



The Man in the Iron Mask

Roger Macdonald

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Alexandre Dumas said that his famous Three Musketeers never existed, but Athos, Aramis and Porthos were flesh and blood. Their supposedly fictional duel with Cardinal Richelieu's guards actually took place in 1640 and Charles d'Artagnan, a teenager on his first day in Paris, fought alongside the Musketeers. According to Oxford historian Macdonald, several other elements of the tale are also based in fact — the Cardinal's agent, Milady de Winter, really was an English aristocrat, and against all odds, the country boy without influence, d'Artagnan, did succeed in becoming Captain of the King's Musketeers, the only man whom Louis XIV could trust to arrest his over-mighty minister, Fouquet. It was d'Artagnan who escorted Fouquet to the feared Alpine fortress of Pignerol, wherein lived the most mysterious of all prisoners, the Man in the Iron Mask. Macdonald has spent five years unraveling fact from fiction to reveal the true story of the Musketeers and their link with the Man in the Iron Mask. It is a reality more extraordinary than anything Dumas could devise. Honor and heroism, betrayal and intrigue, are set amidst the lust, jealousy, and deadly poisons that made the Sun King's court a world of glittering paranoia.



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