



# The Winter Prince

*Cheryl Sawyer*

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## **The Winter Prince** Cheryl Sawyer

A new novel of love and war set in 17th-century England-from the acclaimed author of *The Code of Love*.

*Praised for her "lavish use of history...and vividly detailed settings,"\* Cheryl Sawyer sweeps readers back to 17th-century England at the time of the Civil War, where a royal duchess and a warrior prince fight to save a riven kingdom.*

Mary Villiers, Duchess of Richmond and Lennox, is a ravishing beauty raised as the adopted daughter of Charles I of England. In 1642 she is shocked to find herself opposed to her king when he decides to declare war on Parliament and therefore on his own people. Mary embarks on a dangerous quest to help save the throne of England for its rightful monarch, but first she'll tangle with the king's charismatic nephew, Prince Rupert of the Rhine.

## **The Winter Prince Details**

Date : Published April 3rd 2007 by NAL Trade

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Author : Cheryl Sawyer

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## From Reader Review The Winter Prince for online ebook

### L. (Vacation All I Ever Wanted) says

I discovered the correct way to read this story is to skip over the romance and Mary's parts and stick with Prince Rupert and the war. This doesn't make it a better book but it is more bearable.

1.5 stars.

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### Anthony Kizer says

With the 17th century of England as its setting, there is an immense amount of information to work with. I think this book does a satisfying job at portraying some of the more subtle intrigue there was during that time period. I liked to see the characters in this novel trying to solve their problems emotionally and physically when there are tens of thousands of lives that would be at stake, and to the lengths with which the characters will go to try and save what they believe is right. I would give it a 3.5 if i could. I got this book for free through Endeavour Press for this review.

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### Fredrick Danysh says

In this fictional account of the beginning of the English Civil War which began in 1642, Charles I clashes with Parliament and the conflict begins. The story is viewed through the eyes of a female member of the Stuart family. I like that a listing of source documents was included even though The Winter Prince is historical fiction. It was an easy and enjoyable read. This was a free review copy provided by the author and the publisher.

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### Tina Heathcliff says

My rating of this book may be a little bit biased because prince Rupert is one of my favorite historical characters. Sometimes its hard to believe that so many events could be packed into one lifetime. When we take into account that by the time Rupert was in his early 20s, he was already one of the most important military leaders of the royalist cause. He was what we now often call the prototype of a hero. Its known fact, that he and Mary Villiers had grown very close, how close, thats up to our imagination to decide. I loved their relationship hey have had in the book. Friendship developing into a secret platonic admiration, that could never be. Their love was tragic because they were never meant to be together...In my opinion their clean romance, stolen kisses, hugs, glances across the room,etc were enough, fitting for the kind of love, the destiny they have had.SPOILER The only "complaint" I have is this-its known that Marys husband died in 1655, about 10 years after the events described in this book. It would have been interesting if the author added her reasons why Rupert and Mary didnt marry eventually after she was widowed. END OF SPOILER All in all, its a great read, especially if you are interested in British history of 17th century. The romance is clean, no graphic content. The historical facts are accurate, especially the description of battles is very detailed and its great to follow it with Charles Spencers book Prince Rupert:Last Cavalier, where you can find even more detailed descriptions and maps.

## Cheryl says

Preface - I started this and then just couldn't get through it so set it aside for awhile and then forged ahead. I debated between 3 and 4 stars but settled on 3; not because it wasn't a good book because it was, but ... for me it crossed the description versus dialogue line. The history in this is incredible, well-researched and well described. There are pages and pages and pages of battle descriptions which were just too much for me. Instead of helping to solidify Rupert's character they actually interrupted the overall flow of the book. About half way through the book I ended up skipping pages and pages and pages of it looking for something else interesting to read.

I do not think historical fiction writers should sacrifice fact for fluff but there is a balance that the best writers do with elegance (Elizabeth Chadwick, Susan Higginbotham, Anne Easter Smith, etc.).

I will definitely look for more from Cheryl Sawyer.

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## Megan says

DNF at 43%.

This started out strongly, and I haven't read many (if any) novels about the English Civil War, so I was keen to give this one a try. I also wasn't familiar with many of the historical characters, besides Charles I and Henrietta Maria, and figured that this would be a good chance to learn a bit about a period I know little about.

