

NOTE

This is a preliminary narrative and should not be regarded as authoritative. It has not been checked for accuracy in all aspects, and its interpretations are not necessarily those of the Historical Section as a whole.

Ce texte est préliminaire et n'a aucun caractère officiel. On n'a pas vérifié son exactitude et les interprétations qu'il contient ne sont pas nécessairement celles du Service historique.

Directorate of History
National Defence Headquarters
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0K2

July 1986

~~RESTRICTED~~
~~CANCELLED~~

REPORT NO. 156

HISTORICAL SECTION

CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS

DECLASSIFIED

Authority: DHD 33

by ape for BH/NDHO

Date: NOV 26 1986

31 JUL 1946

Selection and Training of Officers
for the Canadian Army Overseas 1940-45

1. This report deals with the policy of selecting officers from the ranks of the Canadian Army Overseas and to a considerably lesser extent with the actual organization and training of the O.C.T.U. Wing at the Canadian Training School. As will be shown, by far the greater number of reinforcement officers were obtained from the Officers' Training Centres in Canada, but since very little information regarding this larger phase of the programme is available at this Headquarters, the full story will have to be done in Canada. This report is based chiefly on information obtained from C.M.H.Q. files although some reference has been made to War Diaries in the possession of the OIC War Diaries, C.M.H.Q. An earlier report (No. 21) described the closing exercises of the second course at the Canadian O.C.T.U. on 5 Apr 41, and also discussed the then existing O.C.T.U. system and method of selecting candidates. Somewhat more information on the policy leading up to and the actual creation of a Canadian O.C.T.U. overseas is given in the "Preliminary Narrative, The History of the Canadian Military Forces Overseas" (Chap VI, paras 93-99). The question of age limits for officers has been dealt with in the same Narrative (Chap XIII, paras 119-142). Report No. 120 included a section on the training of C.W.A.C. officers overseas, while Report No. 145 described The "Canloan" Scheme.

2. Upon mobilization in 1939 - 1940, militia units had utilized the officers already on their own strength and filled any vacancies with subalterns personally selected by the Commanding Officer. The early quotas of reinforcement officers were obtained in much the same way. Militia units which were still not mobilized by the summer of 1940 continued to send certain of their officers to C.A.S.F. reinforcement drafts earmarked for units from the same territorial area. A certain number of subalterns were also supplied directly from the ranks of the several university C.O.T.Cs. following a decision made by the Department of National Defence that up to 50 per cent of reinforcements might be obtained from this source (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1: Memorandum re Officer Reinforcements by Major Tow, 13 May 41). It soon became increasingly apparent, however, that other means would have to be introduced to meet Canada's expanding military needs; these necessitated a large number of officers both as reinforcements for units already overseas and for those which were scheduled to proceed to the United Kingdom during 1941. Moreover, as time went on, a considerable number of older officers, by reason of age and lowered category, would have to leave field units to make way for younger men.

3. During the visit of the Hon. Norman Rogers to England in the spring of 1940, it had been agreed that approximately 25 per cent of officer reinforcements required for the Canadian military forces overseas should be taken from among suitable personnel serving within the ranks of its formations. It was further decided, however, that, until such time as Canadian troops had been in action, such commissions would be granted only in exceptional cases. (C.M.H.Q. file 2/Trg School/1: Turner to Senior Officer, 23 Jun 40). The creation of an active defence theatre in the United Kingdom itself and the decision to replace W.Os. III by subalterns again brought the

NOV 26 1986

question to the fore. On 13 Jul approval, in principle, was received from Ottawa for the formation of an overseas Canadian Training School, within which would be embodied an O.C.T.U. Wing. The general policy set forth at this time was that all candidates for commissions should take a four weeks' basic "common to all arms" course at the Canadian O.C.T.U. Infantry and M.G. cadets would continue their training at the O.C.T.U. Wing, C.T.S. for a further eight weeks, while candidates for other arms of the service would proceed to a British O.C.T.U. to complete "special to arm" training. The "common to all arms" portion of the course was to include drill, bayonet fighting, training in rifle, pistol, anti-tank rifle and Bren gun, instruction in map reading and in driving and maintenance. There were also lectures in military law and discipline, observation schemes and practice in simple fieldcraft and patrols. (Preliminary Narrative, Chap VI, paras 93-97).

SETTING UP OF THE O.C.T.U. WING

4. On 5 Aug the first course opened at St. Lucia Barracks, Bordon, with Lt.-Col. J.H. Christie in command of the O.C.T.U. Wing; subsequently he returned to his regiment, The Toronto Scottish Regiment (M.G.), and Major E.A. Blais, R 22e R, was appointed in his stead with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. On 4 Sep General McNaughton visited the Canadian O.C.T.U. and found the accommodation to be, generally speaking, "very poor." (C.M.H.Q. file 2/Trg School/1: Turner, memorandum 5 Sep 40). The cadets were "crowded" and the sleeping quarters "particularly dangerous as they are in buildings which afford no protection whatever from bomb splinters." The barracks was located in close proximity to the main cross-roads at Bordon, which had been a target for German bombers on several occasions. No lecture hall existed as such and it was necessary to use the dining hall for this purpose. General McNaughton also found the O.C.T.U. in need of additional instructors; it was therefore agreed "that it is desirable that steps be taken to ensure a supply of well-trained all-round instructors in the Canadian divs and Corps tps so that there may be an adequate source of supply of these instructors for the Canadian Training School including the O.C.T.U." (Ibid: see also Preliminary Narrative, Chap VI, para 98). It was further reported to him that practically no training equipment had been supplied and that it has been necessary to borrow all varieties of weapons and picks and shovels to carry on the training.

5. The first regular course terminated on 23 Nov, with 38 cadets on graduation parade. This constituted the first body of men to be commissioned from the ranks after attending a Canadian course of training.^x (Report No. 21, Hist Offr, C.M.H.Q., 21 Apr 41). The remainder of the class had gone forward to British O.C.T.U.s. after the fifth week (7 Sep) to take courses special to their particular arm of the service.

6. Provision had already been made in Canada for the commissioning of suitable selected other ranks but, with no O.C.T.U. established, the procedure employed was that of granting to a candidate the provisional rank of second lieutenant

x Prior to the institution of a Canadian O.C.T.U. three or four men with special qualifications had been commissioned direct while eight university graduates and former officers had been sent to a British O.C.T.U. and subsequently commissioned.

in a N.P.A.M. unit and sending him forward to join a class of reinforcement officers who were attending a "special to the arm qualifying course" at a training centre. In the event of failing to qualify in the rank of lieutenant, such provisional officers were obliged to relinquish their commissions (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1: Tel A 1135, Canmilitary to Defensor, 1 Sep 40).

7. In the United Kingdom, however, where Canadian candidates in many cases would have to complete their courses at British O.C.T.U.s., it was necessary that they should hold the similar status of cadet, irrespective of previous warrant or non-commissioned officer rank. On 15 Oct authority was obtained from Ottawa to give Canadian candidates such cadet status, with pay of \$4.00 per day, and commissions from the date of their qualification. (Ibid: Tel AG 1540, Defensor to Canmilitary, 15 Oct 40). The administrative procedure was as follows: candidates were struck off strength of their units, sent to the appropriate Holding Unit and then attached to the Canadian and/or British O.C.T.U.s. for rations and quarters. Cadets who continued to a British O.C.T.U. for a "special to the arm" course were to be returned to the O.C.T.U. Wing, C.T.S., in that rank and commissioned from there. Following this, all newly commissioned officers would be returned to their appropriate Holding Unit to join the reinforcement officer stream. (Ibid: Tow to HQ CRU, 19 Jan 41). This procedure was in effect when cadets assembled on 14 Dec for the second O.C.T.U. course.

8. The procedure for selection of candidates for the second and succeeding O.C.T.U. courses was set forth in an appendix to Overseas Routine Order No. 397, "Officer Training - Men Serving in the Ranks", a pamphlet which was based fundamentally on the British regulations but with certain modifications necessitated by purely Canadian problems. (Also see Report 21, Hist Offr, C.M.H.Q., 24 Apr 41). The selection and putting forward of candidates for commissions was made the responsibility of unit commanding officers who were instructed to retain a nominal roll of such personnel recommended for commissioning. Prospective candidates were interviewed by their brigade or equivalent commanders, and usually by the divisional commander as well, before going forward for final selection by "a Committee of Officers, to be set up by the Senior Combatant Officer of the Canadian Militia in the United Kingdom." (Report No. 21, Hist Offr, C.M.H.Q., 24 Apr 41).

9. Colonel Beament considered that the general calibre of the candidates being interviewed in April 1941 was definitely lower than that of those who appeared before the previous Board in December 1940; out of

179 interviewed at the latter date, 46 were rejected as unsuitable. This appeared to be partly due to the fact that certain commanding officers were recommending men who were clearly not of officer material and also to the fact that the first intakes had skimmed the cream from the officer potential in the corps of two divisions then overseas. (Report No. 21; op.cit. and C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1; Memorandum re Officer Reinforcements by Major Tow, 13 May 41). Early in June this third long O.C.T.U. course opened at Havannah Barracks, where the two other Wings of C.T.S. had been set up during the preceding month.

