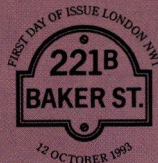


Sherlock Holmes

12 October 1993



Five 24p stamps, printed in a horizontal strip, to commemorate the centenary of the publication of *The Final Problem* – the last Sherlock Holmes story, in which Holmes is killed in a fight with Professor Moriarty, go on sale at post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus, and Philatelic Counters on 12 October 1993.

The stamps feature scenes from five Sherlock Holmes stories: Holmes and Dr. Watson in *The Reigate Squires*; Holmes and Sir Henry Baskerville in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*; Holmes and Lestrade in *The Six Napoleons*; Holmes and Mycroft in *The Greek Interpreter*; and Holmes and Moriarty in *The Final Problem*.

Transport and Communication stamps. Other illustration work for Royal Mail have been the 1988 and 1990 Christmas stamps designed respectively by Trickett & Webb and John Gorham.

The idea for the Sherlock Holmes stamps was to involve the main characters, if not the main stories, over the five portrait – format stamps. Mr Davidson read all Conan Doyle's stories as if for the first time to give a fresh and honest interpretation. He comments: "Many people undoubtedly have their own favourite actor for each part, but it was important to go back to Conan Doyle's original description. As the stamps are about a detective, one with a



The stamps are the work of Andrew Davidson, born 1958, who studied graphic design at Norwich School of Art (1976-79) and The Royal College of Art (1979-82). Over the last 11 years, he has worked using wood engraving and flat colour on a variety of commissions. Most of the work has come from design groups in the form of corporate identity, packaging and pure illustration. Mr Davidson's designs have been used by Penguin Books and in three illustrated books for Faber & Faber. One of these, *The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes, won the Emil Kurt Mashlen award and a Design and Art Directors Silver award in 1986. Another silver award in 1987, for illustrations used for a series of pub signs, led to Mr Davidson being commissioned by Mike Dempsey of Carroll, Dempsey & Thirkell to illustrate the 1988

sometimes humorous, often eccentric nature, a few clues as to the character in the stories are hidden in each stamp. The idea of people using Holmes's favourite prop, the magnifying glass, to find the clues in the stamp, was too good to miss."

Sherlock Holmes was the invention of Arthur Conan Doyle, a Portsmouth doctor, who turned towards writing adventure stories, following an unsuccessful practice.

Doyle's model for Sherlock Holmes was Dr Joseph Bell, who had been his professor of medicine at Edinburgh University in his student days, and whose extraordinary powers of deduction in piecing together the histories of his patients, were a source of wonder to all he taught.

In December 1893, the *Strand Magazine*

announced the death of one of the most famous figures of the Victorian era – Sherlock Holmes. He was presumed to have plunged to his death at “Reichenback Falls” in Austria, while wrestling with his arch enemy, Professor Moriarty, the “Napoleon of Crime”.

Technical Details

Printers: The House of Questa
Process: Offset-lithography
Size: 30 x 50mm (vertical format)
Sheets: 100

Perforation: 14 x 14½

Phosphor: Phosphor coated paper

Gum: PVA

Presentation Pack: No. 241, price £1.50

Stamp Cards: Nos 156a-e, price 21p each

First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus and Philatelic Counters around a week before 12 October, price 21p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps cancelled with a pictorial “First Day of Issue” postmark of the Bureau or London NW1 price £1.77 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £1.51 to overseas addresses (no VAT). Orders for first day covers must be received at the Bureau by 12 October.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers, on the day of issue, for the Bureau or London NW1 cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, KEB, LONDON EC1A 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).

Stamp Scene

Phil Care

“Phil-Care” has been formed to voluntarily supply clean sets of British stamps and clean covers, etc to the unfortunate members of our stamp collecting fraternity who are: Disabled; House-bound or unable to leave home without a carer; Hospitalised; or wounded veterans. *Bulletin* readers interested in “joining” should send their “philatelic C.V.” to: Godfrey Winston, 20 Princes Park Avenue, Golders Green, LONDON NW11 0JP. Please enclose self-addressed reply envelope (UK) or 2 International reply-coupons and self-addressed reply airmail weight envelopes (overseas).

Smallest Post Office in Wales

A post office, believed to be the smallest in Wales, from the hamlet of Blaenwaun, near Whitland in Dyfed, was opened to the public at the Welsh Folk Museum, St Fagans, on 26 May 1993.

It was originally built in 1936 by Evan Isaac, a local mason, for his daughter Hannah Beatrice Griffiths; she and her husband ran it until the mid-1960s. The post office was then taken over by her daughter, Mrs B E James, and the business transferred to her bungalow a short distance away. The old post office remained empty for almost 20 years until it was generously donated to the Museum by Mrs James in 1991.

The building has been furnished as it would have been during the Second World War, enabling the Museum to incorporate this important period into its permanent displays. It gives the Museum an opportunity to display part



Blaenwaun PO, Welsh Folk Museum (Photo: David Harrop).