

SHEPARDSON—A FAMILY STORY.

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£ 1906?

SOMETIME in the year 1628-9, from what ship no record remains to tell, Daniel Shepardson landed at Salem, Mass., being one of a numerous company who sought homes in America at that period of English history. A tradition indicates that he was accompanied by his brother, John, who was very soon killed in a dispute by a spade thrown at him by an adversary. The location of "Old Naumkeag" did not suit some of the immigrants, who moved to Charlestown, where Daniel Shepardson is recorded as a citizen in 1632. He was not one of the wealthy members of the Puritan body, but was a craftsman, a blacksmith by trade.

"Since the birth of time, throughout all ages and nations,
Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by the people."

He was not an educated man, but he had so much company in that plight among the early Americans, that it is not specially to his discredit that his will is acknowledged by a cross, with "the marke of Daniell Sheopardson" beneath it. Like most of the Puritans he was intensely superstitious, a believer in signs and omens, and when one day, as he was working at his forge, a stone fell from it and crumbled into powder, he recognized the evil portent and gave to his wife the nails which he was just making, saying, "They will come in handy some day." The nails were kept, and when he died, 26 July, 1644, they were used in the making of his coffin.

He had a comfortable home with three acres of ground around it, his blacksmith shop, and fifty acres of pasture and meadow land, scattered here and there, so that his widow, Joanna, who had the use of the property during her lifetime, was quite well fixed for a woman of the day. His family comprised a son, Daniel, and two daughters, Lydia and Joanna.

When the children were ready to marry, Daniel married Elizabeth Call; his sister, Lydia, married Elizabeth's brother, Thomas Call, Jr.; and after the death of their father, their mother, Joanna Shepardson, married the father of the Call children, Thomas Call, Sr., so that the relationships became a little mixed.

The second Daniel followed the trade of his father, making his home at Malden, Mass., perhaps moving later to Attleboro. He had three sons, the eldest of course being named Daniel. John and Nathaniel lived to have families of their own, but the third Daniel was a soldier, a lieutenant in the Ninth Massachusetts Infantry, who went to Canada in 1690 and was never heard of again, a type of many who perished in

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the colonial wars of the English against the French. Daniel the father lived to be quite old, and as "Old Goodman Daniel Shepardson" figured to some extent in the courts. In some way his property became involved, and was saved after considerable outlay.

Nathaniel Shepardson, of Attleboro, Mass., represented the third generation. His wife was named Mary, and his children were at least five in number, recognized in the town records as "Shepparson," "Shepperson" and "Sheppardson" in addition to the family accepted "Shepardson." Two of the children were Jonathan, and his brother John, four years younger. Jonathan married Abigail Fuller, and moved away from Attleboro to Cumberland, R. I., and later to Templeton, Mass. John married Abigail Richardson, and moved to Ash Swamp, Conn. These two lines are indicated, because of a question often asked in Granville, "What relation is 'Deacon' Shepardson to 'Doctor' Shepardson?" The genealogical history of these families follows:

1. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, blacksmith of Charlestown, Mass., coming from Salem. Admitted to the Church in Charlestown 8 June, 1633. Removed to Malden, where he died 26 July, 1644. His wife was Joanna —, maiden name and date of marriage unknown. She survived her husband and married (2) Thomas Call, Sr. She died 30 January, 1661. Children:

- i. LYDIA SHEPARDSON, bapt. 24 July, 1637; m. (1) Thomas Call, Jr.; (2) Thomas Skinner. Child, Joanna.
- ii. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, bapt. 14 June, 1641.
- iii. JOANNA SHEPARDSON, bapt. 13 March, 1642; m. November, 1641, Roger Kennicut of Malden, and later removed to Swanzey. Children, Joanna, Lydia and John.

