QUEEN OF THE SEAS
by WINSTON CHURCHILL
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AND CHURCHILL SOCIETIES OF CANADA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM
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Tel. (319) 337-4408 • Fax (319) 337-4408
Email: dcraghorn@email.msn.com

D. Craig Horn, Treasurer
8016 McKenstry Drive, Laurel MD 20723
Tel. (301) 725-3397 • Fax (301) 483-6902
Email: dcraighorn@email.msn.com

BUSINESS OFFICE
Daniel N. Myers, Executive Director
1150 Seventeenth Street, N.W., Suite 307
Washington, DC 20036
Tel. (202) 483-6902 • Fax (202) 233-4844
Email: dmyers@winstonchurchill.org

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Email: geller1@shci.com

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Tel. (312) 658-5006 • Fax (312) 658-5797
Email: geller1@shci.com

Winston S. Churchill • Hon. Jack Kemp
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AFFILIATE
Washington Society for Churchill
Caroline Hartsher, President, PO Box 2456
Merrifield VA 22116 • Tel. (703) 503-9226

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INTERNET SERVICES
Website: www.winstonchurchill.org
Webmaster: dmyers@winstonchurchill.org
Listserv host: jonah.triebwoesser@marist.edu

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Tel. (905) 655-4051 • Email: jeana@idirect.com

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PO Box 1257, Melksham, Wilts. SN12 6GQ
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Robert Dunn, President
Box 2, Site 208, RR2, St. Albert, Edmonton, AB T8N 1M9
Tel. (780) 973-5549 • Email: rolana@shaw.ca

Webmaster: dmyers@winstonchurchill.org
Listserv host: jonah.triebwoesser@marist.edu
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41 Richard Langworth reviews "Two Weddings and a Funeral," the funeral of the television drama's "Churchill" which put it to sleep... Judith Wilks
Kambestad worries that Gretchen Rubin's " Sorry, I Missed your Look at Winston Churchill will enter the literature as established truth."
Christopher H. Sterling recommends Matthew Wills's "A Diminished President" for those who search for explanations of what happened at Yalta.... Wit and Wisdom searches for the last speech Winston Churchill gave in the United States. The answer may surprise you.

Cover: "Sweeping the ocean aside in great crested arrowheads," in John Malcolm Brinnin's phrase, the RMS Queen Mary artwork is adapted from the cover of The Strand Magazine, May 1936, which contained Churchill's "Queen of the Seas," published on page 23.
"Forty Ways"

I found the comments of Terry McGarry regarding Elle magazine’s column on Forty Ways to Look at Winston Churchill (FH 119) to be rather unfair and inaccurate. Mr. McGarry attributes to Prof. Rubin things that were actually said by the magazine’s unnamed columnist. For example, he quotes the columnist’s saying Churchill was “a prodigious drinker” and then chides Rubin for this. As anyone who has actually read the book would know, Rubin wrote this only in a “Point-Counterpoint” sort of way. One of the book’s conceits is occasionally to present Churchill from diametrically opposed points of view in successive chapters; for example, “Churchill as Liberty’s Champion” followed by “Churchill as Failed Statesman.” The author’s intent is that the reader discover the truth somewhere in between.

McGarry hopes that, if Rubin were to attend a Churchill panel, she might bring along “a posse of dewy-cheeked Elle readers...” If an Elle article had referenced one of Sir Martin Gilbert’s works, would McGarry assume that Gilbert is trailed by a pack of ingenuous? Does the mention of an author by Elle imply that the author is shooting for the dewy-cheek demographic?

I am not defending the book itself. While it has a somewhat novel approach, it treads no new ground and will be of passing interest at most to those familiar with the subject. But I find it bothersome that Mr. McGarry appears to be annoyed that a Churchill work is mentioned in a magazine intended primarily for young women. I can only think that this is a good thing.

CHRIS DUNFORD, COLUMBIA, MD.

The book is reviewed on page 35. The problem I think is that it often sets reasonable views of Churchill alongside the worst discredited rubbish and implies that they are equally worthy of consideration. In such cases, the truth may be in between, but it is much closer to the former than the latter. —Ed.

Churchill Centre’s New Website

The new website looks fantastic. I’m really, really impressed, not simply because it’s so improved, but that it is probably one of the most intuitively designed and good looking sites I’ve seen on the net. And this is from a student in computer science and cognitive psychology who gives presentations on web design and usability.

I’d also like to point out what the new website lacks, the things that normally ruin websites: Shockwave/Flash, random Java applets, intrusive advertising, and browser-specific features and programming. The site is mostly valid HTML 4 + CSS, but best of all, it’s compatible. Wow. Great job.

IAN LANGWORTH, NORTHEASTERN UNIV., BOSTON

Thank you, thank you. I’m obviously prejudiced, but I love the look and feel of the new site. Now, to get the rest of the bugs worked out...—DNM

Misjudging History

I occasionally have the opportunity to speak in public about Churchill. In recent months, I have seen many inaccurate references in the media to the 1930s and appeasement. Thus I decided to deliver my annual talk to the local Rotary Club on Churchill, Chamberlain and appeasement. I also wanted to touch briefly on the tendency, as Manfred Weidhorn once said, to “misjudge history.” Can lessons learned from the 1930s really be applied today?

I prepared a PowerPoint program based on Churchill’s first volume of Second World War memoirs, The Gathering Storm. My timeline began with the Treaty of Versailles and then moved to Hitler’s rise to power and WSC’s subsequent warnings of German rearmament. I used the official biography and companion volumes, along with many books and articles by Churchill’s contemporaries and staff, and a few modern historians, and about forty-five pictures.

As I considered Hitler’s aims for Germany and his early successes, the futility of Chamberlain’s naïve and hopelessly optimistic appeasement policy became very clear. I closed with Munich, and two scenes from “The Wilderness Years” documentary starring Robert Hardy as Churchill: Chamberlain’s return to England from Munich bearing “peace in our time,” followed by Churchill’s damning indictment in the House of Commons. The video was very effective and Robert Hardy provided the perfect emotional ending.

FRED HARDMAN, SPENCER, W.V.

Nice going, Fred, hope we’ll see this at a conference some time. —Ed.
Ceping yawns greet most efforts to write about changes in an organization's formal structure. Yet that structure, usually set out in a "constitution" or by-laws, has a direct and decisive impact on an organization's governance, which, in turn, contributes much to the perceptions of its stature and effectiveness held by members and non-members alike.

It is for this reason that I run the risk of glazed eyes and chasing you on to the next page by discussing in this space several significant by-law changes recently adopted by our Board of Governors.

The Board in September created positions for two new Governors beginning January 1st, 2004. These new Governors are, to be appointed by the President for one-year terms. Appointed Governors are not eligible for reappointment until three years have elapsed after the conclusion of their appointed terms. They would, of course, be eligible at any time for election to the standard three-year term. (Each year, two Governors are elected for three-year terms.)

This appointment approach makes it possible to expand the demographic (and geographic) makeup of The Churchill Centre’s Board while creating an ever-widening pool of new leadership from which future elected Governors and officers can be drawn.

Prior to the September amendments, the President of the Churchill Society of Canada and the Chairman of the Churchill Society of the United Kingdom were ex-officio on The Churchill Centre Board as voting Governors without any election by the Board, without any term limits and with little or no accountability. All other Governors were (and remain) elected for specific terms with the resultant accountability. Most fortunately, the Canadian President and UK Chairman currently on the Board are valuable contributors to the Centre and the Board, which would be much poorer without them. But it cannot be assumed that this will always be the case. Thus the by-laws were amended, requiring that at all times there be on the Board at least one Governor nominated by the Churchill Society of Canada and one by the Churchill Society of the UK, and electing such nominees annually for one-year terms.

These amendments accomplish three things. First, they ensure at least one Board seat each for the Canadian and United Kingdom organizations. Second, they inject a degree of accountability into the selection process. Third, they give each organization maximum flexibility over whom each nominates for the Board; e.g., their nominees no longer have to be their President or Chairman, and they can change annually.

One other significant by-law amendment was the creation of a College of Fellows. This is an addition to our Board of Academic Advisers. The College of Fellows will consist of up to twenty-four persons who have made important contributions to the understanding of Winston Churchill and his times. The College was created primarily to recognize the work and importance of scholars, but also others, who, because of other professional responsibilities, would not be in a position to accept appointment to the Board of Academic Advisers. The college will greatly enhance our academic stature.

At the very last minute before the Bermuda conference in November, the Board adopted a recommendation by our editor for a Finest Hour Journal Award, to recognize the outstanding contribution to our print publications in the past year. The 2003 FH Award was presented at Bermuda to Professor Paul Alkon, for his brilliant contribution to our educational mission through his T. E. Lawrence features in Finest Hour #119 (Summer 2003). This award was most richly deserved and we are honored by Professor Alkon’s contributions.
DATELINES

QUOTATION OF THE SEASON
"If democracy and Parliamentary institutions are to triumph in this war, it is absolutely necessary that Governments resting upon them shall be able to act and dare, that the servants of the Crown shall not be harassed by nagging and snarling, that enemy propaganda shall not be fed needlessly out of our own hands and our reputation disparaged and undermined throughout the world."
—WSC, House of Commons, 2 July 1943

Ypres Remembered

YPRES, AUGUST 15TH—For four long, gruesome years beginning in 1914, when German troops roared across Belgium on the way to France, this city was all but surrounded by the fetid trenches and desolate no man’s land of the Ypres Salient, a critical bulge in a battle line that stretched almost all the way from Switzerland to the English Channel. Near-ceaseless shelling and three major confrontations obliterated the town and forced its inhabitants to flee. Exhibits at the museum describe the German introduction of chemical weaponry; daily life behind the front lines; the carnage at field medical stations; and the miraculous Christmas truce of 1914, when, without leave from their officers, German and Allied soldiers met in no man’s land to celebrate Christmas together.

For much of the war, the Ypres salient was occupied by the Allies, especially the British, whose troops came from all over the empire: Scots, Jamaicans, Indians and Canadians, along with English, Irish and Welsh. More than 400,000 of them died here, which has made Ypres a place of special meaning to the British. "I should like us to acquire the whole of the ruins of Ypres. A more sacred place for the British race does not exist in the world," Winston Churchill said in 1919.

About 200 Great War cemeteries surround the town, including Tyne Cot just northeast of Ypres. To honor the almost 100,000 unidentified British dead from the Ypres salient, the English built a massive stone gate by the canal on the east side of town. There I saw wreaths of red paper poppies placed by people who haven’t forgotten the significance of the Great War.

—SUSAN SPANO, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Unsordid Correction, Part II

WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 6TH—In George Mason University’s History News Network (hnn.us/articles/1712.html), Professor James Lachlan MacLeod of the University of Evansville, Indiana, offered a good article explaining how widely Churchill’s remark, "the most unsordid act...in history”, was ascribed to the postwar Marshall Plan, when in fact it referred to the wartime Lend-Lease Act.

Prof. MacLeod rightly corrected Finest Hour for suggesting (in "Date-lines," issue 96) that Churchill’s first reference to the "unsordid act" was in 1945, when it was really in 1941, and we have corrected this on our website. But he incorrectly stated that Finest Hour "p’m’s the blame" for attribution to the Marshall Plan on Dean Acheson’s 1960 book, Sketches from Life. (We simply reported that the New York Times had so ascribed the error.) If any reader can direct us to a writer who credited "Unsordid Act" to the Marshall Plan before Dean Acheson in 1960, we would be pleased to know about it.

Sordid Correction

ORLANDO, FLA., OCTOBER 28TH—"News for Tuesday," in the Orlando Sentinel favorably mentions Bodyguard of Lies, by Anthony Cave Brown (1975), which, they said, "details the massive misinfor-
Among other things, it floats the ridiculous myth that Churchill let Coventry burn in a German air raid to protect his life. It all depends on your perspective.

In 1995 with three colleagues I bicycled Latvia south to north, from the Lithuanian to the Estonian border, under Churchill Centre auspices. (FH 87, page 27.) The purpose was to commemorate the ongoing battle, post-VE-Day, for Baltic freedom, which continued into the mid-Fifties. We met President Ulmanis and several local officials. When we said "Churchill" they often replied, "Yalta," accompanied by hard stares. Churchill was a hard sell. They regarded the 1945 Yalta Conference as a sell-out of Baltic independence. The Mayor of Liepaja told us that it would have been best all-round if we had nuked the USSR in 1945. We said the Anglo-American public would have never stood for that. He replied, "Just think how much trouble it would have saved you, not to mention us." As a boy, he had been strafed and wounded by Soviet beach guards for violating curfew. He was lucky to have escaped with his life. It all depends on your perspective.

At Yalta, what little influence Churchill had was directed to rescuing Poland, which proved a forlorn hope. There was no chance to save the Baltic States, surrounded by a sea of Red Army divisions, though the resistance was still holding out in Courland when peace was declared on 8 May 1945. But I've always believed that in their hearts as well as officially, Churchill and Attlee fully supported the Baltic cause. Postwar British Prime Ministers preserved the independent Baltic embassies and safeguarded their gold reserves. As Larry Arnn once put it, Churchill's actions at Yalta were "the best he could do with the situation at hand." —RML

My credentials to write about the Baltic are only those of a layman. I am of part-Latvian descent and own about 100 books on Latvia and the Baltic States, which I visited in 1992 and 1995. My Churchill studies led me to explore his attitude toward the Baltic; I concluded that Churchill comes in for more criticism than he deserves.

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History Channel Video
WASHINGTON—Steve Goldfien advises that he ordered a History Channel DVD on Churchill which is portrayed as a "new" offering in mail-order video catalogues. However, this is the A&E Biography series narrated by Sir Martin Gilbert, marketed by the History Channel. This was not apparent from the catalogue. Steve and the editor, who made the same mistake, wish to warn that this is not "new."
The Third Churchill Lecture

In the Middle East, is Anyone Ever Satisfied?
On the Atlantic Coast, Will the Hurricanes Ever Quit?

WILLIAM C. IVES & CHRISTOPHER C. HARMON

A s Hurricane Isabel churned its way up the East Coast, Churchill Centre governors were told that their board meeting for September 19-20th would be held "come hell or high water." Isabel brought the high water; hell was avoided, at least temporarily.

Concurrently, nearly 125 Churchillians and at least that many George Washington University students who had planned to attend the Third Churchill Lecture and a reception celebrating the CC’s opening in Washington were confidently reminded that those events would go forward "even if only the Board of Governors appear." Alas, that’s just about what happened. The University simply shut down. Fourteen hardy souls including three Trustees—Celia Sandys, Chris Matthews and Winston Churchill, attended the reception; the latter was able to join us for dinner later, his speaking engagement in Petersburg called off after the Governor of Virginia shut down the state! Twenty-two stalwarts heard David Fromkin's lecture, "Churchill and the Middle East." A CD recording is in the process of being offered for those who missed it.

The Board meeting proceeded as scheduled for a very full day and a half, but not without logistical challenges. Isabel either prevented or hindered the attendance of the Board’s two British and two Canadian members. Jim Lane’s broken hip restricted him to his home near Seattle, but he joined the board meeting via conference call at 5AM his time! Richard Langworth was with his wife Barbara in New York City at the funeral of her mother; he too joined in by telephone. In spite of these natural disasters, the Board meeting was highly productive. Many positive and necessary actions were taken (see page 5).

While coping with Isabel’s fury the Centre also had to deal with the aftermath of Hurricane Fabian’s descent on Bermuda, site of our 20th International Conference, several weeks earlier. Cochairman David Boler and conference manager Judy Kambestad made all the time-consuming adjustments necessary to ensure that this exciting Conference would proceed as planned.

Looking to Winston Churchill for inspiration, we recalled that when advised that owing to the weather he should not fly to France in June 1940 to stiffen the spines of wavering Frenchmen, the PM responded: "To hell with that. This is too serious...to

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bother about the weather.” So it was, and so it is.

Considering the buffeting the Centre and its events have taken since the 9/11 attacks scarcely six weeks before our 2001 San Diego conference—followed by terrorist alerts three days before the event which involved the main bridge to the conference site—one must wonder whether some greater power is testing our mettle. If so, we have not been found wanting. Churchill himself provides our watchwords: “Never flinch, never weary, never despair.” We won’t. —WCI

"Churchill and the Middle East"
WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 18TH—David Fromkin, one of America’s foremost writers, delivered the Third Churchill Lecture under the auspices of The Churchill Centre and The George Washington University. A professor of international relations at Boston University, Fromkin is the author of a bestseller: A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East.

With the end of the Great War in 1918, Britain’s coalition government faced unnumbered and difficult questions of war and peace: the disappearance of the Ottoman Empire; the rise of Soviet Bolshevism; the indignation of Syria under French occupation; divisions among Arab rulers; and the challenge of assembling a state of Iraq from several diverse provinces, all in turmoil. At the same time, Britain’s great army in the region was “melting” (to use Winston Churchill’s word) and few in London had good policy ideas. Prime Minister David Lloyd George turned to Churchill, his Secretary of State for the Colonies, and said: “You deal with it,” according to Fromkin. In his view, Churchill satisfactorily resolved the issues he had been handed, “which in politics should be enough.”

But in the Middle East, is anyone ever satisfied? Even Churchill did not get all he wanted, from London or from the region, David Fromkin explained. He worked hard for a Jewish “homeland” but did not call outright for a Jewish state. Nor did he expect the “Trans-jordan” to become sovereign as it did. He considered a Kurdish state but had to settle for folding the Kurds’ Mosul province into the mix with Basra and Baghdad, yielding modern Iraq. Sherif Feisal, ejected from Syria by the French, became King of Iraq, which has proven more durable than critics of the time thought, according to Fromkin. Iraq even survived a protracted war with much-larger Iran in the 1980s.

The Master of Ceremonies, MSNBC host Chris Matthews; WSC’s grandchildren, Winston Churchill and Celia Sandys; Professor James Muller, and others followed the formal lecture with a dozen questions. Was monarchy really the solution for Iraq? What was known then about oil in the region? What effect had President Wilson on the region’s settlement? Was Whitehall too concerned about creating a barrier against the rising Soviet state?

One of the best replies went to Washington member Bob Hartland, who asked about the scholar’s critique of T. E. Lawrence. Mr. Fromkin answered that Seven Pillars of Wisdom was unreliable as history: Lawrence, he said, admitted as much, and described his book as in line with the great novels, more than the great histories. In an interview before the lecture, Fromkin complimented Finest Hour’s summer issue, which was devoted to Lawrence.

