

# The Fringes of Power: 10 Downing Street Diaries, 1939-1955

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The diaries of Winston Churchill's private secretary from 1941 to 1945 and from 1951 to 1955 provides a unique view of World War II, of Churchill's wartime activities and those of his personal staff

Colville, who was private secretary to Churchill, 1940-1945 and 1951-1955, and to Attlee and the then Princess Elizabeth in the intervening period, may have been at the fringes of power during this time but he had a remarkable view of its center, and in the latter years, when the great man had become "more like Buddha than Achilles," was in it. A sharp observer with an independent mind, a significant presence at international banquets and conferences, Churchill's righthand man, and no mean penman, Colville (*Footprints in Time, The Churchillians*) records his insider's impressions of world events, of Britain's top leaders, civilian and military, and, in particular, of Churchill, whose pugnacity, wit and political wisdom, along with his irascibility and inconsiderateness (offset, however, by generosity), he captures with Boswellian aplomb. Several strokes in the Churchill portrait come as a surprise: his loyalty to Chamberlain, for example; his lack of vindictiveness toward the Germans; his private view of Eisenhower; his desperate efforts to end the Cold War before leaving office; his distrust of Eden. This is one of the most interesting and readable of the major diaries of World War II and its aftermath. Photos. Foreign rights: Georges Borchardt. November 11

Copyright 1985 Reed Business Information, Inc. When Colville was a young diplomat assigned to 10 Downing Street as a private secretary, he began a diary that he kept, with increasing gaps, through Chamberlain's last year and through two stints with Churchill, 1940-45 and 1951-55. He also served as a secretary to the then Princess Elizabeth for two years. For this publication, he has pruned personal trivia and added narrative and explanatory matter. Since the diaries have already been mined both for Colville's other writings and for Martin Gilbert's multivolume Churchill biography, there are few surprises, but this gives a vivid picture of Churchill at work, with interesting sidelights on events and people. Recommended for research collections; optional for others, but period buffs will enjoy it. Nancy C. Cridland, Indiana Univ. Libs., Bloomington

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World War II in Europe, Africa, and the Americas, with General Sources. This volume discusses the best and most enduring literature of World War II years, incorporating all aspects from military and political history to social and cultural history.

□ □ □ □ □ . New York : Viking , 1978 . Gehlen , Reinhard . The Service : The Memoirs of General Reinhard Gehlen . New York : World , 1972 . Goebbels , Joseph . The Goebbels Diaries , 1942-1943 . Ed . and trans . Louis Lochner . "