

Bible of Emeline Griffith Hunter (1811-1890)

The following family record was recorded in a Polyglott Bible edition, published in 1838 at Hartford, Conn., by Andrus, Judd, & Franklin. The bible was formerly part of the collection at the Kentucky Wesleyan College, in Owensboro, Ky. It was donated to the Kentucky Room of the Daviess County Public Library in Owensboro. The following transcription was made by Jerry Long, of Owensboro, Ky.

On page preceding title page:

Caleb Griffith Hunter was born June 11th, 1846 & died October 12th, 1846, aged 4 months & 1 day.

"The Lord reigneth let the earth rejoice."

Mary Elizabeth Hunter was born Jan. 11th, 1848 in Owensboro, Ky.

Emma Howard Hunter was born Sept. 20th, 1850 in Uniontown, Pa. Alice Griffith Hunter was born Oct. 3rd, 1852 in Uniontown, Pa.

In back of bible:

Matilda Ann Bell was born 19th May 1848, she is the daughter of servant Caroline & Isaac.

George H. Davidson, son of same, was born [no date].

Martha Ellen Davidson, daughter of same, was born [no date].

Louise Eslinger Davidson, daughter of same, was born [no date].

Twins, Iris & Peter Davidson, of same, was born Sept. 29th, 1859.

Mary Davidson was born at Owensboro.

Jennie Davidson was born at Owensboro, 1863, & died.

Matilda Ann B. died [no date].

On the first page of the bible is written the following inscription: "E. N. Griffith - presented by friend Mrs. B. H. Triplett."

On the inside back cover was attached the following article:

OBITUARY

Died in Owensboro, Kentucky, on Saturday, the 24th January, 1852, of erysipelas, Mrs. Eliza H. Triplett, wife of the Hon. Philip Triplett, in the 47th year of her age.

In the full maturity of her intellectual and physical strength, the destroyer came, gathered her home to the Heaven of Rest and the presence of the God whom she delighted to serve.

She had been for many years a most meek and devout Christian; and, having attached herself to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, her walk and conversation at all times evinced her fitness, not only for that station, but for the society of Heaven, constituted as it is of the presence of God, the adorable Redeemer, and the spirits of the just made perfect through the grace and favor of God. A husband and children are deeply penetrated with this inscrutable decree of Providence; the community in which her life of good deeds, charitable offices, and eminent Christian devotion were exemplified, must turn their thoughts and affections to Heaven, for she is not now of this earth. God has called her, and she has gone into his presence, where her spirit, well-refined, must dwell for ever more.

To her God had been peculiarly bountiful. To a strong physical constitution he added a power of intellect rarely if ever surpassed by any of her sex, and these great blessings she used and enjoyed, not in idleness, but, like the servant to whom his master had given the highest talents, she used and improved the talents bestowed upon her by her God, and like that servant, her reward was, "Well done, the good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Additional notes:

The bible was presented by Mrs. Philip (Eliza Hopkins) Triplett to her friend, Miss Emeline N. Griffith between the years of 1838 & 1844. Mrs. Triplett died in Owensboro on 24 January 1852. The recipient of the bible, Emeline M. Griffith, was born in Shelby County, Ky. on 12 March 1811. Her parents, natives of Maryland, settled in Daviess County, Ky. in the 1820's. Her father, Caleb Griffith, born on 11 April 1759, married Mary Richardson in Frederick County, Md. on 2 November 1787. Mary was born on 13 November 1767 and died 11 December 1835 in Daviess County, Ky. Caleb died in Daviess County on 9 December 1843. He was a son of Greenberry Griffith & Ruth Riggs, and was a first cousin of Joshua Griffith (1764-1845), another early pioneer of Daviess County, Ky., whose progeny have been prominent in that county's history.

Emeline Griffith married Rev. Hiram A. Hunter in Daviess County on 10 September 1844, she was his fourth wife. Rev. Hunter, a Cumberland Presbyterian minister, was born near Lynchburg, VA on 13 August 1800. From about 1841 until 1849 he had charge of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Owensboro. The next 8 years they resided in Pennsylvania, at Uniontown and then at Philadelphia. They subsequently moved to Louisville, KY, where he

died on 4 November 1883 and she died on 2 November 1890. To the marriage of Hiram A. Hunter & Emeline M. Griffith four children were born, their names and births were recorded above. Source for preceding notes: Griffith Family Papers, Volume I: The Griffith Family, compiled by Jerry Long, Kentucky Room, Daviess County Public Library, Owensboro, Ky.

In the 1870 & 1880 Daviess County, Ky, censuses the following black family was listed:

1870 Daviess County, KY census, Uppertown Precinct, p.311:

#147 Davidson, Milton	45 m	Ky.
Caroline	40 f	Ky.
Martha	13 f	Ky.
Louisa	11 f	Ky.
Iris Ann	8 f	Ky.
Mary	7 f	Ky.
Daniel	2 m	Ky.
Anna	1 f	Ky.

