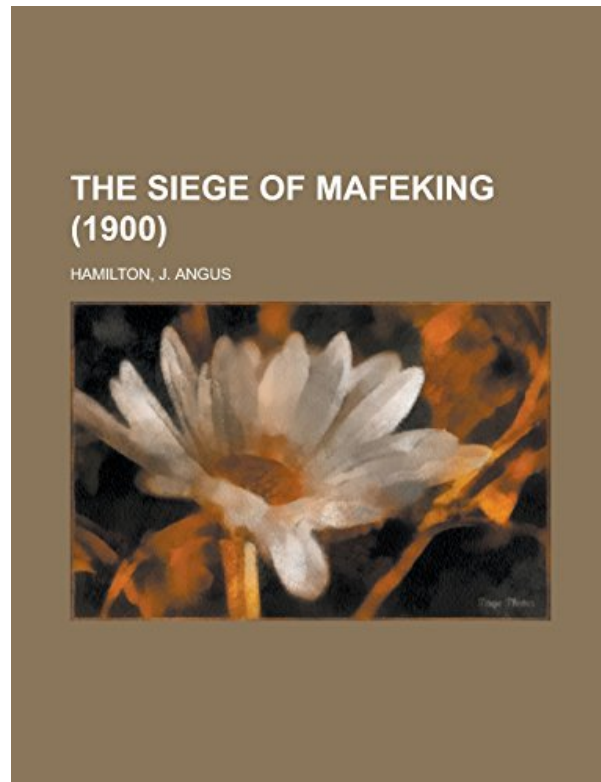


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Excerpt: ... body had been enshrouded. Dr. Hayes snicked the strings which had caught the ends of the sheet about the injured, and as he threw back the flaps Surgeon-Major Anderson gently separated the clothing where, matted with blood, it had congealed into a sticky mass about the injuries. The doctors and the surgeon, bending with callous diffidence about the inert and prostrate form, then proceeded rapidly with their examination. Through the western windows of the room there came the ruddy rays of the sun as it sank to its rest. The light caught the bottles on the shelves, flickered for a moment upon the silvery brightness of the instruments, and played about the hair of the nurses, who, passing to and fro across the window, were as much interested in their work as in the nature of the patient's injuries. In a corner of the room Sergeant-Major Dr. Dowling explained to Surgeon-Major Anderson that the patient, who was a native woman of some repute, had been washing clothes upon the banks of the Molopo, when a flight of one-pound steel-pointed Maxim shells burst about her. The pelvis and the femur had been shattered completely, besides internal wounds of a most fatal character in the abdominal regions. The left foot was also pulverised, the extraordinary part being that any one, after suffering such severe injuries and sustaining so great a shock to the system, should yet be living. The examination completed, Dr. Hayes, turning to the head nurse, said that it was impossible to do anything which would save the woman's life, (p. 163) inquiring, as Surgeon-Major Anderson dissolved a grain of morphia in a wine-glass, if any one knew the name of the native. As the nurse was about to reply, the patient, moaning feebly, expressed in excellent English, that her name was Martha. Then it appeared that she was recognised as being the wife of a Fingo in the location, one who before marriage had been a member of the oldest profession which the world has ever known, but...

- Published on: 2013-09-13
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.69" h x .18" w x 7.44" l, .37 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 86 pages

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INteresting but slightly disappointing

By D. D. LeDu

This is an interesting book, disappointing only in that it could have been much more.

The author was a journalist who was trapped within Mafeking during the siege of 1899-1900. "The Siege of Mafeking" consists of a collection of his letters and dispatches that were published immediately after his return to England at the end of the siege, well before the end of the Boer War. As a result, they reflect his unedited observations, presented without the benefit of hindsight.

He starts as a jingoistic, biased observer, writing of a heroic, outnumbered garrison fighting bravely against a

superior force of dirty, cowardly, ungallant mob of farmers. You cannot but note his personal transition as he comes to think of the Boers as brave and compassionate enemies.

The war went on long after the relief of Mafeking. The Boers showed themselves to be, not a mob, but one of the finest collections of light mounted infantry of all times. Fighting as small commando groups (the origin of the word) of one hundred or less, they would move rapidly, live off the land and spoils of war, combining or dispersing as necessary, and holding a modern army at bay with only their horses and Mauser rifles. These were all skills about which the British were to learn and respect, but which did not show at their best in a static siege.

My greatest disappointment is that there is little coverage of the day-to-day life within Mafeking during the siege. I would like to know more about how everyday life was impacted. All-in-all, though, this is a worthwhile book for anyone interested in either the Boer War or the stories of man in times of great stress.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

A historical work

By jclajr

Shirley Temple's movie "The Little Princess" inspired my interest in this book , as Her "father" was MIA at the siege of Mafeking! It can be a difficult read for one not interested in a historical account of the Boer War.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Baden-Powell book

By Robert W. Briggs

I've been going to read more on Baden-Powell the founder of Boy Scouts and it was at Mafeking where he used a lot of strategies.

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