

## Part 4: Eileen Alford's Consider Alford

Excerpts from Eileen Alford's *THE ANCESTORS AND DESCENDANTS OF CONSIDER ALFORD AND HIS WIFE LUCY FITCH KENNEDY - A SAGA OF THEIR LIVES AND TIMES IN OLD ENGLAND AND COLONIAL AMERICA*—pages 33–35

As I climb down the Alford lineage chart I find the ancestors of Consider Alford in Devon County in the year 1700. Then, for one century, I lost the thread of first names and did not recover the printed name again until the year 1800 in Hartford, Connecticut and New York City.

Consider Alford was the first of this line of the family to come to America, but I would like to mention here that the first Alfords to come to the new world were the two brothers, Alexander and Benedictus, who arrived in the 1630's with their sister, Joanne. *[It was later discovered that Richard Alford was in James City, Virginia as early as 1624 and is considered by AAFA to be the first Alford in America.]* All three were under twenty years of age. The vast majority of Alfords living in America, today, are their descendants. *[Eileen apparently was quoting from two different 1908 publications which made this statement. Data available to AAFA today indicates that this group probably represents less than one quarter of the living Alfords in America.]* They were the children of Thomas Alford of White Stanton, England, and the grandchildren of Rev. Alexander Alford who died in the year 1576. Alexander and Benedictus settled in Windsor, Connecticut, near Hartford. They fought in the Pequot Indian War under Major John Mason. *[There is only proof of the service of Sgt. Benedict Alford in the Pequot*

*Indiana War. The "war" took place in 1637 and Alexander was baptized October 15, 1627, so it is possible he was not of age in 1637.]* The family had many points of interest in common with my Alfords. Both branches came from the same part of England and settled in or near Hartford in the new world. Cabinetmaking, as a career, formed still another link. And oddly enough, Benedictus had a descendant named Consider Alford who was born about ten years before my ancestor. *[If anyone has information on the Consider Alford who descended from Benedict, AAFA would appreciate having it. There is no Consider Alford listed among the several hundred Alford descendants of Benedict known to AAFA, nor among the 3000 plus descendants listed for Alexander Alvord.]*

Of the numerous lines of the family name Alford, the only line detailed in this chapter is Consider and his son, Edwin. The following pages tell the story of their lives, their wives and their descendants. My purpose in compiling the daily lives of the Alfords is to make the past come alive and give them, as individuals, a touch of immortality.

From the present generation of children living in the 1970's the Alfords go back eight generations to Consider and his wife, Lucy. They were the parents of eleven children, about eight of whom lived to adulthood. A conservative estimate, by statisticians, indicates that one couple born during the American Revolution, as they were, would have produced 78,000 descendants. Eight adult children probably brought them about 200 great grandchildren. By the fifth generation, in my father's time, they would have had about 1,000

living descendants on his third cousin level. I mailed hundreds of letters to Alfords, all over the country, seeking family information. Most of those who answered revealed they did not know their great grand parents first names. Thus, their entire family background is lost forever to all future generations. With this thought in mind I have spent the greater part of the past seven years, retracing the restless footsteps of my ancestors.

*[Eileen's obvious concern about lost lineages is the concern of AAFA as well. Although being ignorant of your great-grandparents' names does not mean you've reached a genealogical dead end, as thousands of researchers can happily attest, we are rapidly losing our Alford history. Over 90% of the "Alfords" we contact don't respond. We must persuade more of the present day Alfords to help us with their parents, grandparents, and even great grandparents, while we are willing and able to trace the line using the census and other data and record it in the computer.]*

Consider Alford was born on December 12, 1778 in England, probably in or near the County of Devon. No official birth certificates were kept in England at that early date. No baptismal record was found as it was not known whether he was a member of the Church of England or one of the non-conformist parishes. My search for the birthplace of Consider Alford was both time consuming and costly. I came to the conclusion that possibly no written record exists. Perhaps, someday, another zealous descendant of Consider will find the place in England where this elusive ancestor first saw the light of day.

