

# PERTH CEMETERY (CHINA WALL)

The names of the military cemeteries across the former battlefields often preserve links to war-time features, places, or people. Located near the front lines and well within range of German guns which bombarded nearby Hellfire Corner and Zillebeke village, this cemetery's name preserves two links to the past. The first is Perth, as burials were made here by the 2nd Scottish Rifles, many of whom came from Perth in Scotland. The second is to a communication trench that ran through here to the front line, known as China Wall trench. The Scottish soldiers and the trench are long gone, but their link to this part of the landscape remains.

Located close to the front for most of the war, the cemetery was actually begun by the French Army in 1914. Burials continued to be made here by the British in what is today Plot I, towards the rear of the cemetery, until late October 1917. The story of this place is, however, of the burials made here after the end of the war. These post-war re-burials came from no less than 30 cemeteries, each with its own story to tell about people or place.

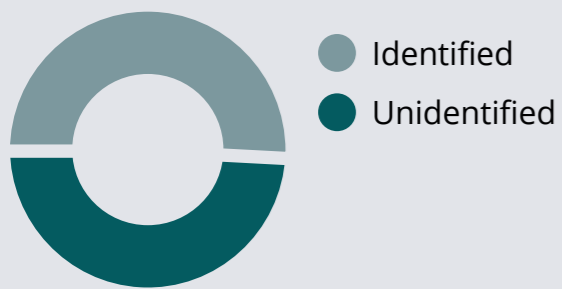
This cemetery was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and John Truelove. They placed two long rows of headstones, creating an open walkway which leads you from the Cross of Sacrifice at the entrance to the Stone of Remembrance at the rear.



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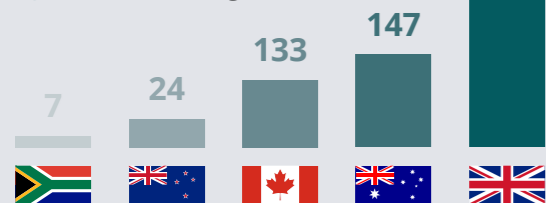
COMMONWEALTH  
WAR GRAVES

Total number of graves: **2,796**



Force nationalities

- South African
- New Zealand
- Canadian
- Australian
- United Kingdom



For more information please scan here.



# CONCENTRATION



A mass reburial service  
© CWGC

After the war many smaller cemeteries and individual isolated burials were moved into the cemeteries you can visit today. This process was called concentration. Most of today's CWGC cemeteries are products of concentration, including Perth Cemetery (China Wall). All of these small, now vanished, cemeteries had their own names and stories. Some were located near here, like Gordon House Cemetery, which was just down the road at a farmhouse. 50 graves were concentrated from that cemetery, and these now form Plot I, Row L and Plot II, Row A. Others were further afield, like St Julien Communal Cemetery, where six Canadian soldiers were exhumed and reburied here in Plot XIV, Row B, Graves 3-8. Some cemeteries were made by the enemy, like Reutel German Military Cemetery. The Commonwealth servicemen buried in Reutel died as prisoners of war and were laid to rest by the Germans. You can see their graves today in Plot IX, Row A.

1



2



3



# HIGHLIGHTS

**1** To the right of the entrance, you will find a careful arrangement of headstones accompanied by three large stone blocks.

These special memorial headstones commemorate men known to have been buried in certain cemeteries but whose graves were lost. The stone blocks are called Duhallow blocks and are inscribed with details explaining their group of special headstones.

