

The Rifles Collection

Collections Development Policy

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Date of Review – May 2022

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Name of museum: The Rifles Collection; the Regimental Museum of The Rifles

Name of governing body: The Rifles Regimental Museum Trust

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 5 May 2017

Policy review procedure: By The Rifles Regimental Museum Trust

The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review: 5 May 2022

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the collections development policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.

1. Relationship to other relevant policies/plans of the organisation:

1.1. The museum's statement of purpose is:

The Rifles Collection will collect, catalogue, store and make accessible significant material of The Rifles since its formation on 1 February 2007. The items will form the basis for the Regimental Museum of The Rifles and made available for display through temporary loans or travelling exhibitions to museums within the Rifles Museums Network, or to places within The Rifles traditional areas, particularly places of high population density.

It is readily acknowledged that the forming regiments and their antecedents each have their own unique story to tell and that these stories are already best told within the existing network of Rifles' Museums.

The current Regiment is a Rifle regiment. The Rifles Collection (hereafter referred to as 'the Collection') must primarily represent this story; i.e. that of the modern Regiment and its strong origins in the Light Infantry and Rifle Regiment traditions of the past. However, the influence on The Rifles history, heritage and traditions from other forming or antecedent Regiments will also be encompassed in line with 'the Golden Threads' principal. Close co-operation and fair exchange of artefacts, ideas and information across The Rifles Museum Network will ensure a balanced, fair and accurate representation throughout the network.

The Rifles' Collection will seek to innovate, excel and lead the market in collecting, preserving, studying, exhibiting and educating the story of The Rifles to develop both its and the Regiment's reputation.

1.2. The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

1.3. By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.

1.4. Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

1.5. The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using SPECTRUM primary procedures for collections management. It will take into account

limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

1.6. The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

1.7. The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.

2. History of the collections

The Rifles Collection opened its first display to the public in June 2013, after the appointment of its staff in November 2012. The Regimental Headquarters of the Regiment had begun collecting items for the future proposed museum since the formation of the Regiment in 2007. In the years since 2013, there has been slow but steady progress in collecting objects, digital items, photographs and archival material that forms the basis of the current permanent displays, temporary exhibitions and the long-term collection for the future. The majority of objects have been donated, with some on loan and others purchased. Donations of special note include a Taliban motorbike and a Patrol Base memorial dedicated to Lt. Chesterman. Loans of significance include a painting of 'The Burial of Sir John Moore after Corunna' by George Jones RA.

3. An overview of current collections

The museum tells the story of The Rifles as a Regiment and the people around it. Our mission is to create a collection, which promotes learning and engages visitors to be moved, inspired and challenged with the living heritage that is the story of The Rifles, the Regiment and its people; soldiers and dependents.

The museum's collections contain around 900 items. All items are contemporary in origin, dating from around 2006/2007 when the Regiment was formed. Physical objects range from paintings to weaponry to military issue clothing. Due to the contemporary nature of the collection, many archives and photographs are born digital and, as such, are stored in a digital format.

The collection supports the museum's mission by providing objects for display, temporary exhibitions and travelling exhibitions. It is also loaned to other museums. The museum does not consider any accessioned item in the collection to be outside of the museum's purpose and mission.

The museum also holds replica items and items acquired solely for display and/or handling purposes. It is not considered appropriate to accession these items and they are documented on a non-collection items list so that they are clearly marked.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

Future collecting will be limited by the current space and storage facilities of the museum. For example, if a military vehicle was offered to the museum, there is currently not the capacity to display or store this item.

The collection strategy for the museum will focus on items that enhance the visitor experience, allowing the visitor to be engaged, educated and inspired by the museum. Items will continue to be acquired by donation, loan or purchase.

Items will have a strong connection to the Regiment, ranging from issued kit to personal items that tell the story of an individual, section or even Battalion. The connection of the object to the story of the Regiment will always be apparent. Duplication will be avoided by cross-checking any future item against the inventory of all items held by the museum.

Purchase of an object for the collections will only be considered where no other option is available and priority for this will be given to items with a recognisable, intrinsic value such as medal sets.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

5.1 The museum does not intend to dispose of collections during the period covered by this policy.

Disposal is not a priority for this policy period, due to the relatively new formation of the museum and its collections. The inventory of all items, which covers accessioned and those awaiting to be accessioned.