Unfortunately though, once the romance started up between Mary, Duchess of Richmond, and Prince Rupert, things went downhill for me. The romantic feelings felt a bit too contrived and fake and over-the-top, and - though initially Mary insisted on keeping Rupert at arms length - too much like instalove for me to really be okay with it. Besides the interludes with Rupert off at war around England, it felt very much like the characters were suddenly reduced to nothing more than their romance, and I soon lost interest.

This one just didn't wasn't for me, it seems.

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## Sue Smith says

Fascinating story about two of England's unsung valiant supporters at a time of great chaos and uncertainty. Cheryl Sawyer writes with great conviction and honesty. I enjoyed the story and it trully felt like you were able to glimpse into the past. Political intrigue and jockeying to rival a down right dirty hockey game!

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## Kathy Cohen says

The Winter Prince is about Prince Rupert of the Rhine, the son of Elizabeth of Bohemia (herself the daughter of James I) and thus the nephew of Charles I. From a young age Rupert has been a soldier, and at the age of

23 he comes to the aid of his uncle Charles at the beginning of the first English Civil War. Rupert is a larger than life character (literally--he was 6'4"), handsome, impetuous, charming. The author uses the rumored love affair between him and Mary Villiers, Duchess of Richmond and Lennox, to advance the story line about the early conflicts in the war. There is quite a bit of military description and political intrigue, as well as the relationship between Mary and her husband James. The book ends shortly after the Battle of Marston Moor. I like to find portraits of real historical people in novels, and I recently ran across Van Dyck's portrait of the young James, Duke of Richmond and Lennox in all his cavalier finery. This is the first book in a trilogy about this time in English history. I have already read the second one, "Farewell, Cavaliers," which is told from a parliamentarian's perspective. For those who like historical novels.

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### **Lady of the Lake says**

It took me YEÀRS to finish this book!

Seriously years!

I started this story many years ago and stopped didn't pick it up again until the following summer...again didn't finish another year went by...each time I would pick this up again I would go back a chapter or so from where I stopped...finally finished it. This all happened because I would leave it at the lake house each summer.

By spacing it out SOOOO MUCH I wasn't

Overwhelmed by the battle scenes but was able

To enjoy it all. (plus being an army wife I enjoy a story heavy

On the battle scenes especially well done scenes as in. Winter Prince)

I have quite a Few books that are Summer only books and have been oddly spaced out...its like catching up with old Friends this way!

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### **Elizabeth says**

I was really disappointed with this one as it seemed like something I would enjoy but it was just so boring.

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### **Dangermousie says**

Rupert of the Rhine:

Mary Villiers:

I confess I was all over this book the moment I found out it was equal parts about Prince Rupert of the Rhine fighting for Charles I in the English Civil War and his supposed affair with Mary Villiers, Duchess of Richmond. I have always had a strong interest in that time period and an unabashed historical crush on Rupert, whose life reads so wildly improbable that it should be fiction (the man was a soldier, pirate, inventor, artist and God knows what else besides).

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And I was not disappointed - this is well-written, with well fleshed-out characters (I ended up liking the complicated, smart Mary immensely, even as I was getting frustrated with her) and an underlying minor beat throughout - as history shows, neither the love affair nor defense of Charles I ended well, after all.

I still like Margaret Irwin's 'The Stranger Prince' more, as far as novels about Rupert are concerned, but this was a very good read.

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### **James Glass says**

The year is 1642. Trouble is on the horizon, and Mary Villiers, though not a political player, is part of Charles's inner circle and about to become very involved in the English Civil War, even as she tries to prevent it.

When Prince Rupert of Rhine comes back to England, potentially to lead Charles's armies, Mary initially dislikes him. He's at odds with her goal of preventing the army. However, once she accepts that war is inevitable, she slowly warms to him...

Not only does Rupert believe war is the only way to bring parliament to heel, his flirtatious manner with Mary soon has the king's enemies whispering about a scandalous affair. Mary loves her husband, but Mary still finds herself captivated by sexy Rupert. Although she still loves her husband, there's no passion.

