Far from being solely fought on the fields of France, The Hundred Years’ War had a big impact on England, and especially on the maritime population of the realm. Anthony Saul’s seminal study of Great Yarmouth’s experience during the fourteenth-century phase of the war was published in this journal over thirty-five years ago, and deftly highlighted the effects of the conflict upon this port.[[1]](#footnote-1) Firmly embedding his research in the Postan-Mcfarlane debate concerning the cost-benefit ratio of the war, Saul took up this theme for Great Yarmouth.[[2]](#footnote-2) In so doing, he compelling argued that the war had a pernicious effect upon the town, draining its wealth and shattering its merchant marine but, while some ports undoubtedly suffered, others had a more varied experience. The following article intends to study the fortunes of the Cornish port of Fowey during this part of the war, with the aim of refining our understanding of the impact of the conflict upon the kingdom.

At this time Fowey consisted of a tangle of streets, warehouses, and wharves, stretching for a quarter of a mile along the waterfront, and was home to around 800 souls. This comparatively small settlement was reckoned to have movable wealth of just £34 3*s*. 4*d*. in 1334 and only enjoyed a modest form of burghal autonomy, for the Benedictine Prior of Tywardreath – some three miles from Fowey – exercised lordship over the borough, running the town through his manor court, albeit with a light touch.[[3]](#footnote-3) Evidently Fowey was different from the realm’s leading ports, with their jealously guarded franchises and precocious civic authorities. Yet while small, Fowey possessed developed infrastructures for shipping and a considerable merchant marine, over three times the size of its nearest Cornish competitor.[[4]](#footnote-4) Its vessels traded far and wide for Fowey merchants handled a multitude of commodities, exporting tin and fish, for example, and importing salt and wine. This deepwater port was also located on major sea-lanes to Aquitaine, Iberia, and beyond, and was therefore an important safe-haven and transhipment station, resulting in vessels from Genoa to Grimsby crowding its quays. Fowey’s wealth was founded upon the sea, and, as the king possessed no significant permanent navy in the fourteenth century, its noteworthy merchant marine was regularly called upon for English fleets. Kings formed fleets in a number of ways, but the ancient right of impressment yielded by far the most vessels. This was a complex process, but in its simplest form involved the ‘despatch of royal agents, commonly sergeants-at-arms, from port to port with the power to arrest vessels and crews’ for royal flotillas.[[5]](#footnote-5) Fowey was a constant fixture on the itineraries of these officials, making a contribution incommensurate to its modest size.

The naval aspects of the Hundred Years’ War have historically not received the attention they merit, however. Contemporary chroniclers did not consider fighting at sea a noble activity, blinding them and later historians to the naval aspects of the conflict.[[6]](#footnote-6) Yet fleets played an essential role in the course of hostilities.[[7]](#footnote-7) Efforts by Sherborne and Richmond to redress this state of affairs have more recently been bolstered by Kowalweski’s work studying the cost-benefit ratio of the war on the realm’s maritime population, and Lambert’s exceptional study of naval logistics.[[8]](#footnote-8) Rodger’s seminal study of the navy in this period has likewise proved a powerful corrective, and has been supplemented by Cushway’s work on Edward III’s navy, but both focus on the war at sea, paying little attention to the realm’s home guard.[[9]](#footnote-9) This too was fundamental to the conflict as England did not invariably ‘command’ the sea. Technological limitations meant that effective blockades were hard to establish; instead, Richmond convincingly argues that there were ‘zones of control’, with any squadron having ‘a measure of local control for the limited time and limited area of its operation’.[[10]](#footnote-10) English and French naval fortunes therefore ebbed and flowed, often leaving the localities on the frontline.[[11]](#footnote-11) Defence and royal fleets only represented part of the war at sea, however, as both the English and French crowns turned a blind-eye to private naval warfare: this activity represented an extension of the war effort. Kingsford, Ford, Gardner, and Rodger, have all devoted considerable attention to ‘piracy’, but although the English Channel has been firmly established as a lawless watery frontier, the debate over the extent to which it formed part of government policy still continues.[[12]](#footnote-12)

Evidently the war at sea has been subjected to increasing study, and this assessment holds true for the realm’s maritime character as a whole, with Friel, Rose, and many others, producing detailed studies.[[13]](#footnote-13) With the British Isles enveloped by sea, and water the chief medium of large-scale transport, the importance of the realm’s maritime character cannot be overstated. Moreover, the experiences of a number of English ports during The Hundred Years’ War – including Bristol, York, the Cinque Ports, Great Yarmouth, and Southampton – have been ‘put under the microscope’, while Kowaleski has studied the maritime communities of Cornwall and Devon.[[14]](#footnote-14) In fact, Fowey is deserving of special attention, for Edward III thoroughly appreciated its maritime prowess:

‘To fortefye anone he dyd devyse

Of Englysshe townes iij., that is to seye

Derthmouth, Plymmouth, the thyrde it is Foweye’.[[15]](#footnote-15)

The following seeks to unearth more concerning Edward III’s maritime policies in the far south-west, and is divided into three parts. The first will consider the way in which he formed his fleets through impressment. The chief documentation for which survives in *The National Archives*, for the exchequer paid wages to mariners temporarily recruited into the king’s service.[[16]](#footnote-16) These lists – studied directly and through Ayton and Lambert’s open access database – will be used to analyse the number of ships Fowey provided for the crown between 1337 and 1399.[[17]](#footnote-17) The second section of this article will consider the defensive strategies employed to defend the port, for during the conflict there was near constant fear of raids and invasion. Finally, the way in which Edward III extended the conflict through the agency of ‘pirates’ will be explored. Fowey will thus be used as a case study from which broader conclusions regarding the influence of The Hundred Years’ War upon the realm’s maritime population will be drawn. In short, the war profoundly affected England’s ports but the results of these pressures were in no way uniform, for although the conflict played a major role in Great Yarmouth’s decline, the fourteenth century was a time of prosperity for Fowey.

I

‘The Gallaunts of Fawey’, as Leland christened Fowey’s shipmen, made a truly remarkable contribution to the war at sea.[[18]](#footnote-18) Between 1337 and 1399 there were 205 cases of Fowey’s vessels being impressed by the crown, crewed by some 3,316 mariners, although lists of mariners are not complete: table 1. This, however, does not mean that there were 205 separate ships nor 3,316 separate men, for numerous vessels and mariners were impressed on multiple occasions – Lambert cautions against ‘double counting’[[19]](#footnote-19) – and it seems likely that with Fowey’s population numbering just 800 souls, many of these men were drawn from around the Cornish coast. Even so, this number of ‘ship voyages’ does serve to illustrate the scale of the town’s naval contribution.

Table 1: Fowey-Ships in Royal Service, 1337-1399

1337-1340 6

1340-1345 16

1345-1350 48

1350-1355 12

1355-1360 9

1360-1365 10

1365-1370 13

1370-1375 13

1375-1380 42

1380-1385 5

1385-1390 10

1390-1395 5

1395-1399 16

Total 205

Sources:

**1337-1340**, *The Wardrobe Book of William de Norwell, 12 July 1338 to 27 May 1340*, ed. M. Lyon, B. Lyon and H.S. Lucas, with the collaboration of Jean de Sturler (Brussels, 1963), p. 369; **1340-1345**, *Calendar of Close Rolls* *1343-1346* [Hereafter *CCR*],128-129, 131, The National Archives of the UK [Hereafter TNA], E101/25/9; Hewitt*, Organisation of War*, p. 138; **1345-1350**, Rodger, *Safeguard*, p. 497; **1350-1355**, TNA, E101/36/20 m. 6; **1355-1360**, TNA, E101/27/10, TNA, E101/27/19, *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous* *1348-1377* [Hereafter *CIM*], 150-151; **1360-1365**, TNA, E 101/28/24 mm. 4, 6; TNA, E101/29/1 mm. 3, 6; **1365-1370** TNA, E101/30/36; TNA, E101/30/29 mm. 2, 4; **1370-1375**, TNA, E101/31/23 mm. 2, 3, TNA, E101/32/22; E101/676/32 m. 4; Ayton and Lambert, *Mariners and Ports*; **1375-1380**, E101/36/14 m. 7; E101/36/15 m. 2; and E101/36/20 m. 6, E101/35/20; Ayton and Lambert, *Mariners and Port;* TNA, E101/37/25 m. 3; E101/38/19 m. 2; E101/39/1; E101/38/30 mm. 2, 3; E101/42/21 mm. 2, 4, 5; Ayton and Lambert, *Mariners and Ports*; **1380-1385**, TNA, E101/39/17 m. 4; Ayton and Lambert, *Mariners and Ports*; **1385-1390**, TNA, E101/40/19 mm. 4, 6, 8, TNA, E101/40/40 m. 2; E101/40/36; **1390-1395**, TNA, E101/41/27 m. 12; Ayton and Lambert, *Mariners and Ports*; **1395-1399**, TNA, E101/42/8 mm. 3, 4, TNA, E101/42/5 nos. 14, 19, 22, 28, 29, 34, 43, 51, 56, 87, Ayton and Lambert, *Mariners and Ports*.