10. Due to the extreme shortage of officers in specialist arms of the service, such as R.C. Signals, R.C.O.C., R.C.A.P.C., C.F.C. and Overseas Records, a special five weeks' basic O.C.T.U. course was commenced on 3 Feb 41.* Following such training period these cadets were commissioned since they were required for duty immediately in existing vacancies. Similar courses got under way on 17 Mar and 28 Apr; this third course had accommodation for 100 candidates. During 1941 a policy of alternating a short basic with the long four-month O.C.T.U. course was continued. The R.C.O.C., in particular, was in crying need of officers, as a result of the reorganization and expansion of that corps which was carried through in 1941. Therefore, on 16 Jul, the A.Q.M.G.(O.S.) at C.M.H.Q. expressed the view that no limit should be placed on the number of R.C.O.C. officers trained overseas until all establishments had been filled.

In view of the fact that recent requests for experienced officers from Canada have usually been refused on the grounds that they were performing key tasks and could not be spared, it is considered that the officer reinforcement situation is probably bad and that the officers we would receive would be quite inexperienced. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1: Bennett to D.Q.M.C., 16 Jul 41.).

The matter was taken up with Mr. Victor Sifton (M.G.O.) who was then in England and approval was obtained to implement it. The Canadian Forestry Corps also expressed the wish that "at least 50% of the annual wastage should be replaced by personnel in this country whose ability we have had an opportunity to assess on actual Forestry Corps operations." (Ibid: Jones to A.G.2., C.M.H.Q., 11 Jul 41.). Thus there was justification for maintaining a five weeks' basic O.C.T.U. course for personnel who would either be commissioned at its conclusion into waiting vacancies in the several services or who would be proceeding to British O.C.T.U.s. to take advanced reconnaissance, artillery, signals, engineering, ordnance and army service corps courses. The Canadian Long O.C.T.U. course was reserved for infantry and M.G. cadets.

CO-ORDINATING OFFICER REQUIREMENTS

11. During the visit of the Hon. J.L. Ralston to the United Kingdom in the autumn of 1940, future policy on officer training had been announced. All candidates for commissions in the Canadian Army must first serve in the ranks, either with an active army unit or with a reserve unit, prior to being sent forward to train as a reinforcement officer for the active army. The training of such candidates taken from the ranks of units

* During 1940 special qualifying courses had been held at 1 C.E.H.U. and 1 C.G.H.U. to produce a small number of badly needed Engineer and R.C.A.S.C. officers.

still in Canada was to be given at two Officers' Training Centres which were to be established at Brockville, Ontario, and Gordon Head, Vancouver Island. Following three months' training at one of these centres, successful cadets would be commissioned as second lieutenants and sent to an Advanced Training Centre for a further two to three months' training in their particular arm of the service. Following successful completion of this further training, they would be promoted to the rank of lieutenant and become eligible to be put in the overseas reinforcement stream. The first intake at these Officers' Training Centres was in April 1941 and, in the first months especially, a considerable proportion of the candidates proved to be unqualified second lieutenants from active units and officers from N.P.A.M. and C.O.T.C. units who were also going forward as reinforcement officers.

12. In order to co-ordinate officer training and not exceed the total officer reinforcement requirements, on 2 May, 41, a telegram was received from Ottawa requesting information as to what proportion of the total candidates required could be found and trained overseas. (Ibid: Tel AG 792, Defensor to Canmilitary, 2 May 41.). On 23 May a C.M.H.Q. telegram replied that General McNaughton considered that 25 per cent of total officer requirements should be provided from O.C.T.U. graduates who had served with field units overseas. This number of candidates could be found from within field units, but not a higher percentage. It was agreed that officer cadets undergoing training in the United Kingdom should be shown in the C.M.H.Q. bi-weekly strength return of officers; this would aid N.D.H.Q. to assess the numbers of candidates who should be trained in Canada for commissions. (Ibid: Tel A 1025, Canmilitary to Defensor, 23 May 41.). A programme for the monthly intake of officer candidates, both in Canada and in the United Kingdom, was worked out at N.D.H.Q., and a telegram of 16 Jun informed C.M.H.Q. that the monthly figures for overseas officer requirements had been set at:

Artillery	12
Engineers	3
Signals	1
CAC	3
Infantry (R)	1 per bn
Infantry (MG)	1 per bn
RCASC	4
RCOC	1
CFC	1

for a corps of three infantry divisions and an army tank brigade. (Ibid: Tel AG 1070, Defensor to Canmilitary, 16 Jun 41.).

13. This met with a mingled reception by the heads of the several corps and services overseas. The total intake at the Canadian O.C.T.U. was approximately 200 cadets in a half yearly period, whereas if the programme set by Ottawa was to be met it would be necessary to put through 684 officers a year. (Ibid: Tow to A.A.G.(Org), C.M.H.Q., 20 Jun 41.). This would necessitate a considerable enlargement of the staff and training facilities at No. 1 (OCTU) Wing of C.T.S. It was considered that sufficient cadets could be found to fill the quotas of artillery, signals, army service corps and infantry officers without lowering the standard but the Chief Engineer did not consider that 36 suitable candidates for his corps could be found during the year; in the past year only 26 cadets suitable for commissioning into the R.C.E. had been produced. (Ibid: Rudolph to Officer, 15 Aug 41.). On the other hand, it was

considered by the A.Q.M.G.(O.S.) at C.M.H.Q. that an insufficient number of R.C.O.C. officers would be trained (12 a year) to meet overseas needs. (See para 10). He pointed out that "to hold back potential officer personnel because vacancies are not available on an arbitrary quota, which Canada lays down, that we shall be permitted to train will have a most regrettable effect upon the morale of the R.C.O.C. Other Ranks, as, in fact, it will mean that a man will have a better chance of obtaining a commission by remaining in Canada than by serving overseas." (Ibid: Bennett to DQMG, 16 Jul 41.). If sufficient officers should be sent forward from Canada at a later date a number of experienced officers might later be sent back to Canada in exchange, in order to avoid a surplus overseas.

SEARCH FOR POTENTIAL OFFICERS

14. From the results of the O.C.T.U. entrance examinations held on 28 Aug, it seemed evident at C.M.H.Q., however, that the numbers required per half year would not be forthcoming for artillery, engineers, army service corps, infantry and armoured corps. (Ibid: McQueen to DAG, CMHQ, 8 Oct 41.). Unless a different system of producing officer candidates was adopted, there might be an estimated deficiency of as many as 434 candidates for the following year. Suitable candidates in sufficient numbers were believed to exist and the onus of finding them, therefore, was placed on commanding officers, some of whom had supplied either a very small quota or none at all. (Ibid). On 22 Oct 41, Lt.-Col. M.F. Gregg, V.C., commanding No. 1 (OCTU) Wing at C.T.S., wrote that candidates reporting up to that time had been normally of the rank of sergeant and above, "with a very high percentage of warrant officers being represented." (Ibid: Gregg to Comdt, CTS, 22 Oct 41.). He felt that commanding officers were selecting older men with more experience and knowledge and that "long and faithful service of certain warrant officers" was being rewarded with an opportunity to obtain a commission. Lt.-Col. Gregg believed that there must be a large number of keen, young soldiers in the more junior ranks of the Canadian Army Overseas, with good education and plenty of natural ability.

15. On 13 Aug, a new Overseas Routine Order (No. 891) on "Officer Training - Men Serving in the Ranks", had been promulgated at C.M.H.Q., pointing out the necessity of increasing the number of officers commissioned from the ranks of field units. The appendix to the Routine Order emphasized that:

The selection of candidates for Officer training is the responsibility of every Commanding Officer. While there is no definite limit to the number of candidates from any one Unit who may be recommended for Officer Training, vacancies are limited, and care must be taken that only the best men are put forward. Long and faithful service of senior Warrant Officers and N.C.Os. is not to be regarded as a criterion for recommendation.

Personnel recommended were to have had six months service in a field formation and units with a high officer potential were to be drained gradually so as to avoid disorganization. Commanding Officers were not, however, to recommend candidates whom they were not willing to take back as commissioned officers, except those who would be transferred to another arm because of technical qualifications. The minimum age for commissioning a candidate after completion of his training was 20 years and, where military qualifications were equal, priority was to be given to those under 30 years of age, and then those over 30 years and up to 40 years of age.

16. On 4 Nov 41, Brigadier Simonds issued a Canadian Corps Circular Letter pointing out that the monthly return of potential officers, due on 5 Oct, had not been received from any units of the three Canadian infantry divisions. On 14 Nov 41, this was followed up by the publication of a further routine order (No. 1242) on the same subject. This order stated in part that, from the report of the O.C.T.U. Selection Board, it was evident:

- (a) Candidates had been recommended for attendance at the O.C.T.U. who were obviously not officer material.
- (b) Many candidates, otherwise suitable for officer training, had not apparently been given a proper opportunity to prepare themselves for attendance at an O.C.T.U. in that they had insufficient or imperfect knowledge of field-craft, organization, administration, military law, map reading and of the weapons of their respective arm.
- (c) There exists a clear disinclination on the part of some Commanding Officers to submit the names of any, or all, of their suitable personnel for officer training. Figures relating to the number of candidates submitted by each Commanding Officer bear out this statement.

