



Firing the Flying Scotsman and Other Great Locomotives: Life on the Footplate in the Last Years of Steam

Ken Issitt

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Fast train fireman Ken Issitt worked on the footplate from the late 1940s to 1960, experiencing firing some of the greatest locomotives from the Flying Scotsman to Coltimore and Blink Bonney. The work was hard and conditions were tough but little did he know at the time that he was experiencing the last years of steam. He would never have imagined the romantic associations the period evokes today. Through a number of short accounts the past comes vividly to life, via stories about train crashes, pea-soup fogs, and fires going out. From the beginning of a shift, donning overalls and making up a packing, and from shunting in the marshalling yard to flying along with an express train at 80mph... Ken Issitt describes what life on the footplate was like across the last years of steam, his tales beautifully brought to life by Chris Bates's illustrations.

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