COVER: MANY HAPPY RETURNS

We dedicate this cover to our Patron on her 88th birthday, 15 September 2010.

“Mary’s First Speech,” oil painting by Winston S. Churchill, 1935, Coombs 47. “Attended by her brother Randolph, and Winston himself, carrying a little bouquet of flowers, his youngest daughter Mary lays the foundation stone for a little brick summer house Churchill built for her.”


ARTICLES

A Traveler in Wartime*

10/ Getting There: Churchill’s Wartime Journeys • Christopher H. Sterling
16/ Chronology: A Log of Twenty-five World War II Flights and Voyages
17/ Air and Sea: Listing the Aircraft and Vessels Churchill Used or Stayed On
18/ Getting There: “With Fond Memories of Commando” • William VanDerkloot
23/ Staying There: Mena House, the Summit of Cairo • David Druckman

“The title of the American novelist Winston Churchill’s only non-fiction book.

9/ Gazing Upwards: Robert Hardy at 85, A Birthday Congratulation • Editor
26/ When Hitler and Churchill Thought Alike • Manfred Weidhorn

BOOKS, ARTS & CURIOSITIES

31/ Charles Morin and the Search for Churchill’s Nom de Palette • David Coombs
36/ Cohen Corner: The Bibliography of Churchill Miniature Books • Ronald I. Cohen
38/ Lady Randolph and the Incomparable Lee Remick and a Tribute by Gregory Peck
39/ Students’ Choice: The Five Best Recent Churchill Books • John Rossi
42/ From the Canon: “The Prussians of the Balkans” • Winston S. Churchill
44/ Googlew orld: New Generations and the Concept of “Joining” • Richard M. Langworth
46/ Is Google Making Us Stupid? • Excerpt by Nicholas Carr in The Atlantic

CHURCHILL PROCEEDINGS: 26TH CHURCHILL CONFERENCE, 2009

50/ Churchill’s “Shall We All Commit Suicide?” • Paul Alkon
53/ “Mass Effects in Modern Life”: Scientific War and Tyranny • Larry P. Arnn
55/ “Mass Effects” and the Great Man Theory of History • David Freeman
59/ Thoughts and Adventures: A Reader’s Guide • Paul Alkon

DEPARTMENTS

2/ Who’s Who in The Churchill Centre • 4/ Despatch Box
5/ Riddles, Mysteries, Enigmas • 6/ Datelines • 8/ Around & About
42/ From the Canon (Wit & Wisdom) • 47/ Action This Day • 48/ Churchill Quiz
63/ Regional Directory
NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD

In these troubled times I turn my thoughts to Churchill and the winter of 1941 and feel much better. I also try to view the nonsense of current events through the lens of a historian writing in 2080. The moral: Things have never been better, and they’re terrible.

ROBERT H. PILPEL, WHITE PLAINS, N.Y.

SMOKING UP THE JOINT

_finest hour_ 147 (page 63) poked amusing fun at the airbrushing of Churchill’s cigar on a poster outside the “Britain at War Experience,” a tourist site next to the “London Dungeon.” Evidently the uproar has influenced management. I passed by today and noted that a new poster had been put up, complete with cigar.

ANTHONY CALABRESE, RUTHERFORD, N.J.

ERRATUM, FH 147

John Tory (FH 147:7) was a former Leader of the Ontario Province Progressive Conservative Party but never Premier of Ontario. Actually we have civic elections in October and there is strong pressure on him to run for Mayor—he would stand a very strong chance to win.

TERRY REARDON, ETOBICOKE, ONT.

...PRAYERS AND THE LASH

Can you please revisit this supposed Churchill quotation? I see it among the “Red Herrings” non-quotes in your book, _Churchill By Himself_, but it’s listed by the _Yale Book of Quotations_.

DONALD ABRAMS, HERMOSA BEACH, CALIF.

Editor’s response: “Don’t talk to me about naval tradition. It’s nothing but rum, buggery [sometimes ‘sodomy’] and the lash.” _Churchill By Himself_ listed this Churchillism in the “Red Herrings” appendix of unattributed remarks, because I could not track it. Turns out I was not searching for exactly the right phrase—but I’m still not entirely at ease with this one.

Fred Shapiro, editor of the _Yale Book of Quotations_, offers a slightly different version of the quote, giving as his source Nigel Nicolson, ed., _Harold Nicolson: Diaries and Letters_, 3 vols. (London: Collins 1966-68) III, 193, which is as follows:

“Paddy Leigh Fermor tells me [that] when Winston was at the Admiralty, the Board objected to some suggestion of his on the grounds that it would not be in accord with naval tradition. ‘Naval tradition? Naval tradition?’ said Winston. ‘Monstrous. Nothing but rum, sodomy, prayers and the lash.’”

Sir Patrick Michael Leigh Fermor DSO OBE (b. 1915 and still with us) would seem an upstanding source. A distinguished soldier, who parachuted into Crete with the SOE to organize the island’s resistance to German occupation, he was also widely admired for his travel books.

I’ve altered my note to this entry in my appendix to quote Leigh Fermor via Nicolson. The latter, himself usually reliable, did have this secondhand; moreover, I think Churchill was not quite original. It is more likely that he was embellishing something he’d read.

There are preceding occurrences of similar phrases, according to the _Oxford Dictionary of Quotations_: “Compare ‘Rum, bum, and bacca’ and ‘Ashore it’s wine women and song, aboard it’s rum, bum and concertina,’ naval catch phrases dating from the nineteenth century.” So running this to earth is tricky, like Churchill’s famous crack about Democracy (“the worst system, except for all the others”)—which WSC admitted was by an earlier author when he voiced it in the House of Commons in 1947.

If you like it, use it, but be sure it’s Leigh Fermor’s version!”

*Editor’s response:*
RIDDLES, MYSTERIES, ENIGMAS

“The trouble was not that [Sutherland] admired the PM too little, but rather that he worshipped him too blindly…”

The 1954 Sutherland Portrait

Q

Recently on BBC Radio 4, antiquarian book dealer Rick Gekoski spoke of the Sutherland portrait of Churchill, commissioned by Parliament as a tribute on his 80th birthday in 1954, saying it was destroyed by his wife because she hated it so much. It portrayed the PM hunched with age and dark in mood. A detailed study by the artist still hangs in the National Portrait Gallery. Gekoski asked if the rights of an owner override those of the public, and if the Churchills had the moral right to destroy it. What were Sutherland’s personal feelings toward Churchill? It looks like the sort of painting you’d do of someone you didn’t like very well. —James Mack, Fairfield, Ohio

This is an old story, remarked as early as Finest Hour’s fourth issue back in 1969. The occasion was a signal one, and Churchill’s words were apoposite. “The portrait,” he told the assembled Members of the Houses of Commons and Lords, “is a remarkable example of modern art. It certainly combines force and candour.”

Lord Moran recalled: “There was a little pause, and then a gust of laughter swept the hall.” In truth, Church hated the portrait and, if private property still has any meaning, Clementine Churchill was within her rights to do as she wished with it.

***

It seems that there was a cordial relationship with the Sutherlows during the sittings, despite certain reservations about the artist’s work. From Martin Gilbert, Winston S. Churchill, vol. 8 “Never Despair” (London: Heinemann, 1988), 1059:

On September 1 [1954] Clementine Churchill wrote to her daughter Mary: “Mr. Graham Sutherland is a ‘Wow.’ He really is a most attractive man and one can hardly believe that the savage cruel designs which he exhibits come from his brush. Papa has given him 3 sittings and no one has seen the beginnings of the portrait except Papa and he is much struck by the power of his drawing.” “He used to dictate while he was sitting,” Miss Portal [a secretary] later recalled, and she added: “Sutherland would not let him see it. He would scribble on a piece of paper and say ‘this is what it is going to be.’ But he wouldn’t let us see the picture itself.” Each time Sutherland left Chequers, the portrait was covered up. When he finished, it was taken away, still unseen.

***

Lady Soames, certainly a primary source on the episode, writes in her book Churchill: His Life as a Painter (London: Collins, 1990), 193-95, quoting several contemporaries who observed the events:

Churchill and Sutherland got on well together, and Winston had demanded at the outset, “Are you going to paint me as a bulldog or a cherub?” To which the painter replied, “This depends on what you show me!” …

Sutherland seems to have come to like his subject during the long hours of work. He told Fleur Cowles: “He was always considerate, always kind, always amusing and cooperative”….Graham Sutherland and his charming wife Kathleen, who sometimes came with him, were much liked by both Winston and Clementine, and by the other members of the family, but alas, as is now so well known, the story ended in tears. When Churchill saw the finished portrait, delivered to Number 10 about a week before its formal presentation at a great gathering in Westminster Hall, he took a violent dislike to it. Clementine, who had been shown the picture by Graham Sutherland before Winston saw it, had at first sight seemed inclined to like it, but later she came to share Winston’s feelings. Seeing how deeply he was upset by the picture she promised him that “it would never see the light of day.”

A lot of his time since the end of the war had been spent in arranging and editing the part he will play in history, and it has been rather a shock to him that his ideas and those of Graham Sutherland seem so far apart. “Filthy,” he spluttered. “I think it is malignant.” Was Winston fair to the artist? Sutherland’s intentions, at any rate, seem to have been unexceptionable. The trouble was not that he admired the PM too little, but rather that he worshipped him too blindly. Graham Sutherland was thinking of the Churchill who had stopped the enemy and saved England, and the manner in which, without a word of guidance, Mr. Churchill took up a pose on the dais convinced the painter that he was on the right tack. “I wanted,” he said, “to paint him with a kind of four-square look, to picture Churchill as a rock.”

One day at Chartwell—it was either the first or second sitting—Sutherland said to me: “There are so many Churchills. I have to find the real one.” When I learnt that he intended to paint a lion at bay I tried to sound a warning note. “Don’t forget,” I said, “that Winston is always acting, try to see him when he has got the greasepaint off his face.” But the artist paid no heed; he painted the PM as he pictured him in his own favourite part. And why should Winston complain, for surely it was he who created the role? All that Graham Sutherland did was to accept the legend for the truth.

Finest Hour has vowed to respect Lady Churchill’s wish and never to run an image of the Sutherland portrait—it’s easily Googled, after all.

Finest Hour 148 / 5

Lord Moran’s Churchill: The Struggle for Survival (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966) provides a further glimpse of the episode (659-60). Although we tend to discount Moran when he disagrees with superior authorities, in this case we think he makes a canny observation. Speaking of his patient the doctor wrote:

Finest Hour has vowed to respect Lady Churchill’s wish and never to run an image of the Sutherland portrait—it’s easily Googled, after all. 🤷
APPLE FROM ORCHARD

AFTER seeing books about Churchill entitled Warlord and Soldier, it might surprise many to learn how much effort Churchill devoted to peace, reconciliation and human advancement. He believed that freedom of thought and speech were worth fighting for, both politically and militarily. Being cultured is a good thing. Respecting science is a good thing. Being patriotic is a good thing. Politics can be a noble profession. Above all, be civil, be informed, be engaged, and be happy. I think that all of these are themes that run through Churchill’s life and make his a timeless example worth exploring and emulating.

STAN A. ORCHARD ON CHURCHILLCHAT@GOOGLEGROUPS.COM

ARCHIVES ONLINE IN 2012

LONDON, JULY 29TH—Winston Churchill’s vast archive, from school reports and wagers to a personal copy of his “finest hour” speech, will be digitised and online in 2012. The Churchill Archive Trust has arranged with publisher Bloomsbury to make available more than one million items, some 2500 archive boxes of letters, telegrams, documents and photographs stored in Cambridge and currently viewable only by appointment.

After years of cataloguing and transferring the material to microfilm, the next logical step was making the archives available to everyone, although not for free, said Churchill Archives Centre director Allen Packwood: “It’s tremendously exciting for us, as it is fulfilling what the trust was established to do in the first place.” An enormous array of historical material will be available without the layers of interpretation that had been added over the years. “It is an opportunity for people to make their own judgments,” he said. “You’ll be able to see what was on Churchill’s desk on a day-to-day basis and how he responded to it. You’ll be able to compare easily what he was saying in public [to] what he was saying privately.”

The CAC said the only way of digitalising the archive and making it widely available was by finding a commercial partner, since there was no prospect of gaining public funds. “We don’t have the money or, crucially, the expertise,” said Packwood.

When the archive goes live in 2012, organisations and individuals will have to pay to access it. Exact figures are not confirmed, but Frances Pinter, the publisher of Bloomsbury Academic, said they would keep the price low to ensure a wide reach.

Bloomsbury won the contract after a bidding process and Pinter said the database would be created in a way that researchers could find historical needles in haystacks: “As an archival collection, there’s nothing like this. The nearest comparison would be something like the presidential archives in America and they are not as digitally advanced as we will be.”

The archive is packed full of letters, photographs and ephemera covering Churchill’s life from his school days; his time as a soldier during the Boer war; his spell as a rising political star in Edwardian England; the isolation of the 1930s and the war itself, before his final years as an elder statesman during the Cold War. Much of it covers international affairs and there are drafts of some of his most famous speeches. There is also more personal material that shines a light on his personal interests and his famous tastes, including a bet with Lord Rothermere that he could refrain from “brandy or undiluted spirits” for a year. The archives include:

• Annotated drafts of some famous speeches, including two commonly thought to have been broadcast: “Fight on the Beaches” speech of 4 June 1940, and the “The Few” on 20 August 1940. Both were delivered in the Commons, although he did record them after the war.

• Items relating to Churchill’s menagerie of pets, including his black swans, sheep and pigs at Chartwell; his cat, Nelson; his dogs, Rufus I and II; and his budgerigar Toby.

• Material about the testing of cigars, reflecting MI5’s concern that Churchill could be offered an exploding or poisonous cigar.

• Articles on subjects both profound and the trite, supplementing his income with pieces such as “Can we breed a race of supermen?” and “Are there men on the moon?”

In 1931, after an near-death experience on New York’s Fifth Avenue, he

Quotation of the Season

“Believe me, the average modern politician cares very little about consistency. He produces an assortment of wares with which to tempt the public, but as soon as the interest in them has declined, he quietly sets himself to work to dress the window with still later novelties. As long as he can sell something for the votes, upon which he depends for a livelihood, he is quite content. I daresay politics are regarded by most people as a game, in which the cleverest sharper wins.”

—WSC TO HERBERT VIVIAN, PALL MALL, APRIL 1905
wrote about what it was like to be hit by a motorcar (Finest Hour 136).

• Painting correspondence with Walter Sickert and Sir John Lavery. There are also letters from George Bernard Shaw, T.E. Lawrence and Vivien Leigh.

—Mark Brown in The Guardian

WSC NEVER HESITATED
WASHINGTON, JULY 2ND— Longtime Churchillian Charles Krauthammer ridicules the current fashion of not calling Muslim extremists Muslim extremists: “The Pentagon report on the Fort Hood shooter runs 86 pages with not a single mention of Hasan’s Islamism. It contains such politically correct inanities as ‘religious fundamentalism alone is not a risk factor.’

‘Of course it is. Indeed, Islamist fundamentalism is not only a risk factor. It is the risk factor, the common denominator linking all the great terror attacks of this century—from 9/11 to Bombay, from Fort Hood to Times Square, from London to Madrid to Bali. The attackers were of varied national origin, occupation, age, social class, native tongue, and race. The one thing that united them was the jihadist vision in whose name they acted.”

Krauthammer quotes Faisal Shahzad, the Times Square attacker: “One has to understand where I’m coming from… I consider myself a mujahid, a Muslim soldier.” Well, said the columnist, “that is clarifying. As was the self-printed business card of Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, the Fort Hood shooter, identifying himself as ‘SoA,’ Soldier of Allah.

‘Why is this important?’ Mr. Krauthammer asks. ‘Because the first rule of war is to know your enemy. If you don’t, you wander into intellectual cul-de-sacs and ignore the real causes that might allow you to prevent recurrences.

‘Churchill famously ‘mobilized the English language and sent it into battle.’ But his greatness lay not just in eloquence but in his appeal to the moral core of a decent people to rise against an ideology the nature of which Churchill never hesitated to define and describe—and to pronounce (‘Nahhhhrzzzzssis’) in an accent dripping with loathing and contempt.”

Charles Krauthammer admits he is not expecting anyone “to match Churchill’s rhetoric—just Shahzad’s candor.”


ANOTHER COVER-UP?
LONDON, AUGUST 5TH— The Telegraph divulged breathlessly that “Churchill was accused of ordering a cover-up of a WW2 encounter between a UFO and a RAF bomber because he feared public ‘panic’ and loss of faith in religion.”

Is the news so slow that they have to regurgitate stuff that was taken care of years ago?

Finest Hour 115, Summer 2002 Datelines: London, October 21st—
“What does all this stuff about flying saucers amount to?”….WSC’s advisers produced a six-page report [which] played down the phenomenon…later an order went out expressly banning all RAF personnel from discussing sightings. —The Observer

Finest Hour 129, Winter 2005-06, Around & About, page 10: [Sir Henry] Tizard saw no threat from UFOs. All sightings, he reported, were explainable by natural events such as the weather or meteors, or were normal aircraft. But Britain followed the American lead in underplaying the sightings, and a few months later an order went out expressly banning all RAF personnel from discussing UFO reports with anyone not in the military. Roberts and Clarke believe that the UFO sightings were the product of “mass hysteria”…..

Some cover-up. Almost makes us pine for a resurrection of the much more amusing fables that WSC knew about Pearl Harbor and engineered the 1929 Wall Street crash.

ANGUS HAMILTON R.I.P.
LENNOXLOVE, SCOTLAND, JUNE 5TH— Angus Hamilton, as he preferred to be known, inherited his dukedoms from his father in 1973, becoming the 15th Duke of Hamilton and the 12th Duke of Brandon, as well as 22nd Earl of Arran.

In 2008, Angus and his wife Kay were our hosts at Lennoxlove on the final Churchill tour conducted by the editor and publisher. They entertained us affably at lunch while showing us around their exhibition on the 1941 flight to Scotland by Rudolf Hess. The Deput Führer was intent on reaching Angus’s father, the 14th Duke, whom he knew and thought had access to the King. The Duke promptly locked him up and rang Downing Street.

As senior descendant of the ancient lords of Abernethy, Angus carried the Crown of Scotland to the first reopening of the Scottish Parliament since its departure to London in 1707. Shy and academically intelligent, he never relished his public duties, but addressed them loyally. He preferred designing off-road vehicles, driving racing cars, and flying his Bristol Bulldog biplane. He wrote a fine biography of his ancestor, Mary Queen of Scots: The Crucial Years. Mary’s death mask is one of Lennoxlove’s exhibits.

In 1973, Angus inherited Lennoxlove Castle, which his father had purchased in 1947. With its 460 acres of parkland and gardens, it became the Hamilton ducal seat in addition to being open to the public. He married the current Duchess of Hamilton in 1998, and shared her love of animals and music. His heir is his eldest son, Alexander Douglas-Hamilton, Marquess of Douglas and Clydesdale, who now becomes the Duke of Hamilton and Brandon. >>
TONYPANDY: THERE THEY GO AGAIN

LONDON, JULY 21ST—Reader Alistair Cooke (no relation to “the” AC) picked up on a comment in the Daily Telegraph by a Labour MP that, a century on, “the people of Tonypandy remember Churchill in relation to the Tonypandy riots.” Few myths, Cooke wrote, have proved as tenacious as the unfounded Labour belief that Home Secretary Churchill had used the Army to suppress Tonypandy rioters. Finest Hour senior editor Paul Courtenay seconded Cooke’s motion and raised him one. The Telegraph truncated Paul’s response. We reprint it in full:

“Mr. Cooke is quite right to puncture the myth of Winston Churchill and Tonypandy. In November 1910, during disturbances and looting at Tonypandy, the police were thought to have enough officers available to contain the situation, but the Chief Constable of Glamorgan asked for 400 cavalry and infantry as a reserve in case his men were overwhelmed or became exhausted. The General Officer Commanding Southern Command despatched these, pending further instructions.

“When Churchill, the Home Secretary, heard that these military forces were on their way, he immediately gave orders that they were to be halted wherever they were and to go no further. The cavalry were initially halted in Cardiff, but were later allowed to advance as far as Pontypridd (five miles short of Tonypandy), and the infantry were halted in Swindon, which was not even in Wales and was as close as they got.

“If anyone finds this hard to believe they should read the leading article in The Times of 9 November 1910, in which that newspaper >>
We have all heard about the art of Timothy Robert Hardy, even though we don’t need to do so, since it is self-evident. But that really doesn’t matter, does it? His three-decade involvement with the Churchill saga provides a balsamic reiteration of what we know, are glad that we know, pity those who do not know, and are proud to be associated with.

It began with his peerless portrayals of Sir Winston in the “Wilderness Years” TV documentary; David Susskind’s “Leaders” series; a London stage play; the mini-series “War and Remembrance”; and—just this August 20th—a brilliant reading from Churchill’s tribute to “The Few” on its 70th anniversary. See our website: http://xrl.us/bhwuip.

We can only begin to imagine the prodigious effort Tim made to master this part—to find, as he put it, “a way in.” But playing Churchill, he said, was “one of the best things that has ever happened to me.” Speaking to us in 1986 he likened the job to scaling Everest: “I shall never look down from the peak, but as long as I live I shall delight in gazing upwards toward those towering rocks.”

The Churchill Society thought enough of his mountaineering to offer him the Blenheim Award, its highest accolade. But his acceptance honored us much more.

Robert Hardy has the distinction of having been on both sides in the Churchill story—for he played von Ribbentrop to Richard Burton’s Churchill in “The Gathering Storm.” He told me he yearned to direct the great Anthony Hopkins as Churchill, but I said this must never occur until he is too old. And he still isn’t!

