

Yang Shen Glossary

Dialects of pronunciations are (M) Mandarin, and (C) Cantonese. (WG) indicates a Wade-Giles romanization. Phonetic pronunciations (*pr.*) offered for Chinese words are spelled in a manner that will result in a fairly close rendering of Mandarin by most American speakers of English, at least where the same sound exists in both languages.

The English glossary is followed by a brief Chinese-to-English glossary.

(Dana) indicates a word or phrase from Dana, 1863 *Sailor's Manual*. (Smythe) indicates Smythe, 1867 *The Sailor's Word Book*.

English Glossary

a la Russe – in the Russian manner, as Susan Lasdun tells us on p. 116 of 1981 *Victorians at Home*, which was to set the food out on a side-board from which servants handed the dishes around to guests to help themselves, and was an obviously more frugal way of serving less food at a large gathering.

AB – able-bodied seaman.

aback – sails pressed against a mast instead of filled out by the wind.

abaft – toward the stern; behind.

aft – toward the rear, or toward the stern of a ship.

a-lee – in the same direction the wind is blowing; with the wind, not into the wind; sheltered from the wind. Helm a-lee: the wheel turns downwind, causing the rudder to turn toward the wind, which brings the bow of a vessel around into the wind, against the direction from which the wind is blowing.

amidships – in the center of a vessel.

An-nan 安南 – (M) Annam, old name for Vietnam.

arm – the extreme outward tip of a yard, as in yardarm.

assizes – sessions of a high court held periodically to hear cases, of a legislature or assembly to make laws. In 1967 *Law in Imperial China*, Bodde and Morris explain there were two assizes in imperial China (p. 134-43), the Autumn Assizes 秋審 for hearing capital cases from the provinces, and Court Assizes 朝審 for cases originating in Peking. Cases not meriting immediate execution often were put off until after the assizes to allow time for review.

astern – in the rear, behind the stern of a ship.

athwart – across a ship rather than in line with the ship (fore to aft; Dana).

athwart our hawse – across the bow; to cross in front. Cross my path (Dana).

astward heaving – arrest the capstan, stop it from turning (Smythe).

a-weather – toward the direction from which the wind blows; into the wind, not with the wind. Helm a-weather: the wheel turns upwind, causing the rudder to turn in a direction away from the wind, which brings the bow of a vessel around with the wind, in the same direction as the wind is blowing.

bankā – a small boat in the Philippines, or a boat of any variety.

bannermen – see Eight Banners.

barangay – the smallest unit of Philippine government administration in the 19th century. Rizal wrote that a *cabeza de barangay* was a headman and tax-collector for a group of about fifty families, for whose “tribute” he was personally responsible. Rizal, 1912 *The Reign of Greed*.

barrio bajo – slum (Spanish).

Bashi-Bazouk – Turkish ruffians, noted by fastidious Englishmen for their unkempt dress and filthy habits. They joined the British and French in irregular units fighting the Russians during the Crimean war. See Brewer, 1970 *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, p. 82, and photo in Lawrence, *Crimea: 1854-1856*, 1981.

battlement – in a castle or on a Chinese town wall, the elevation of a wall at the very top that provides protection for soldiers and frequently has notches for shooting arrows or firing weapons.

beat – sailing into the wind by tacking a vessel; moving forward slowly, with great difficulty.

beating the booby – beating the hands against one's sides to warm up (Smythe).

Beecher's bibles – contemporary slang name for Sharps rifled carbines.

belaying-pin soup – beat with a belaying pin until the consistency of soup, strike in the head with a

- belaying pin, ill-treatment of enlisted men by officers. On a sailing ship, a belaying pin is an iron or hardwood rod two or three feet long to which lines are tied.
- Bellerophon – young hero of Greek myth who mastered Pegasus, the flying horse, and slew the Chimera.
- bend [a rope] – tie or fasten a rope, generally to something, such as a belaying pin.
- betel nut – see *buyo*.
- blancmange – a sweet pudding made using almond extract, milk and gelatin, and flavored with rum.
- blind scouse – lobscouse with no meat. By analogy, a risky enterprise with an unpredictable outcome.
- board – starboard, larboard; aboard. The distance between changes of direction when tacking. Board originally was used for the side of a ship, but the etymology of later use is vague.
- board her in the smoke – to take by surprise by firing a broadside and boarding in the smoke (Smythe).
- bow – the front-end of a vessel.
- bower – a large anchor carried at the bow of a vessel.
- brace – as in “brace the yards, trim the sails.” On a square-rigged sailing vessel, with yards hung on a mast, to turn a yard and change the angle of a sail to the wind, using a rope (brace) run through a block at the end of the yard (yardarm) and down to the deck. See trim.
- brace the yards – pull hard on the tackle holding yards in place (Dana).
- braces – lines that turn yards (Dana).
- brail, brailing – to take in sail; shorten sail.
- brave – see *yung* 勇; also *chuang-yung* 壯勇.
- breakbone fever – disease transmitted by *aedes* the mosquito, with symptoms of headache, joint pain, and rash; aka dengue fever. *Aedes* also transmits yellow fever. Use of the term breakbone fever dates from 1860, and may then have been thought to also mean malaria.
- breeching – heavy rope secured to the cascabel (*q.v.*) of a gun to dampen recoil.
- brevet – temporary appointment or commission in a higher position or rank.
- Brown Bess – smooth-bore flintlock musket of .71 caliber in British service into the early 1840s.
- Brunswick rifle – percussion rifle of .704 caliber in British service from the mid to late 1840s.
- bung-full – (etymology vague) completely full, as with a barrel so full that the bung-hole (where a wood faucet can be inserted) must be stopped to prevent leakage; filled up to the bung-hole.
- bunt – center area of a sail. The bunt of the foreyard is the center part of the lowest yard on a foremast.
- buntlines – lines that fall across the front of a sail and are used to haul up the sail.
- burgoo, loblolly and skillogalee – names for seasoned oatmeal (Smythe).
- butcher's bill – count of dead and wounded (Smythe).
- buyo* – Betel nut, prepared for chewing by wrapping a piece of areca-nut with a little shell-lime in a betel-leaf. Rizal, 1912 *The Reign of Greed*.
- by the mark, two and a quarter – a manner of calling out a depth of water, or the depth as “marked” in a sounding line dropped into water. Two and a quarter fathoms (fathom = 6 feet) is 13½ feet.
- cable – a measure, either 600 feet (U.S.) or 720 feet (U.K.) long, equal to the length of an anchor cable. 100 fathoms.
- Cadmus – in Greek myth, the founder of Thebes. See dragon's teeth.
- Cape Horn fever – a sailor who feigns illness to avoid duty has caught Cape Horn fever.
- capstan – on a sailing vessel in the 1860s, generally a vertical post or cylinder with horizontal bars extending out like spokes on a wheel, each bar manned by a sailor who pushes on the caps'n bar and turns capstan around to take up slack in a chain or rope.
- carpe diem* – seize the day; enjoy today and forget about tomorrow.
- cascabel – metal ball on the back end of cannon where breeching (*q.v.*) was secured.
- casemate – reinforced shelter in a fortification, or protected enclosure on a ship, from which artillery is fired through openings (embrasures) generally large on the inside to allow access to a gun and small on the outside of the casemate to protect the men inside.
- cathead – a heavy timber that extends out over each side of the fore end of a vessel, from which an anchor is suspended.
- cat's-paw – a gentle breeze that ripples water surface as if touched softly by the paw of a cat.
- catted anchor – from the verb cat, to suspend a ship's anchor from the cathead. A catted anchor is one that has been raised to the cathead and suspended there, usually waiting for the bottom of the anchor to be drawn further up to the railing and secured for a voyage.
- cayuses – *pl.* wild horses, from an Indian word for ponies on open range. Cayuse.

