

THE CHURCHILLIAN



WINSTON
SIR
CHURCHILL
1874 - 1965

CLEMENTINE
MRS
CHURCHILL
1885 - 1977

CHURCHILL

ROYAL DANISH EMBASSY

THE
GRATEFUL
PARACHUTE REGIMENT
AIRBORNE FORCE

THE
GRATEFUL
PARACHUTE REGIMENT
AIRBORNE FORCE

Went back
to help
Parachute Regiment
Association
S. B. 1988/89

VE Day May 8, 2022
Remembering
WINSTON
Welcome from
Canada

THE 17th LANCERS
REGIMENTAL
ASSOCIATION

Churchill Society of Tennessee
Summer Edition 2022

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Cover photo © Jim Drury

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British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Laurance Geller present the ICS Sir Winston Churchill Leadership Award for 2022 to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy



Click on the photo above for article and to view the presentation



**Laurance Geller (ICS), Ukrainian Ambassador and PM Boris Johnson present the award to
President Volodymyr Zelenskyy**

All photographs © John David Olsen

Sir Winston Churchill honoured on VE-Day at Bladon

Jim Drury

May 8, 2022, dawned with brilliant sunshine over Bladon, Oxfordshire. It was the morning of Victory in Europe Day and dozens of people gathered at the White House Pub. They were drawn together to mark VE-Day the end of WWII in Europe and to remember all those who gave us victory over the forces of evil. This remembrance took place at a very special location. The grave of Sir Winston Leonard Spencer-Churchill.

The White House Pub is just down the lane from Churchill's grave at St Martin's Church. The pub also holds a special place in Churchill's early life. It was here, just a short way from his birthplace at Blenheim Palace, that he purportedly learned how to drink!

The White House Pub Bladon



The event at Bladon is a recent addition to VE-Day remembrances in the local area. The idea found it's beginning with John Hall, a former member of the Parachute Regiment, who has taken a keen interest in caring for Churchill's grave and preserving the great man's legacy. John and his wife Carin are wonderful people

without whom the event would simply not take place.

After many cups of tea and coffee were consumed, everyone walked up the hill to St Martin's. The first stop was at the grave of Private John Shayler a soldier from the war. This is particularly touching as John Hall explained. He said that is fitting to first pay tribute to the lowest ranking soldier buried there and then to continue with the ceremonies. The remembrance of Private Shayler was led by Revd. Stephen Pix who would also preside over the church service to follow. Also attending was the Guard of Honor which consisted of former members of the 17th/21st Lancers and the Parachute Regiment.



Left to right: PM Jim Drury, Carin Hall, John Hall

Next came the parade up to the church. This consisted of the Guard of Honor, guests and led by yours truly Pipe Major



Remembering Private John Shayler at his graveside.

Jim Drury. The tune played is called 'Lt Col Winston Churchill 6th Royal Scots Fusiliers' honoring the time he spent as their commander in WWI and written by the Pipe Major. As we passed the grave of Sir Winston Churchill, which is located halfway up the path to the church, an order of 'Eyes Left' was given and sharply executed by the Guard of Honor. Once the parade reached the church the Guard of Honor split off the path and presented a glorious backdrop as the guest entered.

The Service of Commemoration began with welcoming remarks by Revd. Stephen Pix followed by a rousing rendition of the 'Battle Hymn of the Republic' with all voices joining in. This was followed by the Our Father and then introduction of the speakers. They included addresses from: Marina Spencer - Churchill, The Rt Hon the Lord Boateng, Zewditu Gebreyhanes, John Hall, Air Vice-Marshal Malcolm Brecht CB CBE and Randolph Churchill. Each speaker in turn paid their tributes to those who fought for our freedom in WWII. Naturally special attention was given to Churchill's incalculable contributions to the victory. There was attention given to today's issues as well. Support was shown for



Guard of Honour

those Ukrainians who are now fighting for their freedom. Also addressed was the ongoing process of keeping the memory of Churchill accurate and not allowing it to be twisted to suit current trends in a changing world.

The speeches were followed by a reading from the Old Testament, Micah 4.1-4. The service then concluded with the singing of that most appropriate and always inspiring of tunes 'I Vow to Thee'.

After the church service concluded, everyone moved outside to Churchill's grave. There awaited the Vicar and the Guard of Honour. As guests and dignitaries gathered, 'Mist Covered Mountains' was playing on the pipes. This tune was played by the Household Division pipes and drums at Churchill's funeral in 1965 as Guardsmen pallbearers carried his casket onto the MV Havengrove for its final trip up the Thames.

Wreaths were then respectfully placed at the foot of the grave. Randolph Churchill placed a wreath from the Churchill family and in turn, the Paras, 17th/21st Lancers, the RAF and others placed their wreaths as tokens of respect and remembrance



St Martin's Sanctuary

for the great man. A final closing prayer was then offered. After a brief moment of silence, buglers from The Rifles Regiment played 'Last Post'.

Then a final gesture of gratitude to a great man from a grateful nation. The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight paid its respects with a special fly-past. It consisted of a flight of two vintage fighter aircraft. The first was a Spitfire that took part in the battle of Britain in 1940. The second was a Hurricane which also took part in the war later on. As the fly-past was taking place, Air Vice-Marshal Malcom Brecht turned to me and said, 'There is nothing else like that



Randolph Churchill Final Prayer

sound!'. Randolph Churchill exclaimed 'That really gets the blood going!'

It did indeed get the blood going. And no better time for that than at the end of a tribute to all those who made it possible for us to live free today. And to celebrate the triumphal victory of the greatest statesman of the 20th century, Sir Winston Churchill.



The Rifles buglers



Final Prayer



RAF Spitfire

All photographs © Jim Drury



Sir Winston Churchill's humble grave at Bladon.

Visitors to Chartwell from across the Pond

Beryl Nicholson, ICS Chartwell Chapter Chair

Visitors

It is such a pleasure to welcome to Chartwell visitors linked with the International Churchill Society.

On Tuesday 3 May the first visitor we welcomed was Jim Drury who came with Celia and John Lee. Jim is the President of the Churchill Society of Tennessee and a member and friend of our Chartwell Branch.



CSOT President Jim Drury in the Living room at Chartwell.

It was lovely to catch up with the news from Tennessee and to accompany Jim around the House and Studio with Celia and John.

Jim was also invited to the VE Day Ceremony and service at St. Martin's Church, Bladon, on Sunday 8 May. There were speeches and wreath laying around Sir



Left to right: John Lee, Beryl Nicholson and Celia Lee outside of the dining room at Chartwell.

Winston Churchill's grave and a flyover by two World War II Hurricane fighters, one having flown in the Battle of Britain and the other in the very last mission of the war. Jim played the bagpipes at the graveside during the ceremony.

Jim was made a member of 17th/21st Lancers private Facebook group. He said: "John Hall organised this impressive day" and without him this event would not have happened". John, a former member of the Parachute Regiment, was given membership in the Churchill Society of Tennessee in recognition of all his hard work.

Churchill's *Marlborough*: Generalship and Alliance in the Service of Liberty (Part I)

Paul Forte



Paul E. Forte PhD is an independent scholar whose principal area of study is western intellectual, religious, and political history, 1500-1800. He is a long-time Churchillian. In this article, the first of two, he reviews Winston Churchill's *Marlborough: His Life and Times*.

Introduction

Winston Churchill's *Marlborough: His Life and Times*, is probably the least read of his many books. The martial exploits and political intrigues of his famous ancestor, John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough (1650-1722; Fig. 1) seem at first glance far removed from the present. Yet *Marlborough* is of central importance to understanding Churchill's later thought and his theory of statecraft, for it underscores the evolution of modern constitutionalism as a response to royal and ecclesiastical claims of divine right, and so chronicles both the advancement and perils of freedom. In this year, the 300th anniversary of Marlborough's death, and at a time when absolute power is once again threatening democratic governments, it is worth taking a serious look at what Churchill was up to in this massive undertaking.



Fig. 1. John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, by Michael Dahl, c. 1700

Churchill published the four-volume work in 1933, 1934, 1936, and 1938, momentous years in Europe.¹ The immediate occasion was the 1929 election, when the Conservatives lost to the Labour Party, and Churchill ceased to be Chancellor of the Exchequer. Being out of office for the first time since 1924 meant Churchill had time to reflect on his own varied experiences and to assess the economic and political currents roiling the continent. It was also an opportunity to return to writing as a source of income.² *Marlborough* is thus pivotal to Churchill's development as a thinker and politician. The effort that went into it—some ten years of reading and drafting at Chartwell and walking the fields of Flanders while working through periods of illness and financial strain—testify not only to Churchill's desire to paint an accurate portrait of a controversial figure but to set forth his own political philosophy. Indeed, it is not too much to say, as Churchill's chief researcher Maurice Ashley suggested and Harold Macmillan noted in his 1965 eulogy, that had Churchill not written the book he might not have become the Churchill of legend.³

Marlborough was well received in its own time. Leo Strauss, the foremost political philosopher of the inter-war era hailed it as the greatest historical work of the 20th century. Desmond McCarthy declared *Marlborough* a stunning work of history, one that allowed us to see for the first time the whole of Marlborough's achievement, but wondered whether its length at one million words wouldn't be dispiriting for some. Numerous others paid tribute, including Franklin D. Roosevelt, who expressed pleasure reading the work.