Long before he played Winston Churchill, this devoted student of Shakespeare played many of the Bard’s heroes and villains—roles he savored. He once remarked to an interviewer: “I have to keep saying to myself, ‘To play Hamlet at your age is out of the question. Stop it!’”

Others know him best for his superb role as Siegfried Farnon in “All Creatures Great and Small.” My wife once said to him, “You’ll always be Siegfried to me.” Tim quickly replied, “You’ll always be Barbara to me.”

Nowadays, we all know him as Minister of Magic Cornelius Fudge in the Harry Potter films. He admitted to Barbara that his only regret in that role is that he was not equipped with his personal owl.

His knowledge of archery and his scholarly book, Longbow, led to his becoming archery consultant to the Mary Rose Trust: studying the longbows and arrows found in the famous ship, now being restored in Portsmouth. Through his intervention, one of our Churchill tour parties was given a private tour of the ship by its curator, who explained the lengthy process of drying ancient timbers.

The unfailing quality of Robert Hardy’s work is equaled by the unfailing courtesy of his manner. Those who meet him for the first time are struck by his gentility, as of course by his wit and erudition. There is something about him that is a dramatic betrayal of the persona one expects from a public reputation.

He has said that Winston Churchill was the one man last century who could lead us through the worst of times by the force of his mesmerizing speeches, monumental courage and personal charisma. I say in reply that Robert Hardy’s work expresses all the Churchillian qualities.

Through his skill, the true Churchill emerged for out of the blue distance of time, for new generations to contemplate.

That is something for which Churchill admirers are deeply grateful and honored—as I am to be part of this tribute to Timothy Robert Hardy, Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.
I
t’s easy to forget, in this time of daily jet travel, that long-distance flying was once rare, cumbersome and uncomfortable, and sometimes dangerous. Flying transatlantic was unusual before 1940; navigation was complex yet rudimentary, landing places limited. And from September 1939, German forces were determined to destroy any British aircraft or ships they came across.¹

Despite these facts, Churchill traveled farther and more extensively than any other wartime leader. He believed strongly in face-to-face negotiations with his overseas counterparts and their military. As Prime Minister from 1940 to 1945, he made at least twenty-five trips outside Britain, some ranging over several continents and lasting for weeks. He preferred to fly, simply to save time.²

And Churchill by then was neither young nor, at

Professor Sterling (chriss@gwu.edu) teaches Media Law and Policy at The George Washington University, Washington, D.C.
least on paper, particularly fit. Aged 65 at the outset of his premiership, working long hours and abhorring exercise, he seemed ill-equipped for stressful travel. Indeed he became seriously ill on one trip, and had health problems on others. He persevered despite the inconvenience and danger. We now know that Churchill was rarely in danger of German attack, but the tension of flying or sailing made planning for his trips complex and nerve wracking for his staff.1

On the plus side, Churchill was a seasoned traveler well before taking up residence at Downing Street. He had sailed on many passenger liners,2 had briefly learned to fly and often flown as a passenger after 1918,3 and regularly took Imperial Airways flights to the Continent during the 1930s. As First Lord of the Admiralty in 1911-15 and >>

A turn at the helm of the Boeing flying boat Berwick, headed home after visiting Washington and Ottawa, January 1942.
again in 1939-40, he had visited or traveled aboard a variety of naval vessels. He substantially expanded this experience over the five years of his wartime premiership.

Flamingoes, Flying Boats and Commando

Churchill’s wartime travels began less than a week after he became Prime Minister. His first five treks were to France during the May-June six-week war, usually in one of three new de Havilland D.H. 95 Flamingo transports of RAF No. 24 (Commonwealth) Squadron, based at RAF Hendon. The twin-engine Flamingo was all-metal—though de Havilland had built only wooden aircraft up to that point. It held twelve to seventeen passengers. The Flamingos were registered G-AFUE, G-AFUF, and R2765, though none was given an individual name, a then-common practice.6

Always escorted by fighters (since German aircraft posed a growing threat), Churchill flew to Paris three times; then pursued the retreating French leadership on difficult and dangerous flights to Briare, eighty miles south of Paris, and later to Tours on the eve of French capitulation. The flights were uneventful—and, sadly, so were the talks.

Eighteen months later, returning from meetings with Allied leaders in Washington and Ottawa in January 1942, Churchill made his first flight across the Atlantic aboard Berwick, a Boeing 314A flying boat painted in olive drab camouflage with large Union Flags under her cockpit windows. She was flown by British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) personnel under military orders. The plane was comfortably fitted with peacetime luxury furnishings and food service for VIPs. Her cabin was divided into several compartments, including a dining area and separate bathrooms for men and women. Passengers could move about, and comfortable full-length bunks could be folded down from the bulkhead. Until the arrival of his Skymaster transport toward the end of the war, the flying boat was Churchill’s most luxurious airplane.

Headed for Bermuda and a sea voyage home, WSC climbed into the Boeing’s cockpit and happily sat opposite the pilot with a cigar clamped in his teeth. He was so taken with the plane that he inquired of Captain John Kelly Rogers whether Berwick could fly him home. Assured that she could, Churchill cancelled plans to sail back from Bermuda. Rogers took on a full load of fuel and saved the Prime Minister several days in transit.

Six months later, Churchill made his only Atlantic round trip by air during the war. Only a handful of prewar passenger flights had followed that route, though military aircraft were being regularly ferried across by mid-1942. On 17 June 1942, Churchill and his party boarded BOAC’s Bristol (a sister to Berwick) at Stanraer, Scotland, flying to Baltimore. Ten days later, they returned on a northerly route via Newfoundland.

A trip to the Middle East and on to Moscow in August 1942 (see article following) involved the first airplane assigned specifically to WSC: an American-built Consolidated LB-30A named Commando. Based on the four-engine B-24 bomber but with a single tail like U.S. Navy variants, she was one of a growing number of bombers and transports flying the risky Atlantic (nearly fifty air personnel were killed in the ferrying process over five years). Commando was piloted by William J. Vanderkloot, who had flown airliners before the war. With his navigation and piloting experience, he was appointed as Churchill’s pilot by Air Chief Marshal Charles Portal. He and the plane had arrived from Montreal, conveying three Canadians to Prestwick, near Glasgow.8

Despite being assigned to the PM, Commando was a far cry from the flying boats. Her deep fuselage lacked windows (the cargo plane on which she was based didn’t need them); the only outside light came from the cockpit. There were drafts, and at first no heat; the shelves in the back of the cabin were the only sleeping accommodation, though a simple cooking stove was provided. Lacking cabin pressurization, Commando rarely flew over 8000 feet, enough to surmount most bad weather. Her name painted at a jaunty angle under the cockpit, the lumbering giant was painted matte black, for she often flew at night.9
None of Churchill’s airplanes was pressurized. Since he was susceptible to pneumonia, a special oxygen mask was made for him by the Institute of Aviation Medicine at Farnborough. He slept wearing it, even with Commando’s low altitude. Some time later a transparent pressure chamber was devised, into which Churchill could crawl, cigar and all, if the aircraft had to climb. But it would not fit into any of his aircraft without disassembling the rear fuselage, and was rejected out of hand.

Churchill ventured abroad four times in 1943, including two of his longest wartime journeys. On 12 January he flew on Commando from RAF Lyneham to Casablanca. The trip lasted nearly a month, including subsequent stops at Nicosia, Cairo, Tripoli and Algiers, and was his final journey on that aircraft.

**Ascalon and the Skymaster**

For a visit to the troops in the Middle East six months later, Commando was replaced by a new Avro York, the only British-built transport of the war. Designed in 1941 and first flown in mid-1942, it used the wings, tail, Rolls-Royce Merlin engines and landing gear of Bomber Command’s famous Lancasters, but had a more capacious square-section fuselage. Assigned to RAF Northolt in March 1943, the York also flew King George VI. More than 250 of the type were built, some serving through the 1950s.

Churchill’s York, the third prototype, had eight rectangular windows rather than the standard round perspex windows, an improvement on Commando’s claustrophobic fuselage. She was named Ascalon, after the sword St. George used to slay the dragon, a name suggested by No. 24 squadron’s commander. Ascalon featured a telephone for talking to the flight crew, a bar and a table with an ashtray, and carried a thermos flask, the latest newspapers and books. Engineers even came up with an electrically heated toilet seat, though Churchill complained that it was too hot and it was disconnected.

In August 1944, with Bill Vanderkloot in command, Ascalon flew Churchill to Algiers and then Naples to visit the Italian theater. There were several other segments of this journey before Ascalon returned home. Two months later, in her third, very lengthy and final trip, Ascalon carried Churchill to Moscow by way of Naples and Cairo, then across Turkey and the Black Sea.

True luxury aloft arrived in November 1944 when Churchill was presented with a brand new four-engine Douglas C-54 Skymaster from America. President Roosevelt already used one, dubbed the Sacred Cow. The first C-54 to arrive in Britain under Lend-Lease, Serial EW999 bore no specific name. She was his first aircraft with tricycle landing gear, which meant no more climbing “uphill” while boarding. But since her deck was more than nine feet off the ground, she carried her own boarding steps—no airport then had such equipment. More than 1200 C-54s were constructed during the war; many were converted for airline service (as DC-4s) afterwards.

The Skymaster arrived with an unfinished interior, but Churchill voiced a vague desire that she “look British.” Armstrong Whitworth in Coventry created a paneled conference room with a table seating twelve, sleeping accommodation for six including a stateroom for the PM with a divan, wardrobe, easy chairs and desk. The C-54 reached RAF Northolt in early November 1944, and soon departed on her first Churchill trip, a brief flight to Paris (and back from Rheims three days later) as the PM visited British commanders.

On Christmas Eve 1944, Churchill boarded the Skymaster for Athens, where he mediated the Greek civil war. His pilot was now RAF Wing Commander “Bill” Fraser. His next important wartime trip was to the Big Three conference at Yalta in February 1945. The Skymaster flew first to Malta, and then, adding fighter escort, across Turkey and the Black Sea for the Saki airport serving Yalta. Fraser parked her next to the Sacred Cow, and both planes were guarded by the Red Army; even their crews had difficulty gaining access.

In late March, the Skymaster departed Northolt with the PM’s wife Clementine, who had been invited to >>

---

Above: A Boeing 314A flying boat of the Berwick and Bristol types proved comfortable to the PM. Below: Ascalon leaving Gibraltar, by Philip West, signed and numbered color print offered at £125 by SWA Fine Art Publishers (www.swafineart.com).
WARTIME JOURNEYS...

inspect Russian Red Cross and hospital facilities. The trip took several days due to a holdover in Cairo while Russian transit arrangements were made. She returned after VE Day via Malta. The PM’s twenty-fifth and final wartime trip was on the Skymaster to Bordeaux (where he relaxed and painted for a week); and then on to Berlin for the final summit at Potsdam. On July 25th, it flew him home for the election returns that ended his wartime travels.

Over the Sea in Ships

Though Churchill preferred to fly, surely his most comfortable journeys were aboard His Majesty’s Transport Queen Mary, flagship of the Cunard Line and longtime Blue Riband holder for the fastest North Atlantic crossing. Commandeered for war transport in 1939, she was painted a flat naval grey, and was soon equipped to carry thousands of GIs to Britain (and prisoners back to North America). But some first class cabins staterooms were maintained in pre-war splendor for use of VIPs including Churchill.

Churchill’s first wartime voyage on Queen Mary was from the Clyde to New York in May 1943; three months later, he sailed again from the Clyde, this time for the first Quebec Conference. About a year later, Queen Mary brought him to Halifax, where he entrained for the Second Quebec meeting. This time he enjoyed her amenities both ways, for the Queen also carried him home from New York.

Another former passenger liner used by Churchill during the war was HMT Franconia, a Cunarder since 1923. She provided accommodations, communications and supplies for the PM at Sebastopol during the Yalta talks.

Other seaborne transport was provided by the Royal Navy, including three modern battleships, an older battlecruiser, and two light cruisers. Conditions here were more austere, but WSC would occupy the admiral’s cabin if there was one, or the best cabin otherwise, while deck officers were bumped down or doubled up to accommodate WSC’s party. Staff meetings were held in the officers’ wardroom.

Accompanied by “a retinue which Cardinal Wolsey might have envied,” the PM boarded the new battleship HMS Prince of Wales at Scapa Flow for his August 1941 trip to visit Roosevelt in Newfoundland. Observing radio silence so as not to attract German attention, the battleship carried Churchill’s party to a secret rendezvous in Placentia Bay, which resulted in the “Atlantic Charter.” Movie newsreels showed both leaders, their staffs and ships’ crews singing hymns at Sunday morning services on her aft deck. Sadly, many of those sailors were drowned just four months later when the Japanese sank Prince of Wales off Malaya early in December. (See Finest Hour 139:40-49.)

After the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor and British Southeast Asia, Churchill left the Clyde for America on 13 December aboard the new battleship HMS Duke of York (a sister to the ill-fated Prince of Wales). Sailing across the North Atlantic in mid-winter was hardly a pleasant trip. But WSC, a good sailor, was indifferent as the 45,000-ton ship pounded gale-force winds before finally reaching Hampton Roads, Virginia.

In August and November 1943, Churchill traveled aboard the aging battlecruiser HMS Renown. Indeed, his longest journey began in mid-November when his party left Plymouth on Renown for Gibraltar, Algiers, and Malta. (See Vic Humphries, “Glimpses from the ‘Taxi’: HMS Renown 1943,” FH 113:24-25, Winter 2002-03.) Though he had hoped to fly home, a serious bout with pneumonia during the trip saw him consigned to the battleship HMS King George V, which arrived at Plymouth in mid-January 1944. His aircraft Ascalon stayed on at Gibraltar for several days, seemingly under repair, in an attempt to confuse German spies watching from nearby Spain.
Small Craft, Short Visits

On at least three occasions, Churchill spent short periods on destroyers. Six days after the Normandy landings, he took a one-day outing to view the invasion beaches aboard HMS Kelvin, which, to his delight, fired on German shore positions while he was aboard. The ship sailed from and returned to Portsmouth. Ten days later he boarded the destroyer HMS Enterprise off Arromanches, France to witness the invasion’s progress. And in August 1944, he was aboard HMS Kimberley to observe troops going ashore on the French Riviera.

He briefly traveled on two light cruisers: Early in 1945, traveling as “Colonel Kent” en route to Yalta, he spent two days aboard HMS Orion in Malta’s French Creek. He used the admiral’s cabin to sleep and shake a fever, and to meet with aides. Homeward bound after Yalta, he rested for a few days aboard the cruiser HMS Aurora in the Egyptian port of Alexandria.

Churchill made numerous short hops to visit troops on the Continent on C-47 Dakota twin-engine transports, usually flown by the RAF. Some 10,000 were manufactured; this military version of the ubiquitous DC-3 airliner saw service in every theater. Seating twenty-one in airline service, but twenty-eight or more in military guise, the C-47 carried anything and everyone. Americans dubbed it “Skytrain” for its flexible capacity. The Dakota was the largest of the twin-engine aircraft which carried WSC.

In addition to the Flamingo for his French flights in mid-1940, Churchill also flew on Lockheed Lodestars. Based on the civilian Model 18 airliner, the military Lodestar first flew in mid-1941 and saw extensive use with multiple services and countries in most theaters. Supplied to the RAF under Lend-Lease, Lodestars served as VIP transports operated by RAF No 173 squadron in North Africa beginning in mid-1942. And Churchill flew aboard a U.S. Navy Lodestar from Norfolk to Washington on one of his American trips.

Churchill’s exhaustive wartime travel and vast array of conveyances demonstrate his determination to overcome time and distance, even in the face of discomfort and potential danger. The logistics in arranging these trips were complex; many were pioneering flights over huge distances. But he was a great believer in personal diplomacy, and his methods helped him cement the personal relationships he saw as so valuable to international relations.

Endnotes

1. For the chronology, see Lavery, Pawle and (though less detailed) Celia Sandys, Chasing Churchill: Travels with Winston Churchill (London: HarperCollins, New York: Carroll & Graf, 2003). As for the substance of these trips, there are shelves of books, including Churchill’s own six-volume war memoirs.

2. The best and most complete account of most (though not all) of these journeys is in Brian Lavery, Churchill Goes to War: Winston’s Wartime Journeys (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2007). Lavery’s maps, diagrams and photos are especially helpful.

3. The first detailed account of the arrangements that lay behind these many trips is in Gerald Pawle, The War and Colonel Warden (London: Harrap, 1963) whose title is one of Churchill’s travel code names. Pawle’s book is based on the recollections of Royal Navy Commander “Tommy” Thompson, who closely planned many foreign trips and was present for most.


5. Christopher Sterling, “Churchill and Air Travel: Ahead of His Time,” Finest Hour 118 (Spring 2003), 24-29.


7. Three of the craft, huge for their time, had been purchased for a million dollars each from Pan American Airways, which retained nine others for its Pacific and Atlantic routes. The purchase was made about the time Churchill was making his aerial round-trips to France.


9. Commando was not always black. One of the few photos of the complete aircraft shows her in natural metallic finish, but not the olive drab then so common. See Peter Masefield and Bill Gunston, Flight Path (Shrewsbury, England: Airlife, 2002), 131. Masefield claims Churchill flew this trip on a different though similar transport, the Marco Polo, but no other source—including Churchill’s own memoirs—agrees.


12. Donald Hannah, The Aeron York (Leatherhead, England: Profile Publication No. 168, no date), 4. Lavery is mistaken when he says this airplane was lost over the Atlantic in 1945 (371). In reality she served for a decade after flying Churchill. The lost aircraft was Commando.

13. Arthur Pearcy, “Douglas DC-4,” Chapter 8 of Douglas Propliners DC-1 to DC-7 (Shrewsbury, England: Airlife, 1995), 105-16. Douglas began designing a larger follow-on airliner to its world-beating DC-3 in the late 1930s. First flown in 1938, the DC-4E (for experimental) was deemed too large by airline managers of the time, and the prototype was sold to Japan. Reworked to a trimmer size, the new aircraft first flew in early 1942. Army and Navy demand for a larger transport meant that none would enter their intended airline service until after the war. Instead, designating them C-54 “for the duration,” Douglas began turning out bare bones four-engine transport aircraft.

14. Several sources quote this line. See, for example, Lavery, 301 (and the previous page, which includes a diagram of the special Skymaster’s layout).


16. This journey was Churchill’s first trip aboard a ship he would sail on often in later years. He published an article about the Queen Mary at the time of her maiden voyage, in The Strand Magazine, May 1936. A reprint is in Finest Hour 121 (Winter 2003-04), 23-28.


Chronology

(Journey numbers are in parentheses)

1940

16 May-14 June: Flies five round-trips from London to France. Three flights to Paris, 16-17 May, 21 May, 31 May. (1-3) Two flights farther south, to Briare (on the Loire, 80 miles south of Paris), 11-12 June; to Tours, 13-14 June. (4-5)

1941

4-18 August: Sails on HMS Prince of Wales from Scapa Flow to and from Placentia Bay, Newfoundland for Atlantic Conference with Roosevelt. (6)

13 December-17 January: Sails on HMS Duke of York from Clyde to Hampton Roads (then flies by Navy Lockheed transport, probably a Lodestar, to Washington DC) for meetings with Roosevelt. Returns in Boeing flying boat Berwick from Norfolk to Bermuda, then on to Britain. (7)

1942

7-27 June: Flies in flying boat Bristol from Stanraer, Scotland to Washington for another meeting with Roosevelt; returns from Baltimore by way of Botwood to Stanraer, his first transatlantic round-trip by air. (8)

2-24 August: Flies in Commando from Lyneham to Gibraltar, Cairo, El Alamein, Teheran, and Moscow, and back largely same way. (9)

1943

12 January-7 February: Flies in Commando from Lyneham to Casablanca, also Cairo, Adana, Nicosia, returning via Cairo, Tripoli and Algiers. (10)

5 May-5 July: Sails on HMT Queen Mary from the Clyde to New York. On to Washington by train, then with FDR to “Shangri-la” (Camp David). Returns in flying boat Bristol, flying to Botwood, then Gibraltar. In late May, flies from Gibraltar to Algiers, Tunisia and home to Northolt on Ascalon, the first of his two longest trips during the war. (11)

5-10 August: Sails as “Col. Warden” in HMT Queen Mary from the Clyde to Halifax for first Quebec Conference; returns on battlecruiser HMS Renown. (12)

12 November-17 January: Sails from Plymouth on HMS Renown to Gibraltar, Algiers, Malta and Alexandria. Flies in Ascalon to Cairo and Teheran, and back to Cairo and Tunis. After two-week illness in North Africa, flies to Cairo in RAF Lockheed Lodestar. In January, sails Gibraltar-Plymouth on HMS George V, the second of his two longest trips. (13)

1944

12 June: Sails Portsmouth-Normandy and back on HMS Kelvin to visit Normandy beachheads. (14)

12-23 June: Flies in U.S. Army C-47 Dakota from Heston to Cherbourg; stays on HMS Enterprise off Arromanches 20-23 June. Returns to Northolt by RAF Dakota. (15)

10-29 August: Flies Northolt-Algiers and Naples in Ascalon; several further short legs in RAF Dakotas. Sails on HMS Kimberley along southern French invasion coast. Several other trip segments before return to Northolt. (16)

5-29 September: Sails on HMT Queen Mary to Halifax for Second Quebec Conference, returns from New York. (17)

8-22 October: Flies in Ascalon from Northolt to Moscow via Naples and Cairo, returning to Northolt. (18)

10-14 November: Flies in RAF Skymaster from Rheims to Paris and back. (19)

24-29 December: Flies Athens and back in Skymaster. (20)

1945

3-5 January: Flies in RAF Dakotas to Paris, returning from Brussels. (21)

29 January-19 February: Flies in Skymaster to Malta where accommodated on HMS Orion; flies on to Saki Airport, then motors to Yalta. Stays on HMT Franconia after conference. Returns to Lyneham in Skymaster via Athens (where he stays on HMS Aurora) and Cairo. (22)

2-6 March: Flies in Skymaster from Northolt to Brussels and back from Rheims. (23)

23-26 March: Flies in RAF Dakota from Northolt to the Rhine and back. (24)

7-25 July: Flies Northolt-Bordeaux/Potsdam for Berlin Conference and for election returns, in Skymaster. (25)

Maps in Hunt and Pawle (below) are too huge to reproduce, but the chicken scratches convey the extent of WSC’s travel.