2. DANIEL SHEPARDSON (*Daniel*¹) succeeded his father as blacksmith at Malden. He was a freeman of Middlesex County, Mass., 29 May, 1674, and took the oath of fidelity 15 December, 1674. He married, 11 April, 1668, Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Call, Sr., and widow of Mr. Samuel Tingley of Malden. Toward the end of life he moved to Attleboro, where he was known as "old goodman Daniel Shepardson." He died 11 March, 1691. Children:

- i. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, bapt. June, 1669; lieutenant in 9th Mass. Regt. against Canada in 1691 and never heard from afterwards. He may have married and had son John, b. 22 July, 1685, d. 15 October, 1685.
- ii. JOHN SHEPARDSON, bapt. January, 1671.
- iii. NATHANIEL SHEPARDSON, bapt. 28 October, 1680.
- iv. ELIZABETH SHEPARDSON; m. Robert Fuller, 19 January, 1699.
- v. MARY SHEPARDSON; m. Joseph Ingraham, 11 April, 1700.
- vi. JOANNA SHEPARDSON; m. John Fuller, 22 December, 1701.

3. NATHANIEL SHEPARDSON (*Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) may have moved from Attleboro, Mass., to Rehoboth, where two of his children were baptized, although all are recorded in Attleboro. His wife was Mary —. From similarity of names and some other circumstances, he may be the one referred to on page 236 of "Hinman's Connecticut Settlers" as "Nathaniel Shippason, widow Mary, of Hebron, estate £207. He died 1718. Children were Jonathan, Nathaniel, John, Elizabeth, Mary, Mercy, Joanna, and others." Children recorded in Attleboro:

- 4. i. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON, b. 29 September, 1706.
- ii. NATHANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 26 March, 1708.
- iii. ELIZABETH SHEPARDSON, } b. 12 May, 1710.
- iv. MARY SHEPARDSON, }
- 5. v. JOHN SHEPARDSON, b. 25 June, 1712.

4. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON (*Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) lived most of his life in Attleboro, Mass., and may have spent some time in Cumberland, R. I., before settling in Templeton, Mass., where he died in 1790. He married in Attleboro, Abigail, daughter of John and Elizabeth Fuller, who was born 22 April 1717. Joseph Shepardson, who gathered extensive notes about the family, all of which were destroyed by fire before publication, reports that Jonathan's wife, "Merriam, died in 1771 very aged," and says children were Jonathan, born 3 January, 1735, Nathaniel and Joanna. The Attleboro records show no other Jonathan of this generation who might be confused with this line, and show children:

- i. NATHANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 18 June, 1731; lived in Cumberland, R. I.
- ii. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON, b. 21 May, 1732; d. early.
6. iii. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON, b. 19 January, 1734; perhaps d. early and name given to son b. 3 January, 1735.
- iv. ABIGAIL SHEPARDSON, b. 17 April, 1736.
- v. MARY SHEPARDSON, b. 10 October, 1743, d. 30 March, 1745.
- vi. MARY SHEPARDSON, b. 1 May, 1746, d. 31 March, 1752.

Perhaps also:

- vii. JOANNA SHEPARDSON; m. 6 December, 1781, John Christianmillar.

5. JOHN SHEPARDSON (*Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) married Abigail Richardson and had children born in Ash Swamp, later called Adams, Conn. No record of these children except—

7. i. WILLIAM SHEPARDSON.

6. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON (*Jonathan*,⁴ *Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) married in Attleboro, Mass., Miriam, daughter of Isaac and Sarah (Carpenter) Follett, who was born 11 February, 1733-4. In 1768 the family moved to Templeton, Mass., having possibly lived a while in Cumberland, R. I. They removed in 1790 to Royalston, Mass. They both died the same day, 3 December, 1804. Children:

- i. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON, b. 23 April, 1758.
- ii. REBECCA SHEPARDSON, b. 30 November, 1759; m. — Pratt.
- iii. MIRIAM SHEPARDSON, b. 1 September, 1761.
- iv. JOANNA SHEPARDSON, b. 22 February, 1765.
- v. RACHEL SHEPARDSON, b. 6 February, 1767.
- vi. BEULAH SHEPARDSON, b. 28 May, 1769.
- vii. ABIGAIL SHEPARDSON, } b. June 1, 1771. Abigail m. — Higgins.
- viii. ISAAC SHEPARDSON, }
- ix. JOHN SHEPARDSON, b. 23 October, 1773.
8. x. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 6 October, 1775.

