

Winston S. Churchill

Complete Works



Series Thirteen

The Complete Works of WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

(1874-1965)



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Complete Works of Winston S. Churchill



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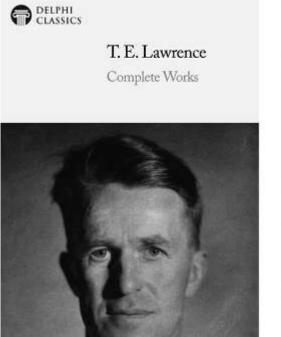
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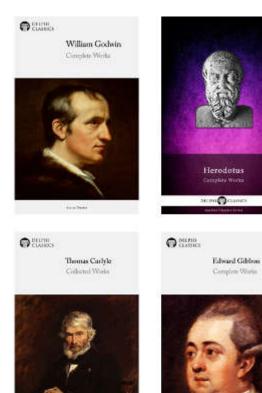
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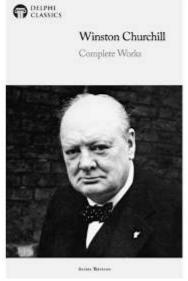


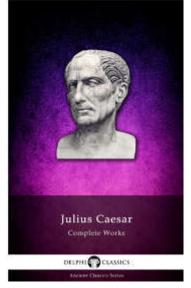


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HISTORY AT DELPHI







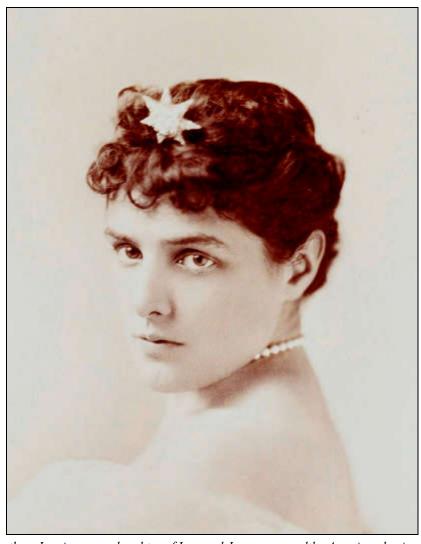
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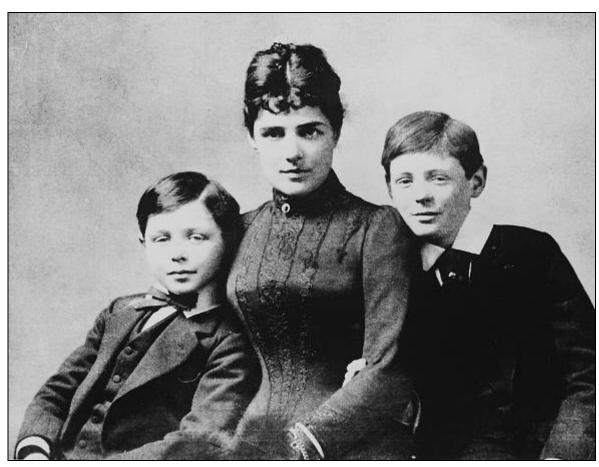
Winston Churchill was born on 30 November 1874 at his family's ancestral home, Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire.



His father, Lord Randolph Churchill, who represented the Conservative Party, had been elected Member of Parliament for Woodstock in 1874.



His mother, Jennie, was a daughter of Leonard Jerome, a wealthy American businessman.



Jennie Spencer Churchill with her two sons, Jack (left) and Winston (right) in 1889



Churchill, age 21, as a cornet in the 4th Queens Own Hussars in 1895

Savrola (1900)



A TALE OF THE REVOLUTION IN LAURANIA

Winston Churchill's only major work of fiction, *Savrola* concerns events in the capital of Laurania, a fictional European state, as unrest against the dictatorial government of president Antonio Molara turns to violent revolution. He had commenced work on the novel during his voyage from Britain to India to take part in the Malakand campaign in August 1897. Churchill was on leave from his posting with the army in India when he received news of fighting in Malakand and he immediately arranged to return. The working title for the novel was *Affairs of State*. It was initially published as a serialisation in *Macmillan's Magazine* between May and December 1898 and was then published as in book form in February 1900.

