

The background of the cover is a collage of various postage stamps. The most prominent is a red 1p stamp featuring a profile of King George VI, with a crown in the top right corner and the word 'POSTAGE' at the bottom. To its left is a blue stamp with a profile of Winston Churchill, with 'POSTAGE' written at the bottom. Other stamps in shades of green, brown, and blue are partially visible, some showing the word 'POSTAGE' and others showing profiles of figures.

# THE CHURCHILLIAN

WINTER 2011 | VOLUME 2 | ISSUE 4

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL CHURCHILL MUSEUM

## 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Abdication Crisis Winston Churchill and Edward VIII

THE POLITICIAN AND THE PRINCE ♦ CHURCHILL'S PRIVATE COMMENTS ♦ "THAT WOMAN"  
CHURCHILL ON MONARCHY ♦ THE PRIME MINISTER IN THE VIEW OF WARTIME ENEMIES

## Greetings from Fulton!



Warm greetings, as ever, from the campus of Westminster College and welcome to the Winter *Churchillian*. The feedback we received concerning the previous edition was most positive and I hope you are all enjoying the incremental improvements! This *Churchillian* explores the fascinating and controversial story of the abdication of Edward VIII. This topic, while a significant moment in British history, is often overlooked, as indeed, is Churchill's role. The recent Oscar winning film *The Kings Speech*, helped bring this

topic back into the public consciousness and to tell again, to new audiences, of this most fascinating time in British political and constitutional life. In this edition we hear from regular contributor and noted *Churchillian* Richard Langworth and welcome two new authors, Manfred Weidhorn and David Freeman.

By the time you receive this, the latest edition of *The Churchillian*, we will be well into the festive season having hosted the 28<sup>th</sup> iteration of the annual Victorian Christmas. If you have not yet visited the Museum and experienced the delights of Victorian Christmas, there is still time as the event does not end until 31<sup>st</sup> December. Also in this edition of the *Churchillian*, for the first time, we have chosen to showcase our many loyal donors without whose help our wonderful Museum would not exist. You all have our thanks for your support. You can also read and see the results of our Fall Fashion Gala, organized and hosted by the Mid-Missouri Friends of the Museum. The evening was a wonderful occasion and helped raised much needed support for the Church of St. Mary.

As we look ahead to next year I would urge you to mark your calendars for the early New Year. In February we will see the culmination of many months of planning and anticipation with the opening of our Smithsonian Institution exhibition, *The Way We Worked*. This temporary display is curated in partnership with our local community in Fulton and Callaway County and will further serve to underscore our reputation as a cultural institution of growing repute. Please also mark your calendars for the 2012 Churchill Weekend to be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup>/ 4<sup>th</sup> March. I'm delighted to announce, too, that our 2012 Kemper will be renowned Princeton University historian and social and cultural commentator, Sir David Cannadine. More details will be forthcoming in due course but, in the meantime, a short biography of Sir David can be found on page 34.

It only remains for me to wish you all a very 'Happy Christmas' and festive season and I look forward to more Churchill with you all in the New Year!

**Dr. Rob Havers**  
Executive Director,  
National Churchill Museum

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# THE CHURCHILLIAN

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL CHURCHILL MUSEUM

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Cover: Great Britain issued only four stamps bearing the image of Edward VIII before he abdicated on December 10, 1936. In the stunned atmosphere following his departure, some suggested that facing the monarch "to the left and into the darkness" prefigured his brief reign.



Young loom workers at Bibb Mill No. 1 in Macon, Georgia, by Lewis W. Hine, January 1909.

National Archives, Records of the Children's Bureau



Submarine builder at Electric Boat Company, Groton, Connecticut, by Fenno Jacobs, August 1943.

National Archives, General Records of the U.S. Navy

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## SPECIAL THANKS

Cover: Edward VIII coronation stamps  
Loaned courtesy of Mr. Overton T. Harris

# Winston Churchill & Edward VIII

WRITTEN BY DAVID FREEMAN

On the tenth of November nineteen thirty-six,  
The Duke of Windsor went to get his kicks,  
It was love love love love love alone,  
Caused King Edward to leave his throne.  
—Caribbean Ditty, 1937

Born 23 June 1894, Prince Edward Albert Christian George Andrew Patrick David immediately occupied a position of near-inconceivable stature. British influence in the world and the British Empire stood at their zenith. As the eldest great-grandchild of Queen Victoria in the direct-male line, the Prince (known to his family as David) stood to inherit what Churchill later described to him as “the finest Throne in the world.”<sup>1</sup> Forty years later, the Prince who became King Edward VIII freely chose to give up that throne in order to marry the woman he loved.

The Abdication, seventy-five years ago this year, deeply involved Churchill and has become incrustated with rumors and misperceptions, born at the time and repeated ever since. The anniversary of the only voluntary resignation by a British monarch since the Anglo-Saxon age is an appropriate moment to assess the relationship between that monarch and his most redoubtable champion. With most (but not all) of the records now open, fact can now be separated from fiction, to show how Churchill and Edward VIII understood, related to and indeed used—or tried to use—one another.

## EARLY ENCOUNTERS

The lives of the young Prince and Churchill, twenty years his senior, intersected in 1911, when King George V made Edward the Prince of Wales. As Home Secretary it fell to Churchill to read out the Letters Patent that invested the Prince with his new title during the ceremony at Caernarvon Castle. Predictably, Churchill found this a moving occasion, and thought “the little Prince looked & spoke as well as it was possible for anyone to do,” noting in a letter to Clementine that “he was a very nice boy—quite simple & terribly kept in order.”<sup>2</sup>

When Churchill became First Lord of the Admiralty shortly after the investiture, he became a hero to the newly-installed Prince of Wales, who had been a naval cadet. Churchill’s vigorous emphasis on sea power appealed to the Prince, who wrote of the First Lord: “He is a wonderful man and has a great power of work.”<sup>3</sup> For his part Churchill confirmed the promotion of the Prince to Lieutenant in 1913. While staying at Balmoral that summer, Churchill had a long talk with the Prince as they went through the First Lord’s official Admiralty despatch boxes together.

Writing to Clementine, Churchill indicated that he and the Prince “have made rather friends,” and noted with avuncular concern the 19-year-old’s self-imposed Spartan lifestyle: “He requires to fall in love with a pretty cat,” Churchill concluded of Edward, with reference to Clementine’s pet name, “who will prevent him from



# *“When our Kings are in conflict with our constitution, we change our Kings.”*

WINSTON CHURCHILL

getting too strenuous.”<sup>4</sup> Little could Churchill imagine the repercussions when the Prince finally did fall in love.

The First World War temporarily strained their relationship. Despite his naval training, the Prince was commissioned in the army and sent to France, only to be shielded at General Headquarters, well behind the front lines. Anxious to do his bit in combat, a frustrated Edward thanked Churchill early in the war for expressing sympathy with his situation. Very soon, though, the impressionable Prince absorbed the dismissive contempt held by battlefield “hard hats” for the “top hats” in London, including Churchill. By 1915, with Churchill under fire as the ostensible planner of the Dardanelles campaign, the Prince was describing Churchill as an “interfering politician” and “intriguing swine” who was “nothing short of a national danger.”<sup>5</sup>

Lloyd George succeeded H.H. Asquith as Prime Minister in 1916. When Churchill was not initially included in the Lloyd George government, Edward expressed satisfaction. A year later, when Churchill was appointed Minister of Munitions, the Prince wrote, “I suppose he has silently wormed his way in again,” allowing that it was perhaps “safer to give him a job than to have him hanging around unemployed.”<sup>6</sup>

## **BACHELOR PRINCE**

The sophomoric attitude of young Edward did not survive the war. By the summer of 1919 he was twenty-five and starting to take up a full slate of royal duties.







The Windsors in later life. (Photo Credit: Popperfoto)

He happily accepted public speaking advice from Churchill, who was pleased to accommodate him. Do not be ashamed to read a speech, Churchill advised, but in that case, “do it quite openly, reading it very slowly and deliberately.”<sup>7</sup>

As Prince, as King and later as ex-King, Edward occasionally sought Churchill’s assistance in preparing important speeches—including his Abdication broadcast in 1936. This has long been known. Less well known is that in 1928 the Prince of Wales started seeing a speech therapist, who had also treated and been recommended to him by Churchill.

Cortland MacMahon served as Instructor for Speech Defects and Breathing Exercises at St. Bartholomew’s Hospital between 1911 and 1939. Churchill believed that he personally benefitted from MacMahon’s treatment “to the extent almost of a perfect cure” and felt it his “duty to spread the good tidings to others who may be similarly helped.”<sup>8</sup> In February 1928 MacMahon wrote Churchill that he had “commenced treatment with HRH the Prince of Wales,” and thanked Churchill for the reference.

If Edward truly suffered from a speech impediment, his problem did not begin to compare with that of his younger brother the Duke of York, who had recently started seeing his own therapist, Lionel Logue—a story now made famous by the Oscar-winning film *The King’s Speech*. In fact, Churchill’s recommendation of MacMahon probably mattered very little with Edward, who most likely started treatment as a result of his infatuation with another of MacMahon’s patients, Freda Dudley Ward.

