

NAUTICAL VOCABULARY

Aft- Toward or at the stern (back or) the ship

Battery- The armament (guns) on a warship.

Berthing Compartments- Rooms containing bunks for enlisted sailors. They slept three high on canvas bunks with mattresses.

Bow- The pointed front part of a ship.

Breakwater- A weather shield designed to block the flow of water on the main deck. It protected men from waves while they worked on the main deck.

Bridge- An elevated platform on a ship where the captain stood while he controlled the ship.

Convoy- A large group of ships traveling together in a tight group for mutual protection from submarine and aircraft attack.

Depth Charge- A powerful bomb, detonated by water pressure, used to attack submarines.

Fantail- The part of the main deck at the stern (back of) the ship.

Fire Control- The science of directing gunfire with RADAR and visual aides.

Galley- The kitchen, where cooks prepared food for the crew.

Gangway- Walkway used to enter and leave a ship.

Hatch- Any opening in the deck of a ship.

Hedgehog- An ahead-firing weapon that launched twenty-four contact-detonated bombs at a submerged submarine.

Knot- A nautical mile per hour; used to measure speed.

Landlubber- Any non-sailor; what you may be called if you refer to the USS SLATER as a boat. Remember: You can put a boat on a ship, but you can't put a ship on a boat!

Lifelines- Bronze wire surrounding the decks of ships to prevent sailors from falling overboard.

Morse Code- A system of signals in which the alphabet is represented by combinations of dots and dashes. Aboard ship, radios and signal lights sent messages in Morse Code.

Pilothouse- The compartment from which the ship is normally conned (steered).

Port- The left-hand side of the ship as you face the bow.

Projectile- A heavy missile, such as the bullets fired from the SLATER's guns.

Propeller- A revolving shaft with blades for driving a ship through the water. On ships with more than one propeller, each rotates in a different direction to maintain balance.

Quarterdeck- The area of the ship where the gangway comes aboard.

RADAR- Acronym for Radio Detection And Ranging. This system uses radio waves to detect distant objects, such as airplanes.

Rudder- A flat moveable blade fastened vertically to the stern of a ship. Moving the rudder turns the ship to a new direction.

Semaphore- A method of sending messages using two handheld flags in different positions to represent the letters of the alphabet.

Signal Flags- A method of sending messages using different colored flags hung from the mast to represent letters of the alphabet.

SONAR- Acronym for Sound Navigation And Ranging. A device that sends sound waves out into the water. The device records echoes received from the sound after it bounces off an underwater object. Used to detect submarines.

Starboard- The right-hand side of the ship as you face the bow.

Stem- The front edge of a ship's hull.

Stern- The rear end of a ship.

Wardroom- The officers' dining room and lounge. On small ships, the wardroom doubled as the operating room when needed.

Watch- Four-hour shift during which the men on duty are responsible for the operation, maintenance and safety of the ship.

Whaleboat- A wooden boat hung alongside a large ship. It is used for rescue operations and for ship-to-ship and ship-to-shore transfers.