

Letter #15

Chicago, ILL  
2127 Jackson Place  
May 9, 1912

Messrs,

A.W. Griffin, 561 So 26<sup>th</sup> Ave., Omaha, Neb  
R Griffen, Esq., Brunswick, Mo., and  
Charles Griffen, Grassland, ILLs.

I sent the following genealogical table, or sketch, to friend R. Griffen, of Brunswick, MO.,  
“Rough Table -

1. Edward (lorwerth) Griffen, of flushing, L.I.
2. John, of flushing.
3. Benjamin, of Mamaroneck, N.Y. – died, in 1731
4. Benjamin, of Mamaroneck, N.Y.
5. Jacob, of Poughkeepsie Precinct, Dutchess, Co., N.Y. he is listed in the Census of April 29, 1783 there. Also in the Census of 1790. Jacob Griffen, farmer, of Rumbout Precinct, Dutchess Co., N.Y. is a witness Feb 19, 1772 and June 14, 1786  
Note – in the confiscation of loyalists estates, Oct. 21, 1778, are “Ferden”, and “Fredon”, Jacobod – also “Disbrow”, Josiah”, – Dutchess Co. This would indicate that Letitia Ferdon’s people in Dutchess Co. were Tories.
6. Jacob Griffen, of Clinton, Dutchess, Co., N.Y. – then went with his family to Westerlo, Albany, Co, N.Y.
7. Joseph, – 7. Abraham, -- 7. Isaac – 7. Jacob

and I asked Morganza; Did you ever hear of a tradition as to any of your ancestors – male or female, in Dutchess C., N.Y. being loyalists, or tories? And requested hin to return same, to me with his comments.

He replied, on May 5 - 1912, thus:

“ I return with this, as requested, yours of recent date; you ask if I have ever heard that any of my ancestors were Tories during the Revolution, and in reply will say that I never did hear of any such – it is possible, however, that there may have been tories in my line. My parents were very strong Americans, and did not have any affection for England”.

You also wish my comments upon my line of descent, as you have tabled. As I have stated before, what information I have points strongly to John, the youngest son of Edward, but as to which of his sons, does not appear strong enough to decide. My own judgement has pointed more strongly to Jacob, than Benjamin.

Now as to spelling the name: My father (Abraham 7) and Uncle Isaac- 7, with whom I was more intimately acquainted than uncle Jacob, always claimed that they were “Griffens” – not” Griffins”.

Now it would seem to me that is Jacob Griffin of Poughkeepsie, was my greatgrandfather, that grandfather would have spelled his name “Griffin” and likewise my Father’s cousin John of Westerlo, who also was a Griffen. Then again only a short time before my Bro. Thaddeus death, he told me that grandfather had two brothers, and that one of them moved from Dutchess Co, with grandfather, to Albany, Co., and the other brother went south, and that all traces of him had been lost. This conversation was the result of a letter which Thad had sometime previously received from a Griffen in Omaha, who claimed some relationship to him (Thaddeus), and Thaddeus said this man spelled his name as we do and that he might possibly be a descendant of grandfather’s brother, who went south. Now this Jacob Griffin, of Poughkeepsie had more than three sons, and if Thad understood it correctly – he could not be the man we are hunting for - besides these sons were all under the age of 16, in the Census of 1790, while grandfather was older than that in 1790. However one of your letters says over 18, which, if right, and was only three, instead of four, would point more strongly to him.

My opinion is that greatgrandfather Griffen was Joseph, and greatgrandfather Fardon, was Abraham.

It would seem to me that if grandmother was a Fardon, that the inscription on her tombstone would be so spelled, but it reads; Lettitia Fardon, wife of Jacob Griffen. This coupled with the fact that my impression has always been that grandmother was a citizen of New York City - which impression came from my mother as well as from my visit to New York City, when a child - would seem to indicate that the Ferdens of Poughkeepsie was not of her family. However, in a letter from Cousin Charles, some many months ago I think, before, or after the time your letter to brother Thaddeus was received, he stated the he thought grandmother’s people lived in Westchester county, N.Y. – whether he got that impression from his parents , or from someone that they left, I do not know.

In a letter from A. W. Griffin of Omaha, Neb., about two or three years ago, he stated that there was a Griffin in Ontario, of whom he had heard. He claimed to be of Welsh descent. And that he had moved from Fishkill. A. W. said he wished to know. If I knew anything about him. I do not know, but I surmised that this was grandfather’s brother, who moved from Dutchess Co with him and who was undoubtedly the father of my cousin John. I do not know what township Fishkill is in (Dutchess) but this would indicate that somewhere about Fishkill, we should look for my greatgrandfather.

Now you may, perhaps, think that I am rather dull and slow to see through a millstone – which is perhaps true – but you wished, as I understand it, my candid opinion of the matter, and I have endeavored to give it. The fact is I am very much - to use an old expression - at sea on this question, and it would make this letter to long to give it all the reasons or impressions, and you will undoubtedly get tired, before you get through with this - but bear in mind that I am an old goat in the family.

Truly your friend,  
Z. Griffen

Now, I don’t want to be butted off the bridge, completely, so I will go ahead and quote from some of

the records in our great genealogical Newbury Library, and help my good friend out on the sea a little. I do the best arguments that I have run across in years on this subject, and here it is for any fortunate for him and others to crack, and digest, and give me their candid opinions, which will refresh me greatly.

As to the Griffin, Griffen, Griffith, etc. and the Ferdon, Ferden, Fardan, etc. families. I quote from the N.Y. in the Revolution supplement –

Of the Revolutionary soldiers, whose names are spelled Griffen , and Barney, Benjamin, Hezekiah, Francis, Isaac, Jacob, a Lieut. Col. Jacob ,Jr. John, etc., Joseph – two of them -- Joshua, Peter, and the \_\_\_\_\_ take the “Griffeth” name - Aaron, Abraham, Jeremiah, Jonathan, \_\_\_\_\_, Justus, Thomas and two William Griffeths.’

And all Griffeths, Abraham. Griffeths and Barney Greffeths. Xxx

Of the “Griffin” spelling.

Aaron, Alexander, Barney, Benjamin, - three of them -Cornelius \_\_\_ and of them - Ebenezer, Isaac, Jacob, a Lieut. Col. James, John – eight of them. Joseph - three of them, Matthew, Michael, Peter, Ruben, and Stephen, an Ensign

Of the “Griffith” were –

Abram, Barney, Jeremiah, an Ensign, John, Joshua, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ Griffith.  
On page 41, in “Fardon, Abraham, Sergt-major.

The list of American soldiers , captured and \_\_\_\_\_ American commissary and quarter-master, made report, as to having \_\_\_\_\_, in British prisons– “ Fardon, Abr. Sergt. Maj.” also

“Fersden, Abr. Sergt. Maj.” (Probably the same person)

from P.H. Smith’s History of Dutchess Co., N.Y.

Page 41 –

A return made at the house of Jacob Griffin, Aug. 13, 1775, of person who signed the Association.

Of “Griffin” name – Jacob, Joseph, Cornelius, William, Joshua, John and Isaac.

Page 112. “Griffin, Thomas”, refused to sign, in Captain Griffin’s Company.

.