

## XVIII

### *Griffith Family*

1. ABRAHAM GRIFFITH, probably the first of the Friends' Colony to settle in the Great Swamp, which later became Richland Township, was born in Wales in the year 1680. A memorial of him published in *The Friend* (Volume 33, page 29) states that he was "born in Wales in the year 1680." The records of Richland Meeting show that he died 10 mo. 3, 1760, "in the 82d year of his age."

Abraham's father, Howell Griffith, with wife and children, arrived in Philadelphia in or prior to the year 1689, as on 2 mo. 3, 1689-90, he purchased of Griffith Jones a lot on "the bank" at High (now Market) Street. "Besse's Sufferings" shows that he was one of the sufferers for his religious faith and was committed to Carnarthshire Jail, 4 mo. (June), 1684. He died intestate and letters of administration were granted on his estate to his eldest son, Abraham Griffith, 2 mo. 17, 1710. On the same day "Abraham Griffith of Philadelphia, Cordwainer, son and heir of Howell Griffith, late of the said city, Cordwainer, deceased," conveyed this lot to Abraham Bickley.

We do not have the names of the other children of Howell Griffith, but there is reason to believe that Evan Griffith, of Southampton Township, Bucks County (also a shoemaker), later of Gwynedd, was a brother to Abraham, and that Diana Griffith, who married, first, Abraham Hewlings, of Wellingsboro, Burlington County, New Jersey, and second, in Richland, in 1730, Thomas Heed, and Patience, the wife of George Phillips, another early settler in the Swamp, were his sisters.

Abraham Griffith was a member of Richland Meeting from the time that it was first established, and from 1720 until his death, on 10 mo. 3, 1760, was a recognized minister among Friends. The memorial before referred to says of him: "His gift in the ministry was exercised to the edification of the Church. He was not large in utterance yet exercised the gift with fluency and zeal. He was a reprover of pride and vanity and an example of temperance and zeal." He married, 1708, at Abington Meeting, Hannah Lester, daughter of Peter and Mary (Duncalf) Lester, then of Byberry. (See No. 2, Chapter XXVII.) She survived her husband and removed with her son Isaac and his family to Maryland in 1770.

The first purchase of land in Richland by Abraham Griffith was 300 acres of the Griffith Jones tract, June 25, 1712. It was located on the west side of the Jones tract, north of the tract conveyed about the same date to John Ball, and extended northward from the road now leading

to Trumbauersville to within about 100 perches of the lower line of the present borough of Quakertown. It is intersected at the northeast corner by the "road to Philadelphia" now known as the Bethlehem Road, which also forms the eastern line of the lower half of his tract. According to tradition his first home was a temporary house erected against a large rock at the site of the "late residence of Samuel H. Getman" on the west side of the Bethlehem Road, about three-eighths of a mile northwest of its intersection with what is now known as the Station Road. The tradition further relates that in this house occurred the birth of the first white child born in the Great Swamp district. Authorities differ as to whether it was Abraham Griffith, Jr., born 2 mo. 13, 1713, or his younger brother Jonathan, born 1 mo. 25, 1715-16. The weight of the evidence seems to be in favor of the former. The house in which this child was born, and all trace of the rock referred to, have long since disappeared.

In 1726 Abraham Griffith conveyed to Morris Morris 100 acres of land, comprising the site of the old house, and at about the same date conveyed to his sister, Diana Hewlings, later the wife of Thomas Heed, the balance of his 300-acre tract.

In 1732 Abraham purchased of George Phillips, his brother-in-law, 150 acres lying east of the upper part of his first purchase. This purchase was probably made for his son Abraham, as the latter joined with him in its conveyance to Joseph Burr in 1743. Prior to 1734 Abraham Griffith had acquired a large tract of land at the southwestern corner of Richland Township in the district known as "The Bog." The greater part of this tract extended below the line of the Manor of Richland, and when the township was surveyed in 1734 it and other land lying westward were included in the township, the line of survey running southward and west "along land of Abraham Griffith."

