

UNFLAPPABLE REG LEAVES THE DOCKS BOARD STAFF AFTER 49 YEARS

THE longest serving member of the British Transport Docks Board staff at Lynn Docks, Mr. Reg Lake will soon be leaving the offices where he has spent the whole of his working life.

He officially retired last week, but will carry on until early March in order, as he puts it, "to help my successor get his toes under the table."

By March, Mr. Lake will have completed 49 years' service having joined the staff of the old King's Lynn Docks and Railway Co. in March, 1923, directly after leaving Lynn Grammar School.

CAREER

His career has been quite a remarkable one in that he has served the whole of his time in the traffic section at the docks, having started as a junior clerk and then becoming traffic superintendent in 1947.

He has served under five docks managers, the first two before docks nationalisation in 1947 and the others since then.

As traffic superintendent Mr. Lake has been at the hub of operations in the docks - the man responsible to the docks manager for all traffic movements and the organisation of the working of the ships.

RESPECT

His handling through the years of the many facets of his job has earned him the admiration and respect of people on all sides of operations within the docks.

His unflappable character has always enabled him to tackle any problems with a shrewd calmness, so desirable for the smooth working of the whole organisation. He is the man at the centre of a triangle having to satisfy the employer, the customer and the working man.

"I am the first link from the working man's point of view when any difficulties arise," he told me this week. "In most cases I am able to sort out the problems, otherwise I refer the matter to higher authority."

In his many years at the docks, Mr. Lake has seen

MR. REG LAKE, longest serving member of the staff at Lynn docks, with Mr. Brian Ellison who is to succeed him as traffic superintendent. (LC 894)



the most progressive times in the history of the port, through modernisation, the introduction of mechanical appliances to handle cargo, and the modern presentation of cargo itself. This has produced a much quicker turn round of shipping.

These quick turn rounds says Mr. Lake, makes "more moves on the draught board" in order to dovetail shipping into berths and keep the daily movements going. "Whereas at one time timber ships, for instance would stay on berth a week, they are now off in a day."

Mr. Lake is Norfolk born and bred and in his younger days played football and cricket locally. He still enjoys a game of tennis. He moved from Lynn some years ago to live at Ingoldisthorpe, and in his retirement plans to do all the things he has wanted to do for years.

SUCCESSOR

"I am a very keen gardener, and also like doing odd jobs around the home," he said, adding, "I might even take up fishing again."

Mr. Lake is also active in village life and particularly enjoys entertaining with a small group, for old folk and at charity functions.

His successor, who took

up his appointment on Monday, is Mr. Brian Ellison who has come to Lynn from Hull where he was assistant docks superintendent at the Albert and William Wright Docks.

He has been with the British Transport Docks for five years having come ashore following 14 years at sea in deep sea cargo vessels. He was with Ellerman's Wilson Line of Hull as deck officer and travelled extensively particularly in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic.

He is a Master Mariner and his first shore appointment was assistant dockmaster at Hull. Married with a small son, he expects to take up residence in Lynn shortly.

Another new appointment at Lynn this week is Captain M. H. Burwell as assistant dockmaster. For the past two years he was piermaster at Goole and for one year prior to that was assistant dockmaster at Hull docks.

Like Mr. Ellison, he is a Master Mariner, and indeed for a time was working in the same group of docks at Hull as Mr. Ellison. He spent eleven years at sea as an officer in the Merchant Navy.

Capt. Burwell is planning to marry later this year and to settle in the town.

Dockmaster at Lynn is Capt. G. A. Burnham, who was promoted from assis-

tant dockmaster to succeed Captain Tester when he returned to Southampton. Captain Burnham, who lives at Terrington, has been working at Lynn for the past six years and was formerly with Trinity House at Yarmouth and Swansea.