



*Winston Churchill Information
Booklet*

Winston Churchill

Winston Churchill was chosen as one of the most influential leaders of all time. He was the Prime Minister of Britain during World War Two and was also involved in the Government during World War I. Churchill was a leader, a historian, a writer and a painter. He even won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1953.

Early Years

Churchill was born on 30th November 1874. He was educated in Ireland and was not a very good student. He typically got poor grades and when he was old enough to join Sandhurst (a military academy), he went against his father's wishes and joined the cavalry. His father wanted him to join the infantry. He actually did well in the cavalry and graduated eighth in his class.

It was in Sandhurst that Churchill began to write and he would often write about the battles he was involved in.

Politics

Churchill entered politics in 1901 by winning the seat at Oldham for the Conservatives, although, he switched parties and joined the Liberals in 1904. Churchill rose in the government after successfully dealing with a number of difficult situations

World War II

When Hitler came to power in 1933, Churchill gave a number of speeches warning the government and the population at large about the dangers that Hitler posed. Unfortunately, few people agreed with him.

When Hitler invaded Poland and war was declared, Churchill was given a spot on the war cabinet and was renamed the First Lord of the Admiralty. When Hitler invaded Norway and defeated the Allied forces, the prime minister, Neville Chamberlain, resigned after a poor showing in

a no-confidence vote. As a result, Winston Churchill was named the next prime minister in 1940.

Churchill established the SOE (Special Operations Executive) which ran secret missions in German-held territory. He also set up the Commando forces which developed into the Special Forces.

France requested that Churchill send British fighter planes to help hold off the German invasion but he refused. Churchill recognized that the fighter squadrons would not be very effective in holding off the German invasion and he also realized that he would need these fighters to protect Britain from German attack.

Battle of Britain

Once Hitler had control of France, he began to make plans for the invasion of England. Hitler ordered bombing raids on the country. These raids were initially focused on coastal airfields and other military targets (such as radar installations) but the raids soon bombed further inland. The German bombers were told not to bomb cities but after they mistakenly bombed the outskirts of London, Churchill ordered the bombing of German cities. Hitler followed with similar orders to bomb English cities.

Churchill gave a number of speeches during the Battle of Britain aimed at building up the morale of the population and the armed forces. The British air force was able to hold off the attacks and once Churchill realized that Hitler would not be able to invade England, he was able to send troops to shore up battalions fighting elsewhere.

The Search for Allies

Churchill recognized that he needed allies if England was to defeat Germany. He approached the United States, which was officially neutral. The American government refused to join the war at this time but did agree to sell supplies. The United States entered the war after the

Japanese attack at Pearl Harbour and they became an important ally for Churchill's fight.

Churchill had to work hard to make the alliance work. He attended a number of meetings and strategy sessions to discuss how the war was to be conducted. Churchill travelled over 160,000 kilometres during the war in order to attend these meetings. At these meetings, Churchill and the other allies came to a number of agreements regarding who would get what at the end of the war. Essentially, the world was divided up by the Allies.

The End of the War

The war was nearing the end and Churchill became concerned about the Soviet Union. He had plans drawn up for an attack on the Soviet Union but it was decided that the plan would not work given the Soviet Union's greater number of soldiers.

An election shortly after the war resulted in Churchill losing as prime minister and while he was out of power, he continued to warn people about against the threat posed by the Soviet Union but few people were willing to take the necessary steps to push back the Soviet Union.

Churchill became prime minister again in 1951 when the Conservatives won the election. Unfortunately, he had suffered a stroke in 1953 and, although, he continued to rule for a few more years, he decided that his health would not allow him to continue as prime minister. He resigned in 1955 and the queen offered to make him a duke but he refused. He

Death

Churchill died on 24th January 1965. His funeral was broadcast live and was viewed by over 350 million people. The queen as well as representatives from over one hundred countries attended the funeral. During the funeral procession, thousands of people quietly lined the streets to watch the body pass.