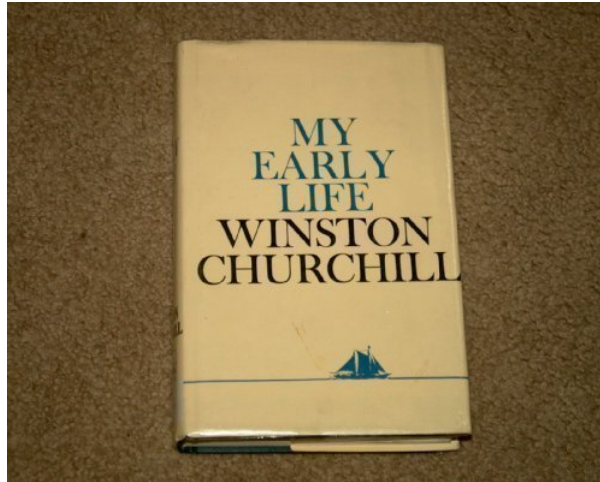
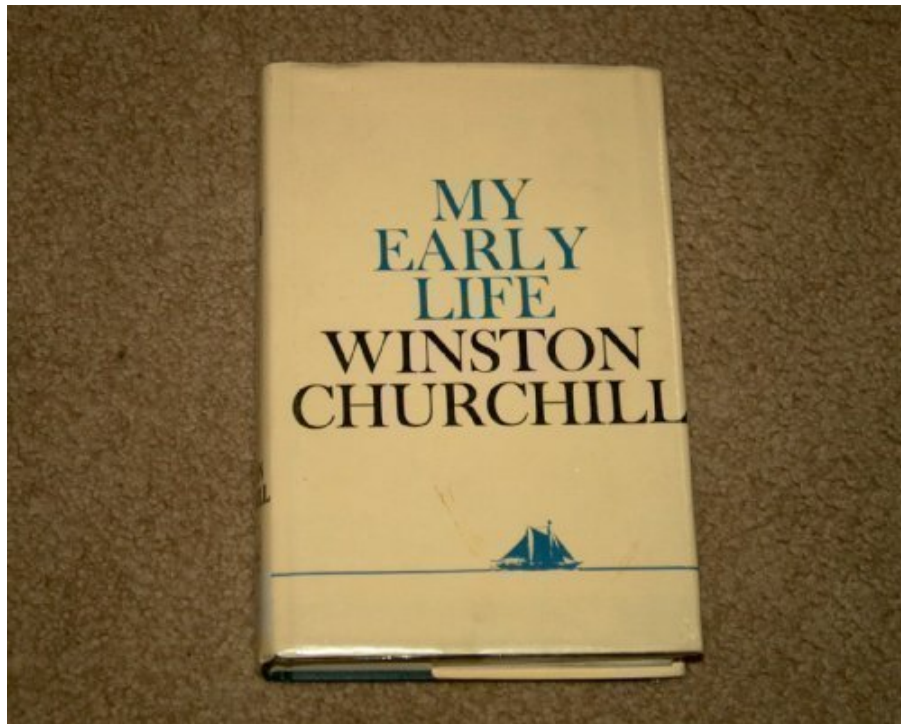


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## Amazon.com Review

The voice of a vanished England speaks from the pages of Winston Churchill's evocative memoir of his first 30 years (1874-1904). The young Churchill inhabits a world in which men fight like hell in meaningless colonial wars--India, Egypt, South Africa--soldiering across the imperial map then extending the hand of friendship to their erstwhile enemy as if they were schoolmates at Harrow. Yet Churchill, born into a privileged family, was not an uncritical supporter of the Victorian status quo. He himself loathed Harrow; an especially amusing chapter skewers the school's emphasis on an irrelevant classical education and rote learning. A firm Tory, he considered himself a friend of the working class, and in 1899 campaigned for parliament with a Socialist colleague. Looking back from his vantage point of 1930, Churchill expresses the most attractive values of the English aristocracy--honor, loyalty, fair play--without giving the impression he wants to live in the past. The book's appeal also stems from its magisterial but colloquial prose. Anyone familiar with recordings of Churchill's rousing speeches during World War II will hear in their minds' ears that growling timbre and unmistakably patrician accent as they read. Though he would have preferred the peace prize, My Early Life offers good evidence that Churchill's 1953 Nobel for literature was aptly awarded. --Wendy Smith

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## From the Back Cover

Here, in his own words, are the fascinating first thirty years in the life of one of the most provocative and compelling leaders of the twentieth century - Winston Churchill. As a visionary, statesman, and historian, and the most eloquent spokesman against the Nazi Germany, Winston Churchill was one of the greatest figures of the twentieth century. In this autobiography, Churchill recalls his childhood, his schooling, his years as a war correspondent in South Africa during the Boer War, and his first forays into politics as a member of Parliament. My Early Life not only gives readers insights into the shaping of a great leader but, as Churchill himself wrote, "a picture of a vanished age".