David Fromkin’s A Peace to End All Peace is a detailed and profound study of a few short years in which, truly, history was being made. Its historical narrative is draped around the imposing figure of Winston S. Churchill—then as later clutching multiple portfolios and fascinated by politics and foreign affairs. The book has appeared in four languages including Arabic, never going out of print in English since its 1989 release. Renewed interest appeared after September 11th, 2001. Another wave comes now: a historian just back from Iraq reports that Marine Corps officers serving there often discuss the volume.

In a similar spirit of earnest conversation, Churchillians moved slowly from the GWU auditorium and into the initial rains of Hurricane Isabel, just then bearing down on Washington D.C. They had been given much to consider by a strong interchange.

Holder of a University of Chicago law degree, David Fromkin continues to teach and to write. His seventh book will appear in 2004 under the title: Europe’s Last Summer: Who Started the Great War in 1914?—CCH
Enigma Conference in April
WASHINGTON—The Churchill Centre has combined with The Bletchley Park Trust, Christ Church Oxford and the International Spy Museum in Washington, DC to sponsor an exciting programme, "Enigma and the Secret Intelligence War," on April 25th-28th. Registration deadline is at the end of December, so act fast to join.

The programme is based on a memorable conference held in 2002 at Christ Church, Oxford, in conjunction with Bletchley; Christ Church, Oxford, in conjunction with The Bletchley Park Trust, Dr. David Kahn, author of The Code Breakers; Michael Smith, defence correspondent for The Daily Telegraph; David Hamer, visiting research scholar at Bletchley; and Barbara Euchus, who worked at Bletchley's codebreaking operations beginning in 1939. The breaking of the increasingly sophisticated German Enigma codes is the major topic.

The conference begins Sunday afternoon April 25th with a wind-up breakfast on Wednesday the 28th. There is an optional excursion to the International Spy Museum, and the host hotel is the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center in Virginia, six miles from Washington. For anyone interested in Churchill and wartime code-breaking, this is a fine opportunity.

Conference registration costs $1185 per person and includes the full program, three breakfasts, two private dinners, one lunch and opening and closing drinks receptions. Hotel accommodation costs $249 and the Spy Museum excursion $48. A deposit of $600 plus one night's room and tax is required. Cancellation penalties apply after 28 February.

To register or request further information please contact USA Host Housing Services, 1055 E. Tropicana, Suite 530, Las Vegas NV 89119, telephone (877) 584-6787, fax (702) 597-0264 or consult their website, www.usahosts.com/housing.

Washington
BURKE, VA,AUGUST 6TH—The Washington Society for Churchill, a CC affiliate, held its annual summer picnic again at Oaks Community Center. Marking the 100th anniversary of powered flight, George Washington University faculty member Chris Sterling spoke on Churchill's aviation pioneering including his quest for a pilot's license, starting the Royal Navy Air arm, the first steps toward regular airline operations, and his famous wartime and postwar air travels. Churchill's air career was truly expansive, covering everything from the earliest fragile biplanes to jetliners. Sterling's presentation featured a display collection of photos, documents and books.

Churchill and Sandsys
NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 10TH—Winston Churchill and Celia Sandsys provided a "family reading" from their two new books, Ms. Sandsys' Chasing Churchill and Mr. Churchill's collection of his grandfather's speeches, Never Give In! (both reviewed last issue), at Chartwell Booksellers on 52nd Street, Manhattan. Champagne by Pol Roger enlivened the occasion.

Sandsys and Churchill are traveling the United States promoting their books. Celia Sandsys is making three trips, involving many appearances including several before Churchill Centre audiences: Washington, New York, Boston and Fulton, Mo., in November; San Francisco and Los Angeles in December; Charleston, South Carolina, Gainesville and Miami, Florida in January.

New England
BOSTON, NOVEMBER 12TH/30TH—Among Celia Sandsys' stops was Suffolk University Law School, where she spoke about her grandfather's travels at a free lecture open to the public. There followed a reception for the author and a dinner with New England Churchillians at the Union Club on Park Street.

PORTSMOUTH, MAY 16TH—USS Winston S. Churchill spent a few days here for essential maintenance on her way home from the Iraq war; her Commanding Officer, Cdr Holly Graf, and the Master Chief Holliday were taken to lunch at the nearby Emsworth Sailing Club by ICS(UK) Vice Chairman Paul Courtenay and Committee member.

A busy autumn for New Englanders continued on Sir Winston's 129th birthday, November 30th, when they were invited to "The Republic of Laurania" to meet "Savrola," Churchill eponymous hero of his only novel, in the person of Patrick Powers of Magdalen College in Warner, New Hampshire, editor of the forthcoming new edition of Savrola to be published in association with The Churchill Centre. Traditional black tie was observed as usual, although business attire was optional.

Minterne and Portsmouth, UK
MINTERNE, DORSET, MARCH 29TH—Twenty-two members and guests of ICS(UK) visited this Dorset home, residence of the first Sir Winston Churchill and later of his third son, General Charles Churchill (whose eldest brother had to make do with Blenheim). The party was shown round by the owner, Lord Digby, brother of the late Pamela Harriman, whose childhood home it had also been; her son is today's Winston Churchill. A visit was paid to the village church to see the grave of John Churchill (grandfather of the 1st Duke of Marlborough). Thanks are due to Elizabeth Snell, who has an apartment on the Minterne estate, for making the arrangements.

DATELINES
Local Organizers
Contact these to attend or assist in your area.

Local Affairs Coordinator:
Judy Kambestad (jammedot@aol.com)
1172 Cambera Lane, Santa Ana CA 92705
tel. (714) 838-4741; fax (714) 838-8899

Alaska: Judith & Jim Muller (ajjwmu@uas.alaska.edu)
2410 Galandow St., Anchorage AK 99508
tel. (907) 786-4740

California North: N. California Churchillians
Michael Barrington (Maj67016@aol.com)
34263 Eucalyptus Terrace, Fremont CA 94555
tel. (510) 791-2305

California South: SoCal Churchillians
Jerry Kambestad (gdkamb@aol.com)
1172 Cambera Lane, Santa Ana CA 92705
tel. (714) 838-4741

Chicago: Churchill Friends of Greater Chicago
Phil & Susan Larson (parkerryfox@msn.com)
22 Scottdale Road, LaGrange IL 60525
tel. (708) 352-6825

Dallas: North Texas Churchillians
John & Paula Restrepo (cunengland@aol.com)
4520 Lorraine Avenue, Dallas TX 75205
tel. (214) 522-7201

Detroit: Gary Bonime
3609 Lake George Road, Dryden MI 48428
tel. (810) 796-3180

England North: ICS/UK Northern Chapter
Derek Greenwell, "Farriers Cottage," Station Rd.,
Goldsborough, Knaresborough, N. Yorks. HG5 8NT
tel. (01432) 863225

Florida North Central: Richard StreifF
(streiffTv@bellsouth.net)
81 N.W. 44th Street, Gainesville FL 32607
tel. (352) 379-8985

Florida Northeast: Robert Chalmers
(BChalmers@aol.com) 1443 Avondale Avenue,
Jacksonville FL 32205-7820
tel. (904) 388-7443

Georgetown: Gary Garrison (ccsgary@bellsouth.net)
2364 Beechwood Drive, Marietta GA 30062
tel. (770) 509-5430, fax (770) 565-5925

New England Churchillians
Suzanne Sigman (ssignman@ani.com)
42 Dudley Lane, Milton MA 02186
tel. (617) 696-1833

New Orleans: Hill Riddle
(HillRide@aol.com)
2715 St. Charles Ave., New Orleans LA 70130
tel. (504) 895-5102

North Carolina Churchillians
Gary L. Snyder (Glsnyder8@ncrr.com)
228 Winterberry Ridge Dr., Durham NC 27713
tel. (919) 593-0804

Ohio: Northern Ohio Churchillians
Michael McMenamin (mtm@walterhav.com)
1300 Terminal Tower, Cleveland OH 44113
tel. (216) 781-1212

Washington Society for Churchill
Caroline Hartzler (Hartzlerc@aol.com)
5956 Coopers Landing Court, Burke VA 22015
tel. (703) 503-9226

Toronto: Other Club of Ontario
Norm & Jean MacLeod (jeana@direct.com)
16 Glenlaura Ct., Ashburn ON LOB 1AO,
tel. (905) 655-4051

The Rt. Hon. Sir Winston
Spencer Churchill Society

Columbia, which in 1986 played conference host to the Churchill Conference and to our guest William Manchester. The Society has an education fund, supporting its mission of acquainting youth with the Churchill story.

Suzanne and Dan Sigman and Dorothy and Chris Hebb have regularly attended International Churchill Conferences, and we look forward enthusiastically to their participation on the Board of Governors.

John Crookshank. It was interesting to hear at first hand about the ship's first operational deployment.

New CC Governors
DECEMBER 2O— Churchill Centre President Bill Ives announced the appointment of two new Governors, Suzanne Sigman of Milton, Mass, and Chris Hebb of Vancouver, BC, in accord with recent by-law changes (see "@ The Centre," page 5). The Board also re-elected Ives and Charles Platt to three-year terms while expressing thanks to retiring Governor John Plumpton for his long service.

Suzanne Sigman rebuilt and revitalized CC New England activities with a host of successful events over the past several years and was instrumental in making the first attempts to coordinate the activities and communications of far-flung local groups of CC members. The former proprietor of a bookshop specializing in children's books, she devotes herself to advancing Sir Winston's message in the Boston area.

Chris Hebb, like his father before him, is a key leader of the Sir Winston S. Churchill Society of British Columbia, which in 1986 played conference host to the Churchill Conference and to our guest William Manchester. The Society has an education fund, supporting its mission of acquainting youth with the Churchill story.

Suzanne and Dan Sigman and Dorothy and Chris Hebb have regularly attended International Churchill Conferences, and we look forward enthusiastically to their participation on the Board of Governors.
George Lewis became treasurer of the then-International Churchill Society following the death of Dalton Newfield in 1982. At the time, our worldly wealth was $389.64.

I often recall our conversations in the early Eighties, just before I would send each 12- or 16-page issue of *Finest Hour* to press. George would call to give the green light—meaning that he could actually write a check to pay the printing bill without being arrested: "Well, we have $1503.40 in the bank, and we haven't sent out this quarter's renewal notices yet. So if the bill is under $2000, we can probably cover it by the time it arrives, and the postage along with it, and even have a little bit left over!"

George held the treasurer's job for a record fifteen years until 1997, after the old ICS had been folded into the new Churchill Centre. When he left, the treasury was substantially healthier. George became a founding member of The Churchill Centre and contributed, over the years, generous gifts to its endowment fund. He also served for more than his five year term as a Churchill Centre Trustee, a position from which he has just retired; and here again his advice and ideas were always welcome.

The Churchill Centre Blenheim Award is presented for notable services to the Centre or to the memory of Winston Churchill. At Toronto in 1997, we presented it to George Lewis, "for his dedication to the cause, his steadfast loyalty through good times and bad, for sharing in our triumphs, and helping us shrug off our tragedies. Nobody deserves it more."

George had joined the old ICS in the 1970s and was one of our longest participating members. When I met him he was just retiring from a long and fruitful career, and had the time—that most precious commodity!—to devote to our affairs. He couldn't have arrived at a more opportune moment. The sudden loss of Dal Newfield had been a blow to everyone. We were forced to scramble in many directions to find substitutes for the myriad positions Dal had filled.

Always with George, the treasury was in good hands. He and his wife Barbara were frequently present at events, and several times hosted meetings of the Board of Governors at their home in Westfield, New Jersey. They carried betimes during many years a difficult burden, following a serious and debilitating car accident suffered by their daughter, which preoccupied them for a long time.

I am always surprised, because of what I think is its relative insignificance, to find the organization attracting the occasional person whose Churchill interest proves secondary to personal interests or personal ego. George was never one of these. We could always count on him to place the interests of the organization first, even when it was not perhaps the preferred course from his personal standpoint. He was the kind of leader we have needed so often over the years—who, fortunately for us, have always been there.

Another former Governor, Cyril Mazansky, had a way of summarizing people in a few deft remarks that always went to the heart of things. Once at a particularly garrulous and soul-searching meeting, after we had wrestled with and disposed of our little problems for the time being, Cyril, South African by birth, remarked: "I can't help but think of George as the type of character who built this country—reliable, trustworthy, solid, always willing to look on the bright side. Those people are a dying breed."

For the sake of his country, one hopes George's breed is not disappearing. But none of those who worked with him, who appreciate his knowledge and enjoy his comradeship, will never forget the contributions of George Lewis, among which is his old friend.
Q: I've been set what I thought was an easy research question about Churchill, but despite looking at websites and books I've been unable to find out the exact dates he was Prime Minister.

A: Blow your teacher away by reporting that he was technically Prime Minister three times. The extra one was when the wartime coalition broke up and he formed a "caretaker" government of Conservatives until the 1945 election. The exact dates are: Coalition Prime Minister, 10 May 1940 to 23 May 1945; Conservative Prime Minister, 23 May 1945 to 26 July 1945; Conservative Prime Minister: 26 October 1951 to 5 April 1955. See also "Timelines" in FH 116.

Q: In its obituary of Lord Shawcross, The Times of July 11th vehemently denied that, as attorney-general in the post-World War II government, he ever said, "We are the masters now." I have always believed he did. Moreover, I understood that the then-Leader of the Opposition, Winston Churchill, retorted, "Oh no you're not. The people put you there and the people will put you out again." Can anyone provide the definitive version? (Alistair Cooke has already corrected two factual errors in this same obituary.) —James Bell, Scotland

A: Shawcross always defended himself over this matter by saying that the famous quote was not complete and that what he said was: "We are the masters at the moment, and not only at the moment, but for a very long time to come." I suspect that the Churchill comment is apocryphal. —PHC $5

FINEST HOUR 121/13
Michael McMenamin

125 Years Ago:
Winter 1878-79-Age 4
"Lord Randolph was mute"

A
fter Lord Randolph's scathing at-
tack on the President of the Local
Government Board earlier in the year,
nothing more was heard from Lord
Randolph on the political front. As
Winston wrote in his biography of his
father, "For the rest of the Parliament
Lord Randolph was mute. Scarcely a
mention of his name occurs in the 'De-
bates.' He was absent from many im-
portant divisions. His relations and feel-
ings towards the Government seem
somewhat to have improved as the
Russian war crisis receded, and he re-
mained an impassive spectator of their
doings in Afghanistan, in Zululand,
and the Transvaal."

Meanwhile, Churchill's parents
continued during the winter their ex-
tensive travels throughout Ireland. As
Lord Randolph wrote to his mother,
"This weather is certainly very wintry
and does not seem to lend itself to any-
thing congenial, while anything more
odious or unfortunate for fishing can-
not be well imagined. I fished for two
days in the Suir and never moved a fish,
nor did anyone else. However, I have
added another Irish county (Tipperary)
to my peregrinations in this island."

Winston's brother Jack was born in
Dublin on February 4th. The family
now prepared to return to London to
face a general election, in which Lord
Randolph would manage to hold on to
the family seat, Woodstock.

100 Years Ago:
Winter 1903-04-Age 29
"Governments have nothing to
give but what they have first
taken away"

BOURKE
COCKRAN

In December, Chur-
chill wrote a
long letter to
his friend
Bourke Cock-
ran, the Amer-
ican Congress-
man and ora-
tor: "I believe
that Chamber-
lain will be de-
feated at the General Election by an
overwhelming majority....Feeling is get-
ing much more bitter on both sides
than when you were here last and I
think there are very stormy times ahead
....I have had all sorts of rows and trou-
bles in my own constituency and I am
thinking of trying my luck in pastures
new....I have never received a copy of
your speech at the Liberal Club. I wish
I had been able to get hold of it. It
would be very useful....I wish you
would send me some good free trade
speeches that have been made in Amer-
ica, and some facts about corruption,
lobbying, and so forth...."

Since their first meeting in 1895,
Cockran had played a formative role in
Churchill's political thought and was
the person after whom Churchill pat-
terned his speaking style. (See
"Churchill's American Mentor," FH
115.) The Liberal Club speech to which
Churchill referred was one Cockran
had given in London on 15 July 1903,
titled "The Essential Conditions of Na-
tional Prosperity." An excerpt from that
speech by Cockran compared with one
given by Churchill on 11 November
1903 at Birmingham illustrates how
closely aligned the two men were politi-
cally and oratorically.

Cockran: "Since Government of it-
self can create nothing, it can have
nothing of its own to bestow on any-
body. It cannot, then, be both just and
generous at the same time, for if it be
generous to some it must be oppressive
to others. If it undertake to enrich one
man, the thing which it gives it
must take from some other man. If it
have a favorite, it must have a victim;
and that Government only is good, that
Government only is great, that Govern-
ment only is just, which has neither fa-
vorites nor victims."

Churchill: "You may, by the arbi-
trary and sterile act of Government—
for, remember, Governments create
nothing and have nothing to give but
what they have first taken away—you
may put money in the pocket of one set
of Englishmen, but it will be money
taken from the pockets of another set of
Englishmen, and the greater part will be
spilled on the way. Every vote given for
Protection is a vote to give Govern-
ments the right of robbing Peter to pay
Paul, and charging the public a hand-
some commission on the job."

Churchill's reference in his letter to
Cockran of "troubles in my own con-
stituency" was borne out on 8 January
1904, when the Oldham Conservative
Association nearly unanimously passed
a resolution of no confidence in him
because of his outspoken views on free
trade. Churchill's reference to "trying
my luck in pastures new" was in retro-
spect a foreshadowing of his coming de-
cision to leave the Conservatives and
"cross the floor" to join the Liberals.

Cockran undoubtedly honored
Churchill's request to send him "some
good free trade speeches" for, in Febru-
ary, 1904, Churchill made a speech at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester which The Times described as "one of the most powerful and brilliant he has made." Churchill said, "It is the theory of the Protectionist that imports are an evil. He thinks that if you shut out the foreign imported manufactured goods you will make these goods yourselves, in addition to the goods which you make now, including those goods which we make to exchange for the foreign goods that come in. If a man can believe that he can believe anything. [Laughter.] We Free-traders say it is not true. To think you can make a man richer by putting on a tax is like a man thinking that he can stand in a bucket and lift himself up by the handle. [Laughter and cheers.]

75 Years Ago:
Winter 1928-29-Age 54
"You will be very sorry after the Socialists are returned"

In the latter part of November, Churchill wrote to the press baron Lord Rothermere, warning of the consequences to follow if he and his fellow newspaper owner Max Beaverbrook abandoned the Conservatives: "Of course, if you and Max rock the boat it will do a good deal of harm and I am sure you will be very sorry after the Socialists are returned. Certainly everything you have stood for, friendship with France, breach with Russia, economy in expenditure, reduction of taxation, will be violently overthrown. However, this is a free country and everyone may try to make his own bed so long as he is ready to lie in it afterwards...."

