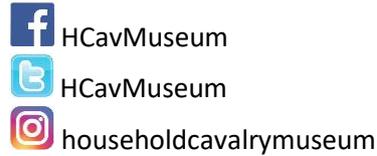




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Podcast 16 ~ HOUSEHOLD CAVALRY ANECDOTES

GRANBY

Thanks to the large number of English pubs named after him – for reasons that I will come to – the name of **Lieutenant General John Manners, Marquess of Granby** is as well known outside of the ranks of the Household Cavalry and military historians as it is within.

Granby was born in 1721, the eldest son of John Manners, 3rd Duke of Rutland, shown here in the centre in his Garter robes. He was the Lord Lieutenant of Rutland, a county over which he presided from his seat, Belvoir Castle.

After graduating from Trinity College, Cambridge in 1738, Granby went on the Grand Tour for two years, a trip that took him as far as Constantinople. On his return he stood for Parliament and, with no opposition, took his family seat in the House of Commons.

Granby got his first taste of the military in 1745, when he assisted his father the Duke in raising a militia regiment in to help suppress the Jacobite rebellion of that year. Aged just twenty-four, was appointed Colonel. Although his regiment didn't see any action, Granby was at the bloody Battle of Culloden, shown here, as a Staff Officer on the Duke of Cumberland's staff, with whom he continued to serve until 1752.

In light of his later reputation as a philanthropist, it's worth recording that whilst Granby was in Scotland, his militia regiment mutinied because the soldiers hadn't been paid. On his return to Newcastle, Granby paid the men from his own pocket and then disbanded the regiment.

In 1752, the government proposed to King George II, shown here on the left, that Granby should be appointed Colonel of the Royal Regiment of Horse Guards, usually known as The Blues. This proposal arose because Granby was, by this time, a very considerable military



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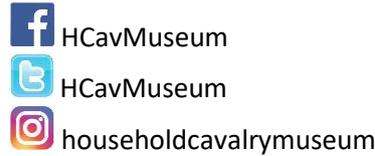


figure who is credited not only with excellent leadership in the field but also to have been one of the first Generals to have recognised the importance of soldiers' welfare and morale.

His immortality within the British Army– and his subsequent iconography – was ensured when, whilst leading a cavalry charge against the French at the Battle of Warburg in 1760, Granby lost his hat and wig, which later obliged him to salute the Allied Commander-in-Chief, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, without either accoutrement. In keeping with the finest traditions of the British Army, this act of *lèse majesté* was adopted by Granby's Regiment, the Royal Regiment of Horse Guards (The Blues), and was continued after 1969 by The Blues and Royals, whose Other Ranks are uniquely permitted, when in barracks and not wearing headgear, to salute officers bare-headed.

Another highly unusual souvenir of Warburg was a portrait of the Marquess by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which was commissioned by the General's principal *opponent*, the French Duc de Broglie, which is now in the Ringling Museum, Sarasota, USA. An artist's copy of this painting, presented to The Prince of Wales (later King George IV) in 1810 by the Dowager Marchioness Townsend, hangs in the Waterloo Chamber at Windsor Castle.

Granby was also a philanthropist who, thanks to his generosity in funding retired soldiers to set up as publicans, is believed to have the most number of public houses in the United Kingdom named after him, many of which display his bare-and-bald-headed image on their signs.

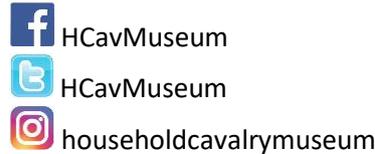
The second-half of Granby's career, which dates from his retirement from field command after the Battle of Wilhelmsthal in 1762, was political although rather less distinguished. Nonetheless, Granby's known charity to injured and retired soldiers made him a popular figure with the masses. This popularity was exploited – despite Granby's avowed party-neutral stance – by the Whig Government when, in 1763, the Marquess was appointed Master General of the Ordnance, then (and until 1855) a position in the Cabinet and, the following year, with his additional appointment to the political post of Lord Lieutenant of Derbyshire.

Worried by the silk weavers' riots of 1765, the Whig Government tried to persuade King George III to make Granby Commander-in-Chief. The government hoped that Granby's



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popularity would help to quell the social unrest: George III refused, but relented twelve months later.

Although Granby remained in office under successive Whig Governments as Master General of the Ordnance and Commander-in-Chief until January 1770, he became notorious for changing his mind on political issues and also came under attack for alleged corruption. This, together with his philanthropy-induced debts and heavy drinking, took a toll on his health. Granby died nine months after resigning from the Government, on 18th October 1770, aged a mere fifty. At the time of his death, Granby was still Colonel of The Blues and still deeply in debt. Granby's friend, Levett Blackborne, wrote of him:

The noblest mind that ever existed... [his] temper plunged him into difficulties, debts and distresses; [he had] a miserable shifting life, attended by a levee of duns, and at last died broken-hearted.

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