1880 Daviess County, KY census, Lowertown Precinct, p.7:

#53 Davidson, Milton	52 m	Ky.
Caroline	50 wife	Ky.
Iris Anne	20 daughter	Ky.
Mary E.	18 daughter	Ky.
Dan	13 son	Ky.
Melia A.	10 daughter	Ky.
Thomas D.	8 son	Ky.

Daviess County, KY Black marriages: Louisa Davidson to C. Locke, 15 July 1880 (Negro marriage book D, p.337); Ann Davidson to Giles Richardson, 1 May 1884 (Negro marriage book E, p.273); Melia Ann Davidson to Harry Rowan, 22 December 1885 (Negro marriage book E, p.439); & Daniel Davidson to Maude Rowan, 18 April 1889 Negro marriage book F, p.463).

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The Cumberland Presbyterian, November 29, 1883, page 2:

REV. HIRAM ABIFF HUNTER and his twin brother, Rev. Howlett Hunter, were born August 13, 1800, near Lynchburg, Virginia. They were the children of James Hunter and Elizabeth Howlett Hunter, and with their parents removed to Logan county, Kentucky, in 1804. Work upon a farm and in a saddler's shop occupied the time that was not spent in school, and thus the hands as well as the head were prepared for usefulness in after life. Hiram's first public act was to enlist in the war of 1812, but as his parents did not approve of the act he was permitted to return home. He was designed by his father for the law, and accordingly his education took that direction; but his conversion, at the age of seventeen, at a camp-meeting near Russellville, Ky., turned him at once toward the ministry. His father was dead, and his mother a widow living in Russellville with her children. Occasionally boarders were there attending school; but the young convert braved it all, set up the family altar, and conducted family worship.

In 1818 he joined General Jackson's army and was a member of the General's Lite Guards. He was orderly sergeant, and was often near the General, and found opportunities to talk with him upon the subject of religion, to which he gave profound attention. He took part in the battle of Maccasuka and the capture of Arthbutnot and Ambrister, and the various remarkable proceedings of his chief that resulted in the acquisition of Florida by the United States. "The ocean boundary was thus made complete," a new Stated added to the realm, and the Southern frontier protected; but while the Government has found money, and time to bestow it liberally upon other, the soldiers of this war have been forgotten.

After the return from the war the young Christian, who had not lost his Christianity in camp-life, resumed the study of theology with Rev. Finis Ewing one of the founders of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. His progress was quite rapid, for in addition to study he held frequent prayer-meetings and exercised his gifts as an exhorter. In 1820 he was licensed to preach, and at once commenced preaching as an evangelist and by riding a circuit. In 1823 he was ordained, and soon after removed to Indian, locating at Vincennes. From this time till 1839 he was in that State, sometimes riding a circuit and at others locating. He also taught school at Logansport in 1830, Washington in 1831, and Princeton in 1832. At Logansport he taught and preached to both whites and Indians, often having to feed the latter at his house after the Sabbath service. In 1834 he made the trip with his family, in a light wagon, from Princeton, Ind., to LaPorte in the same State, the distance being nearly three hundred miles, part of it through an unsettled region, there being but four counties organized north of the Wabash river. At LaPorte, in September of 1834, he attended the land sales, serving as clerk, his father-in-law, Major David Robb, being receiver in the Land Office.

In Indiana he was a pioneer, and as such often found it necessary to work at various trades and professions. His education had fitted him for both teacher and preacher, and his knowledge of medicine gave him calls to serve as a physician, which he did with a good degree of success. As a carpenter he built several houses for his own residences; as shoemaker he made shoes for his family; as saddler he made his own saddles, saddlebags, and harness, and for three years managed, though he did but little of the work upon a farm. All this was done without seriously interfering with his preaching, which was kept up throughout his life. As a pioneer preacher he was eminently successful in winning souls to Christ, and in organizing and sustaining churches. In those days Cumberland Presbyterian preachers were circuit riders, and he often made a circuit of two hundred to three hundred miles, preaching in school houses, cabins, barns, and in "God's first temples," the groves.

In 1839 he removed to Owensboro, Ky, where he remained as pastor of the church ten years, in 1844 marrying Emma M. Griffith, who is now his widow. In 1849 he removed to Uniontown, Pa. Here he was pastor of the church four years, then four years pastor in Philadelphia. In 1857 he took up his residence in Louisville, Ky., and remained pastor of the church there till 1861, when he became chaplain of the 28th Kentucky Volunteers. After some service in the field he was transferred to the hospitals at Louisville, and remained there till the close of the war. Since that time he has traveled and preached in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky until increasing age and failing health compelled him to give up regular work, but he still continued to preach occasionally until a short time before his death. His last public act was to assist Dr. Detwiler in administering the Lord's Supper in the Lutheran church in Louisville.

