Minutes - Executive Policy Committee – June 22, 2005

Minute No. 432
Report - Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development - June 7, 2005

Item No. 17 Commonwealth War Graves Section I at Brookside Cemetery
File PC-1

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development and submits the following to Council:

1. That the transfer of grounds maintenance responsibility for Section I, Plots 1 - 150/A, also known as the Teardrop Section, and the island containing the Stone of Remembrance at Brookside Cemetery be transferred to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission for perpetuity.

2. That the Commonwealth War Graves Commission refurbish Section I and the island containing the Stone of Remembrance at Brookside Cemetery.

3. That the Commission remove and bury six private family markers in the respective interment lots in Section I and mark the lots with the standard war dead memorial.

4. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the foregoing transfer.

Report - Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development - June 7, 2005

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor De Smedt,
That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Carried

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 7, 2005, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development concurred in the administrative recommendation and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

Re: "Commonwealth War Graves Section I at Brookside Cemetery

For submission to: Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development

Original report signed by: Director of Planning, Property and Development

Report date: May 25, 2005

Recommendation(s):

I. That the transfer of grounds maintenance responsibility for Section I, Plots 1 – 150/A, also known as the Teardrop Section, and the island containing the Stone of Remembrance at Brookside Cemetery be transferred to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission for perpetuity.

II. That the Commonwealth War Graves Commission refurbish Section I, and the island containing the Stone of Remembrance at Brookside Cemetery.

III. That the Commission remove and bury six private family markers in the respective interment lots, in Section I and for the lots to be marked with the standard war dead memorial.

IV. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the foregoing transfer.

REPORT SUMMARY

Key Issues:

- The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has requested to take over responsibility for grounds maintenance of the interment plots located in Section I plots 1 – 150/A, also known as the Teardrop Section, and the island containing the Stone of Remembrance at Brookside Cemetery.

Implications of the Recommendation(s):

General implications:

X	**None**
	For the organization overall and/or for other departments
	For the community and/or organizations external to the City of Winnipeg
	Involves a multi-year contract
	Comment(s):

-

Policy implications:

X	**No**
	Yes

Comment(s):

-

Environmental implications:

X	**No**
	Yes

Comment(s):

-

Human resources implications:

X	**No**
	Yes

Comment(s):

-

Financial implications:

X	**Within approved current and/or capital budget**
	Current and/or capital budget adjustment required

Comment(s):

-

REASON FOR THE REPORT:

Council approval is required for the transfer of responsibility to an outside organization.

HISTORY:

Municipal Cemeteries
Brookside Cemetery contains one of the largest military interment sites in Canada, which includes a total of 448 Commonwealth war dead interments; this figure places Brookside as the fifth largest Commonwealth war graves site in Canada.

The Municipal Cemeteries is a public service providing interment services and perpetual maintenance of the plots/lots and grounds. Grounds maintenance consists mainly of straightening and stabilization of memorial headstones and the cutting of grass on and around the plots/lots during the summer months.

To support the cost of perpetual maintenance the Municipal Cemeteries operates a Perpetual Maintenance Fund. The fund is generated by investment of 25% of the revenue received from the sales of plots/lots. The investment fund currently stands at approximately $8.4 million.

The annual interest earned from the investment is used to support:

- *Additional investment funds*, that ensures the continued growth of the Perpetual Maintenance Fund,
- *Operational and maintenance costs* for the cemeteries, to ensure that the on-going operation of the municipal cemeteries continues at minimal cost to the taxpayer.

Currently the Perpetual Maintenance Fund is unable to fully support the maintenance cost for approximately 60,000 interment plots/lots, which have exhausted their contribution, or contributed very little in the early days of the fund. The Commonwealth War graves have no perpetual maintenance fund.

Section I, and the island containing the Stone of Remembrance at Brookside Cemetery has 141 Commonwealth War Graves and 10 War Veterans interment sites. Currently grounds maintenance of the section is undertaken by municipal cemeteries staff and funded from the cemeteries annual budgets and perpetual maintenance fund.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission was established to mark and maintain the graves of the members of the forces of the Commonwealth who died in the two World Wars, operating under a policy of equality in the standard of remembrance for every war dead.

