

## Glossary

**Belay:** To secure or make fast a line. Infrequently used in the fishing industry.

**Belaying pin:** A pin about a foot or more in length, set in the shrouds onto which running rigging is hung or belayed in coils.

**Bilge:** Area next to keel, under the engine or in the fishhold where waste water and oil accumulates. Some bilges have a sump at their lowest point from which the bilge pump draws when pumping out the bilges. (See *Sump*.)

**Bilge pump:** Centrifugal or displacement type pumps used to pump the various bilges dry at regular intervals. Most such waste water is pumped overboard, although environmental regulations now prohibit discharge of oils.

**Bilge alarms:** An alarm system that, through floats and sensors in the bilge, informs the skipper or engineer when bilge water should be pumped out. Alarm may be both sonic and visual, combining bell, horn, or siren with flashing or continuous lights or lights that change color.

**Boat puller:** The crewman on a salmon or albacore troller.

**Boat share:** See *Share system*.

**Block:** A wood or metal frame containing one or more sheaves (pulleys) over which running rigging (lines) are rove (pulled over). Blocks may be secured with a hook or shackle to masts, booms, or shrouds, in order to increase the leverage to hoist heavy equipment, fishing gear, booms, etc. Single blocks have one sheave; double blocks two sheaves, etc. The more sheaves in a block, the more leverage is secured.

**Bumper:** Landlubberish term for fender. (See *Fender*.)

**Buoy lines:** Lines which lead from the fishing gear to surface floats.

**Chance:** A job, or a commitment for a job on a fishing boat. Northwest fishermen look for a *chance*; Northeast coast fishermen look for a *sie*.

**Chief:** The engineer. The man responsible for care of engines and deck machinery.

**Cleat:** Usually a T-shaped form fastened to the deck, mast or rail, to which lines are secured. A deck cleat is fastened to the deck, distinguishing it from a mast cleat or rail cleat.

**Companionway:** Passage from the weather deck to lower deck spaces, such as the fo'c'sle or the engine room.

**Cork line:** The top line of a floating net to which floats are secured. Corresponds to the headrope of a bottom trawl.

**Crew expenses:** Those expenses of the trip which, in the share system, are charged to the crew only. (See *Share system*.)

**Crew share:** That amount of the gross stock which belongs to the crew according to the share system used. Also called the *lay*. (See *Lay* and *Share system*.)

**Crossing:** The transverse division in the fishhold, extending from one side of the hull to the other.

**Delegate:** A crewman elected by his shipmates to be their spokesman and to represent their interests when settlements are made. His function is similar to that of the shop steward ashore.

**Drawbucket:** A bucket with a lanyard knotted or spliced to the handle, or bail, and used on deck for taking up seawater.

**Expenses:** Costs of the trip, such as fuel, groceries (grub), ice, bait, lost or condemned gear, filters, etc. In different fisheries expenses are variously classified as gross stock expenses, boat expenses, and crew expenses. (See *Share system*.)

**Fairlead:** Usually a single sheave block or wheel around which a line is passed so that it may lead fair to the next point, i.e., a line hauled from overside may come up to a fairlead at the rail, turn 90° vertically there and cross the deck to another fairlead, where a 90° horizontal turn is made to lead the line into a winch drum.

**Fender:** Used to prevent the hull of the boat from rubbing against a piling, float, or another boat. Some fenders may be air bags, old tires, wood battens, which are hung overside from the rail to fend away from the piling, float, or boat. Another type of fender built onto the boat, is called a guard. Fender pilings of course describe their function. (See *Guards*.)

**Fending off:** Pushing on boat or dock to keep the boat from bumping.

**Fo'c'sle:** Contraction of forecabin. Living quarters, located in the bow of the boat. Living quarters in the stern are usually termed the *cabin*.

**Footrope:** Bottom line on a trawl; corresponds to the leadline on a seine.

**Galley:** A vessel's kitchen. May be combined on older and smaller fishing boats with the sleeping quarters and located in the fo'c'sle, the cabin, or in a deck house.

**Gear:** Implements used for catching fish or a general term for any auxiliary equipment used on deck.

**Going-in-the-Hole:** Having to pay the trip's bills out-of-pocket because income from the trip was insufficient to pay expenses. (See *Hole bill*.)

**Grossing or Gross Stock:** Total amount of money earned by the boat and crew from the fish or other services.

**Gross stock expenses:** Bills levied against the total dollars earned. (See *Share system*.)

**Gurry:** Combination of fish slime, blood, and visceral fluids that spill while dressing fish. Also the "soup" sometimes found in fishhold bilges—a combination of water and fish wastes described.

**Guards:** Fenders built onto the hull of the boat. Heavy timbers or pipes attached to the hull to prevent chafing against the dock or another vessel.

**Gypsyhead:** A metal drum with a smooth concave surface, usually mounted on a winch. Several wraps of line around the gypsy provides enough friction while it is turning to raise heavy loads smoothly because the line slips and is easily controlled like the friction on a clutch plate.

