

CHAPTER VII

SOME OLD LETTERS

JOHN BATTLE¹ TO ELIAS FORT, CUMBERLAND, TENN.

North Carolina, Edgecombe County,
May 22, 1794.

Dear Sir,

This may inform you that I recd. your letter some time last summer, the particular day I do not recollect, tho I was glad to receive a letter from you (which was the first I have received from that part of the world) * * * * Through the Mercy and Goodness of God I and my Family are in tolerable health at present. I hope these lines may find you and yours in a better state of health. My Father has been in a low state of health great part of the winter past, tho of late he has mended and can ride about the neighborhood a little. My Mother Departed this life on the 19th of Jany last, if I mistake not. Brother Jethro lost his Wife last summer. Many have removed from our parts since you left us, some to distant parts of the world and some to their graves, tho at present there is no great complaint of sickness in our parts. Against my desire and instruction at so youthful a day, Garry Fort and Jethro Battle's daughter Elizabeth were married on the 2nd Day of January last, and have settled to house keeping on his plantation with his negroes. He has employed an overseer and I hope will do tolerable well. When I recd. your letter he seemed intent to go to Cumberland: I agreed that he might go there if there was a good chance of company. I had bought him a good horse before, but I believe that the thoughts of marrying caused him to decline. I understand he talks yet of going sometime hence. I would be glad when you have an opportunity of writing if you would send me a memorandum of the ages of Garry Fort and Lewis as I have no certain acct. of their ages.

We hear the Indians are yet very troublesome in your country and we have great expectation of war with England, so much that Congress has as I understand passed an Act to raise 80,000 Troops in order to stand in our defense, tho at present with some there seems to be some hope of a reconciliation. Our merchants have raised considerably on their goods. Salt has been as high as two and a half dollars pr bushel. It has been reported that William Fort's wife was dead which we hope is not the case, but would be glad to hear whether it be so or not. Please remember me, my wife, Josiah Battle, and Lewis Fort to your sons and their wives and children, Jacob Dickinson and his family and enquiring friends.

Of late my wife is not troubled with the hysteric fitts as formerly. As to religion there seems to be but dull times with us, no additions of late in our church. We have some disorders and dissensions among us, but for the greater part of us, I hope we love and fellowship each other. Pray for me. No more at present, but remain yours &c

John Battle

¹John Battle was the eldest son of the first Elisha Battle.

JOEL BATTLE TO HIS PROSPECTIVE FATHER-IN-LAW,
AMOS JOHNSTON¹

Mr. Johnston

January the 24th, 1801.

Dear Sir

On subjects like this, where peace of mind, and happiness are so much concerned, ceremony and compliments are both disgusting, and unnecessary. Therefore I shall proceed. For the want of confidence, or assurance, I make use of this as a vehicle to convey my solicitude for your approbation on a matter the purport of which is nothing less than an alliance with your Family: Or in other words: I most cordially crave your assent to an Union with your Daughter (to wit) Polly.

It is by the permission of that amiable Girl that I now presume to step forward with this request: hope you will consider that on your determination depends my future happiness or disquietude: let this serve for an opening to a verbal conversation. Sir, I esteem it a matter of the greatest magnitude with me: therefore I with pleasure wait on you for an answer in any manner you shall think proper.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant etc
Joel Battle

JOEL BATTLE TO HIS SON, WILLIAM H. BATTLE, WHILE A STUDENT AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Oak Grove, Feb. 18th, 1820.

Dear William,

A few days past I had the satisfaction of receiving and learning that you enjoyed the blessings of health and I also have the pleasure to inform you that myself, your mother, brothers and sisters all enjoy tolerable health, also your Aunt Ross and family all in moderate health. And as far as I know the neighbors generally are well except a few cases. Cousin John has 2 negroes that are thought dangerous, I have 2 or 3 unwell.

Mr. Benj Weaver returned from Virginia (he went with my hoggs) very unwell and continues So. He got to Shell Bank, last Tuesday was a Week, and has not been able to go out of the house since. I very much fear he will have a tedious spell. I have been to see him to day, as I do almost every day or two, and hope he has taken the turn for the better. He sold my pork at \$6 pr. hd., cr. one half until 3rd. Monday in June. We started 152 Hoggs and got 143 to market, they averaged 149 1-2 lbs. Those that got away came home all except 1 or 2.

