

Final Destination Halifax

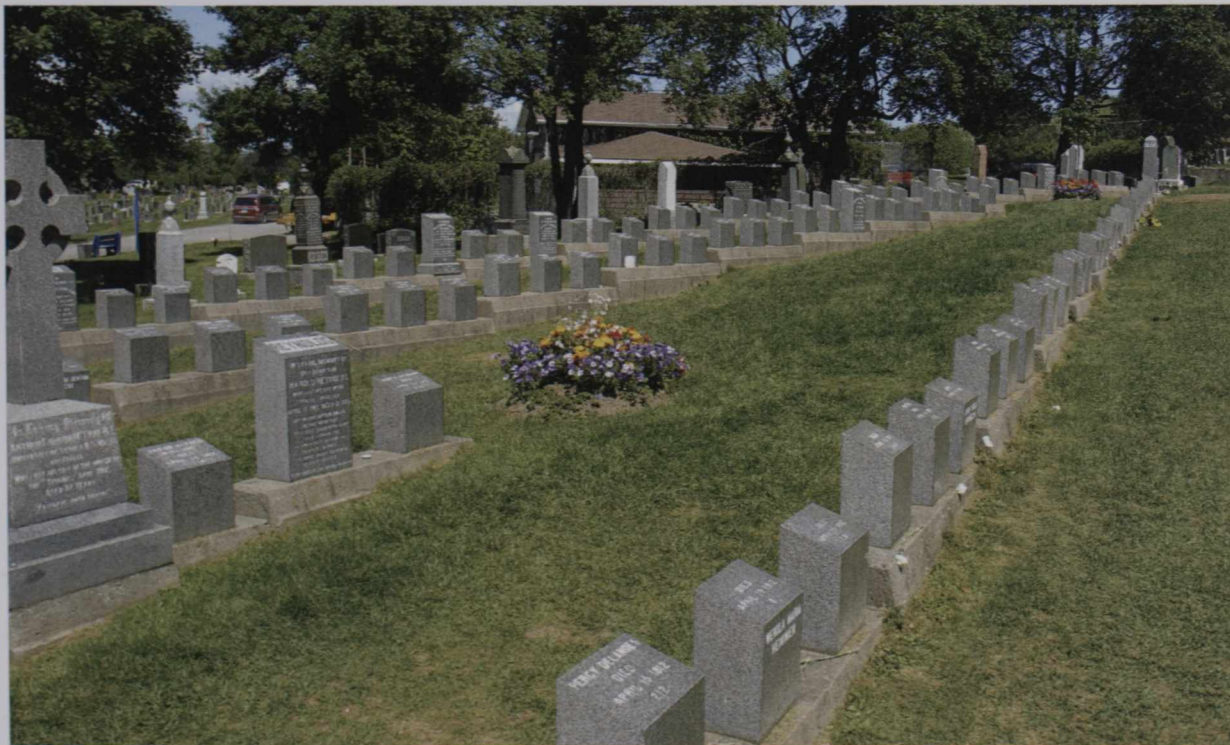
Markku Henriksson

RMS *Titanic* sailed on April 10, 1912 from Southampton, England, with more than 2,200 passengers and crew onboard. Among them were 63 Finns, who were looking for a better life in the United States. We all know what happened. Around midnight between April 14 and 15, *Titanic* hit an iceberg, and more than 1,500 people drowned. Among them were 43 Finns, most of whom were never discovered. Only five Finns have been recognized. Four of them have found their final resting place in Fairview Lawn Cemetery in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Like Wilhelm Gustafsson from Ruotsinpyhtää (Strömfors), many of the 328 recovered victims were buried at sea, but 209 bodies were brought to Halifax, the closest major port. The White Star Line, owner of *Titanic*, also had offices in Halifax.

The company purchased a section of land in the Fairview Lawn Cemetery, where all of the victims thought to be Protestant were buried. White Star Line paid for small black granite headstones engraved with the name and the number of the victim and the date of the tragedy.

Not all headstones have a name, as about 40 of the victims buried in Halifax have not been identified. Sometimes it took a long time before the researchers could identify a body. A special ceremony was held in 1991 for six victims identified only recently. Among them were Jenny Henriksson from Stockholm (identified for her initials J.H.), and Wendla Maria Heininen from Laitila. Her body, No. 8, had V.H. embroidered on her chemise, and she had 150 Finnish marks sewn into her clothes.



Titanic Grave Site, Fairview Cemetery, Halifax, Nova Scotia. 2013. Photo: Markku Henriksson