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CUSTOMS OF THE NAVY

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER A.D. TAYLOR, CD, RCN

1956
Revised 1961

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

There is a wealth of fascinating lore behind many of the routine practices of our naval profession of which many serving officers and men are not aware, or at least do not appreciate. In this small volume are recorded some of the more interesting of the nautical customs and traditions - their origin, development and present form.

It is hoped that this book will in some way help to check the present tendency noted in civilian circles and in the press to condemn our alleged unswerving allegiance to "the traditions of Nelson's day". A custom that has no apparent basis is quite meaningless and therefore must be reluctantly observed. If these pages should serve to enlighten, to make at least some of the naval customs and traditions meaningful, they will amply have served their purpose.

In the Queen's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions is an order that "...every officer...shall... in all respects conform himself to the established customs and practices of Her Majesty's Service at Sea". This is not strange and unreasonable if we realize that the customs and practices referred to are the naval equivalent of the unwritten Common Law of the nation; we are legally bound to conform with the law of the land, of which a large part is not recorded in statute form. The naval enrolment form includes an obligation "to comply with the usages and customs of the Royal Canadian Navy".

The study of naval customs and traditions, like the study of the larger body of history itself, is not an exact science, and much material that has been stated as fact is actually little more than opinion substantiated by some evidence. Although treated dogmatically by some writers, much of what they have recorded is open to question. If this volume should provoke discussion, whether on matters of opinion or on outright errors, its production will have been justified.

A.D.T.

HMCS MAGNIFICENT,
at Portsmouth, England,
15 May, 1954

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Even in the relatively short period since I wrote this pamphlet there have been some changes - stages in the development of our way of life.

Despite the fact that this work has never been published officially in its entirety, some hundreds of copies are in circulation today in the Royal Canadian Navy and its Reserve. A small number of those who have copies have accepted my invitation in earlier preface to comment; I am grateful for their remarks and their encouragement.

At the request of the officer-in-charge, of the Leadership School in CORNWA~LIS, I have revised the earlier edition. Chiefly I have taken advantage of the opportunity of having a reprint produced in CORNWALL IS to add a number of items I had omitted previously. In addition, some necessary corrections have been made. A number of obsolete items have been deleted. It is my earnest hope that with these amendments the pamphlet may be of even greater use to succeeding generations of naval personnel of all ranks than was its predecessor.

A.D.T.

HMCS BUCKINGHAM,
at Point Edward Naval Base,
12 December, 1961

CHAPTER I

SHIPBOARD TERMS

"For the knowledge of naval matters is an art as well as any other
and not to be attended at idle times and on the by...."

Thucydides: part of Pericle's speech
to the Athenians.

It may be considered tactless to presume that 'old hands' do not know the origin of the names of parts of a ship, but despite the risk of offending, a few well-known points are mentioned by way of introduction.

The word ship itself is from the Anglo-Saxon scip or the Gothic skip, both meaning boat. In the navy we draw a distinction between ship and boat, the latter being a smaller vessel, usually without decks, which is carried aboard a ship. Certain exceptions exist: submarines, out of a possible sense of friendly rivalry, are often called boats, and we refer to passenger ships as boats, though probably not as a compliment.

From the ancient Greek and Roman eras until long after the Grand Armada of 1588, warships carried soldiers, accustomed to conducting sieges on land, as their offensive strength. The soldier ashore felt secure in his castle, although a castle is essentially defensive, and on going to sea to fight battles required that castles be provided in the ships of war. There were in fact two self-contained castles in each ship, one forward and one aft, known as the forecastle and the aftercastle. From these the soldiers fired the slingshot, longbow, and crossbow. These castles almost disappeared with the advent of muzzle-loading cannon due to the obvious factor of top-weight. The name forecastle has remained through the years, though often contracted in spelling and always abbreviated in pronouncing.

The memory of the aftercastle, later to become the quarter-deck, is recorded only in abbreviations of the parts of ship, FX and AX - 'X' in this instance representing castle. The more common abbreviation now for quarterdeck is QD but AX is still marked on part-ship stores belonging to the quarterdeck division because it is easier to carve into deck scrubbers or paint on buckets.

In the course of time the aftercastle became the poop; the development of this word, like many things to follow in this text, is conjectural. The Romans and other ancient seafarers carried with them thier gods or idols. These were worshipped in the open rather than between decks, and the forecastle, like the 'sharp end' of any ship at sea, was liable to dampen idols and worshippers alike. The best place would seem to be high up on the aftercastle. As the Latin word for idol is puppis we derive poop-deck or poop. We use the expression "I'm pooped" meaning "I am

completely exhausted"; that usage comes from the effect of a following sea breaking over the poop of the ship, in which case it was said the ship was pooped. Apart from this expression the term survives only in the merchant service where it is used instead of quarterdeck.

A deck which runs unbroken from forward-aft is, of course, a whole deck; and one which goes approximately half the ship's length, like the forecastle deck of a destroyer, is a half deck. Consequently a quarterdeck was roughly a quarter of the ship's length; it was a small deck forward of the stern, just below the poop, between poop and mainmast. When the aftercastle disappeared the quarterdeck came into its own.

The waist, a term still with us in ships where it has not been replaced by the expression boatdeck, was the lowest part of the upper deck, between the forecastle and the aftercastle, and included the quarterdeck. The word top formerly referred to platforms fitted partway up masts, to allow a point to secure various rigging, and as a fighting-platform; the topmen, the hands who worked aloft, were the most agile of the seamen and could be considered the cream of the seaman complement.

The deck above the holds in the old ships, what would now be called the platform deck, was known as the orlop deck, a contraction of overlap, a word of Dutch origin meaning 'that which runs over the hold'. In HMS VICTORY this deck is painted red; the wounded were taken there to be tended by the ship's surgeon. On this first deck below the waterline they were safer, and their blood was not so noticeable against the red paint of the deck. This term orlop is still in use in merchant ships.

During the 18th century there was little difference between warships and merchantmen. Ships were usually built for merchant service and were easily converted and armed when required. Most were armed in any case for defence against pirates. The practice of converting merchant cruisers was continued to the end of World War II.

Before the invention of the rudder, a ship was steered with a long oar or sweep fitted over the stern on the right or steer board side of the ship. The Norse were the first to use a single oar; Greek and Roman ships had two steering oars, often connected and controlled by a tiller. It is not known why the Vikings had chosen the starboard side; their choice, however, became universal. In the course of time the term steerboard changed to starboard; it has no connection at all with stars.

It was found awkward to put a ship alongside a jetty on the side this oar was shipped. By preference ships were put alongside starboard side outboard. A plank was put across from shore to ship, and over it stores were embarked. This plank or board was called the ladeboard or loadboard, later larboard. There was doubtless much confusion over the use of the terms larboard and starboard, but after 1580 there was a way out. The French with their high ships' sides devised a shortcut to handling cargo: they cut a loading door or ports its in the ship's side.

To mariners this became the port side.

Another version of the origin of starboard and larboard is by derivation from the Italian (aque) sta borda - this side, and (aquel) la borda - that side, equivalent to the expression found in the Highway Code of the United Kingdom, near side and off side.

From early times, to avoid collisions, ships underway or at anchor by night carried at least a single lantern showing a white light. There seems to have been no fixed rule about the use of lights until 1824 when two white lights were required to be shown in ships navigating the canals of the Netherlands and Belgium. In 1845 coloured lights were authorized for this purpose.

In that same year HMS COMET carried out experiments at Spithead with red, green and white lights, and 1847 Admiralty regulations called for all British steamships to be fitted in the approved manner. No such requirement existed for sailing vessels. After 1850 all steamships in the busy fairways of the open seas were required to show coloured lights by night. The colours red and green had been selected as the least likely to be confused.

The French in 1863 instituted a practice of making the lights visible on the beam as well as ahead. This led to international agreement on the use of sidelights, visible through definite arcs. About the same time sailing vessels were first required to show red and green sidelights.

Trinity House, the British pilotage authority, had ruled in 1840 that two steamships steaming toward each other by night, to avoid collision were each to alter course to starboard, thereby keeping the other ship on the port hand. The red light, indicating danger, was assigned to the side to be steered away from.

A series of converences of the principal maritime nations has produced the International Regulations for Preventing Collision at Sea, in which are embodied directions regarding lights, steering and sailing rules. In the most recent revision (1953) these are greatly clarified, and are made applicable to aircraft taxi-ing or alighting on water in ocean areas. Further revisions, drafted at the 1960 Safety of Life at Sea conference, will soon be brought into effect.

CHAPTER II

RECRUITING AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

"It is seaman, not ships that constitute a navy."

Rear-Admiral Sir Charles Napier
(1768-1860)

Just over a hundred years ago came the first effort to make possible careers as seamen in the ships of the Royal Navy. Before that time men signed on for the duration of the commission of the ship in which they had elected to serve; only the Captain, his lieutenants and warrant officers were retained in the service after the ship paid off. Conditions of service were hard, and the pay was poor but might be augmented in a fortunate commission by the prize money. From about 1660 of the latter year) the pay of an ordinary seaman had remained at 19 shillings, that of an able seaman at 24 shillings, a month. At the end of the period this rate of pay, fixed by law, was about one-quarter the pay of a seaman in the merchant service.

Until 1825 pay was held back as a guarantee against desertion. It was the practice to pay off the men at the end of a commision, hence the expression, a ship paying off. Men were paid monthly after 1825; it was not until 1949 that fortnightly payment was instituted in the RCN. The practice of making payment in cash on men's hats started during the Commonwealth, at which time it was found wise to treat the men well to keep them loyal.

At the end of a commission each man was given a pay packet which could be cashed at the Admiralty. But as the men had sufficient funds to go to London, money lenders came to the home ports and paid as little as 600 of the value of the pay tickets. After 1728 men were paid aboard ship after returning to their home port to decommission.

The method of manning the King's ships, which Lord Nelson termed "an infernal system", was to engage men to serve only during a period of hostilities. When peaceful conditions prevailed, those who had survived naval service returned to their former occupations. Until well after the middle of the 17th century, losses in men were chiefly due to disease.

Rounding the Cape of Good Hope in 1498, Vasco da Gama lost 100 of a crew of 160, most from scurvy, a disease caused by diet deficiency. Admiral Hawkins appears to be the first to have used lemon juice as a preventive. Captain Cook, on his second world voyage in HMS RESOLUTION E1772-1775), lost only one man of 118. In a document to the Admiralty he

attributed his good fortune to the use of lemons; this resulted in their adoption for general use in the British ships. Lime juice, at present in use, has similar properties.

During the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) only 1,512 men died in action whereas 133,718 succumbed to disease, or for reasons other than death in action or as the result of wounds were listed as "missing"; these numbers are from a total of 184,893 seamen and marines who served during that war. Considering the conditions and the meagre chances of survival, it is not difficult to understand why it was necessary to resort to impressment to man the royal ships.

From Saxon times press-gangs had functioned in order to provide seamen. Henry VIII in 1545, fearing an invasion by the French, ordered in his State of Papers that Devon fishermen were to be "taken as marryners to serve the King". It w as an Admiralty rule, founded upon very old usage, that every male British subject was eligible to be pressed into service. But the principal raids by press-gangs were on experienced seafarers, particularly those serving aboard inward-bound merchant vessels. Due to impressment of crews some of these were unable to reach port unassisted. The merchantmen were always preferred by sailors although service in them was hard too. There is little doubt that pressing for the naval service was legal (and incidentally the right has never been repealed or abrogated) provided the press gang held a warrant issued in the county and was accompanied by a commissioned officer.

In Queen Anne's reign during the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714) men entered her ships "like men dragged to execution". It has also been said that in the reign of James I (1603-1625) men went to serve "with as great a grudgery as if it were to be slaves in the galleys". There is an engraving in the Picture Post Library of a press gang at work. This is evidently an early type of political cartoon in which the victim says, "For god's sake gentlemen don't drag me like a thief". And his wife, on her knees with clenched hands upraised, pleads, "For goodness sake dear your Honour, set him free, he maintains his father, mother, sister and wife". The officer-in-charge replies: "Let them starve and be damned. The King wants men. Haul him on board, you dogs." Presumably his five men have no difficulty as each wields a two-foot club.

Samuel Pepys, secretary to the Admiralty from 1660 to 1669, notes in his diary in the year 1666 that he had gone to see the Lord Mayor of London"...about getting shipped some men that they have these two last nights pressed in the city out of houses: the person wholly unfit for sea, and many of them people of very good fashion, which is a shame to think of; and carried to 8ridewell they are, yet without being impressed with money legally as they ought to be." We later read that the Lord Mayor did not at this time have the money to pay the men. Pepys somberly notes, "It is a great tyranny."

Elsewhere he writes: "Two men leapt overboard, among others, into the Thames out of the vessel into which they were pressed, and were shot by the soldiers placed there to keep them, two days since; so much people do avoid the King's service". On the bow of the VICTORY is a

grating called a marine's walk on which an armed sentry paced in harbour to fire at any man seen breaking out of the ship.

