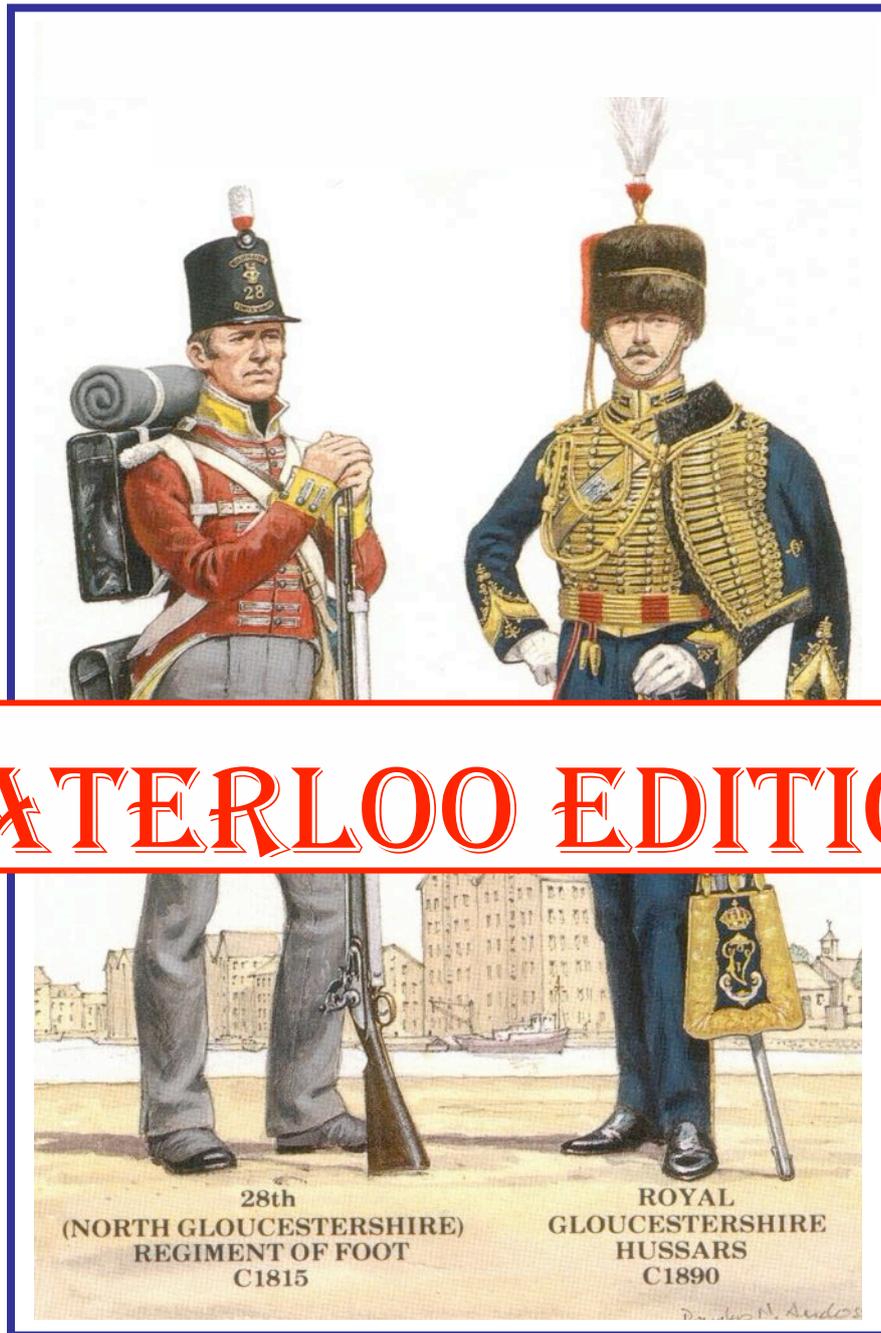


# NEWSLETTER

THE FRIENDS OF  
THE SOLDIERS OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE  
MUSEUM



**SPRING 2015**



*'The 28<sup>th</sup> Regiment at Waterloo' by William Barnes Wollen (1857–1936), an oil painting which hangs in the Long Room of the Custom House.*



*'Wellington at Waterloo' by Robert Alexander Hillingford (1828-1904) – a regular exhibitor at the Royal Accademy.*

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Last year saw the centennial year of the outbreak of the 'Great War', this year we mark the bicentenary of the final battle of Napoleon's campaigns in Europe, at Waterloo, on 18<sup>th</sup> June 1815, and this edition of the Newsletter marks that watershed in European history.

I am extremely grateful to the author (and ex-Gloster) Gordon Corrigan for finding time to write a learned conspectus of the battle and its consequences after publishing his new book, *'Waterloo – a New History of the Battle and its Armies'*. The Museum is organising a special exhibition on Waterloo this summer, on the ground floor, in the temporary display area, which will bring together the artefacts of the period from the Museum's collection. Friends will be pleased to learn that they have funded an extra security camera and digital recording equipment to make this room safe for valuable items. The Museum will also be acting as host to a Table Top War Gaming re-enactment of the battle, in the Long Room, in June. We trust they will come to the same conclusion that Wellington won; when visiting the actual site of Waterloo it's easy to get the impression that the victor was Napoleon!

I am also delighted to announce that our Chavenage Autumn Lecture, this year, will be given by Peter Snow CBE, the broadcaster, historian and author of the recent *'To War with Wellington – from Peninsular to Waterloo'*, which will be his subject. You will receive your invitations later in the year.

Maj. Corrigan states that many books have been written about Waterloo and the editor has made an effort to show that the same can be said about the many works of art depicting the battle, he has tried to pull together some of the famous and not so well known pictures to provide a glossy spring edition.

