



**Director General's
Message**

From the Archives

**Sketching in the
Line of Fire**

**In the Shadows
of History**

**Princess Mary's
Christmas Box**

Don't miss the

AGM

22nd NOVEMBER

SPEAKER:

**Prof John Buckley,
Professor of
Military History
at University of
Wolverhampton**

The Society of Friends of the National Army Museum

The Chairman

Tony Verey

“ It was a great pleasure to be able to hold our recent Quarterly Council Meeting back in the refurbished Museum. It also gave us an opportunity to see the new and exciting approach that has been adopted to tell the story of the British Army in the various galleries. I would urge you to follow in our footsteps if not as a visitor but attending the AGM in November. Congratulations indeed to the Director General for all that has been achieved in the time, we shall be sorry to see her leave and wish her well. Congratulations are also due to the Newsletter Editorial Team who have yet again scooped First Prize for the Best Friends Newsletter of 2017 organised by the BAFM. Three entries and three prizes is something to be proud of as is its reflection on the Museum. ”

The Editor

Robin Ollington

“ New look Museum and new look Newsletter, though the last issue obviously made an impact for once again we have won the BAFM Best Newsletter Award for 2017. So special thanks to all those who provided articles that obviously impressed the judges. In this issue we hear from the Director General and also say farewell to her after her more than ‘ground breaking’ tenure and wish her well in retirement. Remember too this is your Newsletter so please keep contributions coming in. ”

Dear SOFNAM Members

Welcome to the new National Army Museum and thank you!...



Thank you for your help and support, for your patience in the long wait for the new museum and thank you to all those Friends who have said and written so many kind things about the new museum. For those of you who haven't been able to visit yet, I hope you can get some idea from the images of the new museum in the Newsletter and on our website and we look forward to welcoming you back soon. It is over six years now since we started planning this venture. The redevelopment grew out of an initial idea to build a new entrance. However, after speaking to visitors we realised that this would not solve the problems of the old building - that it was dark, there was no café, no education facilities and that it was a building of two halves which didn't speak to each other and didn't have the kind of facilities needed in a modern museum. A completely different building layout allows us to use the space and tell the stories in different ways. The new museum explores the character and role of the British Army past and present through thematic galleries – *Insight, Soldier, Army, Battle and Society*. The bright new atrium and galleries allow our collections to be shown in a vast number of ways and have been able to give a wider perspective on the army's history. The stories in the museum are universal, they come from individual men and women. We invite visitors to come and question their British Army both past and present and find out more about its role in our lives. The galleries provide a space to explore and discuss the army and its relevance to society in ways that

we sometimes would not imagine; from fashion and films to flood defences and, of course, conflict. It is an extraordinary story and we need to tell it in a way that does the subject justice and which the public will understand and appreciate. We have been able to put large objects, such as the Gells Civil War Flag, on display for the first time. In fact, a third of the 2,500 objects on display within the museum have never been on public display before, either due to their fragility, size or because we acquired them whilst the museum was closed, such as Lawrence of Arabia's robes and dagger.



On the Lower Ground Floor *Insight* gallery examines the impact the British Army has had around the world, the many different countries it has interacted with, and the cultures it has encountered. The Ground Floor *Soldier* gallery draws on the abundance of individual stories contained within the National Army Museum's Collection and archive. It brings to life displays of personal and often inspiring objects that explore the physical

and emotional experience of soldiering throughout the army's history, showing that the thoughts, feelings and human experience of soldiers remain remarkably similar across time and locality.

Army gallery charts the history of the army as an institution. It explores its origins in the chaos of the British Civil Wars, its major role in the political development of the country and its impact on global history. It looks at the make-up of the army, the people that have served in it, and explains the hierarchy and systems it uses.

Battle gallery explores the British experience of battle from the 1640s to the present day. Four distinctive sections - the age of horse and musket (1640s-1840s), the age of rapid fire (1840s-1900s), total war (1914-1945) and modern warfare (1946-today) - show how tactics evolved and technological development changed the course of battles fought by the British Army. Finally, *Society* gallery uses objects, artworks and personal testimony to examine the army as a cultural, as well as military force. Half of all objects in this gallery are displayed for the first time, and reveal the army's impact on our customs, values and choices. From films, literature, toys and music we create or grow up with, to how the army impacts the way we vote and our news reporting.

Society gallery also examines ceremony, remembrance and the moments when communities have encountered British soldiers on their streets in circumstances of conflict, natural disaster and national security.

As the number of people in Britain today who have direct or family experience of the army declines, we are now talking to audiences who sometimes have very little knowledge of the army and its history, so the displays have been put together with non-specialists as well as specialists in mind.

