

## UNIV. DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

In a year which marks the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, this is an appropriate moment to look back at life within University College during the years 1939–45. Over the years, some Old Members have shared their memories of that time with the Archivist and others, but, when the Development Office recently held its Diamond Bursary campaign among our oldest Old Members, this presented an excellent opportunity to make a general request for memories of Univ. from times past. Almost two dozen Old Members wrote back with their reminiscences, which are all now stored in the College archives. We are extremely grateful to all those who shared their memories with us.

It is from such sources that this article is drawn. It is very definitely an ‘informal’ history of the College during the Second World War: a more formal account of these years will be attempted in the new history of Univ. which should be published in 2008. It also gives us the chance to appeal once more to our readers, for, if other Old Members from the 1940s read this article, and think that something has been omitted, or is not quite right, then they are heartily encouraged to write in with reminiscences of their own.

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For some members of Univ., the outbreak of war came as no surprise. Michael Chapman (matr. 1931) recalled that ‘many of us joined the Territorial Army or Royal Air Force as early as 1933/4 some years before WW2. We recognised Germany as becoming, and would become in all probability, a serious political menace in Europe, and that we would end up being forced to intervene as we had in the long Napoleonic Wars saving Europe from dictatorship.’<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, the College continued to keep standards up until the very last minute. David Strawbridge, due to come up in October 1939 from a grammar school in Dorset to read chemistry, was disconcerted to receive a letter from the College asking him to come equipped with a full dinner service for six (including two salt spoons), and then relieved to be told in a subsequent letter that, because of hostilities, all meals would be taken in Hall, and that he need only bring up a teapot and a couple of cups and plates.<sup>2</sup>

By contrast with the First World War, the College did not empty completely in Michaelmas Term 1939. Although many undergraduates quickly joined up, others stayed on until they were called up, and a few, such as medics and chemists, were allowed to complete their time in Oxford, because their courses placed them in reserved occupations. Memories are divided about the general atmosphere in the College at this time. Many Old Members recall that the College was a happy place, both before and during the war. It was thought to have an unusually wide social mix, in having more undergraduates from grammar schools than other Colleges, for the old Freeston and Gunsley Exhibitions continued to give preference to men from the grammar schools respectively at Wakefield, Normanton, Rochester, and Maidstone (as they would until well after the war). But others, coming up during the war, remember a sharper class divide between ex-public schoolboys and those from the grammar schools, and that neither group mixed much with each other.

As the war drew on, so numbers inevitably did fall, and by the mid-1940s, the majority of Univ. men left in College were medical students. However, at least by 1942, alongside the students in reserved occupations, the College was also welcoming students who were sent to Oxford on short courses arranged by the armed forces. These courses were intended to provide basic training for

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1 UC:P214/MS1/11.

2 UC:P214/MS1/20.

technical work which might be required, such as signalling. The place of these army students in the College was slightly uncertain: one thought that ‘though *in* College, we were not quite *of* it’. Nevertheless, they signed the Admissions Register, played took an active part in College life, and some of them remembered being made very welcome by the ‘ordinary’ undergraduates. Tony Phelps (matr. 1941) wrote that ‘It is a pity there is not a photograph—or, better still, a Henry Moore sketch—of a Tuesday or Thursday lunchtime in Hall, with so many of us in uniform.’<sup>3</sup>

Academic work for undergraduates on the service courses was remembered as not very demanding, although they had to undergo training exercises, such enduring an assault course on New College’s playing fields in St. Cross Road. Patrick Benner (matr. 1942) wrote:

I forget all the horrid details; but I know that one used amongst other things to go up and over a high wall, scramble up the side of the pavilion, then traverse the front of the roof and drop down on the far side, and (with varying degrees of efficiency) cross a backwater of the Cherwell on a single pole. Afterwards, I would cycle back to college to change. My bedroom did not adjoin my sitting room, which I shared, but was part of the suite of a Fellow who lived out of college. As a result, his tutorials were regularly interrupted by a dishevelled post-assault course figure trudging through his room on the way to change, and then emerging again hurriedly to rush off to a lecture. So far as I recall, he bore it uncomplainingly.<sup>4</sup>

