



Alco Locomotives

By Brian Solomon

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Once the second-largest steam locomotive builder in the U.S., American Locomotive Company (Alco) produced 75,000 locomotives, among them such famous examples as the 4-6-4 Hudsons and 4-8-4 Niagaras built for the New York Central, and the 4-6-6-4 Challengers and 4-8-8-4 Big Boys built for the Union Pacific. *Alco Locomotives* is the first book to tell the full story of this company central to American railroad history—and beloved by railfans for its rich heritage and its underdog appeal. Noted rail historian Brian Solomon looks back at the founding of Schenectady Locomotive Works in 1848 and proceeds to cover that company's merger with several smaller locomotive builders in 1901 to form Alco. Solomon describes the locomotives that made Alco's name around the world, from the standard designs like Mikados, Atlantics, and Mallets to the more powerful and flashy post-World War I models. His detailed, richly illustrated narrative re-creates the drama of a tough, ambitious company in the American tradition—rising again and again to the demands of an ever-changing industry and economy.

Solomon also covers Alco electrics (built in partnership with GE), as well as the company's successful and quirky diesel offerings, including the RS-2 and RS-3 road switchers, FA/FB road freight units, PA road passenger diesel, and the wares of Canadian affiliate Montreal Locomotive Works. Enlivened by numerous historical photographs, modern images, curious details, and firsthand accounts, this history is a complete, fascinating, and fitting tribute to a true icon of American railroading.

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

From 1901 to 1969, Alco locomotives were among the best known in North America. Here is the first comprehensive history of American Locomotive Company's steam- and diesel-powered offerings—machines that combined a rich railroading heritage with a reputation for pushing the envelope of locomotive technology.

Beginning with the steam era, veteran rail author Brian Solomon covers the design and development of standard Alco stalwarts—including Mikados, Atlantics, and Mallets—as well as more powerful and flashy postwar models—most notably New York Central's Hudsons, Union Pacific's Challengers and Big Boys, and Milwaukee Road's Atlantics and Hudsons. Diesel coverage features all pre- and postwar models, including Alco's pioneering road switchers, its FA/FB freight units, and the classic PA passenger locomotive. A mix of high-quality historical photos, modern color images, and primary research ensure a fitting tribute to this icon of the American rails.

While vying with behemoth EMD for a piece of the domestic diesel business, Alco lost market share and exited the industry in 1969, but not before leaving its mark with some of the most beloved and interesting locomotives in the history of North American rails. Throughout this tribute, readers witness a company continually meeting the demands of an ever-changing industry and economy.

From the Back Cover

From 1901 to 1969, Alco locomotives were among the best known in North America, often marked by the innovations of some of the industry's most talented engineers. In this, the first comprehensive tribute to American Locomotive Company, author Brian Solomon offers a collection of high-quality historical photos and modern color images complemented with primary research examining the gamut of Alco locomotives, from steam stalwarts, including Mikados, Atlantics, Mallets, Big Boys, and Challengers, to diesel offerings such as Alco's pioneering switchers and iconic PA passenger locomotives. For the railfan, Alco combines a rich railroading heritage with a reputation for pushing the envelope of locomotive technology. Here is the fitting tribute to this icon of the American rails.

About the Author

Brian Solomon is one of today's most accomplished railway historians. He has authored more than twenty-five books about railroads and motive power, and his writing and photography have been featured in the world's top railfan publications, including *Trains*, *Railway Age*, *Passenger Train Journal*, and *RailNews*. He divides his time between Massachusetts and Ireland.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jack Alexandre:

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Wilma Richards:

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