

The Napoleon Series

The British Mounted Arm and Domestic Horse Trade 1814-1818: Cast offs and Reductions.

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Preamble

This paper will examine the cast-off trade of the British Mounted Arm 1814-1818; how the cast-off system worked and analyse the horses it put into the national horse market. Most of the horses were sold at auction by John Batten of Rochester, and data from the sales notices carried in contemporary newspapers (for example, *The Morning Post*) will be used to suggest the colour, sex and age of the horses in use by the British cavalry and other mounted troops.

Methodology

Adverts placed in metropolitan and provincial newspapers for sale of horses at auction were searched from which dating relating to the number, type, colour and regiment of origin of the horses sold was noted. Horses sold at auction appear to have been sold in discrete Troop-sized lots, of around 60-90 animals. Smaller lots (> 20) are assumed to be cast offs – each regiment was allowed to sell four horses per troop per year which were too old or infirm for further service.

It is assumed that the horses sold as a result of the reductions 1814-1816 were typical, in terms of size, colour and sex. Whilst regiments may have used the reductions as an opportunity to dispose of those animals which were older or less easily managed, the quantity of horses disposed of suggests, and the discrete troop-sized auction lot suggests these horses were typical and entire troops were disbanded and their horses sold in a single event.

The Cavalry in 1814

Following the abdication of Napoléon (14 April 1814) in the 'Treaty of Fontainebleau' peace was restored to mainland Europe for the first time in nearly twenty years. For the British army, however, the veterans of the Peninsula campaign would have enjoyed little rest as they were almost immediately sent off to Canada to fight the fledgling United States, which had attempted to invade Canada two years earlier.¹ The release of so many seasoned troops meant that a quick victory and restoration of peace was imperative: the war, following Napoleon's abdication, was becoming a 'source of growing diplomatic embarrassment for the British government.'² The

¹ A. D. Lambert, *The Challenge* (London: Faber & Faber, 2012), pp. 64-66.

² *Ibid*, p. 387.

continuing war, which was draining troops and money, made Britain look weak and distracted: peace would enable Britain to focus on the big questions of the Vienna Congress. Despite America facing the very real prospect of Bankruptcy by Autumn 1814 she fought on, much to the chagrin of British diplomatists. The Battle of New Orleans (a series of engagements fought between 23 December 1814 and 9 January 1815) proved to be unnecessary as the Treaty of Ghent, which effectively ended the war, had already been ratified (24 December 1814).³

The contribution of the British cavalry to the 'War of 1812', however, was minimal: only the 19th Light Dragoons were involved, arriving in 1813. For the remainder of the British cavalry, however, there was the usual round of cutting out dead wood, casting-off horses and reduction to a peacetime establishments or eight troops. The Cavalry was reduced by a further 9,000 in 1816 saving an estimated £314,000.⁴ The Estimates for 1816-1817 saw a reduction of 30,976 men.

Reduction of the cavalry to save money was not new. Lord Palmerston in the Army Estimates for 1810 projected a saving of £952, 092 and 'particularly recommended a diminution of the cavalry, the staff, the wagon-train.' The Dragoon and Dragoon Guards were reduced by twenty men per troop (486 men in total) saving some £262,230 per annum. At the same time Troop Quartermasters were abolished in favour of a Troop Sergeant-Major. The Royal Wagon Train had five of its twelve troops disbanding, saving £23,433.⁵

Remounts and Replacements

Prior to 1887 the British Cavalry had no formal remount system. Britain, unlike other European countries had no formal studs for breeding cavalry horses and instead relied upon civilian horse breeders and agents – and as a result was wholly reliant upon the fluctuations of the market in terms of price and what animals were bred. Horses were purchased regimentally; there was no coherent system (or staff) for the acquisition of remounts in wartime (other than recursion to horse agents or enlistment of animals), and, more crucially, there was no provision for a reserve of horses to be in place upon mobilisation.⁶

The Government was opposed to the establishment of a formal remount system because of political – not military – ideology: a remount system would have given the Government a monopoly on the horse trade and therefore have been against the principals of Free Trade. In 1803 it was proposed to form a remount depot, but this was soon quashed.⁷ Furthermore, there was opposition because of the perceived 'enormous cost' of purchasing and feeding the horses. Radicals considered that the money would be better

³ Ibid, pp. 387-401.

