



Account of Frederick Ponsonby's injuries:

In the mêlée I was disabled instantly in both arms....I was carried on by my horse, till, receiving a blow on my head from a sabre, I was thrown senseless on my face to the ground. Recovering, I raised myself a little to look round, when a lancer passing by exclaimed, "Tu n'est pa mort coquin," and stuck his lance through my back. My head dropped, the blood gushed into my mouth, a difficulty of breathing came on, and I thought all was over. Not long afterwards a tirailleur came up to plunder me, threatening to take my life. I told him that he might search me....he found three dollars....he was no sooner gone than another came for the same purpose; but assuring him that I had been plundered already he left me....shortly afterwards an officer stooped down...saying he feared I was badly wounded...I expressed a wish to be removed to the rear. He said it was against the order to remove even their own men...I complained of thirst, and he held his brandy bottle to my lips, directing one of his men to lay me straight on my side, and place a knapsack under my head. He passed on into action, and I shall never know to whose generosity I was indebted, as I conceive, for my life....another tirailleur came and knelt and fired over me, loading and firing many times, and conversing with great gaiety all the while; at last he ran off saying, "Vous serez bien aise d'entendre que nous allons nous retirer; bon jour , mon ami" ...It was dusk when two squadrons of Prussian cavalry passed over me in full trot, lifting me from the ground and tumbling me about cruelly....had a gun come that way it would have done for me...I thought the night would never end. Much about this time I found a soldier of the Royals lying across my legs, who had probably crawled thither in his agony; his weight, convulsive motions, noises and the air issuing through a wound in his side, distressed me greatly...it was not a dark night and the Prussians were wandering about to plunder...several of them came and looked at me. About an hour before midnight I saw a soldier in an English uniform coming towards me...he said he belonged to the 40th Regiment, but has missed it. He released me from the dying man. Being unarmed he took up a sword from the ground, and stood over me...At 8 o'clock in the morning some English were seen...a cart came for me. I was placed in it and carried to a farm-house ...and laid in a bed from which poor Gordon [Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Alexander Gordon, ADC to the Duke of Wellington, and attendee at the Ball] had just been carried out [dead]..I had received seven wounds...I was saved by continual bleedings, one hundred and twenty ounces in two days, beside the great loss of blood on the field.

Published in **Lady Bessborough and Her Family Circle** (1940) pp. 242/3