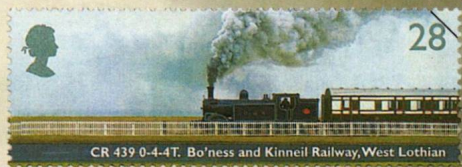


Classic Locomotives Royal Mail celebrates the preserved railways of Britain: a new set of stamps featuring six working steam locomotives goes on sale on 13 January.



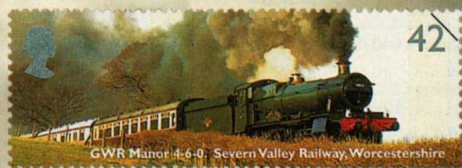
Talylyn Railway, mid-Wales



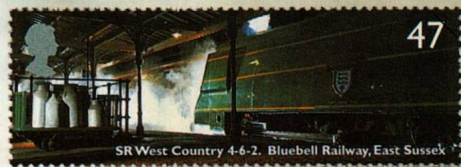
Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway, West Lothian



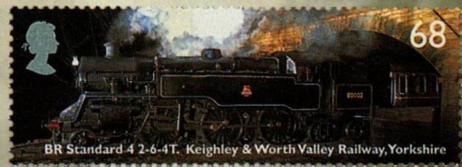
Great Central Railway, Leicestershire



Severn Valley Railway, Worcestershire



Bluebell Railway, East Sussex



Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, Yorkshire



Technical details**Printer** De La Rue**Process** Lithography (fine screen)**Stamp size** 60 x 21mm**Sheet size** 24 and 48**Miniature sheet size** 190 x 67mm**Perforation** 14.5**Phosphor** 2nd class one band others two bands**Gum** PVA**Gutter pairs** Vertical**Cylinders and colours****All values** D1 greenish yellow

- D1 magenta ● D1 new blue
- D1 silver ● D1 black ● D1 phosphor

The Classic Locomotives issue is the fifth set entirely devoted to railways, following issues in 1975, 1980, 1985, and 1994. This set has been designed by Roundel design group, with photography by John Wildgoose.

SHEETS These stamps will be issued to Post Office branches in sheets of 24. However sheets of 48 will be available from Post Office philatelic outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House; these sheets have two panes of 24 separated by a gutter, thus gutter pairs will still be available.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 13 January, price 25p. The cover features a drawing by David Gentleman of a fireman at work on a steam locomotive. Orders for FDCs with the stamps or miniature sheet cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Tallents House or York must reach Tallents House by the day of issue. Price £3.27 UK or £2.79 overseas. Please state if stamps or miniature sheet required.

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, South Shields DO, Keppell Street, South Shields NE33 1AA (York postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDO401' (Tallents House), or 'FDO402' (York). Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the York postmark. A non-pictorial York postmark is also available from the Special Handstamp Centre, request 'FDO402 NP'.

Sponsored handstamps for 13 January will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK/Europe; £24.95 elsewhere). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ.

PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated pack (price £2.95) and stamp cards (30p each) will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and Tallents House.

A coin cover will also be available, price £13.95, from 13 January. The cover features a technical drawing of a steam locomotive with the six stamps affixed and cancelled by a special postmark for Penydarren where Richard Trevithick's first steam locomotive ran 200 years ago in 1804. The colourful insert card includes a map showing the location of 35 heritage railways in Great Britain, with illustrations and details of each of the six featured on the stamps. There is also a railway history chart showing developments from Trevithick's locomotive to the end of mainline steam on British Rail in 1968. The card also illustrates some tickets and luggage labels from the steam age.

PRESTIGE BOOK The *Letters by Night* PSB, to be issued on 16 March, will include a pane of 28p, E and 42p Classic Locomotives stamps. Other panes will contain definitive and country stamps and the 1st class 'Station' stamp from the Pub Signs issue. Details will be published in February's *Bulletin*.



The postmark for the Classic Locomotives coin cover.



CLASSIC LOCOMOTIVES

Royal Mail First Day Cover

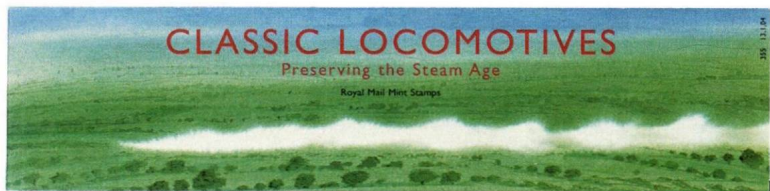
Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorhber Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

Royal Mail Tallents House 31 South Gate Crescent Edinburgh EH12 9PS

The presentation pack (below) for this issue is the first in a new format: the stamps are carried in clear mounts on the bottom panel, rather than in a separate holder. The folded pack will fit existing albums.

The pack includes an article by the record producer Pete Waterman, and illustrations by David Gentleman. Over the last 30 years, Mr Waterman has been heavily involved in steam preservation, and once owned the *Flying Scotsman*.

The miniature sheet is also shown below, at proof stage.



