ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO
LIGHTHOUSE INSPECTOR
BALTIMORE, MD.

HDK-GGJ.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
LIGHTHOUSE SERVICE

1636

SPECIAL

LIGHT
JUL 6 1916
HOUSES

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR, 5TH DISTRICT
BALTIMORE, MD.

July 3rd 1916.

Employment of crews
on Lighthouse Vessels-
1 Inc.(In duplicate)

Forwarded to the Commissioner of Lighthouses.

Very little can be added to what has heretofore been said by this office in reference to the present conditions as to employment of crews on Lighthouse Vessels.

Within statements of the Master of the Tender Maple are, I believe, to be more than justified by the facts. The greatest credit is due the officers of the Maple for the strenuous efforts made by them to keep the vessel in service without interruption during the past two months and it is recommended that they be commended for these efforts by the Bureau.

The increase authorized by the Department on June 30th has relieved the situation so far as the deck force of this vessel goes, but I am unable to say whether the Maple will be able to proceed with her work on July 5th on account of shortages in fire-room force.

The condition seems to be that the supply of firemen is not equal to the demand and that the highest bidder gets the man.

Aside from the difficulty of carrying on Lighthouse Work under these conditions I feel that there is a decided danger to life and property resulting from the disorganization of discipline on board vessels.

With respect to the three specific recommendations submitted by the Master of the Maple I have to state that while a further increase in pay of firemen appears urgent under the present conditions, especially on this vessel, it is believed that, in the service at large and even in the Fifth District as a whole, the increase authorized on June 30th should be extended to other vessels and to other members of the crew of all vessels before increasing pay of firemen further. As a last resort this office contemplates making alterations to the quarters on board the Maple to permit employing colored men as firemen and coal passers. These men are not members of any labor union.

The subsistance allowance of 45¢ per day has been considered ample until very recently, but it can only be recog-

nized that if 45¢ a day was a fair allowance for subsistance five years ago it is not a fair allowance today.

As I have heretofore reported to the Bureau, the Lighthouse Service stands in danger of loosing valuable trained officers who cannot be replaced in a long time. One Second Officer, paid $80.00 per month, has just left the service in this district to take a position paying $125.00.

Some radical steps must be taken unless the field service of the Lighthouse Service is to suffer a serious disorganization and loss of efficiency.

H. D. King.

Lighthouse Inspector.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
LIGHTHOUSE SERVICE

1636

LIGHT
JUL 6 1916
HOUSES

TJM--REOM.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR, 5TH DISTRICT
BALTIMORE, MD.

Difficulty in holding crew, MAPLE.

July 3, 1916

Commissioner of Lighthouses, Washington, D.C.
(Through the Inspector, 5th Lighthouse District)

Referring to Bureau letter dated July 1, 1916 below is given a statement prepared by me relative to the difficulty experienced by the lighthouse service in obtaining and holding suitable men in crews of lighthouse tenders.

Considerable difficulty has been experienced in securing seamen, and firemen, ~~and cooks,~~ on tender MAPLE during the past three months largely on account of the rapidly increasing rate of wages that has been and is now being paid these employees on commercial lines. The crews of lighthouse tenders have to work much harder and longer hours than do the crews on commercial lines. When tenders are buoying or delivering supplies the crews are employed from ten to twelve hours a day at hard work with only intermission for meals. Since the wages of seamen have been increased from $35. to $40. and the wages of first and second class firemen have been increased $5. a month beginning July 1, it is thought that less trouble will be experienced. Still the tender MAPLE has been three or four days endeavoring to hire first and second class firemen at the increased rate of pay and has failed to secure any. The men decline the positions and state that they can get $5. to $10. a month more on the commercial lines and tug boats and not have to work near as many hours

or so hard as they would have to in the lighthouse service.

With the increased cost of living lighthouse vessels should be given a higher rate of subsistence, particularly for the crews, and both officers and men should receive more pay and the vessels should have larger crews in order to get the best efficiency for the cost of maintenance of tenders.

During the last 60 days it has been impracticable to secure experienced firemen. In order to keep the vessel going we have been compelled to take inexperienced boys who know practically nothing about the work they are to perform. The presence of such inexperienced help in the fireroom is really dangerous since it imperils the lives of the persons on board to say nothing of the damage that might be done the vessel.