For sixty two years he was a Free Mason, and was ardently devoted to the order. From 1827 to 1830 he was an officer and prominent member of the Grand Lodge of Indiana, and afterward held similar positions in the Grand Lodge of Kentucky. Few men, if any, in Indiana

and Kentucky, have delivered more Masonic addresses or more effective ones than he. He would sometimes preach a Masonic sermon, and at its close request the Christians present to rise if they believed what he preached was good Christian doctrine; he would then request Masons who were present to rise if they believed what he preached was good Masonic doctrine. Thus he brought Masons to Christ, and disarmed Christians who were prejudiced against the order. He delivered the address at the laying of the corner-stone of the Masonic Hall in Logansport in 1829.

Being a very fluent and eloquent speaker, he seldom wrote his sermons or addresses. They were, however, well planned, thoroughly studied, and delivered in a manner so very earnest that they carried conviction with them.

Among his published writings may be mentioned, "A Narrative of the Captivity and Sufferings of Isaac Knight from Indian Barbarity, etc.," 1839; "Funeral Sermon of Rev. Finis Ewing before the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church," Owensboro, Ky., 1843; "Masonic Address," on St. John's day, at Vincennes, Ind., 1834; "Funeral Sermon of Rev. H. L. Porter, D.D., Philadelphia," Pa., 1855; "Dedication of Cumberland Presbyterian Church," at Louisville, Ky., 1856. Among his unpublished manuscripts are, "Experiences in the First Seminole War," "Reminiscences of a Cumberland Presbyterian Minister," and various sermons and addresses.

He was an Odd Fellow, a Son of Temperance, and an active participant in the temperance and Sunday-school movements of his day. His house was a school of theology. Revs. Jas. Ritchey, Benjamin Ephraim, and Ebenezer Hall, studied for the ministry with him, while some of the good sisters of that early day contributed candles, clothing, and other articles, the work of their own hands, to assist in preparing these devoted men for the work to which God had called them. Much of the pioneer work was done by two ministers traveling together and holding meetings; sometimes several would join in holding a camp meeting. Alexander Downey and Mr. Hunter were co-laborers in this work. On one occasion a camp-meeting was held near Ellettsville, in Monroe county, Ind. Several days passed without very much interest being manifested. Monday morning a licentiate preached, but seemed to attract but little attention. While he was preaching, Mr. Downey insisted that Mr. Hunter should follow, which he did in his usual earnest manner. While he was preaching, Mr. Downey leaned upon his elbow on the pulpit, which was simply a plank in front of the preacher, and looking intently into the face of the speaker, seemed to be drinking in every word. And, as point after point was made, he would turn to the audience, his face glowing with the thought, and bringing down his hand with force upon the plank, would break forth with such expressions as, "Sinner, do you hear that?" "Listen to it!" "Every word of it truth!" "Sinner, that's for you!" The discourse was not a long one, for the enthusiasm of the two men was caught by the congregation, and "those who came to scoff, remained to pray," and the meeting, which was about to close, continued several days with most gratifying results.

Mr. Hunter was four times married, and was the father of thirteen children. Two died at Logansport, Ind., one at Princeton, two at Owensboro, Ky., and one at Nashville, Tenn. Of the six living children, and their wives and husbands, all but two have been or are teachers. Hiram A. Hunter, Jr., whose mother was Agnes Cowardin, resides in Topeka, Kansas. D. E. Hunter, whose mother was Susannah R. Robb, resides at Bloomington, Indiana, but for seven years past has been Supt. of Public Schools, at Washington, Indiana. Robt. H. Hunter, whose mother was Mary J. McNeely, is a resident of Las Vegas, New Mexico. Mrs. Mary E. Foskett, wife of the Rev. Geo. E. Foskett, of the M.E. Church South, is stationed with her husband at Elizabethtown, Ky.

Misses Emma H., and Alice G. Hunter, teachers in the public schools at Louisville, are residing with their mother at 435 East Madison street Louisville, Ky.

His last illness was of two months duration, and during most of the time he was delirious. His death, which was peaceful, took place on Sunday, Nov. 4, 1883, at his residence in Louisville, Ky. The funeral services were conducted by Rev. J. S. Grider, of Bowling Green, Ky., the burial by Excelcion Lodge F. & A.Masons, at that beautiful city of the dead, Cave Hill. After the burial, many beautiful floral tributes were brought by loving friends, and his own children placed them upon his grave.

Such is the record of one who was born with the century and kept pace with its march of improvement. Physically, he was large and strong; mentally, a giant; socially, mild and pleasant. He was kind, loving, energetic, persevering, earnest, and successful. May those he leaves behind imitate his virtues, and leave the world, as he did, "better because they have lived in it."

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Gravestone of Emeline Griffith Hunter (1811-1890)
at Cave Hill Cemetery, Louisville, KY