

Cemetery Sources Packet: Source One

"The Cemetery of Hamm [*Le Cimetiere de Hamm*]," *L'Union*, 1946

Luxembourg American Cemetery Archives



Excerpts from the article translated into English:

Despite the rainy weather during the months of July and August they were able to register over 10,000 persons per week, of which a great number were from Luxembourg; who always visit to put flowers on the headstones.

Of the 8,400 headstones almost 4,000 have been adopted by Luxembourgers.

According to Colonel Davis, the administration found a lot of financial support from the officials and businesses of Luxembourg. Mr. John J. Ernster, executive secretary of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States in Luxembourg helped greatly by assisting in the organization of the ceremonies which requested the presence of Luxembourg organizations. The excellent Memorial Day program was in big part thanks to his efforts.

The beautiful flower beds in the cemetery of Hamm, which are some of the most beautiful in Europe, were

arranged with the advice and help of Mr. Alph. Beffort, senior gardener in charge of the city of Luxembourg. Thanks to him and to the generosity of Mr. Nicolas Anzia, president of the Fédération Horticole Professionnelle Luxembourgeoise, who donated a magnificent selection of rose bushes to the cemetery.

A big number of mechanics from Luxembourg-City also delivered material for the cemetery.

The friendly relations between the authorities of the cemetery and the peoples from Luxembourg, were forged by his Excellency, Mr. George P. Waller. In his capacity as Chargé d'Affaires of the United States to Luxembourg, Mr. Waller took note of the Luxembourgers and the devotion they have towards the military cemetery.

Cemetery Sources Packet: Source Two

R. Warren Davis, Report by the Superintendent of Luxembourg American Cemetery, 1950-1960 (excerpt)

Luxembourg American Cemetery Archives

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American labor troops and German prisoners worked together to lay the pathways among the (approximately) 24 rectangular plots existing at the time. For this single project, over nine hundred truckloads of coarse stone were hauled from the nearest source then in operation, a quarry near Esch-sur-Alzette.

On 12 April 1946, Mr. R. Warren Davis arrived on assignment from A.G.R.C. and became the first Superintendent of the cemetery. Officers and enlisted men were shifted progressively elsewhere, the P.O.W.'s were also moved, and a local labor crew came into being.

During 1946-47, the main activities consisted of establishing lawns, planting flower beds, removing unneeded structures, improving roads and paths, and restoring those areas of the woods which had been damaged by military personnel and equipment.

The administrative staff continued to put all records in order, to establish grave locator files, and process numerous applications for grave adoption. The grave adoption program may have served some useful purpose, but human abuses were notable. In this community, for example, few asked to adopt a protestant or Jewish grave, none adopted an unknown. Moreover, the only graves to be adopted at all were those where the "dog tag" on the marker also bore the deceased's home address. It is our opinion that the scheme should never have been encouraged.

The nearby German Military Cemetery, then comprising some 6-8,000 graves, was also placed under our responsibility, doubling the task of grounds maintenance and the annual repainting of grave markers.

Unlike France, where the prior existence of World War I American cemeteries had established a modus operandi, Luxembourg was experiencing for the first time our non-combat activity and we were frequently hindered by officials who, while cordial, were unable to interpret existing regulations in our favor. Thus, we had to smuggle supplies - even paint for the grave markers - for a considerable period before reasonable importation arrangements could be worked out.

