

OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS

INTRODUCTION

The Oxford University Officers' Training Corps (OUOTC) was one of 23 such bodies formed at universities in Great Britain following the establishment of the Officers' Training Corps (OTC) by Royal Warrant in 1908. The formation of the OTC was proposed by a Committee set up in 1907 by Richard Haldane, Secretary of State for War, to investigate the problem of the supply of adequately trained officers for both the regular and reserve forces of the army. The Committee proposed that an OTC should be formed which would have two divisions, the Senior Division in universities and the Junior Division in schools. The hope was that it would attract young men into the Army and provide an efficient system of progressive military instruction for prospective officers. The report of the Committee was published in February 1907 and the OTC came into existence in April 1908.

The formation of the OTC brought existing University Rifle Volunteer Corps and School Cadet Corps into one corporate body. At Oxford this meant that the Oxford University Rifle Volunteers Corps (OURVC) now formed the basis of the Oxford University Officers' Training Corps.

The 1st Oxfordshire (Oxford University) Rifle Volunteer Corps was formed in 1859 and was established (together with many other volunteer corps across the country) in response to the threat of war with France while the regular army was preoccupied with the Indian Mutiny. From 1881, the OURVC served as one of several volunteer battalions of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry and in 1887 became known as the 1st (Oxford University) Volunteer Battalion or the Oxford University Volunteers (OUV). One of the other volunteer battalions in the Oxfordshire Light Infantry was the 4th (Eton College) Volunteer Battalion.

In 1908, the newly formed OUOTC was based in premises at 9 Alfred Street with the University Delegacy for Military Instruction. The Delegacy had been established in 1904 to superintend the instruction of candidates for commissions in the army and had ensured that military history was given a recognised position among University studies. Candidates registered with the Secretary of the Delegacy and attended a series of lectures which were also open to candidates in Group E of the Pass School. Candidates were expected to gain a BA degree as well as receive military instruction and the practical experience of being attached to a regular army unit. The Delegacy consisted of the Vice-Chancellor, the Proctors, one or more person appointed by the Secretary of State for War and six members of Convocation. The Delegates made an annual report to Convocation, which was published sporadically in the University Gazette, between 1906 and 1939. There were no reports at all between 1917 and 1924. These reports gave financial and administrative details of the Delegacy and statistical information on the number of candidates and commissions received.

The creation of the OUOTC meant increased responsibilities for the Delegacy, for under the regulations of the OTC issued with Army Orders on 1 July 1908, a University furnishing a contingent of the OTC '...must possess a committee of military education officially recognised by the University authorities, and certain

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officers of the Contingent must be *ex officio* members of this committee'. These responsibilities included the appointment of lecturers, the conduct of examinations and the administration of grants. After the creation of the OUOTC in 1908, the Delegacy made two annual reports to Convocation, one continuing to report their own accounts and business and the other the activities and work of the OUOTC. This included details of the strength of the Corps, lists of officers, details of field operations, camp, annual inspections, examinations and commissions received. This separate report on the OUOTC only lasted from 1911 to 1913. After this date the Delegacy's report changed to include operational and statistical information on the OTC. For the purposes of this catalogue, the records of the Delegacy for Military Instruction are listed with those of the OUOTC.

An important aspect of the new OTC was the provision of permanent staff from the regular army to provide rigorous training for the cadets. Training during term took the form of short courses (usually about one per week) which took place at a time that did not interfere with University work or sport. Training included parades, attending camp and studying for voluntary examinations. These examinations were held twice a year in March and November, and took the form of certificates A and B. Certificate A was designed primarily for members of the Junior Division of the OTC and B for the Senior Division; both examinations contained written and practical elements. Although the examinations were voluntary, successful candidates gained some advantages; for example, the holder of certificate B was entitled to a commission in the Special Reserve of Officers or the Territorial Force.

The First World War broke out in the midst of the Long Vacation in 1914 so most undergraduates and many fellows were away from Oxford during the early rush to enlist. For those who were still in Oxford and for others too, the simplest way to join up was to apply to the Delegacy for Military Instruction. However, the process of applying through the Delegacy was deemed too slow and cumbersome, so the OUOTC set up an ad hoc committee to speed up the application process. By the end of September 1914, the committee had processed around 2000 applications for commissions.

