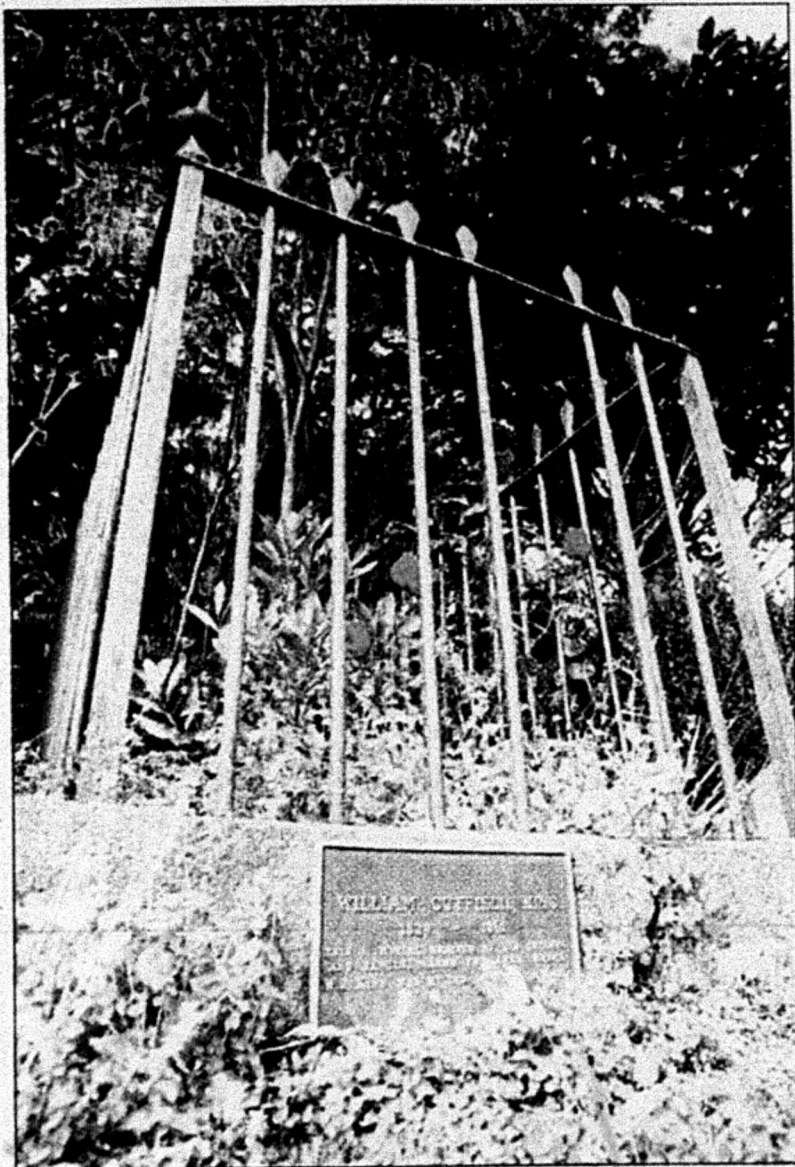


# Of passing interest

Historic features in our landscape observed by Puke Ariki heritage collections manager Kelvin Day.

## William Cutfield King

On the corner of Govett Avenue and Beaumont Crescent, New Plymouth, is a small rectangular area surrounded by an iron railing. While this looks like a grave it actually marks the area where William Cutfield King was killed on February 8, 1861 while he checked his farm animals on his Woodleigh property. William was the only son of Captain Henry and Mary King and had arrived in New Plymouth as a 12-year-old on the Amelia Thompson in 1841. His parents established a farm in what is now Brooklands. In the 1860 election William contested and won the Grey and Bell electorate, his opponent being Thomas King (no relation). During the First Taranaki War (1860-61) settlers and their families were forced into New Plymouth where they could be protected by the military personnel stationed there. This left outlying farms vulnerable to plundering and whenever it was thought safe settlers would venture out to check on their properties and livestock. This is what William was doing on that fateful day in February 1861 when he was surprised by



a Maori war party from south Taranaki, which is said to have included Titokowaru. As he attempted to flee he was shot and killed while his horse was wounded. His body was retrieved and he was buried in St Mary's churchyard. William left a widow and two daughters and the little memorial to him was erected by family and friends.