

# OUR WAR GRAVES YOUR HISTORY

## LYNESS ROYAL NAVAL CEMETERY



Scapa Flow was a Royal Naval base during both the First and Second World Wars. The arrival of the Grand Fleet at Scapa in 1914 transformed Orkney into one of the world's most important strategic locations. Sailors began burying their shipmates at Lyness in 1915, and the cemetery remained in use until 1946.

During the Second World War, Scapa was once again a vital harbour for the Royal Navy. This time, as many as 12,000 military personnel and civilian workers came to Orkney, not just the ships of the fleet. A large naval base grew next to the cemetery - hundreds of huts were constructed, and shore-based hospital facilities as well as hospital ships cared for the sick and wounded brought back to Scapa. The church hut was next to the cemetery and a new gate was made in the wall to make it easier for funeral parties to enter the site.

### Key CWGC features to look out for:

The War Graves Commission erected a Cross of Sacrifice here in 1925. It was made from grey Aberdeen granite rather than Portland limestone. The CWGC headstones are also granite with inpainted inscriptions. The CWGC took over responsibility for the maintenance of this cemetery from the Admiralty in 1927.



### Points of interest...

Commemorations: **691**  
First World War: **455**  
Second World War: **207**

Casualties from the following nations;

Australia  
Canada  
Germany  
India  
New Zealand  
Norway

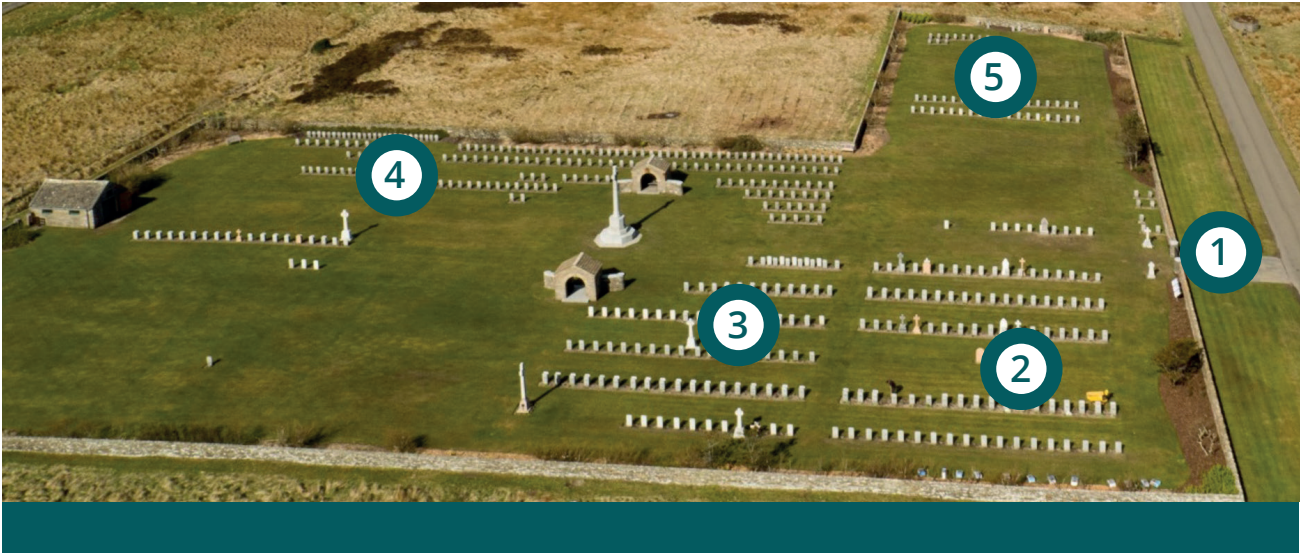
### Things to look out for...

15 boy sailors including  
**F.D. Tavender** of the Royal  
Australian Navy (Grave B.75)

**Lt William Jones**, a merchant  
fleet officer who was 69 when he  
died (Grave D.1)

German burials from when the  
German Fleet was scuttled in  
June 1919 (Plot D)

# Discovering CWGC graves at Lyness Royal Naval Cemetery



The cemetery is on the Island of Hoy, which is part of the Orkney Islands. To visit the cemetery, travel to Hoy using a ferry from the main Orkney island. The cemetery is a five minute drive from the ferry terminal and is signposted. It is possible to park at the side of the road outside the cemetery. In the left-hand shelter, you will find the Register Box which contains the full register for this cemetery and a cemetery plan.

