

## - The Rocks Hotel -

The Rocks Station, with a large skillion store, as noted in 1854, formed the basics for "The Travellers' Home" hotel, which has the honour of being the oldest pub in the area, and although it isn't known exactly when, or by whom it was built, it was certainly in operation in the 1860s.

Located near the nine mile bridge on the Morangarell Road on the Walladilly Creek not far from a spring, it was also on the boundaries of the Temora and Narraburra runs.

The hotel was licensed by William Marshall in 1865, who, along with Mrs Sproul, sold the Rock Station in 1866. At that time they listed the improvements as "Rock station, estimated area 30,000 acres...on this station there are numerous and substantial improvements comprising a public house, doing a first class bush business, a new store, detached kitchen, a fine stable, sheds, outhouses, and an excellent dairy, also a large cultivation paddock and a very large substantial fenced-in horse paddock."

This attracted Thomas Kingsland in 1868, while the following year, John McPherson, then owner of the Rocks Station, built a new and fine hotel at The Rocks in 1869. When tenders were invited for purchase of the hotel in 1870 it was described as a "wooden house, newly erected...the accommodation consists of two parlours, seven bedrooms, bar and tap room, kitchen, stables etc. Within a few yards of the house is a magnificent dam of permanent water".

Later accounts describe it as nothing more than a masonry building, being little more than a shanty pub-cum-store and residence with an unsavory reputation.

Charles Buffrey was the host in late 1870, then Charles Guest 1871-1873, from late 1873 until 1874 William Elliott with his son John as post master were at the hotel, with the name changed to the "Nags Head".

Dennis O'Keefe, publican from 1874 to late 1875, renamed it to the "Temora Hotel".

Fredrick C. Hawkins renamed it the "Rocks Hotel" in the period 1875-77.

Paul Steele and his daughter Bridget, as Post Mistress held the establishment in 1879. later in the same year William McKeon became the host as well as storekeeper .1880 saw William Elliott again in charge of the bar and the hotel name being "Elliott's". Albert Burrett tended the bar but left in an urgent nature, then again in late 1880 Duncan McCallum took over.

Denis O'Keefe again renamed it the Temora Hotel, after he had, in February 1873, taken up 40 acres near the hotel. The full license for the hotel was granted to him on October 12, 1881, which he ran in conjunction with the Post Office as well as a general store.



All that remained of the hotel by 1932.

The hotel was the scene of many wild events... old time shearers fought over their cheques, bushrangers hid from the law, shepherds, drovers and lonely bush people called in.

The vicious Bushranger John Hawthorne often considered the hotel his haven.

Another couple of outlaws, Johnny Gilbert and John Dunn of the notorious "Wedding" Mountains Gang" also considered the hotel a favourite hideout.

It seems likely the Rock Hotel ceased business around 1888.



Denis O'Keefe, 1843-1916

## - The Rocks Post Office -

From controversial beginnings with much debate taking place surrounding the appointment of the first official Post Master, West Temora, or The Rocks as it was also known, was borne out of necessity in December 1873, with a mail run required from Morangarell to join up with the Cootamundra mail run.

The necessary Post Office was located at The Rocks, with local store keeper, Denis O'Keefe, eventually being appointed the Post Master on April 9, 1874, despite strong opposition from some, with their preferred option being John Elliot, who had already had experience there forwarding and receiving mails.

With the eventual relocation of the Post Office to Quinlan's "Bellendale", considered inconvenient for the mail contractor, it was decided, after much correspondence, to close the post office at Quinlans on January 7, 1889, and relocate it to Kite's (Narraburra).

With the resignation of the Receiving Office Keeper at Narraburra Station, Mr Duncan, the Postal Department established a Receiving Office at West Temora (Narraburra) under the charge of the local Public School teacher, Miss Mary Jane Hammond, in April, 1889.

With her resignation later that year, Hannah Kite became her successor, and it was presumed, the Receiving Office was relocated to the Narraburra Hotel.

The RO continued on at premises at the Narraburra Hotel under the name West Temora until January 1897 when it became known as the Narraburra Post Office, effectively bringing the chapter of West Temora history to a close.

### THE ROCKS POST MASTERS/MISSTRESSES

1874 - 1878	Mr Denis O'Keefe
1878 - 1879	Mrs Elizabeth O'Keefe
1879 - 1880	Miss Bridget Steele
1880 - 1880	Mr Albert Burrett
1880 - 1881	Miss Catherine McCallum
1881 - 1888	Mr Denis O'Keefe
1888 - 1889	Mr Mat Quinlan, located at his property "Bellendale"
1889	Quinlans PO closed and relocated to Narraburra.
1889 - 1889	Miss Mary Jane Hammond
1889 - 1891	Miss Hannah Kite
1891 - 1897	Mrs Isabella Kennedy