



WINSTON CHURCHILL

A Life

The Editors of New Word City

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It was 3:00 in the morning on May 11, 1940. Great Britain was embroiled in what looked like a catastrophic war, and **Winston Churchill** was just going to bed after his first day as Prime Minister. A sensible man might have had a feeling of impending doom, but not Churchill. “I felt as if I were walking with destiny,” he later wrote, “and that all my past life had been but a preparation for this hour and this trial.”

And so it had. Churchill’s staunch patriotism, his bulldog tenacity and fighting will, and, above all, his towering rhetoric inspired the British people to a gallant defense of their island nation that set a new bar for national heroism and earned him a place among the pantheon of the world’s greatest leaders.

Winston Churchill was far from perfect. He was a hero, yes, but a human one. He could be petty, irascible, and self-centered. He relished a practical joke. But he had courage and a born politician’s sense of the public stage. And when a bulldog was precisely what England needed, he was there. In his first **speech** as Prime Minister, in words as splendid as any ever uttered under such terrible circumstances, he told his people, “I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat.”

That stark message – and subsequent ones and Churchill’s

actions as a leader - somehow roused the British to a stoic bravery that would carry them through the **Blitz**, years of misery, and hundreds of thousands of deaths. In the end, Churchill was a regal figure, his life one that not even Shakespeare could have imagined. He had inspired his people, saved them, really, from the yoke of Nazi tyranny. He had transcended politics to become the greatest statesman in his country's long history and an inspiration to all the world.

Delights of Empire

Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill was born at 1:30 a.m. on November 30, 1874, amid the splendor of **Blenheim Palace**. The estate, and its 300-room manor house, had been awarded to his ancestor **John Churchill**, the first Duke of Marlborough, by a grateful king. His aristocratic parents were, by all definitions, exceptional: **Lord Randolph Churchill**, son of the Seventh Duke of Marlborough, member of Parliament, First Secretary of State for India, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, and **Jennie Jerome**, the ambitious and beautiful daughter of a New York financier.