In 1747 Abraham Griffith secured by patent 100½ acres of land in Rockhill, lying south of his Richland tract and west of the George Palmer tract. It was probably upon this tract that he resided at the date of his will, as his residence is given in that instrument as Rockhill, and this tract of land was devised thereby to his son, Abraham Griffith, who immediately sold it to Isaac; the latter lived thereon until 1769, when he sold it and removed to Maryland. The will also directs "Isaac to sell movables on the estate whereon he now dwells, which he is to have for the term of five years, by paying off the quitrent." This clause probably refers to the tract in the southwestern corner of Richland. It probably reverted to the proprietaries by reason of non-payment of quitrents, and we find it repented at about this date to Jonathan Heacock and William Hogue.

*Children of Abraham and Hannah (Lester) Griffith:*

2	Mary,	b. 5- 2—1709;	m. first, Benjamin Vastine; second, James Morgan.
3	John,	b. 7- 2—1711;	m. Ann Jones.
4	Abraham, Jr.,	b. 2-12—1713;	m. Elizabeth Lynn.
5	Jonathan,	b. 1-25—1716; d. 8-1—1767;	m. Ann Tennis.
6	Joseph,	b. 2-12—1718.	
7	Isaac,	b. 1- 5—1720;	m. Ann Burson.
8	Samuel,	b. 11-28—1722.	

2. MARY GRIFFITH<sup>2</sup> (Abraham<sup>1</sup>), eldest child of Abraham and Hannah (Lester) Griffith, was born in Byberry, Philadelphia County, Pa., 5 mo. 2, 1709; married first in Richland, 11 mo. 26, 1730, Benjamin Vastine of Hilltown, son of John and Abigail Vastine, of Huguenot descent, the name being originally Van de Woestyne. He was not a Friend, but became a member of Richland Monthly Meeting about the time it was organized in 1742. On 2 mo. 26, 1743, a Friends' Meeting was established at the house of Benjamin Vastine, at "Perquishire." Benjamin Vastine died March 14, 1749-50, and Mary married, second, in 1751, James Morgan.

*Children of Benjamin and Mary (Griffith) Vastine:*

9	Hannah,	b. 1731; m. John Kelly.	12 Benjamin,	b. 1739.
10	John,	b. 1733.	13 Jonathan,	b. 1742.
11	Abraham,	b. 1735.	14 Amos,	b. 1748.

Subsequent conveyances of their father's real estate indicate that none of the children left descendants except Hannah and Benjamin.

3. JOHN GRIFFITH<sup>2</sup> (Abraham<sup>1</sup>), second child and eldest son of Abraham and Hannah (Lester) Griffith, was born in Byberry, 7 mo. 2, 1711, died in Richland, about 1737. He married, 3 mo., 1733, Ann Jones. She married, second, Elisha Parker.

*Children of John and Ann (Jones) Griffith:*

15	Hannah,	b. 5-14—1734; d. young.	
16	Sarah,	b. 7-16—1735; d. young.	
17	Samuel,	b. 10-16—1736;	m. Jane Wood.

4. ABRAHAM GRIFFITH, JR.<sup>2</sup> (Abraham<sup>1</sup>), third child and second son of Abraham and Hannah (Lester) Griffith, was born in Richland, 2 mo. 12, 1713. He was a miller

*Abraham Griffith*

by trade and lived in several different localities. He never became a member of Richland Monthly Meeting, but retained his membership in Gwynedd Monthly Meeting. He was a recognized minister of that meeting and travelled considerably in the

ministry. He married in Philadelphia, 7 mo. 24, 1742, Elizabeth Lynn, daughter of Joseph Lynn, a merchant of that city.

Immediately following their marriage Abraham and Elizabeth (Lynn) Griffith settled in Burlington County, New Jersey. In 1752 they located on a farm in Southampton Township, Bucks County, devised to Elizabeth by her father. Abraham also owned and operated a mill in Southampton for about five years. He then removed to Lower Dublin Township, Philadelphia County, where he also operated a mill. In or about 1762 he removed to Upper Merion Township, now Montgomery County, and again became a member of Gwynedd Monthly Meeting, having previously transferred to Abington, Burlington (New Jersey), and Middletown, Bucks County. He was a "shopkeeper" in Germantown in 1767 and 1768. He retained his membership at Gwynedd until 1775, when he took a certificate to Haverford, having lived for a time prior to that date in Norriton Township. His father conveyed to him the home farm in Rockhill in 1759, and confirmed the gift in his will, dated the same year, but he does not seem to have resided thereon after his marriage, and removal in 1742.

