

# 'Napoleon's Waterloo'

*A Tour to the Waterloo Battlefield  
14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> September 2012*

*... At about nine o'clock in the evening the battlefield was almost cleared of the French army. It was an evening no pen is able to picture: the surrounding villages yet in flames, the lamentations of the wounded of both armies, the singing for joy; no one is able to describe nor find a name to give to those horrible scenes.'*

Henri Nieman - 6th Uhlans



*The Plancenoit Re-enactment*

Waterloo is a story of such magnitude, not only of the leaders, but also of the men themselves. It is a story of their lives, their families, their fears, and their heroism and, for many, their ultimate sacrifice on that fateful June Sunday in 1815.

From its dishevelled start to its electrifying end, the Waterloo campaign fascinates in its intensity. It endured four great battles in as many days, the climax of which, dramatic by any standard, saw the defeat of an Empire and ended the dreams and ambitions of the greatest soldier of modern times. The feat of arms at Waterloo changed the entire course of European history when Bonaparte pitted his military brilliance and charisma against the tactical skill and stamina of Wellington, in an effort to decide the fate of Europe.

This great military gamble unfolded 197 years ago in a small valley 11 miles south of Brussels. With five gross errors of judgement and two incredible chance decisions, amid 115,000 casualties, we discover that at the campaign's unbelievable end, soldiers in multicoloured coats, amidst the fog of war, did not know whether they had won or lost. We visit the very ground where Napoleon met his Waterloo.

## Tour Itinerary

### Day 1: Friday 14<sup>th</sup> Sep - The Waterloo Campaign

- **Departure:** An early start from Moreton, Essex via pick up points by arrangement: - Brentwood (Holiday Inn - Junction A12/M25) - Maidstone Services and Dover to catch an early Dover Ferry to Calais.
- Arrive Grand Hotel Waterloo.
- **Royal Chapel Waterloo:** To place the importance of remembrance.
- **Wellington's Headquarters and Museum-**Impressive and detailed.
- Presentation: **The 1815 Campaign.**
- Dinner

### Day 2: Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> Sep – Setting the scene & The Battle of Quatre Bras

- **The Panorama:** The largest mural in Europe. It depicts the almost surreal but courageous series of French cavalry charges against the Allied squares of infantry resisting them.
- **The Lion Mound** – In one's lifetime this is surely a 'must visit' location. You view the entire hallowed acres where British heritage and history has set modern military standards. A very easy pace is assured and you will be rewarded with a memorable experience.



*The Lion Mound - 300,000 cubic meters of earth*

- **La Haie Sainte:** Scene of the desperate struggle between the King's German Legion and d'Erlon's French.
- Lunch
- **Chantelet Farm:** The Chapel and where Marshal Ney spent the night of 17 June.
- **Le Caillou:** Napoleon's Headquarters and contemplate the demise of the greatest soldier of modern time. We understanding the Waterloo Campaign of 1815.

*At Le Caillou in the room where it happened, we hear how Napoleon overruled his commanders and advisors. We look at how a very serious battle conference went horribly wrong. Confusion, bad feeling and loss of trust resulted.*



*Napoleon's statue at Le Caillou*

- **Quatre Bras:** The Cross Roads where Lancers got stuck in and Wellington earns his keep defending perhaps the most important road junction in Napoleonic history. We view the ground where the Essex lads (44<sup>th</sup> Foot) fought on that hottest of recorded days. The aftermath and the prelude to Waterloo.
- **Pierrepont Farm:** We tour on the only battlefield which Nosey fought on ground not of his own choosing. We see: **Pierrepont Farm** and where the wood of the same name saw the largest Division in the French Army drive in the outposts of the Perponcher's 27<sup>th</sup> Jaegers. We view where De Lancey wrote his deposition whilst Wellington was observing and understanding the tactical significance of the French camp fires and onion soup mid morning on that 16<sup>th</sup> June in 1815. **Gemioncourt Farm:** Scene of the 5th Militia's Dutch determination to hold off the French heavy horse and the fight for the farm. **Cherry Wood and Matern Lake:** To learn of the history of the 'Sweeps' n 'Grasshoppers' efforts to protect Wellington's left. Understanding the significance of the first chance decision of the campaign, the ground of importance and where Perponcher and Rebecque decided wisely.
- **The Quatre Bras Memorials:** Dutch, Belgium and British and where granite went flying.
- Dinner

### Day 3: Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> Sep – Wellington's Line and the 'Way of the Prussian'

- **Wellington's Crossroads and Picton's Line:** Where the rough sharpened sabres of the Union Brigade devastated the best part of two French Divisions, the story of a General, a Sergeant and what hit the Essex boys from the rear.



