

In his holidays, Riley went to Bugaldi determined to solve the mystery. Within twenty-four hours he found the remains of the child's body.

Followed Ant Trail

Police say that one of Riley's most remarkable feats was the recovery of a large quantity of goods, including sugar, which was stolen from Minore, near Dubbo.

It was known that the goods were hidden in the ranges. Riley went to the area and concentrated on the ants. After covering a wide field he came on a trail of ants—they carried sugar.

He followed the trail to a big tree and saw the ants coming down the side with sugar. Climbing to a hollow fork, he found all the stolen property.

Here is his story of his most interesting experience:—

"In 1923 Roy Governor, youngest member of the Governor tribe, who, some years before were responsible for the massacre of a white family and their staff at Breelong, took to the bush in Pilliga and terrified settlers over a wide area.

"Wherever he committed a robbery he left a scribbled note, signed, 'Governor, the notorious bushranger,' but police regarded this as a hoax.

Our grateful thanks to the Sydney Morning Herald for permission to reprint this article from the Sunday Herald of July, 1950.

"For three months I hunted Governor through the scrub from hideout to hideout. I followed him by a peculiar track. I notice a strand of string had marked each pad, so I knew it was a human wearing a foot pad to cover tracks.

"I first surprised him in a hideout, and as he fled into the scrub I saw the foot pads were made of sheep-skin. I also recognised him as one of the Governors, and saw that he was armed.

"A police squad was rushed to the area, and when I pin-pointed his hiding place they closed on the area. When within shooting range Governor opened fire on the police, wounding Sergeant Young, of Mendooran, who never worked again.

"Police fire was concentrated on the hideout and Governor fell with a bullet through the back. It penetrated his chest and chopped the top off a lung.

"After a Dubbo doctor had saved his life Governor was sentenced to death at the Dubbo Supreme Court. The sentence was commuted to life."

Traced Murderers

In 1921, Alexander Matheson was murdered at Yeoval. It was Alex Riley's tracking which led to the arrest of George Earsman, who was sentenced to death.

Sixteen years later he searched a locality for evidence which helped to convict James Earsman, father of George Earsman, of the murder of a man at Gilgandra. James Earsman was also sentenced to death.

In 1936 Ruby Green was murdered at Dubbo, but police could not find the body. Riley found the impression of a human head, with hair strand marks in the soft mud at the foot of a steep river bank. The body was found a mile from this point.

Riley was present when Andrew Moss was arrested at Dubbo in 1939. Moss was subsequently sentenced to death for murder. He was charged with murdering three men.

"Moss was supposed to have killed thirteen. His own boast was that he had done the baker's dozen," said Riley.

To Train Athletes

Asked what he would do with his spare time in future, Riley said: "Concentrate on the training of athletes. I have one 'dark horse' who should win the big event at Bendigo next year."

For years Alex Riley has trained footballers, cyclists, athletes, swimmers, and boxers in the Dubbo district in an honorary capacity.

When Sergeant Tracker Alex Riley retired there was still a Tracker Alex Riley in the force—his son, Alex Riley, junior, who is stationed at Nyngan.



Alex Riley, his daughter and two granddaughters.