



HISTORY IN THE MAKING

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

John Hamer

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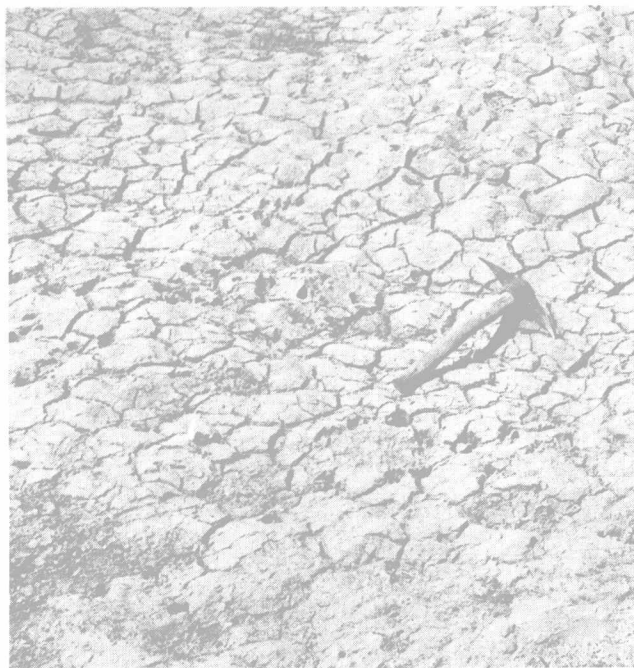
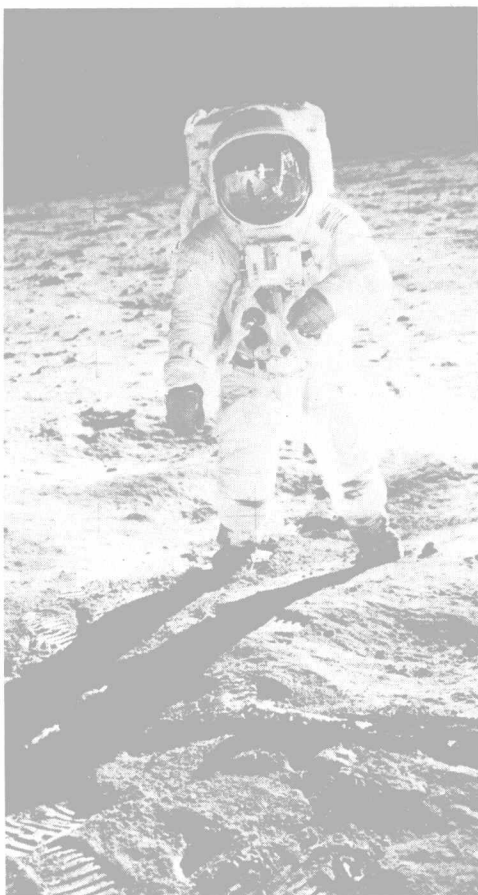
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Series Editor: John Jones

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Century



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5 The Twentieth Century



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Series Preface

Changes in the teaching of history over the last decade have raised many problems to which there are no easy solutions. The classification of objectives, the presentation of material in varied and appropriate language, the use and abuse of evidence and the reconsideration of assessment techniques are four of the more important. Many teachers are now encouraging their pupils individually or in groups to participate in the processes and skills of the professional historian. Moreover such developments are being discussed increasingly in the context of mixed ability classes and the need to provide suitable teaching approaches for them.

History in the Making is a new course for secondary schools intended for pupils of average ability. It is a contribution to the current debate, and provides one possible way forward. It accepts many of the proven virtues of traditional courses: the fascination of the good tale; the drama of human life, individual and collective; the need to provide a visual stimulus to the written word.

But it has built on to these some of the key features of the 'new history' so that teachers can explore, within the framework of a textbook, many of the 'new' approaches and techniques.

To this end each chapter in this volume has four major components.

1 **The text** This provides the basic framework of the chapters, and although the approach is essentially factual, it is intended to arouse and sustain the interest of the reader of average ability.

2 **The illustrations** These have been carefully selected to stand beside the written pieces of evidence in the chapter, and to provide (so far as is possible) an authentic visual image of the period/topic. Photographs, artwork and maps are all used to clarify and support the text, and to develop the pupil's powers of observation.

3 **Using the evidence** This is a detailed study of the evidence on one particular aspect of the chapter. Did the walls of Jericho really come tumbling down? Was the death of William Rufus in the New Forest really an accident? What was the background to the torpedoing of the *Lusitania*? These are the sort of questions which are asked, to give the pupil the opportunity to consider not only the problems facing the historian, but also those facing the characters of history. Different forms of documentary evidence are considered, as well as archaeological, architectural, statistical, and other kinds of source material; the intention is to give the pupil a genuine, if modest, insight into the making of history.

