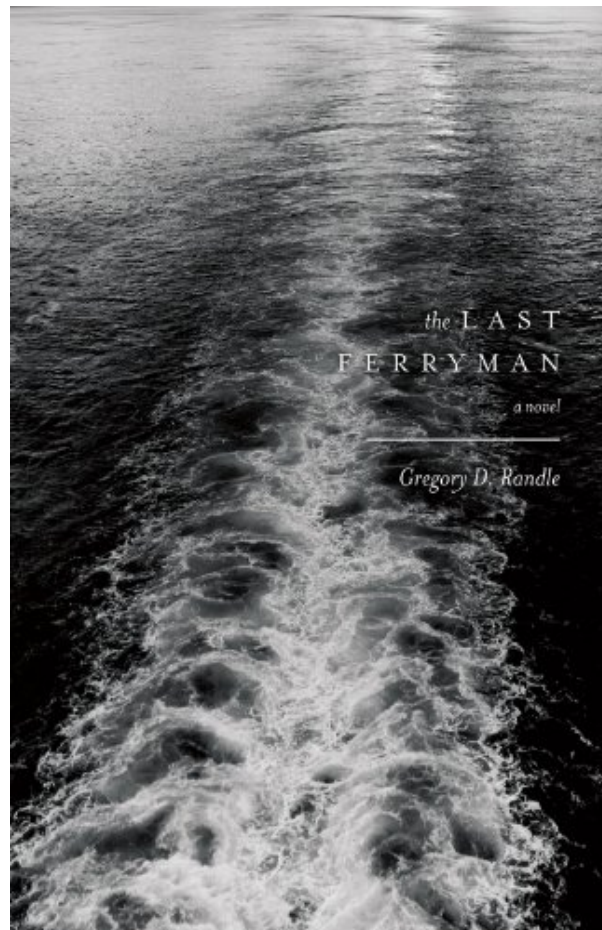
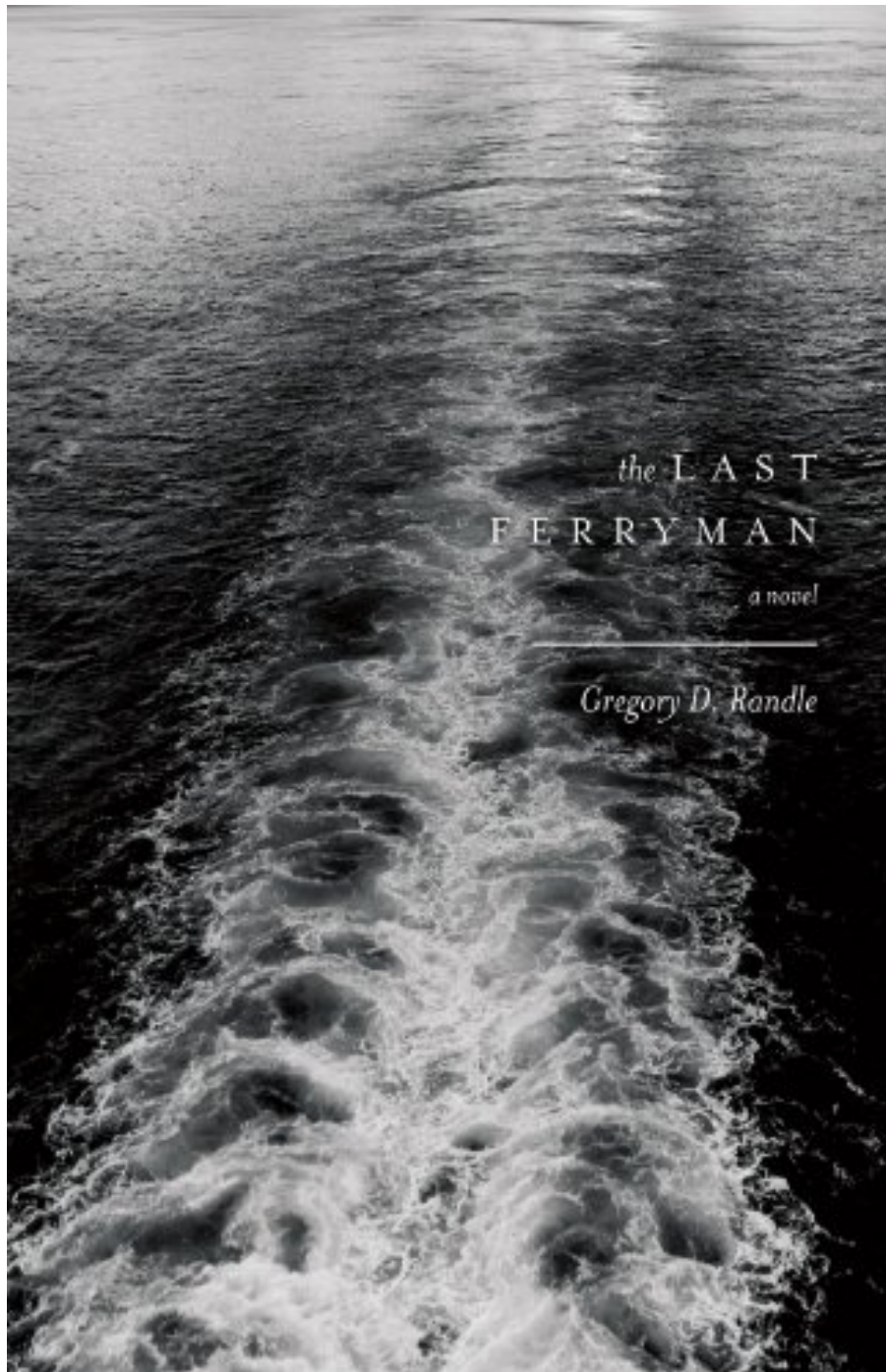