Many war dead are buried in Commission owned and maintained cemeteries, however, in Canada and the USA no such cemeteries exist and the war dead are interred in many municipal, private and church cemeteries, where differing standards of grounds maintenance are observed.

The Commission has identified cemeteries where the numbers of war dead and how they are grouped, makes it possible to try and establish equality in maintenance and remembrance, whilst concurrently enhancing our 'debt of honour'. This is achieved through rehabilitation and landscaping of the interment sites to create a cemetery within a cemetery feature, which the commission then maintains to those standards, applied in it's own cemeteries.

DISCUSSION:

The Planning, Property & Development Department, Municipal Cemeteries Branch have received a request from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to allow them to take on full responsibility for grounds maintenance of the 141 Commonwealth war graves interment sites and 10 War Veterans interment sites in Section I, and the island containing the Stone of Remembrance, in Brookside Cemetery. The Commission is offering to take on the maintenance responsibility for an indefinite period of time, while ownership of the plots will remain with the City of Winnipeg.

The Commission, at no cost to the city, is offering to complete structural refurbishment work and horticulturally develop the section of interment sites prior to commencing regular grounds maintenance.

The refurbishment work will take approximately two years to complete, commencing in Summer 2006 until Fall 2007 and will include:

- Renewal of damaged, stained or degrading memorial headstones,
- Stabilization and realignment of all memorial headstones, including the renewal of decaying or weathered concrete mounting beams,
- Planting of all interment sites with annual flowers and small perennial shrubbery, to create continuous borders and enhance the appearance of the overall site,
- Renewal of all grassed areas with new turf,
- Removal of the outdated flag pole,
- Renewal of concrete curbing around the perimeter of the teardrop section,
- Erection of a bilingual Historical Notice.

Following the refurbishment work the Commission will appoint a horticultural specialist to maintain the section to the standard applied in their own cemeteries, throughout the year.

Section I does contain some large oak trees and these will remain the responsibility of the Municipal Cemeteries Branch to maintain.

Six of the interment sites contain private memorial markers that relatives have placed and which do not meet the standard for war dead memorials. It is proposed to remove the markers and bury them under the turf in the relevant lot and then replace them with the regulation war grave memorial. Attempts will be made to contact the associated families. Contact with the families

may not be possible as the markers were placed many years ago. The markers will be buried within the lot to protect them and ensure they can be retrieved if requested in the future.

Documents attached to this report include:

Appendix A A proposed form of agreement to be used for the transfer,

Appendix B Photographs of Commission maintained interment sites,

Appendix C Photographs marked to show the areas to be rehabilitated at Brookside Cemetery, Section I and the Stone of Remembrance Island.

Financial Impact Statement Date: May 16, 2005

COMMENTS:

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations of this report as the money saved will be devoted to much needed grounds maintenance work elsewhere within Brookside Cemetery.

"Original signed by"
Mike McGinn, CA
Manager of Finance

INPREPARING THIS REPORT, THERE WAS CONSULTATION WITH AND CONCURRENCE BY:

Legal Services Division

Discussions were held with Officers of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

THIS REPORT SUBMITTED BY:

Planning, Property and Development Department
Division: Municipal Cemeteries Branch
Prepared by: J. Saxby, Municipal Cemeteries Administrator
PPD File #:

Document name: O:\Reports Directive\Office of the Director\Cemeteries\Commonwealth Ware Graves.doc

APPENDIX "A"

Agreement

THIS AGREEMENT entered into this day of , between THE CITY OF WINNIPEG and the COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION, created by Royal Charter, an organization of participating Commonwealth Governments.

WHEREAS, there are one hundred and forty one (141) Commonwealth war dead and ten (10) War Veterans interred in **Section I Lots 1-150/A, Brookside Cemetery, in Winnipeg, Manitoba** and

WHEREAS, the COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION has been charged with the responsibility of the upkeep, maintenance, preservation of the marking and maintenance of all interment lots within the Section I including the island and Stone of Remembrance; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of both parties to agree that the cemetery lots upon which the 141 Commonwealth war dead and 10 War veterans are interred will in perpetuity remain as a interment site for the Commonwealth and War Veterans and for no other purpose.

