

**Collection
M 018**

**Griffith and Mahoney Family Papers
1846-ca. 1960s**

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**Thomas Balch Library
208 W. Market Street
Leesburg, VA 20176**

USER INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: .33 cubic feet.

COLLECTION DATES: 1846-ca.1960s

PROVENANCE: Robert Griffith Mahoney, CA

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS: Open for research.

USE RESTRICTIONS: No physical characteristics affect use of this material

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from Thomas Balch Library.

CITE AS: Griffith and Mahoney Family Papers (M 018), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA

ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

OTHER FINDING AIDS: None

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS: Collection includes three DVD's

RELATED HOLDINGS: *The Power of Ducks* by Robert Griffith Mahoney, 2009 [V REF 921 MAHONEY ROBERT G.]

ACCESSION NUMBERS: 2004.0173, 2005.0202, 2008.0001, 2009.0261

NOTES: N/A

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The Griffith and Mahoney families were part of a well-established community of free African Americans in the Hillsboro area. Forrest and Henry Griffith, William Mahoney and Ellzey Furr were among the founding members of the Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church, established in 1864. The early congregation met at Pulpit Rock, located south of Hillsboro, using the white Arnold Grove Methodist Church at night. They built their own church nearby in 1887 on land that included a piece donated by Ellzey and Fanny Furr.

Forrest Griffith was born into slavery in the Hillsboro, VA area around 1790. He was enslaved by James (1749-1804) and Margaret (1760-1837) McIlhane, who were prominent landowners at the time with extensive holdings in Loudoun County. Griffith purchased his freedom and that of his daughter Fanny (ca. 1840) from Margaret McIlhane around 1839. His wife, also named Fanny (ca. 1790), was a free woman, although there is little information about her or how she obtained her freedom. The Griffiths owned 15 acres of land near Hillsboro, which they purchased in 1847. By 1860, Griffith was an established land owner, with property valued at \$500.00. In addition to Fanny, the couple had one son, Henry Griffith, born 27 Apr 1846.

Fanny married Ellzey (Eley) Furr (ca. 1820), a free African American neighbor, and settled near her parents' home. They had eight children: Robert (ca. 1855), Henry (ca. 1849), Harriett (ca. 1850), Mary (ca. 1856), Forrest (ca. 1858), Permelia (ca. 1859), Frances (ca. 1865), Emma (ca. 1860). Henry Griffith, born 27 Apr 1846, married Ann M. Cartwright (15 May 1843-26 Apr 1923) and had seven children: Ella (ca. 1869, died 24 Mar 1939), Henry (ca. 1880), Annie (ca. 1880), Viola (ca. 1874), Warren Cartwright (12 Apr 1876-10 Feb 1946), Ernest (ca. 1889), Hattie (n.d.). Viola's son, Hugh (12 Nov 1897, died 17 Mar 1939), also lived with the family. The Griffith and Mahoney families were joined with the marriage of Annie to William "Willie" Mahoney, a descendent of Eliza Mahoney.

Less is known about the origins of the Mahoney family. Eliza Mahoney and her children – William, Bushrod, Charles Henry, Richard, Catharine and Wesley – were freed by Charles F. Anderson in 1856. There is no evidence extant about the identity of her husband. William married a woman named Martha (last name unknown) and had seven children: He was also one of the founding members of the Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church. William "Willie" Mahoney married Annie Griffith, and they moved to Montclair, Essex County, NJ during the early part of the 20th century. They had one son, Carl Henry Mahoney (12 Feb 1901-17 May 1977). Carl married in 1939 Dorothy Miller and they had two children, Robert Griffith Mahoney and William Mahoney. He moved to California with his family, where his son Robert Griffith Mahoney resides.

Sources:

Ancestry Library Edition, United States census, military enlistment records, Social Security death register, <http://www.ancestrylibrary.com>.

Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church (Vertical File), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA.

Duncan, Patricia B. *Abstracts of Loudoun County Virginia: Register of Free Negroes, 1844-1861*. Westminster, Maryland: Willow Bend Books, 2000.

Griffith and Mahoney Family Papers (M 018), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA.

Lee, Deborah A. for Friends of the Thomas Balch Library Black History Committee, *African American Communities of Loudoun County*, <http://www.balchfriends.org/bhmap.htm>.

Lucas, Townsend M. "Loudoun County, Virginia Lists of Free Negroes: 1851, 1855, 1856, 1857, 1858, 1859" (transcription of Loudoun County Court records). Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA.

Lucas, Townsend M. "Loudoun County, Virginia Numbered Certificates of Free Negroes" (transcription of Loudoun County Court records). Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA.

Mahoney, Robert Griffith, personal communication, 2005-2006.

Stevenson, Brenda E. *Life in Black and White: Family and Community in the Slave South*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Tavener, Charles Blair, "Charles Blair Tavener Collection." Vol. 14. Photocopy, Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg. [Local copy of: Charles Blair Tavener, Genealogical research pertaining to residents of Loudoun County, Va., 1918-1986, Accession #11151, University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va.]

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection includes correspondence, financial records, legal documents, cards and postcards, photographs, and memorabilia. Most of the early documents are from the Griffith family, with items from the Mahoney family appearing later. Financial records comprise the largest group of items, consisting largely of receipts. These include poll taxes for various family members, rent payments, medical bills, shop accounts, and expenses for burial plots. Variants on the Griffiths' surname appear variously in census and financial

records as Griffey, Griffee, Grifey, and Griffy. The collection also contains two DVD's of family movies from the 1930s to 1960s, and a DVD with a family movie called *Griffith-Mahoney's Loudoun County Roots*, from 1940 (see folders 23 and 24).

Inclusive dates for the collection are 1846-ca.1960s, with the bulk of the materials dating from 1870-1935.

CONTAINER LIST

Box 1:

Folder 1	Correspondence 1902, 1915, 1923, n.d.
Folder 2	Financial Records 1846, 1849, 1856, n.d.
Folder 3	Financial Records 1860-1861, 1866, 1869
Folder 4	Financial Records 1870-1873
Folder 5	Financial Records 1875-1879
Folder 6	Financial Records 1882-1885
Folder 7	Financial Records 1886-1889
Folder 8	Financial Records 1890-1895
Folder 9	Financial Records 1896-1899
Folder 10	Financial Records ca. 1900-1903
Folder 11	Financial Records 1905-1908
Folder 12	Financial Records 1911, 1913-1914, 1918-1919
Folder 13	Financial Records 1920-1922
Folder 14	Financial Records 1923-1925, 1928-1929
Folder 15	Financial Records 1934-1935
Folder 16	Financial Records 1940-1942
Folder 17	Financial Records 1944
Folder 18	Legal Documents 1872, 1896, 1915
Folder 19	Cards and Postcards 1909, ca. 1910-1919, 1935, n.d.
Folder 20	Photographs – Griffith Family, n.d.
Folder 21	Photographs – Mahoney Family, n.d.
Folder 22	Memorabilia 1929, n.d.
Folder 23	Mahoney-Griffith Family Movies, 1930s-1960s
Folder 24	<i>Griffith-Mahoney's Loudoun County Roots</i> , 1940