No doubt Churchill could have benefited from a more aggressive editor: there are passages that probably should have been cut in the final draft, such as his rather starry-eyed fictional recreation of letters that might have passed between Marlborough and his wife Sarah Jennings, and his inclusion of an inventory among Marlborough's papers related to the mishandling of his wine cellar by a certain Will Lovegrove (I.28). However, he does exhibit better discretion in the later volumes. And as Andrew Roberts notes, Churchill got mostly everything right, except for Marlborough's birthplace.⁴ But let us gird up our loins and prepare to wade.

Marlborough: Theme and scope

Churchill is intent from the start to demonstrate that his book will not simply chronicle the clashes of defunct empires and declining aristocracies. As he avers in his Preface: "The wars of William and Anne were no mere effort of national ambition or territorial gain. They were in essentials a struggle for the life and liberty not only of England, but of Protestant Europe." Churchill would show that Marlborough, a moderate Tory who served under five monarchs, was instrumental in this struggle. Marlborough's "victorious sword established upon sure foundations the constitutional and Parliamentary structure of our country as it has come down to us today." Marlborough's coalition ended Spanish claims to the Netherlands, saved the Hapsburg Empire, and broke irretrievably "the exorbitant power of France."⁵ Churchill knows that to some readers these claims may seem extravagant, so he will have to recreate the vast canvas on which the scenes of Marlborough's life played out.

This meant describing the events that shaped Marlborough's early and formative years: the English Civil War between Royalists and Puritans, which brought the lawful King Charles I to the block; the Restoration in 1660 of the Monarchy under Charles II; the accession in February 1685 of James II (Fig. 2) as King of England, Scotland, and Ireland; France's revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), which outlawed Protestantism; the Glorious Revolution of

1688, which replaced James with the Protestant Stadtholder of the United Provinces, William III (Fig. 3) and his English wife and James's daughter, Queen Mary II (Fig.3); the epic sea battles in the English Channel among the French, English, and Dutch fleets from 1689-1692; the subsequent battles in Ireland, where James II raised an army; the First Grand Alliance of England, Holland, and Austria against the France of Louis XIV, which lasted from 1689 to 1696, ending with the Treaty of Ryswick, in reality only a temporary truce; and the Second Grand Alliance, triggered by the War of the Spanish Succession, also against France, which started in 1701 and lasted for more than a decade, ending with the peace of Utrecht (1713-1714), a series of treaties signed separately by France, Britain, the Netherlands, Prussia, Portugal, and Savoy.



Fig. 2. King James II of England by Sir Peter Lely

It also meant encountering the host that marches through the pages of *Marlborough*, not only the kings and queens of the countries involved but also numerous aristocrats, ambassadors, and unofficial intermediaries, including Marlborough's early benefactress Barbara Villiers, later Duchess of Cleveland; Sidney Godolphin, Commissioner of the Treasury under several kings; Prince Eugene of Savoy (Fig. 4), the brilliant captain whose campaign in Italy opened the War of the Spanish Succession; Anton Heinsius, the Grand Pensionary and Chief Minister of Holland; he ambassador to the Emperor Leopold I, Wratilaw; Emanuel, Elector of Bavaria; France's Marshall Tallard

and its generals Louis-Joseph, Duc de Vendome, and Claude-Louis-Hector, Duc de Villars; the Tory leaders Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, and Henry St. John, Bolingbroke; the Duke of Ormond, who would replace Marlborough as Commander of the Allied Forces in 1710; and many lesser figures.



Fig.3. William III and Queen Mary II, Ceiling of the Painted Hall by Sir James Thornhill, 1707



Fig.4. Prince Eugene of Savoy, by Sir Godfrey Kneller

Churchill not only profiles these actors but reconstructs the circumstances in which they found themselves, circumstances quite different from those which had prevailed since the Victorian Age, when courts had ceased to be the epicenters of power and politics was a less lethal game.⁶ It is not too much to say that Churchill left little untouched that pertained to Marlborough or the times in which he lived. The result was not so much biography, though there is plenty of that, as magisterial history in the style of historians like Rapin, Gibbon, and Ranke, Churchill's models.⁷

The case against Marlborough

Some have wondered whether all of this was necessary. Churchill apparently thought it was. By the time he started his research there had already accumulated around Marlborough a series of charges and unflattering stories. Churchill has no objection in principle to the examination of an historical figure's character flaws, habits, and peccadillos.⁸ But a number of writers, including such famous ones as Swift, Arbuthnot, Pope, and Thackeray, had savaged Marlborough. After they had gotten through with him, Marlborough was thought an "imprudent, unorthodox general, his authority flouted by other allied commanders; his judgment...trammelled by endless councils of war."

To correct such an assessment, it would be necessary to go back to primary sources — logs, records, eye-witness accounts, letters, other documents—that had not really been studied carefully, if they had been studied at all. Churchill compares the accounts of Marlborough's Chaplain, Dr Francis Hare, Major General Kane, Captain Robert Parker, Sergeant John Millner, and Thomas Bruce, the Earl of Ailesbury; draws on the Dutch diarist Sicco van Goslinga, the British diarist Major J. Blackadder, and the French diarist of Louis XIV's long reign, Saint-Simon; consults contemporary historians like the Austrian Catholic historian Klopp, the German historian von Noorden, the English historian Gilbert Burnet, and the Dutch Historian Lamberty; cites Marlborough's early biographers Thomas Lediard and W.C. Coxe; and makes use of later historians like G.M. Trevelyan and Frank Taylor. In addition, there was "Paget's Examen," an early

rebuttal to Macaulay that questioned allegations about Marlborough's secret communications with the French betraying to the Jacobite Court the Brest Expedition. Finally, there is the large amount of the important archival material that had long lain neglected at Blenheim and that was published under the direction of the Sixth Duke of Marlborough in 1845.⁹ These comprised secret dispatches and intimate letters written by Marlborough to his wife Sarah, to Godolphin, and to various princes of the Grand Alliance, friends, and military figures.

Churchill makes fairly short work of the jibes against Marlborough's personal life. He rejects as malicious "the jumble of anachronisms and obvious mistakes" contained in *The New Atalantis* (1709), a scurrilous book by the 18th century novelist, Tory sympathizer, and gossip columnist Mrs. Delarivier "Delia" Manley (I.3). That book influenced Marlborough's most powerful critic, Thomas Babington Macaulay, the 19th century historian and author of the popular *History of England from the Accession of James II* (1848).¹⁰ Macaulay, thought Churchill, had cited material selectively to "insult and blacken" Marlborough's reputation, treating Marlborough contemptuously as a cad who lived off women: he was the young pet of Lady Castlemaine; the favorite who, after his affair with the Duchess of York, fled the court in the late 1660's for Tangier; and the lover of the rich but aging Lady Cleveland, from whom he received sufficient remuneration to purchase a lifetime annuity.¹¹

Another charge against Marlborough was avariciousness. Macaulay describes Marlborough's rise from "obscurity to eminence, and from poverty to wealth" as causing him to be obsessed with money, "insatiable of riches." This was coupled with a "shameful parsimony" (the words are those of the French general Biron), which compared poorly with his fellow commander Prince Eugene's royal magnificence. Marlborough was reported to have dined often at the expense of his senior officers,

who furnished the comestibles and other necessities of a long campaign (III.22). Tightness was not a noble trait in an age when munificence was expected if not enjoined. Worse, later there was "the peculation charge" brought against Marlborough in 1712 by the Tory Parliament, with the insinuation that Marlborough was protracting the War of the Spanish Succession for personal gain. Churchill devotes an entire chapter to it (IV. 31), and rightly, because it was one of the factors in Marlborough's exile, from which he did not return until the death of Queen Anne and the Hanoverian Protestant accession.

Churchill concludes that when all the details are examined, there is little real evidence for corruption, the whole being politically motivated by the Tories to bring the Whigs and moderate Tories down. No question that Marlborough accepted the gifts and commissions and emoluments which were customary. But he never mishandled public money. Churchill cites in Marlborough's defense his entry into Bavaria after his victory at Schellenberg, where he was offered large sums by the inhabitants not to destroy the land but declined their offers (II.18). After Marlborough's fall, when he lived on the Continent and could do little to help or hurt anyone with whom he had been formerly associated, numerous testimonies were provided by officers close to the scene as to his propriety in handling monies supplied to his army by the government.

More serious still was the charge that Marlborough was a consummate liar and time-server. Macaulay was appalled by Marlborough's conduct at Salisbury, when he deserted James II to join his co-conspirators at Warminster. He impugns Marlborough as "the first to vow with feigned enthusiasm that he would shed the last drop of his blood in the service of his gracious master."¹² James had made Marlborough his confidential agent and had advanced his career at court. Marlborough had conducted secret missions between James (when he was Duke of York), Charles II, and the French King (I.10). And Marlborough had played a role in

suppressing the Monmouth Rebellion of 1685 and securing James's accession. Still, Macaulay could not subscribe to the idea that Marlborough was so strongly Protestant that it left him no choice but to abandon his Catholic king and the Irish Catholic regiments that backed him.

