



CHIEF PETTY OFFICERS  
&  
PETTY OFFICERS  
MESS DINNER  
NAVAL CUSTOMS

## FORWARD

This pamphlet on Naval Customs for a Mess dinner in Chief Petty Officers' and Petty Officers' Messes is published for the guidance of all Mess members.

Historically military organizations have always taken on a life and routine based upon discipline, order and traditions that differ from normal civilian life. Many of our customs and traditions go back centuries to the earliest times of warriors. The roots of our Mess dinners go back to ancient times. It is believed that the pre-Christian Roman Legions began what we nowadays refer to as a Mess Dinner. The Roman military commander would hold a great banquet to honour individuals and units. These gatherings were victory feasts. All clansmen, with the exception of the lookout, would attend the feast. The leader took his place at the head of the table with all others seated to his right and left in descending order of rank. From the Northlands, these customs were transplanted to the British Isles, down to the Royal Navy and hence the Canadian Navy, which has continued this ritual steeped in military tradition.

## CHIEF PETTY OFFICERS' AND PETTY OFFICERS' MESS DINNER NAVAL CUSTOMS

In this pamphlet, the term "President / Gentlemen" is used when gentlemen only are present. When ladies only are present, the term "Madam President / Ladies" shall be used. When both ladies and gentlemen are present, the term "Madam President / Mr. President" or Ladies and Gentlemen" shall be used.

While the general procedure for a Mess dinner in Messes of the Canadian Forces is given in Chapter 5 of CFP 262, Naval traditions remain one of the prime components in the esprit-de-corps of the Navy. The Royal Navy, in the course of centuries, acquired numerous customs and usages, many of which were adopted by the Royal Canadian Navy. Hence, it is appropriate that Mess dinners held in Naval Messes be conducted in accordance with Naval Customs and Traditions.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to define the sequence of events, customs and traditions observed when dining in a Naval Mess, whether ashore or aboard one of Her Majesties Canadian Ships.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

A Mess dinner can be announced in a memorandum, routine orders, posted on the Mess notice board, or by a formal letter or invitation.

## WEARING APPAREL

The President will decree the order of dress to be worn.

The dress for Mess dinners will be posted on the Mess notice board, indicated in the invitation, letter, or promulgated in routine orders.

Naval personnel will wear Naval Mess Kit or N2 order of dress. Members of other services, when dining in a Naval Mess, shall wear their equivalent to the Mess dress ordered.

If civilians are invited to attend the Mess dinner, males shall wear a dinner jacket and tie and female shall wear an evening gown.

## PRESIDENT

The Mess President is normally the President of the Mess dinner, although the Vice-President or any other senior member of the Mess may be called upon to act as President of a Mess dinner.

Throughout the dinner, the President is in absolute charge, regardless of rank, branch or seniority.

The President may levy fines (in the form of libations) or take any other action the President deems necessary to maintain discipline.

## GUESTS

The Guest of Honour is the guest of the President. Other guests may be invited to a Mess dinner. Guests attending the dinner are the guests of the Mess and it is the responsibility of all Mess members to ensure that all guests are entertained and not left to fend for themselves.

## SEATING PLAN

The seating plan is prepared by the Mess Manager in consultation with the Mess President or a designated member of the Mess Committee.

The President will be seated at the head of the table. When the head table is a large table the President is seated in the center. When a small table is used, the President is seated at the end nearest the entrance to the dining room.

When dining at a large table the Vice-President sits farthest away from the President on the right side. At a small table, the Vice-President sits opposite the President.

Guests sit on the right of their hosts. If the host has two guests, they sit on either side of him/her. A host with three or more guests should have the guests seated on either side of him/her. Avoid placing guests immediately next to each other.

There should never be a vacant seat between two diners. If too many places have been laid, the senior steward will remove excess place settings and diners are to move in closer to the President and Vice-President, keeping the numbers on each side of them and of the table as even as possible.

