

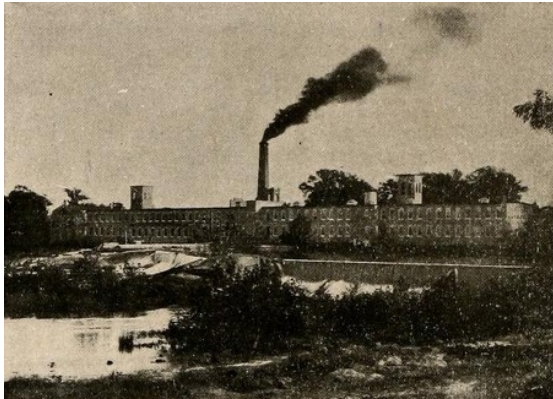
Battle, Joel ^[1]

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Battle, Joel

by Anastatia Sims, 1979

16 May 1779–25 Aug. 1829



"The Rocky Mount Mills," photograph, [circa 1911]. From *Rocky Mount the Gateway of Eastern North Carolina*, p. 32, [published 1911] by the *Rocky Mount Record*, Rocky Mount, N.C. From the Braswell Memorial Library, presented on Archive.org.

^[2]Joel Battle, planter, merchant, militia colonel, and cotton manufacturer, was one of the three children of William Butler and Charity Horn Battle. He was one of the founders of the *Rocky Mount Mills* ^[3] at the falls of the Tar River in *Nash County* ^[4], the second textile mill to begin operation in North Carolina and the oldest mill still in operation at its original site.

Few details are known of Battle's life. He attended *The University of North Carolina* ^[5] from 1798 to 1800. On 9 Apr. 1801, he married Mary Palmer ("Polly") Johnston (14 Jan. 1786–23 Feb. 1866), and shortly afterward they moved to Shell Bank Plantation on the Tar River.

In 1816, Battle, along with his brother-in-law Peter Evans, *Henry A. Donaldson* ^[6], and John Hogan, began buying land around the Falls of Tar River. Hogan sold his share to Battle in 1817. A stone mill was constructed at the falls in 1816 or 1817 and expanded in 1819. By 1820, Battle and his partners owned the entire area, and the mill was in full operation. In that year they got a license to build a dam at the falls. Dissension among the partners in the 1820s led to Donaldson's buying Evans's interest in 1821 and then, in 1828, selling his share to Battle. The Battle family continued to control the mills for a number of years.

Joel and Mary Battle had eleven children, nine of whom lived to adulthood: *William Horn* ^[7], Amos Johnston, Richard Henry, Catharine Anne, Benjamin Dossey, Christopher Columbus, Isaac Luther, Susan Esther, and Laura Carolina. Battle was buried at the Oaks, his *Edgecombe County* ^[8] home, but in 1872 his remains, along with those of his wife, were moved to *Oakwood Cemetery* ^[9] in Raleigh.

References:

Herbert B. Battle, *The Battle Book* (1930).

Battle Family Papers (Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill).

Daniel L. Grant, *Alumni History of the University of North Carolina* (1924).

Raleigh Register, 4 Sept. 1829.

Additional Resources:

Battle Family Papers, 1765-1955 (collection no. 03223). The Southern Historical Collection. Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/b/Battle_Family.html ^[10] (accessed March 7, 2013).

Rocky Mount Record. *Rocky Mount: The Gateway of Eastern North Carolina*. Rocky Mount Record. 1911. <https://archive.org/details/rockymountgatewa00rock> ^[11] (accessed March 7, 2013).

Southside Virginia Families, Volume I by John B Boddie, John Bennett Boddie: [\(Google eBook\)](#) ^[12]

"Rocky Mount Mills." N.C. Highway Historical Marker E-7, N.C. Office of Archives & History <https://www.ncdcr.gov/about/history/division-historical-resources/nc-highway-historical-marker-program/Markers.aspx?sp=Markers&k=Markers&sv=E-7> ^[13] (accessed March 7, 2013).

Rocky Mount Mills Records, Southern Historical Collection, UNC Chapel Hill, online finding aid at: <http://webcat.lib.unc.edu/search/?drocky+mount+mills/drocky+mount+mills/1%2C2%2C5%2CB/frameset&FF=drocky+mount+mills+rocky+mount+n+c&3%2C%2C3> ^[14]

Capitol Broadcasting Company website: http://www.cbc-raleigh.com/capcom/news/2007/corporate_07/rm_mill_purchase/rm_mill_purchase.html ^[15]

Rocky Mount Mills, a case history of industrial development, 1818-1943, ECU Libraries <https://digital.lib.ecu.edu/16842> ^[16]

The Battle book; a genealogy of the Battle family in America, with chapters illustrating certain phases of its history. By: H B Battle; Lois Yelverton; William James Battle, Montgomery, Ala., The Paragon Press, 1930: <https://www.worldcat.org/title/battle-book-a-genealogy-of-the-battle-family-in-america-with-chapters-illustrating-certain-phases-of-its-history/oclc/2579075> ^[17]

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1 January 1979 | Sims, Anastatia

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