*Children of Abraham, Jr., and Elizabeth (Lynn) Griffith:*

18	Joseph,	b. 10-31-1745;	m. Mary Thornton.
19	Hannah,	b. 5-13-1748;	m. 1769 ———.
20	Martha,	b. 11-23-1750;	d. same year.
21	Abraham,	b. 8-14-1752;	d. 1823. (?)
22	Samuel,	b. 9-16-1755.	

5. JONATHAN GRIFFITH<sup>2</sup> (Abraham<sup>1</sup>), fourth child and third son of Abraham and Hannah (Lester) Griffith, was born in Richland, 1 mo. 25, 1716, and died there 8 mo. 1, 1767. He married about 1750 Ann Tennis, widow of Abraham Tennis. Tennis had purchased, about 1742, of Peter Lester, Jr., the 300 acre Lester tract in Lower Richland and at the time of his death his children were minors. Jonathan Griffith apparently lived on the plantation until the Tennis children came of age, and when the plantation was divided he purchased of his step-sons a portion thereof and lived thereon until his death.

*Children of Jonathan and Ann (Tennis) Griffith:*

23	Rachel,	b. 10-18-1752.	
24	Jonathan,	b. 9-21-1754;	d. 3-18-1809; m. Sarah Burson.
25	John,	b. 5-1-1761;	d. 11-28-1820; m. Rachel Greasley.

7. ISAAC GRIFFITH<sup>2</sup> (Abraham<sup>1</sup>), sixth child and fifth son of Abraham and Hannah (Lester) Griffith, was born in Richland, 1 mo. (March) 5, 1720-21. He married at Buckingham Meeting in 9 mo. (Nov.) 1744, Ann Burson, daughter of Joseph and Rachel (Potts) Burson,

and granddaughter of George Burson, the founder of the Burson Family in Pennsylvania. (See No. 8, Chapter X.) She was born 2 mo. 9, 1721.

Isaac and Ann (Burson) Griffith continued to reside in Richland and Rockhill Townships until 1769, probably on two or three tracts acquired at different dates by his father. The will of Abraham Griffith, Sr., proved in 1760, indicates clearly that Isaac, a younger son, was the mainstay of the family at that time, as to him is delegated the care of his mother, the sale of the estate, and the payment of minor legacies. He acquired the homestead in Rockhill by deed from his brother Abraham immediately following the death of their father and apparently lived thereon until 1769, when he took a certificate for himself, his wife, his minor children, and his mother, to Gunpowder Monthly Meeting in Baltimore County, Maryland.\* This certificate is dated 2 mo. 16, 1769. His son-in-law, Joseph Shaw, and family, followed them to Maryland in 1770, but returned to Richland ten years later. Isaac Griffith and his family seem to have remained in Maryland.

*Children of Isaac and Ann (Burson) Griffith:*

- |    |             |                |   |
|----|-------------|----------------|---|
| 26 | Abraham,    | b. 4- 8—1746;  | no further record.  |
| 27 | Rachel,     | b. 9-23—1747;  | d. 11-5—1834; m. Joseph Shaw. (See No. 5, Chapter XLIII.) |
| 28 | Hannah,     | b. 7- 6—1749;  | rem. to Md., 1770; m. 1772, Moses Dillon.                 |
| 29 | Mary,       | b. 7-28—1752.  |   |
| 30 | Ann,        | b. 2- 1—1754.  |   |
| 31 | Sarah,      | b. 11-15—1756. |   |
| 32 | Joseph,     | b. 10-22—1758. |   |
| 33 | Martha,     | b. 2-23—1760.  |   |
| 34 | Isaac, Jr., | b. 6- 7—1764.  |   |
| 35 | John,       | b. 5-29—1766.  |   |
| 36 | James,      | b. 11-16—1769. |   |