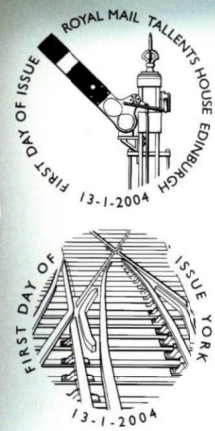
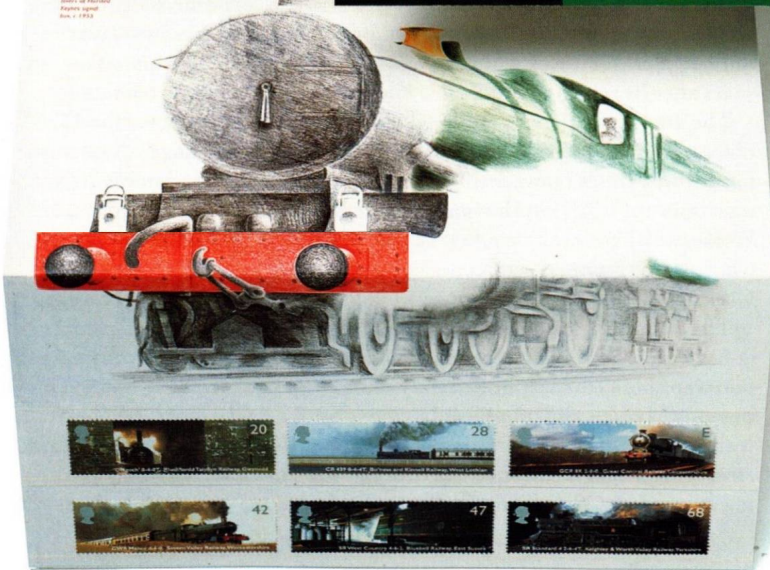
the 1930s when my co-operations, however, to the as a class
splendour of the passengers sitting at tables covered in white
and illuminated by table lamps seemed the distance in luxury.

Although my own railway career was brief it will be forever in
my mind. The working conditions were appalling but the camaraderie
between the workers was unshakable. A locomotive crew was
partnership of driver, fireman and guard. I started work as a boy
and spent the final six months doing what I still consider to be
job of my life - a fireman.

Over the last thirty years, I have spent my
free time trying to preserve as much of
history as possible. Fortunately I once owned
most famous locomotive in the world -
Scotsman - and now own the *Britannia*.



Illustration from
Peter Waterman
1998
1998



Steam locomotives reached their peak in 1924 when about 24,000 were in use. British Railways reduced this number from the 1950s and the last was used in 1968. Many locomotives have been saved by museums, preserved steam railways, and by individuals. In recent years steam-hauled excursion trains have run over main lines. The age of steam, which seemed doomed in the mid-1960s is now very much alive, an important aspect of British heritage. Some details of the six preserved railways on which these locomotives now run will be included in next month's *Bulletin*.



The 20p stamp features locomotive *Dolgoch*, an 0-4-0 tank built for the 2'3" gauge Talylyn Railway by Fletcher Jennings & Co of Whitehaven in 1864. The locomotive is still in service. The Talylyn was one of several narrow gauge railways in North Wales built primarily to serve the slate industry. *Dolgoch*, the second locomotive built for the Talylyn, was in regular use until 1953 when it was withdrawn for repairs and a new boiler. Now, 40 years after its return to traffic, it is into its second century of operation.

The 28p stamp depicts class 439 0-4-4 T locomotive built for the Caledonian Railway by Nasmyth Wilson & Co. Some 124 of this class of locomotive were built between 1895 and 1925. The last was withdrawn from service in 1961. All but the final 10 were built at the St Rollox (Glasgow) Works, which generally painted its passenger engines blue. Some, painted black, were equipped with condensing apparatus in order to work on the Glasgow suburban lines.

The subject of the £ rate stamp is the Great Central Railway's 8K class (2-8-0) locomotive built at several works between 1911 and 1921. A total of 666 were built, the last in Britain withdrawn from service in 1966. This design was originally introduced by the GCR for heavy main-line mineral trains and, during the First World War, used for service with the British Army (Royal Engineers) in France. Some were sold overseas, one remaining in use in the New South Wales coalfield until 1973.



The 42p denomination shows a Great Western Railway 'Manor' class (4-6-0) loco. Some 30 were built at the company's Swindon works between 1938 and 1950, and remained in service until 1965. Manor class locomotives were introduced primarily to work on the former Cambrian Railways Main Line in mid-Wales. The final series preserved several features, including the domeless tapered boiler and distinctive outside cylinders, which had first appeared on GWR locomotives in 1903.

The 47p stamp depicts a Southern Railway West Country class (4-6-2) locomotive built at the Brighton and Eastleigh works from 1945 to 51. The last of the 110 constructed ended its working life on British Railways in 1967. This class of locomotive, introduced to work secondary routes in the West Country, was a scaled-down version of the powerful 'Merchant Navy' class of 1941. Both had unorthodox features – internal chain-driven valve gear and 'air-smoothed' sheet metal casing – aimed at reducing routine maintenance and cleaning. Both classes were rebuilt on more conventional lines from 1956.

The final stamp, 68p, depicts a British Railways 'Standard 4' class (4 2-6-4T) locomotive of which 155 were built at Brighton, Derby, and Doncaster works, 1951-57. The last was withdrawn from service in 1967. In 1951 British Railways inaugurated a range of 12 standard steam locomotive classes, many based on pre-1948 LMS designs ●

GWR Manor class locomotive on the Severn Valley Railway, Worcestershire, as on the 42p denomination of the Classic Locomotives issue.