

a large clearing of about a hundred acres in extent; a comfortable house, with buildings for cattle, stood at a distance of some three hundred yards from the lake; broad fields of yellow corn waved brightly in the sun; and from the edge of the clearing came the sound of a woodman's axe, showing that the proprietor was still enlarging the limits of his farm. Surrounding the house, at a distance of twenty yards, was a strong stockade some seven feet in height, formed of young trees pointed at the upper end, squared and fixed firmly in the ground. The house itself, although far more spacious and comfortable than the majority of backwood farmhouses, was built in the usual fashion, of solid logs, and was evidently designed to resist attack.

William Welch had settled ten years before on this spot, which was then far removed from the nearest habitation. It would have been a very imprudent act, under ordinary circumstances, to have established himself in so lonely a position, so far removed from the possibility of assistance in case of attack. He settled there, however, just after Pontiac, who was at the head of an alliance of all the Indian tribes of those parts, had, after the long and desperate siege of Fort Pitt, made peace with us upon finding that his friends the French had given up all thought of further resistance to the English, and had entirely abandoned the country. Mr. Welch thought, therefore, that a permanent peace was likely to reign on the frontier, and that he might safely establish himself in the charming location he had pitched upon, far removed from the confines of civilization.

The spot was a natural clearing of some forty acres in extent, sloping down to the water's edge, and a more

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