## Starke County 14 September 19, 2008

"Tidbits of Starke County History".....

The Civil War played an important part of the history of Starke County. Many from our county joined the ranks of the Union Soldiers. Each of the 377 known Civil War Veterans buried in Starke County has a story to tell. Some served but a few months before being wounded or taking sick. Others served several years through terrible conditions, constant marches to new battle fields and the ever present likelihood of being killed or wounded.

Marvin Allen, Starke County Historian, is writing a book about the veterans from Starke County. In chapter six, he has inserted some of the pages of the diary written by my grandfather, William Spiker. During grandpa's five years in the Union Army, he participated in numerous significant battles, including Cross Keys, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Bull Run, Antietam and Look Out Mountain.

This Saturday, September 20, 2008, at 1:00 P.M. (CDT) at the Crown Hill Cemetery in Knox, we will be honoring Starke County's last Civil War Veteran. The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, dressed for the occasion, complete with uniforms and honor guard, will be presenting a bronze plaque similar to the one they presented in LaPorte a couple of years ago (see Attachment). Below is an article announcing this event.

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William Wallace Garner will be recognized as Starke County's Last Civil War Veteran in a special program that will be held Saturday afternoon, September 20, 2008 at 1:00 P.M. at the Crown Hill Cemetery in Knox. The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, David D. Porter Camp, will conduct the ceremony and will be assisted by Ed Hasnerl and Marvin Allen.

Mr. Garner, who was born in 1847, attended grammar school in Knox and enlisted at the age of 17 in Company D 29<sup>th</sup> Regiment Indiana Volunteer Infantry. This unit was engaged mainly in Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee.

After the war, Mr. Garner returned to Knox, tried his hand at operating a general store known as the Bee Hive and then established The Enterprise, a forerunner to the Starke County Republican newspaper. Upon selling the newspaper, he joined the railroad and worked in their mail department in Chicago for many years. Later in life Mr. Garner moved back to Knox and took up residence at the Home Hotel.

Each Veterans Day, Mr. Garner would march down to Crown Hill Cemetery and say a few words. Soon it became expected, and local residents looked forward to his presence. Mr. Garner made his last march July 4, 1940 and passed away just 3 months later at nearly 93 years of age. Uncle Billy, as he was known to everyone, is buried in the old section at Crown Hill with many of his fellow Civil War Veterans.

For more information about the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War -- David D. Porter Camp # 116 (Valparaiso) - <a href="http://ddporter116.tribalpages.com/">http://ddporter116.tribalpages.com/</a> National Headquarters - <a href="http://www.suvcw.org/">http://www.suvcw.org/</a>

Jim Shilling
Starke County Historical Society <a href="http://www.starkehistory.com">http://www.starkehistory.com</a>

http://www.scpl.lib.in.us/historical/



