

LONDON AND HERTFORDSHIRE

We now return to the family of Sir Edward Alford.

6. **John Alford** of Hamsey and Offington, co. Sussex, esquire, was the son of Sir Edward Alford by his second marriage with Ann Corbett. He was born about 1645. The Alumni Oxonienses, Equitis gives the following:---"Alford, John, fil. Edward of Offington, Equitis. Church of Christ. Matric: 1664, age 17, of Offington." He lost his father when only eight years old, and succeeded to the Sussex estates on reaching the age of 21. He married the following year, and had nine children, of whom four died in infancy and two others at later ages, as shown in the pedigree, Table III.

The three who survived were:

- i. Mary, born in 1669, who, in 1697, married Colonel Sir Thomas Wenham.
- ii. Elizabeth, born in 1671, who married Richard Bridger, of Hamsey Place near Lewes.
- iii. John, of whom next (7). In 1679 at the age of 34. John obtained a seat in Parliament, sitting as representative for Midhurst, Sussex, from 1679 to 1681, and for Bramber from 1688 to 1689. He died at Offington and was buried at Broadwater, in 1691, at the age of 44. His widow, Sarah Alford, lived till 1737, when she died at the age of 86. Her monumental inscription, upon a flat stone in the church at Broadwater, is:

In memory of John Alford, Esquire, who died
May 16, 1691, at aged 44.
Here also are deposited the remains of
Mrs. Sarah Alford
Who lived his wife 23 years, and his widow 46.
She departed this life Jan. 22nd. in the 86th. year of
her age, and our Blessed Lord 1737."

Also at Broadwater, are the following inscriptions to their children:

"Edward Alford, Esquire, son of John Alford, Esquire, of Offington; ob: January 18, 1697; aet : 17."

"Mrs. Sarah Alford, daughter of John Alford, Esquire, late of Offington. Died Feb: 3, 1727. Aged 50." 7.

John Alford, of Coombe, co. Sussex, Esq., was the youngest and only surviving son of John Alford of Offington and Sarah his wife. He was born in 1683, and matriculated at New College, Oxford, in 1701, being described as "Son of John Alford of Offington, Armiger. Desiring to follow in the steps of his father, grand-father, and great-grand-father, he endeavoured to enter Parliament, but apparently failed to obtain a seat. There is no record of his marriage, and in 1744, at the age of 61, he died leaving neither widow or child. In Broadwater Church is a mural monument in the north transept: "To the memory of John Alford, esquire, who died 1744, the last of the ancient family of that name heretofore of Offington in this Parish; whose remains, together with those of his ancestors and kindred, lie buried in this channel." The direct line of the Sussex Alfords thus came to an end, as his monumental inscription records, and the Sussex property passed away from the family. "The manor of Hamsey (Coombe Place), near Lewes, was devised by John Alford, esq., to John Wenham," son of his sister Mary, who married Sir Thomas Wenham. Some part of the property also passed to the Bridgers.

The following may here be noted: Major John Alford is mentioned several times in the year 1645. His connections with Berkhamstead, in Hertfordshire, would lead one to suppose that he belonged to this second, or Sussex, branch of the family. While he was noted as a Parliamentary soldier, Sir Edward as we have seen, was severely fined as a Royalist. "Wednesday, September 10, 1645. At two o'clock this morning the signal was given to storm the City. The horse were commanded by Major Alford, and within the line met a party of the Royal Horse, whom they forced to retreat, mortally wounding Colonel Taylor, and taking several prisoners." Evans' History of Bristol, pp. 203, 204.

"In 1650 Major John Alford held Crown lands on an unexpired lease at Berkhamstead." Clutterbuck's County of Hertford.

"Major John Alford, a Parliamentary Soldier, held Berkhamstead Place, Herts, under lease in 1656. Berkhamstead House, Manor, or Castle was leased by King James to the family of Morays, or Murrays. The Great Park had contained 1252 acres. About the time of King Charles the Murrays left, and the unexpired term of nine years was assigned to Major John Alford in February, 1650. The Estate and Manor of Berkhamstead are now held by Lord Brownlow under the Duchy of Cornwall." Public Record Office Papers.

The Cornwall Library at Naseby contains a small quarto illustrated tract, not found in the British Museum, published in London 1651, entitled A Narration of the Proceedings of this present Parliament and their Armies, etc. Page 19 begins: "A full narrative of the late dangerous designe against the State, written with Master Love's owne hand, whereby he setteth downe the several meetings and secret actings with Major Alford, Colonel Barton and others."

