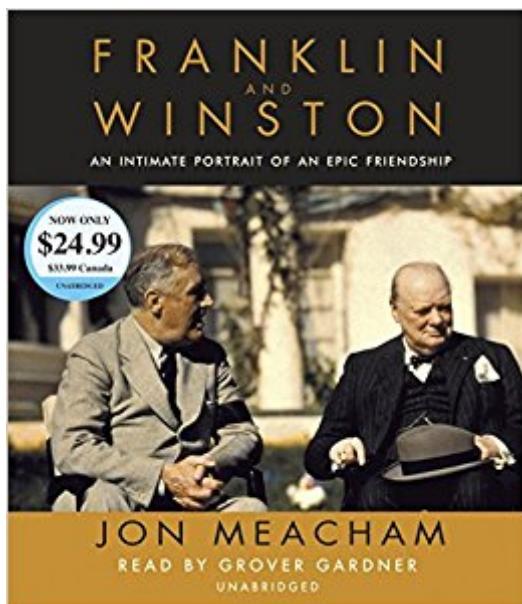


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# Franklin And Winston: An Intimate Portrait Of An Epic Friendship



## Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER 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 "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—but 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 Meacham's new sources—including unpublished letters of FDR's great secret love, Lucy Mercer Rutherford, the papers of Pamela Churchill Harriman, and interviews with the few surviving people who were in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

Audio CD

Publisher: Random House Audio; Unabridged edition (September 5, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1524754633

ISBN-13: 978-1524754631

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 1.2 x 5.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.9 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 291 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #224,484 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #11 in Books > Books on CD > History > Europe #33 in Books > Books on CD > History > Military #63 in Books > Books on CD > History > United States

## Customer Reviews

Drawing on interviews with surviving staffers and other previously untapped sources, Newsweek managing editor Meacham delves into the deep and complicated relationship between the two men who may very well have been the most powerful men on the planet during the most threatening times of the 20th century. FDR and Churchill spent much time together (a total of 113 days), planning, eating, smoking and drinking many a cocktail, and Meacham fleshes out the men behind the public faces, revealing the intricacies and the sometimes raw opportunism of their complicated relationship. Veteran actor and audiobook reader Cariou's authoritative presentation is rock solid and gripping. His gravelly baritone is transformed into Roosevelt's calm yet commanding voice one minute, and Churchill's more bombastic British accent the next (though occasionally, his enthusiastic Churchill is reminiscent of the sinister aliens Kang and Kodos from *The Simpsons*). All in all, he does a wonderful job of capturing not only the friendship between the two men, but also the tensions that build as the world turns to war. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

After their first meeting, in 1918, Roosevelt said that Churchill was "a stinker" Churchill didn't even remember Roosevelt. But by their next exchange, in 1939, Churchill was convinced that Britain's future depended on getting Roosevelt to like him. Meacham's engaging account argues that personal bonds between leaders are crucial to international politics. He draws heavily on diaries and letters to describe a complicated courtship and, at times, seems amazed at what Winston is willing to put up with from Franklin. Churchill paints a landscape for the President, sings for him, and agonizes when his notes go unanswered; Roosevelt teases him in front of Stalin, criticizes him to

reporters, and eventually breaks his heart with a diverging vision of the postwar world. But Churchill never gives up, and he later recalled, "No lover ever studied the whims of his mistress as I did those of President Roosevelt." Copyright © 2005 The New Yorker --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

I have been telling people about this book ever since I read it. Having been a young, very young, girl, I remember adults talking about FDR and talking as if he was a saint, I didn't make opinions of my own. After reading this book and a number of other books about him I am not of the same mind as people years ago. Anyone interested in history would find this book fascinating. However, I came away with a higher opinion of Winston, then FDR. If you only consider his politics, maybe you will think better of him, but if you throw in his personal life I think he falls short of a man to be admired. The book is a wonderful read and won't disappoint a history buff.