Macaulay sees another instance of infidelity later in Marlborough's relations with William III, which would have constituted a "second perfidy." Marlborough's quarrel with William was ostensibly due to Marlborough's belief that William was blocking his path to military command because of William's preference for Dutch officers. In reality, William may have feared that if Marlborough gained control of the army he might conspire to replace William with Mary's younger sister, the wholly English and Protestant Anne.¹³ At any rate, by early 1691 Marlborough had entered into a close correspondence with others to explore a possible return of the exiled king, when, to Macaulay, he should have remained loyal to William, the man who above all others had dedicated his life to defending Protestant values and had paid for it. He furnishes a stinging rebuke of Marlborough's supposed "repentance and reparation speech" to the Royalist Colonel Edward Sackville, with whom Marlborough pleaded for personal intercession with James, and others.¹⁴

Was Marlborough's recantation sincere? Did he really regret his abandonment of James? Or was he keen to protect his own interest, intent on taking out an insurance policy against the risk of James's return from exile, as he had taken out a life annuity against the risk of finding himself one day in financially straightened circumstances? For Macaulay, Marlborough was able to take in many, because he was a plotter, a "wise, brave, wicked man," with a "daring spirit" and a "deeply corrupted heart." Marlborough and his accomplices, including Shrewsbury, Godolphin, and Sunderland, were downright "traitors" to the Protestant and constitutional cause. But then why did not Marlborough follow through and return to James? Why did he ultimately remain a Protestant? For Macaulay, it was partly because he sensed he would not be advanced or even maintained in a Catholic England, and partly

because of his fear of apostasy from his native religion. Ever calculating, Marlborough had arrived at a more comfortable sum.

Marlborough restored

It is hard to dismiss outright Marlborough's shortcomings. But as Churchill notes, in reference to those Englishmen who made the Revolution of 1688 but were said by historians to have then betrayed it:

It seems unlikely that persons in the highest station, devoted to solemn public causes, possessing the high capacities and many noble and heroic gifts, should have all been of such a shameful character. It is important to see whether what has been written against them is a fair representation of the truth: whether the versions given of their conduct are authoritative, authentic, impartial; whether and how far the evidence is untrustworthy, distorted, exaggerated, or definitely malicious; and whether what remains indisputable has been judged in its proper relation to the circumstances of the time (I.21).

Churchill is able to restore Marlborough's character through a mastery of facts.¹⁵ He avers that Marlborough exhibited over long periods "astonishing constancy," "steady and mutual confidence" with others, "Olympian calm" in moments of crisis, "imperturbability" and "poise" in the midst of battle, a sense of "brotherhood" that enabled him to work closely with other powerful commanders like Prince Eugene,¹⁶ benevolence and an irreducible humanity not found in many other great martial types (I. Preface), and was "gentle to the point of laxity with his servants" (I.28). Finding such favorable traits may have been easier for Churchill than it was for Macaulay, not to mention the Tory Dean Swift, who could find little in Marlborough's character to relish (IV.30).

This was likely due to a sympathy of shared experiences: both Marlborough and his descendant were actuated by an ambition for greatness, a willingness to detach themselves from political parties, falls into disgrace, years of lost opportunity, an uncommon ability to forge foreign alliances, a

vision for Europe based on the greater common good, what Lord Randolph Churchill termed "Tory Democracy." For both Marlborough and Churchill subtle shifts in tactical alignment served a grand strategic vision, without which neither might have been able to succeed under the pressure of events. And of course some of the faults for which Marlborough was criticized applied equally to Churchill himself, a fact Churchill must have recognized: egotism, self-centeredness, self-promotion, grandiosity, love of comfort, a readiness to compromise with the enemy.¹⁷

However, a deeper explanation of Marlborough's behavior lay in the nature of European politics, a network of changing dependencies that Churchill grasped intuitively and tracked obsessively. In describing the conditions that brought about Marlborough's decision to check the advances of the Elector of Bavaria in the months leading up to the battle of Blenheim, Churchill recounts the "dangerous web of German affairs...a strange embroidery of half-friendships and hungry ambitions."

It was a world of "shifting, indeed sinister relations" (II.13). Churchill notes that "before Marlborough could hazard the Queen's army in the depths of Germany, he must be as sure as possible that he would not be obstructed or even betrayed by the general with whom he was to act" (II.13). That general was Prince Louis of Baden, the commander in chief of the Hapsburg Emperor, whom Marlborough feared might decide in the end to throw in his lot with the Elector, his friend and neighbor, who had switched sides and was now France's ally and England's enemy.

Marlborough knew from his experience as James's ambassador to France and later William III's plenipotentiary that it was necessary to "peer beneath the surface of the European scene." Hence his habit of collecting intelligence about friendly states and princes as carefully as he did enemy arsenals.¹⁸ This he did because he understood that states and empires are not motivated by ethics but by the advantages they seek to gain. All had to be weighed "in his massive scales." Churchill writes:

He [Marlborough] had to measure the potential movements of his allies with

as much care as those of the enemy, or his own marches and the supply of his own troops. Whether these evil tendencies would become dominant in 1704 turned upon belief or disbelief in the victory of France. Fear and hatred of French ascendancy would not hold the Alliance together beyond the hour when hope of beating France departed. Then Germany and Europe must accommodate themselves to the new dispensation, and prudent princes must not be unprepared for that. The Grand Alliance quivered at this moment in every part of its vast fragile organization (II.13).

Churchill is describing the world of *realpolitik*, one in which nothing can be depended upon except the interests of the parties concerned. Allies could themselves become threats, even before a war was over. Churchill would live to see such behavior himself towards the end of WWII, when it became apparent that the Soviets looked to rule all of Eastern Europe. Again and again in *Marlborough*, this kind of tension is felt. For example, after the great achievements of the Danube campaign; after the Battle of Elixheim (1705), when Marlborough successfully broke through the French defensive fieldworks of Brabant; after the stunning Allied victory at Ramillies in 1706 and the fall of cities like Brussels and Antwerp, which nearly put into Allied hands the entire course of the Rhine; and finally, even with the benefit of Prince Eugene's success in Italy and more dramatically England's Union with Scotland in 1707, which joined their Parliaments together and gave a stability to the island that it not had for ages—after all these gains, new risks arose that threatened everything.

Some of the new risks were external, such as the Dutch exhibiting a decided preference for inaction now that their borders were adequately protected and further investment seemed unnecessary,¹⁹ some internal, such as those resulting between political struggles for control of the English government by the rising Whig party and Queen Anne's rabid dislike of it. The great engine of the Alliance had stalled. All was in jeopardy again, because the French were humbled but not beaten.

References and endnotes

1. All citations to *Marlborough* are from the University of Chicago Press Edition (2002) and are incorporated into the text by volume and chapter number.
2. Churchill was in fact highly productive in these years, working on *Marlborough*, starting his *History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, and penning profiles of the great political, intellectual, and artistic figures of the age. Andrew Roberts, citing Martin Gilbert, Churchill's official biographer, states that Churchill received an advance of £20,000 (£1 million in today's money). See Andrew Roberts, *Churchill: Walking with Destiny* (Viking, 2018), p. 371.
3. Roberts, *Walking with Destiny*, p. 370-374.
4. Marlborough was born at Great Trill in Devon, not Ashe House, which was one mile away. Roberts, *Walking with Destiny*, p. 371.
5. The story of France's rise as the dominant power of Europe in the second half of the 17th century, and the resourcefulness of Louis XIV and Cardinal Richelieu, has often been told. Louis XIV was unquestionably the greatest European monarch of the period. For a recent treatment of Louis's strategy, his plans to make France an imperial power without par, and the alliances he formed, even with such distant powers as the Ottomans and Far Eastern dynasties, see Philip Mansel, *King of the World: The Life of Louis XIV*. (University of Chicago Press, 2020).
6. Churchill notes the risks ministers of government ran in Marlborough's time. See, for example, his comments on the fate of the great Lord Strafford and on the weapons of "impeachment and attainder" that might well result in capital punishment), which he cites as possible outcomes to any minister who might have opposed too persistently the Hanoverian succession (IV.28).
7. Churchill's skill as an historian has been debated. J.H. Plumb, the Cambridge historian, thought it much below professional academic standards, describing it as amateurish and quaint. John Lukacs asserts that if at times undisciplined, Churchill did not attempt to do what so many so many professional historians attempt to do and fail. He understood that the historian can never really detach himself from the subject in which he is engaged, cannot stand as it were outside of history and judge it, and so he worked personally within it as an active participant. To Lukacs, Churchill disclosed an unparalleled understanding of historical process, one equal to that of the greatest historians (John Lukacs, *Churchill: Visionary. Statesman. Historian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 109-118).
8. In his profile of Georges Clemenceau, controversial prime minister of France from 1906-1909 and again from 1917-1920, Churchill writes: "The Muse of History must not be fastidious. She must see everything, touch everything, and, if possible, smell everything. She need not be afraid that these intimate details will rob her of Romance and Hero-Worship." Churchill admired Clemenceau greatly. See Winston S. Churchill, *Great Contemporaries*, 1938 version edited by James W. Muller (Wilmington: ISI Books, 2012), p. 289.
9. *The Letters and Dispatches of John Churchill, First Duke of Marlborough, from 1702-1712*, vols. 1 & 2, ed. Sir G. Murray, 1845.
10. *History of England from the Accession of James II*. Ten volumes (Leipzig: Bernard Tauchnitz, 1849), Vol. III, pp. 82-83. Hereinafter cited as Macaulay. Churchill's preoccupation with Macaulay has been noted by Lukas and others. While it presents a flaw in his narrative, Macaulay's treatment of Marlborough was by Churchill's time the most conspicuous and noteworthy. Macaulay's narrative sweeps the reader along like a powerful river, leaving him breathless with anticipation of what is around the next bend. Churchill certainly assumed a challenge in facing down Macaulay's "inimitable storytelling."
11. Macaulay, Vol. II, pp.32-33.
12. Macaulay, Vol. III, p. 305
13. Macaulay, Vol. VI, pp. 276-77.
14. Macaulay, Vol. VI , p. 172. See especially pp. 170-176.
15. For example, Churchill shows that Macaulay's account was biased by the so-called "Memoirs of King James II." Archival research had shown the Memoirs to have stopped at 1660, when Marlborough was still a child, and that the other document on which Macaulay relied, James's *Life*, was in reality written by one Dicconson years after James's death. Dicconson was a member of that "forlorn group of Jacobites ; ...who had every motive known to the human heart to hate and traduce the English Revolutionary leaders; and of all those leaders none more than Marlborough, who at the time when Dicconson was writing was at the height of his career"(I. 21) Hugh Trevor-Roper comments insightfully on Macaulay's brilliant but reductive treatment of Marlborough and other "Tory" figures like Francis Bacon, William Penn, and George Jeffreys. According to Trevor-Roper Macaulay viewed history "as the history of progress, and progress as