The mention of lunchtime just now leads on to something remembered only too well by Old Members of the early 1940s, namely the College food. At first, food was not rationed—in Michaelmas Term 1939, marmalade was unlimited at breakfast—but this was to alter during 1940. From January 1941, members of the College received two course dinners, rather than three. Lunch was remembered as ‘something of a disgrace—frequently no more than a bowl or soup or (not “and”) a black pudding, supplemented by bread (unrationed) and one’s own butter, cheese, etc. as required.’ Another remembered a lunch ‘of two thin slices of black pudding splendidly alone on a dinner-plate—with a roll’. Another notorious dish was a thin soup which tasted of little else but pepper. When the kitchen staff was reduced in number in 1942, the undergraduates had to set up a rota for operating a large toasting grill in the kitchen. In 1944, regular dishes included rabbit stew, plenty of fish, and spam fritters and chips. The desperate could dine out in the town at subsidised restaurants called ‘British Restaurants’, which offered basic lunches for one shilling<sup>5</sup>

Accommodation in the College retained certain austere aspects which were not to be remedied until long after the war. There were no washbasins in rooms—one made do with a wash stand and a jug of cold water—and the only lavatories were where the Mitchell Building now stands. In winter, the jug was regularly frozen. A large kettle on a gas ring provided the hot water for a single staircase. Tony Palmer (matr. 1944) wrote that ‘the cold at night unheated bedrooms was fierce—I was never so cold during 15 years in the Canadian West. I would put both my Army greatcoat and the bedroom carpet on top of the bedclothes.’<sup>6</sup>

Fortunately, Oxford was never bombed during the war—an Old Member who came up in 1940 only remembers aid raid sirens going off once during his time in the College—but the possibility always remained open. For example, the Chapel windows were taken down for safe keeping. Blackout regulations were in full force, and this had some unexpected results. Because it was easier to blackout lecture theatres than teaching laboratories, chemists found themselves having to attend lectures

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3 UC:P214/MS1/18–19 & UC:P34/MS11/1.

4 UC:P214/MS1/8.

5 Tales of food: UC:P214/MS1/16 & 19–20.

6 UC:P34/MS11/1.

during the evening in winter, After lectures, there was a rush back to College for Formal Hall, which they did not always reach in time.<sup>7</sup>

The most important way in which undergraduates' lives was affected by the threat of bombing was fire-watching. Every night, members of the College had to take it in turns to spend time sitting on the roofs of the College looking out for passing aeroplanes. They even shared these duties during the vacation, with the College paying their board and lodging. Ladders were fixed to the towers, and it was easy enough to walk around the quads at rooftop level, even after a few drinks. Tony Phelps, who was reading classics, remembered that:

During the summer term of 1942 the occupants of my staircase regularly climbed to the roof of the tower and sat up there studying and plane spotting (very popular in those days). It was, perhaps, not entirely incongruous to be doing the latter while studying the tales of Troy or the wars of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>8</sup>

David Strawbridge gave rooftop tours of the College to freshmen, and took some photos, two of which are reproduced here. He was also asked to paint six-inch high numbers in white paint at the bottom of all the staircases so that they could be seen more easily at night. Some of the numbers were still visible sixty years later. For Thomas Morley (matr. 1938), however, 'firewatching duty was for me the single most distasteful aspect of war time college life, not because of any inconvenience or discomfort but because of the boredom.'<sup>9</sup>

The College also had a fire pump, and, by 1944, it was rumoured that, earlier in the war, its contents had been used to fill up the Shelley Memorial to add a certain realism.<sup>10</sup>

Univ. at least was able to keep on to retain its own site. Other Colleges were not so lucky: Keble College was, in the words of one Old Member, 'taken over as a Wrennery', as it was requisitioned by female clerks who were bussed out to Blenheim Palace for what turned out to be intelligence work. For much of the early years of the war, therefore, members of Keble College stayed in Univ. In addition, members of Merton College were also billeted in Univ. for a time.<sup>11</sup> It would also appear that for a time in 1941, at least, the College also played host to some evacuees from London, but we don't have much information about this at the moment.

As the College grew smaller, so its social life was affected. An Old Member coming up in 1940 remembers that formal social activities in college diminished and that political debate, which in his first year had largely directed been against the anti-war stance of the Communists, who were the only party to oppose the war, virtually ceased when Russia entered the war, and the Communists changed their minds.<sup>12</sup> The University College Music Society, however, continued to function, and its choir was sufficiently large in February 1940 to perform Fauré's *Requiem* in the University Church (it is something of a surprise for later generations, among whom the Fauré is so popular a choral classic, that this was the first ever performance of the work in Oxford). There was also usually someone on hand to play the organ in Chapel—which even in the 1940s still required someone else to pump the bellows for the organist.