## THE RINGING OF THE MESS BELL

A bell hanging from the bar or anywhere in a Naval mess is an important item. It is to be rung by the Mess President "only" or a designated appointee. Its ringing is a call for silence. A ringing by a rash adventurer will probably also bring silence, quickly broken by someone informing the transgressor that such an act will cost a round of drinks, for those present, and most likely a severe reprimand by the Mess President

## ENTRY

Dinner is normally served at 2000 hours. Invitations will read "1930 hours for 2000 hours." This indicates a 30-minute period allowing for sociable gathering.

The buglers will play "Mess Call" fifteen and again at five minutes prior to dinner. Five minutes prior to dinner the senior steward will enter the anteroom and report to the President "Dinner is served Mr./Madam President". The President and the Guest of Honour will lead the way into the dining room, followed by the other members of the head table, followed by the remaining diners. When the President and members march into the dining room the Band will normally strike up "The Roast Beef of Olde England" the tune to which Admiral Nelson and his officers are said to have gone to dinner in the Flagship. Upon entering the dining room, diners remain standing until the President and Guest of Honour are seated.

## COMMENCEMENT

When everyone is seated, the senior steward reports to the President, “Diners seated Mr./Madam President” and states whether or not a chaplain is present.

The President raps the gavel for silence.

The President will introduce the members of the Head Table, beginning with the Guest of Honour.

If a chaplain is in attendance, the chaplain will be called upon to say grace. If no chaplain is present, the President will designate the Vice-President or another member to say grace.

## ORDER OF SERVING

The President samples all wines served in order to judge whether the wine is fit for consumption.

The Guest of Honour is served before the President; however, no one may precede the President when eating or drinking.

No dish is removed until the last diner has finished eating the course then served. However, when the Mess dinner consists of a large number of diners, in order to expedite the dinner this rule is normally not followed.

Finger bowls may be provided when fresh fruit or other sweets are served.

When the last course has been eaten; the stewards will clear the table of everything, except the table decorations and port glasses.

## THE MENU

The menu should be balanced and interesting.

Appropriate wines and sherry are served with various courses.

At the order of the President, sherry and both white and red wines may be poured at the same time throughout the meal.

At the Presidents discretion, salvadores may be served or omitted from the Mess dinner.

## TABLE COVER

The table service encountered at a Naval Mess dinner is both impressive and attractive; however, may initially appear rather formidable. The latter need not be so. The basic rule for silverware is “start from the outside and work in”.

The stewards will ensure that the appropriate wine is dispensed into the correct wine glasses.

By Naval, tradition the table is arranged on its natural wood finish. If the dining tables are not of natural wood, a silent cloth and a table clothe may be used.

## PASSING THE PORT

When the table is cleared the senior steward reports to the President, “Table cleared, Mr./Madam President”.

The President will rap the gavel, for silence and thanks is given. The customary prayer is “For what we have received, thank God”.

The origin of the custom of passing the port always to the left is uncertain. It may be merely symbolic of the movement of the earth in turning toward the sun, which ripens the grape. The custom, which we know from early biblical times of protecting a man while he is drinking (in those days from the river) continued into a more recent era. When the cup of cheer was being passed, two men stood at a time, one to drink and the second, on his left, to defend him with a sword from attack in the rear. As the first finished he passed the cup to his defender, and the man on his left stood up.

The Port or Madeira decanters are always stoppered before the Loyal Toast is drunk. This practice suggests that the wine is served only for that purpose.

If the port is passed again the decanters, remain unstoppered until the decanters are removed from the table

In keeping with Naval tradition when passing the decanter between diners, the decanter should never be lifted off the table. Decanters should be slid from diner to diner.

At a large table, the President and Vice-Presidents have decanters placed in front of them. At a small table, all the decanters are placed before the President.

When all decanters are in place on the table the senior steward reports to the President “The port is ready to pass, Mr./Madam President”.