TRANSFER OF LONG O.C.T.U. COURSE TO CANADA

17. The arrival of Lt.-Gen. Crerar (C.G.S. at N.D.H.Q.) in the latter part of December, to take over command of the 2nd Canadian Division, resulted in a change of policy regarding O.C.T.U. training in the United Kingdom. As a result of the experience gained watching the Officer Training Centres get under way in Canada, he suggested to General McNaughton that it would be advisable to transfer the Canadian O.C.T.U. Wing to Canada, commencing with the next course. The facilities of the Canadian Training School could be better employed for other army courses. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1: Rodger to Senior Officer, 29 Dec 41.).

18. At a subsequent meeting on 5 Jan 42, just prior to General McNaughton's trip to Canada, the question was again discussed. General Montague, who was also present, pointed out the disadvantages of such a course. Better training facilities were available in the United Kingdom and if the O.C.T.U. course was transferred to Canada the instructional staff would lose its present valuable contacts with British O.C.T.U.s. and with the personnel who had recently experienced active service conditions. Furthermore, there would be a considerable loss of time and waste of shipping space in sending cadets and instructors to and from Canada. (Ibid: Extract from memorandum covering meeting held at Lt.-Gen. McNaughton's house, 5 Jan 42.). General Crerar then pointed out that his proposal was based on the principle that "basic training should be carried out in Canada and that Cdn training establishments should be provided in the United Kingdom only for specialist types of training." The Officer Training Centres in Canada had been designed to handle a yearly output of 6,000 officers; to operate an O.C.T.U. in the United Kingdom with a capacity of only 300 would thus be uneconomical. There was also the probability that the officer potential within

the Canadian Army Overseas would be seriously reduced within the next few months by the methods of selection which were being applied. Furthermore, the presence of a few overseas candidates in Canada would prove beneficial to the majority of cadets who had not experienced active service conditions. The privilege of a few months at home would be an incentive for candidates to bring themselves forward for O.C.T.U. training. General McNaughton was unwilling to make a definite decision without referring the question to N.D.H.Q.: further discussion could be held there after his return to Ottawa.

19. This question was discussed at Ottawa by General McNaughton with the new C.G.S., Lt.-Gen. K. Stuart, and on 13 Feb, C.M.H.Q. was informed that no further O.C.T.U. courses would be held in the United Kingdom; courses now in progress would, however, be completed. Monthly vacancies were allotted for 100 overseas candidates and the first monthly quota was to be despatched to Canada in time for the course starting 15 May. (Ibid: Tel GST 192, Defensor to Canmilitary, 13 Feb 42.). On completion of training in Canada, overseas candidates would become ordinary reinforcement officers together with those who had not been overseas.

20. Unless special provision was made, it was assumed at C.M.H.Q. that the short basic five weeks O.C.T.U. course would be closed as well. In a letter, dated 16 Feb, General Montague pointed out to General Crerar who was then acting Corps Commander, that this course had been used to fill the needs of "Medical, Dental, Pay, C.M.S.C., Postal, Forestry and General List Officers employed on special duties" ... (Ibid: Montague to Crerar, 16 Feb 42.). It was probable that two such courses of 50 cadets would be all that would be required in any one year and that it would be possible to run such courses at Shillinglee Park in lieu of two of the courses now being run for company commanders and regimental officers. General Crerar agreed that "the expenditure in money and in time which would be involved in despatching the officer candidates ... to a five week basic qualifying course in Canada would appear to be unjustifiable" and considered that the subject should be referred to Ottawa. (Ibid: Crerar to Senior Officer, 26 Feb 42.). The telegram which General Montague sent to the C.G.S. on 2 Mar contained, therefore, as already outlined, all the arguments given for continuing the five weeks basic O.C.T.U. course and also added that "this proposal has definite advantage particularly in catering for needs of Forestry Corps who state attendance at long O.C.T.U. most undesirable." (Ibid: Tel GS 773, Canmilitary to Defensor, For Stuart from Montague, 2 Mar 42.). This modification in policy was discussed at Ottawa with General McNaughton who was still there and on 6 Mar an answer was sent to C.M.H.Q. The five weeks basic O.C.T.U. course was to be continued but "only to be held if deemed necessary by the Senior Combatant Officer in the U.K." (Ibid: Tel GST 292, Defensor to Canmilitary, Montague from Stuart, 6 Mar 42.).

21. The whole question of despatching O.C.T.U. candidates to Canada for training was reviewed by the Army Commander during the latter part of July as a result of objections which had been raised by certain senior commanders and staff officers. Training in Canada meant a two months' additional transportation delay and there was now a shortage of some 700 officers in the United Kingdom. (Ibid: Circular by Penhale on Offr Cadet Trg, 24 Jul 42, and Memo by Brig Young, 3 Aug 42.). Furthermore, letters of complaint had been received from overseas candidates sent back to Canada for officer training that, following their graduation, they were being absorbed into units remaining or forming in Canada and were not being given a chance to return

overseas. As a result, officers commanding field units were unwilling to release valuable personnel for officer training in Canada. (Ibid: Tel GS 2872, Canmilitary to Defensor, McNaughton to Acting A.G., 15 Aug 42.). Certain Corps which were still short of officers were desirous of having all candidates trained in the United Kingdom to avoid any needless delay: this applied particularly in the case of machinist and workshop officers for the R.C.A.S.C. and R.C.O.C. officers, both in the "O" and "E" branches. (Ibid: Penhale to S.O., CMHQ, 13 Mar 42) and Tel GST 336, Defensor to Canmilitary, 21 Mar 42.).

22. On 3 Aug, General McNaughton discussed the question with General Stuart (C.G.S.) who was visiting the United Kingdom with the Minister of National Defence. The Army Commander urged that No. 1 (O.C.T.U.) Wing be reopened at C.T.S. to provide a basic or common to arms course for artillery, engineers, signals and ordnance cadets who would then proceed to an appropriate British O.C.T.U. to complete their training. Infantry and R.C.A.S.C. candidates would still be returned to Canada. In fact, the Army Commander recognized that:

.... the greatest value accrues from the despatch of candidates from the Cdn Army Overseas for trg at OTCs in Canada, due to the inspiration and influence which thus is made to permeate among the several thousand other candidates under trg in Canada, who have not been overseas, and who will constitute the bulk of reinforcement offr for the Cdn Army Overseas. Furthermore, the benefit to be derived from the opportunity thus afforded to selected overseas personnel, as a result of having been selected for this trg, to return to Canada where they can see their families is not to be denied. (Ibid: Penhale to Senior Officer, 5 Aug 42.).

The present policy of commissioning specialist officers required for certain of the services after a basic O.C.T.U. course would still be continued.

23. General McNaughton obtained approval for such a reversal of policy from the C.G.S. and the Minister of National Defence and plans were made to reopen No. 1 (O.C.T.U.) Wing on 27 Sep, with a class of 157 cadets. (C.M.H.Q. file 1/Conf/10/3: Minutes of Meeting with C.G.S., D.N.D. at C.M.H.Q., 3 Aug 42.). There was to be a six weeks' basic course after which the majority of the cadets would proceed to appropriate British O.C.T.U.s. for a further 22 weeks of training. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1: Crowe to CTS, 13 Sep 42.). In future, the training of C.A.C., R.C.A., R.C.E., R.C. Sigs, R.C.O.C. and Motor Bn cadets was to be "carried out to the limit of available trg facilities in the U.K." All candidates for commissions in infantry and R.C.A.S.C., as well as a proportion from other arms and services to be decided from time to time, were, however, still to be despatched to Canada. (Ibid: GS 3175, Canmilitary to Defensor, 7 Sep 42.).

OFFICER PROGRAMME CONTINUES TO EXPAND

24. The entrance of Japan into the war against the British Commonwealth and Empire had increased Canada's home defence commitments, necessitating a continued expansion of the officer training programme during 1942. At the same time renewed efforts were being pursued in the United Kingdom to uncover

the officer potential which was still believed to be buried in units of the Canadian Army Overseas. The newly created Personnel Selection Section at C.M.H.Q. estimated that between 4,000 and 5,000 other ranks in the United Kingdom might prove to be potential officer material. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1/2: Stein to Senior Officer, 6 Oct 42.). In order to complete the officer requirements for the future needs of the Canadian Army, making allowance for enforced retirements, it was estimated that, beginning with 1943, the Canadian Army Overseas would have to produce 1,000 officers a year. Standards were not relaxed but in July the normal period of six months' experience with a field unit was waived in an effort to produce candidates from both the P.E. and reinforcement strength of the several reinforcement units. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1: D.A.G., C.M.H.Q. to H.Q. C.R.U., 6 Jul 42.). Furthermore, during the early summer Pre-O.C.T.U. educational classes were started within C.R.U. by its educational adviser, Mr. R. Morris Wilson, for the benefit of candidates who had been cut off from formal schooling for several years.

25. In a circular letter, issued on 10 Aug, General McNaughton stressed the need for increasing the output of officer training organizations and stated his belief that "the maximum officer potential within the Canadian Army has not been disclosed." (Ibid: Circular by McNaughton to all OCs, 10 Aug 42.). Experience with a field unit or service as an N.C.O. while desirable, was not to be considered a prerequisite to recommendation for admission to O.C.T.U. Once again, the onus was put upon the officers commanding units to reveal their remaining officer material.