Although the museum has increased in size, we have had to pack even more into it and in order to do that we have used



touchscreen technology throughout to allow those with a more expert knowledge to delve deeper into the collections, stories, documents and oral histories which support the displays. The new Templer Study Centre has an extended footprint and better facilities for those serious researchers who need direct access to the archive. The project would not have been possible without the £11.5 million from the National Lottery players and gifts from individuals and organisations such as the Society of Friends of the National Army Museum. We would like to thank SOFNAM for their continued support during and after the redevelopment and look forward to welcoming as many members as possible to the new museum. On a personal note, my time at the Museum is drawing to a close as I will be retiring at the end of October. It has been an exciting and eventful seven years made all the better for the support,

friendship and encouragement I have received from SOFNAM. I know you will continue to offer that support in the future to ensure the Museum becomes an even better resource to explain and connect the story of the Army with the wider world.

I am thrilled that the Council of the NAM have decided to set up the Murray Conservation Fund to support an annual conservation programme of items from the collection. The first item chosen is a full length painting of the Duke of Cambridge, (who served the army a lot longer than 7 years before retirement !) which is in need of restoration before going on display in the new Galleries. There is more information included with the magazine. As I write (23 August) , we are 23% towards the target cost of £30,000 I hope you will be able to once more support this appeal. With my very best wishes.

Janice Murray,
Director General NAM

EVENTS NEWS

Our Vice-President, Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter, conducted a wonderful Walk with Wellington in May. Sadly he was unwell for the second walk but hopes to be able to fix another date for those who were unable to join the first one.

From the Archives

A series by Penny Hutchins, Records Officer, NAM

As Records Officer at NAM I am always looking for a nice story among the Museum's papers, which I then share with other staff in my weekly internal blog. This is one of my favourites: a sweet tale of how one donation to NAM's collection of Victoria Crosses was appreciated. In January 1962, then Director of the Museum, Charles Appleby, submitted to the Daily Mail editorial pages the story of how one Victoria Cross had been unselfishly donated to the Museum for the benefit of the Nation. Very much like today, the early 1960s saw the sale of many VC's by owners, many of which could not be purchased 'for the Nation'. Appleby's letter read: *"As a change from the recent Victoria Cross publicity, may I relate the story of a widow, living on her old age pension, who came up from the South Coast, walked a mile from Camberley Station, and presented to the Museum the Victoria Cross won by her father-in-law in 1881. She well knew the market value of the medals but not only was she not selling but she declined assistance with the railway fare."*



This Victoria Cross (accession number 1960-07-04) was the medal awarded to Sergeant J Danagher, 2nd Battalion Connaught Rangers, for his actions at Elandsfontein, near Pretoria in January 1881, rescuing wounded men under fire. Appleby's letter in the press elicited the following response:

Appleby sent flowers to the widow from the money enclosed in this letter. Images of the medals can be found on Cabal. Reflecting on this has made me realise the reason why I enjoy my role here at NAM: it isn't the fact that we have all these wonderful collections here in the Museum, it is more how and why the collections are here, how the Museum developed and the personalities behind these developments.



20/1/62
To Col. C. B. Appleby, 2/1/62
Army Museum,
Camberley.
Dear Sir
Your letter relating the splendid story of the Widow and her husband's Medal gave me great pleasure in the reading and I am so glad you paid this token to such a splendid old lady.
You mention her great independence, another point for admiration.
I am myself, a pensioner - but with a pension to spare.

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Would you kindly allow your Secretary to address the envelope to her lady. A small gift towards a little comfort. Please do not acknowledge my thanks and apology for the liberty I am taking.
Yours sincerely,
A. D.

SKETCHING IN THE LINE OF FIRE

In May this year, the museum received a donation from the war artist Matthew Cook. His sketchbook and drawing equipment are the latest additions to the temporary exhibition 'War Paint: Brushes with conflict', which runs until 19th November this year. Matthew carried his kit of an airline food tray which he used as a palette, a pencil, a drawing pen, a water bottle, a selection of brushes and three bottles of inks in the primary colours. Using these basic tools Matthew painted vivid scenes of the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, which were reproduced in *The Times* newspaper. Like many artists operating in war zones, he faced many of the dangers of soldiers. Crimean war artist William Simpson wrote in his autobiography, 'Lord Clarence explained the difference between his going into action and my doing the same thing. He would be doing his duty, and if a shell struck him he would be a "hero", whereas, as I had no business there, if a shell struck me I would be called a "fool"'. This, the first temporary exhibition at the refurbished museum, explores why soldiers and artists have painted scenes of conflict. From the portrait commemorating the military service of Lieutenant-Colonel Randolph Egerton painted in about 1672 by the dutch military



Scars, 2016, by Staff Sergeant Richard Salter, Royal Corps of Signals, 2016.