Your donations continue to be of the utmost importance, we are currently in discussions with the Museum Consultant about funding a new display case to house the Frampton Volunteers artefacts, a force raised during the Napoleonic threat, that have been stored unseen in the Gloucester Folk Museum for nearly seventy years; we will have them on a rotating loan. More about that when we know how much of our funds will be committed to the project. We also, you may remember, funded the small cafe in the Museum and, with the spring and summer months ahead of us, need to generate as much business here as we can – so we urgently require volunteers to staff the counter. If you have any free time, do get in touch with the Museum Manager and offer your services.

Please see the other events that are connected with the Museum throughout the coming year, in this edition. Come and lunch at the Badminton Horse Trials in The Royal Wessex Yeomanry Marquee and bring guests with you and encourage them to become Friends – the Chairman of Trustees has set us an ambitious target to increase the membership of the Friends considerably: we need your help to achieve this. In addition, as our Treasurer suggests, do consider changing your annual membership to that of a Life Member and gain the free offer for the Autumn Lecture.

The newly refurbished Museum has attracted positive comments and the staff are working hard to attract visitors and make their tour enjoyable, whilst the Trustees discuss future plans to bring more attention to the north end of the Docks. If you haven't visited the Museum recently do call in and make the most of your free entry, as a Friend. I look forward to seeing you at Badminton, if not then, at the Autumn Lecture, which I believe will be well attended.

**Lt. Col. Ralph Stephenson TD.**

## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY AND TREASURER'S REPORT

As at 1<sup>st</sup> March 2015 the Friends have 401 members in all categories: 273 Life and 128 annual members including 25 overseas. Our finances remain healthy and we are well placed to continue our support to the Museum. We continue to receive 'one-off' donations from members and would like to say many thanks, all donations are most welcome.

For those of you who pay for your membership annually and have already renewed many thanks, for those of you still to renew, you can do so as follows:

*By cheque made payable to 'The Friends of the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum' forwarded to the Friends at the Museum address 'Custom House, Gloucester Docks, Gloucester, GL1 2HE'.*

*Over the internet through the Museum website at 'www.glost.org.uk' – follow the link to the Friends' page on the Museum's Home page.*

*By Banker's Standing Order. To save having to write cheques, pay for postage, or remember that you need to renew your subscription annually, why not complete a Banker's Standing Order Mandate?*

There are 26 Friends paying annually who have not paid for the year June 2014 to May 2015 yet.

**Annual rates are £20 single, £30 couples and £10 for juniors.  
Conversion to Life membership is for a single payment of £200.**

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### A WATERLOO OFFER NOW & FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE YEAR

***Why not convert to Life Membership and gain free entry to the Autumn Lecture for yourself and a guest?***

Act now and take out a Life Membership, forget about the worry of annual payments and when you apply for the Chavenage Lecture this October you will be rewarded with one member and one guest admission free.

Contact the Treasurer for this offer; write to 'The Treasurer, Friends of the Museum, c/o The Custom House, Gloucester, GL1 2HE'. **Patrick Smart**

One Hundred years ago, from the:

***Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Gazette - Saturday June 19<sup>th</sup> 1915***

### **WATERLOO**

Unless a Zeppelin drops a bomb on the office of this paper these lines will probably appear in print on the day of the centenary of the battle of Waterloo. If that centenary had taken place last year or if the occasion of the present war had recurred a year later than it did England and Germany would have clasped hands, however temporarily, on the field of Waterloo in the heart of Belgium..... It is interesting to recall today when we are all suffering the disloyalty of Germany to hear her promises that the argument that Blücher used to his Prussians to quicken their march to the aid of the hard pressed English was that they, the Prussians, must not make him break his word, for Wellington had only decided to fight at Waterloo because Blücher had promised to come to his help. A century ago even Prussian generals recognised a moral obligation to keep their word in spite of the bad example of Frederick the Great, and much more so non-Prussian generals.

**Julia Davis**

## WATERLOO – THE BATTLE FOR EUROPE

On 15 July 1815 Napoleon Bonaparte surrendered to the British in the person of Captain Frederick Maitland, Royal Navy, of His Majesty's ship *Bellerophon*, anchored off La Rochelle. He had gone from obscure lieutenant to Emperor of the French and ruler of all Europe to a hunted refugee in a mere twenty-six years. Napoleon was treated with great respect by the officers and men of the *Bellerophon* – after all he had been defeated and exiled once before, and he had come back. But this time there was to be no reprieve: frustrated in his attempt to escape to America, and refused permission to settle in England as so many political refugees had done before him, ahead was only exile and a lonely death on a remote island in the South Atlantic. A month before he had fought his last battle, in a small muddy field in Belgium, fifteen miles south of Brussels on the ridge of Mont St Jean, considered unpronounceable by the British and so known to posterity as the Battle of Waterloo, after a hamlet three miles south of the battlefield, where his conqueror had penned his despatch after the battle.

Waterloo was the culmination of twenty-two years of almost continual warfare, where Britain was the one constant obstacle to French ambitions of world domination; it was Britain that financed the seven coalitions formed to fight the French, Britain that blockaded France, captured her colonies, cut off her trade and bled her manpower in what Napoleon himself called the 'Spanish ulcer'. It has gone down in history, or at least in British history, as an iconic example of British steadfastness, grit and pluck; a great British victory against overwhelming odds. While it was perhaps an Allied victory against odds that weren't all that bad, the campaign is commemorated by nearly every British regiment, and has had more books written about it than the Somme and Normandy combined.

