

# LIVERPOOL MARITIME SOCIETY



**MERSEYSIDE AND NORTH WEST ENGLAND  
NAUTICAL AND WATER-RELATED SLANG**

*By Bob Ratcliffe*

**Warning: Mild swearing and vulgarity in some of the entries of this dictionary.**

### **Merseyside & North West England Nautical and Water-Related Slang**

#### **“Fleotical”, perhaps; borrowing the term I coined in my book, *Shipyards of the Upper Mersey***

These are terms heard around the locale, and not covered in any of the other documents to be found in this folder. If specifically from a certain county, district, city, or town, it will be denoted in square brackets; otherwise, it will be a general term or dialect word from Cheshire. If it is a word used across the Mersey Valley or Northwest Region, it will say so in the description (“local name for...”). Local dialect names for maritime settlements (cities, towns, whatever that were ports, fishing ports, shipyard towns, or harbours of some sort) will also be listed.

General nautical and canal terms (such as port & starboard, bow & stern, or cratch & bulk, as parts of a canal boat) are not listed here, although they would have been oft heard around these parts. Specific types of locally -built and -owned vessels are, however, listed, along with some terms that are / were in more general use or that were specific terms used only in the region (as opposed to generally along the canal network of the country).

The employees of the Manchester Ship Canal (MSC) developed their own slang, and that is included here. Some Merchant Navy Fleets had specific nicknames which would have been heard in the region also, so these have been listed for locally-owned shipping lines or for ones which were regular visitors. These include Cunard, which was headquartered in Liverpool for many years and whose people still consider Liverpool their spiritual home.

The slang used in the Training Ships, such as CONWAY (and at her shore college successor, established on Anglesey) or INDEFATIGABLE, is also listed here. It was a mix of Royal Navy (RN) terminology and peculiar oddities of each individual ship / establishment. The standard RN pieces have been left out as they are not specific to the Mersey region; I have also omitted terms that seem related only to the latter days of CONWAY, when she was in Wales.

Local shipyard or boatyard terms are also included, where they deviate from the standard. Such terms that originated at Cammell Laird are listed as such. They may well have been in use at other large, modern, yards, such as Birkenhead’s Grayson Rollo and Clover (later subsumed into the Laird’s empire) but they seem to be local to “our” yards rather than nationwide.

Some popular names for famous ships are given, that were used across the country (or world, even), but which pertained to local ships from the area.

Ashcan [Cunard] In her later years, the Cunarder, ASCANIA, was known by this name amongst her crew.

Ask [Cumbria] A newt or lizard. A Watter Ask is a water newt; a Dry Ask, a lizard.

Attached Pilots See Steam Pilots.

Bach A fall or a stream.

Balc Yawl [Isle of Man] Small fishing vessel, with oars and lugsail, used for “balc” (longline) fishing. A Manx design of craft. See Baulk Yawl.

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| Bale Boat      | See Fly-out.   |
| Banana Boats   | [MSC] "Tug-speak", from the Manchester Ship Canal, for the "sludge boats" or the ones which took the sewage waste. Also a term used by others on the canal, such as the Abel's fleet. The term seems to come from the similar shape of bananas to pieces of excrement. See The Effluent Society, Sh*t Boats, and Sludge Boats.               |
| Band Shag      | [CONWAY] A member of the band or a free thinker.   |
| Bandy          | [INDEFATIGABLE] The Bandmaster. Rather like in Naval Service, where any member of the Royal Marines Band Service can be called by this nickname, but it is also applied to the senior Bandsman present in a mess.  |
| The Bank       | [Cammell Laird] The slipways.  |
| Bank Ranger    | [Lancaster Canal term] Someone employed to look after the canal banks and to keep the weeds down, including using the Muck Boat (which, see).  |
| Barge          | [General canal term] A Wide Boat, which see.   |
| Bargee         | See Boatie.  |
| Barged         | Said of a vessel whose masts had been cut down to convert her into a dumb barge or Dumb Flat (which, see, under Flat).   |
| Barging        | "Slanging, perhaps Bargeman's Billingsgate", according to Egerton Leigh's dictionary. He later describes the word as Varging or Barging and speaks of how well a Bargeman was supposed to "excel" at Billingsgate. Probably in the same sense of "Barging-in" being to force your way in, like a barge nudging smaller craft out of the way. |
| Batman         | [Standard Dockers' slang in Manchester Ship Canal ports] Someone who couldn't go through a ship without <i>robbin'</i> !   |
| Batter Gangers | [MSC] Those who worked along the length of the MSC, maintaining the banks / slopes.  |
| The Baulks     | [Runcorn] An area of the town, north of the Bridgewater Canal Ellesmere Street, where baulks of timber for the adjacent Sprinch Boatyard were stored. See Top Yard.  |
| Baulk Yawl     | [Isle of Man] Alternate spelling of Balc Yawl, which see.  |
| BDMs           | [Cammell Laird] "Back Door Merchants": People who had obtained a union   |

card by purporting to be time-served in their profession when they were not.

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| Beany-Prick        | [Cumbria] A Stickleback fish.   |
| The Beautiful Ship | [Merchant Navy] RMS AQUITANIA (1914) of Liverpool's Cunard Line. Otherwise called the Ship Beautiful.   |
| Beck               | Northern standard term for a stream or rivulet. See Burn.   |
| Beck-Bibby         | [Cumbria] The Water Ouzel or American Dipper seabird.   |
| Ben, The           | Local name for BEN-MY-CHREE Isle of Man ferry.  |
| BERENGERIA Back    | [Cunard] The name given to the feigned condition suffered by certain engineers / stokers when given an appointment / assignment to work in the engine rooms of the liner, BERENGERIA. This was due to her turbines being famous for leaking steam and creating a Turkish Bath-like environment that was awful to work in. The ship also received a reputation as being a Workhouse, as men allegedly tended to get assigned to her after making complaints about other ships in the fleet! See Hollywood Afloat for a look at alternate opinions of the ship. |
| Bertha             | [CONWAY] One of the seats in a rowing gig or cutter.  |
| Betsy / Betsy 2    | Name often given to the Cunarder, QUEEN ELIZABETH 2 by her crew. Obviously, from the contraction of the name, Elizabeth. See Black Pig, Cunarder, and Pig.  |
| The Big Ditch      | The affectionate name for the Manchester Ship Canal, heard from those who worked her and those who lived beside her. Sometimes rendered as the Big Dig.   |
| The Big Four       | [Merchant Navy & common term] Liverpool's Cunard Line had four ships of the Celtic Class, known by this sobriquet: CELTIC, CEDRIC, BALTIC, and ADRIATIC (early 1900s vintage).  |
| Big Stink          | [CONWAY] The large motorboat. This may be from the latter days, but may have stemmed from an earlier application of the term when CONWAY was still on the Mersey.   |
| Braid              | [Fleetwood, Lytham, & Marshside] How they make and repair nets. See Knitting.   |

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| Big House            | [Runcorn] Name given in Runcorn (and known further afield) to Bridgewater House, the onetime home of the Duke of Bridgewater and the headquarters of the Manchester Ship Canal Company for many years. The adjacent graving dock was called Big House Dry Dock.   |
| Bight                | A projection in a river, a jutting or receding point. Used as a term at sea in general (Bight of Benin, for example).   |
| Bight or Bought      | A folded or doubled item, like paper. May well be from the same term used in seamanship, wherein a bight of rope is any part of it between the two ends, usually seen in a “U” or fold of rope being used to create a bend, hitch, or knot.   |
| Bight of the elbow   | “The bend of the elbow”, according to Egerton Leigh’s dictionary. See Bight or Bought.  |
| Bilge Cod            | [CONWAY] Fish; rarely on the menu.  |
| Bill                 | [Cammell Laird] A weekly total of an employee’s earnings on piecework.  |
| The Bird Cage        | What the tug and other boat crews of the Manchester Ship Canal named the site of the Ethelfleda Railway Bridge and Runcorn - Widnes Road Bridge as they approached the two structures on the water. Clearly, the combined frameworks looked like an old-fashioned cage. This was the name usually applied to what was the tightest part of the Ship Canal, immediately east of the Runcorn Bend where the canal curves around the coast after the Runcorn Docks and before those two bridges. |
| Birkenhead Navy, The | Local name for the Pacific Steam Navigation Company; the oldest shipping line in the port (a London-based company but one which operated ships out of Liverpool, and registered there, and also recruited locally).   |
| Bishop               | [CONWAY] Out of date or old-fashioned.  |
| Black Hats           | Local nickname for the Liverpool Salvage Brigade, who were responsible for inspecting warehouses of the port and wore small, flat-topped, black leather hats with the word, “SALVAGE”, emblazoned in gold across the front. This nickname distinguished the Salvage Brigade from the silver-helmeted Fire Brigade.  |
| Black Pig            | Nickname given by some of her crew to the Cunarder, QUEEN ELIZABETH 2.  |

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|                           | Said to be due to how tricky she was to steer / stop and, of course, the main colour of her hull. See Betsy / Betsy 2, Cunarder, and Pig.   |
| Blackjack                 | [Whitehaven] Coalfish. See Bluffin.   |
| Black Varnish             | The name given to the gas tar used to coat the hulls of Flats and other vessels.  |
| Blobbing                  | [Workington] To fish for crabs using fish heads.  |
| Blocker Men               | [Cammell Laird] The Foremen and Managers, who all wore Bowler hats. Although mentioned in some of the works on Cammell Laird, no explanation for the etymology of this phrase is given. However, a website on the Belfast shipyard of Harland & Wolff (see bibliography) part-explains that it is this group of supervisory personnel to whom the expression refers. And that is as much as I can derive from it! |
| Blue Eyes                 | [Cammell Laird] Favoured workers.   |
| Blue Funneler             | [Merchant Navy] A ship of the Blue Funnel Line; see below. Well-loved locally, these ships had a distinct ship's siren (or whistle) unlike those of other vessels. Theirs was a deep roar from a motor siren, rather than a "whoop" noise. See Blue Funnel Line, Blueys, and China Boats.   |
| Blue Funnel Line          | [Merchant Navy] The Blue Funnel Line of Alfred Holt & Co. of Liverpool. See Blue Funneler, Blueys, and China Boats.   |
| Blueys                    | [Merchant Navy] Ships of the Blue Funnel Line (which, see). See Blue Funneler, Blue Funnel Line, and China Boats.   |
| Bluffin                   | [Maryport and Ravensglass] Coalfish. See Blackjack.   |
| Blu Flu                   | [CONWAY] The Blue Funnel Line of Liverpool.   |
| Boatie                    | [General canal term] The correct name for those who lived and worked on the canal boats. The alternative of Bargee is acceptable. The derogative Water Gypsy is most definitely not.  |
| Boating Service           | See Boatman / Boatman Service.  |
| Boatman / Boatman Service | Term used for those employed in mooring / unmooring duties for ships at a quayside. What would be called a Foyboatman on the Tyne. Also rendered as Boating Services and hence the name of Runcorn Boating Services, which used to provide these services in Runcorn and surrounds.   |

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| Boatman / Boatwoman | [General canal term] The alternative, and more formal, name for those who work in canal craft.  |
| Bog (1)             | In Cheshire, a tussock of grass in a pasture, so not necessarily the “Bog” of most people’s imagining. See Moss.  |
| Bog (2)             | To be in a bog is to be in a dilemma or quandary. May come from the meaning of a Bog in common parlance, or from the above definition of Bog (1) See Moss.  |
| Bogfounded          | Perplexed or bewildered; from being bogged-down. However, see Bog.  |
| Bollard             | [Lancashire] The standard term for a ship’s berthing fixture can be heard variously in Lancashire as Ballard, Bollard, Pollid, or Deadmon (“dead man”).   |
| Bong or Bonk        | A bank (of a river, say).   |
| Bootle Bull, The    | Local name for the North Wall Lighthouse, near Gladstone Dock in Liverpool. This was given due to the noise of its foghorn.   |
| The Booze Boat      | [Local name on Mersey] Nickname for the ROYAL IRIS Mersey Ferry, due to the secondary role she had as a cruise vessel and for being a venue for some of the best bands from Liverpool and nearby. See also the Love Boat, the Fish and Chip Boat, and the Floating Block of Flats.  |
| Boris               | [CONWAY] An unclean cadet.  |
| Boris Box           | [CONWAY] When the training ship moved ashore to a new Stone Frigate (as the RN called shore establishments), each cadet got a chest of drawers. Thus, the old sea chests were made obsolete. These were then cut-down to make a dirty laundry stowage for the end of each bed and were given this nickname (based upon the name for a dirty cadet). This would seem to be a term from the latter days of CONWAY (in Wales), but is included here for completeness, to complement the entry for Boris. |
| Bottom Winds        | [Cumbria] Especially noticeable on Derwentwater and Bassenthwaite Lake, these are sudden & fierce winds that blow down a fellside and often disturb the waters of one side of a lake, without effecting the calm of the other side.   |
| Bottom Yard         | [Runcorn] The name given in the town to the Old Quay Yard of the Manchester Ship Canal Company, as it was at the bottom of the former Sprinch Brook. See Top Yard.  |

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| Box Boats             | The boats used on the Bridgewater Canal, built with sections partitioned into the stem-to-stern hold, for the placement of boxes. This was, perhaps, the world's first example of containerisation.  |
| Box-Keepers           | [Standard shipyard term in Mersey region] Those who looked after the stores and tools for the various tradesmen of the firms.  |
| Bowhauliers           | [General canal term] Men who worked in teams to haul boats on the inland waterways.  |
| Boxty                 | A potato pancake made popular locally during the building of the Manchester Ship Canal, by Irish Navvies. Not so much a nautical term, but one born from the development of the waterways.   |
| Brandy Boats          | [Merchant Navy] The ships of Liverpool's T & J Harrison Line, engaged on the drinks trade, begun for them by importing brandy.   |
| Break-Up Supper       | [CONWAY] The end-of year meal at the training ship.  |
| Bricenyed             | Birkenhead.  |
| Bridged               | The term used along the length of the Manchester Ship Canal, and elsewhere (such as at Sutton Weaver Swing Bridge) when the road traffic is held up due to the bridge being opened to allow the passage of waterborne craft below.   |
| Bridge Hole           | [MSC] A standard canal term, but heard on the much-larger Manchester Ship Canal (and not, I believe on any similar-sized waterway). The name refers to the place where a waterway passes under the arch of a bridge (and often narrows due to the support structures at each side of that arch). |
| Brig                  | [Cumbria] Bridge.  |
| Brightening the lines | [Cammell Laird] When steel plates needed marking, the platers would do so by using chalk or markers. After a while, they would need going over in order to compensate for fading; thus, they needed Brightening.   |
| Brightwork Juice      | [CONWAY] Brasso. Given that the term, Brightwork, meant any brass or other shiny fixture, and that any such item always required to be polished to within an inch of its life in Naval and Merchant Naval circles.   |
| Brobbing the Sands    | [Cumbria] Marking the route across Morecambe Bay, using branches of a tree (which are called, in the Cumbrian Dialect, Brobbs or Brogs). See Cross   |



