

OF THE BLOOD ROYAL OF ENGLAND and  
GENERAL SOMERSETSHIRE NOTES

OF THE BLOOD ROYAL OF ENGLAND

[Page 178 of the book contains a chart that traces the lineage of Rector Charles Alford and his son Bishop Charles Richard Alford to royalty. Charles Richard Alford is the father of Josiah Alford, the author of *Alford Family Notes*. The chart is reprinted below, slightly modified. This family is discussed fully in *AAFA ACTION*, Fall 1993, "Part 19, Josiah Alford's *Alford Family Notes*," pp. 12–20. Descendancy charts for this family tracing the Alford lineage back to Henry Alford of Weston Zoyland (will dated 1575), appear on pp. 116 and 132 of the book, but they were not reproduced for this publication.]

"OF THE BLOOD ROYAL OF ENGLAND was Sir John Stourton, of Stourton, co. Wilts, and of Stavordale, co. Somerset, High Sheriff of Somerset," 1428 and 1431. "In direct descent from the King, and entitled to quarter the Plantagenet Arms" (*Harl. MSS.* 1110, 1155, 1074, Brit. Mus. Lib.) Married i, Catherine, d. of Lord Beaumont; ii, Jane, d. of Lord Bassett.

[Son of John and Jane] John Stourton, of Preston, co. Somerset, m. iii, Catherine Payne.

[Their daughter] Joan Alice Stourton m. John Sydenham, M.P., of Brympton, and Combe Sydenham, High Sheriff co. Somerset, 1465.

[Their son] Walter Sydenham, of Brympton, co. Somerset, d. 1469. He m. Margaret, d. of Sir Wm. Harcourt.

[Their son] John Sydenham, of Brympton, M.P., High Sheriff of co. Somerset in 1506. He m. Elizabeth, d. of Sir Humphrey Audley.

[Their son] Thomas Sydenham (younger son) of Whestow, co. Somerset. He m. Elizabeth, d. of Wm. Crosse, of Charlinch.

[Their son] Thomas Sydenham, of Westowe Manor b. 1579; d. 1635. He m. Dorothy, d. of David Sellick.

[Their son] Thomas Sydenham, of Westowe, b. 1614; d. 1662. He m. Marjorie Cridland.

[Their son] John Sydenham, of Westowe Manor, b. 1653; d. 1737. He m. Dorothy Venn.

[Their son] Thomas Sydenham, of Westowe Manor, b. 1688; d. 1730. He m. Margaret, d. of Edward Galhampton, of Tolland.

[Their son] John Sydenham, Balliol Coll., Oxford, of Bishop's Hull, Surgeon, b. 1726; d. 1790. He m. Elizabeth Clutterbuck.

[Their daughter] Betty Sydenham m. Richard Symes, of Cannington, Bridgwater, b. 1755; d. 1826.

[Their daughter] Elizabeth Symes m. Charles Alford, Balliol Coll., Oxf., Rector of West Quantocks Head, b. 1786; d. 1869.

[Their son] Charles Richard Alford, D.D., Bishop of Victoria, b. 1816; d. 1898.

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GENERAL SOMERSETSHIRE NOTES

Foster's *Alumni Oxonienses* gives the following entries concerning the Alford family:

"Alford, Thomas, son of Richard Alford of Weston Zoyland, Somerset. All Souls, matric. 1688, age 16. M.A. from St. Mary Hall, 1695. Vicar of Curry Rivel, 1697."

"Alford, Thomas, son of Thomas Alford of Weston Zoyland, Somerset, clericus, Oriol, matric. 1721, age 19. B.A. Brasenose 1724. M.A. 1728."

"Alford, Thomas, son of Thomas Alford of Weston Zoyland, Somerset, clericus, Brasenose." (This entry is erroneously given in the *Alumni Oxonienses*, and is corrected from the official *Oxford Graduates*, 2121 D British Museum Library), matric. 1761, age 19, B.A. 1765.

