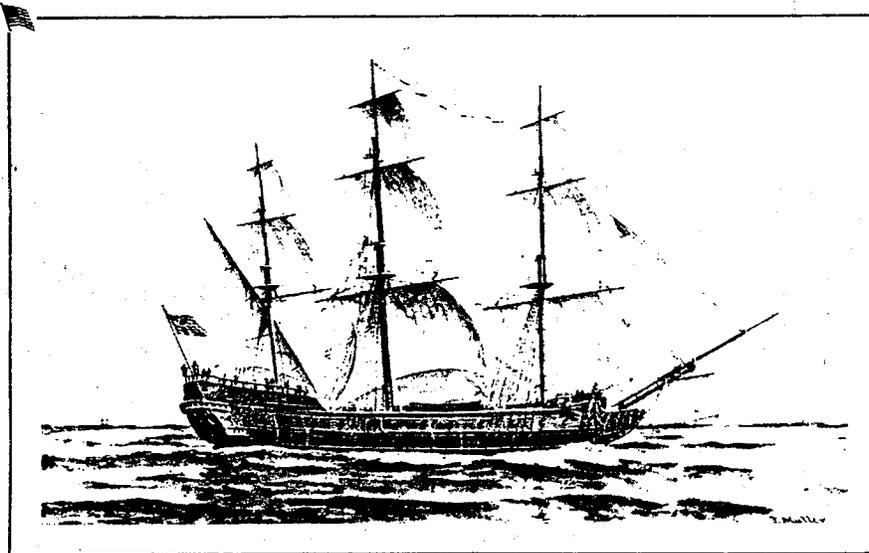


ORIGIN OF NAVY TERMINOLOGY

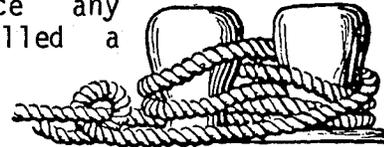




MOORING LINE



There aren't many "old salts" in today's Navy who haven't been required sometime in their career to heave around on a length of hawser in order to tie up a ship. Hawser used in this backbreaking task is called mooring line and gets its name from a combination of two terms used in the early days of sail. The middle Dutch word "maren", meant "to tie" and the middle English words "moren rap" meant "ship's rope". Through the years, the terms merged and were Americanized, hence any line used to tie a ship to the pier is called a "mooring line".



CHEWING THE FAT

"God made the vittles, but the devil made the cook," was a popular saying used by seafaring men in the last century when salted beef was the staple diet aboard ship.

This tough cured beef, suitable only for long voyages when nothing else was as cheap or would keep as well, required prolonged chewing to make it edible. Men often chewed one chunk for hours, just as if it were chewing gum and referred to this practice as "chewing the fat".

BINNACLE LIST

Many novice sailors, confusing the words "binnacle" and "barnacle", have wondered what their illnesses had to do with crusty growths found on the hull of a ship. Their confusion is understandable.

Binnacle is defined as the stand or housing for the ship's compass located on the bridge. The term binnacle list, in lieu of sick list, originated years ago when ship's corpsmen used to place a list of the sick on the binnacle each morning to inform the captain about the crew's health. After long practice, it came to be called the binnacle list.

SICKBAY

In the modern Navy, sickbay is the place a sailor can receive medical attention. In the days of sail there were few such places on shore designated specifically for ill seamen, but onboard most ships there were sick berths located in the rounded stern. The contour of the stern suggested the shape of a bay and consequently the sailors began calling the ancient dispensaries sickbays.

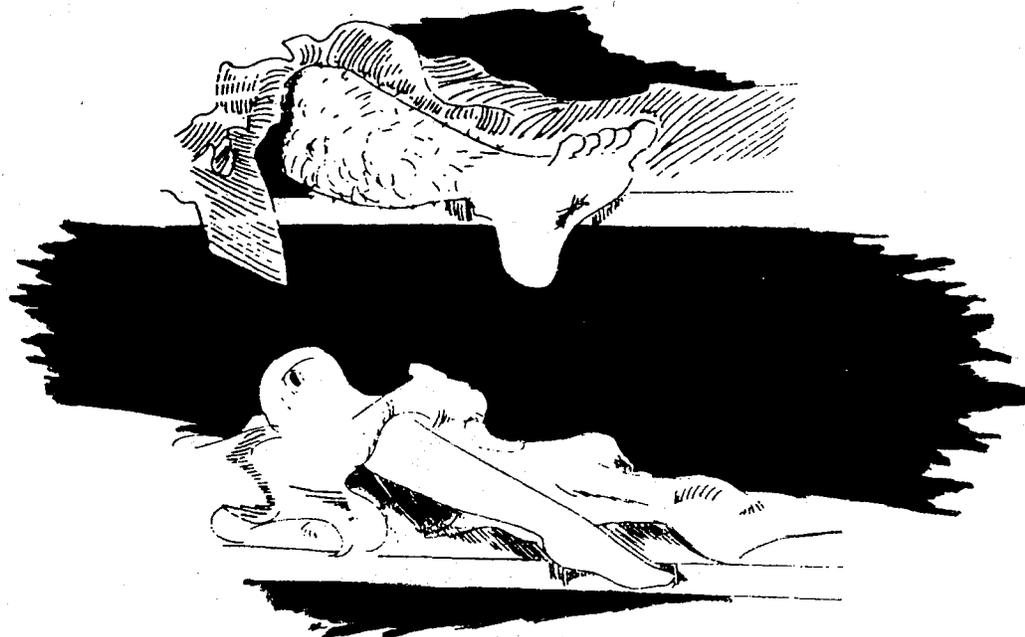
SHOW A LEG

Many of our Navy's colorful expressions originated as practical means of communicating vital information. One such expression is "show a leg".

In the British Navy of King George III and earlier, many sailor's wives accompanied them on long voyages. This practice caused a multitude of problems but some ingenious bosun solved one that tended to make reveille a hazardous event: that of distinguishing which bunks held males and which held females.

To avoid dragging the wrong "mates" out of the rack, the bosun asked all to "show a leg". If the leg shown was adorned with silk, the owner was allowed to continue sleeping. If the leg was hairy and tattooed, the owner was forced to "turn-to".

In today's Navy, showing a leg is a signal to the reveille petty officer that you have heard his call and are awake.



CARRY ON

In the days of sail, the officer of the deck kept a weather eye constantly on the slightest change in wind so sail could be reefed or added as necessary to insure the fastest headway. Whenever a good breeze came along, the order to "carry on" would be given. It meant to hoist every bit of canvas the yards could carry. Pity the poor sailor whose weather eye failed him and the ship was caught partially reefed when a good breeze arrived.

Through the centuries the term's connotation has changed somewhat. Today, the Bluejackets Manual defines "carry on" as an order to resume work; work not so grueling as two centuries ago.

CHIT

One tradition carried on in the Navy is the use of the "chit". It is a carry over from the days when Hindu traders used slips of paper called 'citthi' for money, so they wouldn't have to carry heavy bags of gold and silver.

British sailors shortened the word to chit and applied it to their mess vouchers. Its most outstanding use in the Navy today is for drawing pay and a form used for requesting leave and liberty. But the term is currently applied to almost any piece of paper from a pass to an official letter requesting some privilege.

PEA COAT

Sailors who have to endure peasoup weather often don their pea coats but the coat's name isn't derived from the weather.

