

THE CHURCHILLIAN

AUTUMN 2011 | VOLUME 2 | ISSUE 3

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL CHURCHILL MUSEUM

Churchill on the *Civil War*



THREE SCHOLARS CONSIDER CHURCHILL'S WRITINGS. PLUS: SIR WINSTON'S REMARKABLE FANTASY, "IF LEE HAD NOT WON THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG."

Greetings from Fulton!



As always, warm greetings from Fulton, Missouri. The Museum has been busy over the summer working on an extensive array of programs and events for the coming year. Highlights of 2011/12 include our collaborative exhibition (in February and March 2012) with the Smithsonian Institution entitled ‘The Way We Worked’, in partnership with the City of Fulton and Callaway County Historical Society. Additionally, in June of 2012, we will host a temporary exhibition sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, ‘Our Lives, Our Stories’, which examines the ‘greatest generation.’ This year is significant in other ways in that the Museum will undertake a strategic planning process- the first in several years- and this document and its processes will guide the Museum’s direction over the next five years as we work to establish ourselves as America’s National Churchill Museum in the fullest sense of that wonderful title. You can read in this issue about our Churchill’s England tour that took place in the late spring. This also went very well and we have plans to repeat this in 2012 with an extended version in 2013 that encompasses the battlefields of Normandy.

As you will all hopefully have realized, this edition of *The Churchillian* is rather different. As I noted nearly a year ago, when we made the transition from the previous title, *The Memo*, our intent has always been to improve progressively both the content and the production values of this publication. Now, with this the 4th edition, we have made an even more substantial step-up in terms of numbers of pages and also in terms of the quality of the articles. Future *Churchillians* will continue in this vein as we cast our net more broadly to publish work by noted Churchill authors and scholars worldwide. As we forge ahead with establishing the National Churchill Museum more solidly in the wider Churchill world, this new upgrade will help us reach new readers and also better serve our existing Friends. In the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War, we remember that Churchill, who probably understood that quarrel better than anyone outside America, wrote a lot on the subject—even fiction. The fiction on this occasion is to be found in his intriguing article, *If Lee Had Not Won the Battle of Gettysburg*, which comes to us by kind courtesy of the Churchill Literary Estate and Randolph Churchill.

Churchill’s thoughtful and provocative essay expresses his breadth of understanding for the whims and twists of history. He asks us to consider what might have happened had Lee *won*? Professor Paul Alkon of the University of Southern California, author of *Winston Churchill’s Imagination*, explains how Churchill came to write his fantasy. Professor James Muller, of the University of Alaska Anchorage, then tells us what Churchill himself learned, applied and wrote about the Civil War, which he called “the noblest and least avoidable conflict.”

An appreciation of Churchill’s essay by the great civil war historian Shelby Foote is part of an article by Richard Langworth, a Fellow of the Winston Churchill Memorial & Library since 1996 and whose credentials surely need no introduction. I’m delighted to say that Richard has agreed to work with America’s National Churchill Museum as a historical consultant and his contributions will appear in the *The Churchillian* along with many of our previous (and future) Kemper Lecturers and that of other Churchill writers and scholars. All in all, you, the Friends of the Museum, have much to look forward to with *The Churchillian* in the forthcoming months.

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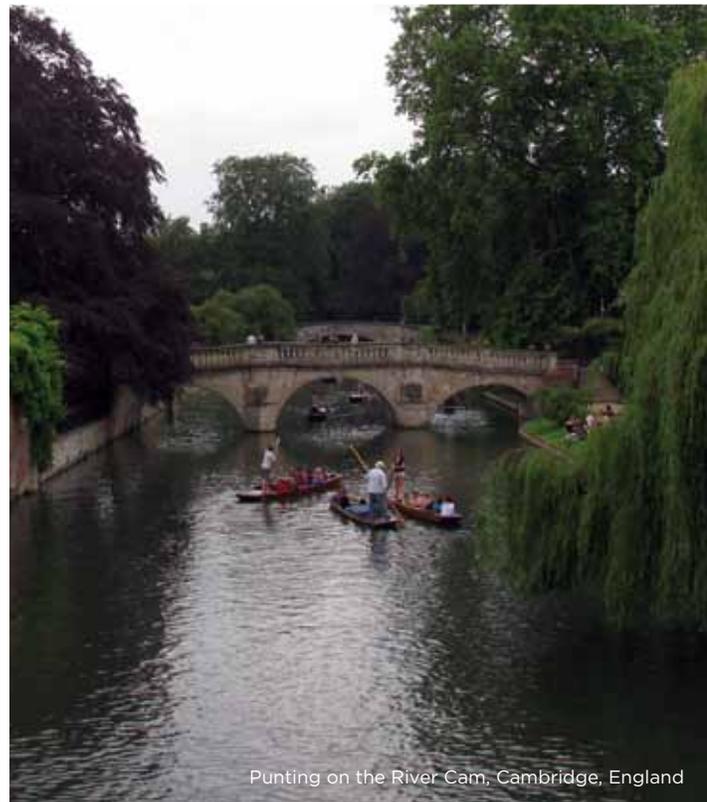
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Paul Alkon, *Writer*

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Introduction:

Churchill

and the **Civil War**

Richard M. Langworth



Churchill is frequently considered a prime example of the “Great Man” theory of history: that individuals matter more than fate. Certainly this axiom has a good case. The historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. mused: “Would the next two decades have been the same had the automobile that hit him killed Winston Churchill in 1931, and the bullet that missed him killed Franklin Roosevelt in 1933? Would Neville Chamberlain or Lord Halifax have rallied Britain in 1940? Would John Garner have produced the New Deal and the Four Freedoms? Suppose in addition that Lenin had died of typhus in Siberia in 1895, and Hitler had been killed on the western front in 1916? Would the 20th century have looked the same?”¹

The “Great Man” theory is entwined with Churchill’s writings (imaginary as well as historical) on “the Noblest and Least Avoidable Conflict” whose sesquicentennial we celebrate this year: the American Civil War. His understanding of that conflict informed his judgment of America, from his youth to old age, as the mighty and beneficent republic with all its power for good—and for strife. His views on the war are therefore doubly appropriate: a commemoration, as well as an education in Churchill’s thought.

James W. Muller’s “The Noblest and Least Avoidable Conflict,” a fine analysis of Churchill’s historical writings, reminds me of an amusing yet instructive story. I first heard this paper, now updated and revised for this issue, presented at a 1991 Churchill Society conference in Richmond, Virginia: what Churchill (and Muller) referred to as “The Rebel Capital.” I was seated near a noted southern historian who had, it is safe to say, a rather different view of the war’s great protagonists. When Professor Muller ventured the opinion that Lee’s decision to fight for the Confederacy was a character flaw, the gentleman rose in heat, saying, “I never expected to hear General Lee referred to in such terms, and in Richmond of all places.”

The incident, amusing to some and disconcerting to others, underlines a more important point, which is that to be understood, Churchill must always be viewed “in the round”—flaws and virtues combined. Indeed when Professor Muller writes of his disappointment that Churchill didn’t see Lee’s flaw in his historical account, he reminds us that it should never be the purpose of his admirers to establish Churchill as super-human.

Churchill’s accounts of the American Civil War are as fine and sensitive a treatment as those of any other foreigner (if the half-American Churchill can be deemed foreign)—well worthy of our reflections on that war’s 150th anniversary. We have not reprinted what he actually said, which is readily available in the fourth and final volume of his *History of the English-Speaking Peoples*. Instead, Professor Muller’s presentation tells us what to look for in those pages, and why it is important today.

Twenty years ago, I sent Shelby Foote, the great Civil War historian, the poignant Churchill “what-if” article you are about to read herein, “If Lee Had Not Won the Battle of Gettysburg.” No fan of counterfactual history, Mr. Foote was nevertheless moved to make an exception: “This is fantasy which transcends all my objections to exploring the what-ifs and might-have-beens in that great war.” Churchill’s conjecture on what might have happened had Lee won at Gettysburg stands alone and unimitated not only in his own work, but in that of all others. Moreover, it explains a great deal about Churchill’s own driving forces, his ultimate optimism, his hopes for humanity.

As Paul Alkon explains in his introduction, Churchill often focuses his experience and depth of imagination to picture possible alternatives at key junctures in history. At the end of World War I, for example, he described Churchill’s feelings of foreboding on Armistice Day, 11 November 1918, as he watched the victory celebrations.² Professor Alkon provides several examples of Churchill’s ability to use his imagination as part of his rhetoric, most notably in 1940.

“If Lee Had Not Won the Battle of Gettysburg” makes fascinating reading, full of unexpected twists, turns, and reversals of reality. Not only does Lee win, but he frees the slaves! Gladstone and Disraeli change places, the former becoming a Conservative, the latter a Liberal. Woodrow Wilson, scapegoat for Versailles in Churchill’s memoirs of World War I, is “the enlightened Virginian chief of the Southern Republic”; Wilson’s counterpart is Theodore Roosevelt—whom Churchill esteemed, though his admiration was not returned.

Churchill had been an ardent promoter of Anglo-American cooperation at least since 1895, when he first came to America. In “Lee,” his vehicle for this purpose is the “English-Speaking Association.” ESA members—the USA, CSA and British Empire—enjoy common citizenship, without sacrificing their own sovereignty: exactly the prescription Churchill would offer at Harvard in 1943 and Fulton in 1946. The consistency of his thought is riveting.

Another traditional aspect of Churchill’s thought is the movement toward European unity he posits at the end of his fantasy—identical in form and substance to what Churchill himself preached at Zurich and The Hague after World War II. Lenin, Hitler, Mussolini—who were they? They never existed, thanks to the English-Speaking Association. If only things had been so easy.

An aspect of the Lee essay which deserves comment is Churchill’s gratuitous and patronizing remarks about the slaves freed by Robert E. Lee. Some of his words were so shocking to the editors of a recent compilation of Churchill’s writings on America that they edited them out. Not so here: readers get the complete, unexpurgated original, “*totus porcus*,” as old Admiral Fisher used to write young Winston, when they were still on speaking terms, before the Dardanelles. Churchill’s words if republished at all should be republished verbatim—lest his admirers be accused of whitewashing, or his detractors be guilty of quoting out of context.

When Churchill refers to a “simple, gifted African race belonging to a much earlier chapter in human history,” the words grate among civilized readers today.

But Churchill wrote at a time when the vast majority of Americans viewed African-Americans in exactly those terms, or worse. Churchill’s broader thoughts are revealed when he comments wryly what might have happened had the Union won:

“We might have seen the whole of the Southern States invaded by gangs of carpet-bagging politicians exploiting the ignorant and untutored coloured vote against the white inhabitants and bringing the time-honoured forms of parliamentary government into unmerited disrepute...Upon the rebound from this there must inevitably have been a strong reassertion of local white supremacy.”³

This remark is consistent with a view fashionable in the 1930s, and decades after, among Southern apologists for slavery, who regarded Reconstruction as misbegotten, rather than as a noble attempt to redress injustice and prepare the former slaves for equal citizenship.

Nonetheless, Churchill’s views on race were more complex than those of his contemporaries. Consider for example his youthful confrontation with the Boer jailer in South Africa who told him that blacks were “put here by the God Almighty to work for us....Brother! Equal! Ugh! Free! Not a bit....We’ll stand no damned nonsense from them.” How did young Winston, the Victorian officer, full of ardor for Queen and Empire, respond? It is not what we might expect:

“What is the true and original root of Dutch aversion to British rule? It is the abiding fear and hatred of the movement that seeks to place the native on a level with the white man. British government is associated in the Boer farmer’s mind with violent social evolution. Black is to be proclaimed the same as white....The dominant race is to be deprived of their superiority; nor is a tigress robbed of her cubs more furious than is the Boer at this prospect.”⁴

Churchill had the prejudices of most Englishmen of his era, and sometimes said things which embarrass him decades later. Yet, as William Manchester wrote, “He always had second and third thoughts, and they usually improved as he went along. It was part of his pattern of response to any political issue that while his early reactions were often emotional, and even unworthy of him, they were usually succeeded by reason and generosity.”⁵

This view is echoed by Sir Martin Gilbert, Churchill’s official biographer. In the course of examining thousands of documents and transcripts, Sir Martin wrote, “I never felt that he was going to spring an unpleasant surprise on me. I might find that he was adopting views with which I disagreed. But I always knew that there would be nothing to cause me to think: ‘How shocking, how appalling.’”⁶

Reason and generosity are manifest in Churchill’s Lee essay, which ends so happily in a world we never knew. The English-Speaking Peoples are “so much absorbed by the immense increases of prosperity and wealth” in the course of his fictitious events “that we have been inclined to allow European affairs to fall into a twilight of interest.” War in Europe? Preposterous!

A quarter-century after his Lee essay, and after an even greater conflagration, Churchill was still hoping for the best: “We might even find ourselves in a few years moving along a smooth causeway of peace and plenty instead of roaming around on the rim of Hell.... Thus we may by patience, courage, and in orderly progression reach the shelter of a calmer and kindlier age.”⁷

That prospect seems increasingly imaginary, increasingly elusive. But Churchill never stopped hoping we would get there some day: “Withhold no sacrifice, grudge no toil, seek no sordid gain, fear no foe. All will be well.”⁸

Endnotes

1. Winston S. Churchill, *The World Crisis*, vol. 3, part 2, 1916–1918 (London: Thornton Butterworth, 1927), 544.
2. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., “History’s Impresario,” 1995 Churchill Conference, Boston, in *Churchill Proceedings 1994–1995* (Hopkinton, N.H.: Churchill Centre, 1998), 90–91.