To understand Churchill’s behavior during the Abdication Crisis and his views about Mrs. Simpson, it must be understood that Churchill along with the rest of British society had a front-row seat to the Prince of Wales’s first extended relationship with a married woman. Edward met Mrs. Dudley Ward in 1918. By 1921 Churchill was writing in a chatty letter to Clementine that he had attended “a jolly little dance at Freda’s” at which “the little Prince” was “idolizing as usual.” Churchill wrote: “People are getting quite bored with it. They think that a door should be open or shut.”<sup>9</sup> Over six years later, though, Churchill was hosting the

Prince and his mistress to luncheon. “It was quite pathetic to see,” Churchill wrote Clementine. “His love is so obvious & undisguisable.”<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, the Prince did abandon Mrs. Dudley Ward after a long and passionate relationship. Observers like Churchill, therefore, might reasonably suppose that he would leave his next married paramour as well. This flawed assumption tripped up Churchill’s political acumen during the final weeks of Edward VIII’s reign.

## MRS. SIMPSON

Churchill was not alone in misapprehending until too late the Prince’s feelings about the American woman who supplanted Freda Dudley Ward. Wallis Warfield Simpson may have been married with one divorce behind her already, but Churchill had served as a minister to the Prince of Wales’s grandfather, the philandering King Edward VII, and took a “modern” view toward royal mistresses.

Only after Edward VIII had acceded to throne, in January 1936, did Churchill begin to receive intimations that the new King’s relationship with Mrs. Simpson was very serious. “Extraordinary as it may seem,” Edward’s official biographer Philip Ziegler wrote, “all the evidence suggests that even Mrs. Simpson was given no inkling of his real wishes until his reign was some way advanced.”<sup>11</sup>

In July 1936 Churchill was sounded out by the King’s close adviser, Walter Monckton, as whether Mrs. Simpson might divorce her second husband and then spend the summer with the King at Balmoral. Churchill strongly opposed both proposals. He learned later that these unwelcome views convinced Mrs. Simpson that Churchill was “against her.”<sup>12</sup> Certainly Churchill was not consulted again by the King until the following December, when Edward’s loss of the throne was all but decided.

## ABDICATION

On 16 November 1936 the King informed Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin of his intention to marry Mrs. Simpson, who had just been granted by a court the first step toward a final divorce. Baldwin recognized immediately that no such marriage would be acceptable in that day and age. On 25 November Baldwin met with Opposition leaders along with Churchill (then a



private but senior member of Parliament) telling them that should the King insist on marriage, the government would resign. The Labour and Liberal leaders, Clement Attlee and Archibald Sinclair, assured Baldwin they would support this decision and refuse to form an alternative government. According to Neville Chamberlain, who was also present, Churchill said “that although his attitude was ‘a little difficult,’ he too ‘would certainly support the Government.’”<sup>13</sup>

Just where did Churchill stand? Essentially he opposed any marriage between the King and Mrs. Simpson. Nevertheless, he felt a natural sympathy towards the King, and believed the solution was a “morganatic marriage.” Under this plan, Mrs. Simpson would become the Duchess of Cornwall, but not Queen. The Cabinet, however, did not approve; neither did the Dominions. Churchill’s only hope now was that the King would see reason, accept his duty as Sovereign, and give up Mrs. Simpson. To this end Churchill began pressing for time—which put him out of step with most of the nation.

Churchill’s friend J.A. Spender wrote to him in shock on December 6th: “How can you suggest that the present state of things should be prolonged for five months.... the thing ought to be settled at once.”<sup>14</sup> Another colleague, Leo Amery, correctly perceived that “the country as a whole was getting progressively more shocked at the idea that the King could hesitate between his duty to the Throne and his affection for a woman.”<sup>15</sup>

Nevertheless, Churchill persevered and, pressing for time in the House of Commons, found himself shouted down by members of both parties on Monday, December 7th. This almost unprecedented Parliamentary rebuke chilled Churchill, who stormed out of the Chamber, his rising prospects as a proponent of rearmament against Germany momentarily (but not permanently) derailed.

## MISPERCEPTIONS

Many wild rumors have floated about, then and now. One is that Churchill was wanted to form a minority Government, with a “King’s Party,” that would force an election and divide the nation over the King’s personal life. Former Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald

thought “a person like Churchill might well put his hand to that job!”<sup>16</sup> But this notion is disproved in letters Churchill wrote the day before the Abdication.

In reply to Spender on December 9th. Churchill wrote: “I have never thought of such a thing as five months’ raging propaganda, but I have asked for ten days or a fortnight.”<sup>17</sup> That same day Churchill also wrote: “My main difference with the Government has consisted in the fact that I regarded abdication as a far greater disaster than they did, and I would have put up with the disadvantages and dangers of a prolongation of the controversy within moderate limits.”<sup>18</sup>

In the view of the royal courtier Sir Alan Lascelles, Churchill’s apparent misreading of the King during the Abdication crisis and his sentimental loyalty to the same man as Duke of Windsor was “based on a tragic false premise—viz that he (Winston) really knew the D of W, which he never did.”<sup>19</sup> Lascelles had served the Prince of Wales as Assistant Private Secretary throughout the 1920s, before holding the same position with every monarch from George V through Elizabeth II. From his daily contact with Edward VIII, Lascelles could see what Churchill did not: a man *not* completely devoted to duty.

For his part Churchill had often met the Prince of Wales socially and professionally. To the end of his days Churchill sent signed copies of his books to the Prince/King/Duke, who almost certainly never read any of them. “I have put it on the shelf,” he once responded, “next to all the others.” Like many, Churchill had originally expected the immensely popular Prince to become an equally popular monarch and had tremendous difficulty coming to terms with events.

Did Churchill’s missteps over Edward VIII, as Lascelles believed, result from perceiving a strong intimacy where it did not exist? Evidence indicates otherwise. Trade union leader Sir Walter Citrine had lunch with Churchill on 2 December 1936, and remembered that Churchill spoke about the crisis growing around the King before finally remarking quietly: “I will defend him. I think it is my duty.”



“What?” I said. “Irrespective of what he has done?”  
“Winston looked grave, and putting his hands on his breast, he said with emotion, ‘He feels it here....’”<sup>20</sup>

## THE FACTS OF THE MATTER

Believing his King to be in duress awoke in Churchill powerful emotions of sympathy and stirred his sense of chivalry. These feelings, rather than the notion that he truly understood the King, are what blinded Churchill to the wider scope of the crisis.

Unlike Baldwin, Churchill had not been in close touch with Edward VIII during his brief reign. He did not see that the King would never give up marrying Mrs. Simpson, no matter how much time he was afforded, and would accept Abdication as the price. Churchill was pressing for time the King did not need. But Churchill’s larger failing was his inability to perceive, like Spender and Amery, that the public spectacle of a sovereign pondering the matter was more damaging to the monarchy than Abdication. He was fast to catch on, however. By the following year Churchill “had the honesty to admit” that “when he stood up in favour of the ex-King, he did not know that public opinion was so much against him.”<sup>21</sup>

While Churchill’s personal and political antennae failed him over the Abdication, it is also a myth that his actions hampered his campaign to alert the nation to the rising danger of Hitler. At an anti-Nazi rally at the Royal Albert Hall, one week before Edward finally gave up his throne, Churchill had to be dissuaded by Sir Walter Citrine, who was presiding, from making a statement about the King. Nevertheless, Citrine recorded, “the meeting passed off successfully without the least vestige of discord....Winston read his speech throughout in the most masterly fashion.”<sup>22</sup> No lasting damage to the fight against Appeasement resulted from Churchill’s support for Edward VIII.

## DUKE IN EXILE

After abdicating on December 10th, Edward was created Duke of Windsor and went to the continent to await finalization of Mrs. Simpson’s divorce, so that he could at last marry her. Writing to his former monarch,

Churchill remarked: “The line I take is ‘I wish to see the [new] King reign gloriously, and the Duke of Windsor live happily.’”<sup>23</sup> As a senior Privy Councillor and member of the Civil List Committee, Churchill attempted to assist in the politically delicate matter of providing an adequate financial settlement for the Duke. Once again, though, Churchill found himself tripped up by the actions of the man he so devotedly served.

The Duke had misled his brother, the newly-crowned King George VI, about the state of his finances, and extracted a promise of support that proved wholly unnecessary. As this gradually but inevitably became apparent to the new sovereign, fraternal relations became permanently strained. Churchill unwittingly exacerbated the situation with occasional efforts to see to it that the Duke and his Duchess would one day be allowed to take up permanent residence in Britain. Churchill believed that several years would have to pass before this could happen, but encouraged the Duke in this regard. King George VI, though, understood that as a former monarch, the Duke could never live in England: “We know this, so does Winston,” he recorded, “but we can never tell my brother in so many words. He has got to realize it for himself.”<sup>24</sup>

As it happened, the Duke unwittingly provided just the prescription needed to keep himself permanently in exile. After their marriage, the former Mrs. Simpson became Duchess of Windsor but was not accorded royal status. This upset the Duke to the point that he refused to return home until his wife received what he believed she had



Late in life, Edward was still devoted.

attained through right of marriage. Churchill opposed a royal title for the Duchess and believed no “Government will be found in England which would advise the Crown to take such a step.”<sup>25</sup> Still, it took many years for the slow-witted Duke to absorb the truth.

## WORLD WAR II

Living in France when the war broke out, the Windsors were initially evacuated to England via a destroyer provided by Churchill, newly installed as First Lord of the Admiralty. They soon returned to France, he to take up a commission as a Major General and military observer, she to involve herself with relief work. When German forces broke through in the spring of 1940, the Windsors were forced to evacuate again, first to Spain and then to Portugal. German intrigues began to swell around the couple in Madrid and Lisbon.

