

Maintenance of Historic Cemeteries on Fort Bragg

THERE ARE 27 historic family cemeteries and two military cemeteries located on Fort Bragg and Camp Mackall. Many military burials on post resulted from combat operations that occurred in the Fort Bragg area between 1781 and 1865 or are the graves of Civil War soldiers killed in action. There are, however, civilians, buried in the two post cemeteries. Also included are markers for veterans of the Spanish-American War and World War II that had been stolen and dumped on Fort Bragg. These now rest at Sandy Grove Church. From 1992 until 1995, the US Army placed 10 memorial markers in the vicinity of a number of historic military graves for which only general locations were known. They include one mass grave from the Revolutionary War and a number of Union and Confederate graves from the Civil War. Family cemeteries and churchyards at Long Street and Sandy Grove Presbyterian Churches are maintained by the US Army under the terms of the land acquisition agreements negotiated with the original owners. All cemeteries are fenced, not used for military training purposes, and are mowed with minor repairs accomplished by the Public Works Business Center.

Policy

Policy for the maintenance of historic cemeteries on Fort Bragg and Camp Mackall are provided by AR 210-190, AR 200-3(4.3), DA PAM 290-5(5), TM 10-287, AR 420-10, AR 420-70, AR 420-74, and TM 5-630.

The Installation Commander has jurisdiction over post and private cemeteries located on Fort Bragg and Camp Mackall and maintains and operates these cemeteries as follows:

In all instances action will be taken to prevent damage to graves and grave markers.

Part 2: Standing Operating Procedures

Post cemeteries

Standards of maintenance will be equal to those authorized for other intensively maintained grounds. Areas will be protected as required by fencing, and will be kept orderly. Care will be taken to prevent damage to monuments, markers, and headstones. These will be kept clean and will be reset and realigned when necessary.

- As required, graves will be opened and closed, temporary headboards provided and placed, and permanent headstones set.

Private cemeteries

The following maintenance of private cemeteries will be performed except where relatives of those interred assume responsibility for performing the required maintenance functions:

- All cemeteries will be fenced. Existing repairable fences will be maintained and fences will be installed where the fences are not repairable or are nonexistent.
- Cemeteries will be thoroughly policed and mowed twice each year.
- Normally, cleaning of the cemeteries will be done in May and September.
- Sunken graves will be filled.
- Grave markers will be maintained in an erect position.
- Vehicular traffic in private cemeteries will be restricted to that necessary for repair work, or as authorized by the post commander.

Procedure

Grounds

Grass will be cut, as necessary, to maintain a height of not less than 3 inches or more than 5 inches. During the winter season, grass will be permitted to retain a growth of 3 to 5 inches to prevent frost damage.

Care will be taken to prevent damage to headstones during all cemetery maintenance operations, including fertilizing, seeding, pruning, tree spraying, and excavating and filling graves. Particular and continual care

is necessary and will be emphasized to protect the headstones from chipping, scraping, scratching, breakage, or soiling during mowing and trimming of the grass. The following precautions are mandatory:

- Power mowers, both rotary and reel-type, will be operated no closer than 12 inches from the headstones, markers and trees. Bumper guards will be used. Such bumper guards will be provided with white or non-staining rubber or other resilient material at the points where they would contact the headstone.
- The grass immediately around the headstones will be trimmed within 24 hours each time the lawn is mowed using a string trimmer.
- No tools or other articles (lunch boxes or coats) will be placed on headstones at any time. Tools will not be leaned against the headstones, and personnel or visitors will not be permitted to sit on or lean against them.
- Cemetery maintenance personnel will be thoroughly oriented in these requirements, and the Grounds Superintendent will see that they are observed at all times.
- Both organic and inorganic fertilizers and weed killers will be used to maintain lawns in the best possible condition. Mechanical equipment for collecting and pulverizing leaves and returning them to the lawns may be utilized. To achieve the desired results, mowers 20 inches or less, which grind satisfactorily, should be used to the maximum and only those areas with low thatch content should be mulched. Oak leaf mulch will increase soil acidity. Applications of fertilizer and soil amendment will be in accordance with recommendations of the cemetery Horticulturist. Grass should be watered as often as necessary to prevent loss of turf. Bare spots in turf will be re-sodded or re-seeded when necessary and seasonal conditions permit. Aeration should be considered when upgrading existing turf. The process stimulates root growth and provides for better penetration of water and fertilization.
- Flowerbeds will be permitted in Army cemeteries only upon approval of the Superintendent. A well-kept lawn with trees and shrubs located properly is more important and contributes more to the beauty and general appearance of the cemetery than the distribution of flowerbeds.
- Trees, shrubs, or vines will be planted, altered, or removed to conform to plans approved by the Superintendent. Superintendents will acquaint themselves with the proper methods of planting and caring for trees and shrubs, especially those that thrive best in the cemetery vicinity.

