

CHAPTER IX

SENLAC

by

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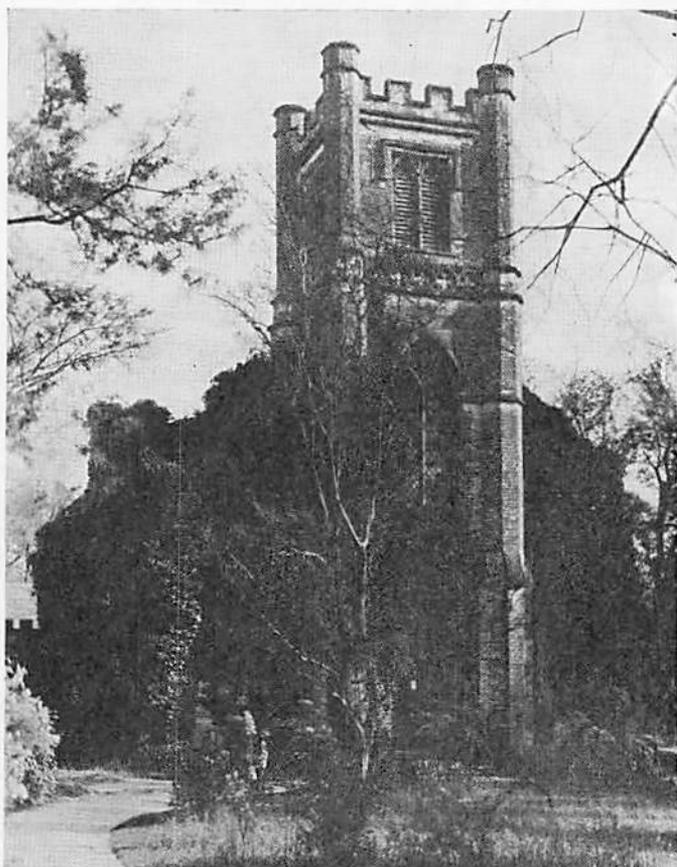
Senlac, the Battle home at Chapel Hill, North Carolina, is so dear to the hearts of so many Battles and has played so large a part in their lives that it seems to merit a chapter all to itself. Five generations have foregathered there of which the writer belongs to the third. Judge William Horn Battle, the first owner, was his grandfather and President Kemp Plummer Battle was his father. He will consistently refer to the judge and his lady as grandfather and grandmother, and ordinarily and properly he will speak of President and Mrs. Battle as father and mother, but if from association with the fourth and fifth generations he slip into calling them Gramps and Granny, it will not be surprising. Probably he knew Senlac better than anybody except the owners did. He was not indeed born there, but he lived there as a boy for thirteen years, and for twenty-nine years more he spent a large part of every summer there except three, and even these three were not without their visits. No wonder he loved it.

Senlac was so called by my father because he liked to think that the family got its name originally from living near the battlefield of Senlac or Hastings. Its history is divided sharply by the Reconstruction control of the University into two periods—Judge Battle's time, 1843-1868, and President Battle's time, 1876-1919. The first was that of the old University, the second that of the rebuilding of the University by the new South. Nevertheless, though conditions changed, the spirit of Senlac did not. Its ways, its traditions, its standards persisted through both periods.

Senlac was bought by my grandfather in 1843 when he moved to Chapel Hill. There he lived till the Reconstruction government drove him to Raleigh in 1868. For the next eight years the place was rented out and like all rented places deteriorated steadily. Dreadful tales were told of how great oaks were cut down by the tenants and chickens kept in the former dining-room. When my father became President of the University in 1876, he bought the place from my grandfather and lived there from 1877 till his death, February 4, 1919. The household was not broken up, however, till the following fall after the death of Mrs. Charles Phillips, my father's aunt though only seven years his junior, who had for some years made Senlac her home. The place was then rented out again but happily was bought in 1922 by Dr. John Manning Booker, Professor of English in the University, who had married Nell Lewis Battle, President Battle's granddaughter, only daughter of Dr. H. B. Battle, the father of the Battle Book. It still therefore remains in the family. Of course much has now been changed. Roads have been cut, lots sold off, and the house improved out of recognition, but the lovely prospect to the front remains nearly as of yore.

Up to the time of Dr. Booker's purchase the place contained six acres and was virtually in the country. On the west side lay the front yard. On the south was

¹See Table 59.



Chapel of the Cross
Chapel Hill, N. C.



Senlac
Home of Judge W. H. Battle and
President Kemp P. Battle
Chapel Hill, N. C.

the flower garden with a corn field and the barn beyond; to the north stretched an orchard and a hayfield; to the east was the backyard with cow-lot and chicken-yard, smoke-house and pig-pen, with the vegetable garden on one side and on the other a second orchard.

