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Command and Leadership Series

Jan Smuts

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Smuts, Jan Christiaan (1870–1950)

Introduction

Smuts became Prime Minister of South Africa in August 1919. His early training in law and his position as State Attorney in Johannesburg in 1897 prepared him for this role as did his military experience as a general at the Battle of Diamond Hill in 1900 during the Boer War against Britain. He led the Boer attack with De la Rey at Nooitgedacht and captured Modderfontein in Transvaal, massacring most of the native inhabitants in 1901.

In 1910, Smuts was principal contributor to the drafting of the constitution of the Union of South Africa. He led South African forces in the conquest of Namibia and in 1916 commanded operations against Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck in East Africa. Moving into politics, he became a cabinet minister in 1917, two years later he signed the Treaty of Versailles as Prime Minister. Despite having fought the British during the Boer War, Smuts was highly regarded in the UK and was given a number of roving commissions by Lloyd George during the First World War. A popular and forward-looking leader, he was re-elected 1939 and was promoted to Field Marshal after directing much of the South African war effort in 1941.

This bibliography has been designed to provide a guide as to where to find information on Smuts. Please note that the list of references below is a selection of the more relevant titles and information on the subject. The list is not intended to be exhaustive or definitive but is an introductory guide to some of the resources available.

Monographs

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Ingham, Kenneth. **Jan Christian Smuts: the conscience of a South African** London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1986, 284p.

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