Great distress and dissatisfaction about money matters prevail in this section of the world. I saw 30 negroes exposed to sale in Tarboro day before yesterday for debt, the greater part belonged to one master. We have sheriff sales almost every day or 2 in this neighborhood; one to day at A. Horn's—2 negroes sold, W. Ross purchased the woman at \$581 and Jesse Thorp the boy at about \$300.

¹See Table 58 and facsimile preceding Table 58.

It is said experience is the best teacher. Many have experienced to their confusion and sorrow but it is to be hoped that so many sad examples and woeful downfalls will teach some of us to avoid those dangerous and fatal rocks, imprudence and extravagance. It is enough to make an heart of adamant melt and weep to reflect on the thousands of helpless infants brought to beggary and want and no pitying eye to relieve. Ah! monster, imprudence and extravagance, what hast thou done!

I have said enough on this subject. Helen Bartlett is to be married Tuesday evening to Mr. Burtsett of Tarboro. I have inclosed you twenty five dollars. If you find this is not enough, let me know. I am afraid to risk much at a time this way.

Your mother and brothers all join in love to you &c. In much haste I subscribe with much affection, yours &c.

J. Battle

JOEL BATTLE TO HIS SON, WILLIAM H. BATTLE, WHILE A STUDENT AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Oak Grove, April 11, 1820

Dear William

With pleasure we rec'd last evening your favour of the 3rd. inst. Should have written Sunday evening but heard there was a letter from you in office for me, and deferred writing to see its contents. We are much pleased to learn that you are deserving and have merited by your application to your studies the honours conferred on you by the faculty, also that you enjoy good health and it is with pleasure I inform you we all enjoy a reasonable portion of health at present. It has been generally healthy in this neighborhood since you left us. Richard and Amos are progressing steady in their studies, their quarterly examination took place a few days ago, but it so happened that I could not attend and the boys could not tell me much about it. The teacher W. Hickok requests to be informed what book in Latin should be read to prepare them for that place. You will inform us in your next about the book and also the time when you will want the horse and gig, provided I do not come myself, &c.

Very fortunately for you and us too, your cousin W. B. Ross, Jesse Thorp, and Benj. Weaver are about to start on a tour to the west and will set out Thursday morning next, if nothing unforeseen prevents, and they have consented to come by Chapel Hill, and carry those things you may need. You mentioned the want of a new suit. I have purchased and sent by W. Weaver 2 3-4 yd. B. Cloth. Have your coat and pantaloons and a pr. stockings and a vest made. I have inclosed in this \$10, it being all that I can spare at present as old W. Smith has declined distilling and is going to the west and we have him to pay off. Besides it takes all we can rake and scrape to get factory in operation, but I hope in 2 or 3 weeks it will go into operation, and in a little while will begin to draw back some of the precious stuff, &c.

Nothing very strange or important has taken place since you left us. We have had rather an unusual wet and cold spring, have had several very high freshets which took off considerable of fences and put the farmers to considerable trouble. We have a few days past set in to plant corn, &c.

Your mother and children send their love to you. Catharine is at Tarboro, boards with cashier Lorance and goes to school and may the good Lord bless, preserve, and teach you of His ways. Farewell,

With affection,
I subscribe,

J. Battle

HENRY A. DONALDSON TO WILLIAM H. BATTLE, THEN A STUDENT AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Falls, 3rd May, 1820.

Dear William,

I shall in all probability want a teacher for the school at this place the ensuing year and think it likely some of the graduates at the University might wish such a situation. Will you do me the favor to make inquiry for a steady, discreet man well qualified, that you think would suit and know his lowest terms. His board, washing, and lodging will be found, and he will have probably about 30 students of all descriptions. The situation will not warrant a high salary particularly in these extremely hard times. Should the teacher be approved and prefer it, he may take the school on his own account and if he should think of teaching for some years, he might look forward to an increase of salary. Your father will be up for you and I have spoken to him to converse with you on the subject before you leave. All your friends are well. Amos, Richard, and Dossey are at school here.

Your friend,

Hy. A. Donaldson.

JOEL BATTLE TO HIS SON, WILLIAM HORN BATTLE, WHILE AT WILLIAMS-
BOROUGH, GRANVILLE COUNTY, N. C., READING LAW UNDER
JUDGE LEONARD HENDERSON

Oak Grove, March 15th, 1822.