17. SAMUEL GRIFFITH<sup>3</sup> (Abraham,<sup>1</sup> John<sup>2</sup>), third child and only son of John and Ann (Jones) Griffith, was born in Richland, 10 mo. 16, 1736. His father died when he was an infant and his mother soon after married Elisha Parker; prior to 1750 his mother died and Elisha Parker remarrying, his uncle Abraham petitioned the court for appointment of a guardian, and was himself appointed Samuel's guardian. The child was reared from the age of about fifteen years under the care of his uncle and guardian, Abraham Griffith, and lived with him in Lower Dublin Township. He married, 4 mo. 15, 1760, Jane Wood, and the names and dates of birth of their children appear on the records of Abington Monthly Meeting.

\* In the "Friends' Intelligencer" of 12 mo. 15, 1923, the following extract from Gunpowder Monthly Meeting records is given: "Twenty-second of Ninth month, 1781, Isaac Griffith's paper condemning his misconduct in marrying his former wife's brother's widow was read and was satisfactory. The case was on hand for two years." (Perhaps it took the Meeting that long to trace the relationship.)

*Children of Samuel and Jane (Wood) Griffith:*

37 Benjamin,	b. 2-27—1761.	42 Ann,	b. 7- 3—1770.
38 John,	b. 11-22—1762.	43 Hannah,	b. 12-13—1773.
39 Abraham,	b. 12-25—1764.	44 Joseph,	b. 1-19—1776.
40 Samuel,	b. 12- 7—1767.	45 Mary,	b. 10-19—1777.
41 Judith,	b. 12-28—1768.	46 Isaac,	b. 2- 1—1780.

18. JOSEPH GRIFFITH<sup>3</sup> (Abraham,<sup>1</sup> Abraham<sup>2</sup>), eldest son of Abraham and Elizabeth (Lynn) Griffith, was born in Lower Dublin, Philadelphia County, 10 mo. 31, 1745. In 1771 he was living in Upper Dublin Township, now Montgomery County, and was a hatter by trade. His father joined him in the purchase of a lot for a hatter shop in Newtown, Bucks County, in September, 1771. The father later released his interest to the son. Joseph was married at Newtown, by Friends' ceremony, to Mary Thornton, before Gilbert Hicks, Esq., 1 mo. 6, 1774. He continued for several years to manufacture hats in Newtown, but in the spring of 1779 sold his property there and removed to Upper Merion, Montgomery County. We have no further record of him, and none of his brothers and sisters.

24. JONATHAN GRIFFITH<sup>3</sup> (Abraham,<sup>1</sup> Jonathan<sup>2</sup>), eldest son of Jonathan and Ann (Tennis) Griffith, was born in Richland, 9 mo. 21, 1754, died in Richland, 3 mo. 18, 1809. He was a "joiner" and farmer in Richland, living on a farm of 55 acres in Lower Richland. He made a deed, 1 mo. 3, 1803, to Cadwallader Foulke and others "Trustees chosen by the subscribers for erecting a School House on the Road leading from Edward Foulke's to the Philadelphia Road." He married, 11 mo. 2, 1786, Sarah Burson, daughter of James and Sarah (Price) Burson, of Springfield Township, Bucks County. (See No. 18, Chapter X.)

*Children of Jonathan and Sarah (Burson) Griffith:*

47 James,	b. 3-12—1788; d. 4-25—1838; m. Ann Johnson.
48 Joseph,	b. 8-29—1790.
49 Mary,	b. 4-23—1797; d. 9-15—1799.

25. JOHN GRIFFITH<sup>3</sup> (Abraham,<sup>1</sup> Jonathan<sup>2</sup>), second son and third child of Jonathan and Ann (Tennis) Griffith, was born in Richland, 5 mo. 1, 1761, died there 11 mo. 28, 1820. He was for many years a Justice of the Peace. He married, 1 mo. 2, 1783, Rachel Greasley, born 10 mo. 30, 1757, died 8 mo. 9, 1841, only child of John and Jane (Foulke) Greasley. (See No. 72, Chapter XVI.)