A School of Instruction for young officers was set up in Oxford in January 1915 and regular army officers previously appointed to train the OUOTC were involved with the training and instruction. By March 1916 about 3000 officers had passed through the School. In 1916, the School was superseded by two Officer Cadet Battalions formed at Oxford (these were No.4 Oxford and No.6 Balliol College; Jesus College served as a Garrison Battalion), in which candidates for commissions, many of whom had served in the ranks, underwent a complete course of training for up to seven months.

The strength of each cadet battalion was about 750 men and they were quartered by companies in Keble, Wadham, Hertford, New, Magdalen, Trinity, Balliol, St John's and Worcester Colleges. For example, C Company of No. 4 Officer Cadet Battalion was quartered at Keble College under the command of Captain FW Matheson.

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The majority of cadets who passed through Oxford on this scheme were not members of Oxford University. Entrants to an Officer Cadet Battalion had to be aged over 18 and a half and to have either served in the ranks or with an OTC. Some records of No. 4 Officer Cadet Battalion are listed within this catalogue at OT 1.

After the First World War, the objective of the OTC continued to be 'to train leaders for the Territorial Army and the Supplementary Reserve and to build up a potential reserve of Junior Officers to meet a national emergency'. The Standing Orders issued by the OTC included 'efficiency' as an important part of the conditions of service. A cadet was deemed 'efficient' if he attended cadet camp, took part in a minimum number of parades and was a regular participant on training courses.

In 1948, the Senior Divisions of the OTC were reorganised and became part of the Territorial Army; as a result of this, their name was changed to 'University Training Corps'. This new title remained until 1955 when the term 'Officer' was reinstated and it became once more University Officer Training Corps. The first women were permitted to join the University Training Corps in 1948 though they trained in a separate sub-unit from the men. Women cadets continued to train separately until the early 1960s when they were finally allowed to join what had previously been all male units.

From 1955, the overall number of University Officer Training Corps in Britain reduced as it became common practice for some to incorporate others, for example, Oxford University became responsible for students who attended Reading University and for certain students at the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham. The University Officer Training Corps, including Oxford, also began to recruit cadets from the polytechnics then in existence.

The headquarters of the OUOTC and Delegacy remained at 9 Alfred Street from 1908 until 1920 when it moved to 20 St Michael's Street. This was followed by a move to Yeomanry House in Manor Road in 1929, where the Corps remained until 1994 when it took up residence in Harcourt House in Marston Road. In c1998 the Corps moved to Falklands House in Oxpens Road, a purpose built building erected to serve as the headquarters for several detachments of Oxford University cadet forces.

The records listed here are those of the Delegacy for Military Instruction which were received in the Archives from an unidentified source at some time between 1975 and 1979 and those of the OUOTC which were transferred to the Archives by the Commanding Officer in 2006. Within the records of the OUOTC are some of No.4 Officer Cadet Battalion (OT 1). Additional records of C Company of No.4 Officer Cadet Battalion are held by Keble College Archives.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

The History of the University of Oxford, volume VIII, the Twentieth Century edited by Brian Harrison, 1994

Oxford University Roll of Service, edited by ES Craig and WM Gibson, 1920

Oxford University Gazette, 1906-39

The records are arranged as follows:

- OT 1 NO. 4 OFFICER CADET BATTALION

- OT 2 ADMINISTRATION

- OT 3 FINANCE

- OT 4 MEMBERS

- OT 5 MILITARY ACTIVITIES

- OT 6 OFFICERS' MESS

- OT 7 HISTORY OF THE OUOTC

- OT 8 PHOTOGRAPHS

- OT 9 MISCELLANEOUS

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- OT 1 NO 4 OFFICER CADET BATTALION
- OT 1/1/1-11 Programme for Officers' Course of Instruction for A and B Company, with lists of participants and personal data forms completed by those attending and details of weekly training programmes and tactical exercises carried out. 1915-16
1. 1915 Jan
 2. 1915 Feb
 3. 1915 Mar
 4. 1915 Apr-May
 5. 1915 May
 6. 1915 Jun-Jul
 7. 1915 Jul-Aug
 8. 1915 Aug-Oct
 9. 1915 Oct-Nov
 10. 1915 Nov - 1916 Jan
 11. 1916 Jan-Mar
- OT 1/2/1-3 Registration forms giving details of the military careers of members of A and C Company. 1916-18
1. A Company, A-Z
 2. C Company, A-L
 3. C Company, M-Z
- OT 1/3 C Company order book. 1916
- OT 1/4/1-2 Quarterly returns of arms, ammunition, equipment, public clothing and barrack stores in possession of C Company. 1917-18
1. 1917
 2. 1918
- OT 1/5 Examination marks for Platoons 9, 10 and 11 of C Company. 1918
- OT 1/6 Weekly programmes of work sheets for C Company with the report of the cadet orderly corporal sent to the Commanding Officer of C Company at the conclusion of his tour of duty. 1918
- OT 1/7 'Routine Book' containing Army Council Instructions, War Office correspondence and orders issued to the Commanding Officer of C Company, FW Matheson. 1916-18

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- OT 1 NO 4 OFFICER CADET BATTALION
- OT 1/8 FW Matheson's copy of instructions for platoon exercises issued by General Head Quarters Small Arms School (Rifle Branch). 1917
- OT 1/9 FW Matheson's copies of training leaflets issued by the British Expeditionary Force, France. 1918
- OT 1/10 'List of names of men from D Company not in squad roll book' annotated to show the names of men killed in action. 1917
- OT 1/11 List of officers believed killed in action. 1919
- OT 1/12 Two letters from the Records Section of the Australian Imperial Force to FW Matheson and Lieutenant CW Nicholls at Keble College, confirming the names of twenty one Australian officers either killed in action or who had returned to Australia. 1919

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- OT 2 ADMINISTRATION
- OT 2/1 Minutes of Shooting Committee. 1883-1900

The committee was made up of members of the Oxford University Rifle Volunteers Corps, a precursor to the OUOTC, and met to discuss Rifle Volunteer Corps participation in various shooting competitions and the rules and conditions involved.
- OT 2/2/1-2 Minutes of the Delegacy for Military Instruction. 1940-83

1. 1940-61
2. 1961-83
- OT 2/3 Copies of minutes of the Delegacy for Military Instruction, 1932, and an extract from minutes of a meeting, 1933. 1932-3
- OT 2/4 Annual reports of the Delegacy for Military Instruction. 1930, 1933-8
- OT 2/5 Annual reports of Oxford University Officers' Training Corps (for 1952-3, Oxford University Training Corps (TA) Territorial Army). 1930-1, 1933, 1952-3, 1957
- OT 2/6 Draft proposal of a 'charter' for the OUOTC compiled by Lieutenant Colonel WSB Gunn, with correspondence suggesting amendments. 1958
- OT 2/7 Charter of the OUOTC stating the reasons for the existence of the Corps, its aims and how it intends to achieve them. 1971
- OT 2/8 Draft proposal for affiliation between the Honourable Artillery Company and the OUOTC. c 1950
- OT 2/9 *Rules and Instructions for University Candidates for Commissions in the Army.* 1912

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- OT 2 ADMINISTRATION
- OT 2/10 *Regulations for the Officers Training Corps.* 1933
- OT 2/11 Scale of subscription fees. 1937
- OT 2/12 'Monthly Strength Return' recording the total number of cadets by sub-unit (Royal Armoured Corps, Royal Artillery, Royal Signals, Infantry and Intelligence). 1952-6
- OT 2/13 Copy of a directive from the War Office concerning the reorganisation of University Contingents Officers' Training Corps, 1955; with 'New Titles for reserve Army Units' extracted from the *Territorial Magazine*, April 1967. 1955-67