NOW, THEREFORE, for the consideration herein set forth, it is agreed as follows:

1. That Section I Lots 1-150/A, the island and Stone of Remembrance at Brookside Cemetery, is hereby designated as a Commonwealth War Graves site in perpetuity.
2. The CITY OF WINNIPEG, agrees that it will not permit any person or persons to be interred on the above described interment site without approval of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.
3. The COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION agrees to assume the rights and responsibilities of the lot holders, and agrees to rehabilitate, establish flowerbeds, maintain and preserve the site, including the responsibility to maintain and, if necessary replace the headstones.
4. The COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION is responsible for the safe removal and burying of private flat markers within Section I. Such markers to be buried within the relevant lot and the lot subsequently marked with the appropriate War Graves Memorial, at the expense of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.
5. The COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION agrees to ensure all contractors, and it's agents act in accordance with Health and Safety Legislation and ensure the safety and welfare of the site, and to act in accordance with the Rules and Regulations and Cemetery By-Law at all times.
6. The CITY OF WINNIPEG reserves the right to expel agents or contractors employed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, whom they find not to be acting appropriately, and notify the Commission of the circumstances.

7. The CITY OF WINNIPEG will maintain and care for the existing trees in Section I and the island containing the Stone of Remembrance at Brookside Cemetery.
8. This Agreement shall continue in Perpetuity.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands and seals on this day of 20 .

Signed by the as duly authorized by

Signed _____

Print Name_____

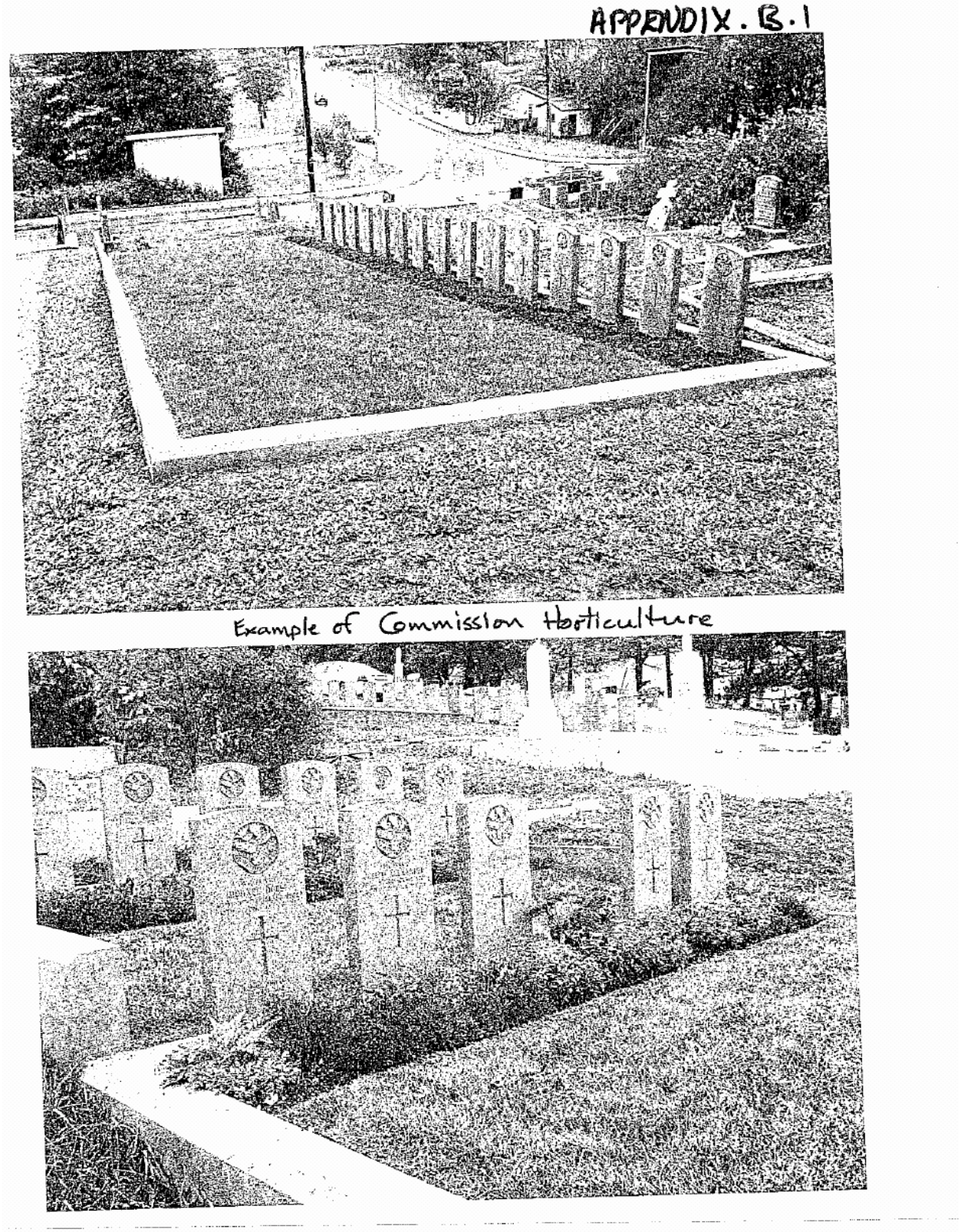
The common Seal of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission was hereunto affixed and (Print Name)

