

Victoria. I wonder if that satisfied the old lady. Gibb got back from his overseas leave and I received the usual bonus or gratuity for acting and Eric Gibb, who was always hard up like the rest of us said as he opened the letter "They have been more generous this year and given you £150, fifty more than usual. Well time was now approaching for an end to all my parties on ships atc for came 158 1958 and the 14th. April my 65th birthe day and the retirement day. I knew that I would miss the work with ships etc but I had had a very good innings and had received very fine treatment. I was still elligable for another trip overseas which Lorna and I and the children were to take later.

This year was going to be the retiring year for another person 'Mother Weaver' for she had sold the hotel to a Company belonging to the Syfret group. The local manager was to be Mr. Thelcher. The company spent a lot of money making a lot of improvements which such a company could well afford and later added another story. Yes it was a fine hotel and is still the best in East London. We are certainly going to miss the hotel but Mom had had a long and succesful innings and had earned a well earned rest. She originally paid £8400 for the site and sold the hotel for £98000. When one Agent said to me fancy paying all that for that hotel but Syfrets knew what they were doing. I pointed out that the prophet shown by Weavers was much more than any other hotel. In fact I showed the last balance sheet to him and he could hardly believe that it showed a net prophet of £10000, and I added that is the return to the Receiver. Yes Mom knew how to run a hotel and besides she did the work that is today relegated to about three or four others. Well the new owners said they were thoroughly sstisfied with the hotel.

There still working for the hotel several waiters, the head waiter, Singh,, the two barmen, and the cheff. That is a very good ~~reccomended~~ raccomendation for any hotel. I spoke to Singh the other day and he s~~s~~ said "To think that dear old lady did allthe workherself ~~which~~ and look at the staff they have today." Singh was a very good head waiter and still is, and though he has been offered jobs by other hotels he l has turned them down. A good head waiter, well known to the public is one of a hotels great assets. Yes today they have a manager and assistant and about four receptionists.

Came the day of my retirement from the Union-Castle Company on the 14th. April 1958 after 45 years service- during which, as I have alred already mentioned had two spells of Active service 1914/1919 and 1940 to 1945 in the two world wars. Quite a spell.

Well being my birthday the staff of 45 assembled in the conference room where laid out on a table were the usual snaks supplied each year by Mom- sausage rolls, sandwiches, prawns, cakes, and many other items and tea. Then there was the short fairwell speech and I was presented with a fine pair of field glasses. I then bade the staff cheerio and went down to the docks to board and see off my last ship. Our native serang boys, about 80, assembled and bade me fairwell and thanked me for having looked after their interests and thanked me for the four sheep which they were about to braai at the docks. The East London Stevedore boys have always been looked upon as the best in the country, or rather docks in th country. They were a fine lot and even now if I go to the docks or meet one of the old gang they always greet me with 'Molo 'ntata'.

I was sorry to leave but one cannot expect to work for years and year blocking other chaps promotion.

Yes we were going to miss the hotel too as apart from the many years we spent helping Mom always put aside for us some eats from the ~~kitel~~ Regarding these items of food which we had to carry home I had one amusing experience. It is in connection with the loss of our de Sot car which had trav lled to England with us. While on the way home one evening I turned to enter or street St Andrews, a small Austin

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car ran into
me and badly
damaged it.
The car was
getting old
and we were
advised that,
apart from
not having the
necessary
spares, it
would cost a
lot so we
decided to get
rid of it.
The insurance
paid/