3. See “If Lee Had Not Won the Battle of Gettysburg” herein.

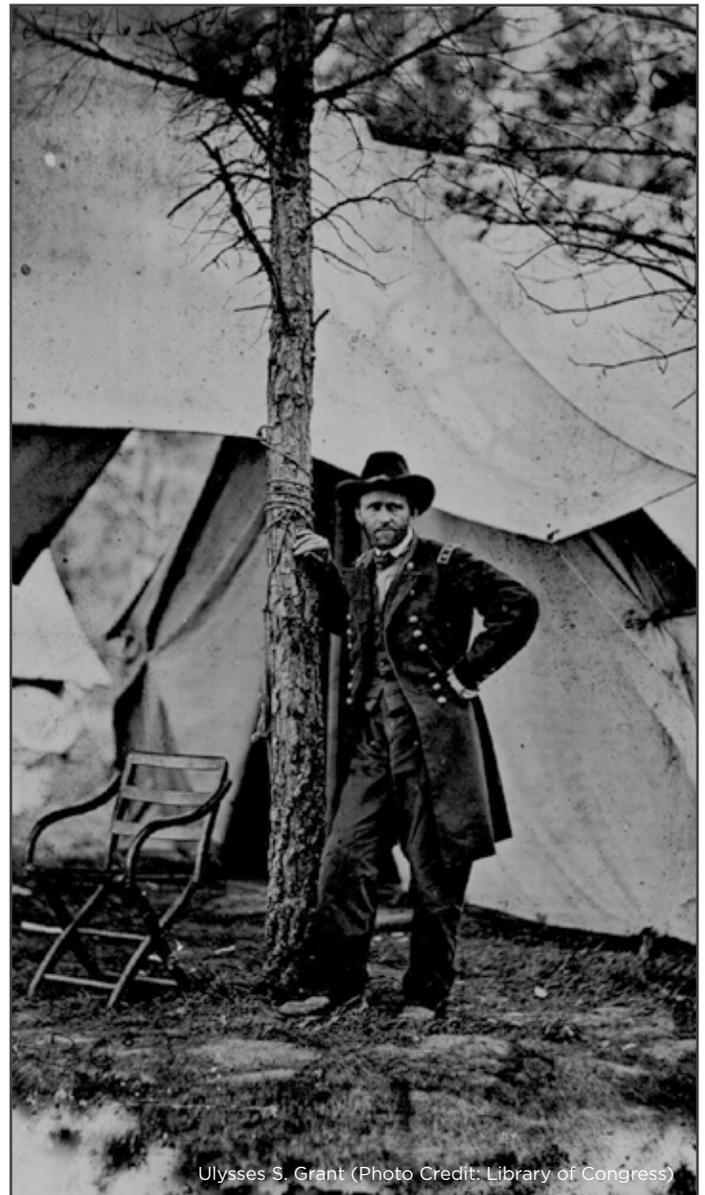
4. Winston S. Churchill, *London to Ladysmith via Pretoria* (London: Longmans, Green, 1900), 131–32.

5. William Manchester, *The Last Lion: Winston Spencer Churchill*, vol. 1, *Visions of Glory 1874–1932* (Boston: Little Brown, 1983), 843–44.

6. Max Hastings, “Life, Love and Liberty: Martin Gilbert has Devoted Half His Life to Winston Churchill,” *Daily Telegraph*, London, 15 September 1989.

7. Speech at the Guildhall, London, 9 November 1954, in Winston S. Churchill, *The Unwritten Alliance: Speeches 1953–1959* (London: Cassell, 1961), 193–95.

8. Speech at Chateau Laurier, Ottawa, in Winston S. Churchill, *Stemming the Tide: Speeches 1951 & 1952* (London: Cassell, 1953), 216–19.



Ulysses S. Grant (Photo Credit: Library of Congress)

GREAT WRITERS HAVE NO MINOR WORKS:

Almost the first thing that Winston Churchill told Congress on the day after Christmas in 1941 was the fact that his “American forebears” had for “many generations played their part in the life of the United States.”¹ When Congress made him an honorary American citizen in 1963, he could look back on a life of devotion to his mother’s country. Nothing proves Sir Winston’s bonafides as an American better than his lifelong study of the Civil War—the greatest event in our national history.

More than a hundred years ago, Americans instinctively recognized the significance of that fraternal struggle when they began to revisit Gettysburg, Antietam, and Shiloh instead of the battlefields of the Revolution. Churchill’s American lineage likewise gave him a nearer connection to the Civil War. Though four of his ancestors “fought in Washington’s armies during the revolutionary war,” as he explains in the preface to a 1939 American reprint of his autobiography *My Early Life*, “at the outbreak of the Civil War” his American grandfather was “a wealthy man and a leading citizen.” Leonard Jerome “was an ardent supporter of the Union cause throughout the struggle.”² As a young Whig, he founded a Know-Nothing newspaper in Rochester; later, as part owner of *The New York Times*, he helped to steer that newspaper through the war in support of Abraham Lincoln. It is satisfying to find martial blood on both sides of Sir Winston’s family tree, but his grandfather Jerome made his mark in public life as a diplomatist and a philanthropist, not as a soldier. His ceremonial sword remained in its scabbard during the war. He subsidized a Union warship called the *Meteor*, succored the wounded, and paid for an abortive effort to establish a freedmen’s colony near Haiti on the Isle of Cows. His wife Clara worked at military hospitals, as her daughter Jennie did later during the Boer War. The end of the war brought the shock of Lincoln’s assassination. The Jerome house in Madison Square was “draped from top to bottom in white and black,” and in the spirit of Lincoln’s magnanimity Leonard Jerome raised funds in New York to relieve the distress of fellow citizens in the South.³

By Winston Churchill’s account, his own fascination with the American Civil War began at the Misses Thomsons’ school just outside the limits of Brighton in Hove, where on Sundays, he had leave to peruse old volumes of cartoons

from *Punch*. The former school house—in its present incarnation the local Conservative Party headquarters, after serving for years as a genteel but fading home for retired professional women—sports a small plaque to honor its most famous resident. Today, standing in the drab downstairs hall, it takes a good imagination to picture the young Winston there, spared the abuse he had suffered from the headmaster at his first school in Ascot, discovering studies that were more to his liking, particularly in history and poetry.

Half a century after he left the school, he claimed that cartoons were “a very good way of learning history, or at any rate of learning something”; from among the potent images of these popular poets, he recalled no fewer than four on the struggle that rent the American Union. One of them, Sir John Tenniel’s “picture of North and South, two savage, haggard men in shirts and breeches, grappling and stabbing each other with knives as they reeled into an abyss” not too perspicuously called “Bankruptcy” (as if the forfeit for giving up the Union would have been chiefly economic), illustrates Churchill’s essay on cartoons in *Thoughts and Adventures*.⁴ His interest in the Civil War must have deepened when he studied at the Misses Thomsons’ school, for in his last year there, he wrote to his mother hinting that he would “rather like ‘Gen Grant’s History of the American War (Illustrated)’” as a present on his thirteenth birthday.⁵

But it was during the time he spent at Harrow School that the young Winston’s fascination with the American struggle ripened into considerate appreciation. In *My Early Life*, Churchill remembers how much he learned from the occasional lectures delivered there by “eminent persons on scientific or historical subjects,” with the whole school assembled in the Speech Room, as they were for the Harrow songs. These lectures, he writes,

“made a great impression on me. To have an exciting story told you by someone who is a great authority, especially if he has a magic lantern, is for me the best way of learning. Once I had heard the lecture and had listened with great attention, I could have made a very fair show of delivering it myself.”⁶

Churchill's Writings on the "Noblest and Least Avoidable" Conflict

Written by James W. Muller

He goes on to describe five such lectures in *My Early Life*; but letters published in the first companion volume of the official biography reveal a sixth that was memorable. Just half a year after he came to Harrow, Churchill heard a "very amusing" lecture by a Colonel Gouraud, whose boys were at the school; the week afterward he wrote both his mother and his father to tell them about it. The colonel, a "tall Yankee," had fought at Gettysburg. His lecture introduced the boys to the recent American invention of the phonograph, which he demonstrated not by a magic lantern, but by bringing one along and singing into it, to the astonishment of "all sober-minded People" in the room,

*John Brown[s] Body lies—Mouldy in the grave'
And [h]is soul goes marching on
Glory, glory, glory Halleluja'*

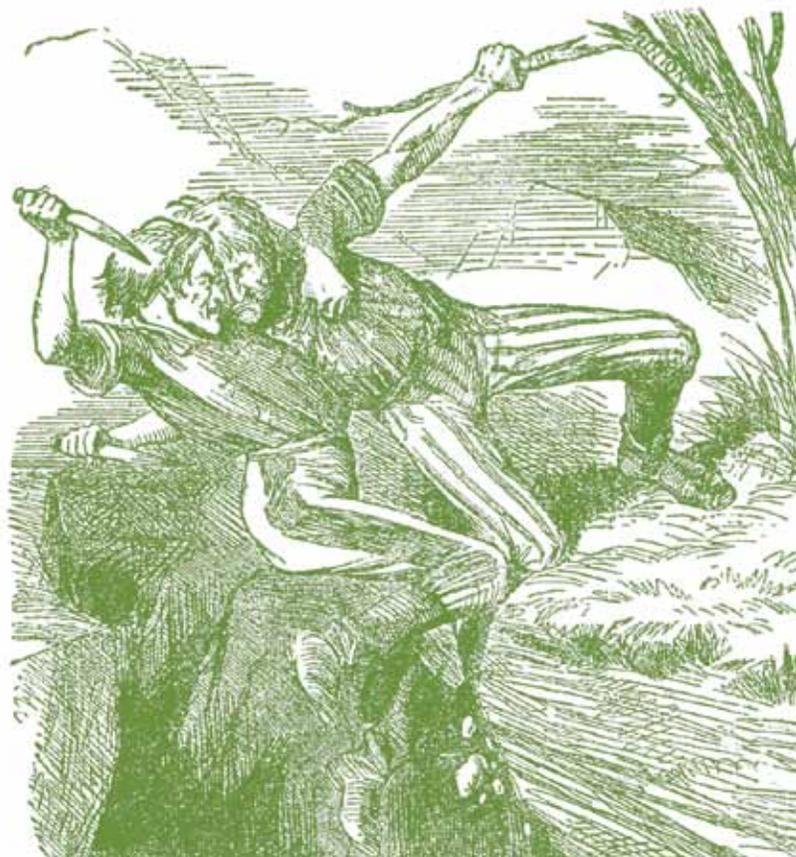
Whereupon "the Phonograph spoke it back in a voice that was clearly audible in the 'Speech Room.'"⁷ Churchill never forgot either John Brown's body or the battle of Gettysburg, both of which figure largely in his account of the Civil War in *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*.⁸

Two years later, it was the Civil War that came to his rescue in the preliminary examination for the army class at Sandhurst, one of Britain's two military academies. Describing that examination in *My Early Life*, Churchill recalls that while it "called forth a very special effort" from him, he also capitalized upon "a piece of good luck." Knowing that he would be asked to draw a map of some country from memory, he had chosen at random to learn the geography of New Zealand, and "sure enough, the first question in the paper was: 'Draw a map of New Zealand.' This is what is called at Monte Carlo an *en plein*, and I ought to have been paid thirty-five times my stake."⁹ But Churchill's luck was not confined to the map test. He was given three choices for his essay on the first day of the army prelim. The first, "Rowing versus Riding," might have provoked an encomium to biting the tan as opposed to the poor riverain sport of Eton, his father's alma mater. The second, "Advertisements Their use & Abuse," might have occasioned a precocious exploration of campaign ethics if Churchill had applied the question to politics rather than economics. But neither essay was ever written. His third choice was "The American Civil War," and by now we are

hardly surprised to discover that, as he wrote to his mother that evening, "I did the last."¹⁰

His study of the war continued after he left Harrow School. After his first visit to the United States, he wrote to his mother's American friend Bourke Cockran recommending Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*, a story of the Civil War. Believe me it is worth reading."¹¹ He did not consider his first essay the definitive treatment of the subject: it whetted his interest to write more. In 1898, by then author of a freshly published book on the war on India's northwest frontier, Churchill wrote to his mother that he intended to write "a short & dramatic History of the American Civil War."¹² That work finally appeared six decades later as his short and dramatic treatment of the war in the last volume of *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*.

In the intervening years, Churchill's knowledge of the Civil War deepened with continuing study. In the 1930s, before writing the story of Marlborough's triumphs, he would retrace the steps of his great ancestor at Blenheim,



Ramillies, Oudenarde and Malplaquet. By then he had already visited many of the great battlefields of the Civil War. He found their aspect deeply instructive: "No one can understand what happened merely through reading books and studying maps. You must see the ground; you must cover the distances in person; you must measure the rivers, and see what the swamps were really like." Though Churchill first set foot on American soil in 1895, it was in 1929 that he undertook his Civil War tour, setting out in the waning days of October from the "rebel capital" of Richmond. First he traced the route of Robert E. Lee in the Battle of the Seven Days. Then, refusing a visit to the last battlefield of the Revolutionary War at Yorktown saying "the Civil War makes better reading," Churchill went to Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, the Wilderness and Spotsylvania. Walking on the battlefields with the autumn leaves underfoot, he refought each battle in his mind's eye. He found earthworks still visible, trees still riddled with bullets, buildings still pockmarked by cannon fire, and men still remembering great battles that had been fought in their boyhood more than sixty years before. "If you could read men's hearts," he wrote after the tour, "you would find that they, too, bear the marks."¹³

When I was a boy, on trips to my grandparents' house at Rocky Fountain Farm in the Maryland countryside, I remember signs advertising candy named after Barbara Frietchie, whose house was nearby in Frederick. My maternal grandmother, who belonged to the "Our Flag" chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, taught me the story of Barbara Frietchie's defense of the Stars and Stripes. Churchill knew of this venerable champion of her nation's flag against the temporary depredations of the secessionists because of the poem written in her honor by John Greenleaf Whittier, which he learned by heart.

In 1943, on a drive with President and Mrs. Roosevelt to their retreat at Shangri-La in the Catocin Mountains (now Camp David), he spied the sort of sign I remember. Harry Hopkins, one of the presidential party, was able to recall for the British visitor the most famous couplet of the poem, Barbara Frietchie's cool refusal to strike the colors of the United States which hung from her window in defiance of an order from Stonewall Jackson and his parading Confederates: "Shoot if you must this old grey head / But spare your country's flag," she said."

Suddenly they heard: "Up from the meadows, rich with corn / Clear in the still September morn..." It was Churchill, not yet an honorary American citizen, showing up his American hosts by reciting the long poem from beginning to end. He would repeat this performance for Harry Truman on the way from

Washington to Fulton, Missouri, in 1946.¹⁴ Anything that had to do with the Civil War commanded his entire attention.

