

Harold Mear was born at Stapenhill, Derbyshire England. His parents were Samuel Oscar and Mary Mear. They came to Australia in 1913 with their nine children, aged between 6 & 19 years, and arrived in Brisbane in 1914. 20-year-old Harold worked as a gardener for Mr Reese, the Lord Mayor of Brisbane. Cyril the second eldest, was sent to Maleny by the employment bureau. He told his dad to “go Maleny and when you get there, stay there.” They obtained a block of land at “Carinya” at Wootha ?1915.

Harold enlisted in the AIF in World War 1 in 1915. He attended Officer Training School at Cambridge. Harold achieved the rank of Lieutenant. He was wounded three times while serving overseas, most severely in August, 1918 with a gunshot wound to the upper jaw. After many operations performed by surgeon Sir Warwick James, he returned home to Australia in May, 1919. When he arrived home his mother didn't recognise due to the scaring from his injuries. He still couldn't speak (he had no top palate) and went to Adelaide for specialist surgery. He was discharged from the army in April, 1920. Harold spent a year recuperating with his good friend and Army mate, Jack Schultz on a sheep property at Aramac. He was awarded the Victory Medal and the British War Medal. He married Ada Armstrong Savage in 1928 in Toowoomba. She had been Matron at the Soldier's Memorial Hospital in Maleny for 2 years (which is where they met).



They had 4 children, Allan, Linda, Howard and Mary.

Howard, Linda and
Mary in the front, Allan
at the back.

Harold pioneered 220 acres at “Stretton”, Booroobin, 10 miles from Maleny, felling scrub, building a hut, digging a well and establishing a stud Jersey dairy farm. Harold and Ada took a keen interest in the district. They helped get the Booroobin State School re-established in 1932. They also attended church services at Ben Martin’s home. Harold belonged to the Masonic Lodge and the Country Party.

In 1937 they bought A.M. Hunt’s 110 acre “Springdale” farm on Mary River Road, Maleny intending to later move their stud cattle there. However, after a week with appendicitis and peritonitis, Harold died in Nundah in 1940, aged 46 years. He was buried at the Witta Cemetery. Soon after he died Ada received a letter from Dr James. He was writing a book and offered to pay the fare for Harold and Ada to England to see how his face was progressing.

Ada continued to work the Booroobin farm with help from families living in the cottage during the Second World War. She had milking machines installed and the children worked the dairy until Allan married Enid Rapp in 1950. Ada moved to “Springdale”, where Harold farmed and had a milk run. He married Helen Elliott in 1955. Ada had a stroke in 1953 Linda came home from her Midwifery training in Melbourne to look after her. After a time, Linda was able to get a nursing job at the Maleny hospital. Mary began her nursing training at the Brisbane General Hospital in 1954. Ada died in June, 1957 and was buried at the Witta Cemetery.