The exact date of the Alford's arrival in America has also remained hidden as most ship's records in the 1700's were lost. The American Revolution ended in 1783. Consider's arrival was sometime between that date and the year 1800. His destination was Hartford, Connecticut.

Little is known of Consider's boyhood in Hartford, but certainly he must have been impressed by the beautiful furniture the craftsmen of that city produced as he chose this as his life's work. In the year 1800 Consider was twenty two years old. He must have felt the need of more adventure and a change of scene. Perhaps, Hartford had nothing more to offer him. Marriage to Lucy Fitch Kennedy, daughter of Isaac Kennedy of Windham, Connecticut, and a permanent move to New York City were his choices.

The children of my generation were told that they had a great, great, great grandfather with the old Puritan name of 'Consider'. The only fact about him, which seemed to be known or stressed, was that he was a cabinet-maker. We often wondered what unusual pieces came from the saw of Consider. The only possibility is an old walnut box we found in our attic many years ago. The box contained the marriage notice of his grandson, Thomas Kennedy Alford to Mary Virginia Broas of Binghamton, New York. No stories of Consider and Lucy were ever told to us. There seemed to be an air of mystery around them. And now, almost two centuries after their births, with great anticipation, I traced their footsteps in old Manhattan.

-To be continued. ♦

## Alford - Kinabrew Kin

By Jack Kinabrew, Member #87

Jack wrote the following article and sent the photographs on the next page. He received them from Dr. J. Kinabrew Williams of Pascagoula, MS, a great-grandson of Amanda Alford Kinabrew Williams. Jack is descended from Sarah V. Alford. AAFA thanks Jack for giving copies of these photos to the Association.

### James Kinabrew and Amanda Alford

Amanda and Sarah Virginia were daughters of Leander Raiford Alford and Sophronia Curtis.

Amanda married James William Kinabrew. The Kinabrews were of Dutch descent. The name was originally spelled Kinnebrew and has also been spelled Kennebrew.

As a boy, walking down the Illinois Central Railroad tracks to school, he spotted a broken rail (or possibly a loose rail connection) which he promptly reported to the section foreman. As a result, he was promised a job on the railroad when he grew up.

He went to work for the IC and eventually became a conductor on the New Orleans to McComb run. One day his train was held up in the Ruddock swamps. "Pops" (as we called him) was told to uncouple the engine from the cars. One link was jammed, he was slow in uncoupling, and a jittery robber shot him.

The bullet lodged in his spine, he was incapacitated, and was retired on a pension. He and "Aunt Kinabrew" (Amanda) moved to New Orleans and built a house at the corner of Peters (now Jefferson) Avenue and Dryades Street (still standing). They had two daughters,

Letitia and Haddie.

Amanda was an early activist in civic and neighborhood affairs. To us she was a kind and gentle person—but firm. To the politicians at City Hall she was a holy terror, by all accounts.

### Thomas Powell and Sally Alford

Sarah Virginia ("Sally") married Thomas Jefferson Powell, who had a farm west of the Alford Farm, where Sally lived. The Powells originated in Virginia, and several branches of the family made their way to Mississippi. We have not been able to determine which line Thomas Jefferson belongs to.

They raised a large family; among the boys was my father John Monroe. As a child his jaw was broken, and he went to live with his aunt and uncle while the damage was being repaired—a long process. The Kinabrews became attached to him and asked if he could remain with them. The opportunity of a good education for him—not readily available in rural Mississippi at the time—could not be passed up, and the Powells agreed.

John Monroe completed grade school at McDonogh 14, a public school a few blocks down Peters Avenue. He then attended Rugby Academy, a fine private military school. Having worked summers at Woodward, Wight & Co., he passed up college to take a permanent job there.

Long known as "the Kinabrew boy," he legally changed his name to Kinabrew before his marriage to my mother.

The Powells moved to New Orleans when their family grew up. Thomas died in 1899, and Sally (Grandma Powell) in 1931. Both are buried in Hollywood Cemetery in McComb, MS. ♦