

“A Girl of Business:” Calicia Allaire at the Howell Iron Works**By Mary Carroll Johansen****DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.14713/njs.v3i1.68>**

Countering the prevailing trends of the antebellum era that separated home and office and thereby placed most women firmly outside the sphere of commerce, Calicia Tompkins Allaire, wife of ironworks owner James P. Allaire, served as her husband’s deputy, helping to oversee the Howell Iron Works and surrounding farms. While James lived mostly in New York City, Calicia helped to manage his businesses in Monmouth County in the 1840s and 1850s; to assess his employees’ character and actions; and to devise new ways for the struggling enterprises to earn money. Referring to his wife in a letter as “a girl of business,” James P. Allaire wrote that he counted on her to “have it done right.” The small scale of the Howell Works, its character as an iron plantation with the family living onsite, and James Allaire’s strained relationship with his adult children made Calicia Allaire the obvious choice to serve as his assistant.

Industrialist James P. Allaire established a brass foundry, the Allaire Works, in New York City by 1804. Initially a one man operation, in the early 1830s the Allaire Works was building over half the marine engines and boilers produced in the country, including for Robert Fulton’s steamships. The Allaire Works depended on iron imports, which had become more expensive due to the War of 1812 and the tariffs of the 1820s. For this reason, James Allaire decided to purchase iron bogs in Monmouth County, New Jersey, where iron ore could be obtained, and to establish the Howell Iron Works, incorporated in 1828. Employing about 500 hands in the 1830s, the Howell Works produced pig iron and finished products. James Allaire established a factory village at the works, compassing 60 or 70 buildings that included housing for the workers, a general store, a blacksmith shop, a carpentry shop, a chapel, and a school. He also rented farmland in Howell to

tenants; his businesses were important to the economy of rural Monmouth County. In addition to his iron and brass works, Allaire ran steamship lines that stretched from Charleston, South Carolina, to Boston, operated a stage coach service, and had contracts for mail delivery.¹

By the 1840s, however, James Allaire's businesses were foundering and he had also suffered personal losses. His business problems stemmed from three steam ships that had run aground, one with many fatalities; the Financial Panic of 1837; and competition from new iron production technologies that had left his Howell Works outmoded and less profitable. Allaire had sold a half interest in his businesses to his brother-in-law John Haggerty; he proved to be a difficult creditor as Allaire's financial problems grew. Additionally, James's wife Frances died in 1836 after thirty-two years of marriage, their son Charles died in 1837, and James severed ties with his namesake son after the young man took a wife whom his father disliked.²

In the face of these challenges, on October 11, 1846 James Allaire wed his cousin Calicia Tompkins, whom he soon came to depend upon to help manage his business affairs. Spending most of his time in New York City at the Allaire Works, James relied on Calicia and the Howell Works' manager, Stephen Garrison, to oversee operations in New Jersey. Allaire kept in touch with Calicia through almost daily letters that provided instructions for business transactions that she was to carry out at the Howell Works and the adjoining farms. Referring to Calicia as "a girl of business," Allaire wrote his wife that he counted on her to "have it done right."³

Calicia Allaire served the role of "deputy husband," carrying out her husband's business affairs on his behalf and in his absence. Under common law, women lost the right to hold property

¹ Philip W. Coombe, "James P. Allaire: His Life and His Legacy, 1785-1900," (M.A. Thesis: Fairleigh Dickinson University, 1976), 28-29, 44, 47-49, 92, 94; Robert F. Van Benthuyssen and Audrey Kent Wilson, *Monmouth County: A Pictorial History* (Norfolk, Va.: The Donning Company, Publishers, 1983), 44, 50.

² Philip W. Coombe, "The Life and Times of James P. Allaire: Early Founder and Steam Engine Builder," (PhD Dissertation: New York University, 1991), 186-187, 193-195, 218-220, 230.

³ James P. Allaire to Calicia T. Allaire, July 11, 1848, Allaire Family Papers and Records, 1808-1901, Monmouth County Historical Society, Box 1, Folder 1.

or to conduct economic transactions when they married, but husbands could authorize wives to act as their representatives in business transactions- as James Allaire did.⁴ As long as she was acting on her husband's behalf, and to further the family's interest, Calicia Allaire could engage in almost any kind of economic transaction. Evidence from letters sent by James to Calicia suggests that he depended heavily on her assistance; he needed a partner he could trust since his brother-in-law and children were proving to be disappointments.⁵

Calicia Allaire's participation in her husband's business transactions into the 1850s went against the prevailing trends of the era. In the nineteenth century, businessmen were moving their worksites from their homes to separate offices. Women knew less and less of their husbands' economic concerns as the men spent their days in factories and offices, returning at night to homes where they could put worldly cares aside.⁶ In contrast, at the Howell Works, the Allaires' Big House was just steps from the dormitory housing male workers, and a short walk from the Iron Furnace, the Foreman's Cottage, and the General Store. The Howell Works was an iron plantation, predecessor to the more modern iron foundries that would be built in Pittsburgh a few decades later. In late nineteenth century Pittsburgh, enormous blast furnaces that ran continuously, and their accompanying railroad connections, belched smoke while cacophonous noise filled the air. The danger the furnaces posed, as well as their noise, drove workers and their families away from

⁴ New Jersey passed a law in 1852 that permitted women to maintain property that they possessed before marriage or that was conveyed to them after marriage as a separate estate; this was the state's first step toward limiting the laws of coverture. "1852 Married Women's Property Act," *Acts of the Seventy-Sixth Legislature of the State of New Jersey*, (Somerville: 1852), 407; *Women's History Project of New Jersey*, accessed May 17, 2016, http://www.njwomenshistory.org/Period_3/womenspropact.htm.

⁵ Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650-1750* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 35-50.

⁶ For more on the division between the workplaces of men and women, see Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly*, XVIII (1966), 151-174; Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: Women's Sphere in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), esp. 19-62; Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

the plant. Pittsburgh's housing was economically stratified, with plant owners, supervisors, and workers all living in separate neighborhoods. At Howell, workers and their families all lived on site in a community of a few hundred people; Calicia, a member of the Allaire household for nearly two decades even before her marriage, would have been well acquainted with her husband's employees from church or from the neighborhood. The small scale of the Howell Works, as compared to the Pittsburgh steel corporations, allowed a limited number of men to oversee all of the daily operations at the site; James Allaire would have conducted some business at home, in full hearing of his wife. She would have known when the blast furnace was running, when charcoal was being produced, or when deliveries were being made from a brief glance out her door. Surrounded as she was by the Howell Works and knowledgeable about the business and its employees, Calicia could have felt confident in handling economic transactions for her husband; the wives of