

The men did not require any pressing to unload the cart and distribute some of its contents. It was a glorious moonlit night, and never did old Luna look down on a happier scene than on those stalwart citizen-soldiers, as they sat on the soft green grass and partook of the wholesome fare sent them from home. As yet they had experienced nothing of the din and panoply of war; but they knew it could not be long kept back. They ate and were thankful, not knowing when or where their next happy meal might be.

The two brothers sat a little apart from the rest, in earnest conversation. When Alistair was made aware of all that had taken place at the Knowe, he was so charged with deepest gratitude for the turn affairs had taken that he could scarcely utter a word. At last he spoke.

"We've aye been leal to ane anither Charlie, and I dinna need to tell you what I think about a' ye've done for Elsie and me. God bless Uncie Thomas and you. Hae ye any idea o' the whereabouts of Alan Kilgour?"

Charlie had just time to remark that Kilgour had been seen to board a vessel sailing north when a message arrived, summoning Alistair to the presence of his chief. On his return, a few minutes afterwards, he said:

"It has been reported that a party of foot-soldiers are approaching cautiously along the road from Edinburgh. My party of scouts are to go out again, and keep them from getting to know the strength of the Prince's troops."

"Douglas," he said to one of the men, "let Charlie have your horse, and take your place. Now, lads, we'll need to take a roundabout way, and surround these redcoats before they see us."

The little party rode quietly down a little hollow towards the south, where there was a long, narrow plantation which afforded them excellent cover, and, as the