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WHY CLEMENTINE, BARONESS SPENCER CHURCHILL IS DESERVING OF A TARTAN IN HER NAME

By Celia Lee



The "Clementine Churchill" tartan was first conceived in early 2018 as the result of a conversation between Mr. Randolph Churchill, great-grandson of Clementine, Baroness Spencer Churchillⁱ and Pipe Major Jim Drury, President of the Churchill Society of Tennessee.

The conversation began with a question. Did the International Churchill Society have its own tartan? Randolph responded it did not. He then suggested that whatever design was chosen it should have the colour of “marmalade” (gold) as a token of respect to his great-grandmother,

Clementine. From that point forward the new tartan pattern would be called “Clementine Churchill”.

Various elements of Winston and Clementine’s life are represented in the tartan’s colours. The light and dark blues represent the RAF and Royal Navy. The grey background with black and white pinstripe alludes to the style business suit often worn by members of Parliament. However, the marmalade strip is perhaps the strongest element in the pattern and pulls the whole design together. That would be Clementine, Baroness Spencer Churchill.



Pipe Major Jim Drury wearing the “Clementine Tartan” for the first time at the 35th Annual Conference of the International Churchill Society, Williamsburg VA, November 2018. The tune being played is “LTC Winston S. Churchill 6th Royal Scots Fusiliers 1916”. - Photo by Professor Allister Vale MD

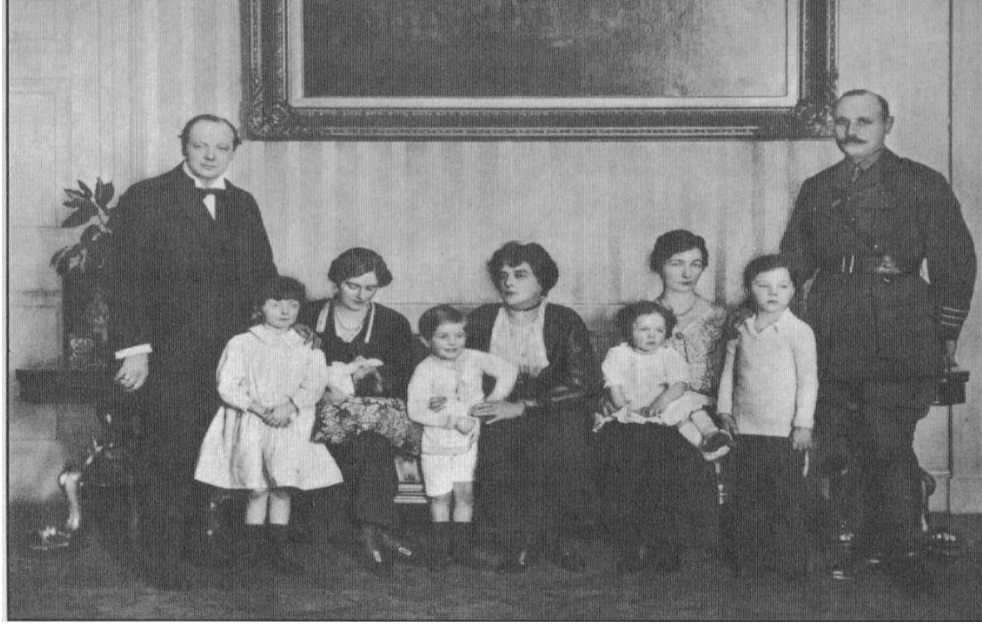
Clementine Churchill's efforts, both in her support of her husband Sir Winston Churchill, and her service to the nation is well worthy of such a tribute.

Clementine Hozier was born to Lady Blanche and Colonel Henry Hozier, April 1, 1885. Her grandparents were the Earl and Countess of Airlie, Scotland, whose family name was Ogilvy, and whose lineage stretched back to the 12th century. The family home was Cortachy Castle, Kirriemuir, Angus. There was therefore, already in existence a number of Ogilvy tartans, but not one specifically for Clementine. Her dedication as a mother and to her husband Winston, along with her immense amount of war work, more than qualified her for the honour of a tartan.

When the First World War was declared, July 28th 1914, Major (John) Jack Churchill's wife Lady Gwendeline (nee Bertie) jokingly wondered to her mother-in-law Jennie, Lady Randolph Churchill, if she and Clemmie, who were holidaying in two cottages on the coast with their children which was under threat of German bombardment from the sea, might qualify for a medal. She little thought how long the war would last and the amount of effort put in by Clemmie, herself, and other like women, would be necessary to bring about its successful conclusion – and it definitely would not be over by Christmas! At the end of August, the buckets and spades were put away, and the two mothers returned to London with their children to face six years of war.

The following year, Winston Churchill lost his job as First Lord of the Admiralty, due to the failure of the Dardanelles Campaign, and he and Clemmie had to vacate Admiralty House. Both families would be crammed into Jack and Gwendeline's house, No.41 Cromwell Road, London. Clemmie confided to a friend about Winston's predicament: 'I thought he would die of grief.' But she did not let that happen, she went into town and bought him a box of paints

as he had now taken to painting, having been influenced by Gwendeline, when they were all staying together at Hoe Farm, and she had set up her easel in the garden to paint the scenery.



The Churchill family: left standing Winston; seated Clementine with Diana; centre seated: Lady Randolph Churchill (Jennie), holding Randolph; seated right, Lady Gwendeline Spencer Churchill with on her lap her younger son, Peregrine and on her left, her elder son, John (Johnny); right standing: her husband Major John (Jack) Spencer Churchill.

Clemmie's small children were Diana, born 1909, Randolph, born 1911, and Sarah, born after war was declared, October 7, 1914. As well as three children to raise with the aid of a nanny, Clemmie as she was affectionately known, had the anxiety that her sister, Nellie, had been captured by the Germans when her nursing unit was overrun. Mercifully the unit was repatriated before too long and Nellie was reported safe.

FIRST WORLD WAR – CLEMMIE TAKES UP VOLUNTARY WORK

In June 1915, Clemmie took up important war work by joining the Munitions Workers' Auxiliary Committee, formed by the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). Liberal Member of Parliament, David Lloyd George, headed the new Ministry of Munitions, and millions of women flocked to the arms factories to take up posts vacated by men going into the armed services. To maximise production, canteens were provided to feed the workforce.

Clemmie became responsible for opening, staffing, and running nine canteens in the north and north-eastern metropolitan area of London, each one providing meals for up to 500 workers. Her job was to tour the areas and enlist ninety unpaid volunteer helpers, and to liaise with, and obtain the co-operation of factory managers. Working with and trying to please both managers and workers was like walking a tight rope as they were frequently in conflict. Trades unions representatives wanted proper wages and conditions for their workers, and male leaders were cagey about women taking men's jobs, lest they didn't get them back when the war ended especially as women were obliged to work for lower wages. To service the war effort the factories operated a 24-hour shift, which meant that vast numbers of meals had to be served both day and night. Once a canteen was set up it had to be visited often to encourage the 90 per cent unpaid volunteer staff to deal with problems and complaints, and to ensure high standards of food, service and hygiene. The remaining male workers resented women and made such petty complaints as women workers smoking in the canteen recreation rooms which they presumably thought should be a male preserve. A special meeting was called, and a ruling given that where smoking was allowed women should be on a par with their male colleagues which ruling was reluctantly accepted by the male workers.

Winston greatly missed having a decisive role in the higher direction of the war and, frustrated by his inability to influence policy in his new and rather bogus role as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, he resigned from the Cabinet, October 30, 1915. Vainly seeking command of British forces in East Africa, he got the hint that Sir John French might get him a brigade command in France, and in November 1915, he quite bravely re-joined the Oxfordshire Hussars in France. His decision was a great anxiety to Clemmie and his mother as before leaving, he somewhat dramatically wrote his Last Will and Testament. Jennie being a great believer that he was born under a lucky star and destined for 'great things' pleaded with him: 'Please be sensible, ... I think you ought to take the trenches in small doses, after 10 years of more or less sedentary life - but I'm sure you won't 'play the fool.'