Over the Christmas holiday, Churchill continued work on The Aftermath, sending chapters to Arthur Balfour, Neville Chamberlain and Stanley Baldwin. In a letter to Baldwin accompanying the chapters, Churchill gave his views on the general theme of the coming election: "I am sure that everything should be done to confront the electorates with the direct choice between Socialism and modern Conservatism. The more blunt and simple the issue, the better for our cause. The world tides are favourable. They set in every country towards Conservatism, co-operation and continuity of national policy."

Churchill warned in a speech on 12 February that a Socialist government would "bring back the Russian Bolsheviks, who will immediately get busy in the mines and factories, as well as among the armed forces, planning another general strike....If a Socialist Government came into power, they might well have a façade of well-meaning and respectable Ministers who were moved here and there like marionettes in accordance with the decision of a small secret international junta."

Privately, Churchill was pessimistic about the election, but not so his cabinet colleagues, who were busy discussing, if not plotting, behind Churchill's back to move him out of the Exchequer in a new government.

50 Years Ago:
Winter 1953-54* Age 79
"This old carcass of mine is a bloody nuisance"

Churchill was in Bermuda for a summit conference with the Americans and the French. "I don't feel old, though I have some of the disabilities of old age," he told Lord Moran. "My outlook on things has not changed. It is exactly what it was. In the mornings I feel the same as I always did, but I have become torpid in the middle of the day. This old carcass of mine is a bloody nuisance."

Churchill's purpose in coming to Bermuda was to persuade the new American administration that the death of Stalin offered an opportunity to explore detente with the new Soviet leadership. Lord Moran asked Churchill if Russia wanted war, to which he replied, "I believe it is not in her interest to make war. When I meet Malenkov we can build for peace." Who was making it difficult?, Moran asked. "Ike," Churchill said. "He doesn't think any good can come from talks with the Russians. But it will pay him to come along with us. I shall do what I can to persuade him. I might stay longer here than I meant, at any rate if I could persuade Ike to stay too."

At Bermuda Churchill told Eisenhower: "If this gathering were being held to find ways to reduce our defenses, that would be an extreme act of criminal folly, but if we were resolved to continue our preparation with the utmost vigor and perseverance...then this second question whether there was any reality in a Russian change was one that could be examined within limits and it should find its part in a general survey of the scene, once we had convinced them that there was no hope of dividing the allies."

But Eisenhower characterized the Soviet Union as a streetwalker. As John Colville records his words, "If we understood that under this dress was the same old girl, if we understood that despite bath, perfume or lace, it was still the same old girl on that basis then we might explore all that Sir Winston had said....Perhaps we could pull the old girl off the main street and put her on a back alley. He did not want to approach this problem on the basis that there had been any change in the Soviet policy of destroying the Capitalist free world by all means, by force, by deceit or by lies."

The most Churchill could do was to persuade Eisenhower, in his forthcoming speech to the United Nations, to substitute "reserve the right to use the atomic bomb" in place of "free to use the atomic bomb." Colville records Eisenhower's comment on the differences between him and WSC: "Whereas Winston looked on the atomic weapon as something entirely new and terrible, he looked upon it as just the latest improvement in military weapons."

Back in London, Churchill learned on 21 January of the death of Richard Molyneux, a fellow soldier who had been wounded at Omdurman and had received a skin graft from Churchill at that time. Whistling past the graveyard, WSC observed "He will take my skin with him, a kind of advance guard, into the next world...."
Throughout his long life, Winston Churchill was a prolific traveler. He enjoyed a variety of modes of transport, including on one notable and photographed occasion, a camel. Of the many ships on which he took passage, Churchill is most closely identified with the Cunard liner *Queen Mary*, on which he sailed numerous times (more than any other single vessel) during and after World War II—and about which he wrote the tribute published in this issue.

Churchill sailed on at least fifteen different liners over nearly six decades. His trips varied considerably in length and the conditions under which he sailed, but few sources detail them. Passing reference is often made ("Churchill sailed..."), offering no information on the ship involved. What follows is culled from a wide variety of sources on ships and Churchill.

Dr. Sterling is on the faculty of The George Washington University and is editor of *The Churchillian*, published by the Washington Society for Churchill. His "Churchill and Air Travel" appeared in *FH* 118.

**Serving the Empire**

Churchill's first ocean voyages took place on vessels of the three most important British shipping lines linking vital Empire routes. The Cunard Line had served the North Atlantic route to Canada and the United States since 1840. The Peninsular & Oriental (P&O), formed in 1839 and responsible for adding the term "posh" to the language (which originally stood for the way to avoid the hot sun by dwelling on the "port [side] out [and] starboard home"), pioneered service to India and Australia. The Union-Castle line (the result of a 1900 merger) served South Africa. At this stage, Churchill was but one of many young men traveling by sea to serve Britain's worldwide interests. The entertainment and excitement he sought, of course, was not found aboard ship.

Perhaps fittingly, his initial sea voyage took him on his first of more than a dozen trips to the United States. In November 1895 Churchill sailed with his friend Reggie Barnes from Liverpool to New York on the Cunarder *Etruria*. It was an inauspicious beginning to a life of travel...
by sea, as he wrote to his mother near the end of the voyage, "I do not contemplate ever taking a sea voyage for pleasure and I shall always look upon journeys by sea as necessary evils which have to be undergone in the carrying out of any definite plan."  

While his cabin was "not uncomfortable," the ship lacked a "comfortable place to sit down and an interesting occupation" while on board—though it was his fellow passengers that were most vexing. "There are no nice people on board to speak of—certainly none to write of...There is to be a concert on board tonight at which all the stupid people among the passengers intend to perform and the stupider ones to applaud. The days have seemed very long & uninteresting." After an exciting time in both New York City and Cuba (where he turned 21 and came under fire for the first time), Churchill returned to England early in 1896 on the same ship.

The next four voyages—on four different P&O ships—all carried Churchill either to or from Bombay, India, by way of the British-operated Suez Canal. In September 1896, he sailed from Southampton with many of his army compatriots on the Britannia, which had been chartered to carry troops. Clearly this second experience was more agreeable—largely because of his fellow passengers. As he wrote to his mother, "I play Picquet...& chess...& in the afternoons and evenings our string band plays—adding to the agreeableness of the voyage. Everyone here pretends the weather is very hot—sleeps on deck, etc. But I remain comfortably in the deserted cabin which as I have it to myself at nights is perfectly cool. We make a very cheery party ourselves—and as there are nearly a hundred officers on board there is no lack of company."

In May 1897, and very much against his mother's advice on what would be good for his career, Churchill took leave and sailed home on P&O's Ganges from Bombay for Brindisi, from which he journeyed by train to Britain. Under three months later he made the same trip in reverse, reaching Brindisi by rail, and sailing on P&O's Rome to Bombay. An eventful nine months later, in March 1899, he left India for the last time, returning from Bombay on P&O's Carthage, along with, among others, Sir Bindon Blood.

Christine Lewis Conover, then a young American whom Churchill met aboard the Carthage, provides a glimpse of young Winston at the time: "...a freckled, red-haired young man in a rumpled suit carrying an immense tin cake box. [In it was his manuscript for The River War, his book on the Sudan campaign, which he had joined as a correspondent during another Indian leave in the summer of 1898.] We found him a most amusing fellow traveler, full of fun, with a delightful sense of humor...Every day he sat beside us on the deck, working intensely on his book. He paid no attention to the gay chatter of young people on the adjoining chairs as he wrote and rewrote in that particular small hand. His concentration was an example to us all."  

Arriving in Cairo, Churchill holed up there for a few weeks to work on his book, keeping brief company with Miss Lewis. Churchill sailed to and from Egypt on small French packet ships of little importance—and less cleanliness, from surviving accounts.

On his subsequent voyage down to South Africa, on the other hand, he was on board a first-class vessel. With some 1,500 British soldiers, he sailed on 14 October 1899 to Cape Town on the Castle Line's government-chartered Dunottar Castle. The first shots in what became the Boer War had been fired just two days earlier. Again he complains—this time in a dispatch to the Morning Post—of "what an odious affair is a modern sea journey!" He was clearly bored with the inaction of a trip of more than two weeks along the coast of West Africa. Or, as he often said, quoting Dr. Johnson's line, "Being in a ship is being in jail, with the chance of being drowned."

Churchill was especially bothered about being cut off from news, since only a handful of ships were then equipped with wireless. But perhaps the real problem this time was mal de mer, as he wrote to his mother: "We have

1. For a survey of his early interest in and travel on airplanes, see the author's "Churchill and Air Travel." Finest Hour 118:24-29 (Spring 2003).
2. We describe here only WSC's use of ocean liners, not yachts, cargo or river craft, of military vessels (e.g., the Admiralty yacht Enchantress). For Churchill on the battleship Renown see "Glimpses from the Taxi": HMS Renown 1943" by Vic Humphries, Finest Hour 113:24-25, Winter 2002-03.
5. Ibid.
had a nasty rough passage & I have been grievously sick. The roll of the vessel is still very pronounced...." But a week later he was "having a cool & prosperous voyage, and although the ship is crowded and ill-found, I cannot say I hate it as much as I expected to." In July 1900, Churchill returned to England on the same ship, by now a war hero.

Churchill's second trip to North America was a lecture tour about his experiences in the Boer War. In December 1900, he sailed for New York on Cunard's Lucania, by far the largest and fastest liner he had yet used, the best of the British merchant marine at the time, though no longer a record holder. After dozens of lectures and £10,000 richer, an exhausted Churchill embarked in February 1901 from New York on Etruria—the very liner that had first brought him to America six years before.

**Interval: Two Disasters**

For almost three decades, Churchill apparently did not sail on a passenger ship. These were, of course, the frantically busy years of his striking political growth. They included two of the worst British passenger liner disasters of the century, in one of which he was indirectly involved.

The sinking of the White Star liner Titanic on her April 1912 maiden voyage to New York, with the loss of some 1,500 lives, horrified the world. Writing to his wife just days after the loss, Churchill reflected that "the strict observance of the great traditions of the sea towards women & children reflects nothing but honour upon our civilization....I cannot help feeling proud of our race and its traditions as proved by this event. Boat loads of women and children tossing on the sea—safe and sound—and the rest—silence." As soon became known, however, the reality was quite different: a host of women and children in second and third class lost their lives while many First Class (and other) male passengers were saved, including the chairman of the line, J. Bruce Ismay, who never lived it down and died a broken and despised man.

The torpedoing by the German submarine U-20 of the Cunard Line's Lusitania off the south coast of Ireland just over three years later was almost as bad. The large liner went down in just eighteen minutes, taking hundreds with her. Many more died before rescue ships reached them hours later. Some 1,200 lives were lost—including many women and children and 129 Americans. Churchill was then First Lord of the Admiralty, and it was under Admiralty orders that Lusitania sailed. A host of accusations were raised then—and in some later books—arguing that Churchill or the Admiralty were somehow behind the sinking of the ship in an attempt to bring America into the war.

Already under fierce political pressure over the Gallipoli venture that would (seemingly) soon end his career, Churchill said little about the Lusitania at the time—merely one brief response to a question in the House of Commons. He devoted three pages to the event in The World Crisis, and wrote a more expansive newspaper piece fifteen years later. In all he was defensive—"No one can say the Admiralty were remiss" as he put it in the 1937 article. In the same piece he also writes of two torpedoes (when even then it was known that only one struck the vessel), that "no panic broke out" (which was...
clearly not the case), and of blunders made by Captain Turner (whom some officers at the Admiralty had tried to frame for the disaster). Churchill also suggests the U-20 remained nearby on the surface when at no time had it surfaced. Nor does he comment upon the Admiralty's confusion over the sending of rescue vessels, which sadly contributed to the death toll.  

**Traveling First Class**

In the 1920s Churchill held high office, including Chancellor of the Exchequer. When Baldwin's government fell in 1929, he was ready for a substantial change of scene. Over the next three years he would sail extensively and loyally on British lines (Cunard, White Star, Canadian-Pacific), unless a foreign liner got him around faster.

On 3 August 1929, joined by his brother, nephew and son Randolph, Churchill boarded the Canadian Pacific's *Empress of Australia* bound from Southampton to Quebec. Used to good service and facilities, the group traveled First Class. "What fun it is to get away from England and feel one has no responsibility for her exceedingly tiresome and embarrassing affairs," he wrote Lord Beaverbrook. Perhaps ironically in light of that comment, he also noted the benefit of being in wireless connection with those back home. The Churchills spent nearly three months in Canada and the United States before sailing in October from New York on Cunard's *Berengaria*, just days after the stock market crash. The huge First Class public rooms and the sense of space on a liner of more than 50,000 tons was unlike anything Churchill had enjoyed before.

Now out of office, Churchill embarked two years later on a lecture tour of the U.S., his fourth trip there. In December 1931 he, Clementine, daughter Diana, and a bodyguard sailed on the North German Lloyd's speedy *Europa* for New York. Choosing other than a British liner (especially on the line that had taken the "Blue Riband" or Atlantic speed record from Britain's *Mauretania* two years before) was unusual, caused by some late debate on the pending India Bill in Parliament.

Arriving in New York, Churchill held a press conference on the Sun Deck reception saloon and posed for pictures. The planned speaking tour was delayed for weeks when Churchill was struck by a car on Fifth Avenue and had to recuperate in a hospital. For a three week rest in the Bahamas, the family traveled to Nassau on White Star Line's huge *Majestic*, which offered warm water cruises to fill empty cabins during the Depression. Originally planning to take White Star's *Olympic* (sister to the *Titanic*) back from New York two weeks later, they extended their stay and returned from Nassau on another cruising liner, the Holland American *Statendam*. After a belated and exhausting speaking schedule, the Churchills sailed home from New York in March 1932, again on the *Majestic*, to find a handsome new Daimler, a gift from more than one hundred friends.

This was Churchill's last ocean liner trip until the war. His heavy writing commitments, as well as ongoing Parliamentary debates on India, the Abdication, and German rearmament, kept him fully involved save for short European vacations. But he stayed in touch with liner developments and in 1936, on the entry into service of the new Cunard-White Star flagship, the *Queen Mary*, wrote a description for the *Strand Magazine*. He concluded: "Never in the whole history of Atlantic travel has so lavish provision been made for those who travel 'tourist.'" Little did he then know how important that phrase—or *diis* ship—would prove to be.  

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9. Ibid., p. 441.
10. There are countless books on the *Titanic* story. For sheer drama, Walter Lord's *A Night to Remember* (New York: Holt, 1955) can't be beaten; it has remained in print for nearly half a century. But one of the most balanced accounts is the harder-to-find Geoffrey Marcus, *The Maiden Voyage* (New York: Viking, 1969), complete with a large fold-out deck plan. Technically, *Titanic* was American-owned, as White Star was then part of J.P. Morgan's International Mercantile Marine combine, though she flew the British flag.
12. For details on how *Titanic's* passenger and crew death toll varied by gender and class, see, for example, Daniel Allen Butler, "*Unsinkable*": The Full Story of RMS *Titanic* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1998), p. 239.
18. "Queen of the Seas," *Strand Magazine* (May 1936); see this issue.
Rising tensions in Europe led Churchill to suggest that another liner on which he had sailed several years before be preserved for possible wartime use. In late 1938 Cunard's *Berengaria* was headed for the Scottish breakers when Churchill, among other MPs, urged the House of Commons to retain her for the duration of the European crisis for possible troop transport. While antiquated, her capacity would have been invaluable. But unfortunately, no action was taken.19

Queens at War

As First Lord of the Admiralty in March 1940, Churchill was in a position to order action to preserve Britain's newest and biggest liner, Cunard-White Star's *Queen Elizabeth*, then completing her fitting out on the Clyde: He ordered her to sail to New York to get beyond the reach of German bombers.20 Painted a dull navy grey instead of her usual livery of black hull with white superstructure, the *Elizabeth* sailed with a skeleton crew and many construction workers still on board. For less than a week, the world's three largest liners lay moored side-by-side at Hudson River piers—the grey *Mary* and *Elizabeth*, and the French Line's doomed *Normandie*, exiled while still in her peacetime livery. (See page 23.)

As Prime Minister, Churchill made three transatlantic round-trips on the *Queen Mary*, traveling by warship or airplane for his other journeys: May 1943 (New York and the "Trident" conference with the Americans); July 1943 (Halifax for the "Quadrant" conference in Quebec); and September 1944 (Halifax again for the "Octagon" conference, again in Quebec). Churchill and those traveling with him always boarded at Gourock, Scotland, near the mouth of the Clyde, in evening hours to lessen the chances that his movements would become known to the enemy. The *Queen Mary* most often traveled alone rather than in a slower convoy, as her top speed, over 30 knots, was far faster than convoy vessels—or the German U-boats.21

While wartime travel on the *Mary* was under austerity conditions for most passengers (who ranged from thousands of prisoners of war heading west to even more Canadian and American soldiers traveling east), Churchill and key members of his party occupied First Class suites on the main deck. These were furnished in the line's best pre-war fashion, right down to fresh flowers daily.

Whenever the Prime Minister traveled, structural alterations were required. His suite had to be sealed off from the rest of the liner; staff offices, dining quarters, a map room and conference room were needed. Cabins and staterooms were restored to something like their prewar state of comfort. Guarded by Marines, the PM Suite had laws of its own. The ship, then ferrying American troops, was "dry." When Churchill heard of this he pulled what is described as "a very glum face," so his accommodation had its own licensing laws and drink could be served!22 The PM's party also enjoyed a higher level of cuisine, but these after all were working journeys with extensive staff work to do. Churchill would usually appear on the bridge at least once daily to chat with the *Queen's* officers about the ship and her navigation.

Churchill's final passenger ship during the war was the older and smaller Cunard liner, *Franconia*. For the Yalta conference of early February 1945, the liner was moored off Sebastopol for accommodation and communications by the British delegation. After the conference, Churchill and many of his entourage spent February

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They Sailed with Churchill
(Includes all liners cited, listed alphabetically)


**Britannia** (1887-1909, 6,525 tons, 465 feet, two funnels, single screw). With *Victoria* and *Oceania*, part of the "Jubilee" class liners, then P&O's fastest and largest vessels, built to honor the Queen's golden jubilee. This and other P&O ship information is found in Duncan Haws, *Merchant Fleets in Profile 1: The Ships of the P&O, Orient and Blue Anchor Lines* (Cambridge: Patrick Stephens, 1978).

