

The Heroism of John Romanes

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It will not find the name of John Romanes on the scroll of honor, for men win the badge of fame in many ways and there are many degrees of valor and many varying rewards won by its display.

Peace has her heroes, no less renowned than war, is the assertion of the poet, but this must be qualified by the omission of the word "no." It is so at any date in the case of John Romanes, for his deed was performed in the silence and solitude of the great Australian bush, without a single spectator who could bear witness to its accomplishment of courage of the highest quality, devotion seldom equaled, and a self-sacrifice so rare that few men unacquainted with the perils of the bush can appreciate it.

As the subject of Romanes' heroism it shall be my duty to tell to a wider circle of readers the events which earned for a hero no greater reward than his own undying gratitude and admiration.

It seems strange to me that, so far, few persons outside of Australia have ever heard of the stupendous efforts the government of Western Australia has made to prevent the incursion of the rabbit pest into the farming and pastoral regions of that state and, as my story has to do with that mammoth work, I feel bound to speak briefly of it.

For over fifty years the rabbits, imported to Australia by a semi-skilled immigrant, have been a fearful scourge to the eastern states of the island continent. Net fences had proved a success in the east and the government at once entered on the stupendous task of running a rabbit-proof fence right across the country to act as a barrier to the invading hosts. That fence stands today, a completed and successful obstacle to the "roads" of the pest. It is over 1,500 miles long, and stretches from Australian Boat Harbor, in the Great Australian Bight, to Condon, in the Ninety Mile Beach, away in the tropic north. It cost the country over \$1,500,000.

To maintain the barrier in a state of effectiveness against the depredations of the hostile natives, the blind attacks of snags and kangaroos and the ravages of flood, tornado and fire, a whole army of men are employed constantly patrolling it.

I was associated in the early days of the construction of the fence with the advanced survey party and, on the completion of the structure, was induced by the high pay to accept the position of inspector of a length of fence in the far north.

It was in April, 1908, that I left Separation Well, the southernmost point of my section of the fence, and proceeded north to the De Grey river, a distance of 200 miles, where I had my main depot. There I was to meet Romanes and his mate Gregory, who had to patrol the last hundred miles of my territory. When I reached the depot, then in charge of two men who were kept there as a relief, I found Romanes in camp, with his mate, who was very ill with malaria and quite unfit to take the track for some time, although his condition was not serious. I was particularly anxious to see the northern section of my part of the fence, because there had been a tropical flood a week or two before and from some overland-riding stockmen I had heard that the fence was in a bad state of repair.

When I questioned Romanes, whom I did not know very well—in fact, I had entertained a suspicion of him from the moment the reports as to the state of his particular length came to me—he was rather nettled and challenged me to come out with him without delaying for a week's rest.

Before leaving the depot I asked both Romanes and the man in charge whether the natives were "bad" along the track.

"Queenland Charlie, that boy of Turnbull's at the De Grey station, told me that 'Major' and 'Toby' were loose again and heading this way, but I don't believe it," said Romanes. "They would make back into West Kimberley to dodge the police, and anyway, if they do get down here Turnbull tells me he had word that they are not armed. I don't reckon we'll see anything of 'em, boss."



"Well, I hope not," I said, "but we'll take some extra cartridges and keep a sharp lookout."

It took us eight days to make the one hundred miles of our eastward journey, as we made a careful inspection of the fence, which I found to be in better shape than I expected, although we had to do a lot of strengthening to the temporary repairs which Romanes had effected on his previous trip. At the end of my section near Mount Bruce we met two boundary riders who had worked south from the next section to the north. They had heard nothing of the movements of Major and Toby and reported everything quiet. We parted company next day, Romanes and myself proceeding on what should have been a six-day trip back and the other men returning north.

We made a good day's march and camped at a rain shed about eighteen miles out, just as it was getting dusk. Not a sign nor a sight of a native had either Romanes or myself seen. In fact, we had not given them a thought. I lit a fire of mulga sticks behind a clump of gidgee bush and was soon busily engaged on the task of making a "damper," or bread baked in the ashes. A flock of Nor West parrots flew screaming overhead. Romanes hobbled the camels and turned them loose with their bells making a monotonous "clump-clump," as they went in search of young and tender spinifex bush.