Having become Prime Minister during his nation’s greatest hour of peril, Churchill repeatedly had his energies distracted from the Battle of Britain by the need to move the Windsors out of harm’s way, and the foolish attempts by the Duke to set terms under the circumstances. At the end of July the Duke was dispatched to the Bahamas to take up the position of governor, with strict instructions from Churchill not to say anything that could be construed as defeatist.

## “THE KING OVER THE WATER”

Safely deposited in Nassau, the Duke quickly set about stretching Churchill’s patience to the breaking point. First Edward wanted £5000 to renovate the dilapidated Government House. “Comment is needless,” Churchill minuted on the request.<sup>26</sup> Meeting President Roosevelt off the island of Eleuthera at the end of 1940, the Duke voiced doubts about achieving victory, repeating these sentiments in an American magazine early in 1941. Churchill responded with a rebuke restrained only by the civility that the Prime Minister’s abiding respect for the royal family can explain. Nevertheless, Anne Sebba reports in her new biography of the Duchess of Windsor (page 16 this issue) that “there are known to be letters, kept secret at the request of the royal family,” which reveal Churchill’s “anger and frustration with the Duke, exacerbated by the ex-King offering unsolicited advice about the prosecution of the war.”<sup>27</sup>

After the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, the Duke adopted a more robust outlook on the war. Permitted to take leave that summer to visit Canada

and the United States, Edward requested advice from Churchill about what to say on his tour. Churchill responded at length, and the Duke appears to have followed the advice: Lord Halifax, British Ambassador in Washington, reported that President Roosevelt was greatly impressed by the Duke’s substantially changed attitude.

## LAST YEARS

After the war, the Windsors returned to France and gradually came to the realization that their exile was permanent. Out of office himself, Churchill quickly let bygones be bygones and resumed his friendship with the former King. He continued to lobby for an ambassadorial post for the Duke and blamed the Labour Government for not supporting this, although he should have known that George VI would not have taken kindly to the proposal. More happily, the Windsors hosted the Churchills’ fortieth wedding anniversary celebration in 1948.

As official historians of the war culled through German archives secured by the Americans, material potentially embarrassing to the Duke was discovered in connection with his time in Spain and Portugal in 1940. Alerted to this by Prime Minister Attlee in 1945, Churchill responded: “I earnestly hope it may be possible to destroy all traces of these German intrigues.”<sup>28</sup>

It was another eight years before the papers were in a state for possible publication. By then Churchill was back in Downing Street. Since the material had been shared by the Allied powers, Churchill wrote President Eisenhower, vainly urging him to suppress the documents. Thwarted in his effort to eradicate a portion of the historical record, Churchill adopted a resigned attitude. “The American historians are bringing out some beastly documents,” he wrote to Clementine, “but they will do no harm and I expect it is only put in to add some sensationalism to what would otherwise be a boring book.”<sup>29</sup>

Much has been made of the so-called “German dossier” about the Duke—and most of it is nonsense. Churchill and the Duke both adopted the view that it was much ado about nothing. Biographer Philip Ziegler persuasively argued that the Germans misread the perpetually self-centered Duke—to a far greater extent than Churchill ever did.



## FINAL THOUGHTS

In January of 1939 with war brewing, Churchill attended a dinner hosted by the Windsors at their current home in France. Desperately anxious as most to avoid war, the Duke had supported the recent Munich Agreement, which had not yet been violated by Germany, and did not understand Churchill's adamant opposition to the settlement. Present that evening was an American journalist, Vincent Sheean, who recorded the following after-dinner scene:

“The Duke of Windsor and Mr. Churchill settled down to a prolonged argument with the rest of the party listening in silence. The Duke had read Mr. Churchill's recent articles on Spain and his newest one (out that day, I believe) in which he appealed for an alliance with Soviet Russia.

We sat by the fireplace, Mr. Churchill frowning with intentness at the floor in front of him, mincing no words, reminding HRH of the British constitution on occasion—“When our Kings are in conflict with our constitution, we change our Kings,” he said—and declaring flatly that the nation stood in the gravest danger of its long history. The kilted Duke in his Stewart tartan sat on the edge of the sofa, eagerly interrupting whenever he could, contesting every point, but receiving—in terms of the utmost politeness so far as the words went—an object lesson in political wisdom and public spirit. The rest of us sat fixed in silence; there was something dramatically final, irrevocable about this dispute.”<sup>30</sup>

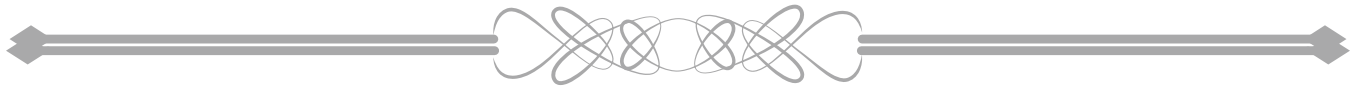
An abiding respect for the monarchy, and a sympathetic nature towards friends in need, always guided Churchill's conduct towards the Duke, even at political risk to himself. But outweighing any personal loyalties Churchill possessed was his even deeper regard for the British constitution and his willingness to defend it at all costs. If there had been no Mrs. Simpson and no Abdication—if Edward VIII had been on the throne when war arrived—the King would have found himself served by the greatest prime minister any British monarch had the privilege to know.

David Freeman teaches history at California State University, Fullerton and serves on the editorial board of *Finest Hour*, the journal of the Churchill Centre. He recently contributed a chapter about Winston Churchill and Eamon de Valera in *The Churchills and Ireland*, a 2011 anthology published by Irish Academic Press.

## Endnotes

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28. Ziegler, 549.
29. Churchill to Mrs. Churchill, 25 May 1954, in Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill Volume VIII: “Never Despair,” 1945-1965* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988), 979.
30. Vincent Sheean: recollections, 19 January 1939, *Companion Volume V, Part 3*, pp. 1349-50.

# Churchill on the Abdication



May I ask my Rt. Hon. Friend [Prime Minister Baldwin] whether he could give us an assurance that no irrevocable step... [Hon. Members: "No!"] ...that no irrevocable step will be taken before the House has received a full statement, not only upon the personal but upon the constitutional issues involved. May I ask him to bear in mind that these issues are not merely personal to the present occupant of the Throne, but that they affect the entire Constitution. [Hon. Members: "Speech!" and "Sit down!"] If the House resists my claim it will only add the more importance to any words that I might want to use.

[Mr. Speaker: "Will the Rt. Hon. Gentleman confine what he has to say to a simple question?"]

I am grateful for what the Rt. Hon. Gentleman has said, but I ask that there should be an assurance that no irrevocable decision will be taken until at least a statement has been made to Parliament of the constitutional

issues involved, and of the procedure involved in such an event? [Hon. Members: "Order!"] —House of Commons, 7 December 1936

*In this exchange Churchill was shouted down by MPs and ruled out of order for making a speech during Question Time. He left the Chamber in heat, saying privately, "I am finished." But the incident only temporarily destroyed his growing stature over the rearmament debate and the growing might of Nazi Germany.*

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...I hope the House will bear with me for a minute or two, because it was my duty as Home Secretary, more than a quarter of a century ago, to stand beside His Present Majesty and proclaim his style and titles at his investiture as Prince of Wales amid the sunlit battlements of Carnarvon Castle, and ever since then he has honoured me here, and also in war-time, with his personal kindness



Abdications have taken place in the history of the world, but if you look at the course of history you will see that they have usually been made by masculine rather than by feminine monarchs. Kings have abdicated but never Queens...

—House of Commons, 27 January 1905



and, I may even say, friendship. I should have been ashamed if, in my independent and unofficial position, I had not cast about for every lawful means, even the most forlorn, to keep him on the Throne of his fathers....

In this Prince there were discerned qualities of courage, of simplicity, of sympathy, and, above all, of sincerity, qualities rare and precious which might have made his reign glorious in the annals of this ancient monarchy. It is the acme of tragedy that these very virtues should, in the private sphere, have led only to this melancholy and bitter conclusion....

Danger gathers upon our path. We cannot afford—we have no right—to look back. We must look forward; we must obey the exhortation of the Prime Minister to look forward. The stronger the advocate of monarchical principle a man may be, the more zealously must he now endeavour to fortify the Throne and to give to His Majesty's

successor that strength which can only come from the love of a united nation and Empire. —House of Commons, 10 December 1936

*This was in essence Churchill's apology for his un-Parliamentary behavior three days before, and did much to repair his reputation among his colleagues; for indeed many of them were beginning to understand that in the face of Hitler, Churchill might well be needed.*

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Private Memorandum (“Secret”)

1. The association [between Edward and Mrs. Simpson] was psychical rather than sexual, and certainly not sensual except incidentally. Although branded with the stigma of a guilty love, no companionship could have appeared more natural, more free from impropriety or grossness. Both were forty-two years old. While profoundly interested in all his duties as King,

and discharging with dignity and punctilio the laborious regal routine, Edward VIII found in his mature paramour a joy and a comfort without which his life and burden seemed insupportable.

2. There is no need to be an apologist for a lax morality in order to state that in no other period in the history of monarchy and upon no other Throne than that of the British Empire would such an attachment have brought about the abdication from his Throne of such a Prince. Upon him had been bestowed many of the rarest and most splendid gifts of personal charm, of insight, of sympathy, and above all of courage and honour. For twenty-five years as Prince of Wales he had faithfully and diligently discharged public duties of a ceremonial character most serviceable to all sorts and conditions of people in all parts of British dominions, but most wearing and exhausting to himself.

