

## Alfred Charles King Cooke 1872 - 1946



Alfred Charles King Cooke was born on 7 January 1872 in Kiama, on the NSW South Coast. The son of Irish emigrants, Mary Ann and William Cooke, he moved with his parents to northern NSW in 1883. In 1895, Alfred married his cousin, Ada Margaret King. Together, they had thirteen children – six girls and seven boys.

Alfred was farming at Alstonville near Lismore, NSW, when the decision was made to relocate to the Maleny district. During 1904, the Cooke family moved into James Cork's house in Maleny while local men, Ben and Charlie Nothling and Fred Vandreike built their home (named Adaville) on the farm Alfred had bought at Teutoburg (Witta). Within months of their arrival, the Maleny Butter Factory opened. This was the catalyst for the local economy to go from timber-getting to dairying. The price of land started to rise as skilled dairymen (of whom Alfred Cooke was one) brought their cattle to the Maleny district from the Clarence and Richmond Rivers area of northern NSW, and the NSW South Coast.

Around 1909, Alfred had a large home (named Rosedale) built in Maleny. It stands today as "Maleny Lodge" at 58 Maple Street. The Cooke family were prominent in Maleny's early European history. In particular, Alfred was involved in many community organisations, including the Guernsey Cattle Society of Australasia (Queensland branch), the Landsborough Shire Council, and Maleny's Hospital, Show Society, School of Arts, Progress Association, Butter Factory, WWI Patriotic Committee, Township School, and Bowls Club. A busy man, as well as his dairying interests, he ran a successful auctioneering business and, at one time, owned the Maleny Hotel.

After nearly 20 years on the Blackall Range, Ada and Alfred moved to Brisbane's Fortitude Valley where they lived for several years before returning to Maleny. Ada died during the Great Depression (1933) and was buried in the Witta Cemetery. A year later, Alfred remarried a widow named Emma Armstrong. Alfred died in the Maleny Hospital on 17 May 1946 and was buried with Ada in the Witta Cemetery. He had followed in his father's footsteps as a man with a lifetime interest in the breeding of good-quality dairy cattle, winning many prizes in agricultural shows around the Sunshine Coast and at the Brisbane Exhibition. As a lasting legacy to the Cooke family, there is Cooke Park in the centre of Maleny and Cooke Road in Witta.



THIS PARK WAS DEDICATED  
BY ALL THE CHILDREN  
OF THE LATE  
A. C. K. & A. M. COOKE  
AS A TRIBUTE TO THE  
MEMORY OF THEIR PARENTS

