A FEW NAVAL CUSTOMS

EXPRESSIONS, TRADITIONS

AND SUPERSTITIONS

SECOND EDITION

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by

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ROYAL NAVY

FOREWARD

As it appears usual to write a preface or foreward, I feel bound to comply with the custom, and wish to explain that this small work is written with the object of dispelling the illusion that "Tradition and Customs count for nothing, and it is a pity that Nelson is not buried deeper".

To those who think matters over, the above oft-heard statement merely gives pain. To the other type I can only repeat the words of the distinguished Officer who wrote "Whispers from the Fleet". (the late Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock) "So long as wind and weather last, so assuredly the seamen in command will weather the lubber---and believe me, Sir, the mainsheet, though in a different form, still drives the King's ships to windward".

In view of the numerous distinguished seamen who have compiled textbooks and manuals, it would be an impertinence for me, in this respect, even to try and follow in their wake, but my hope is that someone with greater talents, more opportunity and fuller scope may be stirred into activity and put into print such knowledge that all the world may learn the origin and customs from which spring our present day nautical language, expressions and pharaseology. I will not say, in this case, that "Small beginnings make great ends", but would have you believe that chance actions lead to much reflection. In support of that remark I would mention that the origin of my work, in the field of nautical expressions, was occasioned by an old friend and instructor, Professor Callender, who threw a hammer at me for remarking that St. Paul, in his last journey, made a poor landfall when he hit Malta. The hammer missed me, but a train of thought was started of which this little work is the outcome.

This pamphlet is compiled from notes which were put together to form the basis of a short lecture. For the lack of style I claim indulgence, as I find "The mightier weapon" tiring to wield and uncertain in its effect.

In this predicament I feel that I can count on the sympathy of "Those who go down to the sea in ships" who frequently are forced to put pen to paper for the benefit of "Higher Authority" after they have ceased for the moment "To occupy their business in great waters".

My sincere thanks are due to Professor Callender for much help and valuable criticism, also to Commander C.N. Robinson, R.N., Mr. John Masefield, Mr. H. Hodges (for permission to make use of their well-known works), Mr. J.W. Culling, Director of Victualling, Surgeon Rear-Admiral Sir Arthur Bankart, K.C.V.O., Sir Conrad J. Naef, C.B.C.B.E. Accountant General, Mr. B.E. Manwaring of the London Library, Mr. D.B. Smith, Secretary to the Admiralty Library, the late Editors of both the Mariners Mirror and the Naval Review, and to many numerous helpers. both in H.M. Service and the Merchant Service. Finally, I would tender my thanks to an unknown Naval Officer who served some time in the eighteenth century, and who wrote copious notes on these subjects but neglected to tally the manuscript, which came into my hands in 1912 and was destroyed by enemy action in 1914.

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NAVAL CUSTOMS, EXPRESSIONS, TRADITIONS AND SUPERSTITIONS

Prior to commencing, I would ask you to transport yourself to the year 2025 and imagine that you are sitting in your Club reading the back files of one of our present newspapers. In glancing through the paper, you see the following notice:

SAD FATALITY!

"In flying over London today, Flying Officer John William Jones, in endeavouring to make a forced landing, crashed in St. Jones' Park. The pilot was seriously injured and his passenger killed. The pilot subsequently reported, when in hospital, that his engine conked."

You will perhaps be puzzled by the expression conked and you will hail a fellow crony in your Club and ask for enlightening, and you will probably receive a reply of this nature---"My dear fellow, I don't know,---I wish I did, but in those days, nobody took the trouble to write down for the benefit of future generations, the meanings of words which were in everyday use".

This is the position in which most students and searchers in the field of Old Naval expressions find themselves at the present time.

THE ORIGIN OF THE NAVY

In dealing with this subject, I think it only fair to make some reference to the origin of the navy, and to the type of ships of which it is composed. The English "man-o'wars" man traces his descent from an institution at least nine centuries old---namely, the Anglo-Saxon "Buscarles" or "Butscarles", and he connects through the Cinque Ports Navy directly with the Royal Navy of our own time. The "Buscarles" were a Naval fighting force which were troops of Canute, Godwin and Harold. They were picked men and maintained to fight the King's ships, and were usually quartered near the mouth of the Thames and along the south coast of England. In peace time as a rule, those of the "Buscarles" who were not actively employed in warlike operations, were used either as sea police or for manning the ships on the King's affairs. This force was kept up until the reign of Henry I, when they were amalgamated with the Cinque Ports Navy from which they had up to this time been entirely separate.

From the "Buscarles" we learn that in the 11th Century the ships were each under a Batsuen or Boatswain or Husband who commanded her crew in action and acted at all times as Master, Pilot, or Steersman, for which service he was paid 10 marks. In the Merchant Service at the time, the person charged with the outfitting of the ship is still called the ship's Husband.

EDWARD THE CONFESSOR'S principal ship carried a Rector or Captain, as well as a Boatswain or Steersman. The rowers who took orders from the Boatswains were paid 8 marks a man, and were provided with provisions and clothing. The latter consisted of rough woollen cloth dyed blue; we thus see that Blue even at this date, was considered an appropriate colour for use at sea. In this respect we can go back still farther, namely to about 55 A.D., when we find a class of ship named the Picate, which rowed 20 oars a side and was coated with wax below water. In order to be invisible at sea they were furnished with grey blue sails and manned by oarsmen dressed in a similar colour. With such ships, the Counts of the Saxon shore watched the coasts, and later, Carausius and Ellectus held British seas against all comers. This is probably one of the earliest examples of camouflage in maritime affairs which is mentioned in this history.

Besides the Boatswain already mentioned, we find also a Cogswain, who apparently was the officer in charge of a Cog, a different type of vessel manned by 39 mariners, with one Master in charge and two Constables as assistants.

This vessel was popular in the reign of EDWARD I, at which time the term Rector was going out of use. I will deal later with the power and position of the Boatswain when we meet him subsequently.

The old Saxon type of ship called a Bus has its memory perpetuated at the present day. On the east coast, up to very recently, a sailing drifter was frequently referred to as a Herring Bus.

In 1645 during the "Long Parliament", instructions were issued for general Courts Martial to be held for the trial of Captains and Commanders, and for ship Courts Martial on Officers of junior rank. The Boatswain and Gunner were authorized to serve on the court at a "Ship Court Martial".

Court Martial probably originated from the "court of chivalry", of which no trace now remains except as found in the court of the Earl Marshal. The Jurisdiction of Courts Martial were prescribed by an act of Richard II, 1377-1399.

"THE ARTICLES OF WAR" AND "LAWS OF OLERON"

Let us now examine the origin of our present "Kings Regulations and Admiralty Instructions" and "The Naval Discipline Act", generally known as "The Articles of War".

These were certainly founded on the "Laws of Oleron" which, according to tradition, were adopted in the Castile by Alphonsus in the 13th Century, and were introduced into England by Richard I. A strong contingent from the Island of Oleron was embodied in the Fleet which set out in the second year of the reign of Richard I for the Holy Land. William de FORTZ of Oleron was one of the five Commanders and one of the Justiciaries of the Navy.

From the "Laws of Oleron" was compiled the "Admiralty Black Book" which, accordingly to Doctor Exton, a Judge of the High Court of Admiralty in 1664, is:

> "An authentic Book, having been from time to time kept in the Registers of the Court for the use of the Judges of the Admiralty successively, and as free from suspicion of being corrupt or falsified as the records of any Court whatsoever."
>
> "This was a book which contained 'The ancient Statutes of the Admiralty', to be observed both in 'Ports and Havens', on the High Seas, and beyond the seas 'which are engrossed in vellum on the said Book and written in an ancient hand and in the ancient French language'."

The "Laws of Oleron" were the Laws which governed the seafaring nations of the West, and were derived from the code formulated in the Republic of Rhodes, and received and confirmed by the Romans and the neighbouring states bordering on the Mediterranean, in the same manner as was the code promulgated at Wisby (a small Swedish town in the Island of Gothland), received and conformed to by the nations bordering on the Baltic and to the north of the Rhine.

The "Black Book" of the Admiralty suddenly disappeared about the end of the 18th Century, and was accidently rediscovered in the year 1874 at the bottom of a chest, supposed to contain the private papers of a former Registrar of the Admiralty Court. It was then ascertained with tolerable certainty that while the book contained ordinances drawn up antecedent to the reign of Edward III, 1327, no part of the writing, which was in various hands, was of a date earlier than the reign of Henry VI, 1422.

In the reign of KING JOHN, all causes of merchants and mariners happening on the main seas were tried by the Lord High Admiral who, in deciding such cases, was guided by the Sovereign's Orders in Council; the unwritten laws and customs prevailing in nautical matters at the time, the decision of his predecessors in Office, together with the principles of justice acknowledged by himself.

The code of Oleron did not err on the side of leniency. "Know all men that We, with the aid of upright councils, have laid down these ordinances:"

"Whoever shall commit murder aboard ship shall be tied to the corpse and thrown into the sea."

"If a murder be committed on land, the murderer shall be tied to the corpse and buried alive."

"If any man be convicted of drawing a knife for the purpose of stabbing another, or shall have stabbed another so that blood shall flow, he shall lose a hand."

"If a man strikes another with his hand, he shall be ducked three times in the sea."

"If any man defame, villify, or swear at his fellow, he shall pay him as many ounces of silver as times he has reviled him."

The practice of levying fines is still carried out in the Merchant Service for certain offences of this nature, in accordance with the Merchant Shipping Act, Section 235, et seq.:

"If a robber be convicted of theft, boiling pitch shall be poured over his head and a shower of feathers be shaken over to mark him, and he shall be cast ashore at the first land at which the Fleet shall touch."

One striking feature of this code is that, although rigorous penalties are laid down for the various misdemeanours, it is specially ordered that the opinion of the crew is to be taken into consideration under certain circumstances, and the decision of the majority is to be abided by. For instance, if a ship is in Haven and stays to await her time, and the time comes for departure, the Master is to take counsel with his companions and say to them, "Sirs, you have this weather". There will be some who will say, "The weather is not good", and some who say "The weather is fine and good". The Master is bound to agree with the greater part of his companions, and if he does otherwise, he is bound to replace the ship and the goods if they are lost, and this is the judgement in this case.

I quote here an extract from the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, Chapter 27, Verses 9-13, to show that the advice of the majority was followed:

"9. Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous because the fact was now already past, Paul admonished them."

"10. And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only with the lading of the ship but also of our lives."

"11. Nevertheless, the Centurion believed the Master and the owner of the ship more than those things which were spoken by Paul."

"12. And because the Haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an Haven of Crete, and lieth towards the southwest and northwest."

"13. And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete."

If Mariners went ashore without leave, got drunk, made a disturbance and were injured, the Master was at liberty to leave them behind and hire others instead, and if he had to pay the substitute higher wages he could charge the defaulter with the difference; as a chronicler optimistically observes, "If he can find anything of theirs".

If a Mariner fell sick and became incapable of working, the Master was to put him ashore and seek a lodging for him, provide him moreover with a candle of tallow and one of the ship's boys to tend him or, failing that, a hired woman.

If contention arose between the crew and the Master, before turning any or all of them out of the ship, it was enjoyed that the Master should remove the tablecloth three times as a warning. As there was only one cooked meal per diem, this was apparently equivalent to three days' notice. I think we can safely conclude that it was from this custom that the expression arose which is still in use of Losing the Cloth.

Our present King's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions and the Naval Discipline Act both contain reference to the "Custom of the Sea" and the "Custom of the Services" vide Section 44, Naval Discipline Act, where it says that persons shall be proceeded against and punished "According to the laws and customs used at sea".

In Part III, Naval Discipline Act, Section 52, Clause 2, we find the expression according to the custom of the Navy. It is interesting to observe that Section 43, Naval Discipline Act, states that, "Every person subject to this Act who shall be guilty of any act, disorder, or neglect to the prejudice of good order and Naval discipline not hereinbefore specified shall be dismissed from His Majesty's Service with disgrace, or suffer such other punishment as is hereinafter mentioned". This, I think, used to be the 39th Article of War and, on account of its covering properties, has been known for many years as the Captains Cloak.

Sir THOMAS AUDLEY, at the command of King Henry VIII, framed a book of orders for War, both by land and sea. The following are some of the instructions:

> "First, the Laws which be written what every man ought to do in the ship towards his Captain is to be set in the mainmast in parchment to be read as occasion shall serve."

Today, it is customary for copies of the N.D.A. to be distributed round the ship in easily accessible places.

"If any man within a ship had slept upon his watch four times and so proved, this be his punishment. The first time he shall be headed at the mainmast with a bucket of water poured upon his head. The second time he shall be armed, his hands held up by a rope, and two buckets of water poured into his sleeves." This latter corresponds with the old Military punishment which still exists in Barrack rooms although not authorized, known as Booting and Bottling, and was generally peculiar to the Cavalry. In later times in the Navy about the Nelsonic period, we read of this punishment being known as Grampussing, or making a man a soused gurnet. It was not infrequently followed by putting a man in the lee of a sail so as to get the full benefit of the draught, walking the weather hammock netting, or being spread-eagled in the weather rigging. However, to continue, "The third time he shall be bound to the mainmast with gun chambers tied to his arms and with as much pain to his body as the Captain will". The fourth and last punishment, being as we would say nowadays a cumulation of offences, is enacted that, "Being taken asleep he shall be hanged to the bowsprit and of the ship in a basket, with a can of beer, a loaf of bread and a sharp knife, and choose to hang there until he starves or cuts himself into the sea".

HENRY VIII laid down that no Captain shall take the wind of his Admiral, but come under his lee, except necessity require the same, and from this we may say that we derive the practice of an inferior in rank giving way to a superior or asking permission before crossing his bows.

Flogging, hanging, keel-hauling, etc. were punishments which existed up to modern times with the exception of keel-hauling, which although in use in the Dutch and French Services up to approximately 1750, was discontinued in the British Navy somewhere, I think, about the Stuart period, although there is a reference to keel-hauling in the "Fair Quaker of Deal", written about 1720, which makes it appear possible that this form of punishment existed till the middle of the 18th Century in our Navy.

The last official yardarm execution took place at Talienwan Bay in the second Chinese War in 1860, and was witnessed by a personal friend of mine, the late General Sir Alexander Tulloch.

The culprit was a Marine charged with attempting to murder his Captain, and the execution was also witnessed by troops specially paraded on shore.

With regard to flogging, we are still bound by the regulations that it shall be carried out at the gangway, according to the customs of the navy.

An interesting case concerning flogging took place under Admiral Cornwallis who, the chronicler relates, ordered a lieutenant of his own ship to be flogged under the following circumstances.

"Billy Blue", as Admiral Cornwallis was popularly called, appeared on deck having taken one glass of wine more than his customary allowance, which state of affairs led to his being totally unaware of his subsequent actions. He desired the Captain to turn the hands to witness punishment. The order was obeyed with all ceremony customary on these occasions, but everybody was at a loss as to the reason for the order, for not only was it at an unusual time of the day, but also was it unusual for the Admiral personally to interfere with the ship's routine. On the hands being reported present, Admiral Cornwallis pointed to an Officer and ordered him to strip. Time did not permit of any argument or expostulation, nor to point out the impropriety of the Admiral's conduct. The Officer was duly seized up to a grating and flogged. The next day the Admiral was told of the occurrence, and again desired the hands to be brought up on deck. The Admiral then appeared on deck with a cane in his hand and, walking up to the astonished Officer, addressed him as follows:

"I am told that yesterday evening I ordered you, Sir, to be flogged, and that my orders were carried into execution on this quarterdeck, but upon my honour I have not the remotest recollection of the circumstances. It appears to be true, however; therefore, this morning I have assembled those who saw you punished and, in their presence, I have to tell you that I don't come here to make an apology for what I have done, because no British Officer could receive an apology from anyone after being struck. If I did not strike you myself, I caused another to do so. I won't ask your pardon, Sir, because of a man of honour you could not, in this way, pardon an unpardonable offence. Nor, Sir, will I waive my rank to give you personal satisfaction on shore, because by receiving your fire or firing at you, I could not obliberate the stain I have laid upon your shoulders. But I ask a favour of you before the ship's company, which is, that you will take this cane and use it on my back so long as it will hold together. By God! I would do so to any man who served me as I served you. You may thrash me if you please, as much as you like, and as I am a living man, it shall not intefere with your future promotion."

Here he presented the handle of the cane to the Officer who took it and snapped it across his knee and threw the pieces overboard, and extending his hand to the Admiral announced that he forgave him with all his heart.

This Officer is stated to have finished his Naval Career that voyage and obtained a capitol appointment on shore under the patronage of the Admiral's brother --- an appointment for which he might have sighed in vain for but for his luck in testing "Billy Blue's Discipline".

Up to comparatively recent times, Boatswains Mates and Ship's Police were armed with small ropes ends known as COLTE or STARTERS. A sergeant of Marines was similarily armed, but, except in third rates, was forced to confine his attentions to his own corps. The Boatswain used invariably to carry a cane, and in carrying out every order, the laggards were assisted by these worthies. Midshipmen were not exempt, and Jack Mitford mentions a case in which an offending Midshipman was seized to a grating in his Captain's Cabin, and given a dozen with the Colte by the Captain's orders. The Captain was subsequently Court Martialled and severely reprimanded which, the historian states, was "nuts" to every Midshipman in the Fleet. This occurred in the early forties.

