

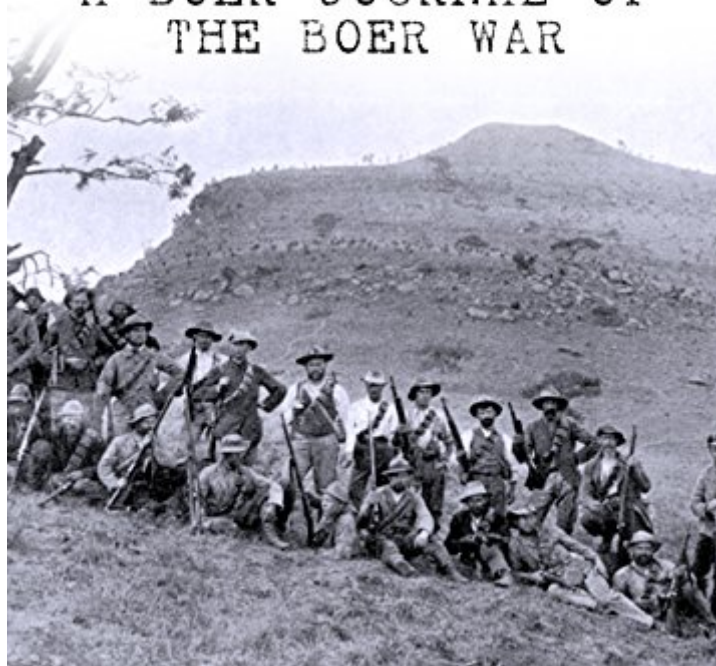
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Commando: A Boer Journal Of The Boer War

DENEYS REITZ

COMMANDO

A BOER JOURNAL OF
THE BOER WAR



Synopsis

Today the word *commando* conjures a picture of daring special forces raids, but originally it was the Boer word for a mobile column of fighting men. This is the account of one such fighting man. Aged just seventeen Deneys Reitz, son of the ex-President of the Orange Free State and then State Secretary of the South African Republic, took up his rifle and joined the Boer Army. It was 1899, and tensions between Great Britain and the Transvaal Republic and Orange Free State had reached boiling point. From their initial strikes into Natal to the surge of British troops and the transition to bloody guerrilla warfare, through luck and family ties Reitz was present at most of the major events. Not published until 1929, *Commando* remains one of the most unique and important pieces of literature about the conflict. J. C. Smuts summed it up best in his preface: "Wars pass, but the human soul endures; the interest is not so much in the war as in the human experience behind it. This book tells the simple straightforward story of what the Boer War meant to one participant in it." Deneys Reitz (1882-1944) was a Boer soldier, lawyer, author and politician. In the aftermath of the Second Boer War, he went into exile alongside his father and brothers, spending time in Madagascar before returning to South Africa and studying law. When WWI swept across the globe he fought alongside the British against the Germans, first in Africa and then on the Western Front, rising to command a battalion. Albion Press is an imprint of Endeavour Press, the UK's leading independent digital publisher. For more information on our titles please sign up to our newsletter at www.endeavourpress.com. Each week you will receive updates on free and discounted ebooks. Follow us on Twitter: @EndeavourPress and on Facebook via <http://on.fb.me/1HweQV7>. We are always interested in hearing from our readers. Endeavour Press believes that the future is now.

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Customer Reviews

Commando is the first and best known of the Deneys Reitz trilogy. It autobiographically tells the story of his part in the Boer War. He started as the sixteen year old son of a prominent Boer politician and ended with him joining Jan Smutts on his raid on Port Elizabeth. This is a story of guerrilla warfare based on minimal resources, for instance they used to visit the abandoned camp sites of British Columns just to pick up ammunition that the Tommies had dropped. They then used this to attack the very soldiers who had dropped it. However, at the end of the Boer War Reitz was unable to accept British rule and went into exile and this is where the second volume, *Trekking On* starts. After a disastrous effort at hauling freight by ox cart in Madagascar which nearly cost him his life, Reitz is persuaded by Smutts to return to South Africa where he regains his health and enters local politics. At the outbreak of W.W.II Reitz joins the South African Army and takes part in the putting down of the Maritz rebellion and the campaigns in East Africa. Once the Germans are defeated in Africa he travels to England and, having decided firmly which side he would prefer to be on, joins the British Army as a private. Following a chance meeting with Smutts in London he experiences a dizzying rise in rank and ends the war, after seeing much action as the Colonel of a famous Scottish regiment. The final book in the trilogy, *No Outspan*, covers Reitz's life in South African politics between the wars and concludes with him as Deputy Prime Minister of South Africa sitting on an advisory panel to Winston Churchill. In London. During this time he is visited by an Englishman who returned to him the Mauser rifle he took from him when Reitz became his prisoner during the Boer War.

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