material progress,” which is to say “Whig” progress. Those who did not fit into its rather narrow scheme, which privileged English institutions in the distant historical past as upholding English values and therefore necessary to be recovered and carried forward by politics, were retrograde if not reprehensible. See *Lord Macaulay: The History of England*, edited with an Introduction by Hugh Trevor-Roper (New York: Penguin, 1968).

16. Marlborough’s close working relationship with Prince Eugene is a recurrent theme of Churchill’s narrative. Churchill describes the two in the movements leading up to the battle of Blenheim as functioning like “two lobes of one brain” (II.19).
17. Andrew Roberts notes that the charge of being self-serving was made against Churchill throughout his life in *Walking with Destiny*, pp. 370-373 and *passim*.

18. Marlborough’s intelligence gathering on enemy troop movements was advanced. See, for example, Churchill’s description of how he tracked with accuracy the size and strength of Marshall Tallard’s army as it made its way towards the Rhine in 1704 before the Battle of Blenheim, secretly assigned to Tallard by Louis XIV only ten days earlier at Versailles (II.19).

19. The Dutch were reluctant to engage their full resources after the successful Allied campaign of 2008. Churchill notes this at several points, citing Earl Stanhope’s anecdote about the Duke of Wellington, who, when asked to compare his situation with Marlborough’s said: “He had greater difficulties than I had with his allies: the Dutch were worse to manage than the Spaniards or the Portuguese.” (IV.24). Wellington thought Marlborough his superior as a field marshal.



Churchill's Marlborough: Generalship and Alliance in the Service of Liberty (Part II)

Paul E. Forte

Marlborough and Constitutional Monarchy

In such a world, it would be naïve to assume that the leaders of nations would stay true to their word, acting in accordance with principles. For both Marlborough and for Churchill, principles should guide men, but states follow a different path. The principles that Marlborough espoused in the early 18th century—respect for native British institutions, recognition of sovereignty as residing in the people, belief in the centrality of Parliament as the agency of popular will, religious toleration—were critical in steering England away from more extreme policies and the social turmoil they engendered. These principles were birthed in the long Parliament of the English Civil War, fostered during the Restoration, tested by the Revolution of 1688, and legalized by the Convention Parliament of 1689.

Of the Revolution itself, that great “bloodless” event, Churchill says relatively little given its centrality to his subject—he devotes fewer than 20 pages directly to the Revolution—but its presence runs like a powerful current throughout *Marlborough*, undergirding its narrative. As Macaulay felicitously phrased it, the Revolution meant that “every improvement which the constitution required could be found within the constitution itself.”²⁰ After the Revolution, the fires that had blazed in English cities from territorial and sectarian animus died down into embers and a new mood of toleration ensued. If men could not see eye to eye with respect to God and his church, they might as well try to allow greater latitude of religious opinion while working out their secular differences through representative bodies acting on their behalf.

In a later retelling of the Revolution's meaning, Churchill quotes the famous juristic axiom *Rex non debet esse sub homine, sed sub Deo et lege*: the King is not

subject to any man, but is subject to God and the law.²¹ The Revolution had finally achieved in explicit terms what had been implicit since Magna Carta—that the King alone cannot make law, but is himself subject to God and the law. This was the foundation of English constitutional monarchy, with the Parliament as the repository of national sovereignty and the Crown as its head, an arrangement that represented a distinct departure from governing by means of a royal household, favorites, clerks.

Such thinking was no mere window dressing. Together with the Protestant Religion, the glue that since the Reformation had held it all together, constitutional monarchy operating under the rule of law had contained the expansionist energies of Spanish Catholic Spain in the 16th century and presented an alternative to the unilateral and absolutist culture of Catholic France under Louis XIV (Fig. 5) in the later 17th century, which, as Voltaire observed, was the norm in Europe except for England and Poland.²² More than 200 years later Churchill would advance it against rising fascism, on the one hand, and a recalcitrant communism, on the other.²³

Churchill sees in Marlborough the brave envoy of history determined to preserve his country and its values. But Marlborough was also a patient man waiting for time to play itself out, as he proved after the unexpected death of Queen Mary, which eventually brought him back into favor with William, who would now reign alone until his death. He was also a practical man, one less likely to have made a great speech than to have checked on “his horse's forage or his man's rations,” a man well versed in the arts of intrigue, able to counter the sophisticated moves of artful statemen in that most artful age.



Fig. 5. Louis XIV, King of France, by Hyacinthe Rigaud (1701)



Fig. 6. Queen Anne of England by Willem Wissing and Jan van der Vaardt (1684)

favor with William, who would now reign alone until his death. He was also a practical man, one less likely to have made a great speech than to have checked on “his horse’s forage or his man’s rations,” a man well versed in the arts of intrigue, able to counter the sophisticated moves of artful statemen in that most artful age.

Churchill as historian thinks such qualities necessary for achieving the desired ends of states whose interests are ever in flux. Not surprisingly, he accords respect to George Savile, 1st Marquess of Halifax, the brilliant but largely forgotten minister to Queen Anne (Fig.2), known today after the title of his taut little book, *The Character of a Trimmer* (1688). In that book Halifax sets forth the virtues and advantages of balance in politics.²⁴ Like Halifax, both Marlborough and Churchill saw that when one side of the boat in which they were sailing had too much weight it made good sense to cross over to the other, to tack this way and that into the wind, making the subtle calculations of the kind employed by such later statesmen as Talleyrand, Metternich, Castlereagh, and closer to our time, their latter-day disciple, Kissinger.

The Major Campaigns

Having swept the deck of clutter, Churchill can focus on the most important aspect of Marlborough’s career, his illustrious record as a general, evidenced by the extraordinary

number of battles in which Marlborough was victorious. Churchill notes that contemporary historians tend to look more closely at history that is not oriented to great battles and generals, finding other factors of equal or even greater importance, such as economics and social development. This, he thinks, is a mistake, because like it or not, it is the great battles that shape history, that create or destroy boundaries, that give control of desired lands and resources, that determine the fortunes of whole peoples.

Here, as elsewhere in *Marlborough*, Churchill is adamant that the historical record be amended to remove the distortions stamped on it by Marlborough’s enemies. He wishes to ensure that Marlborough, much abused and underrated, especially by the French, who viewed him more as a courtier than a warrior, be reckoned among “the great captains of history,” along with Caesar and Hannibal and Napoleon. For Churchill, Marlborough was the “military ideal” of the age. He was the complete general, masterful on land but also comfortable with operations at sea, something Prince Eugene, in spite of his many skills, was not. And he had something else, glimpsed in a letter to his wife Sarah

about the siege of Lille (1708). That was the power to forecast “with perfect comprehension the future actions of the enemy.” Writes Churchill:

His power of putting himself in the enemy’s shoes, and measuring truly what they ought to do, and what he himself would most dislike, was one of his greatest gifts. He was only wrong in his anticipations when the enemy made a mistake. But this also had compensations of its own (III.24).

Churchill sees Marlborough as instrumental in England’s rise to global power against a much larger, more populous, and richer France. William III was an inveterate enemy of France and had fought wars valiantly, but at great expense and without much tangible success. With William’s sudden death in 1702, the French saw their chance to break the Dutch, whose republic was convulsed. What the French failed to recognize was that the England of Marlborough and Queen Anne was not the England of William and Mary. England was now on the whole stronger and would take direction of the war.²⁵ At the same time, the value of its alliance with the Dutch was more widely recognized throughout Batavia. Thus, Marlborough’s arrival at The Hague in the midst of Dutch agitation and concerns about their vulnerability to French incursions from the south enabled him to ascend to the command of the armies of both nations.

While Churchill’s claims for Marlborough’s political leadership of the Second Grand Alliance seem at times strained, Churchill’s account of the ten major campaigns in which Marlborough assumed command, his mastery of the hour-by-hour movements of the various European Armies and the terrains through which they marched, his observations on Marlborough’s ability to delegate and to reinforce the units best suited to carry a fight—all persuade the reader that Marlborough played the central role in the conduct of the war, and that those who tried to diminish it were mistaken. The battle of Blenheim (Fig.7), fought in August of 1704 in Bavaria, was of course Marlborough’s most famous victory. Dozens of books have been written about it, and there is the splendid palace of Blenheim in Woodstock, England, which stands as a



Fig. 7. The 16th Regiment of Foot at Blenheim, 13 August 1704 (watercolor by Richard Simkin, 1900; National Army Museum)

monument to his achievement. Churchill devotes nine full chapters (more than 150 pages) to its genesis, planning, major actions, and aftermath, in the process reporting in detail on the battle of Schellenberg, the devastation that Marlborough’s troops inflicted on Bavaria, and the initial reluctance of France’s commander in chief, Marshall Camille d’Huston, duc de Tallard, to engage at all.