Dear William,

Your letter dated Feb. 12th came to hand in due time, its contents noted. Am sorry you should let your imagination torture you when there was no existing reality, for in truth this loathsome disease did not approach one foot nearer us, than when you left us. It commenced in Mother Philips' Family, which was in a mile of Shell Bank, but such was the dread & terror of this disease that all communication both between white & black was in a great degree suspended, until all persons both white & black were vaccinated, which was soon done by the activity of a few for the benefit of the whole; every soul of my family both white & black, even those only 2 weeks old was vaccinated & I believe all did well except some had very sore arms. About 9 or 10 white persons died of the disease that took it the natural way, perhaps more negroes than whites died; but it never reached any of our family connections or relatives. From the best information I hope that the small pox is now extinct in this quarter of the world. There has not been a case since the 15th of Feb. past, and we have every reason to believe that if the vaccine matter can be kept genuine & vaccination attended to, there will not another case of the small pox

occur in this country. We have such evidence before us of its preventative powers that we can say with confidence that the cow pox is a preventative of small pox.

One reason of my not writing before this is now removed. Your mother has another fine daughter [Caroline C. Battle, who lived only 17 months], born the 6th inst., was very sick about a week which prevented my writing by the last mail. She is now recovered & we hope will do well; the child is large & healthy & they say pretty. We have no name for her & it is the request that you should send her a name.

Amos is at school at Hilliardston where we expect to send Catharine in a week or two. Richd, Duke, & Dossey are at school at Town Creek; they say W. Crowel is an excellent teacher & they learn fast. We are going on as usual all in reasonable health, your Aunt Ross & James & Charity expect to get off about the 1st of April. James has sent the bal. of his negroes by Jo. Fort who left for Tennessee a few days ago.

E. Gray's property almost all of it was sold the 7th inst. to pay his bill of extravagance, scarcely 24 & all gone, sad reflection with the prospect of a plenty of children. Wild Henry has also slipt through the gate. These are loud monitors to young men. My son be wise, consider for what purpose the all wise God has placed you here, and try to esteem the kernel more than the shell, the soul more than the body.

Your mother, sister, and brothers Isaac & Columbus join with me in love to you.

With affection and regard,

I subscribe,

Joel Battle

N. B.

Have inclosed \$50 for Judge Henderson, & will in a short time remit another \$50. I did not get but a small part of my pork money, but shall sell my cotton soon for cash. Let us hear from you soon.

POLLY BATTLE TO HER SON, WILLIAM H. BATTLE, WHILE READING LAW
UNDER JUDGE LEONARD HENDERSON NEAR WILLIAMS-
BOROUGH, GRANVILLE CO., N. C.

Oak Grove, September 15th, 1822.

Dear Son,

I with pleasure inform you of the health of our family, we are about to-day, but cannot say how long it will be the case. The children have all been sick, but the least she is as fat as a pig. Your father is very unwell with a rising in his head, but has gone to see Jorden Barney, who is very like to die. Our black family is sickly as is commonly the case this time of year, but have had only one death as yet. Tempy's child died last Sunday with fits. The people continue to die in this part of the world, both old and young are victims to death. It is time for all of us to be up and doing what we can, for in an hour when we think not, the Son of Man cometh. Therefore I wish you to remember your Creator in the days of your youth, so you may not be afraid to die. The great business of life is to prepare for death.

Your grand-mother was here a few weeks ago, she was well; she lost her son Robert in July. The rest of our relatives are in good health. We had letters from

your Aunt Ross, they are well. James said he knew you wrote the letter that was sent for Polly by what was said about the girls, he said he must come and see something about them. It was not determined whether your Aunt and C. H. would return with James or not; they had not been to look at a place to live when they wrote. They said they wanted your father to make up his mind about the purchase of their land; he has not said yet what he will do. You had better come and help purchase it, bring your gold and silver with you. The children are all at home but A. and C. they are at Hilliardston, Duké is also with them. Mr. Stone is courting Mrs. Rosa Hines, he has been by here twice, he says you must be at the examination. I have been up there, and I was much pleased with the place and better with the people. They talk about you and say you are to live in their neighborhood, they have given you the name of little factory. Richard says you must come and help kill minks and owls or you will lose your dose of chicken pie.

I wish you to write what sort of clothes you will want and they will be ready for you. I must finish as it is getting late and my eyes fail very fast. All have gone to bed and I am alone thinking of you, and may the Lord keep you safe is the prayer of your loving mother,

Polly Battle

Give my respects to the Judge & lady.