- censorate 樞垣 – (WG) *shu-yuan* (M). Office in the Chinese bureaucracy charged with oversight of the performance and behavior of officials. Some censors travelled circuits, checking on local authorities.
- century – a unit of 100 men in a Roman legion.
- Cerberus – a terrible three-headed hound that stood guard at the gates of Hades.
- cheval-de-frise* – usually a log with many wooden spikes, used to obstruct advancing cavalry or infantry.
- ch'ien-chuang* 錢莊 – (M) clearinghouse, bank. *Ch'ien-chuang* were small native banks, developed predominantly by Ningpo men during the 18th century, that issued notes, offered accounts for cash transactions, and extended simple credit to customers.
- Charlie Noble – sailor's nickname for the galley stovepipe.
- Chenkiang 鎮江 (WG) Chen-chiang, *pr.* chen as “jun” in junk: “Jun-jee-ong” (M). Town on lower reaches of the Yangtze river, 155 miles west of Shanghai, 39 miles east of Nanking. Aka “Chin-kiang.” S. Wells Williams translated it as “Guard of the River.”
- Chiang-nan – see Kiangnan.
- Chiang-nan Ta-ying* 江南大營, (M) the Great Southern Imperial Encampment that laid siege to the Taiping in Nanking during the 1850s.
- Chiang-su – see Kiangsu.
- Chiang-yin – see Kiangyin.
- chin-chin – (1) “please, please, *ch'ing-ch'ing* 請請, an essential of polite address;” (2) a gesture of greeting or respect; (3) any worship of a god: “chin-chin joss”; (3) a chat, a chin-wag (Merriam-Webster). Giles, in his *Glossary of the Far East*, says that ch'in-ch'in is “a corruption of the Chinese salutation ‘Ch'ing, Ch'ing,’ which answers to our goodbye, etc. To ‘ch'in-ch'in joss’ is to perform religious worship of any kind.
- chuang-yung* 壯勇 – (M) “irregular braves,” a category of Green Standard soldiers assigned special duties. In 1860, *chuang-yung* were trained in western weapons and tactics and operated together with the Foreign Rifles in action against the Taiping army around Shanghai.
- cittadella* – citadel (Hungarian). Specifically, a fortress in Budapest.
- clew to earing – literally, the diagonal of a square sail; figuratively, from top to bottom (*A Naval Encyclopedia*, L. R. Hammersly & Co., 1881)
- close-hauled – relating to how the wind blows against a sail to gain propulsion. A vessel is close-hauled when the vessel moves into the wind at the sharpest possible angle, nearly head-on. By contrast, the vessel is not close-hauled when the wind blows directly on the face of the sail, at an angle perpendicular to the sail. Aka “full-and-by.”
- comanch – slang for Comanche Indian.
- comprador – Chinese agent of a foreign firm who deals with Chinese customers and suppliers.
- con – perceive, understand; swindle or manipulate; study or memorize.
- conjee – rice gruel (Smythe).
- Conscience Whig – early manifestation of New England Republican, prominent in the late 1840s, opposed to slavery, which is why a southerner like Hannibal Benedict would have thought them the same as abolitionists.
- contemn – to view with contempt or scorn; British usage, 1860.
- copperhead – northerners who sympathized with the South in the American Civil War.
- costermonger – British name for one who sells fruit and vegetables.
- course – the lowest and largest sail on a square-rigged mast. Fore course is on the foremast; main course is on the main mast.
- crank ship – a ship that is top-heavy, unwieldy, or easily tipped over.
- cro'jack – see crossjack.
- crossjack – *pr.* “cro'jack”; a name for the lowest yard on the mizzenmast, the aft mast of a ship.
- cutwater – the part of the bow at the waterline. The sides of a ship's hull where they come together under the bow and “cut” through the water.
- cyclops – giants in Greek myth with one eye in the middle of their foreheads.
- dayo* – Tagalog meaning foreigner, immigrant, or visitor. Also, “white man.”
- descry, descried – to discover something, or catch sight of something in the distance.
- doxie – girlfriend; floozy, woman of loose morals.
- dragon's blood – a dark-red color, as in the palm resin used for varnish; Emerson, *First Essays*: “Siegfried, in the *Nibelungen*, is not quite immortal, for a [linden] leaf fell on his back whilst he was

