

The anglo boer war



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What were the Boers fighting for in the Anglo-Boer war. The first Anglo-Boer War was fought between the Boers of Transvaal and the British. The Boers were fighting for their independence. They were tired of the British always trying to control them. The British just wanted to have more power in South Africa and didn't expect the Afrikaners to fight back. This war affected all of South Africa physically, economically, and philosophically.

There were several causes to the First Anglo-Boer War. For example, the expansion of the British Empire made a lot of the Boers feel uneasy about their standing in their own country. A major cause and the most important cause that sent the Boers over the edge was when the British colonial secretary, Lord Carnarvon, proposed the Confederation of the South African States of 1875 (Banard). This confederation gave Britain a lot of control of the Transvaal State and the Boers were not okay with it. The Boers were not okay with all the power the British had in the country because they felt like they had been in South Africa their whole lives, and no one should be able to just come there and take everything away from them. The reason the British put this act in after diamonds were found, and this made the Boers think that the British were trying to steal what would be their money. The Boers had always tried to be peaceful and not fight with the British and it worked for a long time. That is why the British kept taking more and more cause they thought that they couldn't be stopped. How much longer could the Boers put up with and not react back? Until this point the Boers had adopted a policy of passive resistance (Pretorius). When the British made it clear that they were going to enforce the new confederation, the Boers could

no longer sit there quietly, so they took action. The Boers turned to arm resistance on December 16, 1880 (Pretorius).

The British Military tactics were more traditional than the Boers. When the Boers declared war on the British the British looked at the Boers like a joke. The British assumed that the Boers would not know what they were doing, but the British were unpleasantly surprised. The British Army officers were from the professional middle classes. The British Army was way more prepared than the Boers, they had better weapons, more food supplies, and they were way more experienced. The British only recruited men from the poorest sections of society. This proved that they thought the Boers would be easy to defeat. The British soldiers wore traditional uniforms dark blue trousers, white button up shirts with wide red sashes, and black boots (Banard). The British uniforms actually put them at a disadvantage to the Boers, because the British uniforms made them very easily spotted. Because of this the British had to fight the Boers at medium to long ranges which meant that their shots were less effective than the Boers. The Boers' fighting techniques were much different.

The Boers were much more prepared than the British thought they would be. Since the Boers were farmers they were very handy when it came to guns and they could ride horses good which would come to be a big advantage over the British. The Boers' tactics relied on speed, concentration, attack, and they always had to be ready to withdraw in case something unexpected happens like being outnumbered by the British Army (Pretorius). The entire white male population between the ages of sixteen and sixty had to be ready to get drafted into the war at any moment in time. The Boers didn't wear

uniforms, so this put them at a big advantage to the British because the British soldiers could tell the ordinary townspeople from the Boer soldiers (Pretorius). The Boers had some special soldiers called burghers. The burghers had to be prepared with a horse, ammunition, and food to last them at least eight days. Twelve burghers formed a commando (Banard). These soldiers were like a special team's force they left camp a lot to go on independent missions. The Boers unique way of fighting helped them in the battles and sieges during the war.

There were many battles and sieges during the war, but the most important one was the battle that took place at Rustenburg on December 27, 1880. A lot of British people died, but not from actual battle they died from human natural causes. Most of the people died from lack of food and water, and diseases. Because the war was not going the way the British had planned they wanted to make a truce with the Boers. If there was going to be a truce the Boers wanted it to be on their terms. The British signed the Boers terms of truce on March 30, 1881(Banard). After the truce was signed, but not all the soldiers knew it yet, so they continued fighting in Natal. The Boers separated the whole population into two military camps. The soldiers took all the food in the town and stored it into those two military camps. They didn't want anybody to have access to anything so that's why they locked it all up. They didn't care if anyone survived or not. While they were in the military camps they didn't take care of the people properly and that was just in humane, but the Boers didn't think they were doing anything wrong they were just trying to win back their independence. There were very few Boers stationed in the area, so the British made a plan and tried to rescue all of the

people out of the camps (Stevens 36). When the rest of the soldiers got there the Boers had just received news of the treaty. They were hesitant at first to release the remaining citizens, because they were not sure if that was what they were suppose to do. When they first received the news they thought the British were trying to fool them, so that they could get the people out of the camps. While in the camp many people died while they were still in the two camps. There were more than just men in these two camps. That is why it is remembered as such an important siege. The way the British and the Boers fought in this war was in humane taking woman and children into these concentration camps. When the Boers heard of the peace the Boer government took office again in March of 1880 (Barnard).

After the war and the peace treaty there were still a lot of problems between the British and the Boers. The Boers felt that the treaty was unfair. The Pretoria Convention took place on August 31, 1881. Transvaal was declared an independent republic, but the British still had control over trade with other states and they were in control of segregation. The Boers didn't agree with a lot of these policies. They didn't agree with the policies because they felt like the British were just trying to end the war. The Boers felt like they were still not getting what they truly deserved. The Boer president went back to London to make a new peace treaty. In 1884 at the London Convention the Transvaal changed their name to the South African Republic. The western borders were also extended, but the British still had control over who the South African Republic traded with. This kept to leading to a lot of tension between the British and the Boars. The Boers were tired of the British

and how they kept interfering that it eventually led to the second Anglo-Boer War in 1899 (Pretorius).

The Anglo-Boer War was all about the Boers of Transvaal fighting for their independence, since the British was always trying to control them. If the British wouldn't have been in South Africa interfering with the Boers, than a whole lot of lives would have been saved. The British shouldn't have thought that they could just push everyone around in South Africa. It took a long time but the Boers finally stood up for themselves and fought for what they believed in. The war in the end was a good thing for the Boers because they won their independence, but it is still a sad thing when you think about how many lives were lost.