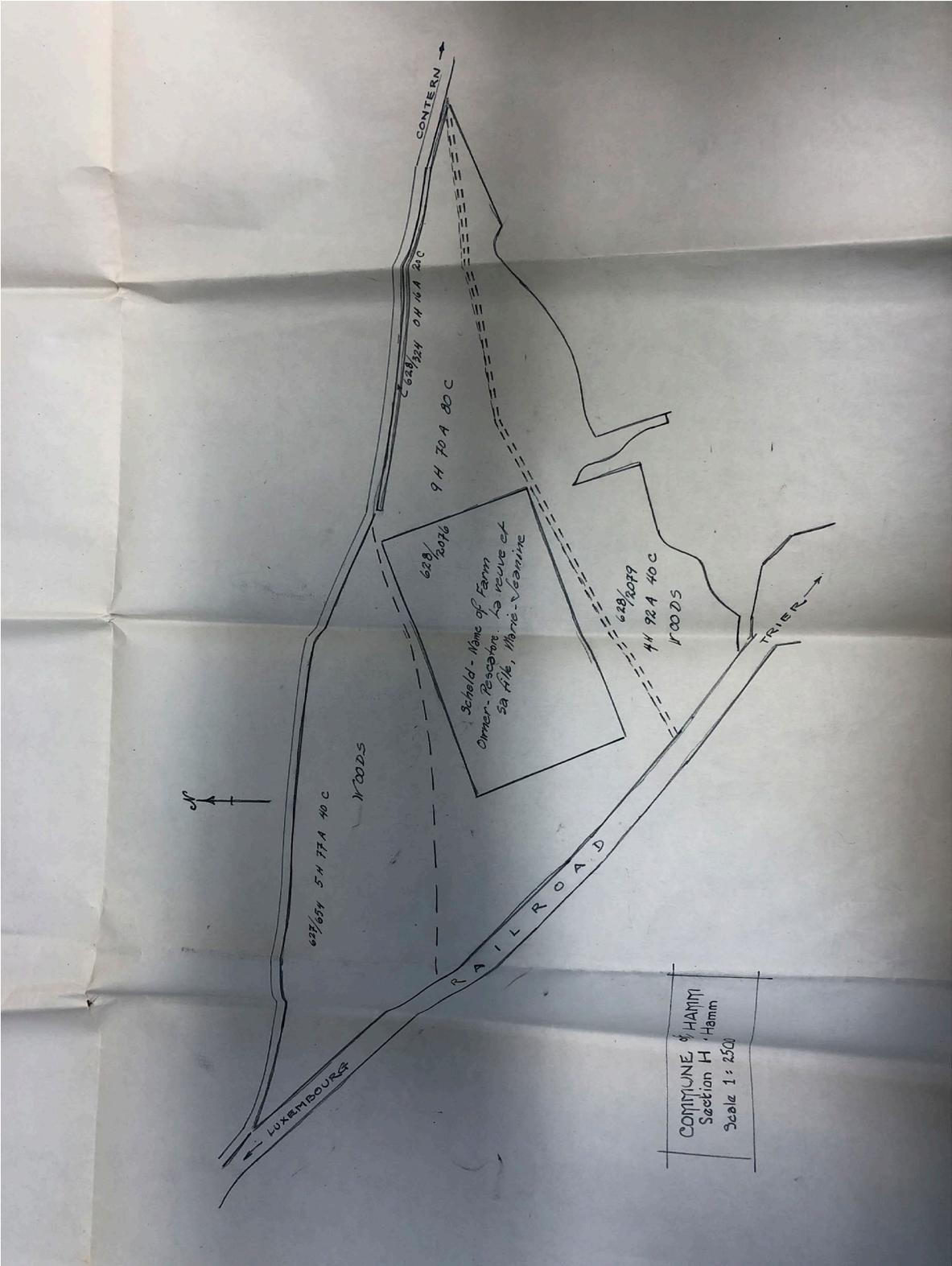
In 1947, the Superintendent was also charged with the temporary cemetery at Foy, near Bastogne, comprising 3,700 graves.

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Cemetery Sources Packet: Source Three