"How would stowed parrot go, boss?" Romanes asked me as he looked after the rowdy birds, which had settled in a solitary gum tree a couple of hundred yards inside the fence.

"Pretty good," I replied. "Take the gun and bag a few."

Romanes picked up my double-barreled Greener gun, stuffed a couple of extra cartridges into his pocket, and was about to follow up the parrots when I advised him to take the Winchester too, saying that he might bring back the tail of a young kangaroo for soup.

I lost sight of Romanes a minute later and went on with my preparations for our evening meal. The "damper" was made and I was just raking out the clean live coals of the fire on which to bake it, when I heard a rustle in the bush at my back. As I turned a spear whizzed by me and stuck quivering in the "grub bag" of the camel saddle a few feet away!

At the same moment I saw half a dozen savages in all their war paint. I rose and literally threw myself at the nearest saddle, against which a second Winchester rested. With that in my hand I could make a bolt and that was not to be. A second spear, aimed with half a dozen others, went through my left wrist, and, as I involuntarily dropped the rifle and grabbed at the spearhead, a waddy

descended on my head and my senses left me.

What actually transpired from the moment I lost touch with mortal existence until I found myself again in the depot I had to glean from the unwilling answers of Romanes to my question, and fill in the blanks from my imagination.

When he left me to follow the parrots, Romanes did not anticipate going more than a quarter of a mile, at most, into the scrub and expected to be back in camp within fifteen minutes at the outside, but before he could get a shot at the birds they had led him on for a mile. It was while he was on his way back to the camp that he heard a shout, which resembled very closely the yell of triumph the natives give when they have captured their game, be it human or animal.

Approaching the camp cautiously, Romanes caught sight of the natives raiding the outfit, tearing open the "grub bags" and generally making themselves acquainted with everything in the camel packs.

Having "tumbled to what had happened," Romanes first thought was to open fire on the blacks and before the natives knew what had happened a double charge of parrot shot struck them. With a yell they arose, the leader (whom it subsequently transpired was Major) grabbing the Winchester and firing wildly in the direction whence the shot had come. Romanes had taken shelter behind a bush which, while it obscured him from view, gave him no protection against bullets. He fired one shot from his rifle, and, dashing from his cover, made for a tree a hundred yards away, the natives following in a body. Once behind a stout trunk he brought his rifle into play and emptied the magazine with such effect that three of the natives fell, and the others, meeting such a stout foe, bolted into the bush.

Not knowing how many natives there were, or whether there were more than he had seen in the neighborhood, Romanes wasted no time in climbing into the tree, there to wait until it was quite safe for him to make a further move, as the superstitious nature of the blacks would prevent them from making any further attack.

When he had spent a couple of hours in his high perch Romanes quietly slipped down and approached the camp, for the main purpose of endeavoring to get a further supply of ammunition, and to secure one of the camels in order that he might get away from the dangerous locality as soon as he had collected anything of value which the natives had left. He expected to find me dead as a doornail and battered beyond recognition, but he got the shock of his life when he went over me and found me breathing.

Having made me as comfortable as

possible, Romanes went in search of the camels, his idea being to strap me to one and get away without delay, for if the natives should return in the morning in increased numbers, neither of us would ever leave the spot.

Poor John, he little knew then what a burden he had assumed in finding me alive! Better for him would it have been if I had really died then and he could have buried me, and, unhampered by a delirious man, have hastened to safety. His first disappointment came when he stood up to listen for the bells of the camels, which should have been heard. He failed to catch the faintest tinkle.

His disappointment became alarm when not three hundred yards from the camp he found our pack camel dead, with several spears sticking in, and the other two, fifty yards further on, hopelessly wounded.

His determination not to leave me placed him in this predicament: he had first of all to shift me to a place of safety before morning brought the natives on us again; and alone he had then to get me into the De Grey depot, a distance of nearly eighty miles, the best part of it over waterless country. It was impossible for me to move of my own initiative, for that had left me and I lay like a log, senseless, delirious. If my life was to be saved I had to be moved from the spot where I fell and be carried to a place of safety. That was the conclusion Romanes arrived at and before another dawn broke we were ten miles away.