**Halyard:** Also *haliard*. A line running through a block or eye for hoisting sails, flags, etc. (See *Lanyard*.)

**Hanging:** 1. To fasten or sew lines onto web, nets. The nets hang from the cork

line. 2. The *hangings*: the distance apart, which can be measured in inches or number of meshes.

**Head:** The toilet on board a ship. On fishing boats it is usually referred to as the toilet.

**Headrope:** Top line on a trawl that roughly corresponds to the cork line on a purse seine, except that the floats are metal, plastic, or even glass, and heavily built to withstand the great pressures of deep water. The floats hold the mouth of a trawl open (vertically) so it catches fish as it is towed.

**Hole bill:** This is the bill, or deficit, when gross earnings for a trip are less than the total expenses.

**Home run:** The journey from the fishing grounds to the home port.

**Iron Mike:** Term generally used when referring to the auto-pilot, an electrical device that automatically steers a vessel on a given course.

**Kink:** 1. A sharp bend in a line or cable, usually caused by the line being improperly coiled. 2. A short nap.

**Knot:** 1. A configuration of a line when it is tied into another line or into itself. 2. An expression of a vessel's speed (not distance). A nautical mile is 6,080 feet, and a vessel traveling 10 nautical miles in one hour is proceeding at the rate of 10 knots.

**Lanyard:** A short length of light line used to fasten down equipment, or used as a handle extension, i.e., tied to a bucket bail or a bell clapper. (See *Halyard*.)

**Lay:** 1. A more formal term used for the *share system*. (See *Share system*.) 2. The lay of a line is the system of reverse twisting of fibers to form twines, then strands and finally a rope or line. A line with a lay to it tends to kink more easily than a line that is braided, though each has its own special application.

**Lead line:** Bottom line of a purse seine or gill net which is weighted either with lead sinkers or with internal lead threads.

**Lee tack:** A slang expression from sailing days to describe the walking progress of a man with several too many drinks.

**Line puller or hauler:** Usually a mechanically driven wheel or sheave with a sharp V-groove in the edge, which holds the line by friction as it is hauled. A long-lining gurdy and a crab pot hauler both use this method of hauling lines. Others may use winch drums for primary hauling power.

**Longliner:** Common term used to describe a fishing boat (or a member of its crew) which uses longlines to catch fish. Such lines are very long, with branch lines attached which have baited hooks for catching fish. Longlines may be weighted and sink to the bottom to catch such fish as halibut or black cod, or float on or near the surface to catch tuna or swordfish.

**Masthead:** Top of the mast. Also used to describe the light on the upper part of the mast; the masthead light is on the forward upper part of the mast, while

the range light is at the very top of the mast, and at some distance aft from the masthead light, and indicates the direction of movement of a vessel at night.

**Mug-up:** A between-meal snack; a cup of coffee and a sandwich.

**Net stock:** The balance left when a billing expense has been taken from one of the stocks of money as described in the share system. (See *Share system*.)

**Pen boards:** Removable wood or metal dividers which fit into vertical slots, formed by cleats, and separate the fish hold into compartments or pens.

**Penned up:** When all pen boards are in place.

**R.D.F.:** Initials for Radio Direction Finder. Through the loop receiver, the direction from which radio transmissions arrive can be accurately determined. The resultant bearing or bearings thus help fix the receiving vessel's position, or that of the transmitting vessel in relation to each other.

**Rig:** Common term used in reference to the whole fishing boat itself or to the type or kind of gear aboard.

**Rigging:** 1. As a noun, the stays, shrouds, and other cables and parts forming the upper works of a vessel attached to the booms and the mast. 2. As a verb, the assembling or putting together of the fishing gear for the boat.

**Run:** Equivalent to east coast term *steaming*, i.e., a day's run, or the home run.

**Running rigging:** Running rigging is rove through blocks or sheaves, and used to lift gear or adjust the position of booms. Antonym: *fixed rigging*, or *standing rigging*, such as shrouds and stays.

**Running sea:** Swells, waves, or breakers built up by a wind of some magnitude and persistence. Also, a sea running.

**Settling up:** The process of totaling the bills and computing the shares of profit or loss for a trip or trips. The resulting balance sheet is the settlement which apportions the share to each man and the vessel according to the agreed formula. Generally called the share system, but often referred to as the *lay* by economists.

**Settlement:** The balance sheet resulting from settling up. (See *Settling up*.)

**Shaft alley:** A tunnel built around the propeller shaft from the engine room to the stern bearing on large vessels and large enough for a man to enter for servicing the bearings.

**Shaft box:** A box built around the propeller shaft from the engine room bulkhead through the fish hold to the stern bearing. The shaft box is large enough to accommodate the shaft and the bearings only, and in the case of vessels with live-holding tanks, the shaft box will be sealed water tight. Boats with main engines in the stern do not generally need shaft boxes because the propeller shaft (or tail shaft) enters the stern tube directly from the engine room without passing through a fish hold.

