



Locomotive: Building an Eight-Wheeler

David L. Weitzman

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In the 1830s, Americans fell in love with railroads and locomotives. Soon we were building the biggest, most powerful locomotives in the world. The steam locomotive became a symbol of American ingenuity and skill that our national poet, Walt Whitman, called an "emblem of motion and power - pulse of the continent." One of the most useful locomotives was a wood-burning 4-4-0, an eight-wheeler made for fast passenger service. The author explains how an eight-wheeler was built and takes the reader through the construction process, from the draftsmen's first drawings to the beautifully crafted, perfectly tuned locomotive that steamed out of the shop with the sun glinting off her polished brass bell and whistle. The mechanical details are miraculously revealed in the illustrations, showing the skill and pride of the craftsmen who helped to build this great nation.

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