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Images: Family visitors in *The World's Army: Empire, Commonwealth and Dominion at War 1914-45*



Spring 2008 - Summer 2009

REVIEW

The UK's leading army museum



'I never got in close to the reality of war as here and now. That reality was presented with much respect for the simple soldiers and the human being behind every soldier.'

Museum Visitor

The Museum, the nation, and the Army

At a time when the work of the Army is always in the news, the National Army Museum (NAM) has a unique role to play. Our purpose is to explain what the Army does and how that transforms society, not just now but in the past.

New approaches

During this period the Museum launched a series of new education sessions, opened an Action Zone for younger visitors, created one major online exhibition and many smaller virtual exhibitions. We developed a new exhibition space, redeveloped a circulation area and opened a new display within the *World Wars* gallery. In each project we undertake, explaining the role and relevance of the Army is at the forefront of what we do.

Reaching out

Building on our profile-raising series of special exhibitions, in this period we reached out to ethnic minority audiences through exhibitions that challenged

preconceptions. The contributions made by South Asian, West Indian, African and Commonwealth soldiers throughout our history were brought more into the open, making the Army's role relevant to all our users and to the nation as a whole.

Coming home

The success of the exhibition *Helmand: The Soldiers' Story* brought a new generation of Army groups into the Museum. Increasingly the Museum is seen by cadets and seasoned soldiers alike as the place where their history is brought to life, and their involvement enables us to bring that history to life for all our visitors.

Images:
(Opposite) Visitors listening to a storytelling session during one of NAM's half term events programmes
(Below) Army cadets attending one of the Museum's education sessions



Exhibitions

The Museum, in all its exhibitions, continues to illustrate how ordinary soldiers and the Army as a whole have contributed to the development of Britain and the world as we know it. This year, our focus was on bringing to light untold stories.

Black Asian British Army is the Museum's most sophisticated virtual exhibition to date, supported by a grant of £50,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The exhibition starts from the perspective of famous black and Asian personalities: James Skinner, Mary Seacole, Walter Tull and Johnson Beharry VC. It includes over 500 testimonies, photographs, film and sound clips and images from the Collections. Online, visitors can leave comments, play games and download a range of educational materials.



The World's Army: Empire, Commonwealth and Dominions at War 1914 - 45 is dominated by a full-scale model of an early tank, the First World War's most obvious technological advance. Soldiers' and civilians' stories are threaded through the display, from nurses to schoolchildren to munitions workers, and the often-forgotten Commonwealth soldiers are given recognition for their valuable contribution.

The **Money and Might** exhibition space explores the period 1784 to 1820, following on from last year's **War for America** display and using the same mix of interpretative styles. This exhibition introduces the

In 2008:

- *Helmand: The Soldiers' Story* was Highly Commended at the Museums and Heritage Awards for Excellence
- Strong visitor figures extended *Helmand's* run

themes of the *Changing the World* gallery, and highlights the contribution made by South Asian and West Indian soldiers. The Army's contribution to the movement of people around the world is as relevant now as two hundred years ago.

Development of the new **White Space** has given us room to display a changing selection of our paintings, drawings, photographs and archives. Three thematic exhibitions will be mounted each year; the first, *Caught on Canvas*, brought together a fascinating selection of soldier portraits.

Images:
(Opposite, top) Logo and image from the *Black Asian British Army* exhibition
(Opposite, bottom) Visitors in the *Money and Might* exhibition space



'I didn't realise like how much they actually did contribute'

(Female Black Asian British Army website user, 16-20)

BLACK ASIAN BRITISH ARMY



'Very good experience for myself and 10 year old son. My son summed it up when he said "nobody really wins a war".'

Museum Visitor



Learning for all

Learning is at the heart of the Museum's work, incorporating formal taught sessions, learning opportunities in the galleries, and themed special events for all the family. Increasing numbers of people took advantage of what was on offer.

Schools and formal learning

Curriculum-based taught sessions are offered to school groups of all ages. Attendance figures rose sharply from last year particularly among sixth form groups. This is a very encouraging vote of confidence in the quality and variety of education sessions now on offer. Many school groups show their appreciation by booking repeat visits. Adult sessions can be based upon topical issues; offer a bespoke introduction to the Museum, or provide cadets with a sense of the traditions of the Army.

