

Letter # 7

2127 Jackson Place
Chicago, ILL
Sept. 23, 1911

Mr. J.A. Griffin
14-16 Rebecca St
Hamilton, Ontario

Dear Sir,

Late card from you received. And in it you promise letter soon. But of late I have been digging at the English Patent Rolls the Welsh MS and from the MS published by the House of Lords in 1910. I have cleared up somewhat Jasper Griffing. Here is a copy of several records of him- he was an old book worm in Wales, and left his marginal notes on the Old Welsh MS in numerous cases. One of his descendants, some years later sent me the Jasper line - that is the father of Maj Jasper Griffin of Southold, LI as being "Jasper Griffith" in Wales. His mother was a Griffin however and his father a Huguenot [Huguenot] in New York and he seemed to be more interested in father's line than his mother or "Mum" line.

Here is my gleanings which I hope will also settle the question of that great ancestor Richard Griffith who fought at Bosworth in 1484. You must excuse the Welsh.

From Vol 1 Welsh Language of Lord Mostyn's

MS page 26 - now owned 1898 by Wm Robert Maurice Wynne of Periarth Towyn, Lord of the County of Merioneth, Constable of Harech Castle, Esquire.

MS 111 Cywyden a Phies Aryen, by W. Cywell in the Authors autograph from Glaidaithe Library - much injured- by coat of Arms:

1. Kowd moliant Richard Gruffydd o vfionyd a duc arvaw, Colw __ imperfect pawd drosto I hvh yhvn jaith doed vddyn mewn de usyddyd (1=95)
3. Title. Arms to the end torn away. Gorav/r mwyaf I geriod (1-3) ROBERT Wynn ar dem I d or penryn quir pwyn Renn (1-710 4 Chynan ddivwich he waid - folio torn away.

And to the said Richard Griffith of Bosworth Field Fame I find the following: (from Calender of Patent Rolls 17 of Edward IV part 82) Commission of Peace granted to Richard Griffith at Westminster the 23rd of Nov 1470. Also on Jan 23, 1471 a similar patent by Henry VI and another page 236 11 Edward IV part 1. 1471 page 26 to Richard Griffith. And before this on page 252 Calender of Patent Rolls by Henry VI on Feb 20, 1471, this the same Peace Patent was granted to Richard Griffith. I think the above shows conclusively the noble charter of our great Welsh ancestor who assisted Henry Tudor obtain the English Crown, at that fierce and bloody battle of Bosworth Field, in 1485.

You can see the difficulties of obtaining accurate records of our Welsh forebears, especially we who have not a knowledge of our ancient language. Now as a settler as to the ancestor of Jasper Griffith of Southold, here is his record: - I will only give a few items - Jasper was a great scribbler on ancient MS.

The Peniarth MS

The Black Book of Carmarthen (the oldest book in Welsh) Vellum 6 3/4 by 5 inches in several hands of the XII and early XIIIth centuries contains 108 pages - some pages missing - in Peniarth Library - "The name of Jaspas Griffith occurs in Hebrew characters on page 3. His name appears in the modern writing on page 45.

On MS 44- Brut y Brenhined - the oldest MS in Wales, the name Jasper Griffith occurs on page 7 in Hebrew characters.

Page 403 Peniarth MS 53 Hen 172. Prophecies occurs this sentence : this MS belonged at one time to Jaspas Griffith- and at page 683 - Peniarth MS 113 a note in Welsh and his name spelled thus Siaspas Gruffydd ysfrifennais" this last word is written I think as gathered from the Welsh dictionary.

But I will not weary you with any more rather dry Welsh coinundrums, and will close with excerpts from the Historical MS commission - Welsh Language Part IV in the British Museum published in 1910 page 949 MS 10 Harleian MS 4353 - the Gwentian Code of the Welsh Laws - Vellum 7 3/4 by 5 inches folios 1 to 3 and others written at Neath about 1285) by the same scribe as wrote Peniarth MS 2 and 6 of Mostyn MS 117. Large initials in red - 25 lines to the page the first and last page are stained half bound in Morocco.

" Sum liber Jasper Gryffyth 1586 (folio 2) Timothy Middleton (t) jisbook douth owe (fol 130" "Liber Humfrede Wanley AD 1714 (fol 16) - most of the marginal index words are in the hand of Jaspas Griffith"

Page 952 - MS 15 Cotton MS code of Welsh Laws, written 1530 illustrated, this belonged to Jaspas Griffith in 1600

Now it appears to me that Jaspas took the Coat of Arms that was given to RICHARD GRIFFITH probably after Bosworth Field Victory, August 22, 1485 and that our ancestor Edward Griffith of Flushing is entitled to it also. Undoubtedly they were connected by blood in Wales as you and Mr Miller suggest. As to the identity of the EDWARD who was a servant of Claibourne, in 1646, and finally settled in Flushing soon after his indenture ran out, I am convinced that he is the same person. He was married late in life, escaped from Saint Marys in Maryland, on the ship of his fellow countryman Gams, a captain who went his bond in 1640 if Claybourne should demand him and of course it would be the most plausible thing for Gams to keep Edward on Board of his vessel until his bond expired at least. But there is a more serious thing about this if he was born in 1602 and died in 1707 in Flushing - a Quaker- he lived to the good old age of a hundred years. This may seem improbable for us who live in low or prairie countries but in the mountainous healthy country of Wales, it is not uncommon for men to live far beyond a century. So, also, in Scotland and in Morocco a man of a hundred years old in the mountains is just considered in the prime of life. So I am satisfied that EDWARD did live to that age and died a Quaker in Flushing, leaving three sons and one daughter, as you already have a record of.

Awaiting your reply, and wishing you prosperity no matter if you people don't want to be annexed to the U.S.

Sincerely yours,

Zeno T. Griffen