I will not speak of the authorized punishments such as Flogging around the Fleet, Mastheadings, etc. but we might note that certain punishments were meted out by Mess Deck Court Martial. A Cook of the Mess, if he spoilt the dinner, was tried by a jury of Cooks of Messes, the signal to form the Court being the hoisting of a swab by the Mess concerned and the Beating of a can along the Messdecks. The punishment consisted of being Cobbed or Firked, and was carried out with either a stocking full of sand or half a bung stave of a cask, which instrument, owing to the Bung Hole, caused Blisters on the posterior of the culprit. The punishment was prefixed by the words, "Watch there Watch", and everybody within hearing was bound to take his hat off under pain of a like penalty. The last blow was always the hardest and was known as the "Purse", hence the expression of getting the Purse of hoisting a swab. The Reverend Cooper in his standard work on Flagellation says that this punishment was in use in Irish Schools in Bygone days, and was known as School Butter.

Cobbin or Firkin was the term used for unofficial Flogging, and was similar to the Military punishment known as Sling Belting. The later punishment was administered with the Sling of the old Fire-Lock.

The number of lashes at an official Flogging was left to the Captain, but for theft, a man might be made by Captain's summary punishment to run the gauntlet, in which case he was started between lines of men having a dozen with the Thieves Cat, an ordinary cat with knotted tails. He then advanced between the lines preceded by the Master-at-Arms, who held a drawn sword against his chest in order that his progress should not be too rapid, and every man hit him with a ropes end wherever he could. He then received another dozen with the Thieves Cat at the turn to the starting point, after which he retraced his steps or passed down the other side of the Ship. In this connection, it is interesting to observe that a similar punishment existed in the Russian Army under Peter the Great; this Monarch, however, limited the number of blows at one time to 2,000.

It is noteworthy that Mr. Pepys, the famous secretary to the Navy, was given the Duke of York's commission to be Captain of the "Jersey" so that he could be a member of a Court Martial for examining the loss of the "Defiance" and other things. Although, in this instance, the worthy Secretary does not seem to have been an actual member of the Court, he was associated with another held to inquire into the dispute between the Captain of the "Nonsuch" and his first Lieutenant, which he classifies as a "Drunken King of Silly Business". Mr. Pepys withdrew before the Court gave judgement as it was feared that he precedent of his being made a Captain might be hereafter made of evil use.

During the late war, Sir Eric Geddes was given the rank of Vice-Admiral while he held office at the Admiralty.

The above instances are the only ones which I can find of civilians being granted Naval Commissions and, although the precedent is there, I doubt if it will ever become a matter of frequent occurrence.

When attending Yard Arm executions it was the Bow oars of the attending boat who furnished the party on the whip. The bowmen of the launches, besides being the most easily spared of the crew --- the boat generally being manned and armed with a carronade --- were usually the biggest scoundrels in the ship, and the fact that they had actively to assist in the executions, was done as a warning in case they thought of following in the criminals footsteps. It is from this that we get the expression which is still current, "As honest as a Bow Oar", or in other words, a thorough-paced rogue.

In the old days the First Lieutenant, who was the Executive Officer of the Ship, had no power to punish unless the Captain was absent "With leave from the Admiral". If we look at Kings Regulations, Article 585, we find that the Executive Officer may not cause a boy to be caned unless the Captain is absent by permission of a superior authority for a period exceeding 48 hours. The present code is certainly founded on the former.

PURSER'S SLOPS AND UNIFORMS

The purser of the old Navy was a man whose integrity was so frequently a matter of supposition that he was forced to lodge a sum of money in the shape of two sureties, varying from £1,200 in first rates to a lesser sum in smaller ships, as a guarantee against speculation. The price of his Warrant which he bought was, in the reign of James I, between £60 and £70. This, however, did not prevent the Purser lining his pockets at the expense of the Seamen. He was expected to do so and considered a fool if he refrained --- the latter charge being rare. There were various ways in which he made a good thing out of his job, of which the following are a few:

Keeping the men's names on the books if they were Dead, "Run", or Discharged.

By "Short Allowance Money" and Victuals for the men so borne.

By giving the men "beverage" for good wine, or shrunken and poor victuals instead of prime when on foreign voyages.

Making out Pay Tickets for men who were Dead or "Run" and giving their attorneys or executors a small sum in consideration for drawing their pay.

Probably the most iniquitous proceeding of all was the first named, the man being tricked into leaving the ship, either by going ashore or being loaned to another vessel, when the unfortunate fellow lost the whole of the wages due to him, the Purser drawing them with a forged Pay Ticket.

By an Act of George II, a Purser was entitled to keep two imaginary men per hundred on his books, and these were known as Widows men. The value of their pay and provisions was paid by the Paymaster General to the Widows Fund. This practice commenced about 1763 when the Seven Years War was terminated by the Peace of Paris, and we find regulations as to the numbers allowed to ships and their rates of pay in the Navy Lists up to 1831. The expression came to mean entirely imaginary person.

Short Allowance Money was the money credited to the men on short allowance owing to the scarcity of provisions. Orders were given in the reign of Queen Anne that Short Allowance credits were always to be paid to the men themselves, but this seems to have been more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

The Purser had very little to do with the actual handling of the men's wages, as these were drawn at the end of a voyage or commission from a Pay Office ashore on presentation of the Pay Ticket furnished by the Purser. In most cases, they were bought at the seaports for about a third of their value, and subsequently cashed by the Jews and Crimps who infested the ships on their arrival.

On account of the various tricks enumerated, it is not surprising that the Purser was known on the lower deck by the nick-name of Mr. Nipcheese. The expression to make a dead man chew also comes from the same source. It is probable that, in this respect, the Naval Purser stands out pre-eminently as the only one who has ever managed to do it.

Slops were bought from a Contractor by the Purser, the Contractor being known as the Slop Seller. He was bound by instructions to allow the Purser I/- in the £ on all sales. By overcharging both the living and the dead, the Purser added to his commission and also to the overplus of stock, which would become his at the end of the voyage. He was very much in the Slop Seller's hands, and if the two did not agree, the Captain was authorized to appoint someone else to receive and vend the slops. It was hardly in the interests of the Captain to interfere, as he also made a good thing out of these practices. Up to 1837 it was customary for the Purser to give private pay to his Clerk at the rough annual rate of £1 per gun for every gun carried by the ship.

The junior member of the Paymaster's victualling staff is known as The Dusty Boy or Jack Dusty.

Tobacco was not supplied until 1798 and, even then, was mostly used to chew and not to smoke, smoking only being permitted in the galley.

It is owing to the nefarious practices on the part of the Purser that the system came into force, which is still with us, of Mustering by the Open List, when every man personally reports who he is and what he is paid for. This ceremony is called Mustering by the Ledger, or in lower deck slang, While Line Pay, from the fact that every man Toes the line as he recounts the duties for which he draws pay. The ceremony is generally carried out quarterly and at Inspections.

It was not until 1748 that Uniform was first established for Naval Officers, and regulations do not appear to have been fixed concerning the men until 1857, although there had been spasmodic and ineffectual efforts long before this to get a certain standard of dress. What little uniformity that was introduced was chiefly due to the Slop Sellers supplying the demand for clothing which was in vogue at the particular period. Trousers were a comparatively modern invention; an old time sailor, as a rule of a squadron commanded by Captain RICHARD CHANCELLOR, were apparelled in Watchett, or sky-coloured cloth, made at and called after the busy industrial town of XV, XVI, and XVII Centuries "By the Seven Seas" near "Blue Anchor", and about 1600 a writer mentions that, on meeting a vessel in the Pacific, "We knew her to be English because the Seamen wore breeches".

Chaucer describes the 14th Century seamen wearing a gown of Falding to the knee. In Captain Marryatt's time, the canvas petticoat was still part of a sailor's kit.

We cannot stop too long on the subject of Uniform, but there are certain points worthy of note.

The present day sailor's knife has no point, and probably is of this shape, not only that it may be used as a screwdriver, but in order to conform to the ancient laws already quoted, so that the practice of stabbing became a matter of difficulty. In sailing ships, even today, I myself have personally seen a man have the point of his knife broken off by the Mate, and a few years ago it was an almost invariable rule that knives with points were barred. A knife with no point was also less liable to damage a sail when cutting the "stops".

The sailor's lanyard was of no fixed length, but depended on the length of the arm, so that he could open his knife with one hand when the lanyard was round his neck.

A sailor's silk handkerchief, popularly supposed to be a sign of mourning for Lord Nelson, is of a very much earlier date than this, and chroniclers tell us that it was worn in action either round the head to prevent the sweat running into a man's eyes, round the waist, or as a pad over his knee in case he was one of the handspike numbers at the heavy guns. When ashore, its colour varied according to individual taste. The "Fancy Man" had a strong preference for what is known as "Birds Eye", and if he was really particular in his appearance, he would wear one of the colour of "Blood and broken eggs". This was worn knotted loosely round the throat.

One of the relics of the old rig still in use are the pumps worn by the riggers in the Royal Yacht. The word pumps, I believe, is derived from the fact that they were the form of footwear commonly worn at the focus of society --- the Pump Room at Bath.

Many Captains dressed their Barges crew according to their fancy. It is on record that the Captain of the "BLAZIER", "HARLEQUIN", and the "TRINCOMALEE" all did so and, I believe, the Captain of the "CALEDONIA", as late as the beginning of the 19th Century, dressed his barges crew in Tam-o-shanters. Admiral VERNON also had ideas on this subject, and clothed his barges crew in red.

Epaulettes were brought into the English Navy long after the Army had them and after they were common in the French Service. When first introduced, they were more or less a private adornment and were shaped like a tassel and were known, and are known now, as SWABS. We read that Nelson, when at St. Omer in France, met Captains Ball and Shepard, who apparently wore epaulettes, for he wrote to a friend concerning these Officers. They wore fine epaulettes, for which I think them great coxcombs. They have not visited me, and I shall court their acquaintances. It is worthy of note that this fretful mood revived in Nelson's mind some fifteen years later when, in 1798, Captain Ball took command of the "ALEXANDER" to join Nelson, who is credited with the words, "What! have you come to have your bones broken?" It is gratifying to learn that his opinion of Sir Alexander Ball underwent a somewhat drastic change in later years.

The main reason for the introduction of epaulettes was that foreign sentries did not accord the usual honour to British Officers, as they did not recognize them as Officers without epaulettes.

"Cooked Hats" which were originally triangular were, and are known to this day as, Scrapers.

The collar with its three rows of tape, generally supposed to commemorate Nelson's three victories, was introduced with the seaman's uniform in 1857, and I believe it is a fact that the third crept in by error.

A Midshipman's Patches are known as his Weekly Accounts, and it is a matter of grave doubt whether "Young Gentlemen" ever wore a white collar all round or, even if they did so, that such was to keep the powder from their pigtails off their coats.

During the Commonwealth, the men wore their hair cropped. After the Restoration when officers took to very full and flowing wigs, the men adopted long hair and ringlets, but left the hair untied.

About 1740, Officers wore tie wigs, though these were, as a rule, reserved for dress occasions.

It appears that about 1760-1780 the natural hair of the Officers was queued, and that about 1787 the men commenced also to tie their hair, but it does not seem that this practice became really fashionable until about 1805, and went completely out of vogue just about fifteen years later. Love locks remained as a facial adornment till about 1850, when beards became the fashion, and the Foretopsman's Look was in use till about 1910, when the shore-loafing dandy took to plastering his hair back like a rat that had eaten his way through a keg of butter.

The pig-tail went out of fashion ashore about 1785. When worn by a seaman it was the hallmark of the Navy man, and the Merchant Service did not affect the style at all.

Eel skins were sometimes used as a Heart when making a tail, and yarns laid up with hair to increase the size.

Tails were worn long when ashore but clubbed when on board or when working. The pigtails took a deal of tying and adjustments, and particular friends would perform the office for each other, hence the terms Tiemates or Tie and Tie and damn all favours.

Pressed men being generally lousy, were close cropped on arrival and so a good tail came to be the mark of a clean well disciplined man and finally became a symbol of professional pride and the sign of a Staid hand. In the days when hirsute appendages to the face were popular, and when the art of naval gunnery consisted mostly of cutlass drill, burnishing the ready use shot, and putting the quarterly practice allowance down the ash chute to save dirtying the guns, a favourite saying was, "Attitude is the art of gunnery, and whiskers make the man".

The Gunnery Officers of the Fleet retaliated by describing the qualifications of the Salt Horse Officer as being possessed of the deportment and manners of a rigger, a Topsail yard voice, and a rope of the oaths.

Aiguillettes are, I believe, of feudal origin, and originated as a badge of office in the following manner.

The horses of the chief and his immediate entourage were picketed close to their tents and when camp was struck, it was the duty of one of the retainers to take up the picket ropes and pegs after the remainder were mounted, and to carry them until they were next required. The ropes were worn round the body with the pegs hanging down, and the chief could easily be located by the proximity of his henchman who was thus attired. Thus they eventually came to be regarded as a badge of the personal staff, and superceded the sash which had been worn in the Navy up to the year 1879. There is also the belief that aiguillettes were originally the prickers which were used for cleaning the vent of the old horse pistols, and that the weapon was handed to the orderly or henchman to be cleaned and reloaded while the second pistol was in use.

The Army had adopted aiguillettes for many years before they became part of the Naval uniform.

A.D.C.'s to Royalty, Viceroys and Governors General wear aiguillettes on the right side --- all others on the left.

Royal Aiguillettes are of plain gold.
Naval Aiguillettes are of blue and gold.
Military Aiguillettes are of red and gold.

The baggy trousers of the sailor are possibly a descendant of the old petticoat, although many people say that they were designed so as to be easily rolled up when scrubbing decks.

Badges on buttons and the arrangement of buttons have been many and varied. For a few years the Engineers of the navy had engines on their buttons, but this did not last long. The buttons were arranged according to the method adopted today by foot regiments forming the Brigade of Guards. In former times, Doctors also had a badge on their buttons somewhat similar to the crest now borne by the Royal Army Medical Corps, only the anchor was incorporated in the design.

The origin of the Executive curl seems to be wrapped in mystery. There is a story that Captain Elliot, wounded in the arm in the Crimea war, used the gold on his sleeve as a sling and that it was called Elliott's eye. I think, however, that the Elliott's eye referred to is the method of making an eye in a hemp cable and said to have been introduced into the Service by the Honourable William Elliot, a member of the Board of Admiralty in 1800 and 1801.

In comparatively recent years it is remarked that in the memoirs of the late SIR CHARLES DUNDAS, of DUNDAS, that an Admiral's wife who accompanied her husband to sea insisted on wearing a uniform monkey jacket. The same Officer relates the idiosyncrasies of certain Captains of that period, some of whom neglected to wear uniform at all, but went about in a plain black coat and a white top hat. One Officer went so far as to wear so thin a jacket that his red braces showed through. Top hats with uniform were in vogue during the memory of officers still serving in 1927.

In 1867, Aide-de-Camp to the Sovereign wore crimson sashes, similar to those of Army Officers. While on this subject, we might remark that the sashes worn in the Army and Royal Marines are relics of the lining of cloaks of the Officers and Sergeants who used them for transporting wounded.

Sergeants of the SOMERSET LIGHT INFANTRY are the only regiment in the British Army who are entitled to wear their sashes with the knot on the right side, the same as Officers. This distinction was granted them because of the gallantry of the Sergeants of this regiment at the Battle of Culloden on 16 April, 1746 (confirmed by a Horse Guards Order of 3 April, 1865).

George II selected Blue and White as the Naval colours, as he had seen the Duchess of Bedford riding in the Park in a dress of this nature, which had struck him very favourably. The actual order was dated 13 April, 1748 and promulgated as Domestic News in the Jacobite Journal and not by any gazette or Order in Council. No patterns were sent abroad, but were all lodged with the Navy Office. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that we find that on 13 February, 1749, Admiral BOSCAWEN writes that he cannot comply with the order, as he was entirely at a loss as to patterns.

The expression Post Captain was derived from the term Post Ship. Such ships were of such rate that they were important commands whose captains would need to take precedence and command over ships of inferior rate and consequently of the Officers commanding them, particularly when engaged in convoy duty.

It is still correct for a Commander in the Navy to be introduced and referred to as Captain so and so, because it has ever been the custom for Commanders to be appointed as second in command of more important ships and in sole command of lesser units.

The French and other foreign Navies perpetuate the practice of referring to the rank of an Officer by the type of command suitable to his seniority, thus a Post Captain is Capitaine de Vaisseau, a Commander is called Capitaine de Fregate and a Lieutenant Commander is Capitaine de Corvette.

The term "Lieutenant-Commander" was introduced in 1912, prior to which date an Officer with two and a half stripes was a senior Lieutenant. All Lieutenants in command were termed Lieutenant-Commanders prior to the introduction of the title and, with the change, the present practice came into force.

