



Mild Jones oxidation ( $0^\circ$ ; 30 s) of the  $\beta$ -aldehyde (**4b**), and subsequent methylation and treatment with toluene-*p*-sulphonic acid yielded the  $9\beta$ -methoxycarbonyl derivative (**5a**) [m.p.  $145^\circ$ ,  $m/e$  332 ( $M^+$ ),  $\nu_{\max}$  ( $\text{CHCl}_3$ ) 3600, 1775, and  $1745\text{ cm}^{-1}$ ,  $\delta(\text{CDCl}_3)$  3.49 (1H, d,  $J$  9.2 Hz), 3.85 (3H, s), 3.88 (3H, s), and 3.88 (1H, d,  $J$  9.2 Hz)] in 90% overall yield.

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