- bathing in the dragon's blood." See Brewer, 1970 *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*.
- dragon's teeth – In Greek myth, teeth from a sacred water-dragon that guarded the spring of Ares, the god of war. When planted in the ground, they sprang up as fierce warriors, fully armed and keen for battle. With five such warriors, Cadmus founded the city of Thebes and, with Medea's help, Jason defeated such warriors in Colchis and went on to win the Golden Fleece.
- dunnage – loose wood stowed amongst cargo to prevent its motion; worthless scrap (Smythe).
- Eight Banners – Manchu soldiers, as opposed to native Chinese soldiers. Manchu families all were organized under eight banners, of various colors, at the time the Manchu conquered China in the 17th century, and the organization persisted throughout the Ch'ing dynasty (Mongols also were under eight banners, as were Chinese who joined the invaders). Banners were distributed between Peking and small provincial garrisons, where their officers held joint authority with Chinese civil officials. Native Chinese were organized separately – see Green Flag.
- Enfield rifle – percussion muzzle-loader firing a .577 caliber lubricated bullet (the grease was blamed for the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny) in British service from the mid-1850s into the 1860s.
- extrality – shorter form of extraterritoriality, the convention holding that, while abroad, a foreign national has the right to be tried under the laws of his own country, and is exempt from prosecution under the local laws of the host nation..
- fantods – the fidgets of officers (Smythe).
- fathom – a depth of six feet.
- felloe – the circular rim of a spoked wheel into which the outer ends of the spokes are fitted; the “tire” fits around this rim.
- fender – on a vessel, this is a cylinder of soft material that hangs over the side to protect the hull.
- filbustier* – French for filibuster (*q.v.*; Smythe).
- filibuster – a congressional delaying tactic, or a fomentor of foreign insurrection. Also, a native of the Philippines accused of advocating separation from Spain – Rizal, 1912 *The Reign of Greed*.
- Flemish horse – an additional footrope at the end of topsail yards (Dana).
- fo'c's'le – (*Pr. foke-sull*) a sailor's pronunciation of the word “forecastle.”
- fore-and-aft – a ship or boat rigged with fore-and-aft sails in line with the direction of the vessel, as opposed to square sails rigged at right angles to the direction of the vessel; a schooner, for example, is rigged with fore-and-aft sails on two masts.
- forecastle – *pr.* “fo'c's'le” (*folk-sull*); the part of the vessel forward of the foremast (the mast closest to the bow of a ship). The deck above the foremast was the foremast head, where the capstan and catheads were located, from which the anchor could be suspended. Inside the foremast were the bunks and living area for ordinary sailors.
- foretopman – sailor whose duty station was at the top of the lowest section of the foremast on a sailing vessel, and who was responsible for the lines and sails adjacent to the foretop. Masts on larger square-rigged vessels were stepped in several sections to achieve height, one atop the other; the foretop was the top of the lowest and largest section of the foremast. The foretop usually had a small platform around the top where, on war vessels, marine marksmen were placed during battle.
- foreyard – the lowest yard on the foremast of a sailing vessel.
- Fortunatus – a medieval German hero who owned a purse that was never empty of wealth. See Brewer, 1970 *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, p. 430. Reference to Wu Hsü's purse of Fortunatus appeared in the *North China Herald* of July 21, 1860.
- Frenchman – sailor's term for any strange vessel (Smythe).
- friction primer – a short, slender tube filled with a mixture of gunpowder inserted into the vent of a cannon and used to fire the cannon. A short friction wire grooved with teeth and affixed to a ring was pulled through the explosive compound to cause a spark, which detonated the gunpowder compound.
- full and change – the days when the moon is (1) fullest, and (2) when it is new.
- full-and-by – see close-hauled.
- gabion – a bottomless cylindrical basket used in building entrenchments.
- Galatea – an ocean nymph. See Brewer, 1970 *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, and Bullfinch.
- Galle – fortified city at the southwest end of the British crown colony of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). Galle was colonized by the Dutch in the 17th century, and later taken over by the British East India Company. Some say that Galle was the Tarshish that traded with the kingdom of Solomon.
- gallowglass – a soldier, from the mercenaries hired by Irish chieftans called *gallóglach*.

- gally dawnhaul – a thing that does not exist (literally, a line to haul down a ship’s galley which, generally, is affixed to the deck and moves neither up nor down, except with the ship).
- Ganymede – cupbearer, after the Greek myth of a youth made cupbearer to the gods on Olympus.
- gingal – (gingall, jingal, jingall) a Chinese blunderbuss. From the Hindustani “janggal,” a swivel. A large musket, in China generally fired from a swivel fixed on a wall or wooden post, but sometimes with the barrel resting on a second man’s shoulder. Giles wrote that “there is very little recoil in these weapons as they weigh about 20 pounds and the charge is not rammed home, but just dropped down the muzzle” (1878 *Glossary of Reference on...Far East*). In 1975 *The Chinese Opium Wars*, p. 248, Jack Beeching adds that a gingal was about seven and one-half feet long and had a range of only 100 yards.
- glacis – (*pr.* glatee) a gentle slope or incline that runs downward from a fortification and functions as a buffer, impeding approach to walls and denying a foothold at the base of a wall (Smythe).
- godown – warehouse. From the Malay “godon,” in Colcord, 1945 *Sea Language Comes Ashore*, p. 87.
- godverdomme* – “goddamn” (Dutch).
- Green Flag – aka Green Standard, Army of the Green Standard. Native Chinese soldiers, as opposed to Manchu soldiers. Green Flag troops, land and water, were under provincial authority, and supplemented by local *yung* (*q.v.*) irregulars, and militia. Speaking very broadly, bannermen were “national” soldiery, and Green Flag regulars were “local” soldiery distantly similar to American “state” guardsmen. See Eight Banners.
- griffin – clerk in a trading house; typically a young man still in his teens come out to China to make his fortune. Griffins worked as assistants to the taipans, the older China traders.
- grogshop – British slang for a low-class bar; a dive.
- grumbler – discontented but hard-working jack (sailor; Smythe).
- gunwale – the upper rail of a vessel.
- gutta percha* – a kind of rubber from Southeast Asia that came into Western use in the mid 19th century.
- Hakka 客家人 – a proud southern hill people of China, distinct in appearance, manner and customs from other southern Chinese. Many of the first Taiping leaders were Hakka.
- halliards – lines that hoist yards (Dana).
- hawsehole – opening in the side of a ship at the bow through which passes chain or cable.
- heave the anchor – raise the anchor up (Dana).
- heave-to – to stop the headway of a square-rigged ship by turning into the wind, or by backing sail.
- helm a-lee – see “a-lee.”
- helm a-weather – see “a-weather.”
- helm up – turn the wheel (helm) steering a ship upwind, into the wind, into the direction from which the wind blows. In vessels rigged so that the rudder swung opposite to the turn of the helm, “helm up” would cause a vessel to turn downwind, with the wind, in the same direction as the wind.
- hen frigate – vessel with the wife and/or family of a captain, master, or owner on board, especially so if they interfere with the running of the ship.
- highbinder – a crooked politician.
- hong 行 – *pr.* “hawng” (M). Business. From the generic Chinese term for a company.
- horse – shove, push, or move something by means of great force. Also, provide horses.
- hotwell – the hotwell collects water condensed from a steam engine for reuse in the boiler.
- howitzer – artillery piece originally designed with a medium-length barrel that allow it to serve as both a cannon and as a mortar, shooting at a low angle for long range, and at a high angle for lobbing shells over walls and into encampments.
- Howqua – (Houqua) Cantonese hong merchant highly regarded by the English of Opium War days and thought to be worth at least £26,000,000. In the 1917 *Encyclopedia Sinica*, Couling says on p. 240 that Howqua donated £1,100,000 of the £6 million ransom for Canton.
- humihinga pa* – still breathing (Tagalog)
- idlers – sailors who don’t go aloft, such as the carpenter and cook (Dana).
- imps – short for imperials. “Imperials” is used throughout in place of “imperialists” to indicate “imperial government” and avoid the connotation of “nation building.”
- in medeas res* – in the middle of things, at a time when the action is already underway, rather than at the chronological beginning of the story or epic poem being related.
- instant – in the present month; as in “Tuesday, the 5th inst.” for the 5th of this month.
- irons, in irons – the bow of a vessel cannot be made to come about one way or another when attempting

