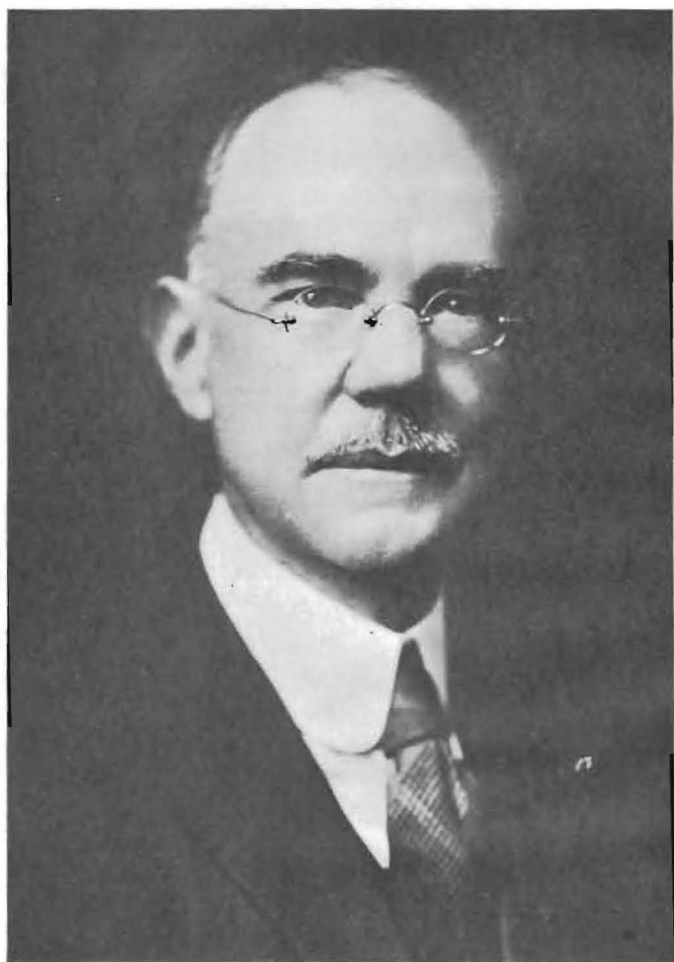


THE
BATTLE BOOK
A
GENEALOGY
OF THE
BATTLE FAMILY
IN
AMERICA

H. B. BATTLE
LOIS YELVERTON
W. J. BATTLE

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IN AMERICA

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DR. HERBERT BEMERTON BATTLE
1862-1929

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University of Texas, Austin, Texas

THE BATTLE BOOK
A GENEALOGY OF THE BATTLE FAMILY
IN AMERICA

WITH CHAPTERS ILLUSTRATING CERTAIN PHASES OF ITS HISTORY

PLANNED AND IN GREAT PART EXECUTED BY
HERBERT BEMERTON BATTLE, PH.D.

CHEMIST, SOME TIME DIRECTOR OF THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE EXPERIMENT STATION

COMPLETED BY
LOIS YELVERTON

AND ISSUED UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF
WILLIAM JAMES BATTLE, PH.D.
PROFESSOR OF CLASSICAL LANGUAGES, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

THE PARAGON PRESS
Montgomery, Alabama
1930

TO THE MEMORY OF HERBERT B. BATTLE

"Generous friend, useful citizen, untiring civic worker, faithful Churchman."

"Montgomery and her people will miss Dr. Battle. Thirty years ago he came here to make his home, and from the hour he first set foot in our beautiful city to the hour that he lay down to die Dr. Battle was a good and upright citizen. He loved Montgomery and her people with a love that was touching, and because he loved her he worked hard and untiringly to advance every cause that helped her welfare.

"Dr. Battle was interested in Montgomery's history and the history of the state, so he joined the Alabama Anthropological Society and at the time of his death was its president and one of its most useful members.

"Dr. Battle realized that the Boy Scout movement was one of the finest things in all the country, a great influence for good, so he identified himself with the Montgomery Council and did his full part to uplift the boy life of this city.

"Dr. Battle knew that there was need for civic clubs in our community. He knew of the good that they did. He knew that they performed useful service. He was no unkind critic of them. He joined the Rotary Club of Montgomery and there had an enthusiastic part in all its work.