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If you want to fully understand Winston Churchill, My Early Life is essential reading.

- Sales Rank: #4073660 in Books
- Published on: 1977-06-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Binding: Hardcover
- 384 pages

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A manual on how to achieve greatness

By S.K.

This is a humorous and honest account that reveals why Churchill rose to the heights that he did. It is obvious he was imperfect (as we all are) and certainly carried the prejudices and conceits of his time and class. His childhood by no means was predictive of the greatness to come. In all the humorous accounts, it is painfully obvious he was a lousy student who apparently did not even finish school! His father correctly anticipated that he couldn't make it to the university. While Churchill had an affinity for the army since childhood, it took him all of three attempts to make it in. And even during the final attempt, he barely squeaked through at the bottom, because the more successful candidates preferred infantry to the expensive cavalry, which Churchill agreed to join. Churchill comes to his own in India where he not only set about to make up for lost time by reading voraciously, but grabbed every opportunity that came his way. Where there was none, he created the opportunity using all means (and they were not insignificant!) at his disposal. By sheer enthusiasm and tenacity, he became the person who was repeatedly in the right place at the right time. Churchill certainly does not portray himself as some super natural or extraordinarily gifted individual. It is a very readable account of persistence, courage (despite at times frankly admitted fears) and carrying on despite adversity. Along the way, we learn of his romantic notions and misguided enthusiasm for war being transformed through bitter experience. For all his opportunism, Churchill also had the courage to openly condemn the less than stellar conduct of his superiors, much to his own detriment (it most probably cost him a VC).

It is the authenticity of his account written with good humor, that makes this autobiography so readable. While Churchill had the advantages of his social position, there were many others far better placed who couldn't achieve half as much. It confirms that most humans are capable of achieving greatness, if they would apply themselves and a little bit of luck smiles upon them. My only criticism is that the book ends abruptly, as if Churchill had a deadline to meet. Or, he simply got tired of the whole thing!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

An Excellent Starting Point For Studying Churchill

By FCD117

Winston Churchill is a giant of history. By coincidence he is also my personal favorite foreign author of non fiction. (I am an American.) His writing style is very florid and reads like fiction rather than non fiction. He uses many illusions and has an ironical sense of humor. He was awarded a Nobel Prize for literature.

This is a autobiography, composed in mid life, in 1930, but only about his life from 1874 to 1904. As such, the story does not include anything about either World War. World War I had concluded but is not discussed in this book in any detail. World War II and Hitler's Germany remain over the horizon. For me, this creates a fascinating autobiographical "snap shot".

Churchill describes his early life of high adventure. He combined a thirst for adventure with an interest and aptitude for writing. While still a young soldier, he wrote for a newspaper. He left the army and continued as

a correspondent. He was taken prisoner in South Africa and escaped. Winston Churchill was a celebrity by the time he was in his mid 20s. After achieving fame in his twenties, he came to America to speak and met an elderly Mark Twain.

All of this is captured in a very artistic writing style. I found all of this fascinating. I purchased an audiobook along with a Kindle reading edition. I listened to the audiobook while commuting instead of listening to the radio. I memorized passages that I need to reread later. I fell this helps both my listening and memory skills. The audiobook was excellent. My copy was narrated by Fredrick Davidson.

This was an excellent reading experience. I am very grateful to have read this fine work. Thank You...

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Very much worth reading. The more the world changes, the more it remains the same!

By Paul G. Schreiber

Good Old Winston, "Winnie" to his closest friends - at his very best as writer and politician. Royalist by close lineage, and pragmatist politician by personal confident accomplishment, you can just sense his tongue pushing out the cheek as he nostalgically reminisces about his time as a Victorian British Sandhurst officer. Silently, the gesture poses the pregnant question to the reader of a later time: Has your generation really improved the world of your time.

As I read, memory casts back to my dear mother who was born into that same time, a wealthy Mennonite, German conscientious objector and royalist herself, who, nevertheless, merited the golden National Socialist (Nazi) party badge because she believed in Hitler as the "savior" of the overstressed Germany of her time. (see *American By Choice - From WWII Ashes to Celebration of Principle* - Amazon Kindle, May 14, 2014) Yet, she vehemently objected to the German press maligning W. Churchill on the grounds that Britain would be perfectly justified to equally malign A. Hitler. Their generation certainly imposed their will on their time, but no more or no less benevolently than ours.

The book vividly conveys life lived as a privileged member of white society, so privileged was that life that, even as a soldier, he could pull the necessary strings to be, or not to be sent to a particular theater of war, naturally, always accompanied by his servants.

I had hoped for a more honest description of the inhuman methods used by Great Britain to finally win the Boer War. Churchill admits to them, but skips over the detail.

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