In my opinion what lighthouse tenders need most at this time in order to make them more efficient is as follows:

1st.: Further increased pay for firemen, both classes.

2nd.: Higher rate of subsistence for the crew; present subsistence being 45 cents per man per day.

3rd.: More pay for the officers of the vessels if it is desired to retain them in the service.

The officers of this vessel have been endeavoring for three days to get men for the fireroom and this vessel now lacks one first-class fireman and three second-class firemen. It appears that the prevailing wages for first and second class firemen in this locality ranges from $50. to $60. per month.

Very Respectfully,

Thos J. Miles

Master, tender MAPLE.

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BALTIMORE, MD.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
LIGHTHOUSE SERVICE

1636

LIGHT HOUSES
JUL 6 1916

HDK-JM

Employment of crews on
Lighthouse Vessels, July 5,1916.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR, 5TH DISTRICT
BALTIMORE, MD.

July 5, 1916.

2d Indorsement.

Since dictating the within indorsement the following additional information relative to conditions on the tender Maple have come to my attention through conference with the Engineer of that vessel:

The Maple has a full crew in the fire room this morning, July 5th. Of the character of the fire room force it may be stated, as an example, that one of these men has previously been dismissed from the Lighthouse Service for confirmed habits of intoxication.

The Engineer and Asst. Engineer of this vessel have spent nearly the entire time since July 1st in the endeavor to round up the necessary number of firemen and coal passers. To do this they have spent between them between $5 and $10 of personal funds in buying drinks and cigars at sailor boarding houses in order to obtain promises that men would report for duty. It was necessary to obtain between 40 and 50 such promises before the necessary six men were actually obtained.

Naturally such conditions do not add to the attractiveness to service on lighthouse tenders for engineers, nor are they conducive to discipline on board vessels, nor to the dignity and creditable reputation of the Lighthouse Service.

But the Maple is ready for duty today, and it is well that she is, for Winter Quarter Shoal Gas & Whistling Buoy is missing from station, and there are coal and members of crew to be taken to Cape Charles, Winter Quarter Shoal and Fenwick Island Shoal Light Vessels.

In respect to the condition of discipline in the engine department of the tender Maple, it should be stated that the Engineer reports it as out of the question to have boiler room bilges cleaned with steam on the vessel, the men simply refusing to do it. Moreover, no cleaning of brass or other similar work will be done by firemen on watch, the reason given being that this is contrary to Union rules.

H. D. King,

Lighthouse Inspector.

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO
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BALTIMORE, MD.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
LIGHTHOUSE SERVICE

163/6

LIGHT
JUL 6 1916
HOUSES

HDK-JM

Employment of crews on
lighthouse vessels.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR, 5TH DISTRICT
BALTIMORE, MD.

July 5, 1916.

3rd Indorsement.
July 5th, 3 P. M.

Since writing the second indorsement the commanding officer of the Maple reported at 1 P.M. that one-half of the fire room force left the vessel at noon, complaining of unsatisfactory food. The noon meal consisted of soup, ham and cabbage, boiled potatoes and bread, and, according to the report of the officers, was well cooked and equal to the meal served the officers.

Three men have been transferred from the tender Ivy to the Maple to make up the complement for this trip. One of these men is a Quartermaster who has had former experience as a fireman; the other two are 2d-class firemen, one of whom is considered reasonably competent as a 1st-class fireman. Steps have been taken to alter the arrangement of the berth deck immediately upon the Maple's return to port so that a colored fire room crew may be shipped.

During the past two months the engineers have at times had to handle coal and ashes themselves to keep vessel going. July 6 months

Hydrog.
Engr. Cons.
Mar. Engr.
[illegible]
Accounts.
Contracts
Chf. Clk.
Dep. Comptr.
Comptr.

(2) Copies of letter to Mr Plummer 1110 July 6

H. D. King,

Lighthouse Inspector.

(1)

Note addition to this endorsement, made by Inspr. on original copy. HB add, the addtn hereto all Inspr's at July 6. Addgm HB 7/6 the matter

TEC 7/6

HBS 7/6