In the 1930s, hard put to support himself and his family at Chartwell in the style to which he was accustomed, Churchill undertook short writing projects, which he frankly called "potboilers." One such series of articles retold twelve of "the world's great stories" for the *News of the World*; first among them was Harriet Beecher Stowe's tale of American slavery in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, originally published in the decade before the Civil War.

Churchill explains that the fearless Stowe, who took on "the whole life-system of a powerful, wealthy, proud and defiant Confederacy," found millions of sympathetic readers both in the United States and in England, where the number of copies sold was "probably ten times" that "of any other work, except the Bible and the Prayerbook." He describes the forbearance of the ill-starred eponymous hero of the book, who passes from the humanity of an impecunious master to the cruel tortures of Simon Legree. He also describes "how profoundly and inextricably negro slavery was interwoven into the whole life, economy and culture of the Southern States" in the middle of the nineteenth century, and how Stowe endeavored to kindle the flame of righteous indignation against the peculiar institution among her readers.¹⁵ The review shows how Churchill came to understand American slavery by reading Stowe's novel, and he tells the tale so deftly as to prove the saying that great writers have no minor works.

The question of slavery introduces Churchill's account of the Civil War in *The Great Democracies*, the final volume of *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*. Churchill's treatment of the war forms the whole of the eleventh book of that work, "The Great Republic," with a postscript on Reconstruction in the twelfth book, "The Victorian Age." He finds the genesis of the struggle in sectional differences between North and South, each bidding for support from the new settlers to the West. Though he quotes Charles Beard's claim, still in fashion when he wrote, that "it was an economic conflict that happened to take a sectional form" and explains the divergent interests of the two sections upon the question of trade, Churchill considers none of the differences between North and South more important than the issue of slavery, which he calls a "frightful disease."¹⁶

Implicitly he grants Lincoln's argument in the Second Inaugural Address that the Southern "slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest," and "that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war." In a chapter called

“Slavery and Secession,” Churchill borrows Alexis de Tocqueville’s acute diagnosis of America’s three races from *Democracy in America*, without mentioning him by name.¹⁷ Again he describes the Abolitionist campaign and the moral effect of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. He is not unmoved by the lot of the slaves, who were carried “like cattle across the Atlantic to be the property of their purchasers.” Yet he judges “their state of life” to be “physically less harsh,” for the most part, “than African barbarism,” and he avers that “the average negro slave, like the medieval serf, was protected by his market value, actual and procreative, as well as by the rising standards of society, from the more senseless and brutal forms of ill-usage.” Indeed, he has a certain sympathy too for the “strange, fierce, old-fashioned” ways of the “aristocracy of planters” in the Southern states, whose “whole life” was based on the almost unquestioning acceptance of black slavery, attributing to them “a grace and ease” nowhere to be found “in the bustling North.”¹⁸

In the chapters leading up to the outbreak of war, he explains the series of famous compromises—“once familiar to every schoolboy,” as Harry Jaffa writes ruefully in his study of the Lincoln-Douglas debates¹⁹—by which leading statesmen tried to avert war over the slavery question. In brief but unerring compass, he tells how these compromises broke down just after mid-century because of a new readiness among Southerners “to defend slavery as a positive good”; a new willingness of the Democratic Party to countenance “popular sovereignty,” which justified slavery by the consent of those who were not slaves, together with the Supreme Court’s effective repeal of the Missouri Compromise in the Dred Scott case; and a new Republican Party pledged to resist the extension of slavery into the territories.²⁰

Here Churchill introduces us to “Abraham Lincoln, a small-town lawyer from Springfield, Illinois,” who as “a young man was moved” by Daniel Webster’s famous speech in the Senate extolling “Liberty and Union, now and for ever, one and inseparable!” Now, “stirred to the depths of his being,” Lincoln decided to run for the Senate himself and delivered his own famous speech, paraphrasing St. Matthew:

“a house divided against itself cannot stand.” I believe this Government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where

the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become lawful alike in all the states, old as well as new, North as well as South.²¹

In a series of debates with Stephen Douglas, the chief Democratic exponent of popular sovereignty, Lincoln defined the issue between the parties so clearly as to gainsay his expectation that the Union would not be dissolved, or rather to insure that it would be necessary for him to prevent its dissolution by resolute deeds. It required only a “spark to cause an explosion.” The spark came when “the fanatic John Brown” seized a federal arsenal, liberating some “bewildered slaves.” He was captured by federal troops and later hanged, which made him a martyr to many in the North. This was the same John Brown whose memory was recalled in song at Harrow School thirty years later by Colonel Gouraud. The Marines who captured him were led by Colonel Robert E. Lee.²²

Lee has been mentioned twice before in Churchill’s account, first as a young army captain who distinguished himself in taking the enemy capital in the Mexican War, and later as a Virginia colonel who acknowledged that slavery was “a moral and political evil in any country.”²³ Churchill calls Lee “one of the noblest Americans who ever lived, and one of the greatest captains known in the annals of war.... His noble presence and gentle, kindly manner were sustained,” Churchill writes, “by religious faith and an exalted character.”²⁴

With the election of Lincoln as president in 1860 after a campaign of “magnificent orations, calm, massive, and magnanimous,” unfolding “the anti-slavery cause,”²⁵ and the decision of the Southern states to depart from the Union, Lee was thrust to the forefront of public life. Though he was opposed to slavery and thought secession unconstitutional, “he had been taught from childhood that his first allegiance was to the state of Virginia.”²⁶ The states of the lower South were first to secede: for a time “noble and ancient Virginia, the Old Dominion, the birthplace of Washington, the fountain of American tradition and inspiration, still hung in the balance.” Lincoln met the rebellion with “patience and conciliation,” disclaiming in his First Inaugural Address any intention to “interfere with slavery in the Southern states”; but when he began to resist the Confederates, Virginia joined the other Southern states in denying the right of the federal government to maintain the Union by force.²⁷ Lincoln authorized General Winfield Scott, who had been Lee’s chief in the Mexican War, to offer him “the chief command of the great Union army” being

raised to fight the rebels; but “at once” Lee sadly declined, resigning his commission in the United States Army to take command of the troops in his native state.²⁸

Churchill admires Lee’s resolute choice to stand by Virginia—the greatest decision of Lee’s life. Rarely is it given to a man to be asked by both sides in a war to be their captain: one has to think back to the versatility of Alcibiades, who successively led the armies of Athens and Sparta in the Peloponnesian War. It has been truly said of the Civil War that there was nobility in plenty on both sides of the struggle, and Lee is the noblest of Southern heroes. Never in the stress of great battles did the Virginian show such emotion as “in these tragic weeks” of 1861, “when sometimes his eyes filled with tears.” Churchill denies the claim of some observers that Lee suffered an “inward struggle,” assuring us that in fact “he never hesitated,” for all that he “deplored” the choice that Virginia had made. Churchill admits, however, that Lee “weighed carefully” before the war “the course which duty and honour would require from him.”²⁹

Perhaps it is too much to expect a gentleman to rise above the education he has received from childhood. Still, it is disappointing that Churchill does not ask whether this noble soldier made the wrong choice. There is an inescapable contradiction in Lee’s position. At West Point, as he became a cadet, he adhered to the motto binding him not only to duty and to honor, but also to country; and it was on the last point that the Virginian erred. He mistook Virginia for his country, though he had sworn to defend the Constitution of the United States. Since he agreed with Lincoln that secession was unconstitutional, one is forced to conclude that Lee knowingly violated his oath. That he did so on account of his lifelong allegiance to the state of Virginia does not excuse his misdeed, however poignant it makes his quandary. For Virginia herself had ignobly forsaken her allegiance to the Union to adhere to the new Confederacy.

The Confederacy was not only, as the event proved, a lost cause; it was also a bad cause, as Lee knew from the start. His nobility is thus tinged with a tragic flaw. Yet Churchill breathes not a hint of criticism of the Virginian. He comes to the fair conclusion that “the great American Civil War” was “the noblest and least avoidable of all the great mass-conflicts of which till then there was record.”³⁰ It may seem almost churlish to criticize the greatest captain of that war here in “world-famous Virginia”;³¹ but for all that we admire Lee, we must not shrink from defending the Union. Robert E. Lee could not have avoided the war,

but he could have avoided fighting on the wrong side of it, against the United States.

How far Churchill admired Lee’s qualities as a soldier may be gathered from the fact that he likens him to Marlborough. In his magisterial biography of his ancestor, Churchill links military genius to the practical problem of making accurate judgments “from hour to hour” about the circumstances of battle. Churchill remarks that “the great captains of history, as has been said, seem to move their armies about ‘as easily as they ride their horses from place to place.’”³² In describing the conduct of the Virginian in the Battle of the Seven Days, Churchill uses almost the same words. Praising “the agile, flexible grasp which Lee had of war,” he remarks again that “great commanders seem to move their armies from place to place as if they were doing no more than riding their own horses.”³³

While McClellan fought his battles from headquarters, “Lee rode his horse about the field controlling the storm, as Marlborough, Frederick the Great, and Napoleon were wont to do.” Like Marlborough, Lee looked always for “the decisive and final battle”: he knew that winning it was the only way to “save the Confederacy.” Indeed, Churchill writes that “war never reached such an intensity of moral and physical forces focused upon decisive points” as the Civil War did in 1862: “The number of battles that were fought and their desperate, bloody character far surpassed any events in which Napoleon ever moved.”³⁴

Finally, Lee had a “famous comrade in arms, ‘Stonewall Jackson.’” The two of them were “united for a year of intense action in a comradeship which recalls that of



Marlborough and Eugene.”³⁵ The partnership between “the great commander and his trusty lieutenant” reached its peak at Chancellorsville, where the odds against them raised the event “from a military to an historic level.” Churchill writes that “their combination had become perfect”; but in that very battle, Jackson was mortally wounded. He lay unconscious as the chance to destroy the whole Union Army slipped away: “thus on small agate points do the balances of the world turn.” His death a week later “was a mortal blow to Lee.”³⁶

S WORK



THIS OLD GRAY HEAD,
TRY'S FLAG; SHE SAID"
Barbara Frutkin

CIVIL WAR

Lee's generalship does not escape Churchill's criticism altogether. At the critical moment, the Virginian's genius failed him. In the weeks before Gettysburg, “the greatest and bloodiest battle of the Civil War,” he dispersed his forces instead of concentrating them. At the battle itself, which might have ended the hopes of the Union, Lee “bid high for victory”; but he was unable to “win dominance” any more than Napoleon did at Waterloo, and his failure cost him the war. His intelligence had let him down, his comrade-in-arms was dead, and he had begun to suffer from a misapprehension that his army was invincible. Fortune “turned against him,” and his “military genius did not shine.”³⁷

In a 1930 speculation (see pages 18-25 below), Churchill suggests what the effect would have been if Lee had won. But

Lee's excellence as a statesman, which arises after his victory at Gettysburg, is only a figment of Churchill's imagination. Churchill's imaginary Lee is greater than the real Lee, and shows us his flaws in sharper relief.³⁸

The other chief protagonist of Churchill's history was more than an imaginary statesman; but until he becomes

president, Lincoln figures in the story only as an anti-slavery politician and a brilliant orator. With the outbreak of war, we see him also as negotiator, as chief magistrate, and as commander-in-chief. In the delicate struggle over the loyalty of the middle states at the beginning of the war, Lincoln was “the more astute diplomatist”: not only did he keep four slave states from seceding, but he “also detached an important section from the seceding state of Virginia.”³⁹ He showed the same discernment in foreign affairs, “sagely” declining to insist on his rights against Britain when an unbending stance might have meant war, and then forestalling British aid to the South by the Emancipation Proclamation.⁴⁰

Churchill is less impressed with Lincoln as wartime commander. To the President's credit, “he wanted an aggressive General who would energetically seek out Lee and beat him,” and he was a “shrewd” judge of men. Often he grasped the main chance better than his generals. He soon saw that McClellan “lacked the final ounces of fighting spirit” and later forbade Hooker to march on Richmond, pointing out that “Lee's army was his proper objective.”⁴¹ But Lincoln's lack of formal military training left him, in Churchill's view, too susceptible to “popular clamour” and political intrigue in his choice of generals, too apt to hesitate when they needed his support, and too quick to discard them when their plans miscarried. Here his rival, who was a West Point graduate and a former secretary of war, had the better of him: for Jefferson Davis backed his generals instead of throwing them away.⁴² Churchill blames Lincoln for not standing by his general, calling his “vacillations” on whether to reinforce him before the Battle of Fair Oaks “a classic instance of the dangers of civilian interference with generals in the field.”⁴³

But Lincoln's flaws as commander-in-chief pale beside his strengths. If his generals shrank from his habit of cross-examining them “as if he were still a prosecuting attorney,” the troops stood by him, sensing “his natural resolution and generosity of character.” The president, though “much beset by anxieties,” endured “relentless political pressures” patiently and firmly:

His homely humour stood him in good stead. A sense of irony helped to lighten his burdens. In tense moments, a dry joke relieved his feelings. At the same time, his spirit was sustained by a deepening belief in Providence. When the toll of war rose steeply and plans went wrong, he appealed for strength in his inmost thoughts to a power higher than man's.

Strength was certainly given him. It is sometimes necessary at the summit of authority to bear with the intrigues of disloyal colleagues, to remain calm when others panic, and to withstand misguided popular outcries. All this Lincoln did.⁴⁴

Churchill draws our attention to the President's "magnanimity."⁴⁵ Even when he was persuaded to dismiss McClellan, "it was without animosity, for that viper was never harboured in Lincoln's breast."⁴⁶ In a meeting with the Confederate vice-president early in 1865, "Lincoln offered a wide generosity," and the easy terms offered to Lee's defeated army were in the same spirit. In his last public address, on 11 April 1865, and again at his last cabinet meeting three days later, Lincoln, who "had saved the Union with steel and flame," turned his thoughts to "healing his country's wounds." He urged his countrymen to forgive their erring compatriots, pointing "to the paths of forgiveness and goodwill."⁴⁷

Lincoln exactly caught the spirit of the magnanimous treatment of the vanquished by the victors that Churchill urged all his life. Though his death prevented reconstruction of the Union according to the prudent and forbearing policy he favored,⁴⁸ eventually the wounds of war were healed. In the last American chapter of *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, Churchill explains how "the wave of patriotism" during the Spanish-American War caused Northerners and Southerners alike to take pride in "their common country"—so much so that "the famous Confederate cavalry leader Joe Wheeler exclaimed that a single battle for the Union flag was worth fifteen years of life."⁴⁹ Looking back, Churchill struck the same note in his speech to the General Assembly of Virginia in 1946: "Old battles are remembered not as sources of bitterness, but to celebrate the martial virtues and the civil fidelity of both sides in that immortal struggle."⁵⁰

Churchill tells us in his life of Marlborough that "battles are the principal milestones in secular history"⁵¹ and he treats the American Civil War as mostly the story of battles. Indeed, since his account of the Civil War engrosses more than half of what he writes about the United States in *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, one might accuse Churchill of reducing most of American history to the Civil War. Distinguished historians have done so, claiming that his work is lopsided.