artist Jan Wyck, to an example of war art film of 'Bolan Market' in Afghanistan in 2011 by Mark Neville, artists have used a variety of mediums to create records of life on campaign, report news or commemorate military events. Some of the most accomplished works on display are by soldiers who were taught to sketch landscapes and draw maps as part of their military training. As Britain's empire grew in the 18th century, British military engineers surveyed the newly-captured land in order to assess their economic and military potential. A number of soldiers employed their drawing skills to produce images which were reproduced in prints, to feed

the public's demand for news of the army and conflict. Above all, war art is a personal perspective on war and its vast impact on people and places. Every image



Warrington Road, Belgium, 1917, by Richard Tennant Cooper, about 1926.

is an individual reflection on the consequences of conflict. Richard Salter served in the British Army for 20 years, including operations in Bosnia and Afghanistan, and painted throughout his military career. In his painting 'Scars, 2016', he hinted at both the physical and non-physical scars that soldiers all carry. According to Richard, 'you can take a soldier out of service, but you can't take the service



A Tommy wearing rain cape and carrying picket posts, about 1917, by Second Lieutenant Richard Tennant Cooper, about 1918.

out of a soldier. I have met many ex-servicemen, all of whom carry countless memories. We will carry these experiences of extreme good and bad with us, they have made us who we are and they will stay with us until the end.'
*Emma Mawdsley,
Senior Research Curator NAM*



A Forward Observation Officer of the 3rd Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery, Basra in Iraq, by Matthew Cook, 2003.

Princess Mary's Christmas Gift Box

Surely one of the most recognised souvenirs of the Great War of 1914-18 still treasured by many families, many with their original contents.

The story of this personal gift by the Queen's Aunt, Princess Mary is a great example of how a simple gesture escalated and ended up with over 2,600,000 boxes being produced and despatched, not only to the troops but also to many others involved in the war effort. These included prisoners of war, nurses, the wounded as well as those serving of different faiths who received boxes with suitably prepared contents.

In 1914, the Princess Royal, as she was then called, thought it would be an idea to send a small Christmas gift and message to all those serving the Crown and at her expense. However such were the numbers involved the cost would have been more than prohibitive, so she launched a special appeal which needless to say had immediate response. The gift was to take the form of a small brass box suitably embossed containing cigarettes or pipe tobacco, a greetings card and photo of the donor with a personal message.

Concern was raised over non-

smokers and those of different faiths, thus the former received chocolates and the latter various spices. Production began, a huge task bearing in mind the amount of brass also needed for shell cases at that time. Things were further exacerbated by the sinking of the Lusitania



Princess Mary.



which carried amongst its cargo brass for the boxes. Eventually however over 2,600,000 were finally distributed, not all in time for Christmas, but well received when they finally arrived and judging by the number still surviving today, many with their original contents, they were treasured by the recipients and continue to be so today by their descendants.

We are grateful to Christine Cook for this article.

WANTED

Sofnam Council needs two new members, one to be responsible for recruitment and the other to take over organising the regular events and visits enjoyed by the Friends.

Please do let us know if you would be interested in and able to undertake one of these roles. Applications with your background and interests to the Hon Sec please at 19 Albany Street, London NW1 4DX

Cartoon Corner



*"I see they've left out ***** and *****"*

In The Shadows Of History 33

A continuing series in which we profile those who played a role in historical events but have now faded into the background.

33



Eric Lambert CMG OBE

1909-1996

Colonial Police Officer, Soldier, Honorary Chinese General, Diplomat and Author.

Piers Storie-Pugh met Eric Lambert on the battlefield of Kohima in 1994, the 50th anniversary of the battle.

Eric was dressed in a white tropical suit, white hat with all the medals including the GMC, the OBE, the KPM and the DSO (China) First Class.

Eric Lambert, born in Dublin, had a most colourful and courageous career of over 40 years, much of it spent in the Far East and for which he was highly decorated by a number of nations.

In 1936, having already been appointed in 1931 a magistrate for Naga Hills, as a Political Officer he was assigned to carry out with two British Majors, both with Military Crosses, a survey of a part of his patch which, due to its remote locality, was not properly under Indian administration or legal system. Following this remarkable six months adventure he presented to The Royal Geographical Society on 11th January 1937 his paper 'The Brahmaputra to the Chindwin'. The Chairman of The Royal Geographical Society, Admiral Sir William Goodenough GCB MVO said "I assure you Mr Lambert that you have given us an evening of very great interest... when three Britons... take a big party through six months travel involving dangerous crossings, illnesses and disease, without loss of life, they are achieving something

that does immense credit to them as leaders...". In 1939, aged 30, he was posted to North East Assam as part of the Imperial Indian Police and would go on to speak six local languages.



Eric Lambert on commissioning into the Imperial Indian Police.