Events

Special events attract family groups and 2008's seven events were no exception. Family History Week in May 2008 was very popular and provided an opportunity to showcase the fascinating resources accessible to family history researchers through the Templer Study Centre. In October, the week of events accompanying the launch of the new Special Exhibition in the *World Wars* gallery was particularly successful and demonstrated the public's keen interest in the First and Second World Wars.

In 2008:

- Over 350 taught sessions were delivered to school groups
- Over 13,000 school children attended formal teaching sessions
- Over 450 people attended our evening celebrity lectures

Images:
(Opposite) Students carrying out some research in the *World Wars* gallery
(Below) Students taking part in a Museum education session



Our Knowledge

An important part of the Museum's role is the sharing of knowledge. Academics, family history researchers, museum professionals and students of military history make great use of our Collections, expertise and scholarship.

Expertise

Our curators and educators share their knowledge with visitors to the Museum, enquirers from around the world, and members of the public they meet at events such as 'Who Do You Think You Are?' Live. The growing popularity of local and family history makes our knowledge more sought after than ever before.

Opportunities to learn

The NAM offers something for all with a mix of free and ticketed lectures. The popularity of the programme of celebrity lectures increased by 10%, no doubt due to the high calibre of speakers. Audiences were keen to hear Andrew Roberts, Richard Holmes, Laurence Rees and Ian

Knight, among others, discuss their latest research. Visitors who find themselves inspired to begin some historical study can attend the Museum's periodic academic conferences.

Access to a vast store of knowledge

The NAM's Collections of books and archives are accessible through the Templer Study Centre. Books, journals, photographs and papers are acquired every week to ensure that the Collections grow in scope and depth. TSC opening hours were extended in summer 2009 to meet growing demand, after visitor figures rose by 16% during the previous year.

In 2008:

- Curators answered 2572 written enquiries

- Staff from over 20 regimental and corps museums attended our Regimental Curators' Course

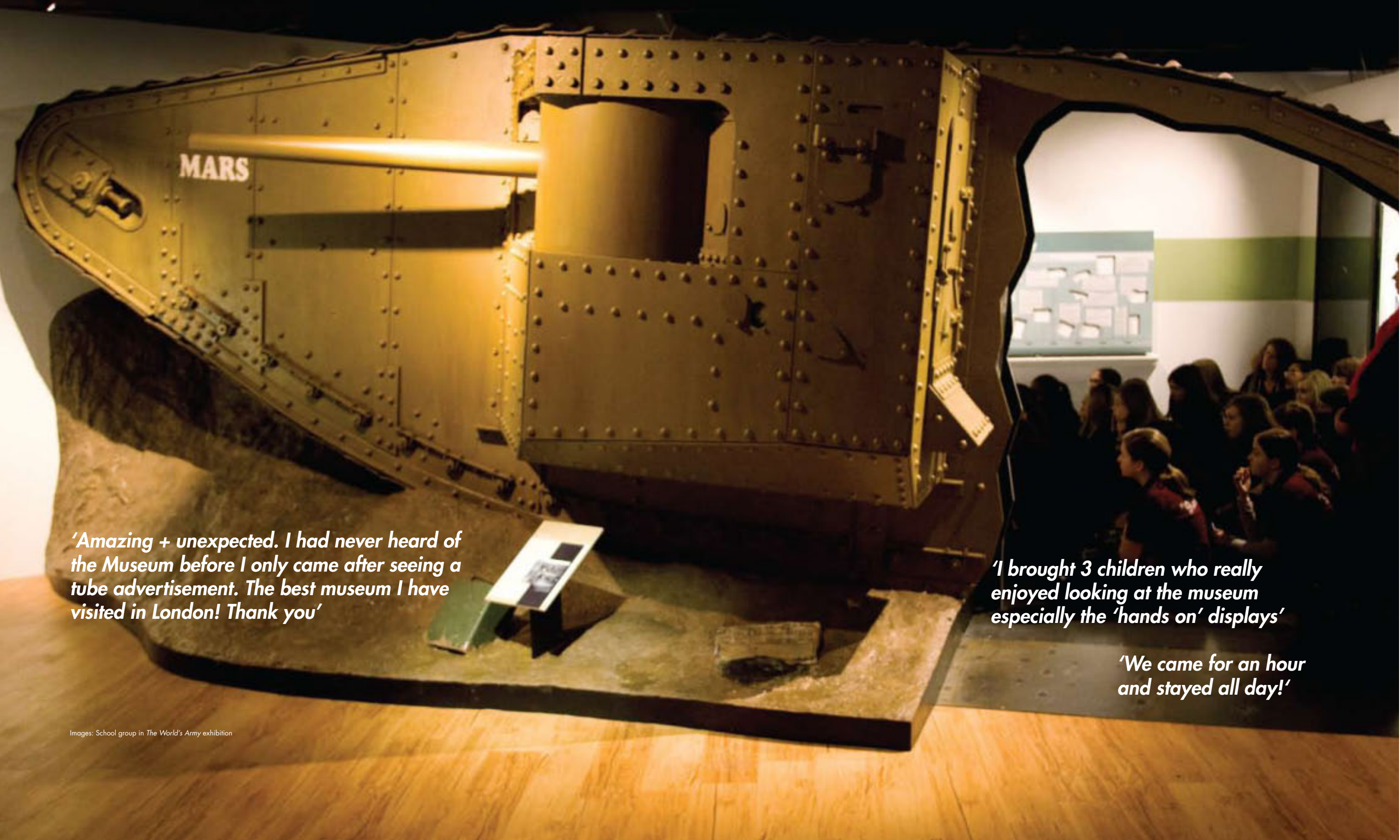
- Over 1200 researchers used the Templer Study Centre

