

Stories of the railroad

John A Hill

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John A Hill : Stories of the railroad before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stories of the railroad:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Slowly revealing.By ProfTomIt's on my iPhone, and so I read it only rarely killing time. Fun short stories, not compelling nor terribly informative, but little by little one gets some sense (I think) of what this business and this work is like. When I first started to look for books about this, I was (still am) surprised there are so few published books on it. It's a bit like the military, these guys work is very specialized, very structured, very dangerous moving these huge machines.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. and roads were only too happy to hire men with the gutsBy Frank ReevesFor most railfans, whose interest focuses on the period from about 1930 to 2000, this book will have little appeal. The stories take place from 1863 to 1875, give or take, and they tell moralistic tales of the families, loves and misadventures of colorful firemen and engineers. Eccentric, strong and brave, these characters were, for their time, held in awe and admiration much as we regard "jet jocks" in our day. Wood-burning diamond-stacked locomotives with early valve and drive rod arrangements were dangerous and uncomfortable; brakes and coupling designs were primitive and dangerous; operations relied on pocket watches and written orders. Rail lines were still expanding westward, and roads were only too happy to hire men with the guts, stamina and resourcefulness to run the trains.Such matters are mentioned in passing, but the real stories involve human lives away from the rails. Writing in the florid, convoluted style typical of nineteenth century prose, the author devotes each chapter to a different set of characters and circumstances. We read of hard times and family loyalty ultimately overcoming misunderstandings; romances that miraculously blossom after languishing for decades; tragic accidents that somehow lead to good ends. The final chapter is particularly "off track," being a tale-within-a-tale about voyaging

to the Arctic aboard a whaling ship and the discovery of some mysterious artifact of shocking importance. If you like short stories from the Victorian period of mid-America, you may enjoy this little collection. Otherwise, I suggest you leave it parked at the station. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Not GoodBy Sparky These are not very interesting stories. Being a career Railroader I thought I would enjoy the stories but they are mostly boring.

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