In the dark hours of the next night Romanes carried me another twelve miles and collapsed beside me near an old native well.

How long into that day he slept, Romanes never knew, but when he awakened, probably as the result of my ravings, he saw a native coming along the fence scarcely two hundred yards away. His first thought was to shoot at sight, believing that the black must be one of our old enemies, but feeling certain that the black fellow could not have seen us in our retreat, he decided to wait till he came right up. The native was apparently following our tracks and was already turning off into the bush; it where we had left the fence, when Romanes recognized him as a native he had seen at Turnbull's station.

"Hallo there!" he yelled. "The black fellow stopped, saw the strange and dilapidated white man with a rifle in his hand, and turned with a yell to bolt into the bush."

Romanes called to him to halt and at the same time used Turnbull's name, and dropped his rifle. At the familiar name, and seeing that he was not to be shot instantly, the native stood still while Romanes walked toward him and told him who he was. The black accepted the peace overtures, and when Romanes learned that he was making for the De Grey station with the news from an outstation that the warlike natives were about, Romanes decided to trust him and conducted him to where I was lying.

He inspected my wounds with many grunts and exclamations of concern. He made a native plaster for my wounds, composing it of leaves and sticking it on with wet clay, over which was bound the piece of shirt sleeve which Romanes had first used to staunch the blood. Then with a message to both the depot and his employer, asking them to hasten to our assistance and telling them where they would find us, dead or alive, the native was dispatched by Romanes.

Romanes then picked me up again, and, footsore and exhausted as he was, carried me another nine miles. There for three whole days and nights we lay, myself in a high state of fever, happily oblivious to all that happened, and Romanes incessantly on the watch for blacks.

On the morning of the fourth day after our arrival at the shed, relief came.

Three days later I awoke to consciousness and found myself in comparative comfort at the De Grey depot, where the surveying party's cook—a first-rate amateur surgeon—had patched me up and doctored me in great style from the outfit's medicine chest. I was still a helpless wreck, but my brain was clearing, and when I realized where I was I asked about Romanes. They brought him to me and it was harder work for that brave fellow to answer my question as to how I got safe in from Mount Bruce than it had been for him to carry me the best part of the journey.

It was a month before I was well enough to travel down to Geraldton and there convalesce, but before I left I had the satisfaction of knowing that Major and Toby had met with their inevitable fate. They had "stuck up" the Turkey Creek station, and, on being beaten off by the stockmen, ran into the arms of a police patrol, who killed many of the natives, including the ringleaders, and captured the balance. When I was able to report to headquarters a further piece of intelligence pleased me. That was that my rescuer, John Romanes, had been promoted to the charge of an inspector's section and had been assigned to one of the best stretches of fence in the southern country.

STATE TAKES HAND IN FIGHT

New Jersey Leads in Advanced Legislation Designed to Check Spread of Tuberculosis.

What is designated by the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis as the most advanced legislation in the campaign against tuberculosis that has been enacted by any state in the United States, is found in a bill recently passed by the New Jersey legislature and signed by Governor Wilson. The new law provides that tuberculosis patients who refuse to obey the regulations laid down by the state board of health concerning the prevention of their disease, and thus become a menace to the health of those with whom they associate shall be compulsorily segregated by order of the courts, in institutions provided for this purpose. If such a patient refuses to obey the rules and regulations of the institution in which he is placed, he may be isolated or separated from other persons and restrained from leaving the institution. The law further provides that all counties in the state of New Jersey shall within six months from April 1st make provision in special institutions for the care of all persons having tuberculosis in these counties. The state treasurer will subsidize each county to the extent of \$3.00 a week for each person maintained in these institutions, except those who are able to pay for the cost of maintenance.