6 Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

6.1 The museum recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

7 Collecting policies of other museums

7.1 The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

7.2 Specific reference is made to the following museum(s)/organisation(s):

- The Keep Military Museum, Dorchester (this comprises the collections of The Devonshire Regiment, The Dorset Regiment, The Devonshire and Dorset Regiment, The Dorset Yeomanry, The Queen's Own Dorset Yeomanry, The Dorset Militia, The Royal Devon Yeomanry and 94 Field Regiment RA)
- The Rifles (Berkshire and Wiltshire) Museum, Salisbury
- The Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum, Gloucester
- The Royal Green Jackets Museum, Winchester
- Cornwall's Regimental Museum, Bodmin, (housing the collections of The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry and The Light Infantry)
- The Regimental Gallery of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery
- The Shropshire Regimental Museum, Shrewsbury (this comprises the collections of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry and the County's Artillery, Yeomanry, Militia, Volunteer and Territorial units)
- The Durham Light Infantry Collection, Durham
- The Herefordshire Light Infantry Museum, Hereford
- Somerset Military Museum, part of The Museum of Somerset Taunton (this comprises the collections of The Somerset Light Infantry (Prince Albert's), The Somerset and Cornwall Light Infantry, The West Somerset Yeomanry, The North Somerset Yeomanry, Somerset Militia, Rifle Volunteers and Territorials, The Light Infantry and its successor regiment, The Rifles)
- Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock

7.3 The Collection will seek to establish relationships and communication with the National Army Museum and the Imperial War Museums, referring material to them as appropriate. The Rifles Collection will work in conjunction with the Rifles Museums listed above with a strong desire for reciprocal loans between itself and the other members of The Rifles Museums Network.

8 Archival holdings

This is not relevant to the museum.

9 Acquisition

9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

- The Rifles Collection will have a Collections Development Committee established, which will judge the attributes of a potential acquisition against the Waverley Criteria. Unless an object is 'closely connected with our history', 'of outstanding aesthetic significance' or 'of outstanding significance for the study of some particular branch of art, learning or history', it will not normally be accepted into the Collection.
- There will be a strong presumption against collecting duplicate material without good reason, for example the object in question is a particularly good example of its type or is part of a collection of objects relating to an individual and so has a strong story that represents the story of the Regiment
- There will be a strong presumption against collecting material for which adequate storage facilities cannot be provided. It is anticipated that storage will be at capacity, placing a limit on the amount of acquisition that can take place without rationalisation
- Where objects are offered for donation but not deemed suitable for accessioning into the permanent collection they will be considered for adding to a 'handling' collection in consultation with the donor before being completely decided against
- Material will be collected according to the proposed principal collections areas – archival, uniforms, equipment, weapons, medals, badges, fine art and miscellaneous other – and in relation to periods within the life of the regiment (as defined by periods of duty in particular locations, e.g. Iraq, Afghanistan. This latter category of object may also include material not directly related to the regiment but to the location in which they were serving
- Items will not normally be accepted for the collection if:
 1. they are beyond economic repair
 2. they are, or are likely to become, physically dangerous and/or a health and safety hazard or a hazard to other objects within the Collection
 3. they are beyond the means of The Rifles Collection to conserve, store, document or make accessible to an adequate standard
 4. they are accompanied by unduly restrictive conditions

9.2 The museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).

9.3 In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.

10 Human remains

10.1 The museum does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

11 Biological and geological material

11.1 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise

transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

12 Archaeological material

- 12.1** The museum will not acquire archaeological material (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.
- 12.2** In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure (i.e. the Coroner for Treasure) as set out in the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners & Justice Act 2009).

13 Exceptions

- 13.1** Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the museum is:
- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
 - acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. The museum will document when these exceptions occur.

14 Spoliation

- 14.1** The museum will use the statement of principles 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

15 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

- 15.1** The museum's governing body, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff, if any, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 16.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

16 Disposal procedures

- 16.1** All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.

- 16.2** The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.
- 16.3** When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.
- 16.4** When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or as a last resort - destruction.
- 16.5** The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.
- 16.6** A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.
- 16.7** Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- 16.8** If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.9** The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.
- 16.10** Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England.

- 16.11** The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.
- 16.12** Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.

Disposal by exchange

- 16.13** The nature of disposal by exchange means that the museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.
- 16.13.1** In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non-Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 16.1-5 will apply.
- 16.13.2** If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.
- 16.13.3** If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will place a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.13.4** Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

Disposal by destruction

- 16.14** If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.
- 16.15** It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.
- 16.16** Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.

- 16.17** Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.
- 16.18** The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.