It would have been a great worry to Clemmie, now living in straightened financial circumstances that her husband went out to the front, attached to the 2nd Grenadier Guards, and saw service in the Neuve Chappelle area. But in December 1915, Sir Douglas Haig replaced Sir John French as Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), and he told Winston that with no vacancies for a brigade command at present, he would have to make do with a battalion. Thus, Winston found himself, as of January 5, 1916, a Lieutenant-Colonel commanding the 6th Royal Scots Fusiliers. This battle-hardened battalion, part of the excellent 9th (Scottish) Division, were not certain what to make of their ‘political’ colonel but, by dint of hard work and attention to military detail, Winston won their trust. They went into the line at Ploegsteert Wood, known to the British Tommies as ‘Plugstreet’. It was a ‘quiet’ sector, and the winter months saw no great actions. Winston worked his men hard improving their defences but, he was never a ferocious disciplinarian. He was once criticised from higher command for ‘undue leniency’. He never shirked danger and did his share of frontline duty and patrolling. All of this Clemmie knew, and being a deeply-religious woman, she would have been on her knees, nightly, begging the good Lord to spare the father of her children from shell-fire, machine-gun fire or a sniper’s bullet.

Clemmie continued to tour the canteens driving the car, until they got into financial difficulties and the car had to be dispensed with which meant she was dependent on public transport or a friend driving her to locations that were widely scattered. Writing to Winston she told him, November 19, 1915: ‘Without a motor it is harder to get to Enfield [north London] than to France – a quarter of the day has been spent in tube, tram, train, the remainder grappling with committees.’ⁱⁱ She wrote again, December 12, 1915 with the added worry that her sister Nellie was about to make a match and marry someone she and Winston considered unsuitable, adding: ‘Meanwhile I toil away at my working-men’s restaurants. After Christmas I am

opening two - to seat 400 men each. ... It is snowing hard and makes me fear that you are wet and cold.' A sketch of the cat was enclosed as Winston loved cats!ⁱⁱⁱ

By January 16, 1916, Clemmie was preoccupied with a new canteen for a big munitions factory which was to be opened in Hackney Marshes, where 1,000 men would have to be fed at one sitting. In a letter to Winston she suggested, 'If I came to Dieppe could you get 2 days' leave? I do long to see you. I'm very, very, lonely.'^{iv} On January 20, Clemmie poured out her heart to Winston: ' I hope you love me very much Darling, I long for you often – I wake up in the night and think of you in your squalid billet and of all the women in Europe who are lying awake praying for safety for their men.'^v By February 2, 1916, Clemmie had a new anxiety about the arrangements of the latest new canteen opening at Ponders End:

'I am feeling rather nervous about Lloyd George addressing my Munition Workers; the skilled men are growling about his visit; they are angry about the 'diluted labour' [women]. It will be very disagreeable if there is an uproar especially if it makes my nice canteen unpopular! If the meeting gets widely reported, people will think you and he are working together. You may have to work with him but never trust him – If he does not do you in, he will at any rate "let you down".'^{vi}

Clemmie need not have worried for the opening of the canteen on February 4th was a resounding success. Writing an account to Winston she told him:

'There was my Head Cook, Mr Quinlan, resplendent in white coat and hat, the paid staff in brown, Holland overalls, and my voluntary workers (about 150) looking like blue and white angels. There was a great crowd of people from the neighbourhood and some from London and all the YMCA swells ... your mother and Violet Bonham Carter and Lady Horner and Lady Henry Grosvenor who runs Woolwich etc. as I do north London.'^{vii}

Clemmie escorted Mr and Mrs Lloyd George around the factory and canteen, and into the new workshops, where 2,000 men had gathered, and they gave her a great cheer but ignored Lloyd George.

On February 22, 1916, Clemmie paid Winston the compliment of telling him she had learnt his way in methods of working:

‘I must tell you that from living with you and watching you for 7 years, I have assimilated (in a small way) your methods and habits of work. In this Canteen work I find people who do it with me are surprised that I do things quickly and that I expect them to drive along too, When I am in full swing, I begin work at 9am and finish at 7.3pm. It’s no use scolding me because it’s all your fault – you have taught me to work outside office hours.’^{viii}

The Ponders End canteen was enlarged with a new wing added for the men and, in addition, Clemmie was responsible for feeding an extra 500 girls. Her canteens would eventually feed 1,800 people. She now had the added experience of her work providing her with an insight into the new phenomenon of the employment of women working alongside men in heavy industry during wartime. To increase her knowledge, in deepest winter she visited Woolwich Arsenal where there were to be 90,000 workers employed making shells and bombs each in a room overseen by a forewoman. She could record that the girls were paid between 18 shillings and £1.5 shillings per week. She found some of them during a downfall of snow, snowballing with the boys in the yard during their breaks. Writing to Winston she told him:

‘The fore-women have their meals in a separate room. They are of course, older, and they belong to the professional and suffragetty classes and some of them look as if they had seen ‘life’. They were nearly all smoking and playing Bridge and nap, after their meals! The quiet ones were reading rather advanced books, translations from the Russian Authors and such-like. I understand the prejudice of the skilled male worker against diluted female labour. The women are full of beans and become terribly skillful very quickly. They want good money too, but of course nothing like the men. A woman earning 35 shillings a week feels like a millionaire. They don’t mind paying properly for their food now. They used, a few months ago to grudge 6d for a good dinner.’^{ix}

By March 1916, Winston was anxious to return to the House of Commons, where, as a politician, he thought he could make a more meaningful contribution to winning the war. On

hearing that his under-strength battalion was due to merge with another, he took the opportunity to resign his commission in May and returned home, and no doubt Clemmie felt it was prayers answered.

Clemmie and Winston eventually returned to the home on which they had originally bought a lease, 33 Eccleston Square, London, and in the spring of 1917, Winston bought a country home, Lullenden Farm, at East Grinstead, Sussex, for £6,000 by selling £5,000 of his Pennsylvania Railroad stock, and £1,000 of Exchequer War Bonds. It was a beautiful, half-timbered, Elizabethan house, built of grey stone, with a Great Hall and a solar room, and the ideal location for his hobby, painting, that soothed his nerves, and it was well away from the London bombings. Attached to the house were a 100-acre working farm, and a barn, which they converted into a nursery, where the younger children lived safely during the day with their nanny, whilst the older went to boarding school locally.

It was not until July 1917, that Winston's old radical ally, David Lloyd George, elevated to Prime Minister since December 1916, felt secure enough to appoint him to a ministry, giving him his old role as Minister of Munitions. The restoration of a ministerial salary was good news for Clemmie and the family as she was often strapped for cash. Her daughter Mary, the Lady Soames told me in interview in recent years, 'All her life my mother worried about money.' This was very important work for the successful prosecution of the war, and Winston was as vigorous and demanding as ever in seeing the work was done well. In a diary that is usually filled with invective against politicians, Sir Douglas Haig recorded the visits of Winston to the armies in France most cordially, complimenting him on 'excellent work', and on his enthusiasm to concentrate all resources on winning the war on the Western Front 'by August 1918'.^x

In the King's New Year's Honours List, January 1918, Clemmie had been appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE), in recognition of her canteen work during the war. She was however, still continuing with the work as Jean, Lady Hamilton the wife of General Sir Ian Hamilton who had led the failed attack at Gallipoli in 1915, recorded in her diary, June 14, 1918, that Clemmie and Frances, Lady Horner, had to leave a dinner party at Lord Haldane's house at 11pm to work a night shift at the Hackney Canteen. Clemmie was at that time four months pregnant with her fourth child but she had not allowed her pregnancy to deter her from her duties.

There were many worries beginning to accumulate for Clemmie. The Ministry of Defence had decreed that farmland must be cultivated as part of the war effort to provide food for the British people, and Winston could not afford to pay for the machinery to cultivate Lullenden farm. Though they loved the place they were eventually forced to put it up for sale. Also, at around that time the cost of the lease on their London home, 33 Eccleston Square, was being increased, and the Churchills could not afford to renew it. At a dinner party at the Hamiltons' luxurious mansion No. 1 Hyde Park Gardens, June 18, Clemmie unburdened herself to Jean. She told her she did not know how she could afford the cost of the birthing in a nursing home at £25, and Jean offered her the use of her house. Then, during a discussion about whether the childless Jean should adopt two orphan children she was fostering, the compassionate Clemmie offered to give her unborn child to Jean, saying, 'I will give you my baby', and then Jean recorded, 'If its twins I should have one of them.'^{xi} It was a momentary crisis and when it was coming up to the time of Clemmie's confinement, Winston's kindly Aunt Cornelia Wimborne loaned the Churchills her London house. There, Marigold Frances was born.