HMS Kimberley along southern French invasion coast. Several other trip segments before return to Northolt. (16)

5-29 September: Sails on HMT Queen Mary to Halifax for Second Quebec Conference, returns from New York. (17)

8-22 October: Flies in Ascalon from Northolt to Moscow via Naples and Cairo, returning to Northolt. (18)

10-14 November: Flies in RAF Skymaster from Rheims to Paris and back. (19)

24-29 December: Flies Athens and back in Skymaster. (20)

Sources

Douglas Austin, Churchill and Malta: A Special Relationship (Stroud, UK: Spellmount, 2006).


**Air and Sea**

**AIRCRAFT**

Listed alphabetically; dimensions in feet unless noted otherwise.

**Avro 685 York Ascalon:**

Four engines; length 78, wingspan 102, cruise speed 210 mph (298 max.), ceiling 23,000, range 2700 miles. After flying Churchill, served in the RAF Far East Communications Flight; broken up in 1954.

**Boeing 314A Berwick and Bristol:**

Four-engine flying boats; length 106, wingspan 152, cruise speed 188 mph (210 max.), ceiling 13,400, range 3685 miles. Sold to World Airways in 1948, scrapped as obsolete 1950-51. (Page 13.)

**Consolidated LB-30A Liberator Commando:**

Four engines; length 66, wingspan 110, cruise speed 190 mph (270 max.), ceiling 30,000, range 2900 miles. After serving Churchill, modified with single fin and longer fuselage early in 1944. Disappeared off the Azores in March 1945. (Page 12.)

**de Havilland D.H. 95 Flamingo:**

Two engines; length 52, wingspan 70, cruise speed 204 mph (243 max.), ceiling 21,000, range 1345 miles. Churchill’s Flamingo was lost in 1942; the last of fifteen was broken up in 1954. (Page 12.)

**Douglas C-47 Dakota:**

Two engines; length 65, wingspan 95, cruise speed 185 mph (230 max.), ceiling 23,200, range 2125 miles.

**Douglas C-54B Skymaster:**

Four engines; length 94, wingspan 117, cruise speed 180 mph (227 max.), ceiling 26,600, range 3,800 miles. Same as FDR’s “Sacred Cow.” Churchill’s Skymaster was returned to the United States in late 1945, and was eventually junked in China.

**Lockheed Lodestar Mk II:**

Two engines; length 50, wingspan 66, cruise speed 200 mph (266 max.), ceiling 30,100, range 2,500 miles. VIP transport from 1941.

---

**SHIPS**

**HMS Aurora:**

5200 tons, length 506, 32 knots. Light cruiser of the Arethusa class, entered service in 1937, served in Scandinavian and Mediterranean waters, survived the war.

**HMS Duke of York, King George V, and Prince of Wales:**

45,000 tons, length 745, 30 knots. Three of a class of five battleships built 1937-41. Prince of Wales was sunk off Malaya in December 1941; the rest survived to be broken up in the 1950s. Prince of Wales was the seventh ship to carry that name—the eighth is a Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carrier now under construction. (See FH 139: 43.)

**HMS Enterprise:**

7550 tons, length 570, 33 knots. The name vessel for a two-ship light cruiser class completed 1926, refitted a decade later. She participated in D-Day action and survived the war.

**HMT [His Majesty’s Transport] Franconia:**

20,175 tons, length 601, 16.5 knots. Returned to Cunard after the war, she was scrapped in 1957.

**HMS Kelvin and Kimberley:**

1700 tons, length 348, 36 knots. Javelin class destroyers completed 1939, Kelvin fought Axis convoys in the Mediterranean, participated in D-Day and served on the Atlantic. Kimberley took part in the invasion of Southern France. Both survived the war; Kelly, a sister, was lost under the command of Lord Louis Mountbatten in 1941.

**HMS Orion:**

6985 tons, length 555, 32.5 knots. Light cruiser of the Ajax class, completed 1934. Saw extensive service in the Mediterranean and survived the war.

**HMT Queen Mary:**

80,774 tons, length 975, 30 knots. Three-funnel, quadruple screw liner. Her final voyage was in 1967 to Long Beach, California where she remains as a museum and hotel, the sole survivor of the golden age of ocean liners. (See FH 121:23.)

**HMS Renown:**

28,000 tons, length 794, 33 knots. One of two sister battlecruisers (slightly smaller, more lightly armored and faster than a battleship) completed 1916, both greatly modernized between the wars. Renown was scrapped in 1946; her sister Repulse was lost with Prince of Wales in 1941. (See FH 113:24-25.)

**Sources**


“With Fond Memories of Commando”

They flew the most important person in Britain across enemy-patrolled seas and continents, but when they realized they had become celebrities, they separated for the good of the cause.

WILLIAM VAN DER KLOOT

My father met Winston Churchill in London in 1942. They were last together in New York in 1946. Quite a bit happened in between.

I first began to understand the stature of Winston Churchill in 1963, when I was in a sixth grade history class. Our assignment was to bring in something—an article, artifact or photograph—that tied our family or community to World War II.

All I knew was that my father was a pilot during the war—but like many of his generation, he spoke very little about his experiences. My idea was to bring in his leather flight jacket or his logbook. My father was out of town, but my mother had a better idea. She handed me an inscribed photograph that had been presented to my father, and suggested I bring that to class instead.

The next day, our classroom was full of wartime artifacts. One student had a Japanese flag, another his dad’s helmet, and someone even brought a bayonet. Our teacher walked around the class and looked at each student’s item. When she came to me, she picked up the >>

Mr. VanDerKloot (billvdk@gmail.com), the son of Churchill’s wartime pilot, is the Peabody Award-winning producer of documentaries and children’s programming. He is based in Atlanta, where he spoke on this subject to the Churchill Society of Georgia.
M E M O R I E S O F C O M M A N D O ...

photograph and held it for a moment. Then she asked, “Was your father in the British army?”

“No, he is an American, a civilian.”

She studied the photograph—a portrait of a rather portly man in a three-piece suit with an inscription that read: “To Captain Vanderkloot with fond memories of Commando. —Winston S. Churchill.”

Riveting the class’s attention, our teacher began to describe the man in the photograph. He was one of the great leaders of the war, she said—one of the towering figures of the 20th century. At that moment I knew I needed to learn more about how my father and this great man had come together.

The Transatlantic Ferry

It’s essential first to know the story of a secret band of aviators called the Royal Air Force Ferry Command: pilots with the critical and dangerous task to bring planes, and later passengers, across the North Atlantic: an ocean so cold that survival in the water is measured in minutes. Even ships with experienced crews have a treacherous time in winter. A crossing by air, at the time of World War II, was deemed almost impossible.

The first successful aerial crossing of the North Atlantic was made in 1919 by a pair of Englishmen, John Alcock and Arthur Brown. In response to a prize offered by the Daily Mail, they took off from Newfoundland, and twenty-three hours later crash-landed in a peat bog in Ireland. At a ceremony in London, Alcock and Brown were awarded their prize cheque by a sometime pilot, Secretary of State for War and Air Winston S. Churchill.

Over the next twenty years under 100 attempts were made to fly the North Atlantic, fewer than half of which were successful. The needs of war created an aviation revolution, and by 1945 transatlantic flights were commonplace, but the transformation wasn’t easily achieved.

The tenth of May 1940, when Winston Churchill became Prime Minister, was one of the worst days of the Second World War. The Germans, supreme in Poland, Norway and Denmark, had now invaded Holland, Belgium and Luxemburg, and were making for France. The Luftwaffe was in daily action and the RAF was desperately short of aircraft. Britain needed planes, especially bombers, a major source of which was the USA.

But America was neutral. U.S. neutrality laws forbade military aircraft from flying to Canada, which like Britain was a belligerent. So some U.S. planes were flown to an airfield in North Dakota and pulled by horses legally across the border. They were then flown to Canadian ports, disassembled and placed on ships bound for Britain. If the convoys made it, they were reassembled and delivered to the RAF. The process took months, and many planes were lost to the attacks of German U-boats.

Churchill’s appointee Lord Beaverbrook, Minister of Aircraft Production, was told to get needed aircraft by any means necessary. A Canadian press baron disdainful of bureaucracy, Beaverbrook was determined to succeed on his own terms, famously remarking: “They’re planes, aren’t they? Let’s just fly them over!” But RAF commanders told him that flying the dangerous Atlantic was foolhardy, and refused to offer pilots, even for a test mission.

Beaverbrook needed a miracle, and he found it in a gallant Australian, Donald C.T. Bennett, a man born for this dangerous adventure. A record-setting transatlantic flier and expert navigator, Bennett convened a group of American aviation experts and Canadian business leaders to form a secret operation that became Ferry Command.

In November 1940, the group flew seven Lockheed Hudsons to Gander, Newfoundland, their departure point for flying the Atlantic. They arrived in the middle of a snowstorm, and crews had to camp in converted rail cars, the only structures available, to wait out the weather. On the afternoon of November 10th the weather broke. After chipping ice off their planes by hand, the crew prepared for departure. A small military band showed up. As the engines started, they played, “There’ll Always Be an England.” Some observers may have thought it a funeral dirge.

Flying the Atlantic in winter was so dangerous, RAF commanders said, they would consider the operation a success if only half the planes made it. To the pleasant surprise of everyone, they all survived. Bennett and his team

* My father used the Americanized spelling of the name in one word. Alas, the photograph disappeared in a burglary; autograph dealers should be on the lookout for it.
had proven that the North Atlantic could be flown even in winter. Beaverbrook was vindicated, the RAF had their bombers, and Ferry Command was born.

Now the task was to find experienced, long-distance aircrews to continue this dangerous mission. The lure was the romance of flying, combined with the sense of patriotic duty. But in the neutral United States, all the recruiting was done in secret.

Bennett and Beaverbrook enlisted the help of the Canadian Pacific Railroad to act as a cover and an organizational parent, which delivered the American-built planes to Montreal. From here they were flown to Gander, and then across the ocean. The transatlantic leg was done at night, since celestial navigation was the only method of holding a course. Naturally, if clouds covered the stars they would have to proceed by dead reckoning, for there were no radio beams and no radar.

The planes had unpressurized cabins, no sound insulation, and no heat. Aircrews said that if it was 50 below outside, it was 50 below inside. Many men suffered from frostbite. When the planes were delivered, their chilled crews were sent back to Montreal by ship, a two-week trip. Later crews returned by air in the cold of converted bomb bays. Either way, it was not amusing work.

Despite the challenges, Ferry Command delivered thousands of badly needed bombers on a regular basis: Lockheed Hudsons, B17 Flying Fortresses, B-24 Liberators, B-25 Mitchells and B-26 Marauders, as well as Canadian-built Lancasters and Mosquitoes. Then Ferry Command began to ferry VIPs on certain flights.

“Some people take drugs,” Churchill said of his wartime Minister of Aircraft Production: “I take Max.” Facing page: Lord Beaverbrook, right, with his son, Group Captain Max Aitken, 1945 (photograph by Ian Smith). Below: Australian Donald Bennett, who formed the secret operation that became Ferry Command, and Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal, Chief of Staff of the RAF, who in July 1942 told Bill Vanderkloot where he was going (Wikimedia Commons).

Vanderkloot and Churchill

As one of the senior Ferry Command pilots at 24, my father began to fly VIP missions across the Atlantic to Britain and Africa. In less than two years at Ferry Command he accumulated over one million miles.

In July 1942, having landed a new long-range Liberator in London with an important passenger, he was told to report to Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal, head of the RAF. Portal asked the young captain a hypothetical question: If he were to fly to Cairo, what route would he take?

My father might have been surprised at the question. At the time, the Germans controlled North Africa and were advancing on Cairo itself. Nevertheless, he told Portal, “I’d take off just before dark, I’d go straight down the Mediterranean for a few minutes just to clear Tangiers, and I’d turn and go southeast, over the Atlas mountains; go south of the battle line, follow it straight through to the Nile River, turn north at the Nile and go into Cairo.”

Portal told him: “Stay close to the phone.”

The phone rang two days later at 8pm. Captain Vanderkloot was told that an RAF car would pick him up downstairs and to please come alone. Driving through the blacked out streets of London, they arrived at a dimly lit street. The driver told him to exit the car and walk to the middle of the block, where a light was shining over a doorway.

He walked to the light. It was Downing Street. The door was numbered “10.” A butler opened the door and led him to the private office, where he was greeted by the British Prime Minister. Dressed in a bathrobe, Churchill wasted no time on preliminaries: “Well, Captain Vanderkloot, I understand we’re going to Cairo.”

Trying to take this all in, my father replied, “Yes sir, I suppose we are.”

They would fly in a Liberator named Commando (see foregoing article by Chris Sterling)—an unarmored B-24 painted flat black. It had few creature comforts and no passenger windows. A bed was constructed for the Prime Minister under the large fuel tanks near the wing. The rest of his party had to sit in seats in the converted bomb bay.

My father was told that he could choose the night he wanted to leave, but was warned to tell no one. Portal said, “I am not to be told of the exact route of your flight, nor is anyone else. We know your departure points and your destinations. Details of anything that lies in between must remain secret, even to me. You are on your own. Good luck.”

On a rainy night a few days later, a line of official cars arrived at RAF Lyneham. Waiting for their special passenger was a five-man crew, all Ferry Command veterans. Two were Americans: Captain Vanderkloot and co-pilot Jack Ruggles; three were Canadians: radio operator Russ Holmes, flight engineers Ron Williams and John Affleck. The oldest man among them was 26. >>
Above: Always liking to make an entrance, the Prime Minister seemed quite at home climbing up and down Commando’s metal ladder. Here he is alighting in Moscow, where he would receive a chilly reception from a Stalin anxious for a second front, August 1942. Below: Ever ready for a turn at the wheel (see also pages 10-11), WSC enjoys a stint as Commando’s pilot. (Photos courtesy the author.) Right: Captain Bill Vanderkloot, circa 1942.

Nile stretched joyously before us. Often had I seen the day break on the Nile. In war and peace I had traversed by land or water almost its whole length, except the ‘Dongola Loop,’ from Lake Victoria to the sea. Never had the glint of daylight on its waters been so welcome.”

Winston Churchill surprised many when he arrived personally to review operations and deliver his own brand of encouragement. This included sacking General Claude Auchinleck, which he personally regretted, and ultimately installing General Sir Bernard Montgomery as head of the British Eighth Army.

A few days later Commando took off again, en route to Moscow with an additional passenger, Roosevelt’s envoy to Stalin, Averell Harriman. Churchill, as he wrote, was bearing unwelcome news: “General Wavell, who had literary inclinations, summed it all up in a poem. There were several verses, and the last line of each was, ‘No Second Front in nineteen forty-two.’ It was like carrying a large lump of ice to the North Pole.”

Their route took them first to Teheran, to refuel and pick up two Soviet military guides, who would help them through Russian air space, which was on constant high alert. As Churchill stepped from Commando onto Soviet soil, the event was recorded in worldwide newssreels. Seventy years later it is hard to imagine how dumbfounded the world was at a 68-year-old Prime Minister flying more than 6000 miles through enemy-infested airspace, all in secret.

Parting Company

As Christopher Sterling has related, Commando’s crew flew Churchill and other VIPs to a number of wartime conferences and meetings. But once they had become minor celebrities for their exploits, they asked to be reassigned, because they feared they would attract unwanted attention to their secret flights.

The crew split up, but continued to fly for Ferry Command throughout the War. My father was awarded a CBE for flying Churchill and for setting up air routes across the Atlantic and the Pacific.

Churchill never forgot Bill Vanderkloot’s contributions. In 1946 when he visited the United States for his famous speech at Fulton, Missouri, and speaking engagements in Virginia and New York, he invited my parents to join him and Mrs. Churchill for dinner in their suite at the Waldorf Astoria. Before parting, Churchill gave my father the personally inscribed photo which I later took to my sixth grade history class.

The complete story is told in a documentary film I produced and directed, “Flying in the Secret Sky: The Story of the RAF Ferry Command,” which has been broadcast on PBS and distributed by PBS and the National Geographic Channels (www.flyingthesecretsky.com) and is available on DVD through amazon.com.
Staying There:  
Mena House, the Summit of Cairo

His wartime travels proved that Churchill was always willing to put up with the worst of everything, to twist a famous remark; but he’d always settle for luxury.

DAVID DRUCKMAN

Probabley quoting F. E. Smith, his closest friend, Winston Churchill declared that he was “a man of simple tastes… quite easily satisfied with the best of everything.” Thus it was with the choice of the five-star, then-74-year old Mena House as a home and meeting place for part of the 23-26 November, 1943 Cairo meeting between WSC, Roosevelt, and Chiang Kai-shek.

The conference’s primary purposes were to address the war against Japan and to review staff plans. Stalin did not attend with Chiang there, either to avoid offending the Japanese (with whom Russia was not yet at war), or because of his famous aversion to straying far from the Soviet Union. Roosevelt and Churchill met with Stalin in Teheran shortly thereafter (see “Getting There,” previous pages).

Giza, Egypt is a city of 2.7 million, located just west of the Nile River, 20 kilometers southwest of Cairo. Its fame comes from the location of the Giza Plateau: the site of some of the most impressive ancient monuments in the world, including the ancient Egyptian royal mortuary and sacred structures, plus the Sphinx, the Great Pyramid of Giza, and a number of other large pyramids and temples. To those who know British and Middle East history, its eminence also comes from Mena House.

The intention of the four-day meeting, code named “Sextant,” was chiefly for British and American Chiefs of Staff to coordinate plans; but as Churchill says they “were sadly distracted by the Chinese story, which was lengthy, complicated, and minor. Moreover, as will be seen, the President, who took an exaggerated view of the Indian-Chinese sphere, was soon closeted in long conferences with the Generalissimo.”

Reenacting Winston and Clementine Churchill’s famous camel trek to the Pyramids in 1921 (below), David and Lynn pose with their guides on the very same spot in 2009.
At Cairo the United States agreed to “a considerable amphibious operation across the Bay of Bengal” (northeast Indian Ocean, between India and Burma) within the next few months. This would have cramped the invasion of France (Operation Overlord) and Italy, to which Churchill objected, and the plan was eventually dropped.

Overlord was discussed amongst the U.S. and British military chiefs. Meetings were held with President Ismet İnönü, of Turkey, attempting unsuccessfully to cajole him into entering the war. The conference ended with a joint “Cairo Declaration”: that “Japan be stripped of all the islands in the Pacific which she has seized or occupied since the beginning of the First World War in 1914, all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa, and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China, and that in due course Korea shall become free and independent.”

My wife Lynn and I were on an Eastern Mediterranean Celebrity cruise with only a day’s stop in Alexandria. We pre-paid for Lynn to visit the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and for me to see El Alamein, the turning point of the war in North Africa, 106 km west of Alexandria. Since we were seasoned cruisers, Celebrity offered us free round trips to Giza instead. “Provided we may also have a look at Mena House,” I said, “we accept the substitute itinerary.” (Lynn, however, required a concession, of which more anon.)

At Mena House we were greeted like visiting pharaohs. As we walked up steps, seven costumed Egyptians played the triumphal scene from “Aida”! They ushered us in to a hot buffet lunch in the expansive and elegant thousand-seat ballroom.

Suddenly I remembered that Churchill had stayed here during the 1943 “Sextant” Conference, and beckoned to the obliging hotel manager, who offered us a tour of the Churchill Suite. (We missed dessert.)

Exiting a private elevator, the three of us entered the Churchill Suite and the hallway which led to its various rooms, all in elaborate Egyptian décor. The rooms were in use by guests, but fortunately empty, and the manager made sure we were shown the two bathrooms, of which he was particularly proud. Off the living room is a tree-lined terrace with a magnificent view of the pyramids, just 700 meters away.
I did not ask about air conditioning in 1943, but of course that meeting was in cooler November. Today’s rate is $1515 per night excluding 24% service charge and tax. There is much information on the Mena House and Giza on the Internet.

We barely caught our bus back for the afternoon trip, 20 km to the world’s oldest pyramid at Sakkara, then the long ride to Alexandria, where our ship welcomed us with bagpipes, drinks and dinner. It was worth the rush.

The aforementioned concession was that I promised Lynn, another cruise to Alexandria so she could visit the famous library. She twisted my arm.

Lawrence of Arabia did not particularly like Egyptian hotels. In a letter to his brother he remarked: “Here we live in a marble & bronze hotel, very expensive & luxurious: horrible place: makes me Bolshevik…”

Churchill had a rather different view. In his opinion, international summit conferences were difficult enough without the burden of sub-standard surroundings.

(Significantly after returning from Yalta, he had all his clothes fumigated.) At Cairo in 1943, however, there is every evidence that he found his accommodation suitable.

My own searches for Churchill, often reported in these pages, are not unique. Churchill sites like this are available to you, too, if you give thought to where you are and where Churchill was. The keys are persistence—coupled with patient civility. Also—when the opportunity presents itself—be prepared to “drop everything!”

Churchill sites like this are available to you, too, if you give thought to where you are and where Churchill was....be prepared to “drop everything”!

Endnotes

When Hitler and Churchill Thought Alike

We praise Churchill’s courageous oratory because we assume that the cause over which one will not surrender is just. We are jolted when we hear Hitler using similar rhetoric.

