

Diamond Jubilee Details of the new Miniature Sheet and definitive released next month



IN CELEBRATION of the Queen's sixtieth year on the throne, Royal Mail will issue six new definitive stamps in a special Miniature Sheet (above) comprising portraits of HM the Queen from the coins, banknotes and stamps of her reign. The Miniature Sheet, printed in gravure by Walsall Security Printers, is released on 6 February, a date which carries great significance for Elizabeth II: it was on the same date in 1952 that she acceded to the throne on the death of her father, her father King George VI of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. He had died in his sleep after a long illness, at the royal estate at Sandringham. Princess Elizabeth, the oldest of the King's two daughters and next in line to succeed him, heard the sad news while in Kenya with Prince Philip.

Stamp by stamp The Miniature Sheet brings together five different portraits of the Queen and also a new Diamond Blue Machin definitive, on six 1st Class stamps. The first stamp is inspired by the Wilding definitives first issued in 1952, featuring a photograph taken by Dorothy Wilding and a decorative frame inspired by the early frame designs of Edmund Dulac.

The second 1st Class stamp shows a banknote portrait by Robert Austin, who designed the first Bank of England notes to bear the monarch's head. The engraving was based on a pencil sketch taken from a photographic portrait of Queen Elizabeth II, the first monarch to be depicted on Bank of England notes. The first such note, £1, appeared in 1960.

The third stamp bears a banknote portrait by Harry Eccleston, whose new banknote designs began to appear in 1971. His portrait of the

Diamond Jubilee Miniature Sheet Specifications

Issue date	6 February
Number of stamps	6 x 1st Class
Miniature Sheet size	147mm x 74mm
Design	Sedley Place
Coin photography	David Burton
Stamp format	Portrait
Stamp size	20mm x 24mm
Printer	Walsall Security Printers
Print process	Gravure, with techniques for metallic and iridescent inks and foil blocking
Number per sheet	6
Perforations	15 x 14
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	PVA

Queen on the £5 note showed her wearing the robes of the Order of the Garter, as on the subsequent £1 in 1978.

On the fourth stamp is a coinage portrait by Mary Gillick. Coins with her design were first issued in 1953 (and it is still used on Maundy Money).

Arnold Machin's design for the new decimal currency, first issued in 1968, features on the fourth stamp. This design subsequently provided the basis for the definitive stamp image and is printed next to the final stamp in the Miniature Sheet – the classic definitive Machin, issued in the new colour of Diamond Blue – specifically for the Diamond Jubilee Year. Highlighted in iridescent ink are the words 'Diamond Jubilee'.

To celebrate the Jubilee year, a self-adhesive version of this stamp will replace the gold definitive in general circulation. It is printed by De La Rue in gravure and the Diamond Jubilee stamp book (shown below) is printed by Walsall Security Printers.



Above and facing page: special postmarks for the Diamond Jubilee Definitives issue feature the numeral 60 and 'Long to reign over us' in cursive script

Presentation Pack The illustrated Diamond Jubilee Presentation Pack was designed at Studio Dempsey and contains a description of the history and iconography of Queen Elizabeth II portraiture on stamps, coins and banknotes. The text is written by Douglas Muir, Curator, Philately, of The British Postal Museum and Archive. The First Day Cover is shown below, with pictorial alternative postmark. The filler card contains an brief overview of the portraiture of the portraits featured on the stamps ●

Diamond Jubilee Miniature Sheet Prices

Miniature Sheet	£2.76
Presentation Pack	£3.30
First Day Envelope	30p
First Day Cover inland	£3.79
First Day Cover overseas	£3.16
Stamp Cards (7 in set)	£3.15
Press Sheet, 12 x uncut Miniature Sheets	£36.43
1st Class Diamond Blue Jubilee Definitive	46p
12 x 1st Class Stamp Book	£5.52
Commemorative Document	£7.49



Above: the new stamp book contains 12 x 1st Class Diamond Jubilee Definitives. Left: the Diamond Jubilee Definitives First Day Cover