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B 143

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M 420

now only about 3000 (anderson - May, '95)

S. Sims	Amal: Stevedores. Lab: Protect Leag:	1.
T. W. Carthy	Organiser of the Dockers Union	6
W. Jarrold	Amal Stevedores Branch 8.	14
Wm. Gray Dawes	Secy: of Stevedores Wages	25.

B 143

(Nov 10. 1891
GLA

Amalgamated Stevedores Labour Protection League.

(with notes from interview with Anderson (Secy) - May 11. 95. (J.A.)

Secretary of Executive Council. Mr Stephen Sims, 42 Brunswick Road E.

Executive Council meets every Tuesday at the Wade's Arms, Jeremiah Street, Poplar at 8 pm.

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Unions are only one Hall

League has been in existence 21 years. After the great strike ( ) some of the branches of the South Side L. P. League were taken into this organization.

There are now 13 Branches in the London district with a total membership of about 4000. One is at Tilbury and there are 3 at the Victoria & Albert Docks.

Branches		District	Secretary, Meeting place etc.
	No 1	Shadwell	Dover Castle, Sutton St. Alternate Fridays
†	2	Millwall	Mr Doyle, White Swan, Ida St. Poplar. Alt Thurs.
	3	Poplar	George IV. Ida Street, Poplar & 'Blue Posts' West India (every Wed) [Dock Rd.
	4	"	'Steamship', Naval Row Every Monday Mr S. Sims.
†	5	"	'The Ship' High Street. " Wednesday. Mr J. Anderson 64 Ordnance Road. Canning Town.
	6	Deptford	Trinity Hall, Berthon St. Every Friday
†	7	Wapping	Railway Tavern, High St. Every Wed. Mr D. Regan, c/o of Mr Donoghue, Railway Tavern
†	8	Rotherhithe	Wood's Coffee House, Every Saturday Mr Jarrold. 14 Lee Terrace, Both Rd. Rotherhithe.
	9.	Canning Town	'Sidney Arms', Alice St. Alt: Thursdays.
	10	Tidal Basin	Union Church. Alternate Mondays.
	11	Limehouse	Phoenix Hall. Three Colt St. Alt. Tuesdays
†	12	Custom House	Ashburton House, Alt. Fridays. Mr Hudson. 70 Garway Road, Customs House.
	13	Tilbury	Victoria Coffee Tavern, Grays. Alt. Mondays.

† Mr Anderson can give particulars as to work at Millwall Dock; Mr Regan about 'River work'; Mr Jarrold about Surrey Commercial Docks; and Mr Hudson about Victoria & Albert Docks.

Each branch keeps its own funds and pays 3d per member to the Executive Council quarterly. If more is needed a levy is made. The Council consists of the Secretaries of the Branches and Councilmen; each branch sending 3 for any number of members not exceeding 250; and an additional councilman for every 200 or not less than 100 more. The Council officers are elected from the Council by the Council for periods of 6 months. They are eligible for re-election.

Powers of Executive. Disputes between workmen & employers & cases of infringement of rules are brought before this body. All new members have also to come before the Executive

Election of members. Candidates have to be proposed & seconded by two financial members of the branch they wish to join. If their application is approved by the branch, the candidate & his supporters have to appear before the Council within 28 days. If he is accepted then, he is referred back to the Branch Secretary who issues his card. This system

X Anderson says now 6 months

⊗ Anderson: Not under than 50 %

is adopted to prevent men who have been rejected by one branch getting elected through another branch.

Entrance Fees. Entrance fee is ~~£20~~ £2 & card & Rules 3d. It is payable, 5/- on nomination, 15/3 on election & the remaining 20/- within X 3 months. Persons who have run out can rejoin if re-elected by paying 20/3. Youths between 14 ~~and~~ 18 (half members) are charged 20/3 viz 2/6 on nomination; 10/3 on initiation and remainder within 3 months. Sons of members between ages of 14 & 18 are admitted to the branch of which their father is or was a member on paying entrance fee of 2/6 & 3d for card & rules.

Union is recruited mainly by seamen returning home & settling down & by the sons of members. About ⊗ 80% of the men have been to sea.

Payment of Subscriptions. Each member pays 2d per week to the branch funds, juniors (14-18) 1d per week. Cards must be 'cleared' on quarterly nights – which come in the first week of the months of March, June, September & December. When the amount is paid, the card is stamped, a

different coloured ink being used each quarter. By this means, it can be seen at a glance whether a card is paid up. Members are fined 1d a week during the time arrears remain unpaid. A man 14 weeks in arrears is not entitled to the death levy. and he is erased from the books when 3 quarters in arrear.

Members going to sea are exempted from fines if they leave their card with the branch secretary & sick members are exempted from subscriptions on the same condition but must pay death levies.

