Watson, J. ‘Daniel De Foe’. *Notes and Queries. 4th Series. II* (17 October 1868): 373

Daniel De Foe: At a banquet given to the Corporation by the Mayor of Halifax on Tuesday evening, one of the speakers, James Bowman, Esq., J. P. and Borough Treasurer, in speaking of old Halifax worthies, said that Daniel De Foe lived for some time in Halifax, and there, in a street called Cheapside, wrote his celebrated work *Robinson Crusoe*. As the same assertion has been publicly made before, and is, I believe, inserted in one of the local histories, will you or any of your readers be able to adduce any proof of the above assertion with respect to De Foe’s having written his now celebrated work in Halifax?

J. Watson
Halifax

[There is no reason to doubt that Dr Watson, the author of the *History of Halifax* (1775) is correct as to one fact, stated on p. 471 of his work, namely, that Daniel Defoe resided for some time at the Rose and Crown, Back Lane, in that town: how long we cannot say, but probably some portion of the latter part of the year 1712. Watson, however, is obviously in error when he states that Defoe there wrote his poem *Jure Divino*, which was published in 1706, and equally so in stating that in Halifax he wrote his celebrated work *Robinson Crusoe*, which was not published until 1719.

Halifax is by no means alone in claiming to have been the birthplace of this work. Among other claimants of the honour is Gateshead in Durham; the Tower of London; a house in Harrow Alley, Whitechapel Market; and a cottage in the little village of Hartley in Kent. We have every reason to believe that Defoe wrote this famed work in the study of his own house at Stoke Newington; and we know that this is the conviction of our valued correspondent Mr William Lee.

The only works Defoe is likely to have written in Halifax are two pamphlets, *A Seasonable Caution against the Insinuations of Papists and Jacobites in favour of the Pretender*; and, *Hannibal at the Gates; or, the Progress of Jacobitism. With the Present Danger of the Pretender*. We believe that the Rose and Crown at Halifax no longer exists.]