

Josiah Alford's Alford Family Notes

The most complete published account of the early Alfords of England is undoubtedly Josiah G. Alford's *ALFORD FAMILY NOTES* published 1908 in London. The book, long out of print, is in the Library of Congress and is available from the library photo duplication service on either microfilm or paper. The cost is approximately \$30 for the microfilm and \$60 for the paper. AAFA member Landon Alford purchased a copy on paper and allowed Gil Alford to make a copy for use in making reprints for anyone who would like to own this book. Copies can be made and mailed for \$11, but readers are warned that the print is very small and sometimes very difficult to read. The 220 page book is indexed.

Landon Alford made a trip to Alford, England, and has visited the site of the Castle. He wrote a report which was published in *ABOUT ALFORDS* several quarters ago. He also took photographs, which we might print in a future issue.

The preface, printed here, provides some insight into Mr. Josiah G. Alford and his reason for compiling the book. Future issues will contain further excerpts from the book.

PREFACE to *ALFORD FAMILY NOTES*

It is now over twenty-five years since there fell into my hands, through the death of an octogenarian relative, various Wills, Documents, and Papers affording much accurate information concerning the history of my family.

The possession of these papers naturally aroused interest, and I soon became aware of a desire on the part of one here and another there to learn something more of the family antecedents, and of the details of that record of an honorable ancestry of which there was a traditional knowledge.

Some years previously Henry Alford, Dean of Canterbury, had traced out his line of the family for several generations, while others since had put together valuable memoranda of their immediate connections.

There also came to light some manuscript notes by the late Reverend Frederick Browne, a celebrated Somersetshire genealogist of the last century, showing the connection of the families of Alford, Symes and Sydenham, all of that County.

Thus, on the one hand, I found a strong desire and frequent enquiry for information, and on the other, a supply of available sources from which that desire could be gratified. The desire, moreover, appealed to me as an eminently reasonable one, for there is something, surely, in hereditary influence upon character; and though, as far as I knew, we could claim no descent from men of noble birth or of great fame, yet a history of some centuries of educated and cultured family-life seemed, for the sake of those still to come, worthy of record in definite and permanent form.

I resolved therefore to make the attempt, and, having once commenced, the work of collection and compilation became a pleasure—hobby (I may as well confess it)—leading naturally to much further research

The result I now offer to my kith and kin in these "Family Notes", the private publication of which is subscribed for by various members of the family

We cannot pretend to produce legal proof of every fact or statement included, but would nevertheless distinctly state that nothing has been passed by Compiler or Editor without good ground for acceptance. Many points, however, are manifestly incomplete, affording ample opportunity for further research and future addition.

Regret must be expressed that it is impossible to include records of some who, though closely connected, are not themselves Alfords. The mass of information concerning the actual family precluded any wider view.

JOSIAH G. ALFORD, Bristol,
December 1908.