The nearest neighbors lived to the north some two hundred and fifty yards away. To the west lay the Grove, an expanse of perhaps fifteen acres of great oaks and hickories and other forest trees, their branches cut high enough for us to see from the Front Porch across the Campus as far as the University buildings and to the right the little Chapel of the Cross whose lighted Gothic windows at night looked like Chinese mandarins.

To the south and east of Senlac stretched the forest now called Battle Park and still beautiful though much reduced in extent. This forest had been partially cut down early in the nineteenth century but had grown up again in a dense mass of many sorts of trees. It was full of flowers and birds and rabbits and occasionally squirrels and possums and coons were found. It was delightful at all times but especially in the crisp air of autumn when the trees were splendid with glorious color. Through it ran a little branch that rose in the Campus and flowing through Senlac grew larger from one spring and another. What a delight it was to build dams across this branch and sail boats. And under my father's direction to try fortunes with floating chips whose coming together meant being happy ever after. And on the lower reaches to try for an unwary fish! What matter if catching one was rather like putting salt on a bird's tail? In this forest lay Piney Prospect, a famous outlook to the east over the prehistoric arm of the sea beloved of geologists. Here too is supposed to have occurred the duel that resulted in the death of Drumgoole (only there wasn't any duel and Drumgoole was never killed). Here my grandfather towards the end of the Civil War buried fifteen hundred dollars in gold and later dug for it in vain till my uncle William reminded him that he had put it in quite another place. Here my father loved to walk and with his hatchet he cut out many a vista and path. Here in the days before movies and automobiles students used to seek solitude the better to read and study and practice speeches. Here was the Trysting Poplar and Lovers' Seat and Fairy Spring and many another spot alluring in name and attractive in fact. I wonder if anybody ever hears of them nowadays.

Northeast of Senlac House at the foot of a steep hill but still on the property rose a fine spring of unusually cold water. This spring was long the only source of water the family had. Later it lost this high estate and was dammed into two ponds, one to supply a rustic bath-house, the other to make a home for water-lilies. Certain neighbors hinted now and then at mosquitoes, but my father appealed to the fish and made peace offerings of lilies and the ponds were saved.

The bath-house was a contrivance of genius. It was built of old or new boards, whichever came handy, and had two tiny rooms. One was the dressing room; into the other came a trough through the roof bringing a stream (unless the trough leaked) as large as a man's wrist of the cold water of the spring some fifty or sixty yards away. We were always suspicious of a snake's putting out his head from the trough but he never did. One came in by the door one day, but fled worse scared than the bather. Snake or no snake, how cold the water was! And how grand and glorious the feeling when the shock was once over!

To get water up the hill from the spring was so much trouble that my grandfather determined to have a well. Again and again the hole he dug was dry.

Finally a man came with a peach-switch who declared that he could certainly find water and he was solemnly engaged. Sure enough he did, even if he had to blast through rock, magnificent water, the coldest and purest in all the village, never known to run dry, and at exactly the right distance from the house. At Senlac ice was never wanted for water; we needed only to draw a fresh bucket from the well. It was down this well that my mother's silver service was let, being sent up from Raleigh when the Yankees were expected there. Horrors! They came to Chapel Hill too, and used that very well for two weeks. Happily they did not suspect the silver and did not find it. It was taken out battered and black, but every piece was there and its makers in New York presently hammered and polished it into its pristine beauty. Alas, that so noble and historic a well should now be closed! Some sanitarian a year or two ago declared it no longer safe.

The first Senlac house went back to the earliest days of the University. It was enlarged by Judge Battle by the addition of eight rooms in front. As the Judge's family grew larger, additional room was supplied by two-roomed cottages called offices, one on each side of the front gate. My grandfather had his study in one of them and my father after him. The boys of the family and occasionally their elders lived in the other. In one my brother Dr. H. B. Battle was born, and here my grandfather died. My father moved both offices to the south side of the gate on the edge of the Grove and as the Upper and Lower Offices they were dear not only to the sons of the house, but, when they had grown up and gone away, to other occupants as well, now members of the faculty, now students, who enjoyed a quiet spot close to nature.

When my father bought Senlac, he thoroughly repaired it and added a one-story wing on each side. Besides the big house and the two offices there were also, in accordance with the traditions of Southern life, sundry outbuildings—well-house, two servants' houses, wood-house, cow-house, chicken-house, smoke-house, three or four privies, bath-house, barn—still eleven in number at the time of my father's death. All told there were in the big house and the offices twenty-four rooms, big and little, besides a cellar and one closet without a window. Wardrobes were used in place of closets.

