

CHAPTER III

MEMOIRS OF THE BATTLE FAMILY TO 1820

by

DR. JEREMIAH BATTLE¹

Raleigh, [N. C.], July 19, 1820.

At the request of yourself² 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.

Elisha Battle, the elder, who was my grandfather, was born in Nansemond, Va., on the 9th Jan., 1723-4, and at the age of 18 married Elizabeth Sumner. After having two children born, he moved to Tar River about 16 miles above Tarboro. He lived chiefly by agriculture. The country being then new, he could raise stock, hogs particularly with great ease, which enabled him to purchase lands on both sides of the river adjoining him, sufficient to settle all his sons. He was industrious and economical. It was customary with him not only to raise all kinds of food necessary for the family, but to perform the greatest part of the mechanical work that was required, so that his mode of living might be called the most independent.

Notwithstanding his industry and attention to all his home concerns, it seems his talents and labors were held in requisition by the public for many years.

He also was a strictly religious man, having joined the Baptist Church at the Falls of Tar River, and he always bestowed the time and attention required of him by that society.

Although his public services in both Church and State were great, he was no orator, spoke in a plain and unvarnished manner but with prudence and judgment. He declined all public services from personal inability, which, though he must have had a good constitution, was perhaps a little premature in consequence of his passing the early part of his life very laboriously.

Tho he had very little education, he always preserved order and method in his public as well as his private business, and I never knew him to be embarrassed with debts or business.

He was bold and free to reprove or censure sin or impudence, not only in his family but among his neighbors, who never took it ill, but felt it a privilege that belonged to his standing in society. It is believed he contributed greatly towards rendering his the most moral and correct neighborhood of any then known to us.

He had 8 children, viz: Sarah, John, Elizabeth, Elisha, William, Jacob, Jethro, and Demsey.

I. Sarah married Jacob Hilliard, a respectable farmer, who lived at the Little Falls, 3 miles off up Tar River, by whom she had 2 children: Elizabeth and Jeremiah. After the death of Hilliard, she was married to Henry Horn of a family of Quakers, by whom she had 4 children, Piety, Charity, Celia, and Henry. The latter was born some time after the decease of his father.

¹See Foreword and Table 50.

²This is supposed to have been prepared for William Sumner Battle of Taliaferro County, Ga.

1. Elizabeth Hilliard married Wm. Fort of Tar River, who moved to Tennessee some years after. He was a man of some talents and popularity and acted in a public sphere both here and in Tennessee. His wife joined the Baptist Society. He had children, viz: Jeremiah, James, Jacob, Sarah, Josiah, and Mary.

(1) Jeremiah Fort married Temperance Battle, daughter of Jethro B., by whom he had a son named Jethro, and he died.

(2) James Fort married ——— by whom he has a daughter, and he married a second time to ———. He followed the mercantile business at ——— until his death.

(3) Jacob Fort also followed merchandise—he married [Cynthia Copeland].

(4) Sarah married Orren D. Battle, son of Jethro B., who had moved to Tennessee and has eight children.

(5) Josiah Fort (the younger) is of the medical profession. He married a Ligon and has 9 children.

(6) Mary Fort married Jack Smith and has 4 children.

2. Jeremiah Hilliard settled on the land his father left, where he improved his fortune to a considerable extent, and acted in several public capacities, being a moral and well informed man. He married Nancy, the daughter of Isaac Hilliard, by whom he had no surviving issue. He married a second wife—the widow of John Hilliard of Northampton Co. and had no issue.

3. Piety Horn, the 3rd child of Sarah, married Josiah Fort (brother of Wm.), who also removed to Tennessee. She had children, viz: Whitmill ———.

4. Charity Horn married Burrill Bunn, who was my mother's brother, of Nash. She had the following children, Piety, William, Henry, and Jeremiah.

(1) Piety married Dr. Terryll and died without issue.

(2) William married Sarah Bunn, the daughter of Willie B. They moved to Georgia and settled in Twiggs County, when he died leaving one child.

(3) Henry Bunn married a Miss Thorpe and also settled in Twiggs Co. He has ——— children.

(4) Jeremiah Bunn has lately gone to Ga. and is not married.

5. Celia (Selah) Horn married Lem'l Sugg, of Edgecombe, but moved to Tenn. He died leaving ——— children.

Celia the widow is since become the second wife of Josiah Fort, her sister Piety's husband.

6. Henry Horn (the younger) married the daughter of the Rev. Jesse Read by whom he had ——— children. He married a second wife—a Miss Costafney. He is living in Georgia.

II. John Battle, my grandfather's 2nd child, settled on S. side of Tar River, below the L. Falls where he spent an industrious, economical, prudent, and pious life. He belonged to the B. Church at the Falls—married Frances Davis. He had five children, Josiah, Mary, Davis, Elisha, and John.

1. Josiah B. married Jane Applewhite of Virginia, settled first on Swift Creek in Nash, and afterwards moved to Wake 18 miles from Raleigh. He had ——— children of whom only John, Harriss [?] and ——— are living.

