

# The Manuherikia

## Junction Cemetery

This burial ground had its beginnings at the peak of the Central Otago gold rushes. Before being formally named Alexandra in mid-1863 the nearby tent township was known as Manuherikia Junction. The tributary flowing into the Molyneux (Clutha) River at that spot had been called "Manuherikia" by the Maori. The first known burial here occurred in February 1863. A seven-year-old lad, William George Robertson, had drowned in the Manuherikia River. This site was probably chosen away from the gold-mining claims that took up most of this general area. Some miners who perished in the notorious snow storms on the Old Man Range in 1863 also rest here. The last confirmed burial was of the well-known local punt proprietor, John Duley (sic) in May 1869. Before 1879 all communication across the river was by punt. Restricted space and the need for an easier-of-access burial ground led to the opening of the "New Cemetery" - the present one to the north of Alexandra - in 1867.

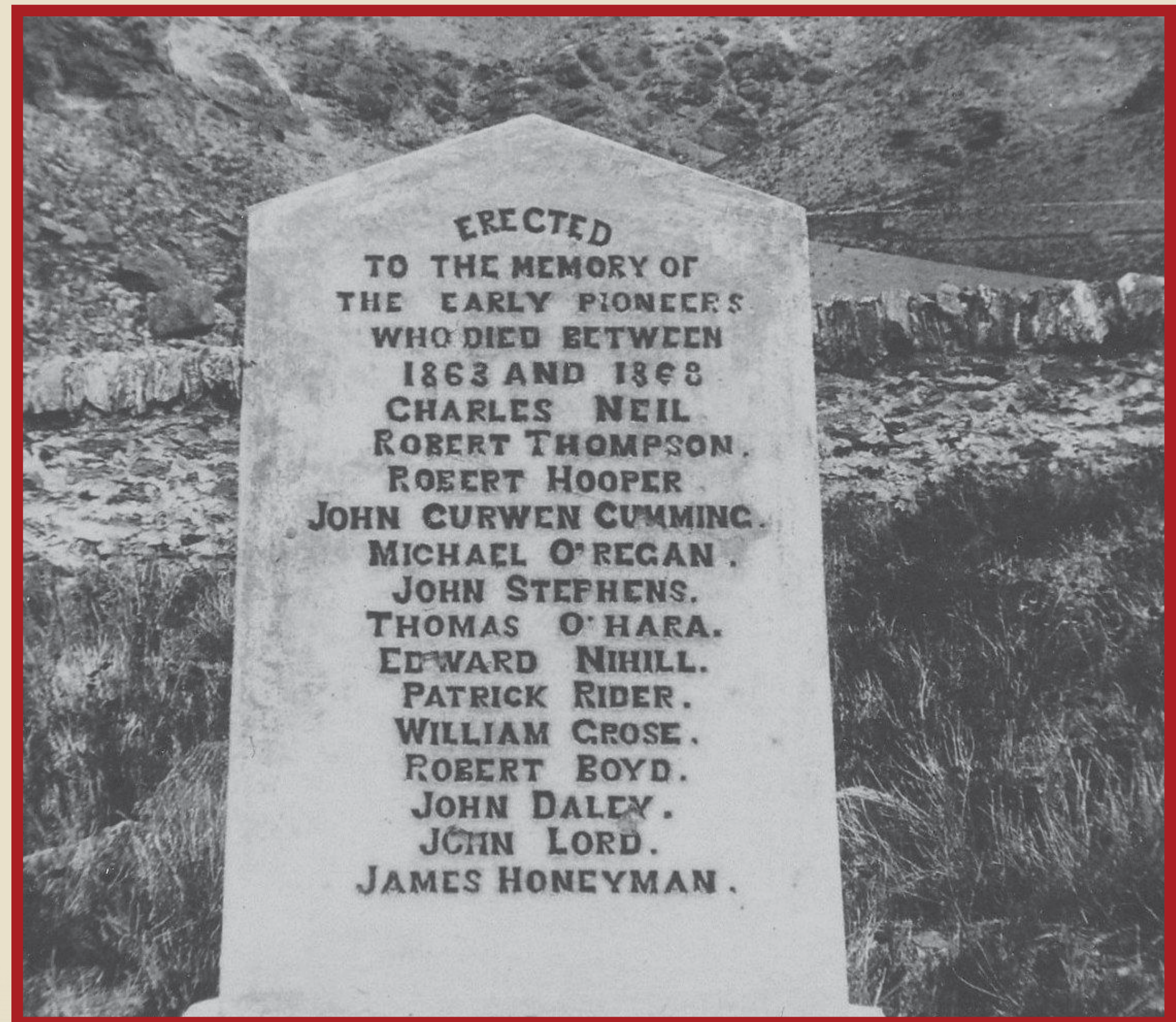
Over time the gully in which this burial ground stands came to be known as "Graveyard Gully", a name that stuck.

In 1892 two local men inspecting the cemetery counted no fewer than 41 pioneer graves. Their description of its neglect led to a restoration.



**Dunstan or Upper Town and Hartley or Lower Town, at the junction of the Manuherikia with the Molyneux.**

*"Illustrated London News", Saturday, November 14, 1863.  
No. 1231, Vol XLIII, pg. 504*



**Communal headstone, 1919**

*Supplied by Eddie Dwyer*

A communal stone was engraved with as many names as locals could recall. The crumbling stone wall was re-built. The cemetery's original name was revived. Work was completed in 1905. Nothing more was done for over sixty years and the decline resumed. In 1967 another reconstruction was carried out. The wall was re-built again and the old damaged headstone was replaced and the inscription was carried over to the bronze plaque seen today.

Unfortunately the original stone turned out to be full of errors with many of the names mis-spelt and only a handful of the original burials listed. Surely the most well-known of all the burials was that of George Hyde and John Love, mates who perished in the same storm on the Old Man in December 1863. Yet their names were completely overlooked. Further, many of the persons listed had actually been buried in the New Cemetery!

All visible sign of burials had vanished by the 1930s.