Map, Luxembourg American Cemetery (property register), c. 1948

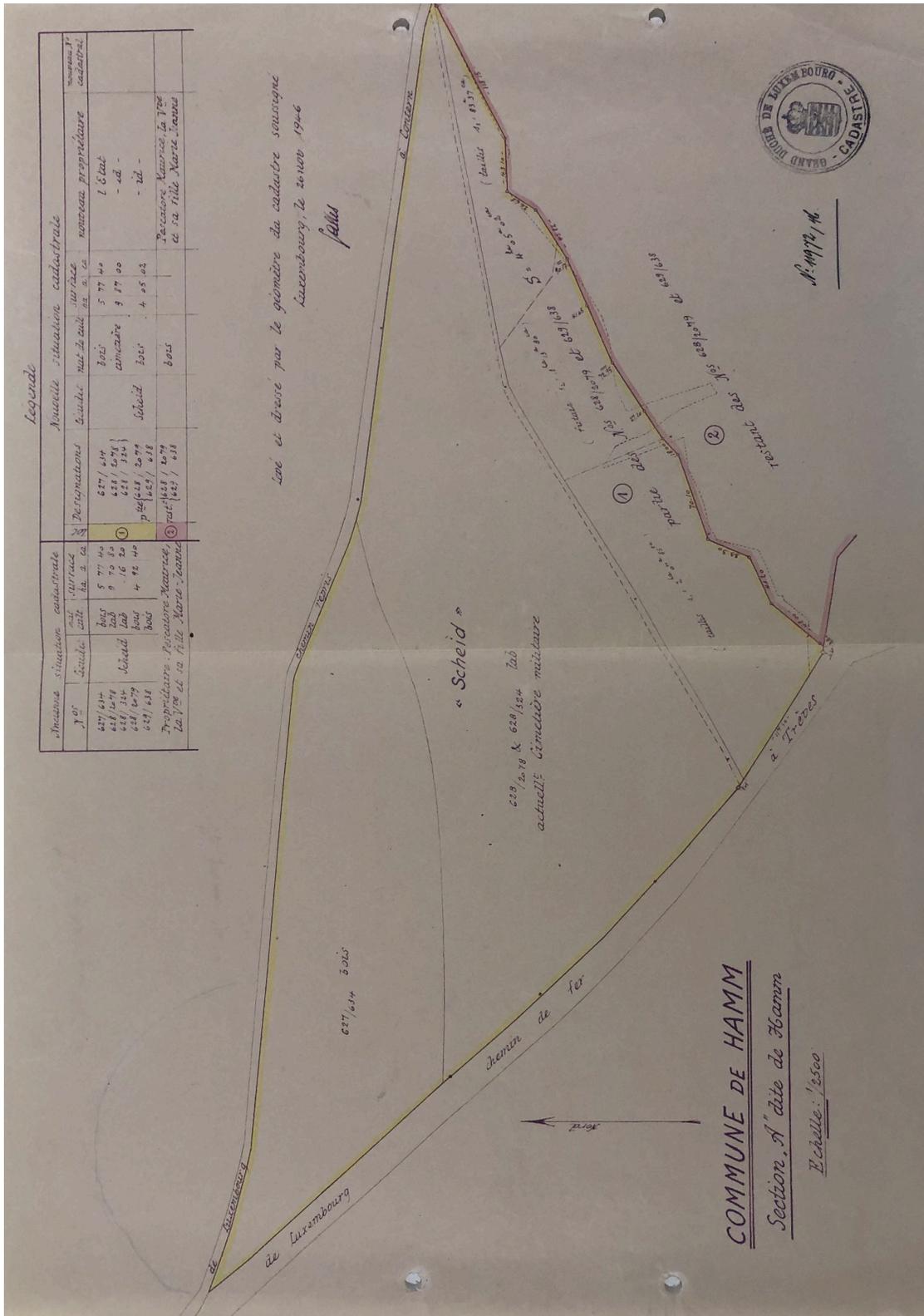
Luxembourg American Cemetery Archives



Cemetery Sources Packet: Source Three

Map, Luxembourg American Cemetery, March 21, 1951

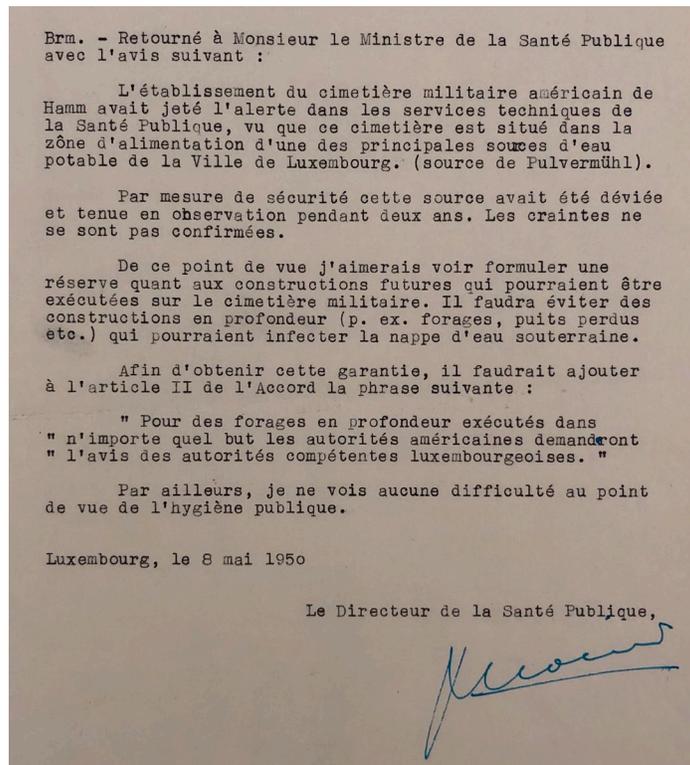
Archives Nationales Luxembourg (AE-07963)



Cemetery Sources Packet: Source Four

Letter from the Director of Public Health, May 8, 1950

Archives Nationales Luxembourg (AE-07963)



Excerpts from the letter translated in English:

Returned to the minister of Public Health with the following advice:

The construction of the American military cemetery of Hamm has caught the attention of the technical services of the Public Health department, since the cemetery is located in the zone of origin of one of the most primary potable water resources for the city of Luxembourg (Water source of Pulvermühl).