⁴ 'Army Estimates', *Leeds Intelligencer* (11 March 1816), p. 2.

⁵ 'Army Estimates', *Cobbett's Political Register* (3 March 1810).

⁶ G. Winton, *Theirs not to reason why: Horsing the British Army, 1875-1925* (Solihul: Helion & Co. Ltd, 2013), pp. 39-40.

⁷ *Cobbett's Political Register*, vol. 4 (December 1803), p 828.

spent feeding the poor and that a Government remount depot smacked too much of having a standing army.⁸ Fifty years later the reform-minded Captain Louis Nolan raged:

It is said that a government stud is opposed to the principle of competition. What competition can there be amongst breeders for the price of a troop-horse when by breeding carthorses they obtain forty pounds for them when two years old? How could they possibly afford to rear animals with the necessary qualifications for a cavalry horse of the first class? To breed such horses a cross must first be obtained with our racehorses: this would entail a large outlay of capital; and when the good troop-horse was produced, the breeder could not obtain his price for him.⁹

Nolan further remarked that because of the system of purchasing from horse dealers, the only horses left for cavalry regiments were the 'refuse':

The best horses of the present day make bad warhorses. What can be therefore expected from the refuse left by a nation of horsemen, horsefanciers [sic.] and jockeys and indeed our cavalry is mounted on what no one else will buy for any purpose whatever, such horses alone become available for the low price of a remount horse.¹⁰

This all meant that the British Cavalry was mounted upon those horses which were preferred by the Domestic Horse Trade; usually hunters, race horses, roadsters, and carriage horses. This, of course, would impact the effectiveness of the cavalry. As early as 1796, the Duke of York, Commander in Chief of the British Army, appointed a board of General Officers to enquire into the mounts and equipment of the cavalry. They noted that

The Breed of black horses formerly ridden by all the heavy cavalry is either extinct or completely reformed, the animals of that description in the market are suitable only for draught, and unfit to carry a soldier... the new type of horse bred chiefly for gentleman's carriages is fitted to take the place of the blacks in the ranks.¹¹

Under the 1795 regulations each regimental colonel was empowered to purchase the horses for his own regiment: £30 was allowed by the Government for a light cavalry mount, and £40 for heavy cavalry. This price remained constant throughout the nineteenth century, despite the inflation in the price of horses after c. 1880.

Each regiment was to maintain a 'Depot Troop' for the training of horse and rider. By 1800, most cavalry regiments rode on hunters, which were either

⁸ 'Corn Crops,' *Cobbett's Political Register*, vol. 18 (August 1810), p. 202.

⁹ Nolan, *Cavalry*, p. 341.

¹⁰ A. J. Guy and A. Massie, eds., *Captain L E Nolan 15th Hussars: Expedition to the Crimea* (London: National Army Museum, 2010), p. 71.

¹¹ A. Hyland, *The War horse in the modern era* (Stockton on Tees: Black Tent Books, 2009) p. 22.

thoroughbred or were thoroughbred-crosses. Every large house and stately home would have maintained both a stock of carriage horses and hunters, which were no doubt bred specifically for this purpose but we may suppose on a small scale. Thus there was a constant supply, of reasonably well-bred horses, which may not have been ideal for the military, but could be obtained relatively easily. In times of war, however, the cost of horses and their fodder could double. This meant that the type of horse the cavalry required became inaccessible, leading to a reduction in the quality of horses being ridden and ultimately a shortage of horses due to the Government refusing to pay above £40 per animal.

During 1812 in order to alleviate the shortage of horses it was proposed that all the horses in the country be registered and that one-tenth be seconded for 'public service.' For every gentleman who owned ten horses, he was requested to volunteer one horse and rider; for those who owned between ten and twenty two horses and riders and so on. Those who owned less than ten horses would have their horses (and rider) seconded via lots, just like the Militia Ballot. Those whose livelihood depended entirely upon their animals would be able to purchase a 'licence' to make themselves exempt.¹² A similar proposal from the Crimean War included 'depots in different parts of the kingdom' where 'loyal subjects may deliver such horses as they feel inclined to place at Her Majesty's disposal. This would, the writer believed, 'have supplied the cavalry service with some thousands of the finest "seasoned" horses in the world.'¹³ The lack of a remount system at home caused consternation with those officers who had served in India. The Honourable East India Company had established a centralised remount service and depots for the acquisition and training of horses, invariably of native breeds as 'European' horses were felt 'too civilised' for that climate. A similar set up was established in South Africa where the 'Cape Horse' was much praised for its endurance and hardiness on campaign despite its lack of breeding.¹⁴