It is worthy of note that not all captains were cruel and sadistic men who governed their ships by liberal use of the lash and irons; some had little difficulty in finding sufficient volunteers to sail with them. The navy of the United States had considerably less of a problem finding men, and their merchant service was more popular still; both recruited many men who had sailed in British ships and had either deserted or had joined the Americans after their ships paid off. During the Napoleonic Wars (1798-1815) many British seamen joined American merchant ships to evade naval service. Many of these were stopped and searched by British warships in the War of 1812. Historians record that this practice, which was begun during the Napoleonic wars, was a major cause of the War of 1812. Still others had joined the Dutch naval or merchant services,

An order-in-council was signed by Queen Victoria on 1st April 1853 which provided for a ten-year engagement period, from the age of eighteen, with a pension after twenty years' service. At the same time improvements in conditions of service were brought about, and it was no longer found necessary to press men into service by the methods mentioned. The Crimean War (1854) was the first without any impressment of seamen.

Although it is generally held that Lord St. Vincent instituted the first divisional system in the Royal Navy, there is some evidence that such a system had been in existence, without official sanction, since about 1755. The official institution of a divisional system dates, however, from 1806, with changes introduced in 1844, 1861, and 1869. The present RCN regulations are taken largely from the King's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions (K.R. & A.I.) of 1926.

CHAPTER III

UNIFORMS

The universal colour of the naval uniform is blue, presumably as a camouflage against the sea itself. For this purpose the sails of Roman ships about 55 BC were dyed blue so that men dressed in blue standing near the sails would be invisible to the enemy archers. Except during the 14th century when breast armour was worn in action, armour was rarely worn at sea, even by soldiers, if only for the reason that steel plate has an obvious disadvantage as a bathing suit.

A more modern version, which does not exclude the first, is that King George II (1683-1760) was so attracted by the dark blue riding costume with brass buttons worn by the Duchess of Bedford that he ordered the adoption of this colour scheme for the officers' uniform. Until the king's wish became known in 1748 through the first British uniform regulations, the most popular colour for dress in the English and foreign navies had been red. The Admiralty order promulgating the uniform regulations of 13 April 1748 commenced:

> "Whereas we judge it necessary, in order the better to distinguish the Rank of Sea Officers, to establish a Military uniform clothing for Admirals, Captains, Commanders, and Lieutenants, and judging it also necessary to distinguish their class to be in the Rank of Gentlemen, and give them better credit and figure in executing the commands of their superior officers; you are hereby required and directed to conform yourself to the said Establishment by wearing clothing accordingly at all proper times; and to take care that such of the aforesaid officers and midshipmen who may be from time to time under your command do the like."

<u>Slops</u>, a term referring to naval clothing stores, is derived from the Old English <u>sloppe</u> - a loose-fitting and shapeless garment. Very basic slops were provided in the Royal navy in 1632, though authorized in 1628, but then as now civilian tradesmen, <u>slop-sellers</u> as they were called, were more readily patronized than the naval stores. At that time, to ensure that his men had sufficient clothing to protect them against all weather, a captain could order a man to purchase up to two months' pay in value. At first the purser's commission was sixpence to the pound, but it had increased to six shillings in the pound or 30% by 1636 when it was again reduced to the former rate.

In 1760, other navies having uniforms by this time, officers petitoned the Admiralty for a uniform for their sailors. The unofficial uniform was described as "a little low cocked hat, pea jacket, canvas petticoat trousers not unlike a kilt, tight stockings and shoes with "pinchmeck buckles". Men did not wear cocked hats after 1780, and when worn by officers they were worn athwartships until 1825. The cocked hat for men was replaced with a shiny black tarpaulin hat

with the name of the ship on a broad black ribbon. Straw hats, introduced from the West Indies in 1802, were in use until 1922. The dress regulations of 1847 stated that men's caps were to be like the officer's but without a peak; this is the origin of the present-day cap.

Being unofficial there were numerous variations to the basic uniform described; mention has been made of coloured comforters and knitted waistcoats. Captains of ships used to dress their ships' companies, or at least their boats' crews, in the particular rig they fancied.

By 1800, the fashion, still unofficial, was a blue jacket white stripes or white thread down the seams, a striped or checked shirt, white trousers, either long and bell-bottomed for ease in rolling up or short to show the stockings. Striped jerseys are still worn in the French and Netherlands navies.

In 1814 uniforms had not yet been introduced for the lower deck. The unofficial dress was still the short blue jacket with the addition of two rows of large mother-of-pearl buttons. This type of button appears to be the forerunner of the two rows of brass buttons on fore-and-aft rigged uniforms.

The sailor's uniform as we know it was not finally authorized until 1857. At that time it was established that the collar, formerly in use as a protection from tallow or even tar on the pigtail or queue (the fashion from about 1785 to 1825) was to have three white tapes rather than the former two. This was probably not as a momento of Nelson's victories as is commonly supposed but only to ensure that the unauthorized collars would no longer be used. Pressed men were often lousy and were shorn as a routine; thus the wearing of a pigtail was a mark of service.

Square rig refers to the resemblance between the sailors collars and the sails of their ships. The other common type of sailing rig is fore-and-aft; this expression is applied for purposes of contrast to officers' and chief and petty officers' uniforms. From this the reader will understand that round rig, an expression current in World War II, really has no place in naval terminology. A doubtful version of the origin of the expression fore-and-aft rig is that it used to take four and a half years to become a petty officer.

The silk did not originate as a sign of mourning for Nelson as has often been suggested since in one form or another it antedate the famous admiral's birth. It might have been used as a mourning band for Nelson in the manner the crew of HMS BERWICK in 1749 mourned their captain's death, by cutting their silk scarves in half, putting one piece around the cap and the other around the arm. This seems a sufficient precedent for officers to use seamen's silks for mourning bands.

Good Conduct Badges first appeared in 1849, followed by the first non-substantive badges, for gunnery in 1867, and torpedo in 1888.

A rag was often worn about the neck, opened at the back like a kerchief, to protect the back of the neck from tar or tallow on the pigtail. It was also used as a sweat band by the guns' crews. Until the uniform was standardized in 1857 the silk was often a colourful article; one writer describes a pattern resembling a mixture of blood and raw eggs! It was, however, normally of black to show dirt least.

The original use of a lanyard was to hang the seaman's knife in front of his body. It was of such a length that a man aloft could open the knife with one arm outstretched, the other holding onto the rigging. It was and still is worn under the collar for comfort, appearance, and to prevent strangulation should the lanyard be grasped or caught below the running turk's head.

The seaman's knife, for reasons of safety no longer worn except with working dress, is worth brief comment. There are at least four reasons for the shape of the blade: blunt-ended for poor stabbing qualities and so it would cause less damage if dropped from alfot, because it can be used to cut stops without damaging clothes or sails, or can be used as a screw-driver.

The uniform of 1857, in particular the blue serge jumper or blouse as it was then called, with a very few changes is still worn today. It is of interest to note the similarity between British naval uniforms and those of other navies, a tribute to the strength and prestige of the Royal Navy in the 19th century. The new-type RCN uniform of soft blue serge with zippers fitted is a recent change, adopted as a trial in 1949 and issued in the following year. The Royal Navy, after a trial of two hundred similar zipper-fitted uniforms, has now adopted the RCN pattern.

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There was no standard uniform for officers until 1748. Prior to that year officers, and captains of ships in particular, had worn what they pleased. It has been recorded that one captain wore plain black tailcoat and a white top hat. This type of headgear may seem out of place at sea but was commonly worn until 1850 or later. It enjoys a special use today though not in our own service: it is the custom in some ports which are icebound in winter for the mayor to award a black top hat (and often a gold- or silver-headed cane) to the first merchant captain to enter the port after the winter season. Another captain is said to have worn a coat of such thin material that his red braces showed through. Several RCN officers knowingly perpetuate this custom, if it is one, of wearing red braces.

Senior officers are still permitted unofficially to modify their dress; for example, Field Marshall Montgomery with his white turtleneck sweaters, and several wartime five-star generals.

One sees very few modifications of naval uniforms except at sea where we all tend to think of comfort before appearance. Battle dress, army battle dress dyed black and fitted with shoulder straps, was introduced in World War II for wear at sea.

What is known as the executive curl, the ring above an officer's gold lace or braid, is said to date from the Crimean War when it was called 'Elliot's Eye' in commemoration of a Captain Elliot who carried his wounded arm in a sling under heroic circumstances. The term also refers to an eye in a hemp rope, said to be a momento of the Honourable William Elliott, a member of the Board of Admiralty 1800-1801. It is worthy of note that of almost all the seagoing nations of the world, the French and American are the only navies whose officers do not wear 'Elliot's Eye'.

The curl was originally worn by the executive officers only but in 1915 engineer officers adopted it, followed by officers of the other branches in 1918. Although in the British Navy the curl is now common to all officers, some other navies who copied the custom have restricted its use to their deck officers. While in some navies insignia placed above the braid indicate specialist branches, Commonwealth navies used coloured cloth below rows of gold lace. Coloured branch distinctions, first introduced in 1863, went out of use except for the medical, nursing, medical administration and technical branches, on 31 December, 1959. From 1879-1891, British naval officers wore three brass buttons between the lace, and several navies still do the same.

In 1795 epaulettes (from the French - epaule - shoulder) or shoulder knots indicating rank were worn on the officers' tailcoats. The custom was adopted from other navies because British officers abroad were often slighted by not being recognized as officers. After the Crimean War tailcoats and epaulettes became obsolete except for full dress uniforms and even these were placed in abeyance for economy reasons during World War II; some effort has since been made both in the RN and the RCN to reintroduce the full dress uniform.

Swords were a part of the officer's uniform from 1805 but gradually slipped into disuse except for ceremonial occasions. They were curved for at least a century. Possession of a personal sword was in abeyance, but it is interesting to note that in January 1954 the United States Navy declared the intention of requiring possession of swords, commencing with admirals and captains and later including commanders and below.

Aiguelletes have always been a sign of an aide de camp. The insignia developed in the army; the general's ADC carried rope and wooden pegs over his shoulder with which he hobbled the general's horse and his own on arrival at camp.

The naval system of awarding medals dates back from Lord Howe's victory over the French in 1794, commemorated as the Glorious First of June.

Since the early 19th century it has been the custom of officers to wear civilian clothes ashore. Before that time uniforms were always worn ashore; in fact until about 1815 naval members of Parliament sat in the British House of Commons in uniform. It is a slackness tolerated in some wardroom messes for officers to remain on board in plain clothes; this privilege was formerly only permitted if the officer were going ashore immediately or had just returned aboard. In any case it is 'proper routine' to say "Pardon my rig, sir" to the senior uniformed officer present, no matter what his rank or branch.

It has already been mentioned why blue is the universal colour for naval uniforms; in passing let us comment on uniforms in general. The first British uniform was worn by Henry VIII's bodyguard - a distinctive dress of gold and silver cloth. A uniform gives prestige to the wearer, and has been shown to add immeasurably to the morale of a military organization. The army now wears khaki, the intention being that it is an inconspicuous colour; similar reasoning stands behind Germany's steel grey (later dark green), France's field grey, and the olive drab of the US Army and Marine Corps. The reason for khaki in the navy as a summer uniform is that it is cool and yet does not become soiled so easily as the white uniform which used to be worn in the tropics and in summertime. The same properties would, of course, exist with a light blue summer uniform.

CHAPTER IV

RANKS

The title admiral is derived from the Arabic emir-el-bahr - lord of the sea.1 This was adopted by the Spanish during moorish conquests in the 8th century as almirante, then in French as amiral, and in English admiral. The prefix vice with admiral means in place of, and therefore subordinate to, an admiral. At one time it was considered most important to protect the head and rear of a fleet of ships in fixed formation, usually with two squadrons known as the vanguard and the rearguard. The admiral commanding the rearguard was the admiral of the rear or rear-admiral. The admiral of the van was next in seniority to the admiral-in-chief (later admiral of the fleet) and bore the rank of vice-admiral. Commodore, a much more recent term, is an officer who commands a detached squadron of ships. Several merchant shipping lines confer this rank on their senior captains, and in wartime retired senior naval officers are appointed as commodores of convoys.2 Yacht squadrons go a stage farther with their ranks of vice-commodore and rear-commodore.

Captain has its root in the Latin caput meaning head. As the head was thought to be the controlling part of the body we can see how the idea of a head man developed; this was shown in the Latin word capitus for chief or head man. In spanish it became capitan, in French capitaine, in German kapitan, and in English captain. From the 14th century the term captain referred to the officer commanding the soldiers whereas the ship was under the command of the master. In the last half of the 17th century the duties were combined when the soldiers were no longer a separate entity onboard (except as marines); the captain's title became master commanding, and somewhat later master-and-commander, abbreviated in 1794 to the present rank of commander. From this derivation may be seen the reason for the courtesy title, now rarely heard, of captain for a commander.3

1. Many nautical words come from Arabic; in particular are the names of the navigational stars.

2. In RN regulations (QR & AI) provision is made for a "first captain" or senior captain, i.e., a commodore first class.

3. The term master retains only one usage in the modern navy; the navigator of a flagship is known as master of the fleet. The flag ship's commanding officer is captain of the fleet as well as chief staff officer.