The heavy topcoat worn in cold, miserable weather by seafaring men was once tailored from pilot cloth a heavy, coarse stout kind of twilled cloth with the nap on one side. The cloth was sometimes called P-cloth for the initial letter of the word and the garment made from it was called a P-jacket later a pea coat. The term has been used since 1723 to denote coats made from that cloth.



IN THROUGH THE HAWESPIPE

Sometimes we hear an old chief petty officer claim he came into the Navy through the hawsepipe and it makes one wonder if he is referring to some early enlistment program. Actually, it was an enlistment program of sorts; it means a person is salty and savvies the ways of the sea because he began his nautical career on the lowest ladder of the deck force. A hawsepipe or hawsehole, incidentally, is a hole in the bow of the ship through which the anchor chain runs.

DITTY BAGS

Ditty bag (or box) was originally called "ditto bag" because it contained at least two of everything: two needles, two spools of thread, two buttons, etc. With the passing of years, the "ditto" was dropped in favor of "ditty" and remains so today.

Before World War I, the Navy issued ditty boxes made of wood and styled after foot lockers. These carried the personal gear and some clothes of the sailor.

Today, the ditty bag is still issued to recruits and contains a sewing kit, toiletry articles and personal items such as writing paper and pens.

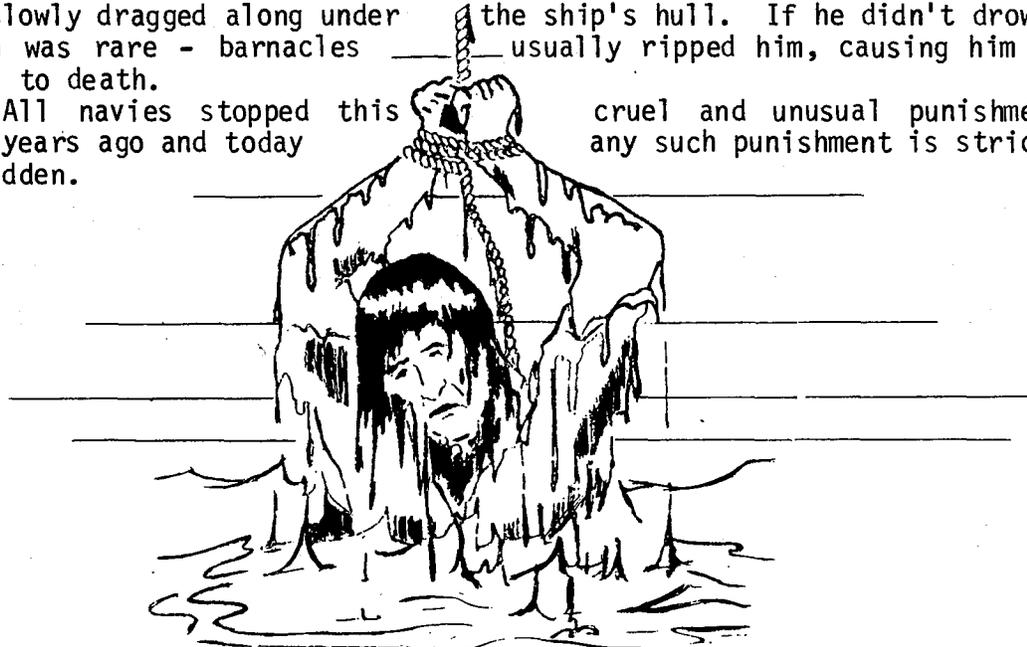
KEELHAUL

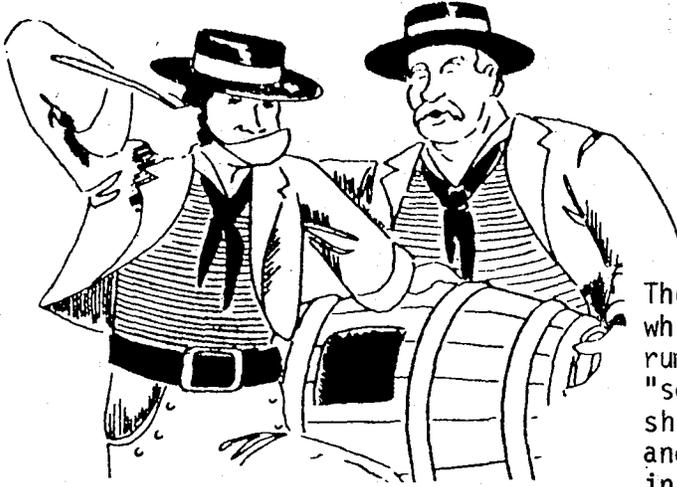
To be keelhailed today is merely to be given a severe reprimand to some infraction of the rules. As late as the 19th century, however, it meant the extreme and often fatal torture employed to punish offenders of certain naval laws.

An offender was securely bound both hand and foot and had heavy weights attached to his body. He was then lowered over the ship's side and slowly dragged along under the ship's hull. If he didn't drown - which was rare - barnacles usually ripped him, causing him to bleed to death.

All navies stopped this many years ago and today forbidden.

cruel and unusual punishment any such punishment is strictly





SCUTTLEBUT

The origin of the word "scuttlebut", which is nautical parlance for a rumor, comes from a combination of "scuttle", to make a hole in the ship's side causing her to sink, and "butt", a cask or hogshead used in the days of wooden ships to hold

drinking water; thus the term scuttlebut means a cask with a hole in it. "Scuttle" describes what most rumors accomplish if not to the ship, at least to morale. "Butt" describes the water cask where men naturally congregated, and that's where most rumors get started. The terms "galley yarn" and messdeck intelligence" also mean the spreading of rumors and many, of course, start on the messdeck.

NAVY BLUE

Blue has not always been "navy blue". In fact it wasn't until 1745 that the expression "navy blue" meant anything at all.

In that year several British Officers petitioned the Admiralty for the adaption of new uniforms for its officers. The First Lord requested several officers to model various uniforms under consideration so he could select the best. He then selected several uniforms of various styles and colors to present to King George II for the final decision.

King George, unable to decide on either style or color, finally chose a blue and white uniform because they were the favorite color combinations of the First Lord's wife, the Dutchess of Bedford.

TONNAGE

Today tonnage refers to a ship's displacement in the water or the gross pounds of cargo it is capable of carrying. In the days of sail this was not the case. Tonnage was spelled "tunnage" and referred to the number of "tuns" a ship could carry. A "tun" was a barrel normally used for transporting wine and tunnage specified the number of barrels that would fit into the ship's hold.

SHIP'S HUSBAND

Sometimes when a ship is heading for the yards, an old salt says that she is going to her husband now and it causes novices to wonder what he's talking about. A ship's husband was once a widely used term which described the man in charge of the shipyard responsible for the repair of a particular ship. It was not uncommon to hear the sailors of creaky ships lament, "Ah, she's been a good ship lads, but she's needing her husband now."

In the course of a ship's life, she may have had more than one husband but this had little bearing upon her true affections. Tradition has it, her love was saved solely for her sailors.



BOATSWAIN'S PIPE

No self-respecting boatswain's mate would dare admit he couldn't blow his pipe in a manner above reproach. This pipe, which is the emblem of the boatswain and his mates, has an ancient and interesting history.

