

STEAM ACROSS THE PENNINES

Chris Gee

The Pennine Hills in the North of England stretch from the Peak District in the North Midlands through to the Scottish border. They are an area of outstanding beauty and span a number of National Parks. They are home not just to glorious countryside but to some of the greatest and most picturesque examples of Britain's industrial heritage.

These hills have long formed a natural barrier to travel and trade. The earliest traders soon established packhorse routes around and over the hills and during the eighteenth century the first road builders established turnpike roads. By the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century, the canal engineers overcame the physical challenges with a series of locks and tunnels to construct the first trans-Pennine canals. Not long after, the Victorian engineers faced the same challenges when constructing the first railways to connect the towns and cities of Northern England. They left an admirable legacy of highly scenic lines supported by some fantastic engineering achievements which still survive today.

The railway lines that survive and cross and thread their way through, over and around the Pennine Hills still see regular steam-hauled excursion trains. The locomotives continue to work hard against the challenging gradients inevitable in this landscape.

There are four main trans-Pennine routes:

The Settle to Carlisle line through the Yorkshire Dales and Eden Valley

The Manchester to Leeds route via Standedge and Saddleworth

The Manchester to Sheffield route via the Hope Valley in the Peak District

The Blackburn to Bradford route via Calderdale and Hebden Bridge

The Settle-Carlisle especially is one of the wildest railways in England and the local permanent way team will tell you that it is quite common to see four seasons in one day!

This book showcases steam engines working in the landscape that draws in both passengers and photographers to witness giants of the age of Britain's industrial glory thundering through some of the most attractive scenery in the world. In more than 140 wonderful images, Chris Gee conjours up a spectacular vision of Britain and its past at its best.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

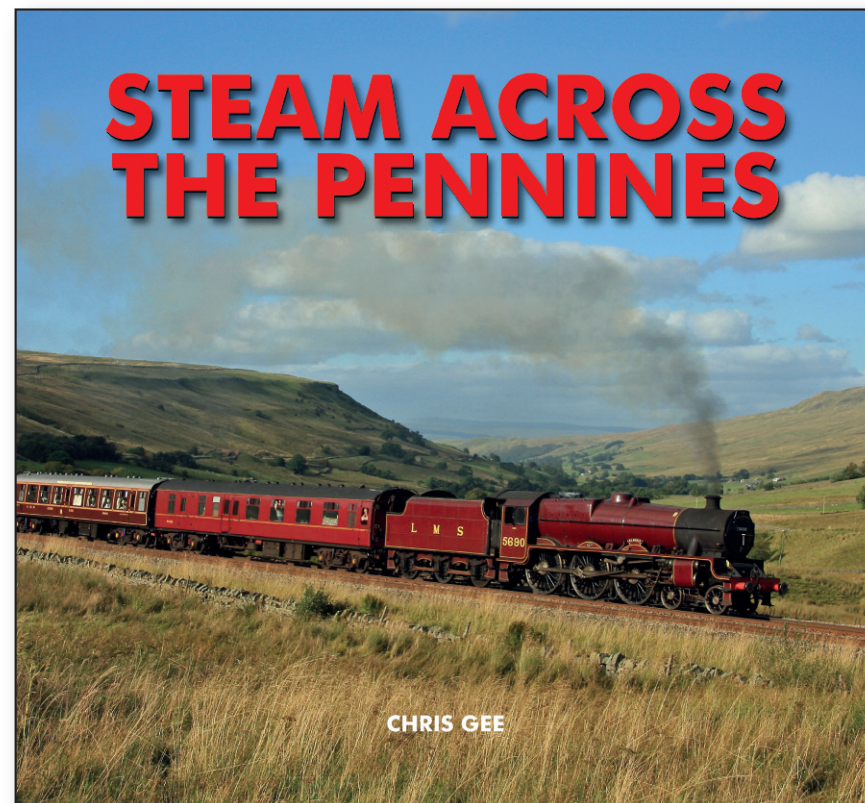
Chris Gee, a Manchester-based photographer who enjoys both landscape and railway photography, combines his knowledge of the area and his love of both subjects to produce a body of work that illustrates trains working hard within this beautiful part of the British Isles.

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Above: LMS Black 5 4-6-0 No.45407 climbs through the gritstone cutting at Quick as it heads to Stand-edge with a Cotton Mill Express on 26 July 2008.

Above left: LMS Royal Scot class 4-6-0 No.46115 SCOTS GUARDSMAN passes the large Arcow quarry at Helwith Bridge with a northbound Thames-Clyde Express on 7 February 2009.

Crossing the River Calder on the impressive Whalley Viaduct, BR Standard 4-6-2 No.71000 DUKE OF GLOUCESTER works a southbound Cumbrian Coast Explorer towards Blackburn on 3 July 2010.

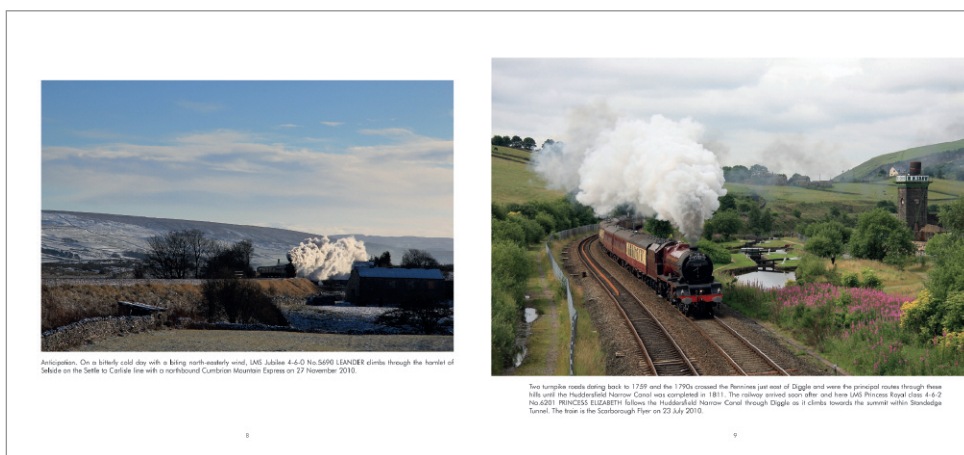


Left: A deserted and typically wet Horton-in-Ribblesdale station plays host to LMS Black 5 No.45231 climbing north with the Waverley on 22 August 2009.

Below: Example of a double-page spread.



Battling hard against a north-easterly wind, LMS Jubilee class 4-6-0 No.5690 LEANDER works hard through Selside with a northbound Cumbrian Mountain Express on 27 November 2010.



Anticipation. On a bitterly cold day with a biting north-easterly wind, LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No.5690 LEANDER climbs through the hamlet of Selside on the Settle to Carlisle line with a northbound Cumbrian Mountain Express on 27 November 2010.

Two tunnels were built during the 1780s and the 1790s crossed the Pennines just west of Diggle and were the principal routes through these hills until the Huddersfield Narrow Canal was completed in 1811. The railway entered each after and later LMS Princess Royal class 4-6-2 No.6201 PRINCESS ELIZABETH follows the Huddersfield Narrow Canal through Diggle as it climbs towards the summit within Standedge Tunnel. The train is the Scarborough Flyer on 23 July 2010.