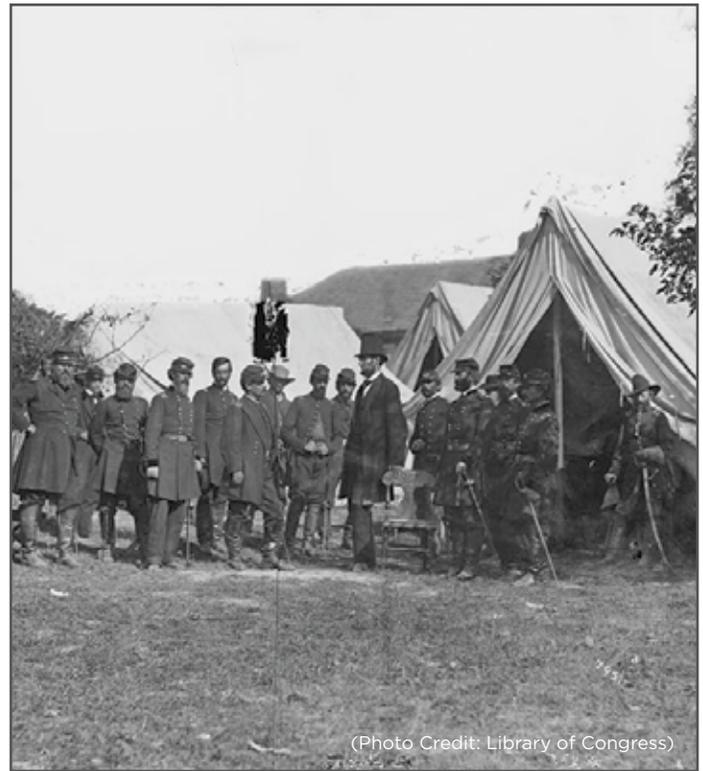
Yet Churchill's favor for the Civil War is truer than the impartiality of his critics. Americans looking back upon their national history realize that the Civil War is the greatest event in the centuries of their common life on this side of the ocean. As Lincoln said of those who fought on the field at Gettysburg, "The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here."

Yet battles are only contention and strife unless men know why they fight. Along with his account of the battles, Churchill tells us what the Civil War meant, both to the victors and to the vanquished. In this, he is often guided by the most discerning interpreter of the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln. The strangest omission of his history is his failure to mention Lincoln's greatest speeches, the Gettysburg Address and the Second Inaugural Address. To understand the Civil War, one must study not only the pages of Churchill, but also the walls of the Lincoln Memorial.

Endnotes

1. Address to a joint session of Congress, 26 December 1941, in Winston S. Churchill, *The War Speeches*, 3 vols. (London: Library of Imperial History, 1975), II 145.
2. Winston S. Churchill, *My Early Life: A Roaming Commission* (New York: Scribners, 1958), vi-vii. Cf. Churchill's speech to the Virginia General Assembly, 8 March 1946, in Winston S. Churchill, *Post-War Speeches*, 3 vols. (London: Library of Imperial History, 1975), I 87: "My grandfather was a Northerner in the state of New York, and you would not expect me to belie the cause for which he strove."
3. The description of the house after Lincoln's assassination is from Churchill's mother, quoted in her grand-niece's biography of her father, from which the other details of his activities during the Civil War are drawn: see Anita Leslie, *The Remarkable Leonard Jerome* (New York: Henry Holt, 1954), 19-20, 42, 67-71; but the author of that book is surer at love than at politics, as evidenced by her mistaken idea that President Fillmore was a Republican, 41.
4. Churchill's account of the Misses Thomsons' school is in *My Early Life*, 13-14. His essay on cartoons is in *Thoughts and Adventures* (Wilmington, Delaware: ISI Books, 2009), 17-31; see esp. 17, 20.
5. WSC to Lady Randolph, 15 November 1887, in Randolph S. Churchill, *Winston S. Churchill*, Companion Volume I, Part 1, hereinafter CVI/1 (London: Heinemann, 1967), 146-47. Richard H. Knight, Jr., drew my attention to this letter.
6. *My Early Life*, 41.
7. WSC to Lady Randolph, 7 November 1888, in Randolph S. Churchill, op. cit., 174; but either he or the colonel must be taxed with a memory of the lyrics that was not quite exact. His letter to his father, written the same day, is reprinted on the following page.
8. Churchill makes a curious reference to John Brown's body at the end of his 1909 Lancashire speech, "The People's Welfare," in which he claims that the House of Lords has murdered the people's budget. While its body is dead, its "soul goes marching along"; here Churchill almost gets the words of the song right. See *The People's Rights*, in *Collected Works of Sir Winston Churchill* (London: Library of Imperial History, 1974), VII 407. Richard H. Knight, Jr., drew my attention to this reference.

9. *My Early Life*, 18-19.
10. The quotations are from Churchill's undated letter to his mother (postmarked 10 December 1890), in CVI/1, 216-17; for Churchill's opinions on rowing and riding, see *My Early Life*, 41, 45.
11. Letter of 29 February 1896, in CVI/1, 665-66.
12. Letter of 25 April 1898, CVI/1, 922-23.
13. Winston S. Churchill, "Old Battlefields of Virginia," *The Daily Telegraph* (London), 16 December 1929, reprinted in Michael Wolff, ed., *The Collected Essays of Sir Winston Churchill*, 4 vols. (London: Library of Imperial History, 1976), IV 45, 47.
14. The story is told in Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, 6 vols. (London: Reprint Society, 1954), IV 638-41. See also Robert H. Pilpel, *Churchill in America, 1895-1961: An Affectionate Portrait* (London: New English Library, 1976), 182-83, 218.
15. *News of the World*, 8 January 1933, reprinted in *Collected Essays*, IV 123-33. Though Churchill here states that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was originally published in 1851, later he changes that year to 1852: see *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, 4 vols., hereinafter *HESP* (London: Library of Imperial History, 1975), IV 122.
16. *HESP*, IV 113, 121.
17. Churchill's borrowing from Tocqueville is particularly evident in the second paragraph of the chapter: *HESP*, IV 119, cf. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 302-96.
18. *HESP*, IV 120, 122-23; cf. 124: civilization was "more elevated in manners" in the South than in the North, as the Southerners saw it.
19. Harry V. Jaffa, *Crisis of the House Divided: An Interpretation of the Issues in the Lincoln-Douglas Debates* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 433.
20. *HESP*, IV 121, 126-28.
21. *HESP*, IV 128-29; cf. 113. See also St. Matthew 12:25 (King James version): "And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand."
22. *HESP*, IV 129.
23. *HESP*, IV 116, 124.
24. *HESP*, IV 135.
25. *HESP*, IV 130.
26. *HESP*, IV 135.
27. *HESP*, IV 133-34.
28. *HESP*, IV 135.
29. *HESP*, IV 135-36.
30. *HESP*, IV 207.
31. The phrase is from Churchill's speech to the Virginia General Assembly, 8 March 1946, in *Post-War Speeches*, I 85.
32. Winston S. Churchill, *Marlborough: His Life and Times*, 2 vols. (London: Harrap, 1947), I 569.
33. *HESP*, IV 155.
34. *HESP*, IV 166, 168.
35. *HESP*, IV 136; cf. 142, where Churchill explains how Stonewall Jackson got his nickname.
36. *HESP*, IV 178-82.
37. *HESP*, IV 186-90; cf. 177.
38. Winston S. Churchill, "If Lee Had Not Won the Battle of Gettysburg," *Scribner's Magazine*, December 1930, reprinted in *Collected Essays*, IV 73-84, and in this issue.
39. *HESP*, IV 138-39.
40. *HESP*, IV 144, 170-71.



(Photo Credit: Library of Congress)



Davis & Group, July 1865 (Photo Credit: Library of Congress)

41. *HESP*, IV 165, 184; cf. 202: of the effort by "Republican malcontents" to replace Lincoln in 1864 with "someone whom they imagined would be a more vigorous President," Churchill writes that "Lincoln's political foes, gazing upon him, did not know vigour when they saw it."
42. *HESP*, IV 139-40; but cf. 205: Davis waited too long to give "full scope" to Lee.
43. *HESP*, IV 148-49, 154, 165.
44. *HESP*, IV 169.
45. *HESP*, IV 207.
46. *HESP*, IV 172.
47. *HESP*, IV 206-7.
48. *HESP*, IV 207 and, generally, 239-46; cf. Churchill's blunt criticism of Radical reconstruction in "If Lee Had Not Won the Battle of Gettysburg," *Collected Essays*, IV 75.
49. *HESP*, IV 260-61.
50. *Post-War Speeches*, I 87.
51. *Marlborough*, II 3.

CHURCHILL'S GETTYSBURG FANTASY: — AN APPRECIATION —

Much has been written about Churchill as a maker and chronicler of history. Far less remarked is the imaginative core of Churchill's thinking about alternative scenarios and the twists and turns of fate by which history might have been very different. In Churchill's memoir of World War I, *The World Crisis*, there is much speculation on how World War I might have ended more quickly, with far fewer casualties, had the Gallipoli campaign been fought more aggressively; and had tanks been deployed *en masse*, rather than dribbled onto the battlefield in quantities too small to be decisive. In Churchill's hands, alternative pasts are sometimes used not only to identify what he calls "turning points" or (in a more classical mode) "hinges of fate," and to suggest what depended on them, but also as invitations to think about utopian or dystopian futures.¹ The "picture of the future" that Churchill said obsessed him while serving as Minister of Munitions in 1918 stands as a warning that every dire thing he imagined might yet take place in the reader's future, if a generous peace was not established. Indeed he wondered, in prophetic tones, months before the Versailles Treaty, whether the 1918 Armistice was the end—or a grim beginning:

“Is this the end? Is it to be merely a chapter in a cruel and senseless story? Will a new generation in their turn be immolated to square the black accounts of Teuton and Gaul? Will our children bleed and gasp again in devastated lands? Or will there spring from the very fires of conflict that reconciliation of the three giant combatants, which would unite their genius and secure to each in safety and freedom a share in rebuilding the glory of Europe?”²

Experience in battle on four continents instilled in Churchill both the horror of war and the ability to imagine a variety of scenarios. Reading those words in what he called “the after-light,” it is shocking to realize that the worst alternative he pondered at the end of World War I came true in World War II, only two decades later.

Churchill's unique essay, “If Lee Had Not Won the Battle of Gettysburg,” is his only freestanding speculation about a different historical outcome. It is a classic of the genre called “alternative history” in science fiction, and referred to by historians—often suspiciously—as “counterfactual history.”

Churchill presents his story as if it were written by someone living in a world where Lee *did* win the Battle of Gettysburg—and the Civil War. Implausibly from our viewpoint, we are told that Lee's victory precipitated a sequence of events leading to the abolition of slavery, a Union of the English-Speaking Peoples, the avoidance of World War I, and the prospect of a United States of Europe led by Kaiser Wilhelm II.

Churchill's imaginary resident of that imaginary world speculates in vintage Churchillian prose about what dreadful things—including a terrible European war, breaking out in 1914—might have happened had there *not* been a Confederate victory. Readers are thus invited to see from that surprisingly utopian perspective our *own world* as both dystopian and implausible.

The narrator mentions, for example, Jean de Bloch's once-famous book, *War in the Future*, which predicted with what proved remarkably accurate military detail



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the devastation that would attend a war between major European states—but which drew from this prediction the sadly inaccurate conclusion that such a war would never happen.³

The brilliance of Churchill's essay lies in his decision to shift its narrative viewpoint so that readers must not only consider the possible consequences of a Confederate victory, including alternatives to the bloodletting of World War I—but also imagine how inconceivable *our* world might seem if things had worked out differently. Emphasis is upon the contingency as well as the facts of history. Churchill powerfully exercises that rare gift of political imagination, which allowed him to portray dramatically different outcomes of a particular situation, whether the American Civil War or, in 1940, the Battle of Britain.

Churchill's evocation in his Lee essay of the implausibility of reality—World War I's gigantic slaughter—is a foreshadowing of the rhetoric which in 1940 rallied his country by inviting contemplation that a Nazi victory—too easily dismissed by many then and now—would plunge the world “into the abyss of a new Dark Age....”

That chilling thought acquires much of its power by inviting imagination of one possible future as a kind of alternative feudal period whose tyrannies are accompanied and abetted by technological development more accelerated than anything actually achieved during the medieval era.

In his “Finest Hour” speech, Churchill invited his audience to think of the worst possible outcome of

Britain's fight against Hitler's Germany—not as a unique situation, incomparable with anything that had gone before, but as an alternative past wrenched out of time to replace that desirable future in which, “if we can stand up to him, all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlit uplands.”⁴

Churchill's skill as an alternative historian notably enhances the rhetoric that he so famously mobilized for war.

Endnotes

1. Winston S. Churchill, *The World Crisis*, vol. 4, *The Aftermath 1918-1928* (New York: Scribners, 1929), 390, 466. In a private letter to me, Edward L. Saslow suggests that “Hinge of Fate,” chosen by Churchill as the title for volume IV of his memoir, *The Second World War*, owed something to his schoolboy struggles with Latin: “The specific place in Virgil from which I think Churchill took his title is *Aeneid*, 1, 572, which has hinge of events (*rerum*, ‘a word of wide application.’)”
2. Winston S. Churchill, *The World Crisis*, Vol. 3 1916-1918, Part 2 (London: Thornton Butterworth, 1927), 544.
3. Ivan (Jan) Stanislovich Bloch, *War in the Future in Its Technical, Economic and Political Relations*, trans. R.C. Long (Boston: Ginn, 1899); *Is War Now Impossible?*, abridged edition, also 1899.
4. Speech in Parliament, 18 June 1940, in Winston S. Churchill, *Blood, Sweat, and Tears* (New York: Putnam, 1941), 314.

