

## Memoir of Daniel Ferson (1795-1871)

Daniel Ferson (1795-1871) was born in New Boston, NH and lived here until 1818.

In January 2020, Will Ferson of Texas referred me to a 32-page typed document found at the FamilySearch website which appears to be Daniel Ferson's memoirs, written in 1838 and 1841, transcribed in 1891 by Jessie Ferson, his granddaughter, and typed in 1941 by Eugenie Ferson, Jessie's niece.

Why is Daniel's memoir a significant discovery?

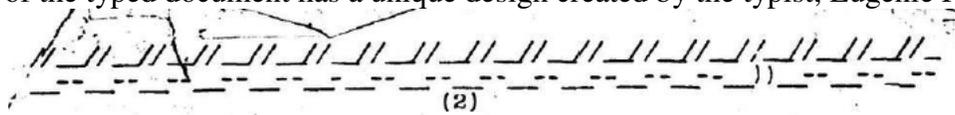
- It is the oldest memoir I've seen about our town, documenting life in New Boston c.1800, with particular detail about his early education.
- Daniel left New England in 1818 because he did not see opportunity here; he did not wish to become a "spindle slave" in the new cotton mills of Manchester or Lowell.
- His journey west is representative of the experiences of thousands of New England men and women. Remember that New Boston's population peaked in 1830 and declined for the next hundred years, as people emigrated in search of better opportunities elsewhere.

Daniel described the Ferson/McPherson homestead on Beard Road and provided sketches of his New Boston schoolteachers. He described in detail a tragic shipwreck he witnessed while visiting Gloucester MA, how he found work in New Ipswich NH, and his decision to go west in 1818. He sailed from Boston MA to Baltimore MD, then traveled by stagecoach across the Alleghenies. He went into business in Ohio, where he married Catherine Cornwall. Daniel returned to visit New Boston in 1841 and wrote about what happened to the Ferson homestead.



The Granite Monthly of 1897 tells us that "Pleasant View farm was first settled by Deacon James Ferson, of Chester, about 1745, and owned by his descendants until 1815, when it was bought by John Dodge, of Hamilton, Mass., and is now owned by Deacon Eben Dodge."

Each page of the typed document has a unique design created by the typist, Eugenie Ferson:



The earliest scene now recollected, was the first pair of pants I ever had on. I was probably 3-1/2 yrs. old or 4. They were some kind of reddish woolen flannel, and Acller Warers, quite a humorous man happened in at the same time ana assisted in putting them on, and to have a little sport, he crowded both of my legs into one leg of the pants and set me upright, when to my great surprise, I could not stand or stir a step, and they all enjoyed a most hearty laugh at my expense. Another anecdote, whether prior to the above I cannot

I retyped into this document some of Eugenie's text – I hope I did not add new errors! I've selected excerpts related to New Boston, plus some of Daniel Ferson's adventures once he departed from New Boston. I've left out pages on Daniel's religious awakening, and (most of) his views on the evils of alcohol. I've added my own notes in [square brackets].

You may read the entire source document at

<https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/memories/KHSZ-Z5P>.



*Genealogy from FamilySearch:* Daniel's parents were James Acllary McPherson (1744-1821), born in Chester NH, and Mary McNeill (1755-1834), born in New Boston.

Their children, according to FamilySearch.org, were:

William McPherson 1774–1853 • M59T-62X

Jenette Mc Pherson 1779–1786 • 93LQ-DK8

James Ferson 1781–1852 • K4F1-CN6

Paul Ferson 1783–1783 • LYJ5-B7Y

Paul Ferson 1785–1847 • 89K7-HKZ

Sally Ferson 1788–1849 • KCB3-PLT

Samuel Ferson 1793–1885 • 27CL-3LY

Daniel Ferson 1795–1871 • KHSZ-Z5P

John Ferson 1797–1871 • 2T1R-9WM

Daniel's *grandfather* was Deacon James McPherson Sr. (1716-1792), born in Ireland. He is buried in New Boston's North Side cemetery.