There was not a water pipe in the house till some time in the nineties, when the slave-time nursery was turned into a bath-room. All the water used was brought in from the well. The house was heated by wood or coal burned in fire places except in two rooms which had stoves. Wood was used for cooking, though latterly oilstoves came in for some purposes.

For lighting there never was gas and no electricity till about 1900. When my father was in college, he studied by a candle, and thought himself lucky if he had two. Presently oil-lamps superseded candles. Lamps gave good light—indeed some of us still regret the yellow light of our German students' lamp—but the trouble of filling and cleaning oil-lamps was considerable. Once our lamps went out one after the other most mysteriously. They were full but still they would not burn. After a while it occurred to somebody to take off a burner and investigate. The odor at once revealed the truth. They had been filled with scuppernong wine that happened to be stored in large bottles like the ones that held the oil.

Naturally housekeeping in such a place was hard work. My mother's bedroom was on the ground floor but even so it was some seventy feet from the dining-room. Several servants were required, although the family lived very simply. My mother's health was such as to make a housekeeper necessary. Besides the housekeeper,

there were a cook, a housemaid, and a yard-man. Additional help was often needed in the garden and the washing was sent out. When there were small children, there had to be a nurse as well. Fortunately wages were low. The cook was paid about six dollars a month, the maid four, the yard-man twelve and a half, with keep and sometimes with a room. These prices gradually rose. Washing for men was a dollar a month each. The village prices in general were on the same scale. The best table-board was thirteen dollars a month and fair board could be had for eight. On the other hand salaries were correspondingly low. The highest professor's salary was two thousand dollars, the President's twenty-five hundred.

Not only was housekeeping at Senlac hard work but the place would by modern standards be judged insufferably uncomfortable. Each room was heated separately and the halls were not heated at all. Neither windows nor doors fitted tight and the wind came in with a howl. One of us once rigged up a row of paper windmills along the crack of a door leading from the hall into a bed-room and we got much amusement out of their merry whirling till we saw that it hurt our mother's feelings. In winter it was a law like that of the Medes and Persians that everybody on going to bed must empty his water-pitcher to keep the water from freezing and breaking it. In summer ice was as scarce as it was abundant in winter. Nobody in the village had an ice-house and ice had to be brought from Durham in barrels. Of course it was expensive and ice-cream in consequence a luxury.

Yet for all the discomforts of Senlac its people did not know that they were uncomfortable. In fact they look back to the life there as to a golden age. What we do not know we do not miss! And certainly the art of cooking as a source of pleasure has not advanced beyond that of forty years ago. We may have learned about balanced diets and vitamins and calories and what not else, but the food of the old southern kitchen beyond any shadow of doubt had a flavor that the food of today does not.

William Horn Battle, the first master of Senlac (though it was not called Senlac in his time), was a lawyer to whom business at first came so slowly that without other resources he would surely have starved. He used his leisure to make himself one of the most learned of the state's lawyers and in the course of time became Reporter to the Supreme Court, Judge of the Superior Court, Professor of Law at the University, and Supreme Court Justice. In his personal relations he was thoroughly kind-hearted, entertained generously, could talk well, but he was serious-minded and did not readily unbend. Very different was his wife, Lucy Plummer. She came of a family famous for its jollity, its love of music and dancing. In later life her health was poor and her spirits never recovered from the loss of her two youngest sons who were killed in the Confederate Army and her youngest daughter who died during the Civil War, but she never failed to make a home that was as dear to her children's children as it had been to her own.

After the Civil War began, the only child of the house who remained at home was Susan Catharine. She was not pretty but was so bright and interesting and had such strength of character and such an understanding heart as to bring a long series of admirers to her feet. Owing to an accident her health gave way and she died in her thirties unmarried.

In characteristics the second master and mistress of Senlac, Kemp Plummer Battle and Martha Ann Battle, were just the reverse of the first. The master was jolly, the mistress was serious. But the net result was the same. Children and grandchildren alike were inspired with a serious purpose in life and yet felt such a

love for parents and grandparents and for Senlac that on the slightest provocation they came trooping back for visits of outrageous length. They knew that there would be flowers and illuminations, that there would be anxious inquiries as to the blowing of the train whistle and watching for the carriage to come down through the Grove, that the dear figures were sure to be standing at the gate.

The most regular and welcome visitors to Senlac in my father's time were his daughter Nellic, Mrs. R. H. Lewis, and her family. She and the children came up from Raleigh usually for the whole summer, Dr. Lewis for Sunday—week ends had not then been invented. So lovely was Mrs. Lewis alike in person and character that her death in 1886 stands out in the history of Senlac as its greatest tragedy. "Such characters," said Mrs. C. P. Spencer, "form the ideal women. We turn to the old masters of English poetry and song to find them there embalmed. The 'hidden strength' of the Lady in Comus was hers—the charm of 'heavenly Una.' Herrick, Herbert, Shakespeare, must have been inspired by such women. Wordsworth drew her likeness". Twenty years later, alas, came another tragedy, hardly less felt, in the death of Mrs. Lewis's daughter Pattie, Mrs. Isaac H. Manning, whose nature appears in the name her grandfather gave her, Sunshine.