"Dr. Battle was a man of strong religious convictions. He believed in Jesus Christ, not, as some men do, with apologies, but he believed in Him as the Son of God and in the Church as His Body. He never regarded his Church (the Episcopal) as a mere human society, a sort of glorified fraternal society or lodge. He knew that it was more than a human society. He believed in the Church as the repository of God's grace, where men might turn for divine strength and help. He supported his Church loyally. He attended its services regularly, gave liberally of his means, and took part in all its activities. He was the firm and abiding friend of his rector and did all he could to help him in his great duties and tasks. He was a good Christian because he lived the Christian life daily.

"Dr. Battle's body will sleep in the old cemetery at Raleigh, surrounded by the bodies of his kinspeople and friends, and close beside the devoted wife who passed on ten years ago. But his memory will always live among the people of Montgomery. They will recall to mind the man of the outstretched hand, the citizen who builded up his town, and the kindly spirit who went about, modestly and quietly, doing good and relieving suffering. Montgomery will miss Dr. Herbert B. Battle, but it will not forget him, for his memory will ever abide as a strengthening and comforting influence."

Judge Walter B. Jones in the *Montgomery Advertiser*, July 8, 1929.

FOREWORD

The father of the Battle Book was Dr. Herbert Bemerton Battle of Montgomery, Alabama. The plan is his; he collected most of the material; and to him are due most of the book's distinguishing features. Of its inception he wrote the following account in 1923:

"It has often been a source of wonder to me why the genealogy of our family should interest me so greatly. Perhaps it may be explained, in part at least, by the fact that both of my parents were of the Battle name and distant cousins. By the irony of fate, or, more strictly speaking, the religious zeal of my mother, I did not come into possession of the name of an ancestor or even a close-by relative. Perhaps the name of the English clergyman and poet, George Herbert, of Bemerton, which was given to me, may have instilled some love for truth and beauty and the desire to preserve them, as exemplified in our past, for the benefit of posterity.

"Time is rapidly passing, the older members of the family are fast leaving us, and soon whatever might have been available in the past or at present or in the few years to come will have been lost forever. In fact, during the comparatively short time in which I have been engaged in collecting these records, I have felt and do feel now that, if they had not been preserved in this way, they would never have been available to any one. Important letters and books, especially family Bibles, have already been lost by fire or otherwise and soon it will not be possible to secure and preserve at any cost the records so essential for such a history as this. I must mention here, and very sadly too, the loss by fire in August, 1902, at Winston-Salem, N. C., of that most cherished volume, the family Bible of the first Elisha Battle, whom we have affectionately dubbed "the Great," or "the Patriarch", with records in his own handwriting of the family events as they occurred. Nothing can ever replace the loss of this link that directly connected us of the present with this particular ancestor of the past.

"The first direct cause of my interest in genealogical matters was a chart showing the genealogy of the Battle family, prepared by the late Governor H. T. Clark, of North Carolina, a genealogist of tireless energy. This was written on blue document paper, sixteen by twenty-five inches in size, and gives the children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren of Elisha Battle I. It was prepared by Governor Clark about 1867, only a few years before his death, and presented to my father, Dr. Kemp P. Battle. Few dates are given, but the records are surprisingly accurate in so far as the children and grandchildren are concerned. The record of the next generation is incomplete as might be expected, due largely to their dispersion from the land of their nativity, Edgecombe County, North Carolina. In 1886, I began an endeavor to enlarge and extend this record to include all of the descendants of Elisha Battle I, and to collect the exact dates of their birth, marriage, and death. In July, 1890, this had so far progressed as to cover a sheet in size twenty-four by twenty-four inches, so completely and intricately that few would have the time or the patience to decipher it. My next idea was to enlarge the sheet into a wall chart, but no wall could be found with a free space sufficient to hold it and this also was abandoned. Separate sheets were then decided upon. These developed into the Tables which make up the bulk of this volume.

"Up to this time, there was no thought of a printed publication, for my highest ambition was to prepare a single copy for the use of my own individual family. But soon interested relatives began to request copies for themselves. The next thought was to prepare a few copies by the use of some duplicating process, but this was finally abandoned as impracticable. The outcome of it all is the present subscription publication, to include all of the Battle stock from the earliest times, with brief sketches of each member, as far as they could be procured.

"As sources for the information contained in this book I would name especially the following:

"1. *The Governor Clark Chart*. I cannot speak too highly of this important paper and the extreme care displayed by the author in its preparation. If this chart had not been prepared, it can certainly be said that this present publication would never have been concluded or in fact even commenced. [A photographic reproduction will be found on the page preceding Chapter III.]

