

# THE OLD MINERAL LINE

**R.J. Sellick**

An independent and sometimes eccentric line, which connected the local port of Watchet with long abandoned mines and deserted villages more than 1000 feet high on the Brendon Hills, the West Somerset Mineral Railway enjoys a place in West Somerset folklore unrivalled by any closed branch line. Rarely accorded its full title, it is invariably referred to with nostalgic affection as the 'old mineral line'.

In this collection of historic photographs and expert commentary, R.J. Sellick traces the story of the Mineral Railway from its beginnings in 1856, through its fitful decline, to the end of the company in 1925. In this revised and updated new edition guidance is offered to exploring what remains of the railway from routes open to the public.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

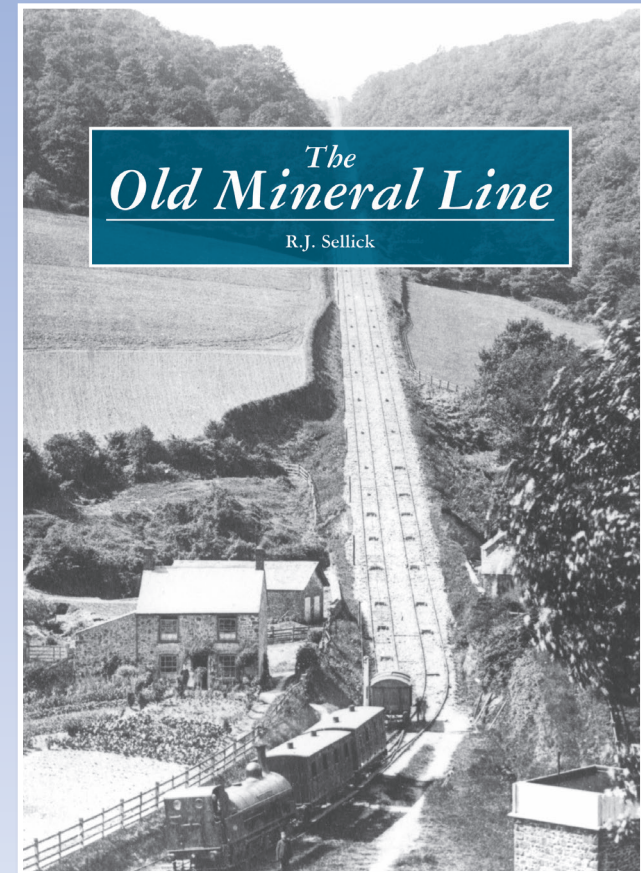
After attending the tiny village school at Herner, in the Taw Valley, the late **R. J. Sellick** went to Barnstaple Grammar School and then to Taunton School. A Chartered Surveyor, his work took him all over the country, from Plymouth to Sheffield, but latterly his permanent home was at Luxborough, only three miles from the West Somerset Mineral Railway.

His interest in the mineral line dated from his schoolboy days when, his curiosity aroused by his father's stories of the derelict line, he explored the route by cycle and on foot and interviewed many who had worked on or remembered the railway and mines. Much later, in 1962, he wrote *The West Somerset Mineral Railway*, the standard history on the subject. He also compiled a new extended edition of C. S. Orwin's classic history *The Reclamation of Exmoor Forest* and edited E. T. MacDermot's notes for the new edition of *The History of the Forest of Exmoor*.

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