Churchill emphasizes that the whole march from the North Sea to the Danube in five weeks was not a haphazard affair but an unfolding of strategic purpose. Marlborough’s announced plan of proceeding to the upper Rhine was a deliberate feint; he intended to head into the heart of Germany in order to punish Bavaria and its rogue Elector. But he waited until the last minute to alter his course. It was only then that the French general surmised that Marlborough meant all along to strike at Bavaria and to rescue Vienna. Still, Tallard hoped to capitalize on the Allied decision to attack his favorable position across marshy ground, an illusion shattered by the controlled firing of Allied infantry, the reliance of Allied cavalry on the sword rather than the pistol, and his own error in weakening his center by allowing his wings to concentrate in the villages of Blenheim and Oberglau, where they would be trapped. Blenheim, says Churchill, was a turning point not just because of the numbers involved in the fighting, or its severity, but because it changed “the political axis of the

world” (II.21). The power of the French hegemon, superior to all challengers for more than 40 years, was broken, and the manner of the defeat, including the surrender of thousands of French troops and the capture of 36 senior French officers, including Tallard himself, who would be carried as prisoners to England, was a humiliation from which the Sun King would never recover (II.23).

The battle of Ramillies, fought in May 1706, was a victory of comparable scale to Blenheim, if not greater because it paved the way for the Allied capture of Bruges, Brussels, Antwerp, and the virtual collapse of French Belgium. But as noted above, the gains that Ramillies afforded were not fully realized in 1707. When the year opened, control of the government of England was being internally contested; the attempt by Prince Eugene to capture the important French naval base of Toulon had failed, and the Margrave of Baden, an important ally, was driven back across the Rhine. Marlborough did not have adequate forces to meet the Bourbon armies of France who were moving north into Belgium and who would capture Bruges and Ghent, while Allied forces operating in Spain split their army and were defeated at Almanza by a superior Franco-Spanish army under the Duke of Berwick, which strengthened the hand of Philip in Madrid.

Despite this ebb in his fortunes, Marlborough was able to bounce back with his remarkable victory at Oudenarde in 1708 (Fig. 8), an important Allied fortification on the River Scheldt that gave the Allies access to the sea and to communications with England. Marlborough directed more than 100 battalions and almost 200 squadrons of allied forces including English, Dutch, Danish, Austrian, and Prussian contingents. This involved a series of dangerous bridge crossings which enveloped the army of the Marshall of France and heir to the French throne within a “flaming horseshoe.” It was here perhaps that Marlborough’s star shone most brightly. Oudenarde “was no set piece of parade and order,” writes Churchill, but in truth a 20th century battle, unlike any other of the 18th century:

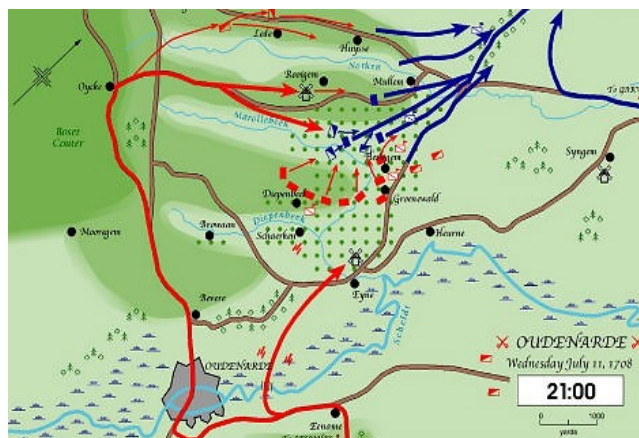


Fig. 8. Marlborough’s forces are depicted in red and the French are in blue
 © The Royal Hampshire Regiment Museum

The chance encounter by forces of unknown strength, the gradual piecemeal broadening of the fighting front, the increasing stake engaged willy-nilly by both sides, the looseness and flexibility of all formations, the improvised and wide-ranging maneuvers, and above all the encircling movement of the Allies, foreshadowing Tannenberg (III.21).²⁶

For Churchill, what was remarkable at Oudenarde was not so much the troops under Marlborough’s immediate command—he had deployed numerous of his own battalions to fight under Prince Eugene and other generals on the flanks, leaving relatively few to himself at the center—but what he termed “his perfect comprehensive judgment, [staying] serene in disappointment and stress...seeing with absolute selflessness the problem as a whole.”²⁷

The successful siege of Lille (1708), one of the strongest fortresses in Europe, was yet another achievement for Marlborough. It effectively drove the French out of the Spanish Netherlands and returned control of the river waterways to the allies. But Marlborough’s star had already begun to wane. Party politics were working against him. The Whigs were generally supportive of the war, but they were determined to get control of its larger aims, such as foreign policy. They managed to overcome the Queen, drive her moderate Tory Ministers from her Cabinet, and compel both Marlborough and Godolphin, who had

largely directed all aspects of the war, to take direction from the party itself.

Henceforth Marlborough would serve in the capacity of a general only. Though at first hesitant, he agreed under pressure from the Queen to campaign in 1709. This led to victory at the siege of Tournai and the capture of Mons, but all headed towards the darkness of Malplaquet, a battle that probably would not have been fought had the Alliance and the French been able to reach an agreement about the future disposition of the Spanish Succession, an issue still unresolved, the Allies insisting the Spanish crown not go to Philip V, Duke of Anjou and grandson of Louis XIV, and Louis insisting he could not send a French army into Spain to remove a family member.

Malplaquet was the largest battle of the 18th century. Some 200,000 men faced off along the northern border of France for two full days under intense cannonade, infantry fire, and cavalry charges. The French army was commanded by Marshalls Villars and Boufflers; as at Blenheim, Marlborough and Prince Eugene commanded the allied forces. Marlborough's tactic of pressuring the enemy's flanks in order to weaken his center worked again, with Marlborough's reserve cavalry coming forward late in the day to overrun the French center whose strength had been siphoned off to the wings. But the cost was terrible, with casualties on both sides estimated at between 30,000 and 40,000,²⁸ those of the Allied forces being the heaviest.

Marlborough's victory was first cheered by crowds in London and then repudiated by the Tories, who used it as leverage to ridicule Whig management of the war and to undermine Marlborough's conduct in the field. There was Marlborough's final campaign of 1710, following *Ne Plus Ultra* line—a series of brilliant moves, including crossing the Scheldt at four bridges and a long night march that enabled Marlborough's army to penetrate the line and to claim his ultimate objective, Bouchain (1711), which he took by siege.

But this was all for naught. The pressure at home from Tory leaders like Robert Harley and Henry St. John to end the campaigns on

the continent and reduce its crippling expenditures on the Exchequer meant that Marlborough was putting men at risk for a war that was in reality already over but for the signing of documents. Finally, there was the not unexpected dismissal by the Queen of Sarah Churchill in early 1711 (III.28), the result of a long series of tensions and unpleasant exchanges, and Marlborough's removal in late December 2011 and replacement by the Duke of Ormond.

Marlborough's legacy and relevance

Churchill reflects, with melancholy, on the awesome weight of responsibility Marlborough shouldered without the power necessary to overcome the criticism incidental to all military actions that go wrong. He explains:

When in Marlborough's conduct of war we see now violent and sudden action, now long delays and seeming irresolution, the dominating fact to be remembered is that he could not afford to be beaten...He could not bear the impact of defeats such as his warrior comrade Eugene repeatedly survived. Neither in his headquarters at the front nor behind him at home did he have that sense of plenary authority which gave to Frederick the Great and to Napoleon their marvelous freedom of action. It is the exhibition of infinite patience and calculation, combined upon occasion with reckless audacity, both equally attended with invariable success, which makes his military career unique (III. Preface).

This is an important theme in *Marlborough*, one that would seem to offer justification without exactly excusing his faults and failures. "He [Marlborough]...was capable of drawing harmony and design from chaos," but he needed "an earlier and still wider authority to have made a more ordered and a more tolerant civilization from his own time, and to help the future" (I. Preface). This he did not have. Hence his inability to prevent the disunity and recriminations following the Treaty of Utrecht.

To Churchill, Marlborough was the savior of Europe, or more precisely, the one who ushered into being the new Europe. Vast

changes were afoot, particularly in England, the result of the English Civil War and the Revolution of 1688. Such events were among the first steps in the struggle to settle the nature of lawful government in the early modern period and the roles that the legislative and executive authorities should play within it. Marlborough's role in this struggle was for Churchill paramount. Thanks to his efforts, England would eventually break the grip of Louis, and with it, his style of "personal government, with all its possibilities for oppression and caprice." Holland would be free of the threats to its southern border, the Hapsburg Empire would survive as a counterweight to a potential of a resurgent France, and the Hanoverians would arrive on the scene as unifiers. In Churchill's words, Marlborough carried "all that was best in the life-work of Oliver Cromwell and William III to an abiding conclusion" (I. Preface).

