The Duchesses: The Story of Britain's Ultimate Steam Locomotives

Andrew Roden



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The Duchesses: The Story of Britain's Ultimate Steam Locomotives Andrew Roden The Duchesses tells the story of the 'Princess Coronation' class of locomotives -the streamlined embodiments of raw, bulked-up muscle and formidable power that any enthusiast will tell you were the finest steam engines in Britain.

Conceived of by the London, Midland and Scottish Railway to rival the LNER's illustrious 'A4 Pacifics', these trains heralded in the last golden age of steam. Designed by the great William Stanier, theirs is a story of grand beginnings, a slow trajectory of decline and a recent, celebrated rebirth. Today, there are two 'Duchesses' still in existence: Duchess of Hamilton and Duchess of Sutherland are now restored to their original streamlined appearance.

As The Duchesses' beautiful cover illustration suggests, these Coronation locomotives were beautiful to behold; truly majestic feats of engineering. Andrew Roden's book tells the story of their time in British Railways service; the class' decommissioning in the 1960s; the extraordinary saga of two trains' unlikely preservation by Billy Butlin at his holiday camps; and their eventual return to steam on the main line.

The Duchesses completes a trilogy of railway books from Aurum, joining Mallard - the story of the world's fastest steam locomotive - and Flying Scotsman –that of the world's most famous.

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