

## **Saint Joseph's University Archives**

Drexel Library  
5600 City Ave  
Philadelphia, PA 19131  
610-660-1900

**Collection Title:** Martin I.J. Griffin papers

**Date Range:** 1842-1945

**Bulk Dates:** 1880-1911

**Finding Aid Created by:** Lesley Carey, 12/20/2019

**Creator:** Martin I.J. (Ignatius Joseph) Griffin

**Extent:** 6.083 linear feet

**Location:** Archives and Special Collections, Drexel Library, Hopkins Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Post Learning Commons.

**Abstract:** Martin Ignatius Joseph Griffin was a researcher, historian, journalist and publisher who focused his work on the history of Catholicism, especially American Catholicism. Martin I.J. Griffin was born October 23, 1842 and died November 10, 1911. He was born and lived in Philadelphia for most of his life. He was married to Mary A.E. McMullen and had 6 children, four of whom lived to be adults.

The Martin I.J. Griffin papers document part of the writing, research and biography of Martin I.J. Griffin. This collection which dates from 1842-1945, with bulk dates from 1880-1911, consists of correspondence, research notes, clippings, monographs, ephemera, biographical information, a deed and several awards and gives a sense of Martin I.J. Griffin's research and writing process, his family, and his publications. Martin I.J. Griffin was an avid contributor to the documentation of Catholic history, particularly Philadelphia Catholic history, and his work highlighted Catholic history and made it legitimate in a time period when none of this information was widely available.

**Language:** English

**Acquisition information:** The collection was originally donated to Dr. Raymond Schmandt of the History Department by Martin I.J. Griffin IV, great grandson of Martin I.J. Griffin, in 1981. Dr. Schmandt then transferred the collection to the Archives. The donation was in memory of Martin I.J. Griffin IV's uncle, Mr. Joseph G. Magee, who was in the class of 1910 at Saint Joseph's College.

**Access Restrictions:** The collection is open to researchers with the exception of Boxes 3 and 5 which are in a very fragile and brittle condition and cannot be handled. The collection itself is fragile and must be handled with care. Scans must be done by the staff of Archives and Special Collections.

**Copyright:** Researchers are responsible for determining copyright of materials used in their publications. Advice on determining copyright information is available at the University.

**Preferred citation:** [item], folder (if titled or numbered), box, Martin I.J. Griffin papers, Saint Joseph's University Archives and Special Collections.

### **Biography/History:**

Martin Ignatius Joseph Griffin was a researcher, historian, journalist and publisher who focused his work on the history of Catholicism, especially American Catholicism. Martin I.J. Griffin was born October 23, 1842 and died November 10, 1911. He was born and lived in Philadelphia for most of his life. He was married to Mary A.E. McMullen and had 6 children, four of whom lived to be adults. They were Rev. Martin I.J. Griffin, Dr. William I.J. Griffin, Sister Dorothea (born Elizabeth Griffin) and Philomena Griffin.

As a child, Martin Griffin suffered an injury to his leg which led him to pursue intellectual inquiry instead of physical play. He attended Philadelphia's Central High School. He was curious about the gravestones in Saint Mary's cemetery and this led him to research the names he found there; Commodore John Barry, Thomas FitzSimons, and George Meade. His research led him to Old St. Joseph's Church in Willings Alley where the Jesuits allowed him access to some of the original documents about the church's history.

Griffin started his career as a bookkeeper and began editing a Sunday school journal called *The Guardian Angel* in 1867. He became the editor for the Catholic Standard in 1870 for three years. He was a temperance advocate and was one of the founders of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America in 1872. Griffin was very active in Philadelphia's temperance movement.

Martin Griffin attended daily Mass at Our Lady of Mercy Church in Philadelphia. Much of his time was spent corresponding with other researchers and institutions of research in pursuit of information on Catholic history.

