

THE WAR-TRAIL!

CHAPTER LXXXVII.
NO COVER.

In silence I continued to scrutinize the camp, but could discover no mode of approaching it secretly, or in safety.

As I have said, the adjacent plain, for nearly a thousand yards' radius, was smooth grass-covered prairie. Even the grass was short. It would scarcely have sheltered the smallest game, much less afford shelter for the body of a man—much less for that of a horse.

I would willingly have crawled on hands and knees over the half mile that separated us from the encampment; but that would have been of no service. I might just as well have walked erect. Erect, or prostrate, I should be seen all the same by the occupants of the camp, or the guards of the horses. Even if I succeeded in affecting an entrance within the lines, what then? Even should I succeed in finding Isolina, what hope was there of our getting off?

There was no probability of our being able to leave the lines unseen—not the least. We should certainly be pursued, and what chance for us to escape? It was not probable we could run a thousand yards with the hue and cry after us? No, we should be overtaken—re-captured—speared or tomahawked upon the spot!

The design I had formed was to have brought my horse as close as possible to the Indian lines—to have left him under cover, and within such distance as would make it possible to reach him by a run, then mounting with my betrothed in my arms, to gallop to my comrades. These I had intended should be placed in ambush, as near to the camp as the nature of the ground would permit. But my preconceived plan was entirely frustrated by the peculiar situation of the Indian encampment. I had anticipated that there would be either trees, brushwood, or broken ground in its neighborhood, under shelter of which we might approach. To my chagrin there was none of the three. There was no timber nearer than the grove in which we were lying—the copses excepted, and to have reached this would have been to enter the camp itself.

We appeared to have advanced to the utmost limit possible that afforded cover. A few feet farther would have carried us outside the margin of the timber; and then we should have been as conspicuous to the denizens of the camp, as they now were to us. Forward we dare not stir, not a step farther.

I was puzzled, perplexed, chagrined.

Once more I turned my eyes upon the sky, but I drew not thence a ray of hope. The heavens were too bright. The sun had gone down in the west; but in the east was rising full, round, and red, almost his counter-part. How I should have welcomed an eclipse. I thought of omnipotent power. I thought of the command of the Israelitish captain. I should have joyed to see the shadow of the opaque earth pass over that shining orb, rob it of its borrowed light, if only for a single hour.

Eclipse or cloud there was none—no prospect of either—no hope either from the earth or the sky.

Verily then must I abandon my design, and adopt some other for the rescue of my betrothed? What other? I could think of no other that might be termed a plan. We might gallop forward, and openly attack the camp? Sheer desperation alone could impel to such a course, and the result would be ruin to all—to her among the rest. We could not hope to rescue her—nine to a hundred—for we saw and could now count our dusky foemen.

They would see us afar off—would be prepared to receive us—prepared to hurl their masses upon us—to destroy us altogether—sheer desperation.

What other plan? what—
Something of one occurred to me at that moment. A slight shadow of it had crossed my mind before. It seemed, though feebly perilous, practicable; but what of peril? It was not the time, nor was I in the mood to regard danger. Anything short of the prospect of certain death had no terror for me then; and even this I should have preferred to failure.

We had along with us the horse of the captive Comanche. Stanfield had brought the animal, having left his own in exchange. My new design was to mount the Indian horse, and ride him boldly into the camp. In this consisted the whole of my newly conceived scheme. Surely the idea was a good one—a slight alteration of my original plan. I had already undertaken to play the role of an Indian warrior, while within the camp; it would only require me to begin the personation outside the lines, and make my *entree* along with the *debüt*. There would be more dramatic appropriateness, with a proportionate increase of danger. But I did not just thus. I had no thought of merriment at the time. The travesty I had undertaken was no burlesque.

TO BE CONTINUED.

Removed.

