

Sir Winston Churchill: The greatest Briton?

1945-1951 Writing history: video transcript

It was not number 10 Downing Street and the role was unfamiliar and uncomfortable. For the first time in his long parliamentary career he was the Leader of the Opposition.

When the time came to restore the House of Commons ruined by German bombs Mr Atlee was Prime Minister. Churchill, standing beside him, to see the stone laid must have remembered his proud vow 7 years earlier given among the smoking ruin: 'It must be rebuilt just as it was'.

Out of office he dreamt again of a united Europe. He was one of the progenitors of the idea of a restored Europe, willing and able to act, supplying to the world its own brand of wisdom.

Churchill's voice:

It is not a movement of parties but a movement of people. And we must endeavour by patient and faithful service to prepare for the day when there will be an effective world government resting upon the main groupings of mankind. I hope to see a Europe where men of every country will think as much of being a European as belonging to their native lands.

Extract from BBC obituary of Churchill narrated by Richard Dimbleby