

The Story of Beatrix Potter

Prestige Stamp Book

10 August 1993



The 1993 Prestige Stamp Book, to be issued on 10 August, commemorates the work of Beatrix Potter, one of our best-loved authors of childrens' books. The year 1993 marks the centenary of a letter that was to become the most famous of all children's books, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. Written by Beatrix Potter, the letter was sent on 4 September 1893 to Noel Moore, the five year old son of her former governess. This year is also the 50th anniversary of Beatrix Potter's death, on 22 December 1943.

The stamp book contains 30 pages, illustrating the life of this remarkable lady. We are told of her childhood in London, her early interest in nature study, her letters to children and the publication of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* in 1902. In 1901 she had been unable to find a publisher for the story and had 250 copies privately printed. In October 1902 Frederick Warne produced an edition of 8000 copies; the book proved so successful that by the end of the year 28,000 copies were in print. More books followed and in 1905 Beatrix was preparing to marry her editor, Norman Warne. Sadly Norman died and Beatrix took refuge in her work and in Hill Top

Farm in the Lake District. In 1913 she married her solicitor William Heelis and they settled at Castle Cottage near Hill Top Farm. Their home and her beloved Lake District are illustrated in the stamp book. Beatrix Potter died in 1943. Her name lives on, not only in her books, but in the Lake District where she left some 4000 acres, including Hill Top and 16 other farms, to the National Trust.

The book contains four panes of stamps, with total face value of £5.64. The retail price of the book is £6.

Stamp Panes

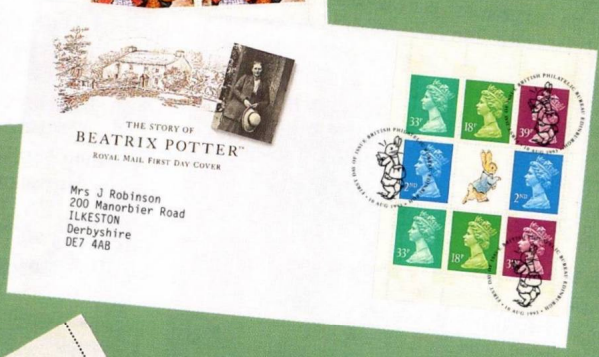
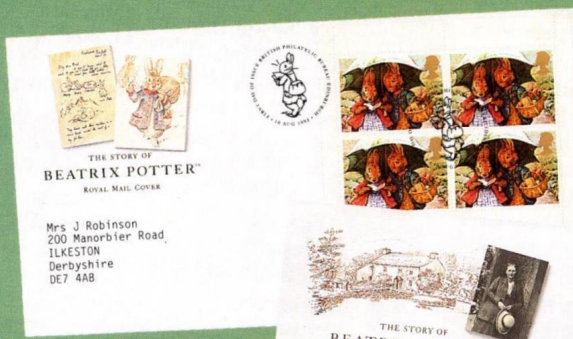
The book contains four panes of stamps, as follows:

1. 4 × 1st class Greetings stamps featuring Peter and Mrs Rabbit (as in "Gift Giving" Greetings book, issued 2 February 1993).
2. 3 × 18p (band left) and 3 × 24p (2 bands) Country definitives, one each for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, printed as horizontal se-tenant pairs for each country, 24p at left.
3. 3 × 2nd class (band left) and 3 × 1st class (2 bands) NVI definitives, printed as horizontal se-

THE STORY OF BEATRIX POTTER™



ROYAL MAIL BOOK OF STAMPS



tenant pairs, 1st class at left.

4. 2 × 2nd class NVI (band left), 2 × 18p definitive (band left), 2 × 33p definitive (2 bands), 2 × 39p definitive (2 bands) and 1 central label.

The pane containing the Peter and Mrs Rabbit stamps was printed in photogravure by Harrison & Sons Ltd, the other three panes in offset-lithography by The House of Questa.

All stamps cover basic postal rates – 18p basic inland 2nd class rate; 24p basic inland 1st class and EC rate; 33p worldwide postcard rate, and 39p basic airmail letter rate.

All panes have selvage, giving a miniature sheet effect, and also have two, vertical columns of rouletting, one near the binding margin for ease of removing the complete stamp pages from the book if desired.

Stamp Variations

The book will yield seven new stamps:
18p definitive, litho, band left (2 copies)
2nd NVI litho, band left (5 copies)
18p Northern Ireland band left (1 copy)
24p Northern Ireland 2 bands (1 copy)
18p Scotland band left (1 copy)
24p Scotland 2 bands (1 copy)
18p Wales band left (1 copy).

The 24p Wales 2 bands and 33p 2 bands were previously issued in the Welsh prestige book (February 1992). The 1st class NVI 2 bands and 39p 2 bands were included in the Tolkien book (October 1992) (1st class NVI and 33p also in Welsh book).

In addition to the stamps, several detachable stickers illustrating some of the more famous characters from Beatrix Potter's books are included.

The Beatrix Potter stamp book was designed by The Partners, written and edited by Judy Taylor. The text was set letterpress by The Hand Press. The illustrations of Beatrix Potter's original works are copy right of Frederick Warne and the book has been produced under licence from that company. The Beatrix Potter characters names and illustrations are trademarks of Frederick Warne.

First Day Facilities

A choice of unstamped "Royal Mail First Day Cover" and "Royal Mail Cover" envelopes will be available from main post offices, the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus, and philatelic counters around a week before 10 August, price 21p each. The "Royal Mail First Day Cover" shows an illustration of Beatrix Potter set against

a view of Hill Top Farm. This will be on sale up to and including 10 August. The "Royal Mail Cover" shows original drawings by Beatrix Potter for the Peter Rabbit story. This cover will remain on sale at the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus and Philatelic Counters after 10 August, until further notice.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the "Royal Mail First Day Cover" bearing the mixed pane of 2nd class, 18p, 33p and 39p stamps cancelled with a pictorial "First Day of Issue" postmark of the Bureau or Keswick, price £2.90 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £2.47 to overseas addresses (no VAT).

The "Royal Mail Cover" is offered bearing the pane of four Peter Rabbit stamps, cancelled by the Bureau or Keswick postmarks, at £1.49 UK (no VAT) or £1.27 overseas (no VAT). Orders for serviced covers must reach the Bureau by 10 August.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers, on the day of issue, for the Bureau or Keswick cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT or Northern England Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Forth Street NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE NE1 1AA. The outer envelope should be endorsed "Pictorial First Day of Issue postmark".

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive the standard, non-pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps.

Details of other special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others, will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – the Royal Mail's magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe, £21.75 Rest of World (Airmail).