For security reasons this source has been deviated and has been under observation for two years. No complaints were confirmed.

With this in mind I would like to formulate a condition in case of future constructions which might be executed at the military cemetery. Deep constructions should be avoided (e.g. drilling, lost wells, etc.) which might infect the underground water surface.

To obtain this guarantee, the following phrase should be added to Article II of the Agreement:

"For deep drillings executed for whatever reason the American authorities will demand the opinion of the Luxembourg authorities in charge."

Otherwise I don't see any other difficulty in relationship to the public health.

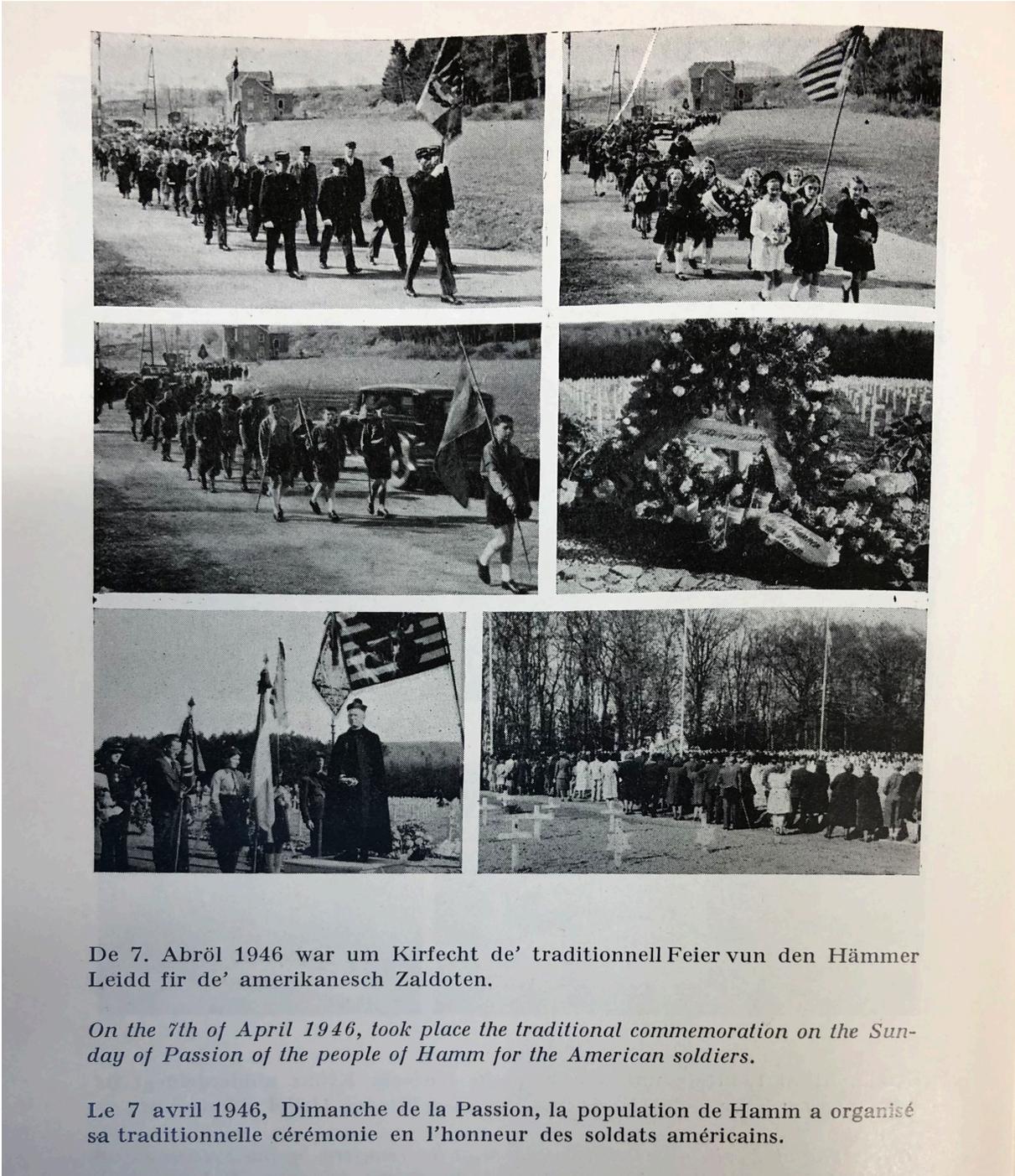
Luxembourg, May 8, 1950.