Following the war's end, in 1919, David Lloyd George, now elevated to one of the victors of the most terrible war in Britain's history was able to offer Winston a job, and he got the important role of Secretary of State for War, with the added responsibility of the Air Ministry.

A General Election was called, Winston campaigned in Scotland's Dundee, on a radical programme, advocating nationalisation of the railways, and waging a savage attack on wartime profiteers. He would have capped war profits at £10,000 and seized everything above that to reduce the National Debt. He even toyed with the idea of continuing state control of industry, since it had worked so well during wartime. He won his seat handsomely, and so did Lloyd George's Coalition in the country, but the Government was massively dominated by the Conservatives. Lloyd George promptly appointed Winston to the Cabinet, in charge of the double ministries of War and Air.



Winston Churchill flying a 'plane, Croydon airfield

Winston and Clemmie by now had a rented house in London, No.1 Dean Trench Street, with their children, Diana, Randolph, Sarah and the new baby, Marigold Frances, born four days

after the official end of the First World War, November 15, 1918, having been not, after all, given away to Jean Hamilton.

Winston was, as usual, deeply committed to his ministerial duties. The ever-sensible Clemmie advised him to drop the Air Ministry and concentrate on one at a time. Winston was too keen on all things related to air power to consider her suggestion. He had taken flying lessons before the war and, being his usual daring self, on July 18, was piloting a 'plane over Croydon airfield when it crashed spectacularly. Though badly shaken, he still delivered a speech at a dinner that night. Winston, it seemed, was indestructible but it was another jolt to Clemmie's nerves.

Clemmie accompanied Winston on a visit to the British Army on the Rhine in August, and wrote to him soon after, 'I love to feel that I am a comfort in your rather tumultuous life.'

Winston did not help his reputation greatly by the violence of his reaction to the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. With a war-weary nation looking forward to enjoying peace, he kept large numbers of British troops in north and south Russia, fighting to maintain an anti-Bolshevik coalition, to no avail. His language was colourful to say the least, referring to Russia's leaders as 'troops of ferocious baboons' and to their creed as a 'pestilence', a 'plague-bearing bacillus'. This belligerence soured his relations with Lloyd George and encouraged sections of British society to see him as a warmonger. What has unraveled in more recent years, written about by Women in War group member, historian Jonathan Walker, was that Winston secretly drew up plans for a Third World War to drive Russia out of Eastern Europe. The thought of yet another war must have driven Clemmie to her wits end.

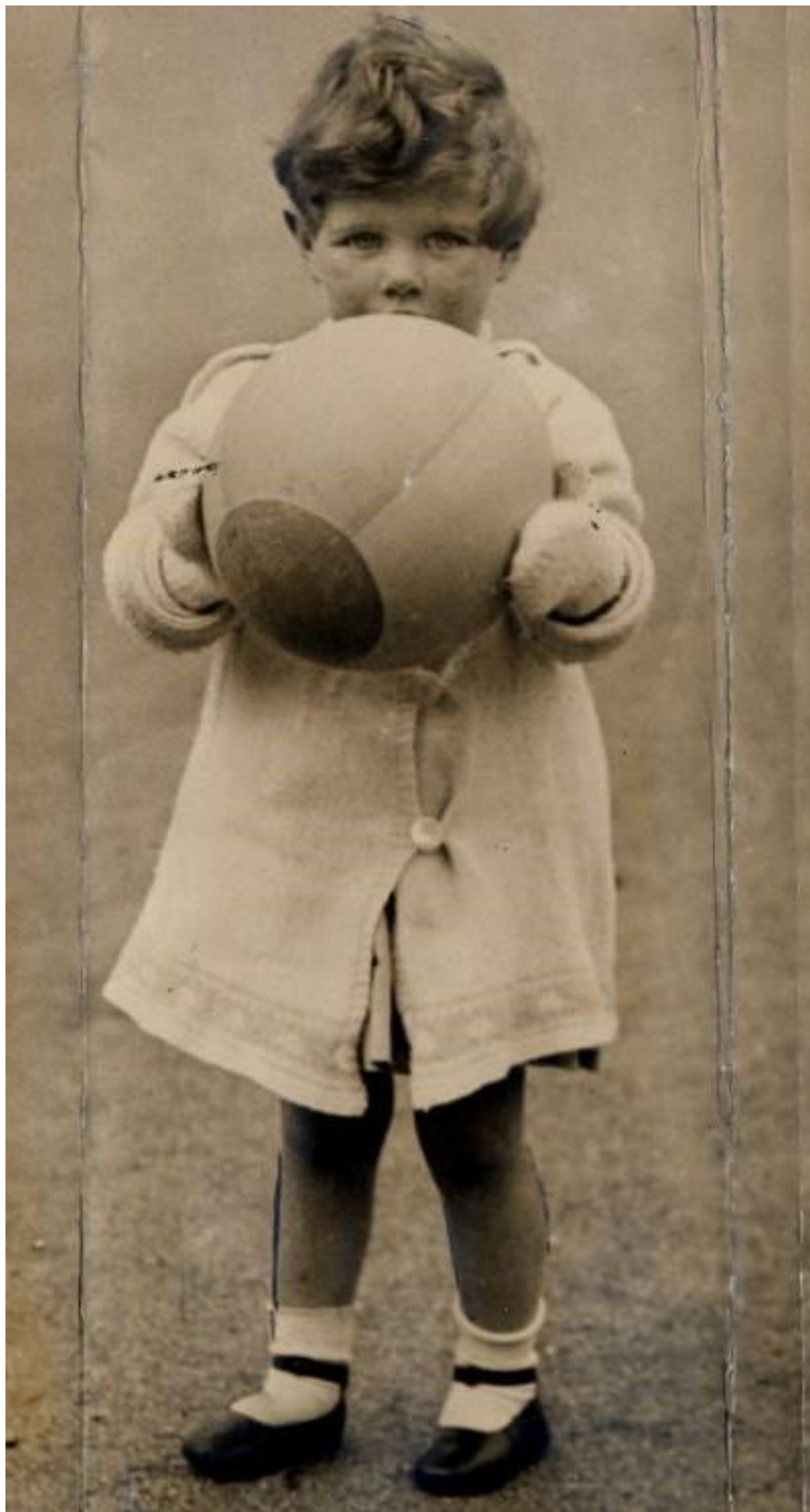
LIFE FOR CLEMMIE AND WINSTON AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Winston sold Lullenden to their friends, General Sir Ian and Lady Hamilton, and it was Jean's money that paid for it for Hamilton was always penniless, whilst Jean's father was a millionaire. Clemmie felt its loss keenly and asked the Hamiltons for a 'first refusal' if they ever decided to sell. There would be other rented houses before the Churchills finally bought No. 2 Sussex Square, London, and were again able to settle into a real family home.

After the war, 'Spanish Influenza' as it was known swept the UK, causing more deaths than those who died in the war. In 1919, Isabelle, the Scottish nurse to baby Marigold had died of it, and there had been great concern for the infant. Several members of the Churchill families caught milder forms of the illness and survived. Following a series of deaths of older members of the family from unrelated illnesses and accidents, including Jennie, more dreadful news reached Clemmie, that her younger brother, William Hozier (Bill), who had been a heavy drinker and a debt-laden gambler, had suddenly, April 14, shot himself dead in his Paris hotel room.

