



Mallard: How the 'Blue Streak' Broke the World Steam Speed Record

Don Hale

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'It ought to be a film, of course, pitched somewhere between *The Right Stuff* and *Chariots of Fire*. Meanwhile, Don Hale's well-ordered, compelling book will do nicely' Andrew Martin, *Daily Express*

Seventy years ago, on 3 July 1938, on the East Coast main line, the streamlined A4 Pacific locomotive Mallard reached a top speed of 126mph - a world record for steam locomotives which still stands. Since then, millions have seen this famous locomotive, resplendent in her blue livery, on display at the National Railway Museum in York. Don Hale tells the full story of how the record was broken, from the nineteenth century rivalry to be fastest between London and Scotland, and, surprisingly, traces Mallard's futuristic design to the Bugatti car and Germany's nascent Third Reich, which elevated the train into an instrument of national prestige. And he celebrates the singular figure of Mallard's designer, Sir Nigel Gresley, one of Britain's most gifted engineers. Mallard is a wonderfully nostalgic evocation of one of British technology's finest hours.

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