An Essex connection of the family is apparent, for the will of Roger Alford of Chelmsford, 1517, given ante, p. 13, shows that the family were then of some position in the county. A writ to the Sheriff of Essex, 7th Elizabeth, 1565, mentions John Alford of Southweld: also Stephen and Thomas Alford of Felstead. In the Visitation of Essex in 1612 we find: Arms (quartered with Raynsford) Gules, a cross flory argent, Alford. And elsewhere the record of the marriage of an Alford with Robert Kempe of Finchingfield. In 1662 Theophilus Alford, son of John Alford of Ashton, Devonshire, became vicar of South Weald, and his son, John Alford, described as of Brentwood, Essex, matriculated at Trinity College, Oxford, in 1675, aged 16. Edward Alford, son of Roger Alford, was M.P. 1603 to 1628 for Colchester. The records of Monoux Foundation School at Walthamstow, in Essex, giving some interesting particulars concerning the Alford family. "Robert Alford, (the father of Roger) was one of the original devisees in Sir George Monoux's Will." The Governorship and Trusteeship of the Grammar School which he founded at Walthamstow thus coming into the hands of the Alfords. In 1599 "Edward Alford, grandson of the devisee, and son of Roger, being in possession of the premises in conjunction with Elizabeth Alford, widow (of Roger) and Edmund Fettiplace (their son-in law) became himself a Benefactor to the Charity." His benefaction being still known as "Alford's Gift." The Alford property on which the charges for this Charity were made was in the parish of All Hallows Staining, in London. It was reported formally in 1636 "that Schoolmasters had been appointed by the Alfords who had been unable to teach the Latin tongue." An "inquisition" was held and a new "decree" made by a Commissioner in 1658. We may here record the following entries in the Registers of St. Dunstan's in West, London: 1589, Feb. 10, Elizabeth, daughter of Edward Alford, gentleman, baptized. 1592, Jan. 7, Anne, daughter of Cuthbert Alforde, baptized. 1601, June 14, Robert, son of Edward Alford, gentleman, baptized.

THE ALFORDS of HEREFORD, LONDON, and CLARENDON PARK

The exact descent of this family is not clear, but it apparently formed the third branch of the Northern stock. The founder of this branch was Thomas Alford, presumably the youngest son of Thomas and Jane Alford, of Holt (see table). Of him we have these particulars: The Public Record Office Ancient Deeds, Hereford, B. 530, mentioned a "Bond by Walter Waters, rector of Bishopstone, co. Hereford, and Thomas Alford, of Brownsyell, in the said county, 20 Henry VII." Thomas Alford was appointed "Gentleman Usher of the King's Chamber" to Henry VIII.

The British Museum Royal MSS. contain the following interesting record concerning him: "Clothes and Jewells delivered to Thomas Alford, 16 November, 20 Henry VII. A purple damask gowne with gold fringe, with 130 diamonds set in golden buttons, and 131 flowers of gold and pearls on the garde gowne. A purple doublet with 54 rubies and gold buttons and points," etc., etc. Thomas Alford was afterwards appointed "Spigurnel," or "Sealer and Signer in Chancery," in which capacity he is mentioned many times in Royal Office State Papers of the years 1533 and 1534. Vol. vi, 578 (25), May 1533, records a "Grant to Thomas Alford to be Keeper of the New Park, near Westminster, with the custody of the King's Lodges in the same Park; and Receiver of the Rents of the Lands near Charyng crosse lately acquired by the King from Abbot and Convent of Westminster."

Also vol. vii, 1601 (2), December 1534, "Grant in Fee to Thomas Alford of lands called Brookys at Ipswich, Suffolk; Westminster, Dec. 2nd." A circumstance of especial interest is that he was a witness to the "Sentence given concerning the validity of the King's Marriage to Anne Boleyn: present, Thomas Cromwell, Thomas Leigh, LL.D., and Thomas Alford." Vol. vi, 737 (7).

He died at a comparatively early age in 1535, for a "Grant" of that year mentions "Thomas Alford, deceased, Signer and Sealer in Chancery." His son appears to have been : 2 John Alford, of Cawther Hill, co. Hereford. His will is to the following effect : John Alford of Cawtherhill, co. Hereford, 1614. To be buried in the Church of Norton. Bequest to the Church of Norton. "Elizabeth my wife. . .William my sonne. . .Alice my daughter. . .My sonne Thomas' daughters. . .John Allford my sonne. . .Thomas his sonne . . .John Alford sonne of my sonne John of Webley." "My best mare. . .my best horse . . .my good mare . . .my yearlinge colte." My son Richard. Elizabeth Meredith my son Richard's wife's daughter. My daughter Margaret's two sons John and James. Thomas son of my son Thomas. My son William, Executor." P.C.C. 91 Lawe.

