Radio Times

THE FUNERAL
OF
SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL
SATURDAY, JANUARY 30
THE STATE FUNERAL
OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
Sir Winston Churchill
K.G., O.M., C.H.

9.30 The scene outside Westminster Hall and along the processional route to St. Paul’s Cathedral

11.0 Service in St. Paul’s Cathedral

11.50 Procession leaves St. Paul’s and proceeds to Tower Hill

12.50 The scene on the River Thames from the Tower of London to the Royal Festival Hall

12.52 The Royal Air Force Fly-Past

1.5 The arrival at the Festival Hall pier and procession to Waterloo Station

1.25 The Special Train leaves London

See pages 2 and 3 for the Processional Route and pages 4 and 5 for the Order of Service

Descriptions by BBC radio commentators
RAYMOND BAXTER, ROBERT HUDSON
AUDREY RUSSELL, JOHN SNAGGE
and FRANK WILLIS of the
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

The events and ceremonies of the day will be described and broadcast in the Third Network. The Service will also be broadcast in the Home Service and Light Programme

IN THE HOME SERVICE ONLY

3.45 Prayers at the time of the burial
THE STATE FUNERAL OF
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
Sir Winston Churchill
K.G., O.M., C.H.

From 9.20 a.m. BBC-1 will give full coverage to the Procession from Westminster Hall to St. Paul’s Cathedral, the Service, and the journey up the Thames from Tower Pier to Waterloo Station.

9.45
The cortège leaves Westminster Hall
For Processional Route see pages 2 and 3

10.13
The Foreign Heads of State and Royal Representatives arrive at St. Paul’s.

10.23
Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother and other members of the Royal Family arrive at St. Paul’s.

10.28
The Lord Mayor of London arrives at St. Paul’s.

10.35
Her Majesty THE QUEEN and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh arrive at St. Paul’s.

10.45
The cortège arrives at St. Paul’s.

11.0
THE SERVICE
The Order of Service is on pages 4 and 5

11.50
The cortège leaves St. Paul’s.

12.25
The cortège arrives at Tower Hill.

12.52
The Royal Air Force Fly-Past

1.5
The river cortège arrives at the Festival Hall pier.

1.20
The motor cortège arrives at Waterloo Station

1.25
The special train departs from Waterloo

COMMENTATOR, RICHARD DIMBLEBY

Readers will realise that this edition of Radio Times went to press immediately after the death of Sir Winston Churchill. Television programmes planned for this day have had to be changed and those for the rest of the day will be announced on the screen. The evening transmissions will include a ninety-minute edited recording of the Funeral Procession and the Service in St. Paul’s Cathedral.
The Funeral Procession through London and the Service in St. Paul's Cathedral will be followed by BBC television and radio. The Procession will leave St. Stephen's Hall in the Palace of Westminster, where Sir Winston will lie in State, at 9.45 a.m. and arrive at St. Paul's at 10.45. After the Service the cortege will proceed to Tower Pier for the journey by river to Festival Hall Pier and thence by road to Waterloo Station.

From Waterloo Station Sir Winston's body will be taken to Bladon, near Blenheim Palace, his birthplace, and there in the quiet churchyard Sir Winston will be laid to rest among his family.
The Procession through London and the Funeral Service will be covered by BBC-1 and the Third Network from 9.20 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. The Service will also be broadcast in the Home and Light Programme (11.00 a.m. to 11.30).
AT REST IN BLADON

Surely he could have been buried in Westminster Abbey or St. Paul’s. This question has been asked many times in the past day or two, since it became known that Sir Winston Churchill would be laid to rest in an unknown churchyard in a village called Bladon, “not far from Oxford.” The inference was, perhaps, that the great man was being belittled—that he was deserved, but was not recording, the highest honours that the country could give him.

Of course this is not so. It was Churchill himself who chose Bladon, the churchyard outside the walls of Blenheim Palace where he was born. According to one story—though there are so many Churchill stories that it is difficult to separate the true from the apocryphal—as he said, “I don’t want to be buried in Westminster Abbey; there are too many people lying there already that I don’t like.”

