

RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE VICTORIAN NOVEL

From 1830 onwards, railway infrastructure and novel infrastructure worked together to set nineteenth-century British society moving in new directions. At the same time, they introduced new periods of relative stasis into everyday life – whether waiting for a train or for the next instalment of a serial – that were keenly felt. Here, Nicola Kirkby maps out the plot mechanisms that drive canonical nineteenth-century fiction by authors including Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Gaskell, Anthony Trollope, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, and E. M. Forster. Her cross-disciplinary approach, as enjoyable to follow as it is thorough, draws logistical challenges of multiplot, serial, and collaborative fiction into dialogue with large-scale public infrastructure. If stations, termini, tracks, and tunnels reshaped the way that people moved and met both on and off the rails in the nineteenth century, Kirkby asks, then what new mechanisms did these spaces of encounter, entanglement, and disconnection offer the novel?

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RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE VICTORIAN NOVEL

From Platform to Plot via the Railroad

NICOLA KIRKBY

City St George's, University of London



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For Rosalyn and Grace

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