The President will rap the gavel and un-stopper all decanters in front of him/her holding the stopper(s) up for all to see and the Vice-Presidents then follow, in the same manner. When the Vice-Presidents have followed suit, the President will place the stopper on the table, Vice-Presidents will comply. The President will then slid the decanter(s) to the left and the Vice-Presidents do likewise.

The President and Vice-Presidents do not pour their own before passing the decanters.

The decanters should never be permitted to “pile up” beside a diner. If there is a gap at the end of the table, the steward will move the decanters across it.

When the port has been passed and all decanters have reached their destination, in front of the President and Vice-Presidents and they have poured their port, the senior steward reports to the President, “The port has been passed, Mr./Madam President”.

The President will rap the gavel, hold up the stopper and stopper the decanters in front of him/her; the Vice-Presidents follow suit.

No one may touch his/her port until the health of the Sovereign has been honoured.

It is not necessary to take port, if you do not wish to. Members are required to indicate prior to the Mess dinner their choice not to consume alcohol. The stewards may charge these glasses with a non-alcoholic beverage, “not” water. In civilian circles if you do not take wine your glass will be filled with water, however, in the Navy we never drink a toast in/with water, as superstition says that the subject of our solicitude will die by drowning.

**THE LOYAL TOAST IS ONLY CONDUCTED WITH PORT/WINE. THOSE DINERS WITHOUT WINE DO NOT DRINK A TOAST TO THE SOVEREIGN.**

### THE LOYAL TOAST

The custom of toasting is said to have begun with the ancient Greeks. The host took the first sip of wine to show his guest that it was not poisoned. Restaurants where wine is served allow the host to sample the wine before the guests’ glasses are filled. At a mess dinner it is forbidden to propose a toast before the Loyal Toast to the Sovereign, except that foreign heads of state are toasted first if foreign guests are present. In civilian circles, it is permissible to drink toasts in water; naval superstition presupposes death by drowning for the personage toasted. Likewise, a glass that rings tolls the death of a sailor; stop the ring and the Devil takes two soldiers in lieu. This will explain why naval personnel never clink glasses in drinking a toast.

At Mess dinners, it is our custom to propose what was known as the Toast Of The Day. The list that seems to be most commonly followed dates from before Trafalgar



In Naval Messes whether on shore or afloat, the health of our Sovereign, Her Majesty The Queen of Canada, shall be honoured while seated even when the National Anthem is played.

Two kings of England, Charles II (1660 - 1685) and William IV (1830 - 1837), are each credited with authorizing the drinking of the Loyal Toast while seated. Whichever king it was, when he rose in one of his ships to reply to a toast while seated. He is reputed to have added "Gentlemen, your loyalty is not questioned". Officers do not stand even when the National Anthem is played (Q.R.C.N. 61.03), except of course when the sovereign, a member of the Royal Family, or a foreign head of state is present, or when foreign guests are present and the head of any foreign state is toasted first, so our own sovereign will not suffer offence. The officers of H.M.S. BRITANNIA, the Royal Yacht, as specially favoured servants of the Crown, always rise for the Loyal Toast. Except for this ancient privilege of drinking the health of Her Majesty while seated in naval messes, all toasts are drunk by naval officers while standing. Military and air force officers of the Commonwealth conform to our practice when dining with us.

When the call for the Loyal Toast is given in English the response shall be given in French and vice-a-versa.

The President raps the gavel for silence and says, "Mr./Madam Vice, The Queen"  
("Messieurs/Madam Vice, La Reine")

When the Band is in attendance they will play "God Save The Queen", after which the Vice-President responds with "Mesdames et Messieurs, La Reine du Canada" ("Ladies and Gentlemen, The Queen").

All diners raise their glasses in front of them and repeat "The Queen, God Bless Her". Those with port/wine drink the toast. Those without port/wine do not drink.

The exceptions are:

When Her Majesty The Queen of Canada, His Royal Highness, the Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, or any other member of the Royal Family is present, these toasts will be honoured standing, unless Her Majesty, His Royal Highness, or other members of the Royal Family has expressed a wish that Naval members should remain seated. (The pleasure of the Royal Personage concerned, on the procedure to be adopted, should be sought before the meal).

