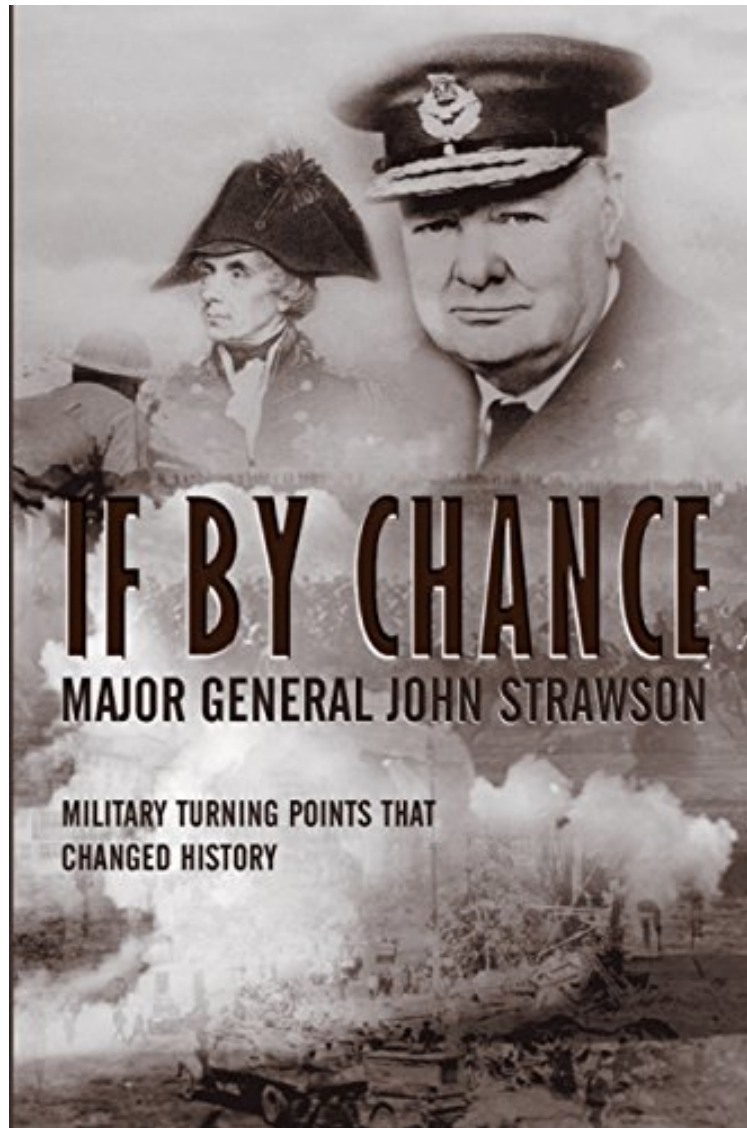


[Mobile book] If By Chance: Military Turning Points that Changed History (English Edition)

If By Chance: Military Turning Points that Changed History (English Edition)

Von Major General John Strawson
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Von Major General John Strawson : If By Chance: Military Turning Points that Changed History (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised If By Chance: Military Turning Points that Changed History (English Edition):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A good introduction to the topicVon A. BirkigtTo begin with, I liked this book. Written by an experienced soldier who fought

under both competent and incompetent leadership in the second world war, it is telling the story of quite a few big "Ifs" which, had the dices fallen otherwise, would have changed history (and the face of the world as we know it) profoundly. From the Battle of St. Vincent to the race for Berlin (that never was) he tells of missed opportunities, strategic lessons to be learned and the political and military consequences that might (or might not) have developed, and spices them with quotes from the wealth of his reading. Both eloquent and concise, the author points out how narrow the margin was between success and failure. What the book is lacking, though, is the in-depth analysis of why certain decisions were taken, particularly on the Allied side in World War Two (the German side usually cut short to "It was Hitler's fault"). I would have liked to learn more on why the assault on Italy had to become the "bloody, sloggish match" it became, rather than a quick rolling-up of the German southern front. Was it just blundering by the Allied commander, or did it happen with an agenda that today it should be possible to talk about? The final chapter of the book turns away from the scheme established for the previous ones in that it doesn't focus on one particular battle or theater of a war. It kind of summarizes the effect of chance on a wide variety of military operations. I lost count of them but they range from the battle of Agincourt through the siege of Khartoum and Gallipoli to his very personal experiences of the Italian campaign of 1944. Each of these would have deserved a dedicated chapter, but their seemingly haphazard arrangement tells of the author's objective to illustrate how chance - in the form of circumstances or personal or characterly shortcomings of the acting persons - affects the outcome of a battle or campaign. What I found strange is the fact that this chapter was set at the end of the book, like an epilogue, when it would have belonged at the start of it, the in-detail descriptions set as proofs for his introductory statements on luck and competent leadership (and the absence of it.) All in all an interesting book for military historians. There may be better ones on individual topics, but for the casual reader this is a good introduction to the subject of "what ifs".

Kurzbeschreibung Could Napoleon have won the battle of Waterloo? And what would have happened if he had? Or suppose Nelson had not destroyed the French fleet at Aboukir, would Napoleon have conquered India and become Emperor of the East? What if Hitler had not halted his panzer forces before Dunkirk and had entrapped the entire British Expeditionary Force? How would Churchill have then denied the Wehrmacht? If by chance Hitler had been assassinated in 1944 and the German General Staff taken control, would there have been a totally different kind of surrender? In examining these and other contingencies, Major General Strawson brings his experience of command in war and his skill as a military historian to present us with an enthralling catalogue of chance and speculation, while emphasising how profoundly the character of commanders influenced events and how events affected their character. Werbetext A fascinating look at how key military decisions have shaped the world - and what might have happened had they been different. Kurzbeschreibung Could Napoleon have won the battle of Waterloo? And what would have happened if he had? Or suppose Nelson had not destroyed the French fleet at Aboukir, would Napoleon have conquered India and become Emperor of the East? What if Hitler had not halted his panzer forces before Dunkirk and had entrapped the entire British Expeditionary Force? How would Churchill have then denied the Wehrmacht? If by chance Hitler had been assassinated in 1944 and the German General Staff taken control, would there have been a totally different kind of surrender? In examining these and other contingencies, Major General Strawson brings his experience of command in war and his skill as a military historian to present us with an enthralling catalogue of chance and speculation, while emphasising how profoundly the character of commanders influenced events and how events affected their character.