



Working Thin Waters: Conversations with Captain Lawrence H. Malloy, Jr

Stephen Jones

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Oysterman, freight hauler, salvager -- for some seven decades, Captain Larry Malloy, Jr. made his living from the "thin" waters of the Connecticut coast and Long Island Sound, taking on "all manner of work legally available to someone with a boat," as Stephen Jones remarks. Malloy weathered the Depression and the hurricane of '38, the submarines of the Cold War and the yachts of the '80s and '90s, and, a gifted if laconic raconteur, he is able to recall and describe it all with clarity, vividness, and wry humor. Jones, himself a mariner, offers an affectionate and colorful portrait of Captain Malloy, recounting the cultural and economic changes that shaped his life on the Connecticut coast. Inevitably, Malloy's story is also the story of the boats he has owned, modified, refurbished, sold, traded, and owned again over the years, from The Captain to the Emma Frances, from the Alice to the Anne. Whether shelling the oyster beds, hauling potatoes or coal or manure, carrying scientists on research expeditions, or salvaging buildings and scrap off the islands of the Sound, Larry Malloy has displayed the ingenuity and technical expertise required to keep an oysterboat running and an oyster bed producing, and the versatility and adaptability required to survive in the face of changing times. Despite his colorful and varied experiences, Malloy himself remains a down-to-earth man who embodies the values and perspective of an earlier era. "What would you call a person who used his boat in all the ways you did?" Jones once asked him. Malloy replied, "I guess I'd call him a damn fool."

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