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|            | Sands Route.   |
| Brod       | [Cartmel] The mark made on a beach by the tide, by the line of flotsam & jetsam that remains once the tide ebbs again.   |
| Bruff      | [Cumbria] Burgh-by-Sands.  |
| Brunner    | See Brunners and Steam Packet.   |
| Brunners   | Name given locally to the vessels of the Brunner, Mond Company and their successors after that firm merged with United Alkali (in 1932) to form Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI). The name continued to be used in this fashion until they ceased trading on the local waterways in 1980. See Brunner.                           |
| Buckie     | [Cumbria] Whelk. Likely related to the Manx Gaelic name for this shellfish: Buckee.  |
| Bug Juice  | [CONWAY] Hair oil.   |
| Bull head  | A Tadpole. The same term is used for both Tadpole and for a small fish, in Cumbria.  |
| Bull Stang | [Cumbria] Dragonfly.   |
| Bunser     | [INDEFATIGABLE] Friend, pal, mate.   |
| Burma Way  | Name given to the main working (non-passenger / guest) passageway that runs the length of the ship in Cunard vessels. The same nickname is given the "main drag" in warships of the Royal Navy.<br><br>Other fleets differ. For example, P&O cruise ships use the name, "M1" after the first, and major spine, motorway of the UK. |
| Burn       | [Northern Cumbria] The name given to a Beck in this part of Cumbria, whereas the standard Northern term rules across the rest of that county.  |
| Butty      | [General canal term] A companion boat, without engine, towed by the main canal craft. See Extra Boat.  |
| Buzz       | [INDEFATIGABLE] A meal served aboard the training ship, that was neither a stew or a soup, but served in bowls. It came in various forms: "Irish Buzz", "Pea Buzz", and "Mystery Buzz"!  |
| Buzzers    | [Barrow-in-Furness & Millom] The shipyard or factory hooters / sirens. See A Rainy Buzzer.   |

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| Byflete             | “A piece of land cut off by the change in a river’s course, which used to belong to the other side”, according to Egerton Leigh’s dictionary.  |
| Cab                 | [CONWAY] The large second gig. This may be from the latter days, but may have stemmed from an earlier application of the term when CONWAY was still on the Mersey.   |
| Canal Animals       | [General canal term] The normal term for horses, mules, and donkeys used for motive power on the canals.   |
| Canal Telegraph     | Perhaps known elsewhere also, this phrase is use amongst the pleasure craft canal community today, as it probably was in the days of commercial carrying still being prevalent, to speak of how the rumour mill works around their world.  |
| Canteen Merchant    | [CONWAY] He who ran the canteen.   |
| Canvas              | [INDEFATIGABLE] A punishment in the training ship that involved having to wear a white canvas jumper, meant to make the wearer feel idiotic, like a “Dunce’s Cap”.   |
| Captain’s Secretary | In Cunard cruise ships, this is the Deck Department Officer responsible for administration, working directly for the Captain. This is rather like the Royal Navy, where the same title is given a junior Logistics Officer (what used to be called a Supply & Secretariat Officer). Other fleets operate a different system. For example, the same duties are carried-out in P&O cruise ships by a Deck Department Senior Rating, known as the Deck Clerk. |
| The Car             | The platform of the Widnes – Runcorn Transporter Bridge. From this came Quick Cars: What the bridge ran at busy times, putting on more trips than the timetable budgeted for. Used in Runcorn and quite far-and-wide given the lack of alternate communications over the River Mersey.   |
| Carel               | [Cumbria] Carlisle.  |
| CARINTHIA Special   | [Cunard] Name given to a banana Split; must have been done particularly well in that ship!   |
| Carry water         | Water with iron chalybeate in it.  |
| The Cathedral       | Nickname for the Preston Brook Tunnel, with its high ceiling and echoes being the presumed reasoning. A name used beyond the town of Runcorn,  |

the tunnel being part of a busy waterway route.

- CC [CONWAY] The Cadet Captain; the most senior cadet. A small number of senior cadets were made Petty Officers (POs), and the head boy was initially the Chief Petty Officer (CPO). Later, the head boy was briefly titled Senior Petty Officer, but this later reverted to the old system. The POs then became First Class POs, with each being given the title of Captain of... a specific Part of Ship each. Subsequently, the system changed again, the senior cadets became Cadet Captains (CCs) and the head boy the Chief Cadet Captain (CCC). A new position of Senior CC (SCC) came in thereafter, for the heads of the Top Watches. However, the head boy was still known colloquially as CPO. Later came Junior CCs (JCCs). In a final set of changes, when the new Shore Establishment was set-up, a SCC Shore Establishment was created, with a Deputy CC (DCC) Ashore (later DCC Shore) and DCC Afloat (later DCC Ship). The DCC were usually called DCPOS, and the head boy still got CPO as his title! A CC of any rank was also referred to as a Rate. This entry clearly includes points from when CONWAY was re-established on Anglesey, but they are included for completeness of the story.
- Channel Hole The hole by which sewer water escapes.
- Char [Cumbria] The Alpine Trout, which is found mainly (but not exclusively) in Windermere and Coniston Lakes.
- Chatterment [Cartmel] Small flatfish (the larger versions of which are known as Flukes or Flocks in Cumbria. See Fluke.
- Cheese Crap [CONWAY] Derogatory name for a meal of cheese and potatoes.
- China Boats [Merchant Navy] The ships of the Blue Funnel Line, based in Liverpool. So-called because of their long-association with the Orient. See Blue Funneler, Blue Funnel Line, and Blueys.
- Chum [CONWAY] A fellow cadet. See New Chum.
- Climb Zion [CONWAY] To rush up to the fo'c's'le, chased by prefects.
- The Cloakroom [MSC] Nickname for the area at Eastham where funnel tops, off taller ships, were stored for the duration of a ship's visit to the Port of Manchester. Taller masts and funnels had to be removed (or the tops thereof, at least)

for ships to go beyond Runcorn and her Mersey bridges. So, like going to a nightclub and leaving your coat with the attendant at the door, a similar situation existed for ships needing to leave items of their outer adornments!

- Clockermunjie [Furness Coasts] Weaver Fish. Also rendered as Klockermungie.
- Clouts [CONWAY] Pieces of old bedcover that cadets slid about upon in order to make their area of deck more shiny, and to avoid damage to it.
- Coal Tanker [Runcorn] Name used locally for coal wagons based upon the received wisdom that Tanker was a name for a liquid-carrying vessel on water and that this had then come ashore as Road Tanker (a wagon pulling a cylinder of liquid, and a term used far-and-wide), and that other cargo-hauling vehicles should follow the same styling!
- Cobbles [Cumbria] Stones rounded & smoothed by the erosion of river or sea water action.
- Cock Boats / Cockboats Local Mersey term for a tender (as always applied to the boat that accompanied a Mersey Flat) that goes back to Medieval times. Probably related to the Cog Boats of Humber Keels and to European Cogs. May originally have come from the Weaver. As with the Flat, this was a local name as well as a local style of boat, with her own particular design & build methods, including being carvel-built. See Punt.
- Cockleamar [Cartmel] The oystercatcher seabird.
- Cock Tugs [Merchant Navy] The tugs of the Liverpool Screw Towage & Lighterage Co., whose house flag had a black cockerel on a white background.
- Cockwood [Cammell Laird] Old bits of wood taken home for the fire.
- Cocoa Flush [INDEFATIGABLE] A drink made by dropping solid slabs of unsweetened Cocoa, some tinned milk, and a small amount of sugar, into cauldrons of boiling water. This was then drawn-off into “kettles” (basically wash-bucket-sized containers). From these, the boys were to get their ration by using “basins” as balers and drinking vessels (there were no cups aboard the training ship for the boys). The same basins were used for eating Buzz, which see.
- Colours [CONWAY] As well as the standard term for the national flag, etc., this

meant any badge awarded for sport.

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| Commodore's Cufflinks, The | [Cunard] The name given to the spare propeller blades stored on the foredeck of QUEEN MARY 2.  |
| Condenny                   | [CONWAY] Condensed milk.   |
| Cork Boats                 | [Merchant Navy] Vessels of the British & Continental Steamship Company Ltd.  |
| Coul                       | [Cartmel Peninsular] Raking-up cockles from the sand. See Cramb, Hardbacks, Jumbo, Skeear, Teanal, and Wheeat.   |
| Covered Wagon              | [CONWAY] Fruit tart. In the RN, the same term could be applied to either a meat pie or a fruit one.  |
| Cow Juice                  | [CONWAY] Milk. Sometimes heard in the RN too.  |
| Cramb                      | [Cumbria] Hooked fork used to rake cockles from the sand during cockling. See Coul.  |
| Cross Sands Route          | [Cumbria] An ancient routeway across Morecambe Bay, used at low tides probably since the Bronze Age. See Brobbing the Sands.   |
| Cruise Director            | In Cunard ships, this was the name given to what other lines would call the Hotel General Manager.   |
| Cruising Green             | A livery of four shades of green used in Cunard vessels, for their hulls.  |
| Crystal Kremlin, The       | [Carnival UK] The Anglo-American Carnival Corporation and Plc is headquartered in Miami and Southampton and formed of the merger between P&O and Carnival: Two large groups of companies, which were, respectively, British and American. Carnival UK is comprised of P&O Cruises and Cunard. Their headquarters in Southampton, a largely glass-fronted affair, is known by this nickname within the company, in reflection of the old nickname for Cunard's former headquarters in Liverpool – The Kremlin, which see. |
| Cubble                     | [Cumbria] An obscure term of unknown etymology. It is used to describe the divisions of Windermere Lake for the purposes of fishing. Hence, she is split into High, Middle, and Low Cubble.  |
| Cunarder                   | [Merchant Navy] A ship of the Cunard Line, of Liverpool.   |
| Cunard Feet                | [Liverpool] A local expression for the sailor's gait, clear to see as people   |

walked whilst onshore, still with the swagger needed to keep steady onboard ships that pitch and roll.

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| Cunard Quadruplets / Quads   | Popular name for the very similar-looking CARINTHIA, IVERNIA, SAXONIA, and SYLVANIA. Otherwise known as the Sparkling Quartet.   |
| Cunard Yank                  | [Merchant Navy] One of the ship's company of a Cunarder, on the trans-Atlantic runs of the 1940s – 60s, who helped the exchange of cultural ideas that shaped music and fashion both sides of the Pond for decades. Also known as the Boat Boys, the Hollywood Boys, or Liverpool Yanks. |
| Curry and Rice Liner, The    | [Pacific Steam Navigation Company] A nickname for the REINA DEL MAR, a Liverpool-registered ship of this company on whose maiden voyage the Captain was Capt. George Rice and the Chief Engineer, A. Currie. See the Sea Queen.  |
| Cut (Bong or Bonk)           | A canal is a "Cut" or a cut bank: An artificial cut through the banks of a river.  |
| Cuts                         | [CONWAY] Hits from a Teaser (which, see), administered on cadets, usually by senior cadets.  |
| Dab (the fish breed)         | [Lancashire] The standard name can be heard variously in Lancashire as Sansker, Dab, Garve, Garvie, or Brit.   |
| Dab chick                    | Water hen.   |
| Day Boat                     | [General canal term] A craft with no accommodation facilities. See Joey Boat.  |
| A day out                    | [Cammell Laird] Docked a day's pay, or off sick.   |
| DCM                          | [Cammell laird] "Don't Come Monday": The sack, or being laid-off. An alternative is OBE: "Old Brown Envelope" (which contained your piece of bad news).  |
| Deadeyes for Square?         | [CONWAY] A question to ascertain "Shall I pass at Divisions [formal muster]?"  |
| Dead Man's Leg               | [CONWAY] Jam roly-poly.  |
| Dead Man's Toe or Tool / DMT | [CONWAY] Crude or rude nickname for a long suet pudding with Sultanas (roly poly).   |
| Dead Muzzler                 | Totally becalmed: No wind. A more widespread term, but certainly used amongst the men who sailed the local waters.   |

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| Dead Tongue            | [Furness Area] Water Hemlock.  |
| Deck!                  | [CONWAY] A request to pass over a Part of Ship owned by a Top (which, see) to which the requester did not belong.  |
| Deg                    | [Cumbria] To dampen or to sprinkle water on something.   |
| Dickie Muster          | [CONWAY] Crude description of the medical inspection that happened every Friday.   |
| Diesel / Diesel Fitter | [Standard Dockers' slang in Manchester Ship Canal and Liverpool ports] "Diesel do..." or "Diesel fit her... diesel fit him..." heard as someone took a personal share of the profits.  |
| Diesel Packet          | The most modern version of a Flat; these were diesel-engined, motor successors to, and based upon a development of the standard hull of, the Flat (though, as with the later of the Steam Packets, much enlarged). Otherwise called a Motor Packet or Weaver Motor Packet.   |
| The Ding Bats          | [MSC] The 3 ex-Lake Maracaibo (Venezuela) tankers, regularly trading to Manchester, were given this name by those who worked on the canal (particularly the Manchester Ship Canal Pilots & Helmsmen – which, see), due to their design. They were twin-propellered, under-powered, and apparently the most awkward vessels to transit the canal. |
| Dipper                 | [General canal term] A handled bowl for water, sometimes called a Hand Bowl (which, see) in the North.   |
| DMT                    | [CONWAY] See Dead Man's Tool.  |
| Doake                  | [Cartmel] Marks left by a Fluke (which, see), where it has laid in the sand.   |
| Dockers' Butties       | [Liverpool] Doorstop sandwiches were once known as Tram-stoppers (until the trams disappeared from the city) and then became Dockers' Butties.   |
| The Docker's Clock     | Victoria Tower at Salisbury Dock, Liverpool, whose multiple clockfaces were once used by mariners to set their chronometers as they sailed from the Mersey.  |
| Docker's thre'p'ny bit | [Liverpool] From the view that dockers were so well-paid, when the new 50 pence piece came out, it was named as though the personal domain of a dock worker, who would be the only person lucky enough to see this multi-angled coin that looked (in that way, at least) like the old pre-decimal 3d   |