On the ancient row-galleys, the boatswain used his pipe to "call the stroke". Later because its shrill tune could be heard above most of the activity on board, it was used to signal various happenings such as knock-off and the boarding of officials. So essential was this signalling device to the well-being of the ship, that it became a badge of office and honor in the British and American Navies on the sailing ships.

BAMBOOZLE

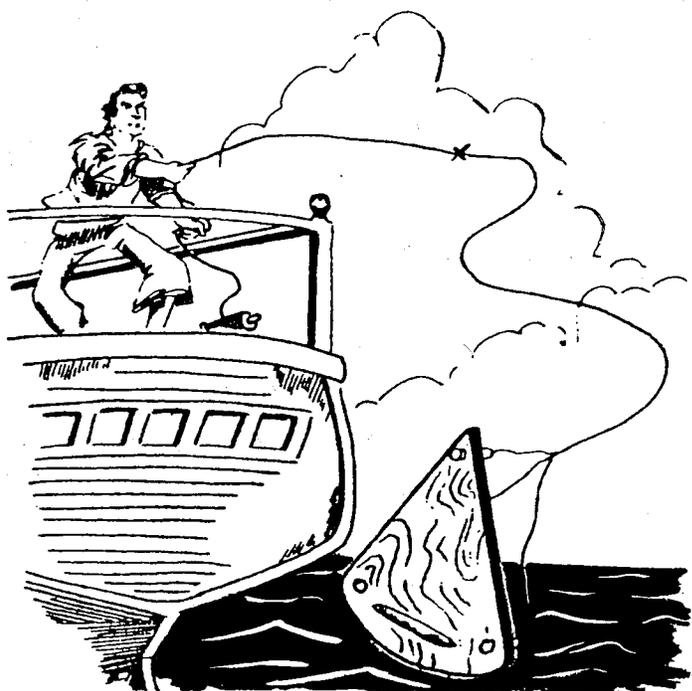
In today's Navy when you intentionally deceive someone, usually as a joke, you are said to have bamboozled them. The word was used in the days of sail, also, but the intent was not hilarity. Bamboozle meant to deceive a passing vessel as to your ship's origin or nationality by flying an ensign (flag) other than your own. This was a common practice of pirates.

KNOT

The term Knot or nautical mile, is used world-wide to denote one's speed through water. Today, we measure knots with electronic devices, but 200 years ago such devices were unknown. Ingenious mariners devised a speed measuring device both easy to use and reliable: the "log line". From this method we get the term "knot".

The long line was a length of twine marked at 47.33 foot intervals by colored knots. At one end was fastened a log chip; it was shaped like the sector of a circle and weighted at the rounded end with lead.

When thrown over the stern, it would float pointing upward and would remain relatively stationary. The log line was allowed to run free over the side for 28 seconds and then hauled on board. Knots which had passed over the side were counted. In this way the ship's speed was measured.



SPINNING A YARN

Salts and landlubbers alike delight in hearing a tall tale told with all the trimmings by someone with a talent for "spinning a yarn". While today "spinning a yarn" refers to any exaggerated story, originally it was exclusively a nautical term understood by sailors only.

Officers and mates in the old Navy were stern disciplinarians who believed if sailors were allowed to congregate and tell sea stories, no work would be done. However, there was one job that required congregating on a weekly basis - unraveling the stands of old line.

On this day, the salts could talk to their heart's content and the period came to be known as the time for "spinning yarns". Later anyone telling a tall tale was said to be "spinning a yarn", a cherished naval tradition.

DUNGAREES

Webster defines dungaree as a "coarse kind of fabric worn by the poorer class of people and also for tents and sail." We find it hard to picture our favorite pair of dungarees flying from the mast of a sailing ship, but in those days sailors often made both their working clothes and hammocks out of discarded sail cloth.

The cloth used then wasn't as well woven nor was it dyed blue, but it served the purpose. Dungarees worn by sailors of the Continental Navy were cut directly from old sails and remained tan in color just as they had been when filled with the winds.

After battles, it was the practice in both the American and British Navies for captains to report more sail lost in battle than actually was the case so the crew would have cloth to mend their hammocks and make new clothes. Since the cloth was called dungaree, clothes made from the fabric borrowed the name.



CROW'S NEST

The crow (the bird, not the rating badge) was an essential part of the early sailor's navigation equipment. These land-lubbing fowl were carried on board to help the navigator to determine where the closest land lay when the weather prevented sighting the shore visually. In cases of poor visibility, a crow was released and the navigator plotted a course that corresponded with the bird's because it invariably headed toward land.

The crow's nest was situated high in the main mast where the look-out stood his watch. Often, he shared his lofty perch with a crow or two since the crows' cages were kept there; hence the "Crow's Nest".



DEVIL TO PAY

Today the expression "devil to pay" is used primarily as a means of conveying an unpleasant and impending happening. Originally, this expression denoted a specific task aboard ship as caulking the ship's longest seam.

The "devil" was the longest seam on the wooden ship and caulking was done with "pay" or pitch. This grueling task of paying the devil was despised by every seaman and the expression came to denote any unpleasant task.

GEEDUNK

To most sailors the word geedunk means ice cream, candy, potato chips and other assorted snacks, or even the place where they can be purchased. No one, however, knows for certain where the term originated; there are several plausible theories.

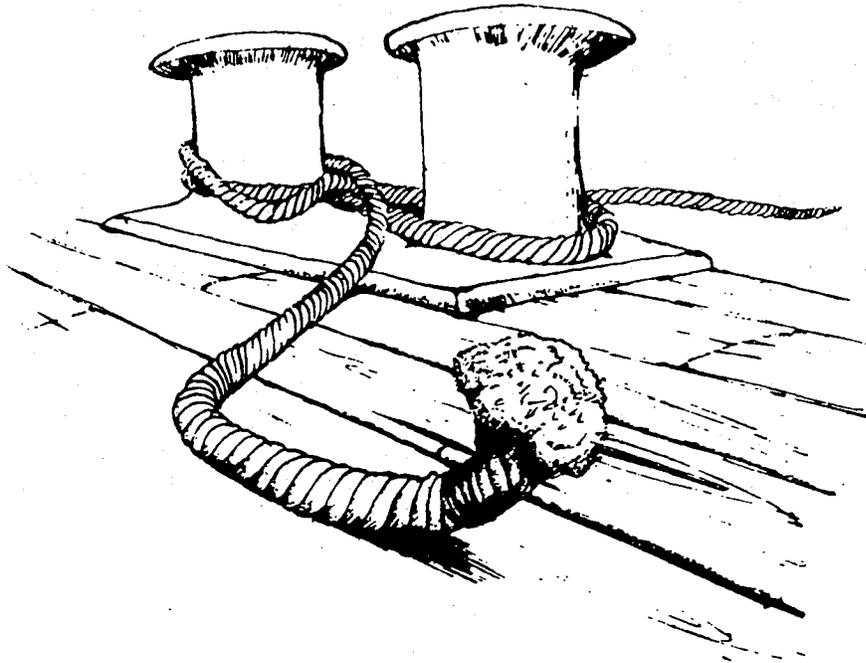
In the 1920's a comic strip character named Harold Teen and his friends spent a great amount of time at Pop's candy store. The store's name was the Sugar Bowl but Harold and company always called it the geedunk for reasons that were never explained.

The Chinese word meaning a place of idleness sounds something like "geedung".

