**[Dutchman](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/6150-dutchman/" \o "Go to Dutchman's profile)**

* Has anyone seen my cousin?
* 
* 
* Admin
* 1,773 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:tidewater virginia

([IP: 159.169.2.37](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=159.169.2.37)) ·

[Posted April 14, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=findComment&comment=352079) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=reportComment&comment=352079)

i have found entries in a log about cokers at work on the decks or spars, but no further explination of what they are doing. well coke is a cleaner durring the period, so am i safe to assume these folks were cleaning the ship?

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=edit)

[**Capt. Sterling**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2648-capt-sterling/)

* Sticky Fingers Sterling Needs a New Hat
* 
* 
* Member
* 10,302 posts
* Gender:Pyrate Hunter
* Location:here
* Interests:Killing pirates, haven't met one yet worth keeping alive....

([IP: 71.53.214.147](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=71.53.214.147)) · · 

[Posted April 14, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=findComment&comment=352082) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=reportComment&comment=352082)

Well the Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English, by Eric Partridge, Paul Beale

says Coker: a lie: ca. 1670-1830 or it could stand for caulker or corker

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=editComment&comment=352082)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/#elControls_352082_menu)

[**Dutchman**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/6150-dutchman/)

* Has anyone seen my cousin?
* 
* 
* Admin
* 1,773 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:tidewater virginia

([IP: 159.169.2.37](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=159.169.2.37)) · · 

[Posted April 14, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=findComment&comment=352083) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=reportComment&comment=352083)

i thought about that as well and it is entirely possible but why would they be on the mast? if this were the case, could they also be serving and parceling rigging? a preceeding entry mentions drawing old hammocs for serving the hawser- which means someone, not necessarely our mystery coker, was working on lines the day before.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=editComment&comment=352083)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/#elControls_352083_menu)

[**Capt. Sterling**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2648-capt-sterling/)

* Sticky Fingers Sterling Needs a New Hat
* 
* 
* Member
* 10,302 posts
* Gender:Pyrate Hunter
* Location:here
* Interests:Killing pirates, haven't met one yet worth keeping alive....

([IP: 71.53.214.147](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=71.53.214.147)) · · 

[Posted April 14, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=findComment&comment=352084) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=reportComment&comment=352084)

Don't know, have not heard the term before... except in use in the canting dictionaries.. where again it comes up as a lie... and cokes are simpletons... so maybe they have the fools up there cleaning the ship... See what Foxe has to say.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=editComment&comment=352084)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/#elControls_352084_menu)

[**William Brand**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1471-william-brand/)

* Mercury Malefactor
* 
* 
* Admin
* 8,884 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Logan, Utah
* Interests:My name is William Pace and I live and work as a graphic designer, illustrator and photographer in Northern Utah. I'm married to the lovely Tracy Pace and we have three children. In addition to all things art, I enjoy traveling and meeting new people from every walk of life. I've always been a fan of history, theology, and of course, Pyracy.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSkt-q-HihQ

([IP: 166.70.59.121](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=166.70.59.121)) · · 

[Posted April 14, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=findComment&comment=352097) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=reportComment&comment=352097)

Liars were called before the mast for the purpose of cleaning the head. A sailor caught in a lie was designated as the Liar (usually for a week) and had the wonderful duty of cleaning the rope and hole that constituted the toilet (or head) at the bow of the ship. As Coker also means liar, it may be that the duties of cleaning went further and to more people at one time than I had previously heard of before now.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=editComment&comment=352097)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/#elControls_352097_menu)

[**Patrick Hand**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1049-patrick-hand/)

* The sailor's sailor
* 
* 
* Moderator
* 6,100 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:TH' Mountains of Central California
* Interests:I like wierdness... Klingon, Pyrate..... and even..... gasp.... Renn Faires...... (Baseball and tractor pulls I'd have to think about.... could be wierd or Not,,,,)

([IP: 207.104.49.59](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=207.104.49.59)) · · 

[Posted April 15, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=findComment&comment=352132) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=reportComment&comment=352132)

Not Nautical, and from a work of Fiction...... and I'm not quoting.... just from wot I remember....

But there was something in Northwest Passage... about Rodgers Rangers....

