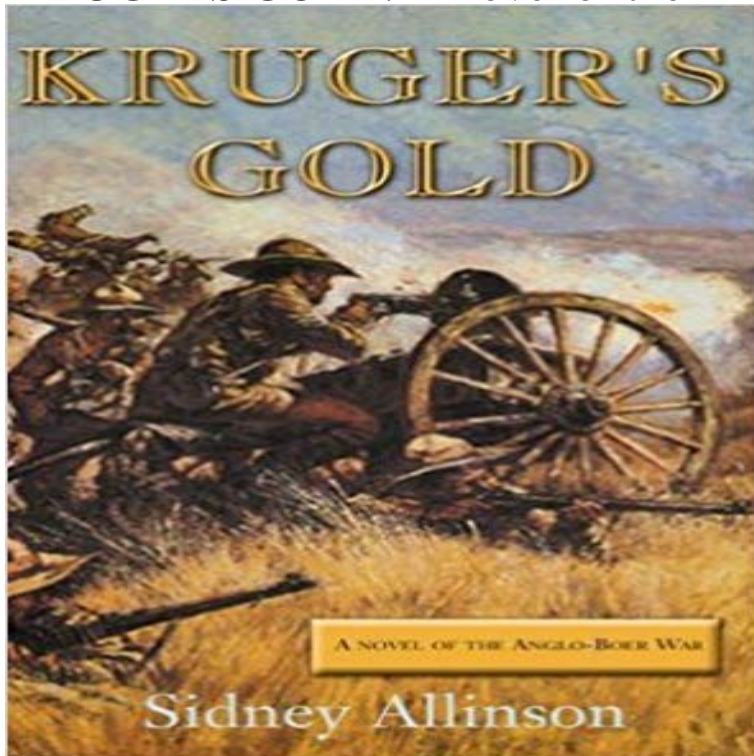


KRUGERS GOLD: A novel of the Anglo-Boer War



KRUGERS GOLD: An historical novel set in 1902 South Africa, when Canadian Lt. Harry Lanyard, British Army, leads a mounted patrol of hard-bitten Colonial troopers into the veld to recover \$15 million worth of gold bullion hidden by Transvaal President Paul Kruger during the Second Anglo-Boer War. To succeed, Lanyard must battle tough enemy commandos, murderous bandits, and a hidden spy sworn to kill him, while striving to regain the love of his American-Boer sweetheart allied with a ruthless Russian secret agent.

Readers review, by Renee Cox

KRUGERS GOLD: A novel of the Anglo-Boer War, by Sidney Allinson. Sidney Allinson's books are always surprises. They can start off unassumingly and build up to rip-snorting sagas of ceaseless adventure. In his finest work yet, Allinson doesn't even start off slowly. Kruger's Gold grips the reader at once and the pace never slows. As I read this action tale of the now little-known struggle a century ago between South Africa's Boers, and England and her colonials, I was repeatedly struck with the idea this would be and should be a wonderful movie. Allinson's experience as a television producer may have given him that hot-shot cameraman's eye or it could simply be that any good yarn so stirringly told lends itself to good theatre. On these pages, an historical conflict that was soon obscured by two ensuing, bloodier world wars leaps to life. It is really the twilight of an era, with Europeans jostling for power and, in this case in particular, South African gold. Allinson fills in the historical perspective while following a Canadian soldier and his colonial troops who, late in the war, have been assigned to find and recover the legendary government cache of gold that departing Prime Minister Paul Kruger was said to have stashed before leaving in 1900 for exile in Europe. Allinson writes sympathetically of

the brilliant Boer commandos fighting to retain their homeland and their way of life. His story is not overly revisionist: the Boers had seized this land from the native tribes, after all, and even the most principled among them want to keep the blacks and coloureds in their place, lest their vast numbers overwhelm the white settlers. Even through today's more politically-correct prism, we must admire the self-reliance of these men whose guerrilla tactics and talented marksmanship enabled them to strike at the enemy, melt away into the bush, and return to attack another day. Many if not most of the men have lost wives and children to the war; yet, while they can be ruthless, both sides treat surrendered prisoners with a decency and respect that arouses a sense of nostalgia in the reader. The resolute British do as well with enemy prisoners, while fighting hard for final victory and suffering epidemic fatal diseases. He unblinkingly describes the concentration camps where stranded Boer civilian families were placed to wait out the war. (Those were not concentration camps in today's Nazi sense of death-camps. Rather, the British camps were set up to literally concentrate Boer civilians who had been forced off their farms.) However, Allinson paints a grim picture of the horrors where women and children and some men languished under-fed in filthy conditions and rampant deadly diseases that killed 1000s. A few selfless medical workers do their best, but there are no facilities and their supplies are woefully inadequate. The camps were not England's finest legacy to history. No less than four romances in the book provide lusty and pleasing counterpoints to the wartime setting. Even the horses get to play a heart-warming role. The author's thorough grasp of military affairs, cavalry warfare, and British soldierly details adds to the feeling of authenticity. Throughout, Allinson has peppered the story with fascinating historical minutiae, such as the Boer heroine forbidden to play ragtime music, because it was identified with blacks. Read KRUGERS GOLD. It is a

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