One fourth of August it occurred to somebody to mark the children's heights, weights, and ages on the wall of the North Porch. Next year the same thing was done. That made a tradition and every year thereafter as August came round the same thing was done till the children were grown. Of course each new grandchild had to be marked too, as soon as he could stand up, and towards the last there was hardly any room left for more. From time to time the house was painted, but the place of the children's marks never. It was sacred.

After the Lewis boys entered the University, they roomed at college but took their meals at Senlac all their four years. It is not surprising that it became to them a home as dear as their own in Raleigh.

At one time and another others than the children and grandchildren of Senlac dwelt under its roof. In the forties after leaving school Judge Battle's youngest sister, Laura Caroline Battle, made her home there. At Senlac she was married and there she came again and again to visit in later years. There too she spent the last years of her life, accompanied by her daughter, Mrs. J. S. Verner, of Columbia, South Carolina, and there she died, lacking but a few days of being ninety-five years old, a blessing and an inspiration her whole long life.

To Senlac came in the late sixties little Mary Battle Van Wyck from New York after the death of her mother to live with her grandparents. Twenty odd years after that another motherless child, my brother Tom's son, Kemp Davis Battle, came to enjoy another grandmother's tender care.

But the welcome of Senlac was not confined to children and grandchildren. At the Senlac table were not only the sons and grandsons who were in college but a succession of nephews as well. My uncle William S.'s sons Octave and Duke, Uncle Turner's sons Turner, Gordon, and Gaston, Aunt Eliza's son Frank Dancy, Aunt Neppy's son Pierre Cox, Uncle Dick's son Lewis, and divers others.

In the time of grief that followed my sister's death Mr. and Mrs. James Lee Love for some time added strength to the household, living in the North Room, formerly the Parlor, now transformed for their benefit. Mr. Love was an able young professor of Mathematics; Mrs. Love, whom everybody called Miss June long after her marriage, was the charming daughter of Mrs. C. P. Spencer. Later Collier

Cobb, Professor of Geology, and his wife, formerly Mary Lindsey Battle, true friends if ever friends were true, lived for some time in the same room.

Of course there were many others besides. The clergy seemed to come to Senlac by instinct. And at Commencement house and table overflowed. Once the small fry had to wait for the third table at dinner. Oh, how hungry we got! Lucky that there were three huge cherry trees at that moment in full fruit.

I have said that my mother's health made a housekeeper necessary. But the term housekeeper is misleading. At Senlac the housekeeper was rather another member of the family, entering into every privilege, every joy, every sorrow. Naturally she too caught the spirit of the house. To mention three, Miss Maggie Webb, of Hillsboro, later Mrs. Dee Mickle of Winston, Miss Susan G. Thompson of Chapel Hill, now of Haw River, Miss Myra Tillinghast of Fayetteville, now gone to her rest, are counted in a very real sense as daughters of Senlac and remembered for many a noble quality.

It would be a pleasure to speak of the long succession of our colored retainers: of faithful Aunt Jinney, who belonged to my grandfather and lived to an incredible age; of Abe Bynum, the yard man who split his big toe with an axe, and his son John who was member of a band that we bribed to practice at the other end of town; of John Evans who had no equal as a gardener if you let him work in his own way; of Henderson Oldham and his wife Cornelia, as upright and trustworthy as any white people; of Junius, who stopped to draw water from the well to put out a fire that was burning a fence close to the lily-pond; and sundry others. But space forbids. Of Easter Snipes alone must a special word be said. As her likeness shows, she presented a picturesque figure. Deep chocolate of hue, vast of bulk, with a grin like a Cheshire cat's, one could never forget her. She was not clever, she could not even read, yet somehow she *could* cook. She grew stiff with rheumatism and feeble with old age, she was overwhelmed with troubles in her family, but in all her nearly thirty years of service at Senlac, no matter what the weather, she could be counted on to come on time from her home a long mile away to do her allotted work.

