

# C. C. WARD LTD. 1895—1976



A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN 1939 (37 YEARS AGO) OF OUR NEW PLYMOUTH STAFF

## How C. C. WARD LTD. started 80 years ago

About 1890, Charles Cameron Ward, on leaving Central School at New Plymouth, was apprenticed to his uncle, who operated a "cooperage" in Powderham Street (opposite the present "AA" offices). In those days nearly everything was packed, transported, or kept in barrels, and Charles Ward became an expert cooper. All cheese, butter was exported salted to England in barrels. The blow came, about 1895, when refrigeration was invented, and a flourishing industry was almost wiped out overnight.

Charles Ward, with 500 pounds, bought a small drapery shop, and the land, in Devon Street, now part of C. C. Ward Ltd.'s present business premises. His daily takings were about five pounds a day, and much of the business was done with the Maori population. He could converse in Maori, and was known to the Maori women as "Tarlie Tarlie".

(There is no "C" in the Maori language). Over the years his business gradually grew, and piece by piece obtained adjoining land in Devon and Currie Streets. It made news when C. C. Ward, in 1933, paid the record price of 300 pounds a foot for an adjoining small shop. This enabled the erection of the three floor building now in use. C. C. Ward Ltd. expanded and today has a staff of approximately 50 in the New Plymouth and Hawera stores.

The private company of C. C. Ward Ltd. is one of the few drapery businesses left in New Zealand completely owned and operated by the sons of the founder. Most family concerns have been taken over by the large companies.

Now, after 80 years, the business which started in a small shop in Devon Street is employing a staff of about 50, and the name of "Wards" is widely known in the district.

Interesting extracts from an advert of C. C. WARDS in 1903 (70 years ago)

(Prices converted to decimal currency)

Extra Heavy Flannelette skirts	Under-23c
Children's Knitted Petticoats	15c
Heavy White Blankets	95c
Extra Large Blankets	\$1.25 pr.
Large White Quilts	59c
Large Size Elderdown Quilts	57c to 72c
Small Size, for Go-Carts	23c
Best Colonial Flannel	10c yd.
Tip-top White Flannelette	6c yd.
Heavy All-wool Serge	15c yd.
All-wool Dress Materials	30c to 47c
Wool Tams	10c
Muffs	72c

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