

A BOY'S COURAGE

I write to you as to a boy's bravery and faithfulness.

David Hacket, a lad of 13, the **son of a pensioner** (deceased), was hut keeper to the Messrs. Clarkson at their eastern station. On Hi^{tn}, July last, when alone at the hut, four natives attacked him, his gun snapped but he knocked down one with the stock; they then threw him down and severely beat him (he still bears the marks), and three of them would have killed him but the fourth prevented them. On the evening of the 31st while he and poor Edward Clarkson were at supper, six spears were thrown at them, one wounding the latter mortally, and one wounding Hacket slightly in the arm. Hacket seized his gun and the natives ran away. The boy got his wounded master into the hut, and tended him truly and kindly for six days, reading to him and praying with him, and although alone and not knowing when the savages would return (they did return once and he drove them off with his gun), never swerving from his watch and tending whilst life remained; and even after poor Edward Clarkson died Hacket shewed no fear, he covered up the body, secured the hut (although natives returned after he left and cleared it of everything including powder, caps, shot, &c. (they had previously stolen a gun), and started on his solitary and dangerous journey of over one hundred miles through the bush, accomplishing the journey in three days.

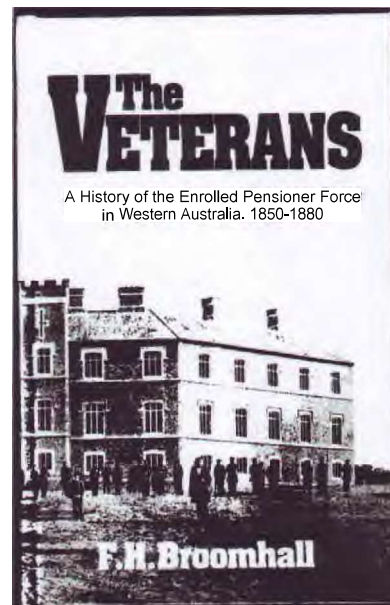
Surely this was pure courage.

A subscription was raised for Hacket, the amount to be paid into the Savings' Bank in the name of a Trustee until the lad became of age.

Rica Erickson's account of this incident in "Old Toodyay and Newcastle" states that David's father having died on the station was buried at 'Nardie'. She goes on to say that during the six days that passed before he died, the dying man instructed the lad how to read the stars at night pointing out which were to be his guides in leading him to Eaton's station at Quelquelling. This was the nearest outpost to civilization, and he had to travel at night because the Aborigines feared the dark.

EPG Reference

The standard reference on the Enrolled Pensioner Guard is available from the EPG Special Interest Group



This book by F. H. Broomhall is a must for all who are interested in the history of the Enrolled Pensioner Force in Western Australian between 1850—1880.

Price \$45.00 plus postage.