

# OUR WAR GRAVES YOUR HISTORY

## GLASGOW WESTERN NECROPOLIS



A number of recruiting depots were based in Glasgow during both world wars, most notably the Royal Scots Fusiliers and the Highland Light Infantry. Today you will find a number of soldiers of these distinguished Scottish regiments buried here. During the First World War several military hospitals opened in Glasgow. Stobhill Hospital became the 3rd and 4th Scottish General Hospitals, which combined housed a total of 2,400 beds, while the Western District Hospital was taken over for military use, as was Springburn Hospital (now North Glasgow College), and the facilities in Govan which became Merryflats War Hospital. Those who did not recover were buried in cemeteries in the city, if their families did not request otherwise.

Glasgow Western Necropolis is located on the same site as a number of other cemeteries. In addition to the 492 CWGC burials in this cemetery, there are 240 in Lambhill, 333 in St Kentigern's, and four in Garnethill. As a result, this tour is available in a short version (based solely at Western Necropolis) and a longer version which takes in the other sites.

### Key CWGC features to look out for:

The badge memorial at the entrance located with the Cross of Sacrifice

The CWGC Cremation Memorial



### Points of interest...

Commemorations: **492**  
First World War: **350**  
Second World War: **124**

Casualties from the following nations;

Australia  
Canada  
France  
Germany  
South Africa  
New Zealand  
UK  
USA

### Things to look out for...

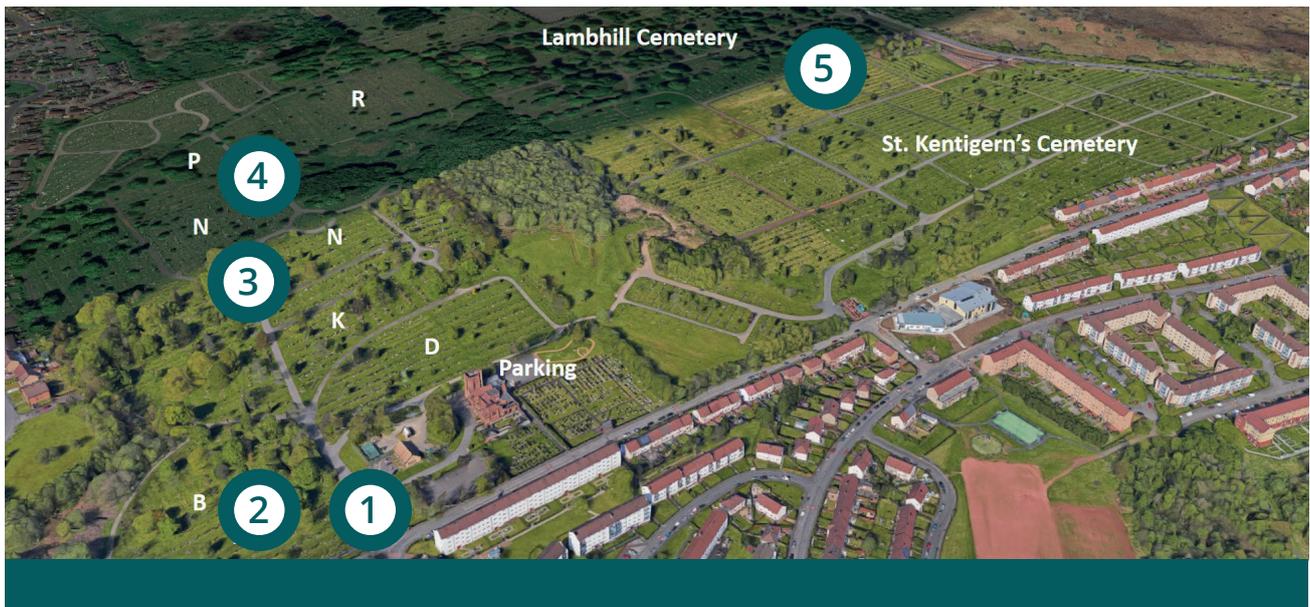
**Lieutenant Commander Charles Head**, RN who died in the Gretna train disaster (Grave P.2907)

15 year old Boy Soldier –  
**Gunner William Booth** (Grave H.1444A)

