

VETERAN'S HORROR

SHIFTING OF MONUMENT

WAS ON MARSLAND HILL

57TH REGIMENT

"The monument can't be moved a second time," declared Mr. A. S. Black, Taranaki's last Maori War veteran, when expressing his amazement and horror at the proposal to move the monument in the Te Henui Cemetery, New Plymouth, to the men of the 57th Regiment, the "Die Hards," who were killed in the Maori troubles of early Taranaki.

The New Plymouth Borough Council has granted permission to the New Plymouth Returned Soldiers' Association to move the monument, subject to certain conditions.

"The returned soldiers should be proud to have the monument at the head of their comrades' graves," said Mr. Black. "During the Maori troubles the volunteers and the militia fought side by side—the forefathers of Taranaki beside the forefathers of the Taranaki Regiment. The neglected condition of the monument at present is a disgrace to the town."

LITTLE-KNOWN FACT.

Mr. Black disclosed the little-known fact that the monument was first erected on Marsland Hill, facing the sea. It had been erected as a memorial to the eight men—two officers, two non-commissioned officers, and four privates—who were massacred near the Wairau River by a party of 30 or 40 Natives on May 4, 1863.

The monument had been erected on the top of Marsland Hill when the military barracks were still on the hill. Later it was decided to move it to Te Henui Cemetery and place it in a commanding position there. Since all the parties concerned were still alive at that time the removal had been made with their permission.

"It can't be moved a second time," he said.

The foundations and base of the monument were of some considerable size, he continued, and in moving the memorial the grave of Charles Armitage Brown, the friend of the poet Keats, was disturbed.

When the monument was re-erected in Te Henui Cemetery there were no burials in that part of the cemetery, and, indeed, very few in other parts of it. The monument was placed on the top of the rise in an excellent and commanding position to the east of the memorial to the memory of Rev. John Whiteley.

"It's present neglected condition is a disgrace to the town," he declared. It was practically impossible to read the inscription, the letters of which could easily be made legible. The inscription mentioned not only those who died in the Wairau massacre but also all the men of the regiment who were killed in the Maori troubles in Taranaki.

"The monument belongs to all Taranaki and not to New Plymouth alone," he said.