It is a conventional example of the "Ruritanian" genre, then popular following the publication four years' before of Anthony Hope's *The Prisoner of Zenda*. Events take place in a fictional country called Laurania, located somewhere on the Mediterranean sea, which is similar to Italy or Spain, but with an overlay of Victorian England. Laurania has an African colony which can be reached via the Suez Canal. It has been a republic for many years and has a well established constitution. Five years previously the country was split by a civil war, as a result of which General Antonio Molara became president and dictator. Unrest has arisen due to Molara's refusal to restore parliamentary rule...

The politics and institutions of Laurania reflect the values of England as Churchill experienced them. A comparison has been drawn between Molara and Oliver Cromwell, against whom an ancestor of Churchill's, also named Winston Churchill, fought as a captain of horse — a tale well known to Churchill as part of his family history. The capital and its institutions are a miniature of London, so the State ball follows the etiquette of the great society gatherings in London that Churchill often attended.

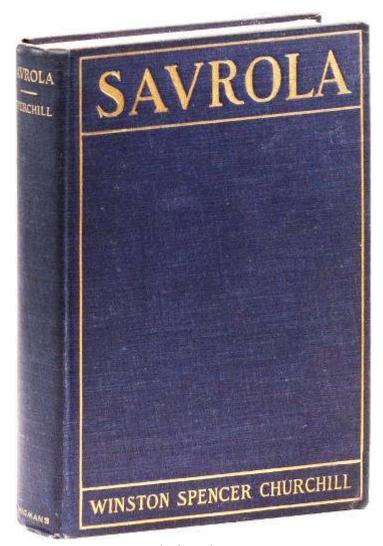
The heroine, Lucile, is believed to be modelled on the author's mother, Lady Randolph Churchill. The wife of Molara, the out-of-touch ruler of Laurania, Lucile abandons the kingdom for the charms of Savrola, a character more like the author. One of the characters, Tiro, an officer in the republican guard, discusses his life in conversation with Savrola, mirroring the life of a subaltern officer in the Indian Army that Churchill had experienced. Savrola himself is described as "vehement, high and daring", and the sort of man who could, "know rest only in action, contentment only in danger, and in confusion find their only peace... Ambition was the motive force, and he was powerless to resist it".

The novel was reviewed by *The Star*, which was modestly impressed. The reviewer considered is as inferior to *The River War*, which Churchill had already published. *Savrola* was compared to the works of Benjamin Disraeli, a politician who also wrote novels with significant social comment. The reviewer observed that in both cases the books serve to maintain public interest in their authors. The characters were described as "stock puppets of brisk romance", but the fighting scenes were "impressive and full of suspense". However, *The Echo* was less impressed. While acknowledging that it showed promise and was interesting, the reviewer was critical of the lack of detail in the plot and love scenes. Unlike some other reviews, which had been entertained by the philosophy and political comment, the critic considered the

"desperate efforts after intellectuality" as simply dull and overly dependent on fighting and bloodshed "to carry it along". Churchill's own verdict on this early foray into fiction, which was certainly a modest success, was given in his 1930 autobiography *My Early Life*: "I have consistently urged my friends to abstain from reading it."



Churchill in 1900, close to the time of his first election to Parliament and the publication of his only novel



The first edition

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SAVROLA

A TALE OF THE REVOLUTION IN LAURANIA

BY

WINSTON SPENCER CHURCHILL

AUTHOR OF "THE RIVER WAR: AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE RECONQUEST OF THE SOUDAN," ETC.

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
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1900

The first edition's title page

THIS BOOK IS INSCRIBED

TO

THE OFFICERS

OF THE

IVTH (QUEEN'S OWN) HUSSARS IN WHOSE COMPANY THE AUTHOR LIVED FOR FOUR HAPPY YEARS

PREFATORY NOTE



This story was written in 1897, and has already appeared in serial form in *Macmillan's Magazine*. Since its first reception was not unfriendly, I resolved to publish it as a book, and I now submit it with considerable trepidation to the judgment or clemency of the public.

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL.



End of Sample