There were opportunities for new ideas. Peter Bayley, who came up in October 1940, began a play-

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7 UC:MS214/MS1/20.

8 UC:P214/MS1/19.

9 UC:P18/C/1.

10 UC:P214/MS1/16. Can any reader of the *Record* verify this statement?

11 UC:P214/MS1/7 and 16, and UC:P34/MS8/1.

12 UC:P214/MS1/7.

reading group, and, in the following summer, took advantage of the presence of the Mertonians to join them in a production of *The Comedy of Errors*. In 1948 Bayley, now a JRF of the College, revived this society, and the re-founded Univ. Players began its happy post-war career. Such wartime inter-collegiate collaborations were not unique to drama, at a time when there were not quite enough undergraduates for Univ. to form its own sports teams. In some years, therefore, there were joint Merton-Univ. hockey elevens and rowing eights.<sup>13</sup>

Most Colleges gave end of term dances, and there was no shortage of partners, with all the women's Colleges still remaining full. Old Members recall one memorable dance at Univ. in Hilary Term 1943, when an American army band was engaged, which included many professionals from the leading swing bands of the day.

Outside the College, the Oxford Playhouse and the New Theatre stayed open, and town and gown choirs like the Oxford Bach Choir and the Oxford Harmonic Society continued to give concerts. Choral services continued at Christ Church, New College and Magdalen. As one Old Member put it 'in drab wartime Britain they were a very feast of beauty, peace and spirituality—and they cost nothing!'<sup>14</sup>

In spite of, or perhaps because of, the seriousness of the news from outside, there was time for practical jokes. Thomas Morley tells of one of the more ingenious ones, and his account deserves telling in full:

We pulled off a hoax in the best tradition on May morning of 1940. No damage, no pain, complete deception. The severest test was to rouse eight or ten from their beds and to persuade them the plan that had seemed so hilarious the night before over beer was worth seeing through in the cold dark of the predawn. The staff work held up, however. The waker woke everyone, the quartermaster provided mugs of cocoa and the wardrobe master distributed surplices all around. Fred [Bickerton, the Head Porter] was already on duty at the Lodge as we filed out, subdued, beneath his owlish gaze. We paraded, double file, down the middle of the High, slackening our pace to an ecclesiastical stroll as we approached the crowd covering Magdalen bridge. The police cleared a way for us and at ten to six exactly we formed a semicircle around our conductor who stood with poised human fibula as his baton. As the applause and the last chords of our rendering of Ilkley Moor died away the angelic strains from the choristers on top of Magdalen Tower floated faintly down. One confused mother in the crowd said, "Last year they did it from the top of the tower", grabbed a child's hand and turned prematurely for home. Our silent recession took us back the way we had come. Once clear of the crowd discipline crumbled. We were well out and pulled the surplices off over our heads. Someone cried, "Bullers". We took off up the High. With a quarter of a mile, uphill, ahead of us the outcome of this race for the College gate was uncertain. Two lithe men, paid to keep fit for the chase, against a rabble of poorly conditioned medical students, insufficiently rested, a little hung over and with pulmonary function seriously impaired from smoking cigarettes.

Even as we poured over the threshold into College we heard the Bullers desperately ordering our surrender. Fred, with an unerring instinct for the proprieties, held the door open until the last man was in, and then clanged it shut in the faces of the invading Bullers with the timing and aplomb that would have done credit to a Walt

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13 Peter Bayley's reminiscences of the early years of the Univ. Players can be found in the 2000 issue of the *Record*.

14 UC:P34/MS11/1.

Disney cartoon. He stumped back to the Lodge without saying a word or cracking a smile, his huge eyes twinkling.<sup>15</sup>

Unfortunately, May 1940 also saw the most dramatic and tragic event to take place within the College during the Second World War—and, indeed, one of the most extraordinary events in recent College history. Around lunchtime on 17 May 1940, a group of undergraduates walking out from Hall into the Front Quad were shot at by the occupant of Staircase V Room 4, on the top floor directly opposite them. One undergraduate was killed, and two more wounded, and a member of staff, trying to come to their aid, was struck on his shoe. Several people were lunching both Hall and the Winter Common Room, when they heard shots being fired outside, and some wondered whether an invasion had begun.