"Alford, Samuel, son of Thomas Alford of Weston Zoyland, clericus. Wadham, matric. 1765, age 18. M.A. 1771."

"Alford, Samuel, son of Samuel Alford of Curry Rivel, clericus, Queen's College, matric. 1794, age 18. M.A. 1800."

"Alford, Henry, son of Samuel Alford of Curry Rivel, clericus, Wadham, matric. 1800, age 17. M.A. 1811."

"Alford, Charles, son of Thomas Alford of Ashill, Somerset, clericus, Balliol College, matric. 1805, age 18; Rector of West Quantockshead, Somerset, 1814."

"Alford, Walter, fourth son of Samuel (junr.), of Curry Rivel, clericus, St. Edmund Hall, matric. 1826, age 18, Vicar of Drayton, Somerset, 1848."

"Alford, George, youngest son of Samuel (junior), of Curry Rivel, clericus. Queen's College, matric. 1842, age 19. Vicar of Mangotsfield, Gloucester, 1881."

"Alford, Daniel Pring, son of Henry Alford of Taunton, armiger, Exeter College, matric. 1857, age 18. Vicar of Tavistock.

"Alford, Robert, son of Walter Alford of Muchelney, Somerset, clericus. Wadham, matric. 1867, age 19. M.A. 1874."

"Alford, Henry Powell, third son of Richard Alford of Weston-super-Mare, New College, matric. 1875, age 19, Vicar of Woodbury Salterton, Devon, 1882."

The *Cambridge University Calendars* and *Graduati Cantabrigienses* record the following admissions to the B.A. degree:

"Henry Alford, Sidney Sussex College, 1822." (Of Bideford.)

"Henry Alford, Trinity, 1832, B.D. 1850" (Dean of Canterbury.)

"Viscount Alford, Magdalen, 1833." (Brownlow family.)

"Charles Richard Alford, Trinity, 1839, D.D. 1867." (Bishop of Victoria.)

"Samuel Alford, Queen's College, 1841. (Vicar of Helmsley, Yorkshire.)

"Bradley Hurt Alford, Trinity, 1859." (Vicar of St. Luke's, Nutford Place, W.)

"Walter Goldin Alford, St. John's, 1867." (Vicar of Henton, Somerset.)

"Josiah George Alford, Corpus Christi College, 1870." (Vicar of Stoke Bishop, Bristol.) [Author of this book.]

"Allan Cameron Alford, Corpus Christi College 1878." (Vicar of Cuddington, Bucks.)

"William Powell Alford, Corpus Christi College, 1882." (Vicar of Dawlish.)

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Curry Rivel, the centre of Alford family interests in Somerset for over two hundred years, is described by Collinson as "a very considerable village ... eleven miles east of Taunton." ... "The Church stands on an eminence, and is a very handsome structure ... with large embattled tower." Burton Pynsent, the splendid mansion of the Earl of Chatham, was demolished in the last century, but the "Monument," a fine column of white stone, built in memory of Sir Wm. Pynsent, stands, a striking object for many miles around. Occupying a more seltered position, between Church and Monument, is "Heale, a pleasant seat".

There were Alford's at Curry Rivel, besides those in the present line of the family, whose connection it seems impossible to trace; and some who distinctly had no such connection, bearing the name of Alford only through that change of spelling and pronunciation, which was by no means uncommon in early days.

The will of Edward Olferd of Curry Rivel, proved seven years later, was witnessed in 1627 by Marmaduke Walsh, who was a Justice of Common Pleas, and lived at Fivehead. His descendant Marmaduke Walsh, gentleman, of Curry Rivel, died in 1731, and by his will left land at Curry Rivel "now in the tenure of Mr.

Samuel Powell for the lives of Frances (who married Mr. Thomas Alford) and Jane, sisters of the said Samuel Powell.”

