

On Assignment in Chester County, PA

By Benjamin F. Alford, Jr.
Member #447 and Pennsylvania State Representative

I was requested by letter dated April 18, 1992 from Allen Alford Staples of Revenna, KY, to search for the names of the children of Charles Alford, who married Elizabeth Laughton/Lawton in 1745 at Holy Trinity Church, Wilmington, DE. Allen believed that Charles may have lived for some period of time in Chester County or Lancaster County, PA.

Allen stated that:

1. Charles Alford was the son of George Alford and Alse/Alice of Mill Creek Hundred, DE.
2. Charles Alford had a son named John and one named James.
3. He wanted to establish whether this Charles Alford was the same Charles Alford that he had found in VA and may have lived in Chester County during the period of 1745-1800.

On 20 May 1992 I visited the Chester County Archives and Record Services, 117 West Gay St., West Chester, PA 19380, (215) 344-6760, and the Chester County Historical Society at 225 N. High St. in West Chester to do my research.

Chester Co. Archives and Record Services

At the Archives, I discussed my assignment with Ms. Barbara L. Weir, historian employee of the Archives. Ms. Weir showed me a copy of the "Calendar of Delaware Wills" for 1748 that listed a Charles Alford, son of George Alford and Alse Alford of Mill Creek Hundred as executor of his father's will. Ms. Weir stated that the Archives did not list a Charles Alford in Chester County during the latter part of the 1700s.

The Chester County tax record for 1747-1749 listed a Thomas Alford in West Nottingham Township. Thomas Alford moved to West Nantmeal Township and was listed at that location for the years of 1750-1763, which was the end date for that microfilm. West Nantmeal Township is located next to both Berks County and Lancaster County.

Ms. Weir stated that there was a general progression from West Nottingham Township, near the Maryland border and Lancaster County, PA, to the north to West Nantmeal Township bordering Berks County along an Indian trail that is now Pennsylvania Route 10.

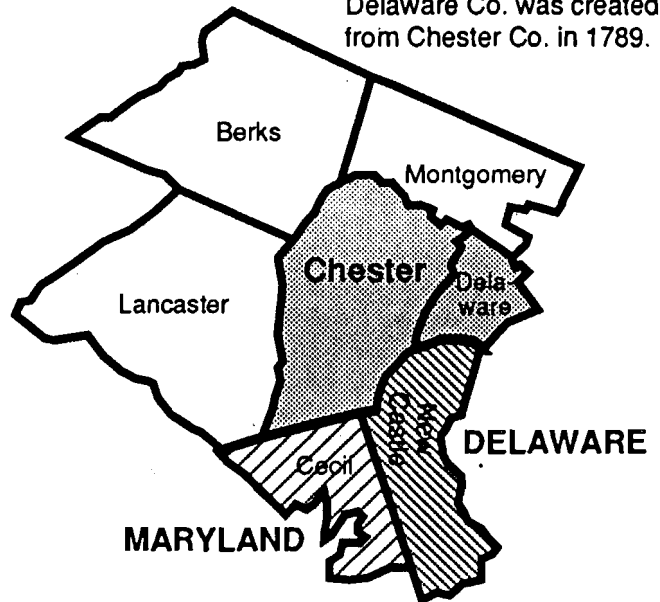
The Chester County index of wills for the period of 1714-1850 listed four Alfords. Keep in mind that for a female to have a

will at that time required she be a widow or unmarried.

Name	Townships	Date
Elizabeth	Kennett	1771
James	London Grove	1805
John	West Nantmeal	1834
Elizabeth	London Grove	1841

PENNSYLVANIA

Delaware Co. was created from Chester Co. in 1789.



The Will of Elizabeth Alford of Kennett Township was filed 27 June 1771 and listed Alice Alford as Administratrix. The list of heirs were Mary, Alice, James, and John Alford.

The will of James Alford of London Grove Township was filed 3 August 1805 and listed three children, Ann, Enoch, and Elizabeth.

The will of John Alford of West Nantmeal Township was filed 10 July 1834 and left all of his estate to his wife Elizabeth and her heirs. No other heirs were listed.

The will of Elizabeth Alford of London Grove was filed 20 March 1841 and did not list any Alford heirs.

Chester County Historical Society

My next stop was at the Chester County Historical Society. I found several documents related to the Alfords.

- A voucher showing payment to James Alford on 27 March 1796 of forty-five pounds by Jesse Miller. Also a voucher showing payment to James Alford of thirty-one pounds two shillings.
- A payment in 1805 to John Alford for mileage as Clerk of Elections in Kennebec Township.
- An 29 April 1813 draft of land in West Marlboro for Elizabeth Alford.
- A newspaper article for 18 November 1818 for Enoch Alford.

Strayed away from the subscriber in Pennsbury township Chester county, on the night of the 5th inst. two fat steers, one of them red, the other white with a dark stripe along his sides, they are supposed to weigh from four and an half to five hundred each. Any person giving the subscriber information where he can find them again, shall be liberally rewarded. ENOCH ALFORD

- The will of Sarah Woodward listing Enoch Alford as witness on 28 July 1819.
- A newspaper for 8 January 1823 listing for public sale the property of James Alfred, deceased, in London Grove Township.

Will be exposed to public sale, on sixth day the 31st inst. on the premises, a valuable Plantation or tract of land, situate in Londongrove township, Chester county . . . containing about 148 acres of land, 20 of which is thriving timber, formerly the property of James Alfred, dec'd. There are on said premises a large brick house, two stories high, with four rooms on a floor, a well of water at the door, a stone spring house; and several small streams of running water. A log barn cellared under, and divided into stabling; an apple orchard and fruit trees of various kinds. . . .

- A draft of Abraham Pennock land tract showing adjacent property line for James Alfred, deceased. I was not able to get a date for the property draft.
- A newspaper article for 6 December 1836 listing for public sale the property of John Alfred, deceased, in West Nantmeal Township by Elizabeth Alfred, Executor.

Will be sold on the premises, in West Nantmeal township, Chester county, on Tuesday, the 27th of Dec., a tract of land . . . containing 50 Acres, more or less, late the property of John Alfred, decd. It is in a good state of cultivation, well fenced and watered by several never failing springs; a reasonable portion is Woodland

and Meadow. The improvements are a log HOUSE, barn, Springhouse over a spring of excellent water. There is an apple-orchard, and other fruit trees on the premises. . . . ELIZABETH ALFRED, Ex'rx.

- A newspaper article for 10 April 1860 showing a notice about Enoch Alford from West Bradford Township as 79 years, 4 months and 17 days old.
- A newspaper article for 26 March 1870, listing the wedding on March 15 between George W. Alfred and Miss Annee M. Meredith, both of Chester County. The wedding was officiated by the Rev. E.P. Alfred.

It is interesting to note the interchange of Alford and Alfred, apparently for the same people. The use of Alfred appears to be mostly in newspaper articles and not in official documents. Unfortunately, the Alford (Alfred) information listed in this report for Chester County does not give a clear genealogical list of Alford descendants, but it may be of help to others having additional Alford information not listed in the Chester County Archives and the Chester County Historical Society files.

My next areas of "On Assignment" will be to visit Lancaster County and my own Berks County, which is next to Chester and Lancaster Counties. ❖

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