It fell to the then Chaplain, John Wild, to bring matters to a conclusion. Showing great presence of mind, he came out of the SCR, and went to the Lodge, where he found that the undergraduate occupying V:4 had come down from his rooms, and was willing to give himself up for arrest, which Wild then oversaw. Every contemporary witness praised the calm and courage shown by John Wild, not least because he would have been in the firing line when he emerged from Staircase II. Even for those coming up towards the end of the war, John Wild was still pointed out with admiration for his behaviour that day, and the legend had grown that Wild had even gone up to the undergraduate's rooms and disarmed him there.<sup>16</sup>

It turned out that the undergraduate who occupied V:4 had taken a dislike to some of his contemporaries, and had taken this dislike to unexpected extremes by taking shots at them from his room. A crack shot, he had borrowed the rifle, a Lee Enfield, and some ammunition from another undergraduate. At the time, people wondered what had driven him over the edge: it was claimed that one of the people at whom he aimed his rifle had played jazz music and entertained girls in his room, which was nearby, and that the marksman thought that this was being done especially to annoy and disturb him.<sup>17</sup> Norman Dix, however, had another tale to tell. He was serving in Hall, and he remembered coming out into the Quad when the shooting had stopped, and seeing a bullet mark on the archway around the Chapel. Later on, he recalled that at breakfast on that day, he had observed a heated argument among some of the undergraduates about pacifism, and he had eventually had to ask them to move on, so that he could clear the table. It was the advocate of pacifism who had fired the gun.

It was tragically clear that the undergraduate was suffering from serious mental illness. Diagnosed as schizophrenic, he was tried in July 1940, and found guilty but insane. He was therefore detained in a mental hospital. Nothing is known of his later life. One of the most striking aspects of this story for a modern reader is that an undergraduate was allowed to keep a rifle and live ammunition in the College at all: indeed, one contemporary remembers being rather bemused that the owner of the rifle seemed far more dismayed at the refusal of the authorities to return it to him, than at the unhappy use to which it had been put.

Even without his behaviour in the shooting incident of 1940, it is evident that, for most undergraduates, John Wild was perhaps the most important Fellow of the College during the war. For one thing, he was one of the few young Fellows still left in Oxford, having been exempted from military service on health grounds. Of the other Fellows of his generation, some, like Richard Holdsworth, the Law Fellow, or David Cox, the History Fellow, went off to fight, and others were

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<sup>15</sup> UC:P18/C/1. This story is confirmed by others, as in UC:P34/MS12/1.

<sup>16</sup> As well as reports from eyewitnesses, this account of the event is also based on a collection of contemporary newscuttings about it (UC:P24/N/1).

<sup>17</sup> UC:P34/MS12/1.

seconded for government work, such as Freddie Wells, the Classics Fellow, who is said to have spent much of the war codebreaking at Bletchley Park.

This left John Wild in charge of most aspects of College life, and he found himself serving variously as Vice-Master, Dean, Domestic Bursar and Chaplain. His administrative load grew greater later in the war, when the Master had to spend more time on his report. Wartime members of the College remember him with great affection, and recall his efforts to get to know them all, such as his regularly arranging evenings when undergraduates could come and listen to his gramophone. No one appears to doubt that he was elected Master in 1945 precisely on account of his services to the College during the war.

Wild's predecessor as Master, who had been elected in 1937, was Sir William Beveridge, who remains one of our most famous Masters on account of the great report which he wrote during the later years of the war. He shared the Lodgings with his housekeeper (and later wife) Mrs. Mair. Beveridge is generally well remembered by undergraduates who came up during the early 1940s. There are tales of his taking pains to find scholarships for undergraduates who would otherwise have been unable to afford to come up, and he was generous with his hospitality: one undergraduate remembered tea in the Lodgings with Sir William Beveridge and Mrs. Mair as being 'always enjoyable', and another that the Master more than once invited the Boat Club to dinner in the Lodgings, where they all played table tennis, Mrs. Mair ordering Beveridge to pick the balls up between games.<sup>18</sup>

