



# Whangamomona Cemetery & Memorial Gates

**Whangamomona Rd**

**1900**

**Use:** Closed cemetery  
**Materials:** Graves  
**NZHPT Registered:** Not registered  
**Legal Description:** -

**Historic Value:** 3 out of 5  
**Architectural Value:** 1 out of 4  
**Technical Value:** - out of 2  
**Symbolic Value:** 2 out of 3  
**Rarity Value:** - out of 2  
**Townscape Value:** - out of 2  
**Group Value:** - out of 2

**Overall Heritage Value of Cemetery:** 6 out of 20

**Overall Heritage Value of Memorial Gates:** 5 out of 20



Mrs. J.C. King became the first settler to die in Whangamomona when she passed away in 1896. The settlement had only just started, and no thought had yet been given to a cemetery, so she had to be buried in her garden. This raised awareness of the necessity of a cemetery site, and consequently land at the back of the domain was set aside for a cemetery, with trustees being chosen.

The site was surveyed and divided into three blocks – Block I being closest to the road, reserved for the Anglicans, Block II being reserved for all other “sundry” religions, and Block III being reserved for Roman Catholics. The work took approximately four years to do; during which other settlers had died, and had to be buried in their sections or farms.

The first recorded interment at the Whangamomona Cemetery is Mary Frances Gleeson, who was buried on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September 1900.



*Memorial listing all those who were buried at Whangamomona Cemetery*

Memorial Gates were erected at the cemetery in 1927, in memory of Herbert Strombom, a Public Works Engineer, who died after chasing a runaway horse. (see below picture). The left pillar reads *“In Memory of Herbert Chas Caulfield Strombom, Public Works Officer in charge of roads in this county from 1901 to 1923”* while the right pillar reads *“Herbert Chas Caulfield Strombom Obituary 25 January 1923. To commemorate a long residence devoted to Public Welfare, this memorial is erected by his friends.”*

After a long period of neglect, Bill English issued a Closure and Clearance Notice that stated that Whangamomona Cemetery (along with Tahora and Midhirst Old) was to be closed and cleared from 14 April 1994. Whangamomona Cemetery was, however, not officially closed by the Stratford District Council until 1996, with a memorial listing all those who had been buried there being erected in the following year.



Owen McAloon became the last person to be buried at Whangamomona Cemetery when he was buried on the 21<sup>st</sup> of January, 2004 (as he had reserved his plot prior to the closure of the cemetery).

In total, 95 people were buried at Whangamomona Cemetery, with over 23 of these being children aged less than three years.

## **Bibliography**

Church, Ian; *The Stratford Inheritance*, The Heritage Press (1990) p189  
Council records