Ye can lie all you want to other folks, tell them yer stories, just don't lie when yer givin a report to me.... (something like that... I'm paraphrasing.... )

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=editComment&comment=352132)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/#elControls_352132_menu)

[**Fox**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1019-fox/)

* Old Twillian
* 
* 
* Moderator
* 2,565 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Beautiful lush Devon, England
* Interests:Nautical history of the 16-18th centuries and living history based thereon.

Shooting pirates.

([IP: 86.162.28.207](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=86.162.28.207)) · · 

[Posted April 15, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=findComment&comment=352143) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=reportComment&comment=352143)

Hmm, difficult to say without more details. Any chance of copying out the relevant entries? Are there any other entires about cokers? Was the ship in harbour or at sea?

Off the top of my head:

It could mean they were cleaning. AFAIK the 'liar' seems to be a fairly early thing (Tudor, Jacobean), I've never come across it in the GAoP - but of course I don't know what date we're talking about.

A coak is also a part of a block so there might be a lead there.

If it were just work on the deck I'd say amost certainly that it meant 'caulkers', but that doesn't explain the top-work.

Nothing new to add from any of my period dictionaries I'm afraid

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=editComment&comment=352143)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/#elControls_352143_menu)

[**Cascabel**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/30-cascabel/)

* Evil Drooling Henchman
* 
* 
* Moderator
* 848 posts
* Gender:Male

([IP: 72.148.237.64](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=72.148.237.64)) · · 

[Posted April 15, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=findComment&comment=352161) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=reportComment&comment=352161)

Just a thought........ Do you suppose it's nothing more mysterious than poor spelling on the part of the person that made the log book entry, and he meant "caulker" ?

Further reading of the log may reveal other "unusual" spelling variations. There seems to be lots of spelling variations in some of the old writings, which can cause confusion among modern readers that are used to "standard" spellings of words.

>>>>> Cascabel

**Edited April 15, 2009 by Cascabel**

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=editComment&comment=352161)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/#elControls_352161_menu)

[**Dutchman**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/6150-dutchman/)

* Has anyone seen my cousin?
* 
* 
* Admin
* 1,773 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:tidewater virginia

([IP: 75.75.123.39](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=75.75.123.39)) · · 

[Posted April 15, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=findComment&comment=352164) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=reportComment&comment=352164)

this is a R.N. log from 1750's of a ship patrolling the west coast of europe/africa. below are some of the entries regarding the ships housekeeping. Entry # 4 is interesting, but #5 refers to the mystery coker. Of note the first three and last two are by different authors as there was a change of command and coker does not appear until the second author. I'm trying to relocate the cokers in the rigging entry.

.........At 3 PM a signal for all lieutenants in general. At 5 came on board longboat with water and boatswains stores.

AM Employed scraping the masts and paying of them.

........At 2 PM a signal for all lieutenants in general.

AM Employed scraping the quarterdecks.

........AM Employed scrubbing the ship's bottom.

.......Ditto sent out a tender with a lieutenant and men to impress seamen. Ditto had a survey on the main mast after(?) which the master mast maker gave his opinion not sprung. At 11 ditto swam ashore and ran away Robert Gordon seaman.

AM Heeled ship. Scrubbed and payed the starboard side.

........PM Employed in taking in the ballast and getting the cables on board.

AM Employed in taking on the ballast and bending the small bower cable. The cokers employed with the gun deck.

edit\* Cascabel you are probably right, but this appears often enough in this one log book to get a second or third looksee before I write it off as bad spelling. Also, the ship is both underway and anchored when the various entries are made.

**Edited April 15, 2009 by bbcddutchman**

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=editComment&comment=352164)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/#elControls_352164_menu)

[**oderlesseye**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2503-oderlesseye/)