When eminent visitors came to call, the Master sometimes invited undergraduates to help entertain them. One such occasion was when the King of Yugoslavia visited with two Orthodox patriarchs. Thomas Morley was among those were invited to meet him, and he remembered that the young King, who was of undergraduate age himself, enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere. As he recalled, 'the King drank beer from crown-topped bottles. As the evening wore on he took to opening them in the hinge of the sturdy oak door that opened into the reception room. But the most startling event of this bizarre evening was the gramophone record Mrs. Mair played. She must have found conversation with patriarchs heavy going, so after a word with the Master she put on a record to set the party hopping. She chose a BBC recording of the Master dilating on his now well-known views on bloodless social revolution through economic reform.'<sup>19</sup>

Members coming up towards the end of the war, however, remember seeing less of the Master, as he was mostly in London working on his report.<sup>20</sup>

Unfortunately, Mrs. Mair is less fondly remembered. College servants from the time thought her overbearing. As for the undergraduates, 'we were all rather rude occasionally about his [Beveridge's] consort' wrote one correspondent, and another recalled that she was nicknamed 'the Old Grey Mair'.<sup>21</sup> There was indeed one notorious occasion when some undergraduates serenaded the Lodgings with an old music hall song titled 'The old grey mare, she ain't what she used to be'. Meanwhile, in the SCR, there are hints that not all the Fellows thought so well of Beveridge, on the grounds that he was distracted by too many other affairs. There was a legend that, when he was working on his great report, A. S. L. Farquharson asked him after dinner 'Well, Master, how's *Mein Pamph?*' Just after the war, when Beveridge decided to stand for Parliament (unsuccessfully, as it happened), he was unable to persuade enough of the Fellows to permit him to be both a Master and an MP.

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18 UC:P214/MS1/2 and 4.

19 UC:P18/C/1.

20 UC:P214/MS1/19.

21 UC:P214/MS1/15–16.

Among the remaining Fellows, Edmund 'Ted' Bowen, the Chemistry Fellow, is remembered by one correspondent as 'always friendly and encouraging. He was no slave driver, but he inspired us owing to his enthusiasm for his subject.'<sup>22</sup> Some, who felt themselves in need of greater direction in the work, wished that he could have been rather more of a slave driver, but they would not deny his charm.

For part of the war, the Dean was Kenneth Wheare. One young student on an army short course remembered Wheare welcoming him and his comrades 'with charm, humour and urbanity'. Wheare lived in Kybald Street, and found that the iron spiked fence by his house was a popular access point to the College after closing hours. Therefore, to prevent damage to his garden, he discreetly opened a small gate nearby to let people in. One Old Member recalled that 'whenever one's clothes got hung up on the spikes to the accompaniment of muttered oaths, his bedroom light obligingly came on and enabled one to see enough in order to extricate oneself'.<sup>23</sup>

Several Fellows, most notably George Stevenson and Edgar Carritt, remained in place until after the war, until younger men could take their places. Farquharson likewise remained in post until his death in 1942. Some undergraduates felt that this affected the quality of their teaching: one historian was aware that his tutors had been appointed in about 1897 and 1907 respectively, and 'were not very well organised - giving essay subjects week by week in a haphazard way unrelated to any syllabus and one had to study the regulations carefully to see what the topics of examination papers might be'.<sup>24</sup>

One of these History Fellows, Kenneth Leys, however, kindled happier memories from one Old Member, who came up in 1941. He remembered Leys as someone who:

made me feel at home. How much I enjoyed my weekly tutorials with him .... He taught me how to write and to think clearly. His intellectual demands were great: but that is what I wanted.

Leys's tutorial methods could be unorthodox. On one occasion, the same Old Member was having a tutorial with him about Sir Robert Peel:

I had begun, as usual, to read [my essay]. Leys said: "let me have it", tossed in his open fire and continued "Now, tell me what you think about Peel." Almost in tears, I replied: "my thoughts are up the chimney". He said: "not much good if there's nothing left in your head."<sup>25</sup>

One Fellow in the College, however, was to achieve greater eminence than any of his colleagues: some remember, especially in 1938/9, a 'newly joined, bright young don, whom the Master had brought into the College, a certain J. Harold Wilson'. The future Prime Minister and his wife Mary lived in Kybald House during the war years, and two of their sons were born there. One of his early pupils had an opportunity to test Wilson's formidable memory, for they met at a luncheon by chance in the 1950s for the first time in years, but Wilson at once remembered him perfectly. Harold Wilson spent most of his time working alongside Beveridge, but, at the end of the war, he did

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22 UC:P214/MS1/4.

