



# Waipuku Cemetery

Mountain Rd, Waipuku

1898

---

<b>Use:</b>	Closed cemetery	<b>Historic Value:</b>	3 out of 5
<b>Materials:</b>	-	<b>Architectural Value:</b>	1 out of 4
<b>NZHPT Registered:</b>	Not registered	<b>Technical Value:</b>	1 out of 2
<b>Legal Description:</b>	Lots 6 - 10 DP13087 Blk VI Ngaere SD	<b>Symbolic Value:</b>	2 out of 3
		<b>Rarity Value:</b>	- out of 2
		<b>Townscape Value:</b>	- out of 2
		<b>Group Value:</b>	- out of 2
		<b>Overall Heritage Value:</b>	7 out of 20



On the 16<sup>th</sup> of January 1896, a meeting of the settlers in Waipuku was held in Mr. Blanchard's house on Croydon Road. The result of this meeting was the establishment of the Waipuku Cemetery. The committee agreed to set aside two acres of land for this cemetery (and a sports domain). The land was leased out – and paid for in the first two years with fencing work.



*Ada Henwood's Grave*

At this time, Waipuku had gone from being a flourishing town with a hotel, school, two general stores and a blacksmiths, to being a community of 30 farmers centered around the Waipuku Creamery (as most moved when a new saw mill was set up in Taraki).

The first recorded burial at this cemetery was on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May, 1898, when a 'charitable aid patient' James Friend, died. However, it was not until 1920 that the ground was actually surveyed. This was done by Mr. B. Horner, who divided the land into five blocks, with 95 plots.

Seven still-births and babies were buried at Waipuku Cemetery. In total, 34 people were buried there, with surnames including Arms, Bell, Blanchard, Brown, Buckingham, Coutts, Fever, Friend, Hamblyn, Henwood, Jones, Kehely, Leneham, Marquardt, Perham, Raynor, Reid, Ridd, Taylor, and Vesty. There are many stories and a vast history behind all of these names, which are held dear to their descendents. John Ridd, for example, who was buried in August 1900 aged 38 years, invented the 'Ridd Milker' – a milking machine that was powered by a water wheel in the stream.



*John Ridd's Grave*

Fewer burials took place than were expected, as the community of Waipuku gradually diminished. As a result, the Waipuku Cemetery was closed by Order in Council on 19 July 1939, with the Minister of Health publishing a closure notice in the New Zealand Gazette on 27 July. The official closure was to take effect from 1 April 1940, although the last recorded burial had taken place on 6 September 1924, when Ellen Perham, aged 60, passed away.

The two rows of lichen-crusting gravestones, situated on a ridge-top and shaded by an ash tree, can be seen as a memorial to the settlers of Waipuku, especially those farmers who stayed to keep the creamery running, while the rest of the community moved on.

The cemetery is about 9.7km north of Stratford, and can only be accessed with permission from the land owner (contact Stratford District Council for more details).

## **Bibliography**

*Waipuku: Once Upon A Town*, David Bruce (May 2003)  
Church, Ian; *The Stratford Inheritance*, The Heritage Press (1990)