

# Black Kentucky Pioneers:

## Harrison Griffith

Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 25 November 1896, p.5:

"After Thirty-Eight Years - Old Harrison Griffith, Colored, Visits the Home Where He Was Liberated – An intelligent old darkey presented himself yesterday at the cashier's window of the deposit bank and inquired of Assistant Cashier Watkins for Mr. James Weir. Being told that Mr. Weir was not present, the old darkey said: "I'm sorry, for I wanted very much to meet him. I used to know Mr. Weir very well away back in 1858 and earlier. My name is Harrison Griffith, and I am one of the slaves to whom Miss Mattie Griffith gave freedom in 1858 when the estate of her father was divided and myself among other slaves became her property.. She gave all of us our free – papers in 1858. Miss Mattie had ever been an intense Abolitionist and finding it more congenial to her sentiments in that section she removed soon after her father's death to New England, where she devoted her time and talents to the liberation of the slaves, writing a book on the subject, which at the time attracted considerable attention. She furnished much other literature on the same subject to newspapers and periodicals of that day."

The old negro made inquiry after numerous of the old settlers of Daviess among them Messrs. John S. McFarland, Clinton and Dan Griffith, Ridley Ewing and many others who have long ago been gathered to their fathers.

Old Harrison is now in his 75<sup>th</sup> year, is a farmer living back in Indiana, and from appearances has been prosperous. He had brought his crop of tobacco to this market and disposed of it and was at the bank with his check for the money.

This was his first visit to his former home since he was liberated by Miss Griffith.

[Note – Daviess County, Ky. Negro Marriage Book A, p.221: Harrison Griffith married Betty Mills, 19 January 1869.]

See article by Jerry Long on Mattie Griffith Browne (1828-1906).