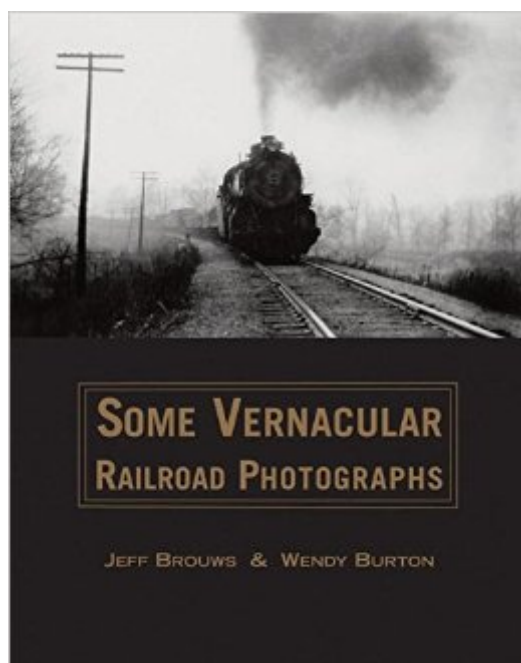


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# Some Vernacular Railroad Photographs



## Synopsis

A remarkable collection of images taken by passionate amateurs that have both a historical value and an innocent charm. Jeff Brouws and Wendy Burton have been collecting vernacular railroad photographs for many years, poring through disorganized boxes of snapshots at train shows and swap meets. With a keen editorial eye they have sought out the unusual, the lyrical, the pastoral, and the urban, ultimately assembling a collection that includes railroad landscapes, locomotives, bridges, and people primarily during the age of steam. This fascinating assemblage will appeal to fans of vernacular photography and rail fans alike. It is accompanied by an essay that includes a brief discussion of the aesthetic evolution of railroad photography in the early to mid-twentieth century and the phenomenon of the International Engine Picture Club, which acted as a clearing house and swapping mechanism for rail fans. 250 duotone photographs

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (5 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

The act of collecting was once a particularly strong trait in Anglo-American culture. Much of my childhood was spent in the 1980s, before the Internet era, when kids--and especially boys--were still expected to busy themselves with hobbies that generally involved some form of collecting. I never traded baseball cards--mine was a football household, poor benighted fans of the Seattle Seahawks--but there were other milieus: coins, stamps, agates. And then there were the adults. My grandfather, for example, seemed to be a magnet for early Pacific Northwest mountaineering memorabilia, though this was not his most unusual collection. That prize went to rocks. As in pure,

genuine, plain rocks. If he travelled anywhere interesting--Mount Hood, the Olympic Mountains, Canada, the Oregon Coast--a humble rock would get tossed into the trunk. Jeff Brouws and Wendy Burton's new book, *Some Vernacular Railroad Photographs*, is about the obsession of such collection, in this case of the amateur photographs of railroads. The railroad has had a profound influence on American culture, and is a subject of much veneration in popular history. The chase of The General across the battlefields of the U.S Civil War, the joining of the transcontinental railroad with a gold spike at Promontory, Utah in 1869, and the tragic 1900 death of locomotive engineer Casey Jones in a collision in Mississippi are all well known pieces of American folklore. More than a half century after the last mainline steam railroad laid low its coal fires and converted to economical, unromantic diesel power, the steam locomotive remains so evocative that it is the chief avatar of railroads in the public consciousness.

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