The connection of the Alfords with the Powell family was two-fold. First, and chiefly, through the marriage in 1698 of Thomas Alford of Curry Rivel with Frances Powell of Heale House, whose grandson Samuel Alford inherited in 1787 the Heale Estate, which estate has now passed through four generations of Alfords to its present owner Mr. Robert Alford. Secondly, through the marriage of John Powell of the Staplegrove family with Joan Sydenham, whose small estate, still called "Powell's," descended after her death in 1790 to Bishop Alford, and so to Canon [Josiah] Alford, who now holds it.

The Powell family possesses an ancient pedigree, going back step by step to "Yesline, one of the Five Golden Pillars of Wales, and Prince of Glamorgan" (about 1138 A.D.).

Heale House, Curry Rivel, "was the residence of the Powell family, the old part of the house having been built in 1620 by Samuel Powell, son of William Powell, D.D., Canon of Wells and Archdeacon of Bath. The south-west front of the house, in early Georgian style, was added by Samuel Powell, great-grandson of the former Samuel, and was completed before 1725." An ancient metal bell-turret surmounts the older portion of the house, finishing in a copper vane, which takes the unusual form of an armorial shield, with the Powell crest, a moorhen, stretching its head towards the wind.

The Powell bearings are: "A field partie of azure and gules with three Lyons rampant argent. The moorhen's head is the crest."

In 1620, the date of the building of Heale House, a Faculty was granted in the Court of the Archdeacon of Taunton "to Samuel Powell, gent, to sette uppe a convenient seate in a vacante void place of the Soute Ile of the Parische Church to appertaine in perpetuities to his new Mansion House within the parische of Curryrivall."

The Powell and Alford monuments are on the walls of this south transept, and the vault is beneath. The vault was constructed by Faculty (dated 23 July 1734), by Samuel Powell who died in 1738, and was himself the first to be buried in it. Mary Alford, widow of Samuel Alford of Heale, who died in 1827, was the last to be buried there; and the vault was filled up with earth and finally closed at the time of the restoration of the Church in 1860.

Collin's *History of Somerset* (vol. i, p. 30) gives the following:

"Mrs. Johanna Alford, of Farrington, in the county of Berks, gave by her will the sum of £20 every year for ever, to ten families of the second poor residing and inhabiting within this Parish (Curry Rivel); to be distributed each year between Michaelmas and Christmas by the Minister and Churchwardens."

"Marmaduke Alford (husband of the above Johanna) gave a new Communion Table and Railing, with a Bible, Common Prayer Book, and Surplice, to the Church."

Foster's *Alumni Oxonienses* gives: "Alford, Marmaduke, son of Robert Alford of Curry Rivell, Somerset; Wadham College, matriculated 1668, age 17, B.A. 1674. Yeoman of Chapel Royal 1675. Sergeant of Chapel Royal 1714. Died 1715, aged 68." His will abstract here follows:

"Marmaduke Alford, 'yeoman of Her Majesties Chappell Royall'. 1715. 'To be buried in the yard of the new chappell in Westminster. ... to the Right Rev. Father in God, Henry, Lord Bishop of London, Dean of her Majesties Chappell Royall, five guineas to buy his lordship a ring. To the Rev. Dr. Battell, SubDean, a ring. To Wadham College, Oxford, £10. To my sister Mary, living in the parische of Curry Rivell in Somersetshire, £50. To Lady Elizabeth Lloyd, a ring. To the poore of Curry Ryvall where I was born, £10.... All my other goods, and my annuity purchased and payable out of Her Majesties Exchequer, to Johanna my entirely beloved wife, whom I make my sole Executor." *P.C.C. 80, Fagg.*

*Alumni Oxonienses* records the matriculation, in 1603, of "George Alford of Somerset, pleb. Balliol College, age 16. B.A. 1607." He took the Holy Orders, and held the Rectory of Poyntington, near Sherborne, from 1618 to 1621.

An entry occurs in the Registers of Bickenhall, near Taunton, under date 1613: "John Alford ibi curatu pro tem.," and in 1615, "Nov. 12, Mr. John Alford, Clarke, Buryed."

George Alford of Wookey, near Wells, held the office of Churchwarden, 1718, and again in 1726.

