



British Colonial Rule in the Cape of Good Hope and Basutoland, 1854–1910

Collection Summary

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Containing over 140,000 images, *British Colonial Rule in the Cape of Good Hope and Basutoland, 1854–1910*, charts over 50 years of British colonial rule in southern Africa.

Settled by the Dutch East India Company in 1652, the colony came under British control in 1806. In 1910, it became a province of the newly formed Union of South Africa. Britain granted the colony the right to elect a legislature in 1853. In 1872, full internal self-government was established. During the nineteenth century, it emerged as a commercial hub—the discovery of diamonds and gold in the 1860s rendered it the most important and prosperous British colony in Africa. This collection **tracks the administration of the Cape from 1854 to the formation of the Union of South Africa.**

This collection also includes material on **British Kaffraria—the southern region between the Keiskamma and Yei rivers—and Basutoland (present-day Lesotho)**, a British Crown colony that was bordered by the Cape, Natal, and Orange River colonies. Kaffraria came under Cape control in 1865. In 1871, so did Basutoland. The documentation relating to this territory includes annual and legislative reports, proclamations, correspondence with local rulers, and reports on rebellions.

This collection evidences **significant historical trends, such as the development of constitutional governance and infrastructure in the region, as well as the growth of key industries, such as mining and the production of cotton, ostrich feathers, and wine.** You will come across records regarding the use of Robben Island, reports relating to the development of the colony's education system, as well as information on the construction of roads and railways, and on the failed Jameson Raid of 1895. Although the Cape colony was controlled by a minority class of white settlers, **the sources nevertheless provide valuable glimpses into African culture and communities, providing numerous examples of resistance to imperialism.**

British Colonial Rule in the Cape of Good Hope and Basutoland, 1854–1910, will be of interest to students, researchers, and lecturers investigating and delivering courses on the social, political, and economic development of South Africa. It should also

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appeal to those exploring the broader histories of Africa and European imperialism. A rich and versatile resource, it forms a natural counterpart to many of BOA's African collections grouped under the theme of "[Colonialism and Empire](#)".

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