4 **Questions and further work** These are intended to test and develop the pupil's reading of the chapter, and in particular the *Using the evidence* section. Particular attention is paid to the development of historical skills, through the examination and interpretation of evidence. The differences between primary and secondary sources, for example, are explored, and concepts such as bias in evidence and its limitations. By applying the skills which they have developed, pupils may then be able to formulate at a suitable level and in appropriate

language, ideas and hypotheses of their own.

History in the Making is a complete course in five volumes, to meet the needs of pupils between the ages of 11 and 16 (in other words up to and including the first public examination). However, each volume stands by itself and may be used independently of the others; given the variety of syllabuses in use in schools today this flexibility is likely to be welcomed by many teachers. *The Ancient World* and *The Medieval World* are intended primarily for 11–13 year old pupils, *The Early Modern World, 1450–1700* for 12–14 year old pupils, *Britain, Europe and Beyond, 1700–1900* for pre-CSE pupils and *The Twentieth Century* for CSE examination candidates.

It is our hope that pupils will be encouraged, within the main topics and themes of British, European and World History, to experience for themselves the stimulus and challenge, the pleasure and frustration, the vitality and humanity that form an essential part of History in the Making.

John Jones

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I Empires beyond the seas



King Emperor Edward VII

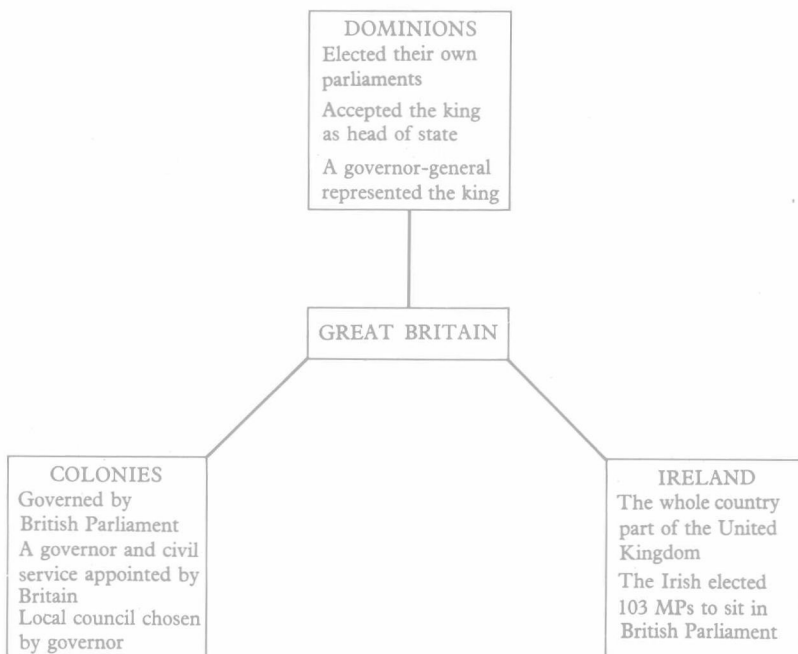
On 22 January 1901, after the longest reign in British history, Queen Victoria died. Her grieving family, members of most of the royal houses of Europe, stood at the frail old lady's bedside. Wilhelm II, Emperor of Germany, had held his grandmother's arm for the last hours of her life.

King and emperor

Victoria had been the ruler of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and (since 1877) Empress of India. These titles now passed to her son, Edward VII. Parliament added another title: Edward was also ruler 'of the British Dominions beyond the Seas'. The empire over which he reigned was the largest and richest in the world. It covered a fifth of the earth's land surface and included 400 million people, a quarter of the world's population.

Not all parts of this vast empire, however, were governed in the same way. Some had greater freedom to manage their own affairs than others.

At the time of Victoria's death there were two dominions – Canada and Australia. During the next ten years they were joined by New Zealand and South Africa. In their parliaments and government offices were the descendants of the early white settlers. Their laws, their customs, and their sports, were very like those of people in Britain. An Englishman visiting an Australian farm at the end of the nineteenth century found not the near-savages he expected, but 'a high-bred English family – English in everything except that they were Australian-born'.



