



News Release  
4 August 2020

## IT'S ELEMENTARY - ROYAL MAIL ISSUE NEW SPECIAL STAMPS TO HONOUR SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE'S SHERLOCK HOLMES

- Royal Mail reveals images of a set of 10 stamps to be issued to celebrate one of the most beloved fictional heroes of all time, Sherlock Holmes
- Sherlock Holmes was created by physician-turned-author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in 1887
- Six stamps will feature images of characters from the BAFTA and Emmy award winning BBC series Sherlock including: Sherlock Holmes; Doctor John Watson; Jim Moriarty; Irene Adler; Mary Morstan; and Mycroft Holmes
- When UV light is shone over the stamps hidden details from the episode storyline are revealed
- A further four stamps, presented in a miniature-sheet, feature new illustrations of other stories written by Conan Doyle: The Adventure of the Speckled Band; The Red-Headed League; The Adventure of the Second Stain; and The Adventure of the Dancing Men
- BBC's Sherlock has been broadcast in 180 countries
- The full set of 10 stamps, available in a Presentation Pack, retails at £13.50. The stamps and a range of collectible products are available now to pre-order from [www.royalmail.com/sherlock](http://www.royalmail.com/sherlock)
- The stamps will go on general sale from 18 August 2020



Royal Mail today announced it is issuing a set of 10 Special Stamps to celebrate Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, one of the most beloved fictional heroes of all time.

Six stamps depict characters from the BAFTA and Emmy award winning BBC series, Sherlock, including: Sherlock Holmes; Doctor John Watson; Jim Moriarty; Irene Adler; Mary Morstan; and Mycroft Holmes. Mrs Hudson and Eurus Holmes are also featured.

Devised and written by Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss, Sherlock aired for the first time in July 2010. This interpretation of Conan Doyle's mysteries offered audiences a fresh, modern take on his novels and short stories, with an irreverent tone and 21<sup>st</sup> century technology such as internet searches, texting and GPS. It went on to win numerous awards for its writing, production and the acting of Benedict Cumberbatch, Martin Freeman, Amanda Abbington and Andrew Scott.

Each of the character stamp features a scene from some of the most popular episodes across all the series. When UV light is shone over the stamps hidden details from the episode storyline are revealed.

An additional four stamps, presented in a miniature-sheet, explore other stories written by physician-turned-author, Conan Doyle. The stories included are among the ones Conan Doyle considered his favourites: The Adventure of the Speckled Band; The Red-Headed League; The Adventure of the Second Stain; and The Adventure of the Dancing Men.





When Sir Arthur Conan Doyle published his first Sherlock Holmes novel, *A Study in Scarlet*, in 1887. He had no idea how iconic the character would become. Inspired by the detective stories of Edgar Allan Poe and real-life figures such as Scottish surgeon Joseph Bell, Conan Doyle would produce 56 Holmes short stories and four full-length novels before laying the character to rest in 1927.

**Sherlock producer, Sue Vertue**, said: "We are terribly proud of our Sherlock TV series and now am ridiculously excited about these Royal Mail stamps. I'm going to immediately book a UK holiday so I can send all my friends postcards using them!"

**Richard Doyle, Arthur Conan Doyle's great nephew**, said: "In the first chapter of my great uncle Arthur's famous Sherlock Holmes novel, *The Sign of Four*, Sherlock remarks upon the sheet of stamps in Watson's desk - imagine his consternation if it turned out to be this sheet of stamps! What would he have deduced from what he observed?"

"I hope those who take a close look at these fascinating stamps, observing not just seeing, are inspired to read the original stories and novels written by my great uncle - Sir Arthur Conan Doyle."

**Philip Parker, Royal Mail**, said: "We celebrate the enduring fascination with the world's most famous fictional detective – Sherlock Holmes. Our stylish new stamps mark the acclaimed and award-winning TV series and are complemented by illustrations of some of the stories Conan Doyle considered among his best."

### Stamp-by-stamp: A Study in Pink

Returning to London following a traumatic experience in the Afghanistan war, injured army medic Dr John Watson is on the hunt for a flatmate when he is introduced to Sherlock Holmes, a unique figure who describes himself as "the world's only consulting detective". The pair move into shared lodgings at 221B Baker Street, only for Watson to be drawn into an unexpected adventure when Sherlock begins investigating a series of bizarre 'serial suicides' that have left Scotland Yard baffled. Coming to the aid of Detective Inspector Greg Lestrade, Holmes soon discovers that each of these deaths is actually the work of the same sinister killer, who has the apparent ability to move undetected through the streets of London.

