

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

PUSHING HIS TROOPS TO THE BRINK

In 335 B.C., Alexander the Great set out on a campaign to recapture former Greek cities and to expand his growing empire. Ten years into his campaign Alexander had never known defeat. He now controlled an empire that included Greece, Egypt, and the massive Persian Empire.

Alexander the Great's Empire was huge, but he was determined to grow it even bigger. So Alexander pushed his conquest into India. His army had been fighting for ten years and had grown tired of war and being away from their homeland. lacked the will to take part in more battles. King Porus in India worth the fight. His men were already wealthy from the spoils of war and another large battle seemed unnecessary to many in his army. Alexander used his speaking talents he had developed while studying under Aristotle to rally his army and motivate his men to continue the fight. His moving speech is below:

Excerpt: Alexander the Great, 326 B.C.; Hydaspes River, India

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 labor 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.