

Site of the Traveller's Rest Hotel Lessee Mr Thomas McDougall

The extent to which the population of Jerilderie was largely unaware of the presence of the Kelly Gang in Jerilderie is typified by the fact that at 1.00pm on Monday, 10 February 1879, as was his usual habit, the Postmaster, Mr H B Jefferson arrived at the Traveller's Rest Hotel for lunch. On finishing his lunch, the waitress said to him that there were rumours of something unusual going on at the Royal Mail Hotel and Bank of NSW.

Mr Jefferson replied that the local school teacher, Mr William Elliott, had called into the Post Office for his mail shortly before 1.00pm and then left there for the Bank. Because Elliott hadn't turned up for his lunch, Jefferson agreed that there must be something strange going on at the Bank.

At 2.00 pm Mr Jefferson left the Hotel and returned to the Post Office, to be confronted by Joe Byrne.

The lessee of the Hotel, Mr McDougall, certainly became aware of the Kelly Gang being in Jerilderie when, shortly after 2.00 pm, he was confronted by Ned Kelly, demanding a look at the McDougall's racing mare "Minnie".

Later, Mr McDougall was prevailed upon by Steve Hart to come with him and carry back a saddle which Steve Hart had 'procured' from the saddlery of James Mahood.

Later still, at approximately 4.00 pm, Ned Kelly rode up to the Traveller's Rest Hotel and shouted the bar, which, by this time, appeared to be full of 'strangers'. Steve Hart return Reverend Gribble's watch to him and bought two bottles of brandy "to go" and, to the cheers of the 'strangers', rode off towards Conargo, singing "*Hurrah for the Good Old Times of Morgan and Ben Hall*".

An eyewitness to these events was none other than the local schoolteacher, Mr William Elliott who, on his release from the parlour of the Royal Mail Hotel at 3.00 pm, walked over to the dining room of the Traveller's Rest Hotel to eat his rather belated lunch.

MR THOMAS MCDUGALL was born at Windsor, New South Wales, on 6 August 1832, and married Anne Morrison in Melbourne, in 1857.

In July 1872, Mr & Mrs McDougall became lessees of the Traveller's Rest Hotel until 1882, when the lease expired and they chose not to renew.

Mr & Mrs McDougall subsequently separated, Mrs McDougall going to Ivanhoe in New South Wales where she acted as the District Nurse for a time, before being licencee of Mac's Ivanhoe Hotel for one year, in 1886.

Mrs McDougall died in Wilcannia in 1912, where she is buried.

Thomas McDougall died in the Jerilderie Hospital and was buried in the Jerilderie Cemetery on 20 March 1903. His grave is located in Row G, Lot 76 in the Church of England section.
