

New Information on Some Descendants of William Ferguson (b. abt 1740, d. 1801) and Annie Henderson of Fairfield District, South Carolina

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This paper addresses William and Annie's son William (b. 26 Dec 1765, d. 20 Mar 1836 or 1837) and his relationship to Joseph Ferguson whose will was proved 11 Nov 1816 in Fairfield District, SC. To keep the Williams straight, I refer to them as William Sr. and Jr. It is concluded that Joseph is not a son of William Sr. but of William Jr.

The Clan Ferguson Society of North America has on file a genealogy of some of the descendants of William Ferguson Sr. and Annie Henderson of Fairfield District, SC.

The genealogy is reportedly based, at least in part, on a hand written document obtained by Shirley F. Doran, Genealogist, Clan Ferguson Society, in 1988 from Jean C. Agee of Chester Co., SC. The document purports to contain information from records and letters reviewed by Eula Ferguson Taylor, 207 W. Olive St., Portersville, California in May 1929. The material concludes with the following note: "Records taken from old family Bible and sent by Lydia (Ferguson) Atkins 1999 [1899?]. Old records verified and additional facts given by paper written by Elizabeth Ferguson, wife of Jacob Ferguson. Paper dated 1858. Copies [of] this record made on May 27, 1955 [1935?] by Elizabeth Ferguson Roberson [Koberson?] at 289 West Olive Street, Portersville, Calif."

This genealogy shows Joseph as a son of William Sr.

Documents concerning William Jr. and his children and grandchildren were discovered a number of years ago in boxes in the attic of a building in Edgefield, SC. These documents were made available to the public in recent years and are held by the Edgefield County Archives, 124 Courthouse Square, Edgefield, South Carolina, 29824.

I have reviewed some of the documents mentioned in the preceding paragraph, including William Jr.'s will and marriage contract with his second wife, Rebecca. The remarriage of Rebecca after William Jr.'s death spawned a great deal of litigation in Edgefield, and the papers filed in that litigation clearly identify 7 of William Jr.'s 8 children and 6 of his grandchildren. The names of the 7 children match the names of the siblings mentioned by Joseph in his will; thus it must be that Joseph is the 8th child of William Jr.

What follows is a description of those documents as well as other publicly available information that is consistent with the genealogy of some of the descendants of William Ferguson Sr. and Annie Henderson that I set out below.

In *History of Edgefield County from the Earliest Settlements to 1897*, John A. Chapman writes that after the Revolutionary War, many Tories came to Edgefield from the Catawba and Broad River sections of South Carolina. According to Chapman, included among them were the brothers William and Abram Ferguson. Chapman incorrectly identifies these men as brothers of the British military leader, Patrick Ferguson, who was killed at King's Mountain.

The areas called Chester District and Fairfield District between 1800 and 1868, lie between the Catawba and Broad Rivers a little north of Edgefield. These districts were home to early Fergusons who migrated to South Carolina from Virginia.

Chapman reports in his book that William and Abram Ferguson owned Mickler and Denny Plantations,

near Saluda, SC, and that they are buried at Denny's across the road from the store. I visited the area a few years ago and stopped someone who lived in the vicinity. They knew of the graves described by Chapman and took me to the grave site. There were no markers, but I observed grave depressions at the site.

The 1820 Edgefield Census has Wm Ferguson, 2M 16-26, 1M 45 or older, 1F 45 or older. This is William Ferguson Jr. and his first wife, Unknown, the mother of all his children.

There is a marriage contract dated 10 Oct 1827, between William Ferguson and Rebecca Crowder, both of Edgefield District, South Carolina.

The will of William Furgerson Jr. of the State of South Carolina & District of Edgefield, dated 25 Dec 1831, references the 10 Oct 1827 marriage contract and leaves William Jr.'s real and personal property to his wife Rebecah so long as she continues to live in a state of widowhood. After her death or marriage, William's property is to go to his lawful heirs living in the United States of N. America, with limited exceptions. The will names Abraham Ferguson executor.

The 1830 Edgefield Census has W. Furgason, 1M 20 to 30, 1M 60 to 70, 1F 50 to 60. This is William and his second wife, Rebecca.

