

# Saving Samuel Godley Drama Pack

By Michelle Cook and Peter Daniel

WATERLOO  
**200**  
— 1815 - 2015 —  
A DEFINING MOMENT  
IN EUROPEAN HISTORY



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## Scene I: Recruitment, or “Taking the King’s Shilling”

- In your group, read through the scene.
- Decide who will be playing each part.
- Use the images which most help to visualise the

### Setting the Scene:

It is the 2nd January 1804 in Whitwell, Nottinghamshire and Samuel Godley Senior has sent his **24** year old son, also named Samuel, off to Chesterfield to buy leather for their cordwainer business. He is seen off by his mother who tells him once again that it is about time that he settles down and finds himself a wife. Ignoring his mother, he takes the family horse and rides to Chesterfield in Derbyshire. He is buying leather in the market when Corporal Will Hitchcock marches through the town. Hitchcock has been sent from the Life Guards in London by Colonel Earl Cathcart to recruit men for the regiment and uses his charm to persuade Samuel to join him in the local pub. Samuel listens intently to Hitchcock’s stories and realises he yearns for adventure. In any case, before he knows it Hitchcock has cunningly slipped him the King’s Shilling in his tankard. He is now a soldier of the Second Regiment of the King’s Life Guards! Samuel returns home to collect his things for the journey to London and has to tell his parents he has joined the army.

### Characters:

**The narrator** is your group leader and is responsible for setting the scene. Once the scene is completed, he/she will clap his or her hands to signal the ‘freeze frame’. The narrator will then tap each character on the shoulder to signal them to describe what role they are playing, what they are doing in the scene, and how their character is feeling.

**Samuel Godley Senior** has lived in Whitwell all of his life. Whereas many local people struggle for a living toiling as farm labourers or working in the local quarry he has a good business supplying bespoke leather shoes to the local gentry. He is proud of his profession as cordwainer and is determined that his son Samuel will take over the family business.

**Anne Godley** dotes on her son Samuel and wants him to do as his father wishes—to take over the family shoe making business. She wants Samuel to meet a nice girl and settle down and is frustrated that he has other ideas.

**Samuel Godley Junior** is now 24 years old but looks older than his years because he has lost nearly all of his hair. He has worked with his father for some time now apprenticed as a cordwainer, a skilled shoemaker who specialises in making luxury leather shoes. He knows his mother wants him to settle down and his father to take over the family business. He wants to do this some day but must quench his thirst for adventure before he settles down. When Corporal Hitchcock, comes along he is soon impressed by his stories of adventure as a soldier and allows the wily corporal to take him into the local pub. He is soon persuaded to turn his back on Whitwell and pursue what seems a glamorous life in London as a member of the King’s Life Guards.

**Corporal Will Hitchcock** has been told by Colonel Earl Cathcart that because of the threat of Napoleon the 2nd Life Guards need to recruit new men to join their ranks and ready themselves to serve overseas. He travels North and takes the opportunity of going to Chesterfield where he knows he might find men willing to take the King’s Shilling. He meets Samuel Godley outside a pub and soon impresses him with many a tall tale. He has worn his best dress uniform and makes sure that he drops hints at the many extravagant parties he has had the opportunity to attend whilst guarding the monarch. When he buys a pint for Samuel he slips a shilling into the tankard.

**Earl Cathcart** is an officer in the King’s 2nd Regiment of Life Guards and has been told that new men are needed to bring the regiment ready to serve overseas to meet the threat of Napoleon. He meets Corporal Hitchcock at Horse Guards and tells him to go north looking for recruits.



## Scene II: Westminster's Soldier

- In your group, read through the scene.
- Decide who will be playing each part.
- Use the images which most help to visualise the life of a new recruit

### Setting the Scene:

George IV's coronation on July 19<sup>th</sup> 1821 was one of the most spectacular events London has ever seen. In today's money it is estimated to have cost around £200,000 even though Britain was still struggling to pay for the war. The event was very popular but clouded by scandal as George refused to let his own wife attend! The Life guards, now returned from war, were in attendance in a ceremonial role, lining the procession. All of London would have known of this great celebration in Westminster.

### Characters:

**Samuel Godley Junior** has returned from war injured but has remained a Life Guard. The job the Lifeguards are now doing are the ceremonies he learnt when he first joined the army instead of going to war. He is looking at younger versions of himself and noticing how far he has come. He wonders if Britain will avoid another expensive war with France.

**Sarah (Singer) Godley**, like many people at the time, is hopeful that the new king will bring a period of prosperity and peace but feels cautious, remembering his excessive behaviour and spending during his time as Prince Regent. She worries, too, about her husband as there is not a lot of work for injured soldiers, so she hopes that peace will continue. She is happy, for now, to enjoy the celebrations.

**King George IV** hopes to use his coronation to show the world his success and power. In particular, he hopes to outshine Napoleon. He has employed guards, disguised as pages, to keep his wife away from the ceremony. He had recently tried to divorce her but been told by parliament he was not allowed to. He had planned for 18 months to ensure every aspect of the day demonstrated his glory.