"Geedunk" is the sound made by a vending machine when it dispenses a soft drink in a paper cup.

It may be derived from the German word "Tunk" meaning to dip or sop either in gravy or coffee. Dunking was a common practice in days when bread, not always obtained fresh, needed a bit of "tunking" to soften it. The "ge" is a German unaccented prefix denoting repetition. In time it may have changed from getunk to geedunk.

What theory we use to explain geedunk's origins, it doesn't alter the fact that Navy people are glad it all got started!



As any able bodied seaman can tell you, a turn of a line around a bitt, those wooden or iron posts sticking through a ship's deck, is called a bitter. Thus, the last of the line secured to the bitts is known as the bitter end. Nautical usage has somewhat expanded the original definition in that today the end of any line, secured to bitts or not, is called a "bitter end".

The land-lubbing phrases, "stick to the bitter end", and "faithful to the bitter end", are derivations of the nautical term and refer to anyone who insists on adhering to a course of action without regard to consequences.

GUNDECKING

In the modern Navy, falsifying reports, records and the like is often referred to as "gundecking". The origin of the term is somewhat obscure, but at the risk of gundecking, here are two plausible explanations for its modern usage.

The deck below the upper deck on British sailing ships-of-war was called the gundeck although it carried no guns. This false deck may have been constructed to deceive enemies as to the amount of armament carried, thus the gundeck was a falsification.

A more plausible explanation may stem from shortcuts taken by early midshipmen when doing their navigation lessons. Each midshipman was supposed to take sun lines at noon and star sights at night and then go below to the gundeck, work out their calculations and show them to the navigator.

Certain of these young men, however, had a special formula for getting the correct answers. They would note the noon or last position on the quarterdeck traverse board and determine the approximate current position by dead reckoning plotting. Armed with this information they proceeded to the gundeck to "gundeck" their navigation homework by simply working backwards from the dead reckoning position.

BULLY BOYS

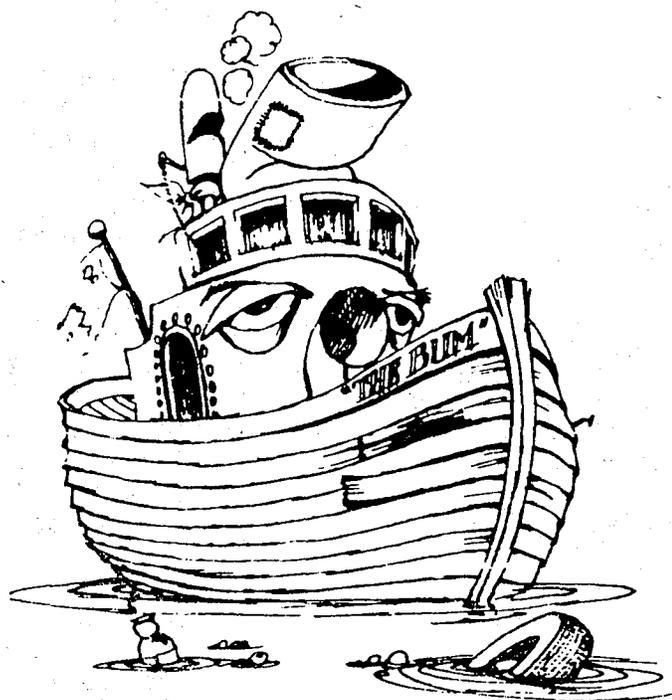
Bully boys, a term prominent in Navy chanties and poems, means in its strictest sense, "beef eating sailors". Sailors of the Colonial Navy had a daily menu of an amazingly elastic substance called bully beef, actually beef jerky. The item appeared so frequently on the mess-deck that it naturally lent its name to the sailors who had to eat it.

As an indication of the beef's texture and chewability, it was also called "salt junk" alluding to the rope yarn used for caulking the ship's seams.

SALLY SHIP

"Sally Ship" was not a ship but a method of loosing a vessel run aground from the mud holding her fast. In the days before sophisticated navigation equipment, ships ran aground much more often than today. A grounded ship could be freed with little or no hull damage if she could be rocked out of her muddy predicament.

To free her, the order was given to "sally ship". The crew gathered in a line along one side and then ran athwartships from port to starboard and back and forth until the vessel began to roll. Often the rolling broke the mud's suction and she could be pulled free and gotten underway.



BUMBOATS

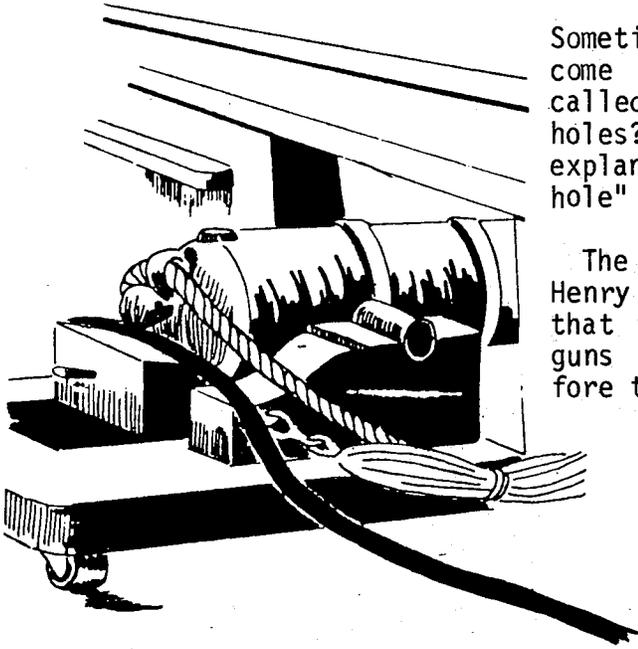
Bumboats, in spite of their name, were not waterborne geedunks piloted by bums or hoboes. They are small boats used by native hucksters and gizmo salesmen to transport their wares to ships anchored in the storm. The name is a handmedown from "boomboats" as the craft were once permitted to tie up to the boatboom of a ship. An early Low German spelling was "bumboat" and in that form it was taken up by American sailors.

TOOK THE WINDS OUT OF HIS SAILS

Often we use "took the wind out of his sails" to describe besting an opponent in an argument. It simply means that one noble adversary presented such a sound argument that his worthy opponent was unable to continue to verbal pugilistics.

Originally the term described a battle maneuver of sailing vessels. One ship would pass close to windward usually ahead of another, and thereby blanket or rob the breeze from the enemy's canvas causing him to loose headway.

PORTHOLES



Sometimes, novice seamen will ask, "how come holes on the starboard side are called portholes instead of starboard holes?" Many old salts are ready with an explanation, but actually the name "porthole" has nothing to do with its location.

The word originated during the reign of Henry VI of England (1485). It seems that the good king insisted on mounting guns too large for his ships and therefore the conventional methods of securing the weapons on the fore-castle and aftcastle could not be used.

A French shipbuilder named James Baker was commissioned to solve the problem. And solve it he did by piercing the ship's sides

so the cannon could be mounted inside the fore and after castles. Covers, gun ports, were fitted for heavy weather and when the cannon were not in use.

The French word, "porte" meaning "door" was used to designate the revolutionary invention. "Porte" was Anglicized to "Port" and later corrupted to porthole. Eventually, it came to mean any opening in a ship's side whether for cannon or not.