3. The character and record of the lady upon whom the affection of Edward VIII became so fatally fixed is relevant only upon a lower plane to the constitutional and moral issues which have been raised. No one has been more victimised by gossip and scandal, but gossip and scandal would not in themselves have been decisive. The only fact of which the Church could take notice was that she had divorced one husband and was in the process of divorcing another. Now the law of England under the liberal reforms of the 19th century affirms the validity of civil marriage, the right of divorced persons to re-marry, and the right of the legally innocent party of a divorce to be

remarried within the sanction of the Church. 4. I had no access to or communication with the King, nor did I seek any, until Friday December 4. At about 5 o'clock on that afternoon, Mr. Monckton telephoned from Fort Belvedere asking me whether I was free to come down and see the King that night.... HM was most gay and debonair for the first quarter of an hour, and no one would have thought him in a serious crisis. But after this effort it was obvious that the personal strain he had been so long under, and which was now at its climax had exhausted him to a most painful degree. On the way down I had made up my mind that never having been consulted at all for so many months, I would not advise on any point except one, viz: time....

The King also said "I have not abdicated. I never used the word abdication in my conversation with the Prime Minister".... He said he wanted a fortnight to weigh the whole matter. He felt himself a prisoner in the Fort. If he could go to Switzerland with a couple of equerries he would be able to think out his decision without undue pressure.....

I said "Your Majesty need not have the slightest fear about time. If you require time there is no force in this country which would or could deny it you. Mr. Baldwin would certainly not resist you. If he did you could remind him that he himself took nearly three months rest in order to recover from the strain of the session. Your strain was far more intense and prolonged. Mr. Baldwin is a fatherly man and nothing would induce him to treat you harshly in such



a matter. Ministers could not possibly resign on such an issue as your request for time.” In order that there should be no mistake I dictated to a shorthand writer in the King’s presence the substance of the position he should adopt towards the Prime Minister. To this I added two other counsels. First that he should not on any account leave the country. That would produce the worst possible impression. Everyone would say that he had gone to meet Mrs. Simpson (then at Cannes)....Secondly I urged him strongly to send for [his doctors]. I was sure that he was in no condition to take so grave a decision as that which lay upon him. He twice in my presence completely lost the thread of what he was saying, and appeared to me driven to the last extremity of endurance....

I must add that throughout I was aware that very strenuous efforts were being made by Lord Beaverbrook through Lord Brownlow to induce Mrs. Simpson who was at Cannes to renounce all idea of marriage, morganatic or otherwise, with the King. This could have been rendered decisive at any moment by withdrawing her petition for divorce upon which she had obtained the *decree nisi*. It is my belief that if this had been obtained, the intense pressure then at work both upon His Majesty and Mrs. Simpson would have resulted in her taking this step and thus ending the crisis.—December 1936, Churchill Papers 2/664.

*Written shortly after the Abdication, these notes, remained unpublished until Sir Martin Gilbert’s official biography, where they may be found in*

Winston S. Churchill, Companion Volume V, Part 3, “The Coming of War” (*Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1983*), 451-54.

The Windsors dine here and we dine back with them. They have a lovely little place next door to La Dragonnière. Everything extremely well done and dignified. Red liveries, and the little man himself dressed up to the nines in the Balmoral tartan with dagger and jabot etc. When you think that you could hardly get him to put on a black coat and short tie when he was Prince of Wales, one sees the change in the point of view. I am to dine with him tomorrow night with only Rothermere. No doubt to talk over his plans for returning home. They do not want him to come, but they have no power to stop him.—WSC to his wife, Chateau de L’Horizon, France, 18 January 1939

*Churchill’s poignant observation says much about Edward’s ultimate reaction to his demoted status. The villas mentioned, in the south of France, were Lord Rothermere’s La Dragonnière and Chateau de L’Horizon, home of their longtime friend Maxine Elliott.*

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I’m glad I was wrong. We could not have had a better King. And now we have this splendid Queen.—June 1953

*WSC to Sir Anthony Montague Browne at Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, in Richard M. Langworth, ed., Churchill By Himself (London: Ebury press, 2008), 352.*

# Churchill & The Monarchy

“IT IS NATURAL FOR PARLIAMENT TO TALK AND FOR THE CROWN TO SHINE.” —WSC

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Churchill believed that Parliamentary government under a sovereign who reigned but did not rule was the most perfect form of democracy. “In this country,” he said in 1944, “we have known the blessings of limited monarchy.

Great traditional and constitutional chains of events have come to make an arrangement, to make a situation, unwritten, which enables our affairs to proceed on what I believe is a superior level of smoothness and democratic progress.”<sup>1</sup>

He preferred the unwritten British constitution to the written American version, however much he admired the latter’s wording. He wondered privately if the U.S. system of recurrent elections every four years wasn’t a detriment to waging war—or indeed to changing a government when it needed changing. From time to time over the last forty years, many Americans may have agreed with him.

In an egalitarian age when such things as monarchs seem arcane and medieval, it may puzzle some that Churchill regarded the sovereign not as a figurehead, but as an intrinsic part of a modern democracy. To him the monarch was a uniting force, around whom peoples of all classes and political opinions could coalesce:

The British have found out a very good plan. Here it is: The Queen can do no wrong. Bad advisers can be changed as often as the people like to use their rights for that purpose. A great battle is won: crowds cheer the Queen. What goes wrong is carted away with the politicians responsible. What goes right is laid on the altar of our united Commonwealth and Empire....It is natural for Parliament to talk and for the Crown to shine.”<sup>2</sup>

But Churchill considered the union of past and present, of Crown and Parliament, Empire and Commonwealth a “golden circle” unique in the world. In his *History of the English-Speaking Peoples* he traced its evolution to Magna Carta, Habeas Corpus, the Petition of Right, Trial by Jury, and the Common Law that is still the basis of law in Britain, America, and other countries once part of the British Empire. (Speaking to Congress after Pearl Harbor he added the Declaration of Independence and the Gettysburg Address.) “These are the milestones and monuments,” he said: “And over all this, uniting each Dominion with the other and uniting us all with our majestic past, is the golden circle of the Crown.”<sup>3</sup>

Churchill saw and sought to mend the rents in Britain’s class-ridden society, particularly as a young Liberal crusading for old-age pensions, prison reform, and what he called a “Minimum Standard.” The Liberals also wanted to limit the powers of the House of Lords, which Churchill had memorably described: “one-sided, hereditary, unpurged, unrepresentative, irresponsible, absentee.”<sup>4</sup>

But Churchill regarded the Crown as an aid to these reforms.

King George V was only weeks on the throne when Lords issue came to a climax:

Prime Minister Asquith informed the new King that he might be called upon by the government to appoint sufficient Liberal peers to tip the House of Lords in favor of limiting its powers. The King, though regretting





Bidding farewell to the Queen at Downing Street the night before his retirement, 1955.

deeply being brought into the political fray, eventually agreed, though the threat alone proved sufficient for the Lords to vote limiting their own power in 1911.

Churchill never forgot what they owed the Sovereign at that critical juncture, and for his leadership during the Great War that followed, for supporting the government of the day, be it Liberal or Coalition, though the King's sympathies were generally Tory. In tribute to the King just before his death in 1936, Churchill's praise was fulsome:

His reign has seen enormous perils and a triumph the like of which the annals of war cannot equal. It has seen moral, social, political and scientific changes in the life of all countries and of all classes so decisive that we, borne along upon the still hurrying torrent, cannot even attempt to measure them. The means of locomotion, the art of flying, the position of women, the map of Europe, the aims and ideals of all nations—East and West, white and

black, brown and yellow—have undergone a prodigious transformation. But here at the centre and summit of the British Empire, in what is the freest society yet achieved in human record, a King who has done his duty will be revered by the ceremonial of his ancestors and acclaimed by the cheers of his faithful people.<sup>5</sup>

When another war came and Churchill became Prime Minister in May 1940, the new monarch, George VI, had his doubts. The King and Queen, three years on the throne, had been strong supporters of Neville Chamberlain and Appeasement. They were horrified to find it failed, and their country once again at war with Germany. They were not alone. Most Britons, Alistair Cooke recalled, "felt they would do anything to get rid of Hitler—except fight him." Every village in England had its Great War memorial, its long list of the dead. This is what Churchill faced, Cooke added: "I don't think ten percent of us would have been with him."<sup>6</sup>

But then in May 1939-40 the battle was joined and Churchill's speeches and broadcasts worked a change. In the midst of the London Blitz, when Buckingham Palace was bombed, the Queen famously said, "Now we can look the East End in the face." Asked if she planned to send her two young daughters out of London to safety, Queen Elizabeth replied: "They will not leave unless I leave, I won't leave unless the King leaves, and the King will never leave."<sup>7</sup> This caused Churchill to remark with emotion: "...your majesties are more beloved by all classes and conditions than any of the princes of the past."<sup>8</sup>

Looking back in the hour of victory, Churchill declared that no Prime Minister

has ever received so much personal kindness and encouragement from his Sovereign as I have. Every week I have my audience, the greater part of which occurs most agreeably at luncheon, and I have seen the King at close quarters in every phase of our formidable experiences. I remember well how in the first months of this administration the King would come in from practising with his rifle and his tommy-gun in the garden at Buckingham Palace, and if it had come to a last stand in London, a matter which had to be considered at one time, I have no doubt that His Majesty would have come very near departing from his usual constitutional rectitude by disregarding the advice of his Ministers.<sup>9</sup>

Seven years later, notified of the King's death, Churchill telephoned Foreign Secretary Eden: "Anthony, imagine the worst thing that could possibly happen...."<sup>10</sup>

