

## Starke County No. 43 - The Last Bear in Starke County

An article from *Who Pulled the Plug on English Lake*, by Bob Statchura -----

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The farmers of La Porte and Starke Counties can have a sigh of relief. The bear that has been destroying so much stock for the past year or so is no more. While two Indianapolis hunters by the name of Ed Longerich and J. C. Rickerts were fishing in the Kankakee at Indian Stretch last week they were startled by hearing a noise in the bushes on the opposite side of the river and were horrified to see a bear swimming across the river toward them. They abandoned the boat and with great difficulty made their way back to camp with all haste through the swamps to Riverside. After changing their clothes, which were badly torn in the mad haste, they borrowed a bear trap of Buffalo Bill and arming themselves with rifles went back to the place where they had seen the bear. They set the trap on Wambaugh's bridge and hung a large ham over it.

They proceeded to Wilder [west of Brems] and reported their experience to Fred Armt. Mr. Armt, being an old time bear hunter, was overjoyed to hear their story and he hastily organized a posse to go in search of the big grizzly. The great Dog King happened to be in his place at the time and volunteered the services of his famous pack of hounds. Bill Tesmer, Skinnie McDonald and Mr. Margin composed the balance of the party. All being heavily armed, they proceeded to where the Indianapolis hunters had set the trap.

The party arrived at the spot only to find that the trap had been sprung and that the bear in his mad struggle

had gnawed off his leg at the first joint. The hounds took up the trail and followed it to Dunn's bridge. Here back of Burrow's abandoned camp in the swamps the bear was cornered by the faithful hounds. The dogs put up a good battle with the angry beast, which was clawing and tearing the hounds as fast as they came within reach of his terrible claws. The fight was so thick and fast that the posse was afraid to use their rifles for fear of killing some of the hounds. Finally the combined weight of the hounds made it possible for them to throw the monster to the ground, which enabled Mr. Longerich to administer his heavy hunting knife..

The bear was carried by Mr. Tesmer (who declined all assistance) to Wilder and it was weighed in front of Smith's store. It tipped the scales at 694 pounds. Mr. Armt sent it to Chicago to have it mounted and will place it on exhibition in his buffet.

The Dog King is bemoaning the loss of seven of his best hounds as a consequence of the fight—valued at three hundred dollars—and his friends at Wilder are going to try to induce the county commissioners to reimburse him in view of his valuable assistance in ridding the county of the greatest pest it has known for a good many years.

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grizzlybear.jpg