– Dan Rothman, *New Boston Historical Society*, January 2020

DAVENPORT, IA., March 21, 1891 [the date of the typed transcription of Daniel's 1838/1841 memoirs]

My mother was born at New Boston, N.H. and lived in her native Township 63 years, till her removal to Ohio. My father was born in Chester, N.H. about 60 miles from New Boston [30 miles, actually]. I think [he] lived there till he was about 16 years of age when the family removed to New B. and my father lived there till Sept. 1818, when we emigrated to Ohio. My father was a hard working, industrious, economical man, and with equal propriety can we all say the same of excellent mother.

N.B. is situated about 60 miles N.W. of Boston, Mass., about 10 miles North of Amherst, the county seat of Hillsboro Co. The old "homestead" consisted of about 150 acres of rough, stony land, but by hard labor, industry and economy, my parents raised a family of seven children and gave us all a respectable English education.

On the old farm was a fine orchard of about 250 acres, often producing as high as 3000 bu. of apples, which were made some into cider, applesauce, and many were sold to our neighbors, and sometimes a load would be taken to Gloucester or Boston to market, and always a good share was lain up for winter use. Many happy evenings have we all spent by the social fireside with our young neighboring friends with a large amount of apples to eat and a mug of sweet cider to drink, and many little plays did we have, and the time was beguiled by many a little pleasure story. Many of our mechanics bills were paid from the product of the orchard. [A "mechanic" might refer to anyone who worked with his hands, including a farm laborer or equipment operator or repairman.]

Two beautiful pear trees stood about ten rods north of the house [one rod = 16 ½ feet] and near to the barn which often furnished us with 15 or 20 bushels of fine summer pears, and along the stones and fences stood the plum trees in all the varieties of N. Eng.: the Sweet White, the Common Red Cherry, etc etc.

A good two story house, 20 by 40 ft., built in 1811, and the old one story Daniel[?] built in '17 [probably a date in the late 1700s?] and two good barns with sheds etc stood on the premises. A beautiful grove of chestnut trees stood in the old pasture, some years producing 40 or 50 bushels of nuts. When the occupation of the farm was not too urgent, such as cider making, digging potatoes, we would turn out in the cold frosty morning of October and gather perhaps one half bushel before breakfast and sometimes when the work would admit of it, and a good prospect of gathering nuts, we would continue our gathering until noon and sometimes all day. I think some seasons we have gathered as high as 12 or 15 bu. And sold them in the Gloucester market at \$2 per bu.

The dooryard was a semi-circle including about one fourth of an acre, with a beautiful circular row of Poplars; inside of the trees the yard was filled with red and white roses, the lilac, and flowers and shrubbery of various kinds. To the admirers of nature the situation might be said to be one of the [most] picturesque and romantic scenes of singular beauty; in no country has she been more liberal of charms. At a short distance West of the house could be seen in the West the old hoary headed Monadnock rearing his venerable old head in towering majesty to the clouds,

and many other beautiful sights of magnitude, displaying a beautiful diversity of woody scenery interspersed with green pastures and bare points of rocks; to the southeast were seen delightful hills in forms of cones, with the tops adorned with the beautiful evergreens of N. Eng.: the Augusta Pine and Hemlock, and in front of the old mansion lay a beautiful field of some 10 acres, adorned and interspersed with some beautiful shade trees of elm, oak, maple and beautiful evergreens, beautifully skirted around.

But few scenes of very early childhood do I now, 1838, recollect. The earliest scene now recollected was the first pair of pants I ever had on. I was probably 3-1/2 yrs old or 4. They were some kind of reddish woolen flannel, and Acller Warers[?], quite a humorous man happened in at the same time and assisted me in putting them on, and to have a little sport, he crowded both of my legs into one leg of the pants and set me upright, when to my great surprise, I could not stand or stir a step, and they all enjoyed a most hearty laugh at my expense.

