

# Doing Australia's dairy industry Proud

The Camperdown Cheese and Butter Factory has been led by a succession of industry greats for many years. One, Jonathan Proud, is commemorated each year with a DIAA trophy for the highest scoring consumer butter pack in Australia. Margaret Langdon reports.

Jonathan Proud was born in England in 1873 and immigrated to Australia as a child with his family, who established a dairy farm in Queensland.

Young Jonathan took over the running of the farm after the death of his father, and even as a teenager he showed particular grit. When the farm milkers walked off the job one Christmas Eve, he milked 240 cows by hand, working around the clock for five days.



Jonathan Proud

Mr Proud studied veterinary science at the Brisbane Technical School and dairying at the Queensland Agricultural College, achieving excellent results. He managed a creamery near Brisbane for several years, before heading south to Victoria in 1902.

For the next decade, Mr Proud was manager of the Korumburra Butter Factory. Then, in

1914, he took the helm of Camperdown Cheese and Butter Factory.

Mr Proud was a decisive and commanding manager, with a military bearing. Colleagues and staff described him as a strict disciplinarian and a perfectionist, but also as fine and fair.

Mr Proud's son, **Jack Proud**, who worked with his father at Camperdown, told the story of an employee who wanted a cream grader's certificate but was not willing to follow Mr Proud's approved method, which was to look closely at the cream and smell it before tasting it.

The would-be cream grader insisted on skipping the first two steps, so Jonathan Proud directed him towards a particular batch. After tasting the cream, the employee realised it was fly-blown with maggots.

"The poor bloke was immediately sick," Jack Proud recalled. "And a bit wiser!"

In 1928, the Victorian Advisory Dairy Board sent Jonathan Proud to the UK to investigate reports of problems with Australian butter exports. He wrote in *The Argus* newspaper that although "much Australian butter of excellent quality reaches London," some did not maintain quality in transit.

On his return, Mr Proud made export butter quality his priority, stressing that inferior butter sent to England harmed the reputation of the Victorian dairy industry.

In addition to his work at Camperdown, Jonathan Proud made a significant contribution to the dairy industry at large. He was a member and officer of most national and State dairy associations and numerous other industry bodies.

He served four terms as Victorian president and 11 terms as national president of the Australian Institute of Dairy Factory Managers and Secretaries, one of the DIAA's

*The Camperdown Cheese and Butter Factory in 1914.*



*Jonathan Proud made export butter quality his priority, stressing that inferior butter sent to England harmed the reputation of the Victorian dairy industry.*

predecessors, and was awarded honorary life membership on his retirement.

Beyond the dairy industry, various governments sought Mr Proud's advice on food production matters during World War II.

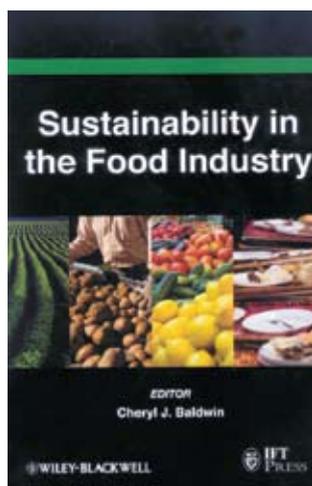
When Mr Proud retired in 1949, a public farewell was held at Camperdown's Theatre Royal, and local and industry representatives paid tribute to him and his work.

Mr Proud left Camperdown to spend his retirement in Victorian seaside town of Torquay, but passed away soon after, in January 1950. ■

*This article is based, in part, on information from Norman Godbold's **Victoria – Cream of the Country**.*



*The beginning of the new Camperdown Cheese and Butter Factory in 1916.*



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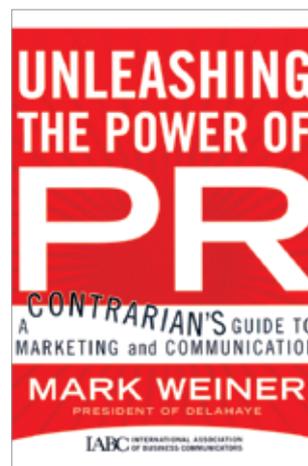
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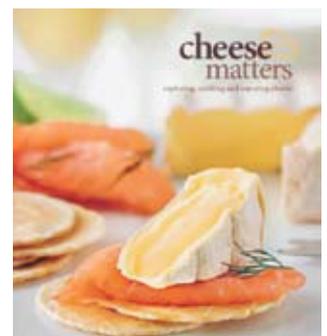


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**Contact:**

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