N.B. The date of TNA, E101/36/20 is lost, but the ships this document records as transporting the Black Prince to Gascony are not the same as the vessels impressed in 1362-1363, suggesting that this list relates to the Poitiers Campaign; A. Saul thought that this list was concerned with the 1355 expedition, ‘Yarmouth’ 109, but Lambert does not use this account, Lambert, *Shipping*, pp. 152-153.

Indeed, from 1337 to 1360 Edward III’s bellicose ambitions placed very considerable demands upon the realm’s shipping. Fowey in no way stood aloof from this pressure and vessels from the town were impressed on some ninety-one occasions. Fowey’s shipmen were almost certainly present at Sluys, for instance, and, in 1346, when Edward III crossed the Channel on what would become the Crécy-Calais campaign, some forty-seven vessels from our port served in the king’s transport fleet.[[20]](#footnote-20) These figures, preserved in the sixteenth century Calais Roll, place Fowey’s contribution above all other English ports, but the crown sometimes grouped ports together for the purposes of financing naval levies, meaning that ships which were based in Fowey’s vicinity may have been recorded as coming from the port when in fact they did not.[[21]](#footnote-21) There is a particular danger of this for Fowey, with Polruan, Lostwithiel, and a host of creeks, included in the seigniorial prerogative that was Fowey-Water, but there is no reason to doubt that our port made a substantial contribution.[[22]](#footnote-22) Great Yarmouth, moreover, provided forty-three vessels and 1,950 sailors, in contrast to the 770 sailors who manned Fowey’s flotilla, suggesting that Fowey’s ships were of more modest tonnage; the town was not as ascendant as it first appears.[[23]](#footnote-23)

Nevertheless, war weighed heavily on Fowey’s shipmasters for impressment was ‘in effect’ an extra tax imposed upon the maritime population.[[24]](#footnote-24) As a result, Fowey’s shipmen did not always willingly lend their support to the king. In 1342 nine vessels from Fowey transported Edward III to Brittany, but these ships were subject to subsequent arrest having departed contrary to the king’s prohibition.[[25]](#footnote-25) The evident strain imposed on English mariners prompted Edward to call representatives from England’s port towns ‘to inform the king... upon the state of the shipping of the realm’. In 1344, for instance, John Trevenour, a lawyer from Fowey who also served the duchy and had shipping interests, represented Fowey-Water.[[26]](#footnote-26) These councils enhanced Fowey’s voice and that of the whole maritime population; in 1340 this resulted in the king levying a tax to support ships safeguarding the sea and would eventually lead to partial compensation for shipmasters – ‘tuntyght’, which was paid at 2*s.* per tun – but before 1380 expenses were met solely by mariners.[[27]](#footnote-27)

The shifting focus of the war greatly influenced the number of vessels required, however. Fowey was conveniently positioned for campaigns to Brittany and Aquitaine, so was well represented on expeditions to those locations, but the port was less well placed for expeditions to Northern-Eastern France and the Low Counties. Fowey’s involvement, or lack of, in the Rheims Campaign deftly makes this point, for the king relied upon the Northern Admiralty for the transport of his forces on this occasion.[[28]](#footnote-28) Yet at the same time the seneschal of Gascony employed a flotilla of nine ships for his transport needs, two of which were from Fowey.[[29]](#footnote-29) Nonetheless, in 1360 the treaty of Brétigny brought the Edwardian War to a close.

In 1369, however, hostilities resumed in earnest. Between 1369 and 1389 Fowey again served the crown well, with vessels from the port impressed on some eighty-three occasions. A fleeting glance suggests that there was a slightly lesser demand for shipping than in 1337-1360, during which time ninety-one ships were arrested, but forty-seven of these served in just one expedition. In fact, the 1370s and 1380s saw the character of the war change, with ‘cruising war fleets’ regularly employed to discourage French activity. In 1370, for example, the English government impressed some thirteen ships from Fowey crewed by 249 men to conduct ‘sweeps’ of the Channel, but these proved ruinously expensive and futile, as there were no French invasion plans and most of the twenty-seven prizes captured were neutral vessels.[[30]](#footnote-30) Strikingly, ships from the town were arrested on three occasions during this year.[[31]](#footnote-31) The 1369-1389 war was a war of attrition, fought at sea in a way that the Edwardian conflict never had been; this placed large and sustained demands upon Fowey’s shipping, in contrast to the more episodic transport fleets assembled in 1337-1360.

Fowey suffered badly in a raid of 1378, but, despite this, some seven ships and 285 men from the port were present in the king’s fleets in 1387-1389.[[32]](#footnote-32) The 1387 expedition resulted in the capture of seventy prizes laden with 19,000 tuns of wine, reminding us that spoils were to be made from war, with the estimated £16,000 worth of plunder split four ways between the king, the Earl of Arundel, the soldiers, and the shipmen involved. [[33]](#footnote-33) Even so, the conflict placed a heavy burden on Fowey, for ‘the Edwardian war was intermittent; the Caroline War (1369-89) was unremitting’.[[34]](#footnote-34) Indeed, the conflict was fought on an ever-growing arena, and Fowey was excellently positioned for ‘the way of Spain’.[[35]](#footnote-35) Strikingly, ships from the western-ports accounted for a greater proportion of the king’s fleets after 1370, suggesting that the importance of our town’s vessels to the crown only grew, but Richard’s quest for peace ended French activity from 1389.[[36]](#footnote-36)

A port such as Fowey assisted in many smaller operations as well. In 1372, for instance, the French king forced John IV, Duke of Brittany, to flee his duchy, but, in 1378, Charles annexed Brittany, offending the Bretons, who promptly invited John back. The *Rod Cog* of Fowey therefore transported the exiled John back to his duchy.[[37]](#footnote-37) In fact, the port served as an essential base for transporting men and supplies, and was instrumental in maintaining the English fortresses at Brest and Bordeaux.[[38]](#footnote-38) The Black Prince also made regular use of the town’s shipping. In 1352 he ordered Sir Walter de Bentele and his company to take ship from Fowey to Brittany, and a series of retinues embarked from Fowey in the 1360s.[[39]](#footnote-39) Likewise, on the return from Gascony of four ships, including the *Seint Sauveourscog* of Fowey, the prince instructed the havener – the chief duchy administrator of Cornish ports – to take less tax ‘as a gift from the prince’.[[40]](#footnote-40) Fowey’s ships also transported numerous envoys, for the port was a significant entry point to the realm; in 1371 John of Gaunt sailed from La Rochelle and landed at Fowey, accompanied by two Castilian princesses, as well as leading English captains and Gascon noblemen.[[41]](#footnote-41) Yet these cases resulted in material reward for the shipmen involved as their vessels were hired, not impressed.

Even so, Fowey’s impressment figures of 205 vessels and 3,316 mariners are made all the more extraordinary when set against the shipping totals from other ports. Liddy found that Bristol and York contributed 196 and 62 vessels respectively between 1350 and 1400, while Kowaleski has demonstrated that between 1324 and 1402 Plymouth and Dartmouth supplied ships to the Crown on 137 and 213 occasions.[[42]](#footnote-42) The different parameters of these studies limit the depth of comparison, however. Instead, by using Ayton’s and Lambert’s exceptional database some comparative figures can be produced for the years 1363, 1370, 1377-1378, 1381, 1387, 1388, and 1399: table 2. Of course a far broader survey would be required to assess all shipping and shipmasters, but even so, Fowey emerges as a port of national significance. The town’s role as a supplier of ships consistently exceeded Winchelsea and Southampton, and sometimes exceeded Bristol and Great Yarmouth, although at other times it was surpassed by both. Dartmouth, however, always provided more ships to the crown, save in 1399, but Dartmouth contributed more vessels to the king’s fleets than any other port in the kingdom.[[43]](#footnote-43) Fowey’s contribution was therefore extraordinary, but two caveats must be considered. Firstly, the smaller average tonnage of Fowey’s vessels, and secondly, as discussed above, there is the perennial and particular danger that ships which were based in the town’s locale were recorded as hailing from the port for ease of accounting. Both render Fowey’s shipping contributions more modest, but the point stands that Fowey bore a disproportionate burden, for in 1334 the port was only reckoned to have moveable wealth of just over £34, whereas Dartmouth was assessed at £185, Southampton at over £510, Great Yarmouth at £1,000, and Bristol at £2,200.[[44]](#footnote-44) Paradoxically, Fowey’s modest size may have made the port more susceptible to royal impressment as the town lacked the political and financial capital to effectively lobby the king, reducing the crown’s shipping demands; indeed, Fowey was not even enfranchised. The port was therefore much called upon.