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|                    | coin.  |
| Dockers' Umbrella  | [Liverpool] The old overhead railway that once ran along the docks in Liverpool.   |
| Doggy / Doggies    | Pan / pans of Scouse. Not sure if this is used for any other meal / food, or anywhere else, but I do not think it general Merchant, or Royal, Navy slang. See Lobscouse.   |
| Donkey's Breakfast | [Standard slang, I believe] A straw or chaff "mattress" (or filled sacking).   |
| Dookers            | [West Cumbria] Bathing suit or swimwear.   |
| Dorman Longers     | See Runcornians.   |
| Douker             | [Cumbria] Diving duck.   |
| Downies            | [Workington, Cumbria] Workington is one of several towns in the country which still play traditional football (or mass football, or old-style football), wherein, kicking, throwing, and carrying are all allowed in a mass sport that can involve hundreds of men and women (thousands in larger towns). Believed to be a revival of an older contest, rather than a survival (dating from the 18 <sup>th</sup> Century but emulating such games as were held in Britain from at least the 12 <sup>th</sup> Century), the contest can be brutal. In Workington, the Downies were made-up of the sailors and dock workers. Their opposition were the Uppies: Miners and steelworkers. To win, the Downies had to get the ball to the harbour, the Uppies had to fling it over the wall of Workington Hall. A similar situation existed at Kirkwall, in the Orkneys. There, the Doonies were fishermen, and the Uppies, farmers. If the Doonies won, it was considered a good omen for the next fishing season; if the Uppies won, it was thought a good omen for the next crop or harvest. This ritual element may have existed in other towns where seafolk competed against landmen. |
| Down the banks     | [Liverpool] Getting annoyed. From falling down the steep banks in the peaty waters of a bog.   |
| Dragon's Teeth     | Interconnected triangles that might be seen on the gunwales of various firms' Mersey Flats, it was a common decoration, seen in various colours.   |
| Drop-off           | [Morecambe] Rough water above a steep shelf in the sea. Otherwise called   |



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|   | Overflow.  |
| Dryope                                  | [Cartmel] The effect of heat on the sands of the bay, wherein the distant areas look as though to quiver.  |
| Dub                                     | [Cumbria] A pool or deep water area in a Beck (which, see).  |
| Duck Wine                               | [Cumbria] Water.   |
| Dukers / Dukies                         | The paddle tugs of the Bridgewater Trustees, double-bowed and with a rudder at each end, used for towing barges across the Mersey.   |
| Duker's Rough                           | Heavy overcoat issued to the Bargemen of the Manchester Ship Canal Company / Bridgewater Department (about once every three years).  |
| The Duke's Cut                          | A nickname for the Bridgewater Canal. Also a nickname for the former channel cut west of Castlerock in Runcorn, to separate what was Runcorn Island (or Duke's Island) from the mainland, and to create a gutter for water to wash away mud from the entrance to Bridgewater Docks (today's Runcorn Docks). The name for this latter feature soon changed to Duke's Gut or The Gut (and not to be confused with Old Gut, which was the nickname given to the former Boathouse Pool where Old Quay Docks were later constructed, then replaced by Old Quay Yard, now the Deck residential estate... so that's all clear then!). |
| Dukesfield / Dukesfielders              | See Runcornians.   |
| Dunhill                                 | [Lancaster Canal term] See Midden.   |
| Eaa                                     | [Cumbria] The channel of a stream on the foreshore at low water; a river. Hence the River Eaa in Cumbria.  |
| Early Heave-out                         | [CONWAY] A punishment wherein the cadet had to get out of his hammock and turn-to (work) early.  |
| The Effluent Society                    | [Standard Dockers' slang in Manchester Ship Canal ports and boat crew slang] The crews of the sewage boats (called by some "Sludge Boats" – which, see). See Banana Boats and Sh*t Boats.  |
| Electric- and Mosquito- Proof Ship, The | [Booth Line] The name given to the HILDEBRAND II.  |
| Elusive Liner, The                      | Popular name for the Pacific Steam Navigation Company vessel, ORDUNA, due to her speed, manoeuvrability, and ability to get out of trouble during World War I. Also known as the Will o' the Wisp o' the Ocean.  |

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| Esslins                | [Cumbria] Salmon fry before they go to sea.  |
| Extra Boat             | [Lancaster Canal term] The equivalent, on this canal, to the Butty (which, see).   |
| Family Boat            | [General canal term] A boat with accommodation for overnight.  |
| Fire Devil             | [General canal term] A metal bucket for burning materials in to keep warm.   |
| Fire Quarters          | [CONWAY] Order for all hands to take their appropriate stations in a fire drill or real situation.   |
| First Spare!           | [CONWAY] Request for any leftover / uneaten food.  |
| The Fish and Chip Boat | [Local name on Mersey] Nickname for the ROYAL IRIS Mersey Ferry, due to the fish & chip café onboard. See also the Booze Boat, the Love Boat, and the Floating Block of Flats.   |
| Fish Stones            | [Cumbria] Large, flat, stones used to display fish on at market.   |
| Flash                  | A shallow body of water; artificially-created.   |
| Flasker                | To choke or stifle. If stuck in mud, unable to get out, one is “Flaskered”. “Flaskerry work” is hard, tiring, labour. A fish, flopping on the mud, out of the water.   |
| Flat                   | The local type of vessel, and its various sub-types, was regarded as a separate entity between boat and ship, rather like how a Humber Keel (a vessel similar to a flat in many ways) was, in the North East of the country, regarded as a ship and never a boat or barge (they had the same opinion of a Sloop). Therefore, this is a local word as well as a local vessel type, with her own peculiar method of design & build. One distinction, made by at least one builder of flats, was that anything with a beam less than 14 feet (4.3 metres), was a boat; anything over was a flat. In earlier times, the flat had a single square sail. Later, they were Sloop-rigged with a triangular foresail and a large gaff mainsail (the more familiar trapezoid-shaped sail associated with flats). Otherwise called a Mersey Flat – but see Weaver Flat. |
| *Bare Flat             | One with no bulwarks, with protection being given by only a stern rail and perhaps a rail from each quarter up as far as the mainmast, or a shorter set of rails near that mast (these rails were usually detachable).   |
| *Barque                | According to the late Michael Stammers, Barque was a term used in the 16 <sup>th</sup>   |

Century for craft that were two-masted, with a square mainsail and a triangular sail on the “mizzen” (for which, see Jigger). He identified a number of such craft in the region, ranging from 6 to 40 tons and speculated that they might be the forerunners of Flats. The term, Ship, simply meant larger three-masted vessel and the more familiar understanding of a Barque being a three- or four-master was not yet in favour.

- \*Barrow Flat Two-masted, Topsail Schooner rig.
- \*Birkenhead Flat Name given to those too large for Runcorn Docks. These were not canal vessels, therefore, but river- or sea- going.
- \*Black Flat The name given to those flats of the Salt Union fleet, with their all-black hulls. Otherwise, they were called Salties.
- \*Bridgewater Flat Otherwise known as a Duker, which see.
- \*Brunner Flat See Steam Packet.
- \*Coasting Flat One used for Coasting, coastal voyages as opposed to on river and canal only.
- \*Cut Flat One designed for the cut or canal only, rather than one built to be sailed on the river.
- \*Derrick Flat One used as a Floating Crane, perhaps using a modification of the standard mast for such craft, which often incorporated a derrick for loading / unloading of cargo.
- \*Dogger This may have been a similar vessel to the Flat, but with a beamier hull. Her rig was also different, being Ketch-rigged, with two square sails on a mainmast and with a standing gaff on a mizzen.
- \*Douglas Flat One built for the dimensions of the Douglas Canal.
- \*Duker / Duke Name given to flats on the (Duke of) Bridgewater('s) Canal, built to be accommodated by the dimensions of her locks. The sub-type also seems to have had a distinct design, with less of a curve in the hull of these vessels compared to those of the Shropshire Union Company, for example. Those that reached Manchester and were horse-drawn were known as Manchester Flats or Manchester Type Bridgewater Flats. Those designed for working to Preston Brook were Preston Flats or Preston Type Bridgewater

Flats.

- \*Dumb Flat One without her own motive power, being reliant on towing by human, horse, or tug / consort vessel. A common nautical term, “dumb”, for such vessels.
- \*Float A sub-type of flat with no hold, the cargo being carried on deck. Also the name for high-sterned cabin tanker-barges.
- \*Galliot-Flat A sub-class rigged as for a Galliot (Ketch-rigged but with the addition of a square topsail on the mainmast, similar to an East Coast Billy Boy). Others were Schooner-rigged, Sloop-rigged, or otherwise distinct from the sisters, but the term for a Galliot-Flat seems to have been specifically used whereas the others may not have been (from the research of the late Mike Stammers). Thus, many vessels registered as Schooner or Sloop, say, may well have been Flats. See Sloop-Flat.
- \*Inside Flat One which navigated rivers or canals only.
- \*Iron Flat These were rare, but some flats were constructed from iron, using the same style as their wooden cousins. More, however, were composite-built of iron frames and wooden planking. Others still were wooden, but with iron knees and other supporting features.
- \*Jigger Flat Two-masted flat. Some Jigger Flats (used in coastal work) also differed from the standard by having a steering wheel rather than a tiller. See separate entry for Jigger.
- \*Leeds & Liverpool Boat The flats of that particular canal, built to her dimensions. These could be either Long Boats (72 feet or 21.9 metres) or Short Boats (61 feet or 18.6 metres). The Long Boats were sometimes called Wiganers, or Wigan Boats, as they only worked between Wigan and Liverpool; their Shorter sisters were the only ones who could access the full length of the canal. Leeds & Liverpool Steamers were the engine versions of this sub-type of flat. Note that the Irish canal craft for the Grand Canal may have had a connection to the Leeds & Liverpool in their designs. This is by no means confirmed, but the steel motor boats, M Boats (most canal craft on the Grand Canal in Ireland were designated by number, not name, with a suffix

for type), were very similar to Leeds & Liverpool Short Boats in size and form.

- \*Long Boat See Leeds & Liverpool Boat.
- \*Lump (Flat) Salvage Flat. When a larger vessel was in difficulties, flats were sometimes used to raft alongside her, to offload cargo and thus lighten the load. Others were acted as “Camels” or “Lumps” to provide extra buoyancy to the ship.
- \*Manchester Flat .See Duker / Duke.
- \*Market Flat Horse-drawn flats working to Chester.
- \*Mast Flat Name applied to Sailing Flats, to distinguish them from those not worked under sail. See Sailing Flat.
- \*Mersey Flat The full name of the type.
- \*Mud Flat A flat used for the dredging trade, as a repository for the gravel dredged-up by specialist craft. The term Mud Barge is used for any such vessel also, be it a flat or otherwise.
- \*Open Flat One without hatch covers.
- \*Outside Flat Name given to those which plied the seas (outside the Mersey, which ends at the Bar Light); a Coaster (which is a general maritime term for a vessel that trades within the local seas of a country, as opposed to a Deep-Sea Vessel, which can be seen to sail anywhere (apart from those waters which require specialist vessels, such as Icebreakers). See Inside Flat.
- \*Powder Hoy Explosive-carrying flats were given this name. A Hoy is a term for a barge or lighter, used across the country.
- \*Preston Flat See Duker / Duke.
- \*Rochdale (Canal) Flat The sub-type of flat built for that waterway’s dimensions and with narrow side-planking. Those with engines were called Rochdale Canal Steamers.
- \*Sailing Flat One under sail, as opposed to a Dumb Flat, which see. See Mast Flat.
- \*Salty See Black Flat.
- \*Sand Hooker Sand-carrying flat bringing the aggregates from dredgers.
- \*Scraping Flat One employed on dredging duties (“scraping” the seabed).
- \*Short Boat See Leeds & Liverpool Boat.

- \*Sloop-Flat      A sub-class rigged as for a Sloop. Others flats were rigged as other style of craft, but the term for a Sloop-Flat seems to have been specifically used whereas the others may not have been (from the research of the late Mike Stammers). See Galliot-Flat.
  
- \*Square-rigged Flat      May not be a term, per se, but there certainly were flats that were rigged with a square mainsail; some of these were smaller flats and still were fitted with a bowsprit. Some flats on the Mersey & Irwell and Leeds & Liverpool had small square sails to assist the horse towing them. Sometimes, a small square sail was used to help dumb flats get about the dock system of Liverpool, to prevent the need to pay for tugs, and to avoid the delay waiting for them. These were sometimes rigged on the light masts of these vessels and other times improvised by use of a ladder and tarpaulin.
  
- \*Steamer      See Leeds & Liverpool Boat.
  
- \*Steel Flat      Later flats were constructed in the same style as their wooden cousins, but from steel. Others were composite-built with steel frames and wooden planking.
  
- \*Weaver Flat      The oft-debated difference between this and the Mersey Flat is that the Weaver-built flats continued the tradition of the square or transom stern after the Mersey-built vessels developed rounded sterns. Later Weaver Flats, however, often had a sharp stern, rather than the more rounded and bluff Mersey Flat sterns. Mersey Flats are often described as being bigger than their Weaver sisters, but there were small and large flats built along both rivers. The full name of the type of vessel is usually given as Mersey Flat, but many render them Mersey & Weaver Flats in order to respect that both rivers could be considered the birthplace of these wonderful vessels.
  
- \*Wiganer / Wigan Boat      See Leeds & Liverpool Boat.
  
- Flatman / Flatmen      The captains and crews of the flats were specifically Flatmen, as opposed to Boatmen, Sailors, or Mariners, for example. See Waterman / Watermen.
  
- Flatman's Gansey      The traditional pullover or jumper or sweater of the flatman. Similar to ganseys or guernseys worn by other seafarers and boaters.
  