BABY'S TERRIBLE SUFFERING

"When my baby was six months old, his body was completely covered with large sores that seemed to itch and burn, and cause terrible suffering. The eruption began in pimples which would open and run, making large sores. His hair came out and finger nails fell off, and the sores were over the entire body, causing little or no sleep for baby or myself. Great scabs would come off when I removed his shirt.

"We tried a great many remedies, but nothing would help him, till a friend induced me to try the Cuticura Soap and Ointment. I used the Cuticura Soap and Ointment but a short time before I could see that he was improving, and in six weeks' time he was entirely cured. He had suffered about six weeks before we tried the Cuticura Soap and Ointment, although we had tried several other things, and doctors, too. I think the Cuticura Remedies will do all that is claimed for them, and a great deal more."

(Signed) Mrs. Noble Tubman, Dodson, Mont., Jan. 28, 1911. Although Cuticura Soap and Ointment are sold by druggists and dealers everywhere, a sample of each, with 32-page book, will be mailed free on application to "Cuticura," Dept. L, Boston.

Time Fliest.

When the blind woman who plays the accordion saw the genial looking man stop to read her placard, she quickened her tune in the expectation that he was going to give her some money, but he gave advice instead.

Said he: "Have you read that sign of yours lately?" She said she had not. "Well," said he, "you'd better, and then have it edited. It is dated six years ago and says you have six small children dependent upon your efforts with this instrument for support. Six years works wonders in children, and they must be pretty lusty youngsters by this time. Change that date to 1912."

Explained.

"The count has a painfully snobbish air. What does he base it on?" "Why, his father, the marquis, was the victim of a duel." "A French duel?" "Yes." "Impossible!" "Not at all. The marquis climbed a tree to get out of the way, and fell and broke his neck."

Takes a Week.

"I thought your daughter was coming home from the beach this week." "We had to let her remain another week in order to finish saying goodbye to a young man."

Before Publication.

"Patsy, bring me a paper when you come to work in the morning," a woman who lived at the edge of a village told her man of all work when he went home at night. "Now, don't forget it," she added. "No, ma'am," said Patsy. "I won't. I might forget it if I left it until morning, so I'll get it tonight."

Naturally.

"That child actor has a part which fits like a glove." "Yes—sort of kid glove."

Not Telling All of It.

"Does your fiance know your age, Little?" "Well, partly."

THE SECRET OF LONG LIFE.

Do not sap the springs of life by neglect of the human mechanism, by allowing the accumulation of poisons in the system. An imitation of Nature's method of restoring waste of tissue and impoverishment of the blood and nervous strength is to take an alternative glyceric extract (without alcohol) of Golden Seal and Oregon grape root. Bloodroot, Stone and Mandrake root with Cherrybark. Over 40 years ago Dr. Pierce gave the public this remedy, which he called Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. He found it would help the blood in taking up the proper elements from food, help the liver into activity, thereby throwing out the poisons from the blood and vitalizing the whole system as well as allaying and soothing a cough.

No one ever takes cold unless constipated, or exhausted, and having what we call mal-nutrition, which is attended with impoverished blood and exhaustion of nerve force. The "Discovery" is an all-round tonic which restores tone to the blood, nerves and heart by imitating Nature's methods of restoring waste of tissue, and feeding the nerves, heart and lungs on rich red blood.

"I suffered from pain under my right shoulder blade also a very severe cough," writes Mrs. W. DORN, of New Brookland, S. C., to Dr. R. V. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y. "Had four different doctors and none did me any good. Some said I had consumption, others said I would have to have an operation. I was bedridden, unable to sit up for six months and was nothing but a live skeleton. When I was advised to take Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery and Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. When I had taken one bottle of the 'Discovery' I could sit up for an hour at a time, and when I had taken three bottles I could do my cooking and tend to the children. I took fourteen bottles in all and was then in good health. My weight is now 157 pounds."

W. L. DOUGLAS SHOES

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TOO BAD FOR HIM.



She (romantically)—Ah, what's in a name? He (absently)—Everything is in my wife's name.

