

British Railways "Britannia" Standard Class Pacific 4-6-2

The ready to run O gauge model is from 55H/Finescalebrass (UK), designed in the UK and fully finished by SAM Models and FM Models in South Korea. Western Star, another name for the planet Venus, was first used by the GWR on an early Broad-Gauge locomotive, then again on a Standard Gauge "Star". 70025 was the first Britannia to enter service on the Western Region.



Designed by Robin Riddles, an ex LMS man, at Derby, all fifty-five "Britannias" were built at Crewe Works from 1951. They had 6' 2" diameter driving wheels, somewhat smaller than many express passenger classes, two cylinders and outside Walschaerts valve gear. They were left hand drive. Deflectors, fitted to lift the exhaust smoke and steam clear of the boiler, actually impeded the crew's forward vision. Fifteen were allocated new to Western Region.

From December 1956 all were concentrated at Cardiff Canton, whose Top Link crews received them well, unlike other WR sheds, and ran them successfully, especially on the tightly-timed passenger rosters between Cardiff and Paddington, including "THE RED DRAGON and "CAPITALS UNITED" expresses. High mileage Britannias were used on passenger-timed parcels and milk trains to and from West Wales. The decision to transfer six GWR "Kings" to Canton from Old Oak Common in 1959 reduced the role of these Britannias, which were diverted to secondary duties working passenger services to Bristol, Shrewsbury and elsewhere. By 1961 all fifteen had left the WR.

Initially to the Eastern Region where there was not suitable work for them, then on to the Midland Region where they were utilised on a wide range of duties, replacing "Royal Scots", "Jubilees" and rebuilt "Patriots", especially in the north-west.

From Carlisle, Britannias were used to good effect working over the Settle & Carlisle main line on express freights as well as passenger rosters, taking them to Leeds, Bradford and Scotland (where some Britannias were named after Firths). Despite Britannias having a number of LMS design features, Midland Region crews had no particular affection for them. All ex- WR Britannias were withdrawn in 1966/67 and none survived into preservation, but BRITANNIA and OLIVER CROMWELL live on.