Household Cavalry

Mr Aldridge of London sold on behalf of the Royal Horse Guards 25 'good-sized, seasoned, active, long-tailed Geldings' (mostly blacks) 'in very high condition' in June 1814.¹⁵ The 2nd Life Guards sold via Tattersall of London 'Twelve very-useful horses...fifteen hands and two inches upwards, of great strength and endurance' on 5th September 1814.¹⁶

The Household Cavalry sold over one hundred horses four years later in 1818 via Batten of London. Of the 'One Hundred and fourteen Long-Tailed Black Horses' 60 of them were formerly the property of the Royal Horse Guards

¹² 'Debate in the Houses on the Threatened Invasion', *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England*, vol. 32 (1818), pp. 1211 to 1213.

¹³ 'The Supply of Cavalry Horses', *The Morning Post* (27 November 1854), p. 7.

¹⁴ 'Our Cavalry and their Horses', *Daily News* (7 August 1855).

¹⁵ 'Supernumery Horses from His Majesty's Royal Horse Guards. – By Mr Aldridge', *The Morning Post* (6 June 1814), p. 1.

¹⁶ 'Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. Troop horses, of the 2d LifeGuards, *The Morning Post* (3 September 1814), p. 1.

whilst the remaining 54 belonged to the 1st Life Guards on 5 and 6 November 1818.¹⁷ Dixon of London sold twelve ‘very superior, young, handsome long-tailed Black Horses’ from the 1st Life Guards on 31 July 1818 at 12-noon. Included in the sale were two thoroughbred horses, lately officer’s chargers ‘...the best lot ever offered for sale.’¹⁸

Table 1: Summary of Horses Sold by Household Cavalry

Royal Horse Guards	June 1814	25	Black	Geldings, long tailed.
	July 1814	30	Brown, bay, chestnut.	
	1818	60	Black	Long tailed
1 st Life Guards	November 1818	54	Black	Long tailed
	July 1818	12	Black	Long tailed
2 nd Life Guards	September 1814	12	Black	15.2h.h
		193 horses		

Whilst the majority of the horses of the Household cavalry were black (163 individuals) the Royal Horse Guards were also riding browns bays and chestnuts (30 individuals). The tallest horses were 15.2 hands high. The entire group had long, i.e. not docked, tails.

Dragoon Guards

The 2nd Dragoon Guards sold 93 mostly bay geldings at auction in June 1814.¹⁹ The 3rd Dragoon Guards, recently returned from the Peninsula were reduced from ten to eight troops. In May 1814, the 3rd Dragoon Guards advertised some 93 ‘Remarkably strong, active cavalry horses...young, in high condition’ for sale at auction. The majority were bay geldings.²⁰ The 3rd Dragoon Guards advertised a further 135 animals for sale in September 1814, on two lots: the first lot of 67 were auctioned at Wakefield on 30 September whilst the second lot of 68 were auctioned at York (1 October 1814 at 11am).²¹ The horses were thought suitable for ‘Gentlemen, for Carriages and Curricles’ or for coach owners and farmers.²² Mr Lumb advertised a further 53 ‘strong, young cavalry horses’ for sale formerly ‘belonging to His Majesty’s 3d Dragoon Guards’ in Leeds.²³ In total the 3rd Dragoon Guards had cast-off 281 animals.

¹⁷ ‘To the Nobility, Gentry, Farmers, Post and Coach Masters’, *The Morning Post* (4 November 1818), np.

¹⁸ ‘Sales by Auction. By Mr Dixon’, *The Morning Post* (30 July 1818), p. 4.

¹⁹ ‘Classified Advertisement. To be sold by Auction’, *Bury and Norwich Post* (1 June 1814), p. 1.