What was that "best"? For Churchill it was nothing less than the modern secular world order in which royal absolutism and those forms of religion which sacralized it were replaced by popular sovereignty and toleration of theological and other differences. Henceforth, the ultimate court of appeal would not be divine authority as received from above but popular will as registered from below through the medium of politics, an imperfect, messy, and at times disappointing activity, but one that was destined to hold sway over every other kind of power because it carried the greatest assurance of liberty.

For Churchill, Marlborough was not only the supreme commander of "the Confederacy of Europe," but the facilitator who negotiated, established, and furthered a culture of alliance by which politics could replace war as the means of conflict resolution. Two centuries later, in the face of annihilation by powers like Germany and Japan, Churchill looked to alliance as the way for lesser powers to exercise self-determination, which the end of WWII did not ensure.

As Felix Klos has shown,²⁹ Churchill advocated strongly in favor of a "United States of Europe." In his speeches at Fulton, Missouri, Bern, and Zurich in 1946, he warned that unity of democratic



Fig. 9. Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, England, home of Marlborough and birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill

governments alone would stave off future conflict by discouraging the incursions of the Soviet Union whose expansionism would be abetted by their acquisition of the atomic bomb. The wisdom of this approach was apparent throughout the Cold War, underwriting most of the West's successes, and is once again obvious today, in the roadblocks it establishes against the revanchist aims of Russia in Ukraine and elsewhere. *Marlborough* is the template on which future statesmen can build strategies to check authoritarianism and oppression. We would do well to study it.

References and endnotes

Note: All citations to Marlborough are from the University of Chicago Press Edition (2002) and are incorporated into the text by volume and chapter number.

20. Macaulay, Vol. III, p. 449.
21. Cited in Churchill, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples* (London: Cassell and Company Ltd, 1956), Volume I: *The Birth of Britain*, p. xiv.
22. Voltaire, *The Age of Louis XIV*, trans. Martyn T. Pollack (London: Dent & Sons, 1926). Voltaire observes that James II, who sought to impose the Catholic Religion on his people, had neither a profound knowledge of policy nor favorable conditions, was animated by the desire to have the same absolute power as other European kings and was urged to pursue that goal by Louis XIV, his ally and role model, and by his confessor, the scheming Jesuit Peters, who longed to become a cardinal and the primate of England.

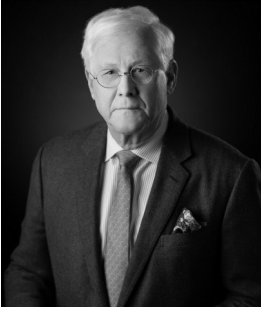
Of James's bungling Voltaire writes: "He undertook the task [of restoring Catholicism in England] so disastrously that he succeeded in shocking all his subjects. He acted at the start as

though he had already achieved what he set out to do; he publicly received a nuncio of the Pope at his court, together with Jesuits and Capuchins; imprisoned seven Anglican bishops whom he might have won over; deprived the city of London of her privileges, when he should rather have increased those she already possessed; arrogantly rescinded laws which he should have secretly undermined; in a word, behaved so indiscreetly, that the cardinals at Rome declared in jest 'that he ought to be excommunicated, as he bade fair to lose the remnant of Catholicism which still remained in England'" (p. 138).

23. Churchill frequently compares the western heritage of liberalism championed by Marlborough with more extreme political movements, as in the words that close his early essay on Franklin Roosevelt, where he writes that Roosevelt's impulse "may well eclipse both the lurid flames of German Nordic national self-assertion and the baleful unnatural lights which are diffused from Soviet Russia." At the same time, he insists on the stabilizing influence of British monarchy, its ability to offer a counterweight to the imbalance of democracy when popular will goes awry, which happened in numerous countries during the 19th and 20th centuries. In his admiring portrait of King George V, Churchill compares a parliamentary system without a constitutional monarchy with that of Britain: "Mighty nations which gained their liberties in the nineteenth and hopefully erected parliaments to preserve them, have fallen, or yielded themselves, to the sway of dictatorships...Unshaken by the earthquakes, unweakened by the dissolvent tides, though all the drifting, the Royal and Imperial Monarchy of Britain stands firm...a fact contrary to the whole tendency of the age" (*Great Contemporaries*, p.308).
24. Compare Churchill's comments on the "harmony of outlook upon middle courses," which Churchill shared with his father's close friend, A.P. Primrose, 5th Earl of Rosebery (*Great Contemporaries*, pp.7-8).
25. As Churchill, following the historian Klopp, explains, "The same main objects would be pursued even more vigorously. England would make the greater and not the smaller contribution. But the predominance would lie in the island rather than among the dykes. The alliance would be of England and Holland, instead of the old reversed form...The Dutch Republic was for some time unconscious of the altered emphasis and priority, and they learned it only through the agreeable channel of aid and victory" (II.2).
26. The mention here of Tannenberg, when the German 8th army in 1914 under Helmuth von Moltke trapped and destroyed the First and Second Armies of Russia in East (now Stebark) Poland exhibits not only Churchill's thorough grasp of Marlborough's orders but mastery of overall battleplan strategy. Small wonder that during WWII Churchill tried to impose his assessments on his field commanders at various points.
27. Cf. Churchill's description of Lord Kitchener's selfless conduct, his determination to carry out his duties, in the midst of Allied failures in 1915 for which he bore responsibility. *Great Contemporaries*, pp. 402-403.
28. Churchill notes at several points in his account of Malplaquet that "the wounded of both sides, officers and men, were bayoneted and plundered." The victors at different times and places on the vast battlefield showed no mercy but slaughtered [the fallen] on the spot" (IV.9).
29. *Churchill's Last Stand: The Struggle to Unite Europe* (New York: I.B. Taurus, 2018), passim.

Churchill in *Punch*

Gary L. Stiles



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Churchill and political cartoons

Churchill beginning at an early age and continuing throughout his life had a great love of political cartoons. He described this interest in his book *Thoughts and Adventures*:

I always loved cartoons. At my private school at Brighton there were three or four volumes of cartoons from *Punch*, and on Sundays we were allowed to study them. This was a very good way of learning history, or at any rate of learning something. Here, week after week, all the salient events of the world were portrayed in caricature, sometimes grave and sometimes gay.¹

Churchill continued:

But how, reader-...would you like to be cartooned yourself? How would you like to feel that millions of people saw you always in the most ridiculous situations, or portrayed as every kind wretched animal, or with a nose on your face like a wart, when really your nose is quite a serviceable and presentable member? How would you like to feel that millions of people think of you like that, that shocking object, that contemptible being, that wretched tatterdemalion, a proper target for public hatred and derision? Fancy having that process going on every week, often every day, over the

whole of your life; and all of your fellow-countrymen and friends and family seeing you thus held up to mockery and shame! Would it not worry you? After all, you cannot go around and say to all spectators: "This is not true; it is not correct; it is not fair." ... But it is not so bad as you would expect. Just as eels are supposed to get used to skinning, so politicians get used to being caricatured.²

Throughout his adult life Churchill would have to both suffer and glow over the myriad of cartoons published about him. He would personally experience all of the feelings he so poignantly describes in the above paragraph. Churchill, however, never being a shy or retiring person reveled in the cartoons published about him, good or bad, with one notable exception which will be discussed later. In fact, Churchill actively engaged in supplying grist for mill that was the cartoonists. Churchill came to be parodied for his distinct physical characteristics and accoutrements that evolved into full-blown comical or iconic images. These myriad features emerged over 80 years of *Punch* cartoons: his forward stoop, large head, hands on hips, jutting jaw, early thin gangly appearance and round pudgy demeanor later in life. The accoutrements include wing collar, bow tie, old fashioned pocket

watch and chain, hats, tiny hats, artist's palette, easels, "V" sign, cigar, bricklaying equipment, polo ponies, polo helmet and mallet, military uniforms, and formal wear. Churchill early on realized that the more distinctive he could make himself in dress and mannerisms the more the cartoonists would utilize exaggerated images in their portrayal of him. One distinctive 'prop', for Churchill who saw himself as an actor upon a stage with himself playing the lead, was his use of hats and most impactful his use of hats that were clearly too small for his head. How this particular scenario came about was described by Churchill himself. He wrote in the *Strand Magazine*:

A very tiny felt hat—I do not know where it had come from—had been packed with my luggage. It lay on the hall table and without thinking I put it on. As we came back from our walk, there was a photographer and he took the picture. Ever since the cartoonists ...have dwelt on my hats, how many they are, how strange and queer and how I am always changing them and what importance I attach to them, and so on. It is all rubbish [but] why should I complain? Indeed, I think I will convert the legend into reality by buying a new hat on purpose.³

His colleagues clearly recognized that Churchill was using every mechanism possible to gain maximum press time including cartoons. Leslie Hore-Belisha noted:

Churchill naturally and without apparent effort looks and behaves like someone important. He is "news" and looks news...In appearance, in manner, in dress and, above all in speech he is an individualist...His unusual hats, which startled the public fancy in his early years, have given place to the cigar, an equally precious gift to the cartoonist. Perhaps such foibles call attention to himself. But what of his "V" sign! There we have his knack of evoking patriotic emotion. It is a gesture of genius...He evidently understands that an appeal can be addressed to the eye as well as the ear.⁴

Churchill not only loved cartoons and eagerly scanned *Punch* and other publications regularly for their appearance but also collected cartoons either by purchasing them or from gifts from others. There are a number of his original *Punch* cartoon drawings on display at Chartwell today.⁵

Punch (The London Charivari)

Punch (The London Charivari) was founded in 1841 and functioned until 2002 except for a brief interval of 4 years in the early 1990s. Certainly during Churchill's life it was the leading magazine of humor and satire and was 'required' reading by any serious politician or citizen interested in the arts or politics. Thus it is not surprising that from 1900 to 1991 there are more than 620 cartoons in *Punch* related to Churchill; an enormous number that has only recently been catalogued and discussed in detail.⁶ In this same time period, *Punch* had a large group of highly talented cartoonists and more than 50 cartoonists who drew Churchill. However, the vast majority of the cartoons were drawn by 8 cartoonists including A. W. Lloyd (145), Bernard Partridge (75), E.T. Reed (70), Raven-Hill (61), Cummings (55), Illingworth (45), Shepard (32) and Townsend (24). Each had their own approach and foibles and none were consistently positive or negative about Churchill.