Napoleone Buonaparte, as he was named in the Italian fashion, was born in 1769, the younger son of an impoverished Corsican lawyer, and while 'impoverished' and 'lawyer' are words that hardly go together today, the Buonapartes had expended their wealth in supporting the struggle for Corsican independence from the Republic of Genoa. Short of money they may have been, but they had influential friends and the young Napoleone was secured a good education, a place in the military college at Brienne-Le-Château and a commission in the Bourbon artillery. And then came the Revolution. Napoleon, having changed his name to the French spelling, was a child of the revolution, and having proved his military ability at Toulon and his political reliability with his 'whiff of grapeshot', he rose rapidly up the ranks of the now depleted French army, three quarters of whose officers had been guillotined, exiled or jailed, until he became First Consul in 1799 and Emperor in 1804. Victory followed victory, until it seemed that the Napoleonic juggernaut was unstoppable, and then, in 1812, with the disastrous Russian campaign, the balance tipped. In 1814, with the Russians, the Austrians and the Prussians closing in from the north and the east and Wellington's Anglo Portuguese advancing from the south, Napoleon abdicated and was permitted the sovereignty of Elba, a tiny island off the Italian coast. With him went a token escort of 600 men, four guns, a troop of lancers and the band of the Imperial Guard. Louis XVIII, the nephew of the executed Louis XVI (whose son died in prison and never reigned, was considered Louis XVII), returned to the French throne from exile in England.

Had the restored Bourbons accepted that France had changed and that many aspects of the Revolution were right and necessary, then all might have been well, but while Louis himself, timid, fifty-nine years old and grossly overweight, was relatively harmless, those who accompanied him were not. A whole rag tag and bobtail of former generals, clergy, émigrés,



*Napoleon Bonaparte (1769 – 1821)*

nobles and dispossessed landowners came flooding back, all expecting to be restored to their pre-revolutionary positions and to be compensated for their losses.



*Louis XVII of France (1755 – 1824)*

Much of the army was demobilised – an economic as much as a political necessity – with eighty-eight regiments of infantry being disbanded and the remainder reduced to two battalions per regiment instead of three, while the cavalry lost ninety-one regiments of various types. The Imperial Guard became just another regiment of the line, Swiss mercenary regiments were raised to replace French ones, the Legion d'Honneur, instituted by Napoleon, became a civil as well as a military distinction, and Louis particularly upset the Paris mob by ordering that bars should close on Sundays.

French public opinion, initially welcoming of the end of the war and the return of the monarchy, began to change, and when Napoleon left Elba and landed west of Cannes on 28 February 1815 troops sent to arrest him joined him and on 19 March he was back in Paris, once more emperor of the French, without firing a shot. He now desperately wanted – needed – peace but his overtures to the Powers fell on deaf ears. They had heard Napoleon's promises before; he had always broken them and they were not going to accept his return now. Napoleon was declared an outlaw, and the allies mobilised against him. The Russians and the Austrians would mass on the Eastern borders of France while the Anglo-Dutch army under the Duke of Wellington and the Prussians commanded by Field Marshal Blücher would deploy in Flanders. When all were in position they would invade, capture Paris and put an end to the Bonapartist dream once and for all.

From Napoleon's perspective staying on the defensive was not an option; he could not withstand the combined allied armies invading simultaneously. As, however, the Russians and the Austrians would take some time to mobilise and get into a position from where they could threaten France, then Napoleon reasoned that if he were to strike first and attack the British and the Prussians separately and prevent them from joining, he could outnumber and thus defeat the

British, whereupon the British army would withdraw to England, the British Tory government would fall to be replaced by a Whig administration that would leave the war, and the allied coalition, deprived of its paymaster, would collapse.

Having massed his Army of the North secretly Napoleon crossed the Belgian border on 15 June 1815, and on the following day he defeated the Prussians at Ligny, while the other half of the French army under Marshal Ney attacked the Anglo Dutch seven miles to the west at Quatre Bras. Beaten though they were the Prussians did not retreat eastwards along their lines of communication and back to Germany, as Napoleon and hoped and expected, but withdrew north, to Wavre, in order to keep in touch with the Anglo Dutch as had been agreed between Wellington and Blücher. Ney failed to dislodge Wellington from Quatre Bras, but once the Prussians had gone the Anglo Dutch had to withdraw too, to avoid being surrounded and cut off from their supply route from Brussels.

Once Napoleon discovered that the Prussians had not, after all, headed for home, he dispatched Marshal Grouchy with 30,000 horse and foot to ensure that the Prussians could not join with the British. This Grouchy singularly failed to do; instead of getting in between the Prussians and the Anglo-Dutch, which he could have done, he elected to attack the Prussians head on at Wavre, whereupon Blücher detailed one corps to hold Grouchy while the rest of the Prussians army headed for Waterloo.



*Napoleon addresses the Old Guard, elite veterans of the Imperial Guard who had served Napoleon since his earliest campaigns, as it prepares to attack the Anglo-Allied centre*

*- Ernest Crofts - Life of Napoleon Bonaparte by William M. Sloane, 1895.*

On 17 June in pouring rain Wellington's army tramped back, north to the ridge of Mont St Jean, once of the many possible defence positions he had recced on arriving in Flanders in March. The French followed, but the rear-guard of the 7<sup>th</sup> Hussars, the 95<sup>th</sup> Rifles and the Horse Artillery ensured that they did not catch the Anglo Dutch on the move. Sometime

during the night of 17/18 June Wellington heard from Blücher, ten miles away, that the Prussians would move to support him – now he knew that he could stand his ground and fight his battle.