Death Benefit. If a member dies, the members of his branch pays a levy for the funeral, which levy varies from 4d in No 3 to 1/- in No 13. Some of the branches (Nos 1.5,7.8) have a levy for member's wife's death.

Accidents. If a member meets with an accident, which incapacitates him for life, a levy of 6d per member is made for his benefit.

Progress of Society. When the Society was started (1870) the men were receiving 3/- to 4/- per day for 12 hours + 4/- for a night. Two or three years after they organized the League, they went in for 5/- for a day of 12 hours + 9d per hour

for overtime. Had 3000 members then & so had no difficulty in obtaining this rise. Soon after obtained a 9 hours day and in the early 80's obtained 6/- a day (9 hours) or 8d per hour & 1/- per hour for overtime. Rate now stands at 6/- for a day of 9 hours & 14/- for night of 11 hours. Day is reckoned from 7am to 5pm with one hour for dinner & night 5pm to 7am with 3 hours for meals.

Since the last increase mentioned above, the only change has been that the men have been forbidden to work more than a day & a night right off. Used to work 2 days & a night. This alteration was introduced to equalize the amount of work amongst the members to a greater extent.

Method of Obtaining Work. In connection with each Dock there are 'Places of Call' were the men wait & are employed at certain 'Times of call' viz 6.45am 7.45am, 8.45am, 12.45pm & 5.45pm. At Tilbury Docks the time is a quarter of an hour later in each case. For 'Places of Call see Rules pg 18

Kind of Work. The stevedores take export cargo from the quayside or from barges and stow it in the holds.

*At Millwall stevedores do all unloading except grain in bulk. — Anderson, Nov 11.95

Anderson admits truth of this, but thinks it wd. be the Union's ruin to publish it. It is the keen competition between the master stevedores wh. gives the Union its chance. They tried dealing direct with the shipowners, but found it no advantage. The shipping coy's were just as exacting as the middlemen, & were more difficult to cope with. Union does good in steadying the market.

In the case of vessels called at more than one port, the cargo has to be arranged so that the goods to be landed at the earlier ports of call are nearest the hatchways. This is done by stacking such good near these hatchways + leaving alleys to afford access to the remoter parts of the hold. These alleys are filled with goods before the boat starts.

In former years, the stevedores used to unload as well as load the boats, but when the rates were increased the employers refused to pay these rates *for unloading and with the exception of discharging timber at Millwall + timber + grain in sacks & general cargoes Surrey Commercial Docks, this part of the work gradually fell into the hands of the dockers.

Sometimes they work for the Companies direct but oftener for master stevedores who contract for the loading. The League prefers the latter form of employment as these masters compete with each other + if one was to object to pay the usual rate another would do so and take the work. It is much easier to maintain rates against the small employers than against the large companies.

Gangs average 12 to 14 men.
In some cases the no. is high as 17, or low as 8 (Anderson)

Quantity of employment has been falling off very much of late. The growth of business is irregular and not so great as to compensate for the quicker handling of the goods caused by the use of labour saving machinery. He instanced the use of steam & hydraulic winches. One man worked one of these winches whereas the old hand winch required 4 or 5 men.

Wages. See Mr Sim's evidence given before the Labour Commission. He says this evidence & statistics were given after discussion at the Council & may be taken as official.

For Piece work rates. See Rules pages 21-23.

Branch No 4. Secretary Mr S. Sim.

Branch has existed for 19 years. There are about 300 members; all financial.

Contributions 2d per week & levies. Must clear at the quarterly night so that arrears on quarter may vary from one week to 12. If man is out of work on quarterly night, the secretary will make his card free for 14 days so that he may work.

Made 14 new members & lost 17 during the year.

Subscriptions are paid at the meetings. Attendance averages about 25 at these meetings

Most of the men are middle-aged. 35 to 40, average. About 40 men in this branch are ~~so~~ over 50 & of these 10 are over 60 years of age. Being one of the old branches, there are a larger proportion of old men in this branch, than in others.

Foreigners. There are a few foreigners but the men are mainly English & Irish. There are nearly as many Irish as English. Do not accept foreigners as members now.

41
33

Busiest during the summer season when the timber comes from Quebec & the Baltic. Export trade busiest from October to about Christmas. During the slack periods the men will do a little docking; some go to seas and others go hopping, flea picking etc.

Men usually join a branch because their proposer & seconder happen to belong to it. Men can transfer to another branch afterwards but must give a sufficent reason for so doing.

Strikes. The great strike did the stevedores harm. They

Anderson (May '95)

Complains that the British India & P. & O. were lost partly thro' action of Dockers Union in allowing members to take the places of the men locked out. In the case of the P. & O. the men took their annual holiday, as had been custom for many years, & in accordance with their rules. They sent the Coy to wks notice of the fact (as usual) & got a notice 3 days beforehand stating that it wd. not be allowed. The men took the holiday, & the Coy wd. not take them back. The Coy had been waiting the opportunity to pick a quarrel.