CATHARINE ANN BATTLE TO HER BROTHER, WILLIAM HORN BATTLE,
WHILE HE WAS READING LAW UNDER JUDGE LEONARD HENDER-
SON AT WILLIAMSBOROUGH, GRANVILLE COUNTY, N. C.

Littleton Oct 23rd 1823

My Beloved Brother

The receipt of your letter gave me great pleasure as I had nearly become confirmed in the idea that you had quite forgotten me. I can the more readily forgive your negligence however having been guilty of the same myself, though as an older brother I had a right to expect you would write me first. I should have answered your letter last week but was prevented by attending a wedding party to which we were all invited about 6 miles from here. We anticipated a great deal of pleasure as it was the first thing of the kind in which we have participated since we came here, and you know occasional relaxation of this nature invigorates the mind and enables us to apply ourselves to study with greater diligence. The company assembled were tolerably numerous, though our own party almost constituted the majority. I had forgotten to mention that the persons married were Miss Martha Falconer to Mr. Isaac Falconer, strangers no doubt to you. Our session closes on the 19th of Novr. when I expect to return home. I am more pleased with this school than any I ever attended before and I hope to continue here as I expect it will be still better next year. You may wish to know my studies they are English grammar, geography, chymistry, spelling, arithmetick, and history which I think is a very pleasing study to an attentive mind. I am also taking musick lessons, I have learnt only 5 tunes. We have no musick teacher, one of the Miss Little's gives me lessons. I forgot to tell you I saw your old friend Mr. Obryan at the wedding, he had a very large boil on his face which made him look as if he had a double cheek. I have nothing more

of importance to tell you my dear Brother. I must therefore conclude by subscribing myself

Your affectionate sister until Death

C A Battle

You must answer this as soon as possible for I want to hear from you very much.

MRS. LUCY M. BATTLE TO HER HUSBAND, JUDGE WILLIAM H. BATTLE
AT LA GRANGE, FAYETTE CO., WEST TENNESSEE, WHERE HE
WAS PROSPECTING

Louisburg, N. C.
May 8th, 1832.

My dear Husband—

I have concluded that it is not improper nor sinful to break a bad resolution, have therefore determined to write to you notwithstanding my vow to the contrary. I scarcely know what to attribute your silence to—we have sent every day to the post-office & for the last week I have felt a little downcast that there was no letter for me. I am unwilling to think it proceeds from a want of affection on your part, so I have come to the conclusion that it is owing to irregularity of the mails. We returned today from Mr. Alston's, viz. Ma, myself & the children. We stayed nearly a week. I did not enjoy myself so much as I expected owing to Mama's indisposition. She was quite sick for 3 or 4 days while there but I am now in hopes she is recruiting. I received a letter from Bro. Richard about a week ago dated April 20th. Your relations down in that section of the country were then well. Mother's health has improved considerably, she can ride to the Falls to preaching which you know is an evidence that she is better. Doct. Lewis, Sister C., & himself were busy fixing to go to Henry Lewis' wedding. He gives a ludicrous description of Sister C's hurry, bustle, & perplexity in which she was involved. He says Dossey comes on bravely at C, says he goes there *twice a week & stays four days* at a time: Query—how many days does he stay at home?

Mr. Billy Eaton gave a large party the 3rd of this month to his son who you know is just married. Nearly all the young people from Warrenton were there. Ann reports they had fine times—agreeable company, good music, fine eating & drinking, &c., &c., but the new married couple were not there. The bride was sick we heard with the scarlet fever.

Alfred was at that time at Mr. Hamilton's frolic. Says he made a great run but there was not much to be seen. He started this evening to a party to be given at Sam Terry's tomorrow at which place he anticipates a great deal of pleasure.

That eccentric being Doc. Dillon is still in town. He has been up here twice since you left. The first time he pulled a tooth for Mama & then one for me which you advised (see what a dutiful wife). It hurt exceedingly—he took it out with an instrument, but pulled Mama's with his fingers, tho' hers was a larger tooth & a perfectly sound one. You will wonder why she had it extracted when she had so few—it was because the gum had left it & left the root exposed so that it ached for several days before she could be convinced that was the cause of it. The dentist told her it was & she consented for him to pull it & she has not been troubled since.