**Queen Caroline** has had a very unhappy marriage to George IV. Her husband struggled to get a divorce but treated her so badly she moved to Italy. Even abroad, her unhappy marriage meant she was not treated like royalty. Even though she has been told not to, she hopes to attend the coronation and take her rightful place as Queen.

**A Lifeguardsman**, stands in would have had a ceremonial role but would also have had a practical role. His job was to ensure the safety of the procession and the King. But he feels wary. Not long ago there had been an assassination attempt on George IV's life and because of the poverty after the Napoleonic wars, there were very often fights and protests at large public gatherings. He hasn't forgotten the riots after the Corn Laws. George IV has changed the uniform of the Lifeguards for this event; they now wear cuirasses and white belts, and look very smart. They also wear the Waterloo Medal which they are very proud of. He knows that the Lifeguardsmen will be given special tokens to commemorate their participation in the event, and this is very exciting. It also feels like a privilege to be at the centre of the action!

**Major Thomas Playford** has been bored since his return from war. He believes time spent being idle is a great evil and has not found much to occupy himself now that the use for the Lifeguards is so much reduced. He is glad to have something to do but the pomp and ceremony here does not compare to the drama of war. He likes to draw, and is trying to take everything in so that he can draw portraits of his companions later.

## Scene II: Westminster's Soldier

- What would it have been like to stand guard at such important events?
- How do you think you would have felt if you were from a poor background amongst that degree of wealth?



Figure 6: George IV was very interested in **fashion** and made sure that all his clothes and the uniforms of his guard were sumptuous

Figure 7: George IV's Coronation ceremony in **Westminster Abbey** where the king was crowned by the Archbishop of Canterbury

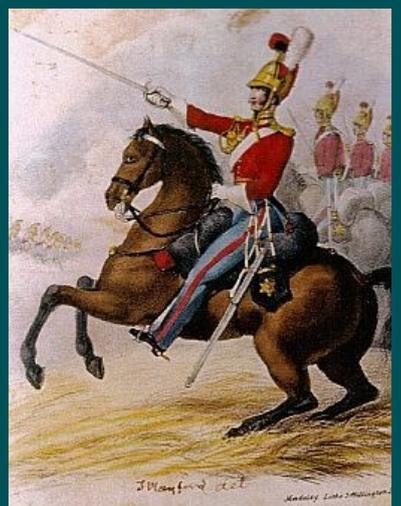


Figure 8: Queen Caroline

Figure 9: Major Thomas Playford liked to draw, this is one of his drawings

Figure 10: The Household Cavalry were mostly a ceremonial guard when they were in London



## Scene III: Saying goodbye to Samuel Godley

- In your group, read through the scene.
- Decide who will be playing each part.
- Use the images which most help to visualise this dramatic end.

### Setting the Scene:

An elderly Samuel Godley is walking through the streets of Marylebone when he feels unwell. He staggers and falls, and though he is quickly rushed to hospital he dies. We fast forward to the 22nd of January 1832 and St John's Wood has come to a stand still for the funeral of Samuel Godley.

### Characters:

#### Narrator

Your group leader is the narrator and is responsible for setting the scene. Once the scene is completed, he/she will clap his or her hands to signal the 'freeze frame.' The narrator will then tap each character on the shoulder to signal them to describe what role they are playing, what they are doing in the scene, and how their character is feeling.

**Samuel Godley Junior** is now aged 53 and lives with his wife in Boston Place. He has not been the same man since his return from Waterloo. The blow to his head eventually led to his retirement from the Life Guards and he has been fortunate to find a job at the Baker Street Bazaar. He has been having black outs recently and is walking along the Marylebone Rd when he collapses. People try to help him but he dies before arriving at hospital.

**Sarah (Singger) Godley** married Samuel Godley in 1810 and expected a comfortable life in London with her husband on permanent guard duty to the king. She was shocked when he was sent away to fight in 1812 and had many years of loneliness. She is worried sick when she hears that Samuel has collapsed in the street and rushes to Marylebone hospital but finds that her husband has already died. She is worried about having to pay for his funeral and what future lies in store for her as a widow. Although she is proud of her husband she knows his wounds from Waterloo had ruined their life together.

**Anne Godley** is Samuel Godley's mother and despite her age has travelled down to London for his funeral. She had never wanted her boy to be a soldier but at the funeral she is overcome with pride at how her son's regiment have honoured him with a decent funeral.

**Earl Cathcart** has never forgotten the men he commanded at Waterloo. Although he is no longer in the regiment he makes sure to attend the funeral of a soldier he knew well. He believes that Samuel should be remembered as he represents all of the men who fought bravely for their country at Waterloo. He makes sure to invite the Duke of Wellington to attend. He helps to carry Godley's coffin at the funeral.