In keeping with the simple tastes and means of the owners of Senlac the furniture was unpretentious. The best was a parlor set of carved rosewood, upholstered in red plush, reserved like the parlor itself for state occasions and held in great awe by the children. Later it came into daily use and soon showed signs of wear. By general consent the rocking-chair of this set was the most comfortable chair ever constructed and there was great rivalry as to who should sit in it. One re-upholstering it bore with equanimity but it absolutely refused to adapt itself to the new springs that Dick Lewis III put in it. It looks now as inviting as ever but nobody sits in it long. The dining-table had belonged to my grandfather at Cool Spring and we prized it highly. The best loved piece in the house was the old hall-clock that had come from my great-grandfather, Kemp Plummer of Warrenton. The original works had been burned in a great fire at Raleigh when they had been sent to the jeweler for repairs, but my father had found another very similar clock and transferring the works from that to the Kemp Plummer clock had forgotten what the differences were. The clock was given to Kemp P. Battle II and by him willed to Kemp Davis Battle. Curiously enough the works were again spoilt and new ones again required. Query: Has K. D. B. the Kemp Plummer clock?

As in most old southern houses there were a number of large oil portraits, most of them painted by William Garl Brown, an Englishman who for many years was active in the South. One of my sister Nellie when a little girl was really charming.

The notable thing about the house was the books. My father and mother were both fond of books and incessant readers. We had no room that we called the library but the walls of my father's two studies were almost wholly lined with books, two great cases stood in the sitting-room, and there were others elsewhere. After my father's professional law library went to my brother Tom—he had to pay for it—the collection was strongest in North Caroliniana and Americana. At the break-up of the house the disposal of the books presented a great problem. We gave the University all the North Carolina books it wanted; many relating to Southern history were sold to the Littlefield Collection at the University of Texas; the heirs took what they liked; still there were a great many left that nobody would have. We tried burning them but that proved tedious. In the end, as a mark of appreciation of the books we had given, the University librarian undertook to get rid of the residue. I suppose he did, but how he did I have never dared to ask.

We had even more trouble with the old letters and documents. All told some thirty large boxes were found filled full without any attempt at order. At first we tried reading all of everything but soon gave that up. Finally we threw away the obviously useless papers and put the rest aside for a more convenient season. That was eleven years ago but the more convenient season has never come.

It would be hard to decide which was the more fascinating, the plant or the animal life of Senlac. Let us consider the plant life first.

Of the trees of the virgin forest scarcely one remained on the place in Gramps's time, but others had been planted and carefully tended. Two great walnut trees covered with ivy stand out in memory alike for beauty and for most excellent nuts that used to fall with terrifying thud on the tin roof of the wings and the Front Porch. Remembered too are the magnolias and the mimosa, and the lucky tree. This lucky tree was a preternaturally tall coffee tree on which my father used to hang horseshoes that he found on the road. And there was the holly tree that never grew up. Some bug would attack it, or unseasonable cold blight it, or something break it down, till it became a joke.

In the hayfield was a fine weeping willow said to have come originally from Napoleon's tomb in St. Helena. Near the well was a paulownia that bore beautiful flowers but attracted enormous green worms. In the back-yard were a beech and an ash and a sweet-gum of great beauty. And the place was full of fruit trees, especially pears, cherries, plums, damsons, and apples. One apple-tree in particular was a never ending source of wonder. It had been grafted and even in extreme old age bore two utterly different kinds of apples, both good.

Better than fruit trees was the scuppernong grape vine that grew right in the middle of the garden where it had been set temporarily and forgotten. Its doom was decreed but as the vines that had been put in the right places had all died, there was such a loud outcry that it was spared and grew to cover a vast area and yield grapes enough for all the neighborhood and—shall I say it?—for home-made wine as well. Of course we had strawberries and raspberries too, but for blackberries we depended on supplies brought in by country people.

Speaking of blackberries, I shall be conferring a blessing on posterity by setting forth one use that we made of them, the construction of a certain dessert that we called Blackberry Fool. "Cut slices of light-bread a day or two old—toast them if preferred—and butter each slice. Stew blackberries in enough water to cover well and sugar to taste. Alternate the slices of buttered bread and the stewed

berries while still hot and set aside to cool. Serve cold with cream, plain or whipped."

In the *East Lawn Bulletin* (See Chapter XII), Vol. 17, No. 6, Feb. 24, 1929, Mrs. Smithers gives a method of serving this delectable dish even in winter: "Take a can of blackberries (loganberries will do), add half a cup of sugar, and stew over the fire a little. Cut bread half an inch thick, butter. Dip a slice in the juice in the saucepan, then spoon up some berries and spread them on the bread. Repeat till the berries and juice give out. Serve with cream. The delectable structure of the Fool is built up story by story. Two story Fool is easier to handle than the skyscraper variety."

While on culinary matters it seems opportune to give another classic Senlac recipe published in the *East Lawn Bulletin*, Vol. 16, No. 11, Dec. 9, 1928, as adapted from detailed directions submitted by Dr. H. B. Battle, who had them ages ago from Lucy Plummer Battle.

