

## Book Review

### **Railways in Profile No. 10** **British Railway Private Owner Wagons Vol. 2** **Geoff Gamble Cheona Publications £8.95** **ISBN 1900298 13 9**

Reviewed by Stephen Siddle

Cheona's tenth is out - grab it while you can. For those who have not yet come across this series, Cheona Publications is the house imprint of Geoff Gamble, railway bookseller and 3mm Society member. "Railways in Profile" are soft back quarto-format photo albums of 60 pages plus covers, each one dedicated to a particular subject, principally wagons, for which the complete list runs:

- 1 Opens and Hoppers
- 3 Vans
- 4 Rail tanks
- 5 Brakes, Cattle Wagons
- 6 Non-Passenger Stock
- 7 Engineer's Stock Vol. 1
- 8 Engineer's Stock Vol. 2
- 9 P.O. Wagons 1
- 10 P.O. Wagons 2  
(The odd man out, No.2,  
covers GW stations)

Photos are mainly black and white: there are colour shots on the covers and (in 9 and 10) 4 pages of colour internally. Photographers include Eric Bruton, Dave Larkin, Don Rowland, Roger Silsbury, BR official sources, and Geoff Gamble himself, and the photographs were taken between early 1948 and late 1997.

That date range is one of the most striking things about this series: it smashes right through the traditional apartheid within the hobby, whereby steam era books draw a polite veil over anything that happened after 25th August 1968, and modern image books ignore at least the first 125 years of railway history. Cheona really do range over the whole half century of BR's existence, and it is very pleasing to see a book like No.9 in this series, which opens with pictures of wooden bodied PO wagons in worn pre-war liveries and closes with three shots of the Redland self discharging aggregates train. I can therefore recommend these books to every member of the Association, with the single reservation that Nos. 1 and 3 do not contain any air braked stock.

The captions give the date and location of the photo and any points of interest in some detail; they are about as reliable as the standard reference works on which they rely. There are additional long notes and general remarks at the start of each book. The photographs themselves are arranged by vehicle type and within each type in rough chronological order of construction, and (where applicable) by railway company of origin.

What you do not get is drawings, or in the case of older vehicles, dimensions. For these you will have to turn to the standard wagon books and the modern image modeller will have to expand the handful of dimensions given by the usual hunting up of obscure references, guesstimation and prayers that the kitmaker/manufacturer got it right. Some of the engineer's conversions of revenue stock could probably be attempted from the photographs alone, since basic dimensions can be obtained for the original vehicle. A few of the finescale brigade might have a heart attack at this, but then they might have a heart attack if they saw what the engineers had made of the vehicles...

Taken together the "Railways in Profile" series are the most important wagon books to appear since the mid eighties. They are an invaluable source for the post war fitted and unfitted fleet in service and sometimes go beyond the existing standard works; they are the only readily available source for the nineties wagon fleet and almost the only available source for the latter part of the Eighties.

However print runs are small (about 1000 copies), distributors limited and they sell out fast although several of the earlier books have been reprinted. As I said, grab them while you can (Midland Counties Publication is a stockists). No.11, BR Vans 2 - Pre-grouping to Air-braked Stock, was due out in November.

*This article first appeared in the Winter 2000 issue of the DOGA Journal  
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