His subsequent approval of Bladon was natural enough. It is here that the Spencer-Churchills lie, within sight of the huge palace where the head of the family lives as Duke of Marlborough. The Dukes are buried in the Palace; the others, the Dukes among them, are buried in modest simplicity just outside the west door of Bladon Church. This is accepted in the family, and the sexton of Bladon was not surprised a few years ago when Churchill, walking round the churchyard while visiting Blenheim, tapped an empty plot of earth with his stick, saying, “This is my place, here.”

Though there is nothing unusual about Sir Winston Churchill’s connection with Blenheim and the Marlboroughs, his father, Lord Randolph Churchill, being the third son of the seventh Duke of Marlborough, the circumstances of his birth at the Palace were anything but normal. His mother, the American Jennie Jerome, daughter of the proprietor of the New York Times, was a woman of energy and spirit as well as beauty, and she did not allow pregnancy to be for her the crippling, embarrassing handicap so bravely suffered by women ninety years ago. Knowing that her child was due in six weeks, she did not let this deter her from joining a shooting party in the grounds of Blenheim on a November day in 1874.

Suddenly she was seized with pain and was taken hurriedly back to the Palace. The situation was obvious and imminent. She was helped to a little ground-floor room just off the huge entrance hall, and there, on November 30, six weeks before his time, Winston was born. The room is preserved today as a little museum, with the same brass bedstead, a lock of his reddish hair, baby hair, and his miniature vest.

Thus it was that in later years Winston Churchill would return to Blenheim, the most majestic of all the stately homes. He would arrive at Handborough station by train from Paddington and make his way as best he could to the Blenheim estate. On one occasion at least, within the memory of an old resident, he found the Palace estate’s cart in the station yard and happily secured a lift “up to the house” on the tail-board.

It is to this same station—very little changed, and likely to be closed soon to passengers—that the special train from London will bring the coffin this afternoon and there, by the large booking-office door—last used by the German Emperor on a visit to Blenheim—a motor brougham will be waiting. A mile or two down the road is Bladon, past the back gates to the Palace that the estate cart took all those years ago.

Bladon is not a particularly pretty village. It suggests the stone-built charm of the Cotswolds without having really achieved it. Nor has its church any great claim to beauty or antiquity. It was built 150 years ago to replace a much older church, the then Duke of Marlborough contributing towards the cost. Inside, it is plain and simple in the extreme.

The churchyard is like a gently sloping field, with a stone wall bounding it, and houses close by. The Spencer-Churchill graves lie by the church, on the right of the main path. They are as unostentatious as the church and the village. Only the grave of Churchill’s father, Lord Randolph, has a headstone of any size and a heavy, rusting chain surrounding the plot. Next to it lies Lady Jennie, his mother, and close at hand his brother John Strange Spencer-Churchill, who died in 1947, and his cousin, Ivor Charles Spencer-Churchill. The grave of Mary, Duchess of Marlborough, who died only three years ago, is farther away by the churchyard wall. The last burial space but one in the Spencer-Churchill area is occupied by a newly dug grave still roughly covered by replaced turf. It was here that they buried the lovely Consuelo Vanderbilt, American-born eighth Duchess of Marlborough and mother of the present Duke, only a few weeks ago.

So the Spencer-Churchills lie together as a family in death, and the last space is now to be given to the most illustrious of them all. Bladon and its church may not be particularly beautiful, but it has peace and simplicity. It seems entirely natural that a great man should be brought here after the sombre splendours of the day are over, to lie not only with his family but with the people of Bladon already here and just as close to him—John Adams, Percy Merry, William Partlett, and the others. We may be sure that for generations ahead travellers who seek the memorial to this splendid figure of our history will find it here at the side of the path in an English country churchyard.

RICHARD DONSKERBY

In the shadow of the church tower is the last resting place of Sir Winston, among the graves of his family.