



Franklin and Winston: An Intimate Portrait of an Epic Friendship

Jon Meacham

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The 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Meacham's new sources—including unpublished letters of FDR's great secret love, Lucy Mercer Rutherfurd, the papers of Pamela Churchill Harriman, and interviews with the few surviving people who were in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.

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