

Mighty engines of the steam era A philatelic



First Class Inland letter rate – *Coronation*, LMS Coronation Class, at a platform in London's Euston Station in 1938



First Class inland letter rate – *Evening Star*, the last of the British Railways Class 9F, at Midsomer Norton in 1962



67p, basic airmail rate – *King William IV*, GWR King Class, photographed near Teignmouth in 1935

THE GREAT BRITISH RAILWAYS issue of six stamps and its presentation pack go on sale at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and at Royal Mail Tallents House on 19 August. (Please note that this is earlier than the originally scheduled date of 16 September).

The new issue marks the fiftieth anniversary of the building of British Railways' last steam locomotive – the 9F Class *Evening Star*. Colin Divall, Professor of Railway Studies at the University of York, was consulted to help choose other great engines to feature, with the aim of representing the whole of the UK by including engines from the four main railway companies that were amalgamated into British Railways in 1948. These companies were Southern Railway (SR), the Great Western Railway (GWR), London, Midland and Scottish Railway (LMS) and London North Eastern Railway (LNER). To cover Northern Ireland, the Northern Counties Commission (NCC) of Northern Ireland – which is an LMS subsidiary – is also included, as well as British Railways itself.

First day cover facilities Your orders for serviced FDCs (i.e. stamped and postmarked) should reach Tallents House (address on page 3) by the day of issue, with payment of £5.29 UK (including VAT) or £4.51 overseas (no VAT). The stamps will be cancelled with a first day of issue postmark of the Tallents House, Edinburgh or the alternative York postmark as required – please mark accordingly on the outside of your envelope. Customers who hand in or post stamped Royal Mail First Day Cover envelopes at main Post Offices on the day of issue will receive the pictorial York first day postmark.

Alternatively, customers may send stamped envelopes to any of the Special Handstamp Centres for the pictorial or plain York postmark, quoting the appropriate reference number – York pictorial 1 FD 09 32; York non-pictorial Ref No FD 09 32NP.

Great British Railways, 19 August 2010

Set of stamps	£4.10
Presentation pack No 446	£4.60
First day cover envelope, unstamped	30p
First Day Cover, mail order price	£5.29
Serviced first day cover stamps, overseas customers	£4.51
Set of six stamp cards	£2.40

Design background Like many of his generation Brian Delaney, of the stamps' designers Delaney Design Consultants, had 'a fascination with engines as a schoolboy,

tribute to some iconic British locomotives



67p, basic airmail rate – *Royal Lancer*, LNER Class A1, photographed in 1929



97p, world airmail – *Sir Mador de la Porte*, SR King Arthur Class, at Bournemouth Central Station between 1935 and 1939



97p, world airmail – an LMS Northern Counties Committee Class WT, Engine No2, at Larne Harbour, circa 1947

especially the massive steam engines.’ And he welcomed the design challenges offered by this stamp series: ‘Ian Prevett and I looked through thousands of original photographs of the period to choose six images that would work well together and include engines used by the big four pre-1948 railway companies and British Railways. Our objective was to retain the particular character of the photography of the era and to present the most powerful images of the iconic engines within the small area available on the stamp.’

As this *Bulletin* goes to print, Brian Delaney is working on a follow-up Miniature Sheet of Great British Railways – watch *Bulletin* for details.

Collectors’ retrospective Other British stamps to have featured railways include: 1975 Anniversary of Public Railways; 1980 150th Anniversary of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway; 1985 Famous Trains; 1999 Millennium Series, Victorian Railway Station 43p; 2003 Classic Locomotives; 2006 Brunel; 2007 World of Invention, Steam Locomotive 1st; Pioneers of the Industrial Revolution, George Stephenson and Locomotion 56p. (Please note, these stamps are no longer available from Royal Mail.) ●

Contained in the Great British Railways Presentation Pack, shown right, are details of all the trains featured and an erudite synopsis of this world-renowned era in British transport. ‘The story of Britain’s steam railways in the 20th century is complex, so cutting it down to 1500 words was a real challenge,’ says Professor Colin Divall. ‘I have tried to give the topic a fresh angle by looking at the way in which locomotives became part of the railways’ marketing.’