Signed the director of Public Health

Cemetery Sources Packet: Source Five

Brochure, Luxembourg American Cemetery, 1950s (excerpt)

Luxembourg American Cemetery Archives

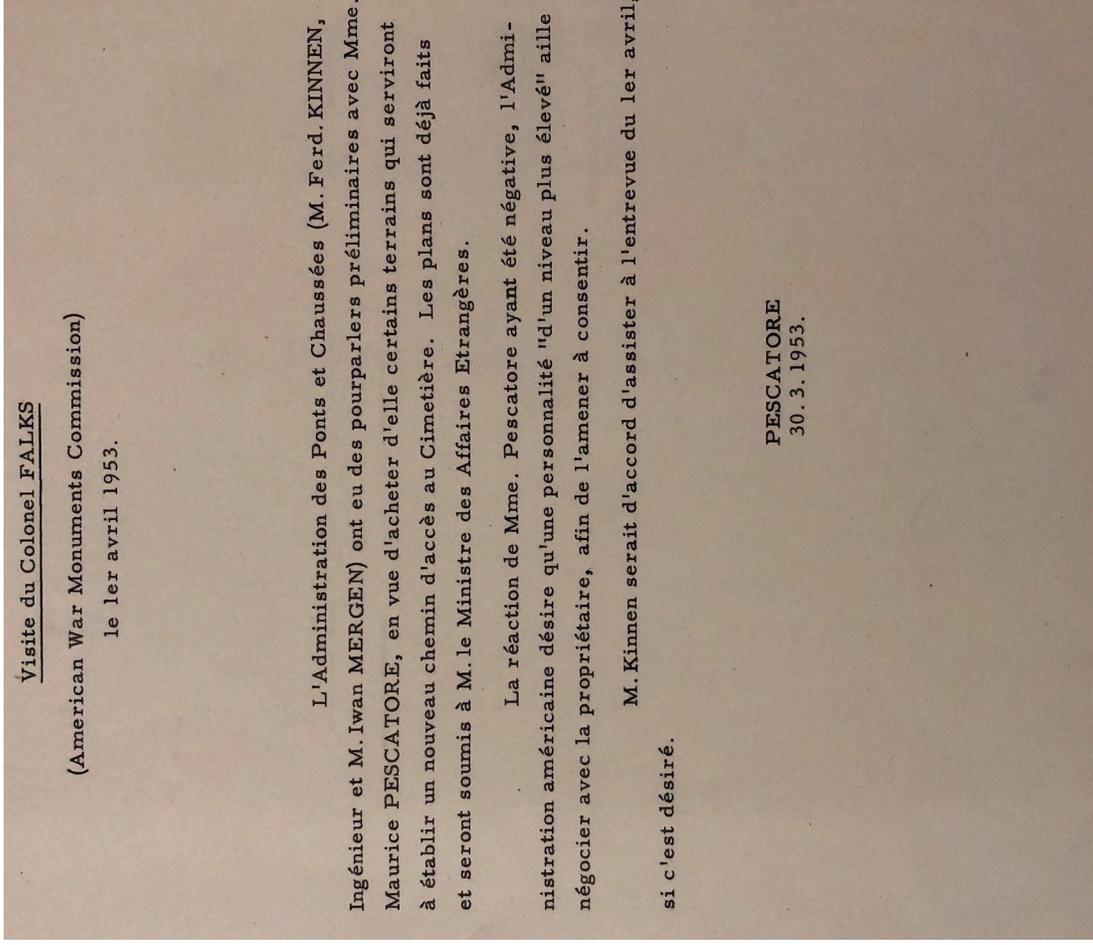


Context: Pictures of a local tradition which started in 1945. After the Sunday of Passion (Palm Sunday) in church, locals go to the American military cemetery to pay their respects to the American soldiers.

Cemetery Sources Packet: Source Six

Letter from Pierre Pescatore (Member of the Department of Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg), March 30, 1953

Archives Nationales Luxembourg (AE-11497)



Translation:

Visit of Colonel Falks

(American War Monuments Commission)

April 1, 1953

The administration of Bridges and Roads (Mr. Ferd. Kinnen, Engineer and M. Iwan Mergen) have had preliminary discussions with Mrs. Maurice Pescatore, in the light of the purchase of certain lands which will serve to build a new access road to the cemetery. The plans are already made and will be submitted to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Since the reaction of Mrs. Pescatore was negative, the American administration would like that a person 'higher in charge' go to negotiate with the owner to reach an agreement.

Mr. Kinnen agrees to assist with the meeting the 1st of April if it is necessary.

Signed Pescatore, March 30, 1953