

Griffin, Hardy ^[1]

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by Claiborne T. Smith, Jr., 1986

ca. 1735–December 1794

Hardy Griffin, legislator and officer in the American Revolution ^[2], was the son of John Griffin, an early settler on Swift Creek in what is now Nash County ^[3]. He was evidently the oldest son, as he was listed first in his father's will of 1761 and was appointed guardian for the younger children. In an undated petition, Hardy Griffin requested permission from the county court to build a water gristmill ^[4] over Swift Creek "at or near his dwelling house." In 1778, he was a justice of the peace for the new county of Nash.

During the American Revolution, Griffin was an officer in the Nash militia. In a letter to Governor Thomas Burke ^[5] dated 13 July 1781, General William Caswell ^[6] referred to a Major Griffin in connection with enlistees from Nash County. Later that year, on 21 August, John Ramsey, writing from Deep River, commended Griffin for holding his post while another officer retreated, observing that "Major Griffin has behaved with much propriety." There is no information about Griffin's later military service other than the fact that he was colonel of the Nash militia in 1787.

With the formation of Nash County, Griffin was elected to the House of Commons in 1778 and served until 1781, when he was elected to the senate. Except for the year 1788, Griffin remained in the senate until his death. He also represented Nash County at the Constitutional Convention at Hillsborough in 1788 ^[7] and at Fayetteville in 1789 ^[8].

Griffin married a woman named Mary. He died intestate but, according to available records, he and his wife were the parents of six children: Archibald; Guilford; Elizabeth, the wife of Dempsey Braswell; Millerey, the wife of Mathew Drake, Jr.; Quinny, the wife of Francis Drake; and a daughter who married Benjamin Mason. Archibald Griffin, the oldest son, was born before 1770. Like his father before him, he was a justice of the peace in Nash and a member of the county militia. He also represented Nash County in the North Carolina Senate in 1797 and in the House of Commons in 1803–4 and 1806–7. Archibald married Lucy Arrington, the daughter of Arthur Arrington, a prominent early citizen of Nash. She had died by 1799, when her husband married Charity Smith, the daughter of Benjamin Smith. In 1813 Archibald Griffin sold his property in Nash County and moved to Laurens, Ga.

References:

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Griffin family records extracted by Joseph W. Watson, Rocky Mount, N.C..

Joseph W. Watson, ed., *Abstract of Early Records of Nash County, North Carolina, 1777–1859* (1963).

Additional Resources:

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