

My Early Life

Sir Winston Leonard Churchill (1875- 1965) was a British politician and statesman. He served as Prime Minister from 1940 to 1945 and again from 1951 to 1955. He received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1953. He was also an officer in British army.

My Early Life (1930) is an autobiography which covers his experiences of most exciting adventures of his young age. He talks about his struggles to educate himself. He was a great self educated man. He acquired mastery over spoken and written language with the supportive family environment. During his early school age he discovered the joys of reading. His teachers saw him reading books which they thought were beyond his age and he was backward in his lessons because he had no interest in his school subjects. His teachers gave him lessons of Latin and Greek which he thought were useless. He was only interested in learning English language skills. He had to try three times to his entrance examination and to start his army career. His schools were Eton, Harrow and Brighton.

He worked in Cuba, India, Egypt, South Africa and many other places as army officer and as newspaper correspondent.

The desire for learning came to him at the age of 22 when he was in India as a subaltern (army officer). His desire was to

learn about ethics, Socrates, history, philosophy, economics etc. He wrote to his mother requesting her to send him books of his interest. Every mail brought him standard books. When he was in India he read the great classic works on history and philosophy such as; Plato's Republic, Aristotle's Politics, Malthus' On Population, Darwin's Origin of Species etc. He read a number of books that challenged religious education such as; The Martyrdom of Man by Win Wood Reade. He was in favour of life skill oriented education

He read such books as; *Treasure Island*, *The Student's Hume*, *Gibbon with Delight*, *Gibbon's Decline and Fall of Roman Empire*, *The Lays of Roman Empire*. *Macaulay's History*,

His final recommendation is – it is a good thing for an educated man to read books of quotations. Bartlett's 'Familiar Quotations' is an admirable work. These quotations give the readers good thought as well as arouse their interest to read more and look for more.