²⁰ ‘Classified Advertisements. To be sold by Auction by Mr Batten’, *Ipswich Journal* (28 May 1814), p. 1.

²¹ ‘Sales. Sixty-Eight, strong, active, young, cavalry horses to be sold’, *York Herald* (24 September 1814), p. 1; see also ‘Sales, Sixty-Seven strong, active, young cavalry horses to be sold’, *York Herald* (24 September 1814), p. 1.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ ‘Classified Advertisements. About 53 strong, active young Cavalry Horses’, *Leeds Mercury* (8 October 1814), p. 1; See also, ‘Classified Advertisements. About 53 strong, active young Cavalry Horses’, *Leeds Mercury* (22 October 1814), np.

The 5th Dragoon Guards sold at auction 44 ‘superior’ horses on 24 August 1814 at Woodbridge, Suffolk via Mr Batten.²⁴ Forty-five ‘strong, bony’ horses from the 5th Dragoon Guards were sold by Batten at the Cattle Market, Chelmsford, Essex 25 March 1815; also at the sale were ‘several Horses belonging to officers.’²⁵ A second lot of 46 horses from the 5th Dragoon Guards were sold at week later by Batten (31 March 1815).²⁶

Table 2: Summary of Horses Sold by the Dragoon Guards

2 nd Dragoon Guards	June 1814	93	Bays	Geldings
3 rd Dragoon Guards	May 1814	93		Geldings
	September 1814	67		
	September 1814	68		
	September 1814	53		
5 th Dragoon Guards	August 1814	44		
	March 1815	44		
	March 1815	46		
		508 horses		

Dragoons

Batten of London auctioned 59 horses belonging to the 1st, 3rd and 5th Dragoons at Canterbury, 12 July 1814 at 11am.²⁷ The 2nd Royal North British Dragoons (Scots Greys) were reduced from ten to eight troops. They cast off 25 horses (bay and brown geldings) in Canterbury on 16 July 1814.²⁸ The Greys also sold, because of ‘further reduction,’ some ‘Sixty Grey Cavalry Horses... of a very superior selection’ at auction by Mr Batten at Canterbury cattle market. They were ‘well worth the attention of Gentlemen for carriages and curricles.’²⁹ The Greys sold a further 68 greys at auction on Saturday 11 August 1814 by Mr Batten ‘at Sadler’s Repository, Goswell-Street, London.’ They were ‘very superior’ and ‘the handsomest and most powerful lot of Horses ever offered for Public Sale.’³⁰ They sold a further 75 greys on 11 June at 11am at Canterbury via Mr Batten.³¹ The Greys also sold a further 96 bay or brown horses during 1814.³² Between 11-26 July 1816 they disposed of 72 bays and browns.³³ Amongst the 130 horses advertised for sale by Batten in March 1817 were 45 Greys belonging to the Scots Greys. They were

²⁴ ‘Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. Forty-four strong, active, young Cavalry Hosres’, *The Morning Post* (22 August 1814), p. 1.

²⁵ ‘Sales by Auction. Remarkably strong, young, active Cavalry Horses’, *The Morning Post* (22 March 1815), p. 1.

²⁶ ‘Sales by Auction. Remarkably strong, young, active Cavalry Horses’, *The Morning Post* (30 March 1815), p. 1.

²⁷ ‘Sales by Auction’, *The Morning* (11 July 1814), p. 1.

²⁸ ‘Sales by Auction’, *The Morning Post* (16 July 1814), p. 1.

²⁹ ‘Sales by Auction. Sixty Grey Cavalry Horses by Mr. Batten’, *The Morning Post* (2 August 1814), p. 1.

³⁰ ‘Sale by Auction. Sixty-eight, strong, young active Cavalry Horses’, *The Morning Post* (10 August 1814), p. 1.

³¹ ‘Sale by Auction., Strong, young active Cavalry Horses’, *The Morning Post* (7 June 1814), p. 1.

³² The National Archives (TNA), Kew, London, Acc. WO1.