- Transplanting and new planting will not be undertaken in hot or very dry weather. Trees should be moved with a ball of earth at the most advantageous time of the year. A liberal amount of soil will be removed with the plants, and special care will be taken to ensure that the roots are disturbed as little as possible and not exposed to the wind or sun for extended periods. Holes will be dug large enough for a considerable quantity of rich topsoil to be deposited before the plant is placed in position. Normally, plants will not be put deeper in the earth than before removal. Soil around new plantings will be kept loosened and mulched. Two or 3 inches of shredded bark or other suitable mulch should be placed over the plant saucer or bed. Roots will be kept well watered during dry seasons, and necessary insect and disease control will be maintained.
- Dead, dying, or broken limbs and branches and destructive growths, such as honeysuckle, ivy, or brambles, will be removed from trees and shrubs. Serious injuries to trees and shrubs will be reported promptly to the Superintendent. Diseased plants will be treated and/or removed if the sources of infection cannot be arrested.
- The Superintendent must specifically approve the removal of live lower limbs or branches of evergreen or deciduous trees.
- Mistletoe will not be removed from trees unless there are indications it is doing harm to them.
- Shrubs may be trimmed to give plants the full benefit of light and air and to assure that headstones are not obstructed. This will be accomplished by pruning some of the older branches or by thinning out some of the new shoots where they are dense. The cutting is to be done to the base of the shrub.
- Trees and shrubs, especially those adjacent to buildings, will be kept trimmed to provide the benefits of air and light. They will be cabled, spliced and fertilized, when necessary. Cavities in trees will be filled when justified by reasonable life expectancy.
- When trees are removed, care will be taken to avoid damage to buildings, monuments, headstones, shrubs, or other trees. When a tree is cut down, the entire stump will be removed, where possible; otherwise, the trunk will be cut at least 8 inches below ground level in order that proper re-sodding or seeding can be accomplished.
- Nontoxic ivy or vines growing on the enclosure wall may be retained but will be kept trimmed or trained on a line parallel with the lower edge of the coping. The Superintendent must approve new plantings of ivy or vines. Ivy or ground covers in an open border will be maintained neatly, and kept free from grass, weeds, dead leaves, debris, and rubbish.

- Planting of flowering vines, such as running roses and clematis, must conform to the approved landscape design or be authorized by the Superintendent. Flowers or other plants growing in boxes, tubs, or other types of receptacles will be permitted only when in conformity with plans approved by the Superintendent. This restriction does not apply to the interior living quarters of the Superintendent.
- Developed areas will be kept free of weeds to the greatest extent possible. Obnoxious plants, such as poison ivy, poison oak, and sumac will be removed from the cemetery grounds, trees, walls, buildings, fences, and other facilities.
- Brushwood, debris, or rubbish will not be burned in Army cemeteries.
- When possible, brush and grass will be cut and turned under in undeveloped areas to assist in developing the soil, and/or minimizing fire hazards.
- Eroded areas will be restored and preventive measures taken against recurrence.
- Control measures will be taken where ground moles or other destructive animals or insects are found.
- The cemetery will be policed, for the removal of trash, dead flowers, and flower receptacles (except those permanently installed).
- Cemeteries will be hand-raked prior to any controlled burn in the vicinity.

Maintenance of Grave Stones and Markers

The natural surfaces of headstones and markers will be retained. They will not be painted, white washed, bleached, or calcimined.

Headstones and markers will be cleaned with water and a fiber brush to remove objectionable accumulations, such as bird droppings, mud, tire or hose markings, grass stains, residue from trees, and fungi. The toning or patina of the stone will not be removed unless as a result of cleaning to remove such accumulations. In this instance, the stone should be cleaned in its entirety to present a uniform appearance.

The following methods will normally be used for cleaning headstones or markers.

Marble headstones and markers.

- Add one-half pound of calcium hypochlorite (Ca (OC1) 2) to 13 quarts of water and mix thoroughly. For best results, apply the solution with a long-handled brush and scrub the headstones until all foreign material is dissolved. Rinse with clear water.

Part 2: Standing Operating Procedures

Flat granite markers.

To remove grass stains and mud, wet the marker with clear water. Apply a small amount of any standard household detergent, powder, or liquid, in accordance with manufacturer's directions. Allow emulsion to form, scrub with brush, and rinse.

To remove rust or stubborn dirt stains, wet marker with clear water. Apply, with a brush, a solution of 2 parts orthophosphoric acid and 1 part water. Rinse thoroughly when stain disappears. Failure to remove solution may result in discoloration and damage to the surface of the stone. Exercise extreme caution in using this solution. Personnel performing the work, mixing the solution or pouring it from one container to another should be equipped with acid-proof face protectors, rubber gloves, aprons, and boots. Employees applying the solution should stand on the windward side of the stone. The following method may be tried in place of the orthophosphoric acid solution: wet the marker with clear water, apply a mild abrasive cleanser (diatomaceous earth or volcanic ash), and rub gently with a fiber brush until stain disappears.

Superintendents will exercise utmost care to prevent headstones and markers from being chipped, marred, or damaged.

Access

Persons wishing to visit any of the cemeteries should first contact Fort Bragg's Public Affairs Officer to obtain permission. This may be done by writing to the following address:

Headquarters
XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg
Public Affairs Office
ATTN:AFZA-PAO
Fort Bragg, NC 28310

Coordination

All visits to cemeteries must be coordinated in advance with both Range Control and CRP.