



Fact sheet Prison Island

St Helena's remoteness makes it an ideal place for imprisoning dangerous people. Prisoners brought temporary prosperity to the island, increasing its population and industry.

Napoleon Bonaparte was surely the island's most famous inmate. The defeated French Emperor arrived with his entourage in 1815. He was greatly frustrated by his restricted lifestyle here and he died a sick and unhappy man in 1821 at Longwood House.

Dinizulu, the Zulu leader, and his two uncles, were exiled to St Helena by the British Government in 1890. They lived here with their families for over 7 years before being allowed to return to South Africa.

Between 1900 and 1902 St Helena held nearly 6,000 Boer Prisoners of War. They made the most of their time here, working in agriculture and skilled trades, organizing events, publishing their own newspaper and even owning their own businesses.

Three men were arrested for crimes against the state in Bahrain, a sheikdom near Saudi Arabia. They were imprisoned here from 1957 until 1961, when they were released on a legal technicality.