Another anecdote, whether prior to the above I cannot say: There was at that time a widow woman, Mrs. Langdell, living about 1/2 a mile east of us in a log house. My brother Sam, older than myself, and I were playing about a small run in the road ["run" = possibly a small stream or rivulet] not far from the house, and Sam took into his head to run off with me to Mrs. L's. When I got there everything was new and strange, and I thought looked not very cleanly. I asked a great many questions about everything I saw. A small kettle hung on a pin overhead. I asked what was in it. When [she] told me it was meeth, or as the Yankees call it "Paddug" [mincemeat pudding, perhaps?] the next question was, is it clean? And well I recollect of asking Mrs. L. is this a house or hovel ('hovel' in this country means a cowshed) that you live in?

I also recollect well of my father learning me the Alphabet. Sometimes of a Sunday morning would he get down old Dilworth's [Thomas Dilworth's "A New Guide to the English Tongue"], Webster, or the Primer, then I must get the pointer, perhaps a quill or a split off the broom, to point out the letters as I read. I particularly remember his method of teaching me O, U, and T. What is the round letter? "O". What looks like an ox bow? "U". And what did you have for breakfast? "T".

His paternal tenderness towards us all is not forgotten. He very seldom if ever corrected by Corporeal punishment; generally a stamp of his foot was sufficient to command silence, and my mother's great care and tenderness towards us, all her working night after night till twelve o'clock to mend and make new clothes, or perhaps to finish a pair of stockings for some of the older ones that might be from here teaching school, is too deeply engraven on all our minds ever to be forgotten. My parents were very strict in their religious duties, reading the scriptures, and family prayer was daily attended to, and they always or particularly my father, attended meeting every Sunday, and as soon as the children were large enough, we were taught from the Primer, who was the first man? Adam. Who the first woman? Eve, etc. Also the Lord's Prayer we had to repeat after our father before going to bed, and Dr. Watts lines "Now I lay me down to sleep, etc." the next was the Westminster catechism which we all had to learn generally on a Sunday, and when our good Pastor of the Church visited us, we sometimes were catechized by him.

I recollect of once seeing my Uncle Paul [1742-1798] when living, he was then lying on his death bed in the west room of the old house of my grandfather; then the property of Uncle Paul.

My aunt or some other one carried me to the bed and showed me the sore on my uncle which caused his death, I was much frightened and wished to get away from the sight as soon as possible. I also recollect as his death that some one of the family carried me to the house and one set me down on the cold frosty ground. They took me into the West room where my uncle lay a corpse, and layed my little hand upon his forehead. I also recollect of seeing from my father's house the funeral procession when assembled in front of the venerable old mansion. Well do I recollect the cold, very chill of death that I felt upon laying my hand upon his head.

Our situation in regard to the schoolhouse was very unpleasant. We were situated in the very remotest part of the district, from the house two miles distant, and on that account I did not begin to go to school till I was six or seven years old. I think that I first went to Miss Fairfield one summer but in the winter could not go on account of the snow. Think the next summer was to Miss Moore, a very mild, amiable, pleasant teacher and a daughter of the Rev. Solomon Moore, then Pastor of the Presbyterian church of that place, but what progress I made in learning I do not now recollect. I next went to one who was the opposite of Miss Moore as far as darkness is the opposite of light and from her ugly, ill, tormenting temper, we invariably called her "Old Liz Wilson". It required not "Ph a Lavata" [Johann Kaspar Lavater 1741-1801 was a Swiss physiognomist] to read in her long visage, her tall lean figure, her long sharp nose, high cheek bone, and her old lantern jaw and evil looking eye, the very character she possessed. It was worse than Dr. Adam Clark's old Irish teacher who told him he was a stupid as an ass, and threatened to pull his ears until they would be longer than ould Jowlers, meaning his big dog.

One poor fellow (Charles Dodge) who was very dull of learning, she used to make the very butt of her ridicule. Instead of giving him kind, encouraging words and trying to lead him gently along, she would frequently set him on a Dunce Block and let all the children point their fingers at him and make all the sport of him possible, and on one occasion she had the bare faced hardihood to mark with a piece of chalk the letter "D" on his back, telling the scholars that was "D" for Dunce, and from that day for years he went by the name of Deferdunce and I have since learned that he was so much discouraged and brokenhearted about it that he never got over it, but had to quit school and grow up in ignorance.