Anderson speaks of the members of the Dockers Union undercutting them, particularly as to piecework, but it is all in the unloading. Owing to this they have much difficulty in maintaining their prices, & lose members.

Anderson is now trying to obtain an alteration of law, so as to obtain

also struck in sympathy with the seamen but this lost them two Society firms: the P & O. & British India lines.

Finance. The League is very jealous about its financial position. Thinks if the masters knew the state of their funds it would injure the society. They accordingly do not publish any balance sheets. Each branch makes out a balance sheet, which is audited by two elected auditors, read at the branch meeting and a copy sent to the Executive Council. The Council prepares a similar statement of its receipts & expenditure & sends a copy to each of the branches.

Compensation for men injured on foreign vessels when being loaded or discharged here. Says at present these vessels are liable for damage to property, but not for injury to the men employed

T. McCarthy. Nov 10 /189[illegible]

formerly general Secretary of the Stevedores' Society. Now paid Organiser for the Dockers' Union.

The Stevedores' Union in its present form consists of the ~~two~~ two former Unions (1) the Amalgamated (founded about 1872) (2) the "United" founded 1889.

The Amalgamated was a descendant of the Labour Protection League; ~~the~~ Branches 1, 3, 4, 9, 35 of the Labour Protection League becoming Branches 1, 3, 4, 9 & 2 of the Amalgamated Stevedores. (Thus the numbers of the old Branches were retained, except 35 which was changed to 2). Branch 3 was the first formed.

When the League ~~broke up~~ was breaking up, the Stevedores tried to put their name to it & call it the "Amalgamated Stevedores' Labour Protection League". This caused a split with the South Side Corn-porters, with the result that two Unions were in existence both claiming the "apostolic succession" from the old League; viz. the A. Stevedores L.P.L & the Overside Comporters (No 33 Branch). It was

one of the employe's of the P. & O; the other of the employe's of Houlder Bros

this split which accounts for the fact that part of the work of discharging on the South Side is done by Stevedores, these having thrown in their lot with the Stevedores Union at the time of the division.

The Stevedores made themselves into a Close hereditary corporation, the entrance fee being £2.0.0 except to sons of members of the Union who pay 2/6 (Rules 9 & 10).

This led to the formation of a Second Union consisting of the excluded Stevedores. A quarrel having taken place between the Amalgamated Union & the P. & O., in 1879 outsiders were employed by them. These outsiders after a time wished to join the Union but were prevented by the high entrance fee.

In 1887 they formed the "United" Stevedores Union, which consisted of two Branches, & insisted on same conditions as the Amalgamated except overtime meal-payments. Contributions were the same.

In 1889 a few months after the great strike ~~Here~~ the "United" was absorbed in the "Amalgamated"

At the time of the Strike (89) the membership was:-
Amalgamated :- 1500.
United 1000 }.

Stevedores' Society, which has since greatly expanded in numbers & in no. of Branches.

It now numbers over 4000 members, its sphere extending down to Tilbury inclusive. There are a total of about 6000 stevedores in the port.

Contributions: Entrance 2..0..0 or 2/6 (see above)
Weekly 2d.
Liability to levy sufficient to make up £10 when a free member dies, & for certain accidents. [For light accidents the Branch is levied: for heavy accidents involving the loss of limb, or death, the whole Union is levied].

For loading a general cargo a gang is composed as follows:-
8 in the hold (4 on each side)
1 on gangway.
2 men on shore or in lighters or craft to sling up the cargo.
1 Donkeyman or winch-driver.
12

Dockers bring the goods from the sheds & put them alongside the ship on the quay. Then stevedore puts the cargo in the sling and it's hove up.

The gear as a rule belongs to the master-stevedore. In Albert Dock they hire cranes of Dock Company, & Dock Company's man drives the Crane.

Stevedores work partly for "Master Stevedores" partly for shipowners, who employ a foreman.
The work is done direct by the following lines:-

Donald Currie,
P & O.
British India
Shaw, Savill & Albion.

A few stevedores work for the Dock Company (?)

On the whole the men prefer working for the master-stevedores, who are weaker men to deal with "in a dispute. They "work easier" under a master stevedore. The worst master-stevedores are those who have risen from journeymen.
On profits made by master-stevedores SEE

T. McCarthy's evidence before the Sweating Committee.
Where the stevedores work for the Company there is no contract.

As a rule the same men work in a gang for the same master. No lists are kept except where the Line of Steamers does the work itself.

T. McCarthy was in first gang for one foreman, & in second for another. There is a customary preference system

Rate of pay 8d hour, 1s overtime. 9 hours a day excluding mid-day meal-time.

Rates for cargoes, about 1s 2d a ton for good cargoes, with special rates for rough cargoes; cement scrap iron, & so on & special kinds of cargoes (— see Scale of Rates in Rules).