Table 2: The Shipping Contributions of English Ports to Royal Expeditions, 1363-1399

For each, number of ships and average tonnage

Year Fowey Bristol Dartmouth Southampton Great Yarmouth Winchelsea

1363 5 92 1 140 17 129 - - 4 118 1 180

1370 13 65 8 136 18 117 11 96 28 88 3 120

1372 7 97 4 123 6 93 - - - - 1 -

1377-8 12 55 13 124 27 88 12 93 5 152 - -

1381 5 60 8 140 11 133 5 49 - - - -

1387 1 240 2 260 4 148 - - 1 200 1 -

1388 6 140 2 200 14 128 2 300 - - 2 175

1399 10 - 21 - 2 - - - - - - -

Source: Ayton and Lambert, *Mariners and Ports.* The tunnage of each vessel is not always recorded, so the averages produced are a guide rather than a strict rule.

These documents also reveal something of the character of the shipping sailing from Fowey, for although vessels of very considerable tunnage hailed from the port – in 1388 the government impressed six vessels with a portage over 100 tuns[[45]](#footnote-45) – a large fleet of smaller ships were also based in Fowey, and these too served in royal flotillas. This shipping prolife further explains the town’s sustained contribution to the war, for larger ships were more difficult to replace, so the crown also relied upon Fowey’s smaller vessels. Moreover, unlike the Cinque Ports and Great Yarmouth where the number of ships supplied to the government dropped dramatically after 1370, Fowey’s contribution remained robust, securing and augmenting the town’s position as one of the realm’s more significant ports.[[46]](#footnote-46)

During the war the town certainly incurred costs, with ships lost to enemy action, long periods of arrest, and no standardised compensation until 1380.[[47]](#footnote-47) Yet impressment was not as burdensome as it first appears, for of the 117 shipmen named in these lists, Thomas Johan and Thomas Roland served the king on six and five occasions respectively, three shipmen appear four times, nine three times, twenty twice, and eighty-two only once. Evidently the majority of those impressed were under royal command on just one occasion. Further, not all Fowey’s shipmen served the crown, for although Nicholas, Richard, Thomas, and William Cook were impressed at various times, John and Geoffrey Cook never formally assisted the king, although they traded and readily engaged in ‘piracy’.[[48]](#footnote-48)

In point of fact, the port also reaped benefits from the conflict, with Fowey’s shipmen regularly remunerated by the Black Prince, rich prizes seized during expeditions, and hard cash paid to the town’s mariners in the form of wages, over £330 in 1371-1372 alone.[[49]](#footnote-49) Of course the question arising from this is who precisely benefited from the profits of war. Crewmen received daily wages, but the way in which compensation and profits were divided between ship-owners and shipmasters (those in command of the vessel) remains unclear, as, indeed, does the degree to which the two groups overlapped in Fowey. Nonetheless, the share-system of ship ownership bound the townsmen together – as well as to men throughout Fowey-Water.

More significantly, the port’s sustained contribution to the king’s fleets suggests that the war at sea did not render the town’s economy moribund, for throughout the conflict Fowey remained wealthy enough to maintain a noteworthy merchant marine. Indeed, Kowaleski has argued that the town’s trading profile remained substantial across the century and into the next, while Fowey’s burgeoning reputation as a nest of freebooters strongly suggests that the years 1337-1399 were prosperous ones.[[50]](#footnote-50)

II

Although Oppenheim has dismissed Cornwall, and by extension Fowey, as too distant ‘from any vital centre’ to have been invaded, the county’s strategic value was far greater than he suggests, for the peninsula functioned as a pivotal point for major sea-routes and from its harbours – of which Fowey was one of the best – the French could have harried English shipping and trade, threatening contact with Gascony.[[51]](#footnote-51) The county could also have been used as a springboard to strike at a range of targets, including Bristol, Wales, and Ireland. Moreover, any loss of prestige occasioned by its occupation would have undermined the king’s legitimacy: comparable strategic ideas underpinned England’s enduring interest in Brittany.[[52]](#footnote-52) Contemporaries were undoubtedly conscious that Cornwall was a place ‘where a fleet of ships could easily touch and perils thereby arise’.[[53]](#footnote-53) Indeed, the very premise of raids was to destroy shipping, and Fowey’s fleet was substantial, making the town a worthy target.[[54]](#footnote-54) Thus the peninsula’s defence was of pressing concern, but the government’s resources were overstretched, leaving Fowey vulnerable.

The period 1338-1340 saw admirals Nicholas Béhuchet and Hugh Quiéret command French squadrons which raided numerous English ports, including Southampton and Plymouth.[[55]](#footnote-55) England’s defensive mechanisms were rooted in the Anglo-Saxon period, but growing fear of French activity prompted the government to guard its coastline more vigorously.[[56]](#footnote-56) To counter this threat, early warning was essential and the king issued instructions in 1338 that beacons be maintained across England, while all nations employed spies and scout-ships.[[57]](#footnote-57) The crown relied on the obligation of every male between sixteen and sixty to provide military service for the protection of his homeland, and placed the maritime land of the realm – an amorphous ‘belt of land running parallel to the coast’, which oscillated between six and twelve leagues deep – under the command ‘keepers of the maritime land.’[[58]](#footnote-58) In July 1338 the knights Philip de Columbariis and Hugh de Courtenay held this position and were in command of defensive forces mobilised by arrayers in Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset.[[59]](#footnote-59) Until 1370, this bilateral system remained in place, with keepers in overall command but arrayers raising troops and holding them in readiness.[[60]](#footnote-60) Both sets of commanders were exhorted to be vigilant, rapidly bringing their forces to bear on any landing parties.

Despite these measures, Fowey’s fishermen and ships suffered harassment in 1338-1339, when the town was raided, although on a minor scale.[[61]](#footnote-61) In 1338, Bishop Grandisson permitted the monks of Tywardreath to retreat temporarily to a more secure location partly because of attacks *piratum*, suggesting that it was freebooters, rather than a more organised force who had raided the town in this year.[[62]](#footnote-62) This contrasts with much of the south coast, but especially Southampton, where the French hammer-blow fell hardest.[[63]](#footnote-63) Nevertheless, events in Fowey were worrying enough, and prompted two unique commissions in 1339: the first to defend all towns between Saltash and Fowey, and the second between Fowey, Mousehole, and St Buryan.[[64]](#footnote-64) Yet the striking failure of this *Garde de la Mer* was the sub-standard nature of Fowey’s fortifications, for the town was only walled on the ‘se coast’, if there.[[65]](#footnote-65) Resources were overstretched, and the existing fortifications at Restormel Castle were too distant to be of use. Undoubtedly the war was destructive, but although Fowey’s defences were still inadequate, the level of threat declined with the passing of 1340 and would not reach a comparable level until 1360.[[66]](#footnote-66)

Nevertheless, when Edward III planned the invasion of France in 1355 the government employed the same techniques, for there was near constant fear of raids and invasion. Fowey’s bailiffs played an increasingly prominent role in defence and were to make ready the town’s defences ‘as far as possible’.[[67]](#footnote-67) Ships were only permitted to sail if they were properly armed, those in harbour were kept as close to land as possible, and convoys were organised – measures designed to deny the French easy prizes.[[68]](#footnote-68) Such instructions were issued in part as they enabled the king to control the ingress and egress of people and information from his realm, but also because trade protection became more pressing as the war progressed.[[69]](#footnote-69) Fowey was a gateway worth guarding, both for its inherent value, but also because it formed a key component of a national defensive network. The government issued further instructions concerning Fowey’s defence in 1360, when the French threatened invasion and, indeed, razed Winchelsea; but, later in the same year the treaty of Brétigny ushered in a truce which lasted until 1369.

