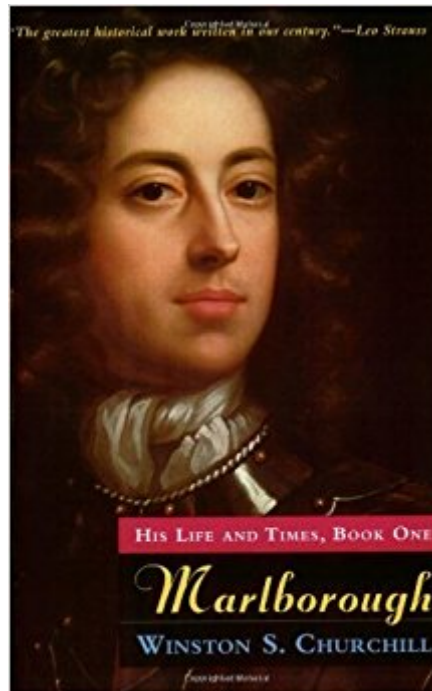




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# Marlborough: His Life And Times, Book One



## Synopsis

"It is my hope to recall this great shade from the past, and not only invest him with his panoply, but make him living and intimate to modern eyes." —from the preface to Volume One

John Churchill, the Duke of Marlborough (1644-1722), was one of the greatest military commanders and statesmen in the history of England. Victorious in the Battles of Blenheim (1704), Ramillies (1706), and countless other campaigns, Marlborough, whose political intrigues were almost as legendary as his military skill, never fought a battle he didn't win. Although he helped James II crush the rebellion of the Duke of Monmouth, Marlborough later supported William of Orange against James II in the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and brilliantly managed England's diplomatic triumphs during the War of the Spanish Succession. Marlborough also bequeathed the world another great British military strategist and diplomat — his descendant, Winston S. Churchill, who wrote this book to redeem Marlborough's reputation from Macaulay's smears. One million words long and ten years in the making, Churchill's *Marlborough* stands as both a literary and historical masterpiece, giving us unique insights into the Churchill of World War II, for just as Churchill's literary skill helps us understand the complexities of Marlborough's life, so too did his writing of Marlborough help Churchill master the arts of military strategy and diplomacy. This two-volume edition includes the entire text and almost all the original maps.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"The greatest historical work written in our century, an inexhaustible mine of political wisdom and

understanding, which should be required reading for every student of political science." - Leo Strauss, University of Chicago "Rarely in the history of historical writing have author and subject seemed so made for each other." - Henry Steele Commager

"It is my hope to recall this great shade from the past, and not only invest him with his panoply, but make him living and intimate to modern eyes." — from the preface to Volume One John Churchill, the Duke of Marlborough (1644-1722), was one of the greatest military commanders and statesmen in the history of England. Victorious in the Battles of Blenheim (1704), Ramillies (1706), and countless other campaigns, Marlborough, whose political intrigues were almost as legendary as his military skill, never fought a battle he didn't win. Although he helped James II crush the rebellion of the Duke of Monmouth, Marlborough later supported William of Orange against James II in the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and brilliantly managed England's diplomatic triumphs during the War of the Spanish Succession. Marlborough also bequeathed the world another great British military strategist and diplomat — his descendant, Winston S. Churchill, who wrote this book to redeem Marlborough's reputation from Macaulay's smears. One million words long and ten years in the making, Churchill's Marlborough stands as both a literary and historical masterpiece, giving us unique insights into the Churchill of World War II, for just as Churchill's literary skill helps us understand the complexities of Marlborough's life, so too did his writing of Marlborough help Churchill master the arts of military strategy and diplomacy. This two-volume edition includes the entire text and almost all the original maps.

The review that I wrote for volume two stands for this book as well. I can honestly say that I was sorry when I was done with all 2000 pages!