PRE-O.C.T.U. TRAINING

26. Although it had been estimated that there might still remain an officer potential of 4,000-5,000, an increasing number of the candidates sent forward were found to be men whose formal education had ended some years previously and who were very rusty in the subjects, such as mathematics and elementary science, which they would be required to use as officers. The Pre-O.C.T.U. educational training which had been carried out during the summer of 1942 under C.R.U. auspices, by the educational adviser, Mr. R. Morris Wilson, had resulted in the percentage of candidates accepted being raised; the percentage of successful candidates rose from 74.18 in January 1942 to 81.69 in September. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1/2: Stein to Senior Officer, 6 Oct 42 and McClain to D.A.G., C.M.H.Q. 7 Oct 42.). Prior to the special intake, made in connection with the reopening of No. 1 (O.C.T.U.) Wing in September, all candidates had been relieved of military duties for the two-week period immediately preceding the examinations in order to study and attend an "ad hoc" series of lectures. The favourable result led the Commander, C.R.U., to suggest that a regular school should be set up within C.R.U. and that candidates should attend for a six-week period, prior to being examined by the O.C.T.U. Selection Board. This suggestion was not acted upon, but during the autumn, "ad hoc" courses were held in local schools at Brighton, Guildford and Colchester, and also within certain units in an effort to bring candidates up to the O.C.T.U. standard (C.M.H.Q. file 23/Reports/1/3: Report No. 28, Auxiliary Services Overseas, 31st January, 1942.). Of the 581 men writing the O.C.T.U. examination in January, 1942, 480 had received instruction and assistance through correspondence courses provided by Educational services.

27. The British Army was experiencing an even more acute shortage of suitable officer material and early in 1942 had reorganized its methods of selection, in an effort to eliminate

potential failures before they should reach O.C.T.U. The system devised for the British Army was based on the procedure which had been employed in the German Army since 1928, with a certain number of modifications and variations to suit British temperament. The result was that as many as 40-50 per cent were failed at the Selection Centre, but the subsequent failures at O.C.T.U.s. were reduced to approximately five per cent. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1: Memo by Major McClain on OCTU Selection - British System, 23 Apr 42.). The British practice was to send candidates in groups of 30-40 to a hostel for two days; there they were kept under continual observation while, at the same time, tests were given on education, learning ability and military knowledge. Brigadier A.W. Beament and Brigadier C.B. Chisholm, Director of Personnel Selection at N.D.H.Q., who visited No. 1 War Office Selection Board (Edinburgh) on 30 Jun 42, did not consider, however, that the existing Canadian O.C.T.U. Selection system ran into a big enough wastage to warrant the setting up of a similar Selection Centre. (Ibid: Memo by Beament on Selection of Candidates for OCTU, 4 Jul 42.). When asked for an opinion, General McNaughton also opposed a change being made since he did not consider that three days was long enough in which to assess thoroughly the character, temperament, initiative, determination, willingness to accept responsibility, spirit of co-operation and general deportment of would-be officers. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1/2: Turner to Senior Officer, 24 Nov 42.).

28. Although it was generally agreed that there was only a very small proportion of candidates passed by the O.C.T.U. Selection Board failing to make the grade subsequently at O.C.T.U., it was felt that possibly a number of candidates were being rejected who might be of suitable officer calibre, but who had not made a good impression on the limited tests given. Since an increasing number of suitable candidates would have to be produced, a committee was set up at C.M.H.Q. in October to study all aspects of the matter. (Ibid: Booth to HQ First Cdn Army 'A', 20 Oct 42.).

29. On 4 Nov this Committee, under the chairmanship of Lt.-Col. Beverly Matthews (AAG(Pers)), submitted a detailed report to the D.A.G., C.M.H.Q. (Ibid: "Report of Committee on OCTU selection and Pre/OCTU Education." See also Montague to HQ First Cdn Army 'A', 16 Nov 42.). Prior to the beginning of 1942, some 544 Canadian cadets had been selected to attend O.C.T.U. in the United Kingdom, while during the current year about 1,500 candidates would be found acceptable. In 1943 it was hoped to raise the number selected by 50 per cent, or to a total of 2,200 cadets. Therefore the question arose as to whether present methods were adequate. Under the existing system the entrance exams designed to test the educational qualifications and mental alertness of candidates were not especially difficult; however, intelligence tests were not given under the best surroundings and the question of fitness of character and temperament had to be largely based on the recommendation of the candidate's commanding officer. The Committee therefore recommended three major changes: the Selection Board to sit continuously and its permanent members to form the nucleus staff of a permanent Selection Centre; candidates to appear before the Selection Board prior to proceeding to a Pre-O.C.T.U. school where those considered suitable for officer training could be brought up to the required educational standard; Pre-O.C.T.U. education to be set up on a permanent basis. (Ibid.). The Report endorsed the view that, insofar as eliminating wastage through failures at O.C.T.U. - the British problem, the percentage of failures was so small under the existing system that no change was necessary; however, the Committee was concerned ...

.... with wastage which may result from potentially good officers being rejected and other candidates accepted who may later prove unsatisfactory in active operations due to temperamental factors which at present are not sufficiently taken into consideration. Furthermore wastage of a different type undoubtedly occurs through failure to direct the transfer of candidates into those Arms or Services where their temperament and ability would enable them to be employed to the best advantage. (Ibid.).

30. The establishment of a permanent Selection Centre would ensure that there would be little or no wastage of suitable candidates and, in border line cases, a candidate would be given benefit of the doubt and allowed to proceed to Pre-O.C.T.U. School; after which his case would be reviewed in the light of further information. In order to secure 2,200 cadets, facilities would have to be provided to interview at least 3,500, since in the four intakes held during 1942, only 1,554 were accepted out of the 2,752 writing the O.C.T.U. examinations, making a rejection of nearly 45 per cent. Based on the above estimation it would be necessary to interview candidates at the rate of 70-80 per week, in two groups of 35-40 each. It was also stressed that the first selection should take place prior to candidates proceeding on a pre-O.C.T.U. course, since subsequent rejection would be bad for the man's morale and leave him with a "browed off" feeling. Furthermore, it would not be economical to make a pre-O.C.T.U. school large enough to cater to the needs of all those put forward by units.

31. As already noted, General McNaughton was among those who did not favour the setting up of a permanent O.C.T.U. Selection Centre, but he was anxious to see a Pre-O.C.T.U. School set up in order to standardize the educational training given to potential candidates. The instructional staff would have time to assess the merits of candidates for commissioned rank; O.C.T.U. examinations would be given while candidates were still at the school and a complete report on every individual could be given to the O.C.T.U. Selection Board before a final decision was made. (Ibid: Turner to Senior Officer, 24 Nov 42.). The war establishment for such a Pre-O.C.T.U. School, giving a three weeks' course for 300 candidates, was drawn up at C.M.H.Q. and, on 4 Jan 43, received the Army Commander's approval.

32. Accommodation was found in Haig Lines, Crookham for 1 Cdn Pre-O.C.T.U. School, which was placed under command of Lt.-Col. K.S. Bjorn. On 24 Jan 43, the first course opened with 101 candidates, eight of whom were failed when the course was concluded on 13 Feb. Candidates wore white armbands to cover up badges of rank and to create a common footing. In the evenings officers of the staff mixed with the candidates in the common room and every effort was made to judge individual characteristics and quirks of the men. Aptitude tests given by Personnel Selection officers replaced the former learning ability tests and a number of outdoor tests, both group and individual, were given by military examiners to test the tactical knowledge of the candidates. The educational instruction was general and elastic enough so that candidates of all levels of previous schooling could brush up. Emphasis centred on developing a command of the English language, mastering simple mathematics and getting a general picture of current affairs. The mathematics paper for artillery, engineer and signals candidates approached senior matriculation level in that it embraced elementary trigonometry and the use of logarithms but left out other portions of the curriculum for junior and senior matriculation. All other candidates wrote a paper based on the

level of grade X mathematics. In addition, all candidates had to write two further examination papers, one on general knowledge and the other in English. Although the primary object of the course was educational, Lt.-Col. Bjorn placed a certain amount of emphasis on discipline, a smart appearance and military bearing. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/PRE-OCTU REPS/1: Bjorn to Senior Officer, 28 Feb 43.). Before a second class arrived, the school was moved to East Frith Barracks, Blackdown, where it was attached for rations and quarters to No. 3 C.A.C.R.U. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/PRE-OCTU/1: McClain to AG.2, CMHQ, 9 Feb 43.).