to turn (tack) through the wind to a new direction (Dana). A ship caught between the equal forces of wind and current can also be said to be “in irons.”

jack – a sailor.

Jacob’s ladder – in marine usage, a rope ladder with wooden rungs lowered over the side of a vessel.

jibber the kibber – to decoy a vessel onto the shore for plunder. See mooncurser.

jonathan – an American (Smythe).

joskins – yankee slang for hayseeds and townsmen aboard ship, in Cole, 1934 *The Irrepressible Conflict*.

joss – a corruption of the Portuguese word for God, *Deos*, originating in Macau and spreading along coastal China in the 19th century as a pidgin word for things related to religion; e. g. joss idols, joss sticks, joss money. Joss also came to mean “luck.”

joss-house – Chinese temple. The Victorian name for a Chinese temple, the place where a joss was kept (Kieth Stevens, “The Taking of Chapu,” JHKBRAS, Vol. 34 (1994), p. 119, n. 7).

Kaffir Wars – aka Xhosa Wars, nine wars fought by native Africans against European settlers in South Africa over the years 1811 through 1879. Fletcher refers to the war fought in 1856-58.

kedge anchor – a small anchor used to kedger a vessel – to shift the position of a vessel.

keelhaul – to secure a man by the wrists with rope and drag him from one side to the other *under* a vessel. Used for hazing or punishment in the old days of sailing, the victim had to be able to hold his breath for the duration he was submerged in water in order to survive the experience.

keelson – a small keel over the main keel of the hull of a vessel, the keel being the central beam that runs the length of the bottom of a vessel.

Kiangnan 江南 – (WG) Chiang-nan, *pr.* “Jee-ong-non” (M). Literally “South of the River,” meaning in the broadest sense all China south of the Yangtze River, a sort of Chinese Mason-Dixon line, but more often thought of as the broad expanse of the Yangtze delta, south from Nanking to Hangchow, and east to the Pacific Ocean.

Kiangsu 江蘇 – (WG) Chiang-su, *pr.* “Jee-ong-soo” (M). East China province in which are located the city of Shanghai, and the towns of Sungkiang (Sung-chiang) and Tsingpoo (Ch’ing-pu).

Kiangyin 江陰 (WG) Chiang-yin, *pr.* “Jee-ong-yeen” (M). Town on lower reaches of the Yangtze river, 90 miles west of Shanghai.

kiss the gunner’s daughter – to be thrown over the breech of a cannon and whipped.

knot – “nautical” mile, about 1.15 land miles.

krummholz – sparse and stunted forest at high elevations and along timberlines.

K’ung-fu-tze 孔夫子 – (M) Mandarin pronunciation of “Confucius.”

lanyard – a small cord or rope used for securing or suspending small objects.

laodah 老大 – “old-great”; *pr.* “lao-dah” (M); *lodaai* “low-dai” (C). Honorific for a man in charge, or the captain of a vessel; the “oldest and most accomplished, or wisest.” Also romanized as *lao-ta* (WG).

larboard – old term for port, or left. Board originally meant the side of a ship.

larbowlines – the larboard, or port, watch (Dana).

Laestrygonians – in the *Odyssey*, a tribe of cruel cannibals that murder many of Ulysses’ men.

lee – see leeward.

leech – vertical edge of a square sail; weather leech is the edge closest to the wind.

leeward – in the same direction toward which the wind blows; downwind; with the wind. Opposite of windward, which is toward the direction from which the wind blows. *Pr.* “lew-ard.”

leeward rail – when the wind blows across a vessel, one rail, or side, is closest to the direction from which the wind blows, and the other rail is farthest. The closer rail is the windward rail (wind’rd rail), and the farther rail is the leeward rail (lee’rd rail).

left bank – the bank on the left when facing down a river.

li 里 – Chinese measure of distance, about 1/3 of an American mile, or 1/2 of a kilometer; “Chinese mile.”

lifts – lines that tilt yards (Dana).

limbered – equipped with a limber; a limber is the part of a field gun carriage to which the trail is raised and attached for pulling the gun with a horse. By itself, the limber is essentially an ammunition box mounted atop an axle and two wheels. When attached to the gun carriage, the limber in effect changes the gun carriage into a four-wheel wagon.

Liu-ch’iu 琉球 – (M) Okinawa.

lobscouse – a sailor’s stew of meat, vegetables, and bread. See blind scouse.

lodaai 老大 – (C) Cantonese for *laodah*.