Happily his relationship with Elizabeth II continued in the same vein, and Her Majesty always recalls her first Prime Minister with pride and affection. It was to this Queen that Churchill paid one of his most lyrical tributes, in a letter after his retirement in April 1955:

Our Island no longer holds the same authority or power that it did in the days of Queen Victoria. A vast world towers up around it and after all our victories we could not claim the rank we hold were it not for the respect for our character and good sense and the general admiration not untinged by envy for our institutions and way of life. All this has already grown stronger and more solidly founded during the opening years of the present Reign, and I regard it as the most direct mark of God's favour we have ever received in my long life that the whole structure of our new formed Commonwealth has been linked and illuminated by a sparkling presence at its summit.<sup>11</sup>

The scholar David Dilks, quoting this letter, explained that for Churchill the monarchy was "something of infinite value, at once numinous and luminous; and if you will allow the remark in parenthesis, ladies and gentlemen, do you not sometimes long for someone at the summit of our public life who can think and write at that level?"<sup>12</sup>

It is legitimate to consider whether Churchill's great clarion calls of British pride, sentiment and instinct for so ancient an institution as the monarchy still apply in the less homogeneous nation that is Britain today. "But what is the purpose which has brought us all together?" he asked years ago. "It is the conviction that the life of Britain, her glories and message to the world, can only be achieved by national unity, and national unity can only be preserved upon a cause which is larger than the nation itself."<sup>13</sup>

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#### Endnotes

1. Luncheon in honor of Australian Prime Minister Curtin, 18 May 1944, in Winston S. Churchill, *The Dawn of Liberation* (London: Cassell, 1945), 80.
2. Coronation Luncheon, St. Stephen's Hall, Westminster, 27 May 1953. Winston S. Churchill, *The Unwritten Alliance* (London: Cassell, 1961), 26.
3. House of Commons, 20 April 1939, paraphrased later to the Canada Club, London. Robert Rhodes James, ed., *Winston S. Churchill: His Complete Speeches*, 8 vols. (New York: Bowker, 1974), VI 6107.
4. House of Commons, 27 June 1907, in Richard M. Langworth, ed., *Churchill By Himself* (New York: Public Affairs, 2008), 104.
5. Winston S. Churchill, "The King's Twenty-Five Years," *Evening Standard*, 9 May 1935, reprinted in *The Collected Essays of Sir Winston Churchill*, 4 vols. (London: Library of Imperial History, 1975), III 240.
6. Alistair Cook, International Churchill Conference, Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, 27 August 1988, in *Proceedings of the Churchill Societies 1988-1989* (Hopkinton, N.H.: International Churchill Society and the Rt. Hon. Winston S. Churchill Society, 1990), 16.
7. Rafe Muir, "VE-Day: One More Memory," *Vancouver Courier*, 15 May 1995.
8. Buckingham Palace, 5 January 1941, in Winston S. Churchill, *Their Finest Hour* (London: Cassell, 1949), 554.
9. House of Commons, 15 May 1945, *Churchill By Himself*; 353.
10. Ibid.
11. WSC to The Queen, Sicily, 18 April 1955. Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill*, vol. 8 "Never Despair" 1945-1965 (London: Heinemann, 1988), 1127-28.
12. David Dilks to the Royal Society of St. George, City of London Branch, 6 February 2007.
13. House of Commons, 9 May 1938, *Churchill By Himself*; 87.



# *That Woman: The Life of Wallis Simpson, Duchess of Windsor* by Anne Sebba

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REVIEW BY DAVID FREEMAN

In his official biography of Edward VIII, Philip Ziegler wrote that before embarking on the work he was of the opinion that every biographer “must owe something to those who worked in the field before him,” but that previous books about the Duke and Duchess of Windsor had disabused him of this impression.

So much rubbish has been written, spoken and dramatized about the Windsors that the popular memory is permanently distorted. A well-researched and objective analysis of Wallis Warfield Spencer Simpson, therefore, has long been needed. Veteran biographer Anne Sebba has filled this void in time for the 75th anniversary of Edward VIII’s abdication to marry the woman he loved.

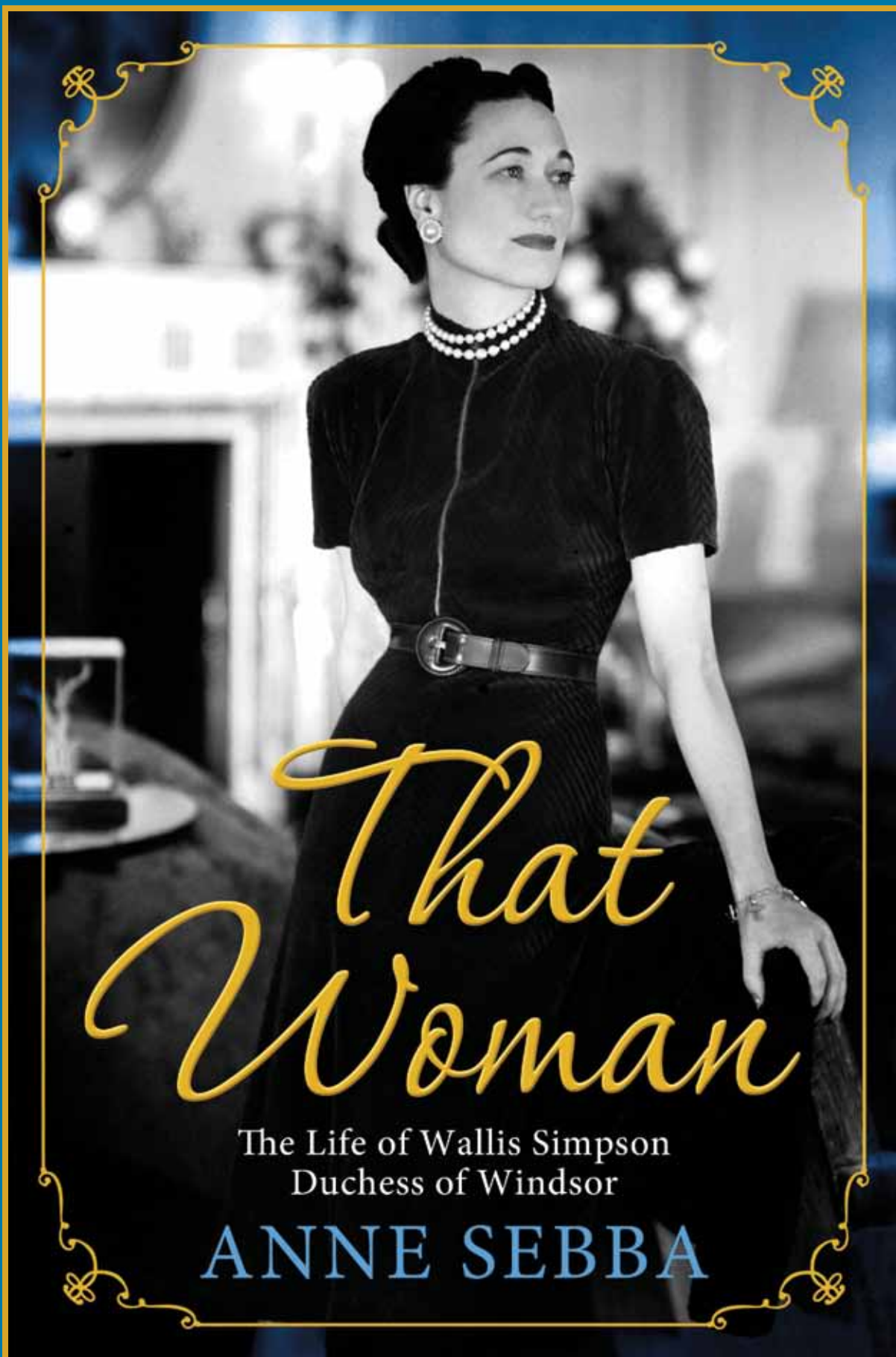
The future Duchess of Windsor was born in Pennsylvania, appropriately amid secrecy and scandal, probably on 19 June 1896. Wallis’s mother, Alice Montague, was probably pregnant at the time she married Teackle Wallis Warfield in 1895. But Teackle died five months after the birth of his only child, leaving his elder brother to provide for the widow and baby.

Wallis grew up in Baltimore, a daughter of impoverished gentry. Psychologically driven towards keeping up appearances, her family lacked the necessary financial means, which kept them in a constant state of anxiety. Everything about Wallis’ upbringing and education, therefore, was designed to prepare her for a respectable marriage that provided security.

Respectability and security do not guarantee happiness. At age twenty Wallis jumped into what appeared a suitable marriage to the handsome and dashing Earl Winfield Spencer, Jr., an Annapolis-trained naval officer and pioneer aviator. He turned out to be an abusive alcoholic. To her credit Wallis tried to make a good navy wife. Financially, she had little choice. She had no means or training to support herself, and divorce was expensive. But Spencer’s increasingly erratic behavior eventually drove her to flight.

Wallis had the good fortune to land on her feet. After securing a relatively affordable divorce in Virginia, she found herself living in London, quite happily married to Ernest Simpson. Born in New York to a Jewish immigrant from England who had changed his name from Solomon, Simpson had studied at Harvard before leaving to join the Coldstream Guards in 1917. Opting for British citizenship, Simpson worked in his family’s shipping firm, concealing his Jewish heritage. Although a good husband with a reliable income, he could not keep Wallis in the lifestyle she desired; and this led to the great upheaval.

