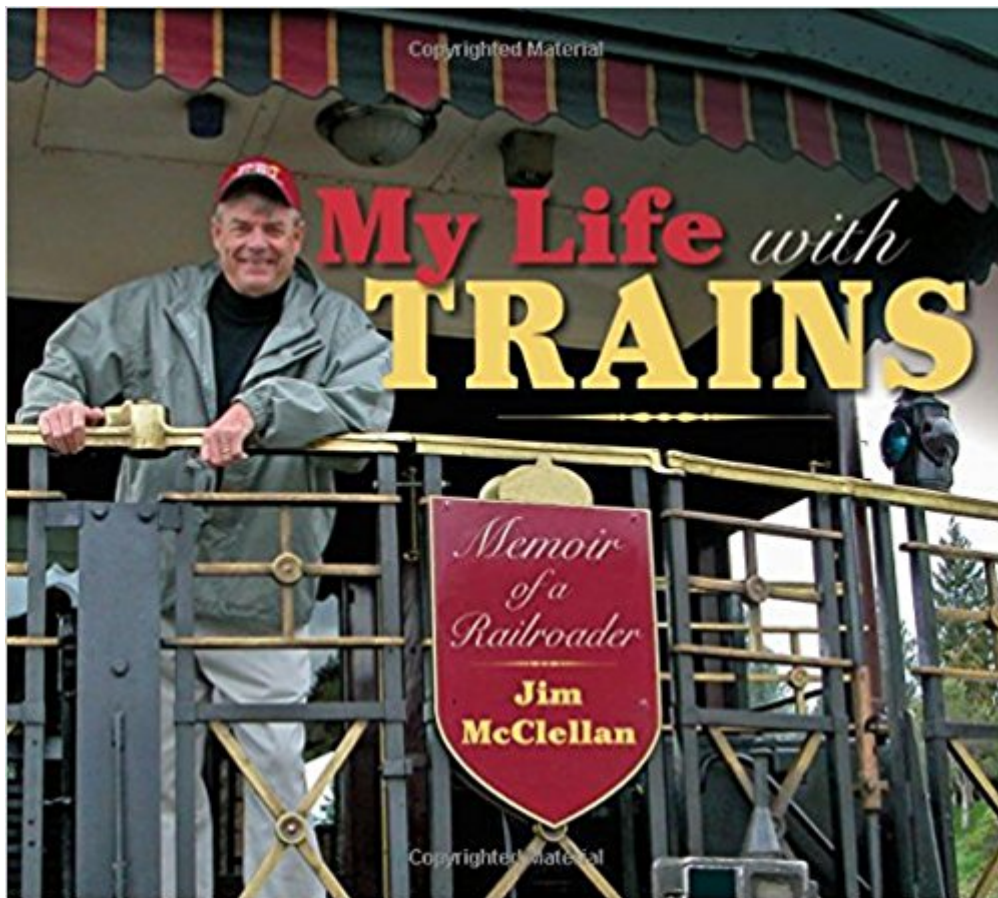




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# My Life With Trains: Memoir Of A Railroader (Railroads Past And Present)



## Synopsis

Named one of the "75 People You Should Know" by Trains Magazine, Jim McClellan was a railroading legend and one of the railroad industry's titans. An iconic and innovative executive, McClellan participated in the creation of both Amtrak and Conrail and worked for the Norfolk Southern, the New York Central, US Railway Association, and the Federal Railroad Administration. My Life with Trains combines a world-class photographer's love of railroading with the insights of a government and railroad official. The book provides a short historical overview of the changes in the industry, recounts McClellan's experience at various railroads, and offers personal reflections on a lifetime of working with and chasing trains. Expertly detailed with over 250 stunning color photographs, My Life with Trains covers sixty years as observed by a legendary railroad strategist.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Jim McClellan has gathered up a treasure trove of inside stories and tells them with precision and gusto. This book should be required reading for anyone seriously interested in the "whos," "hows," and "whys" of recent railroad history." —Herb Harwood, author of *The Railroad That Never Was: Vanderbilt, Morgan, and the South Pennsylvania Railroad* "The shared experiences and observations of Jim McClellan from both a public and private sector perspective lend the reader an appreciation for the state of our interwoven freight and passenger systems. My Life with Trains capsulizes rail industry planning dynamics and the evolving accomplishments during an era of