He ~~the~~ would object to arranging the work the night before, as ~~that~~ would give an unfair advantage to those at work the day before.

A scheme was drawn up some years ago for cooperative gangs, electing their foreman. It was opposed by the foremen & fell through

thinks that on the whole the average number of days work per week secured by a ~~man~~ stevedore throughout the year is 3.

Mc Carthy was only paid 3/4d a week when Secretary of the Stevedores' Union, (not of course giving all his time to it). But he found that he had to engage in so many negotiations & disputes that practically he found it hard to get work. The present Secretary gives all his time.

The Steve dores include a very large proportion of Irish. A large number came over to London ~~after~~ at the time of the great famine (1847) from the South Coast of Ireland (Co Cork, Skibbereen, Clonakilty, Goleen, Rings End, Kinsale &c. They got any rough work in the port, & as the Corn Laws were just repealed the corn trade was expanding largely at the time. Thus the Irish collared the corn-porterin, and the stevedoring, & being very clannish kept it in their families, so that 2nd

generation of Irish got the pick of the work. The Irish were the backbone of the Labour Protection League which was built up on the boom of the Franco-German war. Now that pay is better, English come in. Clannishness is diminishing. There are not many Irish master-stevedores but many foremen.

The 'Lumpers' of old days were small master-stevedores. Afterwards the terms lumper and stevedore became convertible.

Amalgamated Stevedores. Branch No 8.
Mr Jarrold Secy.

Meets at Wood's Coffee-house, Lower Road, Rotherhithe on Fridays at 8 pm.

Branch formed – August 31st 1889.

200 members on books. All financial. Gained 10 during the year & lost 2 – by death. Members have to pay up on the quarterly nights.

When the union started, the first issue of tickets went up to No 509. About half of these dropped off after the first quarter.

All work in the Surrey Commercial Docks and the majority live in Rotherhithe – between the Red Lion & Mill pond Bridge

<u>Death Benefit</u>. Has recently increased the levy at a member's death from 6d to 9d. and abolished the levy for death of member's wife – & many single men in the branch & they objected to pay this levy. Usual course at death is to pay the undertaker's bill and give the balance to the friends.

<u>Age</u>. About 50 are over 30 yrs and of these about 6 are over 40 ~~on~~; one of the six being over 50. About 30 are under 20 yrs. Remainder between 20 & 30.

The age average (Mr J. thinks) is kept low through the men being unable to work at stevedoring after a certain age. As the men get older, they do other kinds of dock work.

Nationality. English & Irish; former predominate.

About 30 per cent of the men are single.

Branch No 6. Mr Jarrold came prepared to give information as to this branch, which meets at Trinity Hall, Berthon Street, Deptford on Fridays at 8 pm.

There are 600 members on the books – 580 being financial. Five new members have joined during the year & 10 have died.

Death Levy is 6d per member. Pay undertaker's bill and give balance to friends.

Members work at Surrey Commercial Dock and live in Deptford or Greenwich.

The majority of the men in this branch are Irish and the proportion of married men is greater than in No 8.

Branch was formed about the same time as No 8.

General Notes applying to both branches.

Busy time is from June to January; slack time from January to June. Jany to June is 'play'; absolutely nothing to do. Mr J. does not know how the others do in the slack time. He has to 'borrow and prawn'. The work in the Timber Dept is entirely stopped: due to the closing of the Baltic & St Lawrence. A few of the Deptford men would get a few days at the iron foundries (Humphries) In the busy time all the men are at work.

Pay is 8^d per hour for unloading timber; overtime 1/- per hour. Overtime has been greatly reduced since the strike.

Average Earnings for the year are not more than 17/- a week. Mr J. reckons that a man gets 5 days a week for 7 months & out of work for the remainder of the year. A large number would not get more than 4 days a week & their average would be 14/- a week.

Replying to a question "whether any of the men saved anything for the hard time they

knew was coming, Mr J. said they had no opportunity: during the winter, they pawned everything they could; let the rent run; and then when the season comes they have to get things out of pawn, pay back rent & bills. If they manage to do this and get a few clothes ~~they are~~ by the time winter is on them again they are fortunate. Mr J. started work this season £15 in debt & he has just managed to pay that off. He is better off than the others however as he is a 'leading hand' for one of the master stevedores; ~~and~~ gets 8/- a day & is always kept on during season. He is also a total abstainer.

<u>Temperance</u> principles are gaining very much. There is a great change since he first went to the Dock (1877) About 40 members of Branch No 8 are abstainers.

<u>Particulars as to work.</u> Stevedores take the deals from the ship & stack them on the quay. The deal porters then remove them.