33. On 5 Mar 43 a circular letter was issued by C.M.H.Q. setting out that all successful pre-O.C.T.U. candidates who were awaiting despatch to C.T.S. or Canada should have reached a standard of training where they would be able to pass all Ts.O.E.T. on basic training subjects, and have reached the standard of driver I.C. (Ibid: CMHQ circular letter on Pre-OCTU Training and Attachment - Cdn Candidates, 5 Mar 43.). Where such a standard of training was not evident, it was to be carried out at a reinforcement unit following the candidate's attendance at Pre-O.C.T.U. School; if any further time remained before a vacancy at O.C.T.U. became available, attachment to a field unit was to be arranged by Headquarters C.R.U. This proved necessary since there were an increasing number of candidates going forward to corps or services with which they had not served previously. There were also cases of men who had been employed as clerks or in sedentary jobs being sent to take an artillery O.C.T.U. course without any knowledge of gun drill. There was some delay at first in getting acceptance to this policy and a number of letters were addressed to C.R.U. partly as a result of complaints received from British O.C.T.U.s. One such instruction from C.M.H.Q., dated 19 Jun, laid it down definitely that candidates from other corps seeking commissions in the C.A.C., R.C.A. or Infantry were first to be brought up to the standard of trained private soldiers in their new arm of the service at a reinforcement unit; if possible, an attachment to a field unit in their new arm of the service was to be arranged before they went forward for O.C.T.U. training. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/8: McClain to HQ CRU, 19 Jun 43.). Due to the desire to avoid as much delay as possible it was left up to the discretion of the Officer Commanding the respective Reinforcement Unit to decide whether candidates needed an attachment with a field unit or could proceed on to O.C.T.U. merely after a couple of basic months' training there. (Ibid: Wills to HR CRU: 19 Jul 43.).

OFFICER PROCUREMENT IN 1943

34. As has been already noted (see para 24), it was hoped, during 1943, to find even more potential officers from the ranks of the Canadian Army Overseas than had been produced in the previous year. In a circular letter of 9 Jan 43, addressed to all commanding officers, General McNaughton had put the case bluntly. Statistics indicated that "many more potential officers remain in the ranks than have yet been put forward for O.C.T.U. Henceforth, there would be a continuous intake of candidates and units would be less likely to suffer dislocation, since fewer key personnel were likely to be removed at any one time. Candidates under 30 years of age were to be recommended for combatant commissions, unless specialists in their existing corps, while those between 30 and 35 years of age normally would be considered for the

services.* In conclusion he pointed out that:

The OCTU Selection Board will be instructed to reject only those candidates who are obviously unsuitable and to permit candidates whose acceptability is in doubt to proceed to the Pre-OCTU School where a further assessment will be made. (CMHQ file 6/Inf School/1: McNaughton to all commanding officers, OCTU Programme 1943, 9 Jan 43.).

35. During the first four months of 1943, therefore, four ad hoc boards sat for a total of eight weeks and interviewed some 1,361 candidates, of whom 1,059 were passed for attendance at 1 Cdn Pre-O.C.T.U. School. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1/2: Montague to GOC-in-C, First Cdn Army, 24 Apr 43.). Different officer personnel were members of each of these boards, for, in practice, it did not prove possible to maintain continuity, because the average commanding officer could only spare a very limited amount of time. Also, as selection dipped deeper into the officer potential, the task facing selection officers became more difficult; there was the further necessity of recommending the transfer of an increasing number of candidates to other arms of the service because of either age or special capabilities and the need for more infantry officers.

36. No. 1 Cdn Pre-O.C.T.U. School had been trying to assess the capabilities of candidates while teaching them but it was now considered by "A" Branch, C.M.H.Q. that the two functions should be separated. Therefore, on 24 Apr 43, General Montague wrote to General McNaughton suggesting the setting up of a permanent selection board, along the same lines as the War Office had established. (Ibid: Montague to GOC-in-C, First Cdn Army, 24 Apr 43.). Canada itself had already followed the British practice regarding the selection of potential officers. On 21 Jan 43, Hon. J.L. Ralston had announced the creation of two Officers Selection and Appraisal Centres, one at Three Rivers and the other at Chilliwack, B.C., where Canadians would spend two weeks being tested and appraised as to their suitability for commissioned rank. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/PRE-OCTU/1: correspondence on file.). Any soldier could apply for posting to one of these centres, even though not recommended by his commanding officer, and if considered suitable by the Selection Board would be sent to either Three Rivers or Chilliwack. In cases where the Board considered that more training was necessary, it could be given by the training wings at these centres. For some time, the same sort of thing, combining pre-O.C.T.U. training, had been going on for French-Canadian candidates at St. Jerome.

37. On 26 Apr General McNaughton replied to General Montague, concerning the latter's proposal, and plans were got under way to set up a permanent O.C.T.U. Selection Centre on the lines of the 19 War Office Selection Boards then functioning. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU SC/1: Montague to GOC-in-C, First Cdn Army, 2 Jun 43.).

* Canadian Army Routine Order No. 2997, dated 20 Mar 43, laid down the maximum ages for first appointments to the Canadian Army in Canada: reinforcement lieutenants had to be under 31½ on first appointment and under 33 for proceeding overseas for CAC, RCA and Inf: in the case of other arms and services the ages were 34½ and 36 respectively.

The centre was to be staffed by four Personnel Selection and five Military Examining Officers who would give the candidates group and individual tests in education, general aptitude and military knowledge during the two and a half days spent there. The President (Colonel) and Deputy President of the Selection Board would be permanent appointees, while the one or two other members would be drawn from visiting unit commanding officers of the same arm of the service as the candidates being examined. It was considered that educational tests would eliminate those candidates whose educational level was "manifestly too low to enable them to reach the standard required for commissioned rank." (Ibid) Lt.-Col. W. McNeill, A.A.G.(M.S.), First Canadian Army, was appointed to command with the rank of A/Colonel while Lt.-Col. K.S. Bjorn, who had been in charge of 1 Cdn Pre-O.C.T.U. School, became deputy president of the selection board at the new centre. The war establishment also provided for a psychiatrist and an educational officer.

38. On 14 Jun General McNaughton again sent a circular letter to all commanding officers, stressing the need that "as large a percentage as possible of officer reinforcements be obtained from personnel who have had overseas experience." (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1/3: McNaughton to all commanding officers, 14 Jun 43.). In the event that unit commanding officers should not come forward with their eligible men, C.M.H.Q. put into operation a practice whereby the Selection Board was instructed to call before it men who were considered by the Personnel Selection Section at C.M.H.Q. to be "officer material". (Ibid: Montague to Sec'y, DND, 19 May 43.).

39. On Sunday, 18 Jul, the first intake of 45 candidates reported at 1 Cdn O.C.T.U. Selection Centre and a second party arrived on the following Wednesday. Successful candidates then proceeded to 1 Cdn Pre-O.C.T.U. School for further educational training. Once a cadet was slated for Pre-O.C.T.U. training he removed his badges of rank and substituted narrow white shoulder bands of the O.C.T.U. type; the wearing of a white cap band was reserved, however, for cadets actually in attendance at O.C.T.U. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/Pre-OCTU/1: Montague to Sec'y, DND, 30 Apr 43.). Thus a new designation of Pre-O.C.T.U. Cadet was instituted. With the separation of functions, 1 Cdn Pre-O.C.T.U. School became almost entirely an educational institution.

40. In his first quarterly report, dated 11 Nov 43, Colonel W. McNeill, commanding 1 Cdn O.C.T.U. Selection Centre, reported that 1,131 candidates had passed through the centre; 506 candidates had been found acceptable and 44 deferred for more training before being reconsidered. During this period 45 commanding officers had sat on the Selection Board as visiting members, a move which had done much to break down any prejudices which might have been entertained against the system. Although the percentage of failures was greater than had been anticipated, enough candidates were found to justify the contention that the system employed was sound and did not need revision. Some of the figures, broken down, showed:

Corps	Total	Accepted	%	Not		Not Yet	%
				Accepted			
CAC	318	107	34	204	64	7	2
RCA	268	127	47	126	47	15	6
Inf	281	139	49	129	46	13	5
RCASC	138	64	46	71	50	3	4
RCCS	29	14	48	15	52	-	-

(C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU SC/1: McNeil to Senior Officer, 11 Nov 43.).

THE SHORTAGE MET

41. On 4 Aug 43 the overseas officer selection programme received a jolt. Lt.-Gen. K. Stuart (C.G.S.) who was in the United Kingdom conferring with General McNaughton, received a telegram from the Adjutant-General in Ottawa to the effect that the shortage in officers was now "entirely overcome". (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1/3: Tel AG 4643, Defensor to Canmilitary, Stuart from Letson, 4 Aug 43.). General Letson's telegram went on to point out that there were now "sufficient potential officers under appraisal or in production and in reinforcement stream to provide estimated surplus of 2,000 by end Apr 1944." This surplus was over and above the estimated replacement for overseas of 3,500 during the next nine months and over and above the existing shortage in the Canadian home war establishment. He therefore recommended that the August intake at the Canadian O.T.Cs. be reduced to 275, inclusive of 71 cadets returning from overseas. General Letson further recommended that the O.T.C. at Gordon Head and the O.S.A.C.^x at Chilliwack should be closed on 15 Aug. The other Officers' Selection and Appraisal Centre should be moved to Brockville where all officer training would be concentrated. The building programme to enlarge the Brockville O.T.C. could be cancelled, thus saving \$150,000 on further construction, while the R.C.A.F. which needed increased training facilities could take over the camps at Three Rivers and Gordon Head.

