



The Railway: British Track Since 1804

Andrew Dow

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Never before has a comprehensive history been written of the track used by railways of all gauges, tramways, and cliff railways, in Great Britain. And yet it was the development of track, every bit as much as the development of the locomotive, that has allowed our railways to provide an extraordinarily wide range of services. Without the track of today, with its laser-guided maintenance machines, the TGV and the Eurostar could not cruise smoothly at 272 feet per second, nor could 2,000-ton freight trains carry a wide range of materials, or suburban railways, over and under the ground, serve our great cities in a way that roads never could. ??Andrew Dow's account of the development of track, involving deep research in the papers of professional institutions as well as rare books, company records and personal accounts, paints a vivid picture of development from primitive beginnings to modernity. ??The book contains nearly 200 specially-commissioned drawings as well as many photographs of track in its very many forms since the appearance of the steam locomotive in 1804. Included are chapters on electrified railways, and on the development of mechanised maintenance, which revolutionised the world of the platelayer.

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