Images:
(Opposite) Presentation to a formal learning group in a Museum education session
(Below) Museum staff at the 'Who Do You Think You Are?' Live event



'a truly excellent conference. The programme was nicely balanced, informative and, what is more thoroughly enjoyable'

Museum Visitor



'Amazing + unexpected. I had never heard of the Museum before I only came after seeing a tube advertisement. The best museum I have visited in London! Thank you'

'I brought 3 children who really enjoyed looking at the museum especially the 'hands on' displays'

'We came for an hour and stayed all day!'



'This is a painting that belongs in Britain, for whom Wolfe's victory meant so much'

Professor Richard Holmes

Images:
(This page) Visitors in the Making of Britain gallery in front of the portrait of Major-General James Wolfe (NAM, 2008-05-25)
(Opposite, above): The Maida Gold Medal awarded to General Sir Galbraith Lowry Cole (NAM, 2009-06-15)
(Opposite, below): The Maida Vase on display in the Money and Might exhibition space (NAM, 2009-01-1)

Our Collections

The objects already in the NAM's care are protected, conserved and displayed by our dedicated staff, but new acquisitions to the Collections bring fresh perspectives.

Saved for the nation

After the NAM's successful public appeal to save it from export, the portrait of Major-General James Wolfe by J S C Schaak. was purchased with grants from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Society of Friends of the NAM, The Art Fund and public donations. Wolfe, the victor of the Battle of Quebec (1759), was a national hero. In the decade following his death this painting was the most famous image of him. Now in the *Making of Britain* gallery.

Gold and glory

One of the nation's rarer medals, the Maida Gold Medal (1806), was

acquired this year. It forms part of a glittering group of orders and medals awarded to General Sir Galbraith Lowry Cole (1772-1842). The group also includes the Large Army Gold Medal for the Peninsular War battle of Albuhera and the Army Gold Cross for Maida, Albuhera, Vitoria and Salamanca, with four clasps.

Splendid silver

Another object with a Maida connection is an ornate silver vase with a tragic history. The vase was awarded by Lloyd's Patriotic Fund to Major John Hamill of the Royal Regiment of Malta.



In 2008:

- Objects from our Collections were lent to museums in New York, Washington, Paris, Madrid and London
- The oldest object we acquired was an English basket-hilted broadsword made around 1610

Sadly, Hamill was killed during the French capture of Capri on 4 October 1808 - six weeks before the vase would have reached him. Now in the *Money and Might* exhibition.