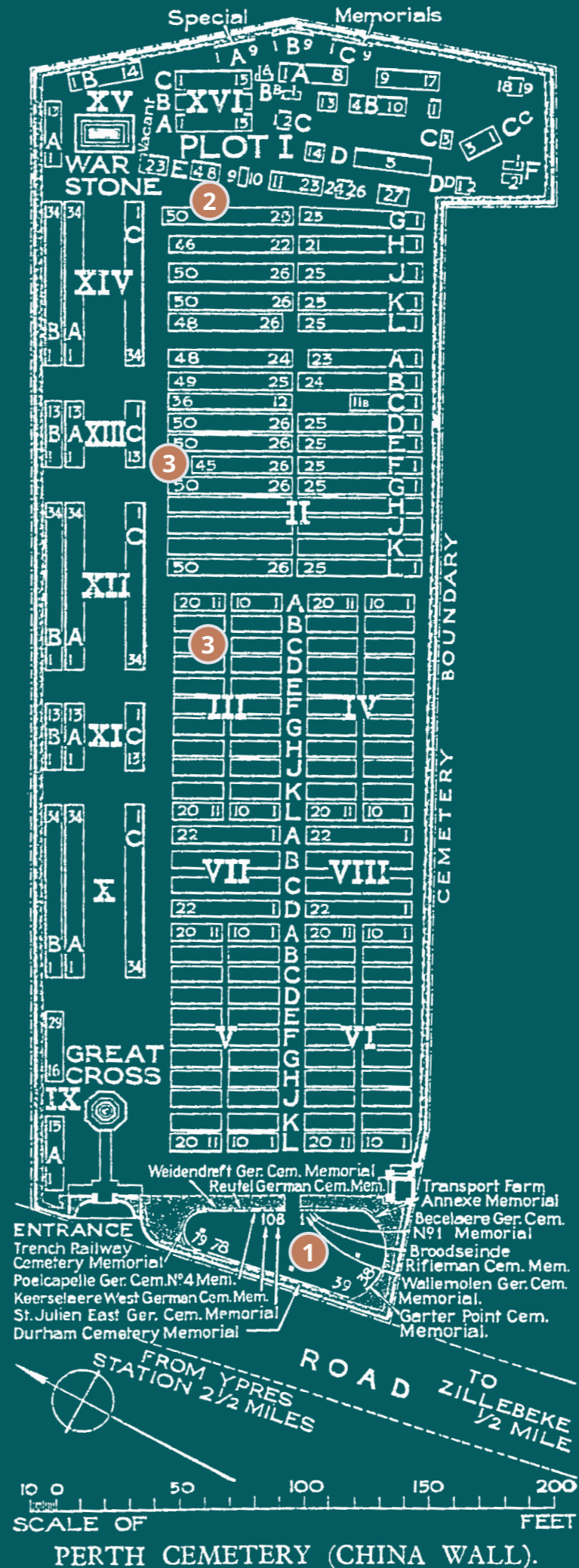
**2** As the architects intended, follow the route ahead of you from the Cross of Sacrifice to the Stone of Remembrance.

At the back of the cemetery, you will find the original war-time graves, looking less orderly than the rest of the plots. Look out for the grave of Welsh-born Second Lieutenant Frederick Birks VC, MM, of the Australian Infantry. He was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for conspicuous bravery near Ypres in 1917.

**3** Wander back through the tightly packed plots towards the entrance. Look out for headstones which mark mass graves - they bear the inscription 'x Soldiers of the Great War / Known Unto God.'

Be sure to pass Plot II, Row F, to find the headstone of Private Thomas Edmundson of the Durham Light Infantry. He was laid to rest here in 2018 after his body was discovered and identified and his headstone bears a wonderful personal inscription submitted by his relatives.

About halfway back, in Plot III, you will find the grave of Major William Johnston VC of the Royal Engineers who was awarded his Victoria Cross in 1914 after he paddled back and forth across a river under heavy fire to save some wounded. He was killed at Ypres in June 1915.



IN LOVING  
MEMORY  
OF OUR  
JACK  
ALSO TOM  
WHO WAS  
BURIED  
AT SEA

*Inscription on the headstone  
of Gunner Bell, VI. F. 14.*

**In the area**  
Hooge Crater Museum is just around the corner. It is the perfect place to visit, have a drink and buy a wreath before you cross the road to Hooge Crater Cemetery.

**Westtoer bike routes nearby**

- Vredesfietsroute
- Frontroute 14-18
- Gent-Wevelgem in Flanders Fields - 128 km
- Crossen door de bossen met Jaek en Nink (kid friendly cycle route)

**Step free access**

**Parking space**

**Seats present in cemetery**