During the 1370s, however, coastal attacks occurred with far greater frequency and ferocity, for the war was increasingly fought at sea.[[70]](#footnote-70) By 1369 the keepers and arrayers had become interchangeable and by 1375 arrayers were responsible for not only mobilising men, but also commanding them.[[71]](#footnote-71) Despite these reforms, as evident from this barrage of orders, defence was still far from comprehensive.[[72]](#footnote-72) Nevertheless, the challenges were serious, in particular the need to prevent the depopulation of maritime lands, since fear of raids often prompted a mass exodus from such areas, reducing manpower and crippling defence.[[73]](#footnote-73) If the townsmen were to remain in Fowey to garrison the port, moreover, it was necessary to stop victuals being carried-off. To this end, the government forbade the removal of food and weapons from the town.[[74]](#footnote-74) But such measures were hampered by administrative confusion and, most seriously, the neglect of duty. Yet the inhabitants of Fowey – and indeed all England’s maritime population – had cause to complain because of time wasted in defence and damage to ships. More significantly, there was profound discontent over the security of the Channel, especially in the 1370s and 1380s, for the inhabitants of the south coast lived in constant fear of raids. Coastal areas were ravaged by French and Spanish flotillas, with Melcombe, for example, never to recover from the obscurity thrust upon it by these events.[[75]](#footnote-75) In 1379 it was even alleged in the King’s Bench that seven years earlier the Cornish knight Richard Sergeaux had conspired with the King of Spain to launch an assault upon Fowey, and although Sergeaux established his innocence, contemporary paranoia about maritime security was palpable.[[76]](#footnote-76) This terror prompted many to be less than diligent in the execution of their obligations, a problem compounded by ‘piracy’ providing the men of Fowey with a vested interest in being at sea seizing prizes, rather than remaining in port. And improperly fortified, Fowey was vulnerable.

This was starkly demonstrated in 1378 when the French were ‘freely burning’ Fowey. Even Walsingham, based in distant St Albans, had heard of the scale of the damage caused by this raid, part of an assault on the south-coast by Jean de Vienne’s Franco-Castilian fleet, which was one component of a three pronged French assault.[[77]](#footnote-77) The French king possessed his own navy, and Castile, allied with France since 1347, supplied him with a contingent of galleys every campaign-season. These sleek, oared vessels had shallow drafts and could move against the wind: they were perfect for raiding.[[78]](#footnote-78) Indeed, Fowey was far from the only town to suffer at their hands; Rye, Dartmouth, Plymouth, and Southampton, to name but a few, were also assaulted.[[79]](#footnote-79) The damage inflicted upon Fowey prompted royal instruction to the duchy steward in 1380, ordering him to investigate whether the adjacent eighty-eight parishes were still bound to provide 160 archers from 1 May to the end of August each year for the defence of Fowey and Polruan. The men of those ports had complained that since these archers no longer served, their ships had been ‘well nigh annihilated by galleys and the enemy landing there’.[[80]](#footnote-80) Thomas Collan, collector of tonnage and poundage in Fowey-Water, requested that Polruan, Bodinnick, and the parish of Lanteglos-by-Fowey, be pardoned tax in 1380 because the Spanish had burnt their ships and goods, imprisoning many mariners.[[81]](#footnote-81) Strikingly though, Fowey itself is not mentioned, suggesting that the town had not been as crippled in the raid. The challenges posed by the French continued, however, and in 1380 all that Richard II could do was to compel Cornish knights to remain on their lands to defend Cornwall’s ‘marches and coasts’. Another invasion scare occurred in 1385, but Richard’s rapprochement led to a truce from 1389.[[82]](#footnote-82)

Fowey therefore emerges as significant enough to be included in national instructions, indeed, it was an integral component of a national defensive strategy, but the limitations of which left the town exposed to the vicissitudes of the war. Fowey’s experience, moreover, reminds us that the conflict undermined trade, continuously threatened security, and was destructive. Fowey was profoundly concerned by the war at sea for its costs were considerable and its effects, both material and psychological, inescapable.

III

Official fleets and defence, however, were but one part of Fowey’s involvement in the conflict, for the town actively participated in ‘piracy’. This subject, however, is a vexed one. In Medieval Latin *pirata* refers predominantly to a style of sea warfare with few moral or legal overtones; ‘piracy’ was only defined as a crime in 1536.[[83]](#footnote-83) Likewise, the term privateer – which suggests a sanctioned attack on shipping, as opposed to the utter lawlessness implied by piracy – originated in the 1660s.[[84]](#footnote-84) Both of these terms have legalistic meanings, so Rodger wisely cautions against anachronistically imposing them on the fourteenth century. Violence was undoubtedly ubiquitous at sea during this period, however, for all vessels were armed, ‘the peaceful trader and vicious pirate’ were often the same person at different times, and the Channel was a ‘natural no-man’s land’ beyond any realm’s legal system.[[85]](#footnote-85) Indeed, Kingsford saw violence as standard form within ‘a system of mutual reprisal’.[[86]](#footnote-86) Rodger compellingly refines this stance, arguing that we should view medieval naval warfare in terms of two categories: ‘public or military war, and private or commercial war’.[[87]](#footnote-87) Fourteenth-century ‘piracy’ then is more accurately perceived as private naval warfare, but for reasons of convenience ‘piracy’ placed in inverted commas will be employed in the following.

The Hundred Years’ War created conditions which abetted ‘piracy’, for all enemy ships were fair game. Nevertheless, Fowey’s increasing prosecution of private naval warfare was encouraged by other factors as well. Most significantly, Cornwall was plagued by endemic lawlessness with a ‘culture of violence’.[[88]](#footnote-88) Many of the causes of this need not concern us here, but there was a pernicious two-way transmission of criminality between the county and the Channel, fuelling disorder in both. Cornwall’s distance from the central courts compounded this fractiousness, making justice more difficult to attain.[[89]](#footnote-89) Likewise, the modest powers of Fowey’s borough court severely limited its ability to provide redress, while the common law was ill-equipped to cope with disputes of this kind.[[90]](#footnote-90) A statute passed in 1353 attempted to control private naval warfare, stipulating that if any seized goods were landed in an English port the victim could, on proof of ownership, be delivered his property ‘without making other suit at the common law’.[[91]](#footnote-91)

Nonetheless, a profusion of competing legal jurisdictions encouraged gangsterism, with borough, county, and most pertinently havenry and admiralty courts in competition.[[92]](#footnote-92) With Edward III’s growing maritime pretensions, a rising tide of disorder at sea, and the burgeoning role of admirals, the influence of these admiralty courts expanded. By 1360 they had emerged as specialised courts with jurisdictional powers amounting to discretionary and flexible equity, being concerned with ‘contact made between merchant and merchant, or merchant and mariner, overseas or within the tide mark’.[[93]](#footnote-93) Their growing authority resulted in a great deal of complaint, however, and in the 1390s their jurisdiction was severely constrained, but the admiral of the west clashed with the havener on a number of occasions before and after this date.[[94]](#footnote-94) Indeed, these admiralty courts – one of which sat in Fowey and Lostwithiel – ‘did their best to attract business’, competing with merchant and common-law courts; they were also plagued by serious irregularities.[[95]](#footnote-95)

Letters of Marque further complicate the picture, for survivors of attacks might have recourse to these; one example from Fowey survives from 1443, when the king granted these to Robert Langist and Robert Drewe of Fowey against the Bretons.[[96]](#footnote-96) These letters were part of ‘marcher law’, and allowed victims to forcibly secure compensation from ‘the fellow-townsmen or subjects’ of a foreign prince if they had been denied redress in the courts of that ruler.[[97]](#footnote-97) Letters such as these were only conceded in times of truce, but although they were concerned with private quarrels, they often covered political motives and undoubtedly fuelled disorder at sea. Perhaps most significant, however, was the glittering wealth of passing trade, which drew many jealous Cornish eyes out to sea.