## 1 Point 1

As you enter the cemetery you will notice that there are two memorials either side of the main gateway. These are two of six private memorials erected in the cemetery to commemorate the crews of Royal Navy ships. The two memorials by the entrance are to HMHS *China* and HMS *Malaya*. On the left-hand side of the cemetery you will find memorials to HMS *Barham*, HMS *Hampshire* and HMS *Vanguard*, as well as a memorial to the Roman Catholic sailors who died.

## 2 Plot 2

To your left is Plot B. In graves 33 and 34 you will find two sailors with the rank of Boy 1st Class. They are **Thomas Cripps** and **Joseph Porter** who both served aboard HMS *Malaya*. Joseph was from Lancashire and had joined up in June 1915. He stood 5ft ½in tall with brown hair and brown eyes with a fresh complexion. After training at Portsmouth, he was posted to HMS *Malaya*. Both lads died of wounds following the Battle of Jutland in May 1916.

## 3 Point 3

Beyond Plot B is Row F, which contains more First World War burials. In Grave 12 is Lieutenant Commander **Francis Stewart**, RN, who came from Shambellie in Dumfriesshire, an usual burial for Lyness, since so many of the naval casualties came from other parts of the UK and the world. He was drowned when HMS *Hampshire* struck a mine off the coast of Orkney on 5 June 1916. Also, on board was Field Marshal Lord Kitchener. Only 12 of the crew survived. Francis had joined the Royal Navy in 1901 and had clearly been popular with shipmates on previous postings, as his former comrades from HMS *Gloucester* created an individual memorial for him in his home village's New Abbey Parish Church in the Stewartry, Dumfriesshire.



Francis Stewart

## 4

## Point 4

Buried in Plot 2, Row 1 are a number of those who were killed when HMS *Royal Oak* was attacked and sunk in Scapa Flow by a German submarine in October 1939. Another of those buried in Plot P is **David Pickering Pick**. Born on the Isle of Wight, he was the son of Surgeon Rear-Admiral Bryan Pickering Pick, CBE, OBE. David enlisted into the Royal Navy and was serving as midshipman on HMS *Norfolk* when he was killed in a German air raid on Scapa Flow on 16 March 1940, at the age of 19. David had been educated at Sherborne School, and was the first Old Boy to be killed in the Second World War. The school named a dormitory after him to mark this fact and the school magazine recognised his gallantry and said, 'He found so much that was happy in his short life'. David is buried in Plot P. Row 2.



*David Pickering Pick*

Three rows further back is **Robert Jamieson**. He is one of the few members of the RAF Volunteer Reserve to be buried at Lyness, as the majority of the casualties here are from the Royal Navy. He was from Western Skeld, Zetland (which was often an old spelling of Shetland). Robert served with 950th Balloon Squadron RAF, which performed an essential role in defending Orkney with barrage balloons. The presence of the barrage balloons forced German bombers to attack from higher altitudes and from further away. Conditions on Hoy were extreme, from mud and wind in the winter, to heath fires in the summer. Robert died on 26 February 1942.

Close to boundary wall is a private headstone to **Zu Sing Kang** of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship *Tusgalusa*, who died at Scapa Flow, 2/5/1916. It was paid for by private subscription and bear the inscription, 'Erected in memory of a kind act done by a Chinaman in nursing a blinded working man afterwards Senator McGregor of the Australian Commonwealth'. There are also other Private Memorials (PMs) such as this to be found in CWGC cemeteries and will remain in place until such time as the inscription is no longer legible at which time a CWGC headstone will be placed over the grave.

## 5

## Point 5

In Plot D are a number of German burials. An interesting date to lookout for is 21 June 1919 – the date on which the German High Sea fleet was scuttled at Scapa Flow. 52 of the 74 German vessels were sunk and a number of those who died in this event are buried here. Also buried in this plot, is **Fritz Heckert**, a German soldier who is believed to have died of wounds having been taken prisoner in a British Commando raid on Norway in December 1941.



*Lyness Royal Naval Cemetery*