- Long River – the Yangtze River, *ch'ang-chiang* (WG) 長江.
- loose the sails – loosen sails and let them fall open to catch wind (Dana).
- lorcha – junk with a Western-style hull and Chinese sails. Portuguese first built lorchas in Macao.
- lubricator – device for lubricating moving metal parts through copper tubes fed oil from cloth wicks.
- luff – a sail that ripples and shakes when the wind shifts (because the wind is blowing across the face of the sail) is said to be luffing. Also, to steer the bow of a ship into the wind.
- luff-tackle – a block-and-tackle with two blocks, a double-block (a line passes through the block twice) and a single-block (a line passes through the block once) used for lifting very heavy weights and for hauling tight the running rigging that controls a ship's sails and yards (sheets, braces, halyards).
- mainbrace – the line that turns the main yard.
- main-truck – truck at the top of the mainmast. See truck.
- manila rope – rope that did not have to be tarred (Smythe).
- mantlet – a portable shelter for protecting soldiers when attacking a fortification.
- Manilaman – contemporary name for people from Manila, i.e. Filipinos. The term “Filipino” had not yet come into common use in 1860.
- mares tails – a change in the clouds which indicates a wind rising (Smythe).
- maskee – pidgin English of ambiguous pedigree. “All right,” “never mind,” and “however” are all valid readings depending on context. See “Maskee” in the Underfoot, Chapter 18.
- Minié rifle – percussion muzzle-loader of .702 caliber, firing an expanding bullet instead of a ball, that was in British service in the early 1850s.
- miss our stays – to fail to complete a tack (when a ship cannot turn her bow across the wind).
- moderator oil lamp – Susan Lasdun, on p. 56 of 1981 *Victorians at Home*, describes this oil-lamp as having a small tube through which oil was forced up to the wick in a controlled amount by a spring-operated piston. It was displaced by the kerosene lamp in the late 1860s.
- monsoon – seasonal wind that blows from the southwest between about April and October (summer monsoon), and from the northeast between October and April. In east China, in particular, the monsoons greatly influence seasonal rainfall, typhoons, and ocean currents.
- mooncursor – a person who deliberately causes shipwrecks. A mooncursor might tie a lantern to a hobbled horse on a dark and stormy night lure an unsuspecting ship into bad water. In the south of old England, such an evildoer would curse the moon when it was so bright as to reveal the shipwrecker's stratagem. From Colcord, 1945 *Sea Language Comes Ashore*, p. 131. See “jibber the kibber.”
- Mount Tai – mountain holy to Chinese for over 3000 years, located in Shan-tung Province. The emperor worshiped heaven there, and pilgrims still visit its many temples.
- mouse, to raise a mouse – to strike a blow that raises a lump (Smythe).
- Mrs. Grundy – a prudish arbiter of social behavior; from a character in an 18th century novel *Speed the Plough* by Thomas Morton.
- mungo – see wool mungo.
- Ningpo Guild 四明公所 – (WG) Ssu-ming Kung-so, *pr.* “Soo-ming Goong-suo” (M). A native-place association of Chinese from Ningpo formed for mutual-assistance between men who shared a common origin and dialect, and whose families usually still resided in the native-place. Also known generally as *T'ung-hsiang-hui* 同鄉會, “same-place association.”
- nun buoy – a buoy that tapers from a wide base to a narrow top.
- oakum – strands of jute or hemp soaked in tar and stuffed into cracks and seams as caulking.
- oculi – (*pl.*) a circular opening, a window; eyes.
- oetlul* – “bloody idiot” (Dutch)
- Omphale's wheel – Hercules was a slave for a year to Omphale, who made him wear women's clothes and hold wool for her spinning wheel. An allusion implying servitude and humiliation.
- pansit – a soup made of Chinese vermicelli. A Philippine noodle dish. Rizal, 1912 *The Reign of Greed*.
- parapet – an elevation of earth, stone or wall for the protection of soldiers.
- parcel – see worm, parcel and serve.
- Parsee – Generally, natives of Bombay, descended from Persians originally resettled in India in the 10th century, who are Zoroastrians.
- Parthian shot – a shot delivered while retreating; from the mounted archers of ancient Parthia know for the stratagem of twisting around on their galloping horses to release arrows at an enemy in pursuit.
- pawl – on a geared wheel, a wood or metal spur that rests on the gear teeth, clicking on the teeth as the

