

21 June 2021 - The Eagle is Landing!
New Waterloo exhibition for Re-Opening of the Household Cavalry Museum

For the first time in two centuries a Napoleonic Eagle captured on the battlefield at Waterloo is being reunited with the medal of the soldier who won it.

At 2pm on 18th June 1815 Serjeant Francis Styles, a Londoner from Holborn, charged with Wellington's Heavy Cavalry against the massed ranks of French infantry attacking the allied position. Styles and his Squadron Leader, Captain Alexander Kennedy Clarke, found themselves in the midst of desperate fighting where they seized one of the two Eagles which were captured at Waterloo, writing their names into legend.

These two eagles, along with the Duke of Wellington's dispatches telling of the Allied victory, arrived in London three days after the battle on 21st June 1815, exactly 206 years ago. After more than a decade of war, London and Britain rejoiced.

This summer, as museums and cultural venues finally open fully, the long-lost Waterloo Medal of Serjeant Francis Styles of the Royals (1st Dragoons) – now Blues and Royals - will be displayed at the Household Cavalry Museum on Horse Guards with the actual Eagle of the *105e Regiment d'Infanterie de Ligne*, which he captured during that fateful battle.

Styles's medal was lost to the Regiment after his early death in 1828. It disappeared from the record until last year when it was put up for sale on eBay in the United States. A serving Household Cavalryman, Corporal of Horse Richard Hendy, spotted this and flagged it to the Museum. It was duly purchased for the museum with donations from serving and ex-serving Household Cavalrymen.

Colonel (retd) James Gaselee, the Museum Chairman, said: "CoH Hendy's discovery couldn't have come at a better time. The Museum has been hit hard by the successive lockdowns and having the medal join our collection, with the loan of the 105th Eagle, will I am sure, draw visitors back to Horse Guards.

"The story of Styles is an epic one and I'm looking forward to others hearing more about him and the incredible characters who charged with him that day. I encourage history fans of all ages to get involved, visit the Museum or follow the Museum on social media to show your support," added James.

From 21st June, thanks to the generosity of the National Army Museum, the Eagle so iconic to members of the Blues and Royals and an artefact of national importance, will be loaned to the Household Cavalry Museum to join the medal. Over the summer a special temporary collection will focus on the cavalry heroes of Waterloo - from Jack 'Bear Shaw', a champion boxer and male model killed at Waterloo, to Lord Uxbridge, who lost his leg in the closing moments.

Major Tom Mountain (31), the Blues and Royals Squadron Leader, said: "Every single soldier in the squadron, and across the regiment, is fiercely proud of the legacy made at Waterloo by Styles and those he rode with. Today we wear the eagle on our sleeves, and for many, we have it tattooed on our skin. It means that much to us. It embodies what it means to be a Household Cavalryman and epitomises the courage, teamwork and sheer grit we expect from our people."

Justin Maciejewski, Director of the National Army Museum, said: "It is a great honour for the National Army Museum to loan the Eagle of Napoleon's 105th Infantry Regiment, a precious object

from our national collection, so it can be reunited with the medals of Serjeant Styles at the Household Cavalry Museum this summer.”

The Museum will reopen fully with the Styles story from 21st June, after a full ceremonial exchange of the eagle on Horse Guards Parade, and will be putting on special Waterloo walking tours, activity trails and special events. The new exhibition trail will explore the courage, carnage and controversies of Wellington’s cavalry at a battle which secured almost a century of peace in Europe.

ENDS

Notes to the Editor

The Eagle Exchange Parade - To mark the occasion of the Museum’s full reopening, normal guard changes resuming, and to celebrate Armed Forces Week and the nation’s return to normality, the Household Cavalry will be conducting a full parade on Horse Guards Parade with 55 horses and 85 men from both the mounted and operational regiments, as well as two carriages and a dismounted marching band. A mounted escort will pick up the Eagle from the National Army Museum in front of watching Pensioners at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, before delivering the eagle, via the Mall to the Museum at Horse Guards Parade where the Queen’s Life Guard will be turned out alongside the dismounted soldiers. The real Eagle will be carried in the lead carriage by a selected Lance Corporal of Horse who, representing Sjt Styles, will wear his Waterloo medal.

Images –

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/n3yhwkvmh5bz7gv/AAAcMPiTsKYUFGLRWKDGQeLma?dl=0>



The Household Cavalry Museum - As well as preserving the heritage of over 350 years of service to the sovereign, the museum boasts a view into the working stables of the Queen's Life Guard and is the only part of the iconic Horse Guards building open to the public. Profits from the museum and its shop contribute to the Household Cavalry Foundation each year, helping support Household Cavalrymen past and present, especially those wounded in conflict in the last few decades.

Find out more about the Household Cavalry Museum at www.householdcavalrymuseum.co.uk

Instagram - @householdcavalrymuseum

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The Household Cavalry - The Household Cavalry is made up of the two most senior regiments in the British Army: The Life Guards and The Blues & Royals. It is divided into the Household Cavalry Regiment and the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment.

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment (HCMR) conduct public ceremonial duties in London but are also known to travel across the UK and even the globe on key international events, all whilst representing the monarchy and the nation. Most famously, the Mounted Regiment conducts a 24 hour guard at Horse Guards called the Queen's Life Guard as well riding en masse on the Queen's Birthday Parade (Trooping the Colour).