Although a commander is actually second-in-command (executive officer) of a large ship, in smaller ships he is a commanding officer. The French and some other navies indicate rank by captain of a ...., a particular type of ship being named; for example, a capitaine de vaisseau in the French navy is equivalent to our captain, and capitan de corbets in the Spanish and some Latin American navies ranks with our lieutenant-commander.

Lieutenant is French in origin - (en) lieu tenant - and means holding a place or position for someone else, e.g. lieutenant-governor, acting for a governor. The American pronunciation 'loo-tenant' is closest to the French, though our obsolescent naval pronunciation 'le-tenant' is close, whereas the army's 'LEF-tenant' seems a corruption of the worst sort. Lieutenants with over eight years in that rank were considered a separate rank after 1877, the year the half-stripe was introduced. Before World War I a lieutenant who held a command was called lieutenant and commander; in 1912 this was officially abbreviated to lieutenant-commander. In most branches promotion to this rank is automatic after eight years as a lieutenant, though regulations now provide for future promotions to that rank to be by selection.

First Lieutenant - is an appointment rather than a rank, the officer so appointed will be the senior executive lieutenant in the ship. Similarly in a large ship the senior executive lieutenant-commander is usually known as the First Lieutenant-Commander. Some traditionalists insist that no matter what the officer's rank, his appointment should be First Lieutenant; so far as origin of the term is concerned, this view must be considered correct.

The rank of sub-lieutenant was instituted by Lord St. Vincent in 1802.

A midshipman originally was, as the name suggests, one who lived amid ships; this was mid way between the officers who lived aft and the men who lived forward. While training as an officer he worked with the men somewhat like our own cadets. In the US Navy this original status is more closely maintained, the USN midshipman ranking with the RCN cadet. The midshipman used to serve seven years on the lower deck and was roughly equivalent to our present-day petty officer in rank and position.

The midshipman's white patch, as an insignia of rank, came into use in 1758. It has been suggested that the patch is all that remains of what used to be a white coat collar which went out of use because the 'Young Gentlemen' used to dirty it too quickly. No support can be found for this doubtful theory. The significance of white, however, is of great antiquity; to it our word candidate is related. Candidus, Latin adjective for white, referred to the pure colour of the togas worn by those aspiring to high office in the Roman government. The same purity motif is seen with a bride's wedding dress. The midshipman's white patch and the officer candidate's white cap ribbon probably stem from this Roman origin.

It has already been mentioned that topmen, who worked aloft in the rigging, were the cream of the seaman complement. Carrying this aspect still farther we can see that the term upper yardmen for officer candidates from the lower deck implies the very best men.

The title of purser is related to bursar - a treasurer: it dates from the 14th century, and existed as a naval rank until 1852. Possibly much of the facetious vilification practised in wardrooms against supply officers refers to the Purser's predecessors who received no pay but were expected to make a profit by their sharp practices. In the 18th century a purser paid two sureties, totalling as much as 1200 pounds, to the Admiralty, and in addition had to buy a warrant costing about 65 pounds. That there was a great demand for the post despite these outlays proves the expectation of making more than a reasonable profit. It has been recorded that most pursers charged slop-sellers a shilling in every pound, i.e. So, but that they made a good deal more on sales to the men. False pay tickets, which they cashed with money lenders, were almost an expected thing, and brought about by necessity the custom of muster by open list, quarterly and at inspections, when each man stepped before the captain and told his name, rank, and his duties on board.

The rank of gunner dates from the early 16th century. He was a warrant officer, in charge of the ship's armament and the gunroom, not only of the muskets kept there but also of the junior and subordinate officers who used it as a mess. In HMS VICTORY at the time of Trafalgar these were the junior or 6th lieutenant and the purser, as well as sub-lieutenants and midshipmen. Dialogues about Sea Service (1685) tell of the gunner's authority and of the painful results of the sailors' superstition:

> "And the knaveries of the Cadets are paged by the Gunner with the Rod; and commonly this execution is done upon the Monday mornings and is so frequently in use that the meet Sea-Men believe in earnest that they shall not have a fair wind unless the poor Cadets be duly brought to the Chest, that is, be whipped right heartily every Monday morning."

The old ranks of chief gunner and chief boatswain were the forerunners of the rank of warrant officer, an officer who held a royal warrant rather than a commission. This rank was abolished in th Commonwealth navies in 1948 to be replaced by the commissioned branch officer. The rank of commissioned officer has since been abolished in the RN; men who would formerly have been given that rank are now promoted to sub-lieutenant.

In the year 1688 the Board of Admiralty revised the system of rank and seniority, giving all officers seniority of that year, and at the same time published the first Navy list, a list of all serving officers with their ranks and seniority. The Canadian Navy List is published half-yearly by Naval Headquarters. RCN Regular Force and Reserve officers are also listed with Dominion navies in the RN Navy List.

In the lean years of the Soviet Fleet, from 1917 to 1940, officers were chosen by election, until Marshal Stalin re-introduced ranks. It is interesting to note that 'tradition' was provided for the Red Fleet by the simple expedient of re-writing naval history, even to the extent of glorifying several of the Czarist heroes, besides claiming numerous naval inventions as being of Soviet origin.

The rank, or rating as it used to be known, of petty officer (literally: inferior officer) was established in the 18th century, and that of chief petty officer just over 100 years ago. It is of interest that there were petty officers first and second class in the Royal Navy from about 1830 until 1907. The RCN has done nothing new in reintroducing those grades; we have done so to parallel the other two Canadian Forces, thereby implementing a tri-service policy to equalize pay rates and promotion tables.

Ranking as petty officers were the master-at-arms, armourer, and the armourer's mate, and the ship's cook. The master-at-arms, or in a large ship the lieutenant-at-arms often the junior lieutenant) together with the ship s corporals, had so little to do as small-arms instructors that it became the practice to assign to them what we would now call regulating duties. After a time the original duties disappeared or were taken back by the gunner and his staff. The ship's corporal eventually became the regulating petty officer though part of his duties are now carried out by the corporal of the gangway.

In 1853 was established the rank of leading seaman, described at the time as "A higher class of able seaman". Since in the RCN the ranks have been put back to where they were over a hundred years ago this description again applies.

CHAPTER V

SALUTES AND CEREMONIAL

All forms of military salutes are signs of mutual trust and respect between members of units of armed forces. Unfortunately, as with many of the customs of our service, we tend to find saluting little more than a required yet meaningless ritual; we find it so because we forget its origin and background.

In the days of knights in shining armour it was not only difficult to distinguish friend from foe but it was almost impossible to determine if one's adversary were in a friendly or a fighting mood. It became the custom for a knight wishing to make a gesture of friendliness to remove his helmet while still at a distance, and if the other did the same the two would approach, each at the mercy of the other. Removing the helmet was no easy task and a common and recognized shortcut was to raise only the vizor, thereby leaving at least a part of one's head vulnerable. Even this became a tiresome routine and it became sufficient to raise one's right hand (the left held the shield) showing the flat of the palm, indicating no weapon was concealed therein. This same type of salute has been in use for centuries as a signal of peace among native tribes in many parts of the world. Rules of conduct, particularly for knights, the gentlemen of the court, were strict and it was doubtful if there were many cases of unfair advantage being taken.

An integral part of saluting while passing is the 'eyes right' or 'eyes left'. In fuedal times serfs and slaves were not permitted to look at their master; they were required to stand aside with bare heads bowed, or even to crawl past in the mud and slime of the road-side ditch. The soldiers employed by the lord of the manor enjoyed the privilege of looking their master straight in the eye, and raised their hats or helmets as a mark of respect.

Until about 1800 the normal type of salute was the raising of the cap, originating with the removal of the steel helmet. Merely touching the cap became a recognized alternative. Admiralty regulations of 1882. defined the salute as removing the cap, or at least touching the brim between the index finger and thumb. This is a clear indication of the origin of the naval type of salute, though other more interesting reasons have been offered. One of these is that in the year 1890 Queen Victoria, renowned for her primness and femininity, while inspecting a body of her sailors turned out in their best uniforms, was horrified at the sight of their tar-stained hands, and ordered that in future the naval salute was to be with the offending palms turned down.

Officers were permitted to salute with the left hand if the right were engaged, but this privilege was withdrawn in 1923 to standardize the salute. The US Navy still authorizes the left-hand salute. In that service it is permissible, though exceptional, to salute when uncovered.

An old type of salute, removing the cap, is still used in the navy on some occasions: the reading of prayers at divisions, reading of the National Defence Act or the Articles of War (to show respect for the statutes of the nation), for a captain's or senior officer's inspection, and for defaulters. A fine custom, now obsolete, was for a signalman, before hoisting or lowering the colours, to lay his cap on the deck. In the Spanish and Chilean navies signalmen still remove their caps for colours and sunset. 'offing one's bonnet' is generally recognized as a mark of shame, though not intended as such, rather than to show respect for the Commander or the law one has contravened; it has been said that some men remove their caps as infrequently as possible because the act reminds them too much of thier appearances as defaulters!

The first movement in saluting with the sword, known as the <u>recover</u>, is said to have religious significance dating from the Crusades 1205 - 1271 A.D.) . The sword in earlier forms was in the shape of a cross, and the position of the recover closely resembles the Crusader's act of kissing the cross of his sword before going into battle. It may also have some connection with the oriental custom of shielding the eyes from a superior. The position of the salute itself is a modification of the former practice of thrusting the point of the sword into the ground from which position it would be more than difficult to strike suddenly at one's opponent. The same principle is true of either the <u>butt salute</u> with a rifle or the <u>present arms</u>. In the latter case even the name implies the offering of the arms to a superior.

Our custom of saluting the quarterdeck originates at least in part from the deference shown the pagan idols and shrines to the gods placed there. Also for centuries the quarterdeck has been regarded as the seat of authority, though it is saluted even by the captain. Surely the simplest reason is that in harbour and in fair weather at sea the colours are flown form the quarterdeck. In the United States Navy officers and men coming onboard face aft and salute their ensign whereas we appear to salute the ship. In harbour some men salute as they step over the brow to go ashore. An officer does so only to return the courtesy salutes of the officer-of-the-watch and the gangway staff; it is incorrect for men to do likewise.

The principle mentioned of putting oneself at the mercy of a possible adversary as a gesture of intended friendship may also be seen in forms of salutes by armed vessels. When the ship that was to windward had the advantage of speed and position, the act of letting-fly her sheets was clearly one of friendly intentions. We employ the same principle in sailing craft, in pulling boats by resting on the oars or tossing oars, and in power boats by cutting the engine or shifting to neutral. After 1201 A.D, the customary salute by a merchant vessel to a man-of-war was to strike a topsail. Even before steam replaced sail, the practice of dipping the ensign in lieu of a topsail had been introduced. The Second Dutch War started because of repeated failure of Dutch ships to salute British war vessels as agreed in 1673. There are now no written regulations acegarding such salutes, even by British and Commonwealth merchant vessels, but flagrant or repeated occurrences of failure to conform with the usual courtesy are to be reported to Naval HQ. The Admiralty order regarding salutes by foreign vessels was withdrawn in 1808.

A warship, before entering a foreign port, to signify her friendly intent would fire all her guns singly, thus leaving the ship temporarily unarmed because of the time required to reload. Usually the charges were blank, but even if shotted no damage would result since all guns were fired on the beam outside the port. There is an order that no warship may fire a salute in the Thames River above Gravesend because in the 16th century a ship accidentally fired shotted rounds which caused minor damage to Greenwich Palace in which Queen Elizabeth I was living.

When two warships met, each would steer toward the other, firing all guns singly on the beam. Later the practice developed of firing personal gun salutes, a certain number of guns depending on the rank or status of the personage saluted. In the British and American navies a salute of twenty-one guns - the royal or national salute - is the maximum; there is no maximum established internationally. You will perhaps wonder why we always fire an odd number of guns in our salutes. Although yearly all ships of the line had even numbers of guns, the reason probably is that odd numbers (thirteen now excepted) have been considered lucky for many centuries. The Roman poet, Virgil, writing about 70 B.C., makes mention of this superstition.

A special gun salute, the firing of a single gun known as the 'Rogue's Salute', is fired at colours on the day a court martial convenes. Formerly this was a signal to the fleet for all hands to muster on deck to witness yardarm execution. A yellow flag was flown in the ship to be watched until execution was carried out; when hauled down, hands could disperse.

Piping the Side is a purely nautical honour which originated in the method of arrival on board of visiting captains, frequently portly gentlemen, who were hoisted on board while the boatswain passed orders to the men with his boatswain's call. Although the officer-of-the-watch now says "Pipe" the side party the order used to be "Hoist him in". The call itself dates from the era of the Greek and Roman galleys when the stroke of the oars was called with a whistle. It was then, and has been ever since, both a 'whistle of honour' and a 'whistle of command'. Mention is made that in 1248, during the Crusade, the call was used for passing orders. In 1645 it was carried only by masters, boatswains and coxswains; now it is the badge of office of the quartermasters and boatswain's mates who may wear a boatswain's call and silver chain instead of a lanyard.