If Lee Had Not Won the *Battle of Gettysburg*

by Winston S. Churchill

“If today [Kaiser Wilhelm II] occupies in old age the most splendid situation in Europe, let him not forget that he might well have found himself eating the bitter bread of exile, a dethroned sovereign and a broken man loaded with unutterable reproach. And this, we repeat, might well have been his fate, if Lee had not won the Battle of Gettysburg.”

Lee Triumphant

The quaint conceit of imagining what would have happened if some important or unimportant event had settled itself differently has become so fashionable that I am encouraged to enter upon an absurd speculation. What would have happened if Lee had not won the Battle of Gettysburg?

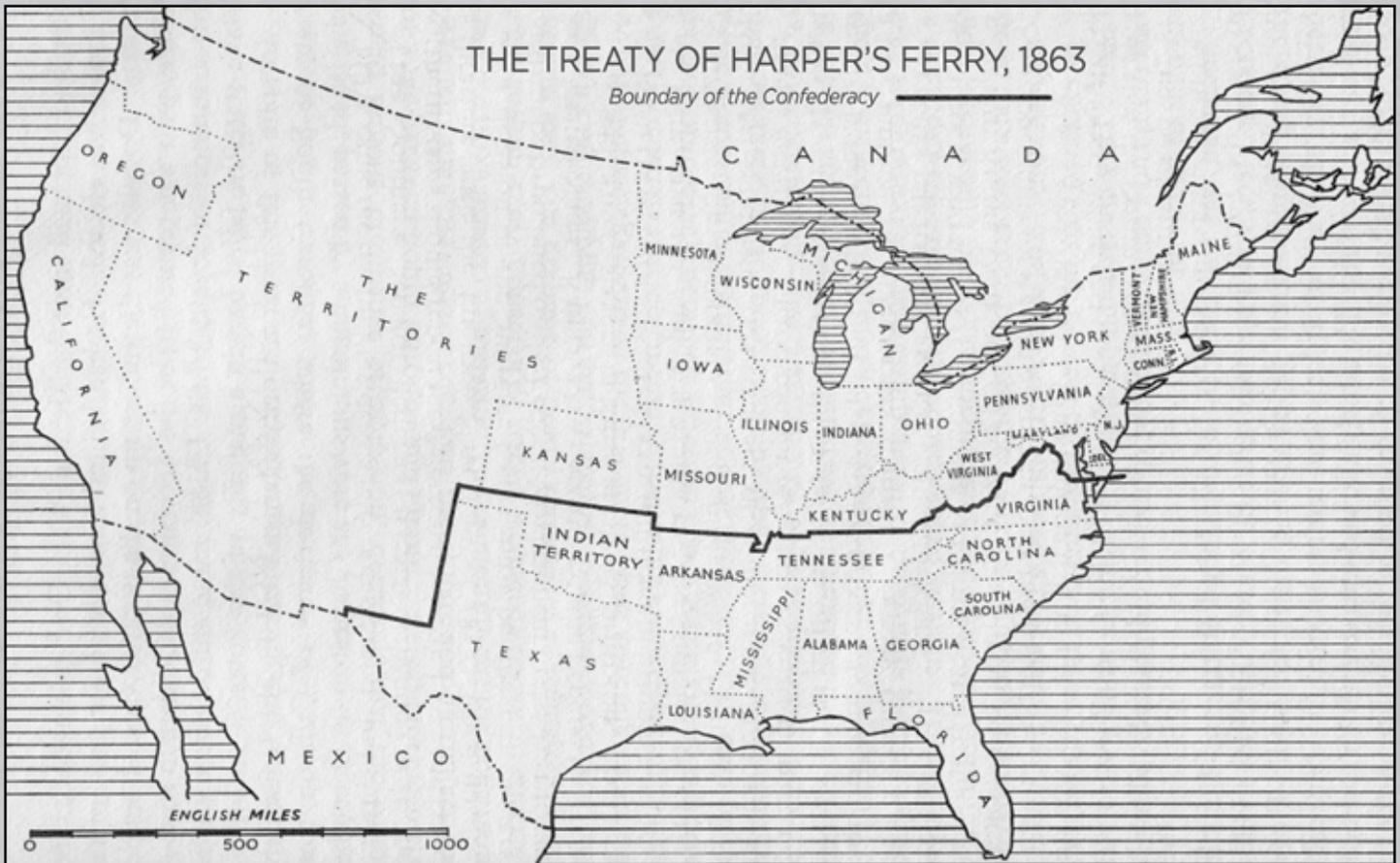
Once a great victory is won it dominates not only the future but the past. All the chains of consequence clink out as if they never could stop. The hopes that were shattered, the passions that were quelled, the sacrifices that were ineffectual are all swept out of the land of reality. Still it may amuse an idle hour, and perhaps serve as a corrective to undue complacency, if at this moment in the twentieth century—so rich in assurance and prosperity, so calm and buoyant—we meditate for a spell upon the debt we owe to those Confederate soldiers who by a deathless feat of arms broke the Union front at Gettysburg and laid open a fair future to the world.

It always amuses historians and philosophers to pick out the tiny things, the sharp agate points, on which the ponderous balance of destiny turns; and certainly the details of the famous Confederate victory of Gettysburg furnish a fertile theme. There can be at this date no conceivable doubt that Pickett's charge would have been defeated if Stuart with his encircling cavalry had not

arrived in the rear of the Union position at the supreme moment. Stuart might have been arrested in his decisive swoop if any one of twenty commonplace incidents had occurred.

If, for instance, General Meade had organized his lines of communication with posts for defence against raids, or if he had used his cavalry to scout upon his flanks, he would have received a timely warning. If General Warren had only thought of sending a battalion to hold Little Round Top the rapid advance of the masses of Confederate cavalry must have been detected. If only President Davis's letter to General Lee, captured by Captain Dahlgren, revealing the Confederacy plans had reached Meade a few hours earlier, he might have escaped Lee's clutches.

Anything, we repeat, might have prevented Lee's magnificent combinations from synchronizing and, if so, Pickett's repulse was sure. Gettysburg would have been a great Northern victory. It might have well been a final victory. Lee might, indeed, have made a successful retreat from the field. The Confederacy, with its skillful generals and fierce armies, might have another year, or even two, but once defeated decisively at Gettysburg, its doom was inevitable. The fall of Vicksburg, which happened only two days after Lee's immortal triumph, would in itself by opening the Mississippi to the river fleets of the Union,



The Treaty of Harper's Ferry, which was signed between the Union and Confederate States on 6 September 1863, embodied the two, fundamental propositions: that the South was independent, and the slaves were free. Photo Credit: Churchill's History of the English-Speaking Peoples, Vol. IV, The Great Democracies (London: Cassell, 1958), by kind permission. Map title altered for the purposes of this article.

have cut the Secessionist States almost in half. Without wishing to dogmatize, we feel we are on solid ground in saying that the Southern States could not have survived the loss of a great battle in Pennsylvania and the almost simultaneous bursting open of the Mississippi.

However, all went well. Once again by the narrowest of margins, the compulsive pinch of military genius and soldierly valor produced a perfect result. The panic which engulfed the whole left of Meade's massive army has never been made a reproach against the Yankee troops. Everyone knows they were stout fellows. But defeat is defeat, and rout is ruin. Three days only were required after the cannon at Gettysburg had ceased to thunder before General Lee fixed his headquarters in Washington. We need not here dwell upon the ludicrous features of the hurried flight to New York of all the politicians, place hunters, contractors, sentimentalists and their retinues, which was so successfully accomplished. It is more agreeable to remember how Lincoln, "greatly falling with a falling State,"¹ preserved the poise and dignity of a nation. Never did his rugged yet sublime common sense render a finer service to his countrymen.

He was never greater than in the hour of fatal defeat. But, of course, there is no doubt whatever that the mere military victory which Lee gained at Gettysburg would not by itself have altered the history of the world. The loss of Washington would not have affected the immense numerical preponderance of the Union States. The advanced situation of their capital and its fall would have exposed them to a grave injury, would no doubt have considerably prolonged the war; but standing by itself, this military episode, dazzling though it may be, could not have prevented the ultimate victory of the North. It is in the political sphere that we have to look to find the explanation of the triumphs begun upon the battlefield. Curiously enough, Lee furnishes an almost unique example of a regular and professional soldier who achieved the highest excellence both as a general and as a statesman. His ascendancy throughout the Confederate States on the morrow of his Gettysburg victory threw Jefferson Davis and his civil government irresistibly, indeed almost unconsciously, into the shade. The beloved and victorious commander, arriving in the capital of his mighty antagonists, found there the title deeds which enabled him to pronounce the grand decrees of peace.

Thus it happened that the guns of Gettysburg fired virtually the last shots in the American Civil War.

Britain and the Two Americas

The movement of events then shifted to the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. England—the name by which the British Empire was then commonly described—had been riven morally in twain by the drama of the American struggle. We have always admired the steadfastness with which the Lancashire cotton operatives, though starved of cotton by the Northern blockade—our most prosperous county reduced to penury, almost become dependent upon the charity of the rest of England—nevertheless adhered to the Northern cause. The British working classes on the whole judged the quarrel through the eyes of Disraeli² and rested solidly upon the side of the abolition of slavery. Indeed, all Mr. Gladstone's³ democratic flair and noble eloquence would have failed, even upon the then restricted franchise, to carry England into the Confederate camp as a measure of policy. If Lee after his triumphal entry into Washington had merely been the soldier, his achievements would have ended on the battlefield. It was his august declaration that the victorious Confederacy would pursue no policy towards the African negroes, which was not in harmony with the moral conceptions of Western Europe, that opened the high roads along which we are now marching so prosperously.

But even this famous gesture might have failed if it had not been caught up and implemented by the practical genius and trained parliamentary aptitudes of Gladstone. There is practically no doubt at this stage that the basic principle upon which the colour question in the Southern States of America has been so happily settled owed its origin mainly to Gladstonian ingenuity and to the long statecraft of Britain in dealing with alien and more primitive populations. There was not only the need to declare the new fundamental relationship between master and servant, but the creation for the liberated slaves of institutions suited to their own cultural development and capable of affording them a different yet honourable status in a common wealth, destined eventually to become almost world-wide.

Let us only think what would have happened supposing the liberation of the slaves had at that time been followed immediately by some idiotic assertion of racial equality, and even by attempts to graft white democratic institutions upon the simple, gifted African race belonging to a much earlier chapter in human history. We might have seen the whole of the Southern States invaded by

gangs of carpet-bagging politicians exploiting the ignorant and untutored coloured vote against the white inhabitants and bringing the time-honoured forms of parliamentary government into unmerited disrepute. We might have seen the sorry farce of black legislatures attempting to govern their former masters. Upon the rebound from this there must inevitably have been a strong reassertion of local white supremacy. By one device or another, the franchises accorded to the negroes would have been taken from them. The constitutional principles of the Republic would have been proclaimed, only to be evaded or subverted; and many a warm-hearted philanthropist would have found his sojourn in the South no better than "A Fool's Errand."

Slavery Abolished

But we must return to our main theme and to the procession of tremendous events which followed the Northern defeat at Gettysburg and the surrender of Washington. Lee's declaration abolishing slavery, coupled as it was with inflexible resolve to secede from the Union, opened the way for British intervention.

Within a month, the formal treaty of alliance between the British Empire and the Confederacy had been signed. The terms of this alliance, being both offensive and defensive, revolutionized the military and naval situation. The Northern blockade could not be maintained even for a day in the face of the immense naval power of Britain. The opening of the Southern ports released the pent-up cotton, restored the finances and replenished the arsenals of the Confederacy. The Northern forces at New Orleans were themselves immediately cut off and forced to capitulate. There could be no doubt of the power of the new allies to clear the Mississippi of Northern vessels throughout the whole of its course through the Confederate States. The prospect of a considerable British army embarking for Canada threatened the Union with a new military front. But none of these formidable events in the sphere of arms and material force would have daunted the resolution of President Lincoln, or weakened the fidelity of the Northern States and armies. It was Lee's declaration abolishing slavery which by a single master-stroke gained the Confederacy an all-powerful ally and spread a moral paralysis far and wide through the ranks of their enemies. The North were waging war against Secession, but as the struggle had proceeded, the moral issue of slavery had first sustained and then dominated the political quarrel. Now that the moral issue was withdrawn, now that the noble cause which inspired the Union armies and the Governments behind them was gained, there was nothing left but a war of reconquest to be waged under

circumstances infinitely more difficult and anxious than those which had already led to so much disappointment and defeat.

Here was the South victorious, reinvigorated, reinforced, offering of her own free will to make a more complete abolition of the servile status on the American continent than even Lincoln had himself seen fit to demand. Was the war to continue against what soon must be heavy odds merely to assert the domination of one set of English-speaking people over another; was blood to flow indefinitely in an ever-broadening stream to gratify national pride or martial revenge?

It was this deprivation of the moral issue which undermined the obduracy of the Northern States. Lincoln no longer rejected the Southern appeal for independence. "If," he declared in his famous speech in Madison Square Garden in New York, "our brothers in the South are willing faithfully to cleanse this continent of negro slavery, and if they will dwell beside us in goodwill as an independent but friendly nation, it would not be right to prolong the slaughter on the question of sovereignty alone." Thus peace came more swiftly than war had come. The Treaty of Harper's Ferry, which was signed between the Union and Confederate States on 6 September 1863, embodied the two, fundamental propositions: that the South was independent, and the slaves were free. If the spirit of old John Brown had revisited the battle-scarred township which had been the scene of his life and death, it would have seen his cause victorious, but at a cost to the United States terrible indeed.