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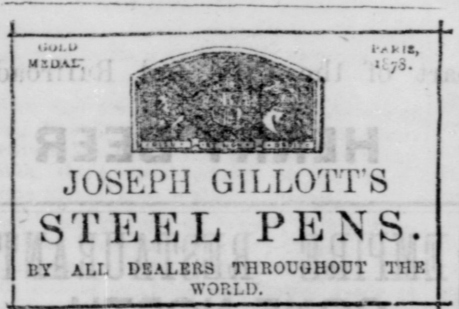


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TIME TABLE NO 17.

WINTER ARRANGEMENT.

To take effect on the 1st Dec., 1881.

TRAINS OUTWARD.

STATIONS.	MIXED.	MIXED.	MIXED.
Ch'town..	Dp 8 15am	1 3.00pm	Dp 2.30pm
Royalty Jc	" 8.38 "	" 3.23 "	" 2.53 "
N Wilts'e	" 9.29 "	" 4.15 "	" "
Hunter R'r	" 9.45 "	" 4.30 "	" "
Bradalba'e	" 10.23 "	" 5.08 "	" "
Co'ty Line.	" 10.33 "	" 5.18 "	" "
Freestown.	" 10.48 "	" 5.33 "	" "
Keenings'n	" 11.10 "	" 5.55 "	" "
Summ'side	Ar 11.45 "	Ar 6.30 "	" "
Wellingt'n	" 2.37 "	" "	" "
Port Hill..	" 3.22 "	" "	" "
O'Leary...	" 4.44 "	" "	" "
Bloomfield	" 5.08 "	" "	" "
Alberton..	" 5.48 "	" "	" "
Tignish...	Ar 6.45 "	" "	" "
Royalty Jc	" 2.53pm	" "	" "
York.....	" 3.09 "	" "	" "
Bedford...	" 3.29 "	" "	" "
Mt. Stew't	Ar 4.05 "	" "	" "
Cardigan..	Dp 4.15 "	" "	" "
Georget'n..	" 5.33 "	" "	" "
Mt. Stew't	Dp 4.15pm	" "	" "
Morell....	" 4.55 "	" "	" "
St. Peter's	" 5.25 "	" "	" "
Bear River	" 6.15 "	" "	" "
Souris....	Ar 7.00 "	" "	" "

TRAINS INWARD.

STATIONS.	MIXED.	MIXED.	MIXED.
Ch'town..	Ar 5.30pm	Ar 11.15am	Ar 11.45am
Royalty Jc	Dp 5.07 "	Dp 10.52 "	Dp 11.22 "
N Wilts'e	" 4.15 "	" 10.00 "	" "
Hunter R'r	" 4.00 "	" 9.45 "	" "
Bradalba'e	" 3.24 "	" 9.09 "	" "
Co'ty Line.	" 3.14 "	" 8.59 "	" "
Freestown.	" 2.59 "	" 8.44 "	" "
Keenings'n	" 2.35 "	" 8.29 "	" "
Summ'side	" 2.00 "	" 7.45 "	" "
Wellingt'n	Ar 11.30am	" "	" "
Port Hill..	Dp 10.38 "	" "	" "
O'Leary...	" 9.53 "	" "	" "
Bloomfield	" 8.31 "	" "	" "
Alberton..	" 8.08 "	" "	" "
Tignish...	" 7.25 "	" "	" "
Royalty Jc	" 6.30 "	" "	" "
York.....	" 11.22am	" "	" "
Bedford...	" 11.05 "	" "	" "
Mt. Stew't	" 10.45 "	" "	" "
Cardigan..	" 10.10 "	" "	" "
Georget'n..	Ar 10.00 "	" "	" "
Mt. Stew't	Dp 8.40 "	" "	" "
Morell....	" 8.15 "	" "	" "
Mt. Stew't	Ar 10.00am	" "	" "
Morell....	Dp 9.20 "	" "	" "
St. Peter's	" 8.50 "	" "	" "
Bear River	" 8.00 "	" "	" "
Souris....	" 7.15 "	" "	" "

L. B. ARCHIBALD, Superintendent, Railway Office, Charlottetown, Nov. 29, 1881.

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