All of these factors interacted, fuelling private naval warfare off the Cornish coast, but ‘piracy’ was certainly not confined to this area. Devonians also took to the sea and Dartmouth, home of the infamous John Hawley, had a well founded reputation as a centre of freebooting.[[98]](#footnote-98) ‘Piracy’ was not only a south-western phenomenon, however, for both Bristol and Great Yarmouth fully engaged in this ‘industry’.[[99]](#footnote-99) Similarly, the Cinque Ports ruthlessly prosecuted private war, even against Fowey, and Pitcaithly has shown the ways in which ‘piracy’ shaped Anglo-Hanseatic relations: disorder at sea was omnipresent.[[100]](#footnote-100) Yet when it comes to comparing levels of private naval warfare, more problems arise. Cases of recorded disorder are simply those which came to the government’s attentions, and evidence of a multitude of crimes was undoubtedly condemned to the watery depths. Moreover, in comparing disorder there is always a danger of comparing levels of litigiousness, rather than actual lawlessness. A paucity of evidence further compounds the problem, for the records of the admiralty courts are sparse in this period and Chancery Enrolments, as we will see, are very selective: our sources record but a fraction of private naval warfare.[[101]](#footnote-101)

Bearing all these caveats in mind, Fowey’s shipmen nevertheless had a penchant for ‘piracy’. All private naval warfare was, by definition, rooted in private self-interest, but while some of this predation at sea was to the crown’s detriment and was therefore punished, much was to the king’s profit. Indeed, ‘piracy’ represented an extension of the conflict, one in which Fowey played an essential role. Kingsford, in 1925, suggested that fifteenth-century ‘pirates’ were beyond the control of the king but, in 1979, Ford contested this, arguing instead that in 1400-1403, for instance, they were part of government policy.[[102]](#footnote-102) Ford has shown that during this period the king provided redress only when he chose, and mainly in cases concerning attacks on neutral or denizen shipping.[[103]](#footnote-103) This also holds true for the fourteenth century. The cases in the Chancery Rolls, therefore, only represent the excesses of private naval warfare, as acts of ‘piracy’ committed against the French went unrecorded because they did not merit restitution. Government policy overlooked ‘piracy’ of this kind as it served to harry the French with minimal outlay – prizes funded this activity.[[104]](#footnote-104) But government control over private naval warfare should not be overplayed, and the crown’s policy was to turn a blind-eye to those for whom ‘sea-roving was... necessary’.[[105]](#footnote-105) This marked an increasing privatisation of warfare, but in so doing provided cases of this kind with quasi-public attributes.

The war encouraged a spate of freebooting off the Cornish coast. In 1338, Cornish mariners had seized two Portuguese vessels which had already been taken into the king’s hands when trading in Cornwall. These ‘pirates’ then delivered the ships to certain Fowey and Mousehole men: for this, the ‘pirates’ were arrested but ‘broke from prison and escaped’, so their arrest was reordered.[[106]](#footnote-106) In 1346, men – many from Fowey, including Richard Johan of Fowey, master of the *le Michel* of Michelstow – captured a ship loaded with goods owned by Reyner de Mortenbek, John Retyn, and John de Loveyn, merchants of Brussels. The vessel was loaded with 155 tuns of tradable wine but was driven by a storm into St Ives bay. The ‘armed’ Cornishmen arrived in a vessel and captured the Brussels ship and its cargo. The men of Brussels tried to make a deal with a customs official, offering him fifteen tuns of wine if he returned their ship. The official in question approached the ‘pirates’, who then held a ‘conference’ about what to do: they decided that to avoid punishment they had to take flight, so hoisted sail and ‘feloniously fled’.[[107]](#footnote-107) In point of fact, they sailed to Haverford and sold the Flemish vessel there. In the following year the Black Prince ordered the havener to arrest *le Michel* as the Flemings were allies and these events had caused the prince to ‘be in great peril’.[[108]](#footnote-108) Louvain, Brussels, and Antwerp, had lobbied the prince concerning damage done by Fowey’s burgesses, among others.[[109]](#footnote-109) More remarkably, in 1347 a Spanish vessel was carrying a large cargo of wine when shipmen from Fowey seized the ship. The owners John Peritz and Domyngus Aynes were, luckily for them, at St Matthieu ‘on their affairs’ because ‘the men of England in two ships and a barge entered that ship by armed force... and killed all the men and mariners’. But John’s son had hidden himself ‘among the tuns through fear of death’ and therefore managed to escape ‘by the aid of men entering the ship when it reached the port of Fowey’ some days later.[[110]](#footnote-110)

These cases are suggestive of increasing disorder at sea, a product of the war and deliberate royal inactivity. By 1338 there was growing admiralty interest in private naval warfare, and the Statute of 1353, mentioned above, further attempted to control this sort of action.[[111]](#footnote-111) Yet this legislation had a limited effect, for not all thefts were at sea: in 1336, the ship of Richard Scotter of Hook, near Southampton, was carrying salt when seized in Fowey-Water and its crew assaulted. Likewise, in 1354 Edward Deoffe of Fowey, and others, seized the *Seinte Marie de Coronade* and its £120 cargo in a night-time raid at ‘Sully’, presumably the Scilly Isles.[[112]](#footnote-112) Four years later, John Trevenour was accused of ‘piratical’ activities.[[113]](#footnote-113) Private naval warfare was evidently a form of economic warfare, fought for profit against a multitude of foes who hailed from enemy and neutral nations, as well from England itself.[[114]](#footnote-114) It was a double-edged sword, however, and in 1346 the *la James* of Fowey was seized by ‘malefactors’ of Castile with its cargo worth £2,000. Its owners, Thomas Lewyn and Richard Broun, therefore sought restitution from Alfonso, King of Castile.[[115]](#footnote-115) Approaching another monarch for justice often proved futile, with, for instance, the King of France awarding William Scarlet and Stephen Pole no compensation after Frenchmen captured their ship and its £500 cargo in 1344. Similarly, in 1372 the men of Fowey, and many other ports, complained about damage inflicted by Flemings since 1343.[[116]](#footnote-116) Fowey clearly suffered, as well as gained, from ‘piracy’.

Peaks and troughs of ‘piratical’ activity may be discerned, with many cases of Fowey based private warfare recorded from 1338-1360, but few cases during the truces of 1360-1369 and 1389-1399. One exception is William Smale’s squadron of fifteen ships, four from Fowey, which the king mobilised in early 1360 to counter the French threat. The treaty of Brétigny, however, left Smale unable to pay these vessels, so he was ‘forced’ to engage in piracy, allegedly killing 100 Flemings and taking £20,000 worth of Flemish goods.[[117]](#footnote-117) Of course royal control over these hardy men should not be overplayed, for, at times, ‘pirates’ hampered the war effort. In 1342, for instance, many men – including a number from Fowey, such as John Pole, as well as numerous Bristol burgesses – seized Adam Scarlet’s ship, *le Trinite*, ‘on the high sea’, which was transporting victuals to the king’s castle of Bordeaux.[[118]](#footnote-118) Even so, the king evidently retained some degree of control over private naval warfare, keeping the sea more effectively during these truces, although any assessment of this remains impressionistic. Yet ‘pirates’ based in Fowey became noticeably more active from the late 1370s, a time of intensifying warfare, with Fowey specifically named in a 1379 Hansa complaint regarding ‘piracy’.[[119]](#footnote-119) Three years later, many Fowey men – including Richard Michelstow and Oliver Scarlet – captured a Portuguese barge and sailed it back to Fowey. In port they divided the 3,900 francs worth of goods amongst themselves and placed the crew in chains. The Fowey men involved, however, were forced to make restitution of £200, although in the same year only £50 of this had been paid and the vessel’s owner was concerned that the bond would be broken.[[120]](#footnote-120) Similarly, in 1386 John Polgas of Fowey was master of a barge and Geoffrey Cook of a balinger, which, along with ships from Lostwithiel and Dartmouth, had seized a Genoese ‘tarita’ that had been driven into a Breton port by a storm.[[121]](#footnote-121) Evidently the crown investigated assaults upon allied, neutral, and denizen shipping.

On the other hand, in 1385 west-country ‘pirates’, including many from Fowey, attacked French shipping amassed at Sluys to invade England, sinking at least four vessels and capturing four more.[[122]](#footnote-122) No investigation was launched as a result of these actions because these shipmen served the king’s purposes, nor did the king issue any commissions three years later when the men of Fowey and Dartmouth captured twenty-five vessels laden with wine, returning home ‘unscathed’.[[123]](#footnote-123) The French, England’s chief adversaries in the war, are strikingly absent from the government’s investigations of Fowey based ‘pirates’. Only one case involved a Frenchman who gained restitution but he, John Geer of Guérande, was master of Odo Ude of Fowey’s craier, *la Seinte Marishippe*, which, while trading salt, had been captured and detained by Englishmen – including John Kendale of Lostwithiel.[[124]](#footnote-124) The government only intervened in this case because an Englishman’s ship had been seized. Attacks against the French were deliberately overlooked as private naval warfare made an invaluable contribution to the English war effort, enabling the king to project his power far out to sea at minimal cost.

