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The Adventure of the Red-Headed League (Illustrated) (The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes Book 2)

Arthur Conan Doyle

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"The Adventure of the Red-Headed League" is one of the 56 Sherlock Holmes short stories written by Arthur Conan Doyle. It first appeared in The Strand Magazine in August 1891, with illustrations by Sidney Paget. Conan Doyle ranked "The Red-Headed League" second in his list of his twelve favorite Holmes stories. It is also the second of the twelve stories in The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, which was published in 1892.

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Conan Doyle was a fervent advocate of justice and personally investigated two closed cases, which led to two men being exonerated of the crimes of which they were accused. The first case, in 1906, involved a shy half-British, half-Indian lawyer named George Edalji who had allegedly penned threatening letters and mutilated animals. Police were set on Edalji's conviction, even though the mutilations continued after their suspect was jailed.

The second case, that of Oscar Slater, a German Jew and gambling-den operator convicted of bludgeoning an 82-year-old woman in Glasgow in 1908, excited Conan Doyle's curiosity because of inconsistencies in the prosecution case and a general sense that Slater was not guilty. He ended up paying most of the costs for Slater's successful appeal in 1928.

Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle DL (22 May 1859 – 7 July 1930[1]) was a Scottish physician and writer, most noted for his stories about the detective Sherlock Holmes, generally considered a milestone in the field of crime fiction, and for the adventures of Professor Challenger. He was a prolific writer whose other works include science fiction stories, plays, romances, poetry, non-fiction and historical novels.

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Conan Doyle was friends for a time with Harry Houdini, the American magician who himself became a prominent opponent of the Spiritualist movement in the 1920s following the death of his beloved mother. Although Houdini insisted that Spiritualist mediums employed trickery (and consistently exposed them as frauds), Conan Doyle became convinced that Houdini himself possessed supernatural powers—a view expressed in Conan Doyle's The Edge of the Unknown. Houdini was apparently unable to convince Conan Doyle that his feats were simply illusions, leading to a bitter public falling out between the two.

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