VICTUALS AND PROVISIONS

I have little to say on this subject as their quality was filthy and their quantity, except as regards liquor, negligible. It is on record that Mr. WILLIAM THOMPSON, writing in 1761, states that mariners of the King's ships have frequently put 24 hours allowance of salt provisions into their tobacco boxes. The allowance of beer or wine was one gallon per diem.

Owing to the limited stowage for beer, the practice of issuing rum as a substitute came into being early in the 18th Century and, finally, was officially adopted. Rum, like beer or wine, was issued twice a day, the allowance being one pint for men and half a pint for boys. It appears that the beer was weak, generally stinking, and not the type of beverage that was capable of putting the "Souls of three butchers into one weaver". I have read that both Hawkins and Frobisher decided that they could cruise "As long as the beer lasted". In 1740 Admiral VERNON instituted the practice of having the rum watered and, since those days, it has borne the name of Grog, this being the nickname of the Admiral who habitually wore grogram clothing, and was nicknamed Old Grog.

Blake introduced brandy about 1650 and rum was substituted in March 1687 (or 1688) as a result of our conquest of Jamaica.

We read that the Cheese and the Beef were capable on occasions of being cut into buttons, which seems to point out that these commodities were of a singularly indigestible nature. Water was kept in casks and was never issued until all else failed, by which time it was noisome and stinking as the casks were frequently used for a variety of purposes. It is nice to think that the water round London was considered to be "particularly good".

The term Junk or Salt Junk derives its name from a species of bulrush of which ropes were formerly made, and this affords us a practical view of the sailor's opinion concerning the quality of his rations.

COOKS

The expression "a Sea Cook" has come down to us as an epithet of contempt --- and not without good cause. The original Cooks were generally cripples who had been injured in the Service. In 1701, the Lord High Admiral issued an order to appoint Cooks to Her Majesty's Service, giving preference to such cripples and maimed persons who were Pensioners to the Chest of Chatham. Lord NOTTINGHAM, when Lord High Admiral, gave a patent to his own cook to appoint all Cooks in the Navy.

The Cook had certain prerequisities, one of which was half the slush from the coppers, which he was permitted to dispose of as he thought fit, provided it was not made into duff for the sailors; the other half had to be given to the Boatswain for grease. He had a boy to help him and, being a cripple, did very little himself. In the early days he was what was known as a Standing Officer, with the Purser, Boatswain, Carpenter and Gunner, and held a Warrant for his appointment.

For the use of his galley to any privileged friend who endeavoured to make his rations somewhat more palatable, he exacted dues in the shape of grog or tobacco.

His funnel, for which he was responsible, became known as Charles Noble. It was originally of wood.

I have heard that Charlie Noble was a Merchant Captain who lived about 1820-1870 and insisted on having a brass funnel.

H.M.S. VICTORY, when re-fitting 1801-3, was given an iron funnel; up to 1800 they were made of wood.

The cook's assistant was known as Jack Nastyface.

It was customary when in harbour for the Cook always to have a red hot poker available for the firing of salutes.

REGULATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS
RELATING TO HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE AT SEA
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THE COOK

Article 1

The Cook is to have the Charge of the Steep Tub and to be answerable for the Meat put therein, if any part thereof shall be lost through his want of care.	To have the care of the meat in the Steep-tub.

Article. 2

He is to see the meat duly watered, and the provisions carefully and clearly boiled, and issued to the men, according to the practice of the Navy.	To boil the provisions and issue them out to the men.
Upon the appearance of stormy weather, he is to be careful to secure the Steep-tub, so that it may not be washed overboard; but if through any unexpected accident which he cannot prevent, the same shall happen to be lost, which the Captain is to certify, he is to make Oath to the number of pieces lost, that is to be allowed upon the Purser's Account.	To preserve the Steep-tub from being lost in stormy weather.

The Steep-tub was used to soak the meat and extract the brine in which the beef was pickled. It was also known as the Harness Cask.

THE GUNNER

The following is an extract from "Three Books of Colloquies Concerning the Art of Shooting in Great and Small Pieces of Artillery", which was written in Italian by Nicholas Tartaglia, and has been translated into English by Cyprian Lucar. It concerns the Properties, Office and Duty of a Gunner.

A Gunner ought to be sober, lusty, wakeful, hardy, patient and a quick-spirited man; he ought also to have a good eyesight, a good judgement and perfect knowledge to select a convenient place in the day of service, to plant his ordinance where they may do most hurt unto the enemies, and be least annoyed by them.

Also a Gunner in time of service ought to forbid with meek and courteous speeches all manner of persons, other than his appointed assistants, to come near his pieces, to the end that none of his pieces may be choked, poisoned or hurt; and he ought not for any praters or reward to lend any piece of his gunmatch to another person, because it may be very hurtful to him in time of service to lack the same.

Also every Gunner ought to know that it is a wholesome thing for him to eat and drink a little meat before he doth discharge any piece of artillery, because the fume of saltpetre and brim stone will otherwise be hurtful to his brains, so it is very unwholesome to him to shoot in any piece of ordinance while his stomach is full.

Every Gunner who shall serve upon the sea in any ship ought before his going to sea to write with good advisement in a paper book for the owner or captain of the vessel in which he shall serve, the weight and price of so much gunpowder, and of so many fit pallets, as will be enough to charge all the pieces in his vessel forty times over, and also the price of ten barrels of more gunpowder, which he ought to have for the only making of fireworks.

CUSTOMS

The customs of the Navy are so many, varied and ancient that we can only touch lightly on them. Up to the present days we find coins are still put in a ship---often under the step of the mast when she is built. The present Royal Yacht is a case in point. This custom possibly dates from the Romans who had a habit of placing coins on the mouth of a person when being buried so that he might pay his fare to Charon when ferried across the Stye. Coins were possibly put into ships so that in the event of sudden disaster, those drowned would at least have their passages prepaid.

One hears frequent reference to Davy Jones. This is really the Duffy or ghost of Jonah, Duffy being an old English word for ghost.

The use of the Boatswain's pipe is almost lost in antiquity, but we know that the ancient galley slaves of Greece and Rome kept stroke by the flute or whistle. The pipe of Call was originally used as a badge of rank also, and as such was worn by the Lord High Admiral and known as the Whistle of Honour and was made of gold and suspended from the neck by a gold chain. These Officers also carried a Whistle of Command which was of silver and was used for passing orders, and blown as a salute to certain personages. It was enjoined that it should be blown on these occasions, "three several times".

BOTELER'S DIALOGUES, 162[illegible]-85. Commander BOTELER of the Stuart period has much to say concerning it; Shakespeare mentions it, and Pepys makes a few remarks about it, and as we go back in history, we find continuous references to it. The first time I can find it being used actually to pass an order was during the Crusade of 12[illegible]8 when the Cross bowmen were piped to come on deck and engage the enemy. In the action between Sir EDWARD HOWARD, son of the Earl of Surrey, who, as Lord Admiral, was killed in action with the Chavalier Pregent de Bideux on 25 April, 1513 off Brest, he threw his Lord High Admiral's whistle into the sea. His Whistle of Command was found on his dead body.

At times the whistle seems to have been a somewhat weighty instrument. I think it was HENRY VIII who laid down the names of the parts of the whistle, and the weight of the Whistle of Honour was put at 12 "Cons" or ounces of gold, while the chain was to be of certain value of golden ducats. Unfortunately, my records concerning this were lost in 191[illegible].

In the old days when Captains were frequently called onboard the Flagship when at sea and in weather too rough to permit of the use of the sea gangways, it was customary for the Captain to enter and leave his ship by means of a bos'ns chair on a yardarm, and he was hoisted out and hoisted in, and the requisite orders were passed by the Pipe.

The present call for piping the side is, although much more drawn out, very similar to the call used for "hoisting and walking away", and as it was ordained that the "Pipe" or "Call" should be blown as a form of salute, I think the origin of piping the side dates from this practice, as it is customary for the Officer of the Watch even now, if the Captain is reported coming alongside, to give the order Hoist him in, notwithstanding the fact that the gangway may be available for use.

While speaking of Piping the Side, it may not be out of place to observe that this form of salute is reserved expressly for certain persons, and is an entirely nautical honour. The relevent orders are laid down in Q.R. and A.I., Art.137 and Appendix, and the actual calls used in H.M . Service are shown in the latest Admiralty Seamanship Manual, Vol, I, 1926, Appendix Chart.

No Military Officer, Consular Officer or other civilian is entitled to this form of salute. By the Custom of the Service a corpse of any Naval Officer or man is piped over the side, if sent ashore for burial.

"Admirals of Ports" and "Vice Admirals of the Coast" are offices held as sinecures, whose legal functions have been merged into either the Admiralty or other Government department, and whose rights were abolished by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835. These officials, as such, are not entitled to be Piped over the Side of H.M. Ships, and they hold no Military Commissions.

At the funeral of the Late QUEEN VICTORIA and KING EDWARD, the Side was piped as the coffin was lowered, and at both funerals the Navy with a gun carriage was responsible for the conveyance of the coffin during the last part of the journey. I believe that this was due to the fact that at the funeral of QUEEN VICTORIA the artillery horses got somewhat out of control and a Naval Field Gun's crew was substituted. At Portsmouth, there is kept a special rubber-tired limber which was used at the funeral of KING EDWARD and, I believe, is being kept expressly for funerals.

The Blue Peter has long been a sign that a ship was about to sail, and probably derives its name from the French word "Partir", to depart. Admiral Cornwallis obtained his nickname of Billy Blue from the fact that, on anchoring, he generally hoisted the Blue Peter.

The drinking of healths in the Royal Navy has always been looked upon as a ritual of some importance. It is hard to say with exactitude what the toasts were for every night of the week, but I give the following which were told me by a very old officer as being in vogue in the days of Nelson:

MONDAY NIGHT	-	Our Ships at Sea
TUESDAY NIGHT	-	Our Men
WEDNESDAY NIGHT	-	Ourselves (as no one is likely to concern themselves with our welfare)
THURSDAY NIGHT	-	A bloody war or a sickly season
FRIDAY NIGHT	-	A willing foe and sea room
SATURDAY NIGHT	-	Sweethearts and wives
SUNDAY NIGHT	-	Absent friends

On Saturday night it is customary for the youngest member of the Mess to be called upon to reply on behalf of "The Ladies".

I cannot trace the exact date when the privilege of sitting to drink the health of the sovereign was accorded to the Navy. Some say that it was WILLIAM IV and others say that it was CHARLES II who, on returning to England in 1660 onboard the "NASEBY" which had been re-christened the "ROYAL CHARLES", bumped his head when replying to a toast, and ever afterwards held Naval Officers excused from rising on these occasions. To sit when drinking the Loyal Toast is not permitted when the National Anthem is played. This is in accordance with the ruling given by the late Marquis of Milford Haven on 4 June, 1914, at which date he was First Sea Lord.

In the days when to be on short rations was not uncommon, the following Graces before meat were sometimes used:

"Messing three among four of us, thank God there aren't more of us."

This, of course, inferred that the mess was on three quarter rations. "Messing four among two of us, thank God there are but few of us", was used for half rations.

When a mess was forced to exist solely on the official ration and could not supplement their stock of food from other sources, it was referred to as being on Bare Navy.

In the Merchant Service the amount of food allowed to each man is regulated by the "Board of Trade" and the Merchant Shipping Act, and the quantity so allowed is termed the Board of Trade Whack or Bare Whack.

The custom of imposing penalties for making a bet or mentioning a lady's name prior to the loyal toast was instituted so that argument should not become heated nor quarrel take place while the proceedings in the Mess were still formal.

Similarly, a fine is imposed on anyone who draws a sword in the mess without previously asking permission to do so---the object was to avoid any hasty action, particularly in the days when duelling was prevalent.

It is still considered bad manners to enter a strange mess while wearing a sword, and discountenanced in order that no aggrieved party should come on board with the intention of forcing a quarrel at all costs.

A dispute between two men could often be amicably settled if these precautions and customs were observed in accordance with the instructions contained in K.R.A.I., Art. 512, when a unique reference is made, namely "Any officer who shall act as herein denoted and consequently refuse to accept a challenge will be deemed to have acted honourably and to have envinced a requisite obedience not only to this order but to the pleasure of the King".

WILLIAM IV was the last holder of the title of Lord High Admiral which he held when Duke of Clarence from May 1827 to 12 August, 1828.

The origin of the motto, The King, God Bless Him, on the Grog Tub is probably due to the fact that many men used to drink their tot as soon as it was issued and toasted the Sovereign while doing so.

In H.M.S. CADMUS in the summer of 1913 at Hankow, quinine was issued three times a week. It was issued in a large bottle, and the cups were placed in a bowl of disinfectent on the capstan head. The lower deck was then cleared and, commencing with the captain followed by the officers and ships company, everyone took his tot and toasted the King.

H.M.S. CADMUS and her sister H.M.S. OLIO, though built in 1803, were fitted with hand capstans and hand wheels (aft under poop). They each were allowed one musician in the scheme of complement for playing when weighing or working cables.

It was often customary in the Army when quinine was issued daily on certain stations for the regiment to parade, and for the senior officer to toast the sovereign with his draught thus ensuring that all officers and men took their medicine out of loyalty if not of obedience.

If no one partakes of the wine for the drinking of the Sovereign's health, the Mess President is entitled to a glass Down to the Mess so that all may share in giving proof of their loyal sentiments. No member, other than guests, may accept a glass of wine for this toast, it being a point of honour to pay for it one-self.

It is still customary in the Army and in the Royal Marine messes for the president to remain seated until the last member has left the table, and the decanters should be stoppered prior to the King and remain unstoppered after the King as long as the president is sitting. A president who leaves the table without either stoppering the decanters or delegating his authority lays himself open to the customary fine. In strictly conducted messes this custom is observed in the Royal Navy. The reason for stoppering the decanter prior to the Loyal Toast is to imply that it is solely for this that the wine is provided and that it is no longer required after all have filled their glasses.

In former times the Officers of H.M. Yachts were messed by the Board of the Green Cloth which is actually the Lord Steward's Department. When this custom was done away with, a sum of 6/_ per diem was paid by the Board in lieu of Messing. This was changed to 5/_ per diem when H.M. Wasafloat, then to 4/_ per diem and lastly to 3/_ per diem and 2/_ per diem for Warrant Officers when the Standard was flying, and in this form it still exists today.

The Officers serving in H.M. Yachts make a practice of standing when drinking the Loyal Toast. I understand that this is merely to emphasize the honoured distinction of serving in the Royal Yachts.

The Records of the Board of Green Cloth at Headquarters do not go back beyond 1895 and consequently, without reference to earlier records elsewhere, it can only be stated that the Allowance has been paid continuously at the latter rates since that time, although it is known to be of much earlier origin.

"REGENCY ALLOWANCE"

Regency Allowance was first paid to Military Messes and to Royal Marine Messes ashore in the early part of the 19th Century, probably during the Regency at the end of the reign of King George III, and was instituted in order to meet the high cost of wine. It survived under the official designation of Mess Allowance at the rate of £6 per annum per officer until 1919 when it was abolished in consequence of the improved rates of pay when granted to Officers of the Fighting Forces. The Allowance is referred to in Article 536 of the Army Allowance Regulations, 1914.

In pre-war times £6 per annum (approximately 4d per night) just sufficed for a glass of No. 2 Port.

I have been informed by French Officers that for many years --- even up to 1917 --- it was the custom in the French Navy to drink to the health of the Little Black Ship, which they assured me was the "MONMOUTH", in order to mark their appreciation of the gallantry displayed by this ship, although I cannot state definitely which occasion is referred to. Professor CALLENDER stated that, in his opinion, it was the Battle of Granada, 1779, between BYRON and d'ESTAING when the "MONMOUTH", together with the SUFFOX, made a most determined attempt on the head of the French Battle Fleet in order to ensure the escape of a British Convoy. Professor CALLENDER's ruling on this subject is of interest, but I seem to remember that my French friends stated that the incident did not occur in a general Fleet Action, and I think it possible that it may date from the action between the "MONMOUTH", 64- gun Ship, and the "FOUDROYANT", of 84- guns, on 28 February, 1758, when Captain GARDINER was killed in action and the FOUDROYANT actually surrendered to Lieutenant Carkett, his First Lieutenant. The "FOUDROYANT", at this time, was considered the finest ship in the French Service. The action took place between Toulon and Cartagena. Professor CALLENDER is supported in his opinion by Fraser in his book "Famous Fighters of the Fleet".

The late Marquis of Milford Haven, when First Sea Lord prior to the War, drew attention to the fact in Admiralty Orders that, although the Navy had the privilege of sitting when honouring the Loyal Toast, they did not have the privilege of sitting when the National Anthem was played. In order to retain the privilege, many ships did not play the Anthem. The First Sea Lord, from his position, had the strongest grounds for drawing attention to this matter, and it is well understood that these orders are in strict accordance with His Majesty's wishes and with the Customs of the Service. The order was dated 4 June, 1914 and read, "The underlying idea is that whenever the Anthem is played, when the King's Health is proposed, everyone stands up. If it is not played, people remain seated". In fact, the Admiralty from time to time since 1914 have brought out most stringent regulations ordering that everybody should stand on all ocassions when the National Anthem was heard, but our prerogative of sitting whilst drinking the Sovereign's health has never been questioned.

REGULATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS
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(7)

When any persons of Quality, or of a Public Character, embark on board any of His Majesty's Ships, they may be saluted at their coming on board, and also at their departure with the following number of Guns. Viz:

How persons of quality may be saluted.

A Duke or Ambassador with 15 guns
Other public Ministers, or
Persons of Quality, with 11 guns or less,
according to their Quality.

XXI

Nothing in the foregoing Article is to be understood to restrain Commanders in their respect to any of the Royal Family, who are also to be saluted by Guns, at the discretion of the Commander in Chief.

The Royal Family to be saluted at the discretion of the Commander.

XXII

Certain Festivals to be observed.

The anniversary days of the Birth, Accession, and Coronation of the King, of the Birth of the Queen, of the Restoration of King Charles the Second, and of Gun-Powder Treason, shall be solomized by His Majesty's Ships, if they are in Port, with such a number of Guns as the Chief Officer shall think proper, not exceeding 21 each ship.

Salutes of all sorts and descriptions are as old as history. Ships salutes in the days of sail were carried out by striking or lowering topsails, by letting fly sheets and by the firing of guns. Mr. Pepys informs us of how, when the news of King Charles declaration came to the Fleet in the Downs, "The General began to fire his guns", which "he did, all that he had in the ship, and so did the rest of the Commanders, which was very gallant, and to hear the bullets go hissing over our heads as we were in the boat". The firing of guns in the olden times was responsible for a most prodigal waste of ammunition, and the practice has been greatly curtailed. Dressing Ship and Manning Ship is as old as the time of Queen Elizabeth, and the ceremony of receiving a Royal Personage, as described by Commander NATHANIEL BOTELER in the reign of Charles I, is almost exactly the same as that described in the present year of Greece.

The ship salute is said to have been enforced in the Narrow Seas by King ALFRED and EDGAR. KING JOHN certainly issued a decree that it was to be accorded.

Professor Callender states that the demand for the salute in the Narrow Seas cannot historically be conceded prior to EDWARD I, who claimed both sides of the Channel and consequently the intervening sea.

King JOHN was also "Duke of Normandy" and would, therefore, appear to have as good claim to both sides of the Channel even though he was responsible for losing much of our French possessions.

It is noteworthy that in the Channel Islands, which alone remain to us of our former possessions in France, His Majesty is still officially referred to as "LE Bol notre Dus" --- The King our Duke.

We find that on 2 May, 1635, My Lords were most careful to emphasize the necessity for enforcing the old decree, and they lay great stress on the matter and also to the keeping of order in the Narrow Seas. I refer to the Admiralty Letter to the Earl of Lindsey.

The Dutch formerly conceded the salute in 1673. The instructions on this subject were embodied in the Kings Regulations up to the Trafalgar period when they were somewhat modified and non-compliance was to be reported and not enforced by shot of gun as hitherto. There was a special clause in the Treaty of Westminister, 5 April, 1654, that the ships of the United Provinces were to accord the salute in British Seas (and of first Dutch War).

The fact of shortening sail or letting fly sheets inferred that the person saluting was willing to place his ship at a disadvantage in the matter of speed, and the firing of guns denoted the fact that he was temporarily unarmed on account of the time taken in those days to reload the cannons.

The insistence by British vessels of the Flag being saluted led to the Dutch War. In May, 1652, off the Start, and on 8 June, 1637, off the Lizard, our claim to the salute by Dutch Man-o-War was enforced by action. On the early occasion, the Captain of the "Dreadnought", one Henry Straddling, went so far as to lodge the Captain of the Dutch Rear Admiral's Flagship in Plymough Port for the neglect of what Straddling considered to be his duty.

In retaliation for the incident of 1652, Tromp was so infuriated that he flaunted his flag off Dover and attacked Admiral Blake, and after these preliminaries the first Dutch War commenced.

Nowadays, although there are no written regulations stating that Merchant Ships shall dip to British men-o-war, the Admiralty consider that this is an act of courtesy, and in accordance with A.P.O. 500/23, desire that the non-observance of this custom by British Merchant Ships shall be reported to my Lords.

On entering a foreign port in the days of sail after a salute to the Country and the Governor had been fired, it was customary to run up the jib, or loose, hoist, or let fail the foretopsail at the first gun, and furl or pick it up on completion or if topsails or topgallant sails were set (as the old expression was) of the port. This privilege was not accorded to dignitaries who were not connected with the sea.

Many high dignitaries were compelled, by cannon shot, to salute the English flag in various seas. Among others may be mentioned King Phillip of Spain, when visiting Queen Mary in 1554; the King of Denmark when returning from visiting King James I; a Portuguese Ambassador, and numerous ships of war, the Commanding Officers of which were in some cases tried in the Admiralty Court and their ships were detained during the proceedings.

Saluting the Quarterdeck, I myself do not believe originated due to the belief that there was originally a crucifix there, as we find that in the former days when the Quarterdeck was saluted it was customary for all Officers present to return the salute by uncovering, and this leads me to think that it was not the crucifix that was saluted but the fact that the Quarterdeck was the seat of authority and the position nearest to which the Kings colours were displayed. This, however, is a matter on which I am prepared to be convinced. I do not think that any custom which was based on saluting the crucifix would have survived the many religious upheavels to which the country was formerly subjected.

Sir John JERVIS made it a practice, even when addressing an inferior in rank, always to remain uncovered.

Queen Victoria instituted the salute in the Navy as opposed to uncovering, the occasion being when she sent for certain Officers and men to Osborne to thank them for rendering help to a distressed German ship, and did not like to see men in uniform standing uncovered.

The personal salute with the hand, although borrowed from the Army, is full of interest, and various theories have been evolved concerning its origin.

There is the usual theory that it has been the custom from time immemorial for a junior to uncover to a superior and, even today, men in the Brigade of Guards remove their caps instead of saluting when wearing Fatigue Dress. The holders of this theory maintain that the present salute is namely the first motion of removing one's head dress. It was officially introduced into the Navy in 1890, but during the war a large number of old retired officers were in the habit of doffing their head gear instead of saluting; this of course being the method to which they were accustomed.

In a book called the "New Art of War" printed in 1740, it is stated that, "When the King or Captain General is being saluted, each officer is to time his salute so as to pull off his hat when the person he salutes is almost opposite him".

Another tradition is that the salute and its return were given as mutuals, tokens of trust and respect, so that when two armed men met, they both raised their visors, thus laying themselves open to attack. The old head dress being clumsy and not easily removed, the preliminary movement of the salute was considered sufficient.

That the hand is kept open is probably a relic of very ancient times, and denotes that no weapon is concealed therein.

The salute with the left hand was abolished in the Navy in the year 1923 so as to bring our customs into line with our allies, and also to conform to the practice in vogue in the Indian Army. Both on the continent and among Indian and African troops, a salute given with the left hand was considered a great insult.

The salute with the sword is undoubtedly of very ancient origin, but there are certainly two schools of thought concerning it.

Some hold that it is of Crusader origin and that the position of the recover is symbolical of the act of religious homage wherein the cross holt of the sword was kissed as representing the Crucifix, and that the holding of the sword at arms length represents the hailing or acknowledging of the leader, and the sinking of the point to the ground betokens an act of submission to superior authority. The other school only differs, I believe, regarding the origin of the "Recover" position and affirms that it is derived from the Oriental custom (still existing) of shading the eyes from the magnificient of the superior.

I cannot say which belief is more correct, but the latter was, I believe, that which was taught some years ago at the Royal Military Training Colleges for Officers.

It is noteworthy that the only straight-bladed cross-hilted swords still in use in the Services are those of the Scottish Archers, undress swords of the Highland Regiments, Midshipmans dirks and Bandsmen.

When an officer is tried by Court Martial, prior to the judgement of the court being delivered, his sword is placed on the table so as to have the point towards the prisoner if he has been found guilty, and with the hilt towards him if he has been found not guilty.

This custom is the equivalent of the old practice on shore where the executioner, carrying his headsman's axe, immediately preceded the accused on his return from the Court to the prison and, in order to demonstrate the judgement of the Court, turned the edge of the axe towards or away from the prisoner, depending on whether sentence of death had been passed or not.

When decapitation ceased to be the extreme penalty in England and was superceded by death by hanging, it was at one time the custom for the executioner to tie together the wrists and thumbs of the prisoner, by means of a short cord, in order to intimate to the public that the prisoner was under sentence of death. In the event of an acquittal, the hands were left free.

A Rouge's salute or One Gun Salute is the signal gun fired to denote that a Court Martial is about to assemble to try a case under the Naval Discipline Act. If the Court assembles on board one of H.M. Ships, the Union Flag is flown at the peak halliards while the Court is sitting. In olden times it was customary to fire this signal gun in order to muster the hands of all ships in company to witness a yard-arm execution. A yellow flag was hoisted at the same time and kept flying until the sentence had been carried out.

When keel-hauling was recognized as a punishment, a single gun (sometimes shotted) was fired o'er the head of the delinquent as he emerged from the sea, "In order to astonish and confound him". Due to the severity of the punishment this additional discomfort would appear to have been unnecessary as the unfortunate culprit had in all likelihood lost consciousness.

The practice of receiving senior Officers and others on entering a ship is very ancient and used to be attended with much pomp and ceremony. In fact at one time no matter what hour of the day or night the Captain returned to his ship, all Officers were expected to attend to welcome him, notwithstanding, as one quaintly remarks in his memoirs, "Though he should be drunk as a beggar".

As a rule the sea gangways were used by junior Officers in harbour and by everyone at sea, weather permitting, the accommodation ladders and entry ports being barred in. It is curious to find, even as late as 1914, that ships still existed with the second or third step of the sea gangway made longer than the remainder. This was to enable the man ropes to be held out to the person boarding the ship by two men specially stationed on the long step for this purpose. The step being extra long, these men were clear of the gangway, and the expression, "Manning the Side" became a literal fact.

Articles 922 and 923 of K.R. and A.I. lay down in the orders for the conduct of a junior Officer in command meeting with a senior Officer in command, and direct that, "Providing the state of the weather admit, he is to wait on such senior Officer, to show all the orders which are not secret, that he is acting under, and inform him of the state and condition of the ship or ships under his orders, etc., etc.".

In accordance with these regulations, it is customary and good manners for the junior officer to ask the senior officer's permission on, "To proceed in execution of previous orders", should the meeting take place at sea, and the junior, be on detached service. In harbour the junior officer is expected to enquire at what time it will be convenient for him to wait on his superior and then make a formal visit at the time specified.

The junior enters a boat first and leaves it last so that the senior shall not be in any way incommoded or wetted, as so often happens when lying alongside in rough weather.

A merchant ship in need of hands used to hoist a bucket, but this custom is now seldom, if ever seen. A man who desired to quit the ship used, I believe, in the Merchant Service, to hang his shirt, tail-up in the fore-rigging, and his exit would be arranged at a price by a shore boatman. I have also heard that a sea boot displayed in a like manner had the same significance.

The hoisting of a broom is to this day common on the east coast of England and in most North Sea countires as an indication that a change of ownership of a vessel is about to, or has very recently, taken place. In Russia, round the White Sea, it is a signal that there is a holiday or "Prasnik", --- a matter of frequent occurrence when Vodka was obtainable.

I think it possible that TROMP hoisted his broom to signalize the capture of either the "GARLAND" or the "BON ADVENTURE" off Dungeness on 15 November, 1652, when BLAKE was defeated. Regarding TROMP and his broom, the Dutch most emphatically state that the alleged incident is not compatible with his character, and they are inclined, therefore, to discredit this story.

BLAKE, hoisting the whip and thus originating the pendant may, I think, also be regarded as a myth, as pendants were authorized by law about the middle of the 14th Century.

While on the subject of pendants, it might be pointed out that until quite recently, an Admiral's flag was flown by the senior sailing trawler of particular fleets in the North Sea. He was always known as the "Admiral", and his motions and orders were most implicitly carried out by means of a well recognized code of signals. His Fleet sometimes consisted of as many as 150 to 250 ships, but with the era of the steam trawler, this custom began to die out and it is almost extinct although it existed as recently as the "Dogger Bank Incident", caused by the Russian Baltic Fleet, 21 October, 1904.

Ships in mourning are those which make their appearance as slovenly as possible, and half-masting of flags is a relic of this. To be slovenly in appearance has been a sign of grief from the earliest times, and there are many Biblical references to this practice. In the Merchant Service it is customary to leave ropes ends trailing and yards scandalized. I think that the last occasion that one of H.M. Ships scandalized her yards as a sign of mourning was when H.M.S. Exmouth carried out this procedure in 1908 while lying off Lisbon after the murder of Don Carlos King of Portugal. H.M.S. Exmouth was commanded by Captain Arthur Henniker-Hughan and was flying the flag of Admiral the Hon. Sir Assheton George Curzon-Howe, K.C.B. H.M.S. Arrogant was also present and for lack of known precedent, yards were cockbilled, mainmast down to port, lower booms were dropped. "Arrogant" copied "Exmouth" and the condition prevailed from 0800 with a gun fired every 15 minutes until "Sunset".

Admiral G.A. Ballard, in a letter to the Society for Nautical Research ("Mariners' Mirror", Vol. XIV. No. 4, October 1930), confirms that this practice was carried out at Tientsin in 1894 when he was First Lieutenant of H.M.S. "Linnet". The occasion was the death of the Czar ALEXANDER III, and the following ships were present: H.M.S. "Linnet", The Russian "Sivoutch", the German "Wolf", the French "Comete", and the American "Monocacy". The procedure followed was commenced at 8 o'clock in the morning and the motions of the Russian ship were followed by all ships present.

Colours were first hoisted then half-masted and the order "Top Away" was given simultaneously in all ships, and yards on the fore were topped to starboard and those on the main to port. No ship present had yards on the mizzen and, although all ships acted in the same manner, no preconcerted arrangement had been come to. Braces were kept fast and no Gaffs were lowered.

On the fourth mourning afterwards when colours were hoisted at 8 a.m., the order "Square Away" was given in like manner in all ships and, as a spectacle, it was most effective. Sail tackles were hooked up the topmast heads to get a sufficient angle for the lower yards.

H.M.S. "Linnet" had no yards on the main as she was rigged as a three masted brigantine, so only the yards on the fore were topped in the manner already described.

The American "Monocacy", being a pole-rigged paddler, dressed ship with half-masted Russian and American colours.

Until recently it was practice (even within my memory) that a volly should be fired at Sunset, at which time the colours are lowered when in harbour. The privilege of firing this gun is only enjoyed today by certain Commodores and Flag Officers, and the old expression which was used on hearing the evening gun fired was, "The Commodore has fallen down the main hatch", or in other words, his days work was finished. This connected with the custom of firing an evening gun which some say was meant as a sign of defiance to the enemy, while others affirm that it was to ensure a dry priming and charge going in the gun prior to night-fall. It has always been strictly enjoyed by regulations which still exist, that ensigns or flags should not be kept aboard during windy weather, nor at times when they could not be clearly discerned during the hours when colours are not formally displayed in harbour ships of importance approach or have the anchorage.

There is a curious incident in connection with the colours at sunset which for many years was practiced at Giberaltar. During one of the sieges of Giberaltar, the Queen of Spain, a most devout Roman Catholic, made a vow that she would sit in a chair on a spot still known as the "Queen of Spain's chair", until she saw the English colours over Giberaltar hauled down. The English General on hearing this and not wishing to incommode the lady and, as he had no intention of surrendering, ordered that the Colours should be dipped five minutes before sunset. I have seen this done many times to the "Jack" which used to fly on "King's Bastion", although I have never seen it practiced since the war.

The other customs at Giberaltar which have fallen into disuse are firstly, the salute by all parties of men, armed and unarmed, when passing the Trafalgar Cemetary, and the other, the locking up of the Fortress at night with a Guard and Band, everybody in the street raising his hat or saluting as the King's keys passed. The custom of saluting the King's keys is still carried out in the Tower of London and is the only occasion, I believe, when the Guard is permitted to talk in the ranks, not being at Devine Service. The keys being delivered up, the Officer in charge says, "God Save the King", to which the Guard replies, "Amen".

Naval Officers on full pay have the right to seize certain ensigns if flown by unauthorized persons when afloat. The ensign so seized is forfeit to His Majesty, and the delinquent is also liable to a heavy fine.

The Lord Mayor of the City of London is still, by appointment, the Admiral of the Port of London. Notwithstanding this, the Navy is not permitted, without asking special permission, to march through the precincts of the City with fixed bayonets, nor with any colours displayed. The Royal Marines have this privilege which dates from the 18th Century. It happened in the year 1746 that a detachment of marines were beating for recruits in Cheapside. A Magistrate of the City approached the Officer and required him to cease beating the drum as no soldiers were allowed to interrupt the civil repose. The Captain commanding the Marines immediately said, "Sir, we are Marines". "Oh Sir," replied the Alderman, "I beg your pardon, I didn't know it. Pray continue your route as you please."

I think the only regiments entitled to this privilege are the GRENADIERS the BUFFS or East Kent Regiment, the ROYAL MARINES and the 6th BATTALION ROYAL FUSILIERS, Household Regiments, confined to the 3rd BATTALION GRENADIER GUARDS, and also the H.A.C. This is as reported by Mr. ARDRIAN POLLOCK, Remembrancer to the City of London (and I refer the curious to the R.U.S.T. Journal, No. 470, of May 1923).