³³ *Ibid.*

auctioned 29 March 1817 at Canterbury.³⁴ During 1813, by contrast, the Scots Greys disposed of 79 'grey cavalry horses' in October at Birmingham.³⁵

The Inniskilling Dragoons sold 'twenty very capital young, fresh horses' 4 October 1814 via Mr Dixon in London. They were all '16 hands high, with a deal of bone and substance.' They were described as being 'the finest and largest horses in the Kingdom' sold 'on account of the reduction.'³⁶

The 1st Royals sold 104 horses via Batten at Marshfield, on 20 and 21 September 1814.³⁷ Mr King of Ipswich auctioned 40 horses from the 1st (Royal) Dragoons at Ipswich 9 March 1816. They were 'in fine condition, and of a very superior selection.'³⁸

Table 3: Summary of horses sold by the Dragoons

1 st Royal Dragoons	September 1814	104		
	March 1816	40	Blacks	
2 nd Royal North British Dragoons	June	75	Greys	
	July 1814	25	Bays, browns	
	August 1814	60	Greys	
	August	68	Greys	
	1814	96	Bays, browns	
	July 1816	72	Bays, browns	
	March 1817	45	Greys	
6 th Inniskilling Dragoons	October 1814	20	Blacks	16h.h.
		605 horses		

The 1st Royals and 6th Inniskillings appear to have ridden black horses; the Scots Greys appear to have ridden mostly grey horses (248 individuals) with 193 bay or brown horses. The tallest horse ridden by the dragoons was 16 hands high.

Light Cavalry

The 15th Hussars reduced from twelve troops to eight. They sold via Mr Batten some 'Fifty, strong, active bony horses' on Wednesday 20 July 1814 at Arundel; they disposed of a further 24 horses the following day. Also sold by separate lots were 'several horses belonging to Officers in the service.'

The 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th Light Dragoons sold cast-offs at auction in Weymouth, which were advertised as far afield as Salisbury.³⁹ Some 56

³⁴ 'Notice of Sales. Upwards of 130 young fresh Cavalry Horses', *The Morning Post* (25 March 1817), p. 1.

³⁵ '79 Grey Cavalry Horses', *Worcester Journal* (30 September 1813), p. 2.

³⁶ 'Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. Officer's chargers and Cavalry Horses', *The Morning Post* (3 October 1814), p. 1.

³⁷ 'Strong, active young horses', *Bristol Mirror* (17 September 1814), p. 2.

³⁸ 'Strong, active, young Cavalry Horses', *Ipswich Journal* (9 March 1816), np.

³⁹ 'Classified Advertisements. Strong, active, cavalry horses. To be sold by Auction', *Salisbury and Winchester Journal* (30 May 1814), p. 3.

horses from the 10th Hussars were sold over two days (Thursday 7, Friday 8 July) at Brighton Cavalry Barracks, whilst 18th Hussars disposed of 30 animals at Lewes in the same month.⁴⁰ The *Sussex Advertiser* reported that

During the course of the present week, upwards of 200 more fine, spirited, cavalry horses belonging to the 10th and 18th Hussars, and the 12th, 14th and 45th [sic, 15th] of Light Dragoons are to fall transsers under the hammer or Mr. Batten, at Sadler's [Horse] Repository, Goswell Street London, at Reigate, in Surrey, and Brighton and at Lewes.⁴¹

Many of the horses that flooded the market were sold by Mr John Batten of Rochester. Batten was the usual agent for several regiments, including the 7th Hussars.⁴² He advertised the following sales of horses in the *Morning Post*

- 31st August: 60 horses belonging to the 10th Hussars at Chichester.
- 1st September: 80 horses belonging to the 10th Hussars at Brighton Cavalry Barracks.
- 3rd September: 70 horses belonging to the 18th Hussars at Lewes Cavalry Barracks.
- 8th September: 99 horses belonging to the 10th Hussars at Brighton Cavalry Barracks.
- 10th September: 70 horses belonging to the 18th Hussars at Lewes Cavalry Barracks.⁴³

Over five days, the 10th Hussars (reduced from twelve troops) divested themselves of 239 horses and the 18th Hussars (reduced from ten troops) of 140; if previous recorded sales are included then these figures stand at 295 and 170 respectively.