This book is a wonderful way to learn about the men, their leadership styles, the benefits of an earlier age in communications and the real weight on their shoulders. Anyone who likes to view history via the people centered in a historical period will learn a great deal from this book. The depth of research and having the benefit of other's work on the period, it's players and resultant outcomes also makes it an excellent read. Discovering letters by people in the room, so to speak, adds a highlight to understanding what was going on between the men, their nations and the world during this period. I rated it a 5 stars because it became more engrossing over the middle and final pages....my appreciation to the Author!

I found that the author laid a good foundation for understanding interpersonal dynamics of Churchill and Roosevelt by describing the origin of each man's involvement as a person and a politician. Based on these factors, the author then aptly describes the interplay between the two great leaders and their common approach to Nazi Germany and dealing with Joseph Stalin. I found additional understanding of their challenges as I later read The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich by Shirer. I found that Meacham's book was enlightening from the standpoint that he gives in his "Portrait of an Epic Friendship" a view of two great human beings mutually supporting each other in the "darkest hour" of modern history. In the processs, the author enables the reader to perceive how great leaders have their vulnerale sides and yet can to rally their countrymen to a miraculous victory over the evil, the Axis Powers. I was but a young child during World War II. It is now very sobering as an adult to become familar through this book with two icons that I no ability as a child to understand nor

their greatness to perceive. Now I understand them so much better as human beings.

I grew up with the gentlemen in power, and loving history as I do was very interested in their interactions. As much as I have read about each of them I still always learn something new. Great read.

A well researched work on the personal relationship between these two leaders of nations at a critical time in world history. Mr. Meacham provides a wide assortment of quotes from those who knew them and were witness to their friendship and does a good job of weaving the story around them. Beginning at the very first encounter of Churchill and FDR, long before either achieved their political apex, the story continues through WWII, FDR's untimely demise, and until Churchill's death some two decades later. It's quite a different perspective on two men who undoubtedly affected the course of history and a different look at WWII. It's a nice addition to the library of any student of the era.

Jon Meacham has woven a beautiful account of these two great characters from a most human and emotional perspective. Meecham doesn't just historically replay events, he gets us inside these two great men and allows us to share in their emotional connections with the war, their families, politics, and each other. Doing this on two men at the same time is a special treat afforded by the voluminous resources available on these particular men and their interaction with each other. The ability to peer into the inner workings of two great minds during the same shared experiences is like having special powers that Franklin and Winston, who were always wondering what each other was thinking, would have enjoyed immensely. WWII is unquestionably a dramatic current that keeps the pages turning but this book is, as the author clearly states, not an academic history book on the events of WWII or even the historical conferences between Franklin, Winston and later Stalin. This book is about humanity. I found myself shedding tears at the death of Franklin because Meecham exposed the personal sense of loss Winston (and others) felt in a way that even Winston could not convey in tributes to Franklin. This book wasn't written to expose historical events, historical event collectors will be disappointed. The book exposes historical thoughts and emotions, courage and insecurities, uncertainty and stubbornness, loneliness and the joy of making genuine connections with others. This a different kind of history, one that might seem inherently speculative if it weren't for Meecham's extensive reliance on reliable sources. His references are almost 1/3 the book and are primarily Franklin, Winston, or friends and family that were immediately present and close to

subjects. I'm extremely uncomfortable with whimsical author speculation and always felt comfortable with this book. I came away with little new knowledge about historical events, but a much closer personal understanding of these two men. Well worth the trip.

Excellent piece of history, extremely well prepared and written. The personal lives and interactions between FDR and Churchill were particularly interesting and , for me, a totally new look at the scene. My only complaint was---perhaps it was a little too close to the bare bones of their lives, including bathroom demeanor and sex lives. Yeah, it's the truth (I guess) but as Agatha Christie used to say, "He (she) gently closed the door..." There were times when I wished the author had done so.

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