Apart from the loss of blood and treasure, the American Union was riven in twain. Henceforth there would be two Americas in the same northern continent. One of them would have renewed in a modern and embattled form its old ties of kinship and affiliation with the Mother Country across the ocean. It was evident, though peace might be signed and soldiers furl their flags, profound antagonisms, social, economic and military, underlay the life of the English-speaking world. Still slavery was abolished. As John Bright said, "At last after the smoke of the battlefield has cleared away, the horrid shape which had cast its shadow over the whole continent, had vanished and was gone for ever."⁴

Tory Gladstone, Liberal Disraeli

At date when all seems so simple and clear, one has hardly the patience to chronicle the bitter and lamentable developments which occupied the two succeeding

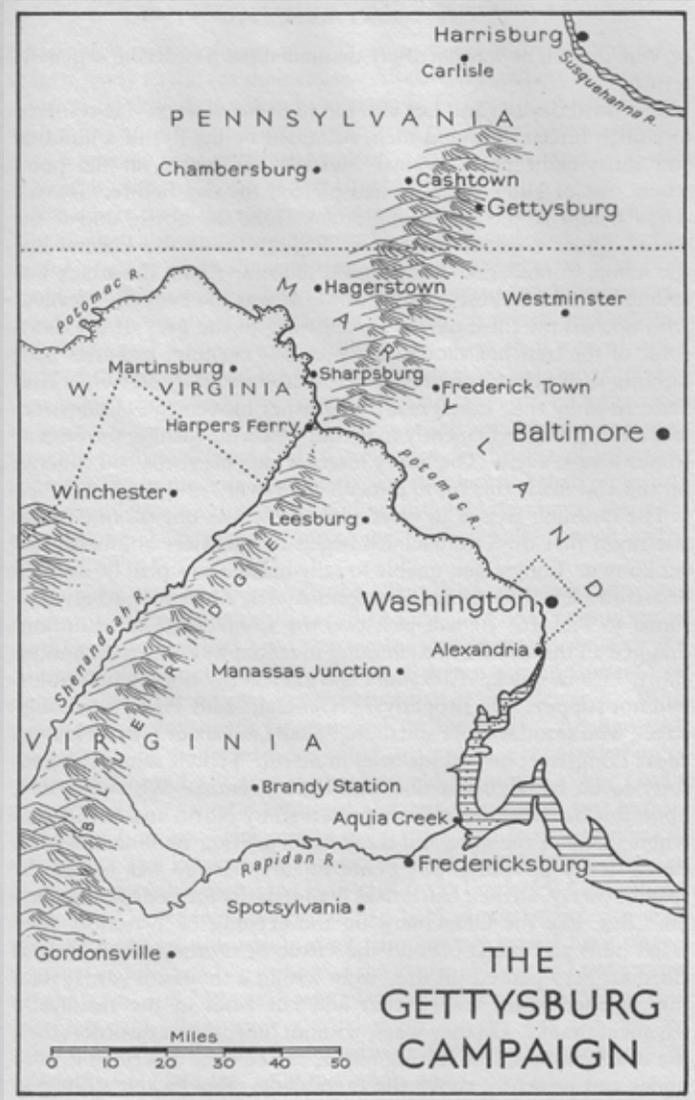


Photo Credit: Churchill's History of the English-Speaking Peoples, Vol. IV, The Great Democracies (London: Cassell, 1958), by kind permission.

generations. But we may turn aside in our speculation to note how strangely the careers of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli would have been altered if Lee had not won the Battle of Gettysburg.

Mr. Gladstone's threatened resignation from Lord Palmerston's 5th Cabinet on the morrow of General Lee's pronouncement in favour of abolition induced a political crisis in England of the most intense character. Old friendships were severed, old rancours died and new connections and resentments took their place. Lord Palmerston found himself at the parting of the ways. Having to choose between Mr. Gladstone and Lord John Russell, he did not hesitate. A Coalition Government was formed in which Lord Robert Cecil (afterwards the great Lord Salisbury)⁵ became Foreign Secretary, but of which Mr. Gladstone was henceforward the driving

force. We remember how he had said at Newcastle on 7 October, 1862, “We know quite well that the people of the Northern States have not yet drunk of the cup—they will try hard to hold it far from their lips—which all the rest of the world see they nevertheless must drink. We may have our own ideas about slavery; we may be for or against the South; but there is no doubt that Jefferson Davis and the other soldiers of the South have made an army; they are making, it appears, a navy; and they have made what is more than either, they have made a nation.”⁶

Under the aegis of his aged chief, Lord Palmerston, who in Mr. Gladstone’s words “desired the severance (of North and South) as the diminution of a dangerous power,” and aided by the tempered incisiveness of Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Gladstone achieved not merely the recognition, but an abiding alliance between Great Britain and the Southern States. But this carried him far. In the main, the friends of the Confederacy in England belonged to the aristocratic well-to-do and Tory classes of the nation; the democracy, as yet almost entirely unenfranchised, and most of the Liberal elements sympathized with the North. Lord Palmerston’s new Government formed in September 1863, although nominally Coalition, almost entirely embodied the elements of Tory strength and inspiration.

No one can say that Gladstone’s reunion with the Tories would have been achieved apart from Gettysburg and Lee’s declaration at Washington. However, it was achieved, and henceforward the union of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Robert Cecil on all questions of Church, State and Empire became an accomplished and fruitful fact. Once again the “rising hope of the stern and unbending Tories” had come back to his old friends, and the combination, armed as it was with prodigious executive success, reigned for a decade irresistible.

It is strange, musing on Mr. Gladstone’s career, how easily he might have drifted into radical and democratic courses. How easily he might have persuaded himself that he, a Tory and authoritarian to his finger-tips, was fitted to be the popular, and even populist, leader of the working classes. There might in this event have stood to his credit nothing but sentimental pap, pusillanimous surrenders of British interests, and the easy and relaxing cosmopolitanism which would in practice have made him the friend of every country but his own. But the sabres of Jeb Stuart’s cavalry and the bayonets of Pickett’s division had, on the slopes of Gettysburg, embodied him forever in a revived Tory party. His career thus became a

harmony instead of discord; and he holds his place in the series of great builders to whom the larger synthesis of the world is due.

Precisely the reverse effect operated upon Mr. Disraeli. What had he to do with the Tory aristocracy? In his early days he was prejudiced in their eyes as a Jew by race. He had, indeed, only been saved from the stigma of exclusion from public life before the repeal of the Jewish disabilities by the fact of his having been baptized in infancy. He had stood originally for Parliament as a Radical. His natural place was with the left-out millions, with the dissenters, with the merchants of the North, with the voteless proletariat. He might never have found his place if Lee had not won the Battle of Gettysburg. But for that, he might have continued leading the Conservative Party, educating them against their will, dragging them into all sorts of social policies which they resented, making them serve as agents for extensions of franchise. Always indispensable, always distrusted, but for Lee and Gettysburg, he might well have ended his life in the House of Lords with the exclamation, “Power has come to me too late!”⁷

But once he was united by the astonishing events of 1863 with the democratic and Radical forces of the nation, the real power of the man became apparent. He was in his native element. He had always espoused the cause of the North; and what he was pleased to describe as “the selfish and flagitious intrigue (of the Palmerston-Gladstone Government) to split the American Union and to rebuild out of the miseries of a valiant nation the vanished empire of George III,” aroused passions in England strong enough to cast him once and for all from Tory circles. He went where his instinct and nature led him, to the Radical masses which were yearly gathering strength. It is to this we owe his immense contribution to our social services. If Disraeli had not been drawn out of the Conservative Party, the whole of those great schemes of social and industrial insurance which are forever associated with his name which followed so logically upon his speeches—“Health and the laws of health,” “sanitas sanitatumomnia sanitas”⁸—might never have been passed into law in the nineteenth century. They might no doubt well have come about in the twentieth. It might have been left to some sprout of the new democracy or some upstart from Scotland, Ireland, or even Wales, to give to England what her latest Socialist Prime Minister has described as “our incomparable social services.” But “Dizzy,” “The People’s Dizzy,” would never have set these merciful triumphs in his record.

We must return to the main theme. We may, however, note, by the way, that if Lee had not won the Battle of Gettysburg, Gladstone would not have become the greatest of Conservative Empire and Commonwealth builder, nor would Disraeli have been the idol of the toiling masses. Such is Fate. But we cannot occupy ourselves too long upon the fortunes of individuals.

Daggers Drawn

During the whole of the rest of the 19th century, the United States of America, as the truncated Union continued to style itself, grew in wealth and population. An iron determination seemed to have taken hold of the entire people. By the Eighties they were already cleared of their war debt, and indeed all traces of the war, except in the hearts of men, were entirely eradicated. But the hearts of men are strange things, and the hearts of nations are still stranger. Never could the American Union endure the ghastly amputation which had been forced upon it. Just as France after 1870 nursed for more than forty years her dream of *revanche*, so did the multiplying peoples of the American Union concentrate their thoughts upon another trial of arms.

To the south of the Confederacy lay Mexico, in perennial alternation between anarchy and dictatorship. Lee's early experiences in the former Mexican War had familiarized him with the military aspects of the country and its problems, and we must admit that it was natural that he should wish to turn the bayonets of the Army of Northern Virginia upon this sporadically defended Eldorado. In 1884 the Confederate States, after three years' sanguinary guerrilla fighting, conquered, subdued and reorganized the vast territories of Mexico. These proceedings involved a continuous accretion of Southern military forces. At the close of the Mexican War, 700,000 trained and well-ried soldiers were marshalled under what the North still called "the rebel flag." In the face of these potentially menacing armaments, who can blame the Northern States adopting compulsory military service? This was retorted by similar measures south of the Harper's Ferry Treaty line. Such a process could not go on without a climax of tragedy or remedy.

The climax, which came in 1905, was perhaps induced by war excitement arising from the Russo-Japanese conflict. The roar of Asiatic cannon reverberated, and everywhere found immense military organizations in an actively receptive state. Never has the atmosphere of the world been so loaded with explosive forces. Europe and North America were armed camps, and a war of first magnitude

was actually raging in Manchuria. At any moment, as the Dogger Bank incident⁹ had shown, the British Empire might be involved in war with Russia. And apart from such accidents, the British Treaty obligations towards Japan might automatically have drawn us in.

The President of the United States had been formally advised by the powerful and highly competent American General Staff that the entry of Great Britain into such a war would offer in every way a favourable opportunity for settling once and for all with the Southern Republic. This fact was obvious to many. Thus at the same time throughout Europe and America, precautionary measures of all kinds by land and sea were actively taken; and everywhere fleets and armies were assembled and arsenals clanged and flared by night and day.

The English-Speaking Association

Now that these awful perils have been finally warded off, it seems to us almost incomprehensible that they could have existed. Nevertheless, by the end of 1905 the tension was such that nothing could long avert a fratricidal struggle on a gigantic scale, except some great melting of hearts, some wave of inspiration which should lift the dull, deadly antagonisms to a level so high that they would become actual unities. We must not underrate the strength of the forces which on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean and on both sides of the fortified American continental frontiers were labouring faithfully and dauntlessly to avert the hideous doom which kindred races seemed resolved to prepare for themselves. But these deep currents of sanity and goodwill would not have been effective unless the decisive moment had found simultaneously in England and the United States leaders great enough to dominate events. In President Theodore Roosevelt and Mr. Arthur Balfour, the British Prime Minister, were present two diverse personalities which together embodied all the qualities necessary alike for profound negotiation and for supreme decision.

When it happened, it proved to be the easiest thing in the world. We who look back upon it take it so much for granted that we cannot understand how easily the most beneficent Covenant of which human records are witness might have been replaced by the most horrible conflict and world tragedy. The Balfour-Roosevelt negotiations had advanced some distance before President Wilson, the enlightened Virginian chief of the Southern Republic, was involved in them. Despite Mr. Gladstone's cold-blooded coup in 1863, the policy of successive British Governments had always been to assuage the antagonism

between North and South. At every stage the British had sought to promote good will and close association between her southern ally and the mighty northern power with whom she had so much in common.

On Christmas Day 1905 was signed the Covenant of the English-Speaking Association. The essence of this extraordinary measure was crystal clear. The doctrine of common citizenship for all the peoples involved in the agreement was proclaimed. There was not the slightest interference with the existing arrangements of any member. All that happened was that henceforward the peoples of the British Empire and of what were happily called in the language of the line “The Re-United States” deemed themselves to be members of one body and inheritors of one estate.

The flexibility of the plan, which invaded no national privacy, which left all particularisms entirely unchallenged, which altered no institutions and required no elaborate machinery, was its salvation. It was, in fact, a moral and psychological rather than political reaction. Hundreds of millions of people suddenly adopted a new point of view. Without prejudice to their existing loyalties and sentiments, they gave birth in themselves to a new higher loyalty and a wider sentiment. The autumn of 1905 had seen the English-Speaking world on the verge of catastrophe. The year did not die before they were associated by indissoluble ties for the maintenance of peace between themselves, for the prevention of war among outside Powers and for the economic development of their measureless resources and possessions.

The Guns of August 1914

The Association had not been in existence for a decade before it was called upon to face an emergency not less grave than that which had called it into being. Every one remembers the European crisis of August 1914. The murder of the Archduke at Sarajevo, the disruption or decay of the Austrian and Turkish Empires, the old quarrel between Germany and France, and the increasing armaments of Russia—all taken together produced the most dangerous conjunction which Europe has ever known. It seemed that nothing could avert a war which might well have become Armageddon itself.

What the course and consequences of such a war would have been are matters upon which we can only speculate. M. Bloch, in his thoughtful book published in 1909, indicated that such a war if fought with modern weapons would not be a short one.¹⁰ He predicted that field

operations would quickly degenerate into a devastating stalemate with siege warfare, or trench warfare, lasting for years. We know his opinions are not accepted by many leading military experts. But, at any rate, we cannot doubt that a war in which four or five of the greatest European Powers were engaged might well have led to the loss of many millions of lives, and to the destruction of capital that twenty years of toil, thrift, and privation could not have replaced. It is no exaggeration to say that had the crisis of general mobilization of August 1914 been followed by war, we might today in this island see income tax at four or five shillings in the pound, and have two and a half million unemployed on our hands. Even the United States might have been dragged in.¹¹

But it was inherent in the Covenant of the English-Speaking Association that the ideal of mutual disarmament to the lowest point compatible with joint safety should be adopted by the signatory members. It was also settled that every third year a Conference of the whole Association should be held in such places as might be found convenient. It happened that the third disarmament conference of the E.S.A.—as it is called for short—was actually in session in July 1914. They acted as men accustomed to deal with the greatest events. They felt so sure of themselves that they were able to run risks for others.