The British Empire, 1900



The British in India: a picnic at Narayanpore

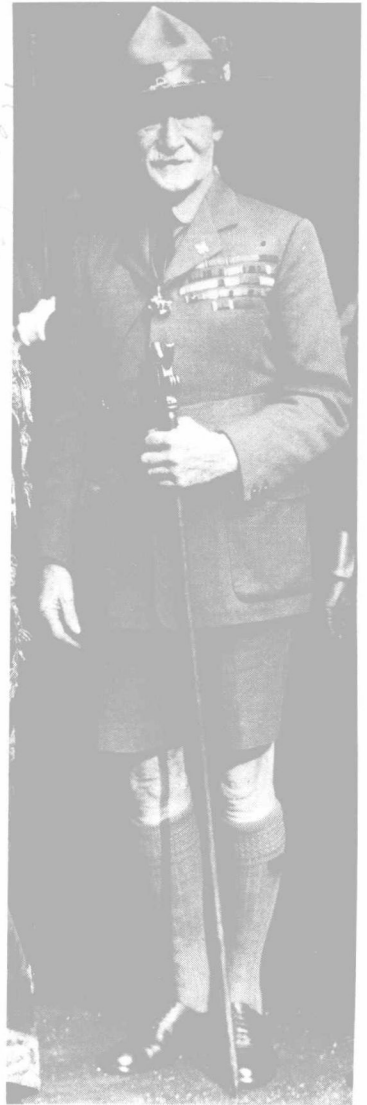
Outside the dominions, the countries which formed the British Empire had far less independence. The 300 million people of India were ruled by a viceroy appointed by the king, and five thousand British officials. After spending some thirty years in India, most of these officials would return to England. They did not settle there as Britons had done in Australia.

There were those who did not believe that Indians would ever be capable of governing the country themselves.

Unless Indians can govern India wisely and well, in accordance with modern national ideas, they have no more right to India than Hottentots have to the Cape, or the black fellows to Australia. In my opinion, Hindoos would never govern Hindustan half, quarter, nay, one tithe [tenth] as well as Englishmen.

Many Indians disagreed. When the Prince of Wales, the future King George V, visited India in 1905, he asked an Indian leader, 'Would the peoples of India be happier if you ran the country?' 'No, sir,' was the reply, 'I do not say they would be happier, but they would have more self-respect.' Changes were made, but the rule of the king-emperor lasted until the reign of Edward's grandson.

