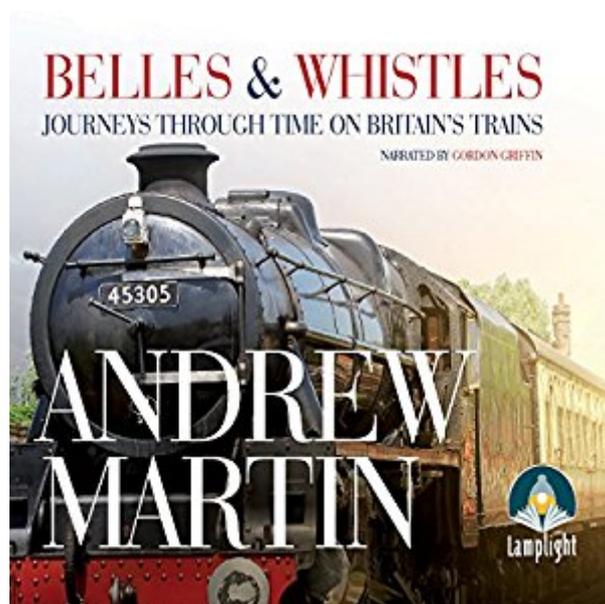


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Belles And Whistles: Journeys Through Time On Britain's Trains



Synopsis

In the heroic days of rail travel, you could dine on kippers and champagne aboard the Brighton Belle, smoke a postprandial cigar as the Golden Arrow approached Paris or be shaved by the Flying Scotsman's onboard barber. Everyone from schoolboys to socialites knew of these glamorous trains. Andrew Martin recreates famous train journeys by travelling aboard their nearest modern-day equivalents, describing the disappearance of the extravagance and luxury.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a great read for, I suspect, a small segment of the surviving cohort of Englishmen and women who have lived long enough to remember the good old days, of British trains before the whole UK rail system was nationalized, and then the denationalization by Maggie Thatcher, and the period up to the present--characterized by a multitude of share-listed companies [including Virgin Rail of the Virgin conglomerate] who run the main lines with adopted names similar to the pre-nationalization days. The prior sentence will give readers in other age groups and from other countries some idea of what talents the English [and Scottish] have of making a hash of things. I am 'senior' enough to remember the old Cornish Riviera [London to Land's End, Cornwall] of pre-state-owned days and the delicious wild rabbit stews they used to serve on the Pullman-like restaurant cars to kids like me getting out of London to avoid Hitler's bombs. Truth to tell, I don't think the old private railways were much improved by state ownership, although nationalization brought drastic cuts in branch lines with quaint old country stations [like Padstow, Cornwall] closed for ever

and trains running more or less on time. Andrew Martin is an excellent railway journalist, knows what he is talking about and has researched the book brilliantly. He highlights the aforementioned London-Cornwall express [now a night train] as well as the more glamorous Fleche d'Or [Golden Arrow], the storied London to Paris boat train. Other trains of note are the Flying Scotsman which wound its way up the eastern coast from London King's Cross to Edinburgh; and the great north-west line from London to Blackpool and Carlisle in Scotland.

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