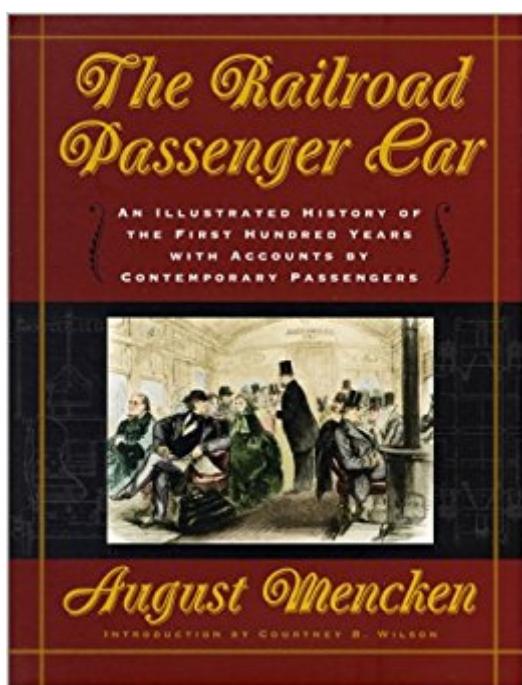


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The Railroad Passenger Car: An Illustrated History Of The First Hundred Years, With Accounts By Contemporary Passengers



Synopsis

Railroad travel in the nineteenth century was often dangerous, dirty, uncomfortable, and uncertain. Yet at the same time, most of the inventions associated with the luxury of a later era--from sleeping cars and dining cars to streamlining and even an early form of air conditioning--had already made their appearance by the time of the Civil War. In *The Railroad Passenger Car* August Mencken offers a fascinating look at the achievements and contradictions of this key period in railroad history. Drawing on a wide assortment of materials--including a wealth of drawings from the U.S. Patent Office, first-hand accounts of contemporary passengers, and his own experience as a young civil engineer active in railroad construction--Mencken presents the roster of cars in which nineteenth-century travelers rode and suffered. Here are the weird and ingenious inventions designed to increase both the passengers' comfort and the owners' revenue; and here are the passengers' own comments, both angry and humorous--thirty-five accounts written by passengers from 1831 to 1891 and bearing such titles as "An Inhuman Conductor," "The Baggage Smashers of Omaha," and "Cows on the West Chester Line." Published in 1957 and long out of print, *The Railroad Passenger Car* supplies a detailed and highly entertaining narrative richly illustrated with working drawings, cutaway images, and early photographs. New to this edition is an introduction by Courtney B. Wilson, executive director of the B&O Railroad Museum in Baltimore.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Humankind has a fascination with trains that borders on the obsessive. As the title indicates,

Mencken (brother of you know who) surveys the first 100 years of trains, including accounts by contemporary passengers. The text is buttressed with numerous monochrome photos and illustrations of passenger, sleeping, and dining cars that run the gamut from the poshest to the poorest of accommodations. This edition of the 1957 original contains a new introduction by Courtney B. Wilson. Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"What The Railroad Passenger Car does best is provide a technological overview of what was once an American institution... [It] remains valuable as a classical text." -- Carlos Schwantes, Technology and Culture

Good information but not well written

August Mencken's The Railroad Passenger Car offers the reader a complete and superbly illustrated history of the railroad passenger car during the first hundred years of its invention and development. This unique and scholarly presentation is based upon meticulous historical research and is enhanced with personal accounts by contemporary passengers, as well as illustrations with period photographs and line drawings. The Railroad Passenger Car is very highly recommended reading for both the railroad buff and students of 19th century railroading history and development, including the sleeping car and dining car.

An excellent reference book for anyone looking for information about railroad passenger cars from the earlier part of the American Railroad history. Many pictures and drawings.

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