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Sommario/riassunto	The description of South Africa as a 'rainbow nation' has always been taken to embrace the black, brown and white peoples who constitute its population. But each of these groups can be sub-divided and in the white case, the Scots have made one of the most distinctive contributions to the country's history. The Scots, as in North America and Australasia, constituted an important element in the patterns of White settlement. They were already present in the area of Dutch East India Company rule and, after the first British occupation of the Cape in 1795, their numbers rose dramatically. They were