

Douglas MacArthur



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Introduction:

Douglas MacArthur was a General in the United States Army. Even though MacArthur is best known for his role in the Korean War, his career started five decades earlier. He had one of the longest military careers of any American officer. He served in World War I and World War II and the Korean War. He is remembered for being a brave soldier and is considered to be a war hero. People also remember his disagreement with President Truman during the Korean War when MacArthur was “fired” by the President. One of his most famous quotes was to the Filipino people on December 5, 1940 when he was ordered to leave the islands. He said “I’ll come back as soon as I can, with as much as I can. In the meantime, you’ve got to hold.” He was very intelligent and a great leader.

Early Life and Education:

Douglas MacArthur was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, on January 26th 1880, and was the third son of Arthur MacArthur. When he was three, his brother, Malcolm died. When he was young, his father, who

was a general in the US Army, was assigned to New Mexico. One of Douglas' earliest memories was the sound of bugles. While in New Mexico, he learned to ride a horse and shoot before he could read and write. Both of his parents told him that MacArthurs were always leaders. When Douglas was six years old, his family relocated to Leavenworth, Kansas, which made his mother happy because his family was now back in "civilization". At nine years of age, they moved to Washington D.C. where Douglas spent time with his grandpa, Judge Arthur MacArthur. By watching his grandfather spend time with important people, he realized that a MacArthur should be both educated and gentlemen. His father was reassigned to San Antonio, Texas in 1893 and it was here that Douglas attended the West Texas Military Academy. He did great in this environment and studied religion, military studies, academics, and Victorian social graces. He got accepted to the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1898 where he had one of the highest academic records in the history of the school. He graduated in 1903 at the top of his class.

Early Career:

At the beginning of his military career, Douglas was an aide and an engineer officer for a decade. He was also on the general staff list for 4 years. He also spent several months with the US troops which occupied Mexico in 1914. MacArthur was a commander, chief of staff, and divisional commander during World War I and the Rhine Occupation. In the 1920's, he was superintendent at West Point Military Academy and

also helped the 1928 Olympics committee. Starting at Brigadier General, MacArthur worked his way up in rank to Major General, and then General in 1930. Douglas was criticized in 1932 when he sent troops to drive out the Bonus Veterans from Washington D.C. He was military advisor to the Philippines in 1935-1941 and retired in 1937.

World War II :

In July, 1941, President Franklin Roosevelt made Douglas MacArthur commander of the Army forces in the East. On December 7, 1941, the Japanese dropped bombs on the U.S. Naval Base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii and attacked American air bases in the Philippines. The U.S. entered World War II and declared war on Japan the following day, December 8. That day, Japanese troops began to raid the Philippines. Douglas MacArthur was called back to active duty in 1941 and led troops to defend the Philippines from attack. In 1942, Douglas was sent to Australia to command Allied forces in the southwestern Pacific. He was famous for his statement that he would return to the Philippines. He charged into New Guinea and the Japanese retreated out of the country by January, 1943. In multiple operations, in 1943-1944, General Douglas MacArthur's troops captured important points in and around New Guinea. By September, 1944, he captured New Guinea and Morotai. On October 20, 1944, MacArthur's forces landed in Leyte, a Philippine Island; MacArthur had returned to the Philippines as he had promised. He became a five-star General the same month

that his troops landed in Mindoro. In 1945, he recaptured Borneo, southern Philippines, and most of Luzon by the time the war ended in August, 1945.

Korean War:

The Korean War was sometimes called “Americas Forgotten War” because WWII caught the world’s attention. North Korean forces invaded South Korea which was controlled by the United States. The United States decided to help the South Koreans defend themselves. By the time MacArthur moved in with his troops, the South Korean forces had been forced to the far south. On September 15, 1950, in a very daring and successful maneuver, Douglas landed troops in Inchon which was very far behind enemy lines. He forced the North Koreans back almost to China. China joined the war and fought back with a counterattack. MacArthur wanted to take the fight into China, but President Truman disagreed with him. Douglas MacArthur is remembered for making his dissatisfaction with the President public. President Truman dismissed MacArthur from duty over this power struggle in April, 1951.

Personal life :

Douglas MacArthur married Louise Brooks in 1922, on Valentines Day, was married for 7 years, but then divorced. He had no children from this marriage. He married his second wife, Jean Faircloth, in 1937. His only child, Arthur MacArthur IV, was born the following year in Manila. One thing he loved to do is smoke a pipe. He is seen with a pipe in a lot of his pictures. Some people tried to get MacArthur nominated for President in 1944, 1948, and 1952, but were not successful. He lived his final years in New York, New York. Douglas MacArthur died of cirrhosis of the liver in 1964 in Washington, D.C. At every military base in the United States there was a 19 gun salute for the famous general and war hero. Over 200,000 came to pay their last respects. He was buried in Norfolk, Virginia at the MacArthur Memorial.

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