

The Conservation of The Queen's Colours Flags of The Sri Lanka Light Infantry

N.M.P.Neththasinghe
University of Sri Jayewardenepura
nilwim@yahoo.com

The Sri Lanka Light Infantry (SLLI) is the oldest regiment in the Army. The regiment's origins can be traced back to the formation of the Ceylon Light Infantry Volunteers (CLIV) force which was formed on 1st April 1881 by the British Governor of Ceylon as a reserve unit in Ceylon. In 1910, the CLIV was renamed as Ceylon Light Infantry (CLI). The regiment was in action during World War 1 and was again mobilized during World War II. Considering the regiment's services, the Ceylon Light Infantry was awarded with King's and the Regiment colours on 22nd March 1922. According to the book "*A glorious past footprint 1881-2006*", the volunteer and regular regiments of Ceylon Light Infantry were awarded Queen's Colours Flags on 1st April 1954. These Colour flags consists Sri Lanka National Flag as Queen's Flag, as Sri Lanka became Dominion Government and the regiment flag. These prestigious flags got deteriorated gradually due to lack of proper guidance, advice and knowledge covering preventive conservation. Conservation and preservation of these Queen's Colours Flags which were badly deteriorated was the main challenge faced by the team of conservators. The main task of the caring work was to conserve the treasured flags made out of a printed fabric material and present them in a suitable environment. After examination of the present condition and identification of types of deterioration, they were transported carefully to the conservation laboratory of the Department of National Museums and conserved using proper materials, chemicals and methodologies according to accepted conservation theories and guidelines. Removing dust, restructuring the loosen treads of the flags, applying Backing, gluing & sawing, conservation and filling the missing parts and consolidation of the flags were the different steps of used in the methodology followed. After attending to conservation and preservation techniques for the objects, presently conserved objects is presented properly in the newly established Sri Lanka Light Infantry (SLLI) museum at Panagoda. These preserved treasures, the Queen's Colours flags, are to enhance the morale of the members of the SLLI and all regiments in general.

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