The call itself used to be blown three times for a salute. For some reason this was reduced to two, once as the boat draws alongside the ship's accommodation ladder, and again as the officer mounts the ladder and steps inboard; the procedure is reversed at his departure. When coming onboard or leaving by brow, the side is only piped once.

The side is also piped for a corpse which is brought on board, as for a funeral at sea, and for the officer-of-the guard when he is flying his pendant.

Members of royalty, their personal representatives, and senior officers of military services are accorded musical salutes, if entitled by regulations. In the original form this type of salute consisted of a number of ruffles on drums - three for an admiral, two for a vice-admiral, and one for a rear-admiral. Recently the traditional British musical salutes were replaced in the RCN by others of distinctive Canadian music.

Another form of salute which originates in the showing friendly intent is that of manning ship. All hands appeared on deck or aloft and grasped the rigging - now only the guard-rails; this showed that guns were not manned and no small-arms were carried.

CHAPTER VI

LAWS OF THE SEA AND PUNISHMENTS

> "... the law relating to the Government of the Navy, whereon, under the good Providence of God, the wealth, safety and strength of the Kingdom chiefly depend ..."
>
> Preamble to the Naval Discipline Act of 1866.

All forms of society require rules governing conduct of the members, and this is especially true within the narrow confines of a ship at sea, which by its very nature is separate and to some extent independent of other authority. Laws governing the relationship of man to man forms of retribution were necessary in order to enforce these laws. There is, therefore, a very close relationship between laws and punishments, and we must think of both in considering the broad term discipline.

The first laws of the sea written in English, from which the Naval Discipline Act of 1956 (governing UK and Dominion naval forces, except those of Canada) and the National Defence Act of Canada have been developed, were recorded in the 13th century - the Ordonances or Usages of the Sea of Richard I, the Lion-Hearted:

> Richard by the grace of God, King of England, Duke of Normandy, and earl (etc., etc.). To all his men going by sea to Jerusalem, greating. Know ye, that by the common council of all good men, we have made the underwritten ordonances:
>
> He who kills a man on shipboard, shall be bound to the dead man, and thrown into the sea; if the man is killed on shore, the slayer shall be bound to the dead body and buried with it.
>
> Anyone convicted by lawful witnesses of having drawn his knife to strike another, or who shall have drawn blood of him, he is to lose his hand. If he shall have only struck with the palm of his hand, without drawing blood, he shall be thrice ducked in the sea. Anyone who shall reproach, abuse or curse his companion, shall for every time he is convicted, thereof, give him so many ounces of silver.

Anyone convicted of theft shall be shorn like a champion[1] boiling pitch shall be poured on his head and he shall be set ashore at the first land the ship touches.

Signed

At Chinon, France

A development from these laws in the early part of the 15th century (not before 1422) was the Black Book of the Admiralty, in which was recorded all laws relating to seafaring under the British flag.

"Know all men that We, with the aid of upright counsels, have laid down these ordinances:

"Whoever shall commit murder aboard any 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 strike another with his hand, he shall be ducked three times into 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.

"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."

These Laws further stated that "All other faults committed at sea shall be punished according to the customs used at sea".

The punishment listed in the Admiralty Black Book for sleeping on watch, a very serious offence because it endangered the ship, was at first humiliating and for repeated offences brutal. A bucket of seawater was poured over the head of a first offender. A second time, the offender's hands were tied over his head and a bucket of water was poured down each sleeve. For a third

[1] This was done to a champion or prize fighter so his opponent could not seize his hair.

offence, the man was tied to the mast with heavy gun chambers secured to his arms, and the captain could order as much additional pain to be inflicted as he wished. The fourth offence was inevitably fatal; the offender was slung in a covered basket that hung below the bowspirit. Within this prison he had a loaf of bread, a mug of ale, and a sharp knife. An armed sentry ensured that he did not return aboard if he managed to escape from the basket. Two alternatives remained - starve to death or cut himself adrift to drown at sea.

The Articles of War, a purely naval code of discipline, stems from this source. These were first written in 1661 in the reign of Charles II. The punishments listed were brutal but the principle has remained to present times: "For the good of all, and to prevent unrest and confusion".

The King's Rules and Admiralty Instructions (KR & AI, now QR & AI) which made their first appearance in 1731, contain general regulations, including discipline, governing the naval service. In the RCN similar regulations were embodied in the Queen's Regulations and Orders for the Royal Canadian Navy, short title QRCN. The 43 articles in the Laws or Roll (Rule) of Oleron in the Bay of Biscay like the maritime codes of the Republic of Rodes (Lax Rhodia), Rome and other Mediterranean states from which they developed, are largely concerned with merchant shipping or commercial practice. That these laws were for the good of all is shown by the fact that the opinion of the crew was required in particular circumstances:

> "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 will 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."

Under the Laws of Oleron the master and crew of a ship which was stranded through negligence of her pilot were authorized, without fear of retribution, to behead the pilot. This seems harsh, but one should realize that pilots were not above working in league with salvagers and wreckers ashore.

The expression Captain's Cloak refers only symbolically to a voluminous garment. It implies that any act could be considered an offence "to the prejudice of good order and discipline". The last paragraph of the quotation from the Laws of Oleron and Section 118 of the National Defence Act are both in this category.

A punishment which was particularly harsh and usually fatal was keel-hauling, awarded for serious offences, and discontinued in the Royal Navy about 1720. It was still practiced in the Dutch and French navies until 1750.

A stout line was rove through a block on the lower yardarm on each side of the ship. One end was secured under the arms and around the chest of the offender whose wrists were secured behind his back. From the other yard the line went under the ship, as a bottom line, and was secured around the man's ankles. On the word of the captain the boatswain ordered the man hoisted off the deck and clear of the bulwarks; slack was taken down on the bottom line, and as it was hauled in, the line around the man's chest was slacked away. In this way he was hauled under the ship, and came up on the other side, feet first. With both lines taut, the man was slung in such a way that his stomach chest and face were dragged across the barnacles of the keel, and in addition he was at least partially drowned.

An incidental feature of his cruel punishment is that the longer the ship was out of port after docking, the less was a man's chance of living through the ordeal of being keel-hauled. As if this treatment were not enough, it was the practice to fire a gun, usually unshotted, above the man as he was hauled up out of the sea, "in order to astonish and confound him". Perhaps this is the true origin of the Rogue's Salute previously mentioned.

Execution by hanging at the yardarm was the normal punishment for mutiny in the fleet. The last execution was carried out in 1860 (during the Second Chinese War) on a marine who attempted to murder his captain. Yardarm execution as carried out in the navy is well described by Nordoff and Hall in Mutiny on the Bounty. As a capital punishment it was by no means instantaneous as is said to be the case with our modern Canadian practice. The prisoner's hands and feet were tied, and with the noose about his neck a dozen or so men, usually boats' bowmen (the worst scoundrels in the ship) manned the whip and hoisted him to the block of an upper yard, to die there by slow strangulation.

The most common type of punishment, inflicted for almost any crime at the discretion of the captain, was flogging with a cat-o'-nine-tails.[2] This was carried out "according to the customs of the service", namely at the gangway. At the time of Trafalgar a man who was to be flogged was given twenty-four hours in which to make his own cat. He was kept in leg-irons on the upper deck while awaiting his punishment. When the cat was made the boatswain cut out all but the best nine tails. If the task was not completed in time, the punishment was increased.

With heads uncovered to show respect for the law, the ship's company heard read the Article of War the offender had contravened. The prisoner was then brought forward, asked if he

[2] A sealed pattern of cat-o'-nine-tails may be seen in the Canadian Maritime Museum, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

had anything to say in mitigation of punishment, then removed his shirt and had his hands secured to the rigging or a grating above his head. At the order "Boatswain's mate, do your duty", a sturdy seaman stepped forward with the cat - a short rope or wooden handle, often red in colour, to which was attached nine waxed cords of equal length, each with a small knot in the end. With this the man was lashed on the bare back with a full sweep of the arm. After each dozen lashes, a fresh boatswain's mate stepped forward to continue the punishment. Each blow of the cat tore back the skin and subsequent cuts bit right into the flesh so that after several dozen lashes had been inflicted, the man's back resembled raw meat. After each stroke the cords were drawn through the boatswain's mate's fingers to remove the clotting blood. Left-hand Boatswain's mates were especially popular with sadistic Captains because they would cross the cuts and so mangle the flesh.

After the man was cut down he was taken to the sick berth, there to have salt rubbed into his wounds. This was done not so much to increase the pain as for its antiseptic purposes.
At one time, men were literally flogged to death with a hundred lashes or more. The figure three hundred has been mentioned in history, and in the time of Czar Nicholas II, a common punishment in Russia was one thousand lashes; Peter the Great had limited the number in the Russian army to two hundred. As late as the early 17th century a thousand lashes was punishment for mutiny and other serious offences in the British forces; this was more prolonged than hanging, but just as fatal.

From 1750 into the 19th century twelve lashes were the maximum authorized for any one offence. The famous admirals Jervis (Lord St. Vincent) and Collingwood rarely exceeded this maximum except in the case of a double offence. It is recorded that they punished fewer men than captains who awarded more than the maximum. Nelson usually sentenced men to less than a dozen lashes, occasionally as many as eighteen, and rarely twenty-four. In ships of the line with companies of up to 550 men, the more merciful captains punished about sixteen men a year, while some others punished over fifty. Not taken into account in the records were unofficial punishments, which were quite prevalent, and which will be mentioned later in this chapter.

Until the end of the 18th century, the punishment for theft, a hateful crime against one man or many in a ship at sea, was for the thief to run the gauntlet (or guantlope). The offender first received a dozen lashes in the normal manner with a thieves' cat, with knots throughout the length of the cords, and while still stripped to the _ waist, passed through two lines of all the ship's company, to be flogged with short lengths of rope. Lest he move too fast to benefit fully from this ordeal the master-at-arms marched backwards a pace ahead of him with the point of his cutlass against the thief's chest. And to prevent him stopping a ship's corporal followed him in a similar manner. On completion of the course, the thief was given a further dozen lashes.

In the 29th century it was the practice to plunge a thief three times into the sea from the bowspirit and then to cast him ashore; the latter part of the punishment was parallel to the civil practice of the time, which was called outlawry.

The usual punishment up to 1735 for attempting to escape or for striking an officer was flogging around the fleet. The offender was secured to an upright timber in a ship's boat, and when it pulled alongside each gangway, a boatswain's mate entered the boat and inflicted a certain number of lashes. For added effect the boat was accompanied on its rounds of the fleet by other boats, each with a drummer in the bows beating a roll on his drum.

The Naval Discipline Act of 1866 limited corporal punishment to 48 lashes. The form of sentence by a court-martial was that "the court, having found that the charge against the accused is proved, adjudges him the said...to receive...lashes according to the custom of the Navy".

Flogging was abolished in the British forces by the Army Act of 1881, in response to strong public opinion. It was said that flogging "made a bad man worse, and broke a good man's heart".

In the mutinies of 1797-8 Lord St. Vincent (Admiral John Jervis) hanged twelve men. Other fleets and squadrons, after twenty mutinous uprisings had fifty-five executions and many floggings about the fleet; St. Vincent, we are told, intensely disliked the latter punishment.

Until suppressed in 1811, it was a common practice for boatswain's mates to carry and use on their men colts or starters - small whips somewhat like knouts or knotted ropes, which they carried concealed in their hats. The boatswain's mark of authority was the bamboo cane or rattan he always carried, and with which he summarily executed punishment. A punishment awarded by messdeck court martial for cooks who spoiled a meal was to be cobbed and firked, that is beaten with stockings full of sand or bung staves of a cask. This practice was officially disallowed after 1811.

Other forms of punishment, in an attempt to make a punishment fit each crime, were usually harsh and often ingenious. In the 19th century it was ordered that "cruel and unusual punishments are to be avoided". Before that time, in addition to the various punishments mentioned in detail, the following were commonly practised: ducking from the yardarm - a more dramatic variation of washing in cold brine; the bilboes - stocks to which painful pressure was applied; and hanging by the arms in the rigging. Discontinued in the 17th century were gagging and scraping of the tongue for swearing or blasphemy; or boring the tongue with a red-hot iron, presumably for repeated or aggravated offences. Cell punishment was instituted in 1847, and a few years later came the first numbered set of minor punishments. A form of corporal punishment, i.e. "birching or caning on the bare breech" (K.R. & A.I.) remained until recent

years as a punishment for boys. Birching was suspended in the service in 1906, but caning is still administered occasionally in the Royal Navy as a punishment for boys, cadets, and midshipmen.

The term court martial probably dates from the early 14th century, from Edward III's Court of Chivalry. Due to shortages of men, courts martial in the 17th century, in ordering the punishment of execution, would not only specify that only one or more of group were to die and leave the victims to cast lots or throw dice, but often used to determine which would die although all might be equally guilty.

