

## Part 6: 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 39–51

Most family lines have been traced now and none, so far, have revealed the name 'Madison'. Two years after Edwin's birth, James Madison became the fourth President of the United States. This even may have coincided with his baptism, and perhaps that is why the middle name was chosen. Bedlow street, once the Alford's home, also changed its name to Madison. . . .

When the Alford's made their next move to 51 Bowery Lane in 1821, Consider was 43 years of age. Edwin, his second son, was just 14 years old. 51 Bowery Lane, the new home of the Alford's, is referred to in the city records as one of three cottages opposite the Bull's Head Tavern. This location was the very heart of the Bowery, in its prime years, before the onrush of immigrants who came at the rate of two thousand a week, and changed the whole tone of the community. Steve Brody's Saloon and his famous song, 'The Bowery', were still years in the future. . . .

In 1825 the Alford's made their last move in the Bowery to 113 Pump Street, later known as Canal Street. Their oldest son, Frederick, had a home and cabinet-making business a few doors from his parents. . . .

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Edwin Madison Alford's boyhood ended with his marriage on December 21, 1826, to Ann-Maria, daughter of Enoch and Margaret Vail Honeywell of New York and Baltimore, Maryland.

The Long Island Star, a popular newspaper of the time, carried a very brief notice of their marriage. . . .

The first home of the young bride and groom was 11 Sheriff Street. Later, in 1842, they moved a few blocks east to 14 Cannon Street. Both homes were located on the far east side of Manhattan Island. They remained at this address until 1873 when they retired in Brooklyn, New York, for the last six years of their lives.

The firm of Kennedy & Alford was located at 505-514-550 Grand Street, New York City. Edwin Alford was the junior partner. His first cousin, Thomas Kennedy, had probably inherited the business from his father, Thomas Kennedy, Sr., brother of Lucy Fitch Kennedy. This firm was, no doubt, a continuation or outgrowth of the Kennedy store in Windham, Connecticut, started by Isaac Kennedy, grandfather of the two young men. The firm dealt in floor tiles, paints and art supplies, and probably wall paper which the Windham firm had featured.

I was fortunate to obtain from the Register's office in New York City, a copy of the indenture made on the 25th day of November 1828, by Thomas Kennedy and Edwin Alford for the lease they took on the property, described as 100 feet long and 25 feet wide, located between Willett and Sheriff Streets on Grand. The lease was for a term of twenty one years. The payments for the rent of this building was \$150.00 a year. The deal was made with Marinus Willett, Esq., of New York City. The deed for this simple transaction was three pages long with sixty lines to each page. It was written in small, well formed script.

Both partners of the firm made their

homes around the corner on Cannon Street. Between the two families there were fourteen children, eleven of whom were boys.

In 1865 the firm of R. G. Dun and Company, later known as Dun & Bradstreet, published their mercantile standing and credit ratings for New York City business firms. Kennedy & Alford was listed under the title of 'painters', and had a capital invested in their company of less than \$2,000.00. Their credit rating was listed as 3 1/2. When interpreted this meant 'fair'. With this small investment both partners managed to live well according to family tradition. The fact that they always listed themselves as 'painters' indicated that they took commissions to paint portraits and other pictures as they did when they painted the murals for the Crystal Palace in New York City. It is interesting to note that just below them on the Dun & Bradstreet record was listed, 'Thomas Kennedy & Company', business—locks, Rating A-1. Their capital was over \$1,000,000.00. There is some possibility that the Thomas Kennedy of this firm could have been the oldest son of Thomas Kennedy of Kennedy & Alford. . . .

Today, Sheriff, Cannon and the five hundred block of Grand Street, where my ancestor spent most of his adult life, is now occupied by two enormous housing projects known as Hillman Houses. There would be absolutely no reason to return with nostalgia to see where the Alford's and Kennedys lived and worked in the nineteenth century. Time has wiped out every mark they may have tried to leave. ♦