

# The Fascinating History Of Commercial Fishing: From Ancient Times to One of the Most Dangerous Jobs in History

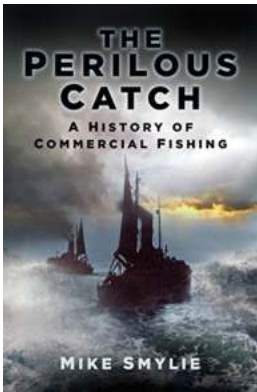


Commercial fishing is a profession that has deeply shaped the course of human history. Dating back to ancient times, this occupation has provided communities with sustenance, wealth, and adventure. Over the years, however, it has also become known as one of the most dangerous jobs, taking countless lives in treacherous seas. In this article, we will delve into the rich history of commercial fishing, exploring its evolution, significance, and the risks associated with it.

## **Ancient Origins**

The roots of commercial fishing can be traced back to ancient civilizations around the world. From early forms of hand gathering and shore fishing, communities began exploring and exploiting their local waterways for sustenance. The use of

various tools such as nets, traps, and spears slowly emerged, allowing humans to harvest larger quantities of fish and expand their fishing capabilities.



## Perilous Catch: The History of Commercial Fishing (History's Most Dangerous Jobs)

by Mike Smylie (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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The development of seagoing vessels marked a pivotal turning point in the history of commercial fishing. Ancient civilizations such as the Egyptians, Phoenicians, and Greeks began using boats to venture further into the sea, enabling them to access more abundant fishing grounds. These early mariners recognized the immense value of the sea and its bountiful treasures, laying the foundation for a flourishing fishing industry.

### The Medieval Era and Beyond

During the Middle Ages, the demand for fish increased due to the growth of coastal towns and the rise of monasticism. Monastic orders, particularly those following a strict rule of abstinence, heavily relied on fish as a primary source of

sustenance. This surge in demand led to the establishment of fish markets, with fishmongers playing a crucial role in facilitating trade and distribution.

As explorations and trade expanded in the Renaissance and Age of Discovery, commercial fishing became an international affair. European nations sailed to foreign shores, discovering new species of fish and establishing lucrative fishing colonies. Cod fishing in the North Atlantic, for example, became a major industry, driving the economy in countries like Portugal, Spain, and England.

## **The Industrial Revolution and Modern Fishing Practices**

The Industrial Revolution in the 18th century brought significant advancements to the fishing industry. Seafaring vessels became larger, faster, and more efficient, equipped with steam-powered engines that could sail longer distances. Improved fishing techniques, such as trawling and longlining, allowed fishermen to catch massive quantities of fish in a single expedition.

As modern technologies continued to evolve, commercial fishing moved towards mechanization. Fish finders, sonar devices, and GPS navigation systems revolutionized the way fishermen locate and catch fish. However, with increased efficiency and larger fishing fleets came a significant environmental toll.

Overfishing, the destruction of marine habitats, and bycatch became pressing concerns, prompting calls for sustainable and responsible fishing practices.

## **The Perilous Nature of Commercial Fishing**

While commercial fishing has played a pivotal role in shaping human civilization, it has also gained a reputation as one of the most dangerous professions in the world. The harsh conditions, unpredictable weather, and physically demanding work make it an incredibly perilous job.

Fishing vessels are exposed to extreme weather conditions, including violent storms and powerful waves, which can endanger the lives of fishermen. The heavy machinery and equipment onboard present their own set of risks, with accidents such as entanglement, falls, and deck injuries posing constant threats.

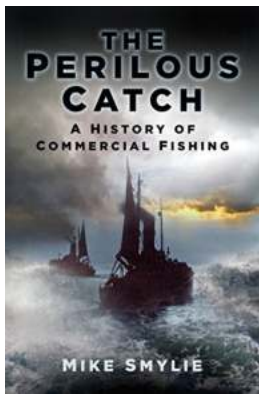
Moreover, the remote locations where commercial fishing often occurs can make rescue efforts challenging and time-consuming. Despite advances in safety regulations and technology, tragedies at sea continue to claim the lives of fishermen. It remains a sobering reminder of the sacrifices made to provide the world with an abundance of fish.

## **The Future of Commercial Fishing: Sustainability and Conservation**

As the world faces the consequences of overfishing and environmental degradation, the future of commercial fishing hangs in the balance. Efforts are being made to promote sustainable fishing practices, preserve marine ecosystems, and protect endangered species.

New technologies offer hope for a more responsible fishing industry. Innovations like underwater drones, which accurately monitor fish populations, and more precise gear designs that reduce bycatch demonstrate the industry's commitment to change.

The history of commercial fishing reflects our intricate relationship with the sea. From ancient civilizations to modern societies, this perilous profession has shaped cultures, economies, and even culinary traditions. As we navigate the challenges of the present and future, it is imperative that we remember the sacrifices and dangers faced by those who venture into the world's oceans in pursuit of the catch. By embracing sustainable practices, we can ensure that the legacy of commercial fishing continues for generations to come.



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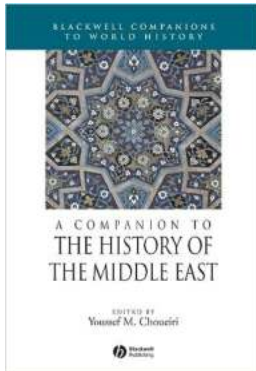
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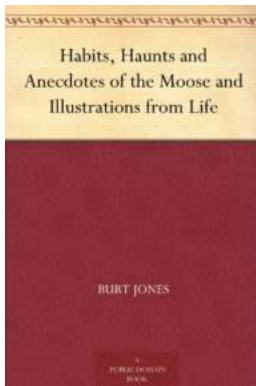


This is the story of Britain's commercial fishermen, who have sailed out into the ravages of the surrounding seas to bring back the fish to feed their country for centuries. Theirs is one of history's most dangerous jobs, and whole communities have been affected by disasters from which a number of the town's men may not have returned: in 1872 some 129 fishermen were lost in one night alone. Loss of life in the industry was caused by a number of factors: extreme weather conditions, lack of emergency support, and, perhaps most crucially, most couldn't swim. Today commercial fishing is still one of the most perilous occupations in the country, claiming the lives of the fishermen and consuming those of the families left behind. Thus it is clear how poignant this history is to the occupation.



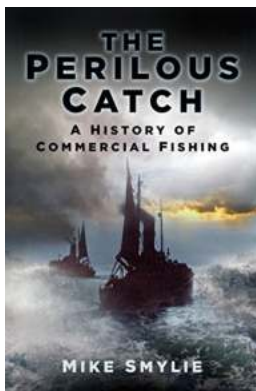
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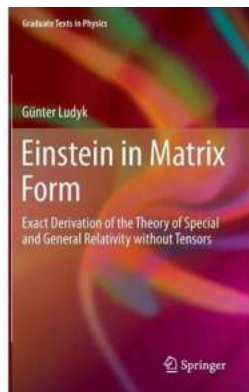
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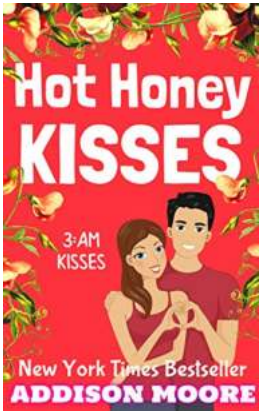
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