



Name _____

Date _____ Class _____

ACTIVITY: Transcribing Selections – The Griffin Petition

Senate bill to give Ned Griffin his freedom

Part 1 (a) Ned Griffin's Petition

To The General Assembly of the State of North Carolina
The Petition of Ned Griffin a Man of mixed Blood Humbly
Sheweth that a Small space of Time before the Battle of Gilford a certain
William Kitchen then in the Service of his Countrey as a Soldier Deser-
- ted from his line for which he was Turned in to Continental
Service to serve as the Law Directs- Your Petitioner was then a Servant
to William Griffin and was purchased by the said Kitchen for the
purpose of Serving in his place, with a Solom Assurance that if
he your Petitioner would faithfully serve the Term of Time that the
said Kitchen was Returned for he should be a free Man- Upon
which said Promise and Assurance your Petitioner Consented to enter
in to the Continental Service in said Kitchens Behalf and was
Received by Colo: James Armstrong at Martinborough as a free
Man. Your Petitioner further sheweth that at the Time no Person
Could have been hired to have served in said Kitchens Behalf for

Soldiers in county militias who deserted were automatically drafted into the Continental line with longer terms of service and farther travel.

Why or how did William Kitchen want to use Ned Griffin?

He wanted Griffin to take his place in the battle.



Name _____

Date _____ Class _____

ACTIVITY: Transcribing Selections, The Griffin Petition

Senate bill to give Ned Griffin his freedom

Part 1 (b) Ned Griffin's Petition

so a small sum as what I was purchased for and that at the Time that I was Recieved into Service by said Colo: Armstrong said Kitchen Openly Declared me to be free Man- The faithfull peformance of the above agreement will appear from my Discharge;-some Time after Your Petitioners Return he was Seized upon by said Kitchen and Sold to a Certain Abner Roberson who now holds me as a Servant- Your Petitioner therefore thinks that by Contract and merit he is Intitled to his Freedom. I therefore Submit my case to your Honourable Body, hoping that I shall have that Justice done me as you in your Wisdom shall think I am Intitled to and Desarving of & Your Petitioner as in duty bound Will Pray.

N Carolina
Edgecomb County
April 4th 1784

Ned X ^ his mark Griffin

Why would the purchase price for Ned Griffin be "so small a sum?"

Answers will vary by student.

What did Kitchen promise Ned Griffin?

Kitchen would grant Ned his freedom after he was done serving.

How did Kitchen break his promise?

He did not grant Ned his freedom upon his return and sold him to another enslaver.



Name _____

Date _____ Class _____

ACTIVITY: Transcribing Selections, The Griffin Petition

Senate bill to give Ned Griffin his freedom Part 2, William Griffin's testimony

State of N^o Carolina
Edgecombe County
William Griff is an inhabi
-ter of Said County being first Sworn, deposeth &
Sayeth, that Some in July in the year 178[1]. That
he said deponent did bargain & Sell a molatto man
Slave Called by the name of Ned Griffin, to a Certain
William Kitchen of Said County to Serve in the Con
-tinental or State Service Twelve or Eighteen months
at most & he the s^d [said] deponent saith that he Sold the s^d [said]
Ned for no other purpose nor intent than to Serve as afors^d [aforesaid]
& he this ^ deponent did Expect that the said molatto fellow Ned
was to be a freeman, & this deponent further saieth that
he heard the said Mr. Kitchen say that the said molatto fellow
Ned was a freeman, & that he the s^d Kitchen never intended to
Call upon the s^d Ned to Serve in any Respect after he had
Served the above said term of time & obtained a discharge
from the aforesaid Servitude. & further saith not.
The above deposition taken
before me this 18th day of March 1784
Ruffin

How does William Griffin know Ned Griffin?

He was Ned's previous enslaver.

Does William's testimony provide any hints at his motivation for selling Ned?

He thought that Ned would become a freeman after his service, as he was promised.



Name _____

Date _____ Class _____

ACTIVITY: Transcribing Selections, The Griffin Petition

Senate bill to give Ned Griffin his freedom Part 3, Joseph Fort's testimony

State of North Carolina

March [the] 27th 1784

Edgecombe County

This day Joseph Fort volun-

tarily appeared before me, and being sworn in the
holy Evangelist of almighty God, Deposeth and Saith
that in June or July in the year 1781 he

was in company with William Griffin & William Kitchen
of the county afores^d [aforesaid] & that the s^d [said] Kitch-
en was bargaining with the s^d Griffin for a cer-
tain Mulatto man Slave named Ned whom the
s^d Kitchen intended to put into the Continent-
al service as a substitute in his own Room,
and farther this Deponent saith, that he heard
the s^d Kitchen promise the s^d Mulatto Ned, that
he should be a free man provided he (the s^d Ned)
would [crossed out] enter into the Continental service
and discharge him (the s^d Kitchen) from the same
Sworn before me

Joseph F his [superscript] mark [subscript] Fort
Rob^t Digges [JD?]