On 1 August, when the German armies were already approaching the frontiers of Belgium, when the Austrian armies had actually begun the bombardment of Belgrade, and when all along the Russian and French frontiers desultory firing had broken out, the E.S.A. tendered its friendly offices to all the mobilized Powers, counselling them to halt their armies within ten miles of their own frontiers, and to seek a solution of their differences by peaceful discussion. The memorable document added “that failing a peaceful outcome, the Association must deem itself *ipso facto* at war with any Power in either combination whose troops invaded the territory of its neighbour.”

Although this suave yet menacing communication was received with indignation in many quarters, it in fact secured for Europe the breathing space which was so desperately required. The French had already forbidden their troops to approach within ten miles of the German frontier, and they replied in this sense. The Czar eagerly embraced the opportunity offered to him. The secret wishes of the Kaiser and his emotions at this juncture have necessarily been much disputed. There are those who allege that, carried away by the excitement of mobilization and the clang and clatter of moving armies, he was not

disposed to halt his troops already on the threshold of the Duchy of Luxembourg. Others avow that he received the message with a scream of joy and fell exhausted into a chair, exclaiming, "Saved! Saved! Saved!" Whatever may have been the nature of the Imperial convulsion, all we know is that the acceptance of Germany was the last to reach the Association. With its arrival, although there yet remained many weeks of anxious negotiation, the danger of a European war may be said to have passed away.

"Broad, Sunlit Uplands"

Most of us have been so much absorbed by the immense increases of prosperity and wealth, or by the commercial activity and scientific and territorial development and exploitation which have been the history of the English-Speaking world since 1905, that we have been inclined to allow European affairs to fall into a twilight of interest. Once the perils of 1914 had been successfully averted and the disarmament of Europe had been brought into harmony with that already effected by the E.S.A., the idea of a "United States of Europe" was bound to occur continually. The glittering spectacle of the great English-Speaking combination, its assured safety, its boundless power, the rapidity with which wealth was created and widely distributed within its bounds, the sense of buoyancy and hope which seemed to pervade the entire populations; all this pointed to European eyes a moral which none but the dullest could ignore.

Whether the Emperor Wilhelm II will be successful in carrying the project of European unity forward by another important stage at the forthcoming Pan-European Conference at Berlin in 1932 is still a matter of prophecy. Should he achieve his purpose, he will have raised himself to a dazzling pinnacle of fame and honour, and no one will be more pleased than the members of the E.S.A. to witness the gradual formation of another great area of tranquillity and cooperation like that in which we ourselves have learned to dwell.

If this prize should fall to his Imperial Majesty, he may perhaps reflect how easily his career might have been wrecked in 1914 by the outbreak of a war which might have cost him his throne, and have laid his country in the dust. If today he occupies in old age the most splendid situation in Europe, let him not forget that he might well have found himself eating the bitter bread of exile, a dethroned sovereign and a broken man loaded with unutterable reproach. And this, we repeat, might well have been his fate, if Lee had not won the Battle of Gettysburg.

Endnotes

1. Churchill, a devotee of the great English poet Alexander Pope, here quotes from Pope's *Prologue to Mr. Addison's Cato* (1713).
2. Benjamin Disraeli, First Earl of Beaconsfield (1804-1881), served Conservative governments for three decades and was Prime Minister two times between 1868 and 1880. Contrary to our tale, he never became a Liberal.
3. William Ewart Gladstone (1809-1898) did not, of course, wind up a Tory. Joining the Liberal Party when it was organized in 1859, he served as Prime Minister four times between 1868 and 1894—more than any other person.
4. Churchill is quoting John Bright in John Morley, *The Life of William Ewart Gladstone*, 4 vols. (London: Cassell, 1889) I: 69. WSC admired Morley and faithfully read his books.
5. Henry John Temple, Third Viscount Palmerston (1784-1865) was Prime Minister in 1855-58 and again in 1859-65, spanning the American Civil War. Anti-Union and pro-Confederacy, he recognized the latter as a belligerent (though not a sovereign) power, and proclaimed Britain's neutrality in 1861.
6. Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-Cecil, third Marquess of Salisbury (1830-1903), known as Lord Robert Cecil before 1865, served three times as Prime Minister between 1885 and 1902. It was he who accepted Lord Randolph Churchill's career-ending resignation from the government in 1886, though Randolph's son held no permanent grudge against him.
7. This is an accurate Gladstone quote, from Morley, op. cit., 79
8. Turning history on its head, Churchill fictitiously uses Disraeli's actual words after becoming Prime Minister for the second time in 1874. Disraeli moved to the House of Lords in 1876.
9. The title of Disraeli's speech, referring to his government's Sanitary laws ("a policy of sewage" according to his opponents), Free Trade Hall, Manchester, 3 April 1873.
10. In 1904, during the Russo-Japanese War, a Russian fleet fired on trawlers on the Dogger Bank, claiming there was a Japanese torpedo boat among them. A Commission of Inquiry ordered Russia to pay compensation to the families of the victims.
11. Ivan Stanislovich Bloch, *War in the Future in Its Technical, Economic and Political Relations*, trans. R.C. Long (Boston: Ginn, 1899); abridged as, *Is War Now Impossible?* (also 1899).
12. Tongue-in-cheek, Churchill is citing the actual reality of 1930, though some sources suggest British income tax was then closer to 2.5 shillings in the pound (12.5%). See <http://bit.ly/pBLWII>.

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After what was a very busy Spring, with the visit of Sirs Nigel Sheinwald and Max Hastings and the unveiling of the 'Iron Curtain' sculpture, we kept up the frenetic pace and launched straight into our 2011 Churchill's England tour.

The Churchill Museum has undertaken tours to the UK previously, but this was the first for some 20 years. Accompanied by 44 people, a mix of friends of the Museum, Trustees of Westminster College (including the Chair of the Board, Robert Muehlhauser), Governors of the Museum and Westminster College's President and First Lady, Dr. and Mrs. Forsythe we embarked upon an eight day exploration of Churchill sites. The tour included visits to the Houses of Parliament, to Chartwell and Blenheim as well as to the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, the home of officer education in the British Army and from where Churchill graduated in October of 1894. As well as visits to the National Army Museum and the magnificent Imperial War Museum in Lambeth, the group also spent time at the Cabinet War Rooms and Churchill Museum in St. James. From this location, Winston Churchill fought much of World War II, and our group was privileged to hear from Phil Reed, the Director of the Museum, about the War Rooms in general as well as the process of creating the Churchill Museum. The principle of speaking directly with the key figures in the Churchill world continued at Cambridge when Allen Packwood, the Director of the Churchill College Archives Centre, addressed the group and delighted all by showing Franc McCluer's original letter of invitation from Westminster College to Churchill in the autumn of 1945 complete with the famous post-script: 'This is a wonderful school in my home State, please say you'll do

it, I'll introduce you, best regards Harry Truman'. While visiting these well known Churchill places was part of the tour it was also to introduce people to England itself and to endeavor to gain a sense of what being English means in a contemporary vein and thereby to extrapolate, as far as possible, what that might have meant to Churchill himself. While the Britain of 2011 is a very different place to the world that Churchill knew, this tour at least helped many understand that, while Britain and the United States share many commonalities, Britain is a very distinct and different culture. Undoubtedly, the highlight for most was our reception with Lady Mary Soames. Held at the home of Westminster alum, Philip Boeckman and his lovely wife Erin, within yards of Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament, this evening affair afforded everyone the chance to meet Lady Soames and spend time with her in a charming, elegant but informal setting. She was, as ever, delightful. No trip to London would have been complete without a visit to the original site of St. Mary the Virgin, Aldermanbury, in the City of London. This event at the very end of the tour was a tremendous way to end things and, amidst the bustle of London's rush hour, it was remarkable for all to see the place where our Church had stood for nearly three hundred years and to marvel at how small the site looked. All in all, the tour was a wonderful success and we tentatively plan to either repeat this in 2012 or to enhance still further in 2013 with a tour and offer a Churchill and Normandy version.



The Fleming's Hotel in the heart of Mayfair, our base for Churchill's England.



A magnificent WWI tank at the Imperial War Museum in Lambeth, South London.



Westminster alumnus Peter Peck and Executive Director Rob Havers plot the acquisition of just such a tank for the Churchill Museum in Fulton.



The entrance to the Imperial War Museum housed in the former 'Bethlem Royal Hospital' known colloquially as 'Bedlam'.



A magnificent photograph of Churchill's beloved country home of Chartwell in the County of Kent.



The group poses in front of the main door at Chartwell.



Westminster College President Dr. Barney Forsythe and Executive Director Dr. Rob Havers in front of the Chartwell exhibition that celebrates the 'Iron Curtain' address.



On board the Havengore, the vessel that carried WSC's coffin on his last journey.



Now moored at St. Catherine's dock in London, within sight of Tower Bridge and yards from the Tower of London, Havengore provides a wonderful venue.



With a painting of the battle of Isandlwana (a famous British defeat) hanging in the background, former Fulbright Robertson Visiting Professors of History to Westminster Dr. Philip Swan and Rob Havers discuss the ongoing Fulbright Program in the wonderful venue of the National Army Museum.



Churchill's grave in the Church yard at Bladon.



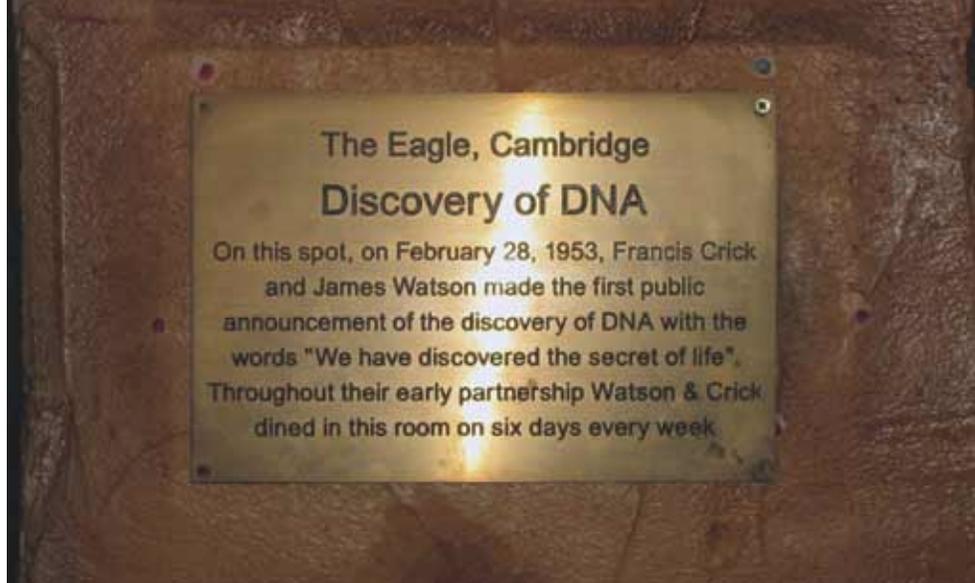
Watched over by Clive of India, the group prepares to enter the Churchill War rooms (entrance at the bottom right) in the heart of Whitehall, London.



The group assembles outside the main entrance to Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire where Churchill was born in 1874.



Allen Packwood, Director of the Churchill College Archives Centre, speaks to the group after tea and biscuits.



The commemorative plaque at the Eagle Pub in Cambridge noting the discovery of DNA (the reason we stopped at the pub of course!)



Punting on the River Cam in Cambridge.



Our group makes its way toward Kings College Chapel in Cambridge



Another group shot, this time on the original site of St. Mary Aldermanbury in the City of London.



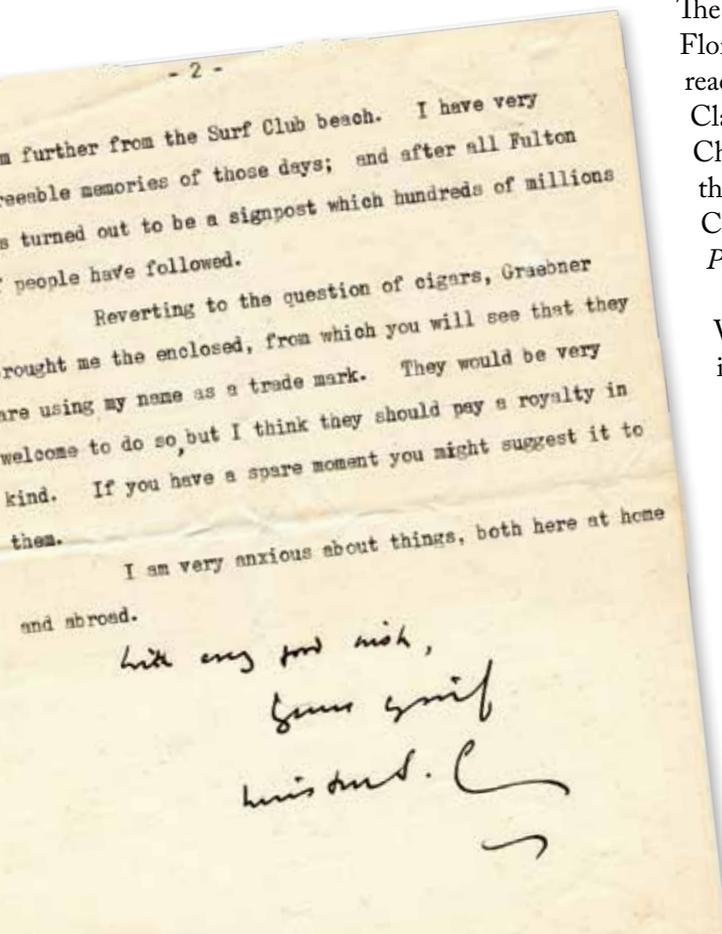
The Westminster College marker indicating where the Church is today.



Liz Murphy, National Churchill Museum Archivist/Curator

An exciting purchase by Edward Jones finds a home in our Archives!

It is with great pleasure that I announce our newest acquisition! Mr. John Bachmann, a former senior partner with Edward Jones, purchased several pieces of correspondence between Winston Churchill and Colonel Frank Clarke from the Forbes Collection.