This was not an unprecedented single sale of horses, however. In March 1810 the 10th, 12th, 15th and 18th Light Dragoons disposed of 443 horses via Batten of London at Canterbury Cattle Market:

- 10th Light Dragoons: 142 horses
- 12th Light Dragoons: 40 horses
- 15th Light Dragoons: 165 horses
- 18th Light Dragoons: 96 horses⁴⁴

The 12th Light Dragoons sold a further 40 in April 1810 and the 10th seventy (212 horses from both sales).⁴⁵

⁴⁰ 'Remarkable, Strong, Active, Young Cavalry Horses', *Sussex Advertiser* (27 June 1814), p. 3.

⁴¹ 'Editorial. Brighton Sept. 5, 1814', *Sussex Advertiser* (5 September 1814), p. 3.

⁴² *Journal for the Society of Army Historical Research* (1961), p. 84

⁴³ 'Classified Advertisements. Superior Cavalry Horses by Mr Batten', *Morning Post* (30 August 1814), p. 4.

⁴⁴ 'Supernumerary Light Cavalry Horses', *Morning Post* (31 March 1810), p. 1.

⁴⁵ 'Supernumerary Light Cavalry Horses', *Morning Post* (4 April 1810), p. 2.

The 7th Hussars sold 'Seventy-Eight handsome, useful and bony horses' via Mr Batten in London on 15 August 1814. They were 'Greys, Bays, Browns and Blacks, young, in high condition, quiet and steady.'⁴⁶ The 13th Light Dragoons sold 16 horses 'in consequence of a reduction' via Mr Batten in London on 12 August 1814.⁴⁷ The 11th Light Dragoons cast-off 24 horses at auction at Hounslow Cavalry Barracks 30 August 1814.⁴⁸ The 12th Light Dragoons sold via Mr Batten 29 'strong, young bony' horses and the 14th Light Dragoons a further 35 animals at Sadler's Repository, London on 5 September 1814.⁴⁹ The 10th Light Dragoons sold via Sadler's Repository 30 'Handsome and young Horses... Bays, Browns, Greys, Chestnuts and Roans... most of them are very handsome, young, sound, and in high condition.'⁵⁰ The 16th Light Dragoons sold via Batten 59 'strong, active and useful' horses 'disposed of in consequence of the reduction of the regiment...not being Cast Horses are of a very superior description.'⁵¹ Also sold were 'sundry Lots of Military Appointments.'⁵²

On 14 February 1816 the 13th Light Dragoons sold, via Mr Batten at Colchester Cavalry Barracks, 40 'strong, active, young' horses '...sold in consequence of the reduction of the Corps.'⁵³ A day later Batten sold at Brighton 46 horses from the 23rd Light Dragoons, also 'sold in consequence of reduction...'⁵⁴ Batten sold 41 troop horses latterly belonging to the 15th Light Dragoons in London, 30 May 1816.⁵⁵

The 10th Hussars sold at auction some 20 'Handsome, clever, active horses... in high condition. 15 hands high, shew a deal of blood, with strength, and are a superior lot to any offered for sale.' They were sold by Messrs. Sadler & Son, London, 29 April 1817 at 12-noon.⁵⁶ Eleven horses from '19th Regiment of Royal Lancers [sic]' were sold by Batten at auction at Brentford, Essex, 25 August 1818. The horses were geldings 'young, in good condition, and well worth the attention of gentlemen.'⁵⁷

Batten advertised 130 horses for sale in March 1817:

⁴⁶ 'Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. Cavalry Horses', *The Morning Post* (12 August 1814), p. 1.

⁴⁷ 'Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. French Horses', *The Morning Post* (12 August 1814), p. 1.

⁴⁸ 'Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. Remarkably strong active, young, cavalry horses', *The Morning Post* (29 August 1814), p. 1.

⁴⁹ 'Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. Remarkably strong active, young, cavalry horses', *The Morning Post* (3 September 1814), p. 1.

⁵⁰ 'Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. Cavalry Horses – at Sadler and Son's Repository', *The Morning Post* (8 September 1814), p. 1.

⁵¹ 'Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. Fifty-nine Cavalry Horses', *The Morning Post* (16 September 1814), p. 1.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ 'Sales by Auction. Remarkably strong, young, active Cavalry Horses', *The Morning Post* (13 February 1816), p. 1.

⁵⁴ 'Sales by Auction. Brighton, Br Mr John Batten', *The Morning Post* (13 February 1816), p. 1.

⁵⁵ 'To farmers, Horse Dealers, Inn Keepers, Coach Proprietors', *The Morning Post* (29 May 1816), p. 1.