8. WILLIAM SHEPARDSON (*John*,⁴ *Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) probably lived in Ash Swamp (or Adams), Conn., before removing to Vermont. Children:

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| i. WILLIAM SHEPARDSON. | 9. vi. ANCEL SHEPARDSON, b. 14 January, 1759. |
| ii. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON. | vii. ABIGAIL SHEPARDSON. |
| iii. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, d. without issue. | viii. MOLLY SHEPARDSON. |
| iv. ISAAC SHEPARDSON. | ix. HEPSIBAH SHEPARDSON. |
| v. OTIS SHEPARDSON. | |

8. DANIEL SHEPARDSON (*Jonathan*,⁵ *Jonathan*,⁴ *Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) lived in Royalston, Mass. Farmer. Married, 9 September, 1801, Prudence, daughter of David and Elizabeth (—) Cook. She died 24 June, 1858, aged 78. He died 5 May, 1856. Children:

- i. JONATHAN SHEPARDSON, b. 23 November, 1802, d. 18 January, 1875.
- ii. PRUDENCE SHEPARDSON, b. 12 August, 1804; m. William Moore; d. 26 June, 1877.
- iii. LITY SHEPARDSON, b. 19 April, 1806, d. 5 June, 1820.
- iv. ELIZA SHEPARDSON, b. 4 April, 1808; m. Charles Moore; d. —,
- v. DAVID COOK SHEPARDSON, b. 31 May, 1810, d. 7 September, 1813.
- vi. MILLIE SHEPARDSON, b. 23 March, 1812; m. George Moore, Athol, Mass.; d. 1893.
10. vii. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 27 July, 1813.
- viii. DAVID COOK SHEPARDSON, b. 2 October, 1815, d. 1893.
- ix. JOHN SHEPARDSON, b. 12 April, 1820, d. 14 December, 1889.
- x. ERI SHEPARDSON, b. 10 September, 1821, d. 5 March, 1895.

9. ANCEL SHEPARDSON (*William*,⁵ *John*,⁴ *Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹) married, 25 July, 1782, Charlotte Colgrove, who was born 20 February, 1762, and died 23 February, 1850. He died 9 February, 1840. They lived in Middletown, Rutland County, Vt., and in Fairfax, Franklin County. Children:

- i. CLARISSA SHEPARDSON, b. 27 January, 1788, d. 30 August, 1839, in Granville, Ohio.
- ii. ASA SHEPARDSON, b. 12 December, 1784, d. 14 August, 1812, in Delaware Co., Ohio.
11. iii. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 27 September, 1787.
- iv. DAVID SHEPARDSON, b. 25 October, 1790, d. 15 December, 1791.
- v. ANCEL SHEPARDSON, b. 10 July, 1793, d. 21 March, 1875, in Fairfax, Vt.
- vi. JOEL SHEPARDSON, b. 28 June, 1796, d. 25 December, 1859, in Vermont.
- vii. LORINDA SHEPARDSON, b. 23 April, 1800.
- viii. CALISTA SHEPARDSON, b. 10 February, 1806, d. 13 August, 1891, in Alexandria, O.

10. DANIEL SHEPARDSON (*Daniel*,⁶ *Jonathan*,⁵ *Jonathan*,⁴ *Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹), born in Royalston, Worcester County, Mass., was the first of the family name in America to attend college, spending two years at Amherst College and two years at Brown University. Alpha Delta Phi. Did not graduate, but received honorary degree of Master of Arts from Granville College (now Denison University) in 1846 and same degree from Brown University in 1853, also the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Lewisburg (now Bucknell University) in 1872. Moved to Ohio in 1841, traveling by stage to Albany, thence by packet boat on the Erie Canal thirteen days and nights to Buffalo, thence six more days by lake and Ohio Canal to Newark, Licking County. Baptist minister in Zanesville, Cincinnati, Cheviot and Piqua. Principal of Woodward High School, Cincinnati, 1853-1862, and for sixteen years member of Board of Examiners and Inspectors of Schools in that city. Principal of the Young Ladies' Institute, Granville, Ohio, 1868-1887, and founder of Shepardson College, the women's department of Denison University. Member of Board of Trustees of Denison University 1843-1860 and 1880-1899. He died in Granville, 9 December, 1899. He married, (1) 1840, in Sandisfield, Mass., Harriet S. Wilcox, who died in Newark, Ohio, August, 1841; (2) 1 December, 1842, Harriet Bestor Beard of Zanesville, Ohio, who died in Cincinnati 9 June, 1853; (3) 18 June, 1854, Eliza Ann, daughter of James Rogers and Hannah (Mulloy) Smart, who was born 21 March, 1835, in Orange, Meigs County, Ohio. Children:

