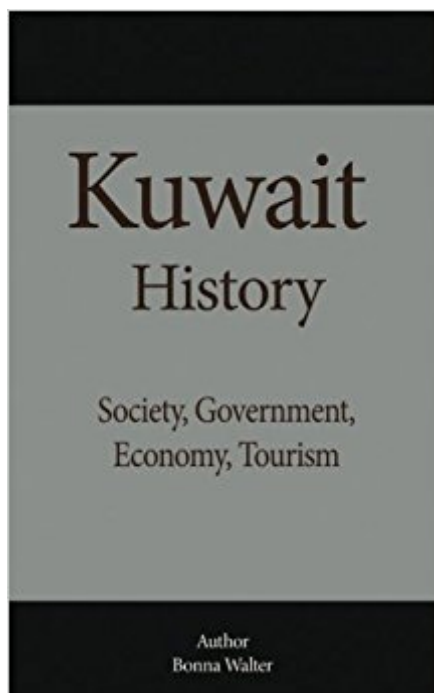


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Synopsis

From 1899 until 1961, Kuwait remained, in effect, a British protectorate. A succession of amirs of the Al Sabah ruled the country, but the handling of its foreign affairs was a British prerogative, and Britain guaranteed the security of the emirate. Kuwaiti forces consisted of the amir's royal guard plus a small domestic police force or constabulary under the British administration. During the 1920s and 1930s, British protection became particularly important in deterring Saudi encroachment and later in blocking Iraqi territorial claims. By independence on June 19, 1961, the British had converted the 600-man constabulary into a combined arms brigade of 2,500 men trained by a British military mission. Small air and naval forces were also established in 1961 under British tutelage

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