David Bruce Encyclopedia Article

David Bruce

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1855-1931

British physician and pathologist who is best known for his landmark studies of parasitology, especially sleeping-sickness. In 1887, Bruce reported that a bacterial agent causes Malta fever. His studies of nagana, a disease of domestic animals in South Africa, showed that the disease was transmitted by the bite of an infected tsetse fly. This insight led to his discovery that sleeping sickness (a disease of humans that is caused by a microbial agent known as a trypanosome) was also transmitted by the tsetse fly.