The Household Cavalry Regiment (HCR) is the armoured fist of our unit, incorporating the latest military equipment, including the new Ajax armoured fighting vehicle, with attached supporting arms including snipers, anti-tank troops and remotely piloted drones. The Regiment was one of the most frequently deployed to Helmand, Afghanistan and served before that in the Falklands, Northern Ireland, Gulf War and War in Iraq.

The National Army Museum – Established in 1960 by Royal Charter, the National Army Museum is the United Kingdom's leading authority on the history and traditions of the British Army. It explores the impact that soldiers from Britain, Ireland and the Commonwealth have had throughout the world, from the 17th century to the present day. Through its world-class collections, the Museum safeguards and shares the stories and values of ordinary people who have been called upon to bear extraordinary responsibilities on behalf of others. www.nam.ac.uk

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Historical Details

The story of the capture of the Eagle of the French 105th *Regiment d'Infanterie de Ligne* at Waterloo on 18th June 1815 is possibly not as well known as the capture of the Eagle of the 45th by the Scots Greys during the same charge but its significance in signposting the final defeat of France and Napoleon after over 25 years of warfare and its iconic status as a symbol of our regiment should not be underestimated.

Their Eagles were hugely important to French regiments having been presented to them by the Emperor himself and men could, and often did, die in their defence. Despite the fact that the French Army disintegrated at the end of the Battle of Waterloo only two Eagles were captured by British

units during the course of the battle, those of the 45th and the 105th. Their captors, Sergeant Ewart of the Scots Greys and Captain Kennedy Clark and Corporal Francis Styles of the Royals were acknowledged, at the time and since, as heroes.

All three men were subsequently promoted in recognition of their bravery. Captain Clark later became a General, Sergeant Ewart was granted a Commission and Corporal Styles was first promoted to Sergeant and later also Commissioned. There is little doubt that had there been any gallantry awards available in 1815 all three men would have been prime candidates to receive them.

The two captive Eagles were brought back to London in Triumph and laid at the feet of the Prince Regent as a symbol of Victory.

Francis Styles, The Man

Francis Styles was probably born in 1785 and joined the 1st or Royal Dragoons on 21 May 1804 at the age of 19. By June 1815 he was a corporal in Captain Paul Phipps's No 5 or F Troop, when he charged with the Union Brigade at Waterloo.

On 25 June 1815 he was promoted to sergeant soon after the battle, probably for assisting Captain Kennedy Clark in the capture of the Eagle of the French 105th Regiment of the Line. On 11 April 1816 Styles was commissioned as an Ensign, in the 6th West India Regiment, as a further reward for his services at Waterloo but due to the reduction of the Army at the end of the Napoleonic Wars he was placed on half-pay on 28 December 1817, aged 32.

He went to live in Holborn and apart from his half-pay it is not known how he made a living. We believe that he was married on 29 April 1818, at St Andrew's Church, Holborn to Mary Ann House of the Parish of St James, Clerkenwell. It seems after their marriage the couple went to live in the parish of St James, Clerkenwell, which is where Francis died in January 1828. At the time of his death, he was living in Gloucester Street, now renamed Gloucester Way.

Francis Stiles was buried in the Georgian Church of St James, Clerkenwell on 17 January 1828, aged 43 years. His entry in the parish burial register records the following:

Captor of an Eagle at the great battle of Waterloo.

There is now no evidence of his burial in the churchyard which has since been paved over, although we know that the bodies were later removed from the churchyard and placed in the church crypt, where he presumably still lies. It was suggested, and agreed by the Church authorities some five years ago, that a suitable plaque or similar monument to commemorate Styles should be placed at the entrance to the crypt but this was not progressed.

THE CAPTURE OF THE EAGLE AND CORPORAL FRANCIS STYLES

Captain Kennedy Clark wrote to Lord Uxbridge on 10 June 1817: *"I did not see the eagle and colour (for there were two colours, but only one with an eagle) until we had been probably five or six minutes engaged. It must, I should think, have been originally about the centre of the column, and got uncovered from the change of direction. When I first saw it, it was perhaps about forty yards to my left and a little in my front. The officer who carried it and his companions were moving in the direction of ? with their backs towards me, and endeavouring to force their way into the crowd. I gave the order to my squadron 'Right shoulders forward, attack the colour', leading direct on the point myself. On reaching it, I ran my sword into the officer's right side a little above his hip joint. He was a little to my left side, and he fell to that side with the eagle across my horse's head. I tried to catch it with my left hand, but could only touch the fringe of the flag, and it is probable it would have*

fallen to the ground, had it not been prevented by the neck of Corporal Styles' horse, who came up close to my left at the instant, and against which it fell. Corporal Styles was Standard Coverer; his post was immediately behind me, and his duty to follow wherever I led.....I called out twice together 'Secure the colour, secure the colour, it belongs to me' This order was addressed to some men close to me, of whom Corporal Styles was one. On taking up the eagle, I endeavoured to break the eagle from the pole with the intention of putting it into the breast of my coat; but I could not break it. Corporal Styles said 'Pray, sir, do not break it', on which I replied 'Very well, carry it to the rear as fast as you can, it belongs to me.'

In conclusion, it becomes clear that the capture of the eagle of the 105th was a matter of close co-operation between the two men, Captain Kennedy Clark cutting down the bearer so that the eagle fell on the neck of the horse of Corporal Styles who actually grabbed it and took it to the rear on the instruction of Kennedy Clark.