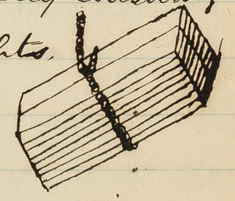
Men wishing work stand at the place of call (outside the Red Lion). They form a line on the kerb at the time of call. The foreman

of the master stevedore then picks out the men he wants. The men work in gangs. A ship with four holds (the usual type) would have 8 men at the fore hold; 10 men at the main hold; 8 men at No 3; and 10 men at No 4 hold. In each case, two men would be on deck and the others in the hold. One of the two on deck would be the gangwayman. At the fore hold & No 3, the second man would be on the 'guy' rope. At the main hold & No 4 he would assist the gangwayman. On the quay there are a number of stevedores known as 'outside workers. These take the deals and pile them as they are passed out of the vessel. At the forehold there would be 3; at the main hold 5; at No 3, 4 men & at No 4, 4 men. The differing proportion of outside workers to the men in the hold is due to the ~~[illegible]~~ varying distance the men have to carry them to the pile. The men stacking the deals from the main hold have to carry them farthest. Deals vary in length from 6 ft to 30 feet and are mixed in the hold – packed in as they will go. When the vessel ~~comes in~~ arrives, the decks is loaded.

The stevedores first clear the deck; each man takes a deal under his arm and pushes it over the side to the outside workers. When the deck is cleared, the hatchways are removed and the deals raised from the hold by means of a steam winch. This winch is sometimes worked by a seamen; at other times by one of the gang.

The gangwayman, usually a trusted ~~employ~~ man, who is always engaged by the master stevedore whenever he has work and is paid 8/- per day, has charge of the hold and is responsible to the master.

The deals are brought up from the hold by a runner and chain; each 'sett' usually consisting of 16 deals ~~two~~ arranged in two lights. and weighing nearly 16 cwt. They are then stacked on the quay by the outside workers. Afterwards the deal porters will sort them into lengths ~~sta~~ and stack them. The deal porters seldom commence removing, until the stevedores have finished. They take about 14 days to stack the deal unloaded by stevedores in 3 days.



Stevedores are paid off each night. Have to go to the master's office

& draw the money. If a ship is being discharged & is not completed at night, the same men usually go back to her in the morning but in all cases they have to go to the Place of Call & be re-engaged by the foreman. The men prefer this system; it prevents them working short handed as might be the case if they went direct to the ship.

Accidents. Work is "very dangerous". Accidents caused by (a) chain breaking, (b) gin coming down through the hook straightening, (c) deal shooting out of the 'sett'. Specially liable to the latter accident when the boards are planed.

There have not been so many accidents since the Union was formed as before. They have been reduced to one-fourth. This is due to the fact that the gangwaymen do not 'rush' the men as they did. They did it to ingratiate themselves with the masters. They could then pay a man off and get another in his place. Now the men will not be 'rushed' and to pay a man off would stop the ship.

No provision is made for accidents. Few of the men belong to a friendly society.

No strikes since the great strike.
Questioned as to the difference between stevedores and steamship workers, Mr J. at first said there was no difference except the rate of pay, but finally said that the steamship workers were mostly engaged in the coasting trade where no special skill was required. Stevedores loaded the vessels for long voyages. [This agrees with the fact that stevedores work mainly in the Docks & S.S. workers in the "Pool" or at wharves.

Mr J. is an exceptionally intelligent man & is working as gangway man. He has ~~given~~ kept a record of his earnings for the past two years; of which he has given me a copy.

Memorandum of Stevedores Wages

Wess. Gray. Dawes & Co

Gangs	Jan to June 1889.			July to Dec: 1889.			Jan. to April 1890			April 16th to June 28th 1891		
	Average earnings per week	Average hours worked		Average earnings per week.	Average hours worked.		Average earnings per week.	Average hours worked		Average earnings per week	Average hours worked	
		Day time	Over-time		Day time	Over time		Day time	Over time		Day time	Over-time
	£. s. d.											
1st Gang.	2. 5. 0	44¼	8¼	2. 0. 11	40¼	7	2. 6. 11	43½	9½	2. 7. 2	45	9
2nd "	1. 19. 10	42¼	7¼	2. 1. 0	43½	7	2. 2. 5	42¼	9¼	2. 3. 2	44½	8
3rd "	1. 13. 11	38	6¾	1. 16. 8	41¼	7¼	1. 19. 3	41¼	9¼	2. 1. 6	45½	8¾
4th "	1. 15. 9	40	7	1. 17. 7	42¼	7¼	1. 17. 1	39.	8½	2. 1. 7	45½	8¾
5th "	1. 10. 1	33¾	6	1. 12. 11	37.	6½	1. 14. 2.	36	8	1. 17. 3	41¼	8½
6th "	1. 8. 9	32¼	5¾	1. 11. 1	35.	6¼	1. 12. 2.	33¾	7½.	1. 15. 2.	38½	7½
7th "	1. 9. 5	33.	5¾	1. 6. 8	30	5¼	1. 9. 6	31.	7.	1. 13. 3	36¼	7.
8th "	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1. 10. 11	33¾	6½
9th "	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1. 8. 0	30½	6
10th "	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1. 5. 9	28	5½
11th "	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1. 0. 7	22½	4¼

July 4. 95 **Coal Work**

Mr Thorn (Radford's coal yard, Chalk Farm)

The work here is nearly all "steam" coal for factories, electric light works, &c. It comes by rail from Wales & the North principally, in trucks wh. usually hold 10 tons. There is a door or shutter in the side of each truck wh. is taken down so as to allow of the coal being shovelled out.

