Hampton Roads Ship Model Society

Logbook

No. 171 **http://members.xoom.com/HRSMS/** **SEPTEMBER, 2000**

FROM THE PILOTHOUSE

SEAFARING IN THE AGE OF TALL SHIPS

Continued from the August issue

What was life like aboard the tall ships when they were working vessels?

Food
Food for the crew was pretty awful by today's standards up until the 20th century. Ships had to remain at sea for long periods of time and there was no such thing as refrigeration or modern preservation means. The staple diet was sea biscuit or hardtack (often full of weevils), salt pork or salt beef (sometimes spoiled on long voyages), dried or salted fish, cheese, beans, rice, molasses (sometimes insect infested), and occasionally dried fruit such as raisins or prunes. Anti scorbutics to prevent scurvy were not discovered until the 18th century, and were not part of the regular diet until the 19th century. Sauerkraut and Lime Juice were commonly used. Lime juice was required in British ships in mid 19th century hence the reference to British sailors as "Limeys"

Drinking water had to be carried in casks and sometimes turned bad from contaminants and insects. Water could be augmented with rain water or by carrying casks ashore to be refilled where and when water was available. Beer and wine were routinely used as a beverage because it didn't spoil as easily as water, and Rum was issued out on a daily basis in British and American war ships. It was later diluted with water and then termed Grog.Liquor was issued on US vessels until the 1880's when it became banned, due to the efforts of Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels. US Naval vessels remain dry to this day. Most foreign vessels are not.

hen ships were in port the long voyage foods were augmented by fresh fruits and vegetables, and sometimes with live stock carried on board. These latter were usually the property of the officers, being too expensive to feed the crew. Also when conditions would allow, the crew often would try to catch fish, and when ships operated in arctic or antarctic waters seals and penguins and sometimes even polar bears would be taken for food.

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Mystery Photo

Welcome to Mystery Photo, *Logbook* No. 170. You have to look carefully this month, and if you do, you will be rewarded with the profile of a vessel nestled along a crowded pier side. Its shape is vaguely familiar. Is it a ship or a boat? Does it cruise on the surface or sneak below the waves? Is it a recent addition to some modern navy or an experimental relic from a by-gone era? Who would say that this is a turret-less monitor? I thought, maybe, that someone might suggest that the mystery photograph is the US Navy's new destroyer, DD-21. After studying the vessel in this photograph it becomes apparent that everything old is new again. What a thought provoking image!

The forces that created this month's mystery vessel are all too reminiscent of the forces that affect today's naval planners. One of the toughest tasks facing modern naval planners is planning for tomorrow's war with today's technology. In today's world where the reality often is ten to twenty year gestation periods for new weapons systems and similar procurement cycles for delivery platforms designed and built with fifty year service lives, you can see how daunting the task is. With this in mind, you can see how hard it must have been to build and equip our navy of one hundred years ago.

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Naval planners of the last millenium didn't have the benefit of think tanks, research institutes, an over-scrutinizing congress and press, or uninformed public opinion to steer their thinking when ordering new weapons systems. In the last century, 19th not 20th, it usually came down to the strongest personality or best debater getting his way. A big hindrance to 19th century naval planning was the navy's, then recent, emergence from a self-imposed, thirty-year stagnation period and an Officer Corp that was way long in the tooth. This left the navy woefully unprepared to build on the rapid technological changes happening around them. To be sure, that era was as rich with technological change as the period we find ourselves in today. But they tried anyway and some anachronisms did creep into the fleet. Our mystery photo showcases one of the designs that took the low road.

According to John Alden in his book *The American Steel Navy*, page-48, "Die-hard advocates of the harbor-defense strategy, led by Rear Admiral Daniel Ammen, had pushed for a fleet of rams ever since the First Naval Advisory Board. In 1889 one example of the type—based on designs by Ammen—was finally authorized." Dave Baker and Joe McCleary both agree--that design is this month's mystery vessel, *Katahdin*.

Dave's response came first so he gets top billing: "John: Your mystery photo on pg. 7 of this month's LOGBOOK is the KATAHDIN, launched by Bath Iron Works on 4 February 1893. Officially typed an "Ironclad Ram," she was one of the more useless objects ever commissioned (on 20 February 1896) for the U.S. Navy. The 2,155-ton KATAHDIN, also described as a "harbor defense ram," had a very brief active career, being decommissioned on 17 April 1897, recommissioned on 10 March 1898 to provide coast defense against feared attacks by Spain, and then decommissioned permanently on 8 October 1898. KATAHDIN's main armament was her heavy bow casting, but she had difficulty making speed and, of course, was very wet in any kind of a sea. The only other armament was four 6-pdr (57-mm) quick-firing cannon. The Royal Navy built a similar ship, the POLYPHEMUS, which was equally useless."

