Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts

of

GREGORY YOUMANS

BA (University of Western Ontario, 2018)

“Officers and Gentlemen?
Class, Values, and the British Army’s Officer Corps, 1871-1901”

Department of History

Friday, August 28, 2020
10:00 A.M.
Conducted Remotely

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. David Zimmerman, Department of History, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Mariel Grant, Department of History, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Mary Elizabeth Leighton, Department of English, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Harald Krebs, School of Music, UVic

Dr. Stephen Evans, Acting Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract
This thesis examines the values and attitudes of the British Army’s officer corps during the period from 1871 to 1901, and how these values were linked to those of the British landed classes. Through studying the memoirs and other writings produced by the officers of this period, this thesis confirms that the link between these two systems was extremely close, and that the landed classes’ ideas of what constituted ‘gentlemanly’ behaviour were vitally important in shaping army officers’ conduct. This thesis argues that the acceptance of these values by the officer corps was not merely a product of their own social origins, but that officers subscribed to these values because they believed them to be particularly appropriate to military service. This attachment to gentlemanly values produced a deeply imbalanced set of competencies in the officer corps’ members, the effects of which remained present in the institutional culture of the army well beyond the end of this period.