"2. *Memoirs of the Battle Family to 1820*, prepared by Dr. Jeremiah Battle, a grandson of the first Elisha Battle, in Raleigh, N. C. The original has long since been lost. Only three copies are known to have existed. One was made for a Texas relative in 1868, but has since been lost; a second copy was owned in North Carolina, but this too was lost. The third and only copy now extant was made from the original by my father, Dr. K. P. Battle, in Raleigh, N. C., in 1854. This also was supposed for many years to have been lost, but was accidentally found by me in 1879, partially mutilated, but at the same time safely stowed away underneath the springs of a large hair-cloth upholstered sofa! The introduction to these Memoirs concisely describes the author's motives: 'At the request of yourself and several of our common relatives, I now proceed to the task of putting down such an account of our family as my information may enable me.' It is very likely that Gov. Clark had access to these memoirs, in which case his task must have been greatly lightened. The author mentions a definite request on the part of a particular relative. There may have been an agreement with this relative for each to write a history of the family so far as it related to his own branch. On this hypothesis, the writing at approximately the same time of a history of the family by a relative in a distant state can easily be explained. Dr. Jeremiah Battle's Memoirs relate entirely to the descendants of the first Elisha Battle. They are well written and show great care in their preparation. [They are printed in full in Chapter III.]

"3. *Historical Sketch of the Battle Family to 1820*. At about the same time that Dr. Jeremiah Battle wrote his Memoirs a distant relative in Georgia wrote *A Few Traditional Sketches Relative to the Origin of the Battle Family together with Their Immigration to North America*. Their author was William Sumner Battle, a son of Jesse Battle, who was a nephew of the first Elisha Battle. Jesse Battle followed Elisha from Virginia and lived for ten years near him in Edgecombe County, N. C. Afterwards he and his son, William Sumner Battle, settled in Georgia. It is not known when these sketches were written, but from the number and names of the children recorded in a certain family it must have been about 1820, the year when Dr. Jeremiah Battle wrote his Memoirs. The original of this paper has long since been lost, and there are no known copies anywhere existing except in Georgia and the states to the southwest. In fact, the family in North Carolina did not know of the existence of such a history until it was located by me in 1896 through correspondence with certain relatives residing in Alabama.

I have inspected several copies obtained from different sources. They show wide divergence in language and fullness. This proves conclusively that various copies were made by different persons from the original or from other copies at widely different intervals. The fullest text I have seen was obtained from Mrs. J. J. Callaway of Batesville, Ark. [It is given in full in Chapter II.] It descended to Mrs. Callaway from Oliver Porter Fears, who wrote about 1878 an addendum to the Sketches, and included his branch of the family in much detail up to the time of his writing. These sketches have proven invaluable to me in the preparation of this history. Without them, I would be without authoritative account from a family source of the earliest period of the family in America. The court and land office records in Virginia and North Carolina carefully examined by me at a later period, confirm in a very remarkable degree the details of these sketches."

To the sources mentioned by Dr. Battle should be added:

Allen, Mrs. Minnie Battle, *The Battle Families and Their Kin*, in Mrs. H. D. Pittman's *Americans of Gentle Birth and Their Ancestors*, St. Louis, 1907.

Arthur, Mrs. J. J., *Annals of the Fowler Family*, Austin, Texas, 1901.

Boddie, J. T., and Boddie, J. B., *The Boddie and Allied Families*, Chicago, 1918.

Jones, Walter B., *John Burgwin, Carolinian, and John Jones, Virginian*, Montgomery, Alabama, 1913.

Marquis, A. N., *Who's Who in America*, Chicago, 1899—.

Saunders, W. L., Editor, *The Colonial Records of North Carolina*, Raleigh, N. C., 1886-1890.

Stroud, A. B., *The Strouds*, Lakeland, Fla., 1919.

University of North Carolina, *Sketches of the History of the University of North Carolina, together with a Catalogue of Officers and Students, 1789-1889*, published by the University, 1889.

University of North Carolina, Alumni History, Daniel Lindsey Grant, Executive Secretary General Alumni Association, Second Edition, Durham, N. C., 1924.

Wheeler, John H., *Historical Sketches of North Carolina*, Philadelphia, 1851.

Wheeler, John H., *Reminiscences and Memoirs of North Carolina and Eminent North Carolinians*, Columbus, Ohio, 1884.

5. Of far greater value was the information secured by Dr. Battle through an enormous correspondence all over the country extending through many years. Sometimes he found indifference, sometimes actual hostility to the very notion of a Battle Book, but in the main there was keen interest and abundant willingness to help. The following list gives the names of those who were of most assistance. To them all he wished to express his warmest thanks.