I think the next winter I went a part of the time to old Master Russell, an old teacher from Ireland. He was of a singular turn, always sat all day with his hat and spectacles on. He would have but one old "Fisher's Arithmetic" in school and from this he would write a sum on their slate and when they had worked it out, he would set it down in their Ciphering book. [George Fisher's "The Instructor: or, Young Man's Best Companion", a book about business accounting and "arithmetick", dated from 1727.] He usually kept a rod, or sometimes a pole so long that he could not strike a scholar, not having room in the house to swing it round, and when his scholars transgressed he would threaten to "Ring them round the school house like a young Colt". I think once or twice he did chase one of his scholars round the outside of the house.

With this old teacher I commenced reading plain, easy prose in Webster's Spelling Book. About this time the old school house was taken down and a new one erected in another part of the District a half mile nearer to us than the old one. I think the first teacher I went to in the new house was my brother James [1781-1852, about 14 years older than Daniel], probably in the 11<sup>th</sup> year of my age. My only studies were reading, in the American Preceptor, learning the

Abbreviations, Pauses, Accent, sound of the letters, Spelling, etc. the next summer I went to Miss Esther Mellon, a very good teacher but rather rough spoken sometimes to her scholars. One of the scholars came one day to school with a dirty face and when he came in she asked him before all the school “where the pigs were when he was sucking the old sow.”

I believe I went to the same school to my brother James again, and in February of winter 1807, I bade adieu for a time to the dear happy home of my childhood and went to Gloucester, a small seaport town in Mass. 30 miles N.E. of Boston, to live with my brother William [1774-1853]. My brother Paul and I.A. Goodhue were then teaching in Gloucester and wished to return home. I set out in company with Josiah Goodhue on horseback, and rode the horse over for my brother to ride home and here it appeared like a new world to me instead of the quiet rural scenery of a country farm. I was at once ushered into a small seaport that presented all the life and bustle of a City. The shops as I first passed through with all the goods hung out to view, completely dazzled my eyes and almost bewildered my imagination.

The broad blue ocean stretched like a curtain, east and south of the town with her gallant ships with the high tapering mast and snowy sails spread to the propelling gale, all were sights entirely new to me, but in a few days I was seized with a dreadful malady called “home-sickness” and it certainly appeared to me that no poor soul ever suffered more than I did, and I would have given anything could I have been once more under the old paternal roof. I could think of nothing night or day but home, home sweet home, and when I could get out alone I would weep most bitterly and relieve my aching heart in a flow of tears, but in about two weeks I began to go to school and that cured me of my malady and I have never since had the least symptoms of it.

...

Soon after my arrival here, I saw for the first time, and the only time in my life a Shipwreck, but here the feeble powers of my pen will be altogether inadequate to describe the scene of desolation, death, and devastation that was presented to our astonished view. She was the beautiful ship “Howard” of Salem of I think 500 tons burden, one half of which was owned by the great Capitalist, Wm. Gray. She had been to Calcutta, and the East Indies, and was returning home richly laden with a valuable cargo of India cotton, some few silks, and about 500 bags of ginger root. They were then with six leagues of home, and had it been daylight, they could almost have seen some of the towering steeples of their distant ports, but alas – a violent and almost unparalleled N.E. snow storm came on with such density and dreadful fury that they could not see the lighthouse on Thachers Island about three miles distant. They began to fear that they were too near the land and were driving furiously onto Eastern Point, a long dangerous point of land running far out into the sea, but the noble ship struck with dreadful violence on a sharp rock and sprung a leak. She did not, however, remain fast on the rock but swung clear round again, got completely under headway, then the sea run mountain high, the breakers were now before them, and they were bounding with twofold velocity, the waves around dashed high and burst upon the deck toward them when the noble ship again struck with tenfold fury upon the reef with a dreadful crash; her bottom was shivered in pieces and her fine towering masts were broken off like fishing rods, went aboard the deck and about half the upper part of the hull remained firm and immovable as the rocks, although the foaming boiling ocean, now already driven in wild raging dread fury by the storm, dashed impetuously against, yet she was as firm and immovable as the dread reef on which it struck.