With the entry of Japan into the Second World War, Eric Lambert was Director of Civil Defence of the North Burma Frontier and in the 1942 withdrawal from Burma assisted in the evacuation of some 20,000 Indians. In this desperate evacuation the 5th Chinese Army, cut off on their journey north by the Japanese at Myitkyina, was formerly posted as missing in the jungle. Word got to Lambert who carried out a recce in a RAF light plane, and found the army alongside the banks of the Chindwin River at a place near Dalu which had been a major supply halt for his 1936 expedition. He returned by air dropping maps and instructions

in Chinese telling them to head for a town called Margherita through some dreadful and mountainous country, adding that he meanwhile would set out on foot with circa 200 coolies, linguists, radio operators and doctors to meet them. He was given the honorary rank of Chinese General with appropriate authority. For this remarkable successful rescue, Lambert was ordered to the temporary capital of China to receive the Chinese Distinguished Service Order, First Class and then ordered to return where he was awarded the King's Police Medal by Great Britain in 1943.

In 1944, with the Japanese advancing through Burma, Lambert with his local knowledge was asked to galvanise the Naga Hills tribes as trackers, informers and fighters including members of the wonderful V Force. General Slim then appointed him Chief Civilian Liaison Officer with the 14th Army with special responsibility for the Kohima area during the coming battle. Kohima was now under threat from Mutaguchi's 31st Japanese Division. For his huge contribution to the Kohima Battle, Lambert was awarded the OBE and remained in North East Assam until 1948. After this period he served with the Foreign Office with Police Security advisory roles in Calcutta, Singapore, Bangkok, Nepal, Mali and The Belgian Congo advising Belgium. He became a personal friend of the daughter of the King of Siam.

In 1961 he was posted to various

countries in South America as British diplomat First Secretary and intelligence officer. While in Bolivia he advised on the protection of minors and administration of their orphanages. His final posting was in Kabul retiring in 1968. For his outstanding Foreign Office work he was made a companion of the Order of St Michael and St George. He then returned to Dublin devoting himself to writing three volumes on Simon Bolivar's revolutionary army comprising of many English and Irish volunteers

and for this he was awarded the Venezuelan Order of the Liberator, Third Class (equivalent to the CBE) in 1995. By this time his health was failing. A year before he had travelled to Kohima, his first return for nearly 50 years, on a pilgrimage organised by Piers Storie-Pugh. At the war cemetery he wore his CMG, OBE, KPM, the 1939-45 Star, Burma Star, 1939-45 War Medal, Indian Police Medal, the 1935 Jubilee Medal and the Chinese DSO. The only medal missing was the Order of the Liberator from

Venezuela which has to this day remained in its box. He wore the neck medal on Remembrance Day 1996 just ten days before his death. Eric Lambert, a true man of the Empire, courteous, honourable, loyal and courageous was cared for in Dublin until he died by his devoted niece who hold his writings and photographs of Assam, Bolivar books and his memories. *Photographs are courtesy of Laragh Neelin.*

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1917-2017: A Centenary of Remembrance

This May saw the Centenary of the founding of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, originally called the Imperial War Graves Commission, now responsible world wide for the care of 1.7 million graves of those who died in two world wars on 23,000 sites in 154 countries with a staff of 1,300. Originally the role of recording those who had fallen was the responsibility of a War Graves unit attached to the British Army.

However by 1917 with the casualties still mounting on many fronts it was felt that a specific body to deal with the matter should be created. The task facing them was enormous, all documentation and record keeping was hand written. Bodies were not repatriated thus families were deprived of the ritual of farewell. This was a contentious point, but in its wisdom the Commission felt that the dead should remain where they fell and they did not want to see a social division where wealthier families could bring their heroes home whilst others were unable to do so. In death all were equal and the Commission by taking over the responsibility for burial acted in locum parentis by providing not only a grave and a suitable memorial but also floral tributes and photographs of the grave for the families to see.

In the words of Sir Henry Kenyon on the subject of cemetery design "There is no reason why cemeteries should be places of gloom" Indeed this ethos was carried out by such famous architects as Herbert Baker and Lutyens and is visible today.

Originally marked with a wooden cross each grave today bears the iconic stone carved with the name of the fallen and also the significant lines "Their name liveth forever more" or "Known only unto God" chosen by Rudyard Kipling.

Modern technology now plays an important part in the upkeep of the cemeteries and memorials. However despite this, the actual role of maintenance is still very much a matter of personal pride for those involved in the task. One of the most remote war graves in the British Isles is at 2,300ft on Ben More Assynt in Sutherland where six aircrew are buried following the crash of their aircraft in 1941.



Ben More Assynt.

Whilst today in the troubled borders between Israel and Palestine 16,000 servicemen and women are still cared for despite damage and attack from vandals and Hamas rockets and the same problems of course apply to the cemeteries scattered throughout the Middle East.

Thus for the Commission their work is never done and will obviously never be so but will continue to earn the gratitude of the many. Especially those of us who have family members buried abroad or who have consulted the database of names they hold to discover even more of our own family history.