The hero of Mafeking, Baden-Powell, seen here in 1929



Leader of the Boers, Paul Kruger, President of the Transvaal

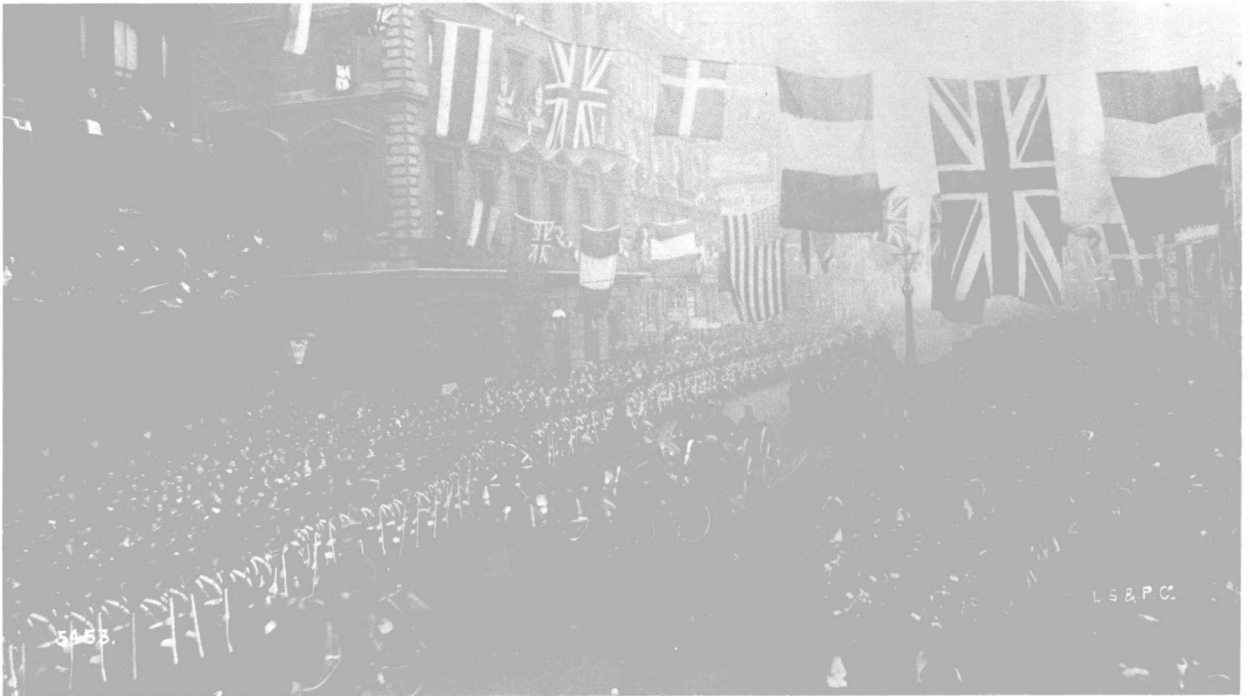


Britons and Boers

Victoria had died in the middle of a war. Since 1899 British soldiers had been fighting in the Transvaal in southern Africa. This was the country of the Boers, Dutch farmers whose ancestors had arrived in Africa two hundred years previously. The discovery of gold in the Transvaal had threatened their way of life, and most of them heartily disliked the foreigners who came to mine for the wealth under the soil. Like their president, Paul Kruger, they wished to rid the country of these 'uitlanders', outsiders. As many of these *uitlanders* came from the British parts of South Africa, they appealed to the British government for support against the Boers. British troops were moved to the borders of the Transvaal. When Britain refused to remove them, Kruger declared war.

The British expected an easy victory, but the Boers were tough soldiers and expert riflemen. They attacked the three towns of Ladysmith, Mafeking and Kimberley, and trapped the British forces there. The longest of the sieges, at Mafeking, lasted for 217 days. When it was finally relieved in May 1900, there was wild rejoicing in the streets of London. The British commander there, Baden-Powell, who later started the Boy Scouts, became a national hero.

But the war in the Transvaal was far from over. It took a further two years, more than 300 000 soldiers, and very brutal tactics to defeat the Boers. The Transvaal was added to the British Empire. Other countries regarded Britain as a vicious bully.



Home from South Africa, a company of the City Imperial Volunteers parade through London in 1900

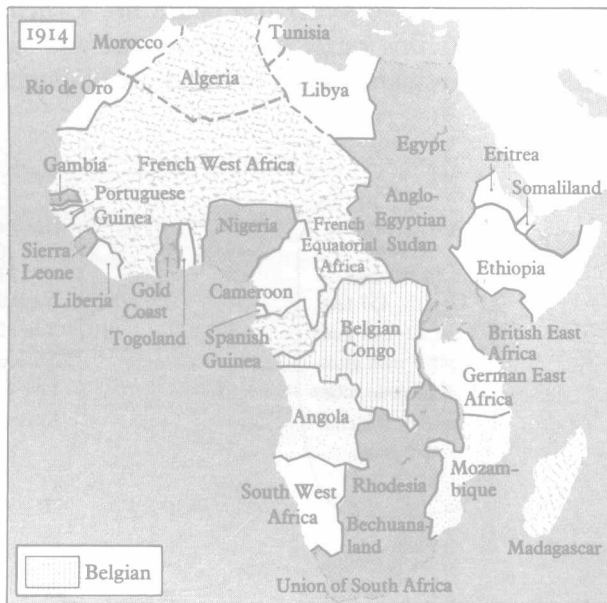
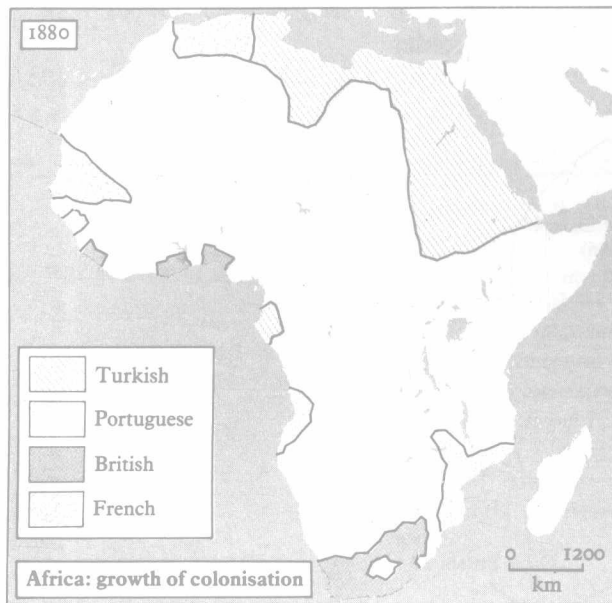
Portsmouth welcomes the return of the relief force from Ladysmith. During the siege naval guns mounted on wheels had been used to bombard the Boers



Colonial rivalry

In a letter to a friend, the American ambassador to Britain wrote, 'I guess they really believe that the earth belongs to them.' But there was competition. Colonies were thought to increase a country's wealth and power, and European rule had spread to many parts of the world.