As Joe sees it: "Easy Peasy! I recognized this one without even going to DANFS. Nothing else ever looked liked this ship. The hardest part is separating what is on the ship from what is junk in the background. Also the ships two large ventilators, forward and aft of the stack, are somewhat disguised because their cowls have been removed.

The Mystery Photo is of USS Katahdin, a one-time experimental vessel classed as a harbor defense ram. She was 250'9' long, with a beam of 43'5" and a draft of 15'1". Her displacement was 2,155tons and she had a top speed of 16 knots. She had a compliment was 97 men and her only weaponry, other than her reinforced, underwater ram bow and very low silhouette her only armament was four 6-pounder guns."

Dave mentions *Kathadin's* final fate: "Stricken from the Navy List on 9 July 1909, the ship's hulk was used as a gunfire target at Rappahanock Spit, VA, in September 1909."

Joe delves a little into the reasoning behind *Kathadin's* design and lack of success. "The harbor defense ram was built very much on the idea that she could slip out of harbor at night and her very low freeboard would allow her to slip up on a blockading or attacking enemy ship and sink it by ramming before her presence was discovered. This is very much similar to the mission and method of operation of the recently raised Confederate "submarine" *Hunley*, which was really intended to run awash rather than submerged, since the periscope had not been invented as yet and the vessel was blind if she submerged. Unlike *Hunley, Katahdin* could not alter her draft or depth, she was just low lying all the time. The longer ranges demonstrated by naval guns in the Spanish American War and Russo Japanese War plus improvements in side armor meant that ships like Katahdin had little or no chance of succeeding and that is why no further types of this ship were built and why *Katahdin* was never kept in commission for any lengthy period of time. She was a weapons system looking for a mission."

The US Navy for all its effort took twenty years to duplicate the Royal Navy's failed *Polyphemus,* built in the early 1880's. *Kathadin* was slow, hot, wet, and cramped. She was in commission for two short years—and one of those because of the Spanish-American War. Named for a mountain in Maine, *Kathadin* never lived up to its lofty namesake. In spite of her green paint, she did have several innovative features that predated the submarine, most notably a double bottom that allowed her to reduce her already scant freeboard to bring the ship to fighting trim. I am troubled by the similarity in hull design between *Kathadin* and the new DD-21, *Zumwalt*-class destroyer. After years of increasing hull size to "increase seakeeping," the navy seems to be more than willing to take a giant step backwards.

Dave and Joe certainly capture the essence of the design.

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NAME TAGS

Please contact Len Wine if you would like to order a HRSMS name tag. The cost will be approximately $5.00. Please pay the Purser upon delivery.

DUES

If you have not paid your dues for the current year, Please open your kit, retrieve the paltry sum and pass it to the Purser. Failure to do so may result in your name be bandied about in your absence.

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"Rather useless" and "A weapons system looking for a mission" are pretty strong epitaphs for a one-off experimental design. For *Kathadin*, wouldn't "Technology demonstrator" be more fitting? This may have been the original stealth ship!

If you are interested, Joe says, "There is a beautiful model of this ship in the Smithsonian's Museum of American History. At one time I considered building a model of this vessel partly because she is of such an unusual design and partly because this would be a good way to sneak up on the steel ship boys in the dark."

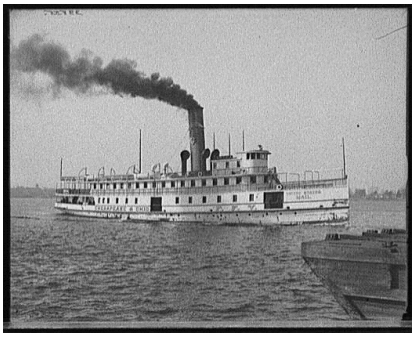
Ammen!

John Cheevers

From: Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ship
HAMPTON
ScGbt: dp. 166; l. 106'; b. 21'; dph. 8'; dr. 5';

CSS HAMPTON was a wooden gunboat built at Norfolk Navy Yard in 1862 and based there until May when the yard was abandoned and the fleet moved up the James River. With Lt. J. S. Maury, CSN, in command, HAMPTON participated in significant river actions including the battle at Dutch Gap on 13 August 1864; operations against Fort Harrison, 29 September-1 October; and the engagement at Chaffin's Bluff, 22 October.

