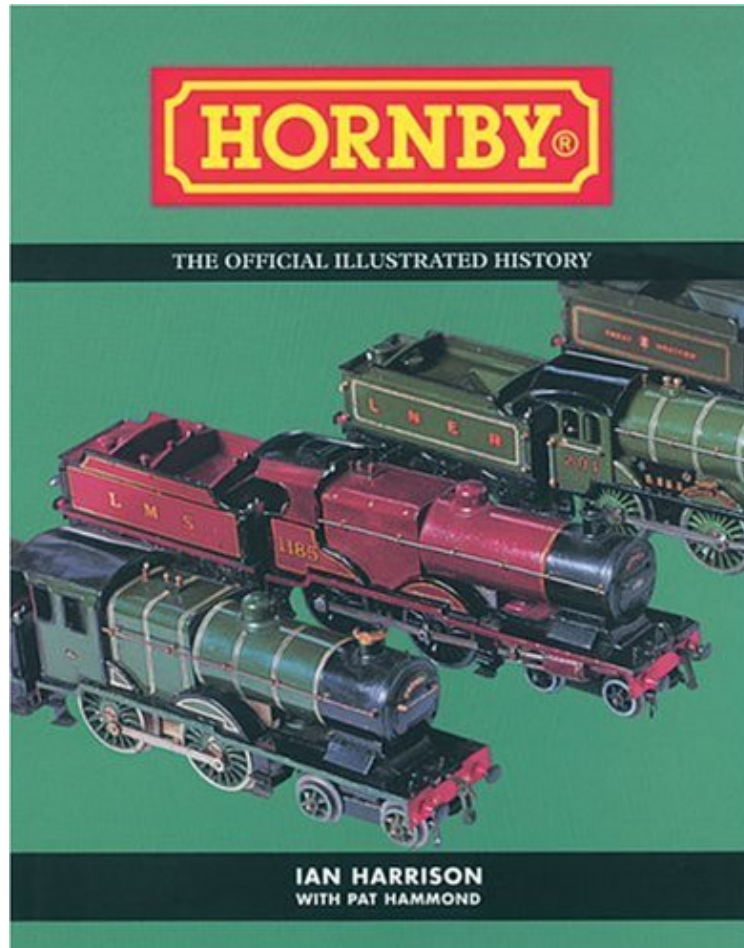


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Hornby: The Official Illustrated History

Ian Harrison, Pat Hammond

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Ian Harrison, Pat Hammond : Hornby: The Official Illustrated History before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hornby: The Official Illustrated History:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Not comprehensive, but an excellent overviewBy Peter Durward HarrisThe history of Hornby and its former rival Tri-ang, who ended up as one business, is long and complicated; the introduction points out that the story has been covered in far greater detail elsewhere, and you would need to read five books to get the whole story. This single volume does not attempt to compete with those books, but it does give a good overview of the history up to 2002, when this book was published.As a child of the era, it was Tri-ang trains that I had. My interest in model trains was a part of my childhood that did not persist into adult life, though I find reading about the history of the business fascinating.Frank Hornby first set up in business to manufacture Meccano, which he invented, but he became interested in toy trains, thus beginning the Hornby Railways story with clockwork trains. The book has four chapters, The first chapter covers the period 1901 to 1937, the 1901 date referring to the year that Frank

Hornby secured a patent for what became Meccano. During this period, clockwork trains gradually gave way to electric trains as an increasing number of households had access to electricity. During this period, the trains ran on Gauge 0 track. In the late thirties, it became clear that people wanted trains that could more easily be set up to run in smaller houses, so Hornby Dublo was born. The second chapter covers the period from 1938, when Hornby Dublo was launched, to 1964, when it went bust and was bought by Lines Brothers, the owners of Tri-ang Railways, who only began producing trains in 1950. Hornby Dublo were the market leader for much of this period, but Tri-ang did very well in the fifties and became the British market leader long before the end came for Hornby Dublo. Following the 1964 buyout, Lines Brothers merged the two and renamed the combined operation Tri-ang Hornby, but Lines Brothers hit trouble themselves in 1971. The Tri-ang name was sold and was never again associated with model railways, so the business has since used the Hornby name. Another owner also went bust in 1980, but a management buyout produced a long period of stability. Through all the changes of ownership, the business continued to develop and adapt, embracing Thomas the tank engine and Harry Potter as well as changes in real British trains. More surprising is development the Hornby Virtual Railway, showing that the business has adapted to the computer age, although this seems to have come about by accident, originating as something designed for internal use. Much of the book is about individual models, especially those that marked significant milestones of one kind or another. Mostly, the book focuses on the top passenger locomotives, but that should come as no surprise in a book that is not meant to be comprehensive. This book will suffice for those who are content to learn about the general history of the business, the main developments in production, the ownership changes and the reasons why. It's plenty good enough for me.

The model train set is the archetypal toy, and the archetypal British model rail train is a Hornby. *Hornby: The Official Illustrated History* is the first full pictorial account of the rise and development of the three main model railway systems that have borne the famous Hornby name over the last 82 years. From the simple toy trains of the 1920s to the super-detailed models of the 21st century, the Hornby story is richly enhanced with historic material and color photos of the trains that made Hornby the most famous name in British model railways.

“A sumptuous illustrated history of Hornby trains.” -- *Library Journal* About the Author Ian Harrison is a respected writer - previous books include *London 360*, (HarperCollins) and *The Times Century in Photographs*, (HarperCollins) among others. He is also an avid train collector