

The Murder of Constable William Dwyer 1883

Constable Dwyer was transferred to Taroom in central Queensland and during his time there, a notorious aboriginal known as Wild Toby roamed the district. Toby was a big, powerful aboriginal, an elusive, fearless and daring scoundrel, with no respect whatever for white man's law or property. For many years he caused great trouble and fear in the district. On September 1882 Wild Toby was arrested by Constable Edwards for kidnapping a grazier's daughter. He was interred for the night in the station storeroom and chained to a log but still managed to escape. On 25 September 1882, a warrant was issued for Toby's arrest on a charge of attempted murder of one James Anderson of Wandoan.

On 24 January 1883, Senior Constable Wright, Constable Dwyer and a tracker left the Taroom Police Station in pursuit of Toby who was reportedly camped at Juandah Station. Late on the 25th the patrol saw a fire coming from what they believed to be Toby's camp but due to the late hour they stopped to camp for the night. At daylight on the 26th the patrol made its way towards the camp and once close to it they saw Wild Toby. The patrol rode single file into the camp with Wright in the lead. Without warning Dwyer got off his horse and charged at Toby, grabbed him by the neck and put a revolver to his head. But Toby had no intention of surrendering and Dwyer could not hold onto him as he was covered in pig fat and was slippery. As Toby leapt to his feet with his tomahawk, Dwyer's gun was knocked out of his hands and Toby lunged at Dwyer with his tomahawk. Wright got off his horse and fired two shots at Toby but that did not stop Toby from hitting Dwyer in the head with the tomahawk. Wright then managed to shoot and kill Wild Toby.

Constable Dwyer died half an hour after the attack from a massive head wound.