_____ as proper officer has signed these presents

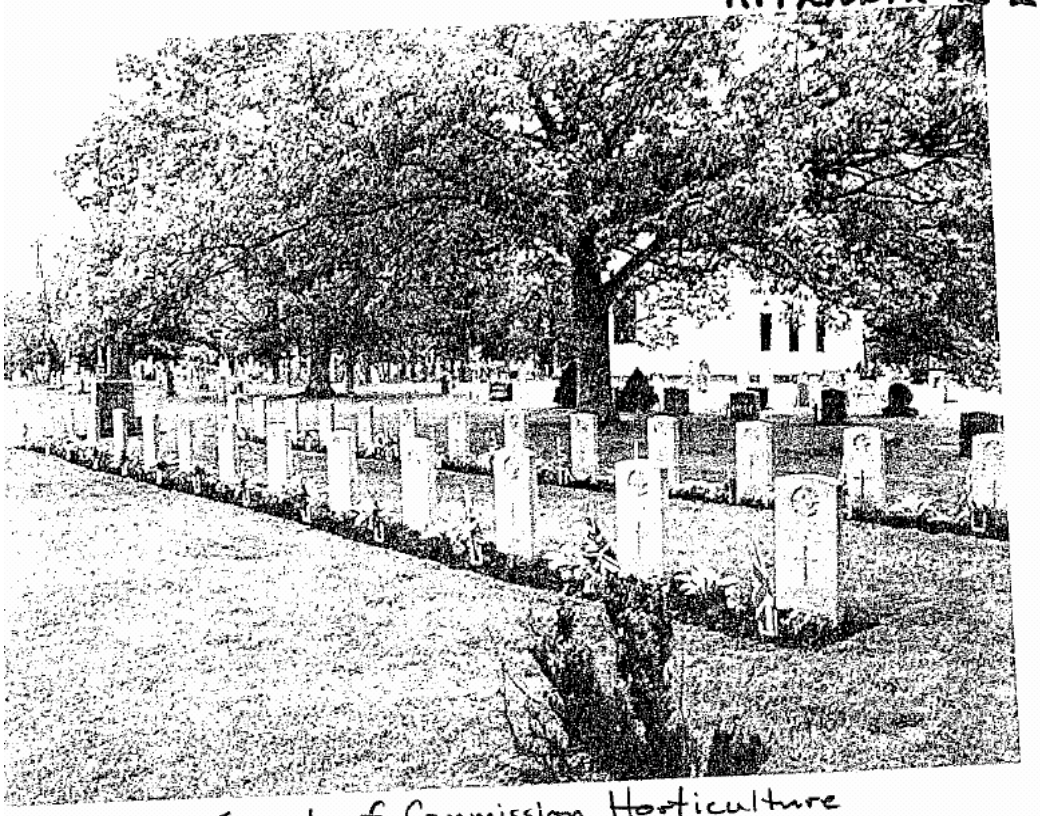
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APPENDIX "B"