I ordinarily don't like to read history. But I took a chance on this after reading a biography of Churchill. In writing this book, Churchill personally traveled across Europe, visiting each of the sites that figure prominently in his ancestor's life. And what a life! Coming of age in an era defined by enmity between Catholics and Protestants that mirrors the current strife in the Middle East, Marlborough was a political and military genius who saved not only his own country, but the rest of Europe through his daring and imaginative actions both on and off the battlefield. No one but Churchill could have written this book. His passion for the times is evident in the prose, which is simply magnificent. I loved this book.

good book good price

I have been wanting to read this work since the 1980's. In about 2005 I obtained a DVD copy of the "First Churchill's" as shown on PBS in 1971 during the very first season of "Masterpiece Theater." This 13-part series was taken from this book (Volume I) and the companion second book (Volume II). Consequently, the desire to read this work increased. I read this first volume almost immediately after I recieved it in the mail. It has been called "the greatest historical work of our (the 20th) century"--Leo Strauss and also received very high praise from Henry Steele Comanger. At first I passed off these comments as hyperbole. However, as I read the book I came to agree with these comments.

A very interesting addition to our collection of writings and times of Winston Churchill. Marlborough (named John Churchill), his ancestor, is a worthy and interesting forebear.... worth reading.

This is quite a genealogy/family history. Some day I may finish it. Other than that, the great W. Churchill is an author that cannot be equaled.

The first Duke of Marlborough during his life and afterwards was a controversial figure that tended to be seen in a rather bad light by history until Winston S. Churchill set about to fully rehabilitate the English/British general and statesman. Marlborough: His Life and Times (Book One) contains the first two volumes of Churchill's four volume biography of his ancestor John Churchill that cover the first 55 years of the general's life. The first volume of Churchill's biography of Marlborough covers the first half of the book from the Duke's birth to the death of William III at the beginning of the War of Spanish Succession. Events and Marlborough's actions throughout this period colored contemporaries views of him as well as later historian's opinions of him. Yet this was a turbulent time in English history, as politics was first dominated by Roundheads and Cavaliers before becoming Protestant and Catholics along with Tory and Whig followed by Jacobite and Anti-Jacobite. Without the deep understand that Churchill gives the actions of Marlborough would make him look wish-washy. The second volume consists of the first four years of Marlborough's time as commander-in-chief of the Grand Alliance as well as de facto co-Prime Minister of England. Throughout this second volume of Churchill's biography, the life of the commander-in-chief of an alliance was not easy and many of

Marlborough's military plans were frustrated by the want of will by his allies, mainly the Dutch. But it wasn't until Marlborough marched to the aid of the Holy Roman Empire that he was able to conduct the military operations that he wanted which gave him the first great English victory on the Continent since Agincourt, yet the next year his designs were once again frustrated leading to military and political unrest amongst the Great Alliance. Given the author's relationship to his subject and stated purpose to readjust the historical view of his ancestor, one could expect a true glorification of Marlborough but to Churchill's credit he did not. While Churchill does take time give the reader an understanding of the changing political environment throughout Marlborough's life and explained his actions in relation to them. When it came to Marlborough's military operations, Churchill is actually balanced in his approach to his ancestor's military decisions as well as "what if" scenarios when Marlborough was frustrated in his planning. Yet Churchill savages those who did frustrate Marlborough's planning through either over caution or plain envy. Marlborough: His Life and Times (Book One) gives an in-depth look at the second half of the 17th century and the early part of the War of Spanish Succession through the life of John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough. Winston Churchill writes engagingly and makes a full picture of events that leaves the reader in no doubt the facts surrounding an issue. After finished Book One, you'll be wanting to start Book Two.

Churchill's biography of his ancestor is really great military history. He has analyzed each of the great battles in detail and sets them out clearly and with great maps (much of this is in Book II, however). Fervently wish that other military historians would do the same. Only "rap" is that Churchill gives only one side to the non-military controversies surrounding the Duke, so if you want a balanced account of Marlborough's life, you'll need to read something else--a favorable biography of James II and a biography of Queen Anne. But if you want a great and readable account of a key part of the "Second Hundred Years War," this (and Book Two) are indispensable.

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