When foreign official guests are present and toasts to heads of state other than Commonwealth countries are included those toasts and that to Her Majesty shall be drunk standing whether National Anthems are played or not;

The first toast shall always be proposed in English, but if applicable, shall be repeated in French or the language of the visitor(s).

National Anthems should be played as an accompaniment to a toast whenever a band is present. When a National Anthem of another nation is played, in accompaniment to a toast, an abbreviated version shall not be used unless it has been ascertained that this is in accordance with the custom of the country concerned.

The sequence of the Toasts will be determined by the President prior to the commencement of the Mess dinner.

### TOAST OF THE DAY

The President will rap the gavel and ask the most junior member present to deliver the Toast Of The Day. The designated member will rise and give the appropriate toast. The Member may begin by providing those in attendance with a short dissertation on the toast of the day, prior to delivering the Toast.

There is no official recorded of the original toast of the day; however, these have been given (by an old Naval Officer) as being in vogue in Nelson's day:

#### **OLD TOAST OF THE DAY**

Monday – Our ships at sea

Tuesday – Our men

Wednesday – Ourselves

Thursday – A bloody war and a sickly season (to ensure quicker promotion)

Friday – A willing foe and sea room

Saturday – Wives and Sweethearts. The reply is “shall they never meet”  
(made by the youngest member present)

Sunday – Absent friends.

#### **PRESENT TOAST OF THE DAY - Effective 2 May 1999**

Monday - Our Ships

Tuesday - Our Sailors

Wednesday - Ourselves

Thursday - Our Navy

Friday - Our Nation

Saturday - Our Families

Sunday - Absent Friends

### AUTHORIZED MARCHES

In accordance with CFAO 32-3 Annex A, authorized marches may be played in the proper order of precedence. When the Marches are played, the Members are required to stand for their respective Marches.

## SMOKING

In years past, cigars and cigarettes were served at the end of the meal. However, in keeping with the policies of the day, smoking is no longer considered a part of the Naval Mess dinner tradition.

## END OF THE MEAL INVITES BY THE PRESIDENT

At the end of the meal, after the tables have been cleared of all items except the port, the President will instruct the senior steward to gather the staff and if the band is in attendance the Bandmaster and have them line up at the far end of the dining tables. When they are in place the President will rap the gavel, to call for silence, rise and thank them for the fine food, excellent service and outstanding music they provided in support of the Mess dinner. The President will then ask those assembled to join him in thanking the staff. The President will then ask the senior steward, cook and band master to join him/her in a glass of port. Port glasses and chairs should be pre-positioned by the head table. While the President is thanking these people, the diners will be instructed to quietly talk amongst themselves.

## REMOVAL OF WINE

The President may order the port removed after the toasts have been made; however, it is customary to pass the decanters at least once more.

After the decanters are passed a second time, the stoppers are left off until the port is finally removed upon the President's order.

## RULES OF ORDER

As soon as the President raps the gavel for grace, the following rules are rigidly in force:

- a. without the President's express permission no one may:
  - (1) enter and seat themselves at the table;
  - (2) leave the table;
  - (3) return to the table;
  - (4) read, except the menu and musical programme;
  - (5) write; and
  - (6) have a second helping of any course.
- b. if a diner wishes to address the President:
  - (1) he/she shall make their wish, to address the President, known to the Vice-President;
  - (2) the Vice-President shall rap his/her gavel for silence, stand, face the President and ask the President for permission for the member to address the President;
  - (3) the President will either grant or decline to hear what the member has to say;
  - (4) if permission is granted to address the President, the member will do so by stating Mr./Madame President, Guest Of Honour, distinguished guests [if any are present], fellow diners ....(and then state their topic)
  - (5) if required the President will administer his/her ruling.
- c. no diner may do the following:
  - (1) commence a course or drink of wine before the President;
  - (2) smoke;
  - (3) utter an oath or use foul language;
  - (4) place a bet or wager;

- (5) discuss political or other controversial subjects;
  - (6) talk shop;
  - (7) tell “smutty” stories; or
  - (8) propose a toast.
- d. if a diner has been granted permission to sit down late, or to return to the table, he/she continues with the course then being eaten or served, unless the President gives permission to eat the course which he or she missed;
  - e. whenever the President or Vice-President summons attention, by rapping the gavel, there must be silence until he/she has finished speaking.