- wheel turns in one direction, then falling in between the gear teeth to lock the geared wheel in place when the direction is reversed.
- pay off – when a vessel’s head falls off from the wind (Dana).
- pecksniffery – sanctimonious hypocrisy; from a character in Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit*.
- pendant – a short rope or strap, fixed to a mast or yard, that has an metal eye spliced into the lower end to receive the hooks of the main and fore tackles (Smythe).
- pennet – sailor’s word for a rope or line.
- Per Mare Per Terram* – by sea and by land (motto of British Royal Marines).
- petard – a container of explosives used to blow apart barricades, gates and walls. “Hoisted by his own petard” is someone who has fallen victim to his own, usually nefarious, schemes.
- pidgin – “business” in pidgin English.
- polo – forced labor in the 19th century Philippines; from *polista* (Spanish). See Arcilla, *An Introduction to Philippine History*, p. 24.
- Polyphemus – a cyclops; son of Poseidon. In the *Odyssey*, Polyphemus is made drunk and blinded with a burning brand so that Ulysses and his men may escape being eaten alive by the cyclops. In Ovid, Polyphemus is the jealous suitor of Galatea (*qv*).
- poop deck – the part of the main deck aft (behind) of the mizzenmast (the mast closest to the stern of a ship); called the quarterdeck on naval vessels. Many clipper poop decks had a skylight over a saloon below, a companionway leading down to the saloon, and a binnacle (which held the compass) and helm located along the center of the poop deck, but the appointments varied.
- pugaree – a cloth wrapped around a helmet to protect the back of the neck from the sun.
- pukka sahib – Hindi for excellent fellow
- purser’s grin – a sneer (Smythe).
- pusa* 補子 – (M) a badge of rank. A large cloth square, *pu-chang* 補章, embroidered on the chest and the back of the surcoat of a mandarin or his wife, which used a symbolic bird or beast to represent one of the official grades 1 through 9, civil and military.
- quarterdeck – the part of the main deck aft of the mizzenmast on a naval vessel (the mast closest to the stern of a ship); called the poop deck on clipper ships.
- quarter gunner – a petty officer subordinate to a gunner in a ship of war. The quarter gunner generally was assigned to care for four guns, keeping them in good condition and ready for service.
- que magnifico! – “How magnificent!” (Spanish)
- que milagro! – “Such a miracle!” (Spanish)
- ratline – ropes tied as steps up the shrouds of a square-rigged ship.
- right bank – the bank on the right when facing down a river in the same direction as the flow.
- runner – in the context of Chinese officialdom, low-level yamen functionary who performed a variety of menial tasks for the magistrate – policeman, guard, messenger, jailor, doorman and so on. Chü T’ung-tsu has a chapter on government runners in 1969 *Local Government in China under the Ch’ing*. Runners often abused their authority and apparently were not greatly loved by the Chinese populace.
- running rigging – lines and cables that control the movement of sails of a vessel.
- samshu* – pidgin for a Chinese liquor, clear in color, distilled from rice, sorghum, or maize. The name *samshu* probably comes from the Cantonese for *shao-chiu* 燒酒, but “*samshu*” was likely used for any variety of Chinese liquors that are clear in color, including rice wine 白酒 or 米酒, *mao-t’ai* 茅臺酒, *kao-liang* 高粱酒, *wu-liang-yeh* 五糧液 (firewater made from five ingredients: sorghum, wheat, corn, and two kinds of rice), and so on.
- sanglely – old Tagalog word for Chinese (of unmixed blood).
- screw steamer – steamer with a propeller instead of paddle wheels.
- sennit – interwoven strands of rope yarn.
- seraglio – Italian (from Turkish) for the palace of a sultan, containing a harem in which wives are secluded, and other private quarters. A seraglio is entered through a Sublime Gate.
- serve – see worm, parcel and serve.
- sheer – the curvature of a vessel’s hull. Sheer strakes are the longitudinal planking with the greatest curvature fore and aft.
- sheerleg – spar used for raising or lowering a mast. Worcester, 1971 *Junks and Sampans of the Yangtze*, p. 75, differs from definitions of a sheerleg as a kind of floating crane. The idea for using the yuloh sweep as the spar came from <http://corribee.org/technical/mast/>. Sheerlegs are used today to form a

- tall tripod with a pulley at the apex for stepping and unstepping masts.
- sheer-strakes – the line of plank on a vessel's side, running fore and aft under the gunwale. They were attached to the ribs of the ship's body with large wooden dowels called treenails.
- sheet – rope attached to the lower corner of a square sail that spreads the sail and keep it taught (Dana).
- shivaree – a loud reception, a burlesque for newlyweds.
- short sixes – a fight (Taylor and Whiting, 1958 *Dictionary of American Proverbs...*).
- shot and shell – shot was solid iron and did not explode. Canister shot was a projectile filled with small iron balls that spread in flight – canister did not explode either. Shell was a hollow iron ball packed with powder – set off by a fuse ignited by the discharge of the cannon – that exploded in seconds and spewed iron fragments. Shot was for damaging things – ship's rigging and stone walls. *Shell was for killing men and horses*. Spherical case was sometimes called “shot,” but strictly speaking any hollowed-out exploding projectile was a shell (as in “hollow shell”).
- shroff – one who measures the weight and quality of gold and silver.
- shrouds – lines supporting masts from the sides (Dana).
- skillagalee – a watery gruel or porridge; also, a worthless fellow.
- skirr – move along at a rapid pace; hasty departure.
- soldier's wind – a wind so easy to sail in even a soldier could sail a vessel in it.
- spanker – a large fore-and-aft sail hung off the mizzenmast of a square-rigged vessel.
- speak a ship – to hail her, as *Game Cock* hailed *Essex* near Woosung (Dana).
- splice the mainbrace – jargon for issuing drink to a crew; serve grog after severe exertion (Smythe).
- splicer – (*archaic*) sailor; a marlin-spike seaman; rope expert. One who splices rope.
- standing rigging – shrouds and stays (lines and cables) that hold the masts of a sailing vessel in place.
- starboard – the right side of a ship. “Star” came from steer, and “board” for the side of a ship, and “starboard” originally was used for vessels propelled or steered by a paddle or oar on the right side of a vessel. *Online Etymology Dictionary*, www.etymonline.com.
- starboardlines – the starboard watch (Dana).
- stays – lines supporting masts fore and aft, forestays and backstays (Dana).
- stern – the rear of a boat or ship.
- stinkpot – a Chinese clay or ceramic weapon filled with noxious chemicals and thrown by hand; a sort of hand grenade.
- stokehold – opening at front of a boiler through which fuel is passed into the boiler.
- strake – longitudinal planking of a wooden vessel.
- supercargo – officer concerned with the commercial activities of a ship.
- sycee – Chinese silver made in the shape of ingots, from two to about six inches in length, that were often called “shoes” because of their resemblance to footwear.
- Ta-jen* 大人 – (M) polite term of address for an official; “great man.” Excellency.
- tabernacle – on a junk, “a housing, or case, extending from a foot or so above deck level to the bottom of the junk,” into which the mast is placed, like a rose stem in a slender vase, and braced with chocks between the mast and the bulkhead. Junk masts have no stays and shrouds for support of a mast in the manner of square-rigged clipper ships. Worcester, *Junks and Sampans of the Yangtze*, p. 75.
- tack – (1) to turn the bow of a ship through the wind. (2) The side of a vessel on which she has the wind (“starboard tack” – wind is on the starboard side). (3) Rope or tackle leading forward from the weather clew of a course (large sail at the bottom of a mast; Dana). See sheet.
- tael – *liang* 兩 (M). Chinese silver currency which, in 1860, was common in the form a small “shoes.”
- tafferel – also “taffrail”; the part of a vessel's rail above the stern (Dana).
- taotai* 道台 – (WG) *tao-t'ai*, *pr.* “dow-tai” (M). “Intendant of circuit”; Chinese official. “The chief local magistrate is the *taotai*, who is the governor of two *fu* and one *chou*, having altogether 22 *ching*, or walled cities, under his jurisdiction; from Smith, 1847 *Consular Cities of China*, probably referring to a particular *taotai*. In 1938 *Clippers and Consuls*, p. 46, Griffin notes that the Treaty of Wanghsia placed consuls on a level of equality with a *taotai*, or a prefect.
- tap the admiral – said of one who'd drink anything. "He'd tap the admiral to get a drink." from the sailor who stole spirits from the cask in which a dead admiral was being conveyed to England (Smythe).
- taper – a long, thin candle used to light other candles or lamps; the wick or cord in an oil lamp that feeds fuel to the flame.
- tared with the same brush – blamed for something for the same reason as another (Smythe).

