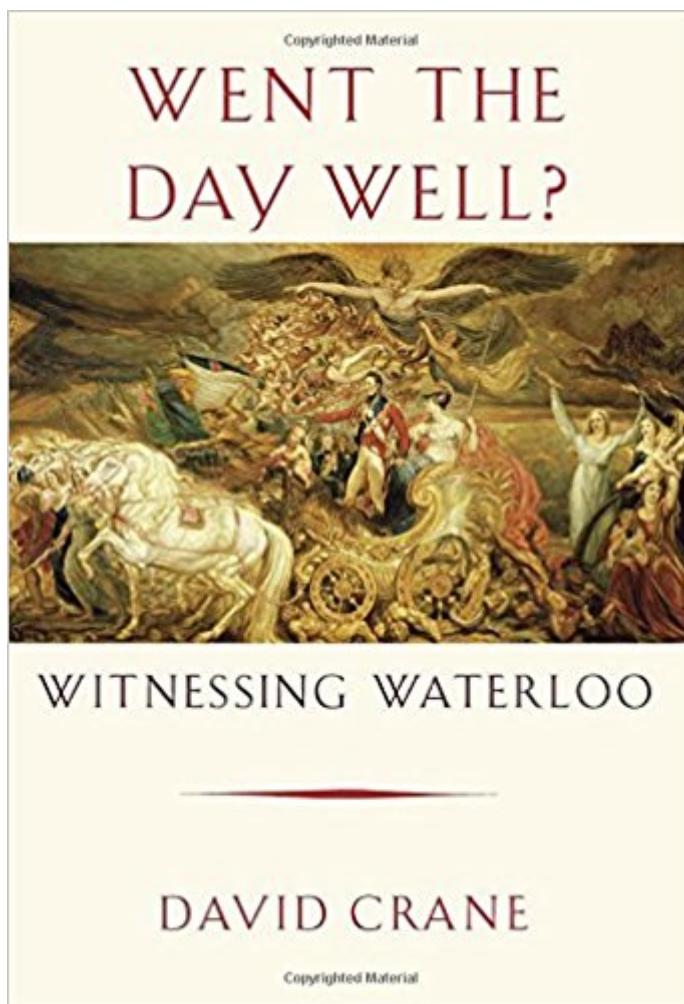


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# Went The Day Well?: Witnessing Waterloo



## Synopsis

Midnight, Sunday, June 18, 1815. Britain holds its breath. Since Napoleon's escape from Elba in February, Europe has been jolted from eleven months of peace back into the frenzied panic of a war it believed had ended. "The whole complexion of the world is changed again," writes George Ticknor, then a young American lawyer in Britain for the first time. "God only can foresee the consequences." The nation is awash in reports and rumors. The Battle of Waterloo is close at hand.

"Went the Day Well?" is an astonishing hour-by-hour chronicle that starts the day before the battle that reset the course of world history and continues to its aftermath. Switching perspectives between Britain and Belgium, prison and palace, poet and pauper, lover and betrothed, husband and wife, David Crane paints a picture of Britain as it was that summer when everything changed. Drawing on a wide range of primary sources—from newspapers and journals to letters and poems—"Went the Day Well?" offers a highly original view of Waterloo, grand in scope but meticulous in detail. What was Britain doing on that Sunday, from the mad king downward? Who were born to live out their lives in the Britain created at Waterloo? Who died? Who was preaching, who was writing and who was painting? Lyrically rendered in Crane's signature prose style, "Went the Day Well?" freeze-frames the men and women of Britain in 1815 as they went about their business, attended lectures, worked in fields and factories—all on the cusp of a new, unforeseeable age.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Of the many books that have been written to mark this year’s bicentenary of the battle of Waterloo, Crane’s surely ranks among the most original. His is not just the story of the climactic carnage that ended the Napoleonic Wars, but a finely balanced narrative that flits seamlessly between the battlefield and the British home front. . . . Crane holds up the battle as a lens through which we see a warts-and-all portrait of Britain 200 years ago.” •Mike Rapport, *The New York Times Book Review* “A delightful chronicle of how Britons, famous and obscure, in and out of the Duke of Wellington’s army, experienced the iconic battle. . . . Readers will marvel. . . . A historical tour de force” •a fascinating panorama of Great Britain during the summer of Waterloo.” •Kirkus (Starred Review) “Crane accents his well-paced, fluid style with nice poetic touches, and he succeeds admirably.” •Publishers Weekly (Starred Review)

DAVID CRANE read history and English at Oxford University before becoming a lecturer at universities in Holland, Japan and Africa. His previous books include *Scott of the Antarctic*, *Empires of the Dead* and *The Kindness of Sisters*. He lives in northwest Scotland.

Interesting and useful approach to presenting the day. Unfortunately unless you are steeped in the politics and characters of the period it is very difficult. Writing could be much better. Many sentences are obtuse and require several re-readings to discern what he means to say. I will probably slough through and finish it, but my enthusiasm is waning.

This is a different take on the battle. Like all wars the world continues on. This book gives accounts of what was happening in England on the day of Waterloo. A more interesting read.

A splendid book in the Waterloo bicentennial year. Mr Crane tells the tale through the eyes and writings of contemporaries. Read it - it's great!

Great!

A terrific book on a favorite subject.

It started out well. Then I realized, that many characters showing up in Britain were of absolutely no interest. That would be fine, in the history of the world most people's lives are of no interest except

to themselves and maybe to their family and friends. Eventually, my eyes glazed over - sheer boredom. To add insult to the self-inflicted injury (it was me who bought the book,) an electronic glitch made the Kindle version nigh illegible. Originally on my Kindle Fire 8.9 HDX each chapter started with the picture of an old pocket watch the hands set to the time of day. Out of a sudden, pfffft - the picture disappeared and the chapters started out with stuff that only a code writer could love. I tried to re- download the book from my PC, no help. My suggestion: if you are suffering from insomnia, start reading this book. Guaranteed to put you to sleep. Considering that the Battle of Waterloo was one of the great events of the 19th Century, this is no easy feat.

The stories are too fragmented and loosely connected. While there is interestingly granulated material about surrounding life, the overall remains bogged down.

Great read on the anniversary of one of the greatest game changing battles in Western European history.

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