HAMPTON was burned by the Confederates as they evacuated Richmond on 3 April 1865.



Str. *Virginia*, Chesapeake and Ohio Line

between 1902 and 1910

(Continued from page 1)

Clothing

Clothing was principally the individual sailor's responsibility. All of a sailor's belongings had to be stowed in a small sea chest and later in a sea bag. They usually went barefoot on board ship so that sailors going aloft could better hold to rigging and foot ropes and avoid slipping. In the late19th century, sea boots were worn in foul cold weather. Clothing was often made out of canvas on board ships. Clothing could be augmented by purchase from "slops", which was cast off clothing or clothing from deserters or deceased sailors. Uniforms for the enlisted men in the Navies did not exist until the late 18th century, and were not common until the 19th century. Oilskins were used as water proof garments, and consisted of clothing coated with linseed oil, tar, or other oils. The present day oilskins appeared in the latter half of the 19th century.

Sea going uniforms in the 19th century consisted of duck trousers, a short blue jacket , shirt, neckerchief, pumps, and a straw hat. Some of these items and features are carried over into the present naval sailor's uniforms. On merchant vessels ordinary every day clothing as worn by lands men was frequently worn. Pea Jackets or short overcoats, knitted sweaters, and knitted caps were worn in cold weather. Sailors seldom wore gloves as they would interfere with handling lines and sails.

Bob Comet

Note:
This material was originally prepared for a presentation given to a Virginia Commonwealth University , Continuing Education group.

Schooner *Fleetwing*

July 20, 1892

MINUTES

8-14-00
Host: Bob Comet
Guests: Brad Grey 2nd meeting
Scott Vickery 1st meeting

The meeting was called to order by the Skipper at 2005 hours.

Corrections to the Minutes; None

A purser's report was given.

Old Business: The NRG Conference committee reported that they had opened a checking account to handle conference funds. They then gave a financial report. They also reported that the nametags for the conference will be on strings to be worn around the neck.

New Business: A question was asked about copies of the HRSMS Bylaws. The Clerk is to contact Alan Frazer and get the file so distribution can be made. The Skipper had a letter from Hobbytown USA requesting the club roster for their mailing list. He polled those present for any objection to releasing the roster. Receiving no objection, the Clerk was directed to send the roster to the e-mail address on the letter. The Skipper asked the members to read Graham Horne's article and respond to him. He restated the need to have a program at each meeting.

Show and Tell: Joe McCleary had photos of salvaged parts of the *Monitor*, and a copy of the Washington newsletter with an article by Graham Horne. John Cheevers showed pictures of his completed model of the yacht, Rachael Carson. Bob Comet showed a nifty device he purchased to serve lines, and a copy of Seamanship in the Age of Sail: An Account of the Sailing Man-of-War 1600-1860 John Harland, Mark Myers / Hardcover / Naval Institute Press / September 1984

The Meeting was adjourned.

From: *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, Vol.VII - p 540

Virginia

The first English colony in America and one of the original 13 states. Virginia ratified the constitution on 26 June 1788 to become the 10th state to enter the union.

(Sch.: t. 187; l. 50' on keel; b. 18'10"; dph. 8'6"; cpl. 70; a. 6 6 -pdrs., 8 4-pdrs.)

The second *Virginia--a* schooner built in 1797 for the United States Revenue Cutter Service at Portsmouth, Va.--was transferred to the Navy for use in the undeclared naval war against France in the early summer of 1798 ; and was commissioned on 25 June, Capt. Francis Bright in command.

In August 1798, *Virginia* received orders to join the frigate *Constitution* off the eastern seaboard of the United States for operations against suspected French warships and merchantmen. She remained on this station until December, when she was assigned identical duty in the West Indies between St. Christopher Island and Puerto Rico as part of the squadron commanded by Commodore Thomas Truxtun. While helping to defend American interests in the Caribbean, *Virginia,* assisted by *Richmond* and *Eagle,* captured the armed French schooner *Louis* and her cargo on 26 April 1799. Despite this success, in the following June, the fragile vessel was declared unfit for further naval service and was returned to the Revenue Cutter Service.