The social connections of the Simpsons resulted in their meeting the Prince of Wales. Edward was not only smitten with Wallis; he became obsessed with her to the end of his days. What was painfully clear to observers, though, was that Wallis was not so obsessed with the Prince. Rather she was smitten by the dazzling lifestyle which he could



# That Woman

The Life of Wallis Simpson  
Duchess of Windsor

ANNE SEBBA



offer. The Prince exploited this with lavish gifts of jewels and money, as well as inclusion in the exalted company that attended the heir to the throne. The poor girl from Baltimore was playing with fire.

Wallis “was sure it was a fairy tale that would end,” Sebba explains, “but while it lasted could not bring herself to end it.” Further, she continued to believe that her husband still “loved her enough to catch her when she fell.” (103) Part of the tragedy is that Wallis was right about Ernest, and she really did love him in return. The affection continued after their divorce, when Wallis initiated a longstanding correspondence with her second husband while still on honeymoon with her third.

There is no support for the canard that Wallis schemed to become Queen. At best that idea lived only in the deluded imagination of Edward VIII after he succeeded his father in 1936. The new King’s determination to be married to his mistress at all costs drove the events of that year and the final outcome. Meanwhile, Wallis became “frozen with anxiety.” (104) “In her bubble of worry about losing both husband and lover,” Sebba explains, Wallis “failed to see just how deeply the British monarchy was loved and revered.” (109) Only after the fact did Wallis learn the magnitude of the price to be paid for her inability to pull back at the key moment.

The Abdication was one of Winston Churchill’s roughest political experiences. His trouble stemmed from the fact that he took a broadminded view about the King having a mistress, believing that Mrs. Simpson was “acceptable” for that role at least. (143) As a biographer of Churchill’s mother, Sebba believes Churchill also had a natural sympathy toward an American woman weathering storms at the highest levels of British society. In the face of growing hostility, Churchill pressed for time in the hope that the King would come to his senses. Only too late did Churchill realize that the King meant to have Wallis as his wife—a situation which even Churchill knew was unacceptable to the British people.

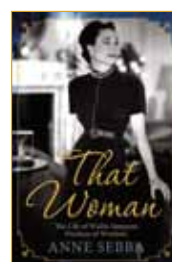
Despite the flak he took for a king who let him down, Churchill, with his characteristic magnanimity and reverence for the Royal Family, remained “doggedly

loyal to his former sovereign” after the abdication (221). Randolph Churchill covered, and reported back to his father, the wedding in France of the newly created Duke and Duchess of Windsor. Both Winston and Clementine, Sebba writes, “were scrupulous over the years in unfailingly bowing or curtsying to the Duchess.” (222)

The Second World War finally strained relations between Churchill and the Windsors. Wallis may have been the source of the friction, but the fault lay with the Duke. In arranging to leave Europe and then later as Governor of the Bahamas during the conflict, the Duke foolishly and persistently tried to leverage his position to gain what he regarded as proper recognition for his wife. The Duchess occasionally fed, but at times also tried unsuccessfully to restrain, the Duke’s obsession. More constructively, the governor’s wife filled her time in Nassau leading the local Red Cross and acting as hostess for the canteen that entertained Allied military personnel.

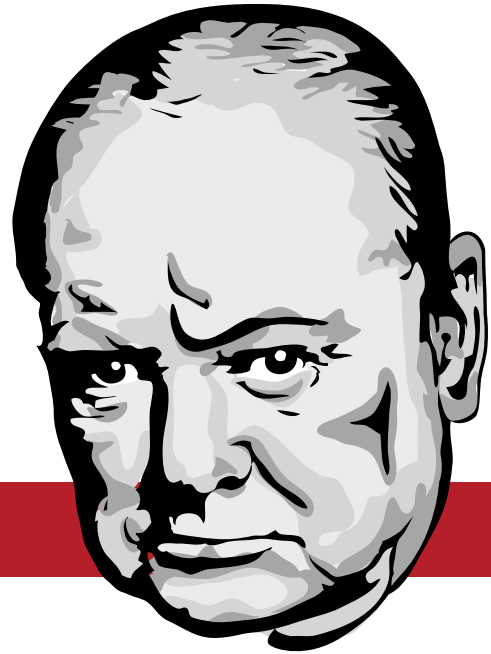
After the war the Windsors settled permanently in France to an opulent but painfully vapid and facile life. Following the Duke’s death in 1972, the mental and physical health of the Duchess deteriorated rapidly. She lived on sadly into her 90th year, dying in 1986 after a miserably long existence in a semi-comatose state.

Wallis, Duchess of Windsor succeeded in obtaining the material comfort she craved at the cost of upsetting tens of millions of people and receiving opprobrium in exchange. Unquestionably, though, she brought happiness to the man who put her in that situation, sacrificing nearly all that he had in the process. Churchill may not have approved or understood it all, but despite having both his loyalty and patience severely tested by the Duke, he never made any unchivalrous remarks about “That Woman.”



*That Woman: The Life of Wallis Simpson, Duchess of Windsor*, by Anne Sebba. Weidenfeld and Nicholson, hardbound, illus. 344 pp., \$27.99, Amazon \$18.47.

# ACROSS THE HAVOC OF WAR



## CHURCHILL IN THE VIEW OF THE ENEMY

WRITTEN BY MANFRED WEIDHORN

A young man who had long been a scapegrace and was in danger of becoming (as Randolph Churchill said to his son Winston) “a social wastrel” managed to turn his life around sufficiently to be able to enter dental school. When he finally received his degree, his skeptical immigrant mother, still traumatized by the troubles he had given her all those early years, asked him, “Darling, by you, you’re a dentist; and by me, you’re a dentist; but by a dentist, are you a dentist?”

In the same way, lovers of oratory and believers in democracy, having nearly turned Churchill into a demigod, face the question of whether people who lack those two acquired tastes share in the adulation. It surely helps his great reputation that, in one of those rare wars in which good and evil were so clearly demarcated as to satisfy even a Noam Chomsky (one hopes!), if not Nicolson Baker or Pat Buchanan, Churchill was not just self-evidently on the winning side but, in the judgment of history, on the right side, as well. Such a combination is guaranteed to make us feel good.

Still, in the spirit of scientific detachment, one would like corroboration from an objective source—from a “dentist.” Finding such a neutral bystander is virtually impossible. So how about testimony from the other side—the losing and bad side?

At first blush, one finds not much substance there, given the barrage of contumely heaped on the British Prime Minister by the Axis ruling circle. “Drunkard” and “liar” are merely the kindest things they said about him. But closer inspection reveals some curious observations tucked away in several diaries. Take Count Galeazzo Ciano, Foreign Minister of Italy under “Il Duce” and, on top of that, son-in-law of that same Benito Mussolini. Commenting on Churchill’s speech of 20 August 1940 (labeled “The War Situation” in *Blood, Sweat, and Tears* but more generally known as his tribute to “The Few”), Ciano is awed: “For the first time in a year I read an English speech which is clear and forward-looking. One can feel that behind the façade of beautiful words and strong statements, there is a will and a faith.”

In other words, the speech has style and substance; it is at once esthetic and hortatory. And again on 23 June 1941, Ciano writes of the PM’s broadcast on the German invasion of Russia: “Churchill has made a speech which, it must be objectively recognized, carries the mark of the great orator.”

When the lifting of Churchill’s spirits by the long-awaited American entry into the war was dispelled by a series of cataclysmic setbacks for the Allies, the Prime Minister, in March 1942, made a speech in which he

acknowledged the disasters but reiterated his determination to carry on to the end and his certainty about ultimate victory. Comments Ciano: “We must honestly recognize in Churchill an orator of unusual power, capable of deeply moving the people.”<sup>1</sup>

Ciano appears to have had little praise (in fact, quite the opposite: see sidebar) for that other expert in the art of stirring people with the spoken word, Adolf Hitler. One also notes that the words “must honestly,” like the “must objectively be recognized” in the previous quotation, prove that we have here the equivalent of an objective observer. The words mean, “He is the enemy and I may not like him, but candor compels...”

This disinterested comment gives credit to both observer and observed. Instead of partisanship and demonization, there is magnanimity or largeness of spirit. Ciano’s comment even has a touch of Churchill

in it, for it was, indeed, in that uncommon spirit that the young Winston, in his maiden speech in the House of Commons, irritated the members of his own party by saying, “If I were a Boer, I hope I should be fighting in the field”; and the old Winston irritated some countrymen by saying about Marshal Rommel, “We have a very daring and skilful opponent against us, and, may I say across the havoc of war, a great general.”