The correspondence pertains to Churchill's pre 1946 visit to Miami, Florida with close friend Colonel Clarke, as well as Churchill's perceived reactions to his own speech years later. The letters read very personally; Clarke and Churchill were close professional friends, therefore Churchill spoke openly to Clarke regarding his concerns. Along with the correspondence, there is also a cancelled check from Churchill to Clarke to cover the expenses to the United States for the *Sinews of Peace* speech in the amount of 500 Pounds.

While each document is intriguing, there are two which stick out in my mind. The first being the three-page letter to Colonel Clarke asking him if it is okay to stay with him in Miami for a little sun and relaxation before the speech in March. He states that until President Truman sets a date for his speech, information regarding his visit to the States is to stay secret. This was sent in November of 1945, four months before Churchill visited Fulton. While we have pre-speech documents, we have none which refer to specific logistics of where Churchill was going to stay before the speech.

The other document which stands out to me is the short letter sent in 1948. In this letter, Churchill laments how difficult the times in England are and fears it will only get worse. Later in the letter, he remembers his visit to Fulton, "I have very agreeable memories of those days; and after all Fulton has turned out to be a signpost which hundreds of millions of people have followed." The letter is very serious in tone but ends with him jokingly stating that if a cigar is going to bear his name as the Trademark, *he* should be paid royalties. In true Churchillian style, Churchill ends on a light note!

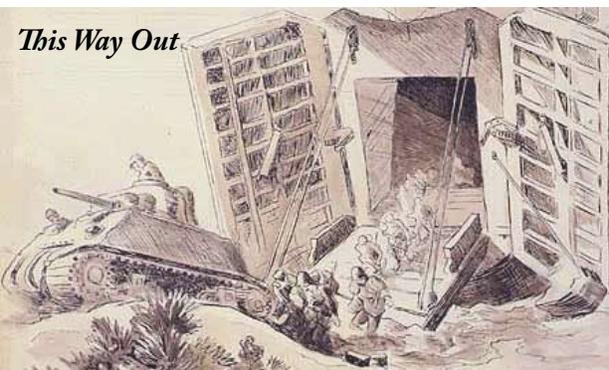
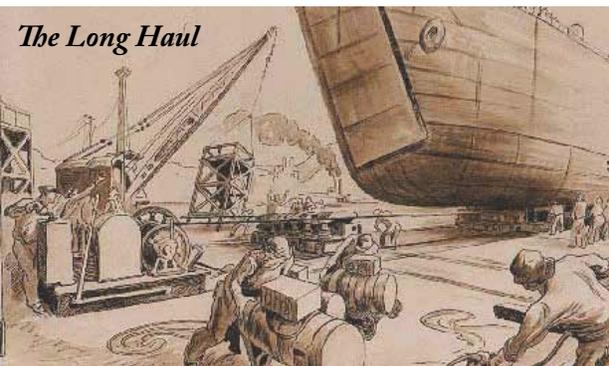
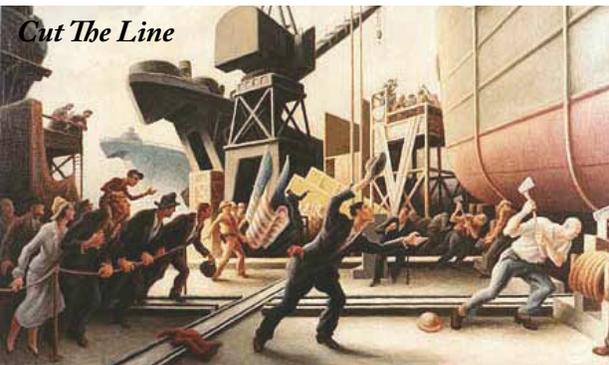
These gifts could not have come at a better time. As the summer wraps up, we too are wrapping up a summer-long project to re-catalog the Churchill Truman Day papers. This project has brought many exciting details about the day to light. For example, we now know that in place of an honorarium, Churchill requested a painting by Missouri artist Thomas Hart Benton.



After learning this, I began to look for Thomas Hart Benton traveling exhibitions to bring to the museum. When I found *Navy Art of Thomas Hart Benton* from the Navy Art Museum in D.C., it was a perfect fit. This 26-piece show was created by Benton as a way of honoring our U.S. Navy and all their hard work. This exhibition is the National Churchill Museum's way of memorializing what will be the 70th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

This set of documents sheds more light on Churchill's pre and post visit to Fulton and fits perfectly with our current collection. We know it will be a great resource for researchers as well. As a matter of fact, just after bringing these pieces to the Museum, a researcher contacted me regarding a book he is writing about Churchill's 1946 visit. After learning about the papers, he said he would be using them in his upcoming publication!

We are grateful to our donors who help us build our collection, they are helping us move toward our stated goal of becoming the largest repository of Churchilliana in the United States. If you are interested in donating an item to the Museum, please contact Liz Murphy by email at liz.murphy@churchillmemorial.org or by telephone at 573-592-5626.



The Navy Art of Thomas Hart Benton

TRAVELING EXHIBIT FROM THE NAVY ART MUSEUM IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

Showing: September 15 – November 2

The exhibition will be held at the National Churchill Museum. For more information call 573-592-5626 or visit our website at www.nationalchurchillmuseum.org.

Museum Hours:
Monday–Sunday, 10am–4:30pm



Mandy Plybon, Education & Public Programs Coordinator

Support The Churchill Trolley Program!

We saw a wonderful increase in both field trip numbers and amount of student groups that visited the museum this past fiscal year (July 2010-June 2011). In fact, there was a 637 student visitor count increase in just one year! Take a look at the tables below to see the difference.

I think the largest draw, and the biggest reason why we did so well this past year, was our *Buy 2 Student Admissions, Get 1 Student Admission Free* coupon. The coupon was given to previous field trippers and new teachers that were applying for field trip grants. Either way, the coupon provided much relief to teachers struggling to find field trip money. Here is one teacher's comment:

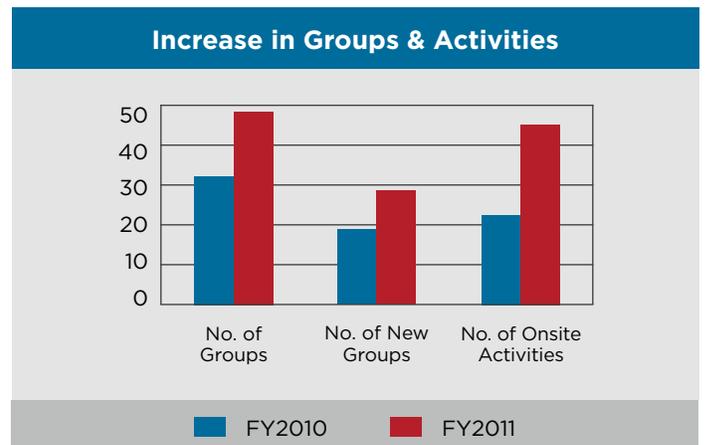
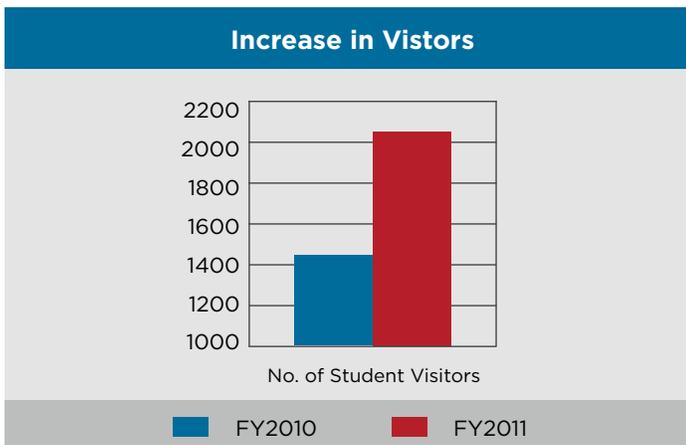
"Just wanted to thank you to you and your staff and leadership for making one of the best museums around more accessible because of the cost defrayment! We will see you in March!"

-Matt Kuensting, teacher, Grant Elementary School, Columbia MO



Teachers attending the National Churchill Museum's 4th Annual Summer Teacher Institute visit the Daniel Boone Homestead and Village.

The success of the coupon program and the success of this past year show how much educators want to visit! Quite a few are working on making a National Churchill Museum field trip part of their standard curriculum. We are still in the beginning stages of The Churchill Trolley field trip transportation grant program. If you are interested in donating money to provide Missouri students the chance to experience the Museum and all we have to offer, please contact me by telephone at 573-592-6242 or mandy.plybon@churchillmemorial.org. I would love to talk with you.





28th Annual Victorian Christmas Fundraiser

November 10 – December 24, 2011

The Museum's annual fundraiser with featured items: handbags, jewelry, Christmas ornaments and gifts for children of all ages.

English Kettledrum Tea

Thursday, November 10th from 10am–2pm

Kick off the holiday season with the 28th Tea – join Friends for English tea, cookies and finger sandwiches.

For evening shoppers, join us later on November 10th from 5–8pm for wine, refreshments and a silent auction – and the opportunity to bid on delicious tea cakes and other desserts compliments of The Friends of the Museum.

National Churchill Museum & St. Louis Public Libraries

As part of our efforts to reach out to new audiences and gain greater visibility for Churchill and the Museum in St. Louis, I'm delighted to tell you that, thanks to the efforts of Board of Governor Member Robert (Bob) DeFer and his wife, Doris, we have had temporary displays in branches of the St. Louis Library system since April 2011. These displays feature portions of Bob's own Churchill collection as well as material from the Museum, and aim to spark an interest in Churchill as well as encourage a visit to Fulton. If you're interested in seeing these displays, below is a list of forthcoming venues.

- Nov 2011 - Mid-County Branch
- Dec 2011 - Headquarters
+ Grand Glaize Branches
- March 2012 - Weber Road Branch
- April 2012 - Samuel Sachs
+ Daniel Boone Branches
- May 2012 - Bridgeton Trails Branch
- Aug 2012 - Tesson Ferry Branch
- Sept 2012 - Indian Trails Branch
- April 2013 Prairie Commons Branch

Attention Educators!

4th

Annual Student
Essay Contest

*October 3, 2011-April 16, 2012
(Monetary prizes awarded)*

5th

Annual Teacher
Summer Institute

June 13-15, 2012

Contact Mandy Plybon,
Education & Public Programs
Coordinator at (573) 592-6242
or by email at mandy.plybon@churchillmemorial.org



Kit Freudenberg

Kit Freudenberg
Director of Development

We have joined the **Time Travelers Membership Program** as a special membership benefit for our Museum members at the *Prime Minister* (\$100) level and above. **Time Travelers** is a reciprocal membership network for historical sites and museums throughout the United States. Our members receive exclusive benefits and privileges at partner museums and historical sites nationwide. These benefits may include free or reduced admission, gift shop discounts, free parking, and much more. Currently, over 200 institutions within 41 states participate in the **Time Travelers** program! The full list may be found at timetravelers.mohistory.org/membership/timetraveler.

The National Churchill Museum currently belongs to the **North American Reciprocal Museum** program with over 500 museums partners. These special membership benefits are also a “perk” for our members at the *Prime Minister* (\$100) and above levels. Please check out our partners at www.churchillmemorial.org/go/museums.

While planning your travels, please visit our partners in this program. The variety is incredible and you will certainly find something new and interesting. Some highlights from my travels with reciprocal membership privileges:

- The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield, IL
- Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY
- Chicago History Museum, IL
- Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO
- St. Louis Art Museum, MO
- Missouri History Museum
- Museum of Science and Industry, Seattle, WA
- Wing Luke Asian Museum, Seattle, WA
- Henry Art Museum, Seattle, WA

Along the way, I have enjoyed terrific exhibits, great cafés and restaurants, wonderful museum store shopping and preferential parking. Great benefits with these programs. Please contact me about receiving these special membership privileges and any questions you may have regarding the program.

YOU'RE INVITED TO A SPECIAL FILM EVENT

Winston Churchill: Walking with Destiny

7 PM | Wednesday, November 30 | Single Tickets: \$6.00 | Group Deal: \$20.00/4 tickets

Celebrate Churchill's birthday in style. Together with B&B Theatre in Fulton, Missouri, we are showing for the first & only time in mid-Missouri *Winston Churchill: Walking with Destiny*. This documentary is produced by the Simon Wiesenthal Center and narrated by Academy Award winning actor, Sir Ben Kingsley. *Walking with Destiny* focuses on Churchill's years in the political wilderness, his early opposition to Adolf Hitler and Nazism, and his support for Jews under threat by the Nazi regime.

The film is a ticketed event. Prepayment is required. Only 227 tickets being sold! A maximum of 4 tickets per household allowed.

Call 573-592-6242 or email mandy.plybon@churchillmemorial.org to reserve tickets.



October

3 **Fourth Annual Winston Churchill Student Essay Contest Begins**
(until April 16, 2012)

15 **Children's Program: Book Club I**
Thomas Hart Benton Murals
11am-12pm, Ages 6-12

November

1 **Third Annual Honor Tree**
(until January 7, 2012)

9 **22nd Anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall**

10 **28th Annual Victorian Christmas Fundraiser**
(until December 31, 2011)

English Kettledrum Tea
10am-2pm

Cocktails & Shopping
5pm-8pm

11 **Veterans Day Barbecue**
11am-3pm

12 **Children's Program: Book Club II**
Sam Johnson & the Blue Ribbon Quilt
11am-12pm, Ages 6-12

30 **Winston Churchill's Birthday**

Special Film Event
Winston Churchill: Walk with Destiny
7pm, Tickets \$6

December

7 **70th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor Attack**

10 **Children's Program: Book Club III**
Snowflake Bentley
11am-12pm, Ages 6-12



NATIONAL CHURCHILL MUSEUM
501 Westminster Avenue
Fulton, Missouri 65251

NATIONAL
CHURCHILL
MUSEUM

CHURCHILL'S ENGLAND TOUR 2012

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

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

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

Comments About the 2011 Tour:

“Great itinerary plus presence and participation of Museum Directors at the sites.”

“....definitely 1st Class and inner sanctum all the way.” **“Exceeded my expectations!”**

Tour Details:

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

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