Martin Griffin wrote, edited and published a Catholic scholarly journal, *American Catholic Historical Researches*, for most of his working life. The American Catholic Historical Society, which had been founded in Philadelphia in 1884, dissolved in 1886. Martin Griffin took over its work in 1886 and began publishing the *American Catholic Historical Researches*, a journal that originated from the defunct Ohio Valley Historical Society. The American Catholic Historical

Society is the oldest Catholic Historical Society in the United States and collects, maintains and researches historical records about the Catholic Church's contributions to American society and culture. Martin Griffin served as the Society's librarian. He spent much of his time researching and writing articles for *American Catholic Historical Researches*, as well as writing a number of books about American Catholic history.

Before Martin Griffin's work and because of anti-immigrant bias not much was known about the role of Catholics in the founding of the United States. He wrote about the central role of Catholics in the founding of the country and legitimized the study of American Catholic history in an era when it was considered unimportant.

His published works include: Monographs on the history of Old Saint Joseph's and other Philadelphia Churches (1881-1882), a monograph on Bishop Michael Egan, O.S.F. (1885), a monograph on Thomas FitzSimons (1887), a monograph titled "The trail of John Ury" (1899) and these published books; *History of Rt. Rev. Michael Egan, D.D. First Bishop of Philadelphia* (1893), *Commodore John Barry* (1902), *General Count Casimir Pulaski* (1909) and *Catholics and the American Revolution* (1907).

#### Citations:

Gerrity, F. "Griffin, Martin Ignatius Joseph." *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., vol. 6, Gale, 2003, p. 529. *Gale Ebooks*, <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3407704858/GVRL?u=sjuniv&sid=GVRL&xid=a58e7002>. Accessed 6 Dec. 2019.

Meehan, Thomas. "Martin Ignatius Joseph Griffin." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 16 (Index). New York: The Encyclopedia Press, 1914. <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/16042b>. 6 Dec. 2019

Rankin, Daniel, S. M. "An American Catholic Historian" *The Sign*. Vol. 16, no. 4, November, 1936, pp. 210-212.

Wikipedia contributors. "American Catholic Historical Society." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 9 Oct. 2018. Web. 6 Dec. 2019.

**Scope and Contents:** The Martin I.J. Griffin papers document part of the writing, research and biography of Martin I.J. Griffin. This collection which dates from 1842-1945, with bulk dates from 1880-1911, consists of correspondence, research notes, clippings, monographs, ephemera, biographical information, a deed and several awards and gives a sense of Martin I.J. Griffin's research and writing process, his family, and his publications. Martin I.J. Griffin was an avid contributor to the documentation of Catholic history, particularly Philadelphia Catholic history.

This collection enhances other collections of Martin I.J. Griffin papers and provides additional details, especially about his research and writing of his book on Commodore John Barry. There are some biographical materials about Griffin and his family including a hand drawn family tree and a printed memorial book that can give researchers further knowledge about Griffin's life. In addition, there is some ephemera and correspondence which detail events in the last years of his life. Beside this material which illuminates Griffin's life, there is value in his research materials and correspondence with libraries and historical societies who answered his research requests. This includes hand-written copies of materials from earlier time periods from the collections of these libraries and historical societies.

The largest series in the collection is correspondence both from and to Martin I.J. Griffin. This includes boxes 2, 4, 9, 10, and 11. Research notes and clippings are the next largest in boxes 3, 4, 5, 10 and 11. Biographical materials are in box 12, oversized materials in box 13. The memorial book is in box 14. When possible the folders of correspondence are labeled by date. More details are available in the Box and folder list.

Some of the Griffin materials have a very early date on them, earlier than the time period of the collection. These are responses to Griffin's research questions and are copied in handwriting from sources at the institutions he sent queries to.

**Arrangement and Processing notes:** There is a box of accession information which includes research notes from the first archivist who worked with the collection. However, the notes do not give a complete picture of the original order or of the proposed plan of arrangement.

The fragility of the collection required additional measures of preservation, like mylar and interleaving paper. Even with these measures some boxes cannot be used by researchers.

The collection was processed to a box and folder level, as evidenced by the Box and folder list.