FATHOM

Fathom was originally a land measuring term derived from the Anglo Saxon word "faetm" meaning literally the embracing arms or to embrace. In those days, most measurements were based on average sizes of parts of the body such as the hand or foot, or were derived from average lengths between two points on the body. A fathom is the average distance from fingertip to fingertip of the outstretched arms of a man, about six feet.

Even today in our nuclear Navy, sailors can be seen "guesstimating" the length of line by using the Anglo Saxon fingertip method; crude but still reliable. And every housewife measuring cloth today knows that from the tip of her nose to the tips of her fingers of one outstretched arm equals one yard.

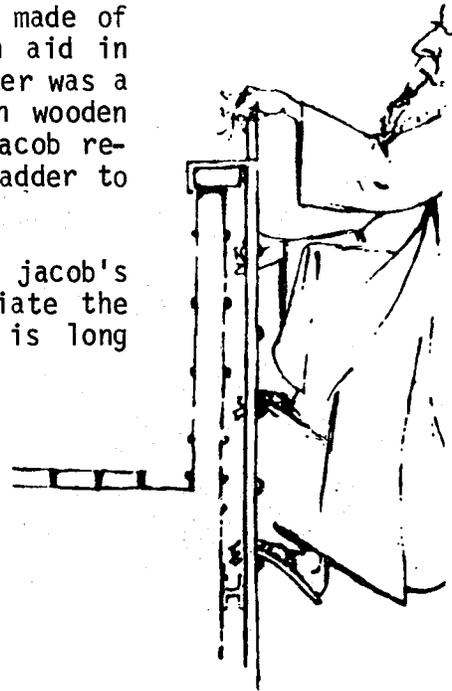
JACOB'S LADDER

A jacob's ladder is a portable ladder made of rope or metal and is used primarily as an aid in boarding ship. Originally, the jacob's ladder was a network of line leading to the skysail on wooden ships. The name alludes to the biblical Jacob reputed to have dreamed that he climbed a ladder to the sky.

Anyone who has ever tried to climb a jacob's ladder while carrying a seabag can appreciate the illusion. It does seem that the climb is long enough to take one into the next world.

SKYLARKING

Originally, skylarking described the antics of your Navymen who climbed and slid down the backstays for fun. Since the ancient word "lac" means "to play" and the games started high in the masts, the term was skylacing. Later, corruption of the word changed it to "skylarking".



Skylarking is a familiar term to most sailors and a popular pastime for others. Today, it is generally looked upon with disfavor while on board ship because "goofing off" can cause accidents and wastes time. However, skylarking was not always viewed unfavorably. Back in the days of wooden ships, it was thought to be the better "occupation" of sailors with free time on their hands - skylarking on the weatherdeck - rather than engaging in mutinous talk in a ship's dark corners.

SIDEBOYS

The use of sideboys is a custom inherited from the British Navy. In the days of sail, gangways weren't frequently used so sailors boarded ship by climbing the rope ladders. Important persons were granted the privilege of wrestling with the jacob's ladder. Very important persons, many of whom were rather hefty or aged, were hoisted aboard in a bos'un's chair.

The officer of the deck instructed the bos'un's to rig a chair hoist from a yardarm and, with much heaving and hoeing, the VIPs were hoisted aboard much like casks of salt horse. The men who did the hoisting were called sideboys.

Today, sailors lined up in clean uniforms on the quarterdeck when visiting dignitaries embark are still called sideboys, thereby preserving another naval tradition.

MIND YOUR Ps AND Qs



There are few of us who have not at one time or another been admonished to "mind our Ps and Qs", or in other words to behave our best. Oddly enough, "mind your Ps and Qs" had nautical beginnings as a method of keeping books on the waterfront.

In the days of sail when sailors were paid a pittance, seamen drank their ale in taverns whose keepers were willing to extend credit until payday. Since many salts were illiterate, keepers kept a talley of pints and quarts consumed by each sailor on a chalkboard behind the bar. Next to each person's name, a mark was made under "P" for pint or "Q" for quart whenever a seaman ordered another draught.

On payday, each seaman was liable for each mark next to his name, so he was forced to mind his "Ps" and "Qs" or get into financial trouble. To insure an accurate count by unscrupulous keepers, sailors had to keep their wits and remain somewhat sober. Sobriety usually insured good behavior, hence the meaning of the words "mind your Ps and Qs".

CHARLEY NOBLE

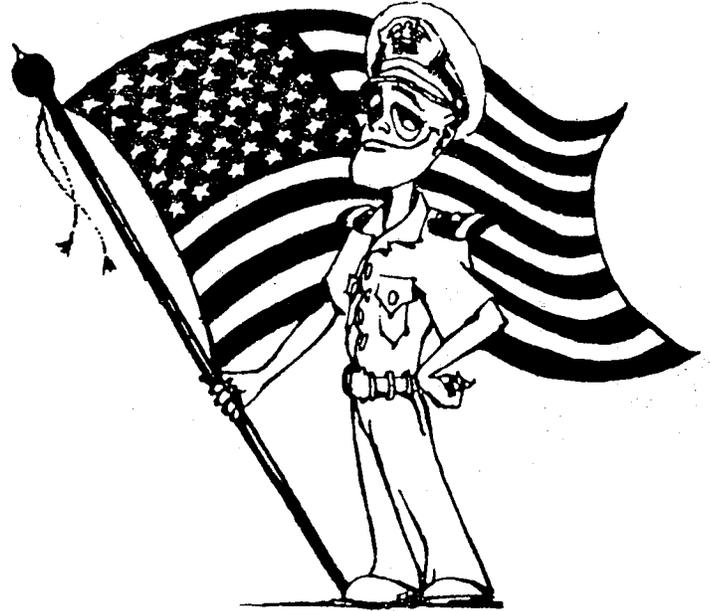
Charley Noble is the enlisted man's name for the galley smoke stack or funnel. The funnel is said to have been named after a stern old merchant captain who discovered that the galley's smoke stack was made of copper and therefore should receive a daily polishing. In today's Navy, it is the custom to send green recruits to find Charley Noble, a hunt which causes endless amusement for the ship's veterans.

CAPTAIN'S MAST

The term "mast" refers to the ceremony that takes place when the captain awards non-judicial punishment for the infraction of regulations or for official recognition for "jobs well done". In the days of sail, ceremonies were conducted under the mainmast on a regular basis and usually on a Sunday morning just before divine services. Consequently, the ceremony came to be known as "mast" in recognition of the locality of the ceremony or function.