### DISCIPLINE

During dinner, the President may discipline any diner for misbehaviour.

The President has three alternatives:

- a. warn the member;
- b. fine the member an appropriate number of libations; or
- c. order the culprit to depart the Mess.

### FINES

Fines may vary from a single libation to libations for all present

The President may award a libation to any diner or diners he/she chooses to name, including the President

Fines imposed upon a guest must be paid for by his/her host

Fines are never paid until after the toasts have been drunk and a customarily paid for after the completion of the Mess dinner

No diner who has “not” drunk the toasts in port/wine may accept payment for a fine

Toasts may never be drunk in the wine or port that is served in payment of a fine

## AFTER DINNER ENTERTAINMENT

In years past the diners would provide skits or musical entertainment to those assemble. Over the years, this tradition has been set aside. Nonetheless, following the Mess dinner, all members are required to retire to the anteroom for a sociable gathering.

Diners shall not leave the Mess, without permission, until the President and Guest of Honour has departed.

## NAVAL MESS DINNER SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- Assembly in the anteroom, **½ hours prior** to dinner in formal lounge
- Five minutes prior to dinner Senior Steward informs President that the dinner is ready
- The President passes word to the bugler or piper to play “Mess Call”
- As the dinners march in, the band will strike up “The Roast Beef of Olde England
- Senior Steward reports to the President that all members and guests are present
- The President raps the gavel for silence and the designated member is called upon to say Grace (“For what we are about to receive, thank God”)
- The President will sample all wines served
- Food and wine service commences
- When the meal is completed, the table is cleared of everything except decorations
- Senior Steward reports to the President that the table has been cleared
- The President raps the gavel for silence and thanks is given.  
(“For what we have received, thank God”)
- *The President **may** consider providing the diners with a 15-minute break*
- The port is then placed on the table (in front of the PMC and VPMC(s)) and Senior Steward reports to President that the port is ready to pass
- Un-stopper decanters. The President raps the gavel for silence and removes the stopper from the decanters. VPMCs follow suit
- The President and his Vices **do not** fill their glasses but pass the decanters to their “left”. Decanters are not to leave the table
- The Senior Steward reports to the President when the port has been passed
- The President will then rap the gavel for silence and replace the stopper. VPMCs follow suit
- The Loyal Toast, all remain seated. President raps the gavel for silence and says: “Mr. Vice, The Queen” (if the President calls for the Loyal Toast in English the response is given in French, if called for in French the response is given in English)
- The VPMC replies with “Mesdames and Messieurs, La Reine du Canada”
- The band will play God Save The Queen”
- **All diners remain seated**, raise their glasses and repeat “The Queen God Bless Her”
- All other toast are done standing
- Toast of the Day, as of 2 May 1999
  - o Monday – Our Ships
  - o Tuesday – Our Sailors
  - o Wednesday – Ourselves
  - o Thursday – Our Nay
  - o Friday – Our Nation
  - o Saturday – Our Families
  - o Sunday – Absent Friends
- Marches are played as directed by the President
- Coffee cups, cheese trays and salvadors (if applicable) are then placed on the tables
- Coffee is served
- The decanters are unstopped, passed again and the stoppers are left out until the President orders the decanters to be removed from the table(s)
- The staff is thanked
- The President then asks the bandmaster, senior cook and senior steward to join the members of the head table for a libation. During this time, attendees are directed to talk amongst themselves and not to disturb the PMC or members of the head table

- The President introduces the Guest of Honour. Speeches follow
- Indication that the dinner is officially over is given by the President standing until noticed by all members
- When silence is given the President will announce the formal ending of the Mess dinner
- The President will then invite all members to retire to the anteroom to meet with the Guest of Honour
- Members shall not leave the Mess without permission, until the President and Guest of Honour have departed



## THE NAVAL HYMN

Eternal Father, strong to save,  
Whose arm hath bound the restless wave,  
Who bidst the mighty ocean deep  
Its own appointed limits keep:  
O hear us when we cry to Thee  
For those in peril on the sea.

