

General Sir Mike Jackson GCB CBE

Arguably Britain's most famous soldier

General Sir Mike Jackson graduated from Birmingham in 1967 with a BSocSc in Russian Studies and in 2000, received an honorary LLD.

Why he is outstanding

The former head of the British Army, General Sir Mike Jackson has always been a force to be reckoned with and has never been afraid to speak his mind.

Born into a military family, Sir Mike was commissioned into the Army at the age of 19 before undertaking his degree course at Birmingham. After a few years with the Intelligence Corps he rose to command the First Battalion of the Parachute Regiment between 1984 and 1986. He also commanded the 3rd (UK) Division, spent two years at the Ministry of Defence and served in Berlin and Northern Ireland.

Sir Mike commanded a NATO division in Bosnia, before he commanded the Alliance's Rapid Reaction Corps. He won a Distinguished Service Order for his leadership of the Kosovo Force in the successful operation to end ethnic cleansing of Albanians in the former Yugoslav republic. He ended his military career as Chief of the General Staff - the professional head of the Army.

Did you know?

Sir Mike's son, Mark, followed him into the military and served as a paratrooper in the Gulf before becoming an artist.