During the thirty years before 1914, almost the whole of Africa was colonised. Resist as they might, the Africans had little hope of success against the more powerful and better-armed Europeans. Although the colonial powers occasionally quarrelled over the spoils, they never actually fought each other for them. In 1898 Britain and France came close to war over the Sudan. In 1906 and again in 1911, Germany protested about French influence in Morocco. But in the end, such incidents were settled peacefully.



Naval race

The world's largest empire was protected by the world's biggest navy, and Britain was proud of her navy. British policy was 'that our fleet should be equal to the combination of the two strongest navies in Europe'.

At the beginning of the twentieth century this naval supremacy was challenged. 'Our future,' declared Wilhelm II in 1898, 'lies upon the ocean.' Germany began to build more battleships. Anxious not to lose her lead, so too did Britain. Under the direction of the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir John Fisher, attempts were also made to make the Royal Navy even stronger. He developed a new, improved type of battleship. The first of them was launched in 1906 – HMS *Dreadnought*.



Colonial rivalry in Africa: eight years later Britain and France clashed at Fashoda in the Sudan, but war between the two countries was avoided

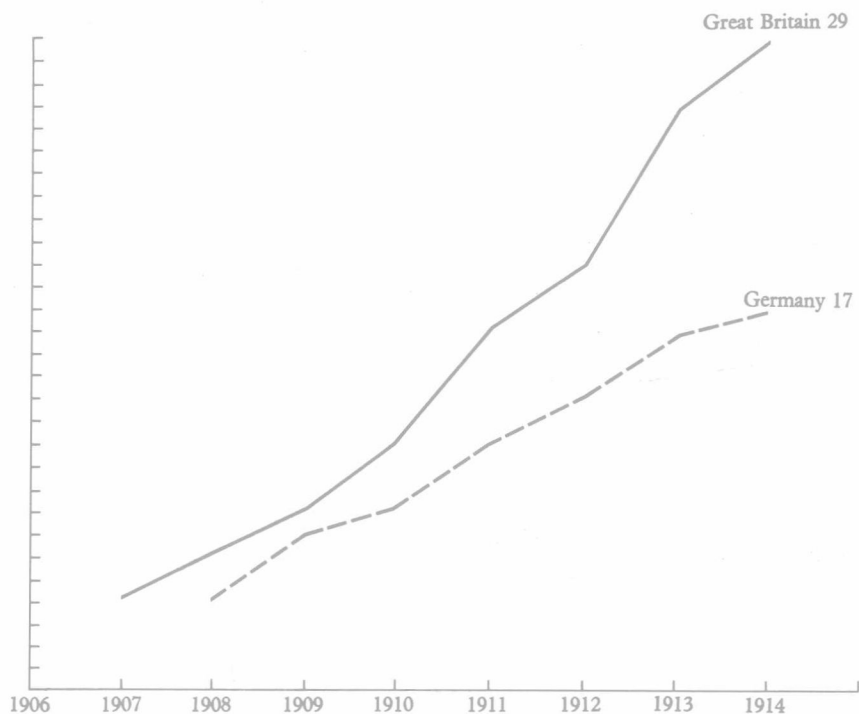


First of a new class of battleships, HMS Dreadnought in 1906

A twelve-inch (30.5 cm) gun could fire a shell more than thirteen kilometres. At this range a dreadnought was superior to two older battleships. Germany began to build dreadnoughts.

A 1905 battleship and HMS Dreadnought

<p>HMS <i>Dominion</i> (1905)</p> <p>16 350 tons</p> <p>Length: 457 feet</p> <p>Four 12-inch guns</p> <p>Four 9-inch guns</p> <p>Five torpedo tubes</p> <p>Armour: 9 inches</p> <p>18.2 knots</p>	<p>HMS <i>Dreadnought</i> (1906)</p> <p>17 900 tons</p> <p>Length: 526 feet</p> <p>Ten 12-inch guns</p> <p>Eighteen 4-inch guns</p> <p>Five torpedo tubes</p> <p>Armour: 11 inches</p> <p>21.6 knots</p>
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The naval race 1906-14

- 1 When did Germany start to build dreadnoughts?
- 2 Why did many people in Britain want an increase in the country's shipbuilding programme in 1909?
- 3 In which year did Britain build the most dreadnoughts?

Before the First World War, countries measured the strength of their navies by the number of battleships they possessed. But, although few people believed it possible before 1914, a very different kind of vessel was to play a greater part in the war at sea. It was Germany's submarines, not her battleships, which came closest to defeating Britain.