**Carthage** and **Rome** (1881-1903/12, 5,013 tons, 430 feet, two funnels, single screws). First P&O ships over 5,000 tons. **Rome** became the cruise ship **Vectis**, 1904-12.

**Dunottar Castle** (1890-1915, 5,625 tons, 420 feet, two funnels, single screw) is an earlier ship than that mistakenly shown on die second page of photographs in Celia Sandys's *Churchill: Wanted Dead or Alive* (1999) which is a 1936 vessel. Casde Line merged with the competing Union Line to create Union-Casde a few months after Churchill's voyage. See also *The Cruise of the Royal Mail Steamer Dunottar Castle Round Scotland on Her Trial Trip* (Edinburgh: T. and A. Constable, 1890) for more information on the vessel.

**Empress of Canada** (1914-52, 21,800 tons, 588 feet, three funnels, twin screws, 19 knots). Built as Hamburg America's *Tirpitz*, but laid up unfinished during World War I, she became a part of postwar reparations. Completed for Canadian Pacific operation, she carried the King and Queen for their Royal Visit to Canada in 1939, and served as a troop ship during World War II.

**Etruria** (1885-1909, 8,120 tons, 500 feet, two funnels, single screw). One of a fast pair of Cunarders (the other was *Umbrid*), held the Blue Riband for several years, recording the fastest passage from Queenstown (now Cobh) Ireland to Sandy Hook (the mouth of New York harbor). These were the last Cunarders designed to use sails as auxiliary power.

**Europa** (1930-61, 49,746 tons, 890 feet, two funnels, quadruple screws, 28 knots) with her sister *Bremen* marked the German comeback on the Nordi Atlantic. The two ships briefly traded Blue Riband honors. Europa became the French Line's smart Libertfaker the war.

**Franconia** (1923-57, 20,175 tons, 601 feet, one funnel, twin screws, 16.5 knots) sailed North Atlantic (with a black hull) and warmer cruising routes (in a white hull to help cool her interior) for Cunard until 1939, when die British government took her over for trooping duties. She resumed her commercial career after full refurbishment in 1948-49, primarily on the run to Canadian ports.

**Ganges** (1881-89, 4,168 tons, 390 feet, two funnels, single screw). Destroyed by fire in Bombay a year after Churchill sailed on her, luckily while few were on board. One of a class of five vessels dubbed "The River Class."

**Lucania** and her sister **Campania** (1893-1910, 12,950 tons, 600 feet, two funnels, twin screws, 22 knots) were handsome liners which for several years held the Blue Riband for the fastest Atlantic crossing. For a wonderful sense (including photos and plans) of the public rooms and traveling in style at the turn of the century, see Mark D. Warren, *The Cunard Royal Mail Twin-Screw Steamers 'Campania' and 'Lucania'" (S'zrdorA: Patrick Stephens, 1993), reprinting a special issue of *Engineering* from 1893.

**Majestic** (1921-36, 56,551 tons, 915 feet, single screws, 24 knots). Designed as Hamburg America's *Bismarck*, she never sailed under that name. Through the 1920s and early 1930s she was advertised as the largest ship in the world. Began cruising in die off-season in an attempt to fill her huge passenger capacity. Withdrawn in 1936, she briefly became the Admiralty training ship **Caledonian**, but was gutted by fire in September 1939.

**Queen Elizabeth** (1940-68, 83,600 tons, 987 feet, two funnels, quadruple screws, 31 knots) was the world's largest liner until the huge modern cruise ships of the 1990s. For a pictorial account of die Churchill 1946 voyage, see "Life Crosses the Atlantic on the 'Queen Elizabeth':" *Life* (11 February 1946), pp. 93-97.

**Queen Mary** (1936-67, 80,774 tons, 1,018 feet, three funnels, quadruple screws, 30 knots) was perhaps the most famous 20di century passenger vessel. She held the Blue Riband for most of the period 1936-52 (when the new *United States* entered service). There are many books on her design, furnishings and long career—among the most useful are Neil Potter & Jack Frost, *The Mary: The Inevitable Ship* (London: Harrap, 1961); and James Steele, *Queen Mary* (London: Phaidon, 1995).

**Statendam** (1929-40, 29,511 tons, 698 feet, three funnels, twin screws, 19 knots) was under construction for eight years with many stoppages, due in part to changes in American immigration laws, which forced design changes in her passenger spaces to eliminate steerage. As with many other Depression-weakened lines, she began off-season Caribbean cruises in 1930. She was destroyed by fire in the German invasion of Holland in May 1940.

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FINEST HOUR 121/21
11th-13th on board "this most comfortable ship with its *Queen Mary* staff." He was not, however, happy with noise from adjacent rooms and several had to be closed. All aboard were "comfortable to the point of luxury and wonderfully over-fed" by the *Queen Mary* chef, whose white dinner rolls "take one back to times of peace." To George Baker, the chief commissary officer, Churchill expressed special appreciation with an autographed copy of *Great Contemporaries*.

**Twilight Voyages**

During the first postwar decade Churchill traveled to or from America by ocean liner on six occasions. He sailed on one or the other of the Cunard Queens, which were from the late 1940s to about 1960 in their passenger-carrying heyday, offering the two-ship Atlantic express originally intended in the 1930s.

In January 1946 Churchill, now leader of the Opposition, and his wife sailed—two of only 134 civilians—aboard the *Queen Elizabeth* to New York, then headed south by train for a holiday in Florida. This was his first time aboard the *Elizabeth* which, save for her two funnels repainted in Cunard orange and black, was still in wartime grey livery and filled with standee bunks for the troops—more than 12,000 returning Canadians. Both Queens remained under government control to shift the thousands of troops back across the Atlantic.

Churchill spoke to them over the ship's public address system toward the end of the voyage, concluding: "Yesterday, I was on the bridge, watching the mountainous waves and this ship, which is no pup, cutting through them and mocking their anger. I asked myself, why is it that the ship beats the waves, when they are so many and the ship is one? They just flop around, innumerable, tireless, but ineffective. The ship with the purpose takes us where we want to go."25

After considerable travel, many visits, and the famous "Iron Curtain" speech in Missouri, the Churchills returned in late March 1946 aboard the *Queen Mary*, also still in wartime grey, continuing to ferry thousands of soldiers westbound and small commercial loads eastbound.

Three years later, Winston and Clementine, along with Mary and Christopher Soames, two secretaries, a detective and a valet, boarded *Queen Elizabeth*, now in her peacetime finery, for a March 1949 voyage to New York—Churchill's twelfth visit to America (see back cover). After a seven-month refurbishment in 1946, the ship had been restored to the luxury form originally intended, with service to match. Churchill noted in a letter to a Cunard official that it had been more than a half century since his first trip on one of the company's liners—which is a long time as human lives go."26 The *Queen*, more than ten times the size of those first vessels, arrived at Pier 90 to be met by a horde of 200 journalists, for whom Churchill answered questions in the liner's theater. The ensuing trip included extended visits to New York, Washington, and Boston (his famous Mid-Century Speech at MIT), and then a return to New York and a voyage home on the *Queen Mary* early in April. In a note to his grandson he described the ship as "a floating hotel which rushes along at 33 miles an hour, and is a great credit to our country."27

In December 1952, now Premier again, Churchill set off on his penultimate liner voyage, to New York on the *Queen Mary*, to see President Truman and President-elect Eisenhower. Lunching and dining in the posh, extra-cost Verandah Grill, he spent New Year's Day in mid-Atlantic. After an impromptu press conference on arrival, his party transferred to Bernard Baruch's apartment and a meeting with General Eisenhower. He flew to Washington in President Truman's plane, then on to a vacation in Jamaica. Two weeks later, he was back in New York for a flight home.

In 1954, Churchill flew to New York. His last voyage on an ocean liner would occur in June when RMS *Queen Elizabeth* carried him home. It was less comfortable than usual: floating ice forced the poorly ventilated ship's track farther south, and into warm and humid conditions. It also became politically uncomfortable when, still at sea, he telegraphed a summit meeting offer to the Soviet Union without prior Cabinet (or U.S.) knowledge or approval. Considerable uproar ensued on his arrival in England.28

Two years later, for the first time in history, more passengers crossed the Atlantic by airliner than by ship. Within five years, both of the great Queens were losing money. In just over a decade, both had been withdrawn, the *Queen Mary* to become a hotel-museum in California, the *Queen Elizabeth* to be destroyed in a fire in Hong Kong harbor. An era had ended.

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27. Ibid., p. 469.
28. Ibid., p. 1012.
The building of the Queen Mary represents the decision of Great Britain to regain the Blue Ribbon of the Atlantic passenger service. This decision has been long delayed and many circumstances most vexatious to British minds have obstructed it.

After the Great War was over, as part of the conditions of peace, Germany was obliged to yield up her transatlantic liners in replacement of the far greater volume of tonnage sunk by the U-boats. We therefore received the two prewar German liners, Imperator and Bismarck, which were renamed respectively the Berengaria and Majestic. These vessels had been built as long ago as 1912. They belonged to the epoch before men’s minds had been stretched by the terrible convulsions of the war. They were magnificent ships, the equals in many respects of their contemporaries, the Mauretania, Lusitania and Aquitania. But the possibilities of science, the modern ideas of comfort, convenience and luxury, rendered it possible to design and construct after the war vessels which were finer and faster.

Great tales have been told of the cruel hardships inflicted upon the Germans by the war indemnities exacted from them under the Peace Treaty. They proved in the end to be the gainers from every point of view. Out of the large sums of money which die Germans borrowed from America and Britain, tliey were able to build in 1929 two great ships, the Europa and Bremen, which were the last word in magnificence, luxury and modernity, and which eclipsed all rivals by three or four knots speed. Germany thus re-entered upon die transatlantic passenger trade in the most favourable circumstances, competing with her own old ships, now in British hands, with brand-new vessels built on money borrowed from the Allies! Great Britain, weighed down with debt, smitten by the economic blizzard, and disappointed in German repayment, found herself unable to put contemporary vessels in the water to meet this new challenge.

There for a time the matter rested in a most lamentable plight. Meanwhile other countries, particularly Italy, built great and splendid ships of die very latest type. Since the Aquitania was built no transatlantic liner of the first order had been laid down in British yards. Nearly a quarter of a century passed without any opportunity being given to our designers to construct the mammoth vessels, in the light of the knowledge of new tastes and requirements of the travelling public, which have developed since then. The glory of the Aquitania and Mauretania is diat they have, for all this period, been able to make head against the tremendous State-aided competition of ships very much younger than themselves. It is from this fact that we may draw good hopes for the future.

Queen of the Seas’ was published in The Strand Magazine for May 1936 (Woods C299) and reprinted in The Collected Essays of Sir Winston Churchill: Churchill at Large (ICS A145), London, 1975. It is published here, for only the second time in article form, by kind permission of the Churchill Literary Estate and Winston S. Churchill.
In all questions of re-equipment on a large scale, whoever can afford to wait till the last has the opportunity of going from the bottom to the top of the class. Such was the position when Great Britain began to recover from the world slump of 1930 and 1931. The ordered and orthodox system of our finances enabled both public and private enterprise to look forward to a new and successful effort to reestablish our industrial and maritime supremacy. The decision to build the Queen Mary, which must of course carry with it the building of a sister ship, was the result of this revival. Her launch by Her Majesty Queen Mary in 1934 was an occasion of national rejoicing. Her entry into the transatlantic passenger service signalized and symbolized the resolve of British industry and the British nation to assert their long-undisputed preeminence on blue water and to be worthy of their old and sure renown.

If it is ever necessary to understand the conditions which must govern the carrying through of this brilliant and spacious enterprise. The history of the British transatlantic passenger service is not a series of "stunt ships" giving satisfaction only to megalomania and record-breaking or ostentation. The policy underlying the construction of the Queen Mary is a sober tale. For every trade route in the world, from the North Atlantic service to the coastal service, there is at any given time a ship of exactly the right size and exactly the right speed. As naval architecture and marine engineering progress, that right size and right speed tend to increase on the majority of routes, especially on the North Atlantic, where there is no check on conditions at ports of call or en route. The depth of water in the Suez Canal imposes definite limitations on the development of our Oriental lines. But New York, Southampton and Liverpool enable the largest vessels ever built by man to be planned and operated. History records that during its ninety-six years' existence in the so-called Atlantic ferry, the Cunard Company has always succeeded in placing in service ships of the right size and right speed for the work they were required to do.

The first Cunarder, the paddle-steamer Britannia, was but 207 feet in length with a gross tonnage of 1,154 tons. In 1840 this ship inaugurated the first regular steamship, mail and passenger service across the North Atlantic. She was exactly suited to the service of her day; that is to say, in seaworthiness, safety, comfort and speed she formed the highest harmony of economic relations for which the public of those times was prepared and able to pay. The Umbria and Etruria in 1884, the Campania and Lucania in 1893, and the Lusitania and Mauretania in 1907, each in their turn, carried out this new principle. When they were commissioned they embodied the latest developments of naval architecture and marine engineering. They were especially designed for the service for which they were intended, and they were an immediate success both scientifically and financially. Indeed, the Lusitania and Mauretania were in many respects ahead of their time, and the latter held the Blue Ribbon of the Atlantic for nearly twenty-two years.

It would none the less be wrong to suggest that the laying down of the Queen Mary is the reply to the German Europa and Bremen. The aim of the builders of the Queen Mary has not been a reply to any particular ship, but rather the designing of a vessel which would meet the exact conditions, natural and financial, upon which a sound and sure policy would be based. For four years before the Queen Mary was ordered in 1930, the whole problem was considered from every possible angle.

For the first time in the history of Atlantic travel it was found possible, owing to the amazing developments in naval architecture and marine engineering, for two vessels of sufficient size and speed to maintain a regular weekly service between Southampton, Cherbourg and New York. This had hitherto been maintained by three ships. If it could be achieved by two, it was evident that large economies in the cost of the services could be secured, which could be distributed between the shareholders in the Company and the travelling public. The speed of the Queen Mary, and her contemplated sister ship, is not designed for mere record-breaking. It is dictated by the time necessary for her to perform the journey regularly at all seasons of the year, so as to give the aging champion: HMS Aquitania was the longest serving of Cunard's Blue Ribbon-holding sisters (Mauretania and Lusitania), lasting until 1950. Here she leaves New York Harbour early in her career. (Steamship Historical Society.)
number of hours required in port on both sides of the ocean. Size has been dictated by the necessity for providing sufficient passenger accommodation to make a two-ship service pay.

The Queen Mary and her sister ship have not sought to be the largest and fastest which can be constructed. That would have been comparatively easy. Although in fact they will be the largest and fastest in the world, they are at the same time the smallest and slowest which could fulfill the necessary conditions for accomplishing a regular two-ship service. They are as inevitable to the Atlantic ferry as was their predecessor Britannia ninety-six years ago.

Almost any fool can build a ship at a loss. The Queen Mary is designed, naturally and properly, to make a profit for her owners. But it is impossible to disassociate the larger questions of national aspirations and national prestige from an enterprise of this kind. To Great Britain, the centre of Empire and world-wide commerce, the pioneer of modern manufacturing industry, shipping is a symbol of strength and security. We are proud—and justly proud—of our long record of achievement as seafarers and shipbuilders. To a great extent we judge ourselves, and we are judged by others, by our ships. It is especially on the North Atlantic that shipping and shipbuilding reputations are made or lost. That is why the general public attaches so much importance to the purely mythical Blue Ribbon of the Atlantic. It is an assurance that all is well in many vital departments of the national economy. To hold the Blue Ribbon is a triumph at once of naval architecture, of marine engineering, of shipbuilding technique, and of shipping management and control.

These are factors which it is impossible to ignore. And there is a real commercial advantage in the capture of this coveted distinction. North Atlantic history has proved time and again that it is the finest ship in the trade which gets the cream of the traffic, not only for the operating company but also for its country.

Figures prove this conclusively. In the year 1931 the German liners Bremen and Europa, joint holders of the Blue Ribbon of the Atlantic, carried between them a total of 85,548 passengers, as compared with the aggregate of 35,400 of their two British competitors, Aquitania and Berengaria.

There are certain other considerations which have made the Queen Mary and her contemplated sister ship necessary. They will carry mail as well as passengers. In modern business the element of time is of paramount importance, and those who have commercial correspondence to send across the Atlantic are anxious to dispatch it at once by the fastest ships. So in recent years we have witnessed the sorry spectacle of foreign-owned express liners carrying British mails to New York because no fast British mail liner was making the crossing at the time.

Equally or perhaps more important is the fact that the character of transatlantic passenger traffic has changed in a very radical way. Before the war, there poured across the North Atlantic a steady stream of emigrants seeking fortune, or at least work, in the New World. The United States was the Golden Land of Opportunity to millions of poor people throughout Europe. They looked wistfully across three thousand miles of ocean and dreamed of the day when they would be able to join the relatives or friends who were already making good under the Stars and Stripes. Today emigration has practically ceased. It has been killed by the quota system. In place of the emigrants is the great army of tourists. Pleasure, change, adventure, rather than work or wealth, are the magnets that draw an increasingly large number of men and women across the dividing sea.

This is an age of travel. There are countless thousands to whom a holiday means not merely rest from labour, not merely an opportunity of recreation, but a chance to gain new experiences and taste unfamiliar modes of life under foreign skies. For a time the Continent satisfied this hunger for change, but more recently the holiday adventurers have been going farther afield. The tourists have discovered America.

To the already huge army of Atlantic holiday-makers the Queen Mary will add new thousands. She has catered for them specially. Her passenger accommodation, or a large part of it, is expressly designed to attract this class of traveller. This again is an inevitable deve-
“I like the way in which the tourist-class passengers have been provided for....Never in the whole history of Atlantic travel has so lavish provision been made for those who travel 'tourist.'”

The Arthur Class passengers have been provided for. Never in the whole history of Atlantic travel has so lavish provision been made for those who travel 'tourist.' Development. It was necessary that a ship should be built which would take into account more fully than ever before the needs of the tourist, essentially different from those of the emigrant. To the latter, the voyage was a necessity, and though as a rule he travelled comfortably enough, he was apt to attach more importance to cheapness. To the tourist, the sea trip is part of the fun. He is prepared to pay more than the emigrant, but he has a far higher standard of comfort. And he demands much more in the way of facilities for sport and amusements. He will get all these things in the Queen Mary.

She is also the first British ship to bring a holiday in America within the reach of the millions of men and women who have only a fortnight off duty. By leaving Southampton on one Wednesday and returning from New York the next she makes it possible for passengers doing the round trip to return home within fourteen days.