The second time he came up he filed my front teeth & plugged Ann's. Mine are much improved tho' there is a considerable vacuum. He told me while he was about it that my old man would not know me when he returned, he was going to make me so pretty. However you need not flatter yourself that you shall see a very *great beauty*.

I hear very often from the miners below. They are getting rich extremely fast. Tom was from there about 10 days ago. He said that they made about \$1000 in 7 days and Mr. Alston says they made one day not long since \$125 from one rocker. What do you think of that? I hope when you return that you & Bro. Wm. will more thoroughly examine your mine—there may be wealth some where for us yet. There would be more comfort in obtaining it here than going to the western wilds for it. Now, my dear, as I have touched upon the subject, permit me here to beg of you to weigh well the disadvantages as well as the advantages of that country. It would be best for you to listen as little as possible to the many fine tales that are told you but look about you & judge for yourself, for upon your decision in this matter depends our happiness in this life. Now do not think I have little or no faith in your judgment—on the contrary I have a great deal of confidence in you, but think it probable there will be so many persons anxious for you & Bro. W. to move that they will represent the advantages of that country in the most glowing colours while they will conceal if possible the disadvantages.

Cousin Isaac Hall was here this evening—seems to dislike the idea of our going. He told me to tell you to leave that for a less worthy man. I have not seen an old acquaintance in a long time I was more pleased to see—he has altered so little & reminds me so much of "auld lang syne."

I was surprized today & somewhat alarmed at the reception of a letter from Mrs. Foster. She informed me of the death of Cousin Sally Gillett. It is a great affliction to the family but Oh, what a blessed exchange for her. She died triumphing in the hope of immortal glory. The old lady tells me they were well at home yesterday. She also said that she heard from you when you were about 100 miles from here, that you were well & going on well, but did not mention how she heard. This is the only time I have heard from you since you left. So, my dear husband, write often. You cannot conceive half the anxiety I feel about you, this moment I feel full to the brim.

The children are well & have been so since you left with the exception of little Sue who was very sick an hour or two one day. She frequently talks about you—Joel scarcely ever says anything about you—they are both very bad having been humored a great deal—little Kemp continues very fat & well—is still very much like a Scotchman.

'Tis nearly 10 o'clock at night & every one gone to bed but myself. I will therefore conclude. So I again beg of you to write often. All hands send their love to you & Bro Wm. Tell him I have not heard from Sister E—so I expect he will not enjoy the contents of this letter a great deal. Now my dear husband farewell with the hope that you will as soon as possible satisfy yourself as to prospects & that you may return to her who cannot be happy until you *do* return & that God may bless & preserve you is the fervent prayer of

Your afft. wife—

Lucy M. Battle—

P. S. Do not parse my letter—it was written as I generally write, in a hurry, therefore will not admit of it.—L. M. B.

DR. CULLEN BATTLE TO HIS COUSIN, REV. AMOS J. BATTLE AT
RALEIGH, N. C.¹

Irwinton Ala Augt. 5th, 1840.

Dear Cousin Amos,

I have just rec'd yours, announcing the death of Cousin Harriet. It would have been highly gratifying to have learned that she professed hope in the blessed Saviour, but this may have been the case tho she never professed it to the world. We can but hope.

Through much mercy we have been spared until now, though we are yet weak. I am quite weak to-day having had some fever last night. I will however try to write you a letter and say something in answer to yours. Beginning, my dear Cousin I am at present very low spirited and of course badly prepared to give you any advice relative to your future movements. I have generally been pleased with this country and now believe 'tis as good a country as any as far south as it is, but I fear it may prove too sickly on the water courses and they have most of the good lands. We have been thinking lately that we might move farther north or at least make a summer residence northwardly, perhaps Tennessee or Ohio. Not that I wish to get nearer Wm. H. Harrison, the Hard Cider Candidate, no, not I.

We should be highly pleased to have you live near us, but the things of time are so transitory and life so uncertain, that in selecting a place to live and leave one's children after us, we should think of other things, think where 'tis likely our children might do best, both as to time and eternity.

You must excuse me for the present, perhaps I may be better prepared in a month or two to write you on this subject, I am now weak both in body and mind and I feel very unsettled myself. I can't expect ever to move my negroes from this country and if anything keeps me here it will be that I am so attached to them and they to me. I ought truly to be very thankful, for I have never lost any one of my family since we have been here over 4 years except a negro man the Indians killed and perhaps 2 or 3 suckling children from bowel complaint.