* Scourge o' the 7 Seas
* 
* 
* Member
* 2,126 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:San Diego, Ca. (North Park) me cove !
* Interests:Oderlesseye is a mutinous two bit sand dollar with a thirst for adventure. Sailing on tall ships, firing black powder weapons, and sword fighting.. I most love to entertain the public in piratical skit presentations that involve all of the above. My name is befitting of my position on board as that of the look-out. Some ask what’s the meaning of the name Oderlesseye...It is simple really.. When Eye am aloft, ye can’t smell me...But it’s spelled wrong some exclaim! Hey now! What pirate can spell? - is my retort!
I have been an active member of the pirate community since 2005. I consider myself a fan of living history in the Golden Age of Piracy. As a child I , like the lot of ye, loved the old time pirate movies with Errol Flynn and Douglas Fairbanks. Long live Long John Silver !
Inspired by them, Eye created a Pirate Ninja Movie called "Treachery and a Dead Mans Promise" Available on YouTube.
Being a pirate, as it turns out, is multi-dimensional. For me, a lifestyle has been carved out of it. There is a six foot tall skeleton pirate in a make shift hide out called Dead Mans Cove behind my house. The walls are painted giving the impression you are in a sea cave. There is a mural of a pirate coming ashore in a long boat at the mouth of the cove. Believe me, it is a great place to enjoy rum now and again!
Exploration into all things piratical have led me to being an attempted escapee from the Governors noose to impersonating a judge in the Anne Bonnie and Mary Read trial held in Pirates In Paradise.. As Oderlesseye, my one on one impression to patrons is as one whom barley escaped the flames of the ship we took when the powder magazine blew with the booty in me hands from the Captains quarters.. The tale explains the soot on me face, the tattered clothing, and the burnt tricorn, as I hand out a gold coin or two. I hate them plastic ones and I know kids appreciate the metal coins even more so.
When an event is slated for a historical time line presentation to the public, I do not do these things mentioned above. Rather, I share about what is a grape shot or how a flintlock works. I ware clothing that is more closely representing the era in these cases. I am still updating me togs (Period Kit) as I learn more thru fellow pirates and sources like the Pyracy Pub.

So far, there have been many exciting moments of adventure the world of PIRACY has afforded me. From standing on a bar top with Pirates Charles singing to me in New Orleans to shooting cannons ( Ships Guns for you PC Pirates!), on the tall ship Spirit of Dana Point. Cheers from a crowd during a show as last man standing on the Treasure chest proclaiming to an excited crowd ITS MINE! THE BOOTY IS MINE ! YARR ! ~ These things and the notoriety that comes with being a pirate has me hooked! Whats More Is the greater bonds of friendships that have been forged with those whose course finds me at such events, sharing the same love and passion of the Life within the pirate/reenactment community. To Them Eye take me hat off and offer a tot of Rum! Cheers mates!

([IP: 72.220.146.181](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=72.220.146.181)) · · 

[Posted April 15, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=findComment&comment=352254) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=reportComment&comment=352254)

 Quote

says Coker: a lie: ca. 1670-1830 or it could stand for caulker or corker

He was a person who chalked between the planks to make them water tite.

"Caulking Wooden Ships

"The planks of a wooden ship are grooved to allow space for the insertion of caulking material between adjacent pieces. There are several materials used for caulking planked wooden ships. Historically, a fibrous material called oakum was used; today a number of different plastics, known as elastomers, are also available.

Elastomers consist of long, tightly twisted molecules that stretch and recoil, much like a spring. Plastic caulking materials are thoroughly mixed with a liquid curing material just before application, and the combined paste is then injected into the clean seam. The outer surface of the seam is smoothed off until it is level with the adjacent planks. When properly applied, plastic materials are far superior to oakum because they adhere to the wooden planking like glue, and they retain their rubber-like elastic properties indefinitely.

Oakum may still be used for recaulking older ships; it is also used in places where plastics are not available. Oakum is made from old hemp rope that has been untwisted and picked apart. It is generally used in the form of loosely spun yarn and may be untreated (white) or saturated with a tarry substance (black). Oakum comes in balls or in rope form. "

**Edited April 15, 2009 by oderlesseye**

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=editComment&comment=352254)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/#elControls_352254_menu)

[**Sjöröveren**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1062-sj%C3%B6r%C3%B6veren/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 457 posts
* Location:Minnesota, Land of 10,000 Lakes and 1 mini-ocean
* Interests:Re-enactment, gradually working my way back from the 19th Century. I figure I'm in about 1700 right now. I specialize in the history of medicine. I like maps, and the general history of geography and geodesy. <br />And in case you're wondering, "Sjöröveren" is Swedish for "the sea rover." And it's supposed to be spelled "Sjörövaren" but I guess it's too late for that!