The Broad Arrow is a Government mark which dates from the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and is the cognizance of Lord de L'Isle the First Lord Commissioner of Ordnance, in the reign of that Sovereign.

CHARLIES I, in 1627, ordered all muskets, cannons and weapons for sea service to be marked with "C.R." and an anchor. Our guns to this day bear the Royal Crown and motto of the Carter. The Foul Anchor or Sailor's Disgrace was the badge of Lord Howard of Effingham.

Trinity House, whose ships have the privilege of flying the White Ensign when escorting the Sovereign (conferred by Admiralty Letter of 21 June, 1894), is an institution founded by Sir Thomas SPURT, Knyte, Controller of the Navy to Henry VIII. It was he who founded the Yards of Woolwich and Deptford. He also was in command of the "Henri Grace a Dieu" or Great Harry TRINITY HOUSE, up to a recent date, examined in Navigation, those aspiring to become Masters in the Royal Navy.

The Royal Yacht Squadron also have the privilege of Flying the White Ensign by authority of Admiralty Warrant of 6 June, 1829. There are no regulations about Royal Yacht Squadrons ships dipping to H.M. Ships, but those who have good manners invariably do so.

In the days when livestock were carried onboard, it was natural that the Captain should be careful to select the titbits for his own table, and I think we can say that this originated the custom of demanding a cask of Tongues on commissioning, from the victualling Yard. This practice lapsed when meat cards were introduced during the war.

The taking off of the hat by a rating is merely a mark of respect to a superior and is still carried out at inspections or when he appears either as a defaulter or even for investigation before a Superior Officer. The fact that it is laid down in the regulations that this should be done, even if only for investigation, I think, proves that in no sense was it meant to lower a man in his estimation or in that of others. Strangely enough, the same custom exists to a certain extent in the Brigade of Guards. In the Italian Navy it is customary for the boats crew to remove their hats when the Captain boards or leaves his galley.

It is only about 80 or 90 years since women ceased to be carried in men-o'war, and it was Queen Victoria who ordered this practice to be discontinued. In the old days when no leave was given, the ship was invaded by crowds of women on her arrival in harbour and any man was free to choose as his fancy dictated. Officers were very jealous of the reputation of their ships, and not infrequently those women thought by the Officer of the Watch not to attain the standard of beauty considered essential, were ignominously returned to the shore.

The boatmen at the Naval Ports were careful in the selection of the cargo they wished to import, as it was customary for women to stipulate that, unless they were not accepted, they would not pay for their passage.

Scenes of profiligacy and debauchery used to take place on the gun decks of our men-o' war. The gangways, however, had to be kept free, and it was in the spaces between the guns that these scenes occurred. Hence, to call a man a Son of a Gun was equivalent to casting doubts on the legitimacy of his parentage. An old definition of a man-o' war's man was that he was begotten in the galley and born under a gun. Every hair a rope yarn, every tooth a marline spike, every finger a fish hook, and his blood, right good Stockholm Tar.

One Officer in the Fleet has informed me that when his grandfather was commanding a Brig off the Spanish Coast in about 1835 he made the following entry in his diary: "This day the Surgeon informed me that a woman onboard has been labouring in child for twelve hours, and if I could see my way to permit the firing of a broadside to Leeward, nature would be assisted by the shock. I compiled with the request and she was delivered of a fine male child."

I think I may say that this is one of the few occasions on which Gunnery Officers of the Navy can truthfully claim to have achieved a satisfactory result without hitting the target.

On another occasion we hear that practice with the great guns was discontinued at the request of an Officer, as there was a woman onboard in such a condition that it was feared that the shock might prove detrimental to her.

A wet Christmas was a thing to shock the least susceptible and the Officers as a whole wisely kept clear so as not to excite the men who were entirely out of control.

It was not uncommon to find several men, and sometimes women, dead, when discipline was again enforced, and I think from these orgies dates and practice of permitting the harmless buffonery which still exists and which includes the custom of the junior and senior ratings exchanging clothes and duties.

The origin of the call of the morning to Show a Leg dates from the time when women were carried and those who thrust out a leg or a Purser's stocking were exempt from turning out until Guard and Steerage, nor did the old cry of Out or Down there, which prefaced the call, ever affect them and which meant that if they did not turn out summarily, they would immediately be cut down.

The Service hammock is suspended and spread by cords which are known as claws and the expression "So and so is going to fit double claws" is undoubtedly derived from the practice of women being carried in ships, but now-a-days means that a man is about to become married.

There is an old story related by Captain Glasscock in 1836 of a sailor who asked to marry, and when it was pointed out by a Lieutenant that the woman was a most notorious harlot, he replied that it did not matter, and that when he came into Port and found the good lady aboard some other ship, he proposed to shove alongside and claim her as his own. History does not relate whether his request was granted.

It was not uncommon in the old days for a body of women 500 strong to march across country to join up again with a ship which had proceeded from one Port to another. Only a few privileged persons were permitted to take their wives to sea. The remainder of the so-called "Wives", whether permanent or "Acting" were ejected before sailing.

The Sergeant-Major's duties regarding the reporting of "Chronometers Wound" I am unable to trace, but I have always been led to believe that the Sergeant-Major, having nothing whatever to do with the routine of the ship beyond setting the Guard, was more likely to remember this most important detail than anyone else.

The custom of hoisting the ensign of a prize inferior to one's own, one is unable to place definitely as regards its conception. The French had the custom of hoisting a captured ship's ensign reversed, and in Admiral SAUMAREZ action with Admiral LINIOIS on 6 July, 1801, off Algeciras when the British ship "Hannibal" was captured, it was not realized that she had struck as it was thought that the ensign reversed was a sign of distress, and the barge of H.M.S. "Venerable", in going to her assistance, was also captured.

In 1915 when bringing in the German Trawler "WURTZBURG" I hoisted the white Ensign superior to the German, but this was not understood by the fishing boats I met off the Yorkshire Coast and with whom I was anxious to communicate, and as they told me afterwards, they thought it was a "Ruse de guerre".

It will be remembered that the First Lieutenant of the "SHANNON", in her action with the "CHESPEAKE", was killed due to the "Shannon" re-opening fire because he accidently hoisted the Stars and Stripes superior to the British Ensign. It is, therefore, evident that this signal of Victory was the only one in our Service which formerly was well understood.

The incident of the "HANNIBAL" may well be explained by the fact that the capture of a British Battleship by the French was such a rare occurrence that very few knew what procedure to expect.

The custom of Evening Quarters which is still with us, originated when, before dark, every ship according to the degree of readiness required, prepared for night action. We might note that, even today, the Bugle Call for Evening Quarters and that for General Quarters or Action is precisely the same with the exception of the additional "G's" sounded. There was an A.F.O. which stated that the call for "Divisions" is to be used at Evening Quarters, and that formerly used for this purpose is to be used only at General Quarters or Action. This order is seldom now observed.

In the old days they were very wary when preparing for action because of the danger attending the handling of loose powder. The following, some of which has the counterpart now in our Magazines Regulations, was the ordinary routine when preparing for action.

Partitions to cabins and all moveable gear liable to splinter was dismantled and struck down or thrown overboard. Frieze cloths were wetted and hung on all approaches to the magazines and cartridges were handed through a hole in the screens while the magazines were lighted by reflected light from behind thick bull-eyes. The powder boys had instructions to carry the cartridges under their jackets and were the only people, with the exception of the Master-at-Arms, who were permitted to descend below the gun decks during action. Midshipmen were stationed at the top of the hatches where the gratings had been tripped, with special instructions to pistol anyone who attempted to contravene these orders and escape below.

They were fully aware of the importance of splinters, and it was customary when going into close action to reduce the charges in the guns so that the shot would have a less penetrating but more splintering effect.

The insides of the gun decks and the scupper ways were painted red so that the blood stains should not be so noticeable. Women who were onboard were generally employed in the cockpit or magazines. It was the duty of the Master-at-Arms continually to go the rounds and to note the expenditure of ammunition and keep tally of the casualties.

The table in the Midshipmen's berth was used in operating as a table. Anaesthetics were unknown and insensibility to pain was produced by administering rum.

All gear that could be, was sent down from aloft. Preventers and extra yard slings were rigged and screens of red cloth, known as Top Armings, to hide the riflemen, were placed round the tops. Nelson deprecated this practice, but it was always used by the French and, as it is well known, it was from the maintop of the "REDOUBTABLE" that Nelson received his fatal injury.

Hammocks were lashed over shrouds in the chains and other places where covering protection was deemed to be necessary. Boarders were detailed from the gun's crews and sail trimmers, and actually worked at their guns armed for boarding. It was customary in some ships to have the decks wetted and whatever sails were not in use were rolled up tight and wetted. Sir Alexander BALL, when in the battle of the Nile on board the "ALEXANDER", owes the safety of his ship to his foresight in carrying out these precautions against fire, as a large part of the "ORIENT" fell onboard Alexander when the former blew up. The "ALEXANDER" caught on fire, but it was quickly extinquished. BROKE of the "SHANNON" also followed this example with good effect.

The Master-at-Arms was responsible in olden times for the training of the men in the use of small arms, and for noting the expenditure of ammunition in action. Subsequently the former duty was performed by the Master-at-Arms under the supervision of the junior Lieutenant. In more modern times the Master-at-Arms has been entirely relieved of this part of his duties.

The Master-at-Arms is today known as the Jaunty which is believed to be a corruption of the French word "Gendarme", which became John Damme, and thus Jaunty. The Master-at-Arms has a staff of Petty Officers to assist him, who are now called Regulating Petty Officers, but prior to 1913-14 were known as Ship's Corporals.

They carry out the duties of the Ship's police and from the fact that formerly they occupied their time in searching for (as opposed to preventing) crime, became known on the lower deck as Crushers.

To give some idea of the expenditures of ammunition in a heavy action, we may mention that the bombardment of Algiers, the British Fleet expended 118 tons of powder, 50,000 shot, and 1,000 ten inch shells in about 9 hours. The QUEEN at the "Glorious First of June", used 25 tons of powder and 60 tons of shot. This was equal to 130 broadsides.

In action, those who were grieviously wounded or killed were bundled through a port. Those who died after the action were buried in the ordinary manner at sea, although in the French Service it was customary to bury the dead in the ballast. I do not know whether this was due to a superstition or for what reason. I imagine that this custom is the origin of the expression to show someone Where the Dead Marine was Buried, --- in other words, an impossible place to find in the bowels of the ship.

Whistling in a Man-o-War has always been most strongly discouraged for obvious reasons, but custom ordains that the Cook of the Mess shall whistle when engaged in stoning plums or prunes to mix in the duff, as this shows that he is not stowing his own hold to the detriment of the rest of his messmates.

Up to 1690 at the launching of a ship, her health was drunk from a silver cup which was after use thrown into the sea, but this was discontinued as a measure of economy.

Up to 1811 a ship was always launched by a Royal Personage or a Dockyard Commissioner, but in 1811, the Prince Regent instituted the practice of a lady performing the ceremony. The Religious Service now held at the launching of man-o-war was, I believe, instituted about 1875 at the launch of the Tug "PERSEVERANCE" in Davenport yard. The institution of the Service is generally ascribed to the representations of Admiral King Hall.

At night, five minutes after the watch on deck changes, one soft stroke is given on the ship's bell as a sign for the new watch to muster. This is always called "Little One Bell". A little one Bell relief is a particularly unpopular person, as he is so called owing to his habitual lateness in taking over the watch.

STRIKING THE BELLS AND DOG WATCHES

It is noticeable in British Ships that the hour of 1830 or 6:30 p.m. is denoted by the striking of one bell. I believe in olden days it was the custom to strike 5 bells at half past six in the last Dog Watch, but the present practice was instituted after the mutiny at the Nore, owing to the striking of five bells being the signal for the commencement of the mutiny on 13 May, 1797.

Foreigners still carry out the old routine, but I am led to believe that the certain numbers are more or less falling into line with our custom.

The nautical day is divided into watches of four hours duration except for the period of 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. (1600 hours to 2000 hours) which is split into two watches of two hours duration each.

As the ship's company used normally to be organized in two Watches (Port and Starboard), it followed that a man would always have the same periods of duty unless one of the watches were split. The 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. period was accordingly split and the watches are known as the First Dog Watch and the Last Dog Watch. The term is probably derived from the expression Dodge Watch.

The expression Second Dog Watch is never used at sea. I do not think that the pun dod watch being a watch Cur-tailed has any bearing on the terms.

THE POINTS OF THE COMPASS CARD ARE OF VERY EARLY ORIGIN

The very ancient charts had a Wind Rose marked on them, and the French still used the term "Rosedes Vemts" to mean a compass.

The early navigators worked chiefly in the Mediterranean and naturally marked the card with the letters designating terms familiar to them. Thus North became "T" for Tramontana, and this letter subsequently became converted into a spearheaded symbol and finally into a Fleur-de-lis, though there are some who affirm that the emblem represents a Lotus flower and that it is of Oriental origin.

BURIALS AT SEA

When sewing the corpse up in an old hammock or piece of canvas it is usual to put the last stitch through the nose of the deceased. I have heard that this is done in order to avoid any chance of launching the body overboard while in a state of catalepsy, the shock of having a stitch passed through the nose being considered sufficient to bring the patient back to life. I can find no regulations in support of this custom, but for many years it was usual for the man who did the sewing up of the corpse to be paid a guinea a body. On board H.M.S. Castor, after the Battle of Jutland, the sum of 23 guineas was paid out from the public funds to the rating who officiated in this respect. This was vouched for by an Officer who was present.

"While serving as First Lieutenant of H.M.S. LEGION, we had occasion to bury three dead Germans, and I well remember that my upper deck Petty Officer did his best to cajole three guineas out of me, but was met with the remark that I had no cash to spare for live Bosches and certainly did not propose to check any away on dead ones, and that he had better make an official request through the Captain." The above mentioned Bosches were killed in the action of 17 October, 1914.

In the olden days there were celebrations similar to those on "Crossing the Line" when crossing the 30th parallel and on entering the Straits of Gibraltar.

The Vikings put their novices at sea through some very strenuous ordeals with a view to proving them, and the customs referred to probably originated with them. All initiates had to vow to do the same to others.

The custom of having Prayers on board H.M. Ships is of great antiquity and, in Blake's time, it was usual to sing Hymns and Psalms at the changing of the watches. In the 17th and 18th Centuries it was usual to go to prayers prior to commencing an action (e.g. - Lord Howe, on 1 June, 1784, at 0730 hove to and went to Breakfast and Prayers before engaging the enemy).

H.M. Ships have carried fishing appliances for many years and in the earliest printed instructions the Captain is ordered to to employ some of the people in fishing, and the catch was to be distributed among the Officers' and Seamen's messes without favour or partiality, and without any reduction of provision allowance.

We have the expression Working a Dead Horse which, strictly speaking, belongs to the Merchant Service; a Dead Horse being the monthly advance of wages given to a man on signing on, so that he could purchase the necessary kit, etc. before sailing. This first months work was done for money already received and spent. In the Merchant Service it was customary at the end of the month to make a canvas effigy of a horse and hoist it up to the tune of that well known old chanty: "They say old horse you're dead and gone --- They say so, and I hope so." At the conclusion of the chanty the effigy was cut adrift, and any work done after that was considered good as it was paid for afterward---probably on paying off.

At Malta, near the top of San Giovanni, on the Southern side, there is an implement known as Promotion Hook. Custom ordains that junior Officers desirous of being promoted in the Service must crawl through this hook or staple whilst ascending the steep street of San Giovanni.

Professor Zammit informs me that this hook originally stood at the corner of San Giovanni and Strada Mercanti, and was used in connection with the pillory which was at this corner, certainly as late as the time of Grand Master Pinto, who functioned between 1741 and 1773. This pillory was used in connection with the Court of Justice known as the Castallania. The hook appears to have been moved down the street towards the end of the 19th Century in order to make room for a shop window.

In the old first-rates, the after bulkhead was pierced by a door amidships which opened from the Captain's cabin to the half deck, which space was covered by the Quarterdeck. The half deck was also known as the "Steerage", from the fact that the steering wheels and binnacles were placed there. The term Guard and Steerage refers to the Guard and those people who were entitled to sling into the Steerage and who did not necessarily turn out with the hands. The old cry for calling the hands given in full was:

> Out or down there! Out or down there! all hands rouse out, rouse out, rouse out. Lash and carry, lash and carry, show a leg or else a Purser's stocking. Rouse and shine, rouse and shine, lash up and stow, lash up and stow, lash up and stow.

Often followed by the words:

> It's tomorrow morning, and the sun's a-scorching your eyes out.

The imaginative Boatswain's Mate would sometimes conclude their remarks by informing all and sundry that they were off the cloudy coast of Cornwall, or the sunny coast of Spain, or other information of a line nature.

Hammocks (of Hamacs) according to Admiral W.H. Smyth are the undisputed invention of Aleibiades.

Columbus found them in use in the Bahamas Islands.

The modern word is said to be derived from the language of the Carribbs and the article itself was introduced into the Navy about 1850, probably as the result of the experience of Sir Francis Drake and many other Elizabethean seamen who had frequent dealing with these natives.