Looking to brighter horizons, Clemmie remarked how much she would like another country home, if only to be able to see more of the 'Jagoons', the delightful collective noun her family gave to the family of Winston's brother and sister-in-law, Jack and Gwendeline, nicknamed Goonie. This would spark the search that ended with the finding of Chartwell House that Winston bought without telling Clemmie until the deal was concluded. The views were panoramic, and it was a veritable paradise but there was an incredible amount of work to be done to update the house and grounds that had been neglected for years, and initially, Clemmie hated the place. That too ended in tragedy with the bitterest blow of all, when Marigold, aged 2 years and 9 months, their adored 'Duckadilly', died suddenly, August 23, 1921. She had previously suffered coughs and colds, but it was not known that she was very ill, until it was too late. She died of septicaemia, whilst Clemmie sat singing to her 'Bubbles' that was her

favourite nursery song. Winston and Clemmie were utterly devastated by their loss and were plunged into deepest mourning. Winston later wrote of the howls and cries of the distraught Clemmie at the loss of this most beloved child. Marigold was not laid to rest in the Churchill family burial ground at St. Martin's Church, Bladon, Oxfordshire, her funeral took place in secret to a council cemetery so that parents and family could visit all the more often. Winston took his children to see the grave, and a story is told still today, by the guides at Kensal Green Cemetery, London, where Marigold is buried, that whilst Winston was Prime Minister during the Second World war, he would arrive in the official limousine and stop and get out and sit on a bench in front of Marigold's grave, meditating in silence.^{xii} When a visitor to Chartwell asked him why he always painted pictures by the pool at Chartwell, he replied it was because he could see Marigold's reflection in the waters.



Marigold Frances Churchill aged 2 years, playing by the sea.

To the great joy of Clemmie and Winston another baby girl was born, September 15, 1922, and they named her Mary. In October, however, Winston suffered from an appendicitis which took him out of political life at a crucial moment. At loggerheads with his Conservative partners, David Lloyd George had resigned as Prime Minister and forced a General Election. Winston was not able to visit his Dundee constituency until November 11, just four days before polling. He had bombarded them with letters and manifestos, but again erred on the side of extremism. He attacked the Labour candidate, the irreproachable E. D. Morel, trying to paint him as a bloodthirsty Communist. Despite Clemmie's personal intervention and best efforts campaigning in Winston's absence, immaculately dressed in twin-set and pearls, it all backfired. Winston was thrashed into fourth place. On his forty-eighth birthday he was out of office and out of parliament altogether. The Conservatives were back, with no place in their ranks for the Liberal turncoat.



Clementine Churchill canvassing for her husband Winston in a General Election at Dundee

Winston and Clemmie went on a long winter holiday in the South of France. He tried to put a brave face on things, but the ‘black dog’ of depression sat heavily upon him. He found solace in his painting and began to sketch out plans for his monumental history of the period, 1914-1919, *The World Crisis*.

By May 1923, the Churchills were back in Britain. Chartwell was eating up the money very quickly, and, though Winston felt some moral qualms about accepting, he took £5,000 from the great oil companies, Royal Dutch Shell and Burmah Oil, to discuss with Prime Minister Baldwin a possible merger with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, in which the government owned a majority share. His meeting with Baldwin was most cordial, and he realised that, at the highest levels, he was not so unwelcome to the Conservatives.



Clementine and Winston Churchill at home, Chartwell House, Kent.

In April 1924, Clemmie was in Dieppe with her mother, when Winston spent his first night at Chartwell House, they, having previously lived in a cottage in the grounds. It was the start of

a long and happy association, where so much great writing, painting and sheer physical labour would reward Winston's diligent efforts to secure the place.

Having never taken more than three weeks holiday at a time in his life, Winston's brother Jack accompanied him on a three-month trip to North America. Winston's only son Randolph and Jack's elder son Johnny, both down from university for the summer, accompanied their fathers for part of the holiday. They sailed on August 3, 1929, on the *Empress of Australia* and travelled in great comfort. Winston wrote continually to his wife who he described as: 'the citadel of my life and soul', regaling her with tales of long sessions of Bezique with Jack, on whom he 'inflicted most cruel defeats'. He found time to write two major essays for publication and began an intensive course of reading in preparation for his proposed study of John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough. Clemmie, having remained at home because she had not been well enough to face the long journey, recovered from minor operations and illnesses. She was sustained by her loving daughters, and by Lady Gwendeline who, along with Jack's younger son Peregrine and daughter Clarissa, (later wife of Anthony Eden), were frequent visitors to Chartwell.

By letter, Winston assured Clemmie with a confident statement of how his writing was earning such good advances and payments, and that some solid investments were producing handsome and steady returns. By the end of October 1929, however, the great 'Wall Street Crash' was upon them, devastating the American economy and sending shock waves around the world, whilst the Churchills were still there on their visit. Winston estimated that his investments shrank by £10,000 in the twinkling of an eye, and, no doubt remembering his own upbringing, he felt a great anguish about his family's finances and prospects. In a throwaway remark in his memoirs, Johnny would say, 'Certainly our families avoided the tragedy which overwhelmed so many others'.^{xiii} A lot of very hard work by Jack as a stock broker was passed over lightly. There were retrenchments at Chartwell. Only the study was kept in use and the family once again repaired to a cottage that had been intended for a butler. Winston embarked

on such a sustained programme of writing for money to ensure that they kept their heads well above water and could even take out long leases on quite comfortable London homes.

Winston was now writing on an industrial scale. He was working on the study of *Marlborough*, on a whole series of essays, and began negotiations with Cassel for the major work that would become his epic *History of the English-Speaking Peoples*. An advance of £20,000 (perhaps £600,000 today) was most acceptable, especially for a work not due to be delivered until the latter half of the decade.^{xiv} Although Winston dictated his words to efficient secretaries, he always employed first-rate researchers, usually rising stars in the world of history^{xv}, to assemble the raw material on which he worked. The year 1930 saw the publication of the very successful *My Early Life*. This humorous, charming and engaging ‘memoir’ has influenced most subsequent books about Winston but, it should be read with caution. It was followed in 1931 by *The Eastern Front* (a supplementary volume to *The World Crisis*, after criticism that he had badly neglected that aspect of the war), by an abridged edition of *The World Crisis*, a collection of essays (*Thoughts and Adventures*), and then the four volume *Marlborough* (between 1933 and 1938).

At the end of 1931, Winston and Clemmie were able to travel together to America, where Winston embarked on what was expected to be a successful lecture tour, scheduled to bring in some £10,000. But, soon after the first talk, he was attempting to find a private address in New York to which he had been invited when he was knocked down by a car on Fifth Avenue. It was a nasty accident, with eight days in hospital and all of Christmas and the New Year he was confined to bed at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, a great worry and anxiety to Clemmie. Three weeks convalescence in the West Indies helped a lot, but he was depressed at this turn in his fortunes. He was very sad at what he considered three great blows in the last two years – the loss of money in ‘the Crash’, the loss of office in the Conservative Party, and now the road accident – and he wondered if he would ever recover completely from this trio of woes. He gamely tried to complete the lecture tour but was only able to manage about half of it. Clemmie

returned to England ahead of him and was delighted to cable him that 140 friends, organised by the faithful Conservative Brendan Bracken, had raised a subscription to present him with a very handsome new Daimler car.^{xvi}

BUILD UP TO THE SECOND WORLD WAR 1939-45

In 1932, Winston had travelled extensively in Germany, a country he admired, visiting the battlefields of the Duke of Marlborough. In Munich, he saw at close quarters the burgeoning influence of the Nazi Party on the brink of assuming complete control of the nation state. A severe bout of paratyphoid fever laid him low, and he was confined to a sanatorium in Salzburg for two weeks. Jack wrote letters that were meant to cheer him saying, ‘There was a rumour that you had been poisoned by drinking water! I contradicted this libel at once!’ Clemmie at home must have been going through nightmares. While he, in common with most people at the time, did not outwardly disapprove of the new regime in Germany, Winston does seem to have instinctively grasped the danger it would pose for Europe.