Manfred Weidhorn

Everyone knows that from May 1940 to June 1941 there took place one of the great duels in history. Perhaps forgotten is that it was a case of what is now called an “asymmetrical war”—between the premier military power in the world and the premier naval power. Hence, the fighting was transferred to the one realm in which symmetry was possible—the air. The combatant nations were, moreover, led by two men who were also, at first glance, asymmetrical.

Setting aside the obvious difference that one of them obtained and exercised power through the democratic process, while the other was among the most oppressive dictators, a few of the inconsequential differences were that one was clean shaven and the other sported a distinctive mustache; one was chubby and the other trim; one was a patrician, with all the requisite tastes and acquaintances, while the other came from the lower middle class and was even homeless for a while: a “bum.” One would be named

Dr. Weidhorn, of Fair Lawn, New Jersey (mfw@optonline.net) is Guterman Professor of English Literature at Yeshiva University, a CC academic adviser, and author of four books on Churchill’s rhetoric and literary work. Among his recent books is the well-received Person of the Millennium.
Yet Churchill and Hitler had a few interesting traits in common, traits which the other pivotal leaders of World War II—Roosevelt, Stalin, Chiang, Mao, de Gaulle, Tojo, Mussolini—mostly did not share. Each was short. Each during the war spent mornings in bed. Each had direct experience of the trenches in World War I and consequently had strong convictions on military matters during World War II. Each crusaded against Bolshevism.

Politically, both had reservations about universal suffrage, with Churchill tentatively suggesting modifications to save the system and Hitler simplifying matters by destroying the system. Neither attended college; both engaged in a program of self-directed reading, primarily in history. Each painted, one in middle and late life, the other only in early life. Each depended on writing for his major source of personal income. Each wrote an important book about himself before coming to power: Mein Kampf is more about the writer’s political philosophy and ambitions than about his personality and life, while My Early Life is the reverse.

Another shared trait is that both men had a drive for fame so intense that it could be fulfilled, as Churchill nicely put it, either by “notability or notoriety.” Negative notices, that bane of normal politicians, were grist for their mill. Young Hitler’s attitude to his Communist foes was that “it makes no difference whatever whether they laugh at us or revile us, whether they represent us as clowns or criminals; the main thing is that they mention us, that they concern themselves with us again and again.”

Churchill arrived at a similar counter-intuitive conclusion: “Politicians get used to being caricatured. In fact, by a strange trait in human nature they even get to like it. If we must confess it, they are quite offended and downcast when the cartoons stop.” Bad publicity, for either man, was still publicity—a line of thinking that bespeaks either political sagacity or a personal insecurity that hogs the spotlight.

Both men indulged in curiously similar hypothetical flourishes. In his maiden speech in the Commons, Churchill famously said, “If I were a Boer, I hope I should be fighting in the field,” even as Hitler, while railing at the French as Germany’s perennial enemy, stopped long enough to concede, quite remarkably for him: “If I were a Frenchman, and if the greatness of France were as dear to me as that of Germany is sacred, I could not and would not act any differently from Clemenceau.”

Years later, before developments made them mortal enemies, Churchill returned to that hypothetical by declaring, in a last-ditch attempt to avert the inevitable with a bit of flattery: “I have always said that if Great Britain were defeated in war I hoped we should find a Hitler to lead us back to our rightful position among the nations.”

Those are simple exercises in identity swapping or sympathetic identification, but Hitler, in a speech of 1928, carries the hypothetical into the realm of the fantastic: “If Satan were to come today and offer himself as an ally against France, I would give him my hand.” Churchill, whether or not he ever heard of this remark, famously used it with reference to Hitler and added typical impishness: “If Hitler invaded Hell I would make at least a favourable reference to the Devil in the House of Commons.”

But the major common trait was that both were the most powerful orators of their age. To be sure, Hitler’s speeches—even if one ignores the delusions, lies, paranoia, and hatred—do not read well these days as compositions, while many of Churchill’s are in all the anthologies. Yet for elocution, body language, histrionics, hysteric, and audience response, Hitler was unique. As he put it himself, “I gradually transformed myself into a speaker for mass meetings [and] I became practiced in the pathos and the gestures which a great hall, with its thousands of people, demands.” Here was one of those rare moments when Hitler told the truth. Equally curious is that both men, again unlike the other giants of World War II, have had something to say on oratory—and these statements are not so far apart. Hitler, in particular, celebrated the power of speech: “All great, world-shaking events have been brought about, not by written matter, but by the spoken word.” He therefore paid close attention to the psychology and circumstances of speech-making.

The time when the speech is made, for instance, matters greatly—“evening is better than morning or afternoon”—as does the hall in which it is given.
Churchill famously said, "If I were a Boer, I hope I should be fighting in the field," even as Hitler....quite remarkably for him: "If I were a Frenchman, and if the greatness of France were as dear to me as that of Germany is sacred, I could not and would not act any differently from Clemenceau."

HITLER AND CHURCHILL...

Indeed a 1922 Nazi memo, no doubt inspired by Hitler’s insights, urges that “one should, for the first time, not rent a too-large hall. Better to have a small, fully packed hall than a large room only half full or even conspicuously empty.”

That is exactly the thinking behind Churchill’s 1943 speech on rebuilding the House of Commons Chamber: “It should not be big enough to contain all its Members at once without overcrowding….If the House is big enough to contain all its Members, nine-tenths of all debates will be conducted in the depressing atmosphere of an almost empty or half empty Chamber.” In other words, when it comes to size of audience, most people simplistically believe that bigger is better, but both leaders realized that political psychology is often counter-intuitive: Not size but context and appearance matter.

Churchill and Hitler did take different routes to discuss the challenge of speaking in front of an audience to be won over. Churchill does so in fictional form, and the performance of the hero of his early novel Savrola is a fantasy—prophetic, to be sure—about someone the author would like to become. Hitler devotes many pages to his actual performances during the early 1920s, when he discovered his vocation, and, concurrently, the Nazis, under his imperious control, first became a force to be reckoned with.

Both men insisted on the need to eschew rhetoric that might engage the more influential and therefore better educated audiences rather than the proverbial little man. In preparing his important speech, Savrola aims for “that correct diction which is comprehensible even to the most illiterate, and appeals to the most simple.” Likewise Hitler notes that the successful speaker “will become so primitive and clear in his explanations that...even the weakest members of the audience is not left behind.” To persuade the doubters, he will repeat the argument “over and over in constantly new examples.”

Hitler goes so far as to express profuse admiration for British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, whose wartime speeches “testified to a positively amazing knowledge of the soul of the broad mass of the people...[as in his] use of easily intelligible examples of the simplest sort.” Dare one wonder why, two decades later, Hitler could not, “across the havoc of war” (Churchill’s words about Rommel in 1942), appreciate the far greater achievement of Lloyd George’s one-time lieutenant?

One way of pitching rhetoric to the level of the audience is to flatter it by contrasting the beauty of the nation and the nobility of its people with the corrupt government which the people do not deserve. Here is Savrola’s version:

When I look at this beautiful country that is ours and was our fathers’ before us, at its blue seas and snow capped mountains, at its comfortable hamlets and wealthy cities, at its silver streams and golden cornfields, I marvel at the irony of fate which has struck across so fair a prospect the dark shadow of a military despotism.

And here is Hitler’s oddly similar version:

Millions of men are diligently and industriously at work....The blacksmith stands again at his anvil, the peasant guides his plow, and the scholar sits in his study, all with the same painstaking devotion to duty....If today all this is not yet expressed in a rebirth....it is the fault of those who...have governed our people to death since 1918.

Churchill famously said, "If I were a Boer, I hope I should be fighting in the field," even as Hitler....quite remarkably for him: "If I were a Frenchman, and if the greatness of France were as dear to me as that of Germany is sacred, I could not and would not act any differently from Clemenceau."

Having found the right verbal wave length, the speaker faces the second challenge: hostile hecklers. Political oratory differs from lectures meant to educate the audience and from speeches to the converted (like those of Hitler in power) meant to turn agreement into zeal and activism. In electioneering politics, by contrast, one often must contend with audiences to be persuaded, as well as enemies to be neutralized.

Hence Savrola, addressing a large meeting, was interrupted by “a man in a blue suit, one of a little group similarly clad, [who] shouted out: “Traitor and toady! Hundred of voices took up the cry; there was an outburst of hooting and groaning; others cheered half heartedly.” Savrola turns on the noisemakers by demonizing them as “paid agents of the government,” with the result that “fierce looks turned in the direction of the interrupters, who had, however, dispersed themselves unobtrusively among the crowd.”

Hitler had a—shall we say—more forceful way of handling opposition. Initially he accepted the fact that the entire audience might not necessarily be sympathetic to him.
“Nearly always it came about that in these years I faced an assemblage of people who believed the opposite of what I wanted to say and wanted the opposite of what I believed.” Observing thousands of “hostile eyes,” he had to work hard at converting them. “And three hours later I had before me a surging mass full of the holiest indignation….Again a great lie had been torn out of the hearts and brains of a crowd numbering thousands, and a truth imparted in its place.”18

According to the unwritten book of crowd psychology, color symbolism is apparently important in the political setting. If Savrolo’s opponents were dressed in blue, Hitler for a while dabbled in red. He had his followers show up with red posters partly in order to “infuriate and provoke our [Communist] adversaries,” partly to make the “run-of-the-mill bourgeoisie” wonder whether the Nazis were a species of Marxists, and partly to attract leftists to the meetings “if only to break them up.”19

Hitler’s opponents were not “paid agents of the Government,” but they were formidable all the same. He was in a life or death struggle with a powerful rival faction equally intent on seizing control of the country. “How often, indeed, they were led in, literally in columns, our Red friends, with exact orders, poured into them in advance, to smash up the whole show tonight and put an end to the whole business.” Unlike Savrolo, Hitler had his Myrmidons (newly named “Storm Troopers”) to defend him. “An attempted disturbance was at once nipped in the bud by my comrades. The disturbers flew down the stairs with gashed heads” or had “their skulls bashed in.”20

Using simplified language and disposing of hecklers are mere preliminaries to the goal, not of persuading the audience but creating a sense of communion, a sense of solidarity, almost a mystic trance. Some sort of bond is indeed achieved by Savrolo’s speech:

“Never Surrender,” like all proverbs, indeed like all generalizations, must be applied with nuance…and is] more vulnerable to the charge of being morally simplistic. We praise the assertion because we assume that the cause over which one will not surrender is just. If only that were so!

Hitler is somewhat more analytical of the process. The mass meeting, he asserted, is important for making each individual feel part of a large community and feel sheltered from a “thousand arguments” to the contrary. The goal is to have the individual listener “swept away by three or four thousand others into the mighty effect of suggestive intoxication and enthusiasm; when the visible success and agreement of thousands confirm to him the rightness of the new doctrine and for the first time arouse doubt in the truth of his previous conviction—then he himself has succumbed to the magic influence of what we designate as ‘mass suggestion.’”

During one speech, Hitler’s followers at first battled the disturbers and gradually restored order. Hitler wrote later: “After half an hour, the applause slowly began to drown out the screaming….The interruptions were increasingly drowned out by shouts of applause” [sic] and at the end “there stood before me a hall full of people united by a new conviction, a new faith, a new will.” After a half hour into another long speech, Hitler sensed that he had captured his audience, and “after the first hour the applause began to interrupt me in greater spontaneous outbursts.”22

The observations and ideas adduced so far are not too removed from what one would expect similarly situated people to evolve for themselves. In other words, there are certain universals of crowd psychology and rhetorical performance, and few striking deviations are likely. Churchill and Hitler merely appear to be the only World War II leaders to regard the matter important enough to be addressed in print. But more controversial is the concurrence of the two men with reference to one of Churchill’s most famous utterances. Speaking in 1941 at Harrow, he said that the lesson of the Battle of Britain was “never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never….“23 This assertion has become ubiquitous. It is quoted in all forms of morally uplifting discourse. At the risk of being of being a killjoy or contrarian, one must insist that the statement has been misinterpreted in two crucial ways by being (1) universalized and (2) moralized.

Most people are not heroic and, tending to be “sunshine patriots,” lose heart too easily. Only a few souls>>
Those who attended our meetings knew full well that we would rather have let ourselves be beaten to death than be cut off. That “never surrender” statement reflects the spirit of Valley Forge and of 1940, of Russia in September 1941 at the edge of the abyss or the U.S. in early 1942 battered by a succession of military disasters (or, in sports, the Boston Red Sox in 2004 facing a daunting 3-0 deficit in the seven-game American League play-offs). Against all odds, the underdogs would not surrender and went on to victory.

The truth is, however, that such life or death struggles are relatively rare. In the course of normal democratic politics, negotiations between the major parties of the left and the right are necessary for a government to function. Negotiations mean compromise, not surrender. The radicals on both sides may yell “never,” and, when they for once had their way, America had a bloody civil war. So one must carefully and infrequently choose one’s last-ditch stand.

Churchill’s “Never Surrender,” like all proverbs, indeed like all generalizations, must be applied with nuance. Because of the many who lived by it and went on to ignominious defeat, it cannot be mindlessly invoked.

If the “never surrender” statement turns out to have limited application, it is even more vulnerable to the charge of being morally simplistic. We praise the assertion because we assume that the cause over which one will not surrender is just. If only that were so! We are jolted when we hear Hitler using similar rhetoric. And even more unsettling is the thought that, deprived as he was, he nevertheless thought that he was fighting for a righteous cause—the God- or nature-ordained ascendancy of a superior people.

And even if he did not believe that, or is accounted insane, he certainly imbued his armies, composed of “normal” people, with the sense of a noble mission that should not be compromised. So we find him in the Churchillian “never surrender” mode time and again in Mein Kampf and later. A good German, he asserts, must be “trained in rigid discipline and fanatical faith in the justice and power of his cause and taught to stake his life for it without reservation.” The Nazis are “fighting for a mighty idea, so great and noble that it well deserves to be guarded and protected with the last drop of blood.” The Nazis entered a lecture hall with the resolution “that not a man of us must leave the hall unless we were carried out dead…. Those who attended our meetings knew full well that we would rather have let ourselves be beaten to death than capitulate.”

Thus does the Devil cite scripture.

And, indeed, Hitler was as good as his word. When the Nazi empire began to contract and the generals repeatedly urged prudent retreats for the purpose of achieving better logistical conditions and of reconstituting the demoralized German forces, Hitler overrode them and ordered that they hold every inch of territory and fight to the last man. So it was in Tunisia, at Stalingrad, and at other places in Russia and France. Hitler held out until, unlike in World War I when Germany surrendered intact, all of Germany was in ruins and the invading “barbarians” were a few blocks away from his bunker. So many lives thrown away, so many cities leveled, to no purpose other than one powerful man’s “never surrender!”

In 1940, facing possible doom, Churchill had spoken of carrying his own pistol and being prepared to fight on until he choked in his own blood. Fortunately, Churchill did not have to do so, and five years later, Hitler turned out to be the one who did.

So when someone blurts out, “never surrender,” the wise observer must ask, “On behalf of what cause?” In 1940, it was glorious; in 1945, unspeakable.

Endnotes

8. Mein Kampf, 468.
9. Ibid., 469.
17. Savrola, 103-05.
18. Mein Kampf, 466, 468.
19. Ibid., 366, 483-84.
20. Ibid., 483, 358, 487-90, 505.
Charles Morin and the Search for Churchill’s Nom de Palette

Why did Winston Churchill exhibit his paintings under the name of a real painter only recently deceased?

DAVID COOMBS

The first public exhibition of Churchill’s paintings was held in Paris in 1921 at the Galerie Druet, a famous and important establishment at 20 rue Royale, specializing in Post-Impressionist painters of the early 20th century. The paintings were shown under the pseudonym of Charles Morin, and six were sold.

This is the story, though the surrounding facts are curious. First, the gallery archives contain no reference to the exhibition, and second, Charles Morin was the name of a real French painter, who died in 1919.

In January 1921, Churchill was in Paris for discussions about extending his responsibilities, as Britain’s newly appointed Colonial Secretary, to Palestine and Mesopotamia: intense and complex deliberations detailed at length in Sir Martin Gilbert’s official biography.

Despite his official duties, Churchill was able to take time off to think about his paintings in the company of Major Gerald Geiger, head of the British Military Mission to Paris: an old school friend and one of WSC’s contemporaries at Sandhurst. On 13 January, Major Geiger wrote to Sir Archibald Sinclair, then Churchill’s private secretary: “The S. of S. [Secretary of State] went with me and an art critic to visit the works of the painter CHARLES MORIN. The works of this artist were produced and criticised for forty minutes by the gentleman in question and the S. of S. was very interested!”

Unfortunately, there is no clue in Geiger’s lengthy letter to the gallery or location he and Churchill visited.¹

Geiger’s letter is quoted in part by Sir Martin Gilbert, who explains that the “Charles Morin was in fact Churchill himself; it was the first public exhibition of his paintings.”²

In his accompanying Companion Volume, Sir Martin adds that the “Morin” paintings “were being exhibited for the first time, under a pseudonym,” and that Churchill had suggested the name “Mr. Spencer,” which he had sometimes used “when seeking to travel incognito to France on munitions business during the war.”³

Whether Geiger knew that “Morin” was Churchill is not clear, although his use of capitals for >>
"Charles Morin," and the exclamation point, suggest that he knew the truth and was giving Sinclair a "nudge."

To be strictly accurate, one of Churchill’s paintings, “Portrait of Sir John Lavery in his Studio” (Coombs 507) had been exhibited two years earlier in 1919 at the annual exhibition of the Royal Society of Portrait Painters in London. Still, the Paris exhibition appears to be the first where several pictures by Churchill were displayed.

The London exhibit was mentioned in a 1953 essay on Churchill as artist by the distinguished museum director, art historian and critic, Professor Thomas Bodkin (1887-1961), who added: “The only other recorded instance of [Churchill] submitting his work for exhibition occurred shortly before the late war, when the French painter Charles Montag organized a one-man show for him in Paris at which six of his canvases, described as being by Charles Maurin [sic] were sold.”4 It seems likely from this that the “art critic” and “gentleman in question” mentioned by Geiger to Sinclair was Charles Montag.

As Lady Soames observed in her book on her father’s painting hobby, Professor Bodkin “does not mention prices,” though it “must have given
Charles Morin great pleasure to know that at this, the first showing of a number of pictures, he had a market.”
We have since learned that the prices were modest, at least to certain friends. Churchill wrote to Jean Hamilton, wife of Sir Ian in October 1921:

You expressed a wish to buy one of my pictures the other day. I have been doubtful about selling any of them because I don’t think they are good enough and also because I am steadily improving. Nevertheless as several people have been asking to buy, I have said that I will sell them at £50 a piece this year.

The work Lady Hamilton chose was “Ightham Mote” (Coombs 235).

Charles Montag evidently played a key role in the exhibition. As Lady Soames wrote, Montag “arranged for his friend to exhibit his paintings at the Galerie Druet,” where Montag had held “a one-man exhibition of his work in 1914….” (As far as I know, this is the first published reference to the specific location of Churchill’s exhibition.)

Although he is little regarded today, Montag was a friend and regular painting companion of Churchill until his death in 1956. Born in Switzerland in 1880, he must have been as energetic as he was charming, and amazingly well-connected with Impressionist painters, including Monet and Renoir, as well as Post-Impressionists like Bonnard and Matisse. He turned these talents to good account as an exhibition organizer and adviser to art collectors.

Montag was a landscape painter, which would have given him much practical insight and sympathy to Churchill’s favourite subjects—another likely reason why he and Churchill took to each other. Two paragraphs from Churchill’s famous essay, “Painting as a Pastime,” refer I think to Montag—and throw considerable light on Churchill’s innately modest attitude to his own works:

Frenchmen talk and write just as well about painting as they have done about love, about war, about diplomacy.
CHARLES MORIN...

cooking. Their terminology is precise and complete. They are therefore admirably equipped to be teachers in the theory of any of these arts. Their critical faculty is so powerfully developed that it is perhaps some restraint upon achievement. But it is a wonderful corrective to others as well as to themselves. My French friend, for instance, after looking at some of my daubs, took me round the galleries of Paris, pausing here and there. Wherever he paused, I found myself before a picture which I particularly admired. He then explained that it was quite easy to tell, from the kinds of things I had been trying to do, what were the things I liked. Never having taken any interest in pictures till I tried to paint, I had no preconceived opinions. I just felt, for reasons I could not fathom, that I liked some much more than others. I was astonished that anyone else should, on the most cursory observation of my work, be able so surely to divine a taste which I had never consciously formed. My friend said that it is not a bad thing to know nothing at all about pictures, but to have a matured mind trained in other things and a new strong interest for painting. The elements are there from which a true taste in art can be formed with time and guidance...

Over the years I have ineffectually tried to find a trail that might lead to the discovery of the “Charles Morin” paintings sold in Paris. Lady Soames’s mention of the Galerie Druet set my mind racing. Surely such a famous gallery would have archives referring to Churchill’s exhibition, under his own name or that of Charles Morin?

Not quite. I learned that the archives of the Galerie Druet were held at the Bibliotheque Wildenstein Institute in Paris. Through the kindness of the archivist, Mme. Amélie Niaux, I was able to study a detailed list compiled by M. Bernard Crochet of the exhibitions held at the Galerie Druet in 1921. There were many well-known names including some peintres anglais modernes such as Harold...
Gilman, Robert Bevan, John Nash and Edward Wadsworth. But to my disappointment, there was no mention of Morin or Churchill. This was a blow as well as a full stop. However as I thought further about everything, I came to some tentative conclusions:

First, Churchill’s exhibition might have been a kind of temporary “display,” which is not an uncommon practice for commercial galleries.