This was about three o'clock in the morning; her fine cargo was immediately emptied into the great deep; the captain, mate, and two seamen that were on the ship were immediately entangled in the sails as the masts broke and fell upon the deck and they were immediately swept off and found a grave in the watery deep; those on the windward side, four or five in number, reached the shore which was only three or four rods distant, on the mast and rigging, and in the morning when we repaired to the spot the tide had ebbed and there lay the upper part of the beautiful vessel, high and sery [possibly "sere" as in "dry"?] upon the rocks, so that the inhabitants could with some difficulty walk to it on the rocks dry shod; as we stood on the shore of the ocean, which had been driven into a wild, tumultuous motion by the raging tempest, now assumed a most beautiful, grand, and sublime aspect; the swelling waves rolled majestically along, their tops crowned with a wreath of purest white, sent a light spray o'er the surface [of] the ocean and as they dashed furiously against the sharp cliffs of rock that lined the shore, sent a beautiful white spray in the air like a thin summer cloud.

The weather was now clear, but a heavy wind blew from the East, and in the distant horizon could now been seen vessels flying swiftly along at the rate of ten or twelve [knots], and as they neared us [we] could plainly see them bowing to the pressure of the strong breeze, and dashing away the swelling seas that almost enveloped their bows in foam. The broken fragments of the vessel, her sails, spars and rigging were washed on shore, and there lay in kind of a chaotic heap – cotton cloths apparently enough to have filled the stores of a small city, lay in confused heaps around; here could be seen lying on the sand some little carved image of the seamen, their chests with all their contents thrown upon the beach, hats, shirts, vests, coats, and the blue broad pantaloons, lay scattered around with all the fine furniture of the ship's cabin quadrants, spy-glasses, log-books, charts scattered and mixed with the confused mass, the long tapering masts with all their spars, staychains, capstans, and countless rope and sheets of canvas mingled with the ruin and under the mainsails lay the two disfigured, bruised and mangled bodies of the seamen that had been dashing about on the rocks for some hours, and had become as black as Ethiopians; some thousands of spectators were standing gazing at the scene; some were laughing, a few were weeping, and some were carrying off a piece of cloth or a bolt of iron, or some relic. Boats were out in the Ocean picking wood and pieces of the cloth, and carts and wagons were hauling off the wet frozen cloth, the ginger root was covered and buried in the pebbles that lay on the shore, and for weeks after this did I pick up some bushels of the root.

[The "Howard" ran aground on February 28, 1807, according to a Gloucester-based blog <https://goodmorninggloucester.org/2018/03/11/brace-cove-shipwreck-february-28-1807/>. Daniel Ferson was 11 or 12 at the time, staying at his brother's house, and it is unlikely that he personally witnessed the ship running aground at 3AM in a winter storm. When he wrote his memoir thirty years later, Daniel may have referred to journals or newspaper articles to refresh his memory of the details of the event. It's interesting to note that the sailing ship which took Daniel to Baltimore in 1818 was also wrecked off the coast of Massachusetts some years later.]

[Sometime around 1811, Daniel looked for a trade. Eventually Daniel was apprenticed to a fuller in New Ipswich, NH. "Fulling" is the process of cleaning and felting wool cloth to make it thicker and more water resistant.

He writes "I went to Gloucester in a sleigh and took Clarissa, my oldest daughter, home who had been living at N.B. and my brother William got into the sleigh with me..." Daniel was unmarried

and childless at the time, but William and his wife Lydia Dodge Ferson had a daughter Clarissa (1804-1876) so Clarissa was most likely Daniel's niece. William Ferson emigrated with his family from MA to Ohio in 1815 after he lost his position in the Custom House during the War of 1812.]

