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**Andrew & Nicola Hallam ed *Lady Under Fire on the Western Front: The Great War Letters of Lady Dorothy Feilding MM Pen & Sword, 2010. 240pp £19.99.***

Lady Dorothie Feilding (1889 – 1935) was, at the age of 24 years, a founder member of Dr. Hector Munro's Motor Ambulance Corps, which included Mrs Elsie Knocker – later Baroness de T'Serclaes and Miss Mari Lambert Gooden – Chisholm “the Ladies of Pervyse”, who all served together in the Belgium section of the Western Front based in and around Ypres.

The editors have selected letters from the whole of Lady Feilding's active service with the Corps, August 1914 to August 1917 and have so allowed her to speak in her own words of her motives, day to day experiences and what she hopes she has achieved by volunteering as an ambulance driver. Because of her social background- she was the 9<sup>th</sup> Earl of Denbigh daughter, the family being of Old Catholic stock, with connections to County Tipperary - she provides a valuable insight into the soon to be lost world of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy. This is a missing voice from nursing on the Western Front which deserves to be heard and understood in the terms in which she lived and worked. She was a very practical young lady, who simply wanted to help the wounded, both Allied and German, and which she did with great courage. She was embarrassed but honoured to receive the Military Medal for bravery in the field, the first woman to be given such an award. She also earned the Croix de Guerre and the Belgian Order of Leopold. She wanted no publicity for her war work and was disdainful of her colleagues for publishing in November 1916 *The Cellar-House of Pervyse* about their work in order to raise much needed funds for the Corps.

Lady Feilding writes with elegance and wit of the horror and tragedy all around, of gossip, lice and near misses by shells but also of the wonder and excitement of being part of The Great War. During her three years of service she sent 400 letters, postcards and telegrams; her readership was her large family which included her parents and nine siblings. She never intended them for publication. The editors have included a most useful guide of “dramatic Personae”, which includes family nicknames and other friends and colleagues, who are discussed in her letters. She manages to convey to her readers both the atmosphere of the Western Front and the personalities of the many senior officers she encountered. This she contrasts with the Home Front, where the family seat was Newnham Paddox, near Rugby, which was turned into a convalescent home by her mother and to which she made frequent visits either on leave or escorting the wounded.

This text is of use and interest for academic research, not only on nursing and women's history but also for understanding the “hidden” relationships of class, family and social connection, which were a significant aspect of the British experience of 1914-1918.

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