Second, Montag and Bodkin almost certainly knew each other professionally. Both were enthusiastic about Churchill’s talents as an artist and Montag was the likely artist of Bodkin’s 1953 story about the Paris sale of Churchill’s pictures. The passage of time and intervention of World War II might also explain Bodkin’s inaccurate references to WSC’s pseudonym, and his dating the Paris exhibition “shortly before” World War II.

These mysteries were soon compounded. As the author of the official catalogue of Churchill’s paintings and a guardian of his reputation in this regard, I’m quite often sent for my opinion images of hitherto unknown pictures said to be by Sir Winston, often signed with initials. Neither the initials nor the paintings are generally found to be his work—not only for technical reasons, but because of the lack of provenance stretching back to Churchill himself.

Yet in 2008, to my total astonishment, I was sent from two different sources images of two landscapes, clearly signed “Charles Morin.” Neither was in any way typical nor representative of Churchill’s known subjects, nor was either painted in anything approaching his usual manner. Both showed, however a definite professional deftness and hand.

Some basic research confirmed that Charles Camille Morin (1846-1919) was in fact a known and exhibited French artist who painted landscapes in a style derived from the earlier French Barbizon School. A description of both pictures confirmed that they were his.

So here is the big question: Why in 1921 was Churchill assigned the pseudonym of a well-known French artist dead for two years?

While we don’t know the subjects of Churchill’s paintings exhibited in Paris in 1921, it is interesting to speculate. In the circumstances of the occasion, they are likely to have been French scenes. And, while we may never know the actual pictures, there may be clues in the illustrations Churchill chose for his 1921-22 Strand Magazine article “Painting as a Pastime.” Perhaps one was of Mimizan, his friend the Duke of Westminster’s property near Bordeaux (page 31). Another might have been a favourite haunt in the South of France such as St. Jean Cap Ferrat (page 32).

So much for conjecture. For the sake of the artist, let us put aside these unanswered questions and turn to the warm friendship between a President and Prime Minister.

In December 1941 Franklin Roosevelt received a letter from Edward Bruce, chief of the Smithsonian’s Fine Arts Section, asking him to forward a message to “Charles Marin,” cheekily inviting the artist to lunch. Bruce was under the impression that “Marin” was Churchill’s pseudonym. As Roosevelt told Churchill later, Bruce was “an old friend and a really grand person—but completely unorthodox.” Bruce’s letter led to an exchange of telegrams at official level between Washington and London inquiring about “the Prime Minister’s nom de palette.” Back came the answer on 31 January 1942 from Churchill’s private secretary: “Correct name is CHARLES MORIN not repeat not MARIN.”

These telegrams were discovered for me by Dr. Lynsey Robertson of the Churchill Archives Centre, when I was on the hunt for references to Churchill’s use of the Morin pseudonym. She also generously directed me to a published letter from Roosevelt in February 1942, asking Churchill about his use of a nom de palette (part of this letter I have already quoted above): “These people who go around under assumed names render themselves open to all kinds of indignity and suspicion,” wrote the President. “Some day I want to see a painting by this alias fellow—and some day I hope you will get enough time to resume the painting and that I will be able to return to making ship models and collecting stamps!”

As it happens, that wish was granted in part, sooner surely than either friend expected. In 1943, after the Casablanca Conference, Churchill insisted to Roosevelt: “You cannot come all this way to North Africa without seeing Marrakesh....I must be with you when you see the sun set on the snows of the Atlas Mountains.”

After their joint visit, the Prime Minister painted the scene, “the only picture I ever attempted during the war” (opposite) which he later gave to Roosevelt as a memento.

Endnotes

1. Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, CHAR 16/75/20-21, with kind assistance of Dr. Lynsey Robertson.
7. Life as a Painter, 39
10. Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, CHAR 2/466A/38-39. “Marin” is French for sailor: could Bruce have been hinting at the “Former Naval Person” - PHC
Churchill’s book-length works tend to be well-known to readers and collectors. Other more ephemeral publications, which are almost unknown in the Churchill canon, still merited inclusion in Section A or B of the Bibliography of the Writings of Sir Winston Churchill. Four of these were miniature books, whose description was triggered by a query from reader Pete Gohn. We must, of course, begin with an explanation of what constitutes a miniature book. In the United States, it is a volume no more than three inches in height, width or thickness.

The first Churchill miniature was published by the famed mini-book publisher Achille St. Onge in Worcester, Massachusetts. Entitled King George VI: The Prime Minister’s Broadcast February 7, 1952, it underwent a single printing of 750 copies at the Chiswick Press in London in 1952. Sangorski & Sutcliffe bound it in two distinctly different cases, one a very deep red full crushed levant morocco (Cohen A262.2.a), the other a dark purplish blue full crushed levant morocco (Cohen A262.2.b). The first variant is considerably rarer: about 100 copies were issued; the second saw a still very scarce run of 650. At least one, which I am happy to say I own, was signed by Churchill.

The next miniature was The Queen’s Message Broadcast on Coronation Day (Cohen B139). It contained, of course, the Queen’s message, preceded by Churchill’s broadcast introduction to that message on page 5. It was published in 500 numbered copies by the colourfully-named Hand & Flower Press of Aldington, Kent. Bound
once again by Sangorski & Sutcliffe, the endpapers were made by the boys of Ashford (Kent) North County Secondary School, at which Alex Waddington, the typesetter of the miniature volume, was a master. Proceeds of the sale of the book went to the Royal National Life-Boat Institution.

The third miniature bears the lengthy title *Sir Winston S. Churchill Honorary Citizen of the United States of America by Act of Congress April 9, 1963* (Cohen B177). In addition to the Congressional Act, it includes Churchill’s letter of thanks to President Kennedy. It was published by Achille St. Onge in that year, and printed in an initial run of 1000 copies by Joh. Enschedé Zonen at Haarlem, Netherlands. There was a second printing of 1500 copies in 1964.

The final and scarcest of all the mini-volumes was *Winston Spencer Churchill: Speech of June 4th, 1940* (Cohen A124.3), published by William Murray Cheney at his Press in the Gatehouse at UCLA on 10 April 1964. I estimate the number of copies as around 100 (as a function of the number of persons gathered at a dinner on that date, to each of whom this book was given as a keepsake).

On that date, Dr. Franklin David Murphy, Chancellor of the University of California at Los Angeles, and his wife, Judy, hosted a dinner at their home for members of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America, in celebration of the University’s acquisition of its two millionth book—the Aldine edition of the works of Plato—and in anticipation of the imminent completion of the University Research Library. The creation of this miniature work by Cheney, in honour of Franklin and Judy Murphy, reflected the Chancellor’s great interest in Sir Winston Churchill’s works; just three days before, he had given his large collection of Churchilliana to the Library. 📚

*Speech of 4th June 1940* (Cohen A124.3) captured in miniature the “Never Surrender” speech for only about 100 guests of Dr. and Mrs. Murphy at UCLA. 📚
Lady Randolph Churchill and the Incomparable Lee Remick

No actress will ever hope to portray Jennie Churchill better than the late Lee Remick, whom we honored just in time with the aid of Gregory Peck.

RICHARD M. LANGWORTH


Amazon has brought out a new CD version of one of the finest-ever films about Winston Churchill, featuring a striking performance by the late Lee Remick. The original television documentary, entitled, “The life and loves of Jennie Churchill,” was broadcast on ITV in Britain and PBS in the USA in 1974.

Aboard the Queen Mary in Long Beach, California, on 4 May 1991 the International Churchill Society held a dinner for Lee, then dying of cancer, to present her with our Blenheim Award for notable contributions to knowledge of the life and times of Winston Churchill. It was a bittersweet occasion, Lee’s last appearance in public. But we did her proud, thanks to the participation of a special guest, Gregory Peck, who had this to say of Lee Remick:

“It was my privilege to work in only one film with Lee. It was called ‘The Omen.’ It had to do with Satanism. It had some horrifying special effects; it was a spine tingler, excruciatingly suspenseful—and complete nonsense—and a blockbuster! People lined up for blocks to see it. While the studio executives took bows as the money rolled in, only Lee and I knew the secret of the film’s extraordinary success: We did it! It was our special artistry, our sensitive portrayal of a married couple very much in love, to whom all these dreadful things were happening. We provided the human element that made it all work. [He said all this very much tongue-in-cheek.]

“There cannot be another American actress so well suited, by her beauty, her high spirits, her intelligence, and more than that, by the mystery of a rare quality which I would call a depth of womanliness, to play the mother of Winston Churchill....Playing opposite this clear-eyed Yankee girl with the appealing style and femininity that graces every one of her roles just simply brings out the best in a man.”

For interested readers, the Lady Randolph Churchill issue, Finest Hour 98, Spring 1998, contains numerous articles including stills from this documentary, which critic Stewart Knowles described, pointing out that Lee was not a Jennie lookalike: “What cast the illusion were clothes, wigs, and the talent of a great actress.”

Knowles was not exaggerating. Lee Remick was one of the most remarkable actresses America ever produced. This was apparent already in her debut in “A Face in the Crowd” (1957) and “The Long Hot Summer” (1958) through her Oscar nomination as the wife of Jack Lemmon in “The Days of Wine and Roses” (1962), and her final film, “Emma’s War” (1986).

She won seven Emmy nominations for her outstanding roles in television docudrama, including the...
Students’ Choice: The Five Best Recent Churchill Books

Are you asked to recommend Churchill books for young people? Here are the choices of undergraduates themselves, under an expert teacher.

JOHN P. ROSSI

Over the years I have taught a college course on Winston Churchill, one of the few historical figures students seem to know something about. They may recognize his name, have a vague idea of what he looks like, and know that he had something important to do with World War II—and that’s something.

The course is usually well subscribed. Students come to admire Churchill’s eccentricities, his love of the good life, painting, his “siren suits,” his bricklaying at Chartwell, and the way he wrote, dictating from his “stand-up desk.” They are impressed by his axiom “Never Give In,” which I highlight in my syllabus. They come to see Churchill as “real,” not just a figure on the History Channel.

My course reading list for the sessions is built around Martin Gilbert’s official biography, supplemented with specialized studies of his life. I exclude biographies other than Gilbert’s because they tend either to be bland, repetitious or grossly overwritten, as in the case of Roy Jenkins’ or William Manchester’s massive tomes. It is interesting to note the books students themselves enjoy. Here are my students’ five most popular recent books.


This is by far their choice as the best overall study of Churchill’s career. In a little more than 300 pages Best produces an overview that is vividly written, while distilling the latest research on Churchill’s long career.

Best admires Churchill but avoids hero worship, recognizing what he sees as arrogance, selfishness and stubbornness. Yet he concludes by holding WSC among “the great men I had always supposed to be there.”

Best stresses the positive influence of Clementine, concluding that her judgment on personalities was usually better than Winston’s. She distrusted Lord Beaverbrook and Lord Birkenhead, whom her husband >>
unreservedly admired, thinking them bad influences. Slightly raffish characters always attracted Churchill, appealing to his love of adventurous reputations, good conversation and political maneuvering; but they frequently led him astray and reinforced his bad judgments.

Clementine was also a good judge of politics. During the Anglo-Irish war (1919-21), for example, she counseled moderation, telling Winston that if he had been an Irishman he would have fought on the side of the rebels. He could hardly deny that, given his admiration for the Irish leader Michael Collins.

Best is very good on Churchill’s 1951-55 ministry, which is widely regarded as something of a failure. He sees Churchill as a “Tory Wet,” not a fierce partisan, and not a forerunner of Margaret Thatcher. Best believes that WSC sought national unity and reconciliation, and accepted the broad outlines of the welfare state created by Labour after the war.

Best is sympathetic to Churchill’s last great cause, ending the Cold War, which he did so much to publicize with his 1946 Iron Curtain speech. Believing Stalin’s death in 1953 offered an opening, he sought a “parley at the summit,” but neither the Eisenhower administration nor Eden and others in his own Cabinet believed the time was right for an approach to the Soviets.


For those seeking a close study of Churchill’s military thinking, American military historian Carlo D’Este offers an interesting study, arguing that the “military Churchill” has been neglected. While this is something of an exaggeration, D’Este emphasizes that “it was the military Churchill who made possible the political Churchill.” (However, one could argue that the military Churchill often threatened the political Churchill, particularly over the Dardanelles.)

D’Este’s value is his analysis of how Churchill’s military experience and past decision-making shaped him for the supreme crisis in 1940. Through imperial conflicts in India, the Sudan, South Africa and World War I, Churchill was disabused of the old idealistic notions of warfare. A romantic about earlier conflicts in English history, he became a supreme realist about war in the 20th century.

Appalled by the bloodletting of the Great War, Churchill was determined that British manhood not be recklessly wasted again. World War I also taught him to distrust military experts. When he gained supreme power in 1940 he made himself Minister of Defence so that he, not the generals, was the ultimate decision maker. This led him down many controversial paths, though he never overruled the final advice of his chiefs—instead, he challenged them to defend their recommendations.

While adding little new information, D’Este provides a solid summary of the strengths and weaknesses of Churchill’s leadership. Like others who have studied the subject, D’Este is impressed by the tenacity with which WSC refused to countenance a negotiated peace in 1940, defying powerful members of his Cabinet. D’Este is very good also on Churchill’s relationships with President Roosevelt and Gen. Eisenhower, with whom he often disagreed. The bloodletting of French battlefields in World War I led WSC to prefer more indirect strategies than confronting the enemy at its strongest point: a view that prevailed in the North African and Italian campaigns. But as American military numbers and industrial output rose, he had to defer to their strategy to defeat Germany.


Like Best and D’Este, Richard Holmes turned a lifelong fascination with Churchill into a rich study of WSC’s career. The creator of the imaginative television series “War Walks,” which takes the viewer through past battles such as Waterloo, Holmes felt compelled to write about Churchill because so many of the campaigns he studied were associated with him.

Holmes concentrates on the controversial aspects of Churchill’s career, beginning with his relationship with his father, the brilliant but erratic Lord Randolph. Holmes doubts that Lord Randolph’s early death deeply scarred his son. On the contrary, Winston “retained the characteristics not of a deprived child, but of one excessively indulged.” Lord Randolph’s death was crucial, Holmes argues (not originally), in ending Churchill’s adolescence and in launching his career.

While presenting sound evidence that Churchill had no drinking problem, Holmes isn’t blind to his subject’s flaws. He is critical of Churchill’s performance as First Lord of the Admiralty before and during World War I, comparing Churchill unfavorably with Lord Haldane, who created an Army General Staff before the war. WSC, by contrast, insisted on the return of the unpredictable Admiral Fisher as First Sea Lord. Holmes
believes that Churchill’s behavior at the Admiralty revealed many of the personal failings that earned him a reputation of instability—rushing into action without thinking of the consequences, as in his attempt to relieve Antwerp early in the war (though he was sent there to—and did—prolong the city’s defense). Churchill forced his views on his professional staff, Holmes says, rejecting their advice when it didn’t match his views. All these failures drove him from office. (There are of course plentiful arguments against this fairly conventional view.)

Holmes adds that impetuosity, stubbornness and aggressiveness were to serve Churchill well in 1940. His chapters on 1940-41, when Britain stood alone against the German onslaught, are among his best. Holmes shows that the PM actually enjoyed himself, despite the desperate crisis confronting him. When asked late in life what year he would want to relive, Churchill always replied, “1940.”

Without Churchill, Holmes concludes, Britain would have lost the war, or at least signed a negotiated peace leading to domination by Germany. As John Lukacs points out in his Five Days in London, May 1940, Churchill brilliantly outmaneuvered the appeasers in Cabinet, and brought them around to his view that they must fight on.

In one of his most insightful observations Holmes shows that the defeatism that surfaced in those dangerous days of May and June 1940 was not confined to right-wing reactionaries, but was in fact shared by what Holmes labels “the strident anti-patriotism of the left.”

Holmes’ chapters on Churchill’s role during the last years of World War II are not impressive. Like D’Este, he believes that Churchill was frustrated when he lost control of the war to the Americans. Perhaps, he writes, some of Churchill’s actions in these years—like his emphasis on the Mediterranean—were taken to convince the Americans that Britain still counted. But this is too pat an explanation of a complicated subject, which has been debated for decades (including in these pages), and will continue to be.

Two more books which fascinate students are the studies of Churchill’s postwar reputation, providing examples of how Churchill continues to attract young people today. The late John Ramsden’s unique work, if my students are any guide, is one of the best ever written about WSC.

Ramsden was fascinated by the growth of the Churchill legend in the years after the Second World War and how WSC projected that image throughout the English-speaking world. His book explains how WSC dealt with his election defeat in 1945, patiently rebuilding his reputation through his writings and speeches.

Ramsden divides the Churchill revival into three parts: the seizure of leadership of the anti-communist movement through his Iron Curtain speech at Fulton in 1946; the promotion of European unity; and, of course, his heroic reputation as the defiant World War II leader.

Ramsden has dredged up many little-known facts. It was none other than Lord Halifax, he reveals, who helped refine Churchill’s Fulton speech to make it palatable to an American public that had not yet lost its admiration for the Russian war effort. And it was with marked surprise that Europeans heard the old warrior at Zurich that same year, arguing for Franco-German rapprochement: “we

must re-create the European family in a regional structure called…the United States of Europe.” Nor did Churchill exclude Russia; at heart he was an Atlanticist. Nevertheless, he considered the Anglo-American relationship supreme. “Each time we have to choose between Europe and the open sea,” he told Charles de Gaulle, “we shall always choose the open sea.” (To Britain’s disadvantage later, de Gaulle took this quite literally.)

Churchill’s ultimate claim to mythic status, John Ramsden argues, still rests on World War II. He had been right about Nazism, and he was determined to prove it through his memoirs, which were at their peak, still unfinished, when Time proclaimed him “Man of the Half-Century” and the Nobel Committee awarded him its prize in Literature.


David Reynolds’ book is the most original of the above two works, taking up Churchill’s six-volume memoir, The Second World War, explaining how he wrote it, the structure he imposed on events, and the way in which he carried out his research. In a clever aside, Reynolds notes that Churchill fought the war twice—first as a wartime Prime Minister and secondly as the war’s first significant chronicler.

Churchill, Reynolds says, was prompted to vindicate his role in >>
reviews

the war by two unexpectedly critical books: Elliot Roosevelt’s As He Saw It and Harry Butcher’s My Three Years With Eisenbauer. In the process of refuting them, he negotiated lucrative literary contracts, making him financially comfortable for the first time in his life while acquiring a first-class pulpit to describe the war as he saw it.

Reynolds delves into Churchill’s book-writing “Syndicate,” including the distinguished and brilliant Oxford historian Bill Deakin and the wartime Cabinet Secretary Norman Brook. Churchill would take their research and weave it into his own unique style: half Macaulay, half Gibbon. And, as he’d written in his autobiography, “I stuck in a bit of my own from time to time.”

Of the six volumes, Reynolds is most impressed by the first two: The Gathering Storm and Their Finest Hour. The Gathering Storm treats the 1930s as a decade of lost opportunities, insisting that there was a real chance to avert war, but the opportunity was squandered through the feebleness of western leaders. What makes Their Finest Hour important, Reynolds says, is that it is Churchill’s personal version of events of that key year between May 1940 and June 1941.

Reynolds holds the next three volumes of The Second World War uneven in quality. Many passages are pedestrian, he writes, because either Churchill relied too much on documents or because Britain (i.e., Churchill), didn’t play a crucial role in those events. But Reynolds thinks the final volume, Triumph and Tragedy, rises to a higher level: It has about it another sense of a lost opportunity, this time to use the Allied victory to check Soviet expansionism or at least to avoid an east-west confrontation.

The Second World War sold over two million copies and is still in print today. Despite rampant revisionism of varying quality, it still influences our impressions of World War II. As the late historian J.H. Plumb wrote, Churchill’s memoir “lies at the very heart of all historiography of the Second World War and will always remain there.” Not a bad epitaph.

From the Canon: The “Prussians of the Balkans” in
A chance question from a Yugoslavian reader leads us to one of our author’s most moving and evocative historical dramas.

Michael Richards

Mr. Vukašin Stojkov in Yugoslavia wrote us asking if Churchill, as he had heard, ever compared Serbia and its role in the forming of Yugoslavia to Prussia’s role in the unification of Germany. A strong contender is Chapter 1 of The Unknown War / The Eastern Front, volume 5 of The World Crisis (London: Thornton Butterworth, New York: Scribners, 1931), where Churchill refers to the Serbs as “the Prussians of the Balkans.” Churchill puts these words in quotes, indicating that they did not originate with him—but as it happens, they did.

Searching Google for the origins of the term, we found sixteen references, most of which indicate that the phrase was applied to the Bulgarians. An 11 August 1903 letter to The New York Times, by Vladimir Andreev’Tsanoff, Secretary of the Macedonian Committee of America, protesting an article on Bulgaria’s dismissal of pro-Russian cabinet members, stated: “In a moment of exasperation at Bulgaria’s obdurate spirit of independence, the Russian Chancellor, Prince Lobanoff, called these Bulgars “the

Prussians of the Balkans.” Churchill had nearly a photographic memory and often dredged up phrases that he had read many years before. In the case of The Eastern Front, however, he certainly goes against all preceding use of the term. It is likely that he was either misquoting what he had read, or liked the phrase so much that he applied it to the Serbs!

His beginning paragraphs from The Unknown War are reprinted by kind permission of the Churchill Literary Estate and Randolph Churchill. The text, slightly shortened for space, conveys I hope a view “from a great height”—the magnificent prose of which Churchill was a master.

The Dusk of Hapsburg
Winston S. Churchill

If for a space we obliterate from our minds the fighting in France and Flanders, the struggle upon the Eastern Front is incomparably the greatest war in history. In its scale, in its slaughter, in the exertions of the combatants, in its military kaleidoscope, it far surpasses by magnitude and intensity all similar human episodes.