How did Fort know Ned Griffin?

He was in company with William Griffin & William Kitchen.

How might Fort's testimony affect the case?

He is another passerby corroborating Ned's story.

ACTIVITY: Transcribing Selections, The Griffin Petition

Senate bill to give Ned Griffin his freedom Part 4(a), James Armstrong's testimony

State of North Carolina
Edgecombe County }[??]
1783

August Term

Personally appeared before me Cole^l [Colonel] James Arm-
-Strong and being duly sworn deposeth and saith
That on or about the first day of August in the
year of our Lord one Thousand Seven hundred &
Eighty one this deponent being at Martinborough
in Pitt County and State aforesaid being appoint-
-ed to superintend the receiving of Draughts
deserters and substitutes for the Continental service
from the district of Halifax and Newbern a certain
William Kitchen who was then a deserter from
the Continental Service having brought a certain
Ned Griffen a molattoe or Mustee to this deponent
as a Substitute in the room of the said Kitchen
to Serve for the term of Eighteen Months in the
Continental Service the said Kitchen upon his
delivering the said Griffin to this deponent (who
ever mindful of his duty and determined strictly
to adhere the Laws of this state particularly to the
directions there enjoined respecting the receptions
of Draughts Substitutes & I objected to the said
Griffin upon this Principle that he was not
perfectly satisfied of his being a freeman and
the said Kitchen thereupon with the strongest



Name _____

Date _____ Class _____

How did Armstrong know Ned Griffin?

He was an army colonel, stationed in the town that would become Greenville, in charge of soldier recruitment (or draftees, deserters, and substitutes) for the Continental service.

What was Kitchen's punishment supposed to be for deserting the militia?

Drafted into a 12-18-month term in the Continental Line. If he had not complied or paid for a substitute, his punishment (if caught) could have ranged from hard labor to death by hanging or firing squad.

ACTIVITY: Transcribing Selections, The Griffin Petition

Senate bill to give Ned Griffin his freedom Part 4(b), James Armstrong's testimony

assurances declared that he the said Griffin was a free-man and as such delivered him to this deponent declaring and positively affirming at the same time that he had Purchased the Service of the said Griffin and upon his Serving the said tour faithfully he the said Kitchen manumitted and totally discharged him from every [species?] of further Services whatsoever. That upon those terms and Solemn assurances of Kitchen only he this deponent received and enroled him the said Griffin in the Continental service accordingly. And farther this deponent saith that some time after the enrolement he met with Wili-am Griffin the person from whom Kitchen had purchased the service of the said Griffin he this deponent addressed himself to the said Willi-am Griffin in these words; so says this deponent Kitchen has purchased of you a certain Ned Griffin (meaning the said Ned Griffin that he had received as a free man of Kitchen for a substitute for him the said Kitchen upon which the said William Griffin answered yes,



Name _____

Date _____ Class _____

What additional testimony supports Ned Griffin's claim in this passage?

He supports Ned's claim that the enslaver, Kitchen, promised Ned to be a free man upon joining the Continental Line and completing the term.



Name _____

Date _____ Class _____

ACTIVITY: Transcribing Selections, The Griffin Petition

Senate bill to give Ned Griffin his freedom Part 4(c), James Armstrong's testimony

this deponent then demanded of him Cloathing
for the said Ned Griffin upon which he the
said William Griffin replied that he made
no Contract with Kitchen when he disposed
of the Services of the said Ned Griffin so the
said Kitchen therefore was under no obligation
to comply with his requisition –

Sworn so before me James Armstrong
this 6th August 1783
in open Court
Isaac Sessums

A True Copy taken from the original
Test
Edward Hall [cc?]

Why would Armstrong be requesting clothing for Ned?

So that he can serve outfitted in the army.

*What does William Griffin say about his agreement with
Kitchen in response to the clothing request?*

He said Kitchen was under no obligation to comply with the request to provide clothing.
Also, there was no written contract for the terms of Ned's sale.

Why is Armstrong's testimony significant?

He was a colonel in the army, so his account carried a lot influence in support of Ned
Griffin's petition.



Name _____

Date _____ Class _____

ACTIVITY: Transcribing Selections, The Griffin Petition

Senate bill to give Ned Griffin his freedom Part 5(a), Henry Hart's Testimony

State of N. Carolina
Edgecombe County April [the] 6th 1784
This day Col. [Colonel] Henry Hart personally appeared before me, and being sworn on the holy Evangelist of almighty God, depose and saith, that about the Month of June or July in the year 1781 a certain William Kitchen & William Griffin met at his House, they being then on a Bargain for & concerning a certain Mulatto Man, named Ned who was then held as a slave by the said William Griffin, and that the s^d [said] Kitchen then wanted to purchase the s^d Ned from the s^d Griffin intending to enlist him into the Continental Service as a substitute in his own room & stead, the s^d Kitchen then being himself returned a Continental soldier, & some time

How did William Henry Hart know Ned Griffin?