How Old Was He? In a country school the boys of a certain grade were devoted to their teacher, a young lady of many charms. One little fellow of rather uncertain age was constantly proving his devotion by little acts of kindness, which did not escape the notice of the teacher. Coming up to him one day she put an arm about his shoulders and said: "I believe I will kiss you for being so good to me, but how old are you?" "Oh, that's all right," he said, "I am old enough to enjoy it."—Mack's National Monthly.

Missing the Point.

Representative Rucker of Colorado, apropos of a tariff argument about sugar, said to a Washington correspondent: "Oh, well, those men don't see my point. They miss it as badly as the old lady missed her son's." "Mother," a young man said, looking up from the Bulletin, "would you believe that it takes 5,000 elephants a year to make our piano keys and billiard balls?" "Make our piano keys and billiard balls?" cried the old lady. "Well, I always understood elephants were intelligent creatures, but I never knew before that they'd been trained to make piano keys and billiard balls."

In the Dark.

"Has that boy of yours who graduated from college last year found a job that suits him yet?" "Nope. He's still looking for one." "Where's he looking?" "Well, I don't just know. He seems to do most of his looking nights."

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It's the goodness of this foot-of-beer as well as its tonic properties that make it so great a favorite. One package makes 8 gallons. If you prefer a smaller size, see the advertisement on receipt. Resale to individuals. Write for Premium List. THE CHARLES H. HRES CO., 255 N. Broad St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Nebraska Directory

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No Formality to Their Marriage

Marriage among Wa-Unga of north-east Rhodesia is much less of a formality than among the neighboring tribes; betrothal being unnecessary, and very often the parents know nothing of the marriage. In the old days, before they came under the government, marriage by capture was common, the abduction being done in canoes. In fact, the lake tribes seemed to be continually raiding each other, and among fellow tribesmen, too, capturing sheep, goats and women. Often raids would be made on Wa-Unga villages on the banks of the rivers; the raiders, waiting till the men of the village were out, would approach in their canoes and catch all the women they could. As the rule of Europeans, with European law, gets a firmer hold, this marriage by capture will presumably give way entirely to the common method of marriage by barter. The local value of a woman is one sheep (market value about 25 cents). In the case of a

Took Revenge on the Crocodile

Recently, while some children were bathing in the Inzizwa river, New Zealand, a Matabele youth was seized by a crocodile. The cries and shouts of himself and his companions brought older members of the kral, who succeeded in frightening off the reptile and effecting a rescue. The boy was found to be badly bitten on the arm and side. The enraged parents then collected some twenty friends, and armed with assegais, battle-axes and bars of iron, they entered the water and drove it in a line. The pool was forty yards long and five broad, and the greatest depth took the men up to the armpits. With much splashing and shouting whenever a cautious foot came into contact with the crocodile, a stab was made. Two assegai wounds eventually took sufficient effect to make the reptile rise for air, when a blow on the head with a battle axe finished it off. The usual ceremony of burning the carcass and returning the remains to the water was

He Got His "Change."

The waning talk about the Ozark lound brings back the episode of Laz Spencer in the courtroom scene of Opie Read's play, "The Starbuckers." Laz, like all the other witnesses, was trying to "stall" in the interest of the old moonshiner, and undertook to entertain the federal judge with an anecdote. "A man up our way," said Laz, "had a lot of dogs. He used to take one to town and trade him for a pint of likker. "One day he took along the biggest bound you ever see. When the storekeeper gave him the likker, this man said: 'What! Don't I get nothin' back, no store?' "And the storekeeper gave him an old setter and a bull pup."

Tight Shoe Caused Loss of Leg.

The wearing of a tight shoe has just cost a young woman of Baltimore, Md., the loss of her right leg. Some weeks ago she bought a pair of new shoes, which she wore for several days. A slight irritation on her little toe, which she thought would wear off in a few days, developed into an ulceration. Then the foot began to swell, and finally the leg swelled. Thoroughly alarmed, the girl applied for treatment at the Mercy hospital, where the case was diagnosed as a gangrenous infection. The foot was opened and the wound sterilized, but it became more virulent, and the physicians decided that immediate amputation was imperative. The leg was taken off just below the hip.

"nafumo," who was killed, compensation was fixed at once, one sheep and a string of beads.—Geographical Journal.