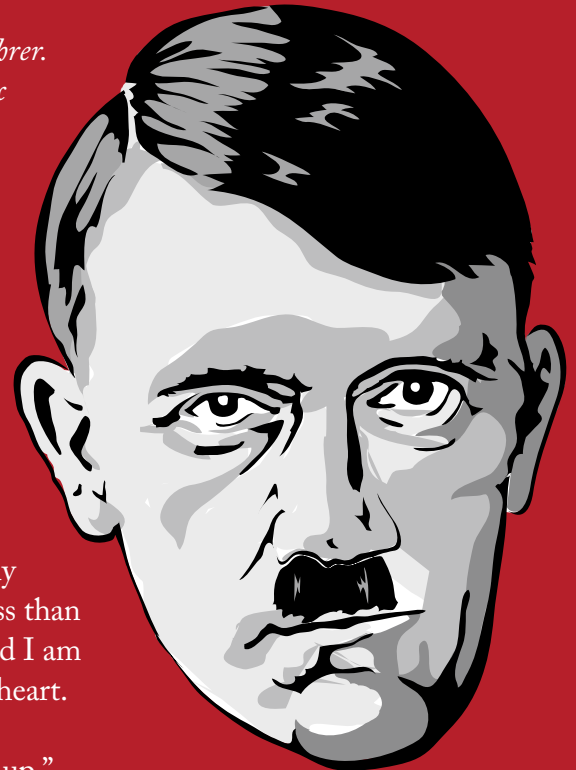
Rommel, incidentally, privately repaid Churchill’s compliments. Writing in his diaries before the Allied invasion of Europe in 1944, Rommel expressed relief that “Churchill, in view of his age and his illness, and with his influence now on the wane, would no longer be in a position to carry through a new landing operation.” After the landings he wrote: “It had meanwhile become known to the Army that Churchill had, as so often before, paid a visit to the British troops in the bridgehead front, and the German troops in the

## CIANO ON HITLER

*Count Ciano was equally blunt, but not nearly as laudatory, toward the Führer. Can this possibly be the same spellbinder who brought multitudes to orgasmic bliss? Or is this a scene out of Charlie Chaplin—or Mel Brooks? True, Churchill also lapsed into private monologues. But no ear-witness was ever quite as censorious as this. —MW*

“Hitler talks, talks, talks, talks. Mussolini suffers—he, who is in the habit of talking himself, and who, instead, practically has to keep quiet. On the second day, after lunch, when everything had been said, Hitler talked uninterruptedly for an hour and forty minutes. He omitted absolutely no argument: war and peace, religion and philosophy, art and history. Mussolini automatically looked at his wrist watch, I had my mind on my own business, and only [Marshal] Cavallero, who is a phenomenon of servility, pretended he was listening in ecstasy, continually nodding his head in approval. Those, however, who dreaded the ordeal less than we did were the Germans. Poor people. They have to take it every day, and I am certain there isn’t a gesture, a word, or a pause which they don’t know by heart. General Jodl, after an epic struggle, finally went to sleep on the divan. [Field Marshal] Keitel was reeling, but he succeeded in keeping his head up.”

—Count Ciano’s Diaries, 30 April 1942





west were very disappointed that the Führer had not so far visited them.”<sup>2</sup>

Ciano’s testimony (and on 12 November 1942, he referred yet again to a new speech by Churchill as “great”) might, to be sure, be questioned on the grounds of ideology, or rather absence of it. He was, of course, entrenched in the heart of the Italian government and his loyalty to, and respect for, Mussolini—at the time of these observations—were on display. But Ciano cannot be said to have been a fanatical Fascist; he harbored growing doubts about, and even growing ill will towards, Hitler and the Germans. Periodically, he would wonder whether his beloved homeland would not be better off under an Allied than an Axis victory. And by early 1943, he had become so disaffected that he was dismissed, imprisoned, and executed by his father-in-law.

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No such ambiguity attends Joseph Goebbels. Here was one of the earliest and most fanatical followers of the Führer. Second only to Hitler as an ideologue, as a public speaker, and as a hater—and superior to him as an intellectual, a writer and a thinker, the holder of a Ph.D. and a would-be novelist—Goebbels, unlike the other apostles, followed Hitler all the way into the *Goetterdaemmerung* bunker and presided over the killing of his wife and their five children before committing suicide. “Greater love hath no man....” To adapt the wonderful Woody Allen joke, no one would be surprised to find out that Goebbels was a Nazi. Such credentials, as well as the tidal wave of insults directed at Churchill by him both in official propaganda and in private diary musings, give any positive assessment of Churchill’s oratory great weight.

A diary entry Goebbels made on 14 April 1942 comments only indirectly on the quality of the Briton’s speeches: “Churchill certainly is the mouthpiece of the English people in so far as his imperturbability and his bragging are concerned.”<sup>3</sup>

This is a sour version of what would be Churchill’s famous retrospective remark of 30 November 1954: “Their will was resolute and remorseless and, as it proved, unconquerable. It fell to me to express it...

[and, as a professional writer] I found the right words.... It was a nation and race dwelling all round the globe that had the lion heart. I had the luck to be called upon to give the roar.” Clearly, these two enemies agree about at least one thing.

But what are we to make of Goebbels’ candid outburst of 8 May 1941 on the subject of Churchill’s book *Step by Step* (his foreign affairs essays of 1936–39): “This man is a strange mixture of heroism and cunning.... And I believe that he will give us a few more problems yet....He is not to be taken as lightly as we usually take him.” That is a clear assessment of the impact of Churchill as speaker and as leader; it is a grudging acknowledgment of the greatness that most people assign to Churchill.

But the blockbuster bomb is a sentence that comes in the middle of Goebbels’ musings: “If he had come to power in 1933, we would not be where we are today”<sup>4</sup>—that is, in possession of nearly all of Europe up to the Russian border.

These words from Beelzebub himself ought to give pause to such revisionists as John Charmley, Patrick Buchanan, and the others who claim that Churchill, by being given too much power, made a hash of things. Apparently the other side blessed its lucky stars that he had not been given that power much earlier.

So, yes, even among “dentists,” Churchill indeed proved to be an impressive force.

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#### Endnotes

1. Count Galeazzo Ciano, *The Ciano Diaries*, tr. and ed. R. L. Miller and S. G. Pugliese (New York: Enigma, 2002), 378, 438, 505, 562.
2. Erwin Rommel, *The Rommel Papers*, ed. Sir Basil Liddell Hart (New York: Da Capo Press, 1981), 466, 433.
3. Joseph Goebbels, *The Goebbels Diaries 1942–1943*, tr. L. P. Lochner (Garden City New York: Doubleday, 1948), 169.
4. Joseph Goebbels, *The Goebbels Diaries 1939–1941*, tr. Fred Taylor (New York: Putnam, 1982), 354.

Dr. Weidhorn is Guterman Professor of English Literature at Yeshiva University and a preeminent scholar of Winston Churchill’s literary canon. His four books on Churchill include his seminal *Sword and Pen* (1974).

## THE CHURCHILL GALA - STEP BACK IN TIME

Friends and guests of the Museum enjoyed a gala evening of fine food, conversation, auction – and vintage fashions hosted by the Mid-Missouri Friends of the Museum on October 8th.

Lively bidding ensued from the audience for a diamond ring donated by jeweler Jan Keen; a portrait donated by artist Jane Mudd; steaks donated by Callaway Livestock Center; and a High Tea Social donated by Dr. and Mrs. Barney Forsythe.

Fashion historian Carolyn Miller led the audience on a 100-year journey of history interpreted with costumed mannequins and accessories. Special guests modeled the period fashions of a Victorian gentleman, a Depression-era bride, a wartime wife and a disco king.

The event benefits are dedicated to the tuck-point repair project for the Church of St. Mary, Aldermanbury.



Karen Mertens with Carolyn Miller



Vintage fashions from 1870 to 1970



Carolyn Miller, Presenter, with Zachery Harrison



(Left to Right) Jennifer Urich, Nancy Lewis with Jerry and Nancy Middleton



(Left to Right) Zachery Harrison, Kate Smart Harrison, with Catherine & Tom Christensen





Liz Murphy, National Churchill Museum Archivist/Curator

## Do you remember your first job?

This question always evokes such a powerful sense of nostalgia. It is that sense of nostalgia that the exhibition *The Way We Worked* encapsulates. *The Way We Worked*, adapted from an original exhibition developed by the National Archives, explores how work became such a central element in American culture by tracing the many changes that affected the workforce and work environments over the past 150 years.

The exhibition draws from the Archives' rich collections to tell this compelling story. *The Way We Worked* is a part of Museum on Main Street, which itself is a partnership of the Smithsonian Institution and State Humanities Councils nationwide. The whole partnership works to bring Smithsonian quality exhibitions to rural communities.

The potential stories and partnerships that could come from an exhibition like this were too good to pass up. So, the Museum began the application process in November of 2010. The process was a competitive one that would result in only six sites hosting the exhibition across the state. Since this exhibition is all about work, the Museum wanted to utilize this exhibition to create a partnership with Callaway County and the City of Fulton. Through this partnership our hope was to showcase Callaway County to Mid-Missouri. We proposed to do this in several ways; through a Callaway County Business Showcase, a smaller exhibit that would focus specifically on Callaway County, and lastly through museum programming that focuses on work. The key message

we wanted to send was that Callaway County had their eye on the future of work. We were not only living history, we were *creating* history.

In late January the Missouri Humanities Council visited the Museum with the specific task of deciding if our site was going to host *The Way We Worked* or if another Mid-Missouri site was going to get the exhibition. Callaway County showed up in spades to this site visit; our Chamber Ambassadors arrived in their red jackets to greet the Humanities Council! After a two hour meeting we all left with high hopes and excitement over the project. Less than a week later I received a call from the Missouri Humanities Council, we had received *The Way We Worked*! The fun and work *really* began now. We formed a committee consisting of members from the county who have been working for 11 months now to plan this community wide exhibition. Committee members represent Callaway County Chamber of Commerce, the City of Fulton, Callaway County Historical Society, Fulton Area Development Cooperation, and various members of Callaway County's trade groups.

We have a multitude of programs planned for this exhibition. Our local historical society's exhibit will tell the story of Callaway County through images,





Workman on the framework of the Empire State Building, New York City, ca. 1930-31.  
National Archives, Records of the Works Progress Administration

objects, and digital media. Be sure to come and check out two life sized ‘Callawegian’ workers who will flank either side of the entrance to the local exhibition! Our Chamber of Commerce is working to create a business showcase for Callaway County which will highlight our County’s businesses to the rest of Mid-Missouri. We also have our local trade groups working with Mandy Plybon on education programs revolving around tools of the trade and classroom discussions about work.

