

# DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS



## Douglas Fairbanks Sr (1883 - 1939)

Born Douglas Elton Thomas Ullman, Fairbanks was an American actor, screenwriter, director and producer. By 1920, he had completed 29 films (28 features and one two-reel short), which showcased his ebullient screen persona and athletic ability. He had the inspiration of staging a new type of adventure-costume picture, a genre that was then out of favour with the public; he had been a comic in his previous films. In *The Mark of Zorro* (1920), Fairbanks combined his appealing screen persona with the new adventurous costume element. It was a smash success and parlayed the actor into the rank of superstar. For the remainder of his career in silent films he continued to produce and star in ever more elaborate, impressive costume films, such as *The Three Musketeers* (1921), *Robin Hood* (1922), *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924), *The Black Pirate* (1926), the first full-length Technicolor film), and *The Gaucho* (1927). Fairbanks spared no expense and effort in these films, which established the standard for all future swashbuckling films.

With his marriage to Mary Pickford in 1920, the couple became Hollywood royalty and Fairbanks was referred to as "The King of Hollywood", a nickname later passed on to actor Clark Gable.

