

William Cooper to Mrs W. A. Norman, 30 July 1940, Norman Family Papers, Mortlock Library, State Library of South Australia, PRG 422/31

Your very kind and sincere letter, dated 22nd inst., reached me this morning and without doubt I must say that I cannot find enough happy words to express my deep appreciation for this letter I have received from you; especially where you speak of your dear beloved father and mother [Daniel and Janet Matthews], and of dear Maloga. I often cast my mind back to them, and the dear old place, and at times it brings tears in my eyes when thinking of the glorious hours, days and months, we spent together; the beautiful singing, the picnics, the games.— Your father's voice still rings in my ears: We never ever had singing like we did at Maloga.

When we left Maloga, it appeared to me as though we left Paradise. After this we were at Cumeroongunga, for about four years, when the people became wrecked. Our people never were the same after they left Maloga: they steadily drifted back, almost to where they started from.

On account of the cruel administration which our people had to suffer, I was obliged to leave Cumeroongunga. I have been away from Cumeroongunga for over 30 years.

I came here in the year 1931 and have been here ever since. During all this time I have been pleading for my people throughout Australia, and only, after working for seven years, I got slight results in the Northern Territory. South Australia is now also improving, but Queensland, with the exception of Cowal Creek, where an Aboriginal leader, Jomen Tamwoy, has gathered together three tribes, taught them about God and they have now, without outside assistance, built their own little homes with gardens in front. They are over 150 persons, they grow their own vegetables and as there are plenty of wild cattle, they are not short of meat. As far as the Government is concerned, Queensland is at a standstill. In W.A. and N.S.W. natives are still very badly treated.

You know that there is much to be done before the Abo can be parallel with the white man. The Government is very unjust and stubborn; for it will not do anything for our people if it can avoid it, for they have often promised in reply to my letters, but that is about as far as they have got so far: however; we must continue asking God to help to pull us through our struggle for justice.

It will be news to you to hear of my brothers and sisters. You will be sorry to hear that Edgar, Lizzie, Johnny, and Aaron have passed away[,] Jack and Bobby Cooper, and Mrs James, and Myself are all well. I don't know if you will remember all I have mentioned, for you were a very little girl when you were at Maloga. You never told me about your sister and brothers! Are any of them in Melbourne? Let me know when you write again, please.

I am enclosing you a subscription list; it is to help the League forward. I will be glad if you will head the list, and if, in your position, you can get other sympathetic friends to help me. I am trying very earnestly to raise enough money to hire the Melbourne Town Hall for a big public meeting. We must make our voices heard, but I feel sure that such a meeting would do a lot of good. I trust you will not think that I am asking too much. I do so because I feel you have our interest at heart. I have gained an

amount of public sympathy, but the Governments keep neglecting all requests. I am still fighting on, and though disheartened at times, I know God sees all, and that if we keep on trusting Him, He WILL see that we get justice, and so I keep on going, and shall do so till the end.