The exhibition will be book-ended by the Callaway County Chamber of Commerce annual banquet in January of 2012 where we will honor those businesses who have been serving Callaway Country for 50 to 150 years. On the other end, The Fulton Area Development Cooperation will host their annual banquet in March and will focus on the future of work.

The energy these partnerships has created is going to carry over into a great exhibition. So please make plans to join us February 11-March 10, 2012 for *The Way We Worked* at your National Churchill Museum.

*The Way We Worked*, an exhibition created by the National Archives, is part of Museum on Main Street, a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and the Missouri Humanities Council.

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Mandy Plybon, Education & Public Programs Coordinator

## *What exactly is museum education?*

The definition for museum education varies from person to person and from place to place. The American Association of Museums uses the following as their working definition of the field:

“Museum education is understood in the broadest sense as any museum activity pursued with a view of facilitating knowledge or experiences for public audiences. The vision of education is in fact a vision of the museum’s mission and purpose as a whole. Education and exhibitions are related and should be mutually inclusive.”

Museum educators provide visitors with a variety of opportunities to connect with exhibitions and museum programs. Their primary concern is, ultimately, the visitor experience. With a multitude of programming avenues at their disposal or should I say, at their creative whim, those in the field are on a mission to provide the best possible engaging environments for their clients.

When people ask me what exactly I do, my answer is, jokingly, a little bit of everything. Depending on staff size and museum type, most museum educators do some or all of the following:

- Docent Training
- Tours
- Teacher Training
- School Programs
- Special Programs and Events
- Museum Theater
- Classes/Workshops
- Newsletter/Publications
- Evaluation
- Program Development
- Interpretive Planning
- Computer-based Programs
- Marketing

Because of the multiplicity, museum educators work in a complex world; one that requires creativity, multitasking, involvement with people, and fluctuating responsibilities. The challenges, while stimulating, can cause burnout.

EdCom, in 2005, developed standards for museum education organized into three functional areas: accessibility, accountability, and advocacy. The definition and standards are intended to lead the museum education field forward in developing museums where visitors gain perceptual skills that enable to think, explore, and inquire in new ways.

Tune in next time for a discussion on the importance of museum and community partnerships.

*Source: Johnson, Anna. “Museum Education and Museum Educators.” The Museum Educator’s Manual Educators Share Successful Techniques. Ed. Anna Johnson, Kimberly A. Huber, Nancy Cutler, Melissa Bingmann, and Tim Grove. Lanham: AltaMira Press, 2009. 7-14. Print.*

# Attention Educators!

4<sup>th</sup>

Annual Teacher Summer Institute  
June 13-15, 2012

5<sup>th</sup>

Annual Student Essay Contest  
October 3, 2011-April 16, 2012  
(Monetary prizes awarded)

Contact Mandy Plybon, Education & Public Programs Coordinator at (573) 592-6242 or [mandy.plybon@churchillmemorial.org](mailto:mandy.plybon@churchillmemorial.org)

Left to Right: Chief Verba, Bob Priddy and Ensign Bibber



Cut The Line



Left to Right: Chief Verba, Liz Murphy, Rob Havers and Ensign Bibber

## *The Navy Art of Thomas Hart Benton*

On September 22 the Museum opened *The Navy Art of Thomas Hart Benton*. We had local Benton expert, Bob Priddy, give a riveting insight into Benton's Navy art work. We also had the pleasure of hosting two members from the USS Winston S. Churchill, a US Naval Destroyer who not only carries the namesake of the great Prime Minister but also carries an active member of the Royal Navy. Ensign Nicole Bibber, Force Protection Officer, and Joshua M. Verba, Chief Gunner's Mate flew out from Norfolk, Virginia the night before our event and spent the day in Fulton. That night they presented the Museum with a plaque on behalf of the USS Winston S. Churchill crew as a symbol of our lasting partnership. We sent them home with a few goodies as well, including a shirt from our gift shop with their motto on it. *In war: Resolution; In Defeat: Defiance; In Victory: Magnanimity; In peace: Good Will*. It was a great visit and opening and our Museum hopes to be able to visit them this coming spring!





*Kit Freudenberg*

**Kit Freudenberg**  
*Director of Development*

*We thank the loyal supporters and Friends of the Museum and acknowledge gifts received in this past fiscal year, July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011.*

Your support brings exhibits and programs to the Museum as well as continued preservation of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Christopher Wren church, and archival care for historic Churchill documents, photographs and artifacts.

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## *Are you Making Plans for the Future?*

There are many ways to plan for the future through your will or trust. A good plan will help you care for your loved ones after you are gone, plan for your own care or even make a gift to charity.

If you would like to include a gift to our organization in your planning, please contact us.

Contact Kit Freudenberg at 573-592-5022  
or [Kit.Freudenberg@churchillmemorial.org](mailto:Kit.Freudenberg@churchillmemorial.org)

*Mark your calendars!*

## 2012 Churchill Weekend March 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>

Featuring the Enid & Crosby Kemper Lecture  
to be delivered by Sir David Cannadine

Sir David Cannadine is the author of twelve books, and the editor or co-editor of thirteen books. His interests range widely across the economic, social, political and cultural history of modern Britain and its empire, capitalism, collecting and philanthropy in nineteenth and twentieth century America, and the history of history. His current projects include a study (and a questioning) of collective identities from religious wars to the ‘clash of civilizations’ and beyond;

a new history of nineteenth-century Britain; a history of the teaching of history in schools in twentieth-century Britain; and a study of Winston Churchill, Anglo-America and the so-called ‘special relationship’. Sir David was recently knighted in the British New Year Honours List, he has served as a member of a committee set up by former Prime Minister Gordon Brown to review the terms and conditions on which government papers are made publicly available. He is also Chairman of the Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery in London and Vice-Chair of the Editorial Board of *Past & Present*.



## *Historical Treasure*

Our inventory process continues to reveal all kinds of historical treasures. This last winter we came across this mug in the Collections and are thrilled that it is being used in the *Churchillian* alongside Mr. Overton T. Harris’ stamp collection. The donor is still unknown at this time, but we are certain our continued inventory efforts will unearth the information!



## December

- 1** **28<sup>th</sup> Annual Victorian Christmas Fundraiser**  
*(until December 31, 2011)*
- 7** **70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Pearl Harbor Attack**
- 10** **Children's Program: Book Club III**  
*Snowflake Bentley*  
11am–12pm, Ages 6-12

- 11** **Traveling Exhibit: *The Way We Worked***  
*(until March 11, 2012)*

### Community Learning Program

*Discovering My Community, Part III*  
10am–2pm

- 21** **Wit & Wisdom Speaker Series**  
*"I'm an Unemployed Sweetheart"*  
5:30–6:30pm

- 25** **Callaway County Business Showcase**  
10am–6pm

## January

- 1** **Community Learning Program**  
*Discovering My Community, Part I*  
10am–2pm

## March

- 2** **Night at the Museum**  
*(until March 3, 2012)*

- 3** **Children's Program**  
*Book Club V*  
11am–12pm

- 25** **Traveling Exhibit:**  
***12<sup>th</sup> Annual Missouri Watercolor National Exhibition***  
*(until May 18, 2012)*

## February

- 1** **Children's Program**  
*Book Club IV*  
11am–12pm

- 4** **Community Learning Program**  
*Discovering My Community, Part II*  
10am–2pm





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## CHURCHILL'S ENGLAND TOUR 2012

APRIL 23 - MAY 1, 2012 | PRIVATE EVENTS & BEHIND-THE-SCENE TOURS

As you have now read in the previous edition of *The Churchillian*, our 'Churchill's England' tour in Spring 2011 was a wonderful success! Because of this and because of the number of people who had wanted to come last time but just missed out, we are planning a Churchill's England 2 tour in Spring 2012.

This will feature many of the same venues **plus** a new flavor with the addition of some notable Churchill authors including Sir Max Hastings and Churchill's official biographer, the incomparable Sir Martin Gilbert. Spaces on this tour are limited so please register your interest as soon as possible.

### Comments About the 2011 Tour:

**"Great itinerary plus presence and participation of Museum Directors at the sites."**

**"....definitely 1<sup>st</sup> Class and inner sanctum all the way." "Exceeded my expectations!"**

### Tour Details:

- Escorted 9-day tour in England with Dr. Rob Havers, Executive Director, National Churchill Museum
- Private events with Churchill's official biographer Sir Martin Gilbert and renown journalist and author Sir Max Hastings
- Behind-the-scene tour of the Churchill Archives Centre, Churchill College, Cambridge University, the repository of Churchill's private papers
- Special tour of the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, Churchill's alma mater
- Reception on the Havengore, the ship which took Churchill on his final journey
- All breakfasts, two lunches, a welcome event and farewell dinner
- Optional theatre tickets and West End Theatre evening
- Transport between London Heathrow Airport to the Deluxe London Hotel
- Tour transport via luxury motor coach and all admission fees included
- Venues include Blenheim Palace, Chartwell, Imperial War Museum, Churchill Museum and Cabinet War Rooms, Duxford War Museum, Churchill College Archives, Westminster Abbey and more
- Deluxe Hotel Accommodations, all applicable taxes, meal gratuities and baggage handling fees

\$3,925/person double occupancy-excludes airfare or \$4990/person single occupancy-excludes airfare. Tour limited to 24 travelers with minimum of 20 travelers. For additional tour information, contact Kit Freudenberg by calling 573-592-5022 or email [kit.freudenberg@churchillllmemorial.org](mailto:kit.freudenberg@churchillllmemorial.org).