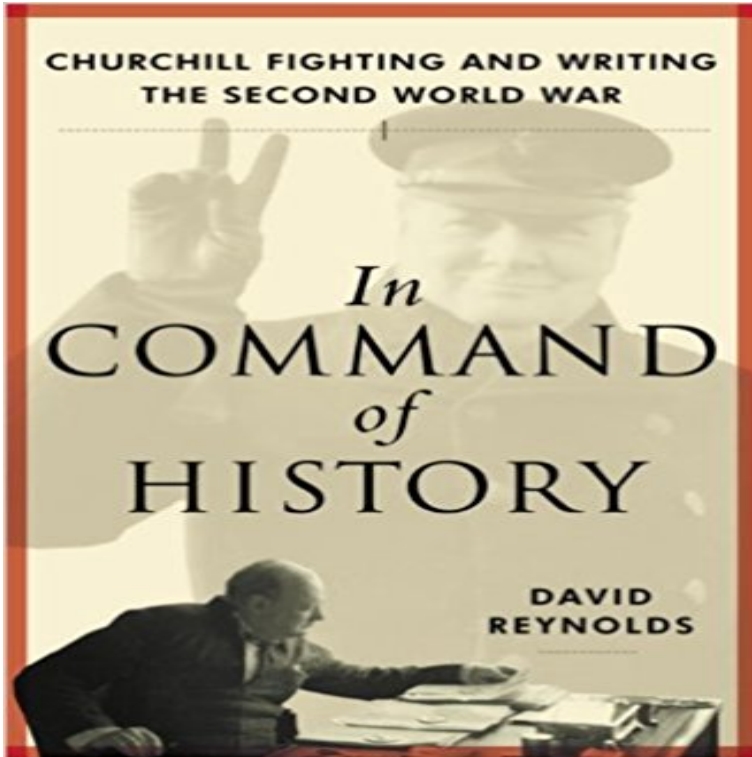


# In Command of History: Churchill Fighting and Writing the Second World War



Winston Churchill was one of the giants of the twentieth century. As Britain's prime minister from 1940 to 1945, he courageously led his nation and the world away from appeasement, into war, and on to triumph over the Axis dictators. His classic six-volume account of those years, *The Second World War*, has shaped our perceptions of the conflict and secured Churchill's place as its most important chronicler. Now, for the first time, a book explains how Churchill wrote this masterwork, and in the process enhances and often revises our understanding of one of history's most complex, vivid, and eloquent leaders. *In Command of History* sheds new light on Churchill in his multiple, often overlapping roles as warrior, statesman, politician, and historian. Citing excerpts from the drafts and correspondence for Churchill's magnum opus, David Reynolds opens our eyes to the myriad forces that shaped its final form. We see how Churchill's manuscripts were vetted by Whitehall to conceal secrets such as the breaking of the Enigma code by British spymasters at Bletchley Park, and how Churchill himself edited the volumes to avoid offending postwar statesmen such as Tito, Charles de Gaulle, and Dwight D. Eisenhower. We explore his confusions about the true story of the atomic bomb, learn of his second thoughts about Stalin, and watch him repackage himself as a consistent advocate of the D-Day landings. *In Command of History* is a major work that forces us to reconsider much received wisdom about World War II. It also peels back the covers from an unjustly neglected period of Churchill's life, his second wilderness years, 1945-1951. During this time Churchill, now over seventy, wrote himself into history, politicked himself back into 10 Downing Street, and delivered some of the most vital oratory of his career, including his pivotal iron curtain

speech. Exhaustively researched and dazzlingly written, this is a revelatory portrait of one of the world's most profiled figures, a work by a historian in full command of his craft. A fascinating account that accomplishes the impossible: [Reynolds] actually finds something new and interesting to say about one of the most chronicled characters of all time. The New York Times Book Review A New York Times NOTABLE BOOK OF THE YEAR A BEST HISTORY OF THE YEAR SELECTION The New York Sun NOTE: This edition does not include photographs.

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