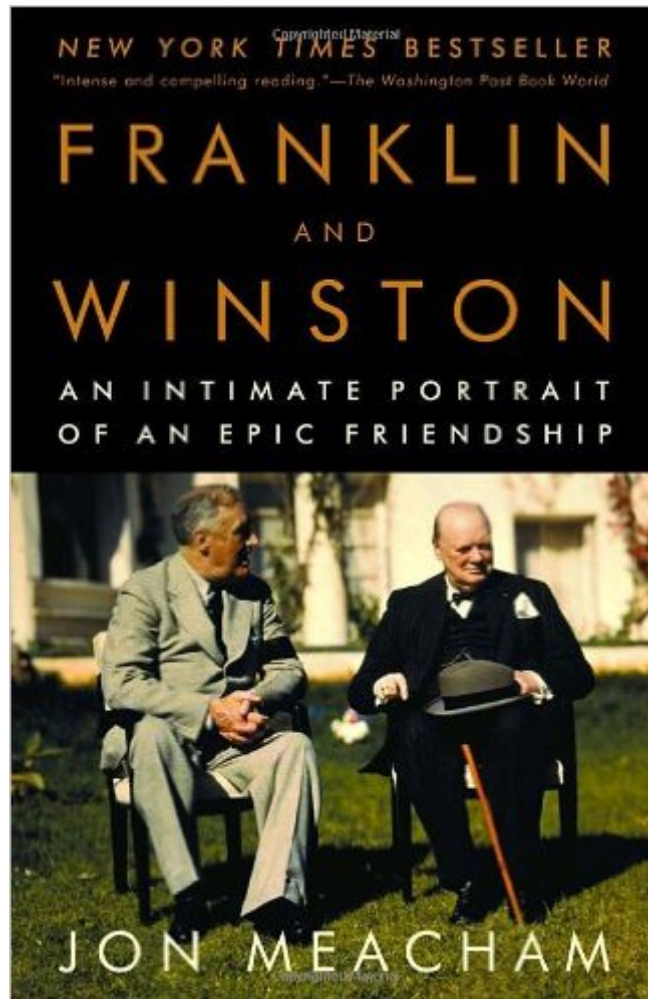


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Franklin And Winston: An Intimate Portrait Of An Epic Friendship



Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLERThe most complete portrait ever drawn of the complex emotional connection between two of history's towering leaders Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill were the greatest leaders of the Greatest Generation. In *Franklin and Winston*, Jon Meacham explores the fascinating relationship between the two men who piloted the free world to victory in World War II. It was a crucial friendship, and a unique one—a president and a prime minister spending enormous amounts of time together (113 days during the war) and exchanging nearly two thousand messages. Amid cocktails, cigarettes, and cigars, they met, often secretly, in places as far-flung as Washington, Hyde Park, Casablanca, and Teheran, talking to each other of war, politics, the burden of command, their health, their wives, and their children. Born in the nineteenth century and molders of the twentieth and twenty-first, Roosevelt and Churchill had much in common. Sons of the elite, students of history, politicians of the first rank, they savored power. In their own time both men were underestimated, dismissed as arrogant, and faced skeptics and haters in their own nations—yet both magnificently rose to the central challenges of the twentieth century. Theirs was a kind of love story, with an emotional Churchill courting an elusive Roosevelt. The British prime minister, who rallied his nation in its darkest hour, standing alone against Adolf Hitler, was always somewhat insecure about his place in FDR's affections—which was the way Roosevelt wanted it. A man of secrets, FDR liked to keep people off balance, including his wife, Eleanor, his White House aides—and Winston Churchill. Confronting tyranny and terror, Roosevelt and Churchill built a victorious alliance amid cataclysmic events and occasionally conflicting interests. *Franklin and Winston* is also the story of their marriages and their families, two clans caught up in the most sweeping global conflict in history. Meacham's new sources—including unpublished letters of FDR's great secret love, Lucy Mercer Rutherford, the papers of Pamela Churchill Harriman, and interviews with the few surviving people who were in FDR and Churchill's joint company—shed fresh light on the characters of both men as he engagingly chronicles the hours in which they decided the course of the struggle. Hitler brought them together; later in the war, they drifted apart, but even in the autumn of their alliance, the pull of affection was always there. Charting the personal drama behind the discussions of strategy and statecraft, Meacham has written the definitive account of the most remarkable friendship of the modern age.

Book Information

Paperback: 490 pages

Publisher: Random House Trade Paperbacks (October 12, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0812972821

ISBN-13: 978-0812972825

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 1.1 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars See all reviews (265 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #24,586 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #15 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > International & World Politics > Diplomacy #43 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > International & World Politics > European #48 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Europe > Great Britain

Customer Reviews

I have read a number of biographies of FDR and Churchill as well as history books on WW II. I thought that I knew everything about both men. Well, I didn't. It's not that Jon Meacham provides that much new material in this book--though there are some new letters and previously unreleased documents--it's that he molds what has been out there into a fascinating study of the personalities of the two men. I may not have learned new facts about these men but I gained greater insight into not only their friendship but also their marriages, their characters, and their lives from this study. Both men became more fully realized, more human, more alive in this book. "Franklin and Winston" follows a simple, chronological structure. It begins with a phone call from Roosevelt to Churchill (who was not yet Prime Minister) at the onset of WW II in Europe; it ends for the most part with the death of Roosevelt and Churchill's inability to attend his funeral. In between, yes, you see all the major events of WW II on the European front. But you also see a Churchill trying to woo Roosevelt--and through his efforts, the neediness in his personality, the boy trying to please. You also realize the tremendous feeling that Churchill had for his American forebearers (his mother was American) and the sincere emotion that he was capable of even at the most difficult of times. With Roosevelt, you see the caginess of his personality, the boy who was the center of his parents' universe and now really was the center of the world. You see in greater depth the feeling that he did have for his wife Eleanor, even though he was spending time in his last days with his former love Lucy Rutherford. You see his ability to charm Churchill--and then turn off the charm.

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