CHAPTER VII

MORE CUSTOMS

One of the oldest customs still practised is that relating to the launching of a new ship. The oldest reference to this custom is of an Assyrian tablet, believed to have been carved about 2100 BC, on which the inscription tells of the building of Noah's Ark, and that at the launching a yoke of oxen was sacrificed. In similar manner the Fiji Islanders and the Samonas made human sacrifice to the sharks, which to them were gods, and washed down their new canoes in the victim's blood. Viking legends tell of young men being crushed in sacrifice under the keels of the ships being launched.

A later development, probably about the 14th century, was the custom of toasting the new vessel from silver wine goblets. The goblets were thrown into the sea to prevent further toasts, possibly of bad omen, being drunk. For reasons of economy a wine bottle was substituted in 1690. It was usual for a prince or other male member of royalty to smash the bottle against the bow, but after 1811 the honour was given to prominent ladies. A freeswing was traditional until a spectator was injured and sued the Admiralty, and from that time a lanyard has been secured to the bottle. This is not always the case, at least on this continent; Mrs. Eisenhower, launching the world's first atomic-powered submarine USS NAUTILUS at Groton, Conn, in January, 1954, used a champagne bottle without a lanyard. Some Canadian shipyards use a form of mechanical cradle containing a champagne bottle.

The custom is partly religious and partly pagan in origin, and it is by no means correct to assume that champagne is the only liquid used; it is currently in fashion, but in the past all alcoholic beverages have been employed, even pure water has made the occasional appearance, especially in Moslem countries. It is still very much in the nature of sacrifice to smash a bottle of good liquor or wine.

By act of Parliament in 1760 the cost of pay and victuals of one able seaman per hundred borne was set aside for the relief of poor officers' widows. These imaginary men were known as widows' men. This off form of charity was abolished in 1823.

The most well known version of the 'Call the Hands' jingle is this one:

"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,
It's tommorrow morning and the sun's a-scorching your
(bleeding) eyes out."

To this a brief weather report was often added so that the men would know how warmly to dress. The question may well be raised why we now pipe the dress of the day with breakfast rather than when the hands are called. Wakey, wakey is probably only a corruption of awake ye, awake ye. The mention of a purser's stocking refers to the days in harbour when women were allowed on board, and the privilege of lying-in was accorded married couples. From this same practice we have the expression fitting double clews on a harrunock, meaning to get married.

The paying-off pendant dates from the 19th century when cleaning rags in a ship decommissioning were knotted together and hoisted as a sign that they would no longer be used. For uniformity (?) the practice is for the pendant to be the length of the ship if she paid off on the proper date, with the addition of 1/24th of the length for each additional month. Some sources say 1/12th, but as foreign commissions
in the RN until recently have been reckoned as being of two years' duration 1/24th may be correct. Still another version holds the custom more simply as a foot for each month in commission.

It is an old naval custom that when a commanding or flag officer relinquishes his command, he is pulled ashore by an officer's boat's crew. In shore establishments, it now seems to be the vogue to 'pull' the officer 'ashore' in his staff car or jeep.

At an officer's court martial his sword is used to signify the court's finding -guilty if pointed toward, not guilty if turned away. A similar practice has been carried out in Britain for many centuries; in procession from the court the executioner carried the headsman's axe with the blade toward or away from the prisoner, and for hanging the prisoner's hands were tied or left free.

It has long been the rule that prizes captured in action are the property of the Crown. But King John in 1205 gave a part of the value of each prize to the crews concerned, obviously as an incentive to clear the seas of foreign raiders and privateers and to improve the meagre pay. During World War I for the first time prize monies were shared throughout the whole navy, and in World War II air force squadrons employed on coastal command duties were included. It is felt by some that the Canadian Government broke with tradition without adequate cause in donating their prize money to the RCN Benevolent Fund; considering the numbers of servicemen involved and the amount itself it would have been impracticable to have done otherwise.

It was the practice of the ancients to decorate their sails for double duty as flags, a practice which continued until the Middle Ages. From the 17th to the 19th centuries a British fleet consisted of three squadrons, and ships of each wore in the maintop an ensign of a difFerent colour to distinguish them in battle. The squadron commanded by the admiral-in-chief wore red, the vice admiral's blue, and the rear-admirals white; the admirals often took the title Admiral of the Red, etc. In 1665 the order of seniority was changed to red, white and blue. Nelson at Trafalgar ordered all ships to hoist white ensigns. Two reasons might be offered for his action: first to confuse the enemy who for centuries had been accustomed to the British tactic of having three squadrons so readily identified, and, secondly, to avoid confusing the red ensign with the Spanish - red with yellow - as might be possible at a distance,

The flag officer wore in the foretop a distinguishing flag of the colour of his squadron defaced to show his rank. The flags flown today by flag officers are those worn in the fleet commanded by the Admiral of the White.

By order-in-council in 1864 the three-squadron policy was abolished; the white ensign was assigned to the navy as Nelson had wished, the blue to government vessels and those commanded and partly manned by naval reservists, and red to vessels of the merchant fleet. The blue ensign is now assigned also by special warrants to the owners of registered yachts belonging to certain yacht squadrons.

The first recorded instance of the use of a British flag or ensign at sea was in 1297 when Edward I ordered his ships sallying forth against France to wear the British standard. The word Jack is said to result from the signature Jacques of King James I in whose reign (1603-1625) the Union Jack was designed.

Obviously the practice, which is still required by QRCN Article 62.41(3), of wearing two or more large ensigns in action is to prevent an enemy from assuming a ship has struck her colours, in surrender, when in fact the ensign has been shot away. Ensigns also aid in identification. It is said that Admiral Sir Richard Grenville (1541-11591) signalled in action that his ensigns would never be struck or disappear even if his flagship were sunk. This crafty officer, immortalized in Tennyson's poem "The Revenge", assured himself of that by keeping his ship in shallow water. This is also attributed to Admiral Duncan, who, in 1797, blockaded fifteen Dutch ships with his flagship and one other vessel by the expedient of signalling to a non-existent squadron over the horizon; at the same time he is reputed to have told his ship's companies that his flags would still be flying at high tide even if the two ships were sunk by the Dutch. Similarly, a flag officer's flag is kept flying even if he is killed or rendered incapable of continuing in command. (QRCN Article 62.21).

The custom of half-masting colours during a funeral or period of mourning dates from earliest times. We read in the Old Testament of men putting on sackcloth and ashes to appear

downcast and slovenly. In the 17th century ships scandalized thier yards and allowed their sails to hang in slovenly fashion. For this reason we abhor the careless practice of failing to keep an ensign or jack close-up or of permitting it to foul its staff. When we actually are in mourning, we carry out the gesture of half-masting our colours.

Lord St. Vincent was responsible for instituting a guard and band for colours in 1797, after the Nore Mutinies. At first the guard and band were paraded at sunrise, but as the time varies daily, the routine was established in 1844 as 0800 in summer (and in the tropics) and 0900 in the winter.

The naval Queen's Colour is a silken white ensign embodying the Royal Cypher. It is mounted on an ash staff, surmounted with a gilt badge in which are combined the symbols of the Crown and the Admiralty. This feature of the Colour dates from early times when military unit commanders (for example, Roman centurions) had heraldic devices mounted on poles for use in battle as identification symbols and rallying points. In ancient Egypt, objects such as sacred animals or tablets bearing the king's name was carried into battle atop staffs. Similarly, in Persia, a stuffed eagle was borne into action on the end of a lance.
In a later period battle flags were attached to the staffs. The earliest mention of a royal colour is from 1747.

The Colour is now presented to naval commands by the ruling sovereign. It is never paraded on board ship or abroad. It is paraded ashore, uncased, on special occasions only, accompanied by an armed colour party, and is lowered only to members of the Royal Family and to heads of foreign states or their representatives. When the late King George VI presented his Colour to RCN's Pacific Command at Victoria in 1939, it was the first time a sovereign had personally made such a presentation outside Great Britain.

A ship's commissioning or masthead pendant is said to have originated from 81ake's Whip, in commemoration of his driving the Dutch from the seas in 1653. Though it is not doubted that Blake hoisted a whip to his masthead on that occasion, the masthead pendant originated much earlier, probably in the 14th century when ensigns and pendants were first authorized in the Royal Navy. Blake had done this in defiance of the Dutch admiral Tromp who had the previous year hoisted a broom to his masthead, signifying that he had swept the British from the seas. Nowadays a broom hoisted in a merchant ship indicates change of ownership, i.e., "a broom sweeps clean", while in the navy it is used more as Tromp did, as a sign of victory over other ships of a flotilla
in all events of general drills or a regatta.

Evening quarters was the taking up of stations in preparation for night action, and came to mean merely the formal end of the day's work.

In port it used to be the practice to fire a morning gun at sunrise and an evening gun at sunset or 2100. At the time of firing the evening gun sentries were to discharge their muskets in a volley to show that their powder was dry and the muskets were in good working order. This practice is seen now only as part of the ceremony of Beating Retreat and Sunset. The retreat is actually a military custom, which had its origin in the 16th century (the earliest record is 1554), or possibly earlier, perhaps during the crusades. In the garrison town in England it was the custom, and very colourful it must have been, for the drum major to muster his drummers after sunset and parade into the town. The marching manoeuvres of the drummers are symbolic of the parade through the narrow twisting streets of an English town in search for their soldiers. This is the tattoo, a term derived from the Flemish expression tap toe, which was the order to the publicans to turn off the beer taps for the night. On completing the rounds a bugler would sound the first post and the soldiers were expected to follow the parade back to their barracks. Shortly after the drummers returned the bugler sounded the last post and the garrison gates were closed for the night. The same ceremony took place nightly in Canada when the gates of the forts were closed against attack by Indians. The two parts of the original ceremony are now reversed, probably only to build up to the climax of the stirring sunset ceremony.

The Blue Peter, the flag 'P' of the international code - a blue flag pierced with a rectangular white centre, is the universal signal for a ship about to sail, though no longer used in the navy in that sense. The term is believed to be a corruption of the French partir - to leave, and the complete expression is attributed to Admiral Sir William Cornwallis (1744-1819) who used to hoist the Blue Peter on anchoring to indicate that his fleet would sail again very shortly and no leave would be granted. For his pains he was nicknamed 'Billy Blue' by his sailors who failed to appreciate his keenness for action.

Until very recently victuals and provisions in warships were not only of poor quality but were low in quantity. Not at all surprising is the fact that rationing had its origin at sea. Fresh food was used as long as it lasted and was restocked whenever possible, but by and large dried provisions such as salt pork and beef and dried fish had to be used. An interesting feature of Nelson's flagship VICTORY, now preserved in a Braving dock in Portsmouth dockyard, is the manager, right forward on the lower gundeck, in which were kept several pigs and sheep plus a flock of chickens. Despite the obvious indesirability of having this livestock in an already over-crowded messdeck, their presence meant the occasional morsel of fresh meat. Just a few feet above the manager is the galley, such as it is - a combined barbecue, oven and boiler for vegetables. The latter were cooked in salt water and the steam was cooled in a copper condenser fitted on top of the boiler. This yielded about a gallon of distilled water per day on which the surgeon had first call for mixing his medicines.

If provisions were lacking, liquor certainly was not. Fresh water, even in casks, would not keep for long and in an early century wine or beer was substituted. The usual ration was a gallon per day per man. Sir Martin Frobisher (1535-1594) of North West Passage fame, is quoted as saying "We'll sail as long as the beer lasts". As there was nothing else to drink except rain-water or melted snow, the remark seems an obvious one.

Shortage of stowage space, a problem even in modern Warships, caused the introduction of rum in the 18th century. This was issued twice a day, at lunch and at supper; the daily ration was a pint for a man, and half a pint for a boy. In 1824 when the use of tea became common in the navy, the suppertime ration was cancelled.

Admiral Vernon in 1740, while commander-in-chief of the West Indies squadron, ordered his captains and surgeons to make recommendations regarding the rum issue. This mixture is called grog after the nickname of the admiral, 'Old Grog', in deference to his cloak of grogram material. In 1850, the ration was reduced again to the present half-gill.

Brandy was in use from 1650 to 1687, to be replaced by rum after the capture of Jamaica. It seems possible that rum may give way to beer if the stowage problem can be solved; it is already an authorized issue for RCN ships on repayment through the canteen. At the time of writing (1955) the RN is studying recent experiments at producing a dehydrated beer for use in ships. Expense of dehydration seems to be the chief disadvantage of this method.

The inscription in brass letters on the grog tub "The Queen, God Bless Her" originates from the custom, regrettably no logger observed, of toasting the sovereign with the first sip of a tot. When all hands had worked in repairing the mainbrace, the heaviest piece of rigging in the ship - an evolution not often carried out - it was usual to issue an extra tot of rum. Thus developed the custom of Splice the Mainbrace.

