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This story researched and written by Vern J. Hansen

## William H. Noah

August 31, 1831–April 13, 1929

Early in the year 2000, I contacted cousin Joyce Fritz in Sidney and she in turn put me in touch with Ruth Campbell, a granddaughter of William Noah. Ruth is 93 years young. Things like this have been working out just great for me since I started writing the C-H. This time it all started because I lifted up some scrapbook material that seemed a bit too thick.

On the backside of this material was the obituary of Civil War veteran William H. Noah of Sidney, MI. This little hamlet was known early on as Sidney Center. They even had a Danish Brotherhood Society with their own building at one time.

It has been very rewarding for me to gather information about the Civil War veterans in the Stanton area and write their stories after all these years. I think you will find this man's story interesting. He was with Sherman on his march to the sea.

Mr. Noah lost his right arm in the Battle of Bentonville, NC March 19, 1865. This battle went on for three days, the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. How sad that just one month before the end of the war he lost his arm.



This is a scene of the battle of March 19, 1865 at Bentonville, NC. This sketch was done by W. Waud and was printed in Harper's Weekly on April 15, 1865.

### Mr. Noah Attended School With James A. Garfield

I now have a total of four articles that attest to the fact that William Noah was a schoolmate of President Garfield. This was in Nelson Township, Portage County, Ohio. I have no reason to doubt this story as it is referred to several

times in the family writing and newspaper articles I have acquired.

Mr. Noah married Hannah Goble in Summit County, Ohio, December 18, 1853. Three years later, he and his wife came north to Michigan with his parents Joshua V. and Ruth Noah to establish their homes in Sidney.

### Noah Family, Pioneers In The Early Days Of Montcalm County

William bought one acre of land and proceeded to clear it and sold the logs and with the money, bought more land. Working hard all the time, he made shingles that he sold for any where from 75¢ to \$1.75 per thousand.

Through these efforts he was able to keep acquiring land until he had a large tract of land that was debt free. Most of the money he acquired from his lumbering efforts he turned into more land. He shaved his shingles and hauled them to market. He continued working this way for ten years.

In the early days of the war, he felt that his place was at home with his family. In 1864 his patriotism took hold of him and he enlisted in Company D, Twenty-first Michigan Infantry, which was recruited in Fairplains Township. When he went off to war he left Hannah with five children to care for. They had four more children after he got home from the war.



### William Noah's War Experiences In His Own Words

Co. D. 21<sup>st</sup> Michigan Volunteer Infantry, 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> Division, 14<sup>th</sup> Army Corps, mustered into the U.S. Army, August 24, 1864 at Grand Rapids, Michigan to serve one year or during the war.

Joining my Regiment, then stationed on Lookout Mountain, Tenn. on Sept. 27<sup>th</sup>, leaving the mountain with the Regiment to take part in the pursuit of the Rebel Gen. Forrest then making a raid into our lines, to a point on the Tennessee River beyond Florence, Alabama where he succeeded in crossing the River, thus escaping a battle and a probable defeat. The Regiment then returned to Lookout Mountain, only to receive orders on October 18 to proceed to Dalton, Georgia to garrison a fort there, recently captured and abandoned by Forrest on his raid into our lines on November 1. Regiment was relieved of further garrison duty and received orders to march to Kingston and join the 14<sup>th</sup> Army Corps of Sherman's Army, thence to Atlanta, Georgia, destroying railroads and other property that might be of any value to the enemy, reaching Atlanta on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