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- OT 3 FINANCE
- OT 3/1 Account book of the Delegacy for Military Instruction. 1914-60
- OT 3/2 Account book of the OUOTC. 1937-59
- OT 3/3 Cash analysis book of the Secretary of the Delegacy for Military Instruction, chiefly concerning petty cash expenses and wages. 1920-47 and 1953
- OT 3/4 Deposit account book for the Delegacy for Military Instruction at Westminster Bank, 1928-35; with correspondence relating to the account with the Post Office Savings Bank, 1944. 1928-44
- OT 3/5/1-2 Statements of account of the Delegacy for Military Instruction's University Chest Departmental account; with a letter relating to appointments from the Air Ministry to the Delegacy, 1953. 1932-62
1. 1932-6
 2. 1947-62
- OT 3/6 Receipts for capitation fees, 1951-3; with a letter relating to money paid into the Delegacy for Military Instruction's account from Royal Air Force candidates gaining regular commissions, 1951. 1951-3
- OT 3/7 Correspondence relating to income tax returns of the Delegacy for Military Instruction, 1925, and statements of general accounts, 1921-8. 1921-8
- OT 3/8 Miscellaneous papers relating to the Delegacy for Military Instruction's accounts and investments, including statements of accounts, 1932-8; balance sheets, 1933-8; and proofs of account, 1948, 1951-4. 1932-54

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- OT 4 MEMBERS
- OT 4/1 Letters of appointment to rank of 2nd Lieutenant in the Volunteer Forces of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry of eight men serving in the 1st Buckinghamshire Volunteer Rifle Corps, 1st (Oxford University) Volunteer Battalion and the 4th (Eton College) Volunteer Battalion. 1899-1900
- OT 4/2 Record of service of officers; with some records of cadets. 1909-26
- OT 4/3 Record of service of cadets. 1922-38
- OT 4/4 List of Engineer Cadets. 1934-84
- OT 4/5 Typescript list of members of the 1st (Oxford University) Volunteer Battalion (to 1893, 1st (Oxford University) Rifle Volunteer Corps) in 1864, 1869, 1873, 1876-7, 1881, 1893 and 1896. Compiled c1990
- OT 4/6 Miscellaneous papers relating to students registered with the Delegacy for Military Instruction; including a list of registrations, 1933-4, and attendance lists for Group E lectures, 1934-5. 1931-51
- OT 4/7 Register of students enrolled with the Delegacy for Military Instruction as suitable candidates for possible commissions in the armed forces; with correspondence relating to candidates for permanent commissions, 1948, and summary of attendances at Group E lectures, 1936-9. 1934-53
- OT 4/8 Lists of candidates for nominations for commissions in the regular army. 1939
- OT 4/9 Letters of appointment of three officers to Second Lieutenant in the Territorial Army in the OUOTC. 1938-9

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- OT 4 MEMBERS
- OT 4/10 Leaflet listing details of officers of the Oxford Free Lancers, 1944-5. Compiled c1992
- OT 4/11 News cuttings from *The London Gazette* recording postings, promotions and listings of cadet members of the OUOTC. 1930-8
- OT 4/12 Letters from the Air Ministry relating to appointments of candidates to permanent commissions in the Royal Air Force. 1952
- OT 4/13 Publicity material for the recruitment of new members. c1960-86
- OT 4/14 'Regimental Nominal Roll' recording name, number, rank, sub-unit and University of officer cadets and senior members of the OUOTC. 1995-8

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- OT 5 MILITARY ACTIVITIES
- OT 5/1/1-3 'Part 1 Orders': Contingent orders issued by the Commanding Officer, giving details of field operations, notices of inspections and programmes of study for certificates A and B. 1912-15
1. 1912-13
 2. 1913-14
 3. 1914-15
- OT 5/2 Standing Orders including details of the organisation and object of the corps, training and uniform. 1930-1, 1933, 1937, 1945-7, 1949
- OT 5/3 Army Orders issued by the War Office affecting the national body of the Officers Training Corps. 1940-1
- OT 5/4 Memoranda on infantry training. 1914
- OT 5/5 Printed map showing Fawsley Park, Northamptonshire, used for the examination for certificate A, the 'first paper for Cavalry, Artillery, Engineers and Infantry'. 1914
- OT 5/6 Printed instructional drawings of attack formations to be used by a platoon in the field. c1918
- OT 5/7 Ordnance Survey map of Oxford and District, printed with title 'Oxford University Officers' Training Corps Map'. 1912
- OT 5/8 Ordnance Survey map of Barkston Heath, Lincolnshire, printed for Artillery Training. 1917
- OT 5/9 Poster of 'Topographical Forms' showing a view, an elevation and a plan with contour lines. c 1930s

