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Since January 1996

As we start to settle into the New Year I thought I would have a little fun with this month's newsletter while focusing on supply chain. Courtesy of the November 2012 edition of *Inbound Logistics* magazine: some commonly used terms and their origination in the long-time transportation trade of maritime shipping. Ahoy mates and enjoy!

Leeway: The weather side of a ship is the side from which the wind is blowing. The lee side is the side of the ship sheltered from the wind. A lee shore is a shore that is downwind of a ship. If a ship does not have enough "leeway", it is in danger of being driven onto the shore.

Scuttlebutt: A butt was a barrel, and scuttle meant to chop a hole in something. The scuttlebutt was a water barrel with a hole cut into it so that sailors could reach in and drop out drinking water. The scuttlebutt was where ship gossip was exchanged.

Slush Fund: Ship's cooks would obtain a slurry of fat called "slush" by boiling or scraping empty salted meat storage barrels. The cooks often sold this slush ashore for their own benefit or for the crew. The money so derived became known as a slush fund.

Know The Ropes: There were miles of cordage on a square rigged ship. The only way of keeping track and knowing the function of these lines was to know where they were located. It took an experienced seaman to know the ropes.

Rummage Sale: From the French "arrimage," meaning ship's cargo. Damaged cargo was sold at a rummage sale.

Above Board: Anything on or above the open deck that is open and in plain view.

Pipe Down: The Pipe Down was the last signal from the bosun's pipe each day, which meant "lights out" and "silence".

Skyscraper: A small triangular sail set above the skysail in order to maximize effect in a light wind.

Buoyed Up: Using a buoy to raise the bight of an anchor cable to prevent it from chafing on a rough bottom.

And finally, the last term is something that I am sure we are all familiar with, especially after a hectic holiday season...

Pooped: The poop is the stern* section of a ship, and to be pooped is to be swamped by a high, following sea.

(*The stern of something is the back or rear. The stern of a vessel is the opposite of the stem (front) of a vessel. And thus the term "stem to stern" which means from front to back.)

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Until next month.

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