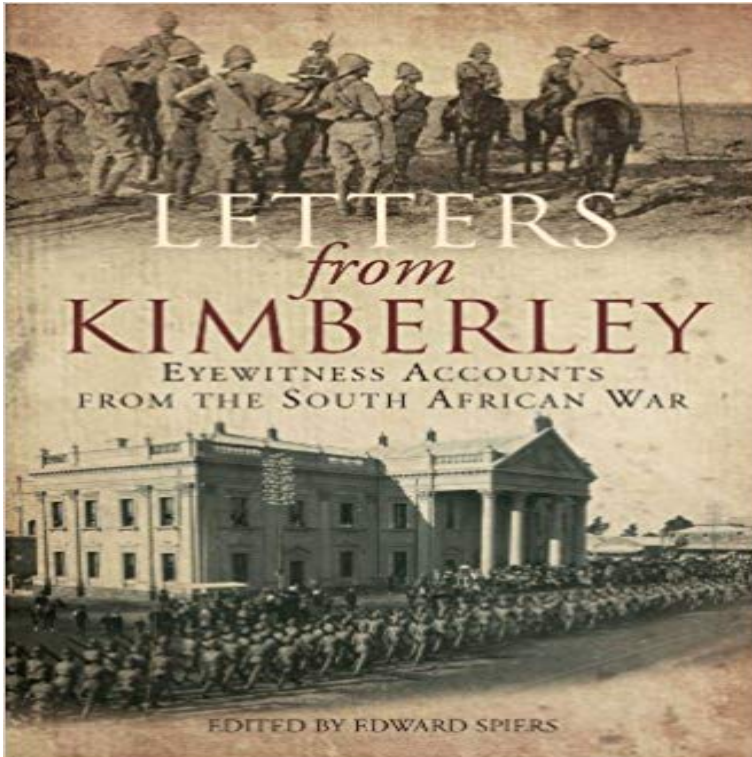


Letters from Kimberley: Eyewitness Accounts from the South African War



Full of new material, fresh insights and perceptive analysis. Ian Knight
The defense of Kimberley and the mission to relieve it was one of the great dramatic sagas of the South African War. The actual relief, following a spectacular cavalry charge, represented the first decisive upturn in the fortunes of the British war effort, soon followed by a crushing defeat of the Boers at the battle of Paardeberg. Within Kimberley citizens suffered from dwindling food stocks and enemy shelling, but even more controversial were the tensions that erupted between the siege commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Kekewich, and Kimberley's leading citizen, Cecil Rhodes. In this illuminating new history, Edward Spiers, presents a selection of firsthand accounts of this epic siege. The 260 letters were published originally in British metropolitan and provincial newspapers and they provide crucial insights into the perceptions of civilians caught up in the siege; the desperate and bloody attempts to relieve the town; and the experiences of junior officers and other ranks as they struggled to cope with the demands of modern warfare. Full of human incident, drama and pathos, these fascinating eyewitness testimonies make for compelling reading and add richly to our understanding of the events in Cape Colony. **REVIEWS** The 260 compelling letters excerpted in this volume convey a sense of immediacy, realism, and the perceptions, observations, hopes, and fears of the soldiers and civilians involved in all aspects of the siege of Kimberley. They superbly supplement the published and official accounts of the Boer War and make a significant contribution to one's understanding of this last major British imperial conflict. Harold E. Raugh, Jr., International Bibliography of Military History

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