Mrs. Minnie Battle Allen, Sharon, Ga.; Mrs. J. J. Arthur, Austin, Texas; George A. Bassford, Ashland, Wis.; Dr. A. J. Battle, Macon, Ga.; Miss Bertha A. Battle, Huntsville, Ala.; Josiah Fort Battle, Dallas, Texas; Dr. Kemp P. Battle, Chapel Hill, N. C.; Mrs. Mary Parker Battle, Rocky Mount, N. C.; Judge N. W. Battle, Seattle, Wash.; Miss Elizabeth Benagh, Nashville, Tenn.; Rev. F. F. Bledsoe, Skidmore, Texas; Mrs. E. A. Bowers, Clay City, Kans.; Mr. Clarence Leon Carter, Houston, Texas; Miss Leona Mae Carter, Dallas, Texas; Mrs. M. H. Chance, Texarkana, Texas; Mrs. Tallulah H. Chapman, Quitman, Fla.; Mrs. Elizabeth C. Coram, Tampa, Fla.; Mrs. Amanda W. Coulter, Clarksville, Tenn.; Mr. Frank B. Dancy, Baltimore, Md.; Miss Anne DeMoyville, Nashville, Tenn.; Mrs. A. G. Eakins, Shawnee, Okla.; Mrs. Ada B. Ector, Texarkana, Texas; Miss Liz-

zie Fort, Nashville, Tenn.; Mrs. Miriam Fort Gill, Paris, Texas; Mrs. Alice B. Glaze, Nolensville, Tenn.; Mrs. Ora B. Gray, Brownsville, Tenn.; Mrs. J. L. Harrison, Montezuma, Ga.; Mrs. A. F. Hodges, Andersonville, Ga.; Mrs. J. H. Hoskins, Brunswick, Ga.; Mrs. James Manly Jones, Pine Level, Ala.; Mrs. E. C. Long, San Antonio, Texas; Miss Lena Long, Atlanta, Ga.; Mrs. E. B. Lynch, Boston, Texas; Miss Effie McIver, Nashville, Tenn.; Mrs. Thomas H. Malone, Nashville, Tenn.; Mr. J. W. Nisbet, Macon, Ga.; Miss Annie B. Northen, Atlanta, Ga.; Mrs. Edgar Allan Poc, Baltimore, Md.; Mrs. Lucy P. Russell, Rockingham, N. C.; Miss Laura Scott, Nashville, N. C.; Mrs. Mary E. Scott, Nashville, N. C.; Miss Minnie McGee Stanford, San Marcos, Texas; Mrs. Sarah M. L. Taylor, Atlanta, Ga.; Miss Fannie Van Zandt, Fort Worth, Texas; Mrs. M. B. Wharton, Eufaula, Ala.; Mrs. E. T. Whatley, Brunswick, Ga.; Mrs. T. J. Wood, Oklahoma City, Okla.; Mrs. W. H. Wood, Waco, Texas; Mr. Eugene Earl Wright, New Orleans, La.

6. Further assistance was had by consulting Court House records and historical collections wherever they seemed to promise anything of value.

It was a great source of regret that the investigation could not have extended to the old home across the ocean.

Dr. Battle's interest never flagged, but unhappily the circumstances of his life were such that he could not work continuously at his task. He began in 1886 and was forced to stop. In 1901 he began again and once more he had to lay the work aside. Additional work was done in 1912, this time with the capable assistance of his daughter, Nell, now Mrs. John M. Booker, and again in 1919. Of course every discontinuance involved loss. Connections were broken. Information went out of date. Subscriptions taken had to be returned till a more convenient season. Many of the cuts made to illustrate the book became unsuitable for use.

Of course too all this clerical work and postage, these journeys to consult records, this printing of forms and announcements, this making of charts and tables, involved no small expense. Dr. Battle bore it gladly out of his extremely limited means with not the smallest hope of return. He felt he should be fortunate if subscriptions should pay for the actual cost of publication. But the time came when he must have relief if the work was to be completed. His only resource was to appeal to other members of the family. They responded gladly. In 1923 a Publishing Committee was formed as follows: George Gordon Battle, New York City; Thomas Hall Battle, Rocky Mount, N. C.; Samuel Westray Battle, M. D., Asheville, N. C.; Kemp Plummer Battle, M. D., Raleigh, N. C.; William James Battle, University of Texas, Austin; Frank Battle Dancy, Baltimore, Md.; Kemp Plummer Lewis, Durham, N. C.; William Smith Battle, Roanoke, Va.; Herbert B. Battle, Montgomery, Ala.

