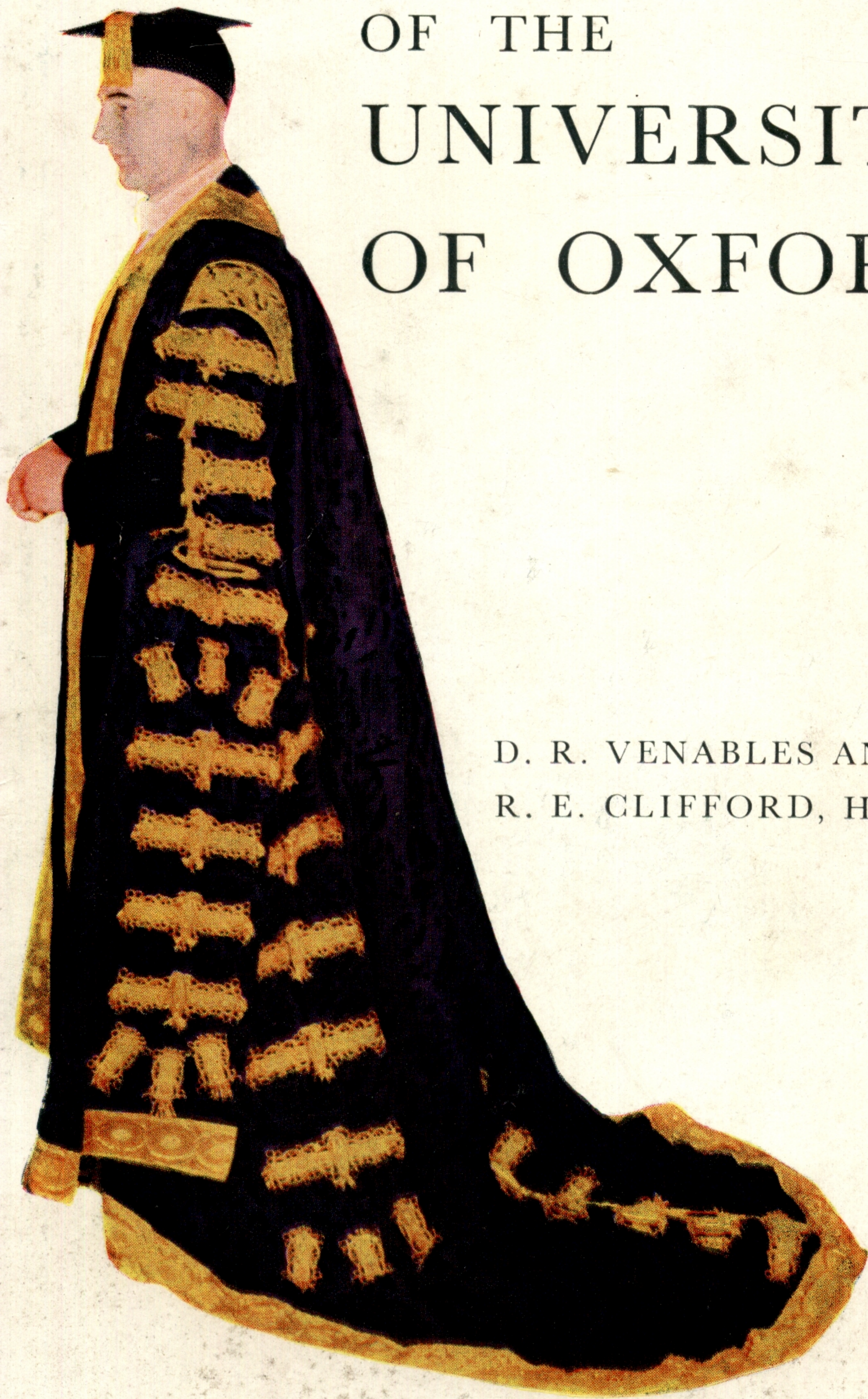


ACADEMIC DRESS

OF THE

UNIVERSITY

OF OXFORD



D. R. VENABLES AND
R. E. CLIFFORD, Hon. M.A.

S/T

£2.00

S/T

Academic Dress
of the
University of Oxford



by

D. R. Venables and R. E. Clifford, Hon. M.A.

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Foreword

Sir Douglas Veale, C.B.E., M.A.