In the old days when the raised forecastle and aftercastle were carried in ships, as a historian says in the reign of Queen Elizabeth "The more for their Majesty to astonish the enemy". It was customary to refer to the aft structure as the aftercastle, and it is this reason that a careful Captain of the Quarterdeck to this day marks his wash-deck with the mystic "AXLE" or "AX".

Whilst on the subject of customs, it might be advantageous to recall some of those which have fallen into disuse since 1914. They are many and varied. No longer do we have the smoking circle and smoking lantern on the upper deck. Boats do not challenge each other by tossing their oars or letting fly their sheets off the starboard gangway of the ship they desire to compete against. In the evenings we seldom see the old games such as Priests of the Parish (which was a sort of gamble resorted to in the olden days with a man's prize money as the stake), Biffers, and Sling the Monkey.

Signalmen, when hoisting and lowering the colours, no longer remove their caps. At the issue of rum, the Band nowadays does not play one of the old-time tunes, such as "Nancy Dawson" or "Drops of Brandy", and we do not clear up decks or beat the quarters with the drum. These two latter customs were falling into disuse prior to the war, but were done in a few ships of which the "HINDUSTAN" was one.

A ship going home to pay off was always played out of harbour and it was considered a thing of some importance that she should be given a proper send off, but this is not always now an organized effort on the part of the Fleet as it used to be. The paying off pendant, however, is still with us. When the Atlantic Fleet left Gibraltar to pay off in 1912, the "Venerable" was the third ship in the line, and we requested the Prince of Wales, which was the Flagship, to haul in her pendant somewhat, as the fly was dangerously close to our standard compass. All the ships in the squadron had approximately the same length of pendant.

Custom ordains that its length should be that of the ship if the ship pays off on the proper date and up to the accepted time. An extra length is added for every period, e.g. - for commission which is stretched from two years to two years and two months, the length would be: the length of the ship plus one twelfth..

The custom is alleged to have originated in the 19th Century when all cleaning rags were put together and hoisted as a sign that they were finished with.

The Admiral's or Captain's Joiner dates from the time when a craftsman of that nature was always carried in ships to keep in repair the wonderful gilded scroll work and carving, generally called Gingerbread work, which ornamented the stern and quarter galleries of the old ships and which first became really prominent in Henry VIII's "Grace a Dieu" or "Great Harry", hence the term to knock the gilt off the Gingerbread.

Idlers was the official general term that embraced all who are now designated as "Daymen" (Coopers, Painters, Blacksmiths, etc., and all other Artisan Ratings who normally kept no night watches). The term existed till quite recent times and was abolished due to it being a very inapt appellation for a highly skilled and hardworking body of craftsmen.

The following nicknames need little explanation, but are almost forgotten. The Master or Navigator was formerly known as Old Spundlings, and his assistant to this day is known as Tankey, and so also is the Captain of the Hold known on the lower deck. The Navigator or Master in former times was in charge of the fresh water of a ship, although nowadays this duty really devolves on other Officers. Tommy Pipes was the Boatswain, and Old Blue Lights was the Gunner. We have already referred to Mr. Nipcheese.

The Royal Marines have been known by many and various nicknames, but that of Cheeks dates from the Nelsonic period when the skirts of a Marine's coat or tunic were looped so as to give free play to the legs, and on looking at a Marine dressed in this manner from the stern view, the inference is obvious. Before the amalgamation of the Royal Marine Artillery and the Royal Marine Light Infantry, they were known at sea by the nicknames of Bullocks and Turkeys, respectively. The Royal Marine Artillery was noted for their magnificent physique and size, while the Royal Marine Light Infantry were clothed in scarlet tunic the same as the Infantry of the Line, hence the above appellations.

A sailor, when speaking of any Royal Marine, often referred to him as a Leatherneck, and sometimes used the same term for soldiers as a whole, the reason being due to the leather tongue which closed the opening of the collar in the military pattern tunic. The Royals is another term by which the Royal Marine is known, but this is never used when talking to any of H.M. Land Forces, as in military circles it refers to the Royal Dragoon Guards.

The soldier is also sometimes referred to as a Pongo, a Grabby, a Bazook, or a Swaddy, the latter being an Army expression which the sailor has borrowed in the same way that the Army borrowed our word Matelot. In military circles the sailor is described as a Flatfoot, a Baggy, a Blue, or a Matelot. The expression Webfoot is also sometimes used but, strictly speaking, this is the sailors term for a West Country seaman.

Tell that to the Marines. Should anyone doubt the truth of a story, he may make use of this expression in order to politely demonstrate a fact. Many and various are the origins attributed to this expression, and the well known writer, Colonel W.P. Drury, Royal Marines, gives an origin which accords so well that I am led to believe that such may possibly be true and correct explanations. The "Merry Monarch", King Charles II, doubted the veracity of one of his attendants at Court who stated that when serving in the Southern Seas, fish had been observed which flew in the air. The King loth to cast aspersions on the integrity of the recounteur referred the matter to a Marine Officer who was attending his person, and the Marine Officer vouched for the truth of the assertion. The King thereupon remarked "That in future should he have any occasion to doubt any statement, we will first tell it to the Marines".

From the ubiquitous nature of their service, the Royal Marines are certainly very well qualified to judge the facts of any Traveller's Tale.

Some aver that the expression took its birth due to the fact that the Marines were a Military Force and, therefore, apt to be credulous regarding matters connected with maritime affairs, but many consider that the story is apocrypha (even though Byron refers to it in 1823 - "The Island", ii, XXI).

It is probably rare in these days to find that the old custom of Christening Midshipmen is kept up. The ceremony used to be carried out in the case of all newly appointed junior "YOUNG Gentlemen" and consisted of a plate of ships biscuit being broken on the head of the subject, who also had to drink some sea water, and frequently was given a dozen with his own dirk scabbard for having the temerity to bring his name to sea.

It was not unknown for the subject to have a broad arrow lightly nicked on his nose with a razor, the owner of the nose to heal the soonest being subsequently dealt with again in order to chasten his vile body for so soon discarding His Majesty's mark.

Junior Midshipmen were always known as Crabs or Warts, and no opportunity was ever lost of impressing on them that their status in the state of creation was after that of a black beetle.

Snotty is a slang term for a Midshipman and is derived from the allegation that these Officers used to make their sleeves do duty as handkerchiefs, and to obviate this practice buttons were placed on the cuffs. The term Wart is used to demonstrate the fact that Midshipmen is an excrescence on the fact of nature.

Everything on top and nothing handy, like a Midshipman's chest, is used to describe any gear carelessly stowed.

The old term for a Midshipman was a Young Gentleman or Reefer, and the latter word is still used to designate the coats worn by subordinate Officers who have not yet attained the dignity of their first gold stripe. The short (pointed back) type of jacket worn by these Officers when in best uniform is known as a freezer, and the reason is not far to seek. Regarding the universally held opinion as to the lowly estate of Midshipman, it may not be out of place to recall that Admiral Collingwood announced that he would teach his people to touch their hats to a Reefer's coat, even if it was only hung on a broomstick to dry. From his remark it may be inferred that he subscribed to the generally accepted view concerning the small importance of Midshipmen.

Midshipmen (and boys) with squeaky voices were made to jump with straight legs from the capstan head on to the deck until the desired gruffness had been attained. This was known as Capstan Drill.

The Lady of Gunroom was the servant who washed up and generally "Did for" the members of the mess. In the old days this rating was sometimes a negro, and more often than not was led a dog's life by "The Young Gentlemen". The term came to be applied to the general utility member of the pantry staff of the Gunroom.

In a certain battleship in 1912, a Private of Royal Marines acted to this capacity to the Gunroom Mess, and eventually filed an official request "To be relieved from Lady of the Gunroom and return to the Detachment". He was prevailed upon to try again and I believe had no cause to regret his decision as the Midshipmen played the game by him whereby he largely profitted while they obtained the services of an experienced guide, a willing servant and an indefatigable resourceful friend.

The old term for a Lieutenant was a Luff. The First Lieutenant used to be known as the First Luff, but nowadays he is more usually referred to as Jimmy the One or Jimmy the First Person.

There are various surnames which have always had an artificial tally attached, and I will recount those which I know, together with the reasons that I can trace: Nobby Ewart, Hewitt, or Clarke; Bandy Evans, Slinger Woods, Knocker White, Dodger Long, Spike Sullivan, Wiggy Bennett, Nosy Parker, Pincher Martin, Dusty Miller, Ginger Casy, Cosher Hinds or Hynes, Buck Taylor, Sharkey Ward, Jumper Collins or Short, Granny Henderson or Anderson, Shiner Wright, Nigger Black, Hookey Walker, Tosh Gilbert, Daisy Bell, Spud Murphy, Jerry Ring, Guy Vaughan, Chats Harris, Jimmy Green, Johnny Bone, Kitty Wells, Harry Freeman, Bogie Knight, and Rusty Steel. Tug was the nickname attached to Admiral of the Fleet, Sir Arthur Knyvet Wilson, V.G., and cannot be traced to any older origin. Since its introduction it has become the tally for all men named Wilson.

Pincher Martin was a very alert officer who was C.C. Med., 1860. His brother was known as Fly Martin, after the name of a ship which he once commanded.

Charles Edward **EWART** was the Captain of the Melpomone in Mediterranean, 1859-62. Nobby EWART was the famous Captain, who was so keen on spit and polish that he was displeased because his private stock of poultry was not fallen in and cleaned for Sunday Rounds. The person in charge had been severely punished on one occasion for neglecting this duty, and on a future occasion hit on the expedient of painting the birds and falling them in on a plank by means of a tin tack through the webs of the ducks and a staple over the toes of the chickens.

Hookey Walker is probably derived from Mr. John Walker, an outdoor clerk of Messers, Longman Clementini and Co., formerly of Cheapside. He was noted for his hook nose, and his office was to keep the workmen up to their work. It is believed that he frequently invented unfavourable reports in order to keep himself in office. I cannot find out at exactly what date this worthy flourished, but I think it somewhere about 1800.

Harry Freeman is stated by Dr. Brewer, possibly to have been connected with the expression Drinking at Freeman's Quay. Porters and Carmen calling at Freeman's Quay near London Bridge had a pot of beer given to them gratis. The eminent Doctor casts doubts upon the truth of this practice, but I have heard that a certain drayman of the City of London named Freeman used to provide part of his wages in beer or, on occasion, distribute rewards in the shape of liquor to his employees.

Johnny Bone was, to use a latter day expression, an eminent Scrounger, or Rabbitter, and was Boatswain to Admiral Cornwallis who remarked to Mr. Bone on parting: "I trust, Mr. Bone, you will leave me my anchors". Hence, possibly, the expression to bone something.

Stores illicitly acquired are still sometimes referred to as Capperbar.

Sharkey WARD is possibly derived from the ferocious pirate and buccaneer who was the terror of the West Indian and Carribean waters and whose name, with that of Teach and Blackbeard, has passed down to posterity in a manner somewhat devoid of repute.

Chats Harris, I conclude to be a person of somewhat unsavoury characteristics. The old English word for a louse was a Chat, and in this connection the phrase Happy and Chatty way may be stated to be of somewhat considerable antiquity.

Tosh Gilbert I should say was a Gentleman highly skilled in the art of Toshing, which was an old term for stealing the copper off the bottoms of sheathed ships. Ginger Casey, I think, explains itself. I have known many Caseys, but only one have I met of that name who could be described as anything but "Ginger".

To spin a cuffer is the same as spinning a yard, but the more improbable the story, the more does the term Cuffer apply.

The term Bum Boat is still with us and is probably an abbreviated form of Bombard boat which was so called because provisions and liquor used to be carried by these boats in large receptacles shaped like and called after the old fashioned bombard or mortar. Receptacles so named are referred to by Shakespeare.

A bombard was also the old name for a type of two-masted vessels in use in the Mediterranean.

Concerning Mother Carey's Chickens, better known as Stormy Petrels, Captain Glasscock, writing in 1826 concerning sailors' superstitions, describes how the "Tiger" East Indian, eastward bound for the Cape, was persistently followed by bad weather and, when off the Cape, nearly Floundered. A passenger called Mother Carey appeared to have a peculiar affinity to the birds and was concluded by the Ship's Company to be a witch. The sailors were debating the question of putting the good lady overboard when she settled the matter by springing over the side and going down in a "Blue Flame". The birds which had assumed monstrous proportions vanished in a moment and left the "Tiger" to pursue her voyage in peace. These birds, it appears, have been known as "Mother Carey's Chickens" ever since.

To marry the Gunner's daughter was an expression which meant being laid over the gun to receive a flogging.

To buy goose meant to receive a flogging, although when used in the following sense "I see no reason to buy goose for you", it meant, I see no reason why I should stand a rub for your misdemeanours.

Goose without gravy was a flogging of so light a nature that blood was not drawn.

Up to recent times many old fashioned Captains referred to their ship's companies as "My People". In many old logs we find the expression in frequent use and see references such as the People engaged in knotting and splicing the rigging.

Captains still refer to my ship, my boats, my First Lieutenant, etc., but in the days when Masters were borne on the books of ships, no Captain ever spoke of him as "My Master"! He was always referred to as the Master.

A Stone Frigate is a term used for a shore appointment.

To strike down is the correct term used when lowering such articles as ammunition, stores, provisions, etc. into their respective magazines or store rooms in order that they may be stowed.

The word Starboard is derived from the old Saxon steeraboard or steerboard, which was a paddle shipped on the starboard quarter to act as a rudder.

Larboard was the opposite side and corresponds with the term Port. I have heard it suggested that the term Larboard was a corruption of Leeboard, but cannot vouch for this. The Italians derived the word Starboard from Questa borda --- meaning "This Side", and Larboard from Quella borda --- that side, this being abbreviated to Starborda and Larborda. The term Port is not of very modern origin as it is mentioned Arthur Pitt's voyage in 1580. I don't know whether there is any truth in the suggestion that the term Port was derived from the custom of preferably placing this side towards the shore when going alongside, owing to the fact that the Leeboard could be easily unrigged so as to avoid being damaged, while the Steerboard would be required to navigate the ship into the required position.

Flying the blue pigeon is sometimes used as an expression for having the lead. With a good swing, the lead can be made to emit a cooing sound like a wood pigeon.

To splice the main brace. There are many different explanations concerning the origin of this expression, but it is generally considered that this operation was one of such rarity that it merited the serving out of an extra tot. The Main Brace being one of the heaviest pieces of running rigging in the ship was probably seldom spliced but presumably renewed instead.

While serving in North Russia I have seen the Main Brace spliced by order twice in one day on the news of the declaration of Peace on 19 July, 1919. The expression was certainly well known in 1750.

In 1917 H.M. Ships Sir Thomas Picton and Earl of Peterborough (Monitors) were lent to the Italians to carry out a bombardment and were supplied with a large carboy of wine by the Italian Commander in Chief and Chief of Staff, and the Main Brace was spliced during the evening. I do not know of any other occasion when H.M. Ships have ever spliced the main brace with liquor supplied by a Foreign Government.

Short Service men were often referred to as Selborne's Light Horse. Short Service was introduced when Lord Selborne was First Lord.

To settle a matter with a Loose foretopsail means, of course, to end or evade an argument by departing.

To pay one's debts with the top sail sheet means to depart without settling one's dues.

A rope is said to Hang Judas when it is insecurely belayed, or False when taking any strain.

To Sway the Main rather infers to swagger, or to assert oneself in an aggresive manner, and probably derives its origin from the fact that in former days everything appertaining to the mainmast, in sail drill, was particularly the charge of the Executive Officer.

To trice your ears out on a bowline means to listen attentively. The weather leeches used to be hauled out by bowlines to enable a ship to sail closer to the wind. The bowline bridles were secured to the cringles on the leech by the well known bowline knot.

As long as the maintop, bowline meant any long drawn out affair and was often used to describe an interminably long story. The main top bowline was generally regarded as the longest rope in the ship.

To hoist a stocking to your jib or a bonnet to your top-sail means to expedite one's movements in the same way as the speed of a ship used to be increased by an additional spread of canvas laced to a sail. Those for the Jib were called stockings, and those for the top-sails, Bonnets.

A ship's masts or funnels are said to rake when they lean aft. Should they lean forward they are said to have Bosn's Pride, or to tumble forward. This expression is due to the fact that the Bosun was the officer who used to be (under the Navigating Officer) in charge of the ship's rigging, and whose particular duty it was to square yards and set up all rigging after the completion of any evolution aloft. Thus any very conscientious Bosun might be over-zealous in setting up or squaring off the rigging, with the result that he might give Bosn's Pride to a mast or spar due to an excess of zeal.

To set up backstays for anyone means to smooth over the results of their faults, and again refers to the fact that the duty of the Bosun was, after an evolution aloft, to square off the yards and rigging and see that all was left shipshape.

A black dog for a white monkey means a quid pro quo.

A Banyan Party, nowadays, has come to mean a cheery party, possibly in connection with a picnic. Banyan Days were formerly Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and were days on which no meat was issued. This restriction was removed in 1884. The term is derived from a religious sect in the East who believed it wicked to eat any creature endued with life. It would appear that the present meaning of the term is derived from the fact that men were accustomed to save up odds and ends of their rations in order to make delicacies to tide them over on fast days.