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- OT 5 MILITARY ACTIVITIES
- OT 5/10 Account of the Royal Artillery Sub-Unit of the OUOTC submitted to Brigadier JFS Rendall, DSO, Royal Artillery, Southern Command, providing details of the background of the unit and records of service of the cadets at that date. 1957
- OT 5/11 Programme of events for mounted sports for members of the OUOTC. 1937
- OT 5/12 Account of the participation of an OUOTC member in CIOR (Confédération Interalliée des Officiers de Réserve) Military Pentathlon. 1990
- OT 5/13 Blank form of contract of service for membership of the Senior Training Corps, Oxford University Contingent. c1950
- OT 5/14 Visitors book. 1900-2000
- This includes the names of members of the OUOTC attending camps and annual dinners.
- OT 5/15 'Spearpoint 80. A sketch book by Ken Howard' for a military exercise involving several nations. 1980
- OT 5/16 Printed training manuals for armoured fighting vehicles, 1942; and armament, 1946. 1942-6
- OT 5/17 Printed instructions for applied driving and maintenance, 1946; Royal Artillery, 1955; 'Staff duties in the field' for officers of all arms and services, 1956; and for officers commanding troops, 1966. 1946-66

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OT 6 OFFICERS' MESS

OT 6/1 Minutes of Mess meetings. 1968-86

OT 6/2 Inventory of property in the Officers' Mess. 1969-86

OT 6/3/1-2 Mess sponce books. 1974-5, 1977-83

1. 1974-5
2. 1977-83

A sponce was a fine issued by cadets on one another for perceived breaches of etiquette. The 'fine' was usually in the form of consumption of a quantity of alcohol in a designated time.

OT 6/4 Summary of monthly Mess bills. 1967-98

OT 6/5 Daily stock account for the Mess. 1963-88

OT 6/6 Suggestions book. 1968-79

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- OT 7 HISTORY OF THE OUOTC
- OT 7/1 Volume containing extracts from the diary of Dr FA Dixey, 1888-1912, relating to his time in the Oxford University Volunteers and the OUOTC, copied by his sons and including two photographs of Dixey. Compiled 1955
- OT 7/2 Volume containing extracts from letters to Dr FA Dixey from various correspondents, 1890-1910, relating to the Oxford University Volunteers and the OUOTC, copied by one of Dixey's sons; including letter to Dixey, c1890, from H L Ruck Keene, enclosing some documents (not present). Compiled 1955
- OT 7/3 Printed accounts of life in the OUOTC (mostly short passages or excerpts from published works). 1996 and undated
- OT 7/4 Printed and manuscript descriptions of the history of the OUOTC, including printed material relating to the insignia worn by OUOTC members. 1942-89
- OT 7/5 Papers collected in response to appeals for material wanted to compile a historical record of the OUOTC; with letters to the Commanding Officer from previous members recording reminiscences of their time spent in the OUOTC. 1936-97
- The papers also include some biographical details of members in the form of nominal rolls and lists of subscriptions received, 1936-40. Also included is a letter to the Editor of the *Daily Telegraph* from Richard Munday, 1989, relating to the recruitment of civilians for military service. Appeals for material were made over a period of time and by different Commanding Officers.
- OT 7/6 Record of events in the OUOTC, compiled at the suggestion of the Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel W Pakenham-Walsh. 1966-8

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OT 7 HISTORY OF THE OUOTC

OT 7/7 Photocopies of the Army Orders detailing the original formation of the OTC; with correspondence from the Ministry of Defence giving information on the Honorary Colonels of the OUOTC. 1991-2

