

THE CHURCHILLIAN

A black and white photograph of Winston Churchill, Clementine Churchill, and their children. Winston Churchill is on the right, wearing a dark overcoat and a hat, looking towards Clementine. Clementine is in the center, wearing a dark coat with a large fur collar and a matching hat, smiling at Winston. In the bottom left corner, two young children are visible, looking towards the camera. The background is slightly blurred, showing some foliage.

Churchill Society of Tennessee
Spring Edition 2022

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**Cover art: HRH Queen Elizabeth II and Winston Churchill with Prince Charles
and Princess Anne.**

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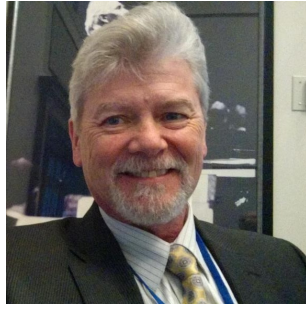
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From the President



Dear CSOT Members,

The CSOT held its first cigar smoker of 2022 on March 6 at Nashville Cigar in Green Hills. It was well attended and we even picked up some new members. The cigars were lit and we raised our glasses of Pol Roger, generously provided by Dan Davis, to toast Sir Winston Spencer Churchill. Just prior to the toast however these powerful and prescient words were read out quoting the great man himself.

‘Civilisation will not last, freedom will not survive, peace will not be kept, unless a very large majority of mankind unite together to defend them and show themselves possessed of a constabulary power before which barbaric and atavistic forces will stand in awe.’

A reminder that there will be a talk by Michael Shane Neal on ‘Churchill’s Art’ in Nashville on April 9. See the Upcoming Events section for further details.

Lastly, I will be heading over to the UK in April to visit some of Churchill’s old haunts mostly in London. We hope to put together a tour of some of these locations next year. I will also have the honor of piping at Churchill’s graveside during the VE-Day ceremony held St Martin’s Church in Bladon, Oxfordshire on May 8.

Enjoy this issue of *The Churchillian*!

Best wishes,
Jim Drury

Upcoming Events

[Tickets for Churchill & His Art Here](#)

Churchill and His Art a talk by artist Michael Shane Neal *presented by the Churchill Society of Tennessee*



Join us for a fascinating talk by Michael Shane Neal, renowned portrait artist and CSOT board member, on Sir Winston Churchill's love of painting. Refreshments and a champagne toast provided!

9 April 2022 at 4pm

at the home of
Bill & Lynne Siesser
2009 Overhill Drive
Nashville, TN 37215

\$25 per person. Tickets are available at churchillsocietytn.org
or mail a check to Lynne Siesser (address above).



*Annual CSOT Formal Banquet
November 19, 2022
at the
Belle Meade Country Club
Tickets go on sale this summer*

6 October 2022

2022 Churchill Conference

6-8 October 2022, Kansas City, Missouri

The International Churchill Society and the National World War I Museum and Memorial are pleased to announce that the 39th In...

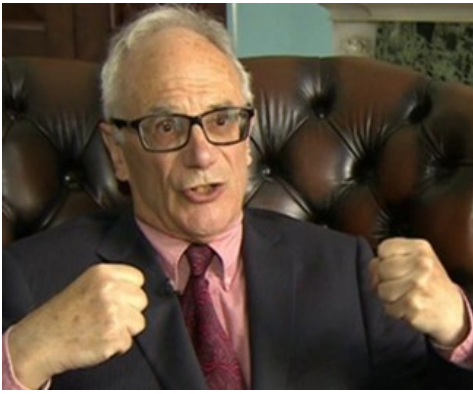
[ABOUT EVENT](#)



Churchill's Menagerie

His Life Through Animals

Piers Brendon



Dr Piers Brendon FRSL is Emeritus Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge and was Keeper of the Churchill Archives Centre from 1995 to 2001. He is a British historian, known for many historical and biographical works, including *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*, *The Dark Valley: A Panorama of the 1930s*, *Ike - the Life and Times of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, and *Winston Churchill: A Brief Life*. His latest book is the subject of this article.



Fig 1. © Helen Oxenbury

Helen Oxenbury's wonderful image of Winston Churchill shaking hands with a bear is a perfect visual epitome of this book (Fig. 1). It is an account of his fascination with the animal kingdom, based largely on original documents but presented in the form of an ancient bestiary.

Hence the title of the English edition, Churchill's Bestiary, which may have been a mistake since few people know that this word means "compendium of beasts" and that bookshops are liable to place it on the groaning shelves they devote to bestiality. To be on the safe side my American publishers, Pegasus Books, changed the title to Churchill's Menagerie.

However, to be clear, I try to show, via the many animals marching through my pages, that Churchill was innocently, but in a quite extraordinary fashion, preoccupied, amused, intrigued, enchanted and besotted by creatures great and small. They included lions, leopards and kangaroos, horses, goats, dogs, swans, budgerigars,

butterflies and fish, right down to ants, bugs, locusts, flies and the tins of exceptionally well-bred maggots he made a point of purchasing from Yorkshire at a cost of 22 shillings and sixpence (about five dollars) a week to feed his cherished goldfish and golden orfe. “Aristocratic maggots, these are,” he sometimes said, “Look how well the fish are doing on them.” As this remark indicates, the book is lit up by Churchill’s incomparable wit, his ebullient personality and his patrician eccentricity. But it is no mere entertainment. Nor was Churchill’s preoccupation with animals just a jokey, trivial or incidental aspect of his life. It was important for a whole host of reasons.



Fig 2. This affectionate study of Churchill absorbed by his golden horde at feeding time was painted by his nephew Johnny. © Churchill Archives Centre Broadwater Collection

For example, Churchill’s love of horses, creatures which embodied a romance wholly absent from machines, illustrates a crucial dichotomy in his worldview. On the

one hand he appreciated the revolutionary potential of science and technology – cars, tanks, planes; on the other he deplored the replacement of the noble quadruped by “the infernal – I mean internal – combustion engine”. Here then is a key paradox about Churchill: his faith in a technological future was always tempered by his nostalgia for a chivalric past.

Given his illustrious ancestry, such nostalgia was understandable. Churchill, born in Blenheim Palace in 1874, the grandson of the 7th Duke of Marlborough, was impeccably blue-blooded. He set much store by pedigree, not just in humans but in horses and dogs and much humbler creatures. For example, he maintained that his goldfish and golden orfe, were a cut above finny plebeians such as vulgar tench or horribly common pike, coarse fish in every sense (Fig. 2).

Furthermore – to explore another key paradox – Churchill conformed to the upper-class convention that a gentleman spent much of his time hunting, shooting and fishing, while doting on the horses, hounds and other furred or feathered friends with which he surrounded himself at home.

As a small boy he was a keen “bug-hunter”, adept at netting butterflies, dragonflies and moths. As

a youth, encouraged by his father Lord Randolph Churchill, he pursued game with hound, gun and rod. All his life he revelled in the excitement of the chase, and he told his American mother (Jennie, née Jerome) that fox-hunting was the greatest pleasure in the world. In India he became an ardent hog-hunter. In Africa he shot everything from crocodiles to ostriches, including, among many other large quadrupeds, three rare white rhinoceroses. In France he hunted wild boar with furious energy, determined to be in at the kill. At Balmoral he once dispatched three stags in a single day and throughout his career he enjoyed shooting grouse, pheasants, snipe and partridge, and catching trout and salmon.

Yet from his infancy upwards he was devoted to animals. He kept guinea pigs and tame bunnies – while slaying wild rabbits. He had an affinity with felines and signed himself in letters home “The Pussy Cat”. At preparatory school he was smitten by “a dear little fox-terrier puppy” and at Harrow he bred silk-worms and sold his bicycle to buy a bulldog, the purpose of which escaped his fond nanny, Mrs Everest, “unless it is to keep us all in terror of our lives” (Fig. 3). Subsequently, at Chartwell, his pocket Blenheim in Kent, Churchill



Fig. 3. Winston sitting with a terrier in his lap, 1892, beside his brother Jack. © Churchill Archives Centre Deposited collections

accumulated an extensive menagerie. He lavished care, cash and emotion on the well-being of its inmates, who became part of his extended family. And he always referred to them in comically refined terms: dogs did not make messes on the carpet, they committed indiscretions; cows did not breed but attended to their family affairs; fish were not pregnant but in an interesting condition. Dwelling amid fauna and flora, he said, was the ideal form of existence.

He went further, once remarking that “The world would be better off if it were inhabited only by animals.” Robert Boothby, his sometime parliamentary private secretary, exaggerated when he said that Churchill had little regard for human

life, least of all his own, but that he “would cry over the death of a swan or a cat”. But it is true that Churchill was moved to tears when contemplating the area bombing of Germany during the Second World War. “Ten thousands of lives were extinguished in one night,” he said, “Old men, old women, little children, yes, yes, children about to be born – and – and pushie cats.” The lisping delivery combined with the bathetic conclusion provoked nervous mirth among those at his dinner table. And when Churchill detected it, he turned like a flash and said in deadly earnest, “When I mentioned ‘pushie cats’ I would not have you think I take them lightly.” However, Churchill expected his own felines to face the Blitz bravely and he was mortified when his black cat Nelson hid under a chest of drawers at No 10 during an air raid. “Come out, Nelson!” he commanded. “Shame on you, bearing a name such as yours, to skulk there while the enemy is overhead!”.

As I’ve suggested, Churchill’s ambivalence towards the brute creation was not unique. English aristocrats (and others) had no difficulty in reconciling their traditional addiction to blood sports with a fondness for animals. However, Churchill related to animals in a highly idiosyncratic fashion. Such was his empathy for the livestock farmed at



Fig. 4. Churchill with Rufus II (“the Two is silent”) © Alamy (2CKNWM6)

Chartwell, for example, that he opposed the slaying of any creature to whom he had said “Good Morning.” On one memorable occasion he asked his wife Clementine to carve the goose because it “was a friend of mine”. On another he hesitated to carve a large roast chicken, explaining to Clemmie in a voice fraught with emotion: “I’m just wondering if this is Ethel.”

Churchill engaged with animals on a personal level. Of course, many people talk to their pets and to other creatures, endowing them with language in a vain endeavour to bridge the gulf that lies between the species. But Churchill was the complete anthropomorphist. More than most he invested animals with human characteristics and communicated with them as individuals.

Churchill wrote letters to and from his poodle Rufus (Fig. 4), an animal it

was hard for others to like because of his appalling halitosis – one private secretary said that Rufus had “breath like a flame-thrower”. But Churchill doted on him and made elaborate endeavours to arrange his marital affairs. He sat Rufus on his lap during films – once, when they were watching the scene in *Oliver Twist* in which Bill Sikes prepares to drown his dog to put the police off his track, Churchill covered Rufus’s eyes with his hand, saying, “Don’t look now dear. I’ll tell you about it afterwards”.

Churchill held telepathic converse with his sheep Friendly, thinking of giving him bread only to be amazed that he came over the hill to demand it. Churchill communed most often with his cats. On 3 June 1941, for example, when he was worried by military setbacks, he had lunch at Chartwell with his private secretary Jock Colville, to whom he said almost nothing, and his marmalade cat Tango, who sat on a chair to his right and occupied his attention. Colville recorded that “he kept up a running conversation with the cat, cleaning its eyes with a napkin, offering it mutton and expressing regret that it could not have cream in war-time.” Churchill wrote notes to “dear Nelson”, thanking him for sending a card on his birthday.

Churchill also had an adoring relationship with his azure-blue and emerald-green budgerigar, Toby, whom he acquired in 1954. Toby pecked at Churchill’s cigars, strutted across the dining table, fought with his reflection in the silver pepper pot and chattered “like a schoolgirl at a picnic”. Toby acquired such a taste for alcohol that he once fell into his master’s brandy glass. This did nothing to diminish Churchill’s affection for him and he determined to purchase a similar bird for Field Marshal Montgomery. But in deference to Monty’s strict standards of temperance he stipulated that his budgie should be a teetotaller.

In August 1942 when Churchill first visited the Kremlin he attempted to convey his enthusiasm for goldfish to Stalin. It was a piquant episode which perfectly illustrates the gulf between the soft-hearted western democrat and the bloodstained oriental despot. Churchill told Stalin that he was very fond of goldfish and the Soviet leader hospitably invited him to have some for breakfast. In the 1950s Churchill became even more infatuated, if possible, with tropical fish, filling Chartwell and Chequers with large tanks full of slivers of quicksilver, a living kaleidoscope, a glittering

piece of kinetic art. As if mesmerised, Churchill would gaze at them for twenty minutes at a time, extolling their beauty, admiring their colours, exclaiming on their antics. He also endowed them with human personalities. And he dilated on their love life, all the while puffing away at a cigar. Once he was he was overheard addressing one of his guppies (tropical minnows) in these terms: "Darling, I do love you. I would make love to you if only I knew how."

Churchill doted almost as much on goats. He went to considerable trouble to ensure that the Welch Fusiliers formed the Guard of Honour at his summit meeting with President Eisenhower and the French premier Joseph Laniel in Bermuda in 1953 because their regimental mascot was a "beautiful white goat" called Billy "with whom I made friends in Jamaica". Actually this goat made diplomatic waves in Bermuda. It caused much indignation in the French press when Churchill lavished far more attention on it than he did on Laniel. At the concluding banquet Churchill had Billy ceremonially paraded around the table at Government House, where the PM rewarded the goat with a glass of champagne and the President

gave it a cigarette, which it rejected. Afterwards Churchill wrote to Ike explaining that he should not take this rejection personally as Billy had informed him that he understood there was no smoking on parade. Ike replied that he was impressed by the goat's "soldierly deportment". He was also amused by Churchill's devotion to the goat, which helped to ease Anglo-American relations, strained over differing attitudes towards Soviet Russia.

In fact, Churchill had catholic tastes in animals. He was keen on parrots, despite the fact that his own sometimes bit him – provoking bellows of unparliamentary language. Churchill treasured his cows and on arriving in Normandy after the successful D-Day landings he coined a richly bucolic image to express his joy: "We are surrounded by fat cattle lying in luscious pastures with their paws crossed." When playing golf he once removed a worm from the fairway saying, "Poor fellow! If I leave you here you will be trampled by some ruthless boot."

A number of Churchill's animals were housed in Regent's Park at different times, notably big beasts that were presented to him. In 1943 he was given a lion called

Rota, whom he liked to visit and feed (Fig. 5). He once threatened to make a diminutive secretary the lion's next meal, saying "Meat is very short now." But the lion took Churchill for a ride. It was called Rota after a German printing machine company of that name, whose pre-war sales manager in England, a man named George Thomson, had given the right to its skin when the lion died, which it did after siring many cubs, in 1955. Thomson then had the lion stuffed and exhibited in a Piccadilly showroom, though Churchill prevented him from using his most famous leonine quotation, delivered in a speech on his eightieth birthday: "It was the nation and the race dwelling all round the globe that had the lion's heart: I had the luck to be called upon to give the roar."



Fig. 5. Churchill feeding his lion Rota at London Zoo. © Alamy (GCG9PP)

The Zoo also accommodated Churchill's leopard Sheba, some of his black swans and tropical fish,

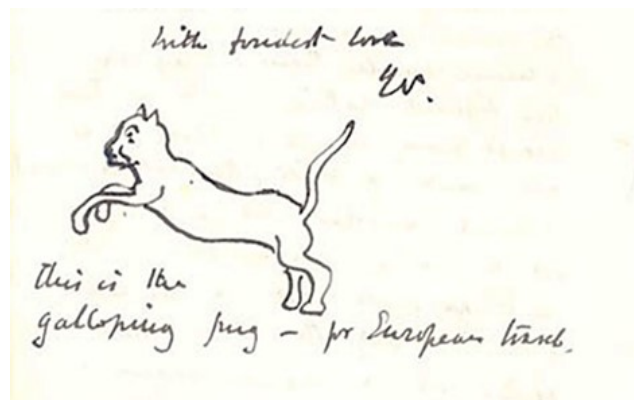


Fig. 6. Winston's self-portrait as galloping pug. © Churchill Heritage

and two white kangaroos, a token of esteem from South Australia. Furthermore the Zoo assisted with other animal transactions, whereby Churchill cemented his friendship with President Roosevelt via a gift of Chartwell goldfish, and, anticipating modern "panda diplomacy", tried to mend his fences with Australia by importing a duck-billed platypus, which unfortunately died on its way to England.

Churchill relished animal stories, especially those of Kipling. He confessed to roaming the jungles with Mowgli and fighting for dear life in the skin of the mongoose Rikki-Tikki-Tavi against the cobra Nag. In fact animals occupied a key place in his imagination. He identified with them and they supplied his family with terms of endearment. Churchill was Pug (or Pig) to Clementine's Kat (Fig. 6). Returning home he would utter a sharp woof-woof, answered by her enthusiastic miaow; and they often ended letters to each other with

sketches of their four-footed avatars. Their offspring, collectively known as the “kittens”, had individual animal nicknames: “the Puppy Kitten” (Diana), “the Rabbit” (Randolph), “the Bumble-bee” (Sarah, later called “the Mule” because she was stubborn and wouldn’t breed) and “the Duckadilly” (Marigold, who died

young). Unlike many patricians, who notoriously preferred their horses and dogs to their children, Churchill was an affectionate parent. He played animal games with his brood, chasing them in the guise of a bear or a gorilla. The latter he imitated with uncanny accuracy, crouching behind bushes and jumping out with his arms swinging limply, baring his teeth, beating his chest and emitting “a blood-tingling roar of ‘Grr! Grr!’”

During the course of his career, needless to say, he was likened to a fantastic variety of creatures, among them caterpillar, rat, lion, warhorse, chicken, maggot, mongrel, porpoise, dinosaur, bulldog, inebriated dragon, wild boar and rogue elephant. Indeed Churchill seemed to compel animal analogies. In a single dispatch to the Foreign Office Britain’s ambassador to the Soviet Union, Archie Clerk-Kerr, likened Churchill, visiting Moscow in 1942, to a bull about to charge, its eyes “bloodshot and defiant”, to a “wounded lion”, to a protean

creature able to transform its features from “the most laughing, dimpled and mischievous baby’s bottom into the face of an angry, an outraged, bullfrog”.

Animal imagery loomed almost as large in his rhetoric as the military metaphors for which, as a soldier, he instinctively reached. Churchill exploited sheep, pigs and other creatures as a source of personal amusement or oratorical entertainment, by which he brilliantly disarmed opposition in the Commons. He once told Labour MPs, “I do not wish to cast my pearls...before those who do not want them.” Sometimes he was less amiable. After Clement Attlee succeeded him as PM, Churchill remarked unfairly but unforgettably, “if any grub is fed on Royal Jelly it turns into a Queen Bee”. He likened General de Gaulle to a female llama surprised in her bath.

Churchill ransacked the wilderness for bestial analogies with which to stigmatise his fiercest foes. He rejected a rapprochement with Nazi Germany by recalling the “fable of the jackal who went hunting with the tiger and what happened after the hunt was over”. He also branded Mussolini as a jackal and, still more obnoxious, a hyena. Hitler, swallowing Austria, he likened to a boa constrictor. One of his most memorable taunts was directed at

those French generals who had prophesied in 1940 that within three weeks England would have her neck wrung like a chicken. “Some chicken! ... Some neck!”

The Soviet Union tested, though it by no means exhausted, his feral lexicon. He represented the Bolsheviks as snakes, wolves, vultures, crocodiles, bears, vampires, typhus-bearing vermin, the tapeworm inside the Russian dog, “the nameless beast” foretold in Russian legend and, above all, as baboons, hopping and capering amidst the ruins of civilisation. When a Soviet trade delegation led by Leonid Krassin visited London in 1920, Churchill asked the Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon, “Did you shake hands with the hairy baboon?”

In using animals as emblems of virtue and vice, Churchill was drawing on a tradition that stretched from Aesop to Orwell – who of course depicted the Communist leaders as pigs. And Churchill himself had a gift for fashioning fables. He adored butterflies and explained to his young nephew Johnny that caterpillars that were greedy and lazy were punished in their next world by becoming drab Meadow Browns or Common Heaths, and living short, miserable lives; whereas a good caterpillar would

become a gorgeous Swallow Tail, or a Painted Lady, or even a Camberwell Beauty, and “may be allowed to hibernate for the winter and enjoy the spring the following year.”

Still more compelling was his fable recounted in the Commons in 1928 and designed to expose the folly of inter-war disarmament. It is too long to quote but it shows how each of the animals was willing to give up the weapons, horns, teeth, claws etc, which it did not possess and that their meeting to discuss disarming almost brought them to blows.

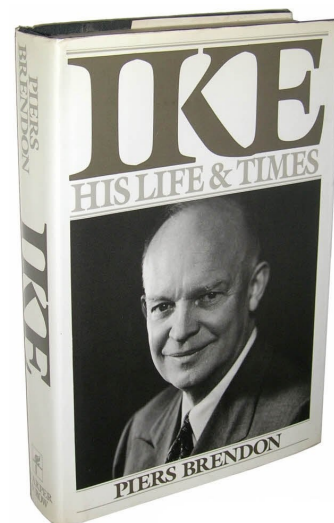
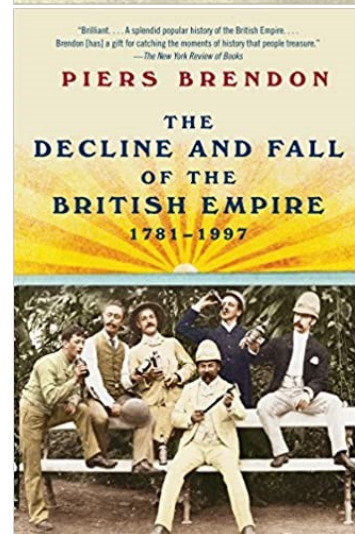
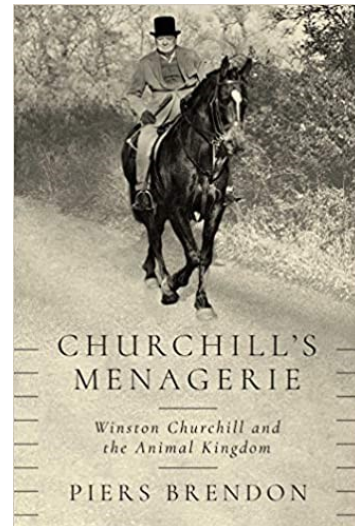
Such symbolism had a universal appeal. Animals are among the earliest denizens of a child’s mind and help to shape the adult consciousness. They are integral to the culture of homo sapiens. They have been objects of veneration and detestation, victims of cruelty and sacrifice, subjects of art, literature and myth, participants in war, work and play, at once a source of danger and a wellspring of health and happiness. They are slaughtered for food, but alive they nourish the human imagination. They are made of our common clay but without the power of speech. They are often comical but they lack the faculty of laughter. Although eating, sleeping,

fighting and procreating like us, they are unfathomably alien. They are alluring but mysterious – so that, as Montaigne said, when we play with our cat we are never sure whether we are playing with it or it is playing with us. Thus animals became a screen onto which human beings down the ages projected their own attributes: meek lamb, cunning fox, savage bull, busy bee and so on.

Churchill's association with animals was, as I've suggested, more than usually paradoxical and ambivalent. He loved faithful dogs but damned miserable curs and feared the "black dog" of depression that constantly prowled at his heels and sometimes jumped on his back. He hunted foxes but kept fox cubs at Chartwell as pets. He speared hogs but scratched the backs of pigs – and depicted himself as one. He loved both fish and fishing. Churchill was likened to Pooh Bear; but he warned that Red Bruin was padding across the steppes towards Europe on blood-stained paws. Later he added this thought: a bear in the forest is a matter of legitimate speculation; a bear in the zoo is an object of public curiosity; a bear in your wife's bed causes the gravest concern."

Wherever you look in his life, his speeches and his writing, you find the creatures that have shared the

earth with mankind throughout history. Churchill's life is, in key respects, an animal story.



Churchill and The Crown

A recent outdoor photography exhibition at Chartwell explored the special relationship between Sir Winston Churchill and the Queen, in her Platinum Jubilee year.

Katherine Carter

A new outdoor photography exhibition closed recently at Chartwell, near Westerham.

In her Platinum Jubilee year, a series of hand-selected archive photographs will tell the story of the



Chartwell House, Westerham Kent

special relationship between the young Queen and Sir Winston Churchill, at his family home.

In 2022 Her Majesty The Queen will become the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, having acceded to the throne in 1952 during Churchill's second term as Prime Minister. The two had a close and genuine relationship, having first met when the Queen was just two years old.

Churchill became the Queen's trusted advisor through the earliest years of her reign, and she meant a

great deal to him. This enduring relationship is illustrated by the photograph of her on her Coronation Day, which Churchill hung on the wall of his Study at Chartwell.

Katherine Carter, Chartwell's curator and lead creator of the new exhibition says: *'The relationship between HM The Queen and her first Prime Minister was a longstanding one. From Churchill's warm friendship with her parents, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, through to*



Clementine and Winston Churchill statue at Chartwell

Queen Elizabeth II's coronation and the earliest years of her reign, these archive photographs encapsulate a truly remarkable friendship that changed the course of history.'

In a speech broadcast ahead of her coronation, Churchill referred to the Queen as 'a Lady whom we respect

because she is our Queen and whom we love because she is herself', showing just how fond he was of her.

Years later, when asked which Prime Minister she enjoyed meeting with the most, the Queen replied, 'Winston of course, because it was always such fun.' One of her household staff even remarked 'I could not hear what they talked about, but it was, more often than not, punctuated with peals of laughter, and Winston generally came out wiping his eyes.'



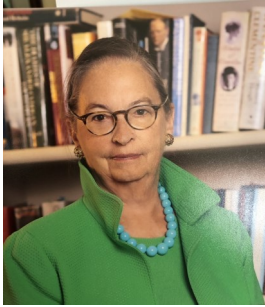
Chartwell House on a misty morning

Katherine continues, 'By exploring photographs of these two iconic individuals, we can see a genuine warmth and friendship which extended beyond that of monarch and counsel, and it's wonderful to be able to celebrate their relationship here at Churchill's former home.'



HRH Queen Elizabeth II with Winston Churchill, Prince Charles and Princess Anne

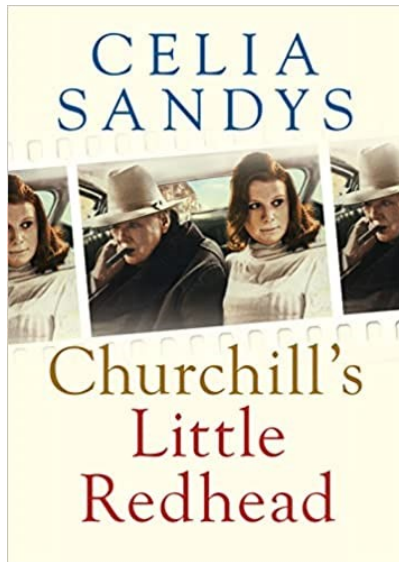
All photos courtesy of the Chartwell National Trust



CHURCHILL'S LITTLE REDHEAD

Celia Sandys

Review by Cita Stelzer



What a charming and revealing memoir this is from Winston Churchill's grandfather, Celia Sandys.

Churchill could never count among his blessings a quiet, serene family life into which to retreat from the hurly burly of politics and war. His loving wife, Clementine, was often exhausted as his political life bounced from wilderness years to periods in high office, his health from robust to threatening bouts of pneumonia and strokes, while the family finances fluctuated between worries about penury and the millions produced by his pen. His

only son, Randolph, was an unpleasant man, often drunk, roiling family gatherings and ruining friendships. His eldest daughter, Diana, sadly committed suicide. His enchanting daughter, Sarah, allowed alcoholism and failed marriages to wreck a promising theatrical career. Only one, Mary, floated above the chaos and, in her telling, had an idyllic childhood and later a productive personal and public life.

We know all this because the lives of the Churchill children have recently been chronicled in more than one book, some better than others, all containing details not only of the lives, but of those of Winston and Clemmie.

Now we have a new source of information, the delightful autobiography by granddaughter Celia Sandys, titled *Churchill's Little Redhead*, as her grandfather, Winston Churchill, affectionately called her. Celia Sandys' mother, Diana Churchill, married Duncan Sandys, a member of Churchill's war

-time cabinet. Celia has an older sister Edwina, today a famous artist and sculptor. Celia was born in 1943, in the midst of war and rationing, although tells us that rationing didn't apply to new-born babies who received extra rations for the first nine months of their lives.

Her first memory is of her third birthday party with a cake "a thing of wonder made by madam Floris... Grandpapa's favourite...Sugar pink, emblazoned with a cat. ...Pink is my favourite colour to this day". Throughout the book, Celia interweaves stories and memories of her grandfather with her own life.

Like her grandfather who had special affinity and love for his nanny, Mrs. Everest, Celia also had a special love for her nanny, Annie Gray. Once, Celia recalls, during some heavy bombing in London, Nanny rang Downing Street and was so insistent that an armored car was sent to their flat to evacuate the two sisters to Chequers. I am sure the Prime Minister, her grandfather, would have endorsed this move as he warmly greeted them with the words "poor little shelter brats". Celia is sure that her nanny reminded Churchill of Mrs. Everest.

During Celia's childhood she spent time with Churchill at both Chartwell

-- and Chequers. At Chartwell, Celia and her sister slept in a room above Churchill's and the girls would go in to say good morning to Winston and Clementine in separate bedrooms. She says "we saw a great deal of our grandparents".

Celia is honest and forgiving when talking about her mother's troubled life. When Celia was ten, she accompanied her mother to a clinic in Italy so she could recuperate from a nervous breakdown. Later,

at school, Celia excelled in sports, particularly swimming and she confesses to several 'scrapes'. But she was unprepared for earning her own living. She writes "I left [school] with the sort of education I might have received from a governess before the war,... my parents did not encourage me to stay on at school' but they did send her to Paris where she spent two terms at a finishing school. She recalls her 'coming out ball in 1961' because "from the moment my grandfather arrived, it was guaranteed success...he stayed until 2 in the morning, tapping his feet." But she discovered that 'partying for month on end...was fairly boring" and she needed to be able to support herself. She tried a cookery school but that seemed pointless as they had a cook at home, then secretarial and

dressmaking courses. But she was untrained for any job, everything had been provided for her at home. And then her parents divorced and her mother, Celia and her sister moved to a new flat -- suddenly they had to fend for themselves -- without a dishwasher but with her nanny and a maid-- and she describes her mothers' "relaxed approach to housekeeping" and herself as "badly trained in the techniques of domesticity".

But in October 1963, "tragedy struck and my mother died of an overdose. She had suffered a number of breakdowns and was still depressed following her divorce from my father who had remarried." Ironically, Diana had been working for the Samaritans when she took her life. Celia's mother, Diana Churchill led a troubled and unhappy life but Celia is kind and understanding but frank about her mother's ups and downs and eventual suicide

In 1963, after the divorce, when her father was secretary of state for the Colonies under Prime Minister Douglas-Home, he invited Celia to accompany him on a tour of Kenya and Zanzibar to celebrate their independence. She was delighted to go and says "I had an amazing time". She stayed in Government House threw herself into the social whirl and writes disarmingly honestly about the social gaffes and scrapes she seems

not to be able to avoid. But she fell in love with South Africa where she met her first husband and moved with him to Kenya. But that marriage was not to last.

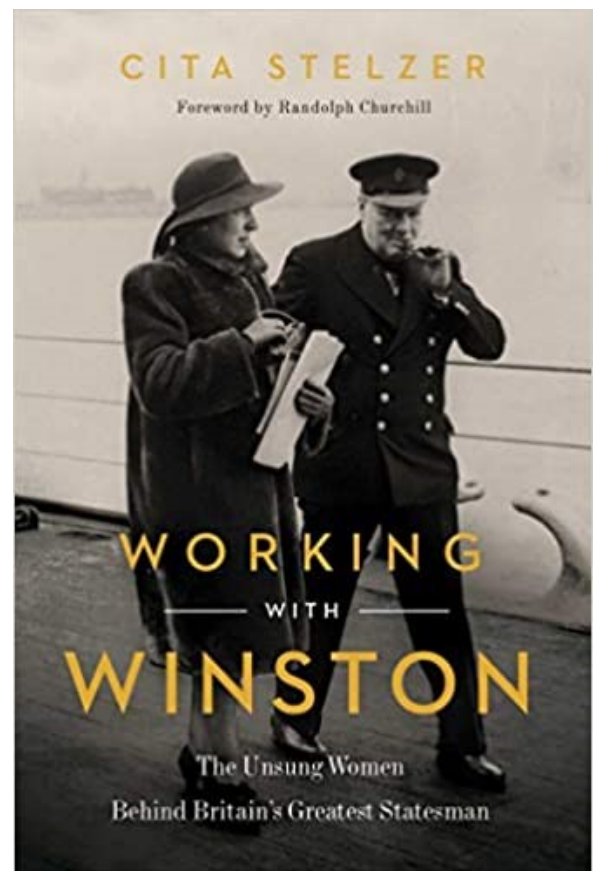
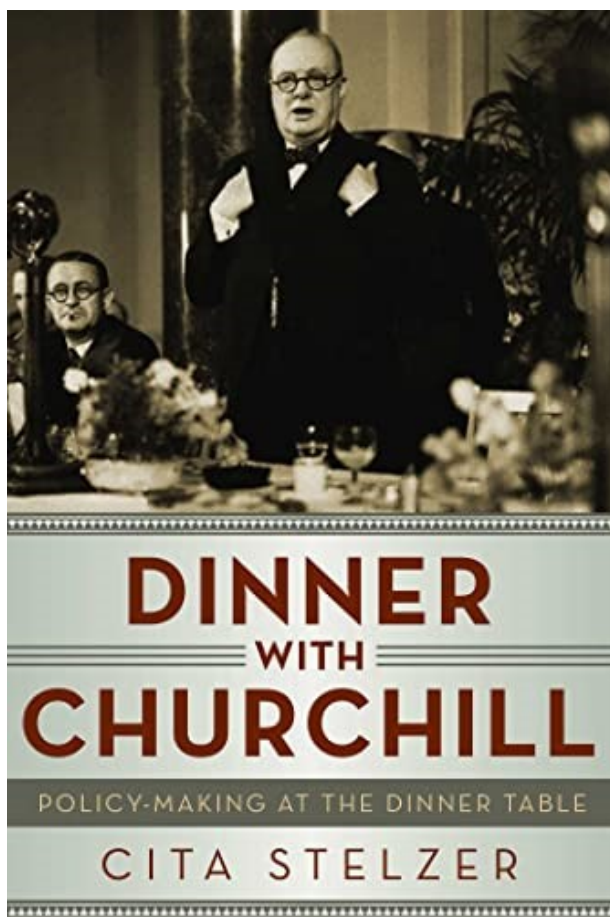
Two years later Winston Churchill died, in London and as the world mourns, Celia describes the family's private grief and the public mourning at the funeral at St. Paul's and burial at Bladon.

At the same time, Celia began to see how her aunt Sarah's drinking was becoming a family -- and a public -- problem. She quotes Sarah as saying 'she nursed her scandals at both ends' Celia writes as sympathetically of her troubled life as she does about her mother's. Two Churchill sisters, Celia; aunts, led tragic lives but her other aunt, Mary Soames led a long and happy and active life. As does Celia.

Celia married twice more, the third time would prove as long and as happy as she had often wished for. Celia has three sons and daughter. And she has worked hard, writing several books about Churchill, plus a well-received PBS film *Chasing Churchill*, about her grandfather's travels in Cuba and south Africa. She appeared on the TV show MasterChef when the chefs prepared a dinner based on what Churchill liked to eat -- I was fortunate to have been at that dinner -- along with Randolph Churchill, Allen

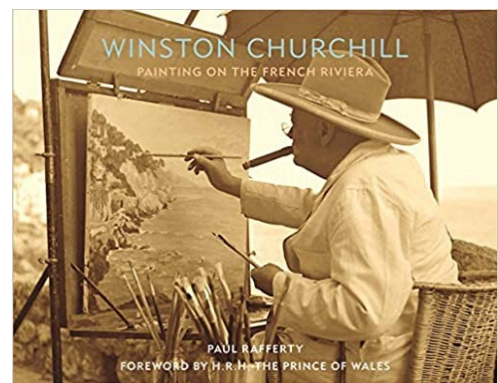
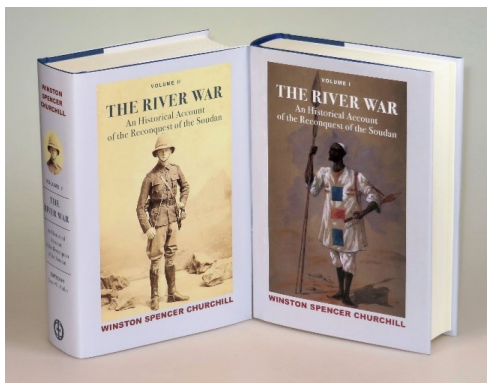
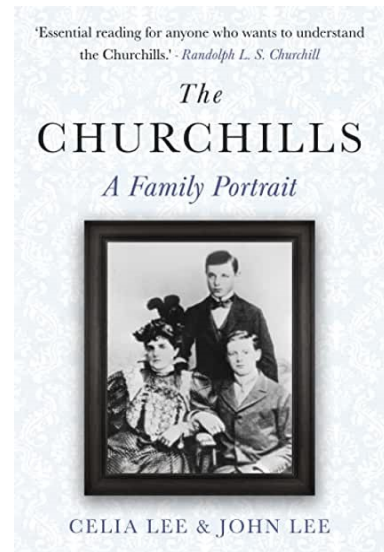
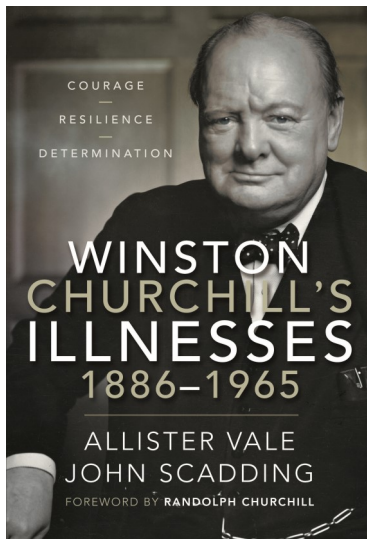
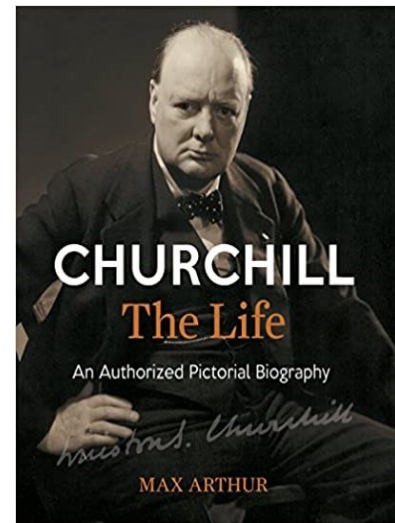
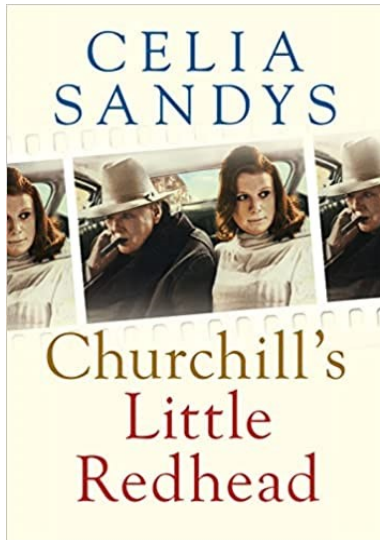
Packwood and David Reynolds. We had a wonderful evening at the Churchill College dining Hall.

Celia has written a beautiful memoir of a life well-lived, and a tale of a loving and forgiving mature woman who has enjoyed all that life can give, both pleasures and pains.



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