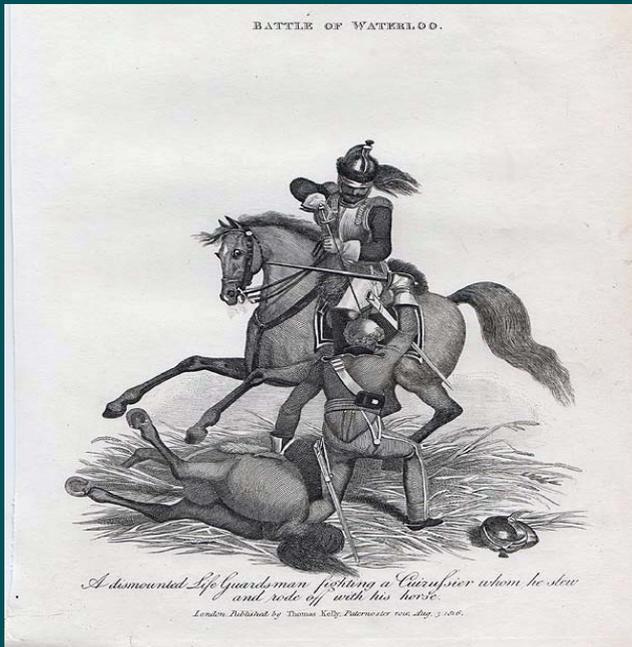
**Sgt Major Thomas Playford** is a Sergeant Major in the 2nd Life Guards and saw Godley's heroics at the Battle of Waterloo. He is in awe of his courage but has seen how Samuel has struggled since that day with the problems brought on by the fracture he took to his skull. As someone who knew him well and as historian/artist of the 2nd Life Guards he insists on designing Samuel's gravestone and organising the collection of funds to pay for his funeral. He helps to carry the coffin at the funeral.

**Duke of Wellington** commanded the Allied armies at Waterloo. Although he has great respect for the veterans of the battle he is too busy to accept an invite to attend Godley's funeral as he is now prime minister.

When you have finished your performance think about Samuel Godley's life and think of something you could say about him when we go to visit his grave.

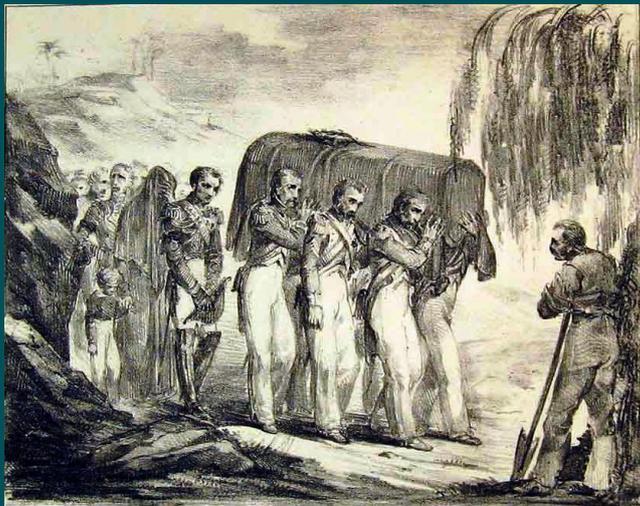
# Scene III: Saying goodbye to Samuel Godley

- How do you think people would have felt seeing him collapse?
- What do you think about the state of Godley's tombstone? Should it be fixed?

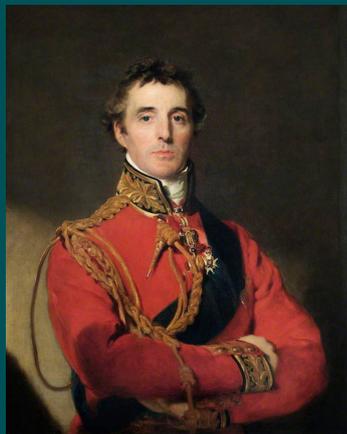


A melancholy instance of the uncertainty of human life occurred on Sunday, in the New-road, St. Mary-la-bonne. An elderly man was observed by several persons suddenly to stagger, and before assistance could be rendered him, to fall to the ground. Aid was quickly procured, and he was conveyed to the St. Mary-la-bonne Infirmary; surgical aid was, however, of no avail, as he had ceased to exist some moments before it could be procured. A patient recognised the unfortunate individual as Samuel Godley, formerly belonging to the 2d Regiment of Life Guards, since his discharge from which, and up to the period of his decease, he has been in the employ of the proprietors of the Bazaar, in Baker-street, Portman-square. He was a man of undoubted courage, and is the identical individual alluded to by Mr. Kelly, in his "History of the War," under the cognomen of the Marquis of Granby (a name he acquired by having lost the greater part of his hair), and who at the battle of Waterloo, when the grand charge was made by the English heavy cavalry against the French cuirassiers, was separated from his regiment, and attacked by two cuirassiers at the same instant, struck from his horse, and although on foot, without his helmet, and with his skull dreadfully fractured, he succeeded in killing both his assailants. The deceased was greatly respected both by his officers and comrades for his courage and general good conduct.

Hereford Journal 25 January, 1832



**Earl Cathcart**  
Lieutenant Colonel  
2nd Life Guards



**The Duke of Wellington** commanded the army at Waterloo



"When he (Samuel Godley) died I made a drawing for the device on his tombstone which may be seen in the burial ground St John's Wood London."

**Sgt Major Tom Playford**  
2nd Life Guards