

**GRIFFITH,
David E.**

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

SEX: Male
DATE OF BIRTH: 1824
DATE OF DEATH: May 20, 1900
PLACE OF DEATH: Near Cornwall, Contra Costa County, California
AGE AT DEATH: 76 years
CAUSE OF DEATH: Fell off horse from exhaustion and landed on fence post
BIRTHPLACE: Cardiganshire, Wales
SPOUSE: Margaret (Edwards) Thomas Griffith
PARENTS: Mr. and Mrs. Griffith

GRAVESITE INFORMATION:

LOCATION OF GRAVESITE: Section N-B, Plot #7b
GRAVESTONE: Exists
TYPE OF GRAVESTONE: Polished granite
SHAPE OF GRAVESTONE: Obelisk
INSCRIPTION: Polished middle granite base says *Griffith*
EPITAPH:
MOTIF:
CARVER:
BASE: Exists
TYPE OF BASE: Granite base with polished middle granite base
ENCLOSURE:
TYPE OF ENCLOSURE:
FENCE: Exists
TYPE OF FENCE: Iron with granite blocks
FENCE MOTIF:

GRIFFITH, David E.

ADDITIONAL PERSONAL INFORMATION:

The 1870 Census for Township Three, Contra Costa County, California, lists David Griffiths [sic] as a native of Wales, age 40, and a butcher. On November 12, 1891 in Somersville, Contra Costa County, California, David E. Griffiths [sic] loaned William Dainty \$2,200 in United States gold coins. In 1892, D. E. Griffith loaned \$180 to the church for the "benefit of Church." The "church" was the Nortonville Church that was relocated to Black Diamond (now Pittsburg), Contra Costa County, California for the use of the New York Landing Congregational Church and Society.

The *Great Register of Contra Costa County, California, 1894*, page 18, lists David E. Griffith, age 68, as 5' 9" tall, dark complexion, gray hair and eyes. He was a stock raiser and a native of Great Britain living in Nortonville. The *Great Register of the County of Contra Costa in the State of California, 1898* for Somersville precinct lists David E. Griffiths [sic], age 71, of Nortonville, Contra Costa County, California, as a stock raiser. He was 5' 9" with dark complexion and gray eyes and hair. He was a native of Wales and naturalized into the United States on October 15, 1860. In the last will and testament left by Griffith dated April 7, 1899, he directed that he be buried beside the body of his friend, Joe Edwards. Griffith died at his home near Cornwall, Contra Costa County, California, between Nortonville and present day Pittsburg. His siblings included: Elizabeth, William, Evan, John, Thomas, Griffith and at least two other brothers, names unknown.

A Superior Court document from Contra Costa County dated October 8, 1900, regarding the estate of David E. Griffith states that \$10 was charged to dig two graves for Griffith (two graves at \$5 each).

The first grave being dug, it was afterwards learned from the will of D. E. Griffith deceased that it was not where his wish to be buried was hence the digging of a second grave.

Contra Costa County probate records dated October 20, 1900, ordered the following articles of personal property be left to his surviving wife Margaret:

Two horses named "Ben" and "Nell" and their harness; Three cows "Blossom," "Lily" and "Rose" and their sucking calves; one spring wagon; all the farming utensils and implements consisting of two single plows, three harrows, two cultivators.

Also, an allowance of \$100 per month for maintenance of the family out of the estate. In a Superior Court of Contra Costa County document dated May 1, 1901, regarding the matter of a claim against the Estate of David Griffith it states that on May 27, 1900, \$12 was charged for carriages for the funeral. Griffith's widow, Margaret, was formerly married to his best friend Rees G. Thomas.

The 1910 Census for Township 6, Contra Costa County, California, lists Margurete [sic] Griffb [sic], age 74, as a widow and native of Wales. Also listed is her son Rees J. Thomas, age 35, a native of California. See Joseph M. Edwards and Rees G. Thomas.

ADDITIONAL GRAVESITE INFORMATION:

Zelma Myrick, who recorded information in a notebook in the 1930s during a visit to Rose Hill Cemetery, reported "Stone down, iron fence around plot." David shares a gravesite with Joseph M. Edwards. A polished middle granite base, inscribed "Griffith" sits on larger granite base. It is chipped in a few places. The iron fence sits on granite blocks. The fence was repaired by the Black Diamond Rangers in 1988. See Joseph M. Edwards.

REFERENCES: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 (July 14, 1900 and May 26, 1900), 9 (May 26, 1900 and April 13, 1901), 11 (P610.31.193, P610.31.195, P610.119.24, P610.145.1, P610.168.20, P610.268.2, P610.312.1, P610.317.20, and P610.349.1), 12, 13 (April 7, 1899), 14, *Contra Costa Times* newspaper (November 7, 1999, page C 9), see newspaper appendix pages 708-710

ACME MARKET,



Front Street,
ANTIOCH,



NORTONVILLE AND SOMERSVILLE.

The above Meat Markets are fitted up in first class style, with everything convenient and necessary. Fresh meats of all kinds, and always the **VERY BEST** the country affords.

Dried, Smoked, and Salted Meats

Of every kind. Also:

Fresh Sausage, Head Cheese, Etc.

The proprietors will ever do their best to please and satisfy their customers.

ALEXANDER MOORE. } Proprietors at Somers-
DAVID E. GRIFFITH. } ville and Nortonville.

ALEXANDER MOORE. } Proprietors at
DAVID E. GRIFFITH. } Antioch.
CHARLES LUPPA. }

This *Antioch Ledger* newspaper article from December 25, 1875 lists David E. Griffith as one of the Proprietors of the Acme Market in Nortonville, Somersville, and Antioch. According to the *Contra Costa Gazette* newspaper, May 26, 1900 (see page 709):

The deceased left an estate worth \$25,000, consisting of the Starr Hotel at Crockett, \$8,000; 480 acres of land near Cornwall, \$6,000; a lot in the town of Paso Robles, at \$1,000; live stock, \$500; money in bank, \$6,000, and claims against the estate of John E. Hughes, \$2,000.



Reference 349.1



Reference 349.3

Photograph above: Nortonville resident, David E. Griffith, 1898. Photograph on left: Rees Thomas, son of Rees G. and Margaret Thomas, and stepson of David E. Griffith, circa 1880s.

On May 20, 1900, David Griffith rode his horse from Nortonville to Somersville to order coal and get his mail. According to the *Antioch Ledger* newspaper of May 26, 1900:

Mr. Griffiths [sic] was in the habit of throwing his right leg around the horn of the saddle at times for relief, and on his left foot he wore a spur. It is supposed the sharp points of the spur irritated the horse and he broke into a gallop. When in front of the house Mr. Griffiths [sic] fell off the horse, probably from exhaustion after riding so hard and fell heavily against a barbed wire fence post, knocking it out of the ground and breaking three ribs on his right side near the arm pit. The force of the concussion must have been terrific. Hugh Medill and Rees Thomas, his stepson, who witnessed the accident, went to his assistance with a cart but he refused help and got into the cart alone. When they reached the house he got out alone crawled in on his hands and went to bed. Dr. George of Antioch was summoned and dressed his wounds. He was beyond medical aid, however, for he lingered until 8 o'clock the next evening, Sunday, when he expired.