

22 January, 1988

Mr. Gilbert K. Alford, Jr.  
Executive Assistant, Alford  
American Family Association  
P.O. Box 1586  
Florissant, MO 63032-1586

Dear Gil:

This is a somewhat delayed response to your letter of 17 December, 1987, concerning Association business. My apologies for the delay. The enclosed clipping obit will explain part of the problem. I just got back from the funeral in Atlanta. This is as you know Mary Marjorie, one of my younger sisters. Boy, the grim reaper is hitting all around me in my family. Mary came down with cancer last summer but with chemotherapy went into remission and at Thanksgiving when we had a mini-reunion she looked good and felt good. But she was still smoking and about first January it hit her again like a freight train. They gave her only about ~~two weeks~~ and that is just about what it took. Please make changes in your data and return clipping.

I am numbering my comments with corresponding numbers in your letter and those omitted means no comment.

1. I got off the membership certificates quickly to Mrs. Bowman, Eliz. Alford Williams and your Dad. But in my haste thought I would write the letters to them later. Now I discover I did not copy down the address of your Dad. Will write Tressie now and I have her address in your Directory.

3. The slate of officers looks fine to me and what you have told me about them makes me feel we are very fortunate. You did a good job twisting arms to get some of us to serve. Weston Adams phoned me one day and we had a nice chat. He wanted to discuss the book and find out if his line was followed. I had to tell him no so I don't think he will be ordering. I commended him for his initiative on design of a family badge.

4. I have no objection to Julius moving the bank account to Mississippi and in fact would have encouraged him to do just that. Long-distance banking has its problems. I have received copies of the banking papers you sent him.

5. Good idea. I am sure we all will have some association expense. Right now I am ~~considering sending out a one page flyer about~~ the association along with the invitations to our family reunion which will be 17 April this year. My thinking is that the flyer would announce the formation of the association, its purposes, names of officers, dues, etc. and invitation to join. Since our mailing list is about 100 and assuming the flyers would be about 5¢ per copy, would the association take on this \$5 plus say half the postage \$11 totalling \$16? I would hope we could hold the flyer to just one page so as not to risk the mailing postage going over 22¢. Would you like to take on the task of preparing the first draft of such a flyer or do you want me to do it? Our mailing will have to go out between first and mid-March so we would have to move on it soon if you agree it is a good idea.

7.& 8. Yes, agree we should put Weston in charge of the badge design. You tell him I said do it. Concur we should have some good stationery prepared with the emblem included and believe it would be best for you to handle it locally. I have been thinking about design, format and items but have not come up with anything other than letter size paper and envelopes. Will leave this up to

your good judgement. I thought you sent me a few sheets and envelopes of the stationery you are using now but I lost it or used it. But don't send anymore until we get the new with emblem on it.

9.& 10. Concur.

11. Certainly agree with this and will start proceedings to send a black and white photo. Would the data in the book be sufficient for such a biographical sketch if some of the extraneous information is omitted?

12.& 13. Concur

14. I have received the copies of correspondence with our researcher and her report. While I cannot comment in detail on her report, I am not impressed. It seems to me I have seen what she reported before and could never connect it up entirely with our NC Alford's. Unless she can discover enough to connect those VA Alford's with ours, the cost will not have been worthwhile. I certainly agree with the 2nd \$100 you sent and will go along with just one more increment if the other officers approve. After that I would not want to continue further with her unless a careful evaluation by you, Nancy and the others indicate we should. I also certainly agree with you that our members are going to want to know what we got for the money paid out. I fervently hope we can find someone like Bill Mitchiner who is a competent genealogist and also a Alford descendant with a deep motivation other than money. Perhaps Bill could suggest someone or he might do it himself if we pay expenses. Or perhaps put it on a contingency basis such as some lawyers do in lawsuits. We could pay expenses for any research and if a substantial portion of the research results can be connected with what we know and/or the New England Alford's, then it would qualify to be paid for on an hourly basis just as we are now paying June Johnson. If I were a competent genealogist, I would certainly do it for expenses only. In my mind motivation is everything. How about Christie Baldwin or perhaps Franceine Rees? I know we need someone who knows how to research in VA but I believe any good genealogist can soon learn the tricks special in VA.

15. For the time being I believe we should keep the dues at \$8 and perhaps seek more donations for start-up costs. I will make another donation soon. Until we get more members I think we should keep the dues on the low side. Everytime I mention joining to members of my family they ask how much. There are so many organizations which charge \$15 or more for dues and I think it hurts them because I certainly decline a lot of them for that reason. When and if we do raise the dues I suggest we do it by small increments-no more than a dollar at a time. I will get to work on a little spiel urging members to renew. I hope our researcher June will soon give us something I can use as a sales pitch.

16. Concur we should extend founding memberships for another year.

17. Yes, I was the one to question trying to contact the 8000 plus Alford households. But my concern centers around the timing more than anything else. Assuming a letter to each household costing about 30¢ each that comes to about \$2500 and I don't think our exchequer could stand it all at once. Perhaps we could send out a thousand or two per year for several years until we have contacted all 8000. As new members join the financial strain should lessen. Maybe the other family reunion groups in Mississippi, LA and Texas might be fertile fields for our first try at increasing our membership-in addition to mine as mentioned in Para.5 above. I agree direct mail solicitation is the best and perhaps the only way to reach prospective new members other than a few personal contacts.

18. Great idea. Do I need to send any more data?

19. I have no quarrel with Alford American Family Association but was just curious as to why the surname came first. How would it do to just drop American and leave it as Alford Family Association? Then that would include Canadian and English members. Just thinking out loud- would do nothing since we are so recently organized.

20. I would not throw away the wrong seals. They look OK to me and I would use them on membership certificate after the correct supply runs out. I don't think they would ever be noticed or if they were people would not greatly care. I would not.

21. Kudos for you on this project. Will help in any way I can.

22. Concur. Will help in any way you can get me to help.

Now, in regard to your letter of 19 December, I believe I have touched on most points in para.14 above. I did not send anything to Nancy direct. To recap, I favor one more increment of funds June research in addition to the \$200 you have already paid. ~~But no more unless we get dramatic results and have reason to believe after a careful evaluation that more will be forthcoming.~~

Again my apologies for not meeting your requested date of 15 January. I might have met the date but for serious illness and death in the family.

About your letter of 4 January to Julius, I have no objection to anything and believe you have tied up a lot of loose ends. Looks great to me. Sure is nice to have good executive assistants. Best regards,

Sincerely yours,



Lodwick H. Alford  
President, Alford  
American Family Association