Like a Pusser's shirt on a Handspike described any gross misfit or any badly fitting suit of clothes or sails.

A King John's man is a person of particularly small stature.

Dodging Pompey is skulking from any particular duty. Some say that the town of Portsmouth is so called for the following reason, and I am indebted to the town clerk of Portsmouth for this information. Some years ago, Miss Agnes Weston, in the early days of her career, was talking to an assembly of sailors and she told them the story of Pompey, the Roman General, of his battles and the success he won on the field of battle, and of his subsequent decline in popularity when he entered the political arena, and his ultimate murder, and thereupon somebody in the room exclaimed Poor old Pompey. This seems to have amused the audience, the exclamation caught on, and from that day it has been associated with the name of Portsmouth in the Services and locally.

Others consider that the nickname of Pompey is the drunkards inarticulate method of pronouncing the words Portsmouth Point, which was the neighbourhood in which the sailor in olden days spent his time in hilarious conviviality. I am inclined to believe the latter explanation, as it is certainly of older origin.

Regarding the name of Guzzle for Davenport, the following is the explanation rendered by the Town Clerk of Plymouth, who considers that in the old days, after cruising about for long periods on indifferent and insufficient rations, the Navy always looked forward to good food in the shape of Devonshire cream and butter when they put in at Plymouth.

A Tom Cox's Traverse is described by Admiral Smith, writing in 1867, as up one hatch and down another, or three turns around the longboat and a pull at the scuttle. I have also heard that it was the name of a tyro in navigation who took three weeks beating round the South Foreland. In any case, its meaning is the longest possible method of getting on with the job of work.

It is better than two nibbles in a hook-pot. A nibby is the slang term for a ship's biscuit, and a hook-pot was an article which only disappeared in recent years. A ship's biscuit was placed in the hook-pot to soak in front of the fire, and was the last hospitality which could be offered from one person to another.

Touching ship's biscuits. It is very rare to hear broken ship's biscuits referred to as Midshipman's nuts, and in present day gunrooms, among the customs which have died out, is the ancient one of making Midshipman's Goose or Crab, which consisted of pickles, salt beef, salt pork, ground biscuit and any other commodity which came handy, including cheese.

Legs like a Torpoint ropemaker is one of the many time-honoured jests borrowed from the West Country, and means a person who is bandy-legged. It was described to me by an old West Country Boatswain as a person who is so bandy-legged that he carries his knees a-burton and his calves before-all. This affliction was presumably caused by the practice of straddling the rope while working the Top at some West Country rope walk.

To pull one's pound refers to the fact that a certain weight of rations was issued in order that a man's strength might be maintained so as to enable him to do hard manual work. Thus, Lend us your pound here, was a request for a man to turn out and exert his utmost strength.

To Lend a Hand is to assist in the operation in progress.

To Bear a Hand is to be quick or smart in the performance of any task.

Handsomely means slowly or with caution, and Roundly, as quickly as possible. Both orders are in common use for Hoisting boats or working tackles.

To be at Loggerheads with someone is a well known phrase which has been borrowed from sea parlance. Loggerheads were balls of iron connected together by an iron bar about three to four feet in length. The balls, when heated, were used for melting pitch. The balls being so immovably connected were somewhat similar to two persons between whom no chance ofan approachment existed. They were, moreover, when in use, kept at a very high temperature.

The expression, Wash Out, when used in the sense to cancel or to erase, came into the Service when slates were used instead of the present day signal pads and message forms. Its use, alas has grown until the expression is so hackneyed and misused as to be offensive.

Tom Pepper was a person who, according to nautical traditions, was kicked out of hell for being a bigger liar than His Satanic Majesty. The term is mentioned by J.A. Gardner in his "Recollections" and appears to have been in use in 1787.

A Rogues Yarn is a coloured strand laid up in a Dockyard-made rope, not only to identify its place of manufacture, but to prevent its illicit sale. The following coloured yarns denoted the "Rope Walk" at which the rope was laid up: Portsmouth---Blue, Devonport---Red, Chatham---Yellow, and Haulbowline---Black.

Andrew Miller is still a slang term for His Majesty's Navy as a whole, and in my manuscript which disappeared in 1914, it was stated that Andrew Miller, who was believed to have been a particularly zealous Officer, worked the Press Gang at one time. Officers zealous in these matters were not popular along the waterside of the British Isles and, in support of this, I might mention a Tyneside song which I collected some years ago concerning Captain John Bover, who died on 20 May, 1782, and was buried in Newcastle Cathedral. He made a considerable stir in the Tyneside district during his life and his funeral was largely attended, but whether as a matter of relief or regret I am unable to state. I am indebted to the Senior Verger, Newcastle Cathedral for much information concerning him.

A Gobby was a Coastguard when this fore was under the jurisdiction of the Admiralty and open to Officers and men of the Royal Navy who were time expired or pensioners, but still fit for coastguard duties. The Coast Guard force is at present under the orders of the Board of Trade and is not so popular with the Naval Service and, in consequence, the term is not so much in evidence.

A Gobby Ship was an old expression denoting a Soft Number and was a harbour service ship to which "Reserve Fleetmen" were drafted on mobilization. These ships only proceeded to sea on special occasions such as test mobilization and Royal reviews, and were regarded as more or less time serving appointments with no prospects whatever for any Officer with ambition.

To celebrate the Siege of Gibraltar is an excuse for a tot. The various sieges of Gibraltar have covered such a period, that one is certain to be in order in the matter of the date, should one care to celebrate it.

Gibraltar has withstood thirteen sieges. The SUFFOLK (late 12th foot) was the senior regiment during the last stand (from 11 September, 1779 to 12 March, 1783), the most famous siege, and was rewarded by the crest of the Castle and Key and the motto "Montis Insignia Calpe", which insignia was granted to the Rock by Henry IV of Castille on 1462 after its capture from the Moorish King of Granada. The Suffolk Regiment served as Marines under Sir George Byng and in the Channel Fleet about 1792.

Mundungus, often used to describe any useless and unwanted material of a small nature, is the correct description for the dust of unmanufactured tobacco leaves, and is a dutiable article.

A Killick is the most ancient form of anchor known, and I personally have found in it what must have been almost its original form in the Western Isles of Scotland, Newfoundland, North Russia, China and India. A Leading Seaman is commonly called by this title.

A Raggle is a friend with whom one shares a rag bag, for polishing gear. To part Brass Rags is a sign of the dissolution of that friendship.

Chioque or Shyoake, is a beverage well known to the Merchant Seaman, both on the "Barberry Coast" in San Francisco and in Australian Ports. It was the accumulated heeltaps of all the glasses and was usually retailed at about four pence a gallon. Of course, only the disreputable bars dealt in this commodity.

Sucking the monkey is the unlawful or illicit obtaining of liquor, and derives its origin from the old pattern rum tub which was known as a monkey.

Monkey is also the nautical diminution: e.g. - Monkey Boom, Monkey Gaff, Monkey Jacket, Monkey Axle, Monkey Tail, etc.

Saltash Luck. Those Seamen who know the West Country and, I presume, there are a few who do not, will unhesitatingly agree that a wet shirt and no fish is very typical of the luck of a Saltash fisherman.

A smart ticket is the old name for a Hurt Certificate which is a document granted to an Officer or Man who is injured or wounded in the performance of his duties. He cannot be granted this certificate if injured owing to his own negligence, and the Officer issuing the document must certify as to the sobriety of the claimant at the time the injury was received. Smart Monkey was the monetary compensation awarded on the production of the Smart Ticket.

To have one's Boots Chalked. It used to be the practice for the Captain of a top or turret to try and chalk the soles of one's boots when going aloft for the first time or on entering the turret, and if he succeeded the victim was supposed to pay his footing.

A Gibby has been the sailors name for many years for his spoon. His knife is a Skinie. The word, however, is fast dying out. It may have been derived from the Gaelic word "skian", meaning knife. His fork is a Port Oar, this, on the face of it is quaint, as it is presumed that he used his fork with his left hand, and strictly speaking, it should, therefore, be a Starboard Oar.

Gib was an old term for a staff with a crook.

Mess traps of this nature are a comparatively recent article of supply in the Service, and formerly were either dispensed with altogether or bought as private property.

A receptacle which is empty is said to have a South wind in it, and a mixture which is half spirit and half water is known as a Nor'Wester. The more northerly the wind stands, the more the proportion of spirit. An East Wind has never been popular whereas a wind to the South'ard of West in home latitudes, although wet, both meteorologically and according to this definition, contained a lesser proportion of spirits and lacked popularity for that reason.

The term White Mice is an epithet applied to those deservedly unpopular persons, happily rare, who at various times have been employed by the Police and others to spy on their shipmates. They are also known as Marks, which, in theives jargon, also means informers.

To walk round someone like a cooper round a cask means to completely vanquish an opponent or to be able to deal with him at one's leisure with little fear of retaliation.

Ullage is the residue remaining in any box or cask whose contents have been taken into Service. It is also an expression of contempt for a person who is slow-witted and of little use.

An Urk is a similar type of witless individual but the term is more forcible and is of modern origin.

A Winger is the general term to denote any boy or very young Seaman who is adopted as a particular friend by an old and staid seaman. The term is far from being a complimentary one.

To go to wind'ard of anybody derives its origin from the time when the weather gauge was the all important thing in Naval tactics, and is anonymous with the term of Lee Bow somebody.

It was at the battle of 12 April, 1782 that Rodney's Flag Captain, Sir Charles Douglas, burst unceremoniously into the Admiral's Cabin and, in the excitement of the moment, announced to the Admiral that "God had given him his enemy on the Lee Bow". (De Grasse Off Martinique.)

Among the numerous Naval Stores carried in H.M. Ships, we find Shovel Navigator. These tools have nothing to do with the Navigating Officer; take their name from the time that the Lincolnshire canals were constructed about 1830 for inland Navigation, and this peculiar type of tool was used in the work, and the workmen came to be known as Navvies (an abbreviation from Navigators). In H.M.S. Queen Elizabeth our first entirely oil fired battleship, a Shovel Navigator, suitably mounted, used to be displayed surmounting the motto, "Lest we Forget". This motto, of course, referred to the remembrance of the heavy manual work and consequent dirt entailed by "Coaling Ship", which was always treated as an important evolution.

A Channel Fleet dish-up is the somewhat unhygenic method adopted due to shortage of water, of using the same water for washing up all plates and mess utensils and almost corresponds to the shore term of a Lick and a Promise. During the long blockades off Brest, under Admiral Cornwallis, the shortage of water was often severely felt, and it is possible that the term originated at this time.

We talked just now of a Cooper, which most useful rating is unfortunately dying out of the Service owing to the prevalence of tinned provisions. In fact, universally, coopering is no longer the job that it formerly was, but there are few Coopers now who know that the small anvil which was part of a Cooper's tools is properly called a Cooper's Study.

A clumsy, awkward person is described as being as handy as a cow in a spitkid. Kid is the term for any small wooden tub. Spitkid is the name given to the wooden tubs, of about two feet in diameter, which are issued for use as spitoons in the men's smoking places. In older ships, where the smoking pieces were always very crowded, there was often great difficulty experienced in accurately hitting the interior of this receptacle, and in some ships it was customary to allow a margin of twelve inches outside, this area being bounded by a chalked circle. Woe betide the man who not only missed the spitkid, but failed to register in the circle. His crime was unforgivable. He was generally sentenced to carry a spitkid for so many days or weeks, and his shipmates were expected not to neglect their opportunities. I remember the case of one Able Seaman, a Gunlayer First Class whose appearances were so frequent at the Captain's defaulter's table for the crime in question, that eventually the exasperated Captain reduced the man to the rating of Gunlayer Second Class "For being a damned bad shot".

We frequently use the term "-a-i-s-t-e-r-" (not W-a-s-t-e-r). It was formerly thought "That he who was not good enough for anything else was good enough for the waist", in other words, an unskilled rating who did the coolie work in the waist, whereas the smartest of the older men were stationed on the foc'sle and the smart young ones on the upper yards.

A Donkey, being the almost universl beast of burden, is used to denote a Naval artisan's tool chest, a sailmaker's or tailor's sewing machine, or any mechanical contrivance which saves manual labour.

A straw-filled mattress is known as a Donkey's breakfast.

While speaking of Upper Yardmen, I will refer to an expression which is almost dead, namely to be able to do something because you wear the tuck. I learnt this from a very old sea officer whose explanation was as follows: The Royal Yardmen of a ship considered themselves, very naturally, as the salt of the earth and, in consequence, before the Uniform Regulations were enforced they used to wear a tuck or pleat in the backs of their jumpers or coats, which was fastened in the centre with a little bow. They had exclusive use of certain public houses ashore and took care that folk who, in their opinion, were less worthy did not intrude. They were particularly careful when on shore to dress themselves in the height of nautical fashion so that everyone should know exactly what they themselves thought of their own prowess. Commander ROBINSON who is one of the greatest authorities on old custom connected with the Navy tells me that he can find no trace of this in the many hundreds of prints in his possession nor, as a Midshipman, does he remember seeing a jacket of this nature or hearing the expression. Nevertheless, I am certain that the custom was in vogue at one period, although it may not have been universal. The expression finally came to mean that unless you are particularly smart you need not expect any extra privileges.

The term Fanny Adams came into use in the Navy about the year 1867 when tinned mutton was introduced as a part of the ration. The nickname is ascribed to the fact that a somewhat notorious murder took place on 24 April, 1867 at Alton, Hants. The murdered was Frederick Baker, aged 29, a solicitor's clerk, and the victim was Fanny Adams, a child aged 9. Baker subsequently cut up the body and tried to conceal his crime but was tried at Winchester Assizes on 5 December, 1867 and in due course, hanged. In private life he was Secretary to a Debating Society and a Sunday School Teacher. Prior to the issue of the present Mess Traps, the men were accustomed to use the empty Fanny Adams tine, and the name "Fanny" thus came to be applied to the present receptacle which is now officially issued. Tinned mutton is no longer issued as a ration; but the nickname is still applied to a corned beef, which is in general use today.

In the Merchant Service, the nickname "Harriett Lane" is more usually heard. She was murdered by one, Henry Wainwright, a brush maker, of 215 Whitechapel Road, who buried the body September, 1874. H. Wainwright and Alice Day, his accomplice, were tried by Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, 22 November - 1 December, 1874, also Thomas Wainwright. Day was discharged for lack of evidence. Thomas Wainwright received 7 years for being an accessory. Henry Wainwright hanged at Newgate 21 December, 1875.

The arrest of the criminals was largely due to the efforts of one Alfred Philip Stokes.

In 1866 a plant for preparing tinned beef and mutton was installed at Deptford under the direction of a representative of Messrs Hogarth's of Aberdeen, and issues to the Fleet commenced from this source in 1867.

Salt Beef was not issued after 1904 although existing stocks were used until exhausted and lasted till about 1913. Salt Pork was withdrawn in 1926.

Jack Sillowe, a Jack-a-lift (abbreviated from Jack outside the lift) is a devil-may-care reckless individual sometimes described as "One who would spit to windward and call the cat a longtailed---d". Of course, to spit in any way promiscuously entailed the direct penalties, and to abuse the ship's eat or cast reflections on its parentage was a method of ensuring a run of ill-luck.

A fork in the bean, most of us have suffered from and has been handed down from the time when in the same mess, i.e.- the Midshipmen's berth - were men over 40 years of age and boys of 11 and 12. When the grog had circulated of an evening and the talk became neither prudish or refined, it was considered high time that the "Youngsters" (as they were termed) should leave the "Oldsters" to themselves. A fork was put in the bean and the last youngster to leave the mess was generally hauled back and Firked or Cobbed for his slackness in obeying.

There is an old saying that if one goes to sea and meets with bad weather, someone has neglected to pay for his amusement when on shore. As late as 1913, when coming home in a certain ship from Vigo, we encountered heavy weather in the Bay. In accordance with the Gunroom custom, we decided to hold a wing song on rounding Ushant but, owing to the weather, the Gunroom piano would not remain upright while the water was up to the coamings of the mess. Lots were ordered to be drawn by the junior members of the mess so as to discover who had contravened the ancient custom and made himself a Jonah by perpetrating the aforementioned crime. Strangely enough the lot fell on the Assistant Clerk who was tried by Gunroom Court Martial and, although ably defended by his confrere, the Captain's Clerk, was universally found "Guilty". He duly received a dozen with a dirk scabbard, and by eight o'clock that night the weather had sufficiently calmed to allow the sing song to take place. This is a fact, but I do not know whether there is any connection between the justice meted out to the Assistant Clerk (who ultimately confessed to the charge being true) and the change for the better in the meteorological conditions.

Breadcrumbs was the order to junior members of the Gunroom to stop their ears. Fishbones, to shut their eyes. Match Boxes, to shut their mouths and maintain strict silence. The order Match Boxes cannot be of very ancient origin as "Friction Matches" or any sort were not invented until 1829.

A Spithead Pheasant or a deep sea or one-eyed steak is a Kipper. In the days before the use of the pipe degenerated, Boatswain's Mates have also been known as Spithead Nightingales.

