

the wilderness to productive fields, the wife had no small task to perform. No one felt the hardships and privations of pioneer life more than she. In coming to the frontier she exchanged her comfortable dwelling house for the rude log cabin. In the place of the society which she once enjoyed she was almost isolated from all intercourse with the world. Oft times the husband must be absent from home for days at a time, and then the women were left all alone, miles from any neighbors, in the heart of a vast wilderness. The wife of Isaac Bacon was frequently thus situated. Mrs. Bacon was a brave woman, and the experiences through which she passed seem to us of this day almost incredible. We give but one instance illustrative of the statement just made. Our informant is David C. Bacon, oldest son of the woman of whom we are speaking. This son still resides in Northfield, near where his parents lived at the time. Mr. Bacon was frequently absent from home, and on one of these occasions a very suspicious looking man came to the cabin and asked admittance, which of course Mrs. Bacon granted. He seated himself and inquired the time of day, when Mr. Bacon would be at home, how far it was to the nearest neighbor, and, if she was not afraid to stay alone! From the first Mrs. Bacon did by no means like the appearance of the man, and every moment only strengthened her impression of him. She was undoubtedly as courageous as any woman; but there she was, so far from any neighbor that no assistance from that quarter, in case of emergency, could be expected. But she had one hope, and that was in the assistance of a powerful dog, which stood by her side. From the time that the man entered the house the knowing animal eyed him, as if to say: "You are here for no good purpose." It was now most dark, and Mrs. Bacon very politely told the man that she could not keep him over night and he had better be going. The man said nothing, but from his actions seemed to think otherwise. He stood and pondered a few minutes, and then called to one of the children to come and turn a grindstone which stood a short distance from the house. He accompanied this request by producing a large, ugly-looking knife. The child obeyed and he proceeded to sharpen the instrument. Mrs. Bacon expected the crisis was now at hand and began to prepare for the worst. She took her station in one corner of the room and called the dog to her side. The man soon came into the house and sat down at the opposite side of the room. They thus remained until midnight, neither speaking a word. The man then began to manifest considerable uneasiness. He finally asked the woman why she did not turn that dog out of doors. She replied that she always allowed the animal to remain in the house at night. He then advised her to turn the animal out of the house. She, knowing that her orders to

the faithful creature would be disobeyed, opened the door and told the dog to go out. The animal growled and looked fiercely at the stranger, but would not move. The man then told the woman to sit down and he would see that the dog left the house. He then opened the door and told the dog to leave, but the creature, now aroused, again growled and exhibited a set of teeth which had the immediate tendency to cause the man to take his seat and desist from all further attempts to disturb the dog. The man made no further demonstrations, but went away about daylight, leaving Mrs. Bacon to thank her dog for the preservation of her life.

In the summer of 1826 there occurred one of the most singular affairs of which we have any knowledge. The parties immediately interested in the transaction were Dorsey W. Viers, then a citizen of Northfield, and now a resident of Norton township, and one Robert Charlesworth. This last named individual was about thirty years of age, an Englishman and unmarried. For some time he had made it his home at Viers', and worked whenever he could, as a day laborer. Sometime in the month of July Charlesworth suddenly disappeared. At first but little was thought of his mysterious departure, but after a time an effort was made to discover his whereabouts. The most diligent search after the missing man was, however, unavailing. Suspicion that he had been foully dealt with began to develop itself, and to make the matter still more positive, it was whispered among the neighbors that Viers knew more about Charlesworth's disappearance than he was willing to confess. A hint of this kind was sufficient to lead many to at once pronounce Viers the murderer. But notwithstanding this strong suspicion no decisive legal action was taken until five years after Charlesworth left. During these years the excitement, instead of abating had become more intense, until popular clamor demanded a full investigation. Accordingly, G. N. Wallace, Justice of the Peace in Northfield, arrested Viers January 8, 1831. A trial of eight days ensued, and we wish the reader to carefully note the testimony elicited. It was said that parties going to the house of Viers the next morning after Charlesworth's disappearance, found Mrs. Viers hurriedly mopping up the floor. Viers himself appeared greatly agitated and was much confused in his statements about the missing man. He once said that he saw Charlesworth go, and then, soon after, said that he was sound asleep when the man left. These contradictory stories had only served to heighten the suspicion of Viers' guilt. Viers' hired girl also testified that a bed blanket which had been on Charlesworth's bed for a few weeks prior to his disappearance was missing, and that it was afterwards found with clots of blood on it, under a hay stack. It was also suddenly discovered that Charlesworth was immensely rich,