

# 2020 Annual Report

## Old Town Cemetery

(George Gordon Battle Cemetery Trust)



## George Gordon Battle Cemetery Trust

### Annual report for 2020

#### Introduction

Prior to World War II, family cemeteries were common throughout the rural south. These cemeteries, often adjacent to family homes, were places for family gatherings. With the south's post war development, this changed. Today, very few family cemeteries remain intact.

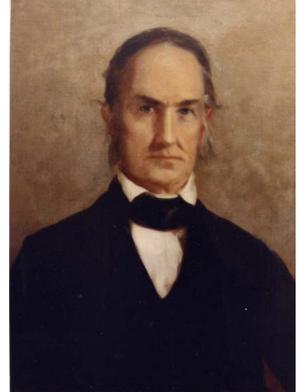
Fortunately for our branch of the Battle family, our cemetery (known as Old Town) is an exception. This is due to the establishment of a cemetery trust over 70 years ago as well as the love and dedication of four generations of family members.

For this reason, we have prepared this annual report (our first!) so that family members are aware of this family history.

#### History

Accurate family records of our branch of the Battle family tree, being descendants of James Smith Battle (1786-1854), whose portrait is attached, have been maintained down to the present (more on this later). The family graveyard of James Smith Battle (JSB) was Old Town cemetery. One of his grandsons was Jacob Battle (1852-1916) from whom we are all direct descendants. All of the living adult descendants of Jacob have received this report and are listed in Appendix A.

The modern era of Old Town began in 1949, following the death of Jacob's youngest brother George Gordon Battle (1868-1949). As part of his estate plan, a trust of \$5,000 (handsome sum at that time) called George Gordon Battle Cemetery Trust (GGBCT) was established upon his death for the maintenance and upkeep of the cemetery. More on "Uncle Gordon" is in the Battle Profiles section of this report. The GGBCT which is still in existence, has been vital to the financial stability of Old Town. Without it, the fate of OT would have likely been that of so many other family cemeteries.



*James Smith Battle*

#### Cemetery Team

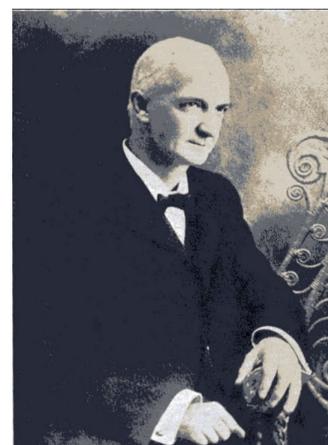
Certain family members have assumed responsibility for providing ongoing cemetery maintenance and maintaining relationships with members of the Battle family. They are:

- Stephen Battle (sssbattle@gmail.com) & Richard Battle (rbattle@capital-invest.com) - are the co-trustees of GGBCT. One of the best decisions made regarding the cemetery was when the local bank decided to exit the farm trust business and the family had to look for an alternative. Problem solved when the Battle brothers, Richard and Stephen, graciously agreed to replace the bank as trustees on a pro bono basis. The result has been superior investment returns and reduced administrative expenses. As trustees, they oversee investment policy, negotiate outside maintenance arrangements, handle regulatory matters and file tax returns.

- Gordon Folger (gfolger@bellsouth.net) - is the cemetery coordinator for the family members on issues concerning the cemetery. This involves such matters as plot assignments and contact with firms that are responsible for maintenance. She and the Battle brothers periodically make trips to the cemetery to make sure all is well.
- George Eatman (gheatman@hotmail.com) - is the family historian/genealogist. He has taken on the responsibility for updating the genealogical records for the James Smith Battle branch and as important, works with Bill Mebane (another Battle cousin) to accurately reflect changes. More information about this is set forth in the Battle Genealogy section below. George is a wealth of knowledge on our family history and a great resource to us all.