⁵⁶ 'Cavalry Horses – by Messrs. Sadler & Son', *The Morning Post* (29 April 1817), p. 1.

⁵⁷ 'Strong, active, Cavalry Horses. By Mr Batten', *The Morning Post* (22 August 1818), np.

- 45 Greys belonging to the 2nd Dragoons (Scots Greys) on 29 March 1817 at Canterbury.
- 55 horses belonging to the 9th Royal Lancers in London, 1 April 1817.
- 43 horses belonging to the 9th Royal Lancers in Brentford, 2 April 1817.⁵⁸

Batten of London also offered for sale at Canterbury 53 horses ‘from several Regiments in France’ on 1 August 1818.⁵⁹ He later advertised 150 ‘troop horses’ for sale in three lots in January 1819. This included

- 56 troop horses sold at Rochester 26 January 1819.
- 40 troop horses at Romford 27 January 1819.
- 56 troop horses at Canterbury 30 January 1819.⁶⁰

Batten’s agent, a Mr Reeve, advertised for sale at auction in the same month 80 horses from the 11th Light Dragoons: 40 were sold on 26 January at Ashford (Kent) and the remaining forty 30 January at Cranbrook (Kent).⁶¹ A ‘number’ of ‘very choice’ troop horses from the 15th Hussars were sold by auction at Bury St Edmond’s by Mr N Nock, 3 February 1819.⁶²

Table 4: Summary of horses sold by the Hussars

7 th Hussars	August 1814	78	Greys, bays, blacks, browns
10 th Hussars	July 1814	56	
	August 1814	60	
	September 1814	80	
	September 1814	99	
	September 1814	30	Bays, Browns, Greys, Chestnuts, Roans
	April 1817	20	Bays, Browns, Chestnuts, Greys.
15 th Hussars	July 1814	50	
	May 1816	41	
18 th Hussars	July 1814	30	
	September 1814	70	
	September 1814	70	
		684 horses	

Table 5: Summary of horses sold by the Light Dragoons

9 th Light Dragoons (Lancers)	April 1817	55
	April 1817	43
	August 1818	11
11 th Light Dragoons	August 1814	22
	January 1819	40
	January 1819	30

⁵⁸ ‘Notice of Sales. Upwards of 130 young fresh Cavalry Horses’, *The Morning Post* (25 March 1817), p. 1.

⁵⁹ ‘Canterbury. Extensive Sale of Horses’, *The Morning Post* (30 July 1818), p. 4.

⁶⁰ ‘Notice of Three Days’ Sale in Kent and Essex’, *The Morning Post* (22 January 1819), np.

⁶¹ ‘Ashford and Cranbrook in Kent’, *The Morning Post* (22 January 1819), np.

⁶² ‘Cavalry Horses. To be Sold by Auction’, *The Bury and Norwich Post* (3 February 1819), np.

12 th Light Dragoons	August 1814	22
	September 1814	29
13 th Light Dragoons	August 1814	16
	February 1816	40
14 th Light Dragoons	August 1814	35
	September 1814	35
15 th Light Dragoons	September 1814	46
	May 1816	41
16 th Light Dragoons	September 1814	59
23 rd Light Dragoons	February 1816	46
		570 horses

Board of Ordnance

On 2 August Mr Dixon of London advertised for sale 'Twenty Horses and Twenty Spanish Mules from his Majesty's Honourable Board of Ordnance.'⁶³ Messrs. Sadler & Son of London advertised an equal number of horses and mules from the Board of Ordnance for sale on the same day.⁶⁴ The mules were all 15h.h. 'young, handsome, bony... used to ride and draw artillery.'⁶⁵ Batten sold fifty horses formerly belonging to the Royal Waggon Train at auction on 12 August 1814;⁶⁶ a further fifty 'carriage and saddle horses' belonging to the Royal Waggon Train were sold by him at auction 18 August 1814 'in consequence of a reduction of part of the Corps.' The horses were 'useful and bony...in high condition... steady in harness, having regularly been driven in pairs, fours and sets.' They were therefore 'worthy of attention of...Post and Coach-masters.'⁶⁷ Sixty 'carriage and riding horses' from the Royal Waggon Train were sold by Batten 22 August 1814 at Sadler's Repository, London. Also included were 'Four remarkably fine Mules; also several Horses belonging to Officers.'⁶⁸ Mr Batten auctioned a further 60 horses from the Royal Waggon Train at Crown Hill, Croydon, 10 September 1814.⁶⁹ He also auctioned sixty more, 21 September 1814 at Sadler's Repository.⁷⁰ He also auctioned 44 horses from the Royal Staff Corps at Ashford, Kent, 20 September 1814.⁷¹ A second lot of 44 horses from the Staff Corps were also auctioned by Batten, at Rochester at 12-noon 27 September