23 UC:P34/MS11/1 and UC:P214/MS1/16. Most Colleges had special unauthorised entrances in the Colleges: in New College, for example, there was a disused coal cellar, which one could enter by lifting a metal grill in the pavement in Holywell Street.

24 UC:P34/MS8/1.

25 UC:P214/MS1/21.

briefly serve as Domestic Bursar, before leaving the College to start a new career in politics.<sup>26</sup>

Last, but far from not least, there were the College servants who were here during the war. Norman Dix was here for part of the time, and was as fondly remembered by Old Members of the 1940s as by those of any later generation. Frank Collett, the College Butler, was 'greatly respected', and 'always most kind and helpful'. The Head Porter of the day, Fred Bickerton, prompts contrasting memories. For one undergraduate, he was 'a character, and rather a grumpy one'; for another, he was 'everyone's friend, and a disciplinarian when the need arose', although he was 'not to be compared, either in personality or vocabulary, with his successor, Douglas Millin'; and a third remembered that 'I used to go into the Lodge in the late evening to have a chat with Fred who had a lot of anecdotes mostly glorifying Fred as an ever resourceful and talented man'. The College Secretary, Lucia Turin, and her husband, Sergei, a Russian exile, were also remembered with fondness by some undergraduates.<sup>27</sup>

Many old servants were brought back from retirement during the war. One of them was Bateson, whose term of service went back to Edwardian times. He impressed undergraduates with his tales of how, in his youth, the wealthier 'young men' would leave the contents of their wardrobe behind when they went down, as a perquisite for their scouts. It was also remembered that 'Long habit had accustomed him to flatten himself against the doorpost and say "Thank you Sir" as you passed in or out'. Another Old Member, however, remembers, relations between undergraduates and College servants were 'cordial, if not close'; he suspected that many servants, who had fought in the previous war, 'may have regarded some of us in reserved occupations as column dodgers'.<sup>28</sup>

When at last the war was over, the College was a crowded place. Some undergraduates had come up straight from school, but they were in the minority. Michael Bradley (matr. 1946) was only 18 when he came up, and remembered that 'the great majority of my contemporaries were WWII veterans; mature, self-confident, and in some cases battle-hardened'.<sup>29</sup> Most undergraduates were either coming to take up places which had been offered them and which they could only now take up, or returning to complete courses begun before or during the war. Not everyone who had started a course at Oxford chose to return: for some members, too much had happened to them; they had jobs to look to; and, in some cases, a family to support. Many people had to live out. One of the lucky ones who did get a room in College found that 'my room in college was often full of coats, briefcases, shopping bags of such friends who lived some distance out and needed somewhere in the centre as a base'.<sup>30</sup>

Some of the war veterans did not find it easy to settle down into College life, but the majority appear to have adjusted with good humour to the disciplines required of them once more. Some things took a while to change: the College food remained awful, as rationing continued until the 1950s. One Old Member recalled that lunches in 1945 consisted of not much more than soup and one boiled potato, and another that 'you could blow off the meat helping from the plate'.<sup>31</sup> After the war, many of the older Fellows, had retired, and the veterans found themselves being taught by replacements who were not very much older than they themselves. Among them was a new History Fellow called Giles Alington, who was to become a central figure in College life during the next decade.

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26 UC:P214/MS1/14.

27 UC:P214/MS1/4, 14, 16 & 19, & UC:P34/MS8/1.

28 UC:P214/MS1/7.

29 UC:P214/MS1/5.

30 UC:P34/MS8/1.

31 UC:P214/MS1/9 & UC:P34/MS4/1.

We should end this account of the wartime College, however, by remembering those who went out to fight, but who never returned. The Second World War Memorial in Chapel bears the names of 87 members of University College who were killed during the war (there may well be others whose names are not recorded). The list includes one Fellow, Richard Holdsworth, a young and popular figure who coached rowing teams, and who was killed serving in the RAF. To give modern readers a better idea of this human cost, they should realise that no less than one-eighth of those who matriculated in 1937 and 1938 are on that memorial. One correspondent speaks for so many of his generation when he writes, ‘Whenever in Oxford I pop into chapel and stand in front of the War Memorial just inside the entrance, and re-read the sad list of those whom I knew so well and did not come back.’<sup>32</sup>