42. General Stuart was asked to give "serious consideration" to having the Canadian Army Overseas produce the bulk of officer candidates: "In other words future officer material should have had overseas experience." (*Ibid*). Potential officer material would be appraised and tagged while training in Canada but would be sent overseas as other rank reinforcements for further experience. Such a step would be in line with the policy which was beginning to be introduced into the United States Army. The American Armoured Forces Officer Candidate School was confining the composition of its August class to soldiers who had seen service in one of the overseas theatres and it was believed that other Officer Candidate Schools would be restricting entrance to enlisted men who had seen actual service at one of the fronts, graduates of R.O.T.C. institutions or specially qualified technical men from civil life. In the case of the American Army such a policy would ensure that new units being raised and trained in the United States would be provided with junior officers who had experienced active service conditions; there would also be an incentive and reward for enlisted men who displayed high qualities of leadership under enemy fire.

43. The question was deemed too important to settle at long distance, however, and was shelved until the return to Canada of General Stuart and the Minister of National Defence. It was not until 2 Sep, therefore, that General Letson was able to despatch a letter to the Senior Officer, C.M.H.Q., laying down future policy as to the production of officers. (*Ibid*: Letson to Senior Officer, 2 Sep 43.). The reasons for the previous drive for officers were set forth as:

^x Officers Selection and Appraisal Centre.

2. The rapid expansion of the Canadian Army caused an acute shortage of officers, and it was necessary to set up extensive facilities for the selection and training of junior officers to meet the urgent requirements.
3. A large number of officers had to be trained as quickly as possible to meet the demands both for units overseas, or designated to proceed overseas, and to build up a reinforcement pool. In addition, the emergency mobilization for Canadian defence during the past two years made heavy demands for trained officers.
4. Now the situation has changed. The Army expansion has been approved, and requirements for the defence of Canada have altered. (Ibid.).

At the moment, as a result of the intensive drive for officers there were 7,000 officers and cadets undergoing training in Canada; after filling all establishments overseas and at home, this would leave a surplus of 1,500-2,000 officers in Canada by the first of the next April. Thus a radical reduction in training capacity was to be introduced at once; Gordon Head, Chilliwack and Three Rivers were to be closed down and all officer selection and training concentrated at Brockville.

44. Future policy would be to train "only sufficient officers to take care of the estimated battle casualties and wastage in the Canadian Army overseas and at home." (Ibid.). This estimate, on a stabilized basis, called for the production of 350 officers a month in the following combatant arms - C.A.C., R.C.A., R.C.E., R.C.Sigs, Infantry, R.C.A.S.C. and R.C.O.C. Allowing for failures it would thus be necessary to have a monthly intake of 375-400 candidates. Should certain units and formations in Canada be disbanded (as did subsequently take place) it would be possible to reduce the monthly intake by approximately 10 per cent. The principle of giving priority to those with overseas service would be established, but the production of officers from Canadian sources would not cease altogether as such a step would have an adverse effect on the morale of units remaining in Canada. The several C.O.T.Cs. and the recently inaugurated Army University Courses would continue to provide officer material, but the total number of other ranks from the Army in Canada entering Brockville each month would comprise what was left of the monthly quota after selection for training had been made in the United Kingdom. C.M.H.Q. was requested to keep Ottawa fully in the picture so that monthly quotas could be adjusted, for it was "extremely important that the combined monthly intake into O.T.Cs., overseas and in Canada, should not exceed the stabilized quota of 375-400". (Ibid.).

45. Since there would be no appreciable wastage once Pre-O.C.T.U. cadets had passed the Selection Board, C.M.H.Q. informed Ottawa by telegram on 11 Sep that the number of overseas candidates entering on Pre-O.C.T.U. training each month would be furnished. The normal procedure was for cadets to proceed on to Canada the following month. As of 1 Oct a statement of the officer situation overseas showed a deficiency of officers in the case of the C.F.C. and 1 Cdn Para Bn but a surplus in all others, although small in some instances. (Ibid: Situation of Officers, Canadian Army Overseas, 29 Sep 43.). During 1943 a total of 2049 candidates were selected and sent forward from Pre-O.C.T.U. training. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1/4: Report by Major McClelland on "OCTU - Selection of Officers," 31 Dec 43.). Due to the length of the courses this increase was not felt for

some time, however, and only 703 officers were commissioned during the year, with a further 159 commissioned during January and February, 1944. (Office file of A.G.6, C.M.H.Q., Report of AG 6 to AAG Pers, CMHQ, for February 1944.).

46. The operations already underway in Italy and the prospect of the Second Front opening within a few months were considered a major reason why the number of candidates being recommended for, or voluntarily coming forward for, commissions began to slacken off in the early autumn. Men who had been overseas for some time did not relish the prospect of returning to Canada for several months' officer training and thus missing active service. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1/3: King to BGS, CMHQ, 11 Oct 43). There was also the question of the time wasted in travelling in the case of Infantry and R.C.A.S.C. candidates returning to Canada for O.T.C. training. With the disbandment of the 6th, 7th and 8th Canadian Divisions it would be necessary to absorb many of their officers in the reinforcement stream at the expense of getting back from Canada newly commissioned officers who already had overseas experience.

INCREASED EMPHASIS ON O.C.T.U. TRAINING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

47. The decision arrived at in September had resulted in the bulk of officer training being centred in the United Kingdom. As a further step, on 9 Dec Brigadier Penhale (B.G.S., C.M.H.Q.) suggested to the Senior Officer that all O.C.T.U. training should be carried out in the United Kingdom. The War Office could allot more vacancies at its O.C.T.U.s. to Canadians and there were a number of special instances where direct commissioning seemed warranted. (Ibid: Penhale to SO, CMHQ, 9 Dec 43.). As it was, only candidates for C.A.C., R.C.A. and Infantry were now being selected for O.C.T.U. training unless specific vacancies were, or likely to be, available in the other arms of the service.*

48. Therefore, after consideration by General Stuart, who was now Chief of Staff, C.M.H.Q. and acting Army Commander, a telegram was despatched to Ottawa on 30 Dec pointing out that:

... opinion held that present phase in which Cdn fms are actively participating in operations necessitates alteration in policy governing O.C.T.U. trg. Extremely desirable maintain avenue for commissioning suitable personnel now serving in the field both as regards incentive and necessity for producing officer material from those with battle

* Number of weeks required to train officers in Canada and United Kingdom:-

<u>UK</u>	<u>Pre-Octu</u>	<u>CTS</u>	<u>Brit OCTU</u>	<u>Total weeks</u>	
CAC	3	7	24	34	
RCA	3	7	19	29	
Inf(M)	3	-	21	24	
<u>Canada</u>	<u>Pre-OCTU</u>	<u>OTC</u>	<u>ATC</u>	<u>Instr Duty</u>	<u>Total weeks</u>
Inf	3	12	4	12	31

Other arms of service spent 3-4 months at ATC instead of a definite period of instructional duty.

experience and their speedy return to units despite surplus officers now in Canada. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1/4: Tel GS 3274 Canmilitary to Defensor, for Murchie from Stuart, 30 Dec 43.).

The delay caused by having to go to Canada was discouraging candidates and was likely to result in their not coming forward in large enough numbers. General Stuart proposed, therefore, that the practice of sending infantry and R.C.A.S.C. candidates to training in Canada should cease. Sufficient vacancies were now available at British O.C.T.U.s. to absorb the additional Canadian candidates. Consideration was also being given at C.M.H.Q. to the accelerated commissioning of selected and well qualified personnel following a modified course at a British O.C.T.U. (seven weeks) and the immediate commissioning, without O.C.T.U. training, of candidates who were highly trained specialists or technicians whose services were urgently needed.

49. The reply sent on 7 Jan from Ottawa questioned the advisability of such a step and raised a number of objections, as well as seeking clarification. It was pointed out by General Murchie that:

Failure to return candidates to Canada for officer training may result in the closing of Brockville which is obviously inadvisable for many reasons inter alia there will be no incentive for outstanding young men now coming to suitable age to elect for the army. The tendency will be for suitable Officer personnel to join the Navy or Air Force. This would eventually result in the Army having no potential Officer material either in Canada or Overseas. (Ibid: Tel GS 9, Defensor to Canmilitary, for Stuart from Murchie, 7 Jan 44).

Furthermore, he considered that the granting of emergency commissions would leave too much to the judgment and discretion of a unit commanding officer and would get away from the principles which had led to the setting up of a Canadian Infantry Corps; in short it would be a return to the regimental basis and would result in a lack of uniformity among subalterns. General Murchie also suggested that it was "questionable if there is sound reason for believing that the type of soldier who has been a Sergeant for a year in the field in England is likely to become a better officer than a person who after careful consideration of Educational qualifications and background and after extensive military training has spent a year or perhaps longer on intensive instructional duty or in an operational role in Canada."

50. On 21 Jan a further telegram was despatched by Generals Murchie and Letson to General Stuart pointing out that the C.M.H.Q. policy of sending cadets to a modified British O.C.T.U., after taking the basic O.C.T.U. course at C.T.S., would create the idea that there was a shortage of officers in the Canadian Army - at a time when surplus officers were being loaned to the British Army under the "Canloan" scheme (see Report No. 145). It was further pointed out that "continual draining by field units of good N.C.O.s. with battle or field experience will in comparatively short time seriously lower the standard of N.C.O.s. in the units" and

would mean a further delay in getting surplus reinforcement officers into active operations. The way was left open for further negotiations but it was pointed out that "we have so many surplus Offrs that we can loan to British it is difficult to see how we can demonstrate any necessity for adoption of short cut measures to facilitate commissioning of additional Offrs thereby perpetuating that surplus." (Ibid: Tel GS 43, Defensor to Canmilitary, Stuart from Murchie and Letson, 21 Jan 44).

