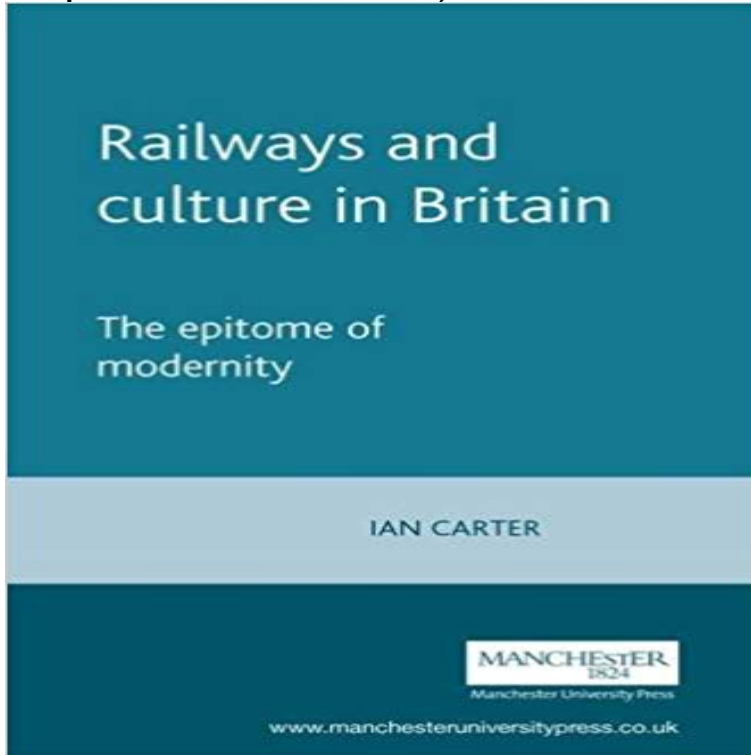


## Railways and culture in Britain: The epitome of modernity (Studies in Popular Culture MUP)



The nineteenth-century's steam railway epitomised modernity's relentlessly onrushing advance. In *Railways and culture in Britain* Ian Carter delves into the cultural impact of train technology, and how this was represented in British society. Why, for example, did Britain possess no great railway novel? The book's first half tests that assertion by comparing fiction and images by some canonical British figures (Turner, Dickens, Arnold Bennett) with selected French and Russian competitors: Tolstoy, Zola, Monet, Manet. The second half proposes that if high cultural work on the British steam railway is thin, then this does not mean that all British culture ignored this revolutionary artefact. Detailed discussions of comic fiction, crime fiction and cartoons reveal a popular fascination with railways tumbling from vast (and hitherto unexplored) stores of critically overlooked genres. A final chapter contemplates cultural correlations of the steam railways' eclipse. If this was the epitome of modernity, then does the triumph of diesel and electric trains, of cars and planes, signal a decisive shift to postmodernity? This book will be required reading for academics and students in nineteenth and twentieth-century British social history, as well as cultural studies and sociology. It will also be of great interest to train enthusiasts and crime fiction fans.

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