- Flatman's Gutter      One of many fanciful, and even romantic, names associated with our

waterways. All such names for roads (anchorage), channels, and rocks, etc. within the local sea, river, and canal passages will not be listed here, but this one deserves recognition as being a local term, being derived from Flatman (which, see). It is the name of a navigable channel that runs into Rock Channel, off the Wirral, and thence passes Mockbeggar Wharf, along the North-westerly edge of the peninsular.

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| Flatowner                    | The owner of a flat, the name rendered as one word.  |
| Flattage                     | Relating to flats. Flattage rates being the rates for using flats, for example.  |
| Flatting                     | “Going Flatting” was getting into the business of being a Flatman.   |
| Fleekborra                   | [Cumbria] Flookburgh.  |
| Floating Aldershot, The      | Popular name for Bibby Line’s DERBYSHIRE when in use as a troopship. This was due to her having messes, armouries and ammunition rooms, a Quartermaster’s Store (as in Army Quartermaster Sergeant, etc., rather than the naval / nautical equivalent), and a canteen. |
| Floating Block of Flats, The | [Local name on Mersey] Nickname for the ROYAL IRIS Mersey Ferry, due to her unusual design. See also the Booze Boat, the Love Boat, and the Fish and Chip Boat.  |
| Flodder                      | [Cartmel] Brown scum on the surface of the water.  |
| Floddies                     | A potato pancake made popular locally during the building of the Manchester Ship Canal, by Irish Navvies. Not so much a nautical term, but one born from the development of the waterways.   |
| Flook                        | See Fluke.   |
| Fluke                        | [Cumbria] Flatfish, such as plaice, flounder, or dab. Can be rendered as Flook. See Chatterment, Sandscars, Slampy, and Treading for Fluke.  |
| Fly-boat                     | See Packet.  |
| Fly-out                      | A Fly-boat’s name in Rochdale or on the Rochdale Canal. Also called Bale Boats from the bales of cotton they often carried.  |
| Force                        | [Cumbria] Waterfall.   |
| Foreigners                   | [Cammell Laird] Jobs done for oneself, using company materials and time.   |
| Foxfire                      | [Cartmel] Phosphorescence on the surface of the sea.   |
| Fratsam                      | Frodsham. See Fratsam Jowieheads.  |

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| Fratsam Jowieheads | The residents of Frodsham (although God knows why!). See Fratsam.  |
| Fresh Juice        | [CONWAY] Water.  |
| Frosk              | [Cumbria] Frog.  |
| Gallower           | [Lancaster Canal term] A Galloway; a small breed of horse (14 hands high, maximum), ideal for fitting under canal bridges on towpaths. What non-Boaters would call a Pony, apparently. See Second Hand Horse and Vanner.   |
| Gangrene Queen     | The local name often given to the Cunarder, MAURETANIA, when she was painted Cruising Green (which, see). See Maurie and Rostron Express.  |
| Gantry Wall        | [Runcorn] The wall between the River Mersey and the Manchester Ship Canal at Runcorn's waterfront, between Wigg Island and the railway bridge.   |
| The Garston Navy   | Locally-used nickname for the (mostly painted grey, like warships) vessels of Edward Nicholson Ltd. (of Garston). The firm later focused on shipping and haulage, with a fleet of road wagons, also in grey (with their house flag painted on the side). Thus, the name continued for a while after the sea-going activities ceased. They later moved to Runcorn, where they were for many years, before their final move to Ellesmere Port. They have now, sadly, ceased trading. |
| Gash (1)           | [Cammell Laird] An interesting derivation from the naval term for rubbish, I believe. In this use, it means something spare or not in use.   |
| Gash (2)           | [CONWAY] Standard Naval term for rubbish; otherwise heard as Yack in CONWAY.   |
| Gaw                | [Cartmel and Lonsdale] A seagull. The same word is used in Westmoreland for a young bird.  |
| Gears              | [Lancaster Canal term] The bridle and other pieces for a working horse.  |
| Gersma             | [Cumbria] Grasmere.  |
| Gezzlin            | [Cumbria] Gosling.   |
| Giller or Guiller  | Horsehairs twisted together into a fishing line.   |
| Gillie             | [Cumbria] Riverkeeper. A word derived from Gaelic and used in Scotland, but also found for the same purpose in Devon, East Yorkshire, Hampshire, Sussex, Wiltshire, and in Wales.  |



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| Ginny Crane                 | [Cammell Laird] A gantry crane with a small lift capacity, as found within a Workshop, usually.  |
| Give someone down the banks | [Liverpool] To scold or reprimand someone – See Down the banks.  |
| The Gold(en) Coach          | [MSC] The nickname of MSC GRAB HOPPER NO. 1.   |
| The Golden Trough           | [Cammell Laird] The name for the directors' section of the works canteen, wherein a cocktail bar and silver service could be found. Also in the facility were the senior mess (No. 1 Mess), where patrons received free food, waitress service, and a free can of beer; and No. 2 Mess (the junior mess), where the rank-and-file had to pay for their food. |
| Good Shepherd               | [Standard Dockers' slang in Manchester Ship Canal ports] Caught stealing half a side of lamb, the excuse was heard: "I was just keeping it warm!"  |
| Go to Ince                  | A Cheshire expression meaning to do something impossible. This has a tentative nautical link: Ince was a manor grange of St. Werburgh's Abbey and stood on an "island" (an Ynys) in the midst of a marsh. It was so remote that getting there was considered impossible.   |
| The Grand Trunk             | An early name for the Trent & Mersey Canal, given its location in the heart of the "Cradle of the Industrial Revolution" in Shropshire, and connecting into the later industrial heartlands of the North West.   |
| Granny                      | [Merchant Navy] Affectionate name for Cunarder (which, see) AQUITANIA; a ship long-serving in that Liverpool fleet.  |
| Granny-Wittles              | [Cartme] Small, sharp, ridges in the sand of the bay.  |
| Grapplin'                   | [Cumbria] Catching trout by wading into a stream and grappling them from under stones or out of holes, using your hands.   |
| The Gravy Boats             | [Cammell Laird] The Polaris Submarines; so-called as they brought such financial security to the firm and her workers.   |
| Grease                      | [CONWAY] Butter.   |
| Great Babe / Great Baby     | [Merchant Navy] Isambard Kingdom Brunel's affectionate pet name for SS GREAT EASTERN, which was Liverpool-registered. Perhaps this nickname followed her to the Mersey? Another avenue for further research...   |
| Green Goddess               | [Merchant Navy] The CARONIA (1947); a Cunarder (which, see). Named   |

after Liverpool's green-and-white "Green Goddess" trams, because of her similar livery, and being for a Liverpool-registered and owned ship. Possibly the root of the name for a military fire engine, too; one to investigate!

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| Green Sod Sludge       | See Sod Sludge.  |
| The Grey Ghost         | The nickname given in His Majesty's Forces in World War II for the Cunarder (which, see), RMS QUEEN MARY, when the Liverpool-registered ship was used as a troop ship.   |
| Grit                   | [CONWAY] Sugar.  |
| Groyse, to             | [CONWAY] To spit.  |
| Guiller                | See Giller.  |
| Guiniad                | The fish, native to Lake Bala and found also in the River Dee. It is critically endangered and in need of support.<br><a href="https://fishingthespot.uk/tips-and-techniques/7526-The-Gwyniad-fish">https://fishingthespot.uk/tips-and-techniques/7526-The-Gwyniad-fish</a><br><a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/nature/sites/species/fish/gwyniad.shtml">https://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/nature/sites/species/fish/gwyniad.shtml</a> |
| Guzunder               | [Lancaster Canal term, perhaps more widespread] I am certain I have heard this used elsewhere, but it was definitely employed in a Lanky Boat (which, see). This was the name of the chamber pot one used for evacuating one's bowels (because it "goes under" you). See Midden.   |
| Haaf Net               | [Cumbria] A sea fishing method, especially on the Solway Coasts, wherein a conical bag is used as the net. The bag is called a Poke (which, see).  |
| The Ham and Egg Parade | See Marine Promenade, New Brighton.  |
| Hand Bowl              | [General canal term] A term in the North often used for a Dipper, which see.   |
| Hardbacking            | See Hardbacks.   |
| Hardbacks              | [Cartmel] Cockles; to go Hardbacking is to go cockling. See Coul.  |
| Hassocks               | Coarse grass which grows in tufted cushions in wet areas.  |
| Heartbreak Hill        | [Canal users' nickname – probably modern] The name given to the 35 locks rising just beyond Middlewich, raising the height of the waterway to 408 feet.  |
| Heave Round            | [CONWAY] To proceed vigorously or to clean ship.   |
| Hen-Pennies            | [Cartmel] Small, pink, bivalve shellfish.  |

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| Hinges           | A popular expression in the area, when the Manchester Ship Canal first opened in the late 1800s, was that “a ship would need hinges” to get around the bends of that waterway. The turn of phrase clearly fell by the wayside due to the work of such excellent pilots as Mr. George Cartwright.  |
| HMS MISERY       | [RN] Near-sounding slang for HMS MERSEY, and employing the oft-heard musing that theirs was the worst draft out of them all, because sailors are either only happy when they’re miserable, or only have two pet-hates: Change, and the way things are! Included here because HMS MERSEY is “our local” ship, by being one affiliated to cities, towns, or institutions of the region.   |
| HMS NEVERBUDGE   | The local nickname for the Naval Reserve training ship, HMS IRWELL.   |
| HMS NEVER BUDGED | The alternate spelling / rendering of the above heard in Liverpool for the Shore Establishment HMS EAGLET (formerly HMS EAGLE, but changed when the new aircraft carrier of that name was commissioned in 1918) and the northern hospital, then called HMS MERSEY.  |
| Hollywood Afloat | A widespread name for the Cunarder, BERENGERIA, due to the large number of Hollywood film stars who enjoyed her hospitality. See BERENGERIA Back.   |
| Holy Joe         | [CONWAY] Anyone good at Scripture.  |
| Horse Stang      | [Furness] Dragonfly.  |
| Huffler          | [General canal term] A casual canal worker. Not sure if this was heard locally.   |
| Hungry Dick      | The name given to the boss of the Liverpool-based Richard Hughes empire of coasters, due to his frugal nature. The firm was already noted for this during the period of the Depression in the 1920s when the custom of letting coaster crews pay for, and cook, their own food ended in the larger vessels of the community, with owners hiring cooks instead. Mr. Hughes then deducted the cost of the food from his crew’s wages and thus earned himself a new nickname!<br><br>Hughes vessels employed no night watchmen for their time in port; their crews did the job. Masters of these vessels were encouraged to obtain pilot |

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|                         | certificates for the oft-visited ports, to save on expenses there also. They were a truly cost-cutting company! On a separate note, they also strictly enforced their no-women rule in their ships – no females were permitted aboard, even if it were a wife visiting her husband whilst he was in port.   |
| Hurries                 | [Whitehaven] The wooden chutes at Whitehaven Harbour through which coal could be loaded directly into ships from horse-drawn wagons high above, via a lever opening a hinged bottom in the wagon, displacing the coal down the chutes and onto the waiting ship, below.   |
| Inde, The               | [INDEFATIGABLE] Pronounced “Indee”.   |
| The Island              | [Runcorn] Not to be confused with Runcorn Island / Duke’s Island (see the Duke’s Cut) or the Church on the Island (Christ Church, the church built for the employees of the River Weaver Navigation Company, on an artificial island created by the locks and basins of Weston Point Docks). Rather, this is the name given to patch of land cut-off from the rest of Runcorn by the triangle formed from the two lines of locks from the Bridgewater Canal down to the MSC, where they once linked into the dock complex of Runcorn Docks (formerly known as Bridgewater Docks). |
| Isle of Man             | [Cumbria] A proverb heard locally was that: If the Isle of Man can be seen, it will rain within twelve hours; and if the island can’t be seen – it’s raining already!   |
| Jack Sharp or Sharpling | The Stickleback; a tiny fish. See Beany-Prick.  |
| Jammy Crane             | [Cumbria] Heron.  |
| Jarble                  | [Cumbria] To splash with mud.   |
| Juice Barge             | [CONWAY] A boat used every day to collect water for the CONWAY.   |
| Jumbo                   | [Cumbria] Two wooden planks, side-by-side, and attached to two long handles, so a person going cockling can “activate” the sand and bring the cockles to the surface, for another to collect. See Coul.   |
| Kenks                   | “(a sea term.) – The doublings in a cable, or rope, when it does not run smooth”, according to Egerton Leigh’s dictionary.  |
| Jigger                  | Where other nautical folk would use “mizzen” (sometimes, “mizen”), the term for the after mast in the Mersey region was always “Jigger”. Hence, a   |

“Jigger Flat” was a two-masted flat (that had a Mainmast and a Jigger). May be related to the [Lancashire] term for a back alley, but then again, it may not! Similarly, to be “jiggered” is a Lancashire term for being exhausted – related; who knows? “Jiggery-pokery” is a general term in the North for underhandedness. Perhaps the sense of something out-of-the-norm is where the idea of a two-masted flat comes from?