Method of Work.

The men work in gangs of 3, consisting of 2 fillers & 1 weigher. On commencing to break down a truck of coal, the shutter is taken out & the van backed to a convenient near ~~to the~~ position. Between the tail of the van & the truck stands the weigher; on the ground at his feet ~~over~~ is a patent weighing machine, constructed to weigh exactly ~~200~~ 2cwt., & with small weights added to allow for the sacks & the "heaving sticks." The

heaving sticks, etc., consist of 2 pieces of wood, about a yard long, with handles at either end, & joined together transversely by 2 iron bars some 18 inches ~~long~~ apart. (II) The sticks are placed on the scale, & resting on them is the upright open sack, held by the weigher with both hands. The 2 fillers loosen the corn as necessary with a tomahawk pick, & shovel ~~each~~ it into the sack until the indicator on the machine "bobs up," showing that the sack has got its proper quantity; then, dropping their shovels, they grasp the handles of the "sticks" & so have the sack on to the back of the weigher, who with a quick & dexterous turn of the body deposits it in the van. When the ~~truck~~ corn has been partially ~~emptied~~ removed, the weighing apparatus with sticks &c., as before, is placed in ~~it~~ the truck, & a pair of loading steps, ~~are~~ having a wide platform on top of them, & called by the men a "dolly," are put against the truck, & the van backed close to them, thus putting

truck, steps & vans on one level. The weigher then stands on the platform of the steps, & the process of filling goes on as before.

A gang working straightforward in this way, & having no screening to do, will load a van with 2 tons (20 sacks) in about 20 minutes, & a good gang ~~average~~ do 6 tons or 3 loads per hour, thus giving the high pay of 1/4 an hour per man.

The work, however, is very hard, & cannot be maintained for a very long spell.

In busy times about 10/- per man is taken, & this represents a full day. They usually lose one day a week.

9 <u>Hours of work</u> are arranged as follows:- The men assemble in the yard punctually at 8. As the clock strikes the words "clock off!" are called out by the weigher (who acts

as gauger) & any man not in his place loses the day's work, there generally being odd men in waiting who are taken on in place of the absentee. So strictly is this enforced, that even if a man were seen coming up the yard as the clock ceased striking he wd. be "out," if an odd man were present. The rule is made by the men themselves, & apparently is made not so much to ensure punctuality as to give the odd men a chance, for the men do not at once proceed to work, but "go to mug," — i.e adjourn to a public house nearby, this taking about 15 minutes. They then work till 8 & knock off till about 10, resume till 12 or 12.30, then take about an hour for dinner, & afterwards go on till 4.30 or 5. in winter, & till 4 in summer. (actual working day, about 8½ hours in winter & 7½ in summer)

On Saturdays work ceases at 2 o'clk — sometimes earlier.

Earnings for those employed are about 9/- to 10/- per day in ~~summer~~ winter & 7/- in summer. In addition to the stackering of barges in summer, there are also not so many employed. Usually there are 4 gangs in winter & 3 in summer.

Sometimes the coal has to be landed, that is, placed in large iron heaps on the ground, ready for use when required. For this 6d. a ton is paid.

In other cases the coal has to be delivered in 1 cwt sacks, & then 11d. (3d. extra) is paid for loading. The same price also is paid for coke, which is always in 1 cwt. sacks.

Occasionally coal is delivered in bulk, consisting of big heaps taken from the truck. It is then necessary to screen the rest of the coal by passing it thro' a sieve; there is extra payment for this.

Habits.

The men are very heavy drinkers, & however much they earn never seem to have money in hand.

Every day at dinner time they want a "sub" of 1/- each, altho' they may have taken 10/- or 15/- the previous night. This "sub" has become a regular custom of the trade. There is, however, some improvement of late. He has two teetotallers out of 12 men. These are the steadiest, & only lose about 1 day a fortnight. Whilst the others "go to pieces," they stay behind & make their coffee, &c.

Carmen.

The carmen start work at 6, & must be at the stable quite punctually to that time, or, like the loaders, lose the day. They are paid by the load delivered, & average 27/- to 30/-

a week. They usually finish between 6 & 8 on ordinary days, & between 3 & 4 on Saturdays. Meals are taken at a coffee house or put. h. on the journey.