2. Mary B. was a Baptist, married Cullen Andrews, who lived and died on Tar River 2 miles above my grandfather. He was a man of a bright mind, but confined himself to his own domestic and agricultural pursuits. His wife died before him, leaving three children, Jesse, John, and Elizabeth.

(1) Jesse Andrews settled in the same neighborhood and built mills on the Little Falls. He was a considerable mechanical genius. He at an early age joined the Baptist Church at the Falls. He married my Sister, Sarah B. They have three daughters, Mary, Maria, and Frances. They had a 4th, a son who died. They are now living in Kentucky, Logan County.

(2) John A. married a Miss Pope, settled in the same neighborhood and moved to the West with his brother. He has 3 children—is a Baptist.

(3) Elizabeth A. married John Cotten, who lives 8 miles from Tarboro. Has had 4 children, 3 of whom are living, John, Caesar [?] and ———.

III. Elizabeth B. the third of my grandfather's children married Josiah Crudup, who lived a few years in the neighborhood and then moved to Little River in Wake Co. She was a Baptist and died in strong faith. She had 8 children, John, Mourning, Bathsheba, Chloe, George, Elizabeth, Temperance, and Josiah.

1. John C. married ——— and settled on L. R. and after living there he moved to Tenn. where he died. He had ——— children.

2. Mourning C. married Wm. Fowler in the neighborhood. They have children, viz: Joseph, Piety.

3. Bathsheba C. married Bullard Fowler, and has children, viz: Godfrey, Tilitha.

4. Chloe C. married James B. Lee and lived on L. R. near the Falls. She has 8 children viz: Susan, Eliza, Temperance, James, Harry, Mary, Martha, and Dossey. Susan is married to L. Fort—has a son. They are now living in Tenn. The rest of the family are living with their widowed mother.

5. George C. married Leah Ellis—lives on L. R., has children, Temperance, ———.

6. Elizabeth C. married Cullen Andrews, after the death of his first wife and he left by her a son named Cullen who is married to a Martha Fort of Wake and has two children. He lives in Wake County. His sister, Elizabeth, is living in Wake, having married ——— Alford. She has children viz: ———. She and her husband are both Baptists.

7. Tempe C. married ——— Lockhart, and had no issue.

8. Josiah C. is a member of the Baptist Church. In early life he belonged to the Methodist Church. He has been much admired as a preacher. He has become a candidate for political honors. He married Mrs. Ann M. Brickell, daughter of Archibald Davis, Esq., of Franklin County. His children are Archibald, James H., and Martha. He lives where his father died and owns the same land.

IV. Elisha B. (the younger), the 4th son of Elisha Battle, is my father. He lives on the S. side of T. River and married Sarah Bunn, daughter of Ben Bunn of Nash. My father is about seventy years of age at the present time. He was always a man inclined to a laborious and active life, and accordingly possesses a good constitution. He has always been very strong and hearty and is greatly beloved by his neighbors and children who have always revered and respected him. He has always been of a cheerful disposition, and courteous and obliging in his manner to all his friends and neighbors. He is known for his plainness of speech when in conversation, more so than all of his brothers, but he can argue better than any of them. His mind is inclined to religion, tho he has never made a profession. He had 8 children, Amelia, Jeremiah, Bennett, William, Polly, Burrell, Jesse, and Sarah.

1. Amelia. 2. Jeremiah.

3. Bennett B. lived to maturity but soon after contracted a violent fever, attended with dysentery. He was delirious for a long time and had much inflammation.

4. Wm. B. was generally unhealthy but relieved by medicine. He died while I was at the University.

5. Polly B. married Orren D. Lamon and is now living in Madison, Ala. She has — children living. She is a Baptist.

6. Burrell B. married Mary, daughter of John Hinton of Johnston County, then moved to Johnston County, 16 miles above Smithfield, driving often to Rocky Mount. There he lived till in the year 18— when he was killed by the running away of his horses. He left five children, Elizabeth, Joseph John, Sallie, Arabella, and Mary, all of whom but the last are living.

7. Jesse B. married Mrs. Polly Bunn Vick, and afterwards moved to Mississippi, thence back to Nash Co. He is a Methodist.

8. Sally B. married Jesse Andrews. She became a professor at the time of revival of religion at the Falls and has a bright experience. They moved to Logan Co. Ky. in 1811.

V. William B., my grandfather's third son, married Charity Horn, daughter of Henry Horn and sister of Henry Horn, Jr., who was the 2nd husband of Sarah Battle. He lived opposite his father's plantation, and had three children, Isaac, Ann, and Joel. He and his wife died early about the same time. Isaac and Joel both settled on Tar River.

1. Isaac joined the church before he was 20 years of age and lived a Christian life. He married Lucinda Mayo, who was also a Baptist. He afterwards sold his place to Joel and moved to Tenn., on Harpeth River about the year —.

2. Ann B. married Daniel Ross, the first husband of my sister Amelia. She had four children, William, James, Elizabeth, and Charity. She and her husband moved to Mississippi.

