



### ***A RAMBLER'S NOTES***

George Bandle DAILY INTERVIEW  
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submitted by Robert Webb

George W. Bandle, of Waterford Township, is a native born citizen of Illinois and a veteran of the Civil War. The work that he has accomplished toward developing the interest of his home township gives him a place among the true hearted, hardworking pioneers who laid the foundation of the present prosperity of this part of the state, and his service in the Union Army places him among those who won honor as soldiers in defending the country and the old flag.

He was born in Orland Township, Cook County, July 4, 1836, and was in the prime of early manhood when the war broke out. He had watched the course of events that led up to the great struggle, with the keenest interest, and when it became evident that the south sought to destroy the Union in order to perpetuate slavery, he volunteered in defense of the stars and stripes and went to the front to help fight the battles of his country.

He is a representative of the second generation of old settlers in Illinois is of Eastern and German born ancestors, and grew to maturity in Cook and Kankakee Counties. His parents were pioneers of Cook County, settling on 160 acres of land near Chicago, in 1833. The town was not incorporated until 1837.

In speaking of the great metropolis of the state, Mr. Bandle said, "I have often heard Father say that what is now the most wonderful city on the globe did not contain, when he came, over 20 houses, with a population of about 150. The first brick house was built in the town the year my father located in Cook County and the first vessel entered the harbor in 1834. Rapid as is the development and growth of things in the United States, the growth of Chicago stands without a parallel. She is passing all her rivals and will soon be the biggest city in the world. She is the wonder of today, and surrounded as she is by all the great stores of natural wealth in mines and forests and herds, she in the coming city."

The subject of our sketch is the son of William and Lydia Bandle and was partly reared on the farm on which he was born and helped to clear it. He drove oxen when ox teams were used, has broken prairie, and done other pioneer labor.

"The Indians had not all left the country," observed Mr. Bandle, "When my parents landed in Cook County, and soldiers were still stationed at Fort Dearborn. My father was ambitious to better his condition and came to Illinois to find what life held for him here. Deer, lynxes, wolves and some elks still roamed over the north part of the state and pens of heavy logs were built to protect the pigs and calves from the ravages of wild animals. Father made the overland trip from Westfield, N. Y., with teams and was many weeks on the road. My grandfather was a soldier in the War of the Revolution and participated in the Battle of Trenton, N. J. He served under Washington. My father was in the War of 1812 and was in the naval fight on Lake Erie under Commodore Perry. He was a stone mason, shoemaker and farmer. The 160 acres of land on which he located in Cook County was 20 miles from Chicago and 10 miles from the present town of Joliet. My mother died in 1840 and is buried on the old Cook County homestead. I received what education I have in the primitive log school houses of pioneer times. I have made trips to the mill with an ox team and a cart loaded with corn. The old water mill stood where the city of Joliet now stands.

I was early set to work on the farm and being large and strong for my years had to put



my shoulder to the wheel and help push things along. I was obliged to chop, burn and clear timber and early became an adept at using the ax. I remained with Father until I was 18 or 19 years of age. I thought of leaving the home fireside some time before I did, and the idea grew upon me to come to Fulton County and make a home of my own.

I omitted to state that when I was 10 years old Father bought me a shot gun and he and I hunted and killed deer and turkeys and ducks and geese all around Chicago. We lived in a crude log house and lived at first on what little 'truck' we raised and wild game we killed.

I went to school some in Hadley, Will County. My sister, Mary (now Mrs. Warner), was my first teacher and she used to whip me unmercifully, but I guess she never hit me a lick amiss. The school was an old frame building with brick between the studding.

Father sold the old Cook County farm in 1863 and moved to Kankakee County, when the last years of his life were spent and where he died some years later. He did his trading with the pioneer merchants of Chicago, was familiar with its early history and could relate many interesting incidents of the early settling of the grand old Prairie State. Indians still came to Chicago to sell their wares when he first settled in Cook County. The land on which the great city now stands was a marsh and was on a level with the lake, but has been raised some 14 or 15 feet.

When I came to Fulton County, the Elmwood branch of the C. B. & Q. Railroad was being built. John Breckenridge, father of J. D. Breckenridge, of Lewistown, came about two weeks after I did. When I reached Rockford, on my way to this county, the Republicans were having a big rally and were cheering for Fremont. I put my head out of the car window and bellowed "Hurrah for Buchanan". A big burly fellow came running up to me and wanted to know where I was from, I jerked my head back, and the train pulled out. That was the only Democrat for whom I ever cheered. I am a Republican, and my father was an old line Whig and a Republican before me.

John Breckenridge settled in Waterford Township, married, and reared his family here. He was for many years my neighbor.

After I reached Waterford Township, I worked in Samuel Warner's steam saw mill for four years, but not continuously.