Chewy Chocolate Candy

"Reagents: Three pounds sho' nuff brown sugar, the browner the better. Almost all of a half-pound cake of Baker's chocolate [not sweetened], either grated through a colander or shaved with a knife (the latter method is the classical one—ed.). Two cups milk, a quarter of a pound of butter, one tablespoonful extract vanilla.

"Process: Mix chocolate, milk, butter, sugar, stir thoroughly over slow fire, increasing heat until butter is melted and active boiling begins. NEVER STOP STIRRING, STIR AND STIR AND DON'T STOP STIRRING AS LONG AS MIXTURE IS ON STOVE. Keep boiling without intermission for about fifteen minutes and until candy is done. The best plan is to have a trusty assistant who will keep stirring ALL THE TIME. To tell when candy is done, dip in a straw and transfer quickly to a tumbler of cold water. Pull candy off straw and roll it between finger and thumb. If done, it will feel firm and hard, and no discoloration will appear in the test water. If it feels soft on the fingers (KEEP STIRRING), boil some more, testing frequently. When done, add vanilla and stir briskly while still on the fire for a second or two. Now pour quickly into shallow buttered dishes, removing spoon and NOT STIRRING A PARTICLE AFTER REMOVING FROM FIRE. Do not scrape the last of the candy from the boiler; leave it to be scraped by the trusty assistant and the smaller fry among the onlookers. If any is scraped into the dishes, it will all turn into sugar. Put the dishes in the cold, then cut into squares, making lengthwise cuts first."

As long as efficient labor could be had a large vegetable garden was grown. Potatoes of both kinds, tomatoes (pronounced to-mah-toes), carrots, parsnips, beets, radishes, lettuce, cabbage, okra, squash, cucumbers, peas, beans, salsify, egg-plant, cantaloupes, water-melons—all these flourished, but asparagus simply would not repay the trouble we took.

The flower garden was even more successful than the vegetable. The season began with winterblooming jessamine, sometimes aflower before the snow was gone. Then came the crocuses and hyacinths, single and double, the tulips and bleeding-heart and snowdrops and lilies of the valley. The memory of them brings a thrill to this day. And the bushes—lilac, snow-ball, spirea, bridal-wreath, syringa, forsythia, deutzia, crepe-myrtle, hibiscus. And the vines—the akebia that grew all over the end of the Upper Office, the two yellow jessamines which birds seemed to

love to make their nests in, the lovely white jessamine that hid the smoke-house, the woodbine that grew on Granny's porch, the clematis that hung over the Front Porch, the ampelopsis that spread itself about the bay windows. Of all the vines the most luxuriant was the honeysuckle. Without the least encouragement it grew anywhere and in fact once started it was hard to get rid of. Between Gramps and Granny it was a constant bone of contention. Granny declared it was untidy and harbored snakes; Gramps urged that it did noble service in hiding ugly spots.

But the pride of the place was the roses. These were Granny's delight and constant care. It often happened that we grumbled when called on to water or cap them but we were proud of them nevertheless. By the way, all the water, till a late period came from the well by bucket or wheelbarrow and barrel, and was distributed in watering pots. Of greenhouse flowers there were not many for we had only a pit, but the house was full of ferns, lovely ones in great variety. There were palms too and sometimes cacti with magnificent red blossoms and smilax and wax plants that we never see any more and orange and lemon trees that grew so big that they had to be given away.

Could the animal life of Senlac vie with such loveliness? Attend and see.

In my father's time the family kept only one horse. He was named Rip Van Winkle because he was so slow, but this being abbreviated to Rip gave an erroneous impression of his character. There was a cow too in those days, a wonderful cow named Cherry. When the need for economy came both were given up. From time to time we had pigs. Of course there were dogs—a noble Newfoundland named Romeo that lived to be seventeen years old, a fine setter called Duke that was never cured of sucking eggs, and Rex the collie that nabbed a poor boy in the calf one day when he was innocently trying to sell fish. There were cats too that were banished in favor of birds, and white rabbits that increased so fast we had to eat them in self-defense, and canaries and love-birds and a famous parrot from the Congo. Of course so large a place had to have fowls—chickens, ducks, turkeys, guineas, but not geese nor pigeons.

But the tame beasties and birdies yielded in charm to the wild. It was a never failing source of delight to feed corn to the chipmunks that had a hole around the corner of the house. They would fill their pouches full, carry them home, and come back for more. One actually carried twenty-one grains on one trip, his greedy eyes and dependent chin reminding us of Ben Butler. At night the flying squirrels were active, jumping from tree to tree, but they never became friendly like the chipmunks. Rabbits often came on a visit, and occasionally minks and possums left a trail of blood in the chicken yard.