I feel for Cousin James in his bereaved state. I think it likely he will enjoy himself better at Cool Spring than any where else—if it don't prove too sickly, he can however spend his summer and fall months in the up country. Our crops are considered now to be very good with us but the wet may injure the cotton.

If we get well enough, I may take Mary Jane and our oldest son Arch John on to the north in about 6 weeks, Arch to be placed in a preparatory school in Connecticut to enter Yale College next year. He will hardly then be old enough, but he is so anxious to go, I suppose I must let him, if he lives. He wishes to graduate in the best college in the U. States.

Dear Cousin, remember us in your prayers and may the good Lord remember all of our families and receive us all at last in His Kingdom is my prayer.

Our Love to your dear old mother and children, your wife and children. Tell Cousin Wm's wife, Cousin Lucy, that I remember her very well and hope ever to do so affectionately, tell her not to neglect the salvation of her soul if she has heretofore done so. Time is Short, but eternity is long.

Very affectionately Yrs,

Cullen Battle.

¹Postage on this letter was 28 cents.

DR. CULLEN BATTLE TO HIS COUSIN, JOHN VEASY, SR., AT
POWELTON, GA.

Irwinton, Ala.

Oct. 8th, 1840.

Dear Cousin Veasy,

Your kind letter of 27th. ult. is before me and 'tis as yet a sickly time with us, yet I will comply with your request to write often.

My negroes are better, but not all up. I have lost three young fellows some time ago, lately I have attended some myself, but now two of my children are down again and not strong myself I cannot attend them much.

As I remarked two of my children are down, Mary Jane and Cullen, but hope they will recover, are now better, some few cases now in town. Genrl. Wellborn is quite low, but have hope he will get up again. I desire to be thankful 'tis no worse with us than it is. We are glad to hear you are so healthy, hope you may yet be spared to do all you can, to be a blessing to us still, but when I think of the people and our once flourishing country—my heart sinking (as you say) at the prospects, but our folks gambling, and speculators now have all the sense and know all about government matters, will not listen to anything but what Whiggs say and write. 'Tis awful to think of it. Southerners have thrown away their principles and go all for party to please a reckless set of leaders. If Federalism was all, I could and would not so complain for I greatly desire to keep clear of politics, but when I see so many of our Southern people fighting against those to the north who have been our only friends, and supporting our enemies all Federalists and Abolitionists, and rejoicing at their success in the north over our friends, I am truly astonished and alarmed for the fate of our country, and these very fellows mostly were high States Rights men, great nullifiers some year or two ago, jumped out of Ultra State Rights into Ultra Federalism, as I told Nesbit at Reuben's last spring, and into Abolition too: strange, passing strange and yet 'tis so and we cannot help it. I think I see that even suppose we may succeed in electing Mr. Van Buren, that such reckless Partisans will ruin this country before very long. If the Lord does not interpose we are gone. They can laugh now as others have done, on the very brink of ruin, and these very fellows (as I wrote my brother in La Grange), just say Insurrection to them and they are immediately scared out of their wits, nearly to death. When will the people learn their true interests. "A prudent man foreseeeth the evil and hideth himself." I am told Jonathan Davis, Dr. Gilbreath, and other preachers (or pretend to be preachers of the Gospel) are now doing all they can for Harrison. The evils I fear for our country may not come upon us in our life time, we are getting old, but we have children.

I should not however be astonished were they to come soon, in two or three years. I have believed some time ago that many of our citizens want a division of the Union, blind as bats to Southern interests, but many of whom live on speculation and have little or nothing to lose, and if they get hard pressed, can slip off to Texas and leave us to reap the fruits of their folly, but enough of this.

We thought of taking a trip to La Grange and Hancock soon as this, but we are yet confined and I think now may not go at all this fall.

Our church is now building and expect it will be done or nearly so by Jany., but I am low spirited, times are so awful, we are very cold in religious things and fear the Lord may cross instead of blessing us. O that He would come and rain

righteousness upon and save us from ruin. We try to keep up a prayer meeting, but it is hard work.

I wish the two Wms may do well in Savannah, but fear. I suppose Bro. David is a very good Preacher. Oh, that we had more such. I suppose old father Mercer is yet alive, I wonder if he can be a Harrison man.

Give my love to Cousin Lancaster. We shall be glad to get a letter from you and Col. Bishop or any friends. Hope you will remember us in your prayers and in our afflictions.