He was another colonel in the army and helped arrange and hosted the transaction between William Griffin and William Kitchen to sell Ned as a substitute for Kitchen's service.



Name _____

Date _____ Class _____

ACTIVITY: Transcribing Selections, The Griffin Petition

Senate bill to give Ned Griffin his freedom Part 5(b), Henry Hart's Testimony

after this the afores^d [aforesaid] William Kitchen & William Griffin again met at the Chapel on Tar River, the afores^d Mulatto Ned being then present, where the Bargain for & concerning the s^d Ned was confirmed & part of the purchase Money paid and this deponent farther saith that he heard the s^d Mulatto Ned several different times say that he would not enter or enlist into the service unless he could thereby obtain his freedom, & that this deponent also heard the s^d William Kitchen say that if he (the s^d Ned) would faithfully discharge his duty in the room & stead of him the s^d William Kitchen that he the s^d Kitchen would never attempt or endeavor to hold him as a slave but that he should be a free man on his performing his duty in the afores^d service, and farther this Deponent saith not sign'd by Henry Hart
Sworn before
Rob^t Digges [JD?]

How would Hart's testimony affect the case?

Like Armstrong, he is a colonel in the army, so his account carried a lot of influence in support of Ned's petition.

How did Ned advocate for himself?

He stated multiple times say that he would not enter or enlist into the service unless he could obtain his freedom. He was a willing participant in the transaction as a legal way to gain freedom and may have convinced William Griffin to sell him for that opportunity.



Name _____

Date _____ Class _____

ACTIVITY: Transcribing Selections, The Griffin Petition

Senate bill to give Ned Griffin his freedom Part 6, Soldier's certification

the Barer Hear of Edw[^]d [Edward] Griffin Soldier in the North
Carolina Battalion and in Cap[^]tn Mills of
Company having served Twelve months
Being the Term for which He was Ingaged
is hearby discharged from the said Battalion
in which we Certifie that he has Behaved
as a good & faithful Soldiar

Given at Camp Near [signature ???]
Bacons Bridge of N.C. Regi[^]t
1[^]st July 1782 [signature] Lt. Murfree [Lt. ???]
[Maine?]

How would the soldier's certification for Ned Griffin help his case?

It proved that he served in the Continental Line and had a good record, therefore functioned as a character witness.

CHAP. LXX.

An act for enfranchising Ned Griffin late the property of William Kitchen.

Preamble.

WHEREAS Ned Griffin, late the property of William Kitchen of Edgecombe county, was promised the full enjoyments of his liberty, on condition that he the said Ned Griffin should faithfully serve as a soldier in the continental line of this state for and during the term of twelve months; and whereas the said Ned

Ned Griffin did faithfully on his part perform the condition, and whereas it is just and reasonable that the said Ned Griffin should receive the reward promised for the services which he performed;

II. BE it therefore enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North-Carolina, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That the said Ned Griffin, late the property of William Kitchen, shall forever hereafter be in every respect declared to be a freeman; and he shall be, and he is hereby enfranchised and forever delivered and discharged from the yoke of slavery; any law, usage or custom to the contrary thereof in anywise notwithstanding.

A. D. 1784

Declared free.

What is the most significant phrase from this legislation?

Answers will vary based on student. One example, "Ned Griffin...shall forever hereafter be in every respect...a freeman; and he...is hereby enfranchised and forever delivered and discharged from the yoke of slavery."



Name _____

Date _____ Class _____

ACTIVITY: Transcribing Selections, The Griffin Petition

Senate bill to give Ned Griffin his freedom Part 7, "Act for Enfranchising"

Whereas, Ned Griffin, late the property of William Kitchen, of Edgecomb county, was promised the full enjoyments of his liberty, on condition that he, the said Ned Griffin, should faithfully serve as a soldier in the continental line of this State for and during the term of twelve months; and whereas the said Ned Griffin did faithfully on his part perform the condition, and whereas it is just and reasonable that the said Ned Griffin should receive the reward promised for the services which he performed;

Be it therefore Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, and it is hereby Enacted by the authority of the same, That the said Ned Griffin, late the property of William Kitchen, shall forever hereafter be in every respect declared to be a freeman; and he shall be, and he is hereby enfranchised and forever delivered and discharged from the yoke of slavery; any law, usage or custom to the contrary thereof in anywise notwithstanding.

What does it mean to be enfranchised? How would it have affected Griffin?

It means the right to vote, which was something only free men with property (not many African Americans) had at the time.

Do you think Griffin could truly be free in a society that allowed slavery? Why?

Answers will vary based on student. Griffin would have experienced limitations but was able to own property.