

# CONTENTS

Introduction	9
431 BC Funeral Oration – Pericles	13
326 BC Address at Hydaspes River – Alexander the Great	19
218 BC Address to his Soldiers – Hannibal	25
48 BC Address before the Battle of Pharsalus – Julius Caesar	29
1066 Be Ye the Avengers of Noble Blood – William the Conqueror	33
1095 Speech at the Council of Clermont – Pope Urban II	37
1187 The Recovery of Jerusalem – Saladin	41
1453 The Final Stand – Emperor Constantine XI	45

1519	Address to his Conquistadors – Hernán Cortés	51
1588	Speech to the Troops at Tilbury – Elizabeth I	55
1653	Dismissal of the Rump Parliament – Oliver Cromwell	59
1716	Speech to the Council of Perth – James Francis Edward Stuart	65
1775	Give Me Liberty, or Give Me Death – Patrick Henry	71
1783	The Newburgh Address – George Washington	75
1794	Report on the Principles of Political Morality – Maximilien de Robespierre	81
1805	Speech Before and After the Battle of Austerlitz – Napoleon Bonaparte	85
1819	Address at the Congress of Angostura – Simón Bolívar	89
1860	Address to His Soldiers – Giuseppe Garibaldi	93
1862	Blood and Iron – Otto von Bismarck	97
1865	Second Inaugural Address – Abraham Lincoln	101
1915	Ireland Unfree Shall Never be at Peace – Patrick Pearse	107
1915	Address Before the Defence of Belgrade – Dragutin Gavrilović	113
1916	Appeal for National Service – Robert Laird Borden	117

1917	Germany Expected to Find a Lamb and Found a Lion – David Lloyd George	121
1917	An Appeal to the Red Army – Vladimir Lenin	125
1917	War Message to Congress – Woodrow Wilson	129
1936	Appeal to the League of Nations – Emperor Haile Selassie I	133
1938	Farewell to the International Brigades – Dolores Ibárruri, ‘La Pasionaria’	139
1939	Reichstag Speech – Adolf Hitler	145
1940	We Shall Fight on the Beaches – Winston Churchill	151
1940	The Flame of French Resistance – Charles de Gaulle	157
1941	A Date Which Will Live in Infamy – Franklin D. Roosevelt	163
1941	Address on the Anniversary of the October Revolution – Joseph Stalin	169
1943	Do You Want Total War? – Joseph Goebbels	175
1944	Serve the People – Mao Zedong	179
1945	Declaration of Independence – Ho Chi Minh	185
1948	If We Have Arms to Fight With – Golda Meir	191
1954	I Am Aware That This is a Hard Doctrine – Syngman Rhee	197

1971	The Struggle This Time is the Struggle for Independence – Sheikh Mujibur Rahman	201
1973	Farewell to the Nation – Salvador Allende	207
1987	Tear Down This Wall! – Ronald Reagan	211
	Sources	217
	Acknowledgements	223

# 326 BC

## ADDRESS AT HYDASPES RIVER

ALEXANDER THE GREAT  
(356 - 323 BC)

**B**y the age of thirty, Alexander the Great had carved out one of the largest empires in history, extending from Greece to India. In 336 BC, he succeeded his father as ruler of the kingdom of Macedon, the dominant power in Greece. His ambitions did not end there. Alexander aimed to conquer the great Persian Empire, which stretched from North Africa to Central Asia.

In 334 BC, his army crossed into Persian territory and, after a string of victories, he was master of Asia Minor, the Levant and Egypt. Three years later, Alexander masterminded his decisive triumph over Persia at the Battle of Gaugamela, in modern-day Iraq. Despite being outnumbered two-to-one, Alexander

## WE SHALL FIGHT ON THE BEACHES

routed his foes. The Persian king Darius III fled and was later murdered by one of his governors.

His thirst for conquest unsated, Alexander invaded the Indian subcontinent in 326 BC. After a series of difficult battles, he faced a local king, Porus, on the banks of the Hydaspes River in modern-day Punjab. The ensuing battle was hard-fought, but the Greeks won through. Alexander wanted to press on east, cross the River Ganges, and conquer more lands, but his men refused to go any further. Stung, Alexander delivered this speech.

### — THE SPEECH —

I observe, gentlemen, that when I would lead you on a new venture you no longer follow me with your old spirit. I have asked you to meet me that we may come to a decision together: are we, upon my advice, to go forward, or, upon yours, to turn back?

[. . .]

Come, then; add the rest of Asia to what you already possess – a small addition to the great sum of your conquests. What great or noble work could we ourselves have achieved had we thought it enough, living at ease in Macedon, merely to guard our homes,

## ALEXANDER THE GREAT

accepting no burden beyond checking the encroachment of the Thracians on our borders, or the Illyrians and Triballians, or perhaps such Greeks as might prove a menace to our comfort? I could not have blamed you for being the first to lose heart if I, your commander, had not shared in your exhausting marches and your perilous campaigns; it would have been natural enough if you had done all the work merely for others to reap the reward. But it is not so. You and I, gentlemen, have shared the labour and shared the danger, and the rewards are for us all. The conquered territory belongs to you; from your ranks the governors of it are chosen; already the greater part of its treasure passes into your hands, and when all Asia is overrun, then indeed I will go further than the mere satisfaction of our ambitions: the utmost hopes of riches or power which each one of you cherishes will be far surpassed, and whoever wishes to return home will be allowed to go, either with me or without me. I will make those who stay the envy of those who return.

### — THE CONSEQUENCES —

Despite Alexander's eloquence, honed during his studies under his childhood tutor Aristotle, he was unable to persuade his armies to advance further east. Instead, they turned south and marched homewards.

## WE SHALL FIGHT ON THE BEACHES

The Hydaspes marked the eastern limit of Alexander's conquests.

Why was Alexander, an inspirational leader who fought side-by-side with his men, unable to rouse his troops? First, they had been away from Greece for years and were desperate to see their homeland and enjoy the plunder from their numerous victories. Second, they were exhausted – in the battle against Porus they had faced war elephants and heavy rain. Third, there was tension between Alexander and some of his officers due to his adoption of Persian dress and customs, as well as his recruitment of Persians.

Alexander himself would never see his homeland again. He settled in the great city of Babylon and died after a fever in June, 323 BC, amid rumours he was poisoned. Alexander's empire ruptured into separate realms, as his senior officers battled for pre-eminence. Despite the break-up of his conquests, Alexander's greatness is undoubted. Undefeated in war, he had carved out an empire spanning three continents.



## ALEXANDER THE GREAT

### **The Second Oration Against Catiline**

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BC) was ancient Rome's greatest orator. In 63 BC, he became consul. During his term, Cicero delivered his most famous speeches: the Catiline Orations. Catiline was a senator who had raised an army of disgruntled veterans and Gauls. He sought to assassinate Cicero and overthrow the Republic. Cicero heard news of the threat and on 8 November, he called a meeting of the Senate at which he denounced Catiline, who was present at the assembly. Publicly shamed, Catiline fled Rome to meet his rebel army.

The next day, Cicero delivered a second oration, telling the people of Rome that Catiline had fled and that now 'no injury will now be prepared against these walls within the walls themselves by that monster and prodigy of wickedness'. In fighting the plot, Cicero promised to ensure that 'no good man shall fall, and that you may all be saved by the punishment of a few'. Conspirators in Rome were put to death and Catiline himself was killed leading his rebels against a Roman army.