The custom of using a ship's bell to mark the passage of time probably dates from the 13th century when it was used in conjunction with a half-hour glass; a bell was sounded each ime the glass was turned and the number of bells was progressive throughout a watch. These glasses did not disappear from the navy until 1857. Of course bells were not sounded between pipe down and call the hands, hence the expression silent hours. Warming the bell at one time meant to strike it before the correct time, but now it means to do anything early.

Prior to 1797, bells were sounded normally, one to eight, throughout the dog watches; it is said that the signal for the Nore Mutiny to commence on the 13th day of May of that year was to be "five bells in the dog watches", i.e. 1830, but that an officer who heard of this intention had only one bell sounded. It is a matter of historic fact that his action had no effect on the commencement of the mutiny; however, the custom remains.

The Seaman's practice of wearing earrings probably come from an ancient eastern custom of wearing amulets as charms and insignia of rank. More recently they appear to date from the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603), not so much in loyalty to the queen as to satisfy a

fisherman's old superstition that pierced ears would improve their eyesight and make them more lively. The latter notion possibly has its origin in the old practice of biting the ear of a fallen prize-fighter to bring him to consciousness. The occasional earring, of plain yellow gold, is still seen in the navy, worn usually on the left ear lobe only.

Tattooing of seamen began among Roman Catholic sailors, usually in the form of a crucifix, as a means of identification for their bodies so they would be assured of the sacred rites and burial. The idea was taken from the natives of some regions of the South Pacific. Nowadays tattooing parlours abound in all seaport towns. One particular design which is considered a charm is that of a pig: it used to be on the foot but now normally appears just above the kneecap. Among Orientals and seamen the principal idea of tattooing now seems to be decoration.
Burial at sea, a simple yet most impressive and dignified ceremony, is the most natural means of disposing of a body from a ship at sea. It is still the custom to sew the body into a hammock or other piece of canvas with heavy weights formerly several cannonballs, at the feet to compensate the tendency of a partly decomposed body (as would be the case in the tropics) to float. To satisfy superstition, or to ensure that the body is actually dead, the last stitch of the sailmaker's needle is through the nose.

As late as 1866 the normal launching method for the Whitehead torpedo was by underwater discharge. The first above-water discharge was carried out in the torpedo trials ships ACTEON about 1880 by tilting a mess table toward an open gun port - an idea obviously taken from the method of burial at sea.

A funeral on shore with full naval honours means a procession commanded by a lieutenant, a band with drums muffled in black cloth, the body borne on a field-gun carriage and limber manned by thirty-two men on drag ropes, a funeral firing party of at least twelve men, a body borne on a field-gun carriage and limber manned by thirty-two men on drag ropes, a funeral firing party of at least twelve men, a mourning party of relatives, shipmates and friends, and an escort of at least twenty men. The constitution of the parties is based on the rank of the deceased; the figures and ranks quoted are the minimum. In addition a guard is paraded for a deceased officer above the rank of lieutenant. The cocked hat and sword of a deceased senior officer are carried on top of the coffin on the gun carriage, and his decorations and medals are borne in the procession on a blue velvet cushion.

The whole procession slow-marches to the cemetery or ship's side where the funeral firing party opens out to form a lane; they turn inwards and rest on their arms reversed as the procession passes through the ranks. Over the grave, or after the body has been committed to the deep, the funeral firing party fires three volleys of blank cartridges. In the case of a senior officer, the same gun salute he was entitled to when living is fired in minute guns.

A naval funeral is without a doubt a most impressive and dignified ceremony. Ensigns of ships and establishments in the port area are, of course, half-masted during a funeral.

It is a custom of the service for the coxswain or master-at-arms to auction a deceased man's kit to his shipmates; all proceeds being applied to the man's estate. Many articles sell for several times their original cost, only to be returned to the auctioneer for resale.

An interesting naval practice, indulged in chiefly by senior and commanding officers, is that of using biblical references for signalling and message purposes. A few examples will serve to illustrate: to compliment a ship on her gunnery prowess, another might signal "Exodus 15 verse 8" - "And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea". Or, in flattery to the senior officer of a formation: "Exodus 25 verse 38" - "Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels". For a promotion to lieutenant: "Exodus 37 verse 3" - "And he cast for it four rings of gold, to be set by the four corners of it, even two rings upon the one side of it, and two rings upon the other side of it". Such use of references out of the context is not only quite permissible in this form of repartee but is indicative of imagination and skill. There is an indexed book available for reference; this, of course, makes the custom somewhat prosaic.

The saying of prayers in the navy and in ships at sea is very old indeed. In the 17th century hymns and psalms were sung on changing watches, and in the 17th and 18th centuries prayers were said before going into action. Outstanding in our naval history are the prayers of Sir Francis Drake before entering Cadiz, Spain, on 19 April 1587:

> "0 Lord God, when Thou givest Thy servants to endeavour any great matter, grant us also to know that it is not the beginning but the continuing of the same until it be thoroughly finished, which yieldeth the true glory; through Him that for the finishing of Thy work laid down His life, our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.":

and of Admiral Nelson on the morning of the Battle of Trafalgar, 21 October 1805:

> "May the Great God whom I worship, grant to my country, and for the benefit of Europe in general, a great and glorious victory; and may no misconduct in anyone tarnish it; and may humanity after victory be the predominant feature in the British Fleet. For myself individually, I commit my life to Him who made me, and may His blessing light upon my endeavours for serving my country faithfully. To Him I resign myself and the Just cause which is entrusted to me to defend. Amen, Amen, Amen."

Naval regulations are still quite explicit about the responsibilities of the captain for holding divine services.

The practice of receiving officers at the gangway of a ship is very old and used to be attended by much pomp and ceremony. Some captains used to require that all officers be on deck to receive them no matter what hour of the day or night they returned.

Until quite recently the sailors' Christmas celebrations were in no way interfered with by the officers. This was wise as men and women were often killed in the festivities. Through the years these orgies reverted to innocuous pranks and colourful parading. Part of this was the ancient Roman custom of exchanging clothes and duties during the festival of the Sturnalia, now followed in the RCN in its present form, that of the captain and the youngest man onboard changing places for the day, and the officers serving Christmas dinner to the men.

Without a doubt the most entertaining of naval customs is that of the ceremony of Crossing the Line, a practice which had its origin in the pagan initiation rites of the Vikings. The next recorded instance, somewhat obscure in detail, is that a deviation of these rites was performed by ships' companies on crossing the 36th parallel of north latitude and entering the Straits of Gibralter. Some centures later the ceremony became one for crossing the equator. A summary of the events of the present-day ceremony as practised aboard RCN ships may be of interest.

The night before the ship is due to cross "The Line" a quaint ceremony takes place on the forecastle in which the Bears, as agents of the Secretary of State of King Neptune's Watery Realm, board the ship, in theory via the hawsepipes. with a little ingenuity this can be very effectively staged with curtains of spray illuminated by coloured
lights. The Bears should be received onboard by a member of the ship's company who has previously been granted the freedom of the Seas, and by him conducted to the captain on the bridge, there to deliver a Royal Proclamation regarding the ship's entry into Neptune's Kingdom, and the holding of the Royal Court on the morrow to initiate all Novices into the Mystic Rites. The Bears may then make their exit by the way they came.

For the next day, that on which the ship crosses the equator, a canvas bath of suitable size should be rigged. Above one side of the bath, rig a ducking stool and thrones for the King and Queen Amphitrite. To commence the ceremony, the Royal Bugler sounds Clear the lower deck and Officer's Call to the vicinity of the bath - dress of the day, bathing trunks - and then the Royal Procession makes their Stately Progress from the Royal Robing Room to the Royal Bath. This is always a high point in the ceremony as the members of the Court will have gone to considerable pains concerning their costumes and appearance. Extreme latitude in this matter is customary, though it is usual for the king to have a bushy grey or black beard, a crown of course, and a trident.

The actual ceremony will usually commence with the investiture of some such decoration to the captain as The Insignia of the Most Exalted. For shipboard personalities who have already

crossed the line, the Equatorial Star or the Equinoctial Cross might be in order. Engineers' workshops often will produce suitable decorations.

At this point, in regal and flowery language, His Majesty King Neptune I (By the Grace of Mythology Lord of the Waters, Sovereign of all Oceans, Governor and Lord High Admiral of the Bath, to give him his traditional titles) will address the Novices as to their impending fate, warning them that none shall be overlooked, and that all "shall be initiated into the Mystic Rites of the Freedom of the Seas, according to the Ancient Customs of Our Watery Kingdom".

The Judge's Clerk will then call each candidate in order, to be presented by the Judge to Their Aquatic Majesties, and to be examined and prepared for the Rites of Initiation by the King's Most Eminent Physician (Note: formal medical trainig is NO qualification for holding this appointment in the Royal Court). The treatment normally consists of an enormous pill concocted in the chief petty officer's mess with the willing cooperation of the galley and sick bay staffs. About all that can be said about the pill is that it will not be toxic but certainly laxative. As if this were not enough, a tonic, similarly of doubtful content, will be administered by the Doctor's Assistant; a large galley syringe, as used for icing cakes, proves most effective for this purpose. The doctor may also use a wooden mallet to sound the back, chest, and probably head of the victim, who is then certified fit for the ordeal and is passed on the Royal Barber and his nefarious assistant. These will lather his face, and probably more, and then shave him with a large wooden straight razor. During this he will be pushed over backwards into the canvas bath, there to be ducked several times by the Bears.

From time to time, should the Secret Police report that some Novices are hiding, the King may interrupt the proceedings to make public announcement of the offence and order his Police to arrest the offenders and bring them before him.

When greenhorns have all been dealt with according to custom, it is usual for the shellbacks to apply to requalify, following which formalities are relaxed and the whole Court will probably take a plunge into the bath. It is needless to say that the ceremony is one of great amusement and much good-natured skylarking. We normally commemorate the occasion by awarding a Crossing the Line certificate specially produced for that ship and that cruise.

CHAPTER VIII

A FEW EXPRESSIONS

For ease of arrangement, the expressions given in this chapter are listed alphabetically. In compiling such a chapter it is difficult to decide what to include and what to omit. These are considered to be the most common of naval expressions that require explanation.

Ahoy. This boat hail was the battle cry of the Vikings.

Andrew Miller or The Andrew. Either means the Royal Navy. The antecedent was a press-gang officer who was so efficient, ruthless and zealous in recruiting seaman that it was alleged he owned the navy.

Banyan party. Until about 1880 Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays were meatless days. This practice probably resulted in part from the fasts of an eastern religious sect of ancient times, but more likely was carried out as a food conservation measure. It was, of course, prudent to save food from the day previous to a fast day. In times when food at sea became plentiful and wholesome, banyan days were occasions of feasting. The term still relates to feasting in the sense of a picnic or beach party.

Bitter end. The inboard end of ship's hempen anchor cable was less often used than the outboard end, and so was known as the better end, late pronounced bitter end, and meaning the very end or the extreme end.

Bloody - is said to be a contraction of "By Our Lady" (the Virgin Mary) but more than likely is just a seaman's colourful epithet having the same force and origin as flaming.

Bottle - equivalent to blast. An abbreviation of a dose from the foretopmen's bottle - supposedly a cure-all.

Bum-boat - the small craft used by local tradesmen in ports throughout the world. Probably the original term was boom-boat, i.e., permitted by the executive officer to secure to the ship's lower boom in order to conduct business. It has never been considered advisable to allow civilian tradesmen onboard.

Capstan drill. A former custom was for older hands to take the boys and young ordinary seamen to this form of drill, to deepen their
high-pitched voices by jumping off the barrel of a capstan while keeping their legs straight.

Clear one's yardarm. In communications parlance this means no signals, _ i.e., flaghoists remain unexecuted. In normal usage it suggests that more than reasonable steps have been taken to avoid embarrassing mistakes or omissions.

Cock of the walk - used in naval and civilian circles alike, though in the navy with the special connotation of winner, as in a regatta, sports meet, or combination of these events. The expression cock of the barracks is more commonly used in shore establishments. The winning ship hoists at her yardarm a large brightly painted galvanised iron silhouette of a "male Domestic fowl" (Oxford Dictionary). It is a common practice, if the winning ship has won every single event as well, to hoist a broom at her masthead commemorating a clean sweep of the sea in the manner of the Dutch Admiral Tromp (see chapter 7).

Conning (tower, etc) - derived from cunning , in reference to the skill of the master in manoeuvring his ship, especially in action.

Crowsnest. The foremast lookout position now replaces a cage in which Noresmen carried ravens as an early type of direction-finder. When out of sight of land, a bird would be released, and as it headed for the nearest land, the ship would follow the direction of its flight.

Crushers - regulating petty officers, the descendants of the ship's corporals. presumably the word refers to their alleged ability to detect rather than prevent offences. The term is now as obsolete as the RPOs to whom it refers.

Dead marine. In the RCN we are not troubled with the animosity that appears to exist between the Royals, leathernecks, turkeys or pongos. A further example of the lack of friendship is the expression dead marine for an empty bottle. The RN seaman says that, like an empty bottle, a marine is of no use to anyone, and if dropped over the side in the position of attention would float upright because of the size of his boots. The marine's retort is that, like an empty bottle, he is always ready for duty again.