The distribution of Churchill cartoons over the decades was not uniform with the 1920s and 1950s having 129 and 128, respectively. In contrast, the decades of the 1900s, 1930s and 1940s had 65, 77 and 82, respectively.

The frequency with which prominent world leaders are seen with Churchill in the cartoons is likewise highly variable. For example, David Lloyd George was the most frequently seen with Churchill and they appear together 63 times while Ramsey Macdonald and Churchill are together only twice. Additional frequent co-habitants include Asquith (46), Attlee (44), and Eden (37) while rarer pairings include Baldwin (16), Franklin Roosevelt (11), Balfour (10), and Neville Chamberlain (4). Special mention should be made of the cartoons shared by Churchill and Philip Snowden.

Although the number is only 20, the epic battles represented in these cartoons over financial issues when they alternated as Chancellors of the Exchequer are a true tour de force of cartooning and a study of these has recently been published.⁷

There are a number of important milestones concerning Churchill and his representation in *Punch* that should be highlighted. Churchill is first mentioned in *Punch* in Vol. 117 (July 12, 1899), p. 12 but no image is provided. It is a brief poem about Winston going off to the Boer war. Churchill is first mentioned in a cartoon titled "Hamlet Adapted" October 31, 1900, p. 311 but there is no caricature of him. The first known cartoon image of Churchill was published just 2 month later on December 5, 1900, p. 397.

With more than 600 cartoons published it is not surprising that the full range of emotions are displayed from effusive praise, and adoration to critical, mean-spirited and venomous negative diatribes. In my mind, however what comes through loudest and strongest in the cartoons is the sheer inventiveness, satire, comic contrasts and the ability of the cartoonists to exaggerate certain characteristics (both physical and his stance on political issues) of Churchill and portray them in either a ludicrous and hilarious manner or in penetratingly powerful critique.

In this article I can only provide a few representative examples of the Churchill cartoons that *Punch* published and the reader is referred to the book *Churchill in Punch* for a full listing.

Churchill first obtained true national recognition in 1899 following his escape from a South African prison camp during the Boer War. Upon his return to England, he was elected to Parliament in 1900 and first took his seat in 1901. E. T. Reed immediately recognized the striking similarities in manner between Winston and his father, Lord Randolph and following Winston's first speech Reed published a cartoon comparing the two larger than life figures.

"Reviving a certain splendid memory"



***Punch* February 2, 1901, p. 160**

In his maiden speech, on February 18, 1901, he concluded by saying: "I cannot sit down without saying how very grateful I am for the kindness and patience with which the House has heard me, and which has been extended to me, I well know, not on my own account, but because of a certain splendid memory which many honorable members still preserve."⁸

The young Churchill from the outset of his career was recognized to be highly talented, could "punch above his weight" and possessed unbridled ambition. Bernard Partridge, the lead cartoonist for *Punch*, aptly portrayed Churchill and David Lloyd George as up and coming stars who saw themselves as being unlimited in their skills, egos and goals. Here Churchill and Lloyd George (as Liberals) are ready, willing and able (in their minds) to speak for the Conservative PM Arthur Balfour (below).

The decade of the 1910s would begin much as the last decade ended with titanic and brutal battles between the House of Lords and the House of Commons over financial issues and a strong advocacy by Churchill, Lloyd George, and other Liberals for sweeping social reform. At times Churchill moved far beyond where Asquith was comfortable. E. T. Reed in his *Almanack* cartoon clearly recognizes who is at point for this battle.

“Ready to oblige”



Punch January 25, 1905, p. 57

Right Hon. Arthur Balfour (meditatively, aloud). “I wish I could find a double to take my place in the House!” Mr. Winston Churchill (aside to himself) Mr. Lloyd-George (aside to himself). “Ought not to be any difficulty about THAT!”

“The Government are in Fighting Trim”



Punch Almanack, 1910

(Ministerial Speech). With the Artist’s heart felt congratulations to those other gallant warriors who, from exigencies of space, have escaped inclusion in the above battle-picture.

Asquith’s Cabinet (L-R) with Churchill, Lloyd George, Herbert Asquith, Edward

Grey, John Morley, Richard Haldane, Walter Runciman, and Reginald McKenna are ready to fight the battles in the House but it is Churchill and Lloyd George dressed as the swashbuckling pirates who will lead the charge.

A very humorous cartoon in 1912 was printed in which Churchill, Lloyd George and Herbert Asquith are promoting GlobeWernicke “Elastic” bookcases.

Punch September 11, 1912. p.viii

The flexible bookcases are shown holding books representing many of the major political issues of the day such as Home Rule in Ireland, the Insurance Bill, Old Age Pensions and the thorny issue of the Lord’s Veto. No report of how this cartoon influenced sales has been found.

Churchill was Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1924-1929 and generally presented well-thought out and well-received budgets at least at their initial reading. During his tenure as Chancellor there were a large number of cartoons highlighting budget battles between the Conservatives and Liberals. Philip Snowden in particular was often a

thorn in Churchill's side. A.W. Lloyd was particularly adept at creating caricatures of the leading politicians and turning them into story book characters.

In this cartoon, "The Ex-Chancellors", he portrays all four Chancellors (past and present) as characters in a German children's book.

"So one and all set up a roar
And laughed and hooted more and more."

"The Ex-Chancellors"



Punch May 5, 1926 p. 493

– Struwwelpeter.

Mr. Churchill. Mr. Lloyd George. Sir Robert Horne and Mr. Snowden.

Struwwelpeter is an 1845 German children's book by Heinrich Hoffmann that provides rhymed stories with a strong moral, highlighting how bad behavior leads to disastrous consequences. In 1926 all three ex-Chancellors were bitterly fighting Churchill over the budget.

At this same time Churchill received warm and positive feedback from *Punch*. A particularly striking and memorable cartoon by Leonard Raven-Hill highlighted Churchill's negotiating skills and as is frequently the case Raven-Hill utilized a hat to emphasize his point

"An Italian feather in his cap"

On January 27, 1926 while uttering bouquets to Mussolini he would later regret, Churchill signed an agreement with the Italian government to start repaying its war debt to Britain beginning in 1930. The deal was hailed as a success, and the French



Punch February 3, 1926 p. 115

The Bird of France (seeing Mr. Churchill adorned with the plumes of the Bersaglieri). "Let's hope he won't want any more Cock-feathers for a bit."

were now worried that they would be required to sign a similar deal. The Bersaglieri was a specialty unit of the Italian army, famed for the plumage on their hats. Raven-Hill, of all the *Punch* cartoonists, placed a hat on Churchill the most often (just above 50% of the time in his cartoons).

Beginning in 1929 and continuing for a decade, Churchill would be in the political wilderness scorned by both Conservatives and Liberals and would hold no cabinet position or significant office until 1939. The cartoons of this period very much reflect his being out of favor and the fact that he supported unpopular positions on a number of issues such as Indian Independence, the Abdication and the threat of German rearmament. Obviously by the end of the decade this latter issue was completely reversed and Churchill was recognized as prescient about the whole issue.

An example of the disdain for Churchill over the Indian issue can be seen in this cartoon by A.W. Lloyd.

England v. India



Punch March 14, 1934 p. 297

India 289
England (under the Captancy of Mr. Churchill) ...34

An obvious statement on how Churchill's view of the Indian question was viewed by *Punch* and much of the House. The score mimics a House vote on an Indian issue.

By 1936, there was beginning to be some recognition in England that Hitler and his plans to strengthen the German military and the German economy were not being executed for peaceful reasons but rather with a view to dominating Europe and acquiring land for his perverted vision. It was Bernard Partridge who was first to support Churchill and note that the warnings Churchill had evinced had real merit.

“A Band of Hope”

One of the first truly positive *Punch* cartoons about Churchill in a long time. Here the four Conservative leaders, Austen Chamberlain, Lord Winterton, Robert Horne and Churchill, all of whom were excluded from the Government by Baldwin are acting as a shadow Cabinet and keeping the public and House ever aware of the risk of Hitler and



Punch June 3, 1936 p. 631

(Left to right: Sir Austen Chamberlain, Lord Winterton, Sir Robert Horne, Mr. Winston Churchill.)

“We Dreamed That We Dwelt in Marble Halls ...

Germany while the Baldwin Government buries its head in the sand.

By 1939, it had finally become abundantly clear to the public and many politicians that Churchill should be brought back into the Government with a position that was empowered to make a difference. E. H. Shepard was the first in *Punch* to join the chorus calling for Churchill to have a cabinet position. *Punch*, the editors and cartoonists were back in the ranks of his supporters.