This is a sound business proposition. But again it is something more. I can imagine no surer way of cementing Anglo-American friendship than exchange of holiday visits by people of both nations. In the past many more Americans have spent vacations in "the Old Country" than Englishmen have crossed to America for pleasure. The balance is now being righted and the Queen Mary will enable the rectification to proceed more rapidly. In that I see a very great advantage to both the United States and ourselves.

The other day I visited the Queen Mary. I talked to the men who were preparing her for her maiden voyage and to some of those who will sail her across the Atlantic. I was shown the marvels of the great ship. I walked for miles upon miles exploring her. But there was so much to be seen and of absorbing an interest that it was only after I had said "good-bye" and started on the homeward journey that I became conscious of fatigue.

One of the things that particularly impressed me was the gracefulness of her lines. To me a ship is a beautiful thing and the Queen Mary challenges comparison with any vessel I have seen. She gives an impression of strength, power, and speed that is unforgettable.

The hull, I was told, is the result of over 7,000 experiments with a variety of models, which Messrs. John Brown & Co Ltd., the shipbuilders, carried out in their experimental tank at Clydebank before the work of construction started. In this tank every possible type of Atlantic weather can be—and was—reproduced, and the models travelled, in all, over a thousand miles in order that their seaworthiness and performance in every conceivable set of circumstances should be noted and compared.

The length on the waterline of the great ship is 1,004 feet; the beam is 118 feet. From keel to top structure her height is 135 feet; from keel to top forward funnel, 80 feet; and from keel to masthead, 234 feet.

I was shown a number of pictures, drawn accurately to scale, which give a vivid idea of the Queen Mary's size. One of them shows what would happen if the liner were set down in Trafalgar Square. The Nelson Column is on her starboard beam, the crown of the Admiral's hat reaches to about the boat deck. Her stern has pushed in the walls of the Garrick Theatre in Charing Cross Road; her port side just fits alongside St. Martin-in-the-Fields and South Africa House; the National Gallery has sustained serious damage and the liner's stem protrudes into Whitehall.

Another of these pictures shows the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbour drawn against the background of the Queen Mary. The upraised hand of the famous figure, which has typified America for so long in so many millions of minds, comes to just above the bridge. The towers of Westminster Abbey do not reach to the top of the mainmast. There is a promenade deck that is twice as long as the facade of Buckingham Palace. The head of Sphinx is well below the main deck at the stern. And if the Queen Mary were stood on end alongside the Eiffel Tower in Paris, she would overtop it by nearly twenty feet.

Everything that ingenuity can devise is being done to ensure the comfort of passengers. The three large funnels will be raked in such a way as to ensure freedom from funnel gases on the promenades of the upper decks. The public rooms are unusually large. It would be possible, for instance, to put nine double-decked passenger buses in one lounge and then to place three Royal Scot locomotives on top of them. An area of nearly two acres will be available for promenading and deck games.

I like the way in which the tourist-class passengers have been provided for. From time to time the Queen Mary has been referred to in the Press and elsewhere as a "luxury" ship. If the term is used to suggest unnecessary and useless extravagance, it is entirely inac-
accurate and misleading. But it is a "luxury" ship in the sense that the passenger accommodation includes every modern improvement likely to attract and please the traveller. The standard of comfort in the modern home is higher today than ever before. Compared with prewar standards, it might well be called luxurious. It is only natural, therefore, that the Queen Mary should offer her passengers far more than ships which were built before this general advance in the art of living; that it should, in this as in other respects, set a new standard in the world of shipping. Yet actually the decoration of the passenger accommodation represents only a very small percentage of the total cost of the liner.

Never in the whole history of Atlantic travel has so lavish provision been made for those who travel "tourist." Their stateroom accommodation extends over five decks. Each stateroom is being supplied with hot and cold water and has its own individual ventilation system, which passengers will be able to control for themselves. The main tourist lounge will have a parquet dance floor, and there will be a cinema for those who cannot imagine a holiday without films. But I think the features which will appeal most of all are the amazing amount of deck space allowed for outdoor exercise and recreation and the large indoor swimming-pool and gymnasium. All these are exclusively for the use of tourist passengers. But even the third-class accommodation, which again includes a film theatre, is planned on spacious lines and constitutes a veritable revolution in the standards for this class of travel.

If I have devoted so much space to this aspect of the Queen Mary, it is because, to my mind, it is of very real importance. The man of wealth has always been catered for by the great liners, as he is in the Queen Mary, but here we have a recognition of the development of the travel habit among ordinary men and women, with all that this implies for international understanding and friendship in the future. It is a recognition that travelling for pleasure—and travelling that is pleasure—must be brought within the financial reach of those who, with only a limited amount to spend, want to get the most and the best for their outlay. It means, very definitely, an enlargement of the possibilities of life to a very great number of people that would have been impossible—undreamt of—even a few years ago.

In going over the ship, I thought of these people, the future passengers of the Queen Mary, to whom she will open new vistas. But I thought also of the many thousands of others, some of whom may never even see the ship, but to whom she has already meant the dawning of better days.

The contract for the construction of the vessel came at a time when the shipbuilding industry was in a distressed state. The building of the Queen Mary has ensured that the art of constructing great liners shall not be lost. It has involved the employment, among others, of large numbers of apprentices, who have thus had the opportunity of learning a trade and craft peculiarly British and for which, I hope, brighter times now lie ahead.

Actually, about 7,000 men have been working on the Queen Mary in John Brown's shipyard. What that work has meant to many of them in the rebirth of hope and the renewal of self-respect is beyond computation. And behind the 7,000 there looms the great multitude of those who have contributed in other ways to the building of the vessel.

The Queen Mary is an epitome of Britain. There is hardly an industry in the country which cannot claim to have some share in her. This great enterprise has meant the placing of orders with nearly two hundred firms in Great Britain and Northern Ireland; it has given employment, in one way or another, to approximately a quarter of a million people. Under the smoky skies of the Potteries workmen have moulded 200,000 pieces of china and glassware for her equipment. The skilled artisans of Sheffield have fashioned her cutlery. In London, in Cheltenham, in Bath and in Glasgow craftsmen have put heart and soul into the work of making furniture that carries on, in our modern times, the traditions of Chippendale and Sheraton. Northern Ireland, Lancashire and Yorkshire have seen their looms busy with the manufacture of linens and woollens of the finest qualities. From Darlington have come the stern frame and rudder—the latter the largest ever con-
The Queen Mary is an epitome of Britain....the symbol of our renaissance, of the new hope and new vigour that have at last overcome the weariness of the postwar years and set our feet on the old high paths once more.

constructed for any ship. It weighs over 140 tons, and the job of hoisting it into position involved many days of intricate work. London, Rugby and Manchester united to supply the electrical equipment, with its 4,000 miles of cable and 30,000 lamps. The great anchor came from Staffordshire.

So one could go on. All over the country men and women have been giving of their best to the Queen Mary, with the result that when she is commissioned she will be a floating British Industries Fair, displaying to the cosmopolitan world that will travel in her not only the marvels of British shipbuilding and marine engineering, but a widely representative selection of the products of British industry and British craftsmanship at their highest.

And even beyond the borders of Britain there are those who have given to the Queen Mary and benefited by her building. The Empire's forests—the world's forests, indeed—have been searched for the fifty-six varieties of beautiful woods used in the decorative schemes.

Of one thing I am sure after my tour of the ship. All those who have, in whatever way, contributed to her may be proud of the work they have done. The Queen Mary stands in my mind as a conquering symbol of British enterprise, finely conceived, nobly planned, and magnificently carried out.

She is to sail from Southampton on her maiden voyage on 27 May. The wishes of the whole country will go with her across the Atlantic; the eyes of the whole world will be upon her. She is a Cunard White Star liner, latest of a long line of splendid vessels, but she is also OUR ship, the symbol of our renaissance, of the new hope and the new vigour that have at last overcome the weariness of the postwar years and set our feet on the old high paths once more.

Greatest of all the pathways for Britain is the sea—the sea that has been our highway to Empire and to wealth, and across which we draw, from the four corners of the world, the daily bread by which we live. And once more, as the Queen Mary sets out, we feel confirmed in our ancient dominion over the wide waters—that dominion of whose peaceful purposes she is again a symbol. May she win back the Blue Ribbon that the Mauretania held for over a score of years—and may she retain it against all comers as long as did her great predecessor.

Good luck to her—and to all who have had a hand in her making, and to all who will sail in her.
1967: LAST
FAREWELL
JOHN MALCOLM BRINNIN

Rarely photographed together, the Queen Elizabeth (right) and Queen Mary in wartime livery, with France's Normandie, which soon burned and capsized, New York, 1940. (Steamship Historical Society)

Transportation writers hold a handful of passages in special respect: Ken Purdy's sketch of Tazio Nuvolari, the greatest racing driver who ever lived; Lucius Beebe's paean to The 20th Century Limited, greatest train in the world; Don Vorderman's tribute to Simon Templar's Hiramond, the greatest car in all fiction. Churchill's long association with the Cunard-White Star Queens suggests that another such piece by John Malcolm Brinnin, reprinted by permission from his book, Sway of the Grand Saloon (NY: Barnes & Noble, 2000), is not out of place here. —Editor

Twelve-ten AM, 25 September 1967. The Royal Mail Ship Queen Elizabeth, largest ship in the world, twenty-seven years old, is bound westward. At some point in the early morning she will meet and pass the Queen Mary, the next-largest ship in the world, thirty-one years old, bound east. This will be their final meeting, their last sight of one another, ever.

For more than two decades they have been the proudest sisters on the ocean, deferential to one another, secure in the knowledge that they are the most celebrated things on water since rafts went floating down the Tigris and Euphrates.

Notices of this encounter have been broadcast and posted throughout the ship. But as usual at this hour most passengers have gone to bed, leaving only a few individuals strolling and dawdling on the Promenade Deck. Most of these have chosen to be alone; and they are a bit sheepish, a bit embarrassed, as though ashamed to be seen in the thrall of sentiment, even by others equally enthralled.

As the appointed moment draws near, they begin to disappear from the Promenade Deck, only to reappear in the darkness of the broad, glassed-in observation area on Boat Deck Forward. They stand apart from one another and do not speak, their eyes fixed on the visible horizon to the east as the vibration of the ship gives a slightly stroboscopic blur to everything they see.

The mid-Atlantic sky is windless, a dome of hard stars; the ocean glows, an immense conjunction of inseparable water and air. Entranced, the late watchers try to pick out some dot or light that will not turn out to be a star. Hushed, the minutes pass. These ten or twelve of the faithful in their shadowy stances might be postulants on a Vermont hillside, waiting in their gowns for the end of the world.

Then the light of certainty; almost as if she were climbing the watery slopes of the globe, the oncoming Queen shows one wink at her topmost mast, then two.

Spotted, she grows quickly in size and brightness. In the dim silence of the enclosure there are mutters, the clicks of binoculars against plate glass, an almost reverential sense of breath withheld. On she comes, the Mary, with a swiftness that takes everyone by surprise: together the great ships, more than 160,000 tons of steel, are closing the gap at 60 mph.

Cutting the water deeply, pushing it aside in great crested arrowheads, they veer toward one another almost as if to embrace, and all the lights blaze on, scattering the dark. The huge funnels glow in their Cunard red, the basso-profundo horns belt out a sound that has less the quality of a salute than one long mortal cry.

Standing to attention on the portside wing of his flying bridge, the Elizabeth's captain doffs his hat; on the starboard wing of the Mary her captain does the same. As though they had not walked and climbed there but had been somehow instantly transported to the topmost deck, the few passengers who have watched the Mary come out of the night now watch her go.

All through the episode, mere minutes long, have come giggles and petulant whimpers from sequestered corners of the top deck. Indifferent to the moment, untouched by the claims of history, youngsters not yet born when the two Queens were the newest wonders of the world cling together in adolescent parodies of passion and do not bother even to look up. As the darkness closes over and the long wakes are joined, the sentimentalists stand for a while watching the ocean recover its seamless immensity. Then, one by one, like people dispersing downhill after a burial, they find their way to their cabins, and close their doors.
Winston Churchill first visited the island of Madeira on 17 October 1899. He was sailing on the Dunottar Castle to South Africa as a newspaper correspondent covering the Boer War. Also on board was the Army Commander-in-Chief, Sir Redvers Buller. Churchill writes in My Early Life that there was no wireless in those days and for the duration of the voyage they "dropped completely out of the world." While in Madeira he wrote to his Mother, "We have had a nasty rough voyage and I have been grievously sick." (See also page 17.)

He was not to visit the island for another fifty years; in the intervening years, however, he enjoyed the fruits of Madeira vines and once commented when drinking a vintage from the late 1700s, "My God, do you realize this Madeira was made when Marie Antoinette was still alive?"

In A History of the English-
Churchill refers to the death of the Duke of Clarence, brother of King Edward IV, who, according to legend and William Shakespeare in his Richard III, was drowned in a butt of Malmsey, a sweet Madeira wine. Churchill states, "Why should it not be true? At any rate no one has attempted to prove any different tale."

In November 1949, Churchill telegraphed Bryce Nairn, the British consul in Madeira, and enquired about "warm, paintable, bathable, comfortable, flowery, hotels etc. We are revolving plans. Keep all secret." His intention was to spend a few weeks there to recoup; to work on The Hinge of Fate, fourth volume of his war memoirs; and, of course, to paint. He was in Madeira for the New Year of 1950 accompanied by Clementine, his daughter Diana, his literary assistant Bill Deakin, secretaries Jill Sturdee and Elizabeth Gilliatt, and two Special Branch detectives. But his vacation was cut short by Prime Minister Attlee's announcement of a General Election to be held on February 23rd. He departed for London on January 12th, although Clementine stayed on in Madeira—he telegraphed her on the 16th, "Hope all has been pleasant, here nothing but toil and moil."

Madeira offers many historic sites to the determined Churchillian...

- **The Madeira Wine Lodge**: Located in the capital of Funchal, in a 17th Century Franciscan Monastery. Home to the largest Madeira producer, The Madeira Wine Company (Blandy's, Leacock's, Miles etc.). In the wine museum are letters from well-known people, including three from Churchill, expressing thanks for gifts of wine.

- **Reid's Hotel**: Owned by the Blandy wine family and located in Funchal, Reid's is recognized as one of the great hotels of the world. As we would expect from someone "easily satisfied with the best," this was the Hotel Churchill chose for his painting holiday in 1950. A committed Churchillian would want to stay in the Churchill Suite, although there is one little drawback: the price is 1,700 euros ($2,000/£1200) per night, not including breakfast. Ornately beautiful, its bathrooms in rose-pink marble, Reid's is truly a beautiful retreat.

- **Camara de Lobos**: is a small coastal town where Churchill painted. Practicing good marketing, the owners affixed a plaque on the wall of the "Churchill Restaurante," which shows exactly where he worked. Plans are said to be underway to build a hotel, but the name has not been chosen. This writer will chance a guess at the eventual title: "The Churchill Hotel"!

- **Cabo Girao**: At 580 meters, this is the highest sea cliff in Europe. A small photographic museum is located at the site and the largest photograph is one of Churchill painting at Camara de Lobos, Detective Sergeant Eddie Murray adjusting his umbrella.

Madeira is a favorite holiday spot for Europeans but not for North Americans. This is a good time for the people of the New World to rediscover this idyllic spot in the Old.
Questions concern Contemporaries (C), Literary (L), Miscellaneous (M), Personality (P), Statesmanship (S) and War (W). Answers on page 47.

1375. In 1914, what Hyde Park speaker did Churchill call a "Lilliput Napoleon—a man with an unbalanced mind, an egomaniac whose one absorbing thought was personal vindictiveness towards Ulster"? (C)

1376. In 1958, Sir Winston wrote the foreword to a history of a company trading in furs and skins. What was the book? (L)

1377. On 30 June 1919 Churchill at the Savoy Hotel, London, presented the Daily Mail prize to Captain Alcock and Lt. Brown. What was the prize awarded for? (M)

1378. What school did young Winston attend after St. George's School, Ascot and before enrolling at Harrow? (P)

1379. In Parliament on 17 June 1914, Winston Churchill begged to move "that it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of such sums, not exceeding in the whole two million two hundred thousand pounds, as are required for the acquisition of share or loan capital of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company." What was the main strategy behind this motion? (S)

1380. At the First Quebec Conference in August 1943, who was named Commander-in-Chief of the AEAFF (Allied Expeditionary Air Force)? (W)

1381. Where was Mrs. Elizabeth Everest, Churchill's beloved nanny, born? (C)

1382. Who wrote, "Mr. Churchill is quite correct. I backed him up till I resigned. I would do the same again! He had courage and imagination! He was a War Man!"? (L)

1383. Churchill was Secretary of State for Air from 1919 to 1921. When did the first scheduled daily international air service begin? (M)

1384. Winston Churchill showed an early interest in aviation, taking flying lessons as early as 1913. Did he ever fly solo? (P)

1385. When did Churchill say, at the London Opera House: "We entered upon the war reluctantly after we had made every effort, comparable with honour, to avoid being drawn in....The way will be long and sombre. It will have many reverses of fortune and many hopes falsified by subsequent events..."? (S)

1386. Churchill, who often accurately predicted future political strategies, was dead wrong when he spoke in May 1912 to the Shipwright's Company on the horrors of war. What did he erroneously predict? (W)

1387. When were Churchill and Clementine Hozier introduced? (C)

1388. In The River War, Churchill identifies the Mahdi's father incorrectly as a "humble priest." What was his actual occupation? (L)

1389. Did Churchill recommend government subsidies for commercial air service? (M)

1390. When Churchill was appointed Secretary of State for War and Air, his appointment was approved by which First Lord of the Admiralty? (P)

1391. In his Cabinet resignation speech in the House of Commons on 15 November 1915, Churchill reminded Parliament: "Take it by ships if you can; take it by soldiers if you must...." What was "it"? (S)

1392. The battleship Audacious was sunk in a German minefield off the coast of Ireland on 27 October 1914. Churchill left the Admiralty on his way to the House of Commons to announce the loss, "when he was cajoled, threatened, and browbeat to keep the loss secret." Who cajoled him? (W)

1393. On 11 May 1953, during Eden's illness, Churchill spoke in the House of Commons on foreign affairs and commented "[he] may well be deemed the wisest German statesman since the days of Bismarck." To whom did Churchill refer? (C)

1394. In 1940, Churchill wrote the foreword for a new edition of speeches by a former prime minister "who heartened the British people in their battle for freedom." Who was he? (L)

1395. Churchill used a gold-headed walking stick most of his life. Who gave it to him? (M)

1396. What American relative of Winston Churchill was part owner of The New York Times? (P)

1397. In the House of Commons, Churchill claimed that he could compare Hitler and Napoleon in only one characteristic of their war strategies. What was it? (S)

1398. Which naval action did Sir Martin Gilbert describe as "The only serious [British] naval defeat of World War I"? Answers, page 47...
GLIMPSES

FIRST CITIZEN OF THE WORLD
My Encounters with the Charismatic Churchill
HENRY A. LAUGHLIN

Henry Alexander Laughlin was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1892 and attended Princeton University. After distinguished artillery service in World War I, he joined Houghton Mifflin Company's Riverside Press as an editor. By 1939 he had become president of Houghton Mifflin, and began to make a series of highly controversial decisions that eventually made the publishing company stronger both financially and in prestige. The first of these decisions was to publish Mein Kampf, by Adolf Hitler, because he felt it could be used to demonstrate the true nature of the man who led Germany. The second was to secure the war memoirs of Winston Churchill. Many inside Houghton Mifflin, and in the greater publishing world, thought it foolish to assign a statesman to write his war memoirs so soon after the war was over, while others believed that war memoirs would not sell well to a war-weary public. But Churchill's The Second World War became one of the best-selling books of all time. Laughlin continued to publish great works from distinguished authors, including Bernard De Voto, John Kenneth Galbraith, Rachel Carson and J. R. R. Tolkien. He ended his long stewardship in 1960 and lived in pleasant retirement with his wife Rebecca until his death in 1978. His memoir of Churchill, read at the January 1965 meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society, just before WSC's stroke and death, is probably the last speech about Sir Winston delivered in his lifetime. It was brought to our attention by Ted Hutchinson, and is published here by kind permission of the Society.