Waterloo was not Wellington's cleverest battle: it required no great tactical acuity and no sophisticated manoeuvring, rather he had to stick on that ridge and hold the French off until the Prussians came, but it is unlikely that his polyglot army, of five national contingents all with their own weapons, tactics and languages, many of whom had been in the French service the year before, and in which the British were a minority with only 15000 British infantry, would have stood on that ridge for anyone but Wellington, and it is questionable whether the Prussians would have stayed in Flanders for anyone but Wellington. A minority the British may have been, but theirs was the only regular, professional army on the field and Wellington positioned them so as to provide a stiffening for the less reliable units.

Wellington rightly described the battle as a 'pounding match' and while the French did not outnumber Wellington's army with anything like the three to one ratio generally considered necessary for an attacker at the time, they did have 246 artillery pieces against their opponent's 157, but even this advantage was largely negated by Wellington's use of the reverse slope. French attacks on Hougoumont Farm on the allied right flank, D'Erlon's corps' advance against Wellington's left, the mass attack by French cavalry, all were beaten off. Gloucestershire was well represented by the 28<sup>th</sup> Foot, 557 strong, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Sir Charles Belson in Major General Sir James Kempt's brigade of Lieutenant General Sir Thomas Picton's division and stationed 150 yards east of Wellington's centre. Unlike about two thirds of the British battalions on the field, the 28<sup>th</sup> had fought throughout the Peninsula War and both at Quatre Bras on 16<sup>th</sup> June and Waterloo on 18<sup>th</sup>; they knew that as long as they stood and fired what Wellington described as their 'clockwork volleys', nothing could break them.

All else having failed, and with the Prussians now in the French rear, Napoleon played his last card: The Imperial Guard. As two columns of the hitherto undefeated elite of the French army marched up the hill towards Wellington's line, they met a hail of fire from the four battalions of British Guards, the 33<sup>rd</sup> Foot (Wellington's old regiment), the 52<sup>nd</sup> and 71<sup>st</sup> Foot and three Nassau battalions. It was too much and the Guard recoiled. The French army, although loyal to its emperor, homogenous and with a higher proportion of regulars than previous Napoleonic armies, needed a victory and they needed it quickly. Suspicion of senior officers who had been promoted under Napoleon, turned their coats and served the Bourbon restoration while the demobilised junior ranks starved on miniscule pensions or none at all, and were now serving Napoleon again, coupled with antagonism at home of the 'blood tax' of conscription all served to unsettle the army, and now it was just too much. The sight of the Guard stumbling back down the hill was the catalyst and the whole French army broke. The Battle of Waterloo was over. While British deaths of 1,419 at Waterloo pale into insignificance compared to the butchers bills of a century later, it was greater than the toll of any one day battle in the Peninsula, where the highest was at Albuhera, 917 on 11 May 1811, and British casualties (killed, wounded and missing) were twenty-eight per cent of the total, with half of the 840 British Officers present becoming casualties. It is sometimes asked 'could Wellington have won the Battle of Waterloo without the Prussians? That is the wrong question: he would never have fought the Battle of Waterloo unless he knew that the Prussians would move in support. Their contribution was vital and has too often been ignored by British commentators.



*Capt. Cadell, Grenadier Company  
of the 28<sup>th</sup> in 1815*

*- watercolour by A. C. Lovett about 1910 (SoGM)*



*Gen. Sir Charles Phillip Belson KCB. who, as a Lt. Col.,  
commanded the 28<sup>th</sup> at Quatre Bras and Waterloo.*



*'Wellington meets Blücher at Waterloo' – a study by George Jones (1786-1869). A student at the Royal Academy, he was commissioned as a Captain in the Royal Montgomeryshire Artillery from 1812 and, although it is uncertain whether he saw service in the Peninsular War, he was with the Army of Occupation in Paris after Waterloo.*



### **The Waterloo Casket**

The Colours of the 28th (North Gloucestershire) Regiment were virtually destroyed, almost certainly by artillery fire, during the fighting at Quatre Bras and Waterloo, and only fragments survived. The centre of the Colour was framed and displayed in the Officers Mess.

Sixty five years after Waterloo, in 1881, as a result of the Cardwell Reforms, the new Gloucestershire Regiment was formed and the 28th (North Gloucestershire) Regiment became its 1st Battalion, while the 61st (South Gloucestershire) Regiment became the 2nd Battalion. This was not popular and the officers of the 28th, as the 1st Battalion continued to call itself until 1947, decided to mark the demise of their Regiment by creating The Waterloo Casket. It was made of the staves of the last Colours of the 28th. In the top is another of the fragments of the Colours carried at Waterloo and, inside the lid, there are more fragments from the four sets of Colours presented to the Regiment between Waterloo and 1881. Around each of these are recorded details of who presented each set of Colours and when.

The casket also displays battles won by the 28th from 1694 until 1881 including some, which are not Battle Honours, such as 'White Plains' in 1775 during the American Revolutionary War, 'Aboukir', the opposed assault landing in Egypt in 1801 prior to the Battle of Alexandria, and Copenhagen in 1807, when the British seized the Danish Fleet to prevent it falling into Napoleon's hands. On the plinth are recorded the names of the officers serving with the 28th on 30th June, 1881, who presumably paid for the casket to be made.

The framed centre of the Colour carried at Waterloo was lost, along with most of the silver of the 28th, when the Japanese invaded Burma in 1942. However, by a happy coincidence the Waterloo Casket was in Delhi for repair at the time and so the fragments in the casket are all that remains of the Colours carried so triumphantly at the Battle of Waterloo.