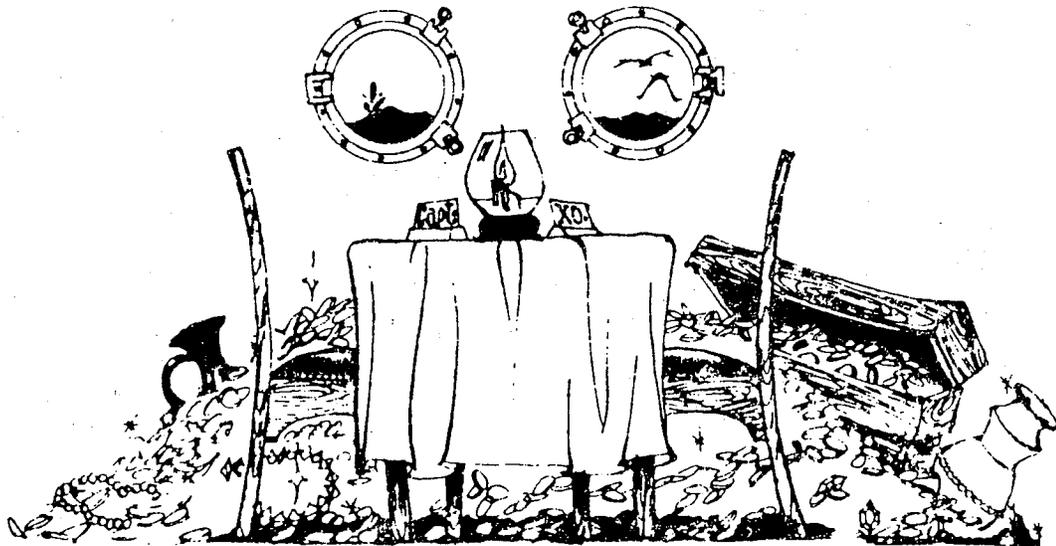
ENSIGN

The name given to the Navy's junior most officer dates to medieval times. Lords honored their squires by allowing them to carry the ensign (banner) into battle. Later these squires became known by the name of the banner itself. In the U.S. Army the lowest ranking officer was originally called "ensign" because he, like the squire of old, would one day lead troops into battle and was training to that end. It is still the lowest commissioned rank in the British Army. When the U.S. Navy was established, the Americans carried on the tradition and adapted the rank of ensign as the title for its junior commissioned officers.

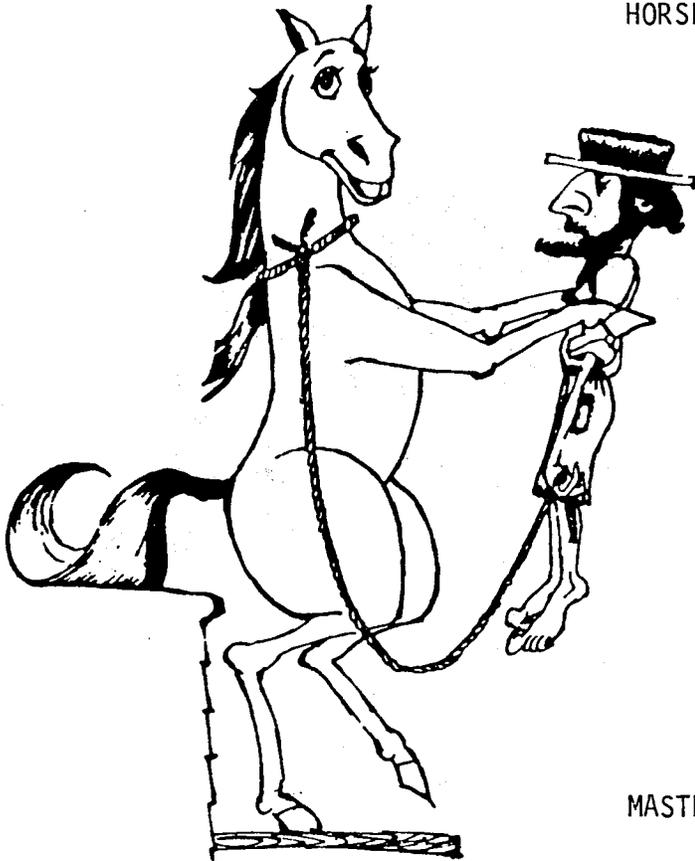


WARDROOM

Aboard 18th century British ships there was a compartment called the wardrobe and used for storing booty taken at sea. The officer's mess and staterooms were situated nearby, so when the wardrobe was empty they congregated there to take their meals and pass the time of day. When the days of swashbuckling and pirating had ended, the wardrobe was used exclusively as an officer's mess and lounge. Having been elevated from a closet to a room, it was called the wardroom.



HORSE LATITUDES



The words of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean" well describes a sailing ship's situation when it entered the "horse latitudes". Located near the West Indies between 30 and 40 degrees north latitude, these waters were noted for unfavorable winds that becalmed cattle ships heading from Europe to America.

Often ships carrying horses would have to cast several animals overboard to conserve drinking water for the rest as the ship rode out the unfavorable winds. Because so many horses and other cattle were tossed into the sea, the area became known as the "horse latitudes".

MASTER-AT-ARMS



The master-at-arms rating is by no means a modern innovation. Naval records show that these "sheriffs of the sea" were keeping order as early as the reign of Charles I of England. At that time they were charged with keeping the swords, pistols, carbines and muskets in good working order as well as insuring that the bandoliers were filled with fresh powder before combat.

Besides being chiefs of police at sea, the sea corporals, as they were called in the British Navy, had to be qualified in close order fighting under arms and able to train seamen in hand-to-hand combat. In the days of sail, the MAA's were truly "masters-at-arms". The master-at-arms in the U.S. Navy can trace the beginnings of their rate to the Union Navy of the Civil War.

MIDSHIPMEN

"Midshipmen originally referred to the youngsters aboard British Navy vessels who were in training to become naval officers. Their primary duties included carrying orders from the officers, quartered in the stern, to the crew, quartered in the fo'castle. The repeated scampering through the middle part of the ship earned them the name "midshipmen" and the nickname "middle".

Naval Academy students and Navy Reserve Officer Training Candidates are still called midshipmen because, just like their counterparts of old, they are in training to become officers in the sea service. It is interesting to note that "mids" (the term "middle" was shortened to "mid") back in the days of sail could begin their naval careers at the ripe old age of eight.

DOG WATCH

Dog watch is the name given to the 1600-1800 and the 1800-2000 watches aboard ship. The 1600-2000 four-hour watch was originally split to prevent men from always having to stand the same watches daily. As a result, sailors dodge the same daily routine, hence they are dodging the watch or standing the dodge watch.

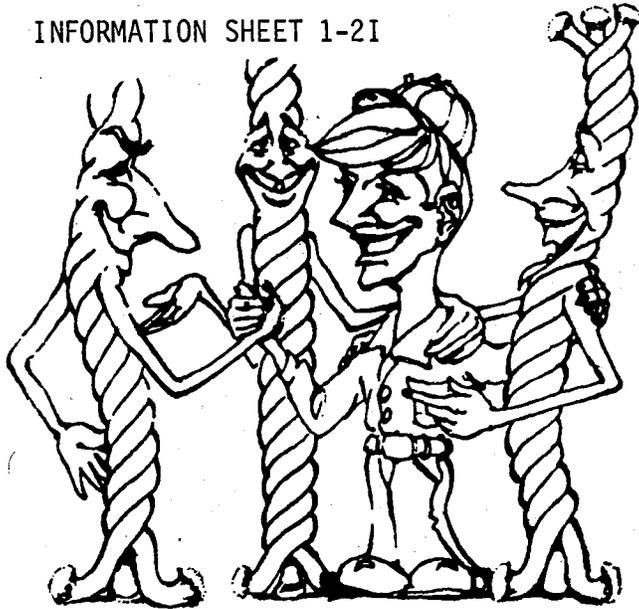
In its corrupted form, dodge became dog and the procedure is referred to as "dodging the watch" or standing the "dog watch".



