

Jo Byrne. *Beyond Trawlertown: Memory, Life and Legacy in the Wake of the Cod Wars*. Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press, www.liverpooluniversitypress.co.uk, 2022. ix+248 pp., illustrations, maps, glossary, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. UK £90.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-80085-655-4.

In preparing to read this engaging book, one might order a serving of fish and chips wrapped in newspaper, sprinkled with malt vinegar and perhaps, a pint of British ale, while wearing a black mourning armband. *Beyond Trawlertown* (the city of Hull, UK) principally centres on the years after 1976, the end of the last Cod War, but casts a much broader timeline. The early chapters offer a glimpse of the fishing industry in the 1950s and 60s that provides a baseline for understanding the subsequent changes. The emergence of the freezer fleet in the late 1960s technologically disrupted established patterns in the trawling industry portending the crisis to come. It became a fleet with dual personalities and two cultural rhythms nodding to the past as it reconfigured for the future contraction and decline of the industry and the town immediately after the Cod Wars era.

Beyond Trawlertown broadly focuses on an unforgiving, dangerous occupation, a seacoast town, technological advances in an industry, and the effect on men from several nations who competed for a rapidly dwindling resource. Of the twentieth century wars, the so-called Cod Wars may have had the lowest world profile, while portending the future without the shedding of blood. (There was only one confirmed fatality during the conflict: an Icelandic engineer accidentally killed while he was repairing damage to his Icelandic Coast Guard boat after a collision with a British naval frigate.)

Jo Byrne's work is a multifaceted textbook of the history and politics of the UK fishing industry, a philosophical essay, and a warning to other prominent fishing ports around the world.

Trawler fishing as first described was a labour-intensive occupation. In this enterprise, a cone shaped net is towed across the bottom of the seabed channeling fish into its point or cone. The trawl-net, usually full of catch, is then lifted onboard. The working vessels had relatively small crews that voyaged for a 21-day trip, usually to the northeastern Atlantic. This routine produced a local work-life-rhythm shaped by life at sea, but by also the surrounding district that supported the fishermen and their families. The homelife of the trawlermen was compressed into three days of both relative frenzy and celebration before the fishermen resumed what seemed like their perpetual hunt for cod. In time, the fish became depleted on the nearby grounds and it became necessary to go a great deal further afield to get an adequate catch. Larger boats and, consequently, larger crews were needed to get to where the

fish were and then to process them at sea rather than land a “wet iced catch.” This led to much larger vessels known as freezer trawlers with crews that could process and freeze the catch into solid blocks. It meant that the men, and now a growing number of women, were away from shore for three or more months. In fact, rather than returning to port, the freezer trawlers offloaded some of their frozen catch onto smaller boats that could quickly take them to shore, thus allowing the mothership to continue to scour the ocean’s bottom for increasingly scarce pelagic fish.

Overfishing was a result of heavy trawling, a fishing method that consequentially decimated potential breeding stock. Politicians, policymakers, scientists, and fishing communities struggled in a seemingly irresolvable dispute over the bounty of the sea. A heated discourse among diverse international social, economic, and environmental interests sought to both secure and preserve the industry and food source in the post-Second World War North Atlantic. Environmentalists became increasingly persistent, calling for changing territorial waters expressed in vital language that could no longer be ignored.

As the northeastern European fishermen competed to harvest the same bounty upon the same grounds, national territorial claims of coastal waters became hotly disputed. In 1952, the three-mile territorial limit became four miles. Iceland insisted upon a twelve-mile limit in 1956 as British trawlers increasingly encroached upon their waters. When “diplomatic, negotiations faltered, the British trawler fleet continued to fish in the disputed waters in ‘boxes’, protected from the Icelandic Coast Guard by the Royal Navy. Once under way, the first Cod War was [largely] a war of harassment, rammings and collisions between gun boats and trawlers” (61). The 1976 Oslo Agreement established a 200-mile limit that is the present law foreshadowing the demise of trawletown’s livelihood and ultimate character.

Byrne coined a portmanteau word “taskscape” that related supporting businesses to the demise of the fishing industry. These were the “bobbbers “or “lumpers” who unloaded the catch, the fish cutters and packers, the net menders, the shipyard workers, the fuelers, the local publicans, and even the pawnbrokers. The nature of an entire town and its support system changed at many levels.

Hull’s seaport had housed of a complex industry but the desire for remembrance was firmly rooted. The merger of place and memory of its society is fundamental to the recollection of events, and encounters are largely inseparable from the place in which they occurred. As humans, we possess quasi-memory banks that recall landscapes or townscapes, evocative terrain that connect with the past. The demise of the fishing town was one of disrupted belonging, feelings of disinheritance, community dissonance, and

action against perceived acts of forgetting. Ultimately, it started a voyage of reclaiming its identity and underwent a fundamental revision.

Much of the remainder of the book focuses on the disintegration and transformation of both the place and the industry that had inhabited the landscape: a narrative channeled through the experience of a single trawler port, compiled from individual and collective memory, framed by documentary research, and expressed through the understanding of an historian. Byrne's vision of its past and its evolution as part museum-part working seaport represents Hull's new beginning.

Beyond Trawlertown is a thought-provoking book in which Jo Byrne provides his readers with an abundance of 860 scholarly footnotes within a relatively slim volume. As a native of Gloucester, Massachusetts, this reviewer personally related to the story, but this theme has similarly played out in other fishing towns in North America such as St. John's, Lunenburg, New Bedford, and Monterey. This is a unique, well-written contribution to maritime literature and highly recommended to anyone interested in this important, still evolving topic.

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Neil P. Chatelain. *Defending the Arteries of Rebellion. Confederate Naval Operations in the Mississippi River Valley, 1861-1865.* El Dorado Hills, CA: Savas Beatie, www.savasbeatie.com, 2022. 336 pp., illustrations, glossary, notes, bibliography, index. US \$24.95, paper: ISBN 978-1-61121-603-5. (E-book available.)

Both sides of the Civil War recognized early on that control of the Southern waterways was essential. Loss of these routes in the Mississippi River Valley would efficiently bisect the rebel states and severely restrict Confederate movement of men, equipment, and supplies. Accounts of Union strategy and its action to strangle and dominate these lifelines are abundant, while analyses of goals, means, and activities from the Southern perspective are relatively scarce. Chatelain tackles this underrepresented topic by examining several Confederate naval activities on the Mississippi River and some of its associated tributaries.

In response to the Union's blockading action, a major objective of the South was to build a countering naval force. The Confederacy's plan, broadly speaking, was to make use of a relatively smaller number of ironclads to counter the larger number of wooden ships that the Union had at its disposal. The South's need to create a scratch-built navy was immediately confronted by