S
o much has been said and written about Sir Winston, so many anecdotes told, actual or legendary, that you may wonder why I should feel justified in adding to the list. The only reason I can put forward is that, while I have no new breathtaking revelations to offer, I have been with him a good number of times, and after each, I sat down and put on paper everything I could remember of what had happened or what I had seen. I have had to make selections and omit many details, even on the limited number of glimpses I shall tell you of, but whatever I do say comes to you at first hand.

I must acknowledge one other bit of presumption. Who am I to talk in open meeting about one of our own Members? I will remind you that Sir Winston has been an Honorary Member of this Society since 1943 and now in his 91st year may, I believe without fear of contradiction, be thought of as our most distinguished Member.

When in the late spring of 1947 I went to London for the formal signing of Houghton Mifflin's contract to publish The Second World War, I was invited by Mr. Churchill to call on him at 28 Hyde Park Gate. I shall henceforth call him "Sir Winston" throughout except when I am quoting someone else, although he was not made a Knight of the Garter until 1953. I shall call his wife Lady Churchill rather than Mrs. Churchill. She is usually addressed as "Clemmie" by Sir Winston and by her host of friends.

Instead of giving you brief accounts of all the times I have seen Sir Winston I am inclined to pick out eight and tell about each in some detail.

My First Visit to London

It was on the 24th of July in 1947 that I first saw Sir Winston. I had sat next to Lady Churchill at a dinner the night before, given for my wife and myself by our old friends Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Agar. Sir Winston had not been there as he was recovering from an operation and was not allowed to go out at night.

At eleven o'clock in the morning I appeared at Hyde Park Gate, which is a short dead-end street, the opening of which, on Kensington Road, faces Hyde Park. On the outside it is a modest house—actually two houses made into one—in a line of block houses in an agreeable but not particularly impressive part of London. It is at-
tractive inside. I saw very little of it then, but years later when my wife and I had luncheon on a beautiful sunny day, we had a chance to see how charming it was.

I rang the bell and was admitted by a maid and shown into a room on the right. In the room I was in there were gay, light-colored curtains at the windows and antique furniture on which the brasses shone. Two sofas covered in what I think was yellow damask were facing each other, in front of the fireplace, with small tables at each end of them. It was a bright room giving the impression of having a lot of flowers around. There were oil paintings on the walls. Over the fireplace was one of the House of Commons in session.

Lady Churchill came in almost immediately and said that Winston would be down in just a minute. One of the most winning things about Lady Churchill is that she invariably refers to her husband in talking to you as “Winston.” We talked mostly about the evening before, and then Sir Winston burst through the doorway. Lady Churchill and I both got up, and she introduced me. At once she said she had to go along and that she would meet Sir Winston at lunch at one fifteen. He then kissed her goodbye, and she said something nice to me and was off. They were a striking couple in the doorway. Lady Churchill was conservatively and tastefully dressed. She has a kind and refined face—very distinguished looking, and, in my opinion, with her silver hair really beautiful. Sir Winston was in a siren suit, all of one piece, made of blue jeans material, which zips up the middle. He was pudgy, with a red face and pinkish, moist eyes; he exuded vitality in spite of his 72 years and recent operation. So many years ago...We’ve all grown older since, and now that I too am 72, it doesn’t seem so old as it did then.

Sir Winston suggested to me that I sit with him on the sofa to the left and asked me if I would have a cigar. I said I would smoke a cigarette if he didn’t mind. He asked me then if I would have a glass of port or a whisky-and-soda. I said I would have a whisky-and-soda if he were going to have one—although I often get well be-yond eleven o’clock in the morning before I have my first whisky-and-soda. He jumped up, hurried out of the room, and called a man—his valet as I later learned—who placed a silver box of cigarettes and a box of matches on a small table, which he put in front of me, and a silver box of toothpicks and a box of matches on a small table in front of Sir Winston, who asked him to bring in two whiskies. He disappeared and in a few minutes came back with a tray, and Sir Winston poured from a Johnny Walker Black Label bottle a drink for each of us, and then we individually put in the soda.

He pulled out a long, very fat cigar. He took a toothpick from the box and stuck it up the mouth-end of the cigar to make it draw, but that appeared to be a failure, for it kept going out and being relighted all during our conversation, and when I left it was not half smoked.

All the time, he was talking enthusiastically, telling me how deeply interested he was in his book, that he had already produced more than a million words, that it took all his thoughts, and that he had lost interest in the House of Commons—and even in his painting.

He said he wanted me to be as excited over his book as he was; that there never had been one like it. He had got his idea of the form of it from two sources—Napoleon's Chronicles and Marlborough's Reports, but his would be different in this respect: everything in his book would be a direct statement of the facts as they were—or as he saw them—put down at the time; that they would be the actual instructions he gave which controlled Britain's fighting of the war. He said he did not have the position of Commander-in-Chief of all the Armed Forces as President Roosevelt had, nor did he as Prime Minister have the authority Stalin had. But all of the men in command of the Army and Navy and Air Force trusted him and he trusted them, and he had a War Cabinet which he could call together on very short notice and which would support him in everything he did, on every appointment or removal he wanted to make. He didn't mean by that that he always did what he wanted to do, for he was often dissuaded from undertakings by his Generals, Admirals, and Cabinet Colleagues, sometimes unwisely—he said with a sort of sly smile—but, in fact, he had the full conduct of Britain's war in his hands and accepted full responsibility for it.

Each morning at an early hour, he said—actual time not mentioned—he got all his despatches and read them in bed. He either wrote in longhand or dictated to one of his secretaries his definite instructions for that day. Those instructions were immediately set in type and each day's lot was bound as a secret document.

All this was to show me that, unlike other writers of memoirs, he was not relying on his memory as to what he thought and did—or should have thought and done—
but on what he actually did think and do. He said he is willing to be judged by history—and that is very important to him—on the basis of his day-by-day decisions.

At ten minutes past twelve, I looked at my wrist-watch and figured I had better go, so I got up. He walked into the hall with me, I got my hat, and he followed me to the door. He asked where I was going, and I said to Claridge's. He asked then how I was going to get there, and I said I'd take a taxi. He insisted on my getting in his car, which was at the door, and having his chauffeur drive me to Claridge's. As we started to move, he suddenly called and ran after the car. We stopped, and he said through the open window that he was sorry not to have met my wife, that his wife had enjoyed seeing her so much the evening before, and he hoped he would meet her on our next visit. He has an extraordinarily winning personality.

**Luncheon in Boston**

Perhaps the most exciting of my times with Sir Winston was on 1 April 1949, when he was in Boston. He had accepted an invitation to speak to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology at their Mid-Century Celebration. I had written him asking if Houghton Mifflin could give a luncheon for him, and we were delighted when he said we could and that he would like to meet members of our company and their wives or husbands.

I had been advised by one of Sir Winston's secretaries, Miss Sturdee, whom I had gotten to know early in our negotiations, that it would be wise not to get in touch with Sir Winston in Boston until after he had made his speech at M.I.T., for he spends all his time before an important speech first writing it, then correcting it, and finally committing it to memory. He is always in great agitation over a speech until it has been delivered. So on the morning of our luncheon I had had no direct communication with him. I didn't get to my office until 9:30. Just as I reached my desk the telephone rang. I picked it up and said "Hello," and the voice came over: "This is Winston Churchill." I made no smart retort for I thought it very well might be he! It was. He asked if I would come to the Ritz and see him. I went at once. He was in bed. In the sitting room which I first entered was a large cake. Miss Sturdee said it was Lady Churchill's birthday.

Sir Winston offered me at once a whisky-and-soda. He was drinking one himself. We talked of his next volume, of his speech the night before, and of the plans for the luncheon to come in a couple of hours. In the midst of this the telephone rang. It proved to be Randolph Churchill, who had been on hand for the speech but he had taken the "Owl" sleeper to New York. Sir Winston motioned me to stay where I was and asked Randolph how he had liked it, what the New York papers had said, and had he talked with London? The New York papers were enthusiastic, and in London it was favorably mentioned by The Daily Telegraph, The Times, and The Daily Mail. Sir Winston was greatly excited, for it was the first time he had ever appeared on live television and he wanted to know not just how he sounded but also how he looked. Seasoned warrior that he was, he was as much interested about the success of his speech and his appearance—and as pleased, as it turned out—as a boy in college after his first notable exploits in a football game.

When I had outlined plans for the luncheon, I told Sir Winston that we would have to have the usual cocktails—which I knew he abominated—and asked whether he would prefer sherry or tomato juice. He said, "tomato juice." When Sir Winston and Lady Churchill arrived at the Club of Odd Volumes accompanied by Mr. Bernard Baruch and Col. Clark,* my wife, Becky, and I met them as they got out of their motorcycle police-escorted car, and we walked up the path and into the Club with them. The gentlemen went to the second floor, Mr. Baruch in the elevator and Sir Winston up the stairs, puffing, but game. I took Lady Churchill's coat on the first floor and waited for her, so we were a few minutes behind the others when we walked up. All the guests had arrived and were having cocktails. My eye immediately lit on Sir Winston, who was being handed a cocktail by my friend and co-director, Gus Loring, who was acting as host and master of ceremonies. I dashed over and said, "Mr. Churchill doesn't want a cocktail; he wants tomato juice." Sir Winston took the cocktail, gave me a withering glance, and started sipping at it. I decided he liked to make his own decisions, and change them whenever he wished.

We had an excellent lunch with Sir Winston's special choice for Champagne, Pol Roger '34—1928 would have been his real choice but that wasn't procurable. An amusing incident took place due to our efforts to provide what we thought he would most like at the luncheon. I had been told that when he made a speech it was comforting for him to have a small glass of brandy at his place. Gus Loring was a connoisseur of wines and liquors, and I thought it well to enlist his services in the selection of an excellent brandy. I had two cognacs of reputation myself and Gus had one he was glad to recommend.

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* A Canadian industrialist who often hosted Churchill. In 1946 WSC had stayed at Clark's house in Florida before die "Iron Curtain" speech.
aged the club, handed them to us, we all unwitting. She kept the record. We were very serious about it and, as luck would have it, we both selected the same one.

At the end of the lunch Sir Winston made a delightful and gracious speech saying how much he liked our edition of *The Gathering Storm*, and he won our hearts when he ended with the words, "When I take it in my hands it opens like angels' wings."* As he sat down there was a burst of applause. He reached for the small brandy glass and polished it off in one gulp. Gus and I looked at each other. It might just as well have been Hennessy's Three Star. Lady Churchill left shortly after lunch to see Mrs. Charles Francis Adams and tried to take Sir Winston with her, but he stayed until 4:30, chatting with a number of us and enjoying that excellent brandy.

**A Family Gathering**

Later that same year I had told Sir Winston that I expected to be in London and hoped I might see him. Our house in Ireland was being renovated after its hard treatment during the war, when it was occupied by the Irish Army, and we were living in a small cottage lent us by a friend of ours in the little village of Ballyduff, County Waterford. We had no telephone, so quite a sensation was created when a message was sent up from the Post Office that Mr. Laughlin was wanted on the telephone by Winston Churchill in London and would I ring him up. I did, and he asked if my wife and I would have lunch with Mrs. Churchill and himself at 28 Hyde Park Gate on a day about a week later. A day or so before, we arrived at Claridge's. We—and particularly Becky, who had never been to their house—were quite excited, and we both took unusual pains to be appropriately and conservatively dressed. I remember I put on a blue suit and sent a pair of black shoes down to be polished.

At about 12:45, we got into a taxicab and were off. Just as we got to Hyde Park Gate I looked down and saw to my horror that I had on a pair of light tan shoes, which I felt was not quite the thing in London, especially with a dark suit. It was too late to turn back but I was unhappy about it; Becky was even more unhappy.

On our arrival Lady Churchill talked to my wife and said they were waiting for her daughter Sarah and her new husband, Tony Beauchamp, whom none of the Churchills had ever seen. Their aircraft from New York was late but arrived, and they were on their way from Northolt. I went into another room and talked with Sir Winston for a few minutes. I recall that he was greatly pleased because he had hit upon a title for his fourth volume—*The Hinge of Fate*. He told me that in the first three books Fate had appeared to be against us, but this fourth one was the story of the hinge swinging from uninterrupted disaster to unbroken success. He then said with a smile to show what a scholar he was that the Latin for hinge was "cardo" and the word cardinal is derived from it—one who acts as the hinge on the door through which true believers get into heaven.

Lady Churchill said we would go down to lunch without waiting longer. I should mention that whenever I had dined with Sir Winston we had delicious food, attractively served. There were two other guests, a cousin of Lady Churchill's whose name I forget, and Lord Cherwell, who had been Professor Lindemann, Sir Winston's scientific adviser during the war, known by all as "the Prof."

The dining room is on the ground floor and looks out on the garden. It is a charming room, relatively large, with a gallery above ending in a stairway on one side and wide windows on two sides. The garden was full of flowers, the windows leading out on it were open, and yellow curtains were blowing gently. On the walls were oil paintings, I think of Marlborough's battles. At any rate, they were pictures of which we have all seen reproductions in our schoolbooks.

On the table were place-mats of pewter with a coat of arms on each, and in the center of the table were lovely bright flowers. It was a gay setting.

Becky sat on Sir Winston's right, and a place was left for Sarah on his left. The conversation went easily and was general. One of Sir Winston's secretaries came in with an open box in which there were fourteen copies of *The Gathering Storm* in fourteen different languages. They were passed around. Sir Winston was boyishly excited and was particularly taken with the one in Persian,* which read from back to front.

When Sarah and Tony arrived they were welcomed, but Lady Churchill told us to remain seated. Sarah kissed her parents and then introduced Beauchamp. It was

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* Churchill said the same of the Cassell edition of *A History of the English Speaking Peoples*, which opened even more like angels' wings. —Ed.

* Perhaps some were proofs: no Persian edition was published. Arabic and Hebrew editions, which read back to front, arrived in the 1960s.
almost uncomfortably informal and undemonstrative as a welcome to a new son-in-law. They sat down, and we went on with our conversation after a few words about the flight from New York. There was a long story about the time during the war when Sir Winston and the Prof, after dinner at Downing Street, went down to compliment the cook, and with bombs dropping decided that they ought to get the cook out of the kitchen into a shelter. They had no sooner done so than a bomb fell on the kitchen and demolished it.

Prof, Beauchamp, and I stayed with Sir Winston over port, cigars and brandy, and we had a genial conversation. But there was no attempt to put Beauchamp at ease or to include him in the conversation. Eventually, the Prof drove my wife and me back to Claridge's. We felt we had had a memorable day.

A Men's Lunch at Hyde Park Gate
In 1951, I had a noon appointment at 28 Hyde Park Gate to talk with Sir Winston before a small luncheon he was having. I found him smartly dressed with black short morning coat and bow tie. We talked about his proofs, schedules, and all until he said suddenly that he would give me a briefing on the three others who were to be with us at lunch. The first, he said, was a very young chap who had won the Victoria Cross on the beach at Anzio. He had secured a seat in the House, and was a bright hope of the Tory Party. But alas his father had died, and he had just succeeded to the title of Lord De Lisle and Dudley and gone to the Lords. Very distressing!

"The second," he continued, "is a compatriot of yours—you may know him, Henry Ford" (grandson of Ford's founder). I said I did not, but that my son-in-law had been a friend of his at Yale. The third guest, he told me, was a kind of relation of his: "No, not quite a relation," he said, "but a connection. He is the Duke of Alba and the Spanish Ambassador, but he got into some sort of trouble but there were no takers."

It was a gay and stimulating luncheon with everyone taking part in the conversation led on by Sir Winston—something I think that was somewhat unusual with him as he likes to do most of the talking as a rule. Toward the end Sir Winston asked Henry Ford and me if we would like to go to Question Time in the House of Commons. We said of course. I was amazed to find how hard our visit was to arrange at short notice, even for the Leader of the Opposition, but it was managed through various telephonings and sendings for Miss Sturdee. Sir Winston was going himself, but for us to get in at all we had to be there early. Just as we were leaving, in Henry Ford's car, Sir Winston said IK would "try to make it interesting." He did, asking the Socialists a couple of controversial questions from the floor, but they had not been put in the Question Box and no reply was made to them—he was offering trouble but there were no takers.

My First Visit to Chartwell
By the time I visited Chartwell, the Churchills' country house in Kent about twenty-five miles from London, he was once more Prime Minister. I expected to have a short lunch with him and then be on my way. I arrived at Chartwell at 12:45 as invited.

The red brick house, comfortable looking with vines growing on it here and there, is almost on the road, and the driveway is a short one. Not only were the gates open, but the front door as well. There was a man in dark blue uniform near the gate opposite the one I entered. The drive makes a short half-circle. I was driven up to the door. I got out and rang the bell. The maid, whom I recognized as having seen before—no doubt at Hyde Park Gate—came at once, holding out her hand. Thinking she was one of the secretaries I reached out mine to shake it, but she simply wanted to take my hat! We did shake hands, both knowing my mistake, which amused rather than embarrassed us, and I followed her into the hall. Sir Winston's secretary, Miss Sturdee, then appeared, also holding out a hand which I also shook: "Mr. Churchill will be a little late; he has already left Ten Downing Street and should arrive at one." Miss Sturdee and I went out on the lovely brick terrace, well above the ground, like an upstairs verandah. There was a beautiful wisteria vine in full bloom against the wall, comfortable porch chairs and a table, and a border of petunias. All the French windows were open. The property is an extensive one, giving the impression of field upon field, mostly golden and brown with grain crops at that time of the year. Two ponds were to be seen, with black swans on one of them; cows grazed in the foreground.

