

# The 1947 Royal Tour of Southern Africa and the End of Empire

The 1947 Royal Tour of Southern Africa was a significant event in British imperial history. It marked the first time a reigning monarch had visited the region, and it came at a time when the British Empire was facing increasing pressure to decolonize. The tour was intended to shore up support for the Empire, but it ultimately had the opposite effect, accelerating the movement towards independence for Southern African nations.



## The Last Hurrah: The 1947 Royal Tour of Southern Africa and the End of Empire by Graham Viney

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 35663 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 509 pages
Screen Reader	: Supported
X-Ray	: Enabled



## The Tour

The tour began in Cape Town on February 17, 1947, and lasted for three months. King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited all four provinces of South Africa, as well as the British protectorates of Bechuanaland (Botswana), Swaziland, and Basutoland (Lesotho). The tour was a massive undertaking, with the royal couple traveling over 10,000 miles by train, car,

and airplane. They were greeted by large crowds wherever they went, but there were also protests and demonstrations by anti-colonial activists.



### **Impact on Southern Africa**

The Royal Tour had a profound impact on Southern Africa. It helped to raise awareness of the region's problems, including poverty, racial inequality, and political repression. It also gave a boost to the independence movement, as it showed that the British were not invincible.

In South Africa, the tour led to increased support for the African National Congress (ANC) and other anti-apartheid organizations. In Bechuanaland, Swaziland, and Basutoland, the tour helped to strengthen the nationalist movements that would eventually lead to independence.

## **End of the Empire**

The 1947 Royal Tour is often seen as a turning point in the history of the British Empire. It marked the beginning of the end of colonial rule in Southern Africa and set the stage for the decolonization of the rest of the Empire. By the end of the 1960s, all of the British colonies in Africa had gained their independence.

## **Legacy**

The 1947 Royal Tour of Southern Africa is a reminder of the complex and often contradictory nature of the British Empire. It was an institution that brought both progress and oppression to the regions it ruled. The tour itself was a symbol of the Empire's power and prestige, but it also sowed the seeds of its own destruction.

The legacy of the tour is still felt today. The independent nations of Southern Africa face many of the same challenges that they did in 1947, including poverty, inequality, and political instability. But they also have the opportunity to build a better future for their people, free from the constraints of colonial rule.

The 1947 Royal Tour of Southern Africa was a watershed moment in history. It marked the beginning of the end of the British Empire and helped to shape the modern Commonwealth. The tour's legacy is still felt today, as

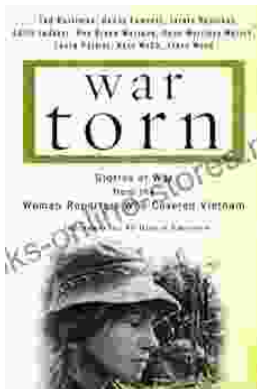
the nations of Southern Africa continue to grapple with the challenges of independence.



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