IT MIGHT have been expected that a University in which the wearing of academic dress is compulsory for all its members would, in the course of seven centuries, have produced an official code of rules. Indeed, in 1636, Archbishop Laud in Title XIV of his Code, ordered the Heads of Colleges and Halls (who then formed the Hebdomadal Council), after making "diligent enquiry", to determine what were the correct robes for each faculty "especially for the medical and legal faculties". And they were to deposit a specimen of each made out of some "cheap material" in a chest destined for that purpose. Anyone who thereafter tried to introduce any novel form of robe was to be punished at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor; and the tailors were particularly enjoined not to depart from the prescribed patterns. Any tailor who was so reckless as to ignore this rule was also to be punished at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor.

Diligent, though intermittent, search during my twenty-eight years as Registrar has failed to locate that chest, though I naturally hesitate to impute negligence to the august persons whose duty it was, under the Laudian Code, to provide it.

But happily in a mere matter of 320 years after the Code was published Mr. Venables and Mr. Clifford have produced this authoritative book on the subject. And to Mr. Venables and his colleagues in the Oxford Branch of the National Federation of Merchant Tailors the University also owes, not indeed a chest of specimens, but what is far more useful and accessible—an illustrated descriptive catalogue of the correct colours and materials of the prescribed robes. This catalogue has been approved by Congregation and is therefore definitive.

To Mr. Clifford, my valued colleague in the Registry, and to Mr. Venables, I now tender grateful thanks for at last producing this excellent and useful work.

University Registry.

5 August 1957

(Signed) DOUGLAS VEALE

ACADEMIC DRESS

THE wearing of academic dress is compulsory at all formal ceremonies of the University and generally in the presence of high University officers, at lectures, at examinations and at most official meetings. *Subfusc* clothing (see page 8) is worn with full academic dress.

The dress now worn is much the same as in medieval times, but with certain modifications, the chief of which were made during the sixteenth century.

THE CHANCELLOR

The Chancellor of the University is elected by Convocation and holds the position for his lifetime. He is always a member of the University who has achieved notability in public life, and his appearances at ceremonies in Oxford are rare and formal.

At the Encænia (see page 9) the Chancellor occasionally presides over the meeting of Convocation and confers the honorary degrees on famous men and women.

The Chancellor wears an elaborate and distinctive robe made from heavy black brocaded silk with gold lace trimming on the collar, facings, back and sleeves. The cap is made from black velvet and has a gold tassel.

THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

The Vice-Chancellor, who is always head of an Oxford college, is nominated each year by the Chancellor. It is possible at present for him to hold office for a period of two years.

He is the administrative head of the University and has many statutory powers, besides being the chairman of most of the important University boards and committees.

He wears the robe or gown of the degree to which he is entitled.



CHANCELLOR'S ROBE

THE PROCTORS

The Proctors are elected each year by two of the colleges in turn. They are in charge of discipline in the University and are also members of many boards and committees.

They wear a black full gown, with velvet sleeves and facings and edgings of a broad yellow and a narrow red stripe, together with a black hood lined with miniver fur. A square cap is worn.

DOCTORS

Doctors wear their full dress robes, white ties and bands at any function indicated on notices or in the *University Gazette* as being one on which "Doctors will wear their robes". Doctors of Divinity wear scarves with full dress robes.

Full dress is also worn at the Encænia, the Encænia garden party, the occasion of Royal visits and by those attending University sermons on special days, such as Christmas Day. It has also become customary for full dress to be worn at the Maison Française garden party.

At meetings of the Ancient House of Congregation (i.e., degree ceremonies) Doctors wear gowns, habits, hoods, bands and white ties, and a square cap. In Congregation or Convocation, they wear gowns with habits and hoods unless, being Masters of Arts also, they sit with the Masters and wear gowns only.

On any other occasions when full academic dress is specified Doctors wear robes, but not habits or hoods. At private parties, garden parties (other than the Encænia or Maison Française), and when paying a formal visit to officials either publicly or privately, a black laced gown is worn.

OTHER GRADUATES

All other graduates wear gowns, hoods and white ties, and a square cap on any occasion indicated by special notice as being one on which "other graduates wear their hoods". This applies to the Encænia, visits of Royalty and any other special occasions. Gowns and hoods are required at the Encænia garden party, but, by custom, ordinary ties are worn. Assessors and examiners wear gowns, hoods and white ties in the Examination Schools or other place when examining, as do Deans presenting candidates for matriculation or in the Ancient House of Congregation when presenting candidates for degrees.