tayo na! – let’s go! (Tagalog)

thimblerrigger – a swindler; one who employs an old shell game to swindle the rubes (place a pea under one of three inverted cups, shuffle the cups, and invite a sucker to guess under which cup lies the pea).

three-tailed pasha – pasha or bashaw, a Turkish officer of high rank, the lesser pashas being preceded by only two or one horse-tail on march or in camp. Brewer, 1970 *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, p. 808.

thumbstall – a sheath that protects the thumb when blocking a vent (*q.v.*), when loading an artillery piece.

tidewater – A customs official who boarded ships as they arrived in port on the tide. Colcord, 1945 *Sea Language Comes Ashore*.

tiffin – noonday meal, a word brought from India by the British and grafted into treaty port jargon.

tillite – a mix of dirt, sand, and rock detritus pushed along around the foot and margin of drifting glaciers.

ti-pao 地保 – (M) village constable. The *ti-pao* was part of the Qing *bao-chia* 保甲 system for local security based on units of ten households, the later rendition of the *li-chia* 里甲 system established to manage tax collection and labor service by the first Ming emperor Ming T’ai-tzu 明太祖. On p. 190 of *The District Magistrate*, Watt uses “village constable” for *ti-pao*. Giles calls the *ti-pao* a beadle in “The Fighting Cricket” story from *Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio* 聊齋誌異.

Tiresias – Soothsayer of Thebes, a seer blinded by the gods, either for telling their secrets, or for coming upon Athena naked in her bath. As if that was not enough, Tiresias was changed by Hera to a woman for seven years when he offended her; he had to live as a prostitute. The shade of Tiresias in hell, called up by Odysseus, warned the hero of dangers ahead. Tiresias appears often in art and as a walk-on character or allusion in literature from the *Odyssey* to the Alexandria Quartet.

toff – British slang for gentleman.

Tolosa – city of ancient Gaul (roughly the location of modern France) plundered by the Romans in 106 BC. A large store of gold and silver was taken from the Druid temple of Apollo. See Brewer, 1970 *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, p. 472.

tompion – a plug or cover for the muzzle of a gun (a cannon).

trail – the part of a field gun carriage that “trails” along on the ground behind the gun. The trail is lifted and moved right or left to point the gun. The trail is also hooked up to a limber, a “wagon harness,” so that the gun may be pulled by a horse.

treenail – wooden dowling used to hold together parts of the hull of a vessel, as the planking to the ribs or other beams.

trim the yards – adjust sail to catch the wind by moving the yards (Dana).

trim, trimmed – as in “brace the yards, trim the sails.” On a sailing vessel, (1) to adjust the angle of a sail so as to most effectively catch the wind; (2) to arrange cargo, ballast or passengers so that a vessel floats evenly in the water without any undue list, tilting to one side or the other, or fore or aft.

truck – small platform or wood cap at the top of a mast, from which pennants and flags may be flown. Also, the wheel of a gun carriage.

trunnions – projections on each side of a cannon that rest in recesses on the top of a gun carriage.

ultimo – in the month preceding this month; as in “Tuesday, the 5th ult.” for the 5th of last month.

VC – Victoria Cross, England’s highest medal for courage above and beyond the call of military duty.

vedette – a mounted sentry that ranged forward of pickets.

vent – a small passage from the outside of a cannon into the gun’s powder chamber; a friction primer was inserted into the vent.

Vulcan – Roman god of fire; smithy to the gods on Mount Olympus. The Chinese equivalent, Huo Wang 火王, is described in the Underfoot, Chapter 24.

waist – the “waist” of a vessel, its middle portion; the part of the main deck that lies between the forecastle and the quarterdeck.

Wandering Rocks – rocks at sea said to smash ships and scatter the remains. In Homer’s *Odyssey*, Circe, the sorceress, tells Odysseus about the route past Wandering Rocks and on toward the monsters Scylla and Charybdis.

warp – to move a ship by attaching a line to a fixed object and taking up the line on the ship’s capstan.

watch-tackle – a small block-and-tackle, a luff-tackle, with a short fall (the rope pulled on), easily moved about, and used for various purposes about the deck of a ship.

water gate – *shui-men* 水門, an opening to allow passage of a stream through the wall of an old Chinese city, just as a city gate allowed passage of a road through the city wall. All manner of boat traffic entered the city through the water gate, just like foot traffic, but the dimensions of the water gate,

- perhaps only ten feet high, limited the size of vessels that could pass.
- wear – to turn the stern of a ship through the wind.
- weather – toward the wind, on the side exposed to the wind. “Weather braces” are braces – ropes that turn yards – on the weather side of a yard. A ship with a “weather helm” tends to steer into the wind.
- wei-ch'i* 圍棋 – Chinese game of military strategy employing black and white stones on a board (called *Go* in Japan).
- whistling psalms to the taffrail – giving advice that is not being heeded by the listener (Smythe).
- windlass – a device for winding chain or rope.
- windward – toward the direction from which the wind blows; upwind; into the wind. Opposite of leeward, which is in the same direction as the wind.
- wool mungo – reclaimed wool of poor quality and short staple, used as a textile fiber for making yarn.
- worm, parcel, and serve – a practice on old square-riggers for preserving rope. To worm is to wind twice into the spiral groove of a plaited Manila rope, to fill the groove to keep water out, protect from chafing, and create a smooth surface. Parcel is to wrap the rope tightly with canvas. After parceling, a rope is served by winding cord closely and tightly around the rope to further prevent chafe and wear. A rope wormed, parceled, and served can then be coated with tar or varnish.
- worming staff – think “corkscrew for a cannon” – intertwined metal coils that catch hold of trash (wadding, cartridge bags) in the barrel of a cannon so it can be drawn out. Manucy, 1949 *Artillery Through the Ages*....
- yang-kuei-tzu* 洋鬼子 – (M) foreign devil (many Chinese today are embarrassed by the term 洋鬼子).
- yamen (WG: ya-men) – administrative office and residence for mandarins at several levels of Chinese government, aka yamun.
- yard – the “crosspiece” hung on a ship's mast. The clipper ships of the 1860s generally had three vertical masts (*foremast*, *mainmast*, and *mizzenmast*), and each mast had five yards, hung at intervals up the mast, from which sail was suspended. The lowest yard was named according to its mast: foreyard and mainyard; the lowest yard on the mizzenmast was the exception, called the crossjack yard (*pr.* cro'jack). The next higher yard on each mast was the lower topsail yard, then the upper topsail yard, the topgallant yard, and the royal yard.
- yardarm – the extreme outward tip of a yard.
- yuloh* 搖櫓 – *Yao-lu* (M); a long sculling oar, a sweep, for propelling and steering small to medium sized water craft in China, mounted usually at the stern, and sometimes also at the bow. The boatman stands and pushed the *yuloh* from side-to-side.
- yung* 勇 – (M) “braves,” irregular soldiery generally called up by provincial authorities in times of crisis.