- i. Infant son, b. August, 1841, d. same month.
- ii. MARY SHEPARDSON, d. in infancy.
- iii. HARRIET JULIA SHEPARDSON, b. 29 April, 1852; m. 1 February, 1876, James Murdoch of Oneida, Ill.; d. 9 March, 1879. Two children.
- iv. HANNAH SHEPARDSON, b. 28 January, 1855, d. 20 February, 1855.
- v. MARY ELLA SHEPARDSON, b. 3 May, 1856; m. 28 October, 1882, H. Sterling Pomeoy of Sommers, Mass.; now resides in Boston, Mass. Six children.
- vi. ELIZA DAVIS SHEPARDSON, b. 26 October, 1858; m. 26 October, 1881, Charles Allen Marsh of Chicago, Ill.; d. 22 April, 1889. Four children.
- vii. JO HANNAH SHEPARDSON, b. 3 January, 1860; m. 12 December, 1883, Francis Wilthorne of Granville, Ohio; now resides Portsmouth, Va. Five children.
- viii. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 2 July, 1861, d. 15 August, 1861.
- ix. FRANCIS WAYLAND SHEPARDSON, b. 15 October, 1862; m. 3 September, 1884, Cora Lenore Whitcomb of Clinton, Ind.; Professor of American History in the University of Chicago.
- x. GEORGE DEFREES SHEPARDSON, b. 20 November, 1861; m. 31 August, 1892, Harriet King of King's Mills, Ohio; Professor of Electrical Engineering in the University of Minnesota.
- xi. DANIEL SHEPARDSON, b. 1 December, 1868; m. 27 August, 1895, Mary Belle Smith of Newark, Ohio; d. 25 November, 1903, in Honolulu, H. I.
- xii. JOHN ERNEST SHEPARDSON, b. 26 October, 1877; Instructor in Science in Dixon Academy, Covington, La.

11. DANIEL SHEPARDSON (*Ancel*,⁶ *William*,⁵ *John*,⁴ *Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹), born in Middletown, Rutland County, Vt. Millwright at Fairfax, Vt. Removed with his family to Granville, Ohio, September, 1813, making the journey in a wagon and being forty days on the road. Served as superintendent of construction on Ohio Canal, 1825-6; constituent member of Granville Baptist Church, and deacon from its organization until his death,

November, 1866. Member of Board of Trustees of Denison University 1831-1866, and superintendent of construction of its first buildings. He married, (1) 12 July, 1807, Prudence, daughter of Daniel Morse of Fairfax, Vt. She was born in Dublin, N. H., 19 September, 1784, and died in Granville, Ohio, 25 March, 1835. (2) 26 November, 1835, Mrs. Mary (Devenney) Dilley, daughter of Cornelius Devenney. She was born 11 April, 1805, in Berkeley County, Va., and died in Granville, Ohio, 5 June, 1850. (3) 7 July, 1852, Mrs. Pamela Barlow, widow of Rev. Julius Barlow of Fredonia, Ohio. Children, all by first wife:

- i. LUCETTA SHEPARDSON, b. 28 September, 1808; m. David Woods; lived in Williams Co., Ohio.
- ii. PERRIN SHEPARDSON, b. 30 July, 1810.
- iii. ABIGAIL SHEPARDSON, b. 26 November, 1812; m. Gardner Woods; lived in Jersey, Ohio.
- iv. HARRIET SHEPARDSON, b. 22 February, 1815; m. Hiram Pruden; lived in Jersey, Ohio.
- v. NANCY A. SHEPARDSON, b. 6 November, 1817; unm.; d. in Granville, Ohio.
- vi. ELVIRA SHEPARDSON, b. 3 February, 1820; m. Rev. D. D. Walden; d. 8 January, 1865, in Hillsdale Co., Mich.
- vii. DANIEL MORSE SHEPARDSON, b. 11 July, 1822, d. 27 July, 1821.
12. viii. DANIEL MORSE SHEPARDSON, b. 2 February, 1825.