## **Subjects:**

Barry, John, 1745-1803

Catholic Church--History—Societies

Catholic Church--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia

Catholics—United States—Biography

Catholics--United States—History

Catholics--United States—Periodicals

Griffin, Martin I. J. (Martin Ignatius Joseph), 1842-1911

Philadelphia (Pa.)—History—19<sup>th</sup> century

Philadelphia (Pa.)—History—20<sup>th</sup> century

### **Related Materials:**

Saint Joseph's University Archives online collections: 43 entries of digitized papers from the Martin I.J. Griffin papers with metadata. <https://sjulibrary.pastperfectonline.com/archive>

Saint Joseph's University Archives Old Saint Joseph's Church Archive. A Finding Aid for the collection is available on site. <https://sites.sju.edu/library/collections/archives-special-collections/noteworthy-collections/>

Catholic Historical Research Center | 6740 Roosevelt Blvd | Philadelphia, PA 19149  
[archives@chrc-phila.org](mailto:archives@chrc-phila.org) 215-904-8149 A collection titled "Martin I.J.Griffin papers" Finding aid online at PACSCAL  
[http://dla.library.upenn.edu/cocoon/dla/pacscl/ead.html?fq=top\\_repository\\_facet%3A%22Philadelphia%20Archdiocesan%20Historical%20Research%20Center%22&id=PACSCAL\\_PAHRC\\_MC8&](http://dla.library.upenn.edu/cocoon/dla/pacscl/ead.html?fq=top_repository_facet%3A%22Philadelphia%20Archdiocesan%20Historical%20Research%20Center%22&id=PACSCAL_PAHRC_MC8&) and other materials relating to the American Catholic Historical Society.

Falvey Memorial Library, Villanova University, 800 Lancaster Ave., Villanova, PA 19085 610-519-4270, Special Collections  
<https://library.villanova.edu/collections/distinctive/specialcollections> Digitized materials from the Martin I.J. Griffin papers at the Catholic Historical Research Center.

Georgetown University Library, Georgetown University Archival Resources, Booth Family Center for Special Collections <https://www.library.georgetown.edu/special-collections/our-collections> 202.687.7444 37<sup>th</sup> and O Streets NW, Washington, DC 20057-1174  
(202) 687-7607 Martin I.J. Griffin papers  
<https://findingaids.library.georgetown.edu/repositories/15/resources/10347>

### **Box and folder list:**

**Box 1-** Accession records and processing notes by Josephine Savaro, first archivist to work on the papers. Xeroxes of collection made by J. Savaro, addition to collection accessioned later.

Folder 1- Griffin, J. Savaro processing notes

Folder 2- Accession information on Griffin papers, previous research

Folder 3- Reprints and additional donated materials

Folder 4- J. Savaro Xeroxes

Folder 5- J. Savaro Xeroxes of Griffin Collection

Folder 6- Josephine Savaro Xeroxes of Griffin papers

Folder 7- Xeroxes done by J. Savaro

Folder 8- Xeroxes done by J. Savaro

Folder 9- Xeroxes done by J. Savaro

Folder 10- Xeroxes done by J. Savaro

Folder 11- Catholic University of America Xeroxes of Articles

Folder 12-Binding records kept by J. Savaro

**Box 2-** Martin Griffin's notes and research, some correspondence.

Folder 1- research notes and correspondence from Martin Griffin

Folder 2- research notes and correspondence from Martin Griffin

Folder 3- research notes and correspondence from Martin Griffin

Folder 4- notes and research from Martin Griffin

Folder 5- Research notes, clippings and correspondence from Martin Griffin

Folder 6- research notes, correspondence, and clippings from Martin Griffin

**Box 3-** Clippings from Griffin's Catholic Historical Researches and other publications used in Griffin's research.

Folder 1- Martin Griffin's clippings

Folder 2- Martin Griffin's clippings

Folder 3- Clippings used in research

Folder 4- Clippings from American Catholic Historical Researches and others

Folder 5- Clippings for Griffin's research

Folder 6- Clippings for Griffin's research

Folder 7- Clippings for Griffin's research

Folder 8- Martin Griffin's clippings

Folder 9- Martin Griffin clippings research notes, correspondence

Folder 10- clippings

**Box 4-** Martin Griffin's research and correspondence on Commodore Barry.

Folder 1- Commodore Barry, monograph

Folder 2- Martin Griffin research and correspondence about Commodore John Barry and some other research

Folder 3-Commodore Barry research materials

Folder 4- Martin Griffin's research and correspondence for his book on Commodore John Barry