THE LAST FERRYMAN: A NOVEL BY GREGORY D. RANDLE



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About the Author

Gregory Randle grew up on the Wabash River in southeastern Illinois. He was raised to have a wary respect for the river, hearing stories of its bounty as well as its hidden dangers, such as its mysterious undercurrent that claimed the lives of even experienced swimmers. Later, when he was old enough to patch holes in an old wooden boat and operate a small motor loaned to him by his grandfather, Randle spent hours on the river reveling in its wildness and beauty. He now lives near St. Cloud, Minnesota with his wife Janelle. Randle has two sons, Elliot and Samuel. This is his first novel.

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PDF

In 1939—and for several decades preceding that year—the only way to cross the river at Millerville, Illinois, was by ferry. It seemed there always was a ferry in Millerville. Buck Shyrock, the local ferryman, knew that better than most. Being a ferryman was in Buck’s blood—his grandfather and father both had ferried folks across the Wabash, from the Illinois side to the Indiana side and back again. To Buck’s way of thinking, Millerville was a “ferry town ... and it’ll keep on bein’ a ferry town.” Even though in recent years there was talk of building a bridge across the river, that’s all it was—just talk. Buck was sure of it.

Buck’s certainty is shaken, however, by the appearance of Floyd Bailey, a roll of blueprints tucked firmly under his arm, and by the growing awareness that Bailey is to act as project engineer on the erection of a suspension bridge—a bridge that will mean the end of Buck’s way of life.

In *The Last Ferryman*, author Gregory Randle has created a compelling saga that masterfully intertwines the transition from ferry to bridge with the changes that take place within the community and within Buck’s family. Buck’s son, August, is perplexed by Buck’s steely determination to hold on to what August considers a “bygone era,” even as the bridge-building begins. But August’s wife, Belle, compassionate and gently supportive, tries to help the old man accept the unstoppable progress and his place in it.

Randle has a keen eye for detail, drawing evocative images of both the situation and the people involved, as well as offering spot-on character dialogue. *The Last Ferryman* isn’t simply the story of progress supplanting obsolescence. The mood, the community, and the time all come alive in this rich and beautifully presented tale.

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By Michael Sakolsky

This well developed story and characters are presented for your consideration in this artfully written first novel. A novel about the ravages of progress tempered by the human condition, it is a timeless story that resonates in a world where the new ways rapidly replace history and tradition. Mr. Randle has hit a home run on his first at bat! I anxiously await his next offering.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Excellent Read

By Dawg Fan

The author brings life to the characters in *The Last Ferryman*. His story, about the determined and stubborn Buck Shyrock, the last ferry boat operator on the Wabash River in the fictional town of Millerville, Illinois, is very well written and holds your interest throughout the book. The author helps you imagine what life was like in 1939 in small town Millerville, while a new bridge is being built to span the river, bringing Buck's livelihood and life as he knows it to an end. You find yourself not only pulling for Buck but also his family, which is struggling with their own worries and fears over the looming change in Buck's life.

I highly recommend this book and congratulate the author on his fine work.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

The Last Ferryman is one of the best books that I have read in a very long ...

By Ken Claypool

The Last Ferryman is one of the best books that I have read in a very long time. The author's writing style and research actually make you feel as though you are living in the novel's time period, and that you personally know the characters and their issues. It is amazing that this written account of Buck Shyrock, who operates the river ferry, can pull you into the character's life so quickly and completely. I finished this book with a great compassion and admiration for Buck Shyrock, and I am really looking forward to any books that Mr. Gregory Randle may write in the future. I highly recommend this book! It has been one of my favorites.

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