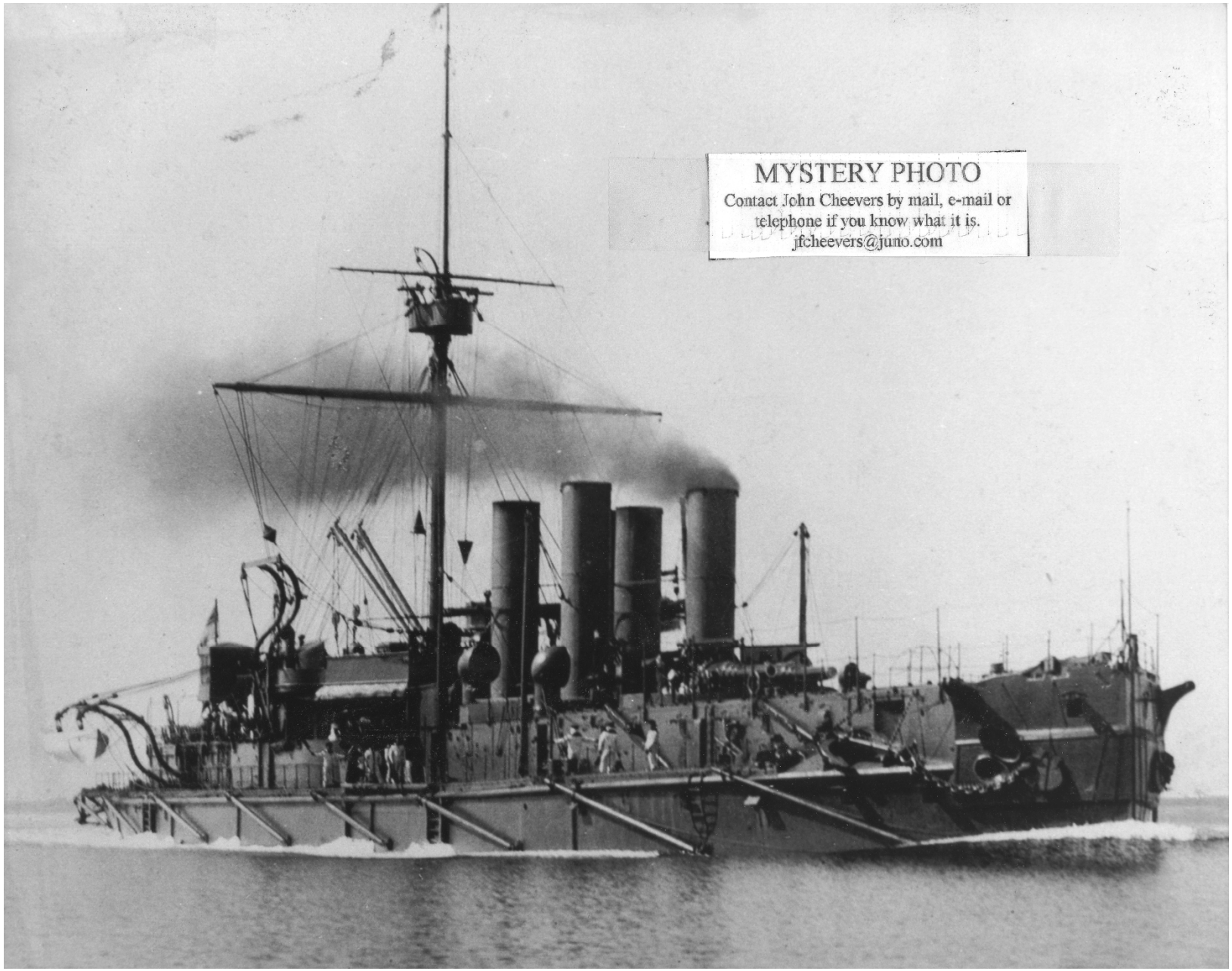
Cyclops II

In Greek mythology, a race of giants with only one eye.

Collier
Displacement 19,360 , Length 542', Beam 65', Draw 27'8"
Speed 16 k, Complement 236
Armament
Class

The second *Cyclops*, a collier, was launched 7 May 1910 by William Cramp and Sons, Philadelphia, Pa., and placed in service 7 November 1910, G. W. Worley, Master, Navy Auxiliary Service, in charge. Operating with the Naval Auxiliary Service, Atlantic Fleet, the collier voyaged to the Baltic during May to July 1911 to supply 2d Division ships. Returning to Norfolk, she operated on the east coast from Newport to the Caribbean servicing the Fleet. During the troubled conditions in Mexico in 1914 and 1916, she coaled ships on patrol there and received the thanks of the State Department for cooperation in bringing refugees from Tampico to New Orleans.