Remember us affectionately to Cousin Jane.

Your friend and unworthy brother,
C. Battle

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO JOHN VEASY, SR., FROM DR. CULLEN
BATTLE, MAY 23, 1846

Texas is invaded and our Soldiers have had some 2 or 3 battles and some skirmishes. The last acct. is up to the 8th, instant.

Our forces have killed as reported abt 1700 Mexicans and our loss abt 150. Those Mexicans will have to be thrashed well before they will come to their senses. Whether Great Britain is at the bottom of this war, we shall see; I fear she is, if so we shall have a tough time of it. O! that the Lord would stay the ravages of war throughout our World. "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Let us praise him for what he hath hitherto done for us as a Nation.

KEMP P. BATTLE,¹ NOT QUITE TWELVE YEARS OLD, TO RUFUS L.
PATTERSON AT RALEIGH, N. C.

Chapel Hill Sep 9th 1848

Dear friend,

I don't know when I was so gratified as I was when I received your letter, and will endeavour to write a few lines to you. This place is very dull now but you know I don't like the bustle of the city.

I am very glad that the fire you spoke of was not a great one. You asked me what did I think about your going to that man by the name of Jefferson Madison Lovejoy. I think you have changed from the meanest of teachers to one of the best. You also asked me whether I knew him or not; I think I do; if I don't, I think I ought; although he never gave me but one lick in his life; but he has scared me almost out of my life.

I am very sorry that Hardy Carrol has got out of jail. I wanted his neck stretched this time any how. I believe this is the third time he has been committed for horse stealing. There are not many Bull Bats here. I am going to school to a man by the name of Ashbel Green Brown. He is not very tight. I like him very well. He has just graduated and is studying law under father and he studies very hard; he does at least in school. I am studying Sallust and think it very hard so far. I am also studying Greek Testament and do not think it hard much; and also Latin exercises besides several other books. I am very glad Mr. Lovejoy's school has increased. I thought you would like dancing school very much. I am very

¹See Chapter XI.

sorry the railroad was washed down. There are some good apple trees in our lot and there were a good many horse apples, but they are gone now. We live just on the border of town, surrounded on all sides by trees but one. Mother and Aunt Laura told me to send their love to your Mama.

Your affectionate friend,
Kemp P. Battle

JOEL DOSSEY BATTLE¹ TO CHARLES PHILLIPS, PROFESSOR OF MATHEMATICS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, IN REFERENCE TO PHILLIPS' APPROACHING MARRIAGE TO BATTLE'S AUNT, LAURA C. BATTLE²

Ridgeway Depot N. C. Sept 20th 1847

My dear Sir:—

Your letter the peculiar object of which was to request my services as waiter on the occasion stated was received yesterday. I take the greatest pleasure in assuring you that with many thanks for the honour, those services will be at any time at your disposal. I in candor say, Sir, that whatever may have been the opinion I previously entertained in regard to your becoming a member of our family in the manner intimated, I will with sincere pleasure hail you and yours as connections. My best wishes for you and the dear Aunt who will soon link her fortunes with yours individually, shall attend you united.

I am truly glad to learn that all are well at "Jezreel³," as also that favourable accounts of my uncle's health had reached there. I was becoming apprehensive that he too with so many others had ere this fallen a victim to the climate of Mexico. As to the grape seed, I think he would have done much better had he sent them to be Americanized by old Mr. Sidney Weller or some other adept in the art of vineyard cultivation. They at home are such bunglers in attempts of that nature, that I question if the seed being once in the ground will ever be seen or heard of again.

Enclosed you will find \$1.00 my mite of a contribution. I would that to give more were in my power to the forwarding of the noble cause in which you and the other gentlemen of the committee for receiving subscriptions to erect a monument suitable to such a man as Dr. Caldwell are engaged. I am aware that the thus availing myself of a letter the direct object of which is so far different from that of conveying contribution money, appears somewhat irregular. But I suppose if you will be so kind as to present my respects to the other members of said committee, with the acknowledgement due the reception of your circular, it will answer every purpose.

I am very sincerely yours,
Joel D. Battle

P. S. Please, Sir, present my best respects to your father's family, and give my best love to all at home.

Yrs. &c.
J. D. B.

¹See Table 59.

²See Table 62.

³A name given by the Phillippes to Judge Battle's home as a place of many Battles.