January 1933 saw Hitler appointed Chancellor of Germany. The Nazis moved quickly to seize the apparatus of the state, making their removal impossible. In February the Oxford Union passed the motion, ‘That this House refuses in any circumstances to fight for King and Country’. A week later, addressing the Anti-Socialist and Anti-Communist Union, Winston denounced this ‘abject, squalid, shameless avowal’ and warned of the ‘splendid clear-eyed youth’ of Germany demanding the re-armament of their country. His powerful talents as a writer and speaker, swung into action as a warning to Britain and Europe of the danger they faced. He was not helped by people reminding him of his stance, before and after the Great War, against military spending and of the cuts he had made in defence budgets at every opportunity. But he had seen, with a clarity denied to others, the logical outcome of the Nazi accession to power and he would not desist. There were great moves afoot in Europe to negotiate further disarmament as a guarantee of peace, and France was put under great pressure to set an example and reduce her powerful armed forces. When Winston suggested that these

measures made war more likely he was shouted down in the House of Commons. His old reputation as a 'war lover', however unjustified, was at odds with the mood of the country. How curious that Anthony Eden, using phrases like 'a fantastic absurdity', refuted Winston's arguments in the Commons.

In the late summer of 1934, Winston and Clemmie had taken a delightful holiday as guests of their friend, Lord Moyne (Walter Guinness), cruising on his motor yacht *Rosaura* in the Mediterranean. He then told them that he had a commission to capture some Komodo dragons from the Indonesian islands for the London Zoo, and he invited them both on a long voyage. Winston was incredibly busy, working on the ever-expanding life of Marlborough. He could see Clemmie would love to make the voyage and graciously gave his consent. She left in December 1934, and was away until the end of April 1935, having sailed 30,000 miles. It was a remarkable experience for her, and the letters between husband and wife are deeply moving in their declarations of love. It is not significant that Clemmie is widely held to have 'fallen romantically in love' with one handsome and charming younger man, Terence Philips, on the cruise. Winston's nastier critics might suggest their marriage was in trouble, but Clemmie recalled those times with 'detached amusement', in the words of her biographer-daughter, Mary, who gamely never shirked such issues in her family history.^{xvii} There was more than a hint that Philips was in fact homosexual, and when a full-blown scandal of Clemmie's supposed affair with him reared its ugly head in recent years, there were those amongst historians who rushed to her defence (including this author) that Philips was definitely so, and that is why she felt safe and to some degree protected in his company.

In Parliament and the press Winston continued to warn of the danger of disarming in the face of German re-armament. He admitted that he was having little impact on the majority opinion in the country. While he maintained that his writing, and his idyllic life at Chartwell sustained him, there were many 'black dog' moments of depression, and a noted increase in the enormous pleasure he took in alcoholic beverages. When German troops re-occupied the

Rhineland that year, it was one more example of the Western powers appeasing the anti-communist powers – Japan in Manchuria, Italy in Abyssinia, and Germany in Central Europe. By now the pretence of a unified ‘National’ government was over and the Conservatives had assumed the reigns of office, with Stanley Baldwin as Prime Minister. If Winston hoped for a moment that he might be invited back into government, he was soon disappointed and no doubt so was Clemmie.

Both Mary and Clarissa recall that as young girls then, for many years the whole talk at Chartwell when the two families assembled there on Sundays was of the threat of war. Winston and Clemmie took great comfort from their family gatherings. The ‘Jagoons’ were frequent and popular visitors. Clarissa’s recollection of Winston’s utterances was that ‘there was going to be a terrible war and we were all going to be annihilated’.^{xviii}

Hitler threw caution to the wind in 1938, and absorbed the whole of Austria into Greater Germany, before making territorial demands upon Czechoslovakia for the ‘return’ of the mainly German Sudetenland to their ‘mother country’. It was a sign of the true feelings of the country at large, that Conservative Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain could fly to Munich, make shameful concessions to Nazi aggression, and return to a hero’s welcome, waving his piece of paper with the bogus promise from Hitler of ‘peace in our time’. If German ambitions could be diverted to Eastern Europe, what need had Britain and France to concern themselves? Winston’s group of patriots were roundly denounced as troublemakers, and the machinery of the Conservative Party was deployed to make their political lives difficult. Clemmie supported Winston completely in his stand, and there are stories of guests at Chartwell incurring her wrath (and she had quite a temper) if they expressed pro-appeasement views. It can have come as little comfort to watch as Hitler promptly invaded and occupied the whole of Czechoslovakia and then turned his attention to Danzig. Belatedly, Britain and France began military preparations to face the crisis; somewhat bizarrely they issued a guarantee to Poland that her territorial integrity would be protected against German aggression.

Thus, it came to pass that, when Germany attacked Poland on September 1, 1939, Britain issued an ultimatum demanding German withdrawal. That ultimatum was ignored, and Britain declared war on Germany on September 3rd. Chamberlain had to create a War Cabinet and immediately invited Winston back as First Lord of the Admiralty. A signal flew around all the bases and ships of the Royal Navy ‘Winston is Back!’ He was at his desk that very evening, and a blizzard of letters to him followed, thanking God that he had kept such a true course for the best part of a decade, and was back in office where his undoubted talents were so badly needed.

After the rapid defeat of Poland, the whole of Europe went into a quiet phase known as the ‘Phoney War’. The British Expeditionary Force (BEF) established itself in Northern France; Johnny Churchill was with them as a Staff Captain at 1st Corps Headquarters, specialising in camouflage work. Peregrine Churchill was employed at the Air Ministry as a civilian expert on similar work. Winston saw the Royal Navy win a great success by forcing the pocket battleship *Graf Spee* to scuttle itself after being trapped in Montevideo harbour following the Battle of the River Plate.

Once again, the frustration of inactivity saw Winston firing off new schemes for action, including some very dangerous ideas about sending the fleet into the Baltic. He was initially interested in the plan to send British and French troops to assist the Finns in their separate war with the Soviet Union, but later argued that it would not impact at all on Germany’s war effort. These discussions did draw Allied attention towards Scandinavia, and the vital iron ore mines in Sweden that found their outlet through Norwegian ports like Narvik. Winston became a major advocate of pre-emptive action in Norway to seize these assets for the Allies and deny them to Germany. Early in April 1940, Chamberlain appointed Churchill to preside over the War Cabinet’s Military Co-ordination Committee, which sounds rather more authoritative than

it actually was. Preparations were well under way for an intervention in Norway when the news came that Germans were massing in their northern ports with a similar plan in mind.

Both sides set out on April 7, 1940; the Germans, having a much shorter journey, arrived first and in strength. Denmark was overrun; Norway invaded. The Royal Navy had some remarkable successes against the German fleet, but Allied land forces were contained and driven back by the German Army and Luftwaffe. Before April was out the Allies were planning for the very difficult evacuation of their beleaguered troops from some parts of Norway, as other troops were still going ashore into extremely perilous situations. A mounting tide of criticism of the whole handling of the campaign inevitably made Winston something of a target. How extraordinary that, in the ensuing parliamentary debate, he should emerge the victor.

WINSTON CHURCHILL BECOMES PRIME MINISTER

Winston emerged strongly from the debate in the House of Commons on 7th and 8th May 1940. There was such a tide of opinion running against Neville Chamberlain that a vote of censure reduced the government majority from 213 to 81. Chamberlain left the Chamber to cries of ‘Go! Go! Go!’ On May 9th he tried to cobble together a new coalition government, but the Labour Party refused to serve under him. A suggestion that an aristocrat, Lord Halifax become Prime Minister was met with stony silence. The next day the Germans launched a huge offensive against Holland, Belgium and France. Clemmie and Winston waited with baited-breath for the moment of decision. Chamberlain tendered his resignation to the King and, when asked to nominate a successor, advised that Winston be called upon. His reputation built over several years, as the siren voice warning about Nazi aggression, made him the natural choice. Together, husband and wife prepared to brazen it out through another terrible war.

Plunged into crisis and near disaster from the day he achieved the highest office, this was the moment Winston was born for. The stubborn streak in his character; his love of British history

and institutions; his certainty in the correctness of his own opinion – all this came together at the hour of his country's greatest need. His unflinching leadership over the next couple of years are why he was, is now, and always will be, regarded with the greatest admiration by freedom-loving people in Britain and throughout the world. His utter refusal to contemplate a negotiated peace with the most evil regime in history was what carried an ill-prepared and battered nation through many trials, until more powerful allies stepped up to take the strain of the war.