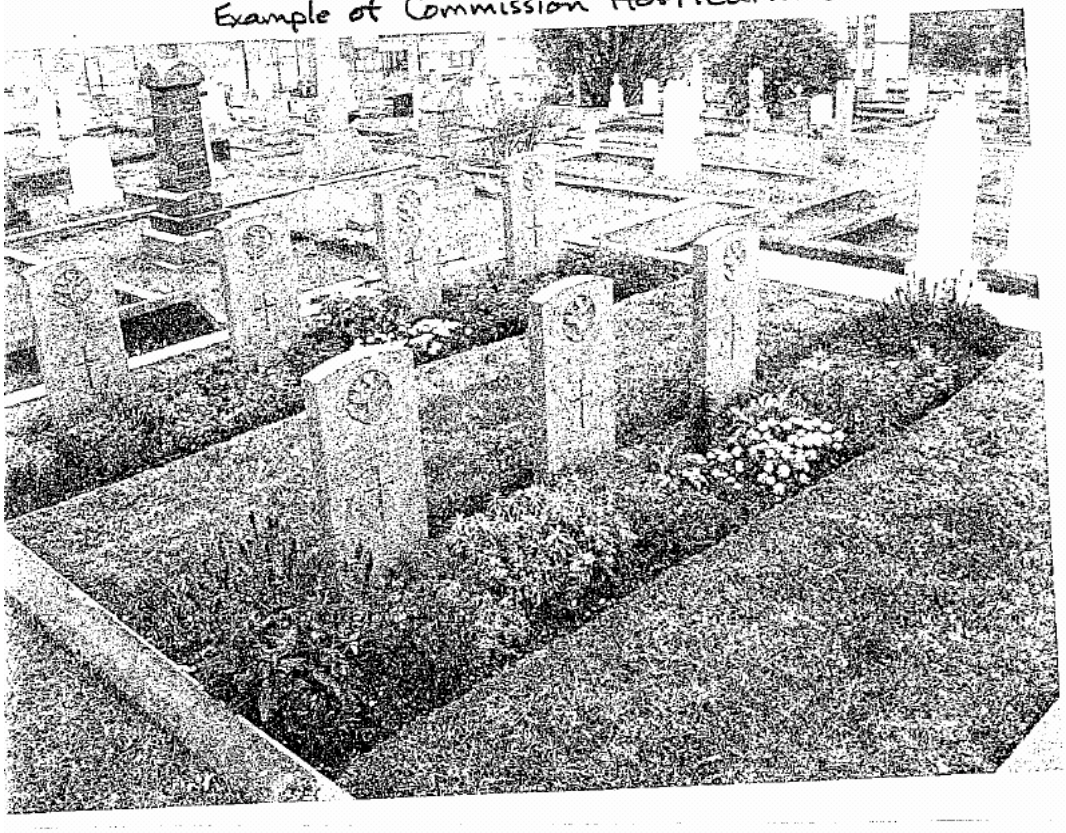
(Photographs of Commission maintained interment sites)