I went to Kansas in 1857, and know something about the trouble there, although I remained on six months. I have shaken hands with old John Brown and Jim Lane, and saw eight free state men taken out and shot. This made me an abolitionist, the border warfare was on and I returned to Illinois. I located on 160 acres of land out there, but left it, and never again returned to the state.

I was married the latter part of 1857 to Miss M. A. Ashby, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Ashby, of Waterford Township, Squire Hezlep officiation. Eight children came to bless our home, only five of whom are living namely: William E. Bandle, on a farm in Waterford Township; Mrs. C. A. Warner, residing in Butler, Bates County, Mo.; John A. Bandle, living near Fiatt, in Joshua Township; George E. Bandle, a resident of Waterford Township; Bert Bandle in Omaha, Neb.

During my absence in the army my wife and older children were left at home and she very ably managed affairs while I fought the enemies of my country.

My second marriage, to Mrs. Sarah Beckett, was solemnized Aug. 11, 1887. The Rev. A. J. Ashby officiating. I have no children by my second wife.

I was living in Cook County in 1862. On July 12, 1862, I responded to my country's call and enlisted in Company F, 100th Illinois Volunteer Infantry, Captain Richard McLeary and Colonel Frank Bartleson being my commanding officers. They were both residents of Joliet. Colonel Bartleson was killed in the charge at Kenesaw Mountain, June 27, 1864. Our colonel was a fighter and our regiment participated in many of the most sanguinary battles of the war, including Stone River, Chattanooga, Chickamauga, Mission Ridge, Buzzard's Roost, Resaca, Kenesaw Mountain, Dallas, Peachtree Creek, Atlanta (on July 22, 1864, the day General McPherson was killed), Jonesboro, Lovejoy Station, Springhill, Franklin and Nashville. The last two battles were fought Dec. 15 and 16, 1864. The old Hundredth was a fighting regiment, from the day it was mustered into the service up to the close of the war. It was gathered from farms and shops' offices, and school houses of Cook County-as fine fiber of blood muscle and brains as ever was laid upon the altar of any country. The career of the regiment was among the bloodiest and in all that makes 'glory' it reaped a rich harvest. Its blood watered the soil of many states, but its fame has never been properly recorded. In looking back through the years that have intervened since the stirring events of 1861 to 1865, I often wonder why it was that we never got our name inscribed on the monuments. Perhaps it is because we had no one to blow our trumpet. We never received our share of praise, but we did some might hard fighting just the same. It is only common justice to claim that our regiment in the deep woods and among the rugged hills and mountains of Tennessee and Georgia, performed deeds of magnificent valor that entitled it to conspicuous mention. If those whose spurs we helped win and whose stars we helped fix have failed to mention us, we can blow our own horn.

Men must bleed and die, widows and orphans weep, and mothers mourn, to save nations. Many of my dead comrades lie in unnamed graves, but I hope to meet them some day where men never engage in deadly conflict and the roar of cannon and the rattle of musketry are never heard.



At the battle of Mission Ridge I pulled a pair of cavalry boots from the feet of a mortally wounded Confederate general. I was barefooted and could not wait for him to die, if I had, some other soldier would have gotten those boots. Captain Lyon, of Company D, who is still living in Plainfield, in this state, took his overcoat and \$350 in greenbacks. In the charge at Mission Ridge, General Wagoner told us to take everything that came our way-'Shot, shell, hell, and everything else.'

On the day before the charge John Barley, and English lad belonging to our company, said to our commander: 'Captain McLeary, I cannot go up there, I'll be killed.' 'Get in line there, d--m you!' was the reply. The next day, Barley was killed in the charge. In this battle our men were knocked down like tenpins and the cannonading was terrific. It was in the fight that my hearing was partially destroyed. Captain McLeary had the sole of his shoe shot away, and the sting of the ball was so great that it made him jump up and down and dance with pain. 'By -----!' said old Fred Clay, 'Cap'n shot again!'

After the Battle of Mission Ridge a call was made for volunteers to go to Knoxville to relieve Burnside, whom General Longstreet had shut up in that city. I told Captain McLeary that I would go if I had a coat. 'Here is my coat,' said the Captain. 'And you have on your feet a brave Confederate general's boots. Don't disgrace either.' We were footsore, weary and hungry, but under Sherman we marched to the relief of Burnside's army, 100 miles away. Here is a wallet taken off one of General Morgan's men, and this is an old harper's musket and a rebel bayonet.

After the war I returned to Waterford Township and resumed the arts of peace, hampered in my efforts by the loss of my hearing but still full of determination and grit. I am one of a family of 10 children, only four of whom are living: James H. Bandle, in Michigan; Mrs. David Warner, of Waterford Township; Mrs. E. R. Beardsley, of Waldron, Kankakee County, and myself. "I will tell you about the early day in Waterford Township when you call again. Talk to my wife while I do the chores."