The 27<sup>th</sup> Regt 'Advance at Plancenoit'



The British 'In Square'

- **Papelotte:** The importance of the Allied left flank and why little is known of the events in this part of the battlefield are revealed.
- **Zieten's Crossroads:** That great chance decision.



*Zeithen's Crossroads*

*Here on Wellington's left flank, General Zeithen, a Prussian commander, was about to execute the strategic intent of his superior when he is ordered to do the seemingly opposite. He knew his boss's mind, and his organizational culture but would he trust in his own judgment?*

- **Chapel St Robert:** The truth about Blucher's march to the 'sound of the guns'.
- **Chapel St Lambert:** The Prussian Rubicon, greasy banks of the Lasne defile and Ferme de la Kelle.
- **Bois de Paris:** Hake's Brigade as they emerged to confront the French reserves of Domon and Subervie.
- **Chateau Frischermont:** The secrets of this place are surprising and educational.
- **Dinner in Brussels**
- **Wellington's Capital by Night**

#### **Day 4: Monday 17<sup>th</sup> Sep - Battle of Waterloo - The End Game**

- **La Belle Alliance:** Ney's second argument with Kellerman and the latter's almost vision of France riding to her demise.
- **The Way of the Garde:** Napoleon's Imperial Columns.
- **Hougoumont Farm and Chapel:** The ground Wellington deemed most important. Scene of 'The Battle within the Battle'.



*Hougoumont's Infamous Southern Wall*

- **Mercer's Ridge:** Ney's gallant cavalry charges, the final attack of the Imperial Guard, the tales from the ridge and the aftermath.
- Depart for Calais to be back at Dover by 1800 Hrs and Moreton by 2000 Hrs.

## Tour Departure Rendezvous:

Tour starts/ends at Moreton, Essex. Departure at 0700 Hrs Friday 14 Sep - via M25/M20 Pick up points by arrangement.

Tour Duration 3 Nights & 4 Days

Tour price per person sharing £585 - Deposit £200 - Single Supplement £155

*Tour Ref: CWT W'Loo 12*

| <u>Included in the price of your Tour:</u>  | <u>Excluded from the price of your Tour:</u>  |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4 Star Hotel B&amp;B 3 Star Accom</li><li>• 3 Dinners with Wine</li><li>• Ferry Crossing Dover - Calais return</li><li>• All museum entry fees</li><li>• Tour Folder</li><li>• Luxury Coach Transport</li><li>• Guild of Battlefield Guides - Qualified Guide</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All Lunches</li><li>• Breakfast on 14 Sep</li><li>• Hotel extra services, telephone, bar and business facilities</li><li>• Dinner on 17 Sep</li><li>• Insurance</li></ul> |

## YOUR GUIDE

Graeme Cooper has been battlefield guiding for several years and operates *Cooper's Waterloo Tours*, specialising in tours to the battlefields of Europe for adults, and leadership training for the military. A Fellow of the International Napoleonic Society, Graeme's interest in military history was sparked during his time as a cadet at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst by the renowned lecturers, military historians and authors, the late Dr David Chandler and Professor Richard Holmes.

In November 2002, Graeme founded the International *Guild of Battlefield Guides*. In May 2006 he started Corporate Battlefields, a business leadership training company for corporate management. He is a recognised Great War and WW2 guide, member of the Battlefields Trust and former Chairman of the British Army of the Rhine Branch of the Western Front Association. Graeme is married with a son and a daughter, both of whom are commissioned in the British Army.



*Lady Butler's 'The Charge of the Greys'*

*The troopers charged with 'rough sharpened sabres' a fact only made public Circa 1850*

For Booking and Further Details Please Contact:

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