

Death Of Founder Of Early Cheese Factory Occurs

The promoter of the first dairy factory in Taranaki, Mr. Alfred Brake, died at New Plymouth on Saturday at the age of 88 years. The factory, a proprietary cheese concern, was established at Lepperton in 1882.

Mr. Brake had a remarkably inventive mind, and he was extremely active even at his advanced age. Among other things, he was an organ builder. He had many minor inventions to his credit, including a butter cooler, which he devised when he was over 80 years of age. But it is the link with early Taranaki dairying by which Mr. Brake is best remembered. The initial factory was situated on the side of the road opposite the present factory and close to the bridge over the Waiongona River.

It was shortly after Mr. Brake's factory opened that Mr. Thomas Bayly opened his factory at Kelly Road. The Waitara-Taranaki company possesses a photo taken of the Bayly factory in 1884. The cheese factory at Lepperton did not last very long, according to Mr. W. Hall, Lepperton, and it was in 1892 that the present co-operative company, believed to be the first of its kind in New Zealand, was formed and a factory was erected almost on the site of the present building. The Kelly Road factory was purchased from Mr. Bayly by the Crown Dairy Company about 1892 and later was bought by the present Waitara-Taranaki co-operative company.

Mr. Brake only a few months ago in an interview said he thought the first dairy factory in New Zealand was the Edendale factory in Southland. The Ashburton factory opened soon afterwards.

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