Latest news

A unique set of supplements to *The London Gazette* dated 1693-1710 was acquired this year. They contain the latest news of British military affairs on the Continent and include the earliest published account in English of the Duke of Marlborough's victory at Blenheim (1704). Now available to researchers through the Templer Study Centre.



Our future

Over recent years the Museum increased its visitor attendance, substantially improved the facilities on offer and continued to provide exhibitions showcasing our world-class military Collections.

A fresh look

The Chelsea Museum needs to be altered to keep pace with ever-increasing public footfall. We have planned a phased schedule of improvements that will increase access and improve the experience of all our users. The place will feel lighter, brighter and more accessible to all.

New displays

Regular visitors will already have had a glimpse of our future, with the dramatic redispays in the circulation spaces. Funds permitting, over the next five years, our two longest-running galleries will benefit from complete redevelopment. New approaches in museum design, state-of-the-art technology and

the latest scholarship will be used to create authoritative and engaging displays. Research is now underway and objects are being prepared. A major permanent exhibition covering the last 40 years of the Army's history, entitled *Conflicts of Interest*, opens in September 2009 and brings the Museum's offer right up to date.

Support us

The Government's Grant-in-Aid covers many of our running costs but leaves very little for capital expenditure. To improve the Museum now, and make it fit to meet the challenges of the future, we need to generate sponsorship, donations, legacies and more member support.

If you care about Britain's military heritage, please help us if you can.

The Museum's Society of Friends offers all our users a way to show their regular and long-term support for the Museum. For supporters overseas, the American Associates group exists to secure tax-efficient support for the NAM from the United States. New supporters are welcome to both; contact pr@national-army-museum.ac.uk for more information.

Images:
(Opposite) Visual concept drawing of the *Conflicts of Interest* exhibition



"An excellent experience + worth many more visits".

Museum Visitor.



About us

In 1960, the National Army Museum was established by Royal Charter to tell the story of the Land Forces of the Crown. It is the museum of the British Army and the Indian Army (until 1947), and its Collections span hundreds of years of history. It is a Registered Charity which receives a Grant-in-Aid from Government under the National Heritage Act 1983. It is also Accredited by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.

The Museum moved to its present site in Chelsea in 1971, and currently operates two out-stations in the South-east.

Our mission:

To interpret and communicate the objects in the Museum's care in ways which inspire, provide enjoyment and provoke questions from diverse audiences.

Our purpose:

To reconnect the Army with society. To link the past with the present. To explain the history of the Army so that everyone can see how it has protected society over time. To explain what the Army did and does, why and how it has, and the impact that it has had on Britain, Europe and the world.

Our core values:

Relevance, Insight, Quality, Exploration

How we fulfil our purpose:

Through four permanent displays explaining the relevance of the Army to society:

The Making of Britain,
1066-1783

Changing the World,
1784-1904

World Wars,
1905-1947

Conflicts of Interest,
1969-Present
(opening September 2009)

We also provide formal and informal learning, special exhibitions, access to our study Collections and online exhibitions.

Images:
(Opposite) An event in the Museum's Art Gallery
(Below) Visitor to the Museum's Art Gallery



About us

Members of the Museum Council

Admiral Sir Jeremy Black GBE KCB DSO

Mr Mihir Bose

General Sir Jack Deverell KCB OBE (Chairman)

The Rt Hon The Lord Freeman PC MA FCA CRAeS

Professor Brian Holden Reid MA PhD FRHistS FRGS FRUSI

The Rt Revd Peter J Nott

Mr Richard Nunneley MBE

The Lady Vaizey CBE

Major General C G C Vyvyan CB CBE MA MSc

Senior Staff

Dr Alan J Guy, Director

Dr Peter Boyden, Assistant Director (Collections)

Mrs Deborah Harris, Assistant Director (Museum Services)