O Christ, whose voice the waters heard,  
And hushed their raging at Thy word,  
Who walkedst on the foaming deep,  
And calm amidst the storm didst sleep:  
O hear us when we cry to Thee  
For those in peril on the sea.

O Holy Spirit, who didst brood  
Upon the waters dark and rude,  
And bid their angry tumult cease,  
And give, for wild confusion, peace:  
O hear us when we cry to Thee  
For those in peril on the sea.

O Trinity of love and power,  
Our brethren's shield in danger's hour;  
From rock and tempest, fire and foe,  
Protect them whereso'er they go:  
Thus evermore shall rise to Thee  
Glad hymns of praise from land and sea.

## THE NAVAL PRAYER

O Eternal Lord God,  
who alone spread'st out the heavens,  
and rulest the raging of the sea;  
who has compassed the waters with bounds  
until day and night come to an end;  
be pleased to receive into Thy almighty and most gracious protection  
the persons of us Thy servants,  
and the Fleet in which we serve.

Preserve us from the dangers of the sea,  
and from the violence of the enemy;  
that we may be a safeguard unto our most gracious Sovereign Lady,  
Queen Elizabeth,  
and her Dominions,  
and a security for such as pass upon the seas upon their lawful occasions;  
that the inhabitants of our Commonwealth may in peace and quietness  
serve Thee our God;  
and that we may return in safety  
to enjoy the blessings of the land,  
with the fruits of our labours,  
and with a thankful remembrance of Thy mercies  
to praise and glorify Thy Holy Name;  
Amen.

## THE SAILOR'S PSALM

They that go down to the sea in ships  
and occupy their business in great waters;  
these men see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep.  
For at His word the stormy wind ariseth which lifteth up the waters thereof.  
They are carried up to heaven and down again to the deep;  
their soul melteth away because of the trouble.  
They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end.

So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble,  
He delivereth them out of their distress.  
For He maketh the storm to cease so that the waves thereof are still.  
Then are they glad because they are at rest;  
and so He bringeth them unto the haven where they would be.

## THE LAWS OF THE NAVY

*Admiral Ronald A. Hopwood, RN (ret.)*

Now these are laws of the Navy,  
Unwritten and varied they be;  
And he that is wise will observe them,  
Going down in his ship to the sea;  
As naught may outrun the destroyer,  
Even so with the law and its grip,  
For the strength of the ship is the Service,  
And the strength of the Service, the ship.

Take heed what ye say of your Rulers,  
Be your words spoken softly or plain,  
Lest a bird of the air tell the matter,  
And so ye shall hear it again.

If ye labor from morn until even,  
And meet with reproof for your toil,  
It is well – that the gun may be humbled,  
The compressor must check the recoil.

On the strength of one link in the cable  
Dependeth the might of the chain;  
Who knows when thou mayest be tested?  
So live that thou bearest the strain!

When a ship that is tired returneth,  
With the signs of the sea showing plain,  
Men place her in dock for a season,  
And her speed she reneweth again.  
So shall thou, lest, perchance thou grow weary  
In the uttermost parts of the sea,  
Pray for leave, for the good of the Service  
As much and as oft as may be.

Count not upon certain promotion,  
But rather to gain it aspire;  
Though the sight-line end on the target,  
There cometh, perchance, a miss-fire.

Can't follow the track of the dolphin  
Or tell where the sea swallows roam?  
Where Leviathan taketh his pastime?