With American entry into World War I, *Cyclops* was commissioned 1 May 1917, Lieutenant Commander G. W. Worley in command. She joined a convoy for St. Nazaire, France, in June 1917, returning to the east coast in July. Except for a voyage to Halifax, Nova Scotia, she served along the east coast until 9 January 1918 when she was assigned to Naval Overseas Transportation Service. She then sailed to Brazilian waters to fuel British ships in the South Atlantic, receiving the thanks of the State Department and Commander -in-Chief, Pacific. She put to sea from Rio de Janeiro 16 February 1918 and after touching at Barbados on 3 and 4 March, was never heard from again. Her loss without a trace is one of the sea's unsolved mysteries.


MYSTERY PHOTO
Contact John Cheevers by mail, e-mail or
telephone if you know what it is.
jfcheevers@juno.com

NOTABLE EVENTS

	SEPTEMBER
8	**H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Willamsburg AARP
16	Bring Your Model Day, Mariners' Museum
	OCTOBER
5	How to Get Started in Ship Model Building Mariners' Museum
13	**H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Graham Horne
27-29	NRG Conference, Hampron Va.
	NOVEMBER
10	**H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Heinz Schiller
	DECEMBER
8	**H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting: host, Jack Bobbitt
12	Bill Clarke will start a ship model
	JANUARY
12	**H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:
	FEBRUARY
9	**H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:
	MARCH
9	**H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:
	APRIL
10	**H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:
	MAY
11	**H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:
	JUNE
8	**H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:
	JULY
13	**H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:
	AUGUST
11	**H.R.S.M.S.** Monthly Meeting:

Thanks

The members would like to thank Bob Comet for hosting the August meeting.

WATCH, QUARTER AND STATION BILL

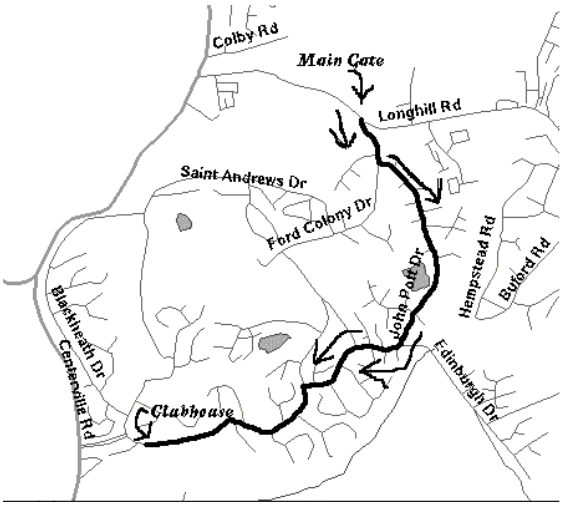
Skipper:	Bob Comet	(757) 934-1279
1st Mate:	Len Wine	(757) 566-8597
Purser:	John Cheevers	(757) 591-8955
Clerk:	Tom Saunders	(757) 850-0580
Historian:	Len Wine	(757) 566-8597
Editors:	John Cheevers	(757) 591-8955
	Bill Clarke	(757) 868-6809
	Tom Saunders	(757)-850-0580

Next Meeting

Date: September 8, 2000
Time: 2000 Hours
Place: 302 St. Andrews Drive, Williamsburg, Va.
Host: Williamsburg AARP

The next meeting will be hosted by our Williamsburg chapter of AARP on September 8, 2000 at 2000 hours. The meeting will be held at the Ford's Colony Swim and Tennis Club, 302 St. Andrews Dr. ,Williamsburg Va.

Take I-64 to exit 234. Take Rte.199 south 1.5 miles to Rte, 60. Make left turn (west) to first light (Rte.614, Centerville Rd.). Turn left, go 3 miles to Rte. 612 (Longhill Rd.). Go .7 miles to Fords Colony. Check in at the brick gate-house on the left. Go .9 miles (on John Pott) to Edinburgh. Make right turn. Go .5 miles to St. Andrews. Make left turn and go .9 miles to the Swim and Tennis Club building.



THE DICTIONARY OF PHRASE AND FABLE
BY E. COBHAM BREWER

Before the Mast *To serve before the mast.* To be one of the common sailors, whose quarters are in the forward part of the ship. The half-deck is the sanctum of the second mate, and, in Greenland fishers, of the spikeoneer, harpooners, carpenters, coopers, boatswains, and all secondary officers; of low birth.

Grog Rum and water, cold without. Admiral Vernon was called *Old Grog* by his sailors because he was accustomed to walk the deck in rough weather in a *grogram cloak.* As he was the first to serve water in the rum on board ship, the mixture went by the name of grog. *Six-water grog* is one part rum to six parts of water. Grog, in common parlance, is any mixture of spirits and water, either hot or cold.