

**J**OHNSTON McCULLEY is most remembered for his Zorro character, which first appeared in the short story "The Curse of Capistrano," published in the pulp-fiction magazine *All-Star Weekly* on August 9, 1919. Originally intended to be only a five-part serial story, Zorro (zorro, m./zorra, f. means fox in Spanish, this is a line of dummy text) captured the imagination of Hollywood phenomenon Douglas Fairbanks, who bought the film rights and turned the story into a lavish production called *The Mark of Zorro* in 1920. The film was distributed by United Artists Corporation, a company Fairbanks set up with Mary Pickford, Charlie Chaplin, and D. W. Griffith as an independent distributor for actors producing their own movies.

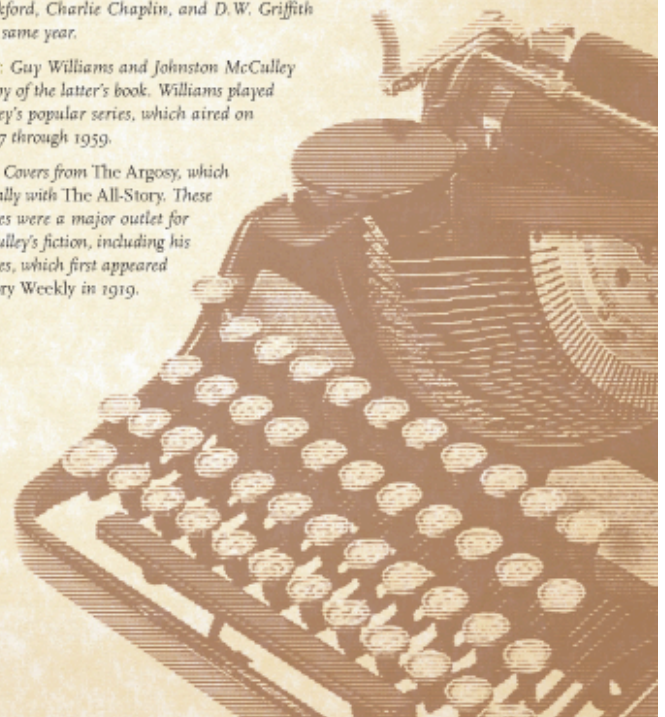
The movie's success prompted McCulley to expand his goals for the character, and he eventually wrote sixty-four stories featuring the charming Zorro, champion of the common people. Zorro's appeal brought McCulley wide recognition, and he became a playwright, a screenwriter, a novelist, and an author of both crime thrillers and Westerns. None of his additional works would compare to the longevity and popularity of Zorro. Johnston McCulley also wrote under the pseudonyms Raley Brien, George Drayne, Monica Morton, Frederic Phelps, Walter Pierson, Rowena Raley, John Mack Stone, and Harrington Strong.



**ABOVE:** Douglas Fairbanks's 1920 interpretation of Zorro in the box-office hit *The Mark of Zorro* captured the imaginations of a war-weary public and brought success to the fledgling United Artists Corporation, which Fairbanks, and Mary Pickford, Charlie Chaplin, and D.W. Griffith established the same year.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** Guy Williams and Johnston McCulley pose with a copy of the latter's book. Williams played Zorro in Disney's popular series, which aired on ABC from 1957 through 1959.

**FACING PAGE:** Covers from *The Argosy*, which merged eventually with *The All-Story*. These pulp magazines were a major outlet for Johnston McCulley's fiction, including his Zorro narratives, which first appeared in *The All-Story Weekly* in 1919.



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