



The Boer War 1899-1902: Ladysmith, Megersfontein, Spion Kop, Kimberley and Mafeking (Despatches from the Front)

John Grehan, Martin Mace

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Fought between the British Empire and the two independent Boer republics, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic, the First Boer War (1880–1881) was a rebellion by the Boers (farmers) against British rule in the Transvaal that re-established their independence. The engagements that it involved, such as they were, were small and involved few casualties. More commonly referred to as just the Boer War, the Second Boer War (1899–1902), by contrast, was a lengthy conflict involving large numbers of troops from many British possessions (up to as many as 500,000 men), which ended with the conversion of the Boer republics into British colonies. The British defeated the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, first in open warfare and then in a long and bitter guerrilla campaign. British losses were high due to both disease and combat. It was also the war conflict which saw Winston Churchill first achieve household fame. The war had a lasting effect on the region and on British domestic politics. For Britain, the Boer War was the longest, the most expensive (£200 million), and the bloodiest conflict between 1815 and 1914, lasting three months longer and resulting in higher British casualties than the Crimean War. This unique collection of original documents will prove to be an invaluable resource for historians, students and all those interested in what was one of the most significant periods in British military history.

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