Gowns only are worn at meetings of Congregation or Convocation, in the presence of the Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor, either privately or publicly, and when dining in college.

When one of the high officers is invited to a private house, office, room or laboratory, his host does not wear academic dress, although both the Vice-Chancellor and other guests do.

UNDERGRADUATES

Undergraduates wear cap and gown in the presence of the Vice-Chancellor or other high officer of the University in their official capacity, also at matriculation ceremonies, examinations, lectures and University ceremonies. At degree ceremonies, examinations and matriculation ceremonies *subfusc* clothing (see page 8) must be worn.

CAPS

Caps are worn with academic dress by men when out of doors and at all times by women. The Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and the Proctors wear caps at all times except in church, in college or in a private place.

MEMBERS OF OTHER UNIVERSITIES

Members of other Universities do not wear academic dress within the precincts of the University of Oxford. The one

exception is that members of the University of Cambridge wear their robes, as a matter of established custom, when preaching the University sermon at Oxford.

WEARING OF BANDS

In addition to the special occasions when bands are worn as described above, the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors always wear them, as do Pro-Proctors when they are representing the Proctors and Pro-Vice-Chancellors representing the Vice-Chancellor. The Chancellor now wears bands instead of what used to be called a “waterfall cravat”.

SUBFUSC CLOTHING

In the Proctors’ memorandum on the conduct and discipline of junior members of the University, *subfusc* is described as:

FOR MEN: a dark suit, dark socks, black boots or shoes, a white shirt, white collar and white bow tie.

FOR WOMEN: a white blouse, black tie, dark skirt, black stockings, black boots or shoes and, if desired, a dark coat.

THE ENCÆNIA

THE most outstanding of University ceremonies at which full academic dress is worn is the Encænia, which takes place at 12 noon on the Wednesday in the week following Trinity Full Term each year. At this ceremony honorary degrees are conferred on distinguished persons from many countries and in varying walks of life.

A procession, consisting of the Chief Constable of Oxford, the University Marshal, the University Verger, Bedels, the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors, Doctors, Heads of Houses, those who are to receive honorary degrees, the Public Orator and the Registrar, starts from the Vice-Chancellor's college and proceeds through the quadrangle of the Bodleian Library and the Divinity School to the Sheldonian Theatre.

After the degrees have been conferred, some of those who have won University prizes read part of their winning entries, and either the Public Orator or Professor of Poetry makes the Creweian Oration to commemorate benefactors of the University.

In the afternoon the Vice-Chancellor holds a garden party, usually in the grounds of his college, at which members of the University wear full academic dress, with the exception that, by custom, ordinary ties are worn instead of white bow ties.

THE DEGREE CEREMONY

THE ceremony of conferring degrees at Oxford takes place at a number of meetings—usually eleven during the academic year—of the Ancient House of Congregation. These meetings are held in the Sheldonian Theatre or, if the number to be conferred is small, in the Divinity School, which is just behind the Theatre.

Before the ceremony, which always commences at 2.30 p.m., candidates are brought by their college Dean of Degrees to either the Divinity School or Convocation House, where a list of their signatures and the college “grace” is handed to the Registrar or his representative. Here last-minute alterations can be made when candidates have failed to appear, and sometimes, with the special permission of the Vice-Chancellor, a name may be added to the list. An official of the University Chest is present to deal with outstanding fees.

Candidates are then seated so far as possible in the order in which they will be called to take their degrees. When all are seated, the Vice-Chancellor, preceded by the Bedel of Arts, enters the Theatre followed by the Proctors and the Registrar. Full academic dress is worn by the candidates at these ceremonies, but doctors who are presenting candidates generally wear Convocation habits. The Vice-Chancellor and Proctors wear their caps throughout the proceedings.

As the procession enters the Theatre, the Professors and College Deans, who are seated in front, the candidates and visitors all stand while the Vice-Chancellor opens the meeting with a Latin formula. The proceedings are conducted throughout in Latin.