**Box 5-** Newspaper clippings used in Griffin research or sent to Griffin

Folder 1- News clippings

Folder 2- News clippings

Folder 3- Newspaper clippings

Folder 4- Newspaper clippings

Folder 5- Clippings

Folder 6- Clippings

Folder 7- Clippings

Folder 8- Clippings

Folder 9- Clippings

**Box 6-** Thomas FitzSimons monograph by Martin I.J. Griffin, 1887

**Box 7-**Thomas FitzSimons Pennsylvania's Catholic Signer of the Constitution of the United States by Martin Griffin, 1887

**Box 8-** American Catholic Historical researches, index to New Series, VIII, April 1912- Tribute to Martin Griffin, July 1912, Final Publication of American Catholic Historical Researches

**Box 9-** Correspondence to Martin I.J. Griffin 1883-1898, and undated

Folder 1- 1895, v.12, deconstructed, correspondence

Folder 2- correspondence, 1894

Folder 3- correspondence, 1894

Folder 4- correspondence, 1901

Folder 5- correspondence, 1895

Folder 6- correspondence, 1895

Folder 7- correspondence, 1894, 1895, 1900

Folder 8- Inventory of folders 1-7, Savaro's processing notes

Folder 9- Copy of 1858 letter, hand written

Folder 10- correspondence, 1864  
Folder 11- correspondence, 1883  
Folder 12- correspondence, 1884  
Folder 13- correspondence, 1885  
Folder 14- correspondence, 1886  
Folder 15- correspondence, 1887  
Folder 16- correspondence, 1888  
Folder 17- correspondence, 1889  
Folder 18- correspondence, 1890  
Folder 19- correspondence, 1891  
Folder 20- correspondence, 1892  
Folder 21- correspondence, 1893  
Folder 22- correspondence, 1894  
Folder 23- correspondence, 1895  
Folder 24- correspondence, 1896  
Folder 25- correspondence, 1897  
Folder 26- correspondence, 1898  
Folder 27- correspondence, undated or without a year

**Box 10-** Correspondence sent to Martin Griffin, 1899-1913

Folder 1- correspondence, 1899  
Folder 2- correspondence, 1900  
Folder 3- correspondence, 1901  
Folder 4- correspondence, 1902  
Folder 5- correspondence, 1903  
Folder 6- correspondence, 1904  
Folder 7- correspondence, 1905  
Folder 8- correspondence, 1906  
Folder 9- correspondence, 1906



- Folder 10- correspondence, 1907
- Folder 11- correspondence, 1908
- Folder 12- correspondence, 1909
- Folder 13- correspondence, 1910
- Folder 14- correspondence, 1911
- Folder 15- correspondence, 1913, 1914

**Box 11-** Misc. box, Martin Griffin notes and correspondence for FitzSimons Book, clippings and notes from American Catholic Historical Researches, Griffin's research on OSJ church and Fr. Greaton.

- Folder 1- Martin Griffin research and clippings
- Folder 2- Thomas FitzSimons monograph by Martin Griffin
- Folder 3- correspondence after Martin Griffin's death
- Folder 4- Book by Martin I.J. Griffin; *William Penn the Friend of Catholics*
- Folder 5- Clippings from American Catholic Historical Researches and others
- Folder 6- correspondence regarding research, transcribed copies, mostly undated
- Folder 7- American Catholic Historical Researches 1911
- Folder 8- Griffin's research on Old Saint Joseph's and Father Greaton
- Folder 9- Notes and research found in Thomas FitzSimons book

**Box 12-** Martin Griffin papers, ephemera, journals and record books, Biographical information, awards

- Folder 1- Ephemera
- Folder 2- Ephemera from Martin Griffin correspondence
- Folder 3- Award book
- Folder 4- Martin Griffin; biographical information
- Folder 5- Biographical information after the death of Martin Griffin
- Folder 6- Biographical information, article about Martin Griffin by Edmund M. Coughlin

**Box 13-** Oversized materials

- Folder 1- NYC deed
- Folder 2- Commodore Barry research

**Box 14-** Martin I.J. Griffin, memorial book, 1911