**Maj. Gen Robin Grist CB OBE**



### **The Waterloo Snuffbox.**

Presented in about 1816, by Colonel Sir Charles Philip Belson, to the officers of the 28th (North Gloucestershire) Regiment to commemorate the part played by the Regiment in the Napoleonic Wars ,. (Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum)

The snuff box itself is in green basalt and gold, the basalt being carved with scenes from the 28th's exploits during the Napoleonic Wars, and with the names of some of the General Officers under whom the regiment served. The top of the basalt lid has a cartouche with the Regiment's battle honours from the recent wars, and its underside holds a Sèvres painted porcelain panel depicting the battle of Waterloo. The lids of the two snuff compartments within the box are cameos of the Duke of Wellington and Field Marshal Blücher.



*'Waterloo' – another painting by George Jones (1786-1869).*

*He exhibited no less than five paintings of the battle at the Royal Academy and six at the British Institution, earning himself the nickname of 'Waterloo' Jones. This one hangs in the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.*

*A little known picture of 'Waterloo', thought to be by one of the Drummond brothers, is the property of Bradford Museum and is on loan to the Cavalry & Guards Club, where it hangs in the Waterloo Room. It illustrates Wellington's statement that 'the day was dark - there was a great deal of rain in the air'.*



*'The 28<sup>th</sup> at Quatre Bras' by Elizabeth Southerden Thompson, Lady Butler (1846 – 1933), this famous oil painting on canvas from 1875 hangs in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia*

## LADY BUTLER AND THE 28<sup>TH</sup> AT QUATRE BRAS

The scene was a dusty field of flattened rye, Quatre Bras on the Charleroi to Brussels road, in mid-June 1815. It was towards the end of a long day of marching and fighting when the 28<sup>th</sup> (North Gloucestershire) Regiment, part of Wellington's Anglo-Dutch Army, for the umpteenth time formed square to receive cavalry.

Witnesses recalled that it was a model of its kind: the kneeling first rank displaying a proliferation of protruding bayonets; the second standing rank giving volley fire to the disparate attacking cavalry. In the midst of the square could be seen the mounted figure of Colonel Nixon next to the regimental colours and in misty mid-distance also General Sir James Kempt, distinguished by his bicorne hat, whom had taken refuge there. The French cavalry bravely but uselessly probe the defences.

It was this scene, the climax of the first of two days' fighting, that the 27-year old Miss Elizabeth Thompson so brilliantly recreated for the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1875. She recreated in freeze-frame the characteristics which the British believed, with justification, had combined to defeat Napoleon – dogged resolution and professionalism.

Elizabeth was born in Lausanne, Switzerland, in November 1846, the daughter of Thomas and Christiana Thompson. Thomas, a minor artist and historian, personally educated his daughters, encouraging their creative talents. The elder Elizabeth, very unusually for a Victorian girl, became a professional artist, while the younger, Alice, became a poetess.

Elizabeth studied at the 'Female School of Art', later part of the Royal College of Art, where she mastered perspective, fine detail and the depiction of human character. She decided to concentrate on military subjects as the Royal Academy then deemed historical subjects to be the acme of professionalism. Her first professional paintings were of episodes from the contemporary Franco-Prussian War, but the turning point came in 1874 with 'The Roll Call', her depiction of a British infantry regiment on the aftermath of a nameless Crimean battle. It was so well received at that year's Royal Academy Exhibition that a sequel was demanded. It may have been the upcoming sixtieth anniversary of Waterloo that directed her choice.

Her preparation was meticulous. She not only read William Siborne's account of the campaign but also used circus horses as models for fallen cavalry mounts, persuaded London senior officers to recreate military formations, acquired uniforms from the Army Clothing Factory and had clean-shaven Metropolitan Police Officers stand as models for the detailed scenes. She even had children trample on a field of rye grass to recreate the very ground on which the action took place. Her one slip was for her models to wear the new 'Belgic' shako rather than the old 'stove pipe' pattern still worn by the 28<sup>th</sup>\*. The result was a triumph which took the 1875 Royal Academy Exhibition by storm, even gaining praise from the curmudgeonly John Ruskin.

There were many squares formed and reformed over the 16-18<sup>th</sup> June 1815, so why did she choose the 28<sup>th</sup>'s? One reason is that contemporaries recognised it as a classic execution of the tactic; another is Miss Thompson thought it the epitome of individual and collective resolution in the face of a courageous, if ultimately defeated enemy.

Soon after the attractive Miss Thompson married Major William, later General Sir William Butler, and from then family came first. It did mean, however, that she would be known to history as 'Lady Butler'.

As for the wonderful 8 by 3½ feet painting of the 28<sup>th</sup> at Quatre Bras, it was subsequently acquired by the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, where it now hangs.

*\*Whilst nearly all Regiments of Foot in the British Army had adopted the false fronted Belgic shako, during the '100 Days Campaign' culminating in the Battle of Waterloo, the 28th Regiment continued to wear the older 'stovepipe' shakos which had been phased out and replaced in 1812; the older headwear can be seen clearly in William Barnes Wollen's painting – page 1.*

**Select bibliography:**

Bernard Cornwell, *Waterloo: The history of four days, three armies and three battles* (2014)

Philip J Haythornthwaite, *The Napoleonic Source Book* (1990)

David Scott Daniell and others, *Cap of Honour* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2005)

Paul Usherwood and Jenny Spencer-Smith, *Lady Butler: Battle Artist* (1987)

**Dr Timothy Brain**

**Dates of interest**

**Saturday 25 April 2015 - Centenary of the Gallipoli**

11.00hrs: Wreath Laying Ceremony and Parade, The Cenotaph, Whitehall.

The County Regiments will be represented by their successor regiments,

The Gloucestershire Regt. by The Rifles and the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars by the Royal Wessex Yeomanry.



**Thursday 7 May 2015 - Badminton Horse Trials - Friends Lunch**

12.30 -14.00hrs: Friends Lunch in the RWxY Marquee, Badminton.