When everyone is again seated, the Registrar rises to state that he is satisfied all candidates are properly qualified. Then

the Proctors stand while the Senior Proctor reads the names of the candidates who desire to be admitted to higher degrees (D.D., D.C.L., D.M., M.CH., D.LITT., D.SC., D.MUS., B.D., B.C.L., B.M. and usually D.PHIL.). Both Proctors then walk down the House and back in front of the Deans, which is the method of voting in the Ancient House. At one time, a Dean sometimes "plucked" the Proctor's gown as a sign of objection to a candidate, but this method is no longer used, although such objections are sometimes raised privately before the ceremony. College officers generally make quite sure that candidates have no reasons which could prevent them taking degrees.

After the Senior Proctor has announced that the degrees have been voted, the candidates are presented by the appropriate Professor or by the college Dean of Degrees. The presenter is called by a Bedel and takes his place in front of the Vice-Chancellor, holding by his right hand the right hand of one of the candidates, who are presented in a group to the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors, to whom they bow in turn.

The candidates next move in front of the Junior Proctor who charges them to be loyal to the University, to which they pledge their faith if they are being admitted as higher Doctors or Masters. Other candidates are charged to observe the University statutes, but are not asked to take the oath. They then stand in front of the Vice-Chancellor who admits them to the degree. The higher Doctors and Masters (D.D., D.C.L., D.M., M.CH. and M.A.) kneel in front of the Vice-Chancellor, who touches each one on the head with a Testament and admits him "in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost".

The Senior Proctor now reads the names of those taking the degree of M.A., following which they are charged and admitted as described above. After this the Junior Proctor reads the names of candidates for B.MUS., B.LITT., B.SC. and B.PHIL. degrees, who are then charged and admitted.

At convenient points in the ceremony those who have been admitted as Doctors return fully robed and shake hands with

the Vice-Chancellor, after which they sit in the seats reserved for Doctors. Those admitted as Masters of Arts come back in procession wearing their Master of Arts gowns and hoods and bow to the Vice-Chancellor.

The Junior Proctor then reads the names of those taking the B.A. degree, who are presented, charged in groups of about thirty and then admitted to the degree.

If there are any members of Cambridge or Dublin Universities who have received permission to incorporate, this is done immediately after the admissions to the corresponding Oxford degree.

When all the candidates have been admitted, the Vice-Chancellor adjourns the House.

HONORARY DEGREES

Occasionally, a degree is given "honoris causa" at an ordinary degree ceremony and it is the first item of the proceedings.

The honorand, who wears the academic dress of the degree to which he is to be admitted, is introduced in a Latin speech made by the Public Orator. After this speech the Bedel of Arts escorts the recipient in front of the Vice-Chancellor, who formally admits him to the degree.

Dress of Other University Officials

The Marshal

The University Marshal is in charge of the Proctors' servants, who are the University police. He wears a distinctive black gown with a silver badge and carries an ebony silver-mounted staff.

The Bedels

The Bedels, of whom there are usually four, attend the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor on formal occasions. They wear a plain black gown with a round black bonnet, and carry staves as symbols. They play an important part in the running of degree ceremonies.

The University Verger

The Verger wears a long black gown with a round black bonnet. He carries a small wand of silver gilt when in processions and helps in the preparations for all University services and ceremonies.

DESCRIPTIONS OF ROBES AND GOWNS

DOCTOR OF DIVINITY (D.D.)

Full dress

A full scarlet robe with bell-shaped sleeves. The body of the robe is made from scarlet superfine cloth with facings and sleeves of black velvet. The facings are edged with three yellow stripes with crimson in between. Doctors of Divinity wear a scarf, cassock, cincture, bands and a square cap.

Convocation habit

A sleeveless cloak of scarlet superfine cloth, part lined with black silk, and fastened with two black buttons in front. The back is gathered in a yoke. The hood is of scarlet superfine cloth lined with black silk. Convocation habit is worn over the undress gown.

Undress gown

The gown is the same as for the Master of Arts, but should be made of silk and worn with a scarf.

DOCTOR OF MUSIC (D.MUS.)

Full dress

A full robe made from cream silk with apple blossom embroidery, the facings and sleeves being of cherry crimson silk. A velvet bonnet is worn.

Undress gown

A black gown of silk or poplin with a form of black lace sewn on the collar, the lower part of the back and down the sides of the sleeves, which are closed and cut straight, but have an opening just above the elbow. A square cap is worn.

The hood is of cream silk brocade with apple blossom embroidery lined with cherry crimson silk.

