

S T O R Y

OF

THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

BY THE

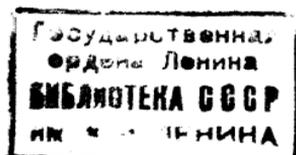
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P R E F A C E.

I SHALL be very glad if the following attempt to describe the great military operations of 1815, and to connect them in some sort with the state of public and private feeling as it then operated both in this country and at the seat of war, shall prove acceptable to the class of readers for whom it is intended.

My object has not been to enter into controversy with any one. I believe that I have read most of the published accounts of the Waterloo Campaign which have appeared both here and on the Continent, and I know that I have always had before me, while writing, the twelve volumes of Colonel Gurwood's invaluable work. If, therefore, my views shall in some respects differ from those which others have taken, I am not without hope that they will prove, upon investigation, to be at least as accurate.

I have not applied to many of the minor actors in the great game for information respecting its details. Captain Siborne, in his valuable work, has saved all who may be curious in these matters, a great deal of trouble; and if I shall seem somewhat to have overlooked the advantages which he offers to me, I trust that he will not on that account consider that I think lightly of what he has done.

His History will always stand upon its own merits ; and his plans are invaluable. But I confess that my recollections of war lead me somewhat to undervalue—perhaps in a measure to distrust—the stories told in perfect good faith by parties who happen to be the heroes of them. Modern battles are not won by feats of individual heroism ; indeed, many gallant deeds achieved embarrass more than they facilitate the accomplishment of the General's plans. I have, therefore, endeavored as much as possible to avoid entering into minute narrations of these things—except where simple facts were to be stated ; and I hope that this course will prove satisfactory to my readers.

Finally, I have to throw myself on the indulgence of the public on account of errors, which, though I have not been able to detect them, may abound in my narrative ; of whatever nature these be, they are certainly not wilful ; for I have left no means that were accessible to me unexplored, in order to guard against them. But a work would not be human which was free from such ; and mine must take its chance.

CONTENTS.

CHAP.	PAGE
I. State of Europe consequent on the Peace of Paris	7
II. Proceedings at the Congress of Vienna—Escape of Napoleon from Elba	14
III. Arrival of Napoleon in Paris, and its immediate Consequences	24
IV. Distribution of the hostile Armies early in June	32
V. State of Brussels and the Netherlands in the early Summer of 1815	41
VI. Continued Preparations on both sides	47
VII. Rumors of Coming Events—Commencement of Hostilities	54
VIII. Concentration of the English and Prussian Armies at Quatre Bras and Ligny	65
IX. Battle of Quatre Bras	73
X. Battle of Quatre Bras— <i>continued</i>	82
XI. Battle of Ligny	88
XII. Battle of Ligny— <i>continued</i>	99
XIII. The Night after the Battle	110
XIV. Movement on Mont St. Jean	118
XV. State of Feeling where the War was not	125
XVI. Movements of the French on the 17th of June	133
XVII. Operations of Retreat, and Pursuit to Wavre	141
XVIII. The Position of Waterloo	149
XIX. French Position	161
XX. Last Preparations—First Shots	168
XXI. Attack and Defence of Hougomont	175
XXII. Advance of the French Centre and Left—Flight of Bylandt's Belgian Brigade	183