



A Military History of Modern South Africa

Ian van der Waag

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The twentieth century has been one of enduring, rapid and fundamental social and political change. In southern Africa, innumerable wars, rebellions, uprisings and protests have marked the integration, disintegration and then reintegration of both society and subcontinent during this period.

The century started with a brief but total war. Less than ten years later victorious Britain brought the conquered Boer republic, and the Cape and Natal colonies, together into the Union of South Africa. And the military of this early creation served not only in all of the major wars of the twentieth century, but also in a number of regional struggles: rebellion on the part of Afrikaner nationalists, industrial unrest fanned by syndicalists, and uprisings conducted chiefly but not exclusively by disenfranchised black South Africans.

The century ended as it started, with a war. But this was a limited war, a flashpoint of the Cold War, which embraced more than just the sub-continent and lasted a long, twenty-three years. Regrettable actions, typical of unconventional warfare, were made by all parties in the struggle. The first of its kind, *A Military History of Modern South Africa* provides an overview of South African military history from 1899 to 2000. Focusing on the campaigns and battles, it also brings discussion on the evolving military policy and the development of the South African military as an institution into a single volume. Ian van der Waag is an associate professor and chair of the Department of Military History in the Faculty of Military Sciences, Stellenbosch University. A transnational historian, he has published extensively on imperial and colonial defence, South Africa's wars of the twentieth century, and the mutual, reciprocal impacts between war and South African society.

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