John Alford married Elizabeth and had issue :

- i. William Alford (see Table iv)
- ii. Thomas Alford, of whom next (3)
- iii. John Alford (see Table iv)
- iv. Alice, m. Pritchard
- v. Margaret
- vi. Richard Alford of Norton Cannon, Hereford, whose will was proved in 1634: "To be buried at Norton. . .Phillipp the son of William Alforde. . .James, John, Margaret and Joyce, Children of the said Wm. Alforde. . .John Alford the younger of Welles. . .Joan the daughter of James and Catherine. . .Her sister Alice. . .Alice Pritchard my sister. . .To my brother William my house at Norton. . .James his son. . .My sister in law Joyce Alforde. . .Margaret Alforde my sister in lawe. . .John Alforde and William my brothers. . .Marie Alforde. . .Margaret the younger. . .Joyce the younger. . .Mary Alforde. . .John Alford my brother, Wm.h is sonne. . .Philip Alford, James Alford, John my brother." P.C.C. 82 Seager.

3. **Thomas Alford**, of Coventry, gentleman, was the second son of John Alford and Elizabeth his wife. He died 1616, and his will is to the following effect: Thomas Alford of Coventrie, 1616. "To my wife Alice my nowe dwelling house in Well Street in the citie of Coventrie, with the stable and gardens, also my house called the Croft in Bishopgate Street, and after her decease to my sonne John Alford, and for lack of issue to my sonne Thomas Alford (a minor). . .To my wife all my plate . . .My daughters Johanna, Anne, Mary, Sara, Hope, my five daughters. . .To my daughter in lawe Alice Hope a piece of plate." "If anny of my sonnes and daughters doe take riotous and ungodly courses, and will not be ruled by the counsel of their mother, that stubborn and disobedient child shall have no more than £20." P.C.C. 51 Cope

He married Alice Phelps, of Tewkesbury, whose will here follows: Alice Allford of Conventrie, widow, 1617. Bequest "to poore of Tewkesbury where I was borne. . .all of my lands at Tewkesbury to Alice Stawell my daughter," Edward Stawell her husband land in St. Giles in County of Cornwall. "To my sonne John Allford. . .to Thomas Alford my sonne. . .to my five daughters." P.C.C. 51 Cope

Their children were:

- i. John Alford, of whom next (4).
- ii. Thomas Alford. He was educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. "The Rev. Thomas Alford was Minister of Daventry 1635-1637. The Registers for the year ending Lady-Day 1635 were signed by his predecessor; those for the year ending Lady-Day 1636 by himself; and those for 1637 by his successor. His death does not appear in the Register of Burials probably therefore he resigned." He married Alice Hope. "There are no entries in the Register as to any member of his family."
- iii. Johanna, m. Edward Farmer.
- iv. Anna, m. Benjamin Wheate.

- v. Mary, m. Benjamin Farmer.
- vi. Sarah, m. John Needham.
- vii. Hope, whose inscription is at Drayton, in Leicestershire, as below: Arms: Gules, six pears.

"Here lyeth the body of
 'Hope Alford,
the youngest daughter of
Thomas Alford, Esquire,
who dyed 25 November 1636,
 anno aetat: suae 23."

4. **John Alford**, of London, mercer, entered his pedigree in Visitation of London, 1634. He is described as descended from the old Alford family at Cheshire, and the Hearlds confirmed to him the arme in the same year. He became a man of considerable wealth and importance, and lived in later life at Clarendon Park, Wiltshire, "an ancient palace and domain two miles south-east of Salisbury, once the seat of the Earl of Pembroke." "The manor belonged to the Crown, and was granted by Charles II to the Duke of Albermarle, from whom it passed to the Earl of Bath. The magnificent estate of Clarendon Park extends over 4,000 acres. There is an excellent Manor House, with remarkably picturesque Park of 300 acres, which is richly timbered, and the lake in it is the noted resort of wild-fowl. Here the famous Constitutions of Clarendon were signed in the 12th century. Here also Edward III and his royal prisoners, the King of France and Scotland, passed the summer months in 1357. The Estate was held in the later part of the seventeenth century by John Alford." The marriage of his daughter is recorded in the Harleian Visitations. Also London Marriage Licenses "John Clarke, of London, bachelor, 33, and Johanna Alford, spinster, 22, daughter of John Alford, of Clarendon Park, county Wilts, gent, 15 September, 1663."