Nevertheless, the sea was lawless and Fowey a ‘frontier town’ in this border warfare, the south-western equivalent of raids and ‘rieving’ in the Northern Marches.[[125]](#footnote-125) In 1359 the Black Prince was forced to write to the rulers of Ghent and Bruges concerning the safe passage of Cornish merchants. These men feared to cross to the Low Countries because a cog of Flanders had recently been captured at sea by Cornish shipmen, and they feared reprisal.[[126]](#footnote-126) Walsingham also provides a vivid vignette of ‘piracy’ and violent self-help.[[127]](#footnote-127) In 1379 a barge from Fowey was returning home after keeping the sea, but its crew hoped to ‘make gains of their own’. The Cornish sailors, however, were met by a Flemish ship which embarked upon its ‘normal activity’, attacking Englishmen. Despite stiff resistance the Cornish barge was captured and its crew butchered. Yet during the fighting one Cornish boy ‘leapt onto the Fleming ship,’ hiding in the hold. Three days passed, but when the Flemings put into an English port he alerted the authorities who arrested the ship for the king.

Thus private naval warfare faded into public military war, with the two intimately intertwined. Undoubtedly there was a great deal of lawlessness, for the crown’s control of these redoubtable shipmen was far from complete, but the government turned a blind-eye to these private feuds as they served the king’s ambition of harrying the French with little expense. This was state condoned private naval warfare, making the townsmen ‘pirates and patriots’ in turn. Fowey, then, was in the vanguard of these unofficial fleets, revealing a striking variety in the town’s contribution to The Hundred Years’ War.

Liddy suggests that ‘piracy’ yielded little profit to Bristol, while Anthony Saul argues that although Great Yarmouth made some gains, foreign attacks far outweighed earnings from ‘piracy’.[[128]](#footnote-128) Of course no perfect balance-sheet can be drawn-up for Fowey, but although losses were sustained, the spoils from private naval warfare were substantial, and appear to have outweighed losses accruing. Plundered wares were noteworthy enough to draw the Black Prince’s attentions, for instance, and in 1359 he tried to tax enemy wine which the men of Fowey and elsewhere had ‘captured’.[[129]](#footnote-129) More tellingly, the town’s freebooting profile grew greatly across the century and into the next. These earnings, which grew as a result of the conflict, challenge the idea that the war only drained wealth, and attracted participants from the whole spectrum of Cornish society.[[130]](#footnote-130) Yet they also serve to establish the fact that effects of the war were highly localised, for although Great Yarmouth suffered more than it gained from ‘piracy’, Fowey gained more than it suffered.

Evidently each aspect of maritime life interlocked, with trade, piracy, and smuggling interchangeable occupations for Fowey’s shipmen, but all of these activities were set to the backdrop of the war at sea. Thomas Johan, for instance, served in the king’s fleets on six occasions between 1355 and 1388, but he also engaged in much private naval warfare and many trading ventures: the ‘peaceful trader and aggressive pirate’ were indeed one and the same.[[131]](#footnote-131) There can be little doubt that the conflict exercised immense influence upon the borough, but the town did not buckle under these pressures for a picture emerges of a thriving port with a resilient merchant class, which was thoroughly involved in the war, but was emphatically not beggared by the conflict.[[132]](#footnote-132)

IV

To conclude, ‘the Gallaunts of Fawey’ made a conspicuous and diverse contribution to the war at sea, for their ships were ubiquitous in the conflict, but this was not always relished by the townsmen. The port also suffered from the war, for the town was raided twice in the fourteenth century, despite being an essential component of a national defensive network. Official activity represents only a limited view of Fowey’s contribution to the war effort, however. Private naval warfare extended the conflict, for in the fourteenth century the crown overlooked activity against the French. Of course many exceeded the intention of royal inactivity, but policy nevertheless underpinned ‘piracy’. Fowey therefore made a contribution to both public and private naval war incommensurate to its modest size; indeed, Fowey may have been particularly susceptible to impressment as the town lacked the financial and political muscle to resist royal demands. Without doubt, then, the port was essential to the kings’ stratagems, which yielded great profits, but also engendered substantial losses.

In judging the impact of hostilities on Fowey, the question arises: did the costs of the war outweigh the benefits? Postan’s bleak assessment of England’s wealth being ‘much shrunk and depleted’ was contested by MacFarlane, and nuanced by Sherborne, who argued that impressment ‘was in effect a tax’ which fell heavily on the maritime population.[[133]](#footnote-133) Of course there is a danger of conflating the effects of the Black Death with those of the conflict, but Anthony Saul showed how Great Yarmouth was left moribund by the war. Ships were sunk, long impressment times bankrupted mariners, trade and fishing were disrupted, defence costs were high, and ‘piracy’ was to the town’s loss.[[134]](#footnote-134) There can be little doubt that Fowey too incurred substantial costs, with no standardised payment to impressed shipping until 1380 and long arrest times hampering trade. In 1357, for instance, Matthew de Cornubia petitioned the Black Prince as his sixty tun vessel had been arrested for the prince’s expedition to Aquitaine, where ‘it was delayed a great while’, and when Cornubia returned to England his ship was again arrested for John of Gaunt – losses accruing forced him to ‘sell up’.[[135]](#footnote-135) Commerce and fishing, then, were seriously dislocated: in 1338 Cornish ‘boats hardly dare to go to sea because of the war at sea’.[[136]](#footnote-136) French raids were perhaps the most tangible costs of the war, and although these appear to have been high, they did not annihilate the town’s shipping, its greatest asset.

Kowaleski has reinterpreted the cost-benefit ratio of the war, arguing that there were many more benefits than previously believed. Fowey certainly acquired greater political clout as a result of the conflict, sending representatives to Edward III’s maritime councils. The Black Prince often hired the port’s vessels; Henry Skuryn received 100*s*. for shipping war supplies to Sandwich, while Richard Michelstow was awarded £20 by the prince for shipping services rendered.[[137]](#footnote-137) The supply and outfitting of military and diplomatic expeditions yielded further profits, and the prince ordered Sir Walter de Bentele’s company to pay ‘a reasonable price’ for victuals which they bought whilst waiting to embark from Fowey.[[138]](#footnote-138) More money was injected into the port through payments to mariners and compensation to shipmasters, with over £455 paid to those impressed in 1388 alone.[[139]](#footnote-139) Crown patronage stimulated shipbuilding, moreover, bolstering Fowey’s economy.[[140]](#footnote-140) Commerce was undoubtedly disrupted by enemy activity and by increasing disorder at sea, yet the sheer volume of maritime trade should caution us against overstating this point.[[141]](#footnote-141) Nonetheless, the strains of war re-shaped sea lanes, conceding the advantage to western ports which were on the quickest sea-routes to Aquitaine and the Iberian Peninsula, and therefore were less exposed to the risks of long sea voyages. This reduced shipping costs, which were on an ever-upward trajectory as the century went on.[[142]](#footnote-142) This shift so favoured Fowey and other western-ports that they increased their ‘share of the nation’s shipping’.[[143]](#footnote-143) In point of fact, Fowey’s fishing profile grew markedly during the conflict, as did its involvement in overseas trade – the port handled much cloth, wine, and tin, to name but a few commodities – for the fourteenth century was a time of prosperity for the port.[[144]](#footnote-144) Further, although ships were lost to official enemy activity, such as the *Trinity* of Fowey in 1375, prizes of very considerable value were seized during the course of campaigns.[[145]](#footnote-145) Private naval warfare also yielded large profits and, despite losses, the wholesale expansion of the town’s ‘pirate’ profile from 1337 to 1453 suggests that earnings from this ‘industry’ far outweighed losses incurred. Indeed, the increasing prominence of the town and its leading men strongly implies that the spoils of war were worth having: Fowey remained wealthy. Consider, for example, Richard Michelstow’s career. Michelstow was a man of Fowey whose ships were impressed by the crown, but his vessels were also hired by the Black Prince, whom he often assisted, and he grew wealthy through this service, as well as ‘piracy’, smuggling, and trade. Indeed, the war made Michelstow’s fortune, securing him a place in gentle society.