### **The Great Game**

When an innocent woman is taken hostage and strapped to a bomb, Sherlock Holmes and John Watson are drawn into a cat-and-mouse game with London's most notorious criminal, the enigmatic James Moriarty. The challenge is simple: working against the clock, Sherlock must solve a series of crimes, each more fiendish and challenging than the last. Ranging from the seemingly natural death of a popular TV star to the theft of important government files, each case adds another piece to Moriarty's sinister, unfolding puzzle. Having successfully completed all five tests – and survived a bruising encounter with a master assassin known only as The Golem – Holmes accepts Moriarty's invitation to join him at a deserted swimming pool where the criminal mastermind finally reveals his true identity.

### **A Scandal in Belgravia**

Holmes's older brother, Mycroft, reveals that the notorious Irene Adler has compromising photographs of a member of the Royal Family on her phone, and calls on Holmes and Watson to retrieve the device. When our heroes track the flirtatious Adler to her London flat she escapes, taking the phone with her. But Sherlock is unable to forget his encounter with this alluring woman, and when her dead body is found he is deeply affected. It later transpires that Adler – who has also been passing information to Moriarty and threatening to blackmail the government – faked her demise to evade a gang of terrorists, who plan to bomb a transatlantic flight. Only Sherlock has the knowledge necessary to stop them.

### **The Reichenbach Fall**

By now the most famous detective in the country, Sherlock's reputation comes into question following another encounter with the devious Moriarty. Having carried out audacious attacks on the Bank of England, Pentonville Prison and the Tower of London, Moriarty is captured in possession of the Crown Jewels. He is swiftly brought to trial, only to be unexpectedly acquitted – because, as Sherlock discovers, the crime lord either threatened or bribed the jury. Having gained his freedom, Moriarty manipulates the public and the media into believing that Sherlock is a fraud who carried out crimes only to 'solve' them himself. Matters culminate in a face-to-face showdown between Sherlock and Moriarty on the roof of a hospital, from where Sherlock apparently plummets to his death.

### **The Empty Hearse**

Two years after his faked suicide, Sherlock comes back to London having tracked down and eliminated the last vestiges of Moriarty's criminal empire. He reintroduces himself to Dr Watson, only to be surprised when his old friend doesn't welcome him with open arms. Watson, who is soon to be married to Mary Morstan, has spent the intervening years trying to come to terms with Sherlock's death, and is understandably annoyed to discover that he has simply been in hiding. But the pair set aside their differences when Sherlock saves John from a kidnapping, and are soon on the case of a respected Lord who appears to have vanished on the London Underground. The case leads them to a bomb plot against the Houses of Parliament, and the revelation that there is a new master villain in town.

### **The Final Problem**

Sherlock Holmes is alarmed to discover that, in addition to his brother Mycroft, he has a second sibling – a sister, Eurus, described as a genius to rival Isaac Newton, but with a total absence of human empathy. Eurus is being held in a secret maximum-security prison situated on an island in the North Sea, a last-resort facility housing the country's very worst criminals. Holmes and Watson travel to the prison to confront Eurus, only to find that she has used her extraordinary powers of persuasion to take over the facility, bending the staff and fellow prisoners to her will. To avert a horrific tragedy, Sherlock and John must undergo a series of psychological trials designed to test the bonds of friendship between them.

The full set of 10 stamps, available in a Presentation Pack, retails at £13.50.

The stamps and a wide range of collectible products are available now to pre-order at [www.royalmail.com/sherlock](http://www.royalmail.com/sherlock)

The stamps will go on general sale from 18 August 2020.

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**Notes to Editor:**

**About Royal Mail Special Stamps**

For more than 50 years Royal Mail's Special Stamp programme has commemorated anniversaries and celebrated events relevant to UK heritage and life. Today, there are an estimated 2.5 million stamp collectors and gift givers in the UK and millions worldwide. HM The Queen approves all UK stamp designs before they are issued.

**About Royal Mail plc**

Royal Mail plc is the parent company of Royal Mail Group Limited, the leading provider of postal and delivery services in the UK and the UK's designated universal postal service provider. UK Parcels, International and Letters ("UKPIL") comprises the company's UK and international parcels and letters delivery businesses operating under the "Royal Mail" and "Parcelforce Worldwide" brands. Through the Royal Mail Core Network, the company delivers a one-price-goes-anywhere service on a range of parcels and letters products. Royal Mail has the capability to deliver to around 30 million addresses in the UK, six days a week (excluding UK public holidays). Parcelforce Worldwide operates a separate UK network which collects and delivers express parcels. Royal Mail also owns General Logistics Systems (GLS) which operates one of the largest ground-based, deferred parcel delivery networks in Europe.