Winston would face many more humiliating military defeats, and the pressure of responsibility would see many more 'black dogs' gnawing at him. Throughout his travails a close and loving family would sustain him, and they made a vital contribution to Britain's success in war in this, their own way, and at the forefront was his ever loving and determined wife Clemmie, now aged 55 years.

Randolph, who had married the beautiful Pamela Digby in 1939, was returned unopposed as the Conservative MP for Preston, from 1940 to 1945. He went out to the Middle East with No.8 Commando in January 1941, and was frustrated to be kept in Cairo, doing various liaison jobs, by commanders too afraid of his father to put him in harm's way. The Churchill's eldest daughter Diana, served in the Women's Royal Naval Service but had to leave in February 1941 to look after her two small children and her husband, Duncan Sandys, who had been seriously injured in a car accident. Sarah continued her acting career until she parted from her husband, Vic Oliver, in 1941. She then joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force and worked on photographic interpretation. Stationed at Medmenham, she was able to get to Chequers often to see her parents. By September the whole family was in uniform, as Mary joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service and immediately applied for active service with a mixed anti-aircraft battery.

The matriarch, Clementine, was the guiding genius of the family. She was as perceptive as ever, realising that a well-meant attempt to get little Sally, (the daughter of Angela and Johnny Churchill), who is today Lady Ashburton, evacuated to America would look like the Churchill's were abandoning ship. She moved swiftly to get the passage cancelled and the child re-located in England. She frankly warned Winston that his 'sarcastic and over-bearing manner' was alienating the friends he must work with.^{xix} She was sure this was just the strain of his work, but the value of such timely advice was beyond calculation.

CLEMMIE'S WORK DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Clemmie embarked on a punishing schedule of work and visits, building on her First World War experience. She was aware of the demoralised state and situation of the French servicemen now in the UK, having been evacuated from Dunkirk beaches. Some joined the newly forming Free French Forces straight away. Others were offered repatriation and whilst awaiting their return home, were put up in none to desirable conditions at White City Stadium that had been turned into a temporary camp. Clemmie visited the stadium in August. Mary has spoken of the 'painful impression on her to see the looks of doubt or despair, and even glances of downright hostility, on so many – for the most part young – faces. She talked to some of the men and came home sad and troubled.'^{xx}

From letters sent to her in the post, Clemmie became aware of the appalling conditions existing in many of the London air raid shelters in which many thousands of Londoners were obliged to spend their nights, during the Blitz. She wrote to Winston's private secretary asking him to let her know about the arrangements to shelter people whose homes had been wrecked or damaged in raids. She also asked about welfare arrangements for them and whether they would receive any compensation for injuries. That December she set about her own investigation into the conditions of those spending their nights in shelters and visited London boroughs, 'calling in unannounced on as many of the shelters as she could.' May Tennant of the Red Cross and

often Jock Colville accompanied her. Winston was eager to hear the results of what she found on her visits and suggested she travel in an 'armoured car' lest she got killed by a flying bomb. At Stephney in the East End of London, entering a shelter amongst the poorest of the poor, Clemmie stood on a chair and made a speech. Mary has written of her mother's experience:

'Clementine was horrified by the conditions she saw in most of the places she visited, and she formed the opinion (reinforced by the view of responsible people who worked in the shelters and by many local authority officials) that, while life in the shelters could never be Ritz-like, there were nevertheless many things that needed to be done, and that could be done, to improve the standards of hygiene and comfort. When she had inspected a representative cross-section of shelters, she submitted a series of memoranda to Winston. Her suggestions give a vivid and horrifying picture of the conditions which many thousands of Londoners endured for nights on end, in addition to the risk and fear of death, injury and the loss of their homes; and they also show her practical approach to problems.'^{xxi}

Finding 'water was dripping through the roof and seeping through the walls and floor', Clemmie wanted 'every shelter' to be made 'water-proof'. She suggested that if the 'bedding in shelters' was 'not regularly stoved' then 'lice must spread'. It should be 'stoved ... even though the bedding is private property' and 'each shelter should be provided with adequate latrines'. In relation to accommodation she criticised the 'overcrowding in the sleeping arrangements and poor sanitation'. The '3-tier bunks' were 'much too narrow' and 'too short'. In relation to mothers who slept with their babies and, she said: 'it must be quite intolerable, as the baby has to sleep on top of the mother'. She wanted the present model stopped and replaced by one 'redesigned' for practicality. The latrines that were 'only buckets' were inadequate and she suggested they be 'doubled or trebled in number', and lighting should be provided and there should be 'separate latrines for little children, with low buckets and chambers [chamber pots]'.^{xxii} There were difficulties getting these facilities seen to and Clemmie was of the opinion that the 'main difficulty' lay in the number of Authorities concerned: Local Authorities; Home Security; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Labour; Ministry of Supply; one might quote the old saying, 'too many chiefs and not enough Indians'! About Government policy she did not mince her words:

‘There seems to be general uncertainty as to the Government policy re bad shelters. The reason (or excuse?) given for doing nothing is that the particular shelter is unsafe and that it is not worth the while to spend money on it. Meanwhile people continue to live there perhaps fourteen hours out of the twenty-four in really horrible conditions of cold, wet, dirt, darkness and stench.’^{xxiii}

It is considered that ‘The sustained and close interest which Clementine took in the shelters at this time was largely instrumental in bringing about rapid and considerable improvements.’^{xxiv} All of her reports she sent to her husband, who sent them to the appropriate departments, and appeals carried weight coming from the Prime Minister’s Office. Her demands were qualified by support from ‘Members of Parliament, social workers, doctors and officials’^{xxv} who appealed to her directly, having been themselves unable to secure the desired requests from the individual departments.

On 22nd June 1941, Germany and her allies attacked the Soviet Union, unleashing the greatest and most violent campaign in military history. Winston, the inveterate enemy of Soviet Communism, began immediately to offer assistance to his new ally, Joseph Stalin. He reminded one and all that if the Germans invaded Hell, he could be relied upon to make at least a favourable reference to the Devil in the House of Commons! The Soviets suffered such a string of massive defeats in 1941-2 that many doubted if they could last much longer, but their spirited counter-attack at the gates of Moscow in December 1941, showed that they were not giving up easily.

On 7th December the Imperial Japanese Navy, without a declaration of war, attacked the United States base at Pearl Harbour in the Hawaiian Islands. Astonishingly, in the second great act of folly referred to, either in a fit of Hitlerian madness or a bowing to inevitability, Germany declared war on the United States of America. Winston could hardly contain his glee. He felt that the war had been won from that moment forward. There would be much hard fighting for more than three years, but in slightly more than one year the battles of Midway in the Pacific,

El Alamein in North Africa, and Stalingrad on the Eastern Front, had decisively wrested the initiative away from the Axis powers.

Winston, who celebrated his seventieth birthday in 1944, kept up a punishing schedule of work. He spent a lot of time overseas at summit meetings or meeting with his service chiefs. Jack was always there to greet him on his return, often escorting Clemmie. Mary recalled that Clemmie drew strength and comfort from the constant and calming presence of Jack through these difficult years. The strain began to tell on Winston and his health began to suffer. Clemmie, too, was ordered by her doctors to convalesce by the sea in April 1943. Ten days rest at Weymouth, with the amiable Jack for a companion, saw her return to the fray in the best of spirits.

Randolph was seeing his share of active service in the Middle East and, with Evelyn Waugh, was sent into Yugoslavia to liaise with Tito's guerrilla partisan army. After the Normandy landings, Mary's anti-aircraft unit went over to join the armies fighting their way through North-west Europe.



Eleanor Roosevelt and Clementine Churchill at the Quebec Conference 1943

The Young Women's Christian Association Wartime Appeal - Red Cross Aid to Russia campaign

In February 1941, Clemmie was made President of the Young Women's Christian Association's (YWCA's) Wartime Appeal, for whom she did important war work. She did not enjoy public speaking, but her delivery improved as she took her duties seriously and spoke up with spirit, appealing for money to help women war workers and service women adjust to the demands of war, and she raised thousands of pounds. She was a diplomatic host to the energetic and outspoken Eleanor Roosevelt, during her three-week visit to the United Kingdom.



