

**WAIMAKARIRI DISTRICT COUNCIL
HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM**

2021 District Plan Item No. HH091
HERITAGE ITEM NAME Birch Hill Cemetery Millton/Ford family and World War I Memorial
ADDRESS 130 Garry River Road, Glentui

PHOTOGRAPH



(www)

DISTRICT PLAN ITEM NO. N/A **HNZ LIST NO. & CATEGORY** 9251 / 2 (cemetery)
(at time of assessment)

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Lot 1 DP 10564

VALUATION NUMBER 2150005300

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION late 1930s

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/
BUILDER** Unknown

STYLE Rustic

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Symmetrical structure comprised of a slightly curved wall supported by flared buttresses and sheltering an altar-style plinth atop a paved base. Memorial has rectangular footprint and Celtic/Maori inspired decorative relief work. Wall and plinth inset with bronze panels; three in all with one dedicated to members of the Millton/Ford family, another to the men of Birch Hill Station who fought in World War I and the third to the horses of the 8th Regiment NZ Mounted Rifles that died in the war.

MATERIALS/STRUCTURE

River stones, bronze and concrete.

ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS

Unknown, if any.

SETTING

The memorial stands within the Birch Hill Cemetery to the east of Garry River Road and to the south of the Garry River. The Birch Hill Station homestead is to the west of the cemetery. The memorial stands at the back of the cemetery reserve and is set against a backdrop of trees and shrubs. The scheduled setting is the land parcel on which the memorial and cemetery are located. It is noted that the HNZPT list entry # 9251 is for the cemetery as a whole and that the entrance gates to the cemetery are outside the subject site.

HISTORY

In October 1933 Lieutenant-Colonel EB Millton's offer of a public cemetery on his Birch Hill Station property was accepted by the Ashley County Council. The Millton family had owned the Birch Hill Station since 1874 and Edward Bowler (Ted) Millton (1861-1942) was a keen horseman and member of the local mounted rifles company. He married Maud(e) Ford (1867-1946) in 1892 and the couple commissioned leading Canterbury architect Samuel Hurst Seager to design their new homestead in 1908. The ACC agreed to recommend to the Governor-General that the trustees of the cemetery should be Millton, his brother-in-law Reginald Ford and Councillor JD McCracken. The site was subdivided by Millton in May 1935 but it would appear that the status of the cemetery remained unresolved for some time, given that it was reported in mid-1942 that the cemetery was a private burial ground for family members and permanent staff of the station. EB Millton's funeral was held on 13 March 1942 at the Birch Hill Cemetery. Having had no children the Milltons bequeathed their property to the Sunlight League for use as a children's home after Maud Millton's death in 1946. The home closed in 1985 and the homestead became a private home once again in c.1990. In 1980 the Hurunui District Council took over the management of the cemetery, which is now vested with the Waimakariri District Council and operates as a public burial place.

HISTORIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Birch Hill Cemetery Memorial has historic and social significance for its association with Maud and Edward Bowler Millton, Birch Hill Station, and the men and horses that were sent from the district to serve in World War I.

CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Birch Hill Cemetery Memorial has cultural significance as a mid-20th century commemorative structure that contributes to a sense of place.

ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Birch Hill Cemetery Memorial has aesthetic value as a rustic monument that uses a local building material to link the structure with its setting. It is comparable to the TD Burnett and Downlands Water Supply memorial at Cave, South Canterbury (c.1947) in its styling and purpose and illustrates the continuity of the Arts and Crafts design philosophy relating to the truthful and direct use of local materials in to the mid-20th century. The designer is currently unknown.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE

The Birch Hill Cemetery Memorial has craftsmanship value for the quality of its locally sourced river stone construction and ornamental detailing. The stonemason is currently unknown.

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Birch Hill Cemetery Memorial has contextual significance as a historic feature within its cemetery setting.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE

Although the memorial post-dates 1900, its site may have potential archaeological significance relating to its earlier use and development as part of the Birch Hill Station.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Birch Hill Cemetery Millton/Ford family and World War I Memorial has overall heritage significance to Glentui and to the district of Waimakariri as a whole. The memorial has historical and social significance for its association with the Millton/Ford family, the men of Birch Hill Station who fought in World War I and the horses that died whilst serving in the war and cultural significance given its commemorative purpose. The Birch Hill Cemetery Memorial has aesthetic value as a rustic monument and craftsmanship value for the quality of its river stone construction. The Birch Hill Cemetery Memorial has contextual significance as a historic feature within the cemetery in which it is located; its site may have potential archaeological value relating to the property's colonial use and development.

HERITAGE CATEGORY

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REFERENCES

- *Press* 11 February 1935, p. 6; 12 March 1942, p. 7; 7 April 1942, p. 1; 28 July 1942, p. 4; 1 July 2010, available online.
- *North Canterbury Gazette* 10 October 1933, p. 4; 7 June 1935, p. 4; 5 February 1937, p. 4; 6 July 1937, p. 4.
- *Lyttleton Times* 4 April 1908, p. 14.
- *Northern Advocate* 28 July 1942, p. 4.
- *NZ Herald* 28 July 1942, p. 2.
- <https://www.newzealand.com/int/article/birch-hill-war-horses-memorial/>
- <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/9251>
- <https://genealogyjourn.wordpress.com/rural-cemeteries-of-canterbury-new-zealand/birch-hill-cemetery-near-glentui/>
- <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-AclEarl-t1-body-d3-d15.html>
- <https://billiongraves.com/cemetery/Birch-Hill-Cemetery/292246>
- <https://birchhillmemorial.wixsite.com/ww1-ride/the-millton-family-at-birch-hill->
- <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/birch-hill-station-war-memorial>

REPORT COMPLETED

7 April 2019

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WWW.



Extent of scheduling, Millton/Ford family and World War I Memorial, Birch Hill Cemetery, 130 Garry River Road, Glentui.