Devil to pay. Trouble's ahead. The devil in wooden ships is the longest seam in the hull and is the most difficult to caulk or pay. The same term appears in the old expression "Between the devil and deep blue sea" - which is the hazardous position assumed by a man who is paying the devil seam.

Dog Watch. There are various ideas about this common term, a corruption of docked or dodge, or in reference to dog days of summer in the autumn, what we in Canada call Indian Summer. Scarcely worthy of mention is the punster's comment that it is a watch curtailed.

Dutch courage - the uninhibited courage shown by a man who has had one too many. This refers to the old Dutch custom of issuing tots of schnapps before battle. The Dutch had every right to base similar sardonic remarks on the British rum issue.

Dutchman's pendant and Irish pendant. These two are included only to differentiate, as many seaman use them synonymously. While the former refers to a gash rope's end not secured in a seamanlike manner - a dig at the Butch - the latter refers to the frays and tatters of bunting that develop in the fly of an ensign or flag that is exposed to strong winds for any length of time. The reference is to untidiness born of a carefree nature in the Irish.

Jack Nastyface. Not a name one is likely to find except in books on naval custom. It is said that this is the pen-name of a sailor who wrote about the service in the navy in the 18th century. Another writer believes that he fought at Trafalgar and that some of the writings on that battle can be attributed to him. In the RN the term is sometimes applied to the ship's assistant cook. Ship's cooks have long been the butt of sailors' humour, and this allusion probably has no more meaning than that.

Jacob's ladder - the name for a boat ladder, taken of course from Jacob's dream in the Old Testament of a ladder which rose from earth to heaven. To the uninitiated, the length of both would appear to be similar.

Jaunty - master-at-arms. A corruption of the French gendarme - policeman, through the old RN term John Damme, to its present form.

Joint - in reference to a meat dish, refers to the old practice of serving whole portions of meat, bone and all, which the diner held in both hands.

Long Ship - a midly uncomplimentary term occasionally heard in wardrooms, reflection on one's hospitality in failing to offer a guest a drink - he has to go a long way to find one: or, a long time between drinks.

Make and mend. Before the times when uniforms were issued, the men made their own. When hands could be spared from work about the ship, the pipe was made "hands to make and mend clothes". Later it was the practice for two or three men, more expert tailors than their fellows, to obtain permission to form in partnership what was called a jewing firm, in the figurative sense of unscrupulous dealers. The expression make and mend today bears little relation to its original use. Now it means a half-holiday granted in harbour; at sea we have a pipe down instead. Makers is the usual slang abbreviator. We have come a long way from the original term with our sports makers.

Make it so - rarely heard nowadays except in large ships. When the communicator at the ensign staff reports "Eight o'clock, sir" (or nine o'clock in winter), it is customary for the Commander to reply "Make it so", whereupon the corporal of the gangway will sound the requisite number of bells. The ceremony of colours then follows.

Mess - a word that causes considerable doubt in many ships. Some cynics think it refers to the normal state of the messdecks. Actually it is the anglicized form of the Spanish word for table - mess. Mass has the same derivation. Until the last century a seaman's mess was nothing more than a table; even benches were not provided until the 19th century.

Naval nicknames. A practice probably unique in naval and military circles is that of associating certain nicknames with particular surnames. A few of the more common ones are Daisy Bell or Dinger Bell, Nobby Clark(e), Jimmy Green, Taffy Jones, Pincher Martin, Dusty Miller, Spud Murphy, Nosey Parker, Spike Sullivan, Buck Taylor, Knocker White, and Tug Wilson. Although the reason for some of these is obvious, the origins of others are obscure.

Padre - affectionate slang term for a chaplain. It is the Spanish and Italian word for father.

Queen's hard bargain - originally a British army term, now rarely heard in that service or our own. It is customary in law to give consideration to make a contract legal and binding. So it was that the old type recruiting officer used to give a new recruit a shilling on enrolment. To refer later to the same man as a Queen's hard bargain, because of laziness or incompetence, meant in effect that the sovereign had lost on the transaction.

Regatta - formerly pertained to gondola races on Venetian canals; now is any kind of boat race.

Room to swing a cat. Referring to the foul berth of a ship at anchor, it means that there is no room to swing even a cat-o'-nine-tails. (The feline mammal has never been a favoured pet at sea, except in the merchant service. Whenever a cat is mentioned in this or any book about the navy, almost invariably the reference is to the instrument of punishment described in Chapter VI.)

She and He (in reference to a ship). The weight of evidence seems to be in favour of calling a ship she though there are examples of the masculine being used - merchantmen, men-o'-war. In the navy, officers in particular are apt to call a naval vessel he because of the practice of referring to the commanding officer by the name of his ship. An example of this is the answer to a boat hail given by the coxswain of a boat carrying the captain of a ship, the name of his ship being shouted in reply.

In defence of she much could be written. First of all, several of the parts of a ship, particularly of a sailing vessel and its rigging, are the same as the parts of a woman's body or her ornaments. Also we speak of dressing ship. Before the era of steam propulsion, a figure-head was mounted on the stem of a ship, usually of a female. A few collected suggestions are that a ship, like a woman, is obstinate and perverse, requires much cleaning and polishing, is an object of affection, needs men to look after her, but they in turn are looked after by her, and whenever she sinks, she takes a lot of good men with
her!

Ship's people - ships's company. There is at least one commanding officer in the RCN who requires that his commander, in calling the ship's company to attention at divisions, call them ship's people. A more usual custom is to call them by the name of the ship, i.e. ONTARIO'S. Probably becuase of the numerous lengthy Indian names for RCN ships, this latter custom is obsolescent in our service. On the same subject, it is quite usual for a captain to refer to "my people", "my ship", "my boats", etc. These phrases no doubt brought about the jocular term for the captain, The Owner. Until recent times captains assumed that every article brought on board was their personal property.

Sick berth, later sick bay, was introduced in the Mediterranean Fleet in 1798 by Lord St. Vincent. When he became first Sea Lord in 1801, he caused sick berths to be fitted in all ships. At that time these were usually below the forecastle. Now they are located amidships because there is less motion than either forward or aft.

Snotty - a midshipman. At the time when midshipmen joined their first ships as boys of twelve or thirteen, and often too poor to afford handkerchiefs, it is said that they would dry their tears of homesickness and wipe their noses on their sleeves, and to curtail this practice, three large brass buttons were sewn on the cuff of each sleeve It was after 1857 that this became the rank insignia for chief petty officers. It is because of the youthful age at which midshipmen joined the navy that the officer appointed in charge of them has always been known as the Snotties' Nurse.

Son of a gun - an uncomplimentary expression dating from the times when women were allowed onboard and between decks. Reference has been made previously to the debauchery which took place in the gun-decks where the men lived.

South wind. The correct retort to "how's your glass?" might be "there's a south wind in it" meaning, it is empty. A nor'wester is half spirit and half water, while a north wind is neat spirit, a bitter wind.

Spitkid. A kid is a small tub, usually of wood, or any small container. The naval expression "as handy as a cow in a spitkid" is adequately descriptive of clumsiness.

Stone frigate - a shore establishment. After the first Canadian naval college was partially destroyed in the Halifax explosion of 1917, it was moved to the Royal Military College, Kingston, Ontario, into one of the barrack blocks renamed HMCS STONE FRIGATE. This was, of course, not the original use of the term.

Sun is over the foreyardarm - a phrase meaning it is late in the forenoon. The only time it is ever used nowadays is perhaps by a crusty old officer who thinks it is time to have the wardroom bar opened. At a time when naval officers indulged in heavy drinking, the Admiralty directed that no officer was to partake of liquor until the sun was over the foreyardarm.

Swallow the anchor - a very old phrase meaning to retire from sea service. The idea seems to be that once swallowed it is of no further use.

Talk a good day's work. Not often heard in the service but often applicable, and in any case self-explanatory.

Two hands for the Queen. The normal practice of a man aloft in a ship's rigging is to hold on with one hand and work with the other - "a hand for navy and one for myself". A man completely dedicated to naval service is alleged to work with both hands at all times.

Very good is said by a senior, normally an officer, when a report is made by a junior. It seems to be obsolescent, especially among junior officers, giving place to thank you or some such civilian phrase. Very good, sir, in lieu of Aye, aye, sir is not used in the navy although proper usage in the army and air force. Roger, sir is also, for the present, unacceptable.

Winger - an uncomplimentary term in its original sense, as a boy or young seaman befriended by an older man. In present usage, winger is one's best friend.

CHAPTER IX

WARDROOM CUSTOMS

Generally speaking the customs practised by officers are those of polite civilian society, with modifications to suit naval circumstances, plus other changes caused through historic development.

The wardroom itself bears discussion. Before about 1700 each officer lived and messed in his own quarters, cramped as they were. The captain's cabin, on the other hand, was known as the Great Cabin. Under it was the wardrobe, a locker often used to stow articles of value taken from prizes. When not in use for that purpose, the officers used it to hang their spare uniforms. It is first spoken of as being used as a general officer's mess about 1750, at which time it was of much greater size than a locker, and was renamed the wardroom.

Until the mid-19th century the gunroom was where the small-arms were stowed. Here the gunner lived, together with, and in charge of, the junior officers. Toward the end of that century it was thought advisable to have the w arrant officers mess separately. It was as late as 1948 that warrant officers' messes were abolished.

Some customs, originally taken from society to make life at sea more tolerable, regrettably have disappeared from civilian life. Wardroom customs are not really the strange rituals of a secret fraternal organization, although the traditional practices of mess dinners might appear to contradict this statement to no small extent.

The firm rule about not calling anyone a liar in the mess is obvious and sensible: it avoids trouble and bad feelings. Likewise, though with little present-day application, is the rule regarding not drawing swords in the mess - to discourage duelling. In fact, the rule usually observed is that one does not ever wear a sword in a strange mess; to do so in your own is frowned upon.

It is customary for officers, and should be for men as well, to remove their caps before entering a mess other than their own. This custom applies equally to officers' messes and enclosed messes, and should be observed when passing through seamen's messdecks except on duty. The customary rule applies to cabins and offices as well. This is the same as the practice ashore - you do not wear a hat in someone else's home, and, though you may wear it in your own home, you would not normally do so.

All wardroom drinking is, or should be, social: military drinking is considered taboo. It is customary to buy drinks for other officers particularly one's friends, and then to toast the others with "cheers" contracted form the Englishman's "cheerio". Canadians have turned a bit more cosmopolitan and it is increasingly common to hear skol, bon santé, salud, or even, in ships returning from a Latin-American visit, a variation of salud y amor y pesetas - health, love and money. In the RN it is a custom that foreign languages are not spoken in the mess unless foreign guests are present. As both English and French ar officially recognized in Canada and in the RCN, Canadian officers take little note of such a rule.

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 officers never clink glasses in drinking a toast.

At mess dinners it used to be a custom, not often observed now, to propose what was known as the toast of the day. The list that seems to be most commonly followed dates from before Trafalgar, and is:

Monday -our ships at sea
Tuesday -our men
Wednesday - ourselves, because no one else is likely to bother Thursday - a bloody war or a sickly season (to ensure quicker promotion)
Friday - a willing foe and searoom
(The two preceding seem to be of historical interest only)
Saturday -wives and sweethearts, may they never meet.
(Reply is made by the youngest officer present)
Sunday -absent friends.

The 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 (QRCN 61.03), except of course when the sovereign, a member of the Royal Family, or a foreign head of state is present and the head of any foreign state is toasted first, so our own sovereign will not suffer offence. The officers of HMS 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.

The Port or Madeira decanters are unstoppered, passed always to the left, and then 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 they are removed. 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 customs of calling on senior officers and their wives and the leaving of calling cards is now almost unique in military circles. There is a good reason for this custom, based on the fact that naval officers are moved about so much; by making one's number, an officer is often assured of hospitality, and, if not, at least he indicates good service manners. Officers serving in Ottawa call on the Governor General, those in Quebec City call on him when he is in residence during September, while those serving in a provincial capital call on the lieutenant govenor of the province.

The custom at an officer's wedding of forming an archway of swords, with their cutting edges upwards in the quinte or fifth guard position, symbolizes the guarding of the couple as they enter upon their married life.

Finally, two customs by which deference is shown to senior officers. A junior officer always enters a boat or car first and leaves last, the original idea possibly being that the senior might remain dry and safe that much longer. Although confusion exists on this point, a junior should precede his senior over the brow going ashore and follow the senior officer onboard. This works at its best when a senior officer and his staff are calling, because it enables the captain to greet the officer and lead him to his cabin without having to become ensnarled in staff officers. On departing, the entourage can disappear over the brow or down the ladder, leaving the senior officer to engage in parting conversation with the captain.

