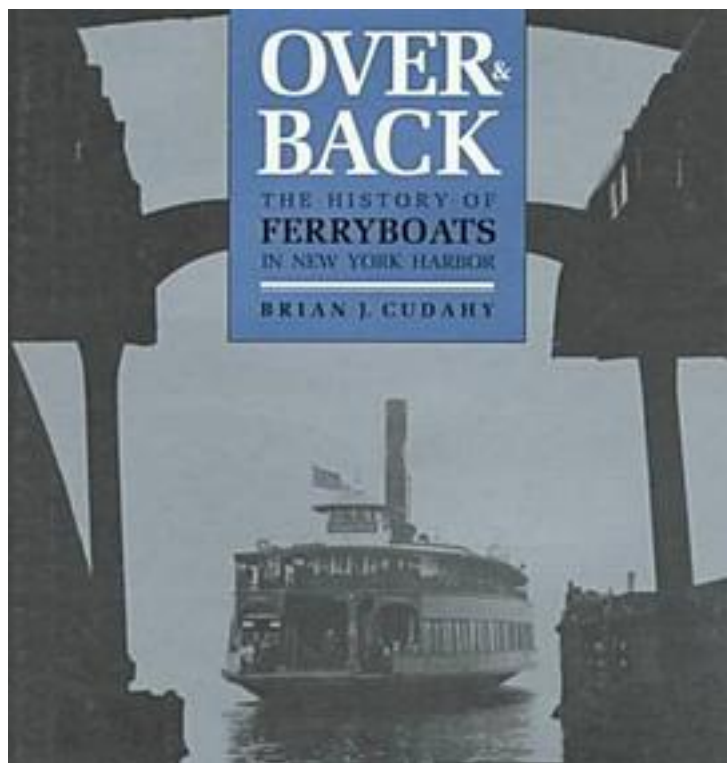


# Over and Back



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Ask the average American anywhere in the country to answer the association question Staten Island and you get Ferry in immediate response. what is regularly billed as America's favorite boatripe- not least because a round trip still costs an astonishing twenty-five cents- is the last public survivor of New York Harbor's once immense fleet of those doughty double-ended ferryboats. Dozens of ferryboats in a myriad of liveries crossed the harbor's waterways as recently as one generation ago Most have vanished as though they never were, leaving in their ghostly wakes only fading memories and a few gorgeously restored ferry terminals. The handsomest of these terminals, on the

New Jersey side of the Hudson, is probably the one dubbed by Christopher Morley the Piazza San Lackawanna. Over and Back captures definitively nearly two centuries of ferryboating in New York Harbor, by a master narrator of the history of transportation in America. In stories, charts, maps, photographs, diagrams, route lists, fleet rosters, and in the histories of some four hundred ferryboats, Brian J. Cudahy captures the whole tale as concisely as one could hope. The transportation expert, the ferry buff, the model builder, the urban historian: each will find grist for his or her mill. The photographs capture a highly significant footnote in America's past and present; the colored illustrations preserve some of the stylish rigs in which the owners garbed their boats, despite coal soot, oil smudge, and urban grime. Fully a third of the book comprises the most complete statistical compilation that the nation's public and private archives permit. The data show, among other things, that some of the former workhorses of New York Harbor are filling utilitarian or social roles elsewhere in the United States and overseas, and that the newest boats in the harbor began life along the Gulf of Mexico and in New England.

作者介绍:

目录:

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