Beeching: 50 Years On

Simon-E: Just thought I would let everyone know of a new publication that is being sold in WH Smith called Beeching - 50 years of The Axeman, its 130 pages with many articles and pictures and it costs £6.99, I've bought a copy and it's definitely worth every penny. Copies can be found near the transport magazines section. Just thought I would let everyone know of a new publication that is being sold in WH Smith called Beeching - 50 years of The Axeman, its 130 pages with many articles and pictures and it costs £6.99, I've bought a copy and its definitely worth every penny. Copies can be found near the transport magazines section. This year â€“ and indeed this month â€“ are also highly significant though for a rather less joyous reason. For in March 1963 a small book of around 150 pages was published by the British Railways Board. Its official title was The Reshaping of British Railways. Inevitably, however, it became known by the name of the man who headed British Railways at the time. An industrial chemist who had previously headed ICI, he was â€œon loanâ€ from that organisation with a remit to sort out the problem of the railways. For many, Dr Beeching will always be the bogeyman. For those wishing to be more objective though, there are, fortunately, various publications that look back more critically and more objectively at both the man and the report, which arguably changed the face of rural Britain. Julian Holland. With images of protests, last trains and the subsequent dereliction, Julian Holland presents a vivid picture of this dramatic and drastic shake-up of Britain's railways. Julian Holland's Dr Beeching's Axe 50 Years On is a unique memorial to all that was lost following the publication of the 'Beeching Report' on 27 March 1963. Across the land railways were ripped up and communities were broken apart. Vast regions of England, Scotland and Wales were left without a railway link to the outside world. Skilled railwaymen, who for generations had loyally given their all to the company March 2013 marks fifty years since the Beeching Axe fell upon the nationâ€™s railway system. The recommendations made by the infamous report were greeted with horror and indignation then and the furore is rekindled simply at the mention of Beechingâ€™s name. In this book we shall look at the positive effects the report has had, not on the railways themselves â€“ that has been done many times â€“ but on the opportunities which would never have arisen otherwise. Maybe by the end of the book Dr Beeching will be seen in a slightly different light by the reader: not as the saviour of Britainâ€™s railways, but as someone whose name should be associated with a whole new area of leisure for all and indeed pleasure for those who can swap OO gauge for 4ft 8in (1.44m).