Come and have a Rest from Shopping, Sit Down, Meet Friends and take a Hot Tasty Lunch  
(Please book by contacting the Hon. Sec. [simoncolbeck@msn.com](mailto:simoncolbeck@msn.com) )



**Weekend 23-25 May Gloucester Tall Ships Festival 2015**

A variety of sailing vessels visit Gloucester Docks and Sharpness Canal



**Wednesday 27 May 2015 – Forces Rugby Match**

The Rifles v Household Div.

Evening kick off at the

Prince of Wales Stadium, Cheltenham.

*The Friends will have a small stand and bookshop to advertise and recruit.*



**Saturday 27 June 2015 - Armed Forces Day**

1200 – 1700hrs: Drum Head Service on College Green in the shadow of Gloucester Cathedral.

A Parade through the City Centre to a Family Day at The Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum., The Docks.



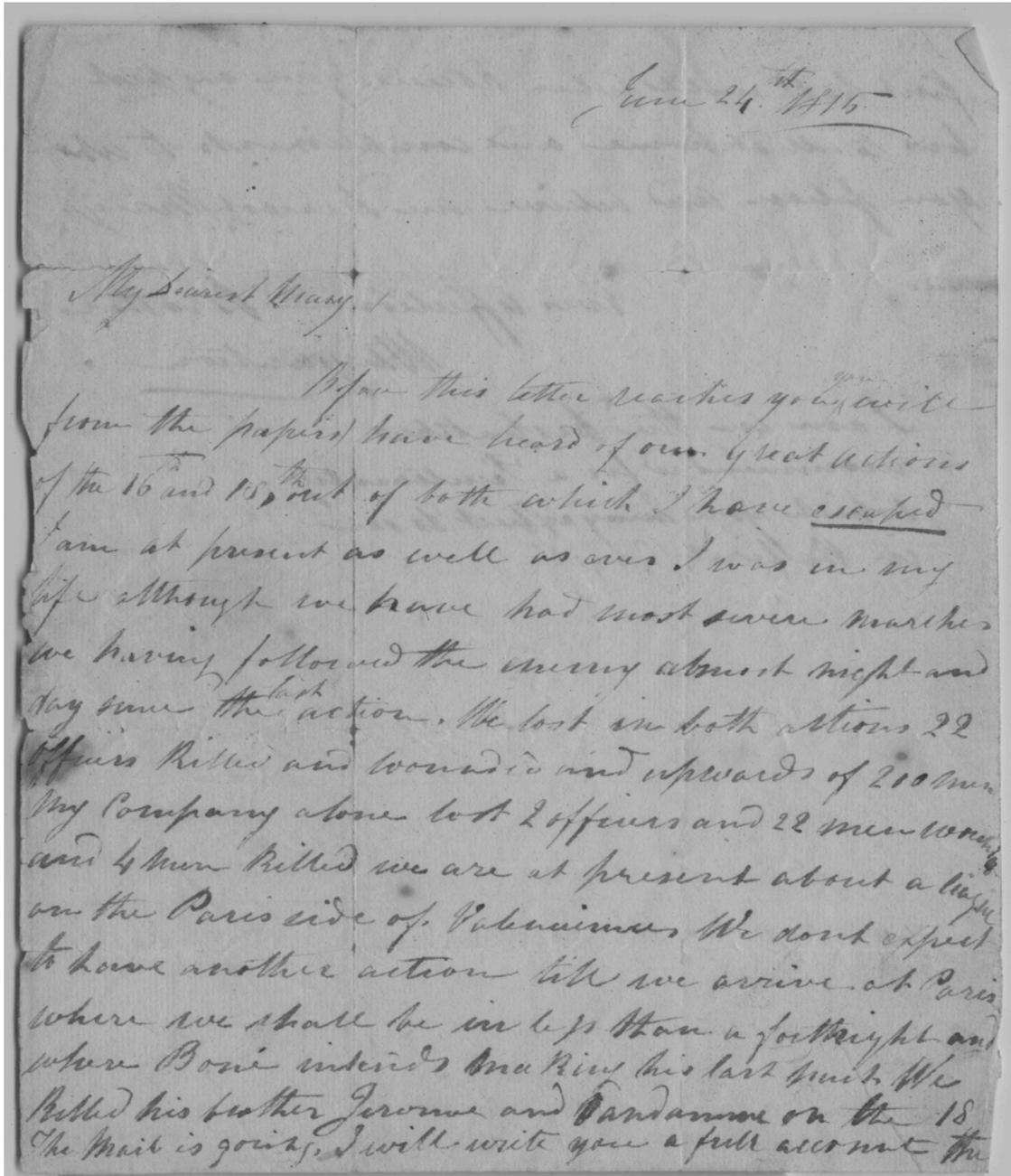
**Friday 23 October 2015 – Friends Chavenage Autumn Lecture**

1845 for 1930hrs: Peter Snow CBE will talk on

**‘To War with Wellington – from Peninsular to Waterloo’**

Your invitation will be sent to you in September 2015.

## LETTER FROM FRANCE 1815



**Letter written by Ensign William Serjeantson to his sister six days after Waterloo.**

It is the only manuscript the Museum has from a soldier of the 28<sup>th</sup> or 61<sup>st</sup> from this period. Notable points are its immediacy and inaccuracies resulting from fog of war. Neither Jerome Bonaparte nor Vandamme were killed at Waterloo, both surviving the wars, and indeed Vandamme wasn't even at Waterloo but was with Grouchy at Wavre. It can also be seen that at this stage, the Allies expected Napoleon to make a last stand at Paris:-

My Dearest Mary,

24<sup>th</sup> June 1815.