⁶³ 'Sales by Auction. By Mr Dixon at his Repository', *The Morning Post* (2 August 1814), p. 1.

⁶⁴ 'Sales by Auction. By Sadler & Son, at their Repository', *The Morning Post* (2 August 1814), p.1.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. Royal Waggon Train', *The Morning Post* (12 August 1814), p. 1.

⁶⁷ 'Sale by Auction. Royal Waggon Train Carriage and Saddle Horses', *The Morning Post* (10 August 1814), p. 1.

⁶⁸ 'Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. Royal Waggon Train. Carriage and Saddle Horses', *The Morning Post* (22 August 1814), p. 1.

⁶⁹ 'Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. Royal Waggon Train. Carriage and Saddle Horses', *The Morning Post* (8 September 1814), p. 1.

⁷⁰ 'Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. Royal Waggon Train. Carriage and Saddle Horses', *The Morning Post* (19 September 1814), p. 1.

⁷¹ 'Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. Forty-four Cavalry Horses', *The Morning Post* (19 September 1814), p. 1.

1814.⁷² Ten ‘Ordnance Horses’ were sold at auction by Aldridge of London (4 November 1818), latterly belonging to the ‘Honourable Board of Ordnance... disposed of solely on account of a Reduction.’⁷³

Table 6: Summary of horses sold by the Board of Ordnance

Board of Ordnance	2 August 1814	20 horses 20 mules
	2 August 1814	20 horses 20 mules
Royal Waggon Train	12 August 1814	50 horses
	18 August 1814	50 horses
	22 August 1814	60 horses
	10 September 1814	60 horses
	21 September 1814	60 horses
Royal Staff Corps	20 September 1814	44 horses
	27 September 1814	44 horses
		408 horses 40 mules

Conclusion

The flooding of the horse trade with ex-cavalry horses in good condition led to a ‘Great reduction in...the price of horses... and sales are announced in all the military depots.’⁷⁴ The market price was further affected because in April 1814 Horse Guards had ordered regiments to ‘discontinue all purchases of horses.... until further notice.’⁷⁵ The *Stamford Mercury* opined that the price of horses fell by 15% in agricultural districts.⁷⁶ It was not just the English horse trade that was affected, but the French too. The British army is reported to have sold 7,000 horses in Bordeaux and surrounding districts for as little as £10 to £12 per head that effectively destroyed the horse market as local breeders could not compete with such low prices.⁷⁷ Whilst the disposal of horses in relatively large numbers, for example in March 1810 was not unusual, the quantity of horses sold and that no new horses were to be purchased to replace them meant that the impact of the 1814-1816 reductions was more strongly felt in the domestic horse trade. Horse prices rallied a little in April and May 1814 after an outbreak of equine influenza that was estimated to have killed several thousand animals in the midlands. Prices only recovered – albeit briefly - after declaration of war in April 1815 but the domestic horse trade was apparently unable to supply sufficient horses, or at least sufficient horses at the price the government would pay, leading to continental horse dealers re-mounting the British mounted arm for the Hundred Days campaign.

⁷² ‘Horses, Carriages &c. Sales by Auction. Sale at the Stock Market Rochester’, *The Morning Post* (26 September 1814), p. 1.

⁷³ ‘Ordnance Horses – By Mr. Aldridge’, *The Morning Post* (4 November 1818), np.

⁷⁴ ‘Editorial’, *Chester Chronicle* (1 July 1814), p. 3.

⁷⁵ *Stamford Mercury* (29 April 1814), p. 2.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ ‘Cavalry Horses’, *Chester Chronicle* (14 June 1814), p. 3.

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