As the battle of civil war rages on, so does the passion between Mary and Rupert. Can Rupert and Mary balance their other relationships?

Sweeping battle scenes, witty conversation, and declarations of true love will pull a reader into the heart of this Civil War.

'The Winter Prince' is a memorable saga, moving across England, and even across the ocean, to illustrate the course of the war and the people fighting. Although the book starts out slow, the heat of passion between Mary and Rupert, along with the heated battles between King Charles I, his parliament, and a raging civil war provides a crafted, history-rich plot with an intriguing and dangerous romance.

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### **Michele Martell says**

England's 17th Century Civil War: The Winter Prince

This book provided an interesting perspective into the civil war between King Charles I and Parliament in the mid-17th century. The story focuses on the relationship between Mary Villiers, the Duchess of Richmond, and Prince Rupert, who was a Lancelot to King Charles. I enjoyed this historical novel which features lesser known historical figures (to me, at any rate) than the Tudors. The palace intrigues, the politics and the battles are vividly portrayed. Mary, the consummate royal insider, balances the tension between supporting her king and trying to stop the civil war that is destroying her country, while resisting the love Rupert offers her in order to be faithful to her husband.

Rupert is a fascinating character and I'd love to explore more of his history.

Overall, a solid historical read and worth the time.

## Fay D says

### Wow

Never have I enjoyed a book with so much military detail entwined with the social aspects of court and it's followers. The detail is excellent and draws you in without being a boring history lesson. descriptive writing at its best. Highly recommend

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## Anita says

As a 17th Century enthusiast and having just written my third book on the era, I was very excited to read this novel of Mary Villiers, the only daughter of Charles I's assassinated favourite Duke of Buckingham has been treated like a Royal child all her life. Rich, beautiful and spoiled, Mary is destined to make marriages of state, and at twenty her second husband is James Stuart, Duke of Richmond. A staunch royalist, Mary toys with treason by visiting Lord Essex and tells him she disagrees with King Charles' actions in declaring war on his Parliament and giving up London at the beginning of the English Civil War.

Mary met Prince Rupert when she was younger and doesn't appear to have been very impressed with the arrogant young nephew of King Charles. When they meet again, she reminds him that she teases everyone, but their attraction is mutual and devastating. Mary is a loyal and dutiful wife, and thus she agrees to be Rupert's friend, when he would like to take their liaison much further.

The war takes Rupert off into dangerous territory, leaving Mary to fret and worry about the man she admits only to herself she is in love with. Our hero and heroine can only meet every few months, and largely at the exiled Court in Oxford or on Queen Henrietta's forays into Europe in search of funds and support for her husband's cause. This leaves the lovelorn Rupert and guilt-ridden Mary to endure heartfelt looks and regretful sighs and the 'will they won't they' which gets tedious after a while. To the author's credit, Rupert and Mary's love affair was mostly gossip and speculation at the time, so to give them a happy ending was out of the question.

Mary and Rupert are doomed to show their affection in cryptic ways, like when Rupert sends her a book of poems with pinpricks in the pages to show her which lines he wants her to read, or contrived meetings – like their 'accidental' tryst in a secret tunnel beneath Merton College which had been undiscovered for two hundred years.

Cheryl Sawyer is an accomplished writer and she delves into the minds of her characters in fluid, emotive prose that fits the 1640's beautifully. Her in-depth accounts of the conflicts, the victories, private ambitions and characters of the players is exemplary. She portrays the King and Queen faithfully, as proud, vain, egomaniacs without the intellectual capacity to realise that some compromise would have saved them. The casual dismissal of their subject's lives to obtain their own ambitions is staggering, but plays excellently into the 'Divine Right of Kings' philosophy that was Charles I's downfall.

For anyone interested in the English Civil Wars, this is a fabulous account, but I also feel Ms Sawyer has benefitted Mary with all the virtues and none of the faults of a girl raised as a princess.

This novel also gives rise to the question, 'How much history should an historical novel contain?' In this

case too much as I felt the military accounts were more like a textbook in places and in order to stick to facts, Rupert and Mary's 'affair' was tenuous and there wasn't much to work with.

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