*John Griffith*

*Children of John and Rachel (Greasley) Griffith:*

- 50 Jane, b. —1783; m. 11-12—1812, Thomas Jackson, of Mill Creek Hundred, New Castle Co., Del.
- 51 Hannah, b. 1-12—1785; m. Nathaniel Kinsey. (See No. 2, Chapter XXV.)
- 52 John Greasley, b. 1-12—1789; m. Abigail Kinsey.
- 53 Thomas, b. 3- 3—1791; d. 1818; unm.
- 54 Abraham, b. 7- 9—1793; m. Mary W. Michener.
- 55 William, b. 6-30—1795; d. 2-14—1859, unm. in Vermont; his will, proved in Bucks Co., gives a small legacy to his nephew, Edward K. Griffith, and the residue of the estate to Hannah Griffith, daughter of John G. Griffith.

47. JAMES GRIFFITH<sup>4</sup> (Abraham,<sup>1</sup> Jonathan,<sup>2</sup> Jonathan<sup>3</sup>), eldest child of Jonathan and Sarah (Burson) Griffith, was born in Richland 3 mo. 12, 1788. He was buried 4 mo. 28, 1838, at Richland Friends Burying Ground, but probably resided elsewhere, as no settlement of his estate appears of record. He married Ann, daughter of Casper and Deborah (Adamson) Johnson. (See No. 23, Chapter XXIV.) No record of descendants.

52. JOHN GREASLEY GRIFFITH<sup>4</sup> (Abraham,<sup>1</sup> Jonathan,<sup>2</sup> John<sup>3</sup>), third child and eldest son of John and Rachel (Greasley) Griffith, was born in Richland, 1 mo. 12, 1789, was a coach maker in Richland and for many years a Justice of the Peace, but was living in the borough of Northampton, Lehigh County, Pa., in 1842. He married, 4 mo. 1814, at New Garden Meeting, Abigail Kinsey, who died 11 mo. 10, 1856.

*Children of John Greasley and Abigail (Kinsey) Griffith:*

- 56 Edward Kinsey, b. 9-24—1816; d. 2-13—1854; unm.
- 57 Margaretta, b. 12- 6—1818; m. William Prackett, who died in Libby prison.
- 58 Jane, b. 12-29—1820; unm.
- 59 Hannah, b. 1-25—1823; d. 1-16—1892, unm.; she was probably the last of the family bearing the name in Richland or vicinity. Her will, dated 4-11—1887, bequeathes her estate to her sister Margaretta, widow of Wm. Prackett, and the latter's three daughters, Abby Harker, who lived in N. J.; Maggie Miller, who lived in Berlin, N. J., and Gertrude Prackett.

54. ABRAHAM GRIFFITH<sup>4</sup> (Abraham,<sup>1</sup> Jonathan,<sup>2</sup> John<sup>3</sup>), fifth child and third son of John and Rachel (Greasley) Griffith, was born in Richland, 7 mo. 9, 1793, married at Stroudsburg 3 mo., 1818, Mary W. Michener. After living for six years in Richland they removed with their minor children to Stroudsburg, taking a certificate dated 4 mo. 2, 1824. Prior to 1837 they removed to Morgan County, Ohio. The will

of his mother, dated 12 mo. 1, 1837, gives him a legacy of 300 pounds "if living at time of settlement," if not living the legacy to be paid to his daughter, Violetta Griffith. He, however, gave a letter of attorney to Caleb Foulke, signed February 22, 1842, in Morgan County, Ohio, to collect his share of his mother's dower.

*Children of Abraham and Mary W. (Michener) Griffith:*

- |                |                                |
|----------------|--------------------------------|
| 60 Samuel,     | b. 2-27—1819; d. 9-14—1820.    |
| 61 Rebecca W., | b. 10- 5—1820; d. 11-18—1820.  |
| 62 Violetta,   | b. 12-25—1821; living in 1841. |



ONE OF THE EARLY FRIENDS OF UPPER BUCKS