PLEASE

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THIS

PAGE.

Thank you,

With affection,

May 15, 1931.
LYNCH NAVY (UNLADEN RATING).

Longden: I deeply regret to
tell you that there is no other way of
â€œnotingâ€​ what I consider to be justified
in the treatment of a boy by the Admiralty during
the last two years. This boy is Edward Benett, and he
my Division. He volunteered in 1865 in the Navy. He joined
September, 1866, and was invalided
July, 1868. The boy immediately
and forcibly all on one side of the
being the leg, arm, and mouth,
is nothing which would lead me
to suppose that this infection has
any way due to any weakness
or injury. The Admiralty have
my responsibility for this boy, and
I beg to mention towards him and his
the boy treated the maga.
which he says he sufficient for
me at Harwich. The
is that we cannot get the
report made under the last Act
the Admiralty Administration�under the
state of the case in all 3 years, and in
have not
any help at all being given
very poor boy. The case of the
boy has been very strictly stated
which have been written to me
this. I propose to quote in
April, 1868, as follows:

McRuer, to my Lords Com-
ment of the Admiralty to your yes-
was invalided out of the Royal
December, 1868. In respect of
Navy to me 30th September to

No. 25, 1890, that statement was
and in a letter on 16th October,
this written to me from the

private medical opinion available

so far as that boy is the same as
the Navy that he was under
ill in hospital and on the
flying list, partially invalided
there.

I was told:

No one has made any
the objections, and inasmuch as
these people are all
of the medical

the Admiralty letter dated 16th September,
1890, tells me this:

"It is open to every man in my friends
to produce any reliable medical evidence
injury in the way of medical opinion,
and, to the best of my knowledge, he was
it cannot have
the 3 years in the Navy.

and he has signed the
letter in which he says that
the case of the

the boy he

I beg to state to you
the proof of my
the case.
the best report I have
at any time, I have
in the case, and
I am

This block I have four
leg-patches and 12 cuts for

He was attacked across the face, he says,
and he did not know what it was about.
He received punishment in the "gun" by
"indescribable jumping, climbing,
and hissing" and, finally, he
that the reason for entering
the hospital was the result of birching
and other ill-treatment.

It is a
type of either that the kind
who would like to see men "on the keep"
in the interests of discipline in the old
savage fashion that we know so well. An
Admiralty letter dated 16th September,
1890, tells me this:

"It is open to every man in my friends
are not reliable. If my friends,
physiologically and mentally, and he
found no trace of hereditary weakness
a nervous condition of any kind of
functional weakness, either in the family
or in the boy. He says himself of
boy:

"The left hand is much wasted. The
upper arm, which is a
weakness is.

There are in addition many opinions of
his neighbours. Here is one:

Mr. Carter, a very reliable neighbour, says:

http://www.godfreydykes.info
This letter is to certify that I have known Edward Dennis for about 10 years, and before he joined the Royal Navy, before he entered the Service, he was a fine lad, being bright, strong, intelligent, and of splendid physique, in fact, when he had his first description from Shirley, he was a picture to look at. When he came home discharged from the Royal Navy it was a shock to me, for I got him, and not only did he look his voice, but he was a cripple, and, it is true, I am prepared to swear on oath, if required, that the boy was fit, and that he never was fit when he joined the Royal Navy, but when he was discharged, it was a complete wonder, so I think this means that his illness must have been caused through his service.

I have other letters that I might quote, including one from Mr. Vincent, one from Mr. O'reigh, another from Mr. Crutchley, and I will quote a number of others. It seems to me that the letters from the Admiralty partly admit the boy's case. In the letter of 10th April, 1895, from Mr. W. L. Sims, one reads this:

"As he was discharged prior to attaining the age of 18, he is ineligible for the award of any compensation under the Discharge Penalties Regulations." 

Secondly, in the Civil Lord's letter of 4th September, 1910, it says:

"An illness which has developed since his naval service is not necessarily attributable to service.

These words "not necessarily," bring in a considerable element of doubt, and if there be any doubt in a tragic case like this, the benefit ought to be given to the lad's side and not on the Service's side. It is very regrettable that this boy entered the Navy in such a helpless and thus actually, during the time he was in the Service, eight or nine months, he was confined in bed and body in this way and became paralysed. No effort of mine, for these three years nor a penny for that lad except the recognition fee. He is not in good enough. There must be plenty of parched, judging whose children are going to. The fact of this letter have been under the old conditions."

...""

"..."
ATTENTION

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The information contained herein is sensitive and should be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Unauthorized access or distribution is prohibited.
I hope the case will not rest where it is at the moment. Investigations of some kind are required. The statement has been made that there is a complaint from only one boy. I hope the Admiralty will never rely upon that situation. I have known cases in other Services where one boy has not received the same treatment—i.e., will put it no higher than that—and other boys who were being trained, and had excellent reason for complaining. I cannot say that that happened in this case. I do not want to suggest that the petty officer did not like this particular boy, or anything of that kind, but the case cannot be left where it is. Here is a boy whom we are now told is a cripple, but who was a sound boy when he entered the Navy. His neighbours speak of him as being an extremely bright boy physically and mentally. After a few months' service in the Navy he is in a crippled condition. Things cannot be left thus, and I hope the Admiralty will investigate the case and get right down to the bottom of it, so that nobody in this country shall believe that a boy entering the Navy is not going to be properly treated.