**Share system:** Sometimes called the *lay*. As an historical profit sharing scheme, this possibly goes back to the beginning of fishing by man. Today there are as many different share systems as there are fisheries, and the formula may vary within a particular fishery from boat to boat, as well as in equitability to the partners in the system. Basically, the total income from the vessel and crew's efforts is the *gross stock* or the *grossing*—the total number of dollars from sale of fish.

A *gross stock* expense is deducted from the initial stock, if this is part of the formula.

A *boat expense* is that cost which is deducted from the *boat share* according to agreement.

A *crew expense* is that cost which is deducted from the *crew share* according to agreement.

After the foregoing expenses are deducted from the respective shares, a *net stock* is left which finally ends up in the pocket of the boat owner and each crew member respectively.

**Sheave:** 1. The wheel or pulley inside a block, around which the line is rove. 2. In the case of large blocks designed for steel cables, the whole structure may be referred to as a sheave.

**Shelf:** A heavy, wide timber used to stiffen the sides of a wooden vessel. It is located under the edge of the main deck near the top of the ribs. The shelf runs most of the length of the vessel along each side. In the fish hold, there may be doors or ventilated openings between the shelf and deck planking, permitting air circulation between the inside and outside wooden planks, preventing dry rot.

**Shrouds:** Wire ropes or cable fastened to the hull and extending to near the mast top, and kept taut with turnbuckles. The shrouds keep the mast transversely braced so that it may remain upright and bear loads for lifting. (See *Stay*.)

**Side pens:** Compartments formed on each side of the fishhold when the fishhold is penned up. Sometimes called *wing pens*. In cross section they are roughly the shape of a quarter circle, the rounded portion being the turn or curve of the bilge.

**Site:** A job or commitment for a job on a fishing boat (East coast usage). (See *Chance*.)

**Skin:** Planking, both inside and outside the ribs of heavily built wooden fishing boats. These are the "outside" or "inside" skin.

**Slaughterhouse:** Square hold compartments along the fishing boat's center line, over the keel area between the port and starboard side pens.

**Slop bucket:** A bucket (or can) for galley wastes.

**Sou'wester:** A wide brimmed, watertight oil hat for foul weather wear.

**Spring lines:** Tieup (mooring) lines used in addition to the bow and stern lines at a dock, float, or alongside another vessel. The spring lines extend from the boat to the dock nearly parallel with the vessel and prevent her surging fore and aft in a strong wind or tide. A spring line running aft from the bow will prevent surging forward and vice versa.

**Standing rigging:** Cables or lines used as fixed stays or shrouds to hold masts in

position. Tension is usually maintained with turnbuckles.

**Stay:** Wire cable or other line running fore and aft from near the mast top, bracing it longitudinally of the vessel.

**Sump:** Lowest point in the bilge to which all water and oil drains. With the suction end of the bilge pump pipe located there it can remove the maximum amount of water. (See *Bilge*.)

**Tackle:** A line rove through two blocks for extra leverage to lift heavy loads. (See *Whip*.)

**Taper:** The angle of cut across web that is tangential to the meshes in a line. If a line were drawn across a chess board from one corner to the other, it would form a taper to the squares (or meshes). The angles of a taper are described by a formula, so that each section of mesh when sewed together, will form an accurately proportioned cone, for example, as in a bottom trawl.

**Trawl:** A cone-shaped net, with floats on the head rope and chain or steel cable in the foot rope, which is towed through mid-water or on the sea bottom to catch fish. The trawl may be held open by a long beam (beam trawl) or by otter doors (otter trawl).

**Trip:** 1. Refers to the total fish aboard, or the fishing trip itself. 2. To *trip* a line: to suddenly dump a load by releasing a trigger, as in the end of a trawl when dumping the fish aboard.

**Turnbuckle:** A metal device used to tighten rigging. Consists of three parts: the middle (barrel) of the turnbuckle is threaded inside at each end; the two outside-threaded rods are inserted at each end, and as the barrel is turned, the rods move toward each other inside the barrel. The other ends of the rods are shackled to a stay or shroud and to the hull, so that the movement serves to tighten (or loosen) rigging tension as needed.

**Underway:** Vessel in forward motion, running, steaming.

**Warps:** The cables that lead from the winches on a trawler to each side of the trawl and transmit the towing power from boat to trawl.

**Whip:** A kind of tackle used for lifting with only one block which, therefore, does not give extra leverage. A whip rove through a single block overhead lifts a weight only equal to the initial pull.

**Wing pens:** (See *Side pens*.)

**Wristlets:** A cloth tube worn on the arms by some fishermen usually extending from the elbow down over the wrists, with the lower end having a thumb loop to hold it in place. Upper end is usually fastened with safety pins to the cutoff shirt-sleeves. Wristlets (or wristers) keep lower arms warm. Fish slime and blood are more easily washed out of the wristlets than the arms of the shirt. Other fishermen wear gauntlets of oilcloth or plastic, extending from above the elbow to the wrist, with each end of the tube having a rubber cord inside to hold it snugly on the arm.