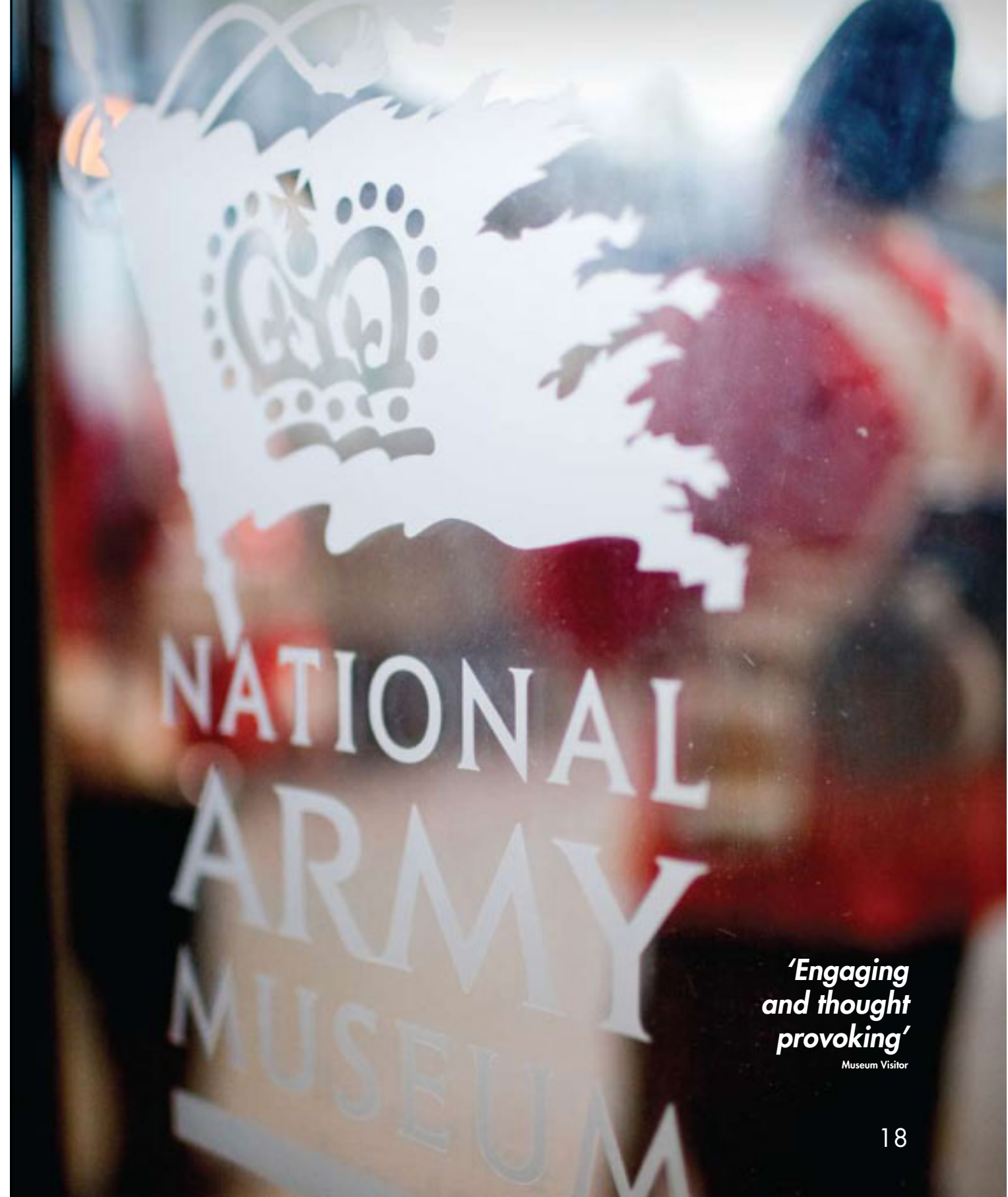
Mr Mike O'Connor, Assistant Director (Operations)

Miss Teresa Scott, Assistant Director (Human Resources)

Mr David Smurthwaite, (Museum Development Officer)

Find out more:

Further information about the NAM, including the latest news on our exhibitions and how to access our Collections, can be found online at www.national-army-museum.ac.uk or by contacting the Department of PR, Marketing and Events at pr@national-army-museum.ac.uk or by telephoning 020 7730 0717 ext. 2535. This document is also available on the Museum's website.



**'Engaging
and thought
provoking'**

Museum Visitor