There is no Convocation habit for this degree.



D.D.



D.MUS.

DOCTOR OF CIVIL LAW (D.C.L.)
and
DOCTOR OF MEDICINE (D.M.)

Full dress

A full scarlet robe with bell-shaped sleeves. The body is made from superfine scarlet cloth with facings and sleeves of blood crimson silk. A velvet bonnet is worn.

Convocation habit

A sleeveless cloak of scarlet superfine cloth, part lined with blood crimson silk, fastened with two red-silk-covered buttons in front. The back is gathered in a yoke. The hood is of scarlet superfine cloth lined with blood crimson silk. A square cap is worn.

Undress gown

A black gown of silk or poplin, with a form of black lace sewn on the collar, the lower part of the back and down the sleeves, which are closed and cut straight, having an opening just above the elbow. A square cap is worn.

MASTER OF SURGERY (M.CH.)

There is no full dress for this degree.

A black gown of silk or poplin with a form of black lace sewn on the collar, the lower part of the back and down the sleeves, which are closed and cut straight, having an opening just above the elbow. A square cap is worn. The hood is of black silk lined and edged with blue silk.



D.C.L. OR D.M.



M.CH.

DOCTOR OF LETTERS (D.LITT.)
and
DOCTOR OF SCIENCE (D.SC.)

Full dress

A full scarlet robe with bell-shaped sleeves, of which the body is made from scarlet superfine cloth with facings and sleeves of neutral grey silk. A square cap is worn.

Convocation habit

A sleeveless cloak of scarlet superfine cloth, part lined with neutral grey silk, fastened with two grey-silk-covered buttons in front. The back is gathered in a yoke. The hood is of scarlet superfine cloth lined with neutral grey silk.

Undress gown

A black gown of silk or poplin with a form of black lace sewn on the collar, the lower part of the back and down the sleeves, which are closed and cut straight, but have an opening just above the elbow.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (D.PHIL.)

Full dress

A full scarlet robe with bell-shaped sleeves, of which the body is made from scarlet superfine cloth with facings and sleeves of navy blue silk. A square cap is worn.

Convocation habit

A sleeveless cloak of scarlet superfine cloth, part lined with navy blue silk, fastened with two navy-blue-silk-covered buttons in front. The back is gathered in a yoke. The hood is of scarlet cloth lined with navy blue silk.

Undress gown

A black gown of silk or poplin with a form of black lace sewn on the collar, the lower part of the back and down the sleeves, which are closed and cut straight, but have an opening just above the elbow.



D.LITT. OR D.SC.



D.PHIL.

*** BACHELOR OF MUSIC (B.MUS.)**

A black gown of silk or poplin, with a form of black lace sewn on the collar, the lower part of the back and down the sleeves, which are closed and cut straight, but have an opening just above the elbow. A square cap is worn.

The hood is of lilac ribbed silk or poplin trimmed with white fur.

*** BACHELOR OF MEDICINE AND
OF SURGERY (B.M., B.CH.)**

and

*** BACHELOR OF CIVIL LAW (B.C.L.)**

A gown similar to that described above for the Bachelor of Music, but the hood is of blue corded silk or poplin with white fur.

** Note:* The black-laced gown for the above Bachelors, and those shown on page 23, is the same style as the undress gown worn by Doctors, with the exception that there is no lace trimming on the back of the gown underneath the arm.



B.MUS.



B.M. OR B.C.L.

* BACHELOR OF LETTERS (B.LITT.)
and

* BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.SC.)

A black gown of silk or poplin with a form of black lace sewn on the collar, the lower part of the back and down the sleeves, which are closed and cut straight, but have an opening just above the elbow. A square cap is worn.

The hood is of light blue ribbed silk trimmed with white fur.

* BACHELOR OF PHILOSOPHY (B.PHIL.)

A gown similar to that described above for the Bachelor of Letters or of Science, but the hood is of dark blue navy ribbed silk lined with white silk.

BACHELOR OF DIVINITY (B.D.)

(Not illustrated)

A black gown of the Master of Arts style (see page 26) is worn, and is made of silk or Russell cord. A square cap is worn.

The hood is of black corded silk lined with a fine black ribbed silk.

* See note on previous page.



B.LITT OR B.SC.



B.PHIL.

CONVOCAATION DRESS

The Convocation habit is worn by Doctors on occasions shown on page 6. The variations of this dress for the different degrees are given under the explanations for the appropriate doctorates.

