



# A brief history of the Second Boer War

*Christian Weckenmann*

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Seminar paper from the year 2007 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Culture and Applied Geography, grade: 1,0, University of Heidelberg (Anglistisches Seminar), course: Cultural Studies: History of British Institutions Part II, language: English, abstract: "Take a community of Dutchmen of the type of those who defended themselves for fifty years against all the power of Spain at a time when Spain was the greatest power in the world. Intermix with them a strain of those inflexible French Huguenots who gave up home and fortune and left their country for ever at the time of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The product must obviously be one of the most rugged, virile, unconquerable races ever seen upon earth. Take this formidable people and train them for seven generations in constant warfare against savage men and ferocious beasts, in circumstances under which no weakling could survive, place them so that they acquire exceptional skill with weapons and in horsemanship, give them a country which is eminently suited to the tactics of the huntsman, the marksman, and the rider. Then, finally, put a finer temper upon their military qualities by a dour fatalistic Old Testament religion and an ardent and consuming patriotism. Combine all these qualities and all these impulses in one individual, and you have the modern Boer - the most formidable antagonist who ever crossed the path of Imperial Britain. Our military history has largely consisted in our conflicts with France, but Napoleon and all his veterans have never treated us so roughly as these hard-bitten farmers with their ancient theology and their inconveniently modern rifles." 1

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, author of the Sherlock Holmes detective stories, wrote two volumes about the Boer War. He was fascinated by the struggle of this people, called the Boers, against, what was then, the most powerful nation in the world. And he was by no means left all on his own with his keen interest in this war.

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