After the destruction of that beautiful city on the day following we joined Sherman's Army for the Grand March from Atlanta to the sea, its destination then known only to Sherman and perhaps a very trusted few, from thence to Milledgeville, arriving there on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, thence proceeding in the direction of Augusta, though in nearing that place turning directly south, arriving at the Rebel works in front of Savannah on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of December, occupying a position on the south side of the canal, the most exposed position on the whole line, occupying the trenches until the 18<sup>th</sup>, suffering from both cold and hunger, then being relieved, the Regiment moved back north of the canal again, resting until the city was evacuated by the Rebels under Gen. Hardee on the 21<sup>st</sup>; then camping a short distance from the city, remaining there until the 20<sup>th</sup> of January, 1865, making preparations for another campaign, not knowing where or of what magnitude it was to be, except to Sherman himself. Leaving Savannah on that date under command of Captain A. C. Pierce, moving slowly up Savannah River to Sister's Ferry, remaining about ten days in bridging and clearing timber from the road on the low lands on the opposite side of the River which the enemy had fell across promiscuously from both sides to retard our march, which it did together with the help of high water until the 5<sup>th</sup> day of February, when the Regiment crossed into South Carolina, passing through Columbia and seeing that city destroyed by fire, thence moving northward to Winnsboro, assisted in destroying the railroad; north to Blackstock Station, thence moving on to Fayetteville, N.C., thence to Averysboro, taking part in a sharp but short battle, the enemy retreating during the night; continuing the march again to *Bentonville*, where on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of March the Regiment took part in a three day battle, resulting in our favor, though sustaining a heavy loss in killed and wounded (losing 6 officers, 86 men killed and wounded out of 230) that being the last battle of the Civil War. My Regiment then proceeded to Washington and on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May taking part in the Grandest Review our country ever knew. Proceeding thence to Detroit, Michigan where on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of May, 1865 the Regiment was paid off and disbanded.

I have given a brief outline of some of the experiences of the Grand Old 21<sup>st</sup>, tracing it from Lookout Mountain where I joined it, to Detroit where I will now leave it to pen some of my experiences from the Battle of *Bentonville*, N.C., March 19, 1865 to my home in Sidney, Michigan. *William H. Noah*



### Mr. Noah's Wound And The Long, Painful Trip Home

I, having received a gunshot wound in my right arm near the shoulder the first day, (March 19<sup>th</sup>) undergoing amputation the following day and two days later boarded an ambulance train for Goldsborough where we arrived the evening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> day; there with two others also wounded were given lodging on the second floor in a brick building with nothing but the floor for our bed the first night, remaining there two weeks, when we were ordered to take a train to Newbern, N.C., a distance of 80 miles. The order was hailed by us with gladness, at Newbern after another stay of two weeks all that felt able were ordered to board a boat for New York. You bet I was one of the lucky ones, as I was sure every jump meant one more jump toward home. After a week's voyage on the Atlantic we reached New York, remaining in a hospital there three weeks; then boarded a train for Cleveland, Ohio; thence to Detroit, remaining in the Harper Hospital nearly three months, receiving my pay and discharge, July 18, 1865, reaching home on the 22<sup>nd</sup> to enjoy the fruits of the result of the war, though yet suffering from my wound until sometime in November following when I underwent another amputation at Greenville, Michigan at my own expense, suffering much more than the first, with no prospect of healing until the following spring, when to

my great joy it suddenly healed, never to trouble me more, except at long intervals, when lightning flashes would come and as painful as it was quick.

These are some of the trifling sacrifices necessary to be made that our country might live and remain one and inseparable.

*Wm. Noah*



### William Noah's Last Battle

In his story, Mr. Noah states that *Bentonville* was the last battle of the Civil War. What I think he was saying was that it was *his* last battle in the war. Because on April 9<sup>th</sup> at Fort Blakely, Alabama at 5:30 p.m., just after Lee's surrender in Virginia, the last battle of the Civil War was fought.

11 USCT regiments (United States Colored Troops) fought in this battle. 200,000 African-Americans served the Union during the war. They were in 449 engagements, 39 of which were major battles. The last shot fired in the Civil War was fired by the CSA ship the *Shenandoah* in the waters of the Pacific Ocean.

Throughout his story Mr. Noah spells the name of the town as *Bentonville*. There is no *s* in the word. Correctly spelled it is BENTONVILLE. But hey, William Noah lost his right arm there and he can spell it any way he so desires.



Wm. Noah at gravesite of his beloved Hanna



In the battle at Bentonville, N.C., March 19, 1865 Major General Henry W. Slocum used the Harper house, pictured here, for his headquarters.