Before this letter reaches you, you will from the papers have heard of our great victories of the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> out of both which I have escaped. I am at present as well as ever I was in my life although we have had most severe marches, we having followed the enemy almost night and day since the last action. We lost in both actions 22 Officers killed and wounded and upwards of 210 men. My Company alone lost 2 Officers and 22 men wounded and 4 men killed. We are at present about a league on the Paris side of Valenciennes. We don't expect to have another action till we arrive at Paris where we shall be in less than a fortnight and where Boné intends making his last finish. We killed his brother Jerome and Vandamme on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

The Mail is going. I will write you a full account at the first halt, until when, adieu. Give my best love to all at home and compliments to who you please, and believe me, Dearest Mary's,

Ever Affectionate Brother,

W. Serjeantson.

I am in the Despatches, recommended for a Lieutenancy, which you may expect to see in the first Gazette.

## THE DUCHESS OF RICHMOND BALL

Charlotte, the wife of Charles Lennox, 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Richmond, who was commanding a reserve force protecting Brussels, held the famous Ball in Brussels on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 1815, the night before the battle of Quatre Bras. Three of her sons were serving in the Anglo-Dutch force and the event was eagerly anticipated by the Brussels' visitors. She originally had some concern regarding the timing of the event and had sought the opinion of Wellington.

*'Duke,' said the Duchess of Richmond one day, 'I do not wish to pry into your secrets ... I wish to give a ball, and all I ask is, may I give my ball? If you say, "Duchess, don't give your ball", it is quite sufficient, I ask no reason.'*  
*'Duchess, you may give your ball with the greatest safety, without fear of interruption.'* Indeed, the Duke had intended to give a ball himself on 21 June, the second anniversary of the battle of Vitoria. Operations were not expected to begin before 1 July.



*The coach house on Rue de la Blanchisserie, the next street, said to be the site of the Duchess of Richmond's Ball*

The ball was said to have been held in the property rented by the Richmonds, in the Rue des Cendres, but no true record of the exact location was recorded, although in a letter to the Times, in 1888, Sir William Fraser claimed the he had discovered the likely location – a large coach house that backed on to the house. The room was certainly 'transformed into a glittering palace with rose-trellised wallpaper, rich tent-like draperies and hangings in the royal colours of crimson, gold and black, and pillars wreathed in ribbons, leaves and flowers'.

Throughout the evening officers quietly slipped away to their regiments not knowing that a small force of French skirmishers had been driven back at an empty crossroads at Quatre Bras that afternoon by Prince Bernhard of Saxe-Weimer, with 4,000 infantry and eight guns.

*'Lady Dalrymple-Hamilton, who sat for some time beside Wellington on a sofa, was struck by his preoccupied and anxious expression beneath the assumed gaiety. 'Frequently, in the middle of a sentence he stopped abruptly and called to some officer, giving him directions, in particular to the Duke of Brunswick and Prince of Orange.....'*

*'Shortly before supper ... a dispatch was brought in ... from Quatre Bras for the Prince of Orange. The message, dated about 10 p.m. that night, announced the repulse of Prussian forces from Fleurus on the road north-east of Charleroi, and less than eight miles as the crow flies from Quatre Bras. As soon as Wellington had read this enlightening but grim piece of news he recommended the prince to miss supper and return straight to his headquarters in the field. .... Wellington kept up an animated and smiling conversation for twenty minutes more, when a lesser man would have fled.'*  
- Elizabeth Longford.

Later, rising from the supper-table, Wellington 'whispered to ask the Duke of Richmond if he had a good map. The Duke of Richmond said he had and took Wellington into his dressing-

room. Wellington shut the door and said, "Napoleon has humbugged me, by God; he has gained twenty-four hours' march on me. .... I have ordered the army to concentrate at Quatre Bras; but we shall not stop him there, and if so I must fight him there" (passing his thumb-nail over the position of Waterloo). The conversation was repeated to me by the Duke of Richmond two minutes after it occurred'

– Capt George Bowles

*"It was a dreadful evening, we were taking leave of friends and acquaintances many never to be seen again. The Duke of Brunswick made a speech as to the Brunswickers to be sure to distinguish themselves after the honour done to them by having the Duke accompany them to their review! I remember being quite provoked with poor Lord Hay, a dashing merry youth, full of military ardour, whom I knew very well for his delight at the idea of going into action and all the honours he was to gain, but the first news that we received on the 16th was that he and the Duke of Brunswick were killed".*

- The Dowager Lady Georgiana de Ros

The guest list 'of chivalry, if not beauty', contains the names of ambassadors, generals and nearly all of Wellington's senior officers including several of the Royal Navy, aristocrats and 'dashing young officers' including a certain Capt. Arthur Shakespear, of the 10<sup>th</sup> Hussars.

### **CAPT. SHAKESPEAR, THE 6<sup>TH</sup> CAVALRY BDE. AND THE YEOMANRY**

Capt. Arthur Shakespear was born at Twyford, near Winchester in July 1789 and, although he is best known as a 10<sup>th</sup> Hussar, he was a cornet in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dragoon Guards and Lieut. in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Light Dragoons before leading his own troop in the 18<sup>th</sup> Hussars in January 1814. He exchanged to the 10<sup>th</sup> Hussars in November 1814. Much of his service was as an ADC, first to the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke of Richmond, when the Duke was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland from 1807, when he may well have been acquainted with the Duchess, before she and the Duke moved to temporarily live in Brussels in 1814.

