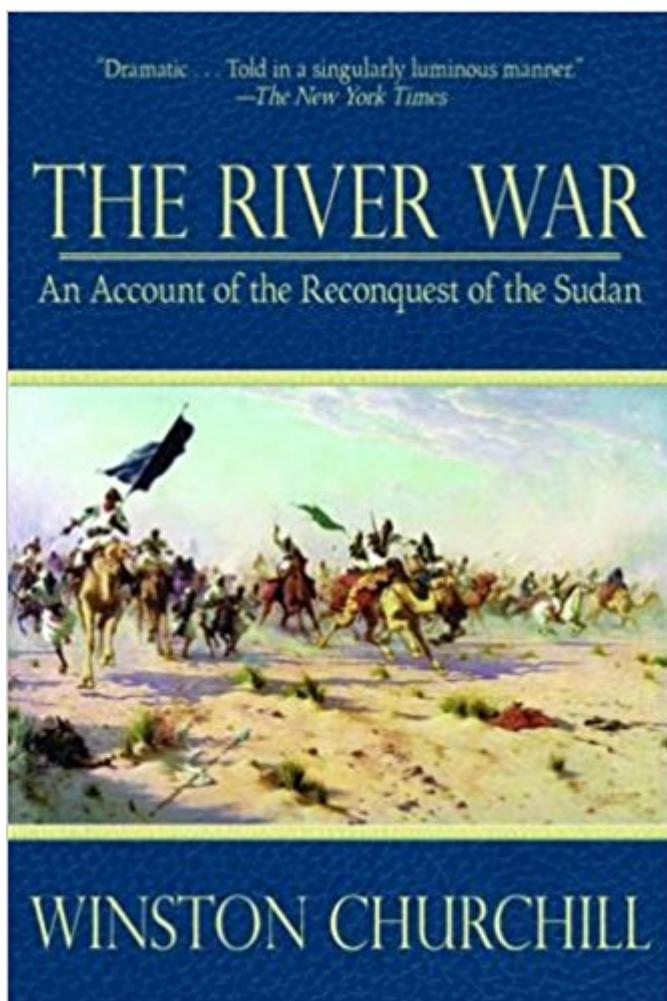


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The River War: An Account Of The Reconquest Of The Sudan



Synopsis

First published in 1899 and revised for the 1902 edition by its author Winston Churchill, this history of the River War in Sudan vividly chronicles the military campaign that altered the destinies of England, Egypt, and the Arabian peoples in northeast Africa. More by accident than design, in Churchill's view, England was drawn into the affairs of Egypt in the 1880s, for at the same historical moment that the English, under Lord Cromer, were granted virtually sovereign power to establish a sound government in Egypt and to stimulate its national economy, the Mahdi rebelled in the Egyptian suzerainty of Sudan. Violence and bloodshed ensued, and the English soon found themselves embroiled alongside their Egyptian ally in a bitter conflict with the fiercely nationalistic Mahdi—a conflict that culminated in the massacre of General Charles Gordon at Khartoum and the emergence of the fanatical regime known as the Dervish Empire. In this illuminating volume, Churchill not only dramatically relates the catastrophic events in Sudan's 1880s, but also places them in the context of Sudanese history. So it is that his subsequent account of the reconquest and pacification of Sudan by a mixed Anglo-Egyptian force under the command of Sir Herbert Kitchener weds history to destiny, as the outcome of the River War for decades would link Great Britain to the uneasy future of Egypt and Sudan.

Book Information

Paperback: 400 pages

Publisher: Skyhorse Publishing; 1 edition (January 24, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1620874768

ISBN-13: 978-1620874769

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 5.6 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 42 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #315,041 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #21 in Books > History > Africa > Sudan #92 in Books > History > Africa > North Africa #123 in Books > History > Africa > Egypt

Customer Reviews

Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965) was prime minister of Great Britain during World War I. Throughout his long and distinguished political career, his writing was prolific. Churchill received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1953.

Churchill gives a great account of Kitchner's expedition up the Nile and the battle that followed. He's a fine writer and as a participant, provides first hand accounts of the battle. The book also has many parallels to current events, showing how the British dealt with Islamic fundamentalism over 100 years ago.

Sir Winston Churchill's writing style is easy to read. He tells it like it was. "The River War" is about Africa and the Upper Nile region in the late 1800's. While the cowboys were winning the American West, there were wars going on along the Nile that were vast in scope and that presaged the events now in progress in East Africa. The wars are a part of British History and are about the peoples of Africa and their character and their courage. This book is well worth reading.

I had watched the movie Khartoum many years ago with Charlton Heston. This book covers the events leading up to and after that event. Winston Churchill speaks from his own experience as a young officer that was involved in the final acts of this event in history. Well put together and an eerie view of our present situation in the middle east.

A masterly account of a perhaps forgotten period of history, a time when the British Empire was still a reality and Britain was engaged in defending it. Streets and other features of our towns bearing the name of General Gordon bear testimony to this campaign, but who remembers their origin now? Khartoum and the Sudan remain an inhospitable part of the world, and Churchill's observations on Islam are still relevant.

A fantastic use of the English language to give a detailed description of a war of the late 1800s in which Churchill participated. He wrote this detailed war story in longhand. The only criticism is the lack of maps which would make it perfect. It should be read (with map in hand) by anyone who want to understand today's conflicts in Sudan with jihad. Churchill was a great author as well as a statesman who led Britain during WWII. Reading this made me pick up "The Last Lion" Manchester and Reid's wonderful biography of Churchill during that war and until he died.

Very few people are familiar with this aspect of history. The movie "Khartoum, Charlton Heston", was where it began. Winston Churchill does an excellent job of bringing this significant period in history to life. What an epic chapter in the history of man. And it wasn't that long ago. We were involved in

the Spanish-American war at the time so it was back page for most Americans. Nevertheless, It is an eyeopener regarding The Arabs, Muslims, slavery, and many other contemporary issues.

The book describes the complex social and economic situation prevailing in Sudan and Egypt at the end of the 19 century and the complex matrix of foreign interests in the area. It presents a picture of the competing activities of foreign countries in the region and the military actions developed by Egyptians and British legions against local groups of interest throughout northern and southern Sudan. It shows also the resulting infrastructure of necessary work develop to support military actions.

Churchill's account of this small part of the ongoing war with Islam is nothing short of spectacular. The politics that led to the massacre in Khartoum, the logistics miracles wrought by the Brits to overcome the obstacles, and the final climactic fight that put an end to the Mahdi's claims of immortality are all here in vivid detail. The modern parallels are eye opening. It's a good read. My advice is to get an atlas of Africa to refer to, because you'll be looking for one before you get out of the first chapter.

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