Clementine Churchill addressing the crowd at the England versus Scotland International Soccer Match, Wembley, 17th January 1942, in aid of 'Mrs Churchill's Aid to Russia Fund'.



In October, Clemmie undertook the Chairmanship of the Red Cross Aid to Russia campaign that would be her most triumphant work. This non-political appeal to send medical aid to embattled Russia was an ideal way for all political classes to express their support for a real fighting ally. The Russians were demanding recipients; polite pleasantries did not figure in their vocabulary. But Clemmie drove the appeal along forcefully, raising £2.5millions by December 1942. She deliberately let the fund get overdrawn as it shipped aid off as fast as it could be collected. Working-class support was particularly strong; the Mineworkers' Federation sent the Russian ambassador a cheque for £60,000. A fine New Year appeal saw the overdraft cleared in a trice, and the fund boomed along – over £4millions by October 1943, and £6millions by December 1944. It actually ran on after the war's end, until June 1947, by

The Churchillian

which time over £7.5millions had been raised. The Soviet authorities were moved to honour Clemmie on behalf of all the volunteer workers associated with the Red Cross.

CLEMENTINE FLIES OUT TO RUSSIA



Clementine Churchill centre, wearing the uniform of St John's Ambulance; left famous Russian ace fighter pilot and Chairman of the Anti-Fascist Committee Mrs V. Grizodubova.

In March 1945, as Winston watched the Allied assault across the Rhine, Clemmie flew out, via Cairo, to the Soviet Union as the honoured guest of the Red Cross. She and her companions, Grace Hamblin and Miss Mabel Johnson (secretary to the Aid to Russia Fund), were lodged in the State Guest House. A full programme of visits to hospitals, children's homes, factories, the ballet, and to official lunches and dinners, and one interview with Joseph Stalin himself, was laid on. The Soviet Red Cross awarded Clemmie the Distinguished Red

Cross Service Badge, ‘amidst stormy applause’. The party travelled to Leningrad by train to see the heroic city that had withstood a Nazi siege for some nine hundred days. After more morale-boosting visits, the City Council awarded Clemmie the Order of the Red Banner of Labour, and Miss Johnson the Medal of Labour. On to Stalingrad, to see a city more completely devastated than anything Clemmie could ever recall. After a ‘rest’ on the Black Sea coast, punctuated by more visits to recovering wounded soldiers and to the theatre, they went on to Rostov-on-Don, where the Fund was rebuilding two shattered hospitals. They were in Odessa, via the Crimea, for May Day, and returned to Moscow on 5th May. Clemmie was there when the news of Germany’s surrender finally came through. The next day, she broadcast over Moscow Radio a message from her husband looking forward to friendship and understanding between the British and Russian peoples. Clemmie was home by 12th May and Winston, unable to break the habits of a lifetime, was late in arriving to meet her!



Winston Churchill with his daughter Mary who was in the Auxiliary Territorial Service during World War 2

In 1945, there had been no General Election in Britain for ten years. With victory in war guaranteed, the political parties began to turn their attention to the demands of peace after such a protracted and expensive struggle. Partisan attitudes began to replace coalition co-operation. Winston greatly offended the organised working-class, as represented by the Trades Union Congress, by refusing to consider an amendment to the Trades Disputes Act of 1927, still resented as an act of vengeance after the General Strike. The Labour Party became more assertive and the party conference at Blackpool in May declared that it was not prepared to wait for victory over Japan before insisting on an election. The Coalition Government ended on 23rd May, and Winston technically headed a caretaker Conservative Government until the election.

Winston worked on his electioneering speeches over the first weekend in June at Chequers. He made one of the most astonishing blunders of his long and interesting life. His old Labour colleagues immediately became 'Socialists', abhorrent to a free Parliament. Despite the predictably sensible advice of Clemmie, he inserted into his radio broadcast the gross slander that such a party could only govern with some sort of 'Gestapo' to nip free opinion in the bud. Before the days of television in the UK, the radio was listened to attentively by most of the British population. His broadcast unleashed a storm of protest and did irreparable harm to the Conservative campaign. Well might an admirer like Vita Sackville-West ask, 'What has gone wrong with him?' He still campaigned as vigorously as one would have expected.

The election was on 5th July, but the result would not be declared for three weeks, to allow all the service votes to come in from around the world. On 15th July, Winston flew out to the Potsdam Conference, where the Allied powers were to discuss the war against Japan and the many, intractable issues about the settlement of post-war Europe. He returned to London on 25th July for the declaration of the results expecting a victory; the Labour leader, Clement Attlee, apparently expected to lose by a narrow margin. Winston was returned unopposed in

his new constituency of Woodford in the English county of Essex. The Conservative Party crashed to one of its greatest ever defeats. Labour, with 393 seats to the Tories 213, had an outright majority of 146 over all the other parties. The British people might love ‘Winny’ and admire his defiant stand at the moment of the nation’s greatest ever peril, but they could not forgive his party for the hardship of the 1930s and the drift to war that had blighted so many lives. Clemmie, concerned at the enormous strain the war years had been on his constitution, remarked to Winston that electoral defeat might well be a blessing in disguise. He famously replied that it seemed ‘quite effectively disguised’.



Clementine Churchill with left, daughter Mary, and right, daughter Sarah, at her investiture as a Dame Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire, July 9, 1946.

Despite a minor stroke in 1949, Winston was able to lead his party into an election the following year that almost wiped out the huge Labour majority of 1945. In October 1951, his sixteenth general election, he was back as the properly elected Prime Minister of a Conservative Government. He was feeling all of his seventy-seven years but there would be a last flourish of that great heart. In 1953, Anthony Eden had to take a long leave from the Commons because of ill health. Winston took over the duties of Foreign Secretary and the extra work seemed to rejuvenate him. Thus, it was that he was 'in post' when Joseph Stalin died in May. Winston was inspired to issue a warm, friendly invitation to the new Soviet leadership to a summit conference, and even referred to the possibility of a 'Locarno style' pan-European security system that would, presumably, replace the power blocs of the Cold War.



Clementine Churchill wearing the petunia mantle of a Dame Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire, at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, June 2, 1953. Now suffering from neuritis, she had her arm in a sling

Winston had repeatedly refused a peerage, perhaps because a hereditary title would have interfered with his son Randolph's parliamentary aspirations. But he was installed as a Knight of the Garter in 1953, and later that year made the coronation of the new Queen Elizabeth II a personal triumph by his gallant speeches. His eightieth birthday in 1954 was a national event of the highest importance and he received 30,000 birthday cards, one simply addressed to 'The Greatest Man Alive, London', and 900 presents, were delivered. A collection by 30,000 subscribers raised £259,000 for a Churchill Trust that would go towards the creation of Churchill College, Cambridge in 1958. Clement Attlee presented an illuminated address from both Houses of Parliament to him, together with a specially commissioned – now notorious – portrait by Graham Sutherland. This uncompromising picture of an elderly gentleman with his flies apparently undone, that Winston famously described as a remarkable example of 'modern art', was not at all how he wished to be remembered. At a later and convenient date Clemmie took a knife to it and hacked it to bits and ordered the gardener to throw it on the fire of leaves he was burning in the garden at Chartwell. Civic freedoms, prizes and awards poured in. Winston beat off the claim of Ernest Hemingway to achieve the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1953, something that only three Britons (Rudyard Kipling, John Galsworthy and George Bernard Shaw) had achieved before. There is a faint, and commendable, suggestion that he would have preferred to win the Peace Prize.

At a large Downing Street dinner on 23rd June, Winston had a serious stroke, and his condition, kept secret, deteriorated over the next few days. He was taken to Chartwell to rest and the prognosis was not good. By the time speculation about his condition reached the British press via news stories from America, Winston had made a remarkable recovery. Clemmie was anxious that he should retire from office sooner rather than later.



Left to right: Clementine Churchill, Anthony Eden, Clarissa nee Spencer Churchill the daughter of Lady Gwendeline and Major John (Jack) Spencer Churchill, and Winston Churchill on the Eden's wedding day, August 14th 1952.

