

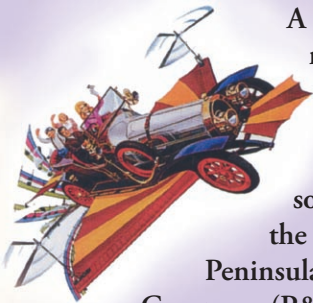
# Everyday speech from sailors of yesterday

## Posh

*“Oh, the posh posh traveling life, the traveling life for me,  
First cabin and captain’s table regal company.*

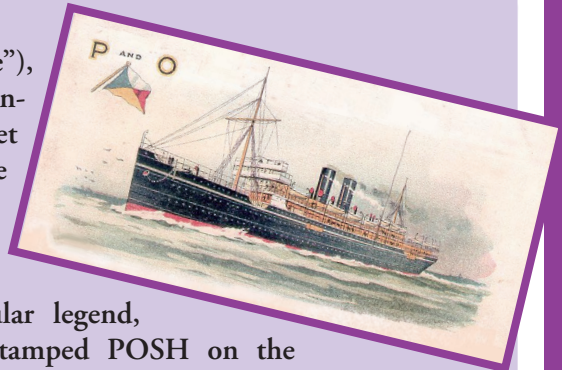
*Pardon the dust of the upper crust—fetch us a cup of tea,  
Port out, starboard home, posh with a capital P-O-S-H, posh.”*

—from the Chitty Chitty Bang Bang song, “P-O-S-H”



A popular, but highly debated, story about where the word “posh” came from dates back to the 19th century. Today, it means “high-class,” fancy, or elegant—sometimes even pretentious. At the height of the British Empire, the Peninsula & Oriental Steam Navigation Company (P&O) started transporting passengers and mail between England and India. It was extremely hot during the passage across the Indian Ocean when the ship traveled close to the equator. Because the route nearly paralleled the equator, cabins facing that side were considerably more steamy than those on the other side of the ship. When heading east (or “out”), port side cabins were more desirable; heading

west (or “home”), first-class passengers tried to get cabins on the opposite (starboard) side of the ship. Contrary to popular legend, P&O never stamped POSH on the tickets or documents.



**When My Ship Comes In** is a term that was always used shoreside, but today it means when someone, anyone, might make his/her fortune. Back in the days when merchant ships were sent out on trading voyages around the world, investors in the voyage would not make any money until the ship returned and sold its cargo. Like today, people borrowed money to finance a commercial venture. Unlike today, the moneylenders allowed them to pay the debt back at an unspecified time. A borrower would sign a contract promising to pay “when my ship comes in.”

From Dr. Martin Davis, *Traditions and Tales of the Navy* (Missoula, Montana: Pictorial Histories Publishing Co., Inc., 2000)

## WORD SEARCH: Sailors, Scientists, Explorers

B	T	A	G	W	O	H	H	R	N	F	P	Y	M	G	Q	A	T	A	H
S	E	L	R	U	V	V	I	O	E	O	T	R	B	G	H	U	W	T	H
E	J	C	E	K	M	T	B	W	N	R	T	A	A	C	M	K	C	S	N
E	Z	J	H	V	T	E	L	J	F	E	E	E	E	M	E	Y	E	I	K
G	B	K	X	E	E	I	S	R	I	A	L	P	L	I	J	A	E	G	X
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O	F	O	P	E	T	Z	M	O	K	A	A	A	S	N	O	S	N	E	H
Y	J	I	Z	Z	V	P	P	E	R	F	B	T	I	Z	O	L	C	J	I
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P	C	K	U	T	T	S	O	R	I	W	N	P	N	V	Q	X	C	J	C
U	N	X	G	I	I	R	Q	C	K	J	D	J	T	H	P	G	I	I	X
A	A	I	R	F	O	I	L	T	W	J	S	Q	R	Y	A	F	P	A	H

AIRFOIL  
ARKTIKA  
BARTLETT  
BECHE DE MER  
CARGO  
EINSTEIN  
FIJI  
FORE AND AFT  
HENSON  
NORTHPOLE  
PEARY  
POSH  
ROOSEVELT  
SEA CUCUMBER  
SEA HISTORY  
SEEGLOO  
TUMMLER