Leland believed that ‘the glorie of Fowey rose by the warres in King Edward the first and the third and Henry v. day’.[[146]](#footnote-146) Fowey did indeed blossom during the conflict, for the costs the port incurred from the war were less than presumed and the benefits accrued greater, but in sharp contrast the conflict brought about Great Yarmouth’s decline.[[147]](#footnote-147) Evidently the results of The Hundred Years’ War were in no way uniform, yet the all-pervasive effects of the conflict cannot be doubted, substantiating Sherborne’s argument that the war ‘had a greater impact on those who earned their living from the sea’ than those on land.[[148]](#footnote-148) Although a fleeting glance suggests that the Hundred Years’ War was fought far from England in France’s verdant fields, Fowey’s experience utterly disabuses us of this idea.

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19. Lambert, ‘Cinque Ports’, pp. 67-68. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. R. Pearse*, The Ports and Harbours of Cornwall, An Introduction to the Study of Eight Hundred Years of Maritime Affairs* (St. Austell, 1963), p. 38; *William de Norwell*, p. 369; TNA, E101/22/39; Lambert, *Shipping*, pp. 119-127, 136-140; M. Oppenheim, ‘Maritime History’, in *Victoria History of the County of Cornwall*, ed. W. Page (London, 1906), pp. 475-513 at 477-480; Elliott-Binns, *Medieval Cornwall* (London, 1955), p. 88; Rodger, *Safeguard*, pp. 98-100, 496-497; *The Register of Edward The Black Prince*, [hereafter *RBP*], 4 vols (London, 1930-1933)*,* I, 84; C. Lambert, ‘Edward III’s Siege of Calais: A Reappraisal’, *Journal of Medieval History*, 37 (2011), pp. 245-256. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Kowaleski, ‘Devon’, 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Lostwithiel provided no ships, Rodger, *Safeguard*, p. 497. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. A. Saul, ‘Yarmouth’, 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Sherborne, ‘Shipping’, 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. *CCR 1343-1346*, 128-129, 131; Lambert, *Shipping*, pp. 128-139; Rodger, *Safeguard*, pp. 100, 496. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. *CCR 1343-1346*, 360; Keast, *Fowey*, p. 12; Oppenheim, ‘Maritime History’, p. 479; *RBP*, II, 164; TNA, JUST 128/3 m. 1r; *CFR 1347-1356*, 253. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Kowaleski, ‘Crown Patronage’, pp. 240-241; A. Saul, ‘Yarmouth’, 110-111. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. TNA, E101/27/22; E101/27/23; E101/27/24; E101/27/25; E101/27/31; Lambert, *Shipping*, pp. 141-151. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. TNA, E101/27/19; see also *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1361-1364*, [Hereafter *CPR*] 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. TNA, E101/30/36; TNA, E 101/30/29 mm. 2, 4; Cushway, *War at Sea*, pp. 185-189, 196-198; *The Anonimalle Chronicle 1333-1338*,trans. V. Galbraith (Manchester, 1970), pp. 68-69. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. F. Devon, *Issue Roll of Thomas de Brantingham* (London, 1835), pp. 272-273, 274-276; Lambert, *Shipping*, p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. TNA, E101/40/40 m. 2; E 101/40/36; N. Saul, *Richard II* (London, 1997), pp.151-152; Sherborne, ‘Shipping’, 174; see also TNA, E101/42/22. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Rodger, *Safeguard*, p. 113; T.K. Moore, ‘The Cost-Benefit Analysis of a Fourteenth-Century Naval Campaign: Margate/Cadzand, 1387’, in *Roles of the Sea in Medieval England*, ed. R. Gorski (Woodbridge, 2012), pp. 103-124. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. J. J. N. Palmer, *England, France, and Christendom, 1377-99* (London, 1972), p. 1; Sherborne, ‘Shipping’, 163-164. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. N. Saul, *Richard II*, p. 95. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Lambert, ‘Cinque Ports’, p. 77. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. TNA, E101/37/25; N. Saul, *Richard II*, pp.42-43. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. J. Sumption, *Divided Houses, The Hundred Years War* (London, 2009), III, p. 310; *CPR 1340-1343*, 28, transport of this type was not always diligently undertaken, *CCR 1343-1346*, 458. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. *RBP*, II, 32; *CPR 1377-1381*, 196; *RBP,* IV, 213; *CCR 1367-1370*, 133-134; Keast*, Fowey*, p. 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. *RBP*, II, 141,160, 165, *RBP*, IV, 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. *CCR 1385-1389*, 548; *CCR 1389-1392*, 260-261; Sumption, *Divided Houses*, p. 120. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Liddy, *Politics*, pp. 45-46; Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Kowaleski, *Exeter*, p. 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Glasscock, *Lay Subsidy*, pp. 31, 64-64, 121, 192, 198, 91; these figures represent a considerable undervaluation of each port’s wealth, however, W. M. Ormrod, ‘The Crown and the English Economy, 1290-1348’ in *Before the Black Death, Studies in the ‘Crisis’ of the Early Fourteenth Century*, ed. B.M.S. Campbell (Manchester and New York, 1991), pp. 149-183 at 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. TNA, E101/40/40 m. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Lambert, ‘Cinque Ports’, p. 77; A. Saul, ‘Yarmouth’,108-109; Bristol’s role as a supplier of ships did not diminish either, Liddy, *Politics*, p. 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Openheim, ‘Maritime History’, p. 481. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. *RBP*, I, 77-78; *CCR 1343-1346*, 129-130*; CPR 1348-1350*, 56, 115, 593; *CPR 1385-1389*, 165; M. Kowaleski, *The Havener’s Accounts of the Earldom and Duchy of Cornwall 1287-1356* (Exeter, 2001), pp. 206, 249-250, 291. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. TNA, E101/31/23 mm. 2, 3; *The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England, 1274-1504* [Hereafter, *PROME*], ed. C. Given-Wilson et al 16 vols (Woodbridge, 2005), VI, p. 99; Cushway, *War at Sea*, p. 197;Kowaleski, ‘Crown Patronage’, pp. 240-241, 245-250. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Kowaleski, ‘Coastal Communities’, pp. 49-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Openheim, ‘Maritime History’, p. 475. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Cushway, *War at Sea*, p. 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. *Calendar of Fine Rolls 1319-1327*, 300, this was also connected to Edward II’s and Isabella’s tumultuous relationship. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Rodger, *Safeguard*, pp. 92-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. J. Sumption, *The Hundred Years War: Trial by Battle* (London, 1990), I, pp. 246-251; Hughes, ‘Hampshire’, p. 125; Richmond, ‘War at Sea’, p. 96. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Alban, ‘Coastal Defence’, pp. 69-70; for Edward I’s modifications, see A.Z. Freeman, ‘A Moat Defensive: The Coast Defence Scheme of 1295’, *Speculum*, 42 (1967), pp. 442-462. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Hewitt*, Organisation of War*, pp. 3-5; Rodger, *Safeguard*, p. 105. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Alban, ‘Coastal Defence’, pp. 59, 69-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. *CPR 1338-1340*, 138, 134; Alban, ‘Coastal Defence’, p. 69; Hewitt*, Organisation of War*, pp. 6-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Alban, ‘Coastal Defence’, pp. 59 and 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. *Chronicon Galfridi le Baker de Swynebroke*, ed. E. Thompson (Oxford, 1889), pp. 63-64. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. *The Register of John de Grandisson, Bishop of Exeter 1327-1369*, ed. F. Hingeston-Randolph, 3 vols (London, 1894), II, pp. 870-871. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Platts, *Southampton*, pp. 107-118. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. *CPR 1338-1340*, 279. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Leland, *Itinerary*, p. 323; Openheim suggests it was totally unfortified, ‘Maritime History’, p. 475 – either way, the port’s defences were sub-standard. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, pp. 246-251; Hughes, ‘Hampshire’, p.125; Richmond*, ‘*War at Sea’, p*.* 96; Hewitt, *Organisation of War*, p. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Hewitt, *Organisation of War*, p. 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. *CCR 1354-1360*, 214-215; Hewitt, *Organisation of War*, p. 17; Roger, *Safeguard*, p. 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. For example, *CCR 1349-1354*, 206-207; *CCR 1360-1364*, 405-406; *CCR 1381-1385*, 273; *CPR 1358-1361*, 405, 407; Rodger, *Safeguard*, p. 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. *CPR 1374-1347*, 496-497, 499; *CPR 1377-1381*, 40, 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Alban, ‘Coastal Defence’, pp. 66-67. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. N. Saul, *Richard II*, pp. 30-33; Richmond, ‘War at Sea’, p. 108. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Hewitt, *Organisation of War*, pp. 9-10; *CCR 1369-1374*, 448-449, anyone ‘whatsoever’ was forbidden from leaving. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Hewitt, *Organisation of War*, pp. 9-12; *CCR 1354-1360*, 401-402. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. TNA, SC 8/141/7039; Richmond, ‘War at Sea’, p. 101; Rodger, *Safeguard*, p. 112. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. *The History of Parliament, The House of Commons 1386-1421*, ed. J.S. Roskell, L. Clarke, and C. Rawcliffe, 3 vols (Stroud, 1993), III, pp. 328-333. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. *The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham* *1376-1394*, ed. J. Taylor, W. Childs and L. Watkiss (Oxford, 2003), pp. 234-235; N. Saul, *Richard II*, pp. 31-33. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Richmond, ‘War at Sea’, p.100; Prestwich, *Armies*, p. 265; Allmand, *War*, pp. 88-89. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. N. Saul, *Richard II*, p. 33; Rodger, *Safeguard*, pp. 111-112. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. *CCR 1377-1381*, 388; Keast argues that this resulted in the construction of two defensive Block Houses, but the instruction makes no mention of fortifications and Leland, Carew, and Norden claim that they were built by Edward IV; Pevsner agrees. It seems, therefore, that the Block Houses date from the fifteenth century and that during the fourteenth Fowey’s defences were sub-standard. Keast, *Fowey*, p. 22; Leland, *Itinerary*, p. 204; R. Carew, *The Survey of Cornwall by Richard Carew*, ed. J. Chynoweth, N. Orme, and A. Walsh (Exeter, 2004), pp. 134-135; J. Norden, *A Topographical and Historical Description of Cornwall* (London, 1728, reprinted 1966), p. 39; N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England, Cornwall*, revised E. Radcliffe 2nd Edition (London, 1977), p. 69. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. TNA, SC 8/40/1954. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. *CPR 1377-1381*, 455; N. Saul, *Richard II*, pp. 205-235; Froissart, *Chronicles*, pp. 306-307. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Rodger, ‘Private Naval Warfare’, 7; M. Pitcaithly, ‘Piracy and Anglo-Hanseatic Relations, 1385-1420’ in *Roles of the Sea in Medieval England*, ed. R. Gorski (Woodbridge, 2012), pp. 125-145. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Rodger, ‘Private Naval Warfare’, 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Rodger, *Safeguard*, p. 115; Rose, *Sea*, p. 107; Eddison, *Medieval Pirates*, p. 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Kingsford, *Prejudice,* pp.78-79. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Rodger, ‘Private Naval Warfare’, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. H. Kleineke, ‘Why the West Was Wild: Law and Order in Fifteenth Century Cornwall and Devon’, in *The Fifteenth Century,* III, *Authority and Subversion*, ed. Linda Clark (Woodbridge, 2003), pp. 75-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. *PROME*, III, p. 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Ward, *Shipmaster*, pp. 2, 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. *PROME*, V, pp. 76-77; Kingsford, *Prejudice*, p.79. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. *Select Pleas in the Court of the Admiralty, The Court of the Admiralty of the West (AD 1390-1404) and The High Court of the Admiralty (AD 1527-1545)*, ed. R. G. Marsden, 2 vols (London, 1892 and 1894), I, pp. xlix-l, 1-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Ward, *Shipmaster*, pp. 29-37; *Select Pleas*, pp. xii, xiv; D. Simpkin, ‘Keeping the Seas: England’s Admirals, 1369-1389’ in *The Roles of the Sea in Medieval England*, ed. R. Gorski (Woodbridge, 2012), p. 91. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. *Statutes of the Realm, 1101-1713*, ed. A. Luders et al, 11 vols (London, 1810-1823), II, pp. 78-82; Simpkin, ‘Admirals’, p. 91; Ward, *Shipmaster*, pp. 40-43; *CCR 1381-1385*, 319; *CCR 1396-1399*, 141-142. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. *Select Pleas*, pp. 1-2; Ward, *Shipmaster*, pp. 37, 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. TNA, C 47/28/7/26. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Rodger, ‘Private Naval Warfare’, 6-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Kingsford, *Prejudice*; J. Appleby, ‘Devon Privateering from Early Times to 1668’ in *The New Maritime History of Devon*, ed. M. Duffy, S. Fisher, B. Greenhill, D. Starkey and J. Youings, 2 vols (London, 1992-1994), I, pp. 90-97; *History of Parliament,* III, pp. 328-331. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Liddy, *Politics*, pp. 54-55; A. Saul, ‘Yarmouth’, 113; Rodger, *Safeguard*, pp. 115-116. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. *CPR 1317-1321*, 557; Pitcaithly, ‘Anglo-Hanseatic Relations’. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Gardiner, *Chancery Proceedings*, pp. xii-xiv. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Kingsford, *Prejudice,* pp. 78-106; Ford, ‘Piracy or Policy’, 63-77; also Pistono, ‘English Privateers’, the chief difference being that Ford argues for more royal direction than Pistono or Kingsford. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Ford, ‘Piracy or Policy’, 63-65. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Kowaleski, ‘Crown Patronage’, p. 250. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Gardner, *Chancery Proceedings*, pp. xiii, xvi-xvii. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. *CPR 1338-1340*, 142. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. *CPR 1345-1348*, 115-116. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. *RBP*, I, 77-78, Thomas Cook was named master. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. TNA, SC 1/54/56. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. *CCR 1346-1349*, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Ward, *Shipman*, p. 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. *CPR 1334-1348*, 296; *CPR 1354-1358*, 56-57. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. TNA, JUST 128/3 m. 1r. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Rodger, ‘Private Naval Warfare’, 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. *CCR 1346-1349*, 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. *CIM 1307-1349*, 465; *CCR 1343-1346*, 334-335; *CCR 1343-1346*, 334-5; TNA, E30/1271. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. *CIM* *1348-1377*, 150-151; *CPR 1358-1361*, 584-585; Kowaleski, ‘Crown Patronage’, p. 251. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. *CPR 1348-1350*, 593. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. TNA, SC 8/116/5780. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. *CPR 1381-1385*, 142-143; *CCR 1381-1385*, 72. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. *CPR 1385-1389*, 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. Sumption, *Divided Houses*, p. 543 [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. *The Westminster Chronicle 1381-1394*, ed. L. Hector (Oxford, 1982), pp. 76-77. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. *CPR 1381-1385*, 285. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. As the burgess of Yarmouth claimed in 1385, A. Saul, ‘Yarmouth’, 106; for border warfare in Northern England, see C. J. Neville, ‘The Keeping of the Peace in the Northern Marches in the Later Middle Ages’, *English Historical Review*, 109 (1994), pp. 1-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. *RBP*, II, 162-163, 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. *Walsingham*, pp. 289-293. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Liddy, *Politics*, pp. 54-55; A. Saul, ‘Yarmouth’, 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. *RBP*, II, 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Kingsford, *Prejudice*, pp. 81-84; Kowaleski, ‘Crown Patronage’, p. 250. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. *CPR 1345-1348*, 115-116; *Havener’s Accounts*, pp. 189, 237, 249, 273; Rodger, ‘Private Naval Warfare’, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Kowaleski, ‘Coastal Communities’. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. Postan, ‘Social Consequences’, 11; McFarlane, ‘Social Change’, 3-13; Sherborne, ‘Shipping’, 165, 174-175. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. A. Saul, ‘Yarmouth’, 110-115. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. *RBP*, II, 115-116. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
136. *Havener’s Accounts,* pp. 137, 152, 156. [↑](#footnote-ref-136)
137. *RBP*, II, 165; *RBP*, IV, 206. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. *RBP*, II, 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
139. TNA, E101/40/40 m. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-139)
140. Kowaleski, ‘Crown Patronage’, pp. 233-254; Kowaleski, ‘Devon’, p. 70. [↑](#footnote-ref-140)
141. Rodger, *Safeguard*, pp. 79, 115-116; Friel, ‘Sea’, p. 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Ward, *Shipmaster*, p. 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. Kowaleski, ‘Crown Patronage’, pp. 233-254. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. Kowaleski, ‘Coastal Communities’, pp. 49-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. Openheim, ‘Maritime History’, p. 481; Moore, ‘Cost-Benefit’. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. Leland, *Itinerary*, p. 203. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. A. Saul, ‘Yarmouth’, 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. Sherborne, ‘Shipping’, 174-175. [↑](#footnote-ref-148)