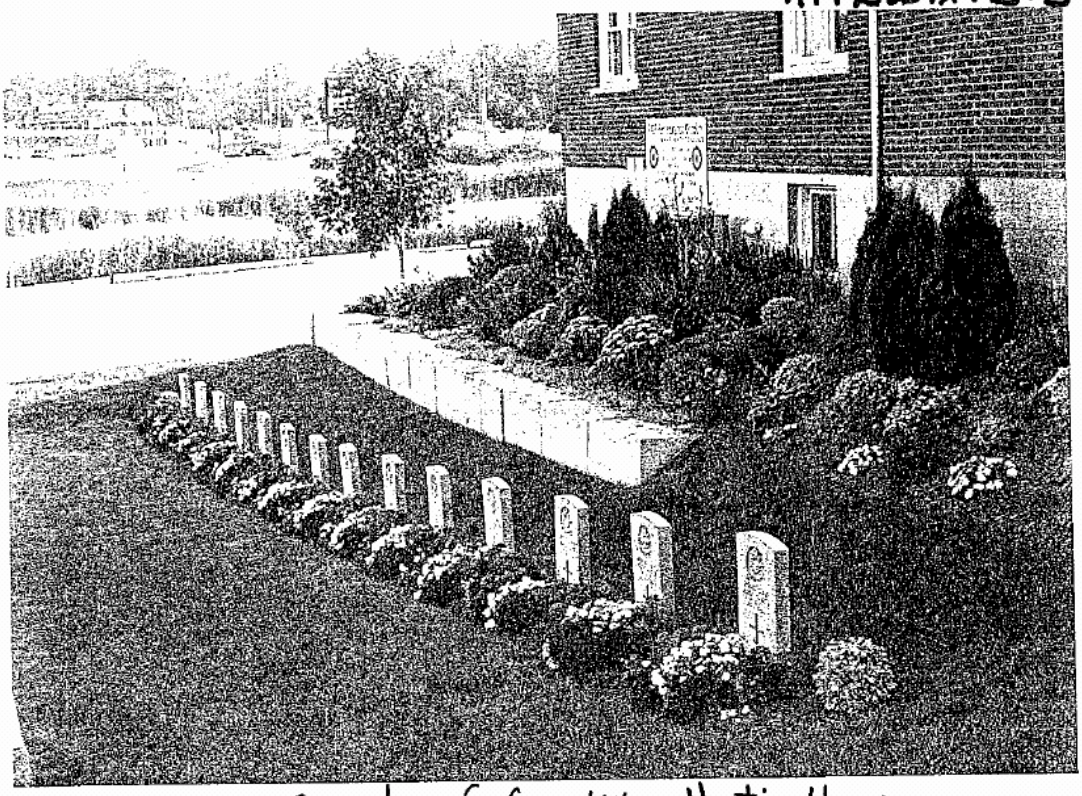
APPENDIX · B · 2



Example of Commission Horticulture



APPENDIX. B.3



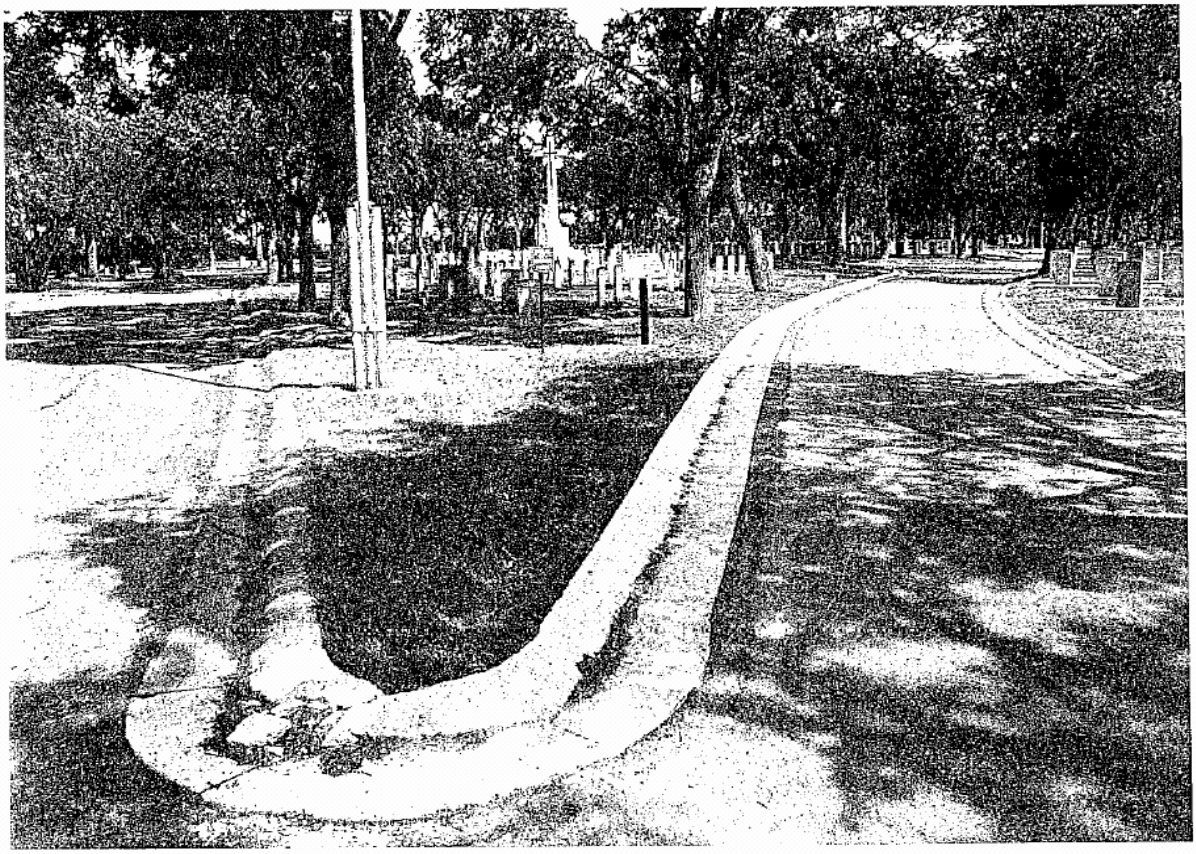
Example of Commission Horticulture



