

Hon. Edward Martin
Governor of Pennsylvania
United States Senator
Adjutant General of Pennsylvania
Commanding General, 28th Division
Inducted 2011

Edward Martin ran for office fifteen times and never lost an election. In addition to being governor and U. S. Senator, Martin, six-foot, four inches tall, had a distinguished military career through four wars. In 1898 Martin interrupted college to serve in the 10th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry during the Spanish-American War and then in the Philippines Insurrection. He returned home in 1899 as a sergeant, and despite having contracted malaria, he completed his degree work. By 1905 he began to practice law and was promoted to captain.

Martin earned four wartime decorations, including the Distinguished Service Cross and Purple Heart, each with an Oak Leaf Cluster, in World War I. He served with the 109th and 110th Infantry Regiments in five major campaigns in France from 1917 to 1919, and was promoted to lieutenant colonel. Martin was one of the few soldiers to narrowly escape a direct shell hit on his headquarters. He also survived a near miss by friendly forces and was gassed by German forces. It took Martin two years to recover from the effects of the mustard gas.

After the war Martin returned to his private law practice and began to invest in the businesses of banking, oil, and gas. He continued to serve in the National Guard and was promoted to colonel in 1919 and brigadier general in 1922. He amassed a fortune from private investments, and although the Department of Treasury did not lose any money, he lost his wealth in the Great Depression. Using his life savings and inheritance to pay off his debts, he started over.

In 1936, Martin further enhanced his public image with outstanding work during the Johnstown flood, caused by heavy runoff of melting snow combined with three days of rain. Martin followed in the footsteps of an earlier adjutant general, Daniel Hastings, who became governor after he became a state hero during the 1889 Johnstown flood. While another world war approached in 1939, Martin was promoted to major general in command of Pennsylvania's 28th National Guard Division and became Adjutant General under the administration of Governor Arthur James.

When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, General Martin was sixty-two years old. In 1937, he had already earned Pennsylvania's General William Moffat-Reilly Medal for forty years of service to the National Guard, but he was ready to serve the U. S. Army once again in a fourth war. By then, the National Guard was federalized and Martin, in command of the 28th Division, assisted in the war preparation of troops and supply and leading training maneuvers in North Carolina. By 1942, the Army released Martin from active duty due to his age.

Martin was far from being ready to retire, however, and many state Republicans were looking to General Martin to run for governor to succeed Arthur James. A soldier-statesman during wartime appealed to voters and he was elected Governor.

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Hon. Edward Martin (continued)

Martin later regarded guiding Pennsylvania through the height of World War II as the most important role of his administration. In his inaugural speech Martin said, "Right now nothing matters but winning the war, because if we do not win it, nothing else will matter." More than one million Pennsylvanians were in the armed forces during the war and 33,000 sacrificed their lives.

Martin also recognized the importance of historical preservation and in 1945 upgraded the role of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission to become an independent agency reporting directly to the governor. Martin remained conservative when it came to government spending. In urging a balanced budget, Martin said, ". . . a government which gives the people everything they want will soon take everything they have." After four years as governor and prohibited by the state constitution to succeed himself for another term, Martin turned his attention to the race for the U.S. Senate.

Martin was prominent in the development of Fort Indiantown Gap and after his death, the United States Senate renamed the facility the Edward Martin Military Reservation, a designation that Martin himself had rejected throughout his life. The new name was never fully accepted by the military personnel who served there. In 1975, the Secretary of the Army renamed the post Fort Indiantown Gap in order to more closely align it with the other Active Duty stations throughout the United States.