Dr. MORGAN: I was a little disappointed with the reply of the Parliamentary Secretary. I asked a question to the effect that he try to ascertain whether he had any medical substantiation for the view which was expressed at the time, and only from the point of view of eliciting the outlook of the Admiralty in reference to the medical treatment real out. He may have some documents in his possession contradicting that. There seems to be no points in this case, first, the medical fitness of the boy, and secondly, his mental stability. This boy was accepted for service in the Navy at a great unsuitable age, hewed up to the physical and mental standard required for recruitment. Whatever happened, whether physical illness or his mental rejection to his surroundings—suppose all the suggestions of physical illness were right—yet here is a boy who has been mentally affected by the conditions existing in the ordinary Navy. As a result of that service, the boy has reached a mental state which results in his being to go to the hospital for complaints which he regards as being real, and which the hospital authorities regard as imaginary. May I point out that they must have been real symptoms, because, in the end, the boy was taken to the hospital and treated. It is a question which deny him any opportunity of working in the ordinary industrial market. In the first instance, the Admiralty were of the opinion that the boy was fit for recruitment, and now he is sent from the Navy, with a raised constitutional, and my object is compensation for a state which he has not been warned to expect.

It has been stated that the boy developed a dull mentality in the service, but when did he develop it? There is a certain disease known as sleepy sickness. In its acute form it is easy to diagnose, but I do not think every disease that is so obvious as one of the most trivial to the Edinburgh is one of the most difficult diseases to diagnose, and yet it leaves mental after-effects. The boy may have had that form of sleepy sickness after his service, and this may have caused his mental rejection. I beg of the Parliamentary Secretary to consider the case, because it has been at all in my mind. I only considering the statement and the counter-statement, and if the Parliamentary Secretary has strong medical facts showing that the boy is not entitled to compensation, he should tell us what they are, and he has not so far told us. Paraphrasing the conclusion of the boy's statement for the benefit to the Navy, then, gentlemen, will give the boy's case further consideration.

Mr. STEPHEN: I hope that the Minister is going to agree to consider this case further. I would suggest that he should get from the boy's schoolmaster some record of his conduct and condition when at school. This boy is passed into the Service, and afterwards begins to show evidence of a dull mental condition and a bad physical condition. It was not there when he passed in, or, at least, the Minister has to take responsibility for the fact that he was passed into the Service. I suggest that the Minister might quite well go back to the boy's earlier period of life at school, and find whether he was a healthy boy and what was his schoolmaster's opinion of him. If that is satisfactory, you come to the second stage. The boy is passed into the Service, and how is he not very long in the Service before this hysterical condition, this mental and physical condition and his desire to go into hospital, becomes apparent. The history of the boy after he left the Navy, and his present condition, show that the boy's desire to go into the hospital is due to a defective physical and mental condition.

When I heard the Minister's statement this evening, I wondered that his medical
Any measures to grant such an inquiry will be taken by the British public to mean that there is more in this than there appears on the surface and I think it would be a good thing if the Parliamentarian Secretary would press for an assurance that the Vice-Admiral will make a most searching investigation and call before the tribunal those who are able to give evidence, and thus clear up this matter to the satisfaction of the Service and of the boy himself.

Mr. AMMON: The House has been much moved by last night's events and any fresh evidence which we can get, we shall be only too glad to re-examine the case and go into it to the fullest possible extent. I shall be only too glad if any ground can be advanced for going into it. This was an ordinary case under the ordinary way at an ordinary recruiting station. He was arrested, but was found later not to be quite up to standard. From the very beginning he was seen to be not up to standard. He was in the naval cohort. He was rejected by the officer in charge as below standard. We have no purpose in setting against us three medical officers gave independent reports, and on that we were passed out, not on any physical ground, but as mentally unfit for service. Nearly 12 months elapsed before any appeal was made to the Admiralty. I believe that the present Government may have happened during that time that we know nothing about. He was simply passed out as one who would not make a proper naval rating.

Mr. STEPHEN: For the honour frankly and the Service, and satisfaction of this boy, there is the most careful and searchy into the whole of these facts.

Mr. AMMON: That sort of thing is happening again and again in all the Services. A recruit may be accepted by the recruiting officer and be found on subsequent examination to be quite up to standard. With little of this age, there is every possibility that, with proper training and nourishment, they may be improved. Everything shows that this boy was given every consideration. It is hardly fair that the Navy should be charged with ill-treatment or any responsibility in a case like this. I repeat publicly what I have said in writing to your hon. Friend, that, if there is any evidence, however slight, that can be brought forward which will give us any reason to renew the case, I shall be only too glad to see that it is reviewed fully.

Mr. EDWARD: Has any investigation taken place in regard to the charges of cruelty? That is the point that is in my mind. Has the boy been given an opportunity of being brought face to face with those against whom he makes the accusation? It seems to me that that needs to be done.

Mr. AMMON: The first thing I insisted upon was that inquiry should be made as to the alleged cases of ill-treatment. A searching investigation was made, but the same petty officers are out there now. That is one of the difficulties. Everything was done to trace any record on to find anyone who knew anything about ill-treatment. There is no ground whatever for the assertion. The very fact that the regiment was made that he wasbidden was an indication of the fact that the position of that regiment was no hearing at all. The birth is only used in cases of sexual assault offences. Only a case such as that in use in ordinary schools is used and there are records of disciplinary action in the punishment book. There has been no evidence on which one can proceed to bring any charges of ill-treatment in regard to the contemporaries of the boy, I regard to none of these can we find any cases of ill-treatment by petty officers. Question put, and agreed to.

Adjudged accordingly at Nine-teen Minutes before Eleven O'Clock.

THANK YOU.