A *square* cap is always worn with Convocation dress.



D.C.L. OR D.M.



D.LITT. OR D.SC.

MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.)

A full-style gown made from black Russell cord, reaching below the calf of the wearer, with a full gathered yoke behind and closed sleeves with a crescent-shaped cut at the bottom and an opening at the elbow.

The hood is of Dean Burgon or Oxford shape and is made from black corded silk lined with crimson or shot crimson silk. A square cap is worn.

BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A.)

A full-style gown made from black Russell cord. It has a full gathered yoke behind with long open-fronted sleeves.

The hood is of Dean Burgon or Oxford style and is made from black corded silk lined and trimmed with white fur. A square cap is worn.



M.A.



B.A.

ADVANCED STUDENTS

This gown is only for those undergraduates who are admitted by a Board of Faculty as Advanced Students who are working for a Doctor of Philosophy degree.

The gown is of the same style as that for a commoner, but it reaches to the knees of the wearer and has streamers on each side hanging to the length of the gown. A square cap is worn.

SCHOLARS (and some exhibitioners)

A scholar's gown is worn by any undergraduate who has been awarded a scholarship by an Oxford college. Some colleges give special permission to exhibitioners also to wear this gown.

The scholar's gown is made from black cotton material in full style with a gathered stiffened yoke behind and short, open sleeves. The gown should reach to the wearer's knees. A square cap is worn.



ADVANCED STUDENT



SCHOLAR

COMMONERS

A commoner is any undergraduate member of the University who has not obtained a college scholarship or exhibition, or been admitted as an Advanced Student. Senior students wear the commoners' gown.

The gown is made of black cotton material with the style of a turned-over collar. It has no sleeves, but has a streamer on each side with square pleating and hanging to the full length of the gown, which covers the normal lounge coat. A square cap is worn.

WOMEN GRADUATES AND UNDERGRADUATES

Women wear the same style of gown as men, but instead of the square cap they wear a soft cap, specially designed, of which the flap at the back is left buttoned. The cap does not have a tassel.



COMMONER



WOMAN UNDERGRADUATE

Explanatory Notes

Convocation

The House of Convocation is composed of all Masters of Arts of Oxford University who became members of the University in Michaelmas Term, 1936, or afterwards; also those M.A.s who matriculated before that date and who have either (a) compounded for their University dues or (b) have been, and still are, paying University dues each term from the time of taking the M.A. degree.

Convocation elects the Chancellor, the Public Orator and the Professor of Poetry; it also considers certain statutes and decrees which have already been submitted to Congregation. All honorary degrees must be approved by Convocation before they can be conferred.

Congregation

This is the main legislative body of the University which considers statutes and decrees submitted to it by the Hebdomadal Council.

It is composed of those members of Convocation who hold teaching and administrative appointments in Oxford or who are members of any board, committee or other body established by a statute of the University.

The Ancient House of Congregation now only confers degrees.

The Hebdomadal Council

This is the chief administrative body of the University, and deals with all important questions connected with the policy and government of the University. It meets each Monday of full term and on the Monday of the ninth week. The members are elected by Congregation.

*The register of colours and materials of robes, gowns
and hoods for degrees in the University of Oxford*

On 28 May, 1956, a committee on academic dress examined a book of patterns prepared and submitted by Mr D. R. Venables on behalf of the Oxford branch of the National Federation of Merchant Tailors, and recommended that the patterns be approved. This recommendation included the alternative for the lining of the M.A. hood and said that the use of nylon substitute fur for the hoods of Bachelors should no longer be allowed. It further recommended that a register of the patterns should be accepted by the University. All the above was approved by the Hebdomadal Council on 12 February, 1957.

The register of patterns was prepared, bound in leather and on parchment leaves, to which were affixed patterns of silks, materials and fur, and the University requirements written above each pattern. This register is now kept in the University Archives. A second copy is kept by the firm of Shepherd & Woodward.

Both copies were signed on behalf of the University by the Warden of Wadham College (Sir Maurice Bowra), Pro-Vice-Chancellor, and the Registrar of the University (Sir Douglas Veale), and for the Tailors' Federation by Mr. D. R. Venables and Mr. S. Blackler, partners of the firm of Shepherd & Woodward, High Street, Oxford.

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