All three empires, both sides, victors and vanquished, were ruined. All the Emperors or their successors were slain or deposed. The Houses of Romanov, Hapsburg and Hohenzollern, woven over centuries of renown into the texture of Europe were shattered and extirpated. The structure of three mighty organisms built up by generations of patience and valour and representing the traditional groupings of noble branches of the European family, was changed beyond all semblance. These pages recount dazzling victories and defeats stoutly made good. They record the toils, perils, sufferings and passions of millions of men. Their sweat, their tears, their blood bedewed
the endless plain. Ten million homes awaited the return of the warriors. A hundred cities prepared to acclaim their triumphs. But all were defeated; all were stricken; everything that they had given was given in vain. Nothing was gained by any. They floundered in the mud, they perished in the snowdrifts, they starved in the frost. Those that survived, the veterans of countless battle-days, returned, whether with the laurels of victory or tidings of disaster, to homes engulfed already in catastrophe.

We may make our pictures of this front from Napoleon’s campaigns. Hard and sombre war; war of winter; bleak and barren regions; long marches forward and back again under heavy burdens; horses dying in the traces; wounded frozen in their own blood; the dead uncounted, unburied; the living pressed again into the mill. Eylau; Aspern; Wagram; Borodino; The Beresina—all the sinister impressions of these names revive, divested of their vivid flash of pomp, and enlarged to a hideous size. Here all Central Europe tore itself to pieces and expired in agony, to rise again, unrecognizable.

The states and peoples of central and south-eastern Europe lay upon its broad expanses in the confusion left from ancient wars. The old battlefields were cumbered with the bones of bygone warriors, and the flags and trophies of far-off victories, and over them brooded the memories of many a cruel oppression and many a perished cause. In the main the empire of the Hapsburgs and the states of the Balkan Peninsula sate [sic] amid the ruins of centuries of struggle with the invading, proselytizing, devastating Turk. Here, long after they had ebbed and ceased in the west, the tides of war-like Islam had finally been dammed. After long-drawn struggles the Danube was liberated. One by one, aided mainly by Russia, these fierce races, hammered hard upon the anvil of Turkish misrule, shook themselves free; until finally the Turkish power was broken for ever. Roumania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Greece, relieved from the curse of bondage of five hundred years, stood erect, and gazed upon each other almost immediately with eyes of keen malevolence and rivalry.

First among the champions of Christendom stood the empire of the Czars. If Austrian and Hungarian chivalry had stemmed the Turkish invasions, it was Russia who for two centuries had advanced upon Turkey, inspired to the deliverance of kindred races still in bondage, and impelled by other motives towards Constantinople and the warm, open waters of the Mediterranean. The feud between Russia and Turkey was as old and as deadly as that between France and Germany.

As the external enemy faded and died, the army of the Austro-Hungarian empire began to fall to pieces. Like the liberated states of the Balkans, the four constituent peoples of the Danubian plains began to think again for themselves about their past and their future. Hungary had in revolt and revolution almost torn herself away in 1848. Caught and crushed by Russian armies pouring through the passes of the Carpathians, she was led back captive by the Czar and chained once more to the throne of his brother Emperor. It was upon an orgy of blood and executions that the youthful Francis Joseph entered upon his long and fatal reign. Bohemia in the general resurgence of nationalism which marked the close of the nineteenth century fretted, chafed and struggled in the Austrian net.

The sentiment and tradition of all the southern Slavs turned towards Serbia as to a magnet, and through Serbia far back across the ages to the once great Serb empire of Stephan Dushan. To revivify those glories and reunite the lands and peoples now scattered, became the persisting ambition of the Serbian people from the moment they had shaken off the Turkish yoke. This hardy warlike stock, “the Prussians of the Balkans,” whose teeth were whetted in centuries of unrecorded ferocious struggles with the Sultan’s troops, respected nothing that stood in their way. Reckless of consequences to themselves or others, fearing naught and enduring all, they pursued their immense design through the terrors and miseries of Armageddon, and have, in fact, achieved their purpose at its close.

All these disruptive forces were actively and increasingly at work within the Empire in the latter part of the last century. There was not in the declining Empire any force equal to that which has imposed throughout all innumerable national schools of the United States one single language and one universal secularism. Each race in the Dual Monarchy indulged its separatist tendencies to the full, and reviving ancient, even long-forgotten tongues, used these as weapons in ever-extending hostilities.

Parliaments can only flourish when fundamentals are agreed or at least accepted by the great majority of all parties. In the Parliaments of the Hapsburgs bands of excited deputies sat and howled at each other by the hour in rival languages, accompanying their choruses with the ceaseless slamming of desks which eventually by a sudden crescendo swelled into a cannonade. All gave rein to hatred; and all have paid for its indulgence with blood and tears.*

*Readers may notice the first and last words on this page. They were not, however, the first iteration of what became one of WSC’s most famous phrases. In London to Ladysmith via Pretoria in 1900, Churchill predicted that Britain would eventually win the Boer War. The result, he wrote, “is only a question of time and money expressed in blood and tears.” (166)
We’ve published student papers in *Finest Hour* and teacher comments and interchanges with professors at summer institutes.

While our efforts have been received with high praise, nothing has kept under-30s on our rolls when their interests vary and wander because of all the many things competing for attention at their age. Last year I tracked the young law student who keynoted our 1995 conference to a Texas firm and renewed his gift subscription; he’d forgotten all about us.

Yet the last time I checked, the average age of North American members reporting their ages was only 53. So what about people between 30 and 60?

If it’s members paying subscriptions we want, there are richer pickings among the 30-60 age group—people who have had enough time to develop their lives and to get interested in history as an avocation or as part of their profession—and, incidentally, who are more likely to make charitable contributions.

More settled in life, many of these people have for a variety of reasons developed an interest in history—where inevitably they run into Winston Churchill. How to reach them is the problem. What groups or lists can we exploit? Ah, there’s the rub.
In 1988 we mounted a direct mail campaign with an ambitious young direct mail expert named Karl Rove, who liked Churchill and was introduced to us by fellow Texan David Sampson, later Assistant Secretary of Commerce. We devised a superb mailing package offering low-cost introductory subscriptions, with fly-out testimonials by William Manchester and Senator Bob Packwood. It was a model—an award winner.

But even with Rove’s help, we could pinpoint no mailing list (and we sampled scores from veterans to history clubs and periodicals) containing enough people to provide the necessary 0.5 percent response that is what you need for a direct mail roll-out. Churchillians are everywhere—but nowhere in particular.

I dismiss no effort to increase members among any demographic. But let me offer an unorthodox and revolutionary thought for your consideration: The era of subscription-for-service is nearly over.

I asked my son, a software engineer with many outside interests from tropical fish to photography, how many non-professional organizations he pays dues to belong to: “None. Why? It’s all on the web now, Dad.”

Now, I have not taken a survey of people in each decade of life to see how many share his view. I simply find his response interesting—given what we do.

Fifteen years ago we made a decision. We said to each other that the time was fast approaching when large numbers of people might not wish to pay fees to belong to an organization devoted to a personality who died in 1965. Those who still remembered him were passing on, and new generations of young people were growing up in their place.

And so, we said to each other in 1995, “let’s build an endowment of $10 or $15 million that will spin off the earnings to support our basic mission long after we’re gone.” In 1995, Churchillians capable of raising that kind of money were reaching their peak earning years, or just retiring. Now, we told each other, is the time to enlist their support to build that endowment.

Our plan was controversial and created huge disagreements on a personal level among our leadership. We struggled through, and raised some money, but in the end far below our goal. Many who contributed to that endowment have since passed on. I think however that there was nothing wrong with our premise.

Like it or not (I personally don’t like it), the digital world, what I like to call “Googleworld,” is fast replacing print, telephone and fax in every phase of life, from ordering a garden sprinkler to launching a political campaign to reading a book.

According to Julie Bosman, media columnist for The New York Times, in the first five months of 2009, e-books were 2.9 percent of trade book sales. In the same period in 2010 e-books, which generally cost less than hardbacks, grew to 8.5 percent, spurred by sales of Amazon’s Kindle and Apple’s iPad. Even the big chains, like Barnes and Noble, have witnessed declining profits and store traffic.

For an example closer to home, consider Hillsdale College’s periodic proceedings of its speeches, Imprimis. It has 1.8 million subscribers. But there is no annual subscription! You send an email to receive it, and you get it forever—on the web or on paper, only a few pages per issue. Likewise, if you ask for their email bulletins or RSS feeds, you get them. All for free.

What pays for this? A massive endowment, raised from gifts, or gains on gifts that accumulate unspent. “It still comes down to the problem of gifts,” says Hillsdale President Larry Arnn. “Something in the publication has to show people that the organization is worthy of support, or they must pay for a subscription, or a mixture of both.”

Nicholas Carr in The Atlantic (overleaf) recently asked, “Is Google Making Us Stupid?” He quoted Bruce Friedman, a blogger on computers in medicine, whose thinking, Friedman admitted, has taken on a “staccato” quality, reflecting the way he scans short passages online: “I can’t read War and Peace anymore. I’ve lost the ability to do that. Even a blog post of more than three or four paragraphs is too much to absorb. I skim it.”

One guess where that leaves the master scribe of fifteen million words, Winston S. Churchill.

Granted, “scanning” and “skimming” is something most of us have done for decades. So what’s changed?

I think Carr is saying is that so much of our material is now conveyed on a computer monitor that scanning and skimming is now all we do.

Traditional periodicals are disappearing. Those that are still successful, like The New Yorker, are depending more and more on the Worldwide Web—not necessarily charging for a subscription, but reaping the advertising revenue their websites attract.

Rupert Murdoch, owner of the Wall Street Journal, recently said that their challenge is to restore the power to charge for editorial content. The Journal is already doing this, and he is starting a new “app” for iPad and smartphones, for which they will charge.

Google earns its billions, not on searches and freeware like Google Maps and Google News, but on the advertisements that accompany and adorn them. Every time a browser “clicks” on a Google ad link, Google gets paid. Jokingly I sometimes refer to Google, whose motto is “Do No Evil” (and which I use every waking hour), as the “Evil Empire.” At least think I’m joking. >>

FINESHT HOU148 / 45
I asked my son, a software engineer with many outside interests from tropical fish to photography, how many non-professional organizations he pays dues to belong to: "None. Why? It’s all on the web now, Dad."

**GOOGLEWORLD...**

Ultimately, I fear, the old concept of a fee-for-service membership in specialty organizations, which all of us have known all our lives, is increasingly limited. If what they want is not instantly available on the web, the new generations pay no attention.

Now it’s true that subscription revenue can at least partly be replaced with website advertising, such as that available through Google Associates. But relying on membership and dues as a major component of organizational income is becoming increasingly problematic.

Our subject matter is not exactly in vogue, though it’s not yet of “niche” stature. While Winston Churchill and World War II rank fair and high respectively among Google search percentiles (30th and 60th respectively), there are thousands of websites dedicated to our stock in trade—particularly leadership studies, international relations, the relevance of history, and other traditional areas The Churchill Centre tries to emphasize.

So ask yourself: what is it in this brave new world that makes The Churchill Centre special? As I see it, one main thing.

We have always prided ourselves on being “the” source—the best assembly of Churchill writers, historians, educators and experts, where you can always expect the honest facts about a fascinating character and everything he touched in a complicated, highly debated, often controversial career—an almost unprecedented fifty years on the political scene, with dramatic parallels to the present.

Only The Churchill Centre, for example, was able quickly and accurately to respond to the recent nonsense about Churchill covering up UFO sightings—old news which had been dealt with years ago (See “Another Cover-Up?” on page 7.)

Reliable knowledge and serious thought from the best sources is still our singular distinction. But if we want our little enterprise to survive, we need to consider methods not dependent on subscriptions and renewals—before the diminishing number of Churchillians with the means to support our goals are dead.

---

**Is Google Making Us Stupid?**

*What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*  
by Nicholas Carr (Excerpt)  
*The Atlantic, July/August 2008*

For the full article see [http://xrl.us/bhmg3f](http://xrl.us/bhmg3f)

Over the past few years I’ve had an uncomfortable sense that someone, or something, has been tinkering with my brain, remapping the neural circuitry, reprogramming the memory. My mind isn’t going—so far as I can tell—but it’s changing. I’m not thinking the way I used to think.

I can feel it most strongly when I’m reading. Immersing myself in a book or a lengthy article used to be easy. My mind would get caught up in the narrative or the turns of the argument, and I’d spend hours strolling through long stretches of prose. That’s rarely the case anymore. Now my concentration often starts to drift after two or three pages. I get fidgety, lose the thread, begin looking for something else to do. I feel as if I’m always dragging my wayward brain back to the text. The deep reading that used to come naturally has become a struggle.

I think I know what’s going on. For more than a decade now, I’ve been spending a lot of time online, searching and surfing and sometimes adding to the great databases of the internet. The web has been a godsend to me as a writer. Research that once required days in the stacks or periodical rooms of libraries can now be done in minutes. A few Google searches, some quick clicks on hyperlinks, and I’ve got the telltale fact or pithy quote I was after.

Even when I’m not working, I’m as likely as not to be foraging in the web’s info-thickets, reading and writing e-mails, scanning headlines and blog posts, watching videos and listening to podcasts, or just tripping from link to link to link. (Unlike footnotes, to which they’re sometimes likened, hyperlinks don’t merely point to related works; they propel you toward them.) For me, as for others, the internet is becoming a universal medium, the conduit for most of the information that flows through my eyes and ears and into my mind. •
125 Years Ago  
**Autumn 1885 • Age 11**  
“*When the elections are over*”

Winston continued to pine for his parents’ affection and—unsuccessfully—for their visit to his school. On 29 September he wrote to his mother, “when do you think Papa will come & see me?” On October 20th he wrote with dismay to his father: “I cannot think why you did not come to see me while you were in Brighton. I was very disappointed but I suppose you were too busy to come.” A fortnight later his mother received another message: “There is a portrait of you in The Graphic. I wonder when you are coming down to see me.” A week later: “I am not very happy. But quite well. I want you to come and see me when the elections are over.”

On 24 November Winston wrote his father: “I hope most sincerely that you will get in for Birmingham, though when you receive this, the election will be over.” Lord Randolph did not get in for Birmingham, where he was defeated by 773 votes. But he was elected the next day by 1706 votes at Paddington South, where an admirer had instantly stood aside to let Lord Randolph run in his place.

100 Years Ago  
**Autumn, 1910 • Age 36**  
“*Take that, you dirty cur!*”

Three episodes in Churchill’s life a century ago are worthy of note. One involves a lie still repeated today, that he used army troops who fired against striking miners at Tonypandy. The second involves the suffragettes’ hostility to Churchill’s position on the women’s vote. The third involves the general election in December, the second within the last twelve months.

During a coal miners’ strike in South Wales during the first week in November, the local constable, after a few incidents of window breaking, asked the army directly to send troops. When Churchill found out the next morning what had been done he immediately decided to use police, not the army, to deal with the problem. He sent 200 police from London to South Wales and the troops, already on their way, were ordered to stop. When the striking miners attacked a colliery and were driven off by local police, they moved on to the village of Tonypandy and began looting local shops. When the rioting continued, Churchill sent an additional 500 police from London and authorized one cavalry squadron to move to a nearby rail junction to be available should police be unable to handle the problem. But the police proved sufficient, and not a single soldier came into contact with a striking miner, let alone fired shots.

*The Times* criticized Churchill for not sending in troops, while the left-wing *Manchester Guardian* praised him for his restraint. (See also page 9.)

On 18 November, suffragettes held a demonstration in Parliament Square to protest Asquith’s proposed dissolution of Parliament without acting on women’s suffrage. Contrary to Churchill’s written instructions, the police did not, as in the past, promptly arrest those who engaged in a breach of the peace, but instead began a six-hour free-for-all fight with the demonstrators where, as Randolph Churchill reported in the official biography, “Stories of women being punched, kicked, pinched and grabbed by the breasts seem well-authenticated.” On the 26th Churchill was attacked with a whip on a train by a man who had been arrested at the Parliament Square demonstration. “Take that, you dirty cur!” the man shouted, and later spent six weeks in jail after a conviction for assault.

At Dundee on December 2nd, Churchill explained that he was “in favour of the principle of women being enfranchised” but opposed extending it only to women with property, because it would “unfairly” alter the balance between parties, i.e., to the advantage of the Conservatives at the expense of the Liberals.

During the bitter 1910 election campaign, Churchill engaged in *ad hominem* attacks, even on Tories he otherwise liked and respected. In a speech in London on November 28th Churchill said of some of them:

Mr. Balfour is an amiable dilettante philosopher who is content to brood serenely, sedately, over the perversity of a world which he longer attemps to influence. Mr. Austen Chamberlain is a very admirable and honourable young gentleman, but, after all, with all his faults, I would rather have old Joe [laughter]....Then there is Mr. F. E. Smith...a man of excessive sensibility [laughter]. He would have played a very effective part in this election but for one fact. At the outset he was terribly shocked by the wicked language of Mr. Lloyd George...he has been running about ever since endeavouring to say things which he believes will be as effective...but with this difference—that whereas Mr. Lloyd George is invariably witty, Mr. F. E. Smith is invariably vulgar. So much for their leaders. I do not think these will work out at more than about six and a half pence a pound. >>
 Seventy-five Years Ago
Autumn 1935 • Age 61
“A gentler figure in a happier age”

Churchill continued to warn of the growing power of Nazi Germany. On 26 September he told the Carlton Club in London: “The German nation, under Herr Hitler’s dictatorship, is spending this year at least six times as much as we are on the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force put together.”

Italy invaded Abyssinia on 3 October and Churchill addressed this issue at Chingford on 8 October: “It may well be that Italian ambitions would never have taken this dangerous scope if they not been led to believe that Britain was becoming feeble and degenerate and that they would soon become the heirs to all our interests and rights in the Mediterranean and in the Middle East.”

Churchill believed that Italy’s invasion of Ethiopia, while deplorable, paled in significance to “the scale and rapidity of German rearmament.” Speaking in the House of Commons on 24 October, he reminded Members that Abyssinia (where slavery was still practiced) was not a “civilised” nation and that the League of Nations should take the opportunity afforded by the Italian invasion to make Abyssinia “put its house in order”:

The native independence of Abyssinia cannot be made a matter for compromise or barter. But no one...can justify the conditions that prevail in that country...No one can keep up the pretence that Abyssinia is a fit, worthy and equal member of a league of civilised nations. The wisdom of the British policy was shown in our opposing their admission and the unwisdom of Continental countries, who now bitterly regret what they did, was shown in its admission. It was a mistake. Steps must certainly be taken to make sure that the oppression by the dominant race in Abyssinia of the tribes which they have recently conquered is not perpetuated as the result of League of Nations action.

An article by Churchill in the November issue of The Strand Magazine drew a formal protest from the German Ambassador in London for its “personal attack” on Hitler. In fact, Churchill was restrained in his characterization of the German leader:

Hitherto, Hitler’s triumphant career has been borne onwards, not only by a passionate love of Germany, but by currents of hatred so intense as to sear the souls of those who swim upon them...Does [Hitler] in the full sunlight of worldly triumph, at the head of the great nation he has raised from the dust, still feel racked by the hatreds and antagonisms of his desperate struggle; or will they be discarded like the armour and the cruel weapons of strife under the mellowing influences of success?...[Hitler appears to be] a highly competent, cool, well-informed functionary with an agreeable manner.

Ever the optimist, Churchill added that “we may yet live to see Hitler a gentler figure in a happier age.”

At the Conservative Party Conference on 4 October, Churchill openly praised Stanley Baldwin, a General Election was set for November 14th. Many of Churchill’s friends—as well as Hitler—expected WSC to be given a position in the new Cabinet. Churchill hoped so too. He campaigned for himself and other Tory MPs, urging accelerated rearmament, but when the Labour Party accused the Conservatives of planning “a vast and expensive rearmament programme,” Baldwin told the Peace Society, “I give you my word there will be no great armaments.”

The Conservatives won 432 seats in the election, 278 seats more than Labour, but Churchill was not asked by Baldwin to join the new government.

In a private letter, Baldwin explained why: “I feel we should not give him a post at this stage. Anything he undertakes he puts his heart and soul into. If there is going to be war—and no one can say that there is not—we must keep him fresh to be our war Prime Minister.”

Fifty Years Ago
Autumn 1960 • Age 86
“Charming and affectionate”

Sir Winston and Lady Churchill went on holiday in the south of France in September, staying at the Hotel de Paris because Emery Reves had refused WSC’s request to stay at the villa La Pausa. Reves said his wife Wendy had been distressed that the previous January, Churchill had declined an earlier invitation. Lady Churchill wrote to Wendy on 23 September 1960 that her husband was “surprised and sorry that you should feel the way you do,” while Winston wrote to Wendy on 9 October: “…the months I spent at your charming house were among the brightest in my life.” Although subsequently invited, Churchill never returned to La Pausa.

On 22 October, Winston and Clementine met with President de Gaulle in Nice where private secretary Anthony Montague Brown reported that de Gaulle was “charming and affectionate.” On 10 November, Churchill was at Harrow School, where he gave his last public speech. Five days later while saying good night to his wife in her room, he fell and broke a vertebra. Mary Soames records that he did not go to hospital but was not well enough to attend the wedding of his granddaughter Edwina Sandys to Piers Dixon in December.

On the 23rd, young Dixon was summoned to Chartwell to meet his bride’s grandfather. Edwina later said that her grandfather “had never looked so ill.” Later that day, according to his physician Lord Moran, Churchill suffered a small stroke, which kept him in bed for a week but did not prevent him from receiving birthday visitors, including Beaverbrook and Onassis.$
Churchill Quiz

JAMES LANCASTER

Each quiz includes four questions in six categories: contemporaries (C), literary (L), miscellaneous (M), personal (P), statesmanship (S) and war (W), easy questions first. Can you reach Level 1?