JAMES S. BATTLE¹ TO MARTHA ANN BATTLE AT SCHOOL IN
GEORGETOWN, D. C.

White Sulphur Springs [Va.] July 19th 1849

My dear and beloved daughter Martha,

This may acknowledge your most affectionate and devoted letter of the 12th inst. received last night. It was received with pleasure, mixed with pain and remorse. I am always glad to hear from my dear children as my greatest object now in this life is to promote their happiness and prosperity in this world of trouble and trial, and their ultimate happiness beyond this vale of tears. I do not feel that I could write much on the present intricate, perplexing, and vexed question. My mind is burdened and perplexed. I know not which way to turn, or what to say. I would not willingly hurt or mar your peace in any temporal matters, and more especially in matters of religion, when the conscience is concerned, if I really thought it had not been led off into error and deception by false guides and instructors, by which your tender, susceptible, and excitable heart has been entrammelled and enslaved. True and vital religion is the greatest blessing bestowed on man in this life. May my right hand forget her cunning and my name be blotted out of existence, rather than I should be a stumbling block in the way of your performing your duty to your God: this world and time things are but vapours, and as the morning dew will soon pass away, and the place that now knows us will soon know us no more forever. May we be prepared for that important change. May the Lord direct us by his spirit in the way of all Truth, and give us Grace to walk therein, is my sincere prayer.

After the within preface I approach the subject, which appears to be the principal object of your writing, with a trembling hand and agitated mind, for I acknowledge to you candidly I am a little excited, and I do not think you are entirely divested of it. You observe you again ask my consent for you to join the Episcopal Church. It is an embarrassing and a delicate subject with me, and what to do in the premises I am at a loss to know. To give my consent *willingly* I cannot, and to say you shall not, I do not feel willing. You observe in yours you wrote me all of your views on the subject in your last letter sent to Warrenton and requested Eliza to forward it to me. I received a letter from Eliza and Neppy the same time that I received yours. She said nothing on the subject, neither received I your letter from her. Neppy observed in her letter that her Cousin Sally informed her that Mrs. Turner who had recently gone to Baltimore had paid you a visit, and that you were anxious to come home with her, but Mrs. Turner did not like to take the responsibility unless I knew something about it. My dear Martha, I cannot but believe you are somewhat excited and have been led into error. You are still young, have had but little experience in the world, I should prefer you postponing this important matter longer. I have likewise, I think, earnestly and sincerely prayed the Holy Spirit to instruct and direct me my duty on the matter, but with my present feelings and the light I have on the subject I cannot willingly consent, as I have observed, nor peremptorily deny, but this much I can say without a change should take place within me, if you unite yourself with them in my day, it will be an unhappy one with me. If I am in error, I pray God to undeceive me, man cannot do it. You observed that, if you did not believe a change had taken place in you, you would not

¹See Table 63.

ask to join this church. You likewise observe if the heart is right in the sight of God, it matters, you thought, but little, what church you join; I think differently, and that it is of the utmost importance to join the true church. Christ's loved and undefiled is but one. Christ told Nicodemus, you must be born again; he thought it strange, did not know how such things could be. Christ told him he need not marvel, that the wind blows where it listeth, you cannot see it but you hear the sound thereof, but can not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of God. It is a supernatural work, a work of the spirit, a change of heart as you speak of, and after that change is effected then the person is a fit subject of baptism, not before: some contend baptism is regeneration, and by the Bishop laying on his hand on the person while pouring or sprinkling, which they call baptism, the Holy Ghost is imparted. Can you believe it my dear child? True and evangelical religion cometh from above, it is a manifestation from God, it is not a science to be taught by man, as some vainly think to bring up the youth of the present day by human means, such as sabbath schools, catechisms, &c, to be fit subjects of the church. We are informed that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; Christ's Kingdom is a spiritual one, it is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. I hope, my dear daughter, I have not hurt or injured your feelings. Far be it from me to intend such a thing. I wish you to search the scriptures, in them you think you have eternal life, they are they that testify of Christ, consult for yourself my dear Martha, and do not consult and depend upon catechisms or prayer book, but pray God to direct and instruct you into all truth and give you grace to walk therein, defying the frowns of a gainsaying and perverse world. I have written more than I expected. If I have said anything improperly I am sorry for it. . . .

Your devoted father who wishes you well. My mind seems to be barren and unfruitful. Take the will for the deed.

James S. Battle.