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| Jinny Green Teeth | [Cumbria] Green algae on ponds.  |
| Joap              | See Jope.  |
| Joey Boat         | [General canal term] A craft with no overnight accommodation. Consequently, day-boaters were called Joey Boaters. See Day Boat.  |
| Jope              | [Cumbria] To splash. Can be rendered as Joap.  |
| Kebbing           | See Kepping.   |
| Keish             | [Cumbria] Water hemlock.   |
| Keld              | [Cumbria] A well or spring.  |
| Keowl             | [South Cumbria] A small piece of wood or bone, used when measuring mesh size when making fishing nets.   |
| Kep               | [Cumbria] To fish with hook and line   |
| Kepping           | [Walney Channel and Morecambe Bay] To fish with hook and line. Also rendered as Kebbing.   |
| Keps              | [Cumbria] Fishing tackle consisting of a lead weight and two curved wires leading off the main line and with strings off each end (with a hook and bait on each).  |
| Keswick Lake      | [Cumbria / Lakes Area] Local name for Derwentwater.  |
| Ketmar            | [Cumbria] Tern.  |
| King of the Woods | [CONWAY] The most powerful QB; later used for the QB that the others thought should have been CC. See QB and CC. This would seem to be a Wales-years term from CONWAY, but is included in order to complete the picture regarding cadet hierarchy. |
| Kipper            | [Cumbria] Salmon out-of-season after spawning.   |
| Kippertime        | [Cumbria] Between the 03 <sup>rd</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> of May, when salmon fishing was banned.  |

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| Klockermungie        | See Clockermunjie.   |
| Knacker / Knackering | [CONWAY] To borrow something with little or no intention of returning it. Considered something different to actually stealing, which was unforgiveable.  |
| Knitting             | [Morecambe] How they make and repair nets in another part of Lancashire!   |
| Knobstick Men        | [Standard canal term] The crews of Knobsticks (which, see).  |
| Knobsticks           | [Standard canal term] Narrow Boats of the Alexander Reid & Co. / Anderton Co. were called so named, although no real difference between them and other canal craft has been discerned, with the caveat that they were of fine lines (Edward Paget-Tomlinson suggests they were known as such possibly because they belonged to the Anderton Company who operated on the Trent & Mersey: A waterway whose managers employed baton-carrying patrolmen; those weapons giving their names to the company's vessels). |
| Kremlin, The         | [Cunard Line] Anti-establishment, disparaging, nickname given the Cunard Building by the crews of their ships, based on the obvious image of the dictatorial government buildings of the former U.S.S.R. (and which now fulfil a similar role for Russia). See the Crystal Kremlin.  |
| The LACONIA Order    | [Infamous directive to German U-Boat crews of World War II] Not really a local expression, but born from a locally-built ship. LACONIA was built by Cammell Laird at Birkenhead and torpedoed by U-156. Whilst the submarine was rescuing survivors, and flying the Red Cross to indicate so, US aircraft bombed her. This led to the order for U-Boats to cease rescuing survivors.   |
| Ladies' cushions     | The Sea Pink of Thrift: A coastal plant found, for example, on Hilbre Island.  |
| Lady, The            | Local name for the Isle of Man ferry, LADY OF MANN.  |
| Lady Purser          | [Cunard] The former name given to women in the role of Purser. In P&O and Union-Castle ships, for example, the title was "Pursurette". Nowadays the gender-neutral "Hotel Manager" title is used in lieu in both (and most fleets). "Purser" itself has largely disappeared, but lives-on in the Royal Navy as a word to describe anything owned by the RN (A Purser's – or "Pusser's" – something is often heard, as is the term, "Pusser" for anything   |

that is the genuine article). It can still be seen in Cunard ships as the main reception desk is, somewhat confusingly for most I guess, still called the “Purser’s Desk”.

Lairdsman / Lairdsmen [Cammell Laird] Men who worked at the shipyard (as they all were once, bar secretarial and support staff (canteen, etc.).

“Laird’s yard without a warship is like a church without a steeple” A popular local phrase of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries.

Lakers [Merchant Navy] Nickname given to those ships designed to be able to navigate directly to the Great Lakes in North America via the locks of the Lachine, Welland, and Soo Canals. These ships were created when the St. Lawrence Seaway project was first announced, so that firms could get straight into trading at the Great Lakes ports, rather than having to tranship at Montreal. Some of Manchester Liners’ ships were amongst the first of these, but the type was made redundant at the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway, when larger vessels could reach the lakes.

Lake Weed Knot grass, found along the seashore.

Lambie [CONWAY] A Mizzentopman (see Top).

Lancaster Canal Boat The style of boat prevalent on that waterway; they were square-sterned and shallow, due to the canal’s lack of depth. They were built of wood, and latterly of steel, and all were horse-drawn. Also known as Lanky Boats.

Lanky Boat See Lancaster Canal Boat.

Leister See Lester.

Legging The act of propelling a boat through a tunnel by lying on your back and “walking” along the side walls of the tunnel. The standard procedure was to lay a plank across the bows of the boat and to have two people lie on it, one on each side of the boat.

Lenient Judge [Standard Dockers’ slang in Manchester Ship Canal ports] One heard to shout, “Let the guy go!” (the guy being a term often – but erroneously – used for the line used to secure a ship or boat).

Lester [Cumbria] A fish spear. That used for eels has three flat serrated blades; that for salmon has several prongs with barbed ends. Also rendered as

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|                            | Leister or Lister.   |
| The Levi                   | The nickname on Merseyside of the huge dredger, LEVIATHAN, built for the Mersey Docks & Harbour Company by Cammell Laird, and launched in 1909. Also called the Scouse Boat.   |
| Life to man, death to fish | [Isle of Man] An oft-heard toast in days gone by, given that the island state was dependent on fishing for survival. So much so, in fact, that they had a tradition of folk-magic with Charmers being consulted to cast herb-based spells to provide good fortune for fishermen (“Doing a Charmer” being the name for this practice. See No herring, no wedding.   |
| Light oh!                  | [CONWAY] Request for more light (made to the person blocking it).  |
| The Liquor Pit             | [Runcorn] The nickname for a pool of industrial waste which used to lie beside the Bridgewater Canal in Runcorn.   |
| Lister                     | See Lester.  |
| Little Packet              | Name given to the steam tugs of the Bridgewater Canal Company. Also sometimes called Jack Sharps (the local name for the tiny Stickleback fish), because of their slender form. See Packet.  |
| Little Venice (1)          | A nickname, locally, for Ellesmere Port’s waterfront / docks area.   |
| Little Venice (2)          | A nickname, locally, for Runcorn and her complex waterway systems.   |
| Liverpool Boat             | The Liverpool-style boat (as it was alternately known) was developed as a lifeboat by Coastain’s of Liverpool.   |
| Liverpool Head             | [General nautical term] A sheet-metal ventilation feature, allowing the outflow of gases for ventilation whilst preventing egress of seawater, based around two drums (one inside the other) with staggered openings.  |
| Liverpool Hook             | [General nautical term] A hook in the end of a cargo runner (a runner being a tackle wherein one end is made fast and the block runs on the bight, with a nominal advantage of two-to-one) where the bill is inward-curved, with a downward-inclined projection above the bill. The inward curve is to guard against accidental unhooking and the projection is to prevent the hook lifting underside of the beam. |
| Liverpool House            | [General nautical term] An accommodation area otherwise known as the “Midship House”, and stretching across the upperdeck (which helped to   |



strengthen a ship also). The steering gear was placed above, thus making it one of the first "Bridge" structures associated with what later ships had as a Wheelhouse. Presumably from local shipbuilding designs.

Liverpool Line, The In eastern South American ports, the Lamport & Holt ships were collectively known by this name. This Liverpool-based firm operated a range of services to-and-from that continent.

"Liverpool on her stern, bound to go" An old expression said of a ship manoeuvring to leave the port and go to sea.

Liverpool Pantiles [General nautical term] A name for ship's biscuit (hard, dry, bread).

Liverpool Point [General nautical term] A rivet point, slightly convex, and with a large-diameter face, used for watertight work on thin plating.

Liverpool Splice [General nautical term] This is the name of a method for putting a permanent eye into a wire rope, the tucks of wire going with the lay of the rope. It is not as strong as the Admiralty Splice, but it is less bulky and a lot easier to do. It would seem that the technique originated in Liverpool, and that there was a later development, the Brixham Technique, that presumably came about in that fishing town.

Liverpool Virus [General nautical term] A bacillus for killing rats in ships and warehouses, completely harmless to all other creatures bar mice.

Liverpool Weather [General nautical term] Exceptional bad weather. A bit cheeky, in my opinion, given how it ALWAYS rains in Manchester! Maybe from the days before ships were able to get all the way up to Manchester and see how bad the weather THERE was...

Lobscouse [Liverpool] A sailor's stew of meat and vegetables; probably related to the Scandinavian Lapskaus (Norwegian spelling here, but can be seen in various forms in the other countries) and other Northern European dishes. Otherwise known as "Scouse". "Blind Scouse" is a meatless version. The term (and its aforementioned shortened version of Scouse) is used across Lancashire, Cheshire, and Cumbria.

Lompond The pond of a farm, where all refuse runs.

The Lost Mile The name given to the final section of the Lancaster Canal, as it wends its

way to Ashton Basin (the terminus of the waterway, one mile north of the original end of her).

The Love Boat [Local name on Mersey] Nickname for the ROYAL IRIS Mersey Ferry, due to the secondary role she had as a cruise vessel and for being a venue for some of the best bands from Liverpool and nearby. See also the Booze Boat, the Fish and Chip Boat, and the Floating Block of Flats.

Luggage Boats, The Local name for the vehicle ferries, such as CLAUGHTON, which operated between Liverpool and Birkenhead / Seacombe.

Lum [Cumbria] A deep pool in a stream where sheep were washed.

Lumpers A local term for those Liverpool dock workers who were paid a lump sum to labourers to load / discharge cargo.

Lusi [Merchant Navy] Cunard Line of Liverpool's LUSITANIA (1907).

Maa [Cumbria] Seagull. Also rendered as Maw.

Maggie Booth's [Booth Line] Name given to the company and ships, etc. by seafarers after a lady of the owner's family, who regularly visited wives of seamen of the company to check that they were getting their allotments sent home and that they were otherwise well. Maggie Booth was well-loved by all in Birkenhead and Bootle, from whence the firm's employees were recruited.

The Magnificent Monstrosity Another nickname for the Widnes – Runcorn Transporter Bridge. See the Trannie and the Car.

Manchester Ship Canal Pilots & Helmsmen The Pilot Service and its supporting arm, the Helmsmen who would take the wheel of any ship under the direction of the pilot, had its own collection of peculiar terms...

Appropriated Pilot When the Ship Canal opened, the Pilotage Committee founded a system wherein there were "Appropriated Pilots" and "Independent" or "Free Pilots". The former were the established Liverpool pilots who were hired by each ship and paid directly, being the preferred pilot for the ships of individual companies (and thus being the sole person entrusted to pilot those vessels in local waters). From their wage, a fraction was taken, pooled, and shared amongst all the pilots in the Liverpool service. The other pilots had to secure their own employment against this almost monopolistic

system. The “Gang of Four” senior or “Master Pilots” sat on the Pilotage Committee and could allocate work to their favoured juniors. These junior pilots would then be paid a sum deemed suitable by the Master Pilot who had chosen him and have to give a set proportion of the fee from the ship to that Master Pilot in return. This was known as the “Contract”, “Contracting-Out”, or “Farming-Out” and was deeply unpopular amongst those outside the clique. The Appropriated Pilot System was also known as the Choice Pilot System (see below).

**Catch-as-catch-can System** Colloquial name for the system (in the early 1900s) where the pilots had to operate a free-for-all in trying to secure work from ships. This preceded the establishment of a Rotary System of work allocation between the various pilots.

**Choice Pilots System** Wherein each shipping line had its preferred pilot and always used the services thereof. This system created a sense of jealousy amongst the other pilots, leading to nicknames such as the Brahmin Pilots and the Sacred Cows. The system ended in 1988. The other pilots were called “Term” Pilots as they had to obey terms of employment that meant their being available at set locations to take-up work in ships other than those of the big companies that made regular Ship Canal sailings.

**Four-year Wonders** Contemptuous name from the old guard of pilots (who had “Steered” for 10 years in the Helmsman Service before promotion to Second Class Pilot) for the 1950s-onwards breed who served 4 years as helmsmen before gaining their pilot’s licence.

**Rota** The Ship Canal Company at one time operated two rotas alongside one another: The Ince Rota and the Manchester Rota – where pilots were divided between two ends of the canal, being stood-by at one or other of the two places, ready to “Do a Turn” onboard a visiting ship.

**Station Duty** Where pilots, under the newer Rotary System, had to work at one of the Pilot Clerk Offices and await expected vessels. The name changed to Tide Duty from 1940.

**Steersman** The name previously (before 1904) given to the helmsmen of the

Manchester Ship Canal Company, who used to steer the ships under the direction of the company's pilots. The name apparently caused consternation amongst the pilots, who noted the etymology of the term, which came from the Scandinavian *Styremann* (an officer). The pilots demanded the change as they disliked the elevated status thus given to their subordinates.

**Turn** Pilots or helmsmen taking the duties onboard (either giving the orders, or steering – or, indeed, stood-by on Station Duty – which, see). On turn or taking / doing a turn would normally be heard in the Merchant Navy as Taking a Trick (on the wheel).

**Turning-down** The name given for the power pilots had to refuse a helmsman for a job, under an older system employed by the Ship Canal Company, which meant that someone may be removed from a job and sent the opposite way down the canal, aboard another vessel. This meant that the helmsman in question might end up, for example, not sailing as planned from Ellesmere Port to Eastham, but instead from Ellesmere Port to Manchester - a longer "Turn" but still paid the same standard wage as for the original he was supposed to be booked for. An unfair system that could be financially ruinous for helmsmen.

**Weekend Welchers** Name given to those who seemed to regularly, and suspiciously, suffer a bout of illness between Friday and Monday.

**Marine Promenade, New Brighton** [Local nickname for the place] The terraces of Victoria Park, which were once part of the Aquarium Parade, earned themselves the nickname of "Tea Pot Row", and later, "Ham and Egg Parade", due to the number of huts and cafes that existed along the seaside stretch.

T.A. Coward, in his *Cheshire: Traditions and History* (pages 70-2), details the history of an establishment known as Mother Redcap's Café besides an "area of the river called Red Bett's Pool by the local pilots". The Wirral, in those days of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries, was apparently inhabited by wreckers (who lured ships to crash on the shore, using false lights) and smugglers. The café was specially-adapted for unloading and distributing

illicit cargo and the operators used a weather vane there to indicate to their people whether or not the “coast was clear” of the Preventative Men, anchored offshore (the forerunners of today’s HM Revenue & Customs). In 1820, there was a sign over the café door that read:

“All ye that are weary come in and take rest;  
Our eggs and our ham they are of the best;  
Our ale and our porter are likewise the same.  
Step in if you please and give’em a name.”

Mr. Coward suggests this as an origin for the Ham and Egg Parade name.

Marine Supervisor In Cunard ships, the Officer above the Boatswain / Bosun (the Senior Rating in charge of all on-deck and boat evolutions) is given this rather splendid moniker... because Cunard have to be just that little bit more refined & special than everyone else. It actually derived from giving Officer status to some senior Boatswains and the last of these individuals currently serves (2023) in QUEEN MARY 2.

Market Boat See Packet

Marram Grass [Cumbria] Sharp and spiky grass that grows along coastlines in the sand dunes.