**Clifford Cummings** – an RAF Air Cadet (Grave N.2995)

The **CWGC Cremation Memorial** which commemorates 73 individuals

# Discovering CWGC graves at Glasgow Western Necropolis

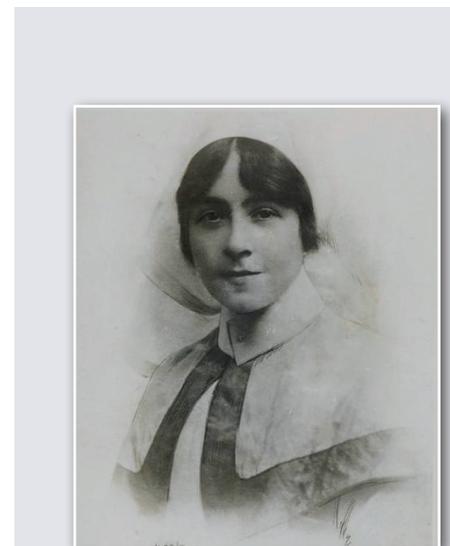


Glasgow Western Necropolis contains more than 350 First World War burials, many of them grouped together in Section P. These include more than 20 Canadian servicemen and even some Americans who had enlisted in Canadian units. A small plot in Section N is made up of all but one of the Australian graves in the cemetery, the final resting place of men from farms, country towns and cities in Queensland, Victoria, or Western Australia. Many war graves in the cemetery date from the post-war era and represent men who died in the influenza, or 'Spanish Flu', pandemic, that killed as many as 50 million people worldwide.

**1** At the entrance you will find the Cross of Sacrifice. The Cross of Sacrifice was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield, one of the commission's leading architects, and was intended to represent the faith of the majority. Any CWGC site with more than 40 burials will have a Cross of Sacrifice, of differing sizes, depending on the number of burials. You will also see a memorial wall, inlaid with regimental badges. This is a very unusual CWGC feature, only seen in a very small number of sites worldwide. It is used where it is not possible to include a regimental or unit badge on the headstone, often because there is not enough room.

## **2** Sister Annie Winifred Munro, South African Military Nursing Service

Annie was the daughter of William and Ellen, of Pietermaritzburg, Natal. She started her nursing career in West Africa and was then based on a hospital ship caring for casualties from the fighting in Gallipoli. Annie then joined the South African Expeditionary Force in France. Based close to the front lines, she worked very long hours, often in demanding conditions. As a result, she contracted pneumonia, and travelled to England to recover. When she felt better, she travelled to Scotland, where her father had been born. Annie became ill again and was taken to hospital in Glasgow where she sadly died on 6 April 1917, aged 26. She is buried in Grave B.1881A with a private headstone, but with a CWGC pedestal marker at the base of the headstone. This was installed as the original headstone was no longer legible.



Annie Winifred Munro

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## The Australian Plot

**Charles J. Prunster** is one of 11 casualties in a small Australian plot. Charles was born in Geraldton, Western Australia, in 1893, and was a butcher by trade. He enlisted in October 1916, and his training took him to Suez, then to England where he trained as a gunner on Salisbury Plain. He was posted to France in the autumn of 1918. He was injured in action but recovered and returned to his unit. While on leave in the UK he fell ill and died in hospital in Glasgow. Cathy Sedgwick, of *'Australians in the FWW'*, provides a description; 'The deceased soldier was accorded a full Military funeral, Firing Party, Bugler, and Pallbearers being in attendance. The coffin was draped with the Union Jack, and conveyed to the graveside surmounted by beautiful flowers...' He is buried in Grave N.12.



Charles J. Prunster

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## The highest-ranking casualty

**Lieutenant-Commander Charles H.E. Head** is the highest-ranking casualty we care for in the Western Necropolis. He grew up in Bath, and was serving in the Royal Navy, commanding HMS *Vernon*, the torpedo training school. He was also responsible for training recruits, and the ship was a base for research and development into anti-submarine devices and mines. On 22 May 1915, Charles was killed in the Quintinshill Train Disaster at Gretna. This remains the worst rail disaster in the UK, and there were over 220 casualties. 25 officers and 100 sailors attended his funeral. He is buried in Plot P, Grave 2907.

At this stage, some visitors may wish to end their tour. For those willing to extend their walk, please continue onto Point 5.



Alexander Boyle

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## The Boyle brothers

A sad story of four brothers, all serving in the First World War, none of whom survived. **Robert Boyle**, of the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders, is buried in the Lambhill section of this large cemetery complex. He died on 30 July 1916. His brother **Alexander** (pictured), was a stoker in the Royal Navy and was killed in action in the Dardanelles in July 1915, while **Samuel** was lost in France in October 1914. The last brother, **David**, was lost at sea when his ship the *SS Sycamore* was torpedoed on 25 August 1917. He is commemorated on the Tower Hill Memorial in London. They left a sister and two widows - their father, a ropemaker, was a widower at the start of the war. Robert is buried in Grave Q.911. His headstone is unusual in that the personal inscription also remembers his brothers and far exceeds the 66 character limit set for personal inscriptions, showing that there are always exceptions to the rules!