51. On 11 Feb General Stuart informed N.D.H.Q. that there was no attempt being made to lower the officer standard or to do other than create more officers with battle experience. The numbers affected would be comparatively small and would not seriously enlarge the officer surplus. Consideration was also being given to disbanding the O.C.T.U. Wing at C.T.S., in the interests of manpower conservation, since British O.C.T.U.s. could "better carry out its function" and after 1 Apr would be able to handle all Canadian candidates. (Ibid: Tel GS 440, Canmilitary to Defensor, 11 Feb 44). General Stuart again reiterated that candidates would not come forward if it involved spending six to eight months in Canada and stated his own opinion that there was "no alternative to this proposal when the sole criterion is the battle efficiency of the Cdn Army." (Ibid: Tel GS 423, Canmilitary to Defensor, for Murchie and Letson from Stuart, 11 Feb 44).

52. On 15 Feb a telegram was despatched from Ottawa giving approval to the C.M.H.Q. policy, provided that there was no lowering of the standard and that "arrangements will be made which will permit action to increase the flow of Reinforcement Officers from Canada." (Ibid: Tel GS 84, Defensor to Canmilitary, for Stuart from Murchie, 15 Feb 44). In exceptional cases emergency commissions could be granted to specialist personnel who were urgently required to fill vacancies. It was agreed that No. 1 (OCTU) Wing at C.T.S. should close on 4 Mar, at the end of the present serial, and in future Canadian candidates would do all their training at British O.C.T.U.s. After attendance at 1 Cdn Pre-O.C.T.U. School candidates would proceed either to the Pre-O.C.T.U. R.A.C., the A.A. O.C.T.U., R.A. or 148 Training Brigade which would handle Pre-O.C.T.U. training for all other cadets. In certain cases, specially qualified and recommended personnel would be commissioned at the conclusion of basic O.C.T.U. No infantry or R.C.A.S.C. candidates would be sent to Canada for officer training.*

53. The procedure evolved was that candidates were sent to 1 Cdn Pre-O.C.T.U. School for a month and then returned to No. 1 C.G.R.U., to which all pre-O.C.T.U. cadets were posted. While waiting for a vacancy on a British pre-O.C.T.U. course candidates spent a week on a University short course, held under the auspices of Educational Services. After proceeding to the British Pre-O.C.T.U. the Canadian Cadet was transferred, on paper, to the appropriate Reinforcement Unit for his arm of the service, and was to be returned there on the successful completion of his course. Unsuccessful candidates were to be returned to their Reinforcement Unit as other rank reinforcements.

* Only 580 infantry cadets had been returned to Canada since August 1943 and only 117 R.C.A.S.C. cadets had gone back to Canada during the whole of 1943.

54. The production of officers was drastically curtailed from its 1943 high during the following year but there still remained a large surplus of C.A.C. and R.C.A. subalterns in September. It was decided, however, that, since it would be bad for morale to completely curtail commissioning new officers in these corps, in future only five a month would be accepted for commissions in C.A.C. and R.C.A.; one in R.C. Sigs per month but any available R.C.E. candidates. Other candidates for commissions would have to transfer to infantry where there was still a need for officers. By the middle of September 1944, the remaining cadets in O.C.T.U.s. who could not be absorbed thus into their own corps had to accept commissions in the Canadian Infantry Corps or remain in their own corps as other ranks. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1/4: Bostock to DAG, CMHQ, 15 Sep 44). As it was, existing surplus reinforcement officers were being encouraged and urged to take infantry conversion courses if they wished to see active service.

55. In the United Kingdom the number of applications for commissions dwindled from 667 in March 1944 to 150 in May, 211 in June and only 57 in August. During the autumn the number of applications rose slightly with 124 in November and 175 during December; only 79 of the latter, however, were recommended for Pre-O.C.T.U. training. Some 925 new officers were commissioned and the end of the year found a further 333 cadets undergoing training at British Pre-O.C.T.U.s. and O.C.T.U.s. (Office file of A.G.6, C.M.H.Q., Report of A.G.6. to AAG(Pers) C.M.H.Q. for December 1944).

56. The number of applications for commissions during 1945 dwindled from 173 in January to 12 in April and 3 during May. The end of May found a total of 251 officers commissioned during 1945 and 184 Pre-Cadets and cadets undergoing training. (Ibid: Report of A.G.6 to AAG(Pers), CMHQ for May 1945). With the cessation of hostilities the question arose as to what to do with candidates undergoing training and there was no further selection.

FORMATION OF 1 CDN SELECTION AND APPRAISAL CENTRE

57. The activities of No. 1 Cdn O.C.T.U. Selection Centre had gradually been extended so that it embraced the appraisal and classification of officers for whom it was desired to find more suitable employment. In a letter to the Army Commander, dated 15 May 44, Brigadier Penhale (D.C.G.S.; C.M.H.Q.) suggested that the existing O.C.T.U. Selection Centre and Pre-O.C.T.U. School should be reorganized into a Selection and Appraisal Centre (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU SC/1: Penhale to G.O.C.-in-C. First Cdn Army, 15 May 44). The concurrence of General Crerar was obtained and C.M.H.Q. Administrative Order No.88, dated 19 May, authorized the new establishment. Colonel W. McNeil assumed command of the whole centre which occupied Dene Lodge, a large rambling brick and timber house near Ash, Surrey. 1 Cdn Pre-O.C.T.U. School became a wing of the new establishment but remained at Blackdown, Surrey, until 28 Dec 44.

58. The number of candidates coming before the O.C.T.U. Selection Board varied continually. During the three months ending 30 Apr 44 only 152 were accepted out of a total of 516 interviewed: of those accepted, three were graded as excellent, 17 very good and 132 suitable. For the next three-month period the percentage of suitable candidates declined still further, to 26 per cent, but then began to rise again. The quarterly results of acceptance for officer training, from the commencement of the activities of the O.C.T.U. Selection Board are shown by quarter as:

First	18 Jul 43	-	20 Oct 43	45 per cent
Second	20 Oct 43	-	5 Feb 44	34 " "
Third	5 Feb 44	-	30 Apr 44	29 " "
Fourth	30 Apr 44	-	31 Jul 44	26 " "
Fifth	31 Jul 44	-	25 Oct 44	33 " "
Sixth	25 Oct 44	-	31 Jan 45	58 " "
Seventh	31 Jan 45	-	30 Apr 45	52 " "

(Ibid: Bjorn to MGA, CMHQ, 4 May 45)

During the period 18 Jul 43 to 31 Jan 45, the Selection Board interviewed a total of 3652 candidates, of whom 1355 were accepted for O.C.T.U. training (6/OCTU/1/5: McClelland to A.D.A.G.(B), C.M.H.Q. 21 Feb 45).

59. In order to compare the method of O.C.T.U. Selection against the standard of existing officers during December, a number of units were asked to furnish three subalterns for perusal by the Selection Board. It was requested that one of the officers should be outstanding, another average and the third very poor, preferably the poorest officer in the unit. It was found that the 36 officers who underwent selective tests on 29-30 Dec achieved the same general standard as the candidates passed for O.C.T.U. training (W.D. 1 Cdn O.C.T.U. Selection Centre: 28-30 Dec 44). From time to time reports on further officers were forwarded to M.S. Branch at C.M.H.Q. On 25 Sep 44 a regularly constituted Officers Survey and Classification Board was set up, with the President of the O.C.T.U. Selection Board acting as temporary chairman in an effort to determine whether useful employment overseas could be found for officers who were otherwise surplus to existing needs, due to age, category or temperament. (W.D. 1 Cdn O/S Offrs Survey & Classification Board, 25 Sep 44). On 23 Oct a second such Board commenced hearings, examining officers who were unsuited for their present employment but who might have special qualifications which would facilitate employment somewhere else.

CANDIDATES FROM C.M.F.

60. Up to the end of 1943 a total of 73 applications for commissions were received from C.M.F., via the ad hoc boards which had been set under the authority of the Senior Officer, Cdn Section G.H.Q. 1st Echelon (Brigadier A.W. Beament). (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1/4: Report by Major McClelland on "OCTU - Selection of Officers" 31 Dec 43). During February 1944, in accordance with the practice already in vogue in the United Kingdom, a list of 313 names of candidates considered by the Personnel Section, C.M.H.Q. as qualified for O.C.T.U. training was despatched to C.M.F. (Office file of A.G.6., C.M.H.Q.: Report AG6 to AAG(Pers) CMHQ for February 1944). For example, the ad hoc boards sitting during the spring of 1944 comprised Lt.-Col. F.B. Conrad as permanent president and two other commanding officers who changed with each board. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU AAI/1/2: Neilson to AG 6, CMHQ, 13 and 19 May 44). The number of candidates appearing before "ad hoc" boards in Italy did not warrant the services of a permanent president, so Lt.-Col. Conrad, Officer Commanding 8 Cdn Reinf Bn, was left in charge. The only serious complaint received during the period concerned the 25 candidates who arrived in the 19 Jul 44 intake at 1 Cdn Selection and Appraisal Centre. That commanding officer pointed out that the intelligence ratings of these candidates ^{was} noticeably below that of the other candidates which had appeared in the previous 12-month period.