Maurie The Merseyside nickname for the famous liner, MAURETANIA (both I and II), a much-loved pair of Cunarders (from Liverpool’s famous shipping group) and built by Cammell Laird. The Maurie could also be spelled as the Maury. See Gangrene Queen and Rostron Express.

Maw See Maa.

Midden [Lancaster Canal term] The heap of dung one emptied the Guzunder onto along the canal bank (see Guzunder). Also known as a Dunghill.

Meat Crap [CONWAY] Meat and potatoes.

Meetings [Cumbria] Where two tidal currents meet, creating rough waters.

Melgreaves [Cartmel] Quicksands.

Mere A natural pond or small lake. Note that pronunciation may vary. Crowmere, in Five Crosses, Frodsham, for example, is mostly heard as Crummer’s Lake in that locale (the apostrophe being my addition, based on how it seems to

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|                          | be said, as though it were the lake of a person called Crummer).   |
| Mersey Flat              | See Flat.  |
| The Mersey Funnel        | [Liverpool] An alternate nickname for the Catholic Cathedral in Liverpool, usually called <i>Paddy's Wigwam</i> .  |
| Mersey Trout             | Local slang for a floating piece of excrement bobbin' in the oggin (the latter being the RN slang for water, which I just thought sounded right here!).  |
| Mess Clout               | [CONWAY] The weekly duster supplied to each mess. See Clouts.  |
| Midshipman               | [Merchant Navy – Blue Funnel Line] Whereas most merchant fleets of the UK used the rank of Cadet for their Officer Trainees, Blue Funnel of Liverpool preferred the naval rank of Midshipman. Uniquely, they also had the rank of Senior Midshipman for those cadets who were further through the training programme.  |
| The Millionaires' Ship   | [Merchant Navy] Liverpool's Cunard White Star Liner FRANCONIA, which was used primarily for global cruises for the world's elite. Note that the White Star Line's House Flag can still be seen (despite her disappearing from the register after merging into Cunard) once a year: Every 20 <sup>th</sup> April, the flag is flown in Cunard ships, inferior to that of Cunard, to commemorate the day the two firms merged. |
| Mine Boats               | See Starvationer.  |
| The Monkey and the Nut   | [Merchant Navy] The House Flag of Liverpool's Cunard Steamship Line: The "monkey" being a lion and the "nut" being the globe.  |
| Monkey Boats             | [Merchant Navy] Ships of Liverpool's Elder, Dempster Line, so-called as they often carried nut kernels in their cargoes.   |
| Monkey Box / Monkey Hole | [General canal term] A small drawer wherein the polish and cleaning gear was kept in a canal boat. I wonder how many local families have taken this term ashore with them to their modern-day homes?   |
| Monk's Navy              | Local name for the large collection of vessels belonging to any of five related companies of the Monks family. These included Joseph Monks and Co., Ltd. of Liverpool and John S. Monks and Co. Ltd., formed from J.H. Monks (Preston) Ltd.  |
| Morlan Floods            | [Cumbria] Floods in the Keswick area which often coincided with the 22 <sup>nd</sup>   |

July Feast of St. Mary Magdalen.

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| Morts       | [Cumbria] Young salmon on their first return from the sea.  |
| Mooch       | [CONWAY] To walk around in a group, with no real purpose.   |
| Moss        | A bog.  |
| Muck Boat   | [Lancaster Canal term] The square-ended boat used by Bank Rangers (which, see) to help keep the canal and her banks tidy and free from weeds.   |
| Muck Monday | [Lancaster Canal term] The name given to the Whitsuntide Walks in Preston. The reason was the amount of horse manure left over following the horses being paraded (or pulling floats for the procession), which meant a free bit of income to those who traded manure on the canal. It is quite pleasing to know that people can make an honest living from peddling manure... when you see the less honourable version enacted at Whitehall daily...   |
| Murgin      | "A bog, from which there is no emerging", according to Egerton Leigh's dictionary.  |
| Murphy      | [CONWAY] Half a baked potato.   |
| Narrow Boat | [General canal term] The common term for the narrow canal craft otherwise known by the variety of names shown in this list. Various companies built their own classes of such boats and they could thus vary quite a bit from each other, and tended to do so by region (with companies having a monopoly on local boats or an influence over other companies of the same area). Thus, Narrow Boats from Taylor's in Chester tended to be shorter than others, Yarwood's boats from Northwich were similar to the larger ones built by Walker's of Rickmansworth (the "Ricky" Boats, which were from outside our region, like the "Woolwich" Boats built by Harland & Wolf at their yard there, as another example of the various types of Narrow Boat). In the latter years of freight carrying on the canal network, as the various firms merged, Narrow Boats could be heard referred to as Admirals or Admiral Class, Royalties or Royalty Class, Stars or Star Class, Towns or Town Class, etc., depending upon which of a variety of standard designs they were built to. See Northwich Boat, Runcorn Boat / Runcorn Six- |

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|                        | Planker, Shroppie Flies, Two-Decked Boat and Wide Boat.   |
| Navigay                | [INDEFATIGABLE] Navigation.   |
| Navvy                  | One who digs canals; the workers who carved-out our many waterways. The canals were called Navigations (Weaver Navigation, Mersey & Irwell Navigation, etc.), hence those who created them were Navvies. A Steam Navvy was a steam-powered mechanical digging engine.   |
| Neb                    | [Cumbria] A bill, beak, or nose, but also a cape or promontory.   |
| Necky                  | [CONWAY] Cheeky. A standard term in the region also.  |
| Nervey                 | [CONWAY] Impertinent; “you nervey swine!”.  |
| New Chum               | [CONWAY] New cadet, just joined. See Pleb.  |
| Niffle                 | [CONWAY] To smoke.  |
| Nix a Buff!            | [CONWAY] A warning that someone has broken wind.  |
| Nix-oh!                | [CONWAY] Look out! Or: Mind your back!  |
| Nobby                  | The regional type of fishing vessel. As with flats, a local term for a specific type of craft. These were single-masted cutters used as inshore trawlers. The full name of Lancashire Nobby is often heard but these were found in Cheshire as well as their birth county, including Runcorn.                                     |
| No herring, no wedding | [Isle of Man] A proverb from the Irish Sea nation, reflecting the fact that, at one time, if the herring fishing failed, there would not be money enough for young people to afford to wed. See Life to man, death to fish.   |
| Norry Boat             | [Cartmel] The constellation otherwise known as the Plough. Perhaps because it looks like Noah’s Ark?  |
| Northwich Boat         | [General canal term] Narrow Boats built in Northwich and known to be of large capacity. There were Large Northwich and Middle Northwich boats built by Yarwood’s and others, near the end of the freight days of the canals, as the various companies merged and eventually mostly came under British Waterways. See Narrow Boat. |
| Nova Scotia            | [Liverpool] The Canning – St. George’s Dock Passage area, and later one street in the reclaimed land locale, which later became known as Mann Island.   |
| Number Ones            | [General canal term] A vessel owned by her master; the term was adopted   |



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|                        | by Flatmen (which, see) also.  |
| Nursery                | [CONWAY] Area of the ship reserved for New Chums (which, see).   |
| OBE                    | [Cammell Laird] See DCM.   |
| Old CONWAY             | [Merchant Navy] A man who went through the training regime of CONWAY.  |
| Old Reliable           | [Merchant Navy] White star Line of Liverpool's OLYMPIC (1910).   |
| Old Wooden Mother, The | [CONWAY] Nickname for the ship, from the CONWAY Song.  |
| OPHIR                  | This ship, of the Zillah Shipping and Carrying Co. Ltd. (of Warrington and Liverpool), should properly be pronounced as "oh-fer". However, her crews always called her the "offer".  |
| Over the Wall          | [Cammell Laird] Out of the yard when you were supposed to be there; still being paid but not at work; clocked-in but then left without clocking-out.   |
| Over the water         | A term used on both shores of the Mersey to refer to the places and people across the way.   |
| Packet                 | A vessel that carried cargo or passengers and kept to a timetable. The term was applied to a variety of craft but this was the original use of the word in the canal and river domain. Also known as Fly-boats and usually with fine lines for increased speed. A Packet Boat, Passage Boat, or Market Boat was also the name given to an early type of Narrow Boat which had fine lines and a reduced beam. The term, Packet, comes from the bundle of official papers that such a vessel would carry as part of her cargo. Thus, it is related to the Royal Mail Steam Packets that once plied the high seas.<br><br>The faster vessels, with first-class passengers carried a liveried "Postilion", nicknamed the "Jockey", who would blow a curved horn to warn other vessels to make way. There is also a reference to Swift Boats in this regard, as opposed to Tide Boats, which were those which went at a more gentle pace, according to that source ( <i>Runcova</i> Volume II). |
| Paddock                | [Cumbria] Toad. See Tyadd.   |
| Pig                    | Nickname given by some of her crew to the Cunarder, QUEEN ELIZABETH 2. Probably a contraction of Black Pig. See Betsy / Betsy 2, Black Pig, and Cunarder.  |
| Piglet                 | Nickname for the CARONIA, a Cunarder, seemingly looked-upon as a small   |

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| Pilot Robbers                | version of the QUEEN ELIZABETH 2, which was known as the Pig, which see. [Liverpool Pilots, late 1800s] The name given to the larger ships beginning to frequent the Mersey in those days, as the pilots saw them as taking money from them by virtue of more tonnage being brought-in by one pilot of a large vessel, rather than in several smaller ones, each with her own pilot. See Whale. |
| Pink or Penk                 | A minnow.   |
| P*ss-Quicks                  | [CONWAY] Crude but obvious name for those who wet their hammocks and subsequently had to hang them near the Heads (toilets in naval parlance).  |
| Pit                          | An artificial pond or lake, as opposed to a natural one.  |
| Platt or Plat                | A small bridge or passage over a ditch or gutter. (To Plat is to Cross, such as crossing one's legs). A further explanation comes from <i>Cheshire Life</i> magazine, thus – “an old Cheshire word for a small bridge and may indicate a rather rudimentary pontoon-like affair built of bundled branches”.   |
| Platterdock                  | A pond weed.  |
| Pleb                         | [CONWAY] Alternative name for a new cadet or for one in his first couple of terms. See New Chum.  |
| Poach                        | Land is Poached when wet, undrained, and swampy, and trampled by cattle.  |
| Poke                         | [Cumbria] A small, conical bag, such as used for sweets, but also the bag used as a type of net in sea fishing. See Haaf Net.   |
| Polly                        | [Harrison Line] Nickname for their vessel, POLITICIAN.  |
| Pool                         | Another name for a natural pond or lake.  |
| Poor & Old                   | [Carnival UK] The British arm of the Anglo-American Carnival Corporation and Plc includes the Cunard Line, which still considers Liverpool her spiritual home (hence inclusion here). This is the disparaging & unfair name they give to the other half of their group, P&O Cruises.  |
| The Port of a Thousand Ships | [Liverpool] Local name for the port, for the obvious reason the name suggests.  |
| The Pretty Sisters           | [Merchant Navy] The Cunard Line's turn-of-the-20 <sup>th</sup> -Century pairing of CARMANIA and CARONIA.  |
| Pretty spare chum            | [CONWAY] Bullsh*t!  |

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| Pudding and Pie Fellows  | Mentioned in <i>All at Sea: Memories of Maritime Merseyside</i> by Ev Draper, as a phrase used to describe the always hungry-seeming CONWAY cadets.  |
| Punishment Corporal, The | [AKBAR] The man responsible for birching offenders, or dishing-out other punishments, aboard the training ship.  |
| Punt                     | Term for cock boat used in Liverpool & Birkenhead and perhaps more widely across the Mersey. Also the name given a small, long, open boat across Lancashire and Cumbria. It is round-bottomed, and clinker-built (overlapping planks, rather than edge-to-edge as in carvel-built), unlike the flat-bottomed Punts of the south.   |
| QB                       | [CONWAY] Quarter Boy – A cadet in his last term whose CONWAY course (usually about two years in length) gained him one year’s remission of his 4-year apprenticeship at sea.   |
| Queen, The               | Popular name for Liverpool’s Cunard Line’s RMS QUEEN ELIZABETH (1940).   |
| Queens, The              | Popular name for all of Cunard’s “Queens”: QUEEN ELIZABETH, QUEEN MARY, etc.   |
| Quick Cars               | See The Car.   |
| A Rainy Buzzer           | [Cumbria] In the heyday of the shipyards and steelworks of Millom, the factory whistles (known locally as Buzzers, which see) became a portent of rain. It was said that, if you could hear the Buzzers, it meant rain was inbound. This seems an entirely sensible prediction, based upon the wind direction making the noise audible and hence meaning that the bad weather (and, indeed, any weather) was due to blown in the direction of the listener. The phrase, “A Rainy Buzzer” made it into local dialect. |
| Red Nettle               | [Cartmel] A red jellyfish.   |
| The Red Noses            | [Local name] The sandstone outcrop that juts-out onto New Brighton Beach.  |
| Relief of Bootle, The    | [White Star Line] The name given to the liner, CERAMIC, as she supposedly gave so much employment to the local people of the town and thus took many off the dole!   |
| Rescue Ship, The         | Popular name given to the Warren Line ship, NEWFOUNDLAND, after her  |

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|                                 | many exploits in saving people from distressed ships.   |
| Returning Gash!                 | [CONWAY] In the days when rubbish was thrown over the side in ships across the globe, whenever the Yack Tub (which, see) was emptied over the side from CONWAY, into wind, this was the cry given to warn people of the rubbish about to return in their faces!                   |
| Rigatt or Riggott               | “A small channel made by the rainout of the common course of the water”, according to Egerton Leigh’s dictionary.   |
| Rigg                            | A gale.   |
| Rigging a Flat                  | Flatmen (which, see) spoke of doing this, rather than of Setting Sail, as sailors in other vessels would have.  |
| Rindle                          | A stream or rivulet. Also heard in South Lancashire.  |
| The Ringay Flu                  | [Ringway] The name given to the River Bollin on older maps of the Ringway area (where today’s Manchester Airport lies); once part of Cheshire and now in Greater Manchester.  |
| The Risley Cell Block Extension | [MSC] The name given to the pilot and helmsman accommodation built at Cadishead in the 1940s and closed in 1981. Clearly named after the 1964-opened prison at Risley, near Warrington.   |
| Roads                           | [Runcorn] The lines of locks from the Bridgewater Canal to the Manchester Ship Canal, the Old Line and New Line being known as the “Old Road” and the “New Road” by Runcornians. Care of an article by Bill Leathwood, published in the <i>Port of Manchester Review</i> [19]’76. |
| Robin Hood’s wind               | “A soft wind that brings on a thaw pleasanter to freebooters than a biting east wind”, according to Egerton Leigh’s dictionary.   |
| The Rochdale Nine / The Nine    | The arm of the Rochdale Canal between Castlefield and Piccadilly in Manchester.   |
| Rodney Boater                   | [General canal term] Someone not of a genuine boating family, who clearly has little experience or interest in the outward appearance of the boat. Also called a Bird of Passage. A Rodney Boat was a neglected boat.   |
| Rolling Reina                   | [Pacific Steam Navigation Company] This Liverpool-registered vessel was the REINA DEL PACIFICO: A ship renowned for her lack of sea-handling properties.  |

