

## JOHN HOPE SKERMAN

John Hope Skerman was born at North Pine (later Petrie) in 1875, one of a family of 16. After completing his schooling at the North Pine State School, he was engaged in the blacksmithing trade at Strathpine. In 1896, he turned his attention to dairying, accompanying Mr John Mahon, the Government Dairy Instructor, for six months, following that, he went on to manage a cheese factory at Laidley. He held this position for two years, before transferring to a butter factory, operated by the same company, in Brisbane.

In 1898, he became Manager of the butter factory at Tiaro, near Maryborough. It was here where he won an award of £15/15/0, a prize offered by the Queensland Government to stimulate the butter industry in the State. In 1902, Mr Skerman returned to blacksmithing with his brother at Terror's Creek (later Dayboro).

In 1903, he took up 152 acres of land at Maleny. His arrival at Maleny coincided with the first moves to establish a local butter factory, later becoming a Provisional Director. It was in this capacity that he was requested to manage the Factory, taking up those duties in December, 1904. In that first year of operations, he carried out the entire operations by himself, even acting as his own secretary and sleeping on the premises. The Company established a co-operative general store, which Mr Skerman managed as well. The store and the factory both went through a period of expansion and progress in the time following. It was then Mr Skerman was relieved of his store duties to devote his energies to the butter factory.

By 1908, the original butter factory was too small when it decided to erect a new factory. Mr Skerman supervised the construction of this factory which took three years to complete due to the difficulties in transporting materials from Landsborough.

Mr Skerman served as Manager from 1903 to 1926, a period of 23 years.