I had now [1818] arrived at the 23d year of my age and often thought very seriously about my future prospects in life, which to me looked very dull indeed. The New England states then had a population as large as could thrive their and every nook and corner appeared to be amply supplied in my branch of business [fulling wool cloth], and to start an establishment for myself, that is to buy out some one that was already in operation, would require at least \$1000 or \$1200, and with all the industry and economy that I was possessed with, could not lay up more than \$100 a year and my father's farm would only support my parents and perhaps one of my brothers with their family to take care of them in their old age. I had concluded that I must just continue to work about some of those large manufacturing establishments by the month or year and be wholly dependent on them for a livelihood, or as Gov. McDuffee says, quietly sit down and content myself to become a "Spindle Slave" to those large establishments. [In the 1830s, George McDuffie of South Carolina argued that the southern institution of slavery was no worse than the working conditions and "wage slavery" in northern factories.]

In May of this year, however, I was cheered by receiving the following letter from my brother Paul, dated Janesville, Ohio, Apr. 16, 1818. "Dear Bro.: Esq. Silliman, a wealthy, respectable man of this place, called on me yesterday to know if I had not a brother [who was] a clothier in New England (Mr Date had before informed him that I had) and observed that he was about to erect a fulling mill 14 miles from this place, and was determined to engage a good workman from that quarter to take charge of the business; that the situation was very excellent and would afford water all the year, and that a woolen factory (probably not on a large scale) was to be connected with it. As there are no works to rival this for a large extent of country round, he says there is a certainty there will be a large supply of work..." [Daniel decided to go west, and although the business was not as profitable as Silliman promised ("there was quite too much moonshine in his golden calculations"), Daniel would describe himself as perfectly satisfied with the arrangement. However, first he needed to get himself to Ohio!]

[Daniel left New Boston on Wednesday the 12<sup>th</sup> day of August 1818.] With a heavy heart and dejected spirit I set out in company with my brother Sam'l who was to accompany me to Boston in a small wagon, where we arrived at 8 o'clock A.M. on the 3d day after we left home. Nothing worth relating took place on our journey thus far, except that we had the pleasure of standing on the battle ground in Lexington, Mass. that was dyed with the first blood, where I think the first martyrs fell in the glorious struggle of the Revolution which burst the fetters and the yoke of Gt. Britain from the necks of our forefathers... [The Battle of Lexington and Concord in 1775 was twenty years before Daniel was born.]

We went on to Long Wharf [in Boston] and found that the only vessel bound for Baltimore was the brig "Federal George", Josiah Field, master, to sail on Sunday or Monday following. [Daniel visited his brother in Gloucester and was on board the ship on Monday.] The tide was fast ebbing away, and they got three or four sails bent and we set sail at one o'clock with a fine N.W. wind and as we passed out of the harbor, we had a most beautiful view of the port... Tuesday the 18<sup>th</sup>

a 5 o'clock the sun rose clear. The wind was light and from the S.W. from 5 to 11 we were drifting about Cape Cod in every direction, with little or no wind. [Progress was thwarted by contrary winds and tides as the ship slowly worked its way past Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. Daniel sighted ocean-going steamships, which were a recent invention – no steamship had yet crossed the Atlantic. Daniel arrived in Baltimore, MD on Friday, August 28. At 2:30AM the next morning his stagecoach departed Baltimore. Daniel crossed the Allegheny Mountains towards Pittsburg.] We journeyed along for days. When we arrived at Pittsburg, the great Smoking Birmingham of the West, a dense block of smoke hung over the City and immense columns of smoke could be seen rising in the air from the steam mills and great iron works... The houses were so blackened by smoke that they looked as if they had been built soon after the Flood. [Daniel traveled by stage and on foot to his brother Paul's house in Zanesville, OH. He worked there and in Mansfield OH for a number of years. Daniel Ferson married Catherine Cornwall in September of 1827, and they returned to New Boston for a visit in July, 1841.]

[Daniel describes how his grandfather came to New Boston.]