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| Rollock                            | [Cumbria] The hollow in the gunwale of a boat, for the oar to fit in. The name later applied to the U-shaped metal device fitted for the same purpose. Comes from row-lock.  |
| Ronuk                              | [CONWAY] Floor polish and the floor polishing machine. Probably just ashore at the Welsh Shore Establishment, but included in case it derived from an earlier term for polish done by hand onboard.  |
| The Rose Boats                     | [Merchant Navy] The ships of Richard Hughes and Co. of Liverpool, which mainly had names ending in -ROSE. See Hungry Dick and the Welsh Navy.  |
| Rostron Express                    | [Merchant Navy] The MAURETANIA. The name derived from her captain's surname and the well-known fact that he made sure he never missed his train home after bringing his ship into port. See Gangrene Queen and Maurie.   |
| Royals                             | [Cammell Laird] Workers given the best-paid jobs; favoured workers.  |
| Runcan                             | Runcorn.   |
| Runcorn Boat / Runcorn Six-Planker | The style of canal boat designed for the deep waters of the Bridgewater Canal and largely developed & built in Runcorn. This is a local name for the boats, but was heard quite widely across the country; it was also the name of a distinct type, constructed with a deeper hold (and hence their being six-planks deep). Also called a (Runcorn) Wooden Header, or a Double Header, because of the strong fore and aft ends with almost vertical stem and stern posts and protruding timber heads; also called a Northern Boat; and I have seen reference to them as a Bridgewater Six-Planker.   |
| Runcornians                        | The Old Town developed out of the original Lower Runcorn, which clustered around the area now called the Decks and to the south of that, and Higher Runcorn, with various points between. Eventually, it spread further out and was then joined by the New Town developments. The main housing areas in Old Runcorn's centre, however, were named in nautical fashion. Dukesfield is the area to the west of the railway bridge, above the docks. Sometimes, this name is taken to include streets further east, and there may be some historic precedent for that. However, that is fiercely contested by those who live in those roads of Runcorn's extreme north west corner. This estate |

is named, as are her many streets, after the Duke of Bridgewater, who created the docks that also once bore the name of his dukedom (but are now called, simply, Runcorn Docks) and the canal that is driven through the heart of Runcorn (and also bearing the ducal name). Those people who live on the other side of the railway bridge are known locally as South Bankers, after the former road of South Bank Terrace and the fact that this area was the south bank of the River Mersey and is now such of the Manchester Ship Canal. When the Silver Jubilee Road Bridge was built, those who lived here also got the nickname of Dorman Longers, after the famous Dorman Long firm that erected the steel arch bridge.

So, whether a Dukesfielder or Southbanker / South Banker (or Dorman Longer), these names all sprang from the waterways and their crossings. People in Runcorn recognise “under the arches” as meaning under and through those railway bridge arches into Dukesfield. They also recognise Colley Bank as an abbreviation for Collier Street and the bank of the Manchester Ship Canal at that far northern edge of Dukesfield.

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| Colley Bank         | [Runcorn] A nickname for Collier Street, based upon the fact that it is beside the bank of the Manchester Ship Canal?  |
| Rundle              | A variant of Rindle, also recorded in Cheshire. “A small brook, a runlet”, according to Egerton Leigh’s dictionary.  |
| Runners             | [Standard shipyard term in Mersey region] Those sent on urgent messages, or to go back to the office to obtain tools, equipment, more hands, whatever was needed (in the days before radios or telephones were prevalent). |
| The Sailor’s Church | [Local name, across Mersey Region] “St. Nick’s” , or, Our Lady & Saint Nicholas, near the Pier Head in Liverpool.  |
| Sam Boats           | Nickname given to the US-built Liberty Boats often seen on the Manchester Ship Canal. From the “Uncle Sam” characterisation of the USA.  |
| Sandscar            | [Cumbria] A type of Fluke (which, see), similar to a plaice. Also rendered as Sandsker.  |
| Sandsker            | See Sandscar.  |

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| Saturday Boats           | Local name for the Coast Lines' scheduled Liverpool, Plymouth, Southampton, London, Plymouth, Liverpool route freight and passenger service, given due to the day of her regular sailings. See Wednesday Boats.   |
| Sawduck                  | [CONWAY] See Soddack.   |
| Scar                     | A rock; often one overhanging a river. In Cumbria, the same word means a cliff, bare rock, or rocky island, and can also mean a shoal or a stony bed on the foreshore.  |
| Scarf                    | [Cumbria] Cormorant. Also rendered as Scarth.   |
| Scarth                   | See Scarf.  |
| Scary Mary               | [Cunard] The name given to QUEEN MARY 2, along with "Bloody Mary" and the "Red Queen", given the tragedy that befell her before launch, when a contractor-built brow collapsed, killing and injuring many of the local populace at the les Chantiers de L'Atlantique shipyard where she was built. The names seem to have disappeared from use, hopefully, but "Scary Mary" is still occasionally heard in fonder usage, and in less macabre circumstances. |
| Scold like a Wych Waller | A Cheshire phrase derived from the renowned bad language of the salt boilers. See Wych Waller.  |
| The Scottish Ship        | [Cunard Line of Liverpool] The nickname given to LUSITANIA (1907), built in Scotland, to distinguish her from MAURETANIA, which was built in England.   |
| Scouse                   | See Lobscouse.  |
| The Scouse Boat          | See the Levi.   |
| Scoute                   | [Isle of Man] Manx sailing craft, once used in herring fishing.   |
| Scrag-piece              | A carpenter's term for a useless piece of wood which cannot be used. Perhaps used by the shipwrights of the region too?   |
| Screeve                  | To ooze out.  |
| Scriber                  | [Cammell Laird] Sharp-pointed, hardened steel, marking tool for use on steel plates.  |
| Sea Queen, The           | Popular name for Pacific Steam Navigation's Liverpool-registered REINA DEL MAR. See the Curry & Rice Liner.   |
| Sea Pie                  | [Cumbria] Oystercatcher. Also rendered as Sea Pyet.   |

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| Sea Pyet                      | See Sea Pie.   |
| Seath or Seeth or Sheath      | A brine pit.   |
| The Sea Urchins               | The name of the club, and her members, of Royal Naval Reserve Officers in Liverpool.   |
| Seaweed                       | [Lancashire] The standard term can be heard variously in Lancashire as weed, wreck, or muck.   |
| Second Hand Horse             | [Lancaster Canal term] An older horse, of about 11 or 12 years of age, suitable for canal work (younger ones not being considered so, having not built-up strength in a previous job first). See Galloway and Vanner.  |
| Seech or Seek or Sike or Syke | A spring in a field with no outlet for the water, leading to the creation of a boggy place.  |
| Senior Hand                   | [CONWAY] A senior cadet.   |
| Senior Midshipman             | [Merchant Navy - Blue Funnel Line] A rank in this Liverpool shipping company. See Midshipman.  |
| Serge                         | The sedge or Water Rush.   |
| The Sewage Canal              | After the Suez waterway was opened in 1853, locals dubbed the somewhat filthy River Irwell this complementary, but NOT complimentary, nickname.  |
| Shag                          | [CONWAY] The shape bent by a cadet into his cap.   |
| Sharpling                     | See Jack Sharp.  |
| Shelly                        | See Skelly.  |
| Shilla                        | [Cumbria] Shingle on a beach; gravel. Also rendered as Shillies  |
| Shillies                      | See Shilla.  |
| Ship Beautiful, The           | See the Beautiful Ship.  |
| Shipmen                       | Local name for Liverpool dockers who loaded / unloaded ships. The Porters had the safer job of arranging the cargoes and quayside.   |
| Shire Ships, The              | Popular name for the Bibby vessels named after the old counties of England.  |
| Sh*t Boats                    | Vulgar, but straight-to-the-point nickname for the sewage boats, as used by tug & dredger crews on the MSC. See Banana Boats and the Effluent Society. Apparently, they used to hold their noses when working on the big Dredging Department vessels, such as the GOWY, to let the fore or aft winch houses know a sewage boat was about to pass them! |



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| Shoe            | The last bit of smoothing and narrowing to a drain or gutter or ditch, cut with a specially-shaped spade, or Shoo.  |
| Shoeings        | The refuse from drains and ditches, used to fill-up holes.  |
| Shovel-engineer | The engineer in Steam Packets; a name clearly from the profession of being a Stoker.  |
| Shroppie Flies  | The Shropshire Union Fly-boats were the very narrow and shallow fast Narrow Boats that worked that canal.   |
| Shuts           | [Fleetwood] The duckboards (which you walk upon in the bottom of the open hull) of a punt (a small, long, open boat). See Punt.   |
| Sick pigeon     | [Standard Dockers' slang in Manchester Ship Canal ports] A seaman who often hid aloft, skiving.   |
| Sike            | [Cumbria] A watercourse through wet land; a drain; a small stream. Also rendered as Syke.   |
| Sitch           | A stream or rivulet, specifically one that formed a boundary between fields.  |
| Skeear          | [Cartmel] Cockle bed. See Coul.   |
| Skelly          | [Cumbria] Freshwater herring found in Ullswater, Haweswater and Red Tarn (and also in certain Scottish Lochs). Also rendered as Shelly.   |
| Skilley         | [CONWAY] In earlier years, this meant any hot drink, but it came to mean specifically tea. Sometimes rendered as "Skilly", and has been described as a mix between tea and weak coffee.   |
| Slack Party     | [CONWAY] A group of cadets on punishment detail.  |
| Slackwater      | Not enough water to work a mill.  |
| Slampy          | [Cartmel] A Fluke (which, see), after spawning, when it is white and thin.  |
| Slob            | Soft mud on the seashore. "Slobber", by extension, is the mud produced by slushy, sleety, rain or snow. See Sod Sludge.   |
| Slubber         | Frog's spawn.   |
| Sludge Boat     | [MSC crews and dockers term also used by Abel's fleet] Many on the MSC used this term to refer to the sewage boats. Abel's used it to speak of the boats into which the sea or river bottom waste (sludge) was transferred from the dredgers. |
| Slutchy         | Boggy.  |

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| Small Stink           | [CONWAY] The small motorboat. This may be from the latter days, but may have stemmed from an earlier application of the term when CONWAY was still on the Mersey.   |
| Smelling Bottom       | Another piece of “tug-speak” from the Manchester Ship Canal, where they speak of a ship passing a bank of silt along the canal bottom on a tight bend or narrow part of the canal, resulting in the tug crews having to be alert to the dangers therein (ready to pull the ship away from that bank of silt, but keeping her safe from hitting the opposite wall or bank of the canal). |
| Sniddle               | Long, coarse, grass and rushes, sedge, and flags that all grow in wet places.   |
| Snig (1)              | Eel. Also in Lancashire. In Cumbria, a small eel.   |
| Snig (2)              | To catch something from the water by throwing a stick that is tied to a length of string, which you then haul in. The term is also used for dragging a tree along the road without loading it to a timber carriage.   |
| Snubbers              | [General canal term] Long tow ropes. See Straps.  |
| Soddack               | [CONWAY] Bread. Also heard as Soduk / Sodduk or Sawduck.  |
| Soddack for a spread! | [CONWAY] A call usually heard when the bread load came aboard the old ship.   |
| Sod Sludge            | Sea mud used as a manure. Also known as Slob and Green Sod Sludge, both of which, see.  |
| Soojie                | [CONWAY] Soap powder. Interestingly, in the Royal Navy, “Soojie Moojie” was an old term for a mixture used to wash paintwork, which equated to “Strongers” in Merchant Navy usage.  |
| Sough or Suff         | Drain.  |
| South Bankers         | See Runcornians.  |
| Sparkling Quartet     | See Cunard Quadruplets / Quads.   |
| Sparling              | A fish.   |
| Spell                 | [CONWAY] A period of time, usually of work.   |
| Spello                | [CONWAY] A rest from work.  |
| Spike Island          | The Widnes landmark is apparently named after the dialect term for the doss houses that were once prevalent there (to accommodate the influx of workers for the local soap works).  |

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| Splashes       | See (Water) Splashes.  |
| Spottom        | [INDEFATIGABLE] Margarine.   |
| Spouse         | [Cartmel] Small fish.  |
| Spread         | [CONWAY] Jam.  |
| Sprinch Yard   | See Top Yard.  |
| A Sprinch Yard | [Runcorn] According to Ron Freethy in his <i>The River Mersey</i> , this was “a local term used to describe a yard building canal boats rather than seagoing craft”. I believe that he is mistaken here, but I may be wrong: Perhaps the name of the Sprinch Yard, being a famous boatbuilding yard of national renown, came to be used as a term for other canal yards?   |
| Springing      | When there was no wind and a flat wanted to make progress, she would “spring” (known as “dredging” in the West Country) by drifting with the tide, then letting the anchor go with a short amount of cable paid-out to stop her. She would then swing so ship’s head faced the tidal stream, the rudder put hard over in the required direction, and the anchor heaved-in. She would then move stern-first with the tide.                                  |
| Sprod          | [Cumbria] Young salmon or salmon trout.  |
| Squeeker       | [CONWAY] A small, noisy, cadet.  |
| Squit          | [CONWAY] a small cadet.  |
| Staging Pull   | [Cammell Laird] A single row or column of staging boards about a ship.   |
| Standing-by    | [Cammell Laird] On pay but not being used currently / non-productive.  |
| Stank (1)      | To stank a drain is to dam it before cutting the piping, thereby preventing the water from interfering with that work.   |
| Stank (2)      | [Cumbria] Pool or artificial pond.   |
| Stars Out      | [CONWAY] Either to go red in the face, or to express incredulity.  |
| Starvationer   | The very appropriate name given to the incredibly narrow bots built for the Duke of Bridgewater’s Worsley mine tunnels, which had the ribs exposed in the open hull. These boats could not be turned around in the mines, so were designed with a pointed bow at each end. The ones used in the lower levels of the mines had to be lowered vertically, which is another reason they were so narrow. There were three types, the larger ones designated by |

a letter which formed part of the serial number; the smaller ones carried only the numerals. The 10-ton boats were T Boats, the 7-ton ones, M boats, and the 2-ton craft for the lower levels were called Tub Boats. An alternate description (from NarrowBoat Magazine) states that there were 12-ton M Boats, smaller T Boats, and a later development were larger than the 12-tonners; these were called B Boats and were for the section between Worsely and the incline of the mines. Starvationers were sometimes called Mine Boats or the Duke of Bridgewater's Coal Barges.