In busy times the carmen may keep right on at work. Returning with an empty van, they find a loaded one waiting for them, & just put on their horse to the fresh load & start off again. When work is slack, the work is shared & they only get 2 or 3 loads a day

Age capacity.

Men are unfit for loaders work after 45 to 50. Some of them get jobs as carmen, or are put on at the stables, or are found light odd jobs. (I saw one old man - about 60 perhaps - taken out a small load of coal in barrels)

The men are usually strong & powerful

lookey. Some have been sailors, but more generally they have previously worked at some kind of general labour wh. involved the use of the spade or shovel. Most are countrymen.

Mr Heath (New Wharf, Pimlico)

The work here is unloading coal from barges into vans.

The men work in gangs of 5, consisting of 2 fillers & 3 backers. Each backer loads his own sack on the heaving sticks, & the fillers ~~help~~ lift it on to his back, as in railway work. The backers then walk up a short ladder from the hold of the barge & across a plank on to the quay. He then deposits it on a weighing machine, & the sack having been adjusted by the weigher, takes it on his back again, & walking up an inclined platform, places it in the van on the other side.

For this work $11\frac{3}{4}$d a ton is paid. If the barge is of more than 75 tons capacity, an extra $2\frac{1}{4}$d a ton is paid on account of the additional depth; & if loaded in 1 cwt sacks the extra

price is 6d a ton.

The coal has to be screened, & if this is left to the men they employ a sixth man & make a charge of 1/8 a ton extra for all the small coal made. Under this system the men are apt to make more small than is necessary, & the firm find it cheaper to employ a screener themselves. The filler shovels into the sieve he holds, & he shakes it & empties it into the sack. He is paid a weekly wage of 25/- & the men get 4d a ton extra for the small (instead of 1/8)

Earnings.

Londers - 9/- to 10/- day in winter
5/- to 6/- — " summer
Weigher - 29/- wk regular
Screener 25/- wk.

There is extra pay (2½d ton) also for "2nd across" & "2nd up - i.e., when the men have to cross another barge in order to get to the quay from the one they are working in.

Hours.

Start at 6 o'clk & work till about 7.30; then go to mug for about 15 min, & resting work till 8.30. Then have breakfast (1 hour), & resume about 9.30. At 11.30 there is another interval for mug, & then work is continued till 1 or 1.30. An hour is taken for dinner, or further mug interval at 4, & work ceases at 6.

Above is for a winters day. In summer, hours not quite so long.

The same practice as to punctuality prevails as in railway work. There are generally odd men wanting.

Regularity.

There is only one gang at present working; usually 2 gangs, but work slack this summer. In winter sometimes have 3 gangs. If an extra gang is wanted now for an occasional

day's work it is made up of odd men, but for winter or regular second gang will be engaged, & most probably consist of same men as last or previous years.

When a gang ceases to find work at its regular farm, it is broken up, & its former members go around as odd men, probably returning & coming back in busy time.

Earnings are shared.

The men all share alike. All the money earned (altho' it may be by 3 or 4 different gangs) is pooled, & equally apportioned to each man. One of the buckers acts as foreman, keeps tally of work done, & shares out the money, but gets nothing extra for himself.

Age capacity:

Men are knocked out at from

45 to 50. Older men are employed as scrounes, or carmen, or working after horses.

Training.

Strength & pluck are required. There is very little to learn. Many of the men have been "pull back" boys on large 2 & 3 horse vans — i.e., have brought the sacks from the front to the back of the van or a barrow, ready for the carman to deliver.

Character.

The men are a very simple thriftless, drinking class. Their money is nearly always mortgaged, & however much a man earns one day he has none the next, & must "sub" his 1/- at breakfast time. But there is some sign of improvement.

Some say it is large families that take all the money, but more truly it is "large thirst".

I watched the men "go to work."
A man called out "work oh," & the
men quickly gathered in a shed close
by, where beer had by brought; but
there also appeared to be tea, &
it was evidently more of a quiet
rest than a drinking bout

July 11th 95. (J.A.)

Charrington. Sills. Dale & Co. Coal Merchants Ratcliff. Was shown over the extensive wharf & yard by Mr. Gupp.

A collier steamer carrying 600 tons of coal was being unloaded. There are 3 holds in the vessel in 2 of which 8 men were working. & 4 in a third (smaller) one. These men are called tank fillers. The tanks which hold about 16 cwt each are lifted by hydraulic cranes. There are 4 tanks for each of the large holds + 2 for the small one, 2 men to each tank. From the first hold coal was being unloaded into a barge alongside. On the barge a man was stationed, who by withdrawing a lever, tipped the bucket or tank, & so emptied it.

The crane man works the levers from a little compartment in the upper part of the building. & near by him sits the weigher who as each tank is hoisted books the weight of its load which is readily told by means of an apparatus attached to the crane.

From the other holds the tanks of coal were drawn up to the top of the building & emptied into an iron ~~trough~~ truck by men working in pairs who so soon as a truck was filled, ran it along on lines of metal.