But he battled on, first to wait until the 'Party leader in waiting', Anthony Eden, now married to his niece Clarissa Churchill, was recovered from his series of operations, and then to 'hold the fort' while the Queen and Prince Philip went on their long Commonwealth tour. Winston tired easily, and could get depressed, but still he managed to attend Cabinet meetings and the Party conference in October. A signal honour was paid to Clemmie when she was asked to accept the Nobel Prize for Literature on Winston's behalf. (Normally, if a recipient is unwell, his or her country's ambassador to Sweden accepts the prize).

The family had its tribulations. Diana suffered a nervous breakdown that made relations with her mother more than usually fraught. Randolph, a successful journalist, seemed intent on offending as many people as was humanly possible, and Clarissa broke with him completely over a spiteful attack he made on her husband. Sarah had separated from her second husband. Clemmie was suffering acutely from neuritis, experiencing great pain in her right arm and shoulder. While nursing her husband and herself, Clemmie had then to help her much younger sister, Nellie, through the last stages of cancer until her death, aged sixty-six, in February 1955.

The celebrations for Winston's eightieth birthday were a tremendous, rejuvenating boost to him, though Mary Soames recorded in her diary that her 'Mama collapsed with fatigue'.

Finally, the date for retirement was set for 5th April 1955. Queen Elizabeth paid the unusual tribute of joining a celebratory dinner at No.10 Downing Street on 4th April. It was a sign of the enormous respect and personal regard she felt towards her Prime Minister, and it quickly became 'established' that this was a unique honour paid by a reigning monarch to her 'first citizen'. A party for all the staff at Downing Street was held the next day. Chartwell and life as a private citizen beckoned. At last Winston could get on and finish *The History of the English-Speaking Peoples*.

The long and gradual decline of life set in from 1958, when a bout of pneumonia left Winston much weakened. A fall in 1960 led to the breaking of a small bone in his neck, but a worse tumble in 1962, while staying at the Hotel de Paris, saw the breaking of a hip bone that had longer term consequences. His London home, 28 Hyde Park Gate, was fitted with lifts to enable him to get about, but he was not able to travel down to his beloved Chartwell for a year. Deafness, for which he resolutely refused to wear a hearing aid, and increasing bouts of lethargy, led to long periods of brooding silence. All this Clemmie bore with humility and dedication to a husband she loved.

Family life for Clemmie could bring joy and tragedy. Great comfort was taken from the arrival of grandchildren (two Churchills, three Sandys' and five Soames') and the first great-grandchild (to Diana's daughter, Edwina). The Soames family lived at Chartwell Farm and were a constant source of pleasure. Their removal to Hamswell Manor, near Tunbridge Wells, was still within easy motoring distance. Sarah's third marriage, to Henry Audley, promised much happiness but was tragically ended after just fifteen months as he succumbed to a massive heart attack. The heaviest blow of all was the death of Diana in October 1963, by an

overdose of sleeping tablets.^{xxvi} She had taken to doing excellent work with the Samaritans, and she had seemed in good heart to those of her family who saw her just before the end. It was mere happenstance that there was nobody about when she took the fatal dose. It fell to Mary to convey the news to her heart-broken mother and father.

Winston remained the Conservative Member of Parliament for Woodford through the general elections of 1955 and 1959, with substantial, if slightly declining majorities. Clemmie kept an eye on constituency affairs for him, and his efficient secretariat dealt with the normal matters of Member of Parliament. His last attendance at the House of Commons was in January 1961. The question of how long he could remain as an MP was being increasingly discussed, not least by Clemmie who thought it really was time he stood back from public life. As a General Election approached in 1964, Winston took the decision not to seek re-election.

The Conservative Government of Sir Alec Douglas-Hume planned to put before the House of Commons a vote of thanks for Winston's long and distinguished services to Parliament, which would then be conveyed to him at his London home. When Clemmie saw the utterly banal 'appreciation' offered she was deeply displeased. She looked out the stirring address made by the Speaker of the House when the Duke of Wellington left Parliament and compared it to the 'mangy address' intended to her husband. Winston made a final visit to the Commons on 28th July, and the next day a much more fitting tribute was passed, paying proper respect to his inspirational wartime leadership. He had been made an honorary citizen of the United States of America in the spring of 1963; his ninetieth birthday in November 1964 saw more national celebrations.

But the end was not far off. Another stroke on 11th January 1965 left him semi-conscious but clinging to life. A Roman Catholic priest was called in by a relative to pray over the unconscious Winston. He lasted until early on 24th January 1965, when, with two or three long

sighs, he died exactly seventy years to the day and almost to the moment after his father, Lord Randolph.

But in death there was life for two days before Sir Winston passed away, Minnie Churchill the wife of his grandson also named Winston, gave birth, January 22nd to Randolph Leonard, who is today President of the International Churchill Society and Patron of the Churchill Society of Tennessee. Clemmie was delighted with the new baby, and grandmother hood began again.



**Clementine, Mary, Randolph and Nicholas Soames,
attending the state funeral of Sir Winston Churchill, January 30, 1965.**



**The grave of Sir Winston and Baroness Clementine Churchill, St Martin's Churchyard, Bladon,
Oxford, visited by thousands of tourists each year.**

Sources: The main source for the article is Celia Lee and John Lee *THE CHURCHILLS A Family Portrait*; pub. Palgrave Macmillan New York and London, 2010. John Lee was the academic advisor on the military careers of all those mentioned in this article.

The second source is: Mary Soames *Clementine Churchill* (Second edition), pub. Doubleday 2002.

ⁱ Winston Churchill dropped the use of Spencer from his name, but it remains part of the family name.

ⁱⁱ Mary Soames, *Clementine Churchill*, (Second edition) Doubleday, 2002; p.156.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ditto p.167

^{iv} Ditto p.182

^v Ditto p.182

^{vi} Ditto p. 88

^{vii} Ditto p.189

^{viii} Ditto p.195

^{ix} Ditto p.196

^x Gary Sheffield, *The Chief: Douglas Haig and the British Army*; pub. Aurum Press; 2011.

^{xi} Celia Lee *Jean, Lady Hamilton 1861-1941 - A Soldier's Wife*; pub. privately 2001; pp. 198-9.

^{xii} Story related to Celia Lee by Claire Aston, a guide at Kensal Green cemetery.

^{xiii} John Spencer Churchill *Crowded Canvas*, pub. Odhams, 1961.

^{xiv} Because of the war and its subsequent six-volume history it would not actually appear until 1957.

^{xv} Maurice Ashley and Keith Feiling worked on *Marlborough*.

^{xvi} Subscribers included the press barons, Beaverbrook and Harmsworth, the Prince of Wales and Duke of Westminster, General Sir Ian Hamilton, Charlie Chaplin, Harold Macmillan and Duff Cooper.

^{xvii} Mary Soames *Clementine Churchill* (Second edition), pub. Doubleday 2002; pp. 298-9.

^{xviii} Interview with Clarissa, Countess of Avon, recorded by Celia Lee.

^{xix} Mary Soames, *Clementine Churchill*, (Second edition) Doubleday, 2002; *Clementine Churchill to Winston Churchill*, 27th June 1949; p.325.

^{xx} Ditto p.324

^{xxi} Ditto pp.333-5

^{xxii} Ditto p.333-5

^{xxiii} Ditto pp.333-5

^{xxiv} Ditto pp.333-5

^{xxv} Ditto p.335

^{xxvi} Although the medical outcome at the time was suicide, it is today questioned whether this was in fact suicide, or a tragic, accidental, overdose, before the time that adequate precautions were taken that the patient had a reminder that they had taken the prescribed dose.

Clementine Churchill Tartan Ordering Information



To order please link to the scotweb site in Scotland where you can get information on the ordering and manufacturing process. This tartan is made on an old artisan loom in the traditional manner making it very special indeed.

<https://www.scotweb.co.uk/tartan/Churchill-Clementine-Member-Design/611486>

You can order kilts, trews, scarves, cummerbunds, ties or just the cloth.

We hope you enjoy our new tartan!

THE CHURCHILL SOCIETY OF TENNESSEE



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