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| Staw         | A cart trapped in a slough is said to be Stawed.   |
| Steady       | An anvil. Perhaps heard in the region's shipyards and boatyards.   |
| Steam Packet | The later development of the Flat, wherein an engine was fitted to an older vessel, then the same sort of hulls were newbuilt around steam engines. Sometimes called Brunners or Brunner Flats, after the Brunner Mond company that later became part of the Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI) empire. The latest of these were constructed to the same lines but from iron and, later still, steel. Apparently, all of the Winsford Steam Packets had their funnel (which was on the after casing, as all Steam Packet's funnels were) hinged. Steam Packets (sometimes known as just Packets, but this confuses matters because of the use of the term for other vessels) were fitted with a steering wheel, not a tiller. Later versions had a Wheelhouse and the latest ones had a raised Superstructure and Bridge, making them look very much like any other modern Coaster (vessel employed in Coastal or Short-Sea trade). The Steam Packets were later overtaken by Diesel Packets and those vessels were the final development of the Flat. |
| Steam Pilots | In the 1800s, as steam vessels became more prevalent but remained in far smaller numbers than sailing ships, a practice arose of coasting steamers retaining their outward-bound pilot, so that they could return to Liverpool with ease after the visit to one of the nearby ports they were trading to. Otherwise known as Attached Pilots.  |
| Straps       | [General canal term] Short tow ropes. See Snubbers.  |
| Suction      | [CONWAY] An obvious, if vulgar, term for brown-nosing.   |

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| Super Trooper, The | [Cunard] The GEORGIC, so honoured because of her sterling service as a Troopship in World War II.  |
| Swaggle            | Swing or sway to-and-thro... may not be nautical in origin, but I like it!   |
| Sweep              | [CONWAY] An area of the ship that a cadet was responsible for (from a fairly obvious meaning of how he kept it tidy).  |
| Sweep, to          | [CONWAY] To clean.   |
| Sweeps             | [General canal term] Auxiliary oars kept in some canal boats. Not sure if this was heard locally.  |
| Syke               | See Sike.  |
| Tack               | [INDEFATIGABLE] Bread. Similar to the idea of the Royal Navy use of the term "Hard Tack" for ship's biscuit, but actually meaning genuine bread.   |
| Tangel             | See Tangle.  |
| Tanggal            | See Tangle.  |
| Tangle             | [Cumbria] Seaweed. Also rendered as Tangel or Tanggal. See Tangle Dales.   |
| Tangle Dales       | [Cumbria] Parcels of land along the Cumbrian coast, allocated to farms, and from whence they could collect seaweed for use as manure.  |
| Tarted Out         | [CONWAY] A poor specimen.  |
| Teanal             | [Cumbria] Cockle basket. See Coul.   |
| Teapot Row         | See Marine Promenade, New Brighton.  |
| Teaser             | [CONWAY] Rope ends used by senior cadets to inflict corporal punishment on junior ones. Similar to the Starter used in the RN and carried by Boatswain's Mates to "encourage" harder work in others. See Cuts.   |
| Terrible John      | This was the nickname of a local shipping magnate, Rear Admiral John Parry Jones-Parry, who had settled at Thelwall Hall after leaving the Royal Navy. He was a shipowner who helped to found the Manchester, Liverpool and North Wales Steamship Co. Ltd. and was also a magistrate. His moniker may have stemmed from his time as Gunnery Officer in HMS TERRIBLE at the Crimea, or from his reputation as a stern Justice of the Peace. He was, by the way, often referred to by his abbreviation: J P J-P, JP! |
| Tesco              | [CONWAY] Whitewash.  |
| Thoft              | [Cartmel] A seat in a boat.  |

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| The Three Graces   | [Common term] The Liver Building (home of the Royal Liver Assurance Group), The Cunard Building (once the headquarters of the famous shipping line), and the Dock Offices of Liverpool are the three magnificent waterfront buildings that make-up one of the most famous cityscapes in the world. The buildings have nautical connections, of course. |
| Thrumwort          | [Cumbria] Water Plantain.  |
| Thunner-Stanes     | [Cumbria] Quartz stones found in streams and thought to be created by thunder! Also used for erratic boulders.   |
| Tide               | [MSC] Being as tides should not affect a canal, this may seem an odd term to be used by the employees of the MSC Co. However, it WAS used and it was used to describe the traffic flowing through the port: The “Current Tide” is the name given to the vessels moving into, out of, or within the Port of Manchester.                                 |
| Tide-Wreck         | [Cumbria] A line of flotsam, jetsam, and seaweed left behind by the tide.  |
| Toenail Pie        | [CONWAY] Any stodgy pudding with bits in it.   |
| Top                | [CONWAY] The equivalent of a House in a Public School, the CONWAY cadets were allocated to one of 4 Tops: Fo’c’s’le, Foretop, Maintop, or Mizzentop. During the 1940s, when there were large numbers, there was also a further Top: Quarterdeck. For many years, there was also the Hold Party, which later just became an overflow mess / dormitory.  |
| Top Please!        | [CONWAY] A request to pass through a Part of Ship owned by a Top (which, see) other than one’s own.  |
| Top Yard           | [Runcorn] Name given in Runcorn to the Manchester Ship Canal Company’s Bridgewater Department yard at what was the top of the Sprinch Brook (see Bottom Yard). This facility, properly called the Victoria Yard or the Runcorn Dockyard, was also known as the Sprinch Yard. However, see also A Sprinch Yard.   |
| The Trannie        | The Widnes – Runcorn Transporter Bridge’s affectionate nickname. See the Car and the Magnificent Monstrosity.  |
| Treading for Fluke | [Cumbria] Method of catching Fluke (which, see), by walking barefoot across the bay, following the ebb tide. One is notified of the existence of a   |

Fluke quite easily! However, one must beware the Weaver Fish or Clockermunje (which, see).

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| Trench Boat                                 | A very narrow Narrow Boat used on the Shropshire Union Canal.  |
| Tugs  | The tugs of the Manchester Ship Canal sometimes had nicknames and all had the prefix "MSC" from 1927 onwards), as follows:   |
| 1200 Robbs                                  | The 1200 bhp tugs built by Henry Robb of Leith, such as ONWARDS, ONSET, PANTHER, PUMA, QUARRY, QUEST, RANGER, and ROVER.   |
| Little Ducks / Duck Class                   | The smaller tubs, such as MALLARD, MERLIN, NYMPH, and NEPTUNE. Otherwise called the Donald Ducks.  |
| A Class, S Class, T Class, U Class, V Class | The obvious name given for the traffic tugs from 1938 onwards, when an alphabetical naming system was adopted... ARCHER and ARROW; followed by many others, including the O, P, Q, and R Class mentioned above; then SABRE, SCEPTRE, SOVEREIGN and SCIMITAR; then TALISMAN and TARN; and ULEX and UNDINE; finally VICEROY and VICTORY. |
| Tug-Tender DANIEL ADAMSON                   | Always known as the Danny.   |
| Tummuz                                      | Toad.  |
| Turbary                                     | The right to dig for turf in a bog.  |
| Twinnies Bridge                             | A bridge at Styal, over the River Bollin. It apparently comes from an old word for confluence: Twistle. This may, therefore, be an example of a dialectal version of an ancient word surviving into the modern day.  |
| Two-Decked Boat                             | [Standard canal term] A Narrow Boat of the Shropshire Union Company that was fitted with a fore cabin. See Narrow Boat.  |
| Two of fat, one of lean                     | [Merchant Navy] The ships of the T & J Harrison Line of Liverpool, which had funnel colours in the form of three horizontal bands: One thin red one sandwiched between two thick white ones.   |
| Tyadd                                       | [Cumbria] Toad. See Paddock.   |
| Vanner                                      | [Lancaster Canal term] A small horse, under 10 or 12 hands. See Galloway and Second Hand Horse.  |
| Vulch, to                                   | [CONWAY] See Vulture.  |
| Vulture                                     | [CONWAY] Someone who eyes your plate in the hope of grabbing anything  |

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|                     | you left. To Vulch was to be the Vulture.   |
| Wall-up             | To spring-up as water does.   |
| Wanla               | [Cumbria] Walney.   |
| Wappow or Weppow    | Railings put up by a brook to prevent cattle encroaching on others' lands.  |
| Watcher             | [Lytham] A small buoy.  |
| Watercress Beds     | [Standard canal term] The nickname given the boats of the Mersey, Weaver & Ship Canal Carrying Co. Ltd. in her latter days before sale to British Waterways in 1958. The fleet, all wooden, was dilapidated by then and hence earned this disparaging moniker.  |
| Water Lily          | [CONWAY] Harsh, but amusing nickname for a cadet who wets his hammock.  |
| (Water) Splashes    | Fords across the waterways (not sure if this a Cheshire expression or one used universally, but also within the county).  |
| Waterman / Watermen | The River Weaver's term for Flatmen, originally, this seems to have expanded to be used more generally for those working on the rivers (although this may just be me misreading that in various sources!).  |
| Wath                | [Cumbria] A ford.   |
| Watter Ask          | See Ask.  |
| Weat                | See Wheeat.   |
| Weaver Flat         | See Flat.   |
| Wednesday Boats     | Local name for the Coast Lines' scheduled Liverpool, Falmouth, Plymouth, London, Southampton, Cork, Liverpool route freight and passenger service, given due to the day of her regular sailings. See Saturday Boats.  |
| Weel or Wheel       | A whirlpool.  |
| Weeze               | To drain away, drip gently, or ooze-out.  |
| The Welsh Navy      | (1) Liverpool's Blue Funnel Line which was, at one time, predominantly crewed by Welshmen.<br><br>(2) Liverpool's Richard Hughes and Co. and associated companies was also given this sobriquet, due perhaps to her many links with Welsh ports (along with trade in-and-out of various other British harbours). They also hired many crews from Anglesey and mainland Wales. See The Rose Boats. |



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| Welt, go on the               | [Liverpool Docks] To sag-off, or skive-off.  |
| West Bankers                  | Those who live in Widnes' West Bank – Clearly a nautically-derived name.   |
| The Western Gateway           | [Common Term] Name given to the Port of Liverpool, for her being the second port of the United Kingdom, and the gateway to the world, in the West.   |
| Whabble or Wabbock            | Puddle. If a field is “a whabbock”, they are flooded.  |
| Whack                         | [CONWAY] To “get your whack” was to get your share.  |
| Whales                        | [CONWAY] Sardines.   |
| Whales                        | [Liverpool Pilots, late 1800s] This was a name given to the larger ships beginning to be seen in the Mersey in those days. See also Pilot Robbers.   |
| Wheeat                        | [Morecambe Bay] Very young cockles. Also rendered as Weat. See Coul.   |
| Whig                          | Any obstruction to a drain.  |
| Whitten                       | [Cumbria] Whitehaven.  |
| Wide Boat                     | [General canal term] As opposed to a Narrow Boat (which see); a Barge, in other words.   |
| Wide                          | Another name for the lakes caused by salt mining and subsidence.   |
| Will o' the Wisp o' the Ocean | See Elusive Liner, The.  |
| Willy-Wicket                  | [Cumbria] Sandpiper.   |
| Wooden Mother, The            | See Old Wooden Mother.   |
| Wukkit'n                      | [Cumbria] Workington.  |
| -wurth                        | This placename ending, according to the renowned Cheshireman Sir Peter Leycester (1 <sup>st</sup> Baronet of Nether Tabley and antiquarian / historian) means “place by water”. He further stated that Budworth is thus named as “Bode” or dwelling by water. T.A. Coward mentions this on page 226-7 of his <i>Cheshire: Traditions and History</i> . |
| Wych Waller                   | A salt boiler at one of the many wyches or salt works. See Scold like a Wych Waller.   |
| Yack                          | [CONWAY] An alternate name for rubbish in CONWAY, as opposed to the standard naval, Gash (which, see).   |
| Yack Tub                      | [CONWAY] Rubbish bin made from sawn-off barrel-ends with rope handles each side.   |

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| Yellow Perils | [Merchant Navy] The Stability Class of ships for the FT Everard fleet were painted a shade of yellow and known by this nickname. They were regular visitors to the MSC. |
| Yerds         | Tow. Perhaps used in the nautical sense also?   |
| Yuck          | [CONWAY] Pilchards in tomato sauce.   |
| Zion's Hill   | The fo'c's'le head.   |

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### **Conversations with**

Peter Blackmore, who recollected the experiences of his father, John, who worked in Shell Tankers and the MSC tugs (with my grandfather, George Ratcliffe). Pete is a good friend who has collaborated with me on much work about local history.

Percy Dunbavand, former MSC tug skipper. Percy worked with my grandfather, George, and has long been a friend of the family.

The late Frank LeCouteur, who worked in Abel's vessels (as did his father), before going to sea in Blue Funnel ships and later emigrating to Australia. He was my late father, Ian Ratcliffe's, cousin.

### **Feedback from Facebook's Canal Old Boys Web (COBWEB)**

This is a list of ex-MSC employees who responded to my post on COBWEB to ask for more phrases and terms from the canal:

Simon Buckley

David Jones

Colin Leonard

Col Shaw

### **Other Facebook Pages / Chat Groups**

Runcorn Past and Present

### **And**

My own memories of local, Merchant Navy (incl. Cunard and P&O), and RN lore.