



Ministry of Defence

Army Secretariat
Army Headquarters
IDL 24 Blenheim Building
Marlborough Lines
Andover
Hampshire, SP11 8HJ
United Kingdom

Ref: FOI2017/13066/79846/05/04

E-mail: ArmySec-Group@mod.uk

Website: www.army.mod.uk

19 December 2017

E-mail address: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 11 December in which you requested the following information:

"I am trying to get information on the 11th Battle Training School at Baliol School, Sedburgh, during the 2nd World War. I have the attached information supplied by the Sedburgh Historical Society. The Forces War Records people said my only hope was to contact you.

I am specifically looking to find out which Unit would have run the training there around 1941/1942. I am trying to find an Officer called Leslie specifically but without his last name or date of birth this is the only lead I can think of pursuing. Time is running out. He has probably passed away but there are biological members of his family who are now in their 70s and really want to find him."

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

I am writing to advise you that following a search of our recorded information, I have established that the information you requested is not held by the Ministry of Defence. Indeed, there is no information held on how the Battle School would have been structured, it is likely that it would have had officer and Non-Commissioned Officer instructors who would have been taught elsewhere and instructed those units and men who passed through the School. Moreover, there is no information held on when the School may have opened. Under section 16 of the FOIA – advice and assistance - it is possible that the officer concerned may have been with a unit in 1941-42, which was not connected with the school. This is because the battle school movement took hold in 1942, so the Historical Society evidence of the School starting around that time would seem highly likely.

In the first instance, I would suggest you might follow up further leads to establish what unit(s) were based at Baliol School and when the Battle School may have opened. Whilst it is possible that local archives may have information on this, it may be more helpful to consider the Home Forces War Diaries (WO 166) and Home Forces HQ Papers (WO 199) at The National Archives. The War Diaries in WO 166 may include Northern Command and Sub-Area/District diaries relevant to the Sedbergh area, which might include location statements, showing which unit was based at Baliol School and may refer more directly to the establishment of the Battle School. I believe that the most likely areas/districts to cover Sedbergh may be Yorkshire Area and later the West Riding Area/District. Papers in WO 199 relating to training and training areas may also hold some information which would indicate when the Battle School was established. The National Archives website can be accessed at the following link:


<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

If you can confirm what unit(s) were based at Sedbergh (other than the Battle School), it may be possible to identify specific War Diaries for those units. These can contain officer returns – although unlikely to refer to an individual as Leslie.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance. Following this, if you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,


Disclosure and Litigation Leader