Level 4
1. Which of WSC’s books begins, “All along the north and north-west frontiers of India lie the Himalayas”? (L)
3. “Weary and worn, impoverished but undaunted and now triumphant, we had a moment that was sublime.” What was this moment? (W)
4. Churchill wrote: “We may, I am sure, rate this tremendous year as the most splendid, as it was the most deadly, year in our long English and British story.” Which year? (S)

Level 3
5. What major memorial to Churchill was opened in his lifetime? (M)
6. What was the title of the British edition of *Blood, Sweat, and Tears*, published in 1941? (L)
7. “…he had appeared to the tortured souls of other men in a letter to Stalin?” To whom was Churchill referring? (C)
8. Churchill once said, “foreign names were made for —, not Englishmen for foreign names.” Fill in the blank. (L)

Level 2
9. “On any day, if they thought the people wanted it, the House of Commons could by a simple vote remove me from my office.” Where did WSC say this, in December 1941? (S)
10. When did WSC wed Clementine? (P)
11. At the Oxford Union in the Hilary term of 1934, who was charged in a mock trial for constituting a menace to the world? (P)
12. Which event did Rosebery refer to when he wrote Churchill on 2 October 1900: “‘MP’ will now distinguish you from your American twin”? (P)

Level 1
13. In the Commons on 23 March 1943, whom did WSC describe as “presenting...a much larger target than I do, as he has no fewer than four sons serving, whereas I have only one”? (C)
14. On which occasion did Churchill tell Hugh Dalton, the Minister of Economic Warfare, to “Set Europe ablaze”? (W)
15. “We must regard the next week or so as a very important period in our history. It ranks with the days when the Spanish Armada was approaching the Channel, and Drake was finishing his game of bowls.” In which broadcast did Churchill say this? (W)
16. On 26 October 1899 WSC wrote in a despatch: “Yet all earthly evils have their compensations, and even monotonous is not without its secret joy.” Where was he? (M)
17. “Good God, you can’t declare war on a radio announcement.” Who said this to Churchill after hearing about Pearl Harbour on a portable radio set belonging to Harry Hopkins? (C)
18. August 1942: “Strategically the raid...did something to take the weight off Russia. Honour to the brave who fell. Their sacrifice was not in vain.” Which raid? (W)

Answers

1. The History of the English-Speaking Peoples, vol. 2 (When the Accords of 1919 and Treaty of Versailles were signed) (C)
2. Churchill is cited fifteen times, far more than any other writer. (3) VE Day, 8 May 1945. (4) 1940. (5) The Spanish Armada was approaching the Channel, and Drake was finishing his game of bowls. (6) “Commissar Winston representing the X-Cheka”? (M)
3. While First Lord of the Admiralty in World War II, Churchill sometimes asked in the war room “Where’s the oil?” What or whom did he mean? (C)
4. Name Churchill’s distant relative who was Chief of Intelligence of the U.S. Army in the 1920s. (P) 

The Best of the Malakand Field Force, 1895, 1897 (1) The handsomest man who ever cut a throat.” W ho was Churchill referring? (C)
Future Shock: Weapons of Mass Destruction

Churchill’s "Shall We All Commit Suicide?" (1924)

"Without having improved appreciably in virtue or enjoying wiser guidance, [mankind] has got into its hands for the first time the tools by which it can unfailingly accomplish its own extermination....Death stands at attention, obedient, expectant, ready to serve, ready to shear away the peoples en masse; ready, if called on, to pulverize, without hope of repair, what is left of civilization. He awaits only the word of command. He awaits it from a frail, bewildered being, long his victim, now—for one occasion only—his Master.” —WSC

PAUL ALKON

Horace Walpole is credited with saying, “The world is a comedy to those that think, a tragedy to those that feel.” Churchill did both.

His writings are ample evidence of his inclination to think. Their frequent amusing touches show his appreciation of the human comedy. Hundreds of anecdotes record his readiness to respond emotionally to life’s major and minor disasters. He could plunge into despondency—his rather too famous “black dog.” He was never ashamed to cry at sad events in life and even on the film screen. As Prime Minister in 1940 he warned that what lay ahead was not only work and wounds but grievous emotions: “I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat.”

Isaiah Berlin, in what I believe is still the best single essay on Churchill, finds that despite Churchill’s joie de vivre and capacity for exuberance, his outlook is essentially tragic. In this respect Berlin contrasts Churchill with Franklin Roosevelt:

[Churchill’s] nature possesses a dimension of depth—and a corresponding sense of tragic possibilities, which Mr Roosevelt’s light-hearted genius instinctively passed by....Mr. Churchill is acquainted with darkness as well as light. Like all inhabitants and even transient visitors of inner worlds, he gives evidence of seasons of agonised brooding and slow recovery. Mr Roosevelt might have spoken of sweat and blood, but when Mr Churchill offered his people tears, he spoke a word which might have been uttered by Lincoln or Mazzini or Cromwell but not Mr Roosevelt, great-hearted, generous, and perceptive as he was.

Berlin’s comment offers the best key to Churchill’s achievement in general, and in particular to the odd fate of his 1924 essay “Shall We All Commit Suicide?”

This article is one of Churchill’s most perceptive insights into future danger. We can easily see this now because in the light of subsequent history its hints of atomic weapons stand out, like the more explicit prediction of them in his later essay “Fifty Years Hence,” as Churchill himself was not shy about remarking after such weapons became reality.

“Shall We All Commit Suicide?” was first published in the September 1924 number of Nash’s Pall Mall magazine, and reprinted several times in the 1920s, as Professor Muller documents in the notes to his edition. In 1929 Churchill adapted the essay within the conclusion of his book The Aftermath, about a decade following World War I. The essay was reprinted (as you have it) in...
the 1932 collection *Thoughts and Adventures*. Finally, in 1948, Churchill quoted it in *The Gathering Storm*, volume one of his memoirs, *The Second World War*, where he thus had the satisfaction of saying, though not in these words, “I told you so.”

But that could only have been cold comfort. His essay had done nothing to avert the dangers it warned against. They had increased.

There are several reasons why this essay, like many of its kind, was widely read, then ignored. One problem is its hyperbole, its exaggeration. In it Churchill alludes, quite correctly, and if anything with understatement, to the horrors just past of World War I. Readers in the 1920s were all too familiar with the gruesome features of that war, its unprecedented destructiveness. No exaggeration there. Nor is there any exaggeration in the essay’s account of what 1919 would have been like, had the war continued for another year. On that basis readers could only accept its forecast of even greater horrors to be unleashed in another great war. As Churchill warms to that topic, he eloquently and accurately sketches the possibilities of warfare via aerial assault, bigger and better bombs, other explosives, poison gas, other chemical methods of annihilation, and biological warfare.

Well-informed readers, moreover, could hardly disagree with Churchill’s assessment that by the outcome of World War I “the causes of war have been in no way removed; indeed they are in some respects aggravated by the so-called Peace Treaties and the reaction following therefrom.” Within the context of all this, Churchill could also plausibly make the point that “It is probable—nay certain—that among the means which will next time be at their disposal will be agencies and processes of destruction wholesale, unlimited, and perhaps, once launched, uncontrollable” (*T&A*, 262).

In retrospect, this seems even more accurate and dire than others impending disasters he could not prevent or, in some cases, nobody could prevent.

It is true that he not only foretold the menace of Nazi Germany, Cassandra-like to little avail, but, as Prime Minister, was instrumental in warding it off in 1940, and finally helping to defeat it in collaboration with Russia and the United States. This was a triumph. For most people it would have been enough to mark their life as a total success. But in Churchill’s eyes it was only a prelude to another tragedy: the Cold War, as he signaled by calling the last volume of his war memoirs *Triumph and Tragedy*.

He foresaw but could not avert the loss of India and the subsequent collapse of the British Empire that he tried so hard to preserve. During his second term as >>
"Shall We All Commit Suicide?"
...was ineffectual in its day and, except to historians and a tiny band of Churchilians, remains unknown in our time. Sadly, the essay was unable, then or now, to influence events.

**FUTURE SHOCK...**
Prime Minister he saw in hydrogen bombs the ultimate realization of his 1924 prophecy but could do nothing to dispel their menace. He could only articulate hope that the threat of mutual annihilation would deter their use. In his 1 March 1955 speech on defense to the House of Commons, he said: “The atomic bomb, with all its terrors, did not carry us outside the scope of human control or manageable events in thought or action, in peace or war,” but with the advent of the hydrogen bomb, “the entire foundation of human affairs was revolutionized, and mankind placed in a situation both measureless and laden with doom.”

“Tragedy” and “doom” are characteristic words in Churchill’s vocabulary, signaling ideas basic to his mentality. Hyperbole too, or what often seems to others hyperbole at the time of pronouncement, is a feature—not omnipresent, but very frequent—of Churchill’s style and outlook. Paradoxically, his penchant for exaggeration is what often allowed him to see into the future more accurately than those less given to these theatrical, highly imaginative, modes of expression and thinking. They are an aspect of what Isaiah Berlin rightly calls Churchill’s characteristic “sense of tragic possibilities.”

Others have remarked this note sounding throughout his career. Gretchen Rubin writes that, in viewing it as a whole and comparing it to the classical pattern of tragic drama developed in Greek antiquity, we see in Churchill “a tragic hero, who enacted, in his individual life, a tragic drama of such pure and perfect construction as to stagger belief in its reality.”

Manfred Weidhorn remarks in his indispensable study Sword and Pen that “For all his intermittent optimism, the happy endings of most of his books, and the many blessings of his career, Churchill’s writings, willy-nilly, add up to a tragic vision.”

Very often (as in “Shall We All Commit Suicide?”) Churchill saw ahead what most others had no desire to see or seriously acknowledge and act to avert—dooms and tragedies, large and small. Cassandra’s talent earned her little love and only underscored the tragedy of Troy’s fall. The very accuracy of Churchill’s prophecies often cast him in the same unenviable but awesome tragic predicament.

Even more poignantly, Churchill was not merely another Cassandra making prophecies of disaster from the sidelines. Events compelled him—as for the classical tragic hero—to take a major part in bringing about the dangers and downfalls he warned against and most wanted to avoid. As Prime Minister during World War II he authorized and encouraged Britain’s participation in development of the atomic bomb. He could do no other. Germany could not have been allowed to go unrivaled in that research.

In the terminology of Greek dramatists, we might say that, despite his best efforts to the contrary, Churchill was compelled by Fate to play an instrumental role in bringing humanity closer to the possibility of that atomic suicide he had warned against and thereby tried to avert. Or instead of Fate, we could call it Destiny, Providence, History, or the Will of God. Whatever term we choose, the fact is that in this matter as in others, Churchill, like so many tragic heroes, encountered an irresistible force bending him to participate in the ruin of his own hopes.

As for the essay itself: “Shall We All Commit Suicide?” remains as testimony to Churchill’s genius, one of the most noteworthy documents of its time. Ironically, however, it was ineffective in its day and, except to historians and a tiny band of Churchilians, remains unknown in our time. Sadly, the essay was unable, then or now, to influence events.

**Endnotes**
A subject of high concern to Churchill, “Mass Effects in Modern Life” has two aspects: the importance, influence, and virtue of the great souls in the human race; and the importance, influence, and virtue of ordinary people in the human race.

Churchill was a democrat all his life, and there can be no doubt that he is committed to that to the death. He says of democracy that it is “the association of us all in the leadership of the best.” If you think about that quote, it implies a partnership. I believe Churchill saw these two groups, the great and the ordinary, their influence, importance, and rightful sway, as threatened by the same enemy.

Two further aspects we have spoken of often in this conference: scientific progress, and the new forms of tyranny: Communism and Nazism. And Churchill saw both of the latter, and both alike, as enemies.

In Britain, those who leaned to the left were forgiving of Stalin. Read the huge treatises by Sidney and Beatrice Webb describing Soviet Russia in terms that border on utopian. Those who leaned to the right, by contrast, were forgiving of Hitler: read the fine book by David Pryce-Jones on Unity Mitford.

In “The Infernal Twins,” a wonderful article in Collier’s in 1937, Churchill likened Nazism and Communism to a pair of twin religions at opposite ends of the spectrum:

You leave out God and put in the Devil; you leave out love and put in hate; and everything thereafter works quite straightforwardly and logically. They are, in fact, as alike as two peas. Tweedledum and Tweedledee are two quite distinctive personalities compared to these two rival religions. I am reminded of the North Pole and South Pole. They are at opposite ends of the earth, but if you woke up at either Pole tomorrow morning you could not tell which one it was. Perhaps there might be more penguins at one, or more Polar bears at the other; but all around would be ice and snow and the blast of a biting wind. I have made up my mind, however far I may travel, whatever countries I may see, I will not go to the Arctic or to the Antarctic regions. Give me London, give me Paris, give me New York, give me some of the beautiful capitals of the British Dominions. Let us go somewhere where our breath is not frozen on our lips because of the Secret Police. Let us go somewhere where there are green pastures and the shade of venerable trees. Let us not wander away from the broad fertile fields of freedom into these gaunt, grim, dim, gloomy abstractions of morbid and sterile thought.

Churchill thinks it a major responsibility of the British and American governments to confront these two challenges on a global basis. He favors a structure of >>
The central principle of Civilisation is the subordination of the ruling authority to the settled customs of the people and to their will as expressed through the Constitution. In this Island we have today achieved in a high degree the blessings of Civilisation. There is freedom; there is law; there is love of country; there is a great measure of goodwill between classes; there is a widening prosperity. There are unmeasured opportunities of correcting abuses and making further progress. We have, however, to face the problem of the turbulent, formidable world outside our shores. Why should not the same principles which have shaped the free, ordered, tolerant civilisation of the British Isles and British Empire be found serviceable in the organisation of this anxious world? Why should not nations link themselves together in a larger system and establish a rule of law for the benefit of all? That surely is the supreme hope by which we should be inspired and the goal towards which we should march with resolute step.

Churchill then turns to the Soviets, whom few were criticizing in 1931, in words that proved prophetic:

...we have a society which seeks to model itself upon the Ant. There is not one single social or economic principle or concept in the philosophy of the Russian Bolshevik which has not been realized, carried into action, and enshrined in immutable laws a million years ago by the White Ant.

But human nature is more intractable than ant-nature. The explosive variations of its phenomena disturb the smooth working out of the laws and forces which have subjugated the White Ant. It is at once the safeguard and the glory of mankind that they are easy to lead and hard to drive. So the Bolsheviks, having attempted by tyranny and by terror to establish the most complete form of mass life and collectivism of which history bears record, have not only lost the distinction of individuals, but have not even made the nationalization of life and industry pay. We have not much to learn from them, except what to avoid.

A previous speaker said that religious freedom is a deduction from the fact that we do not know who God is. Is that the right deduction?

Nietzsche writes that nothing is true, and so therefore everything is permitted. Brandeis and Holmes say that democracy is experimentation. Jefferson, Lincoln and Churchill do not think that. They speak of self-evident truths. Churchill believes that violence—the rule of warriors and despotic chiefs, warfare, riot and tyranny—gives place to parliaments where laws are made, and independent courts of justice are established where, over long periods, those laws are maintained. That is Civilization—and in its soil freedom, comfort and culture continually grow.

In the main, "Mass Effects in Modern Life" is a defense of civilization. On 2 July 1938, in a speech imploring his countrymen to face and resist the Nazi power, Churchill poured all his love and respect for that word in a speech he entitled simply "Civilisation":
“Mass Effects” and the Great Man Theory of History

Churchill Contemplates the Democratic Revolution (1931)

“I have been in full harmony all of my life with the tides that flow on both sides of the Atlantic against privilege and monopoly, and I have steered confidently towards the Gettysburg ideal of ‘government of the people by the people for the people.’ I owe my advancement entirely to the House of Commons, whose servant I am. In my country, as in yours, public men are proud to be the servants of the State and would be ashamed to be its masters.” —WSC, 1941

DAVID FREEMAN

“I have no hesitation in ranging myself with those who view the past history of the world mainly as the tale of exceptional human beings, whose thoughts, actions, qualities, virtues, triumphs, weaknesses and crimes have dominated the fortunes of the race.” Thus writes Churchill in the opening paragraph of “Mass Effects in Modern Life,” firmly identifying himself with what has been known as the “Great Man”—or perhaps now “Great Person”—theory of history.

But Churchill then goes on to ask, “Are not our affairs increasingly being settled by mass processes?” By “mass processes” Churchill meant not only mass media but the advent of universal adulthood suffrage. With all adults in Britain having obtained the vote, Churchill concludes that “the throne [of power] is occupied; but by a throng.” Whether or not this newly arrived-at situation would prove to be for the greater good of the British people is the question Churchill sets out to explore in the remainder of his essay.

By the time Churchill came to write “Mass Effects” he was—as it turned out—roughly half way through his sixty-year Parliamentary career. During the first three decades of his time in the political arena, the structure of British government had altered dramatically. This more than anything is the “mass effect” upon which Churchill is reflecting. When he was first elected to Parliament in 1900 it was still the case that no women and not even all men had the right to vote. Members of Parliament who did not hold a ministerial position did not receive salaries. Some MPs, like Churchill himself, were elected from two-member constituencies. The nation could go up to seven years without a general election.

The House of Lords retained tremendous power, and the Prime Minister himself, Lord Salisbury, served from the upper chamber. By the time this essay was published, all men and women in Britain over the age of 21 could vote. elections had to be held at least every five years, and all MPs received salaries. The House of Lords had lost most of its power and no prime minister was likely ever to serve from that body again. The triumph of democratization meant that national debate more than ever before carried well outside of Westminster as all participating members of the electorate considered through the media the issues of the day.

Where, Churchill wondered, would this lead? It is simply not sufficient to conclude that he was at heart an elitist, an aristocrat. To answer the question, it is necessary to examine Churchill’s view of where Britain had been, and how it had reached the point where it was >>

Professor Freeman received his Ph.D. in Modern British History from Texas A&M University and teaches History at the University of California at Fullerton. A twenty-year member of TCC, he is a regular contributor to Finest Hour, notably “Winston Churchill and the Making of Iraq” (FH 132: 26-33) and “Churchill and F.E. Smith” (FH 139: 29-35).
GREAT MAN THEORY...

in 1931 when he wrote “Mass Effects in Modern Life.” In doing so I believe we will find that Churchill viewed the future of Britain with the confidence that all would come right.

Speaking before the United States Congress on the day after Christmas 1941, Churchill famously remarked, “I am a child of the House of Commons.” Indeed he was—not just a product of the British Parliament, but a historian and lifelong student of that institution. “I was brought up in my father’s house to believe in democracy,” he told the Congress. “‘Trust the people’—that was his message.”

As a young army officer in India, Churchill passed the time reading verbatim records of Parliamentary debates. He committed to memory long extracts of speeches made by the great political figures of the Victorian era, including his father, and eventually produced a lengthy and admirable biography of Lord Randolph Churchill.

Later, between the world wars, as part of his effort to make a living by his pen, Churchill generated a number of sketches of leading political figures whom he had observed or personally known. Written during the same era as the essays that appear in Thoughts and Adventures, many of these were collected in Great Contemporaries, soon to be out in a new edition.

At the same time Churchill wrote and published The World Crisis, a multi-volume memoir of the First World War and its aftermath. He then turned to a vast biography of his ancestor John Churchill, First Duke of Marlborough. This involved a detailed study of British politics during the era immediately preceding the development of the office of prime minister. Finally, in the years just before the outbreak of the Second World War, Churchill wrote most of what would be published after the war as A History of the English Speaking Peoples, an account that terminates at the point Churchill’s own political career began.

Thus, well before Churchill himself assumed a position in the eyes of most of the world as one of history’s Great Men, he had given much study to the role of leading figures in the development of parliamentary democracy up to and including his own time. Tracing through these writings, we find the foundation upon which Churchill stood as he contemplated the future in Thoughts and Adventures.

Politics during the life of the First Duke of Marlborough was a dodgy occupation. Failure could still result in imprisonment or permanent exile abroad. The Duke’s patron, Queen Anne, still presided over the Cabinet in person, and exercised the Royal Veto. Necessarily the situation changed under her successor, the non-English-speaking George I, but even Sir Robert Walpole had spent time in the Tower of London before virtually creating the position of prime minister during the reign of George II.

Churchill describes Walpole as “the first Great House of Commons man in British history”—high praise indeed and not to be skimmed over lightly. To achieve such recognition himself, and to do so as prime minister, was Churchill’s lifelong ambition. It is from this point, then, that one should start to study Winston Churchill’s examination of how leading personalities could shape events through the mechanism of Parliament—even as that mechanism underwent dramatic systemic change.

Churchill ranked William Pitt the Elder “with Marlborough as the greatest Englishman in the century between 1689 and 1789.” Today, reading Churchill’s
description of Pitt, one cannot miss the way he identified the very characteristics of a war leader that he himself shortly afterwards would replicate. Churchill wrote that “the whole struggle [of war] depended upon the energies of this one man….He broke incompetent generals and admirals and replaced them with younger men upon whom he could rely”….He had used the House of Commons as a platform from which to address the country…and brought the force of public opinion to bear upon politics.”

But Churchill also knew that Pitt sat for Old Sarum, one of the rottenest of rotten boroughs: constituencies with small electorates, used by their patrons to gain unrepresentative influence in Parliament. While Pitt’s talents helped define what the office of prime minister could and should be, representation in government remained limited to the wealthiest men of property. Even this elite group faced the frequent hazards of impeachment and bills of attainder. Reform was required.

William Pitt the Younger, Churchill wrote, “saw quite clearly the need and justification for reform,” but “was overcome by the dead hand of eighteenth-century politics.” Instead the younger Pitt solidified the role of prime minister-as-war-leader defined by his father, while professionalizing the finances of the nation and creating “the modern machinery of the ‘Budget.’”