ROPE YARN SUNDAY

On the day the tailor boarded a sailing ship in port, the crew knocked off early, broke out rope yarn and mended clothes and hammocks. One afternoon per week at sea, usually a Wednesday, was reserved for mending. Since it was an afternoon of rest from the usual chores, much like Sunday, it was dubbed "rope yarn Sunday". The Navy adhered to the custom up to the years immediately after World War II; men used Wednesday afternoon for personal errands like picking up their laundry and getting haircuts, etc. Of course they paid back the time by working a half-day on Saturday.

Today, uniforms require less attention so rope yarn Sunday has been turned to other purposes; mainly early liberty or a time for catching up on sleep. Some, however, still adhere to tradition and break out the ditty bag for an afternoon of uniform PMS.



HE KNOWS THE ROPES

When we say someone knows the ropes we infer that he knows his way around at sea and is quite capable of handling most nautical problems. Through the years the phrase's meaning has changed somewhat. Originally, the statement was printed on a seaman's discharge to indicate that he knew the names and primary uses of the main ropes on board ship. In other words, "This man is a novice seaman and knows only the basics of seamanship."

BOATSWAIN, COCKSWAIN (OR COXSWAIN), SKIFFSWAIN

As required by 17th century law, British ships-of-war carried three smaller boats - the boat, the cock boat, and the skiff. The boat - or gig - was usually used by the captain to go ashore and was the larger of the three. The cock boat was a very small rowboat used as a ship's tender. The skiff was a lightweight all-purpose vessel. The suffix "swain" means keeper, thus the keepers of the boat, cock and skiff were called "boatswain, cockswain and skiffswain" respectively. Until 1949, a boatswain's mate 3rd class in the Navy was called a cockswain.

CHAPLAINS

Chaplains, the military men of the cloth, are rightly named according to French legend.

It seems that Saint Martin of Tours shared his cloak - by splitting it in half - with a beggar on a wintry day at the gates of Amiens, France. The cloak was preserved since it was believed to have been shared with Christ, and became the sacred banner of French Kings. The officer tasked with the care of the cloak and carrying it into battle was called the chaplain or cloak bearer. Chaplain comes from the French word "chapele" meaning a short cloak. Later, priests or chaplains, rather than field officers, were charged with the care of the sacred cloak.

Chaplains served aboard warships of many nations and in the British and American navies they collected four pence per month from each member of the crew. In return, they rewarded every seaman who learned a psalm by giving him six pence.

Besides holding divine services, chaplains were charged with the instruction of midshipmen and the moral guidance of officers and men alike.

It wasn't until the 18th century that chaplains were permitted to dine in the wardroom. Previously, they messed in their cabins although they were frequently invited to dine with the captain.

YANKEE

Americans are known by their nicknames from Hong Kong to Timbukto; one of the most widely used is "Yankee". Its origin is uncertain but it is believed to have been given us by the early Dutch.

Early American sea captains were known but not revered, for their ability to drive a hard bargain. Dutchmen, also regarded as extremely frugal, jokingly referred to the hard to please Americans as "Yankees" or wranglers and the nom de plume persists to this day.

SEA CHANTIES

Sea chanties were songs sung in the days of sail by crews as they worked at heaving the lines or turning the capstan. The songs' rhythms caused everyone to push or pull simultaneously, hence, causing a concerted effort and better results.

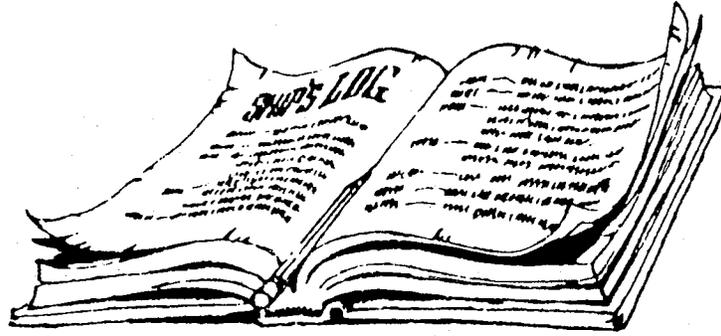
Some believe the term is a derivation of the French word "chanter" which means "to sing". Others maintain the spelling should be "shanties", claiming the name refers to the shanties along the Mobile, Alabama waterfront where many of the tunes were learned by sailors.

Whatever the origins, chanties were divided into three distinct classes. Shrt-drag chanties, used when a few strong pulls were needed; long-drag chanties, longer songs to speed the work of long-haul jobs; and heaving chanties, used for jobs requiring continuous action such as turning the capstan.

One man, the chanty-man, stood high above the working crew and sang the main lines while the rest of the crew added their voices strongly on the second line. On the last word, a combined pull made the ropes "come home".

A good chanty-man was highly prized by officers and crew alike. Although he had no official title or rate, he was usually relieved of all duties to compose new verses for sea chanties.





LOG BOOK

Today any bound record kept on a daily basis aboard ship is called a "log". Originally, records were kept on the sailing ships by inscribing information onto shingles cut from logs and hinged so that they opened like books. When paper became more readily available, "log books" were manufactured from paper and bound. Shingles were relegated to naval museums - but the slang term remains.