In summer at night the air vibrated with the noise of katydids and July-flies and tree-frogs close by and bullfrogs off in the distance. It was a firm belief among the children that if they went out and touched the tree in which a July-fly was singing (as they called it), he would stop. They often tried it and the things certainly did stop—sometimes, but whether it was a case of *post hoc* or *propter hoc* was never finally settled.

Another delightful occupation was to find doodlebug holes and lure the doodlebugs up by promise of food: "Doodlebug, doodlebug, come up and get a grain of corn". Whether the plan was successful or not, enough doodlebugs were captured to have doodlebug towns in boxes in the North Porch.

Snakes were rare but it was told under the breath that once a black-snake was found in the house. And there was no denying that a copperhead right in the front

yard bit Kemp Davis. This was a terrifying experience. The leg swelled up and got black and for a while there was genuine alarm. The killing of kingsnakes was strictly forbidden but all others were lawful prey, and were apt to be hung up to bring rain. Gramps, an inveterate rationalist as to proverbs and signs, declared that the injunctions of folklore were usually soundly based even if people had absurd ideas about them. Of course hanging up a snake did not bring rain, but it was usually followed by rain because snakes were sure to go abroad in dry weather looking for water; if found they were killed and hung up as a sign of prowess; then rain coming on as usual after dry weather was associated with the suspension of the snake.

Toads, we called them frogs, were plentiful, and to this day the present scribe recalls with horror the feel of a fat toad crushed accidentally under his bare foot.

Speaking of bare feet, most children in Chapel Hill went barefooted in summer, as the famous hammock picture testifies. It was a trial to have to wash one's feet before going to bed, but at Senlac the authorities did not require shoes on Sundays. We stumped our toes constantly and got stone bruises galore, and once there was a famous encounter with yellow-jackets in the grass, but we persisted in the practice from May to September till we were big boys and girls.

It was the birds that of all nature gave the greatest pleasure at Senlac. Under no circumstances could any bird except English sparrows be killed there. Against these there was constant warfare. Gramps kept a loaded shot-gun behind the door of his house-study ready for instant use against the foe. At any moment, on sight of even a single English sparrow in the yard, he would slip into the house, creep out, and fire away, usually with good effect, but sometimes to the alarm of unsuspecting visitors. Once he accidentally discharged the gun in the hall and the ceiling for years bore the marks of the shot. Luckily he hit neither himself nor anybody else. Somehow word got abroad among the birds of what was likely to happen and the sparrows ordinarily stayed away. Other birds did not seem to mind the gun at all. They flew away when it was fired but came right back again.

Well might birds other than English sparrows love Senlac. Nest-boxes were provided in abundance, after nearly every meal crumbs were thrown out, a great piece of fat usually hung in a tree for them to peck at, and there was always a stone basin of fresh water ready for drinking or bathing. They came in great numbers; one day thirty-five kinds were counted. Our greatest favorite was the wood-thrush, loved alike for his beauty and his song. Surely no note of nightingale or lark can compare with his pure and liquid tones. The blue-bird was almost a rival, a glint of comfort and hope, once plentiful but nearly exterminated the spring of 1888 by a fearful blizzard. Another cheerful and most amusing bird was the blue-jay, hated for his overbearing ways but admired for his beauty. For most people he uttered no sound except to quarrel, but when his soul was at peace with the world and he thought of his lady-love he had notes of great beauty that Granny declared showed he was Highland Scotch—Lochiel, Lochiel, uttered with a rising inflection. Some asserted that he was destructive of other birds' eggs and young and should share the fate of the English sparrows, but his beauty and his Scotch ancestry saved him. Another interesting bird was the red-headed woodpecker. He was so conspicuous in his red, white, and black, so industrious with his pecking! For some unknown reason he was dubbed Jethro. For a long time he was by no means common and when Mills Eure one day shot one directly in front of the gate, Gramps hastened out to reproach the culprit and confiscate the bird. We had him stuffed and he

abode with the last of our love-birds each under his glass dome on the sitting-room mantelpiece till the break-up came. Perhaps the daintiest of our bird friends were the nut-hatches and house-wrens. How tame the nut-hatches were and what wonderful heads they had to be able to come down the trunk of the elm-tree by the front door head foremost just as comfortably as they went up! One summer a pair of wrens built a nest in a vase on the mantelpiece in the Upper Office and raised their brood on thoroughly friendly terms with the human occupants.

One of the charms of Senlac was the simplicity and regularity of its life. In a college town this seemed natural, indeed inevitable, then, but people do not live that way in college towns now. When I was in college, breakfast was at half-past seven because students had to attend prayers in the Chapel every week-day at ten minutes to eight and the President went as regularly as any student. In vacation time the breakfast hour was changed to eight and college prayers replaced by family prayers, said by the head of the house in the dining-room after breakfast. Everybody was expected to be there and everybody was there as a matter of course except for good cause.

