

Perhaps the elite of Woodbridge were aware that, with the departure of the troops, the prosperity of the town would decline. One thing they wouldn't have been aware of was the escape of Napoleon and his final defeat at Waterloo in June 1815. William Lockwood was born in 1808 and remembered the Barracks as a small boy, but his father must have been the source of the information he gave in the book he wrote many years later. It had been a profitable time for tradespeople and shopkeepers. A watchmaker and jeweller, probably George Gurdon, 'took more money before breakfast than than in a whole day' since. Officers purchased gold seals to hang on their watch chains. The turnover of some grocery and provision shops was nearly £200 a week. The principal brewery sent a six-barrel dray to the Barracks Canteen three times a day. The brewery also owned the Duke of York, beside the Barracks, and eight or more public houses in the town. There was also a shop within the Barracks; the shopkeeper, Jonathan Beaumont, married a local woman in 1809.

Lockwood also gave some details about the Barracks. Communication was maintained with the closest Martello Towers by way of a high tower called a Gazebo (gaze about). This would be impossible in foggy or misty weather, which he said resulted in the word 'rafty' being introduced into the Suffolk dialect, because such weather would make it ideal for Napoleon's invasion rafts to be towed to England. Troops of cavalry were kept in readiness to depart at a moment's notice, and when he was a boy at a Dame school in New Street, the boys would rush to the window to watch the artillery go by on the way to Bromeswell Heath to practice.

The auction of the furniture and fittings from the Barracks took place on a number of days in April 1815. It was reported that the prices obtained were much higher than when the contents of the New Barracks at Ipswich were sold. Very little remained to be seen after the Barracks were demolished but David Elisha Davy recorded in 1827 that a piece of ground near the Barracks was used as a burial ground for the Garrison. Near its centre a memorial to William Hamilton Finnie, several years Barrack Master of the Garrison, who died 17 March 1814 aged 38 years, still stood. Today in a corner of the Old Cemetery, accessible from Warren Hill, is a stone placed in memory of the 669 persons who died in the Barracks. In St. Mary's Church Davy described a memorial to Major Thomas Clarkson Moncrieff of the Berwickshire Militia who died in 1811, at the advanced age for a military man of sixty-five.

Burials of ordinary soldiers and their wives were recorded in St. Mary's register, but only officers were buried in the churchyard. Most years the Reverend Thomas Carthew noted the number of burials in each place and at the end of 1803 recorded that in December many died of the smallpox and the following winter many children died from colds caught in the Barracks. The burial ground was extended at the end of 1808 after the greatest number of burials in one year, namely 189. The first three months of that year the weather was extremely bad, with huge amounts of snow accumulating. The following year there were 95 burials, many of men returning in the autumn from the Walcheren Expedition, sick from malaria or typhoid contracted in that marshy part of the Netherlands. The 23rd and 92nd regiments came to Woodbridge, but high numbers of men died in barracks along the south coast. However there were enough Highlanders fit to parade in Woodbridge for King George's Jubilee in October 1809.

Today we can enjoy the frontages of the handsome houses built for senior officers in Cumberland Street, which until then was part of The Thoroughfare. It would appear that the stationing of 4,000 or more soldiers in this small market town did not disturb the populace much and they certainly contributed to the prosperity of traders, brewers and retailers. Newspapers often remarked on the good behaviour of troops. Perhaps harsh punishments and strict discipline kept most in order. The bonhomie of the bottle, rather than resource to women may also have contributed, although there were clearly some public houses where prostitutes congregated.