

# VICTORIAN STEAM

Robin Jones

The steam railway was the backbone of the Victorian age, the bridge link between the Industrial Revolution, the British Empire and the modern age.

As railways rapidly evolved from being small local concerns serving mines and factories into main lines shrinking travelling times firstly throughout Britain and then the rest of the world, the scramble was on for locomotive engineers to produce more powerful, versatile and reliable locomotive types to suit every purpose. As the national rail network came together, rival companies competed to produce faster locomotives to claim a greater share of potential trade. There were the great Races to the North to see who could reach Scotland in the shortest time from London, which produced steam icons like Patrick Stirling's legendary Great Northern Railway 'singles.'

Elsewhere, smaller locomotives made a huge impact in industry, allowing sprawling private railway systems to serve colliery, ironmaking and quarrying complexes. The mid-19<sup>th</sup> century pioneering introduction of steam on lines like the Festiniog and Talylyn railways opened up many new possibilities in the field of narrow gauge, hitherto the domain of horse traction.

By the end of the Victorian era, the earlier locomotives typified by gleaming brass steam domes, no cabs, huge stovepipe chimneys and enormous single driving wheels had given way to what we immediately recognise as 'modern' steam locomotive types – some of which were so successful that they lasted into the final decade of British Railways steam in the 1960s.

Not only that, but by the 1890s, steam locomotives were being built for tourism and leisure purposes, as evidenced by the Snowdon Mountain Railway and Sir Arthur Heywood's pioneering miniature railways.

Expert Robin Jones looks at the engines that made Victorian Britain's railways the envy of the world. In more than 60 images and with a sharp and incisive text, *Victorian Steam* is the ideal brief guide, in Halsgrove's new collectible, pocket-size format.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A graduate of the University of Central England, Robin Jones, founding editor of *Heritage Railway* magazine, was a news editor and chief investigative reporter at the *Birmingham Evening Mail*, and over the years has produced several books and special publications, along with historical features for numerous other newspapers and periodicals. He has been interested in railways from a very early age, when his elder brother Stewart took him trainspotting at Widney Manor station in Solihull at the age of four; at the end of the British Railways steam age.

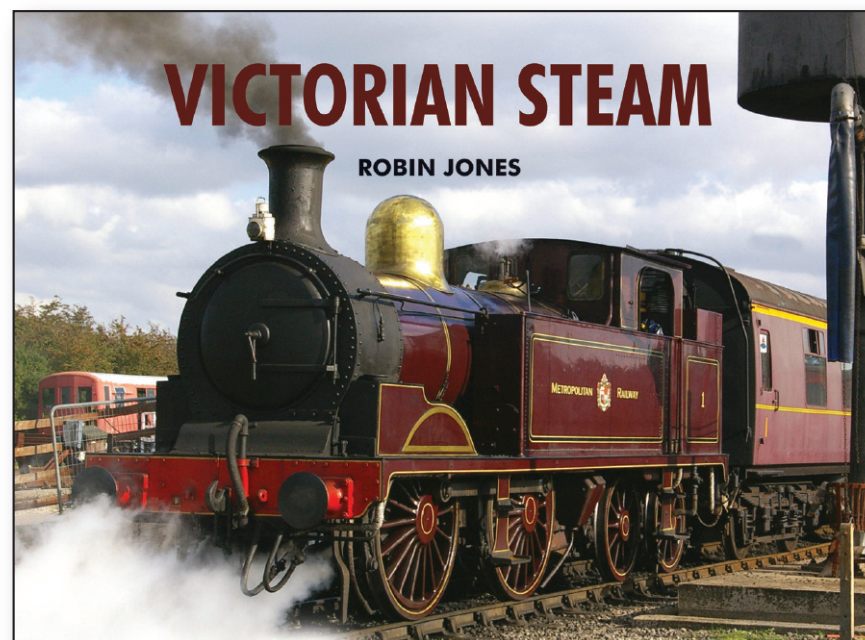
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Above: The Talylyn Railway's No 2 Dolgoch.



Perhaps best known as The Green Dragon in the EMI big screen production of Edith A Nesbit's classic *The Railway Children*, Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Class 25 0-6-0 tender locomotive No 957 designed by Chief Mechanical Engineer William Barton Wright. Built by Beyer Peacock in Manchester, the type became known as 'Ironclads'.

Right: Former Dinorwic Quarry saddle tank Cloister, built in 1891, is now in regular service on the Amberley Museum line in Sussex.



**1848**  
*Five Queen* was supplied new by marine engineers A. Harlick and Co in 1848 to run on the 4ft gauge Padstow Railway, which carried slate from the great Dinorwic Quarry in Caernarfonshire to the harbour of Port Dinorwic at Y Felinheli.  
 It was the first of the Welsh slate carrying 'limes' to use steam locomotives. The Padstow Railway closed in 1961 and *Five Queen*, a classic example of mid-19th century locomotive technology, is now a static exhibit in the National Trust's excellent Penrhyn Castle Railway Museum.



**1864**  
 Fletcher Jennings was an engineering company at Looe near Whitehaven in Cumbria. It supplied the first and only two steam locomotives to run on the Talylyn Railway in pre-preservation days. No 1 *Talylyn*, an 0-4-2ST, is seen hauling a demonstration freight train at Fach Goch in 2008. The locomotive did not have a cab when delivered new in 1865 – one was added later – and it appears here in its original Victorian condition.



Beattie well tank No 30587 recreates the atmosphere of the sylvan Wenfordbridge branch as it runs on multi-millionaire enthusiast Sir William Mc Alpine's private Fawley Hill Railway in Berkshire with a demonstration freight working.

Example of a double-page spread.