

Rhodes, Cecil John

Contributed by Administrator
Monday, 29 October 2007

Rhodes, Cecil John (1853-1902). English colonial statesman and pioneer of diamond-market control in South Africa. In 1870, he went to South Africa for his health, joining an older brother in Natal. The brothers participated in the diamond rush in Griqualand West, in Cape Province, in 1871, and soon were among the most prosperous of the diggers. After a trip through the country, he conceived his idea of a United Empire under the British Crown, visualizing South Africa as a tremendous source of mineral wealth. Eventually, he succeeded in consolidating a number of claims within the De Beers Mine and formed the De Beers Mining Co., in 1888. The merger between the Rhodes' and Barnato interests, which concerned the entire De Beers Mine and the greater part of the Kimberley Mine, led to the incorporation of De Beers Consolidated Mines, Ltd., in the same year. Shortly afterwards, De Beers Consolidated Mines acquired a 100% interest in the Kimberley, Dutoitspan and Bultfontein Mines, thus gaining control of the diamond market and becoming the most influential factor in the industry. Rhodes became the first chairman of De Beers and held office until his death in 1902. Rhodesia was named in honor of him. See de Beers consolidated mines,

LTD.; BARNATO, BARNETT.