In between these lines are a series of large hoppers or ~~bags~~ bays & the load is brought over the particular hopper into which it is to be shot. when a bolt is drawn, the bottom of the truck gives way like a trap door, & with a loud noise the coal pours into the receptacle. The hopper narrows in proportion, until it reaches the yard below as a shoot of modest dimensions. // Here the coal is put into sacks, & ~~loaded into~~ the vans drivers ready for delivery. The ~~men~~ loaders work in gangs of three, consisting of a scream a weigher, & a backer. Standing on ~~the~~ a raised platform at a height about level with the floor of the van, the weigher holds the open sacks to the ~~mouth~~ outlet of the hopper with its bottom resting on a weighing machine which he works lightly

with his foot. Above him stands the screener holding a rake with which he works the falling coal so that the larger is directed into the sack whilst the small goes ~~into a receptable~~ through a screen into the bay behind. So soon as the sack turns the scale, a piece of wood or metal is inserted to stop the mouth of the shoot & the backer lifts the sack into the van. The work proceeds very quickly a van of 2 tons being loaded in about 10 minutes.

Conditions of work.

The work of the tank filler is heavy, dusty & stifling, but he is well paid for it. Trade union rates are recognized — 4/2 per ton. The men work for long stretches, keeping straight on until a steamer is finished (& some of them hold 1000 Tons) In the one on which I saw them they started at 5 a.m. & would finish about 8 p.m. having 2 hours interval for meals. Beer or other liquid refreshment is brought to them. Occasionally it is necessary to work all night. The shipowner is always anxious to have his ship unloaded rapidly,

Earnings Vessel holds 600 tons. actual time in unloading - 13 hours. No of men employed 20. 600 tons @ 4½ per ton = £11.5/-
~~600~~ £11.5/- divided by 20 = 11/3 per man, or about 10½ per hour.

These men do not work every day, & would not if it is offered. They make about 4 days a week, & share their earnings.

The man on the barge who tips the bucket is paid separately from the gangs, & so also of course are the craneman & weigher.

The truck men are paid 2/4 a ton, & earn much less than the tank men. They work for about the same hours.

Tank fillers are paid 6/7 so soon as they have finished a vessel. If they only partially unload overnight they receive something on account, & the remainder on finishing next day.

Truck men are paid weekly.

Loaders are paid 3½ per ton. They work from 6 till 6, with the usual times for meals. Generally inland work finishes

at 5, but this firm, being so close to the River adhers to the recognized riverside time of leaving, viz 6 o'clock

Loaders are paid weekly, but receive money on account on Wednesday.

Carmen also get the union wage (7 per ton for delivery & 1/- for driving horse & 1 for water for horse, with extra rates for distances over 4 miles) Ordinarily average 4 loads a day;

8 tons = 4/8 + 1/1 = 5/9 per day

Carmen are paid weekly. They & the loaders lose a certain amount of time, but not nearly as much as the tank fillers. Carmen sometimes attend to the stabling etc of their own horses, & are paid something extra for so doing.

Railway Dock

This firm has extensive sidings at Cable street; where 4 men are kept to unload trucks at a regular weekly wage of 30/- They unload into bags over which runs the truck which is

arranged so that traps let down both at the bottom & in the sides.

The loading is done just in the same way as at the wharf, & pay is similar.

The barmen are also on just the same footing.

Block Fuel.

The firm manufactures a very large quantity of this, but do not make any in June, July, Aug. & Sept. owing to the hot weather. The "briquets" as they are called are made by machinery & consist of an admixture of pitch & coal dust, into which steam vapour is injected. The machine is attended to by one man, & boys are employed to feed the apparatus with pitch & to receive & pack the briquets as delivered. The coal dust is conveyed to the machine by mechanical means.

Irregularity - Except for tank fillers work is pretty steady right through the year; most of the men share the work

in any time of slackness.

Character. Mr. Gripp notes some improvement, but there is still much hard drinking, particularly with the riverside men. The men rarely save anything. Carmen are more steady, and include 2 or 3 abstainers. & the 4 men who unload railway trucks are quite respectable & reliable, & hardly lose a weeks work in a year.

A number of odd men hang about, & if a regular man is not punctual to time, one of these is quickly taken on by the rest of the gang. Sometimes regular men stay away purposely in order to give the odd men work.

Age Capacity.

Tank fillers cannot keep on at that work after about 45. They can however often get jobs as loaders or carmen. Excepting the bucker, loaders' work at the bags is not very heavy.

The Trade

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The large factors usually have contracts with the mine owners. The smaller ones buy off the larger ones, in many cases by the barge load. The shipping of coal is in quite a few hands. The quite small men buy a load or so as required, & retail it in small quantities. Some hawk it in the streets, with hired horse & trolly.

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footnotes.

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