([IP: 64.131.55.152](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=64.131.55.152)) · · 

[Posted April 15, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=findComment&comment=352259) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=reportComment&comment=352259)

 bbcddutchman said:

The cokers employed with the gun deck.

If they were on the gun deck, then they would almost have to be 'caulkers' wouldn't they? No top work being done on the gun deck, I think. Isn't the gun deck the first deck below the main deck?

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=editComment&comment=352259)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/#elControls_352259_menu)

[**Dutchman**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/6150-dutchman/)

* Has anyone seen my cousin?
* 
* 
* Admin
* 1,773 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:tidewater virginia

([IP: 165.176.50.253](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=165.176.50.253)) · · 

[Posted April 15, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=findComment&comment=352276) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=reportComment&comment=352276)

at this point i'm leaning towards the poor gramar as a caulker rather than coker. maybe the au was pronounced o and thats how he wrote it- as he heard it. anyhow, i'm as well trying to reason why a caulker would be in the rigging unless it was a general term of work for the day as in the caulkers were working on the deck then wormed and parceled the shrouds. . .. although, the first entry mentions paying the mast. you pay seams- as in the devil to pay- caulking the devil seam- but what is there to pay on the mast? after thinking about this---later entries refer to a dammaged mast after a bit of rough weather. maybe the mast had already sprung and they were sealing the checks to delay the inevitable? incidentaly- scraping the quarter deck is most likely removing the excess... ahem-"dried" tar from the deck after paying the seams.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=editComment&comment=352276)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/#elControls_352276_menu)

[**callenish gunner**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1944-callenish-gunner/)

* Scourge o' the 7 Seas
* 
* 
* Member
* 2,138 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Pennsylvania mountains north of Clarion
* Interests:The Callenish gunner has just hoved into view looking for safe anchorage in these waters... purveyor of bladed and flintlock weaponry also leather accessories ..........painter of portraits and period scenes by avocation I'm getting my armoury business underway and will be doing as many festivals as I can ...right now along the east coast or great lakes

([IP: 98.21.69.113](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=98.21.69.113)) · · 

[Posted April 21, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=findComment&comment=353200) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/14713-whats-a-coker/&do=reportComment&comment=353200)

**I must agree with you dutch since in the GOAP there was no standard spelling in a great deal of the english language it was spelled by in large phonetically;**

**"In the first half of the eighteenth century there was no rival in the English language to the dictionaries, such as the *Vocabulario degli Accademici della Crusca* and *Le dictionnaire de l'Academie Francaise*, produced by the continental academies. Some, such as Alexander Pope and Joseph Addison, had proposed such a work but none had undertaken it until Samuel Johnson started work on *A dictionary of the English language,* which was published in 1755.**

**Johnson was paid 1,500 guineas by a consortium of booksellers to produce the dictionary. The work was expected to take three years but eventually took nine. It finally appeared in 1755 in two large folio volumes and contained the definitions of over 40,000 words. Johnson's main innovation was that he included quotations to illustrate the meaning and usage of words. Johnson included 114,000 quotations from various sources. He did not restrict himself to quoting literary sources but also quoted extensively from scientific, medical, legal and theological works. It was also more comprehensive than previous dictionaries. For example, McAdam and Milne have pointed out that while Cockeram gave no definitions of "to take" and Bailey gave only eighteen, Johnson gave 134.**

**Johnson's dictionary is full of humour. His description of oats as a "grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people" is well known. He defines pension as an allowance made without equivalent, which in " England it is generally understood to mean pay given to a state hireling for treason to his country". He defines excise as a "hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the common judges of property, but wretches hired by those to whom excise is paid".**

**Occasionally he allows his personal views to colour the definitions of words. He obviously had Lord Chesterfield in mind when he defined a patron as "one who countenances, supports or protects. Commonly a wretch who supports with indolence, and is paid with flattery". Lord Chesterfield had refused Johnson any real financial aid while he was compiling the dictionary but when it neared completion hinted that he would like it dedicated to him. He gives us a glimpse of his personal views when he describes the sonnet as a form "not very suitable to the English language." Sometimes Johnson makes mistakes, as when he describes the word "pastern" as meaning as the knee of a horse when it is in fact the foot of a horse. This error was not corrected for eighteen years. "**

**So in most cases the spelling prior to this work and even later could vary due to the educational level and dialect of the writers of reports or documents**