

STEAM ACROSS THE HIGHLANDS

Brian Sharpe

Steam trains and Scottish highland scenery make a powerful combination, but is an experience that virtually disappeared fifty years ago. From the early 1980s though, as the railway preservation movement went from strength to strength, the return of steam traction to the Highlands proved to be one of the movement's most elusive goals. After the first tentative steps with the occasional steam train over the Highland main line though, steam returned with a vengeance in 1984, to the West Highland line to Mallaig on almost a daily basis.

Packed with evocative colour images, this book shows the full story of the steam revival on every surviving route in the Highlands, from the Strathspey Railway, through the regular 'West Highlander' and 'Jacobite' trains to Mallaig, to the one-off specials to Oban, Kyle of Lochalsh and the Far North, and including the multi-day, multi-engine land cruises of recent years.

With the accent on sunshine, scenery and steam, this is a comprehensive tribute to the men and machines which have conquered the Highlands for a second time in steam's Highland revival.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brian Sharpe is a journalist and lifetime railway and steam enthusiast, brought up close to the East Coast main line when it was ruled by the Gresley Pacifics.

As well as being deputy editor of *Heritage Railway* magazine for the past ten years, contributing features and news items, Brian has written books on *Flying Scotsman*, the dieselisation of British Railways and the railway legends of Doncaster.

In his spare time, Brian has also been a long-serving volunteer on the Nene Valley Railway, principally in the civil engineers and wagon restoration departments.

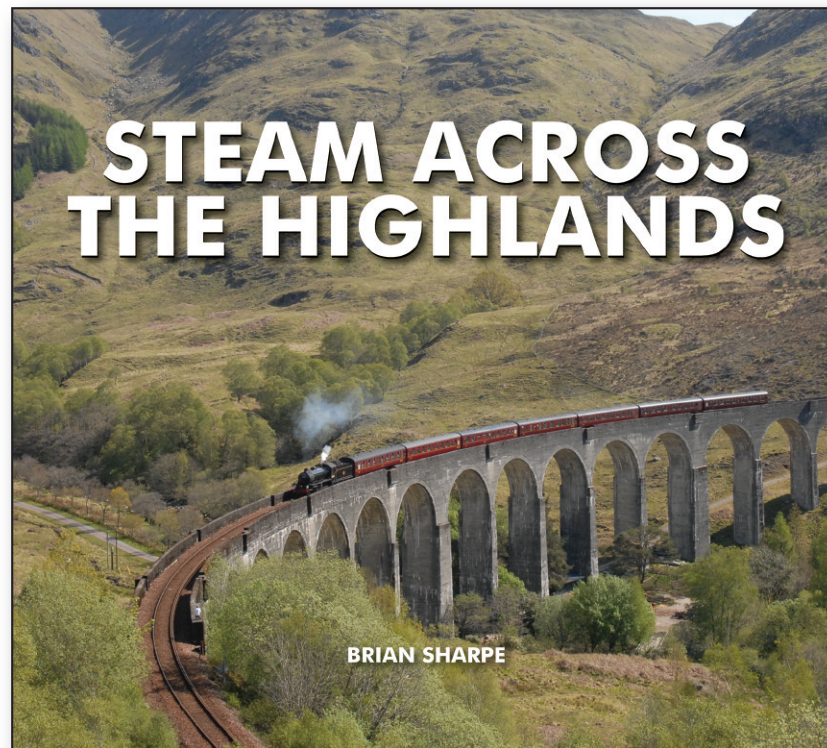
Throughout many years of photographing steam locomotives in action around the world, the railways of Scotland have always held the greatest appeal.

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No. 62005 climbs away from Glenfinnan early in the morning of 7 October 2003.



LNER K4 2-6-0 No. 3442 The Great Marquess and LNER K1 2-6-0 No. 2005 climb away from Loch nan-Uamh above the waters of Loch Dubh.



Right: Maude reaches the west coast and crosses Loch nan-Uamh viaduct on 28 May 1984.



Seen from above the first tunnel at Beasdale, LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 5305 crosses the distant Lochnan-Uamh viaduct on 1 December 1989.



LMS 'Black Five' 4-6-0 No. 5025 departs from Achnashieen on 5 October 1902.

No. 5025 rounds the curve near Durness, alongside Loch Carron on 5 October 1902. This location is now well known as the train breaks form where trains are greeted by the sound of horns and other specific comments.



Example of a double-page spread.



LMS Royal Scot 4-6-0 No. 46115 Scots Guardsman crosses Findhorn viaduct over the River Findhorn through Strathdearn on the climb to Slochd, running from Inverness to Glasgow.