Rebecca Ferguson avers in an answer to a bill of complaint, sworn to and subscribed by her 29 Jun 1846 and filed in Equity in Edgefield, that William Ferguson died 20 Mar 1836 or 1837. Either date is consistent with the fact that William Jr.'s will was recorded in Edgefield on 26 Apr 1837 in WB D Pg 24.

A Bill for Relief filed 25 Mar 1846 in Edgefield, Equity 839, by John Ferguson et al., against Rebecca Ferguson O'Neill and Cullen O'Neill, states that the complainants, John Ferguson, Jincey M. Clark, Agnes Corley, Keziah Edwards and Anna Reeves are children of the deceased William Ferguson. The bill further states that Gideon, Lewis and Elizabeth Ferguson are the children of James H. Ferguson, deceased, and grandchildren of William Ferguson, and that Isiah, Martha and Abraham Ferguson are children of William H. Ferguson, deceased, and grandchildren of William Ferguson.

The 1840 Edgefield Census has Mary Furgurson, 2M 5 and under 10, 1F under 5 and 1F 40 to 50. This is Mary, the widow of James H. Ferguson and their three children, Gideon, Lewis and Elizabeth.

The 1840 Edgefield Census also has Rebecca Furgerson, the widow of William Jr., as a head of household.

The 1850 Edgefield Census has Mary Ferguson, head of household with Gideon, Lewis and Elizabeth.

A Bill of Partition filed 2 Jun 1847 in Edgefield Equity 712, Ferguson et al. v. Corley et al., states that sometime during the year 1846, Rebecca Ferguson married Cullen O'Neill. The complainants are identified as John Ferguson, Jincey M. Clark, Kiziah Edwards, and Anna Reeves, children of the deceased William Ferguson; Jesse Edwards, husband of Keziah; James B. Reeves, husband of Anna; Gideon, Lewis and Elizabeth Ferguson, children of the deceased James H. Ferguson and grandchildren of the deceased William Ferguson; and Isaiah, Martha and Abraham Ferguson, children of the deceased William H. Ferguson and grandchildren of the deceased William Ferguson.

Answers to this Bill of Partition filed by Rebecca, Cullen O'Neill and Agnes Corley admit that the complainants are children and grandchildren of William Ferguson as described in the Bill of Partition.

The will of Joseph Ferguson dated 22 Mar 1816, proved 11 Nov 1816, and recorded in Fairfield District Will Book 7, Page 93 on 16 May 1817, leaves the property of Joseph to his named brothers and sisters, John Ferguson, Agnes Ferguson, Anna Reves, Keziah Ferguson, Wm H. Ferguson, J.H. Ferguson and Jancey M. Ferguson. Abraham Ferguson is named executor. A transcript of Joseph's will

is attached hereto.

Before turning to the genealogy of certain of the descendants of William Ferguson, Sr., that is the focus of this paper, it will be noted that both William Jr. and Joseph Ferguson named an Abraham as their executor. The writer has not been successful in either case in establishing the identity of Abraham, the executor.

It is widely held that William Jr. had a brother, Abraham. As noted above, Chapman states in his history of Edgefield that the brothers William and Abram came to the Edgefield area following the Revolutionary War and owned the Mickler and Denny Plantations near Saluda, South Carolina. Chapman further states that Abram predeceased William and that they are both buried at Denny's Crossroad.

The Thursday, August 5, 1824, edition of the City Gazette, Charleston, SC, posted the following obituary:

"In Fairfield District, SC on the 20th ult. Mr Abraham Ferguson."

A grave located approximately 2 miles north of the Hunter House outside Ridgeway, SC, the former home of Anna Ferguson, an heir of Abraham Ferguson believed to be his illegitimate daughter, contains the following inscription:

"Sacred to the memory of Abram Ferguson who departed this life 20th July 1824 in the 51st year of his age. The memory of the just is blessed."

The grave of Abram Ferguson is adjacent to a grave marked with a stone inscribed "Sacred to the memory of William Ferguson." Some speculate that this is the grave of William Ferguson Sr.