OT 7/8 List of documents containing military references held by the Bodleian Library with the shelfmark Ms Top Oxon. Compiled c1960s

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- OT 8 PHOTOGRAPHS
- OT 8/1 Photograph album showing group pictures of the sections of the OUOTC (Cavalry, Royal Artillery, Infantry, Royal Engineers) with photographs of each section in training. 1934
- The album is inscribed that it was presented to Lieutenant Colonel ESB Williams on the completion of his tenure of command by the Officers and Officer Cadets of the OUOTC, 15 October 1934. The album was re-presented to the OUOTC by his son Colonel DAB Williams.
- OT 8/2 Group photographs of 'Oxford University Senior Training Corps, SAE course, RAC Unit'. 3rd course, March 1945; 4th course, September 1945. 1945
- OT 8/3 Group photograph of Oxford University Senior Training Corps. Aug 1945
- The group is posed in different uniforms and with field guns, unlike OT 8/2.
- OT 8/4 Group photographs of unidentified members of the OUOTC. c1940-c1980
- OT 8/5 Photographs of the Queen's visit to Hyde Park showing her inspecting a guard of honour from the OUOTC as part of the Golden Jubilee Review of the Territorial Army. 1958
- OT 8/6 Photographs of Yeomanry House, showing exterior of building and the drill hall. c1980s
- OT 8/7 Photograph of two unidentified men outside Yeomanry House. c1980s
- OT 8/8 Photograph of two female OUOTC members on exercise. 1994

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OT 8 PHOTOGRAPHS

OT 8/9 Typescript list of pictures and photographs kept at Yeomanry House, Manor Road, a former headquarters of Oxford University Senior Training Corps. 1945

OT 8/10 Photograph of men resting on the deck of a ship (found within OT 1/2/1-3, Registration forms of No. 4 Officer Cadet Battalion). undated

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- OT 9 MISCELLANEOUS
- OT 9/1 Scrap book containing miscellaneous records and memorabilia of the OUOTC, including menu cards, 1901, 1936-8; photocopies of letters from the War Office discussing the formation of the Oxford University Rifle Volunteer Corps, 1859-72; programme for military tournament, 1958; centenary celebration material, 1959; news cuttings, 1955-70; publicity material for recruitment and OUOTC news letters, 1965-8. 1901-70
- OT 9/2 Menu cards, some signed by those present, for presentation of South African War Medals, 1901 and 1903; annual dinners for OU Volunteers, 1901-2 and the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the Corps, 1909. 1901-3, 1909
- OT 9/3 Term cards. 1954-5, 1964-9, 1971
- OT 9/4/1-2 OUOTC News Letters. 1967-9
1. 1967-8
 2. 1968-9
- Earlier newsletters can be found pasted into the scrap book OT 9/1.
- OT 9/5 OUOTC annual dinner programme, including a list of names of the guests and hosts, a short history of the OUOTC and biographies of the principal guests. 1992
- OT 9/6 Certificate appointing the OUOTC as an honorary member of the Dutchmen Battalion of the Hofstra University Reserve Officers' Training Corps. 1993
- OT 9/7 Postcard of an engraving showing the 'Military College, Oxford. Mounted Lance drill in the quadrangle'. c1890
- OT 9/8 Photocopy of receipt for the purchase of a Georgian chest by the OUOTC. 1991

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OT 9 MISCELLANEOUS

OT 9/9 Catalogue of the records of the OUOTC compiled by Lieutenant Ian Barbour. 1992

Barbour produced a bound catalogue of the records arranged chronologically. The material was subsequently relabelled as part of the cataloguing programme of the 'Oxfordshire Regiments' project. These numbers have been superseded by the current list but a concordance of references has been compiled.

OT 9/10 *Instructions for the Guidance of Medical Boards under the Military Training Act*, issued by the Ministry of Labour. 1939

OT 9/11 Order of thanksgiving service for General Sir John Winthrop Hackett (honorary colonel of the OUOTC), with newspaper cutting listing those who attended the service. 1997