12. DANIEL MORSE SHEPARDSON (*Daniel*,⁷ *Ancel*,⁶ *William*,⁵ *John*,⁴ *Nathaniel*,³ *Daniel*,² *Daniel*¹), born in Granville, Ohio; was a farmer there until he retired from active labor. Succeeded his father as deacon of the Granville Baptist Church. Member of the Board of Trustees of Denison University since 1863. Has been one of the prominent citizens of Granville for many years. He married, 8 November, 1848, Abby L., daughter of Jatham W. and Lucy H. (Chilson) Durant. She was born in Vermont, 1 October, 1827, and died in Granville, 14 May, 1904. Children:

- i. ESMAN C. SHEPARDSON, b. 25 January, 1850; m. Rev. Alfred S. Orcutt.
- ii. LUCY P. SHEPARDSON, b. 8 October, 1866; m. Milan P. Ashbrook.

It is a curious illustration of the movement of American families that the descendants of two sons of an Attleboro, Mass., family should meet in Granville, Ohio, after living, the one in Connecticut and Vermont, and the other in Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

Now, another feature of American life is admirably illustrated by this same family. Again and again, when looking up family records, genealogists have come face to face with a blank wall in the shape of an entry, "Went West," in the family Bible. That closed the records, for in the days of poor and expensive mail facilities, family ties were often rudely snapped asunder. The first Daniel Shepardson did not like the looks of things at Salem, so he went to Charlestown. His son pushed on to Malden, and then to Attleboro, then on the frontier and a long way from Boston. In the fourth generation the sons Jonathan and John had the moving spirit, the former going to Cumberland, R. I., and then to Templeton, Mass., the latter going far into the wilderness of Connecticut. Among the children of John Shepardson, who lived at Ash Swamp, now East Adams, Conn., was a son William, one of whose children was Ancel. He did not like the aspect in Connecticut, and so plunged into the woods, going to the very jumping-off place, the region called Vermont in after days. In time a son Ancel was born to him, who had a brother Daniel. The son Ancel, "Deacon" Ancel Shepardson, of Fairfax, Vt., had a conversation with a cousin of mine, some forty years ago, in

which he told how his father, when he himself was very young, rode horseback from Vermont to Connecticut to see his relations there. About the time of this interview, my cousin met a certain Sally Shepardson in Bosra, Conn. She told how an uncle named Ancel had left the rest of the family and gone to Vermont, or rather "up country," as she expressed it. She had never heard of the second Ancel, neither had the second Ancel heard of his first cousin Sally, and when Ancel's brother, Daniel, moved West and became the first "Deacon" Shepardson of Granville, Ohio, the ties of relationship were still further strained, so that in 1876, when a sketch of the Shepardson family was published in the History of Licking County, it was stated that little was known of William and his family.

Paul, in writing to Timothy, took occasion to speak against "endless genealogies," but Paul never had any experience in tracing an American family. In the years during which I have paid more or less attention to details of family history, I have been surprised at the side lights upon the history of my country which have been thrown from genealogical research. For example, in the story just told, one notes the superstition of the colonist which led witches to the gallows, and took cognizance of every abnormal birth as a portent from on high. One recalls the aristocracy of the day, which reserved the title "Master," or "Mr." as we write it, for those of wealth or special distinction, the commonality being known as "Goodman." One sees the fearful and wonderful orthography of the early writers, which marked public records and private communications with "horrid false spells." One follows the restless, moving spirit of the day, which drove the Indians back into the interior, which opened Connecticut, New Hampshire and Vermont to settlement, and which, after a time, pointed the way westward across the wilderness and beyond the mountains, until Ohio and Indiana and Illinois, and then Iowa and the far Western States even to the Pacific, began to fill up with the children and children's children of the men who came to Salem and other towns of New England in the first twenty years of New England settlement.

There are quite a number of people in Granville who are interested in genealogical research; there ought to be many more. It makes no difference whether the first American of a line had a coat of arms or not. He may not have had any kind of a coat; but if his descendants have helped to the upbuilding of the land we love, there will be intense satisfaction in following their wanderings from State to State, and greater satisfaction, if at the close of the study one can say with Cowper:

"My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, or rulers of the earth,
But higher yet my proud pretensions rise;
The child of parents passed into the skies."