Chinese Glossary (^{G12345} refers to the Giles dictionary number for a character)

Places along the lower Yangtze

蕪湖 – *Wu-hu*, Wuhoo

和州 – *Ho-chou*

天京 – *T'ien-ching*

焦山 – *Chiao-shan*, Silver Island

江陰 – *Chiang-yin*, Kiangyin

江陰運河 – Kiangyin Canal. When the old canal from Chenkiang to Wu-chin could no longer be used, traffic moved to the shorter route that flows from Lake T'ai through Wu-yang and Kiangyin to Huang-t'ien-kang 黃田港.

句容 – *Chü-jung*

鹿茸口 – *Lu-mao-k'ou*. “Deer-park.” *Mao* 茛 is a “water-mallow”^{G7696} sometimes used for *mao* 茅. *Pai-mao-gen* 白茅根 is the root of rushes, used as a “febrifuge,” an agent that reduces fever.

狼山 – *Lang-shan* (Wolf Mountain). Opposite Fushan, on the left bank, bearing roughly 7 miles NNE (see 江蘇全省輿圖, p. 249, and Williams *Commercial Guide*, p. 147). In 1860, this location was the most difficult patch along the lower reaches of the Yangtze.

福山 – *Fu-shan*, Fushan

福山口 – *Fu-shan-k'ou*

福山塘 – *Fu-shan-t'ang*. Flows from Fushan to Chang Shu, and thence to Soochow

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白茆口 – *Pai-mao-k'ou*白茆塘 – *Pai-mao-t'ang*. Flows from *Pai-mao-k'ou* to Chang Shu, and thence to Soochow寶山 – *Pao-shan*, Paoshan吳松 – *Wu-sung*, Woosung崇明島 – *Ch'ung-ming-tao*, Tsungming Island

崇寶沙 – *Ch'ung-bao-sha*, Bush Island. In the old maps of Che-chiang, the island just northwest of Woosung, between the Huangpu and Tsungming Island has this name. It should be northeast of Wu-sung now. If you look at the name, it seems obvious that it means "the sand bank 沙 between Tsungming Island 崇明島 and Paoshan 寶山. Of course, that was 140 years ago – now it should be called 崇吳沙, for the sand bank between Tsungming Island 崇明島 and Woosung 吳松!

Detail locations cited above along the river were found in Maps of All Kiangsu 江蘇全省輿圖, based on the edition of the 21st year of Kuang-hsü 清光緒二十一年刊本, reprinted by Cheng-wen Publishers 成文出版社.

Towns on the Grand Canal 京杭大運河丹陽 – *Tan-yang*, Tanyang武進 – *Wu-chin*蘇州 – *Su-chou*, Soochow常州 – *Ch'ang-chou*, Changchow無錫 – *Wu-hsi*杭州 – *Hang-chou*, Hangchow**Other locations in Kiangnan**江南 – *Chiang-nan* (Kiangnan)安徽 – *An-hui* province金壇 – *Chin-t'an*, Kintan (south of Changchow)太倉 – *T'ai-ts'ang*清浦 – *Ch'ing-p'u*, Tsingpoo松江 – *Sung-chiang*, Sungkiang黃浦江 – *Huang-p'u-chiang*, Whampoa River廣德 – *Kuang-te*溧陽 – *Li-yang*南橋 – *Nan-ch'iao*, Nanjiao鎮江 – *Chen-chiang*南京 – *Nan-ching*, Nanking (T'ien-ching)寧波 – *Ning-po*崑山 – *K'un-shan*嘉定 – *Chia-ting*, Kading廣福林 – *Kuang-fu-lin*, Kuangfulin高橋 – *Kao-ch'iao*, Kaojiao金山衛 – *Kin-shan-wei*建平 – *Chian-p'ing*金壇 – *Chin-t'an*楊中 – *Yang-chung*丹徒 – *Tan-t'u***Shanghai Localities**黃浦江 – *Huang-p'u chiang*, Huang-pu River; Whampoa River吳松江 – *Wu-sung chiang*, Wu-sung River; Soochow Creek虹口 – *Hung-kou*, Hongkew外灘 – *Wai-t'an*, the Bund洋涇浜 – *Yang-king-bang*, Yangkingbang Creek大北門 – *Ta bei-men*, Great North Gate關帝廟 – *Kuan-ti miao*, Temple of the God of War (Kuant Temple)城隍廟 – *Ch'eng-huang miao*, Temple of the City God大東門 – *Ta tung-men*, Great East Gate道署 – *tao shu*, Circuit Intendant's Yamen火神廟 – *Huo-shen Miao*, Temple of the God of Fire水仙宮 – *Shui-hsien Kung*, Temple of the Water Sprite董家渡 – *T'ung-chia-tu*, T'ung Family Ferry浦東 – *P'u-tung*, Pootung Peninsula (east of the "Poo" river, the Huang-p'u)龍華寺 – *Lung hwa shih*, the Lungwa Pagoda (south of the city)徐家匯 – *Hsu-chia-wei*, Siccawei