Henry VIII ordered that "no captain shall take the wind of his admiral", by which was meant the junior officer should pass the leeward of his senior so as not to inconvenience him by cutting off the wind from his sails. Similarly it has long been the custom to request permission to cross a senior's bows, though the necessity for such a manoeuvre should be avoided if at all possible because it might require the senior to shorten sail or reduce speed to avoid collision. Some officers observe this seamanlike practice in the mess: if they reach in front of another officer they say "may I cross your bows?" This rule has a present day application with aircraft carriers operating into wind, to which the USN has applied the saying, "Never stand behind a mule or cross ahead of a carrier!"

Lord St. Vincent remarked with wisdom: "Discipline begins in the wardroom. I dread not the seaman. It is the indiscreet conversations of the officers and their presumptuous discussions of the orders they receive that produce all our ills."

These remarks on officers' customs are concluded with a part of the address of the American admiral John Paul Jones to the Naval Committee of Congress on 14 September 1775. Even in this year of expansion in the Canadian naval service, set in an era of modern weapons and futuristic warfare, the famous admiral's words are excellent advice. The final paragraph is considered of particular importance and interest because it states most clearly the principle of command at sea.

"It is by no means enough that an office of the navy should be a capable mariner. He must be that, of course, but also a great deal
more. He should be, as well, a gentleman of liberal education, refined manners, punctilious courtesy, and the nicest sense of personal honour.

"He should not only be able to express himself clearly and with force in his own language, both with tongue and pen, but he should also be versed in French and Spanish."

"The naval officer should be familiar with the principles of international law, and the general practice of admiralty jurisprudence, because such knowledge may often, when cruising at a distance form home, be necessary to protect his flag from insult or his crew from imposition or injury in foreign ports.

"He should also be conversant with the usages of diplomacy and capable of maintaining, if called upon, a dignified and judicious diplomatic correspondence; because it often happens that sudden emergencies in foreign waters make him diplomatic as well as military representative of his country, and in such cases he may have to act without opportunity of consulting his civic or ministerial superiors at home, and such action may easily involve the portentous issue of peace or war between great powers. These are general qualifications, and the nearer the officer approaches the full possession of them, the more likely he will be to serve his country well and win fame and honours for himself.

"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 incompetence, and well-meant shortcoming 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 his subordinates such relations as will make them constantly anxious to sit at his table, and his bearing 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 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 rights and republican freedom, the ships themselves must be ruled and command at sea under a system of absolute despotism."

CHAPTER X

OODS AND ENDS

The word knot as a unit of speed has an interesting beginning. The first method of calculating the velocity of a ship was by Dutchman's log. A chip of wood thrown from the forecastle was timed as it passed down the side of the ship. The calculation of speed was based on the length of time the chip took to travel between the forward and after marks, since distance divided by time equals speed. But it was from a later type, the hand log, first used in the 16th century, that the word knot develops. A triangular piece of wood called a log-ship is weighted at the bottom, and slung by means of a three-legged rope crows-foot, one leg of which is secured to the log-ship with a removale wooden plug, in such a way as to present resistance to the water when towed astern of a ship on a log-line. This plaited line of about 150 fathoms is marked every ten fathoms. In the days of sail the hand log was streamed once an hour by the midshipman-of-the-watch and the boatswain's mate. The latter rigged the log with a plug in securely enough to remain in against the water pressure to be expected, and streamed it astern. As the log-line slipped through his fingers, at the first knot that passed after the log was clear of the wake, the boatswain's mate called out "turn" and the midshipman inverted his hour-glass. When each subsequent knot passed the boatswain's mate sang out its number. As the last of the sand fell into the bottom half of the glass, the midshipman gave the order "check"; the boatswain's mate stopped letting the line run out, noting the number of the knot nearest his hand. Comparing the number of the knot against the time on a chart gave the speed of the ship. By jerking the log-line the plug was removed and the log recovered. Thus it was that knots in a line became associated with nautical miles per hour. The reader will understand from this description that the land-lubber's 'knots per hour' is meaningless.

Although the glass referred to was probably graduated for about three or five minutes, a half-hour glass was used aboard ship until 1857 to mark the passage of time. The ship's bell was struck at the time of turning the glass, a custom instituted in the 13th century.

Whistling is forbidden in most ships if only for the reason that it can often be confused with the sound of the boatswain's call used for attracting attention before making a pipe. A former reason for the no-whistling rule was that it was the custom to whistle a wind when becalmed in a sailing ship; if perchance a gale ensued the assumption was that they overdid it. So sailors, being superstitious, rigidly curtailed their whistling habits. At the time of whistling for a wind it was customary to drive a knife into the mainmast on the bearing the wind was desired. Another strange and very ancient superstition for producing wind was the knotting of a short length of rope, a single knot for a light breeze, two for fresh breezes, and three for strong winds.

A killick is Gaelic for anchor, an invention of the Chinese emperor Yu (2205-2197 BC), and it is from the badge of a single foul anchor that the leading seaman takes the naval slang term for his rank. The foul anchor, otherwise known as the sailor's disgrace, has no intent of

reflection on the wearer's seamanship ability, but had its origin in ancient times as a religious symbol of steadfastness, hope and salvation. It reappears in the heraldic device of Lord Effingham. Lord High Admiral in the late 16th century, and naval use of it probably dates from that time.

Records indicate that tobacco was introduced in the navy in 1798, mostly for chewing, although we red that in later years informal meetings of a smoking circle about a smoking lanter were held on the upper deck in fine weather, at other times in the galley. The US Navy refers to this smoking lantern in lieu of our stand easy and out pipes.

The broad arrow or crowsfoot on government stores, not just naval gear, was the personal mark of the Commissioner of Ordnance during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603). The mark was authorized for use by the Royal Navy in 1698. The same mark was used in Canada for military stores with the addition of the letter 'C' about the arrow.
Its use as a war assets had made such a usage uncertain. Service stores are now marked only as having been tested by Inspection Services of Canada.

The term compass rose no doubt comes from the French rose des vents, an imaginary flower of four petals, one for the wind of each cardinal point. Roman records show that what is now the north point was their era marked with a letter 'T' for trans montana or tramontana - across the mountains, i.e. what lay to the north of the Mediterranean. The French later substituted their national symbol, the fleur de lis.

Mention has been made elsewhere of the silver chain and boatswain's call now worn in lieu of a lanyard by men of the quartermaster branch. A silver whistle and chain have also played a part in military as well as naval command. For some centuries this item of regalia has been part of the military bandolier, now rarely seen except in ceremonial parades of historic regiments.

A custom not often practiced at the present time is that of hoisting between the masts of a ship, or at the yardarm, on the day of marriage of a member of the ship's company, a garland of evergreens, symbolizing continuing fruitfulness.

For centuries the marines in a ship lived between the officers and the men. The small-arms racks were kept nearby since the marines were the soldiery of the ship. After the Nore Mutinies St. Vincent had the marines moved further aft, and the small-arms moved with them. The marines' mess is traditionally called the marines' barracks.

The naval tudor crown, as described in the Manual of Seamanship, Volume 2 (1951) "consists of a circlet surmounted by the sterns of four men-of-war, each with three poop lanterns,

and four square sails each spread on a mast and yard and fully filled and sheeted home; the ships and sails being positioned alternately". The Sailing and Fighting Instructions published in 1746 appear to contain the first written description and use of the crown in the navy. It was there stated that it was an award to a ship's company for being the first to board successfully an enemy man-of-war.

The normal place for the naval crown now is at the top of ships' crests or badges. The latter are drawn up in accordance with the historic rules of heraldry, that is from items of office, name of history, and are submitted for approval to the Clarenceaux King of Arms, titular head of the College of Heralds. RCN crests have three green maple leaves in addition to any other distinctive Canadian symbols or animals. A sealed pattern of each ship's crest is issued to the ship by Naval Headquarters.

A Canadian warship is known in writing as HMCS BUCKINGHAM or the BUCKINGHAM, or even the *BUCKINGHAM* (with her name in italics); but a ship's name should never appear in quotation marks. In referring to her captain, he is called simply BUCKINGHAM or *BUCKINGHAM* (italics)

By traditional right the starboard side of the quarterdeck belongs to the captain, though it may be used by any officer so long as the captain is not on deck. Less necessary, but certainly a reality in the days of small vessels on long voyages, was a space to walk, and even now captains or officers-of-the-watch can be seen pacing the quarterdeck. Presumably the starboard side became the captain's choice because it was farthest from the noise and turmoil of loading the ship on the port side.

The adjustable screw plug which fits in the muzzle of a large gun is called a tampion or tompion. Some of these, particularly on mountings or turrets on the quarterdeck, have the ship's crest or some other symbol affixed. These fittings were invented by a London clockmaker named Tompion in the year 1690.

The seaman's hammock was first introduced to the Old World by Christopher Columbus who had discovered them in the West Indies in 1493. The present name comes from the Spanish hamaca and the original English word was hamaco. The British first saw these at the Armada (1588) and they appeared in service in the British navy in 1597. At first they were issued on a basis of one for every two men, and for foreign service only. In 1693 they were noted as supplementary stores items for flagships only - 400 for the Admiral of the Red, 300 for the Blue, and 200 for other flagships. They were listed under 'Boatswain's Stores' as 'hammacoes, swinging'. Until well into the 19th century these and the sailors' trousers were made of heavy brown canvas from damaged sails. On clearing a ship for action the lashed hammocks were placed in the netting along the upperdeck bulwarks to protect exposed guns' crews from musket fire.

Under international law the territory of a state extends, with some local exceptions, to three nautical miles to seaward from mean low water level. This distance, determined in the 17th century, is based on what was then considered to be the maximum range of cannon. It has long been an established right under the law relating to territorial seas that ships which ordinarily operate outside the limits of such waters are exempt from excise tax and duty on certain articles such as tobaccos and alcoholic beverages which are for consumption onboard by the crews and passengers. These fringe benefits are considered a valuable compensation for the inconveniences and discomforts of seagoing service.

The anchors and cables and other heavy rigging in ships before the advent of steam propulsion were worked by hand-operated capstans of massive size. In the VICTORY, for example, the main capstan was 'handraulic' to the extent of 280 men, 140 of them on each of two decks, manning the capstan bars. A fiddler used to sit atop the capstan playing tunes to which the men sang: this was the beginning of the sea shanty. Many of these, although very old, are found in modern songbooks and still enjoy a wide popularity.

Amidships and just above the waterline on the side of a merchant ship you will see painted in white a circle with a horizontal line through it, and alongside it, another set of marks. These are known respectively as the Plimsoll line and the load lines, the first named for Samual Plimsoll, a Liverpool merchant and member of Parliament about 1880 who succeeded in having a bill passed requiring every British merchant ship "to carry the mark and not submerge it". Before that year many otherwise seaworthy ships had been lost through overloading. The load lines are special variations for different areas of operation and prevailing conditions. Obviously there would be no point in applying such a system to naval vessels. The draught marks of our ships are marked fore and aft in 6-inch Roman numerals and are read by a shipwright before leaving or after entering harbour.

Not previously mentioned in the remarks on laws of the sea are the North European Sea Codes, which placed emphasis on the shipping of wine. Measurement of ships engaged in this trade was by the number of large casks, known as tuns, carried. If we study the definitions of gross and net tonnage - the usual measurements for merchant ships - we see that the ton is still a unit of internal carrying capacity.

By modern requirements, a ship's log, though full of detail, cannot be called a very interesting document. To show that logs, as diaries of ships' activities, enjoyed a more colourful past, some logbooks dated between 1804 and 1812 may be examined in the Museo Maritimo in Barcelona, Spain. Each page, written in Spanish, is headed "Dios nos quie, Amen". (May the Lord guide us.) and ends "En el nombre de Dios, Amen". (In the name of God.) Between these, on the left page, are columns for courses and distances, much like our own logs, with the addition of plane sailing tabulations, that is, distance run north, south, east and west during the

day. On the right hand page, above a narrative in the master's handwriting of the day's activities, is a watercolour painting of his ship, showing the sails set, the relative sea state and direction and the motion of the ship; if at anchor, details of the part appear in the background. By contrast, we now substitute columns of navigational and meteorological numerals and symbols.

In the Sixth Book of the Roman poet Virgil we learn ttiat the old seamen used to place a coin under the heel of each mast to pay the Fare to Charon for crossing the River Styx, thereby ensuring a safe passage for all hands over 'the river of the underworld' should disaster overtake the vessel. In deference to this old superstition the practice is still carried out. A copper coin inserted in the mouth of a dead seaman in Roman times served the same purpose in respect to the individual.

A custom adhered to by navies and steamship lines in naming their ships is that a name is only repeated in a later vessel if the predecessor went out of service honourably - through being sold to another owner, scrapped, or lost by enemy action. The name of a ship destroyed by fire or lost in collision or grounding is not repeated. It would perhaps bs more appropriate to decide each case in its merits, but the custom seems quite inflexible.

Whereas merchant practice is to paint a ship's name on both bows, and across the stern together with the port of registry, large naval vessels have their names on either side of the stern so they may be easily seen from boats approaching either accommodation ladder. Small naval ships, namely destroyers and below, have hull or pendant numbers painted on both sides below the bridge superstructure, and across the stern. Name-boards are often mounted as well, usually on the after superstructure.