



The Scum of the Earth: What Happened to the Real British Heroes of Waterloo?

Colin Brown

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Debunking popular myths, this is a cold, hard look at the infamous battle itself and its aftermath—just in time for the 200th anniversary of the battle

This book follows the men Wellington called just that from victory at Waterloo to a Regency Britain at war with itself, and explodes some of the myths on the way; such as that the defeat of Napoleon ended the threat of revolution spreading from France. Did the victorious soldiers return to a land fit for heroes? They did not. There was the first of the Corn Laws in the same year as the battle, there was famine, and chronic unemployment. In 1819, the Peterloo massacre saw 15 killed and at least 500 injured when cavalry sabred a crowd demanding parliamentary reform. Peace in Europe perhaps for 50 years—but at home, repression and revolution in the air. And at the same time, the sheer exuberance of the Regency period, with new buildings, new art, even 17 new colonies more or less accidentally acquired. By 1848 the whole of Europe was once more set for complete upheaval. The 200th anniversary of the battle is on June 18, 2015.

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