To tell the truth the breakfast was worth coming for. It was none of your modern scientifico-dietetic affairs. It varied somewhat with the time of the year but in general there were fruit and oatmeal; meat or eggs or roe herring (a favorite dish); two kinds of bread—biscuits (beaten or yeast-powder) and batter-bread or corn meal muffins or flour muffins; frequently fried apples or fried potatoes; nearly always some sort of griddle-cakes with syrup—buckwheat cakes, flannel-cakes, corn-meal batter-cakes, or waffles—and milk or coffee or both if you wanted them. Often too there was clabber, a most soothing food. Such a meal sounds impossible now but in those days it was the traditional southern breakfast.

After breakfast we scattered to our various occupations, to gather again a little before dinner-time to get the mail and then have dinner, always a plenteous repast, at half-past one. In summer, it being vacation time, pretty much everybody took a nap after dinner. Gramps had a post-prandial nap all the year round, seldom over half an hour long, but a great comfort and refreshment, probably a main cause of his excellent health for over eighty-seven years. Later in the afternoon came tennis, or a long walk, or some other form of exercise, and then supper about half-past six, a fairly substantial meal, hot in winter cold in summer. Supper over, came more work or a family gathering with games or reading, held in the sitting-room in the winter, on the Front Porch in the summer.

What an institution that Front Porch was! It was wide and went all across the house between the two wings. The floor was of heart-pine and though never painted needed no replacement in the forty-two years that I knew it. Of course it was kept clean by scouring. The Porch was delightful all day except in the early afternoon. Protected on three sides by the house it was comfortable even in winter much of the time. The prospect was lovely, lovely at all times of the day but loveliest in the late afternoon when the sinking sun cast wonderful golden light and the trees made long shadows over the endless expanse of grass. And so far off was the life of the University and the village that there was nearly always an air of infinite peace, seldom broken except by the deep tones of the college bell. We all loved this porch, my mother especially. She spent her time there rather than anywhere else. There in good weather she did her reading and sewing, there she received her guests, thence she directed the operations of the household, there in bad weather she would promenade back and forth for her needed exercise.

As I look back on it now, it is clear to me that the determining element in the atmosphere of Senlac was religion. It was not much talked about—rather was it taken for granted as the underlying fact of life. Judge Battle's people were Baptists but he became an Episcopalian under the influence of his wife, a member of an old Anglican family in Virginia. All their lives they were both earnest church people and brought up their children to love the ordered ways of the Episcopal Church as much as they did. They were enthusiastic supporters of the Rev. W. M. Green, later Bishop of Mississippi, in building the little Chapel of the Cross in the forties. Judge Battle was prominent too in the concerns of the Diocese of North Carolina and went as its deputy to session after session of the General Convention and to the one General Council of the Church in the Confederacy. He and President Battle were among the few Southern members of the General Convention in Philadelphia in 1865.

My father and mother were as devout members of the church and as prominent in its activities as my grandparents. This time it was the wife who was reared a Baptist, but she came into the Episcopal Church through school influences before she was married. Her father, James S. Battle, was a convinced Primitive Baptist. At first he was much opposed to his daughter's proposal to join the Episcopal Church but yielded when he saw how much in earnest she was. Curiously enough six of his children became Episcopalians through the influence of wife or school, and their descendants have followed them with few exceptions.

On Sundays at Senlac it was a matter of course for everybody unless ill to go to church, children went as well as grown-ups, and the family sat together. However, my father had such vivid recollections of painfully long sermons when he was a boy that he always allowed the Senlac children of his day to go out before the sermon until they were old enough to understand it. One Sunday the whole Communion rail was filled by the Senlac family. Another time when there happened to be no service at the church, the family arranged themselves like a congregation in the Senlac Front Porch and one of the sons said Morning Prayer and my father then past eighty read a sermon.

As a general thing, though the Chapel of the Cross was often without a rector, there was lay service with my father usually in charge. He took the duties of a lay-reader seriously and went to much pains to find good sermons. The ones the younger generation liked most were remarkable rather for brevity than profundity. If one passed twenty minutes, there was sure to be a protest. Once we discovered that my father had read two sermons together, leaving out the text of the second one. The combined length was within the approved twenty minutes but the fusion was held to be little less than sacrilege. Verily things were changed from the days when my mother used to attend the Baptist Church at the Falls of Tar River. On one occasion there a noted Elder preached for three hours with such eloquence that the congregation besought him to preach again in the afternoon and he did, almost as long.