An Abraham Ferguson who lived near Ridgeway, SC in Fairfield District prior to his death in 1824, names in his will dated 12 Jul 1824 and recorded in Fairfield District 6 Dec 1824, his brothers William and Jacob, sisters Myriana Lumkin, Annes Turbevill and Anna, and Keziah Edwards, child of William his brother. Thus, it appears that Abraham did predecease his brother William and could not have been the Abraham who William Jr. named as his executor. This Abraham may be the person named executor in the will of his nephew, Joseph Ferguson who died in 1816. He may well have owned a plantation in Edgefield, but it appears that he did not live there at the time of his death in 1824.

There is ample evidence of William Jr.'s presence in the Edgefield area as early as the 1800 census. The writer has found no evidence, other than statements by Chapman in his book, that Abraham lived in the vicinity of Edgefield.

I believe that the genealogy for certain of the descendants of William Ferguson Jr., son of William Ferguson Sr. and Annie Henderson, is as follows:

William Ferguson, b. bet 1760 and 1770, d. 20 Mar 1836 or 1837, married first Unknown. The writer is exploring whether this Unknown is Mourning Ferguson. Their children were

1. John Ferguson, d. aft 2 Jun 1847
2. James Hiram Ferguson, d. bef 2 Jun 1847, married Mary (Maynard, Culbreath or Edwards?), b. abt 1798, d. aft 15 Jan 1849. Their children were:
 - i. Gideon Ferguson, b. abt 1832
 - ii. Lewis Ferguson, b. abt 1834
 - iii. Elizabeth Ferguson, b. abt 1836

Note: A Petition for Guardianship filed by Lewis and Elizabeth in Edgefield Equity 2562, 15 Jan 1849, asks that Wesley Culbreath, cousin of the petitioners, be appointed their guardian. Mary Ferguson, mother of the petitioners, consents to the appointment, and Westley Culbreath accepts the appointment. There is a Westley Culbreath, b. 1811 Edgefield, d. 1880 Baker, GA, son of Edward Culbreath, b. 1788 Edgefield, d. 2 Jun 1868, Edgefield, and Elizabeth Maynard Culbreath, b. 1791 Edgefield, d. 4 Jun 1880 Baker, GA.

3. Jincey/Jancey M. Ferguson, d. aft 2 Jun 1847, married Unknown Clark, d. bef 2 Jun 1847.
4. Annes/Agnes Ferguson, d. aft 2 Jun 1847, married Unknown Corley.
5. Keziah Ferguson, d. aft 2 Jun 1847, married Jesse Edwards, d. aft 2 Jun 1847.
6. Anna Ferguson, d. aft 2 Jun 1847, married James B. Reeves, d. aft 2 Jun 1847.
7. William H. Ferguson, d. bef 25 Mar 1846, married Unknown. Their children were:
 - i. Isaiah Ferguson
 - ii. Martha Ferguson
 - iii. Abraham Ferguson
8. Joseph Ferguson, d. 1816

WILL OF

JOSEPH FUGERSON

Fairfield District
And State of South Carolina

In the Name of God Amen

I Joseph Ferguson of the above Dist and State being in my perfect Sences and right mind do make this my will and testament (being about to Start a Journey) namely I leave my Earthly property what it has pleased God to give to me I leave Ito my Brothers and Sifters Namely Keziah and Wm H. and James H. and Jancey M. Ferguson the whole of my earthly property to be Equelly devided among them – Excepting all my cloths I give to my brothers above mentioned & fifty dollars to Anna Reves & fifty dollars to John Ferguson & fifty dollars to Agnes Ferguson my sister, after this one hundred and fifty dollars is divided between my Sister ann Reves and John Ferguson my Brother and Agnefs my Sister – then the rest or whole of my property Equel, devided amgnst my above mecend Brothers and Sisters Viz Kezianh & Wm H. and J H and Jancey M Ferguson – I want as much as possible of this property to be laid out Economically on the Education or tuetion of the above metioned Schold in I leave Abaham Ferguson my Executor where unto I Set my hand hand this 22 day of Mach in the year of Lord one Thousand Eight hun- and Sixteen & forheth year of the independency of the united States of a Macary

Joseph Ferguson
Proved Nov. 11, 1816
Jno Buchanan J C P
Recorded in Book No. 7
May 16, 1817 Page 93
Apt. 15 File 167