

# THE GREAT DETECTIVES



## ON SCREEN

**Week Five**

**The Marvellous Miss Marple**

## Welcome to *The Great Detectives*

### Week Five

Miss Jane Marple, one of the indelible creations of Agatha Christie – doyenne of crime fiction, first appeared in 1927 in a short story entitled “The Tuesday Night Club”. Over the next five decades, she would appear in 12 novels and 20 short stories.

Marple – second only to Hercules Poirot – is one of Christie’s most beloved detectives – proving not only that female detectives were more than capable of standing alongside their male counterparts (never mind the fact that any doubt on that score was and remains insane) but also that literary sleuths could be of any age or background.

From her perch in St Mary Mead, Jane Marple solves crimes big and small and it wasn’t long before she had taken her rightful place on stage and screen.

A great many actors have tackled the part, each building a devoted following of their own. In cinema, Margaret Rutherford made four Marple films in the 1960s. Angela Lansbury, before she claimed another long-standing crime solving role in *Murder, She Wrote*, was Marple in 1980’s *The Mirror Crack’d*.

On television, Grace Fields, Helen Hayes, Joan Hickson, Geraldine McEwan and Julia McKenzie all brought their own versions of the detective to life.

Like Poirot, Miss Marple is more than a singular character. They are icons of a particular brand of detective novel and, in turn, screen story. They rely on brains over brawn, often using the way in which other characters underestimate them to their benefit.

Jane Marple is oft-imitated, but never equalled.

## FILMS WEEK FIVE

Murder, She Said (1961)

*Dir. George Pollock*

The Alphabet Murders (1965)

*Dir. Frank Tashlin*

The Mirror Crack'd (1980)

*Dir. Guy Hamilton*

The Secret of the Blackbirds (1983)

*Dir. Vadim Derbenev*

A Caribbean Mystery (1983)

*Dir. Robert Michael Lewis*

Murder by Death (1986)

*Dir. Robert Moore*

Murder at the Vicarage (1986)

*Dir. Julian Amyes*

The Body in the Library (2004)

*Dir. Andy Wilson*

Agatha Christie's Great Detectives (2005)

*Dir. Naohito Takahashi*

A Pocketful of Rye (2009)

*Dir. Charlie Palmer*

Miss Ma (2018)

*Dir. Min Yeon-hong & Lee Jung-hoon*