



Brothers in Arms: Hollanders in the Anglo-Boer War

Chris Schoeman

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At the outbreak of the Second Anglo-Boer War in 1899, a large number of Hollanders and Dutch expatriates joined the Boers, their reasons ranging from loyalty to their common ancestry to strong anti-British sentiments and a search for adventure.

Brothers in Arms documents the trials and tribulations of these volunteers – most of them unaccustomed to the harsh landscape and climate of South Africa. Quotations and personal anecdotes from their diaries and memoirs vividly bring to life their hardships on commando, the thunder and chaos of battle, and the trauma of comrades falling around them.

Some of the prominent figures in the book are Cornelius van Gogh, brother of the painter Vincent van Gogh; the Dutch artist Frans Oerder, who became the Transvaal's first official war artist; Jochem van Bruggen, four-times winner of the coveted Hertzog Prize for Afrikaans literature; and Rev. Herman van Broekhuizen, who played rugby for South Africa in 1896 and later served as South African ambassador in The Hague. Brothers in Arms covers the full spectrum of the Hollanders' roles as soldiers at the various battle fronts, ambulance personnel and military attachés, and their life in prisoner-of-war camps overseas.

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