### Battle Genealogy

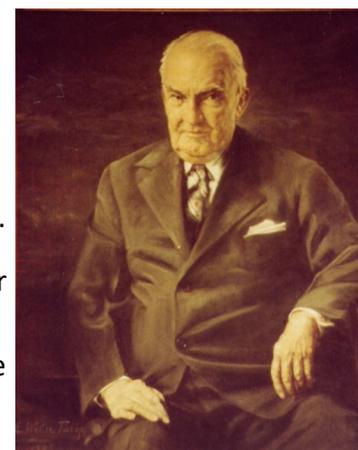
- In 1930 a book entitled "The Battle Book: A Genealogy of the Battle Family in America" was compiled by Herbert Battle, a classical language professor at the University of Texas. Its scope was genealogy of all Battles who arrived in Virginia from England since 1654.
- Since publication, there had been no formal updates so it immediately became outdated. This changed when George took on the herculean task of updating genealogy of the James Smith Battle (JSB) branch. A 10-year project, which he completed in 2001. JSB is the grandfather of "our" Jacob Battle (see his portrait) so this includes all of us.
- To avoid this also becoming outdated, George and a cousin, Bill Battle Mebane collaborated to develop a James Smith Battle website with George feeding changes to Bill who updates the website several times a year.
- The address is [www.thebattlebook.com](http://www.thebattlebook.com). The genealogical data (but not the other parts of the website) are password protected. The password is *jsb1786-1854* (link is found on home page under Battle coat of arms) .
- You are encouraged to visit the web site including genealogical data. This allows you to not only re-view entries for your immediate family but also an opportunity to learn more family history as well as contribute additional information that may be of interest to others. The goal is to keep information current so if you have any additions or corrections, please email George at [gheatman@hotmail.com](mailto:gheatman@hotmail.com).



*Jacob Battle II*

### Battle Profile: George Gordon Battle (1868-1949)

- In future Annual Reports, we plan to have a profile of one of our relatives. In this first edition, it is fitting that it be of George Gordon Battle who established the cemetery trust. Although buried with his wife in VA rather than at OT, the trust has been crucial to the financial health of OT.
- GGB was the youngest sibling of Jacob Battle. Born at Cool Spring, not far from the OT cemetery. After attending UNC and UVA, he enrolled at Columbia Law School where by all accounts he was a brilliant student; he remained a New Yorker for the rest of his life but never lost his love of the South and Eastern NC.



*George Gordon Battle*

- In 1933, The New Yorker magazine featured GGB in its Profiles section, titling the article “Mr Chairman”. The article is worth a read (found on the Battle family Website). Although GGB lived in NYC he was the quintessential southern gentleman, in addition to being:
  - Brilliant attorney, especially well known for arbitration involving labor disputes;
  - Fighter of anti-Semitism (awarded the American Hebrew medal);
  - Advocate for Prison reform;
  - President of Association for NYC Parks & Playgrounds;
  - World peace advocate; and
  - Staunch Democrat.
- An interesting factoid: In the recent March 30 issue of NY Times, there is the obituary of G. Gordon Liddy, the (in)famous participant in the Watergate burglary. His father was an associate in GGB’s firm who admired GGB so much that he named his son after him.

### Financials

- Recap of financials for 2019 and 2020

	For year ending	
	12/31/2019	12/31/2020
Cash	3,967	5,018
Mutual Funds	96,980	100,721
	100,947	105,738

	2019	2020
Beginning Account Value	85,327	100,947
Deposits (+)	375	350
Withdrawals (-)	-1,440	-1,955
Dividends & Interest (+)	3,280	2,712
Other Transaction (-)	-13	0
Net Change in Portfolio	13,418	3,685
Ending Account Value	100,947	105,738

- These financials are on a cash basis and do not reflect future known expenses. Later this year, there are plans to power wash and professionally clean the monuments which is not reflected in numbers above; estimated cost is \$5,000.

- For ongoing maintenance and care of the grounds, there is a relationship with 2 Rocky Mount firms:
  - Ward Cemetery Services for mowing and general maintenance; and
  - Landscape Gardener for pruning, watering and plant replacement.

Since none of the Cemetery team lives in Rocky Mount, these firms assure that on a day-to-day basis, the cemetery is maintained.

- As for unforeseen expenses, 2020 was a relatively quiet year- not necessarily so in the past. Extra expenses in recent years have been mostly weather related such as damage from Hurricanes Floyd (1999) and Irene (2011). These extra expenses involved:
  - Removing debris and fallen tree limbs;
  - Replacing portion of antique cast iron fencing following damage from fallen trees;
  - Replacing trees that were uprooted;
  - Removing tree stumps;
  - Planting and pruning.

