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Musketeers, like D'Artagnan, were part of an elite group of extremely good soldiers. Despite their wide popularity in modern culture—likely thanks to Alexander Dumas and his prolific writing—the real musketeers were all about the advanced weapon they used ... the flintlock musket. When the King's guard received these muskets, Louis XIII changed their name from the King's Carabineers to the King's Musketeers. This image depicts a Musketeer, in uniform, during the late 17th century (when Louis XIV was King of France). It is from *Louis XIV's Army*, by Chatrand Rene, Osprey Publishing, LTD., London (1988). Online, via [Madame Bonamcieux's Cavalier Page](#).

Musketeers of the King (*mousquetaire du roi* in French) were named after the firearms (muskets) they wielded, although they are best remembered for their swashbuckling exploits.

Because they were an elite force, led by the King himself, it was difficult to become a musketeer. D'Artagnan—a main character in *The Three Musketeers* (the novel by Alexandre Dumas)—learned that fact firsthand.

Was D'Artagnan, the fictional musketeer, a real person? Turns out the answer is "Yes."

Born (sometime between 1610-1620) in his family's chateau (which today is located in the village of Lupiac), his name was Charles de Batz-Castelmore d'Artagnan. (D'Artagnan was his mother's name.) Later he lived in Auch, the capital of Gascony.

Was it easy for him to attain his dream? No, because a rule required a potential candidate to first serve in another branch of the military before he could be admitted into the elite musketeers. But the historical D'Artagnan knew the right people. Thanks to the influence of Monsieur de Treville, then commander of the musketeers (a rank second only to the King), Charles was given a place in the King's Guards.

Two of D'Artagnan's compatriots were also real people: Athos, (whose actual name was Armand de Sillegue d'Athos d'Autevielle) and Aramis (whose real name was Henri d'Aramitz). Athos joined the musketeers when he was only 25 and died in Paris a few years later.

The real D'Artagnan was the subject of a fictional "memoir" (*Memoires de Monsieur D'Artagnan*) written by Courtills de Sandras. Alexandre Dumas used some of this work to create his famous characters.

Known for his incredible knowledge of history, Dumas was such a prolific author that people of his day wondered if he actually wrote everything himself.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-REAL-D-ARTAGNAN-Musketeer-The>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

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Musketeer

Image of Musketeer uniform from Louis XIV's Army, by Chatrand Rene, Osprey Publishing, LTD., London (1988). Online, via [Madame Bonamcieux's Cavalier Page](#). View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Musketeer>



Chateau - CASTELMORE Mansion

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Monsieur de Treville

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