New plans were formulated, new announcements made, a new subscription list started. The amount of material had now become so enormous and the cost of printing had so increased that the price of the book had to be more than doubled. Nevertheless subscriptions were received in encouraging number. The interest of the family in the project was still keen. But once more unavoidable accidents caused delay. Not till the December of 1927 could work on the book be seriously taken up again. This time Dr. Battle was fortunate enough to engage the services of a really competent assistant, Miss Lois Yelverton of Montgomery, Ala. Descendant of an old South Carolina family which had moved to Alabama in 1824, Miss Yelverton had had twelve years of experience as a teacher and three years

subsequent training in historical and genealogical research, devoting considerable attention to the court house records in Virginia, North Carolina, and Alabama. An active member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and the Alabama Anthropological Society, she had compiled a genealogy of her own family and had made contributions to the publications of the Anthropological Society. She entered on the work of the Battle Book with enthusiasm and presently was as familiar with its details as Dr. Battle himself. So many years had now elapsed since its inception that everything had to be gone over afresh, information had to be brought up to date, new tables made, new illustrations secured, new subscriptions taken. Substantial progress had been made and the outlook for early publication was good when Dr. Battle died of a sudden attack of heart failure July 3, 1929. He had been called away before he saw the cherished desire of his heart fulfilled.

To the members of Dr. Battle's immediate family it seemed intolerable that such devoted work should go for naught, such an extensive accumulation of information as to the Battle family remain inaccessible. Of the Publishing Committee of 1923 S. Westray Battle of Asheville, N. C., Kemp P. Battle of Raleigh, N. C., and Frank B. Dancy of Baltimore had also died and it was necessary to form a new Committee. Through the efforts of Thomas H. Battle of Rocky Mount, N. C., the new Committee was constituted as follows: George Gordon Battle, New York City; Thomas H. Battle, Rocky Mount, N. C.; Mrs. K. P. Battle, Raleigh, N. C.; William James Battle, Austin, Texas; Mrs. Frank B. Dancy, Baltimore, Md.; Kemp P. Lewis, Durham, N. C.; Richard H. Lewis, Oxford, N. C.; Ivey F. Lewis, University of Virginia; William S. Battle, Roanoke, Va.; Col. Marion S. Battle, U. S. Army; Mrs. John M. Booker, Chapel Hill, N. C.; J. Wilson Battle, Montgomery, Ala.; Kemp D. Battle, Rocky Mount, N. C.; Hyman L. Battle, Rocky Mount, N. C.

Each member of the Committee agreed to furnish a definite part of the sum required to complete the work. Professor W. J. Battle, of the University of Texas, Austin, was asked to act as supervisor and Miss Lois Yelverton to continue the work she had so well begun. An office was equipped in the Bell Building at Montgomery, Ala., and the work went on without a break. The Battle Book is now presented to the subscribers, not as without error, not as containing all it ought to contain, but as a piece of conscientious work, the fruit of love for the family name and devotion to the memory of a noble man. It is published essentially as Dr. Battle wished it. A few changes have been made from his plan but nothing has been omitted that would have added materially to its value.

The present Committee has no plans for the future but the writer will undertake to receive corrections and additions and to keep them for the use of coming family historians.

A word may be said as to the introductory chapters. They are intended not as a history of the family but as glimpses here and there into some interesting parts of that history. Chapter I outlines the general westward movement of the family. Chapters II and III give the classic narratives in which the Genealogical Tables of Chapter XIII have their beginnings. Chapter IV gives an account of the devices which the family has by common consent adopted as symbols of its ideals. Chapter V shows how in early days a foothold was acquired in the wilderness and how the fathers handed down their estates. Chapter VI recalls the hardships of pioneering days. Chapter VII gives a few examples of the letters that oldtimers used to write, though it has not seemed to be fair to print them with-

out making a few corrections of careless slips—there are enough left! Chapter VIII gives an account of Cool Spring, Edgecombe Co., N. C., home of Elisha Battle I, earliest and most revered of all the North Carolina Battle homes. Chapter IX tells of life at Senlac, another Battle home in North Carolina dear to many of the name. Chapter X gives the songs in which Senlac used to delight, recalling a phase of old time Southern life that may be a relief from the solid facts of the rest of the book. Chapter XI gives an account of an eminently useful life, chosen not because others are not also worthy of honor but because this was to the father of the Battle Book the best known and best loved of all. Chapter XII is a sort of basket of memories, sacred and secular.

WILLIAM JAMES BATTLE.

University of Texas, Austin, Texas.
December 1, 1930.

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