Thus it appears that our ancestors left Ireland, a land of oppression, and fled to America, then almost a howling wilderness. They undoubtedly were poor, but what was infinitely better, they were all sober, honest, pious, industrious laborers, and by their hard labor and persevering industry and economy, they not only obtained a comfortable living, but accumulated a handsome property. Our grandparent James McPherson, as appears by the history, lived upwards of 50 years in Chester, and then removed to N.B. and purchased about 35 acres of land, then a howling wilderness, and with his son James (our father) & Paul, they cleared a beautiful farm and erected a beautiful old fashioned two story house, painted red. The dooryard was adorned with a row of beautiful elms, which lifted their lofty heads about the house, with their wide spreading branches formed a delightful shade during the summer months. Two large barns stood on the farm. A large cider-mill house, sheds, wood houses, etc etc. The situation was truly rural and delightful; large improved fields lay open to view on the north and south, and on the west, lay the beautiful rural and picturesque and retired farm, the dear spot of our infancy. [Does "retired farm" suggest an older house, perhaps a modest structure built by grandfather McPherson when he first arrived in New Boston? Which house was built in 1811? Which was painted red?]

[Daniel writes about the unfortunate disposition of the McPherson/Ferson homestead in New Boston.

James McPherson died in 1792; his wife Jennet died in 1804 at the age of 86, after she fell and "broke her thigh." When Jennet's son (and Daniel's uncle) Paul Ferson died, the property was willed to Stephen Ferson, Daniel's cousin, son of his aunt Sarah McPherson. It isn't clear from the memoir why the homestead wasn't left to Daniel's father James, who at age 60 was Jennet's oldest living son. The decision was made with advice from "the most learned Magistrate of the Township"; it is possible that Daniel was being sarcastic.]

Stephen Ferson was then a very steady industrious young man... After he came into possession of the property, worth 5 or 6 thousand dollars, things appeared to move in the old ancient track for a short time, but soon after this, he was elected as an officer in the Militia, which in those days was considered quite an honor, although quite an expensive one that prevailed of the officers treating the Militia to rum and loaf sugar. This appeared to be the first step in the

downward road to him. He had no military turn at all and the habitual use of rum on muster days caught him in the trap that thousands and tens of thousands have fallen to. It was soon discovered that Intemperance had gained the ascendancy over him. He married, and unfortunately to a person of an unhappy, unpleasant disposition. This instead of lightening his afflictions only added to them... He thought of speculation to clear him of his difficulties; borrowed money and bought cattle; made nothing; went into the lumbering business; sunk money; intemperance still gained on him; he borrowed more money but failed in most of his speculations; he sold off part of his stock and farming utensils; this impoverished the farm; things now were a gloomy aspect indeed; he borrowed more money and mortgaged his farm. He still worked hard, was a kind, affectionate and honest man. The interest of his money was now so great that all prospect of keeping the farm was gone and in the year 1814, he was obliged to sell the old farm to a Mr. Dodge for \$3700 and forever quit the dear old home of the early days. Thus passed away the farm of our worthy and highly respected grandparents, a farm certainly obtained with much difficulty, where peace, happiness, virtue, and piety resided while our forefathers lived.

---

What became of Daniel Ferson's memoirs?

Daniel and Catherine Ferson had four children, including *Gilbert White Ferson* (1830-1905).



*Gilbert* and his wife *Mary Jane* had seven children, including *Alpha Hortense Ferson Dellitt* (1861-1901), *Jessie May Ferson Spink* (1864-1898), and *Royal S. Ferson* (1871-1953).

*Gilbert's* daughter (Daniel's granddaughter) *Jessie May Ferson* copied Daniel's memoir April 16, 1891, while employed at the Red Jacket Mfg. Co. at Davenport, Iowa. (Note: this company manufactured water pumps, not red jackets.)

*Jessie's* manuscript was typed by *Royal's* daughter *Eugenia M Ferson* (1899-1988).

The typed document went to *Alpha's* daughter *Vivian Eleanor Dellitt Townsend* (1891-1981) and then to her daughter *Vivian Townsend Tinker* (1921-2013) by 1991.