financial weakness to the emerging Renaissance." •Ronald L. Batory, President & Chief Operating Officer, Conrail"We've seen a lot of railroading's giants pass in recent years, but I can't recall anyone who triggered the kind of deep, emotional response accorded Jim.... We'll learn more about him in May 2017 when Indiana University Press releases his book, My Life with Trains." •Classic Trains"Jim McClellan dives into his treasure chest of reminiscences and describes in rich detail an excellent and fresh view of American railroading during the last half of the 20th century. The book's real beauty is the air of innocence and charm that is created by McClellan's unvarnished view of events and the world in general. McClellan's photos are also exceptional and will serve as a handy guide for any rail buff or historian." •Rush Loving, Jr., author of The Well-Dressed Hobo: The Many Wondrous Adventures of a Man Who Loves Trains"Jim McClellan is one of the most widely known and respected railroaders of my generation and few have had more direct involvement in the major reorganization of the industry. McClellan's personal observations will be extremely useful for anyone who wonders how and why the railroad industry has made such a complete turnaround in the past 30-40 years. This book is an excellent read and a valuable research tool." •Tom Hoback, retired Founder and CEO, Indiana Rail Road

Jim McClellan was a veteran of the railroad industry.

For me, nothing in railroading is more interesting and informative as the stories from the professionals. This book excels .

Jim's work was behind the scene and often off radar, but he played the key role in shaping the railroads resurgence, sadly now very much endangered once again.

Another great "first hand" account of an insider revealing what goes on inside the railroad board rooms and decision making process.

This is a book about a man's journey as an intellectual railroader. It's not about trains or about pictures of trains. Jim McClellan wrote and published other books and articles about trains. Even pictures and paintings of trains. However, this book is about his experience as a man who directly helped reshape the business of railroading. It's about his fears as well as his successes In taking on complex strategic ideas about the business of running railroads as companies. About struggling to communicate the complexity of networks. Often as a junior officer to others with far more experience

and seniority then he had. About championing over a three to four decade long "idea" of merging smaller railroads into larger and stronger corporate networks. It's about persevering when at first your idea of the perfect business match doesn't pan out. It's about dealing with business silos that face critical survival issues as the business of moving freight on steel rails became more difficult. It's about one man's maturing over along career. It's also a look inside a corporate culture in a company that competitors always thought was a strong and wealthy railway company that could do no wrong. How could they lose? They carried coal downhill. They had the best operating ratio. They were the envy of their competition. Yet, Mr McClellan reveals that inside that company there were serious questions about becoming "marginalized" by a carrier with a poorer productivity performance -- but with a much stronger origin/destination network coverage. It's about the career long search for long term corporate survival as the railroads struggled with eastern US bankruptcy like the Penn Central. About the fear of what happens if king coal traffic advantages should falter. It's a personal disclosure of how some times it's better to adapt to being lucky than just being smarter. It's a book about life inside both government agencies that regulate railroads as well, as life inside the executive floor of big private rail companies. If those issues interest you, then this book should be added to your library. Disclosure: twice in my railroad career I had the opportunity to work and learn from Jim McClellan. I might therefore be biased in this review. But in examine his history of four of the books sections about which I have first hand knowledge, I conclude that Jim McClellan gives the reader interesting and a pretty accurate account of the events -- from his insider recollection. Sharing with his peers as well as with outsiders some of the human and corporate nuances that I had overlooked. Sharing his fears so that the reader can learn that even the brightest among us have to struggle to be leaders. Because leadership isn't an easy task. There is always some doubt you have to overcome. That's my take away of why Jim's memories are of importance.

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