* Alba's ancestor was the Duke of Berwick, the illegitimate son of James II and Arabella Churchill and a Marshal of France.
Sir Winston arrived from London in "blue battle dress"—that is, his zip suit. We started out on an easy conversation about volume six of *The Second World War*, which he told me was going to be called *Triumph and Tragedy*, because it described the tragedy brought about by what we gave away at Potsdam and by the incredibly shortsighted removal of our troops from Europe at a time when Britain and America could still have dominated it.

Although he did not say so at the time, I knew that he thought also of his own personal triumph and the sense of tragedy he felt when the electorate repudiated him in 1945. We had a great deal of talk about both British and American politics, and then we discussed at length his own writing, the success of the first five books, and our plans for the final volume.

You may be interested in the lunch.* We began with *hors d'oeuvres* of sardines, olives, stuffed eggs, cucumbers, and chopped greens of some kind. Sir Winston insisted on my putting vinegar on the sardines, saying it greatly improved them. Then he noticed I had only taken one sardine. He reached over and put three more on my plate—or tried to—and dropped one on the mahogany table in the process. This I retrieved. Then, the vinegar. It did improve them.

With the *hors d'oeuvres* we had a bottle of Pol Roger '28, which we discussed. He told me that Odette Pol-Roger (the family name carries a hyphen and is pronounced "Rozhay") sends it to him especially. "She is a charming woman."

There followed lamb chops, mashed potatoes, and cabbage—on which we both poured vinegar without further comment—followed by what I would call an ice—a sort of very cold, creamy raspberry soup, which he called a custard. I liked it, and he more so. I think he had a second—at least we talked about it, though I declined. Meanwhile he had the maid get some meat to feed Rufus, his small grey poodle. He called the dog "sweetheart" as he fed him. Rufus was friendly and appreciative, and followed us around all afternoon.

We finished with cheese and bread (bread and butter had been on all along) and by that time we were on our second bottle of Pol Roger '28. He said I must have port with the cheese—there was nothing like it. We were then served fruit. I think I didn't take any. Then we had coffee and brandy, and on we went with our conversation.

The maid came in, and Sir Winston asked her to get a bottle of Cointreau. He said it was a pleasant light finisher and poured my glass himself. A little later we had a second light finisher, which he also poured.

Meanwhile, the cigars. There were a couple of boxes on the sideboard, but he had the maid bring the "specials," which he said were sent by his friend Col. Clark, whom I had met both in Boston and at Mr. Baruch's in New York. They were Super-Churchills in size and quality. We each took one. We didn't leave lunch until I had smoked my Super-Churchill down to an inch, but I don't think he had gone an inch and a half on his.

We went from the dining room to a room which contained six large tanks of small fish and then wandered outside and looked at his fishpond, containing golden orfe. A rivulet works down from the house, with falls and pools, clear to the pond where the swans are.

A man walked up while we were sitting in chairs looking at the fish. Sir Winston introduced him as his detective, Mr. Murray, and asked him if he would get something to feed the fish. While he was gone Sir Winston told me that Mr. Murray corresponded to our Secret Service. He was not in uniform. Eddie Murray and I had a pleasant chat about the weather and the beauties of Chartwell. He then strolled casually away.

Sir Winston and I sat on a bench on a lower terrace under the one described earlier and discussed politics, the party system in America, the end of American isolationism, and the need for Britain and America to stand together no matter what happens. Then we wandered through the two gardens, ending in a brick arbor which he had built with his own hands.

I suggested leaving then, but he asked if I would like to see his pictures. I said I would. We went into a room almost completely hung with his own paintings, and there were a great many more stacked in a sort of bicycle rack along the length of the room opposite to where most of his pictures were hung. In the center was a very good portrait of Lady Churchill, though not by Sir Winston. He told me he could not do portraits. Finally I said I must go. We looked at William Orpen's famous portrait of him from long ago in 1916—very good I thought (cover, *Finest Hour* 118, Spring 2003), and a black and white by Sargent just two weeks before the latter died.

He asked me to take another cigar, and I showed him I already had one in my pocket. He shook my hand and we drove off. He waved. I looked at my watch. It was

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* For a very similar account of lunch with Churchill, see A. L. Rowse, "A Visit to Chartwell," *Finest Hour* 81:9 (Fourth Quarter, 1993).
just five minutes to five. I had been with Sir Winston four hours, absolutely fascinated. The uniformed guard was at the gate. Mr. Murray was nowhere to be seen.*

A Luncheon at Chequers

The only time I was ever at Chequers, which is the country residence of British Prime Ministers, was in the autumn of 1954. While in Ireland I had received a telegram from Sir Winston asking my wife and me to have lunch with Lady Churchill and him at Chequers on Sunday, September 19th. I will not describe the lunch, as I have covered one of these in detail.

Having returned to London we drove to Chequers, thirty-six miles from Marble Arch and extremely difficult to find. It is amazing how few people seem to know where it is or how to get there. There are of course no road markings. My wife, fortunately, had been sent a map with special instructions by Lady Churchill. There is no guard or policeman at the gate, and not until you get up a fairly long avenue—almost to the house—does anyone come out to ask your business and then only in a perfunctory and unobtrusive way.*

Inside we were greeted by Anthony Montague Browne, Sir Winston's Private Secretary. He seems invariably to be called by his three names. There were ten for lunch. It was a bright warm day, and we sat on the terrace and had a choice of sherry or tomato juice. Sir Winston had not come downstairs but we indulged in a general conversation. Lady Churchill told Anthony Montague Browne he would never guess the name of the guest coming to stay next week, about whom she had just had a note. "John Foster Dulles isn't coming back, is he?" "Oh no," she replied, "not as bad as that; it is the Lion of Judah—Haile Selassie." There was general laughter.

Shortly after that Sir Winston appeared, looking bright and debonair. His color was good, and there was a general air of freshness about him. Lunch was easy and pleasant. Talk was for the most part general, but Sir Winston is not interested in general conversation; he likes to talk to one or two people, and to do most of the talking. After lunch, when the ladies had left, we sat and talked animatedly over brandy and cigars.

Then Sir Winston, his solicitor Mr. Moir, and I went into a small room and discussed his future writing plans, including an abridgement of The Second World War. He told me he wanted to make much better provision than he had already made for "Mrs. Churchill." (To others, he always referred to her by that name.) He talked very freely, and without the slightest reluctance, about what was going to happen to his papers after he died. He said I should talk with Mr. Moir about that, for all his papers would belong to the Churchill Trust, of which Mr. Moir was one of the trustees. All his papers are now being edited by Randolph Churchill for the official biography, which Houghton Mifflin will eventually publish.

At almost five o'clock we joined Lady Churchill and my wife, who had been having tea. We all went out and walked over the croquet ground and the garden. Lady Churchill told us how easy it was to go to Chequers for weekends; but it was absolutely impersonal, she continued: there was no feeling that the place was one's own. The housekeeping was beautifully done by Mrs. Hill, who had managed it during the war, and of whom Lady Churchill was very fond: the property cared for by Mr. Gardner. Both of them were guests at lunch. There was an attractive garden of sorts, but Lady Churchill said it was impossible to take an interest in a garden for which the Government buys the seeds and the various public gardens send their surplus bulbs and plants.

The Chequers staff included eleven members of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force, who liked the job; there was much competition for it. They waited on tables and did all the housework. Sir Winston told me he called them all "Corporal," with the exception of the only one who is a Corporal. He calls her "Flight," bearing a kind of relationship in his mind—and possibly hers—to "Flight Lieutenant." Chequers after Chartwell, we gathered, was agreeable, if not comfortable and delightful.

* The light security Churchill enjoyed, at Chartwell and even Chequers, is sadly a remnant of history for today's Prime Ministers.
Cinema at Chartwell

When Becky and I were in London in August, 1957, while I was just getting around after breaking my leg, my wife got a note from Lady Churchill asking us to come to Chartwell for Sunday lunch. We were particularly pleased because Becky had never been to Chartwell. I also had had a letter from Sir Winston saying he wanted to see me while I was in England.

At nine o'clock that Sunday morning Anthony Montague Browne telephoned to say that Lady Churchill was ill with lumbago and would we be able to postpone coming to lunch until Monday? We were up against it, for we had timed our stay in London to end with the Churchill luncheon. We had made our plans accordingly, had people coming to stay with us at Castle Hyde the following Tuesday, and had air tickets back on Monday morning. At that time, just at the close of the London season, impromptu transportation is difficult to arrange.

I therefore told Anthony Montague Browne that I was very sorry but we couldn't go on Monday, but I wondered if, forgetting the luncheon, Sir Winston might like to see me sometime during the day for just a few minutes. In a few minutes Anthony rang back saying that Sir Winston wondered if we wouldn't come to dinner that evening instead, and if Lady Churchill were able she might join us briefly. Becky and I were delighted, for we had planned nothing, although we realized that it would mean our chugging back to London in our small self-drive English Ford after midnight.

We put on our "black ties" and appeared at eight. Sir Winston's nephew Johnny Churchill, his niece Lady Avon (Clarissa Eden), and Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Montague Browne were the only other guests. Sir Winston talked with Becky about my broken leg while I parked the car and on my arrival said he wanted me to make the cocktails the way I liked them. We had a pleasant chat; Lady Churchill sent down a note saying how sorry she was, but she was helpless.

Sir Winston insisted on pushing me into the lift to go up to dinner, sending Anthony running up the stairs to pull me out at the upper end. Becky and I were seated on either side of Sir Winston, Anthony on Becky's right, and Mrs. Anthony on my left. Johnny Churchill was on the opposite end. Sir Winston talked quite spiritedly both to my wife and to me. We had the full treatment, but nothing fancy; sherry with soup, Pol Roger '34 with the cold chicken, port after the sweet, our choice of brandy or Cointreau with the coffee.

Then we all went into the cinema to see a film. The staff was obviously waiting for us, for they too were invited: the valet, butler, three maids, and three or four unidentifiables.

We sat in front on either side of an aisle, Becky and Sir Winston in armchairs with their feet on an ottoman; Anthony on Becky's left; Mrs. Anthony, myself, and Johnny Churchill on a sofa. The staff was in chairs behind us. The film was "The Lavender Hill Mob," a semi-comic gangster picture starring Alec Guinness.

It was on a large, rounded screen, and the sound was at a high pitch to compensate for Sir Winston's deafness. It overcompensated for mine, but I at least got used to it. I thought it was a good picture.

Afterwards—it was almost midnight—Sir Winston brushed the cigar ashes off his dinner jacket—it and his trousers were completely grey from them—and we said goodnight. We hit the road for Claridge's, which we reached at just about one.

Last Encounter

I still get too excited about my recollections of Sir Winston. My trouble, you see, is that I find it hard to hold myself down to a few words. I shall stop though, after one more fleeting glimpse of him—my last—in 1963, just after he had been made, by resolution of the Congress, the first Honorary Citizen of the United States. (He called my attention to the fact that he was the first Honorary Citizen. Lafayette had been made a Citizen but not an Honorary Citizen.)

Sir Winston appeared much older, but still his face lit up from time to time with enthusiasm, especially when he said to Mr. Montague Browne, "Show Laughlin my passport." Anthony brought in a passport, the same size as mine, only bound in dark green leather with the Seal of the United States in gold on the cover. Inside, instead of the usual unflattering picture and information about birth and nationality, there was the exact wording of the resolution of the Congress. Here was the document certifying him as the first Honorary Citizen of the United States. I go farther than that. To me Sir Winston Churchill is the First Citizen of the World.
The blistering volume of Churchill publishing—print, digital, and video—continues apace, straining our resources to keep up. Among the offerings this season are a fine new catalogue of Churchill paintings produced by the literary marriage of David Coombs and Minnie Churchill; another attempt at marrying Winston Churchill to the "brief life" treatment; and a three-hour television opus which might have better served as an obituary, except for its length. Together these productions remind me of the title of a 1994 Hugh Grant film. Let's take the funeral first.

Very Nice, and. Very Dull

Churchill, a three-hour documentary produced by TWI (UK) and PBS (USA). Narrated by Sir Ian McKellen.

It runs in three separate parts, which may keep more people watching.

To its credit, this latest attempt to capture Winston Churchill for a TV audience avoids perpetuating myths popularized by chic writers for The Atlantic and other arbiters of what passes for reality. Churchill's father does not die of syphilis; his mother does not sleep with 400 men; WSC himself is not an alcoholic. There are a few minor clangers: Lord Randolph at forty was not "losing his marbles"; Churchill never said naval traditions were "rum, sodomy and the lash" (a remarkable gaffe, since Sir Anthony Montague Browne, part of this production, who asked WSC about that quote and got a denial, was apparently not consulted on the script). The producers don't try to tell us that Churchill sent troops to quell the striking miners at Tonypandy—they tell us he sent troops to battle the anarchists at Sidney Street. (Neither is true.)

All the more regrettably, the raw material was there. The producers found some very interesting people: the grandson of WSC's great colleague, David Lloyd George; the son of Andrew Dewar Gibb, who wrote about Churchill in the trenches of Flanders; the grandson of WSC's long-time colleague Archibald Sinclair; telephone censor Ruth Ive; and George Elsey, who ran FDR's White House Map Room. Former secretaries Elizabeth Nel and Patrick Kinna, and Sir Winston's daughter and grandchildren, always provide keen insights. (Lady Soames pointedly wonders: what if Clementine Churchill had been bored by politics?) But the rest mainly recite platitudes and appear stiff, as if the producers had suddenly realized they've skipped it. In the Munich era, Churchill's true finest hour, many think, all the best perorations are absent. Throughout, there is next to nothing about his painting, or his books except My Early Life.

And the plot crawls. "To say it is slow moving is a gross understatement," writes one of our members. "It is hard to conceive of the fall of France, the attack on the French fleet at Oran, or the Battle of Britain as boring, but they are...If the producers intended a pictorial synopsis of a World Book encyclopedia, I suppose it succeeds. If the intent was to do more than that, it fails disarmingly. Over and over I found myself saying to the television, 'you missed the point,' or, 'you failed to do justice to that.' It is hard to appreciate what this man accomplished without some statement about what was going on around him. A sense of urgency or desperation is missing...The program could not have gained Churchill many new fans."

Fragments of the great war speeches do emerge briefly, but are poorly selected and even altered: in the "Mighty Mississippi" speech about Anglo-American cooperation,
Vancouver Churchill Society, had recognized the sand traps Churchill painted in the distant golf course, "having spent a lot of time in them!" More recently, thanks to John Kops and Bill Benjamin in Florida and Celia Sandys in England, we published one of the few photos of Churchill painting with his wife observing (FH116, Autumn 2002), which forms a lovely double-page frontispiece to the new book. The list of those who helped in far more significant ways is long, and testifies to the years of research Minnie Churchill and David Coombs put in before they were ready to publish.

The genesis of their project was described by Levenger Press editor Mim Harrison in the previous issue of Finest Hour. Compared to the original, the scope of the new book is vast. The majority of paintings are now reproduced in faultless color—some are regrettably small, but there's none of the brassy color often seen in cheaper books. Here are celestial delights from Churchill's palette that only private owners had glimpsed before. Included are some of the sketches he made or the photographs he used as aids: even pictures of the canvasmaker's labels that help identify a genuine work.

The text consists of an erudite foreword by Lady Soames, an introduction by David Coombs, five thick chapters, a bibliography, catalogue and index. The chapters combine descriptions of Churchill's artistry with a year-by-year background of world events, allowing the reader to compare WSC's subjects and techniques with what might have been on his mind while he worked—although Churchill himself claimed that painting largely released him from worldly cares.

A bibliographic masterpiece, the chapter entitled "Painting as a Pastime" describes Churchill's essays on his avocation, from their original periodical appearances through his stand-alone book, providing both a textual history and the full text. Another fascinating chapter is "Discoveries and Mysteries." Here we learn how David Coombs authenticates a Churchill: what he looks for and what disqualifies a contender. And there are thirty-odd new paintings which have never before been seen or credited to Churchill. Fabulous.

The rear catalogue lists every known Churchill painting. Original "Coombs numbers" have been retained; new numbers were assigned to the new discoveries. The catalogue is printed in eye-straining small type, one of the book's few flaws. (Could they have spared another spread and two larger point sizes?) Since the original "C" numbers were not chronologically, these are not either—another minor fault. But they were wise to retain the original numbers to avoid confusion, and the new catalogue is painstakingly complete, detailing the ownership where known of each painting through the years.

It remains only to pronounce the Life Through His Paintings as one of the "must-have" books every Churchillian needs on the proverbial desert island—along with such classics as Lady Soames's Clementine Churchill, Sir Martin Gilbert's In Search of Churchill, Urquhart's Cartoon Biography, and Colville's Fringes of Power. Granted, it's not cheap—but you have to expect to pay for all those color separations. It's not about politics, war, biography or history; Churchill was not renowned for his art, and always held himself an amateur artist. But arguably he cannot be understood without considering his paintings. This book is the last word you will ever need on the subject.

Brief Life Bonanza


How many "brief lives" of Winston Churchill have there been? At a guess, at least a hundred fifty. They began with hagiographic World War II potboilers, contin-
The brief life has peaked again over the past few years. We have had adult-market ones by Humes, Keegan, Haffner, Lukacs, Best, Wood, and Blake; juveniles by Reynoldson, Ashworth, Rodgers, and Severance; even a student textbook by Heywood. While there are enormous qualitative differences, all have the same proclaimed goal: marrying all you need to know about Winston Churchill with a short page count so you won't be bored to tears or kept up late. Yet it almost seems that every one of these books has proclaimed itself an end-all and be-all: the latest and greatest.

Take Robin Neillands, whose Statesman of the Century informs us on his jacket: "All books on Churchill make the point that he was a great man. This book explains the course of events and the quirks of character that made him a great man... and why his life therefore provides useful lessons for later generations."

Reading this in a vacuum, one might be forgiven for thinking that nobody had ever done that before. But 600 books exist about Churchill, and most of them try to explain in one way or another made WSC a great man. What then does this book add?

Some canny observations, at least. "One of the most curious aspects of Winston Churchill's early career is how short these various, dramatic episodes that marked his life actually were," Neillands writes. That gets you thinking. He spent only a few months each in the Malakand, the Sudan, and South Africa. Given the delay in communications in those days, it is all the more amazing that he crammed so much into the experiences.