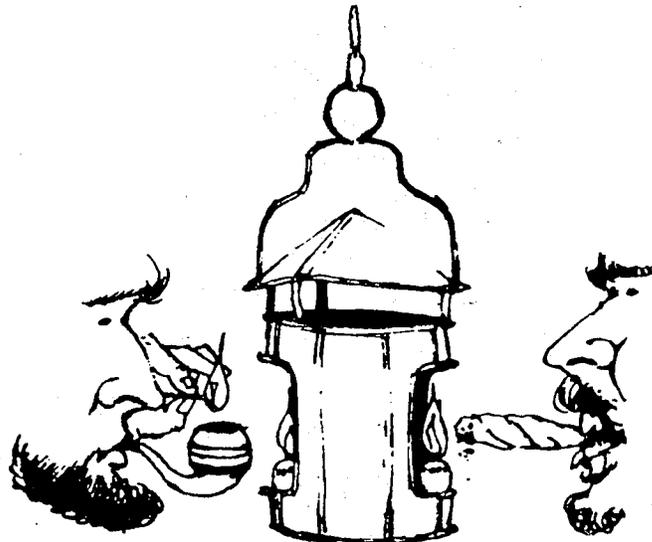
SMOKING LAMP

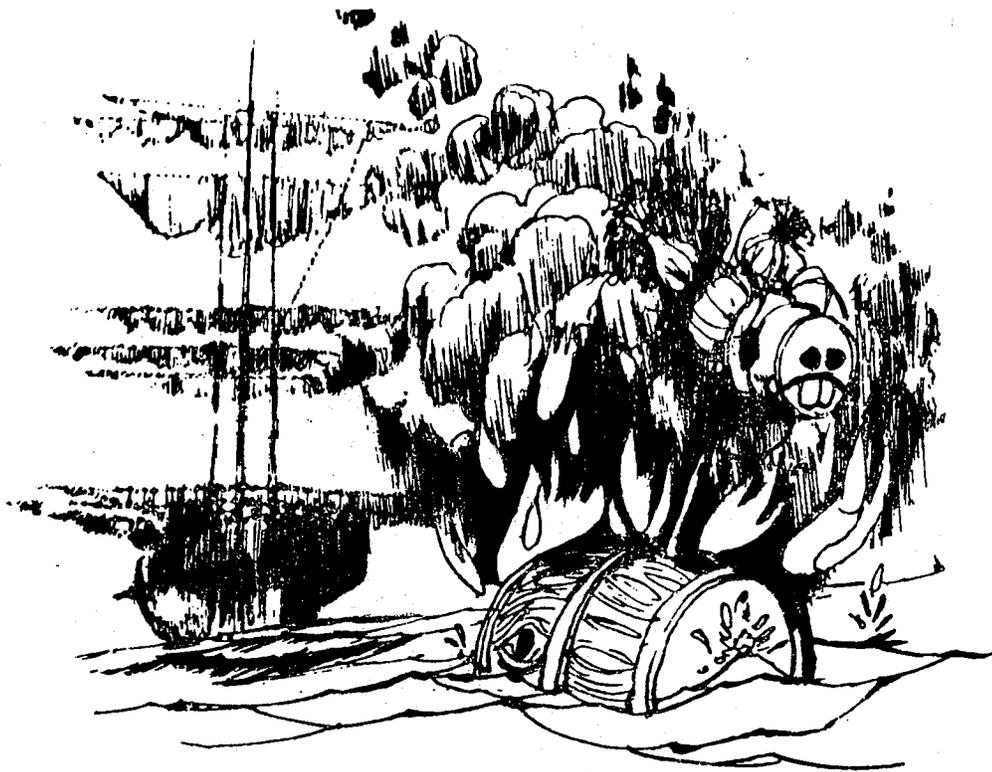
Sea dogs who sailed the wooden ships endured hardships that sailors today never suffer. Cramped quarters, poor unpalatable food, bad lighting and boredom were hard facts of a life at sea. But perhaps a more frustrating problem was getting fire to kindle a cigar or pipe tobacco after a hard day's work.

Matches were scarce and unreliable, yet smoking contributed positively to the morale of the crew, so oil lamps were hung in the fo'castle and used as matches. Smoking was restricted to certain times of the day by the bos'un's. When smoking was allowed, the "smoking lamps" were "lighted" and the men relaxed with their tobacco.

Fire was, and still is the great enemy aboard ships at sea. The smoking lamp was centrally located for the convenience of all and was the only authorized light aboard. It was a practical way of keeping open flames away from the magazines and other storage areas.

In today's Navy, the smoking lamps have disappeared but the words "smoking lamp is lighted in all authorized spaces" remains, a carryover from our past.





DEAD HORSE

British seamen, apt to be ashore and unemployed for considerable periods between voyages, generally preferred to live in boarding houses near the piers while waiting for sailing ships to take on crews. During these periods of unrestricted liberty, many ran out of money so the innkeepers carried them on credit until hired for another voyage.

When a seaman was booked on a ship, he was customarily advanced a month's wages, if needed to pay off his boarding house debt. Then, while paying back the ship's master, he worked for nothing but "salt horse" the first several weeks aboard.

Salt horse was the staple diet of early sailors and it wasn't exactly tasty cuisine. Consisting of a low quality beef that had been heavily salted, the salt horse was tough to chew and even harder to digest.

When the debt had been repaid, the salt horse was said to be dead and it was a time for great celebration among the crew. Usually, an effigy of a horse was cast afloat to the cheers and hilarity of the ex-debtors.

Today, just as in the days of sail, "dead horse" refers to a debt to the government for advance pay. Sailors today don't burn effigies when the debt is paid but they are not less jubilant than their counterparts of old.



ADMIRAL

An admiral is the senior ranking flag officer in the U.S. Navy, but his title comes from the name given the senior ranking officer in the Moorish army of many years ago. A Moorish chief was an "emir", and the chief of all chiefs was the "emir-al". Our English word is derived directly from the Moorish.

BOOKOO

Often an old salt will boast that he has bookoo this or has done something bookoo times during his seafaring years. The picturesque sound of the word "bookoo" may cause one to wonder how it came to mean "many" or "a lot".

Actually, bookoo is a legitimate French word, "beaucoup", meaning "very many". Americanization changed the spelling and pronunciation but the meaning remains unchanged. Like many foreign terms that have crept into our nautical lingo, "bookoo" is the inevitable product of generations of American seamen meeting peoples of other nations and adopting bookoo phrases from their languages for everyday shipboard use.

INFORMATION SHEET 1-2I

TERMS

Airdale - slang, a naval aviator; "fly boy"

Allowance - numbers, ranks, and ratings of officers and men allowed to a ship.

Anchor's aweigh - said of the anchor when just clear of the bottom

Aye-aye - term used to acknowledge receipt of a command or order from a senior. It means "I have heard the order; I understand it; I will carry it out."

Barnacle - small marine animal that attaches itself to hulls and pilings

Belay - to cancel an order; stop; firmly secure a line

Berth - space assigned ship for anchoring or mooring

Bogey - unidentified aircraft

Boondockers - slang, ankle-high boots usually issued in boot camp

Boondocks - slang, any remote or isolated place

Boondoggle - slang, usually a trip taken ostensibly for official business that is really for pleasure.

Can - slang, short for "tin can", destroyer; also, to throw out or get rid of

Captain - from Latin caput meaning head (Until 1862, captain was highest commissioned rank in U.S. Navy.)

Catwalk - elevated walkway between bridges; commonly found on tankers; also called fore-and-aft bridge, connecting bridge, monkey bridge; walkway around aircraft carrier flightdeck

Chit - receipt, voucher, or request; word came into use on Asiatic Station; picked up from pidgin English; also used by British Army and Navy and East India Company - derived from Hindu word chitti.

Colors - National ensign; distinguishing flag flown to indicate a ship's nationality. Naval ceremonies are performed when national flag is hoisted at eight o'clock in the morning and hauled down at sunset.

Conning tower - on larger warships, a heavily armored structure just forward of and slightly below the bridge for conning the ship in battle.

Crow - slang, eagle on petty officer's rating badge

Cumshaw - Chinese; alms for a beggar; pidgin English for gift, or something thrown in on trade; in Navy parlance, something obtained "for free", or the act of obtaining it.

INFORMATION SHEET 1-21

Davy Jones' Locker - bottom of the sea

Deep Six - throw something away or overboard

Ditty bag, ditty box - small container formerly used by sailors for stowage of personal effects and toilet articles

Embark - to go aboard ship preparatory to sailing

Fathom - in measuring depth of water, six feet; from Anglo-Saxon faehom; originally distance spanned by man's outstretched arms

Field Day - day devoted to cleaning ship or station, usually Friday. The act of cleaning an office, compartment, or space. Field day can be held in a desk drawer.

Flank speed - certain prescribed speed increase over standard speed; faster than full speed, but less than emergency full speed

Four 0 - top mark, equal to 100%. Navy grades and marks run from 0.0 to 4.0. By common usage, perfect, whether said of running condition of engine or appeal of girlfriend.

Gangway - opening in bulwarks or rail of ship to give entrance; order to stand aside and get out of the way

Geedunk - slang, ice cream soda, malted milk, anything from soda fountain or Geedunk stand

Gig - one of ship's boats designated for commanding officer's use

Helm - the helm proper is the tiller; often used to mean rudder and gear used for turning it

Holiday routine - followed aboard ship on authorized holidays and Sundays.

Jury rig - makeshift rig of mast and sail or of other gear, such as jury anchor, jury rudder; any makeshift device

Old Man - seaman's term for captain of a ship

Skipper - from Dutch schipper, meaning captain

Turn To - an order to begin work