Surveying the state of parliamentary debate at the start of the nineteenth century, Churchill found the scene uninspiring. But change finally started in 1828 with, first, the elimination of religious restrictions on office holders and, second, the expansion of the franchise in 1832. The Industrial Revolution, and the religious diversity of a United Kingdom that then included Irish Catholics and increasingly wealthy Nonconformists, had forced changes to the British body politic, but great men could still influence events. Of Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel’s career-ending decision to repeal the Corn Laws, Churchill wrote: “he understood better than any of his contemporaries the needs of the country, and he had the outstanding courage to change his views in order to meet them.”

The expansion of the electorate resulted in the creation of modern political parties and with it the need of the parties to become responsive to the will of voters. Far from ending the role of great parliamentary leaders, however, the new situation brought forth a fresh generation of Titans. Churchill himself was born in the political age dominated by William Gladstone and Benjamin Disraeli. He later recognized Gladstone’s Midlothian Campaign as “the first broad appeal to the people by a potential Prime Minister” and considered it Disraeli’s “great task” to have persuaded the Conservative Party “to face the inevitability of democ-

racy, and to endow it with the policies which would meet the new conditions.”

Hastening this last development, Churchill believed, was his own father, whose campaign for “Tory Democracy” maintained that Conservatives should enfranchise the working man and embrace his input into the political system. But to this idea Lord Randolph’s leader, Lord Salisbury, was unresponsive, leaving the ground in Churchill’s view to the emergent Labour movement.

Radicalism did not begin, however, with Labour. Joseph Chamberlain epitomized the prosperous industrialist but in middle age turned his great energies to politics. In the process he transformed his native Birmingham from a Dickensian slum into the self-confident Second City of Britain.

Radical Joe’s efforts to bring about similar change on a national level were largely frustrated first by Gladstone and then by Salisbury, but in an essay on Chamberlain Churchill noted that by the 1930s it had become “the axiom of the Tory Party that the well-being of the people…is the first duty of the ruler, once the preservation of the State is secured.” Chamberlain had the rare distinction of imposing his influence on two major political parties by deriving his power direct from voters and not from his political superiors.

The Parliament Act of 1911 and the Representation of the People Acts of 1918 and 1928, which Churchill characterized as “a tidal wave of democracy,” combined with “the volcanic explosion of the [First World] war swept the shores bare” of the sort of forces that blocked Lord Randolph and Joseph Chamberlain. Britain’s progress towards universal adulthood suffrage culminated in the general election of 1929 when, for the first time, all adult men and women could vote on an equal basis.

“I cannot see any figure which resembles or recalls the Liberal statesmen of the Victorian epoch,” Churchill wrote in an essay about the respected John Morley: “The leadership of the privileged has passed away,” he continued, “but it has not been succeeded by that of the eminent. We have entered the region of mass effects.”

Clearly the effects of the full democratization of politics were much on Churchill’s mind in the Twenties and Thirties. What sort of leaders, he wonders, would now be produced?

Churchill believed the great parliamentary leaders of the past did much to lay the foundation of a free and prosperous Britain. But personalities like Walpole, the two Pitts, Canning, Castlereagh, Peel, Gladstone and Disraeli had been produced by an age, as Disraeli himself acknowledged, “when the world was for the few, and for the very few.”
**GREAT MAN THEORY...**

Writing in *Great Contemporaries* about Lords Roseberry and Curzon, Churchill extols the capabilities of two men he knew well, while making it clear that he did not believe the new political reality could accommodate such Old World aristocrats. But could the new Britain, for all its hard-won democracy, produce the sort of politicians who could preserve and perpetuate their inheritance? Churchill believed the answer was yes.

"Whatever one may think about democratic government," Churchill wrote,

it is just as well to have practical experience of its rough and slatternly foundations. No part of the education of a politician is more indispensable than the fighting of elections. Here you come in contact with all sorts of persons and every current of national life. You feel the Constitution at work in its primary processes. Dignity may suffer, the superfine gloss is soon worn away; nice particularisms and special private policies are scraped off; much has to be accepted with a shrug, a sigh or a smile; but at any rate in the end one knows a good deal about what happens and why.16

In all of this, Churchill was not simply speculating in the dark. He already had before him the example of his great colleague and mentor David Lloyd George. The Welsh Wizard’s famous “People’s Budget” of 1909 had been the very catalyst of what Churchill characterized as “a tidal wave of democracy.” The same radical reformer had then proven equally effective as a war leader in Britain’s most desperate crisis to date. Indeed, all of the leaders who gathered at Versailles’ table of victory in 1919 represented democratic powers. In the Twenties and Thirties Lloyd George was still viewed as someone who might once again become prime minister.

Churchill held a much dimmer view of Ramsay MacDonald, the first Labour prime minister. MacDonald came from even humbler origins than Lloyd George, but Churchill disagreed with him on almost all points. Yet it was not in Churchill’s nature to despair. Writing during the time of the first socialist government in 1924, Churchill noted:

One may condemn unsparingly the actions and opinions of such a man at such a time without failing to recognize the qualities of sincerity, of strength of character, of tenacity of purpose, and the disregard of unpopularity which he unquestionably displayed, and which in happier circumstances might have been, and may perhaps still be, of exceptional service to his fellow countrymen.17

And so that brings us back to Churchill’s Boxing Day speech before the United States Congress in 1941. As Lincoln contemplated in his Gettysburg Address, Churchill too faced the question—as we again face it today: Can a democracy fight a war of survival without compromising its principles?

“I have been in full harmony all of my life,” Churchill told Congress,

with the tides that flow on both sides of the Atlantic against privilege and monopoly, and I have steered confidently towards the Gettysburg ideal of ‘government of the people by the people.’ I owe my advancement entirely to the House of Commons, whose servant I am. In my country, as in yours, public men are proud to be the servants of the State and would be ashamed to be its masters.18

**Endnotes**

2. Ibid., 193.
3. Ibid., 194.
6. Ibid., 142.
7. Ibid., 132.
8. Ibid., 139-40.
9. Ibid., 142.
10. Ibid., 220.
11. Ibid., 221.
13. Ibid., 258.
15. Ibid., 61.
In his essay on hobbies in *Thoughts and Adventures*, Winston Churchill writes: “It is a mistake to read too many good books when quite young.” The good news about our American educational system at all levels is that, with rare exceptions, it is remarkably well designed to shield young people from the dangers of reading too many good books. Our author explains the nature of that hazard:

> It is a great pity to read a book too soon in life. The first impression is the one that counts; and if it is a slight one, it may be all that can be hoped for. A later and second perusal may recoil from a surface already hardened by premature contact. Young people should be careful in their reading, as old people in eating their food. They should not eat too much. They should chew it well.¹

When Churchill himself first decided to read good books seriously, he was twenty-two years old, the age at which most university students then and now are scheduled to graduate and leave their days of wide reading behind them. Previously at Sandhurst, his attention had been narrowly focussed on the topics necessary for a soldier: “Tactics, Fortification, Topography (map-making), Military Law and Military Administration formed the whole curriculum. In addition were >>
Churchill was not an amateur author but a professional writer....Throughout most of his life Winston Churchill depended on writing for income which allowed him to live—or almost to live—in the aristocratic style which he had no inheritance to support. More importantly, income from writing also allowed Churchill freedom to engage in politics. He was a professional writer who engaged in politics, not a politician who dabbled in amateur writing.

THOUGHTS AND ADVENTURES...
Drill, Gymnastics and Riding.” For reading to supplement this curriculum, Churchill reports that he soon obtained “Hamley’s Operations of War, Prince Kraft’s Letters on Infantry, Cavalry and Artillery, Maine’s Infantry Fire Tactics, together with a number of histories dealing with the American Civil, Franco-German and Russo-Turkish wars, which were then our latest and best specimens of wars.”

Although doubtless useful for a cavalry officer, all this was thin fare to nourish a future Nobel laureate in literature. Famously, it was later, in India, that Churchill embarked on his own program of reading very good books indeed for several hours a day: Gibbon, Macaulay, Plato, Aristotle, Schopenhauer, Malthus, Darwin, Lecky, and many more.

Churchill also reports that while reading in India he longed for university instructors who could have guided him: professors “eager to distribute the treasures they had gathered before they were overtaken by the night.” Countering this agreeable though utopian image of ever-helpful professors, Churchill adds that he now pities “undergraduates, when I see what frivolous lives many of them lead in the midst of precious fleeting opportunity.”

It may be as well that Churchill can’t be with us in the Bay Area this week to observe and comment on American undergraduates. Despite his nostalgia in sentimental moments for the academic experience he never had, I believe he certainly did as well or better reading and thinking for himself than within the confines of university attitudes and orthodoxies.

In any case, Churchill’s advice, exemplified by his own approach to reading, is the first lesson—and perhaps the most important one—that we ought to take away from consideration of Thoughts and Adventures. It’s well to read widely. It’s best to read good books when we can measure them against something more than very early life experiences. It’s best to read because we want to—not because somebody hands us a syllabus along with news of the ordeal that awaits on final exam day. It’s excellent that you are all here by choice not compulsion. If by chance you’re coming to Thoughts and Adventures for the first time at an age that might politely be described as “post-adolescent,” so much the better. I want next to consider what frameworks might be most useful for thinking about Thoughts and Adventures.

In 2003 Gretchen Rubin published a nice book entitled Forty Ways to Look at Winston Churchill. She might have found fifty ways, or a hundred ways. Churchill was deeply involved in military and civil pursuits over an unusually long, active, and influential life. There are many angles from which he can be viewed. One that deserves a conference of its own some day, for example, is his work as a skillful amateur painter.

In looking as readers at Thoughts and Adventures, I suggest we start with the fact, fundamental to all facets of his career, that Churchill was not an amateur author but a professional writer. I use “professional” in the sense defined by the 11th edition of Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary to mean “participating for gain or livelihood in an activity or field of endeavor often engaged in by amateurs.” Throughout most of his life Winston Churchill depended on writing for the income which allowed him to live—or almost to live—in the aristocratic style which he had no inheritance to support. More importantly, income from writing also allowed Churchill freedom to engage in politics.

He was a professional writer who engaged in politics, not a politician who dabbled in amateur writing. Only infrequently did his political offices provide enough money to sustain himself and his family. Nor did his writing, at first. He was a professional writer too in that other sense of a professional as somebody who works successfully to master techniques in a particular field. As he improved his skill and his reputation via his
writing as well as his other activities, he became one of the most highly paid writers in his day. In addition to financial incentives, there was of course, as for most professional writers, interest in using his writing to explore and think about various topics that concerned him, thus using his writing as a means of thinking for himself in some depth about significant issues.

The essays in *Thoughts and Adventures* are outstanding examples of this. As Professor Muller has carefully documented in the notes to his edition, before being collected in the book, most of the essays were each published in several magazines, thus multiplying the money Churchill received for them while also, and not incidentally, keeping his name and ideas in the public eye on both sides of the Atlantic. As Professor Muller’s edition also documents, successive publication of the same essay allowed for the professional writer’s technique of revising and polishing early drafts.

By 1900, when Churchill entered Parliament at the age of twenty-six, he was already the author of five books as well as many articles for newspapers as a war correspondent. Eventually his collected works ran to thirty-eight volumes (they don’t include all his speeches). In 1953 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature. This, according to the citation, was “For his mastery of historical and biographical description as well as for brilliant oratory in defending exalted human values.”

“Oratory” refers to the great wartime speeches that are deservedly the most familiar and most famous part of Churchill’s oeuvre. His mastery of historical and biographical description has been less often appreciated. It is this aspect of his writing that is most conspicuous in *Thoughts and Adventures*, although somewhat in miniature. The most imposing of his histories are *The World Crisis*, his six-volume account of World War I, and *The Second World War*, his six-volume memoir of that conflict. Churchill’s most dazzling work as biographer is found in his four-volume biography of the First Duke of Marlborough, and in the panorama of biographical sketches in *Great Contemporaries*.

As the title of *Thoughts and Adventures* invites us to do, we may divide it into essays exploring particular topics, mostly historical, and short true narratives, mostly autobiographical in form, featuring Churchill but not always starring him as the central character.

A brilliant example of the latter is “A Day with Clemenceau.” In *Thoughts and Adventures* an arresting and perennially relevant example of Churchill’s essays on history is “Ludendorff’s ‘All—or Nothing.’” Tomorrow and Saturday we’ll be discussing many but far from all of the outstanding essays. What I want to stress now via brief comments on those two essays is that both the historical essays and the biographical and autobiographical narratives are skillfully shaped in ways to which Churchill’s Nobel Prize citation does not do justice—as it hardly could in six words—by praising his “mastery of historical and biographical description.”

It is the word “description” that is misleading. Had the Nobel Committee asked me (it never does), I would have suggested “analysis” rather than “description.”

"Very well,” said Clemenceau...”I have done what you wish. never mind what has been arranged before....And now,” he said, “I claim my reward...I wish to pass the river and see the battle.” The Army Commander shook his head. "It would not be right for you to go across the river,” he said. "Why not?"

“Well, we are not at all sure of the situation beyond the river. It is extremely uncertain.” "Good,” cried Clemenceau. “We will re-establish it....You come with me, Mr. Winston Churchill, and you, Loucheur. A few shells will do the General good.”

—WSC. Who can resist thinking that his “Day with Clemenceau” was in his mind in 1944, when he insisted on crossing over to the east bank of the Rhine?
“Description” suggests writing that is both easier and less interesting than Churchill’s. What is most striking in all his historical and biographical works is their astute combination of narration with analysis.

In “A Day with Clemenceau,” analysis is less sustained than in Churchill’s sketch of Clemenceau for Great Contemporaries. The account in Thoughts and Adventures of Clemenceau’s day visiting allied generals and the front lines during a major crisis of World War I, however, weaves into the narrative an appraisal of two styles of leadership, with Churchill’s preference and recommendation unmistakable.

At the outset, Churchill—and the reader along with him—discovers Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister “in bed, a grey figure amid a litter of reports and telegrams” (177). This grey figure then dispatches a subordinate—Churchill—to France to find out what the armies are doing about the German offensive. The French Prime Minister, Georges Clemenceau, taking Churchill along, goes himself to important allied headquarters, listens to the generals, decides on the spot to send French reserves into battle in support of hard-pressed British troops, and then insists on also going as far forward as possible, where he comes under German shell fire, to have a look at the front line. “A Day with Clemenceau” shows why Clemenceau was one of Churchill’s heroes and models. It also leaves no doubt about what style of leadership is best.

“Ludendorff’s ‘All—or Nothing’” is not a narrative of the March 1918 German offensive as it unfolded, but rather a gripping, sustained analysis of its causes, horrendous nature, and consequences—among other things, ruin for Germany. For our conference on “Churchill and Today’s Challenges” there is surely no essay more relevant than this one. Here, as a reminder or to whet your appetite, is a central paragraph:

The Clemenceau statue, Paris. “As much as any single human being, miraculously magnified, can ever be a nation, he was France....the Old Tiger, with his quaint, stylish cap, his white moustache and burning eye, would make a truer mascot for France than any barnyard fowl.” —WSC

It was the fatal weakness of the German empire that its military leaders, who knew every detail of their profession and nothing outside it, considered themselves, and became, arbiters of the whole policy of the State. In France throughout the War, even in its darkest and most convulsive hours, the civil government, quivering to its foundations, was nevertheless supreme. The President, the Premier, the Minister of War, the Chamber, and that amazing composite entity called “Paris,” had the power to break any military man and set him on one side. In England Parliament was largely in abeyance. The Press exalted the generals, or “the soldiers” as they called themselves. But there existed a strong political caste and hierarchy which, if it chose to risk its official existence, could grapple with the “brass hats.” In the United States the civil element was so overwhelmingly strong that its main need was to nurture and magnify the unfledged military champions. In Germany there was no one to stand against the General Staff and to bring their will-power and special point of view into harmony with the general salvation of the State. (167)

Among many other points of this paragraph and this essay, Churchill’s analysis shows the danger of not reading and learning widely beyond that narrow military education from which he broke free in ways exemplified by his career, and not least by the book we are here to discuss this week. 🍃

Endnotes


LOCAL COORDINATORS (USA)
Marcus Frost, Chairman (mfrostrock@yahoo.com)
PO Box 272, Mexico TX 76667
tel. (254) 587-2000

Judy Kambestad (jammott@aol.com)
1172 Cambera Lane, Santa Ana CA 92705-2345
tel. (714) 838-4741 (West)

Susie & Phil Larson (parker-fox@msn.com)
22 Scotdale Road, LaGrange Park IL 60526
tel. (708) 352-6825 (Midwest)

D. Craig Horn (dcrayghtorn@carolina.rr.com)
700 Bluebird Hill Lane, Weddington NC 28104; tel. (704) 844-9960 (East)

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS
(Affiliates are in bold face)
For formal affiliation with the Churchill Centre, contact any local coordinator above.

Rt. Hon. Sir Winston Spencer Churchill
Society of Alaska
Judith & Jim Muller (afjwm@uaa.alaska.edu)
2410 Galewood St., Anchorage AK 99508
tel. (907) 786-4740; fax (907) 786-4647

Rt. Hon. Sir Winston Spencer Churchill
Society of Calgary, Alberta
Mr. Justice J.D. Bruce McDonald, Pres. (bruce.mcdonald@albertacourts.ca)
2401 N - 601 - 5th Street, S.W.
Calgary AB T2P 5P7; tel. (403) 297-3164

Rt. Hon. Sir Winston Spencer Churchill
Society of Edmonton, Alberta
Dr. Edward Hutson, Pres. (jehutson@shaw.ca)
98 Rehwinkel Rd., Edmonton AB T6R 1Z8
tel. (780) 430-7178

Churchill Centre Arizona
Larry Pike (lpvike@chartwellgpr.com)
4927 E. Crestview Dr., Paradise Valley AZ 85253
bus. tel. (602) 445-7719; cell (602) 622-0566

Rt. Hon. Sir Winston Spencer Churchill
Society of Great Britain
Christopher Hebb, Pres. (cavellcapital@gmail.com)
30-2231 Folkstone Way, W. Vancouver, BC V7Y 2V6
tel. (604) 209-6400

California: Churchillians-of-the-Bay
Jason Mueller (youngchurchillian@hotmail.com)
17115 Wilson Way, Watsonville CA 95076
tel. (831) 768-8663

California: Churchillians of the Desert
David Ramsay (rambo85@aol.com)
74857 S. Cove Drive, Indian Wells CA 92210
tel. (760) 837-1095

Churchillians of Southern California
Leon J. Waszak (leonwaszak@aol.com)
235 South Ave. # 66, Los Angeles CA 90042
tel. (818) 240-1000 x5844

Churchill Centre Chicagoland
Phil & Susan Larson (parker-fox@msn.com)
22 Scotdale Road, LaGrange Park IL 60526
tel. (708) 352-6825

Colorado: Rocky Mountain Churchillians
Lew House, President (lhous2eti@earthlink.net)
2034 Eisenhower Dr., Louisville CO 80027
tel. (303) 661-9856; fax (303) 661-0589

England: TCC-UK Woodford / Epping Branch
Tony Woodhead, Old Orchard 32 Albion Hill, Loughton Essex IG10 4RD; tel. (0208) 508-4562

England: TCC-UK Northern Branch
Derek Greenwell, Farriers Cottage Station Road, Goldborough, Knaresborough, North Yorks. HG5 8NT
tel. (01432) 863225

Churchill Society of South Florida
Rodolfo Milani (churchillsocietyofsouthflorida@gmail.com)
7741 Ponce de Leon Road, Miami FL 33143
tel. (305) 668-4419; mobile (305) 606-5939

Churchill Centre North Florida
Richard Streiff (streiff@bellsouth.net)
81 N.W. 44th Street, Gainesville FL 32607
tel. (352) 378-8985

Winston Churchill Society of Georgia
William L. Fisher (fish1947@bellsouth.net)
5299 Brooke Farm Dr., Dunwoody GA 30338
tel. (770) 399-9774

Winston Churchill Society of Michigan
Richard Marsh (rcmarsh@aol.com)
4085 Littledown, Ann Arbor, MI 48103
tel. (734) 913-0848

Winston Churchill Society of Ohio
Bernard Wojciechowski (bwojciechowski@bourough.ambler.pa.us)
5909 Bluebird Hill Lane, Weddington NC 28104; tel. (704) 844-9960

South Carolina: Bernard Baruch Chapter
Kenneth Childs (kchnld@childs-halligan.net)
P.O. Box 11367, Columbia SC 29111-1367
tel. (803) 254-4035

Texas: Emery Reves Society
Jeff Weesner (jweesner@centurytel.net)
2101 Knoll Ridge Court, Corinth TX 76210
tel. (940) 321-0757; cell (940) 300-6237

Churchill Centre Houston
Chris Schaeper (chrischaeper@bcglobal.net)
2907 Quenby, Houston TX 77005
tel. (713) 660-6898

Churchill Centre South Texas
thechurchillcentresouthtexas.com
Don Jakeway (churchillsts@gmail.com)
170 Grassmarket, San Antonio, TX 78259
tel. (210) 333-2085

Sir Winston Churchill Society of
Vancouver Island • www.churchillvictoria.org
Mayo McDonough, Pres. (churchillsoctery@shaw.ca)
PO Box 2114, Sidney BC V8L 3S6
tel. (250) 395-0008

Washington (DC) Society for Churchill
Chris Sterling, Pres. (chrissew@gwu.edu)
4507 Airlie Way, Annandale VA 22003
tel. (703) 615-2355

Churchill Centre Seattle
www.churchillseattle.blogspot.com
Simon Mould (simon@eckirkanl.org)
1920 243rd Pl., SW, Bothell, WA 98021
tel. (425) 286-7364