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There were Alfords for many years at Whitestanton .

In 1530 John Alford of Whitestanton, was witness to a will.

In 1538 William Alford was witness to a will.

In 1558 mention is made of the Reverend Alexander Alford of Whitestanton.

In 1576 the Will of "Alexander Alford, clerke, of Whitestanton, Somerset", was proved. "Agnes my Wife Executrix."

In 1578 the burial is recorded at West Monkton, Somerset, of "Agnes, wife of Alexander Alford of Whitestanton, Clerk".

In 1586 George Alford was baptized at Whitestanton.

In 1606, June 20, "John Alford and F. Gibbs were married".

In 1608, "non die Oct, Johannis Alford filius Thomae Alford baptizatus fuit".

In 1622 "Johanna, daughter of Thomas Alford", was baptized.

About 1630 "Alexander and Benedict Alford, with their sister Joan, left the neighbourhood of Whitestanton and Chard, and became the founders of some of the Alford or Alvord families of the United States of America. [There is no final quotation mark in this paragraph.]

In 1636, 27 May "Joane Alford, widow, was buried" at Whitestaunton [*sic*].

In 1650 "Richard Alford and Alexander Alford, Yeoman of Whitestanton", both of whoses signatures are there appended, are mentioned in the Record Office *Royalist Composition Papers*, Series I, xxiii, 79.

In 1657 the Will of Richard Alford of Whitestaunton [*sic*] was proved.

In 1693, December 17, the Whitestaunton [*sic*] Registers record the burial of John Alford.

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The little country-town of Chard, Somerset, was also inhabited by various members of the Alford families.

In 1740 "Mr. Alford of Chard took an account of Harvey's Charity".

In 1777 "William Alford of Chard died childless".

In 1782 Thomas Alford was Vicar of Chard, holding benefice together with that of Ashill. He was in the direct senior line of the present Somersetshire family.

In 1805 the Reverend Thomas Alford, Vicar of Chard, died.

#### Armorial Bearings

The senior branch of the Alford family have long used bearings, the origin of which is uncertain. They were to be seen on the north side of the Vestibule (now the Baptistry) of Lyme Regis Church, as the Arms of Richard and Gregory Alford, who are there buried, the latter being described as "Armiger" in the *Dorset Administrations*. They appear on some old seals and plate which descended from Thomas Alford of Ashill, and are referred to in the Will of Mrs. Elizabeth Alford of St. Audries. These arms were adopted in the Episcopal Seal of Charles Richard Alford, D.D., Bishop of Victoria, 1867. They also appear on a small mural brass, marking the burial-place of Charles Alford in St. Audries Church, Somerset, and in the Bishop Alford memorial window in Cleeve Church, Somerset, as well as in one of the beautiful windows of the Great Hall of St. Paul's School, Hammersmith, London.

Quarterings are made with Alford of Bucks and Berks (six pears); with Symes of Somerset (three escallops in pale); and with Sydenham of Somerset (three rams passant).

The crest, as used by the family for two hundred years, is an escallop shell, the crosier bearing a "difference or distinction" added thereto for Bishop Alford and his descendants.

The following is a correct blazon, being an extract from the grant which is recorded at Heralds' College: "The Armorial Bearings, hitherto used by his family with such distinctions as may be necessary, to be borne by him and his descendants, the Right Rev. Charles Richard Alford, Doctor of Divinity, Bishop of Victoria, according to law of arms: Or on a chevron indented azure, between three roses gules barbed and seeded proper, four crosses patee and three fleurs-de-lis alternately argent; and for the Crest, an escallop argent surmounting a crosier in bend sinister or. The Motto is 'Vive ut Vivas'."

The family Motto has been well interpreted by the late Miss E. M. Alford of Taunton, in the following verse:

#### Vive ut Vivas

"Live that thou mayest live"—the Motto of our Race;  
Live a life of purpose, live a life of grace,  
A life of self-denial, a life of active love,  
A life lived here as seeking a fuller Life above.