



The Royal Arsenal Railways: The Rise and Fall of a Military Railway Network

Mark Smithers

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Mark Smithers has written a number of definitive books and magazine features on the history of locomotive construction and the development of narrow gauge railways. This book looks at the history and development of railways at the Royal Arsenal Woolwich, which evolved from humble roots in the 1820s into three separate railway systems, serving the Gun Factory, Laboratory and Carriage Department. The three systems originally had their own fleet of locomotives and rolling stock and were constructed using three different track gauges: standard gauge, 2ft and 18 inches.

The three separate factories and their railways were amalgamated to form one organization on 1 January 1891, when the Royal Arsenal Railways became an official entity.

The Arsenal and its railways played a major role in both world wars and continued to hold an important place in gun and propellant manufacture until the late 1950s, when the complex was gradually run down. The Royal Arsenal and its railways were finally closed in 1967, when the last train of material left the site. This book covers the history of the system from its beginnings through to its demise and also details the significant remains of a once mighty network.

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