APPENDIX "C"

(Photographs marked to show the areas to be rehabilitated at Brookside Cemetery)

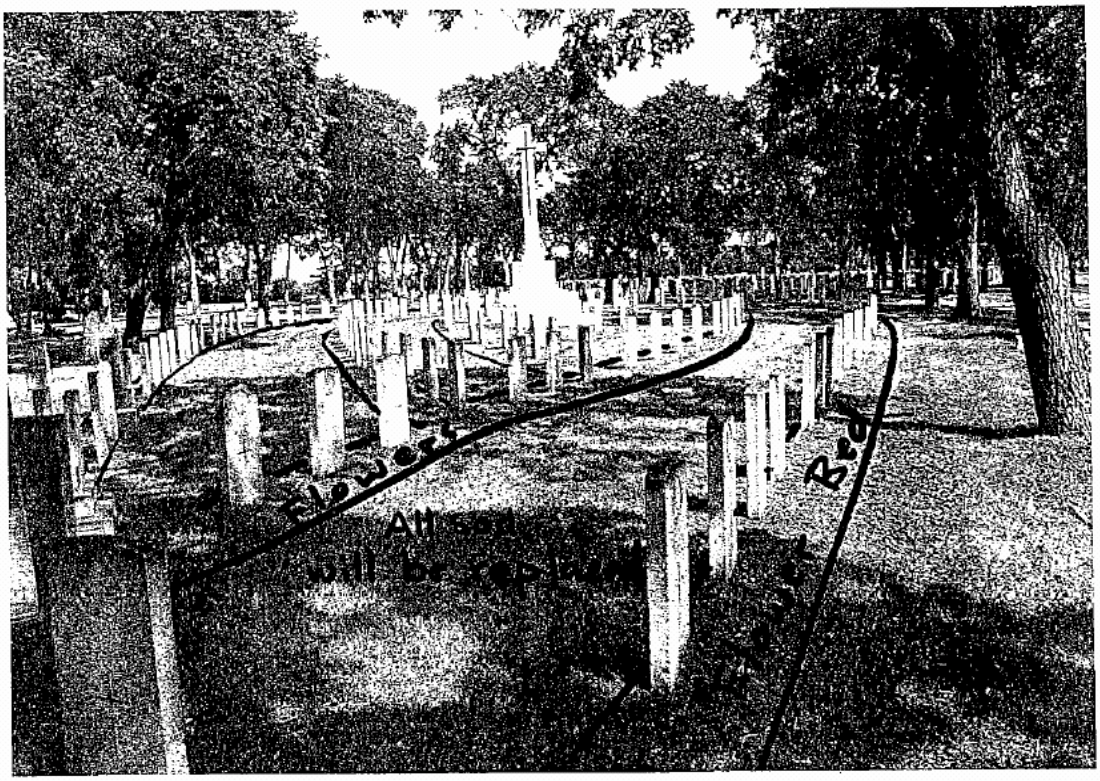
APPENDIX. C.1



new curbing

APPENDIX.C.2





APPENDIX C-3