Neillands gets most of his facts right, for which we must be grateful. He notes, for instance, that Churchill never sent troops to put down striking miners, as lightweight writers and socialists always insist. But he also gives evidence of too little stepping in the literature—too facile an acceptance of cant and popular misconception.

For instance, Neillands swallows whole Churchill's proven fanciful account of his Harrow entrance exam (not even Lord Randolph's son could have got in merely with an ink blot on an exam paper). His treatment of the Dardanelles/Gallipoli episode lacks interpretation or perspective; his view of Churchill's defense of Antwerp in World War I is cliché-ridden and without substance; he somehow attributes the 1915 shell shortage on the Western Front as a factor in Churchill's dismissal, "protesting wildly," from the Admiralty. Where is all the interpretation showing how WSC became great, and the lessons for future generations?

And Lord Randolph dies of syphilis again—for the 173rd time in popular mythology. I sometimes think the depth of any Churchill biography might be judged at a glance from how it treats the death of Lord Randolph.

There are some niggle little typos and minor errors: "Lady Jenny" for Lady Randolph, "taxicab" for "car" when Churchill is knocked down in New York in 1931, "Mary Soames" for David Rose as author of Churchill: An Unruly Life. And curiously, Neillands seems to think Germany lost East Prussia at the Versailles conference.

The errors are few and far between, and the book is well written. The point is that there's nothing here either to fulfill the promise of the dust jacket or to make this brief life stand out above the pile. It is modestly priced, and certainly should be acquired for those who pride themselves on an extensive library. But there are better short texts than this: Blake, Severance, Keegan, Reynoldson. This book is not in their league and can hardly be deemed essential reading.

Reality and Rubbish Juxtaposed

JUDITH MILLS KAMBESTAD

Forty Ways to Look at Winston Churchill, A Brief Account of a Long Life, by Gretchen Rubin. Ballantine, 308 pages. $22.95. Member price $16. Gretchen Rubin teaches at Yale Law School and School of Management. She has mined the work of other authors to compile this book and present her case in a "Churchill vs. Churchill," pro vs. con format. In paired chapters, a positive, admirable, likeable Churchill emerges, only to be dashed by a pursuing chapter of negative rancor.

If you read the jacket of this book, you may be inclined to buy it. It has an intriguing title, and declares it is for 21st century readers. Rubin's only other work, Power Money Fame Sex: A User's Guide—a very 21st century title reminding one of supermarket check-out stand headlines—may explain the author's inclusion of lurid, attention-grabbing headings such as "Churchill the Drinker," "Churchill the Spendthrift," "Churchill and Sex," and "Churchill as Husband." I was reminded of Celia Sandys's remark quoted in The Los Angeles Times (Calendar, July 27th): "People think, 'Ah, if I write a book with Churchill in the title it'll sell a few copies. But if I say something nasty about him it will—shock, horror—sell more.'"

The table of contents lists forty chapters. Why forty? Rubin tells us that historically, "forty meant many." Some chapters are only a page or two, and some give the impression that a stretch was needed to meet the required forty.

In the introduction, the author states this is a "biography of my »
REALITY AND RUBBISH...
Churchill." The book is casual reading—not for anyone looking for depth, power, strength or leadership, or the aura and mystique of the Man of the Millennium. Instead we have a 20th century Churchill written in 21st century-light. The "inconclusive" biography includes only the subjects that interested the author: "Dark and light, blame and praise, must both be included: only one with a thorough knowledge of Churchill's character, even his faults, can appreciate his grandeur; only one who sees his inconsistencies can understand his hard core." Therein lies the raison d'être for Gretchen Rubin's work.

The book has easy-to-read double-spaced type, some good pictures, informational lists such as people Churchill knew, quotations, a time line, a good notes section listed by page, and an extensive bibliography.

The first chapter is an excellent summary of Winston Churchill's political accomplishments, matter-of-factly written with no embellishments and no critiques, a good valedictory summary. The second and rebuttal chapter, "Churchill as Failed Statesman," calls WSC a "crossbreed" in the first sentence. Rubin gives his mother, Lady Randolph, no redeeming qualities, and Randolph few, which is common among authors. She dwells mostly on their disappointments, criticisms and failures. Rubin says Churchill assured the British Empire's liquidation by throwing every possible resource into the World War II effort, leaving Britain less than a great power. What kind of a great power Britain would have been after coming to terms with Nazi Germany is not considered. The chapter closes with the dysfunction of Churchill's family, beginning with Clementine, and then his children.

Rubin's chapter, "Churchill's Decisive Moment, May 28, 1940," starts with her description of the protagonist: "short, fat, bald, with a forward stoop and jutting jaw___drank constantly, cried frequently, painted pictures, didn't get out of bed until late morning and recited poetry___" A multiple statement, and partly true; but without clarification it misleads an uninformed reader. Still, it does make good copy.

"Churchill's Genius with Words: His Greatest Strength," followed by a number of quotes, and "Churchill in Symbols: Metonymy" are both good reads. Rubin concludes that "his power of expression was his greatest strength," an innocuous argument with which most would agree.

The author uses mystery writer Margery Allingham's summation in The Oaken Heart for her three-page chapter, "Churchill, True: In a Single Word" for another way to look at WSC. Quoting from Shakespeare's King John, "Naught shall make us rue, if England to itself do rest but true," Allingham writes: "That is the basic rock, the ultimate secret belief of the instinctive Briton—Churchill saved the country "and all was safe and true again___[He is] the living incarnation of true Briton in fighting___After half a century the country has got into the true with him, but it is its fighting not its normal angle." Allingham's idea was that the "hour" has risen to Churchill as a "fixed compass." I found this to be the only chapter with an interesting concept—and that borrowed from a mystery writer!

In "Churchill's Desire for Fame," Rubin says he "lusted for honors, medals, offices, the respect of kings, a place in history___he whipped up strife because he knew that being the object of attack made him a larger figure___An official at the Teheran Conference commented dryly on the extravagant number of generals, admirals, and air marshals who accompanied Churchill, solely to make the Prime Minister appear more grand." Without a corresponding chapter in rebuttal, this chapter comes across as absolute truth and bears a close resemblance to contemporary political mudslinging.

A 21st century light must include "Churchill the Spendthrift: A Weakness" (guilty), "Churchill and Sex: Too Interesting to Ignore" (undersexed, faithful), "Churchill as Husband: A Happy Marriage" (had, had not), "Churchill as Father: A Good Parent?" (was, was not), and "Churchill the Drinker: An Alcoholic?" (was, was not). In the latter Rubin summarizes: "...given Churchill's extraordinary accomplishments...it's difficult to credit that dependence on alcohol in any way impaired his health or abilities." Why bother to state what is patently obvious?

The last chapter, "My Churchill: Judgment," reveals Churchill in "brilliant color...on the quarterdeck of HMS Prince of Wales, cigar in his hand...his powers, too strenuous for peacetime, at last suit the hour." That's it—no summation of previous arguments.

It is not the intention of this book to be accurate, nor has the author attempted to do much research for accuracy. Two-thirds of it treats Churchill as a man from a family with a great history, famous parents and no inherited money; as a warrior, politician, orator, writer and statesman. It is the other third that I did not like. My concern is the precedent Rubin presents. Written words, right or wrong, compiled in a style presenting them all as fact, with little effort to differentiate the settled opinion of historians from the wild accusations of sensationalists, will become a permanent part of Churchill lore.

FDR Agonistes
CHRISTOPHER H. STERLING

FDR in 1944: A Diminished President, by Matthew B. Wills. Ivy House, 192pp., illus., $22.95. Order from the publisher, (800) 948-2786.

There seems to be a growing fascination with and trend toward issuing studies of great persons in the context of their personal histories—medical and matrimonial. Recent studies of John Kennedy
and Princess Diana are but two examples. This privately-published volume is such a book—a warm and feeling description of the last full year of Franklin Roosevelt's life as his health worsened, though this vital fact was withheld from all but a tiny handful of close aides. Wills's focus is on the impact of that disastrous decline on American policy as the war turned solidly in the Allies' favor.

The author practiced law for a third of a century in Colorado before retiring and turning to his love of American history. He had a published study of the many wartime missions of Harry Hopkins to his credit before undertaking this analysis of the complex tale of Roosevelt's decline. Not a medical man himself, Wills seems to have sought good advice from others as he pored over papers from the FDR Library and other resources better to understand and relate how the President's declining faculties affected political and military decision-making in Washington, and with the Big Three, including Churchill. Only when FDR reported to Congress early in 1945, just after returning from the Yalta conference, was his obvious decline on public display for all to see. He died just three months later.

In part this is a study of deliberate deceit. Not that there was no precedent—Woodrow Wilson's wife and doctor had conspired to keep his parlous state from the public eye in 1919-20. In those now long-vanished days, reporters and editors treated the White House with a distant respect and generally accepted what they were told. Little had changed a generation later as FDR was in decline, and a small coterie of aides could readily keep the truth from prying eyes—especially when wartime secrecy was an accepted mode of operation.

And in part Wills's study reveals the very different press performance standards of the era. While we've all heard the stories of the informal agreement not to portray the President's paralysis in photographs (and, indeed, only two or three such pictures are known to exist), readers in the early 21st century will find it hard to believe (and perhaps to understand) how editors could so limit what they reported about the President's health. Given what we now know about present and many past political leaders—whether we want to know or not—the seeming trust of the public in what they read in 1944 helps to explain the widespread worldwide shock when the President died in April 1945.

Wills's approach is chronological. He tells us the story of Roosevelt in 1944, from wartime decisions to domestic politics (including, of course, the 1944 national reelection campaign), to family relationships. Making good use of judicious quotes from contemporary observers, Wills focuses on the growing concerns of those around the President, the choice of Truman as Vice-President (and, as many expected to be the case, President sooner rather than later), the changing relationship between Harry Hopkins and the President, Churchill and Roosevelt, the sacrifice of General "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell in China in favor of retaining Chiang Kai-shek in power, the decline of American foreign policy under Secretary of State Cordell Hull (himself infirm), and a brief epilogue.

The chapter on Churchill and Roosevelt, while not adding much to what is already known of that famous relationship, is interesting nonetheless. Wills demonstrates some of the growing differences between the two men, especially concerning the future of the British Empire and the timing and location of attacks on German-occupied Europe. He concludes that Roosevelt treated Churchill inconsistently (at best), but that his declining health is probably the explanation.

Wills's book is engagingly written, taut and to the point. It helps to shed light on a critical period in both Roosevelt's and Churchill's lives, making clearer the health-driven changes that few understood at the time.
Last Speech in America

Our executive director and editor daily answer Churchill questions from all over the world, which are often familiar, but occasionally intriguing. In September we had an urgent request from the Kenton County, Kentucky Sheriff's Office for information on Churchill's last speech in America, and whether he used his famous Harrow quote, "never give in."

Do you know the answer? We didn't until we referred to the excellent chronology in volume 8 of Robert Rhodes James's *Winston S. Churchill: His Complete Speeches 1897-1963* (New York: Bowker, 1974). Knowing that Churchill last spoke to Congress on 17 January 1952, we worked forward from there. There is only one later entry, from a press conference in Washington on 25 June 1954:

"I have come with Anthony Eden to talk over a few family matters, and to try to make sure that there are no misunderstandings. The English-speaking family—or brotherhood—is a rather large one, and not entirely without a few things here and there. If we can work together, we may get along all right ourselves and do a lot to help our neighbours in the world, some of whom, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, seem to face even greater problems than we do ourselves."

The next day Churchill met the press at the Statler Hotel in Washington. Whether this was a "speech" is debatable, but Robert Pilpel's *Churchill in America* (NY: Harcourt, 1976) records some of what James Reston called "the largest news conference in the history of this capital."

"I'm sure you will consider." Churchill began, "that you must be generous, as you always are, and tenderhearted to an aged guest." But he then demonstrated as quick a tongue as ever. Asked about "the temperature" of the Anglo-American friendship, he replied, "Normal!" Asked if he saw any prospect for Arab-Israeli peace he said: "I am a Zionist. Let me make that clear. I was one of the original ones after the Balfour Declaration. I think it a most wonderful thing that this community should have afforded a refuge to millions of their co-religionists who had suffered so fearfully under the Hitler, and not only the Hitler, persecution." But he did not predict an Arab-Israeli peace...

When a reporter asked Churchill if "larger Conservative and Republican majorities" in Parliament and Congress respectively might improve Anglo-American relations, Churchill replied with a quip that grew famous: "I refuse to choose as between Republicans and Democrats. I want the lot!" But it was on east-west relations that he spoke the longest, and here his disagreements with the Eisenhower administration were evident:

"I am of the opinion that we ought to have a try at peaceful coexistence, a real good try for it. I am very much in favour of patient, cool, friendly examination of what the Russian intentions are. You may some day hear that I have done something or other which looks as if I were going to become a Communist, but I assure you that I have been all my life...fighting this. I even remember making a speech at Fulton six years ago [sic; he meant eight] at which I didn't get a very warm welcome because it was so anti-Russian and anti-Communist. I am violently anti-Communist. But I do beg you to make sure that no stone is left unturned in this period to give them a chance to grasp the prospects..."

"Never give in" might well be the title of these remarks, and the ellipses indicate we don't have all the words, so he may well have said as much; we would welcome the full transcript.

Referring again to Pilpel, we find a brief impromptu speech on 4 May 1959, when Churchill arrived in Washington for a private visit with President Eisenhower. WSC was responding to the President's welcome. This too follows the theme of "never give in," though he clearly didn't say those words: "Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I am most happy once again to set foot in the United States—my mother's country I always think of it and feel it. I have come here on a quiet visit to see some of my old comrades of wartime days..."

His very last public words in America came when he responded to the President's toast at a White House dinner on May 6th: "It resounds in my mind, a precious and happy thought... the union of the English-speaking peoples. I earnestly hope that an effort will be made, a fresh and further effort forward, to link us together..."

On May 8th he left Washington for the last time, and two years later, on 14 April 1961, he flew home from New York, where Onassis had brought him aboard *Christina*: his last visit to the USA. On this occasion he said nothing, merely lifted his hat to well-wishers at Idlewild Airport. He did, of course, make a "speech" at his honorary citizenship ceremony in 1963 (one of the few he did not write himself; the author was private secretary Anthony Montague Browne). But he was too infirm to be present and it was delivered by his son Randolph.

Whether "never give in" was part of his text on any of these final visits is still undetermined. But its sentiments, real and implied, he certainly expressed in 1954 and 1959.
AMPERSAND

A compendium of facts eventually to appear as a reader's guide.

Churchill's Letters

The Rt Hon Sir Winston Churchill, KG, OM, CH, TD, PC, FRS, MP had several other "letters," often represented by that most coveted citation, "the Order of Etcetera." Here are the usual letters attached to his name, in the order of precedence:

RG: Right Honorable, a prefix denoting peers and peersesses below the degree of Marquess/Marchioness, all members of the Privy Council, and Lord Mayors of certain principal cities. Churchill became a Rt Hon by becoming a PC in 1907.

KG: Knight of the Garter. The highest honour for military and civil service a Briton may receive. Selection is made personally by the Sovereign and is given in only one class, knight. Membership is limited to the Sovereign and twenty-five knights. Churchill was invested with the Garter on 24 April 1953 and was formally installed at Windsor on 14 June 1954. As a knighthood, it takes precedence in the titles after his name.

OM: Order of Merit. Created in 1902 by King Edward VII, personally awarded by the Sovereign for distinguished achievement in the arts, literature, and science, or for war service. Churchill was appointed to the civil division of the Order of Merit in the New Year Honours list of 1 January 1946.

CH: Companion of Honour. Created by King George V in 1917, often considered a junior class of the OM. Churchill was appointed to the Order on 19 October 1922 in recognition of his services as a minister of the King's government.

TD: Territorial Decoration. Awarded to Volunteer officers in the Territorial Army after twenty years' service (full-time war service counting double). Churchill qualified in 1924, having first joined the Queen's Own Oxfordshire Hussars in 1902.

PC: Privy Councillor. The principal council of the Sovereign, composed of the cabinet ministers and other persons chosen by the King or Queen. Peers and peeresses correctly use these letters since they already have the Rt Hon prefix because of their rank. Churchill became a PC in 1907.

FRS: Fellow of the Royal Society, a learned society founded in 1660 and given a Royal Charter by Charles II in 1662, through which the government has supported science. Churchill became a Fellow in 1941.

MP: Member of Parliament. Churchill was elected in 1900 and, save for brief interludes in 1908 and 1923-24, remained one until he retired from Parliament in 1964.

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TRIVIA ANSWERS (from page 37)

(1375) Lord Charles William de la Poer Beresford, Unionist MP for Portsmouth.
(1376) The History of the Hudson's Bay Company. (1377) The prize was for flying a Vickers-Vimy bomber on a direct transatlantic flight from Canada to Ireland. (1378) The Misses Thomson Preparatory School at Hove, Sussex. (1379) The strategy was Churchill's plan to convert the fleet from coal to oil. (1380) Air Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory was named Commander-in-Chief of AEAFin 1943.
(1381) Chatham, Kent. (1382) Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fisher, who wrote the comments in his Memories in 1919. (1383) 25 August 1919, from London to Paris. (1384) Churchill never soloed. (1385) In his speech, "Call to Arms," 11 September 1914. (1386) Churchill stated, "It is much more likely, I say it with sincere conviction, that war will never come in our time and perhaps will have passed from the world, at any rate for the period which our most adventurous imagination enables us to foresee."
(1387) They were introduced by Lady Randolph Churchill at a dance given by Lady Curie in 1904. (1388) The Mahdi's father was a boat-builder. (1389) Churchill initially denied government subsidies for commercial air service. Subsidies were granted in 1921 for competitive reasons, because the French and Dutch governments provided them for their airlines. (1390) The First Lord approving Churchill as Secretary for War and Air was Walter Long. (1391) Constantinople. (1392) The First Sea Lord, Admiral Lord Fisher.
(1393) Dr. Konrad Adenauer. (1394) The third edition of The War Speeches of William Pitt, the Younger. (1395) The walking stick was a wedding present from King Edward VII. (1396) Winston's American grandfather, Leonard Jerome. (1397) "Both these men [Hitler and Napoleon] were temperamentally unable to give up the tiniest scrap of any territory to which the high watermark of their hectic fortunes had carried them." (1398) The 'only defeat' was of Rear Admiral Sir Christopher Craddock off Coronel, Chile, by the German Far East Squadron under the command of Admiral Count von Spee.

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