3. Joel B. married Mary, daughter of Amos Johnston after which he moved to "Shell Bank" on Tar River, where he carried on the business of merchandising. He also purchased a plantation higher up the river which is now his chief residence. Besides his store and plantation at the River he purchased mills and cotton factory at the Falls of the River. He and his wife belong to the Baptist Church. He has children, William, Amos, Richard, Catharine, Dossey, Christopher Columbus, Isaac, and Susan.

VI. Jacob B. the sixth child of Elisha Battle, settled on land below his father, and carried on a large farm, having married Mrs. Penelope Edwards (formerly Langley). He early became a member of the Baptist Church and uniformly led a consistent Christian life, together with great industry in the transaction of business, all of his actions becoming characterized by honesty. He was extremely liberal in his views. He was rather under the size of the Battles generally but possessed health and good constitution so that he could take much exercise. The correctness of his views, and the natural suavity of his manner were so striking that he has performed all his duties without suspicion of error or wrong doing. He had children, James, Marmaduke, Thomas, and Elizabeth.

1. James S. settled on his father's farm 15 miles above Tarboro, and carried on a large plantation. He married Mrs. Temperance Fort, widow of Jeremiah

Fort, daughter of Jethro Battle, by whom he had a son, James Marmaduke. James also became a member of the Baptist Church at the Falls.

2. Marmaduke being unhealthy soon died of epilepsy about — years of age.

3. Thomas died at an early age.

4. Elizabeth B. married Dr. Cullen Battle and became a meek and pious Baptist. Soon after the birth of her first child she was attacked with quinsy and lived only 11 hours after the attack.

VII. Jethro B. He settled on the north bank of the river. He was an energetic man generally but his principal business was farming. He married Martha Lane and had six children, Elizabeth, Ann, Alford, Orren, Temperance, and Joseph. He belonged to the church at the Falls.

1. Elizabeth B. married Garry Fort and settled 4 miles from Tarboro. He had a fall from his horse which proved fatal. He died leaving three sons, Lewis, Orren, and Joseph. She was a pious Baptist.

(1) Lewis married Harriet Wilson, since which he and his wife moved to Tennessee. They have many children.

(2) Orren F. married Lucy Dunn of Franklin. They have also moved to Tennessee with their mother.

(3) Joseph is still in Edgecombe.

2. Ann B., daughter of Jethro, married Lewis Fort, brother to her sister's husband. She was a meek and kind woman but not a professor. She had several children, but left only one living named Garry. Garry is living with his father who is now living in Tenn.

3. Alford L. B. married Susan Wilson, who died without issue, after which he married her sister Nancy, by whom he has children, Jethro, James, Elizabeth [?].

4. Orren D. B. went to Tenn. and married [Sarah] Fort and has [eight] children.

5. Joseph S. B. lived where his father lived. He married a Miss Dunn of Wake, who died with her first child.

6. Temperance B. married Jeremiah Fort of Tenn. and after having a son, named Jethro, her husband died and she returned to her father's. She became a Baptist in 1811. She afterwards married James S. Battle and after having a son (Marmaduke) she died Aug. 2nd, 1820¹.

VIII. Demsey B. the 8th and last of my grandfather's children, was a very pious Baptist, reserved and modest in his demeanor. Like most of the rest of his brothers and sisters, he took time to think before he spoke, though among his intimate friends he was very sociable. His religious scruples placed him in a dilemma of many other Christians. His temper and sympathetic heart abhorred war, but lest it should be his duty, he thought it best to do his part in supporting them without murmuring. During the war in 18— when the President adopted his retaliatory measures, in a conversation between us on the subject, I found his sensibility could not bear abuses of humanity daily practised in war. He suggested and urged me to write to the President to release those British prisoners, then doomed to die for our American brethren who were taken by the British and threatened with death. He expressed himself at some length on the inconsistency of the practices of war-

¹Temperance Battle died Sept. 9, 1814.

makers with the Christian religion, on which points he and I agreed perfectly, and I was at length induced to write Mr. Madison a letter on the subject.

He married Jane Andrews, sister of Cullen A. the elder. He settled at first opposite his father, not a mile from him, on the other side of the river. His children who came to maturity were Cullen, Amelia, Andrews, and John.

1. Cullen B. first settled himself as a farmer, but afterwards studied medicine in Tarboro under my direction, and became an industrious and successful practitioner. He married Elizabeth, the daughter of Jacob Battle, who died soon after having her first child, after which he married Jane Lamon, and about the same time his daughter died, having never fully recovered from a spell of the epidemic which she had some months before. In the year 1818, he removed to Ga. and is now living in Powelton. His present wife has lost two children. He has declined the practice of physic and devotes his attention to farming.

2. Amelia B. married Dr. John G. Gilbert, son of the Rev. Nathan G. They had one child and after moving to Georgia near Powelton, she died of a pulmonary consumption, which is the only instance of that disease in the Battle family, within my knowledge. Her child did not long survive her. She and her husband were both Baptists.

3. Andrews B. studied physic under his brother Cullen, after which he settled in Powelton, Ga., where he married a Miss Duggar, and is now practicing with considerable reputation. He is a Baptist.

4. John B. lives on the place where our grandfather lived and died and where Demsey his father spent the latter part of his life.