The Cook of the mess is still entitled by custom to what are known as Plushers, which is a term undoubtedly derived from the French word "Plus", and generally means the residue of any rum apportioned to the mess after each man has had his share. The term is generally used for prerequisites.

When passing a dish at the table and a person helps himself, leaving the person passing it to hold the dish is, at sea, considered so inexcusable as to warrant the person passing the dish to drop it, the charge for breaking being made against the one who helps himself from the dish without holding it. The latter may, however, claim exemption should he make use of the expression "Excuse the Marine". The reason for this is that when the ship is rolling it is often necessary to hold your food with one hand and feed yourself with the other. If one spends one's time holding dishes for others, one is apt to lose one's own share. Owing to the fact that a Marine in former times was looked upon very much as a soldier and not versed in sea manners or customs he was held excused.

A Dead Marine, of course, is well known as an empty bottle that has done its duty and is ready to do it again, but some have been known to suggest that the term is derived from the fact that an empty bottle always floats heads up, and it has been rumoured that a Marine will do this even when dead, owing to the traditional size of his feet. I think the former explanation is certainly the most just and decidedly the most apt. It is supposed that the Duke of Clarence made use of this term on one occasion, and the event is commemorated in verse by Col. W. Drury, R.N.

A soldier's wind is a breeze which enables a boat to reach its objective without wearing or tacking. Another old term for sailing with the wind abeam or on the quarter was Lasking.

A smart Nipper means, nowadays, a boy with his wits about him, but we can trace it back to the time when the anchor was weighed by means of a messenger which nippered to the cable. It was the duty of the boys to pass and cast off the nippers as necessary.

The Devil to pay and no pitch hot. The "Devil" is one of the hardest seams to pay being the upper outboard stroke. If the pitch was not hot, the job was rendered even more difficult.

Between the Devil and the Deep Sea does not refer to His Satanic Majesty, but to the aforementioned plank, meaning a person who was in this position had nothing between him and a watery grave.

To go through the Hoop was formerly a method of gauging hammocks so that they should have a uniform appearance when stowed in the nettings. If any doubt existed as to the size of a lashed-up hammock, it was put through a hoop, and if it failed to pass, the owner was punished. A hammock that went through too easily and presented a skimpy appearance was, and is still known as a Greyhound lash-up.

The Sun is over the Yard-arm meant that the sun had attained sufficient altitude and the day was sufficiently far advanced to take what is known as a Nooner.

In this connection, I might refer to the expression A Long Ship, which means that the hospitality of the mess is somewhat meagre, and presumably originated with the idea that it was a far cry from the Wardroom pantry to the Mess.

To take the can back for anyone means to take the blame for someone's faults, and at the same time to gain no advantage by so doing.

A Shifting Backstay is the expression used to denote a person who is made the tool of another. It is sometimes used to describe a fairweather friend.

Two hands for the King. In the Merchant Service, the expression is one hand for the ship and one hand for yourself, but in the Royal Navy the expression has long been current, Two hands for the King, in other words, get on with the job no matter what the consequences to yourself may be.

Cutting a Dido is an expression of comparatively recent date, and dates from the time when the "DIDO", which was a particularly clean ship serving on the Mediterranean Station about 30 years ago, had, on certain occasions, paraded around the Fleet before coming to an anchor in order to display her extraordinarily smart appearance.

To Sham Abraham means to malinger, and derives its name from a word in Bedlam which was appropriated for the reception of idiots. This ward was named "Abraham", and is cited by a writer named Burton in the "Anatomy of Melancholia", written in the year 1621.

In everybody's mess but in nobody's watch, is an expression which described a workshy, fairweather friend.

One of my Lord's Major's men is synonymous with the term a King's hard bargain, and dates from the time when the Lord Mayor, who, as Chief Magistrate of the City of London, frequently gave the option to delinquents appearing at his Court, of serving His Majesty's Navy or being committed to gaol. It is worthy of remark that the two were considered similar punishments. Even Doctor Johnson once remarked, although he knew nothing of nautical affairs, that he "Could not understand why people should go to sea when there were plenty of gaols on shore".

Different ships, different long splices, is the nautical equivalent of "Autres temps, autres moeurs".

A Rat in the forechains. To tell this to a Thames Bargee is to bring down on one's head a storm of invective which there is no stopping, and is due to the fact that rats are commonly believed to leave a sinking ship; there is another and less polite cause. If, however, one wishes to get the better of a bargee, one has only to ask him "Who ate the puppy pie near Marlow Bridge?" The story is this: At Marlow Bridge, there formerly stood an Inn noted for the pies and the pantry window was so placed that barges passing through the bridge used frequently to steal the pies. Mine host discovered this, and one day made a pie from a litter of drowned puppies and left it in a tempting position near the window. The bait was taken by a passing bargee who ate the pie with relish until subsequently informed by the innkeeper of the nature of its contents. This remark has been known to leave a Thames Bargee speechless.

A Dover Court was all talkers and no hearers, and I have heard it suggested that it originated from the maritime Courts held at Dover in which, even today, one hears English, French, Dutch and Flemish spoken by foreigners who are sometimes forced to attend for crimes committed in connection with the North Sea Fisheries Act.

A Scarborough Warning is to let something go by the urn and without seeing that everyone was clear, i.e. - with no warning at all. The expression is of very ancient origin, as is also Jedburgh justice, which, to the old moss trooping days, meant to hang first and try the case afterwards.

A Parliament heel was the name given by sailors to the method of inspecting, cleaning, and ascertaining the rottenness of the ship's underwater timbers by heeling her over whilst still afloat, and shows that, even in former days, that august Institution was not held in particularly high esteem by the men of His Majesty's Navy.

It was during an operation of his nature that the "ROYAL GEORGE" foundered with the loss of Admiral Xempenfelt and most of her ship' company.

To DO something for the Collins, or Tom Collins, whether or no (i.e. - is agreeable or not). Tom Collins was a man of peculiar character who, I think, flourished about the middle of the 18th Century. He apparently served as Captain of the Haids, and today's a "Job for Tom Collins" or To see Tom Collins" amounts to the same as Hobson's Choice, i.e. - a matter of necessity, and that there is no way of getting out of it.

A Galley Packet is nowadays known as any "Buzz" started by the Cook's Mate. The galley was formerly the only place where smoking was permitted, and was the spot where the men fore-gathered to yarn and smoke.

Scaldings is the warning cry of any man carrying a hot dish from the galley, or any liquid which is liable to burn a person if spilled over them.

A Purser's name is a fictitious name given, for instance, when a man is arrested by the Civil Police, and certainly traces its origin from the fictitious names placed on the list by unscroupulous Pursers in order that they might draw the pay and allowance.

To risk the run is an old term which was in use with the old sailing convoys, and meant that if a ship risked the run she proceeded without escort. In sailing orders issued to me at Portsmouth during the war, I remember on one occasion that I was most strictly enjoined to allow no ships to Risk the Run, and it is the only time that I have ever seen this phrase used in present day documents.

To swallow the anchor is a thing that comes to everybody sooner or later who leave the sea for good. It implies that you will have no further use for one of the most trusty implements used in connection with the sea.

A Full Due is an expression meaning forever, or for a very long period, e.g. - anything lost overboard and irrecoverable is said to have gone for a full due. Likewise, a rope which will not be used for a long time may be delayed for a full due.

To be "Gazetted". This term is derived from the word "Gazette", a small coin used in the Adriatic and Lecant, and formerly the price of the first Venetian newspaper.

The Dutch being a seafaring nation, it is only natural that some of our nautical expressions should be described as Dutch.

A Dutchman's log is a crude method of computing the speed of a ship through the water. It consists of dropping a floating object overboard at the ~~stern~~ bow Thus, by a simple calculation the speed of the ship through the water is arrived at, providing the length of the ship is known.

A Dutchman's tackle (or purchase) is a means of expediting the work done by a purchase (or tackle) by reversing its "Mechanical advantage" and making it do the work required while it is being "Overhauled". A good example of this was the "Gun-loading cage purchase" of the old twelve-inch turrets.

The term is also used to describe a purchase (or tackle) whose efficiency is reduced to a minimum owing to friction, e.g. - the hauling part of a tackle being lead round a cleat instead of through a leading block, in a seamanlike manner.

A Dutchman's Breeches denoted a patch of blue sky to leeward during a storm. Being to leeward its presence is of no material benefit at the moment, but it is a hopeful sign of better time to come, in the same way that the patches in a Dutchman's breeches are a sign that the owner thereof has observed their state of disrepair, and is dealing with the situation, even though his sartorial efforts do not materially assist in benefitting his personal appearance.

A Dutchman's pendant is the term used to describe any stray yarn or rope's end flying loose aloft. This is sometimes wrongly described as an Irish pendant which ought only to be used when referring to the frayed "Fly" or end of an Ensign, pendant or flag.

The same rule applies to the term, a dead man, which, strictly speaking, refers to any yarn or other untidiness lying about on a level with the deck.

A segment of the full arc of a rainbow is know as a windog and by many it is supposed to be a sign of the approach of gusty squally weather.

A flat calm is sometimes referred to by the expression, the wind is up and down the mast.

To Hog out (say a boat or mess) is derived from the old Hog, which was a stiff brush made of birch twigs and used to scrub a ship's bottom.

To Bear up as is well known, means to keep further off the wind --- the tiller being borne up to windward. The helmsman in ancient days also had to walk uphill to do this when the ship was heeling over. Merchant Service Officers have informed me that with them the order refers to the ship's head, and is equivalent to Luffing.

To warm the Bell or Flog the Glass is to advance the clock or to be previous over a job. Generally used in calling one's relief to take over the watch. An illegal and unpopular practice which is of little real use as it is apt to be returned.

Room to swing a cat. This expression is certainly of nautical origin and referred to the cat o' nine tails.

The cat is out of the bag, which is a term in common use on shore, may also have been derived from the fact that the Naval Cat o' nine tails was kept in a red baize bag or cover. The usual practice was for the weapon to be produced from the bag while the culprit was being seized up to the gratings and when no chance remained of him escaping punishment.

The Bitter or (Better) end was the inboard end of the hemp cable which was secured to the Bitts. It was also the better part of the cable as it was least subjected to wear and tear.

To be sick of the lay, is best described in modern parlance as being "fed-up", and is probably derived from the old term "Lay days" which were a specified period allowed for the congenial task of loading and discharging cargo or stores. In the Merchant Service, if the lay days were exceeded without excuse, demurrage could be claimed.

Touch and go. When a ship touches ground and goes clear.

Martinet means a strict disciplinarian, and takes its name from the French Marquis de Martinet which still is the nickname in the French Navy for the cat-o-nine tails.

Ditty Box is the receptacle in which a sailor keeps his private small effects, and used formerly to be a bag made of "Dittis" or "Manchester Stuff", in which needles, thread, etc., were kept. Much ink has been spilt over the origin of this term, and by many it is believed to be derived from the word "Dight" (to clean, repair or make good) still in common use in Scotland.

A Snob in naval parlance means a shoemaker, and a Jew, a tailor, while the Indian word Dobhey is used both for men who do laundry work and also for washed clothes.

A Goffer is a non-alcoholic drink, such as lemon squash, etc.

Men who privately combine to work at shoe-making, laundry, tailoring, etc., or manage a bar for soft drinks, are said to run a snobbing, dobhey, Jewing or Goffer firm as the case may be.

The present-day sailor seldom makes his own clothes, but refers to his repairing gear as his Jewing bag or more usually as his House-wife.

To be Yellowed or on the Yellow line was the old phrase whereby an Officer announced that the Board of Admiralty had intimated that he would receive no further employment. Nowadays the expression is to Get a blue ticket.

Kagg is a naval argument, and its origin is a mystery. More often than not a Kagg fulfills the well-known definition of a "positive assertion, a flat contradiction and personal abuse".

The Lurk has its shore-going equivalent of "to sting" and the expression may be used in many ways, e.g. - "To lurk someone for a glass of port", "To be lurked to take a patrol", "To lurk someone to keep a middle watch", etc.

Stepney. It is an old tradition of the East End of London, and of many seamen, that all children born sea, belong to Stepney parish. The old rhyme runs:

"He who sails on the wide sea
Is a parishioner of Stepney."

This rather wide claim to the parochial funds has often been made by paupers who have been borne at sea, and who used gravely to be sent to Stepney from all parts of the country; but various decisions of the superior courts have at different times decided against the traditional law, cited in Thornbury; Old and New London, Vol. 2 p. 142.

From time to time the Rector of Stepney has been notified of births and baptisms which have taken place at sea, so that they might be included in the parish registers. Such cases, however, are becoming more infrequent than formerly, and it is customary to note these events in the ships log and in due course, to inform Somerset House.

A good dressing down is described in nautical language as a dose from the foretopsman's bottle.

SUPERSTITIONS

Fishermen have a superstition that to see a Hare on the way down to the boat brings bad luck, and if one looks at some of the old books concerning witchcraft it will be seen that it was a common belief that witches frequently disguised themselves as hares.

A fisherman wears earrings to make him lively, and particularly to improve his eyesight. The fact that the ear had to be pierced may have had something to do with this, as we find that in the old prize fighting days it was a common practice to bite the ear of a man who had been knocked out in order that he might be brought round and so continue the fight.

Many fishermen are averse to using white stones for ballast, or a knife with a white handle, but none have been able to tell me why.

Of course, sailing on a Friday or on the 13th of the month is of Biblical origin and is well-known to everybody. To carry a Parson is often thought to be unlucky, as the Devil was considered to specially lay for the Padre and to visit the ship in order to compete with him, and it was on these grounds that his presence was considered undesirable.

To bring wind, it was customary to stick a knife in the mast with the handle pointing to the direction from which the wind was desired. I have heard that this belief was founded on the idea of storm accompanied by lightning springing up from the wished-for direction.

In the West country I have heard the belief expressed that the soul of old sailors inhabit sea gulls. Of course, the legend of the Ancient Mariner is well-known to everybody, but there is a quaint similarity between this belief and that held in the North Russia where it is thought that for three weeks after death, the soul of the departed enters into a pigeon. In many other countries similar beliefs also exist.

During the Dwina River campaign, I know that villagers, who frequently had relatives fighting on both sides, were most careful to feed pigeons that were about, and were highly incensed by the fact that British Officers frequently shot these birds for the pot.

To permit a glass to Ring is supposed to sound the knell of a sailor who will die in drowning. If, however, the ringing is stopped, "The Devil will take two soldiers in lieu."

In conclusion, let me quote an extract from a letter of JOHN PAUL JONES, to the Naval Committee of Congress, dated 14 September, 1776, regarding his opinion of what he considers desirable in a Naval Officer:

> "It is by no means that an Officer of the Navy should be a capable mariner; he must be that, of course, and also a good deal more. He should be, as well, a gentleman of liberal education, refined manners, punctilious courtesy and nicest sense of personal honour. Coming now to view the Naval Officer aboard ship and in relation to those under his command, he should be the soul of tact, patience, justice, firmness and charity. No meritorious act of a subordinate should escape his attention or be left to pass without its reward, even if the reward be only one of approval. Conversely, he should not be blind to a single fault in any subordinate, though at the same time he should be quick and unfailing to distinguish error from malice, thoughtlessness from incompetency, and well meant shortcomings from heedless or stupid blunder. As he should be universal and impartial in his rewards and approval of merit, so should he be judicial and unbending in his punishment or reproof of misconduct. In his intercourse with subordinates, he should ever maintain the attitude of the Commander, but that need by no means prevent him from the amenities of cordiality or the cultivation of good cheer within the proper limits."

"Every Commanding Officer should hold with subordinates such relations as will make them constantly anxious to sit at his table, and his hearing towards them should be such as encourages them to express their opinions to him with freedom and to ask his views without reserve. The Navy is essentially and necessarily aristocratic. True as may be the political principles for which we now contend, they can never be perfectly applied or even admitted onboard ship. Out of port or off soundings, this may seem a hardship, but it is nevertheless the simplest of truths. Whilst the ships sent forth by Congress may, and must fight for the principles of human right and republican freedom, the ships themselves must be ruled and commanded at sea under a system of absolute despotism."

I believe this letter is used as a preamble for the Articles of War of the United States Navy, and I can only think of one better, namely, our own, which is more than 500 years old and stated that, "It is the Navy whereon, under the good providence of God, the wealth, safety and strength of the Kingdom chiefly depend." The periodical reading of the Articles of War dates from an order issued by the Lord High Admiral of CHARLES II, and the fact that the Articles of War have been read is considered of such importance that a notation to the effect that they have been read quarterly to the ship's ledger is closed.

For the benefit of, and as a sot to those, whose "Principles and views are to be deplored, and who still consider that the Service has gone to the Devil", and yet do nothing to rectify the matter, I suggest that they lay to heart the following lines, attributed to Captain Marryat, which were engraved onboard and formerly were displayed in the old Admiralty waiting room, where Officers of a bygone period were detained when Waiting on My Lords in order to seek employment. The board and words now hang in the office of the Drafting Commander, Royal Naval Barracks, Portsmouth.

"In sore affliction, tried by God's command,
Of Patience, Job, the great example stands;
But in these days a trial more severe
Had been Job's lot, if God had sent him here."

- -

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