During the Peninsular War he was ADC to Lord Combermere, who had been given overall command of the Cavalry and 'was present in all engagements with him'. It was in the Peninsular that Shakespear met the Duke of Wellington and lent him a horse. In the winter of 1813, after moving up from San Sebastian on the northern Spanish coast and entering France, Wellington rode to St Jean de Luz to inspect the 3<sup>rd</sup> Light Dragoons, tiring his own horse, Copenhagen, on the steep road.

*"He asked me to give him another; a favorite horse of mine was walking round in front of the house; after taking a glass of wine he mounted her and rode a good hard canter for five hours over bad roads – he said he was never carried better....."*

*Such high good humour in the Commander-in-Chief prompted Shakespear to ask for promotion.*

*"His Grace made no promise, but that day fortnight upon return of letters from England I was gazetted....I attributed my good fortune entirely to having supplied the Great Man with a comfortable horse! We played at Whist that evening and I won 30 shillings from his Grace!" It is improbable that Shakespear's promotion to a troop in the 18<sup>th</sup> Hussars occurred for that reason.....'*

- Elizabeth Longford.

During Napoleon's 'One Hundred Days' he was ADC to Sir Hussey Vivian, who commanded the 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade of Cavalry, consisting of the 10<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Hussars and the 1<sup>st</sup> Hussars of the Kings German Legion.

At Waterloo the brigade was posted on the Duke of Wellington's left flank and waited throughout the afternoon. As evening approached the 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Brigade together with the 4th Cavalry Brigade, were moved, under fire, to support the hard-pressed centre of the line and, after the repulse of Napoleon's Imperial Guard, the two Brigades, about 2,600 men of six cavalry regiments, made the final charge of the day between Hougomont and La Haye Sainte, 'sweeping everything before them'.



**'Capt. Arthur Shakespear'** - a copy of the only known portrait of him.

Along with the allied army of Prussian, Dutch and British troops, Sir Hussey and the brigade pursued Napoleon to Paris and occupied the city.

Capt. Shakespear went on to half pay in 1818 and lived for a while in Exton, Hampshire before moving to Cheltenham, the fashionable town for retired officers, from 1823. In 1827 he leased Boxwell Court, near Wotton-under-Edge.

Here he came to the attention of the Marquis of Worcester, the future 7<sup>th</sup> Duke of Beaufort and, in 1834 when the independent troops of Yeomanry were amalgamated into a single regiment, the Gloucestershire Yeomanry Cavalry, he was asked by the Marquis to be the Major in this new regiment.

*"In 1834 Arthur was appointed Major of the Gloucestershire Yeomanry, and spent much of the summer organizing them. The Duke of Beaufort afterwards inspected them by squadrons. Service in the Yeomanry brought Arthur into close touch with the Duke of Beaufort and he was often over at Badminton. In 1836 the Duke of Wellington was staying there, and Arthur records that he went over to meet him at dinner. He also mentions good sport at Badminton and being given mounts by His Grace. The annual trainings of the Yeomanry provided outings of about a week at Clifton and Gloucester, which Arthur evidently thoroughly enjoyed, but which I suspect caused serious inroads on his purse. Arthur, with his honour of a Waterloo veteran to keep up, was not one to do things by halves."* - 'John Shakespear of Shadwell and his descendants'

His grand-daughter, writing in 1909 recalls:

*My grandfather, Capt. Arthur Shakespear, died in middle life. I have always understood him to have been an extremely handsome and taking man of extravagant tastes, who lived well beyond his means. Boxwell Court is in "the Duke's Country" and he of course hunted with the Duke of Beaufort's pack. This brought him into friendly association with the Duke and his friends, and led to living beyond his income – difficulties were the result and the family had to leave Boxwell.*

- Ibid

In 1838 the family left Boxwell 'somewhat suddenly', leaving his debts behind him, staying in Calais and then Brussels, where he made visits to Waterloo with old army comrades, such as Lord Combermere and other friends. In Baden, in July 1842, he met his old commander Sir Hussey, now Lord Vivian and he was with him when Lord Vivian died of a heart attack in that August, 'Arthur was in close attendance on him all the time' and was even present at Lord Vivian's post mortem. The family's exile ended in 1844 when they returned to England, but not to Gloucestershire. He died, visiting friends at Hampton Court, in 1845, aged fifty-five.

#### References:

- 'John Shakespear of Shadwell and his descendants' 1619-1931 by Lt. Col. John Shakespear.
- 'Wellington, The Years of the Sword' by Elizabeth Longford.
- Family papers.

**Lt. Col. Ralph Stephenson TD.**



***'The Duchess of Richmond's Ball'***  
by Robert Alexander Hillingford  
(1828–1904)

*Painted in the 1870s when he became interested in historical subjects, especially of the Napoleonic Wars. He was a regular exhibitor at the Royal Academy. The painting now hangs in Goodwood House.*

***'Before Waterloo'*** (below) by Henry O'Neil (1818–1880) Painted in 1868 he depicted officers and their ladies in an emotional departure from the Duchess of Richmond's ball.



*Capt. Arthur Shakespear's Waterloo medal in the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum*

*There is a stone memorial at Boxwell Court, inscribed "Whippy carried Captain Shakespear, 10<sup>th</sup> Hussars, at Waterloo 1815". The family of Arthur Shakespear have informed the Museum that Whippy, or rather Whipcord, was the family pony and the stone was put up by the tenant who succeeded the Shakespear's at Boxwell. The name of the 'Waterloo' horse was 'Jubilee' and the National Army Museum has one of the hooves of this battlefield charger.*



*Pictures by William Holmes Sullivan (1870-1908)*

*(above) 'The Capture of the Eagle' - the 1st Dragoons capturing the Eagle of the French 105th Infantry Regiment, painted in 1898 and 'The Bivouac, the British Lines the night before Waterloo' (below)*

