

PATRONYMIC

Our family name originated in Wales, but soon spread throughout the British isles, and as long ago as the year 1547 the name appears in numerous entries of marriages, births and deaths in the registers of many parishes in London, England, and its vicinity. There have been many modes of spelling the name, as is the case with a number of other family cognomens. Before me is a short account of an old English family, which contains some variations in spelling their name, for instance, in one legal document their family name is spelled in three different ways, and in a will written a generation later the writer made use of three other modes of spelling it.

But the predominant manner of spelling our name during the past four hundred years is as spelled in this book, viz., "Griffin."

How many individuals of our name migrated to America during the first fifty years of the settlement of British people on this continent is hard to discover. But there are records in existence which prove that there were probably scores of them. These settled in different sections, in Maine, in Massachusetts, in Connecticut, in New York, in Pennsylvania, in Virginia and in other colonies.

The first English settlement was in Virginia in 1609. The first settlement in New England was in 1620. I do not know in what year the first Griffin arrived, but by 1640 there were a great many of that name. I have the names of four who came in 1635, by different ships and who settled in different sections, also one in 1633. I quote the following from the introduction to the geneology of the descendants of Matthew Griffin, of Charlestown, Mass.: "The name Griffin was a common one among the early settlers in New England. As early as 1660 there were six grow-