Joel and Jean Boseman are neighbors to OT (who have beautifully restored, Cool Spring, a family home nearby). They have graciously assisted in clean-up of OT following damage from storms. OT is fortunate to have them as neighbors

### Conclusion

- As requested in the cover letter, please let us know whether you feel an annual report is worthwhile continuing and if so, what you think should be included.
- If continued, the yearend report for 2021 and following years will be distributed shortly after year-end.
- Finally, so that holiday cards can be exchanged, regular mail addresses of your cousins will be emailed to you this fall. If anyone doesn't want mail address included, please let me know.

## Appendix A - All Living Descendants of Jacob Battle

	Initials	Full Name	State
1	SN	Stacy Nicholas	OR
2	TWB	Turner Westry Battle VI	FL
3	TWB	Turner Westry Battle III (VII)	DC
4	TWB	Turner Westry Battle IV (VIII)	DC
5	TWB	Madison Elizabeth Battle	DC
6	TWB	Isa Latham Battle	DC
7	TWB	Sloan Barksdale Battle	FL
8	SSB	Stephen Shackelford Battle	NC
9	SSB	Kristen Elizabeth Sebastian	NC
10	RSB	William Richardson Staats Battle	NC
11	RSB	Cameron Shackelford Battle	NC
12	RSB	Stering Barksdale Battle	NC
13	RSB	William Richardson Staats Battle Jr	NC
14	ELE	Edward Laughtin Eatman Jr.	NC
15	ELE	Edward Laughtin Eatman III	FL
16	ELE	Shannon Gay Eatman	NC
17	ELE	Amanda Nicole Long	NC
18	ELE	Jonathan Tyler Long	NC
19	GHE	George Hackney Eatman	DC
20	GBE	Gordon Battle Eatman	NM
21	GBE	Sara Rose Eatman	TX
22	GBE	Theodore Carson Toohey	TX
23	GBE	Maxwell Sawyer Toohey	TX
24	NBE	Nell Battle Eatman	VA
25	NBE	Andrew Christian Edwards	VA
26	NBE	Richard George Battle Edwards	MD
27	NBE	Mary Elizabeth Edwards	MD
28	NBE	Joshua Zachary Edwards	MD
29	GWF	Gordon Wilkinson Folger	NC
30	GWF	Lee Alphonso Folger IV	NC
31	GWF	Lee Alphonso Folger V	NC
32	GWF	Allison Wilkinson Newbold Folger	NC
33	GWF	Francis Wilkinson Folger	NC
34	GWF	David Alexander Folger	NC
35	GWF	Caroline Jourdan Folger	NC
36	GWF	Kathyrn Carlyle Battle Folger	NC
37	FSW	Frank Smith Wilkinson Jr	MN
38	FSW	Smith Kemp Wilkinson	MN
39	FSW	Westray Battle Wilkinson	MN
40	FSW	Eloise Battle Ratan	MN
41	FSW	Scarlett Battle Ratan	MN
42	FSW	Josephine Kemp Ratan	MN
43	FSW	Charlotte Elizabeth Scannell	MN
44	FSW	Benjamin Carter Wilkinson	MA

NOTE: Descendants of Jacob Battle plus adopted and step children

## APPENDIX B

### Reunion Reminiscences

#### Since 2000

- Since 2000, there have been 2 reunions of the descendants of James Smith Battle, centered around Old Town Cemetery
  - April 18-19, 2003: 1<sup>st</sup> reunion with events in Rocky Mount, Old Town Cemetery, Old Town Plantation and Church of Good Shephard (Rocky Mount, NC).
  - April 27-29, 2012: 2<sup>nd</sup> reunion with events in Rocky Mount, Old Town Cemetery, Old Town Plantation and Calvary Episcopal church (Tarboro, NC) with local house tours in Tarboro.
- In addition, there have been 2 smaller family remembrances
  - May 15, 2015: dedication of cenotaph at Old Town cemetery in memory of Treadwell Covington.
  - May 17, 2017: NC Museum of Art (History Museum) in Raleigh dedication of military medals of Col. Westray Battle Boyce who headed The Women's Army Corp at the end of WW II.

Below is a group shot of attendees of 2012 reunion in front of Old Town house. This includes Jacob Battle descendants plus other Battle cousins, mostly from the area. Get your magnifying glass out and find yourself!



*Group Photo at Old Town house following lunch at 2012 Battle Family Reunion*