.... Of the twenty-five, twelve scored below 160 in the 'M' test before appearing at this Centre, and the average was 159. The average rating of the twenty-five, by composite scores of 'M' tests and two intelligence tests at this Centre, was poorer than sixty-three per cent of all candidates appearing at this unit. (Ibid: McNeil to MGA, CMHQ, 26 Jul 44).

In nearly all cases where the intelligence rating was low there were not enough compensating factors to merit passing the candidates. The general experience of the Centre was that candidates with an English 'M' test score of less than 160 (under 145 French) were not likely to be sufficiently alert mentally to absorb O.C.T.U. training and that candidates with scores under 150 in the English 'M' test (and 135 French) were likely to be very poor risks. This information was conveyed to A.A.I. and Colonel W. McNeil was despatched to the Mediterranean for a two-months' period to supervise the methods of selection being used by the "ad hoc" boards. (Ibid: Tel A 5332: Canmilitary to AAI for Candex, 2 Jul 44). Colonel McNeil spent most of August and September in Italy.

61. By the end of January 1945, a total of 195 candidates from A.A.I. had been approved for O.C.T.U. training. "Ad Hoc" Boards in Italy had interviewed 1181 candidates but only 375 were returned to the United Kingdom for further consideration. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1/5: McClelland to ADAG(B), C.M.H.Q. 21 Feb 45).

CANDIDATES FROM NORTH WEST EUROPE

62. A different procedure was adopted in North West Europe and instead of setting up "ad hoc" boards at 1st Echelon to interview candidates for O.C.T.U. training as had been done in Italy, officers from the Selection and Appraisal Centre made two visits to the theatre of operations, at which time only were "ad hoc" boards convened. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU SC/1: Bjorn to MGA, CMHQ, 5 Feb and 4 May 45). On 11 Dec 44 Colonel W. McNeil and the senior personnel selection officer at 1 Cdn Selection and Appraisal Centre travelled to Cdn Section, G.H.Q. 1st Echelon, 21 Army Group and set up an "ad hoc" board which interviewed candidates during 13-17 Dec. Out of the 143 candidates interviewed 65 were found suitable; the candidates for C.A.C., R.C.A. and Infantry commissions were returned to the United Kingdom for further interview at 1 Cdn Selection and Appraisal Centre during the week commencing 7 Jan 45 and the remainder were deferred until such time as the officer situation in their respective Corps warranted further action being taken. Again on 18 Mar 45 the deputy-president of the board at No. 1 Cdn Selection and Appraisal Centre, Lt.-Col. Bjorn, and the senior personnel selection officer visited North-West Europe. During the days 19-24 Mar the "ad hoc" board which they convened interviewed 106 candidates, of whom 54 were found suitable for return to the United Kingdom to undergo Pre-O.C.T.U. training. (Ibid.). The cessation of hostilities during the first week of May precluded the need to hold another "ad hoc" board. Then, on 23 Jul, 1 Cdn Selection and Appraisal Centre was disbanded.

POST-WAR O.C.T.U. SELECTION AND TRAINING

63. The conclusion of the war in Europe brought an end to the need for providing large numbers of reinforcement officers for the Canadian Army and the question arose as to what should be done with cadets who were undergoing training at British O.C.T.U.s. In accordance with verbal instructions received

from the D.A.G., C.M.H.Q. on 20 Jun, Colonel Bjorn, now President of 1 Cdn Selection and Appraisal Centre, and Lt.-Col. W.A. Georgeson, his assistant, spent the next two weeks interviewing Canadian cadets undergoing instruction at British O.C.T.U.s. (C.M.H.Q. file 6/OCTU/1/5: Bjorn to MGA, CMHQ, 11 Jul 45). As a result, of the 137 candidates interviewed it was recommended that 97 cadets be allowed to finish their courses and 40 be returned to their units. Those interested in the post-war Canadian Army were carefully screened with the result that 40 cadets were earmarked for such consideration. At this time, 22 Jul, it was recommended that candidates due to graduate by 1 Sep 45 should be permitted to complete their course; only those other candidates who had volunteered for C.A.P.F. or C.A.O.F. would be allowed to complete courses finishing after that date and the remainder returned to their units. (Ibid: Walker to DAG, CMHQ, 22 Jul 45).

64. Furthermore, during July, the Department of National Defence raised the question of training infantry officer reinforcements, in Canada and the United States, for the Canadian Army Pacific Force and was prepared to set a monthly quota of 150, to begin in September or October. (Ibid: Tel AG 4051 Pers 2, Defensor to Canmilitary, Weeks from Walford, 28 Jul 45). The conclusion of the War against Japan negated such a need, however, and also made it no longer imperative that O.C.T.U. cadets who had volunteered for service in the Pacific should be permitted to complete their officer training.

65. It was considered by the Department of National Defence that for some time to come the demands of the C.A.O.F. for reinforcement officers could be supplied by qualified officers in Canada who had not volunteered for the Pacific Force but who had not sufficient service to warrant their return to civil life and by officers already overseas with low point scores. (Ibid: Roome to C.M.H.Q., 3 Aug 45).

66. When queried, Ottawa sent a cable, dated 1 Sep, recommending the withdrawal from O.C.T.U. of cadets who had volunteered for C.A.P.F. and the retention at British O.C.T.U.s. of only those who had volunteered for the Occupation Force; those who had failed to volunteer previously for either had already been withdrawn from O.C.T.U. courses. (Ibid: Tel MGA 449 Canmilitary to Defensor, Walford from Weeks, 30 Aug 45 and Tel AG 10321 Defensor to Canmilitary, 1 Sep 45). Steps were therefore taken to have all cadets at British O.C.T.U.s. and Pre-O.C.T.U.s. interviewed again and given the option of either volunteering for C.A.O.F. and completing the O.C.T.U. course or of being returned to their units, with effect from 15 Sep, and reverting to substantive rank to await either repatriation or further duty. (Ibid: C.M.H.Q. Circular Letter on "OCTU - Disposal of Cadets and Pre-Cadets", 5 Sep 45). The only exception made were those cadets who were due to be commissioned before 30 Sep.

67. The cadets who signified their willingness to serve with C.A.O.F. continued to graduate from time to time as commissioned officers. On 11 Jan 46 eight cadets were still undergoing training at Sandhurst and it was anticipated that the last cadet at 100 O.C.T.U. (RAC) would not graduate until 6 Jul 46. (Ibid: DAG, CMHQ, to HQ CRU, 11 Jan 46.).

68. This report was prepared by Capt. J.M. Hitsman, General List.

J M Hitsman, Capt
(C.P. Stacey) Colonel
Director Historical Section

ADDENDUM To
REPORT NO. 156
HISTORICAL SECTION

CANADIAN MILITARY HEADQUARTERS

24 AUG 1946

1. The following addendum, dealing with Canadian Cadets at British O.C.T.U.s., should be attached to Report No. 156, dealing with the Selection and Training of Officers for the Canadian Army Overseas 1940-45.

2. An article in The Army Quarterly of July 1946 - Training Army Officers by F. Warhurst^x analyzes the work of the wartime training of officers, with special reference to a Royal Signals O.C.T.U., with which the author was connected. Since Canadian cadets took their "special to the arm" training at British OCTUs, in the case of all but infantry and M.G. candidates, the following quotations from this article are of interest:

Sixty-two per cent of the Empire cadets were in the top three grades of A, AB and B, as against just under 24 per cent of the U.K. cadets. The Empire had its failures and a few who scraped through in category D but, expressed as a percentage, they were less than half the U.K. number.....

The overwhelming conclusion.....is, of course, that Empire, and particularly Canadian, cadets were far superior to those from the U.K. That is perfectly true of the cadets under review and any Course Officer who discovered a Canadian in his course was always pleased. It must be remembered, however, that Canadian cadets continued throughout to be the pick of men who had volunteered for overseas service, whereas the pick of the U.K. volunteer army - the pre-war Supplementary Reservists and Territorials - had long since passed through O.C.T.U. A more even comparison would lie between the Canadians and some of the earlier U.K. cadets, or some of the courses of those sub-alterns who had taken their commissions in the volunteer forces before the war. Nevertheless, to suggest others with whom the Canadians under review could be compared detracts not at all from the excellent standard of their results. Rather does it emphasize it. They did well enough in all technical subjects but scored most heavily in the cheerful self-confidence with which they tackled everything they were given to do.

A careful reading of Report No. 156 will suggest, however, that there had been a very heavy drain upon the officer potential in the Canadian Army Overseas and that, as early as the beginning of 1943, it was becoming increasingly difficult to find candidates in sufficient numbers.

3. This article also attempts to analyze the ability of the several groups in age and academic background, who appeared at OCTU. Generally speaking, it was found that boys straight from secondary or public schools, possibly via a war-time university course, did not do as well as those slightly older men who had had some business or professional experience. Even those men with elementary schooling, plus some experience in every day civilian life or in the Regular Army, did rather better. The conclusion had to be drawn that "an elementary school education was an adequate background provided that the required inherent characteristics were present."

J. M. Whitman, Capt
(C.F. Stacey) Colonel
Director, Historical Section.

x Served as W/S Major, Royal Corps of Signals, Supplementary Reserve.