What ocean he calleth his home?  
Even so with the words of thy Rulers,  
And the orders those words shall convey.  
Every law is as naught beside this one—  
"Thou shalt not criticise, but obey!"  
Saith the wise, "How may I know their purpose?"  
Then acts without wherefore or why.  
Stays the fool but one moment to question,  
And the chance of his life passeth by.

If ye win through an African jungle,  
Unmentioned at home in the press,  
Heed it not; no man seeth the piston,  
But it driveth the ship none the less.

Do they growl? It is well: be thou silent,  
So that work goeth forward amain;  
Lo, the gun throw her shot to a hair's breath  
And shouteth, yet none shall complain.

Do they growl and the work be retarded?  
It is ill, speak, whatever their rank;  
The half-loaded gun also shouteth,  
But can she pierce armor with blanks  
Doth the paintwork make war with the funnels?  
Do the decks to the cannon complain?  
Nay, they know that some soap or a scraper  
Unites them as brothers again.  
So ye, being Heads of Departments,  
Do your growl with a smile on your lip,  
Lest ye strive and in anger be parted,  
And lessen the might of your ship.

Dost deem that thy vessel needs gilding,  
And the dockyard forbear to supply?  
Place thy hand in thy pocket and gild her;  
There be those who have risen thereby.

Dost think, in a moment of anger,  
'Tis well with thy seniors to fight?  
They prosper, who burn in the morning,  
The letters they wrote over-night;  
For some there be, shelved and forgotten,  
With nothing to thank for their fate,  
Save That (on a half-sheet of foolscap),  
Which a fool "had the honor to state—."

If the fairway be crowded with shipping,  
Beating homeward the harbour to win,  
It is meet that, that lest any should suffer,  
The steamers pass cautiously in;  
So thou, when thou nearest promotion,  
And the peak that is gilded is nigh,  
Give heed to thy words and thine actions,  
Lest others be wearied thereby.  
It is ill for the winners to worry,  
Take thy fate as it comes with a smile,  
And when thou art safe in the harbour  
They will envy, but may not revile.

Uncharted the rocks that surround thee,  
Take heed that the channels thou learn,  
Lest thy name serve to buoy for another  
That shoal, the Courts-martial Return.  
Though Armoured the belt that protects her,  
The ship bears the scar on her side;  
It is well if the Court shall acquit thee;  
It were best hadst thou never been tried.

#### Moral

As the sea rises clear to the hawse pipe,  
Washes aft, and is lost in the wake,  
So shall ye drop astern all unheeded,  
Such time as the law ye forsake.  
Take heed in your manner of speaking  
That the language ye use may be sound,  
In the list of the words of your choosing  
"Impossible" may not be found.  
Now these are the Laws of the Navy  
And many and mighty are they,  
But the hull and the deck and keel  
And the truck of the law is - OBEY

## NAVAL RUM TERMINOLOGY

**Grog:** Traditionally, 2 parts water, 1 part Pusser's rum

**Tot:** 1/8 pint rum, the standard daily ration

**Neat:** Rum without water

**Splice the Main Brace:** A double tot for a job well done

**The Framework of Hospitality:** Where 3 sippers equal 1 gulp, 3 gulps equal 1 tot

**Gulpers:** One, but only one, big swallow from another's tot

**Sandy Bottoms:** To see off whatever's in a mug when offered by a friend

**Bob's-a-Dying:** In Admiral Nelson's day, it meant a "stupendous drunken bash" (sounds like one of our parties)

## DRINK MEASURES

**1 dash** = 8 to 10 drops

**1 tablespoon** = 3 teaspoons

**1 jigger** = 1 1/2 ounces

**1 'tot'** = 2 imperial ounces or 2 1/2 US ounces

**6 dashes** = 1 teaspoonful

**2 tablespoons** = 1 fluid ounce or 1 pony

**1 large jigger** = 2 ounces

**1 cup** = 8 ounces or 1/2 pint