“The Old Sea-Dog”

The cartoon refers to Churchill previously having been the First Lord of the Admiralty from 1911-1915 and to historical naval heroes such as Sir Francis Drake or Sir Walter Raleigh. Please note the headlines (‘Churchill Wanted’ and ‘Call Up Winston’) of the two newspapers scattered around Churchill. Churchill was indeed brought into the Government on September 3, 1939.

In May of 1940 Churchill became Prime Minister, a goal he had strived for since his



Punch July 12, 1939, p.33

“Any telegrams for me?”

youth. I will not attempt to recount all the trials and triumphs of his premiership as they have been well documented by many publications. However a cartoon in 1942 highlights just how much his speeches were revered, impactful and anticipated. It was E.H. Shepard who echoed the desires of the public to be able to hear Churchill speeches as he gave them in the House.

“A bold dream of Big Ben”

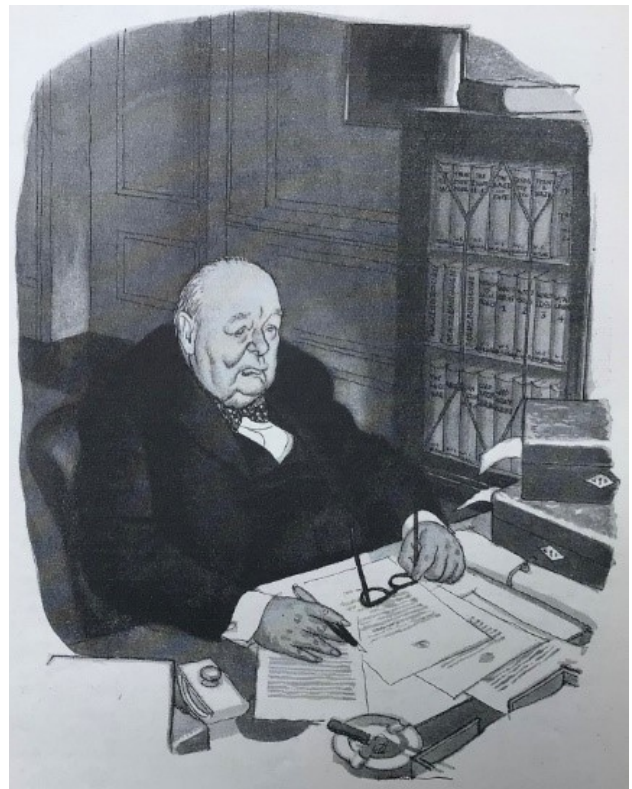


Punch January 28, 1942, p.73.

On January 20, the House asked Churchill to consider recording his speeches in Parliament for later broadcasting. Churchill suggested they try it for his next major speech as an experiment. However, his critics replied that they should be given equal time or at least should be able to shout criticisms during his speech. With this in mind, Churchill decided he shouldn't do it. Though it was a tremendous loss for history, it was probably the correct decision at the time.

The one cartoon that most upset Churchill and hurt him deeply and permanently is the one drawn by Leslie Gilbert Illingworth in *Punch* in 1954.

“Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.”



Punch February 3, 1954, p.167.

The quote is from Psalm 114. This cartoon created, perhaps, the most outrage and response in the press, by politicians, by the common man, and by Churchill himself as any Churchill cartoon in his life time. Illingworth, directed by *Punch's* new editor, Malcolm Muggeridge, was now behind the effort to retire Churchill. This cartoon is the most heartless ever published in its sheer

vindictiveness. Churchill is seen as a haggard old man with strong remnants of his stroke evident on his drooping and asymmetric face and lifeless hands. Illingworth provided the visual image while an accompanying article by Muggeridge completed the mean spirited and personal attack on Churchill and his faculties. Churchill was deeply affronted, and Muggeridge, though he remained editor to 1957, was not forgiven. To read a more complete and fulsome discussion see *Churchill in Punch*.⁹

To end this brief account of how Churchill was viewed through the lens of *Punch*, its editors and cartoonists, I wish to show a very simple but evocative and telling cartoon which depicts Churchill at one of the inflection points in his career and how he was viewed by one of his political adversaries. Cummings has shown a poignant and emotional moment in the interaction between Churchill and Clement Attlee.

“Morning”



***Punch* December 8, 1954, p. 734**

On November 30, at the opening of Parliament there were two major events: the Gracious Speech of Queen Elizabeth II and the eightieth birthday of Churchill. In the opening remarks on the latter event, Clement Attlee referred to Churchill as “the last of the great orators to touch the heights”. Cummings captures the endearing relationship between political opposites who,

however much they disagreed, held each other in high esteem.

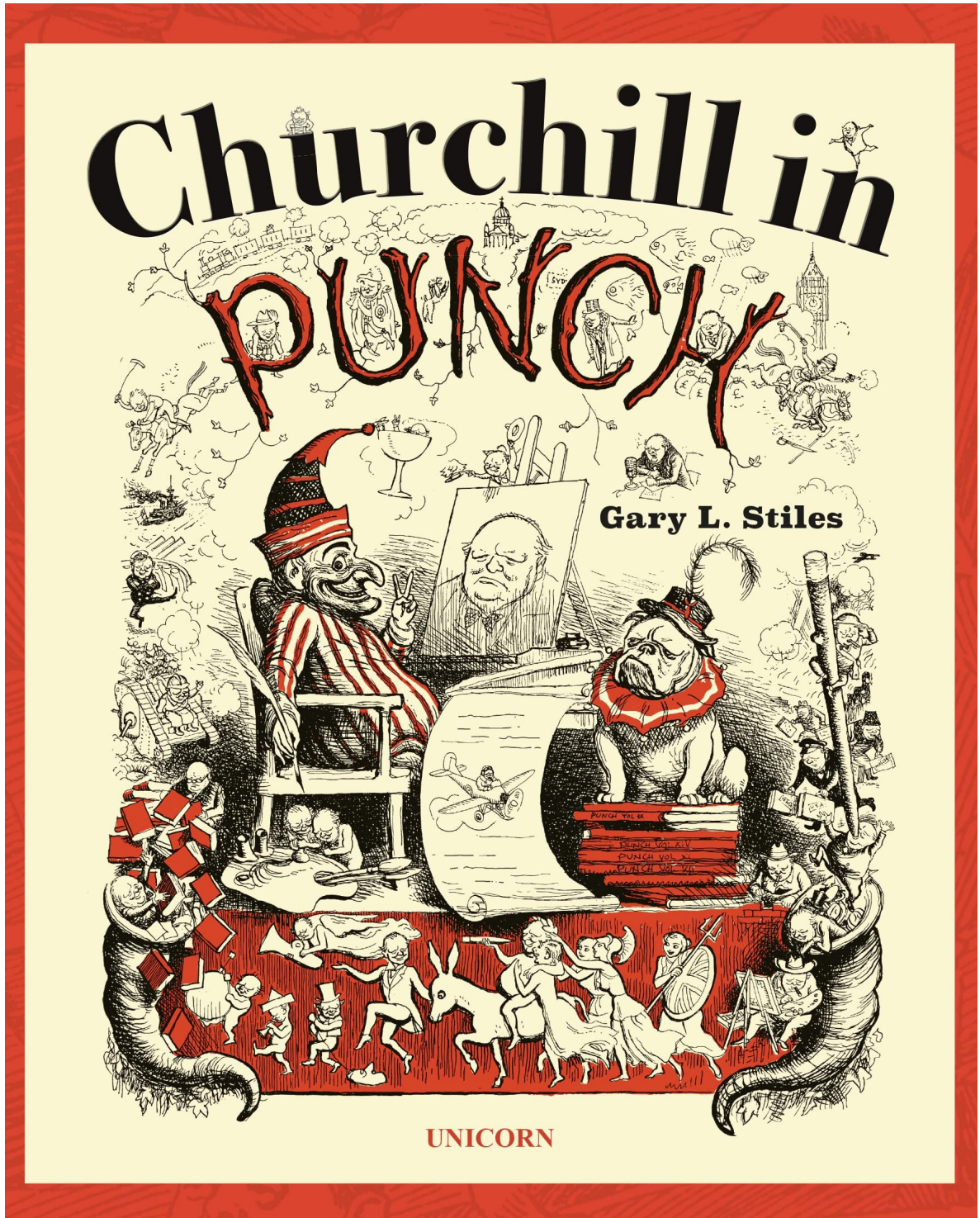
In this brief recounting of Churchill’s career as depicted in *Punch*, I have chosen just a handful of cartoons that I feel are emblematic of how Churchill was viewed. I wish this to be a foretaste of what can be seen in the recent book, *Churchill in Punch*. The selection of cartoons in this article was completely personal and others would surely have chosen a different subset to tell the story. There are few historical figures that lend themselves so well to being caricatured in cartoons as Winston Churchill. The full collection of more than 600 *Punch* cartoons when viewed in their entirety make a bold statement about the man and his impact on history.

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Acknowledgements

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4001 Hillsboro Pike Nashville, TN
starting at 5:30pm.*

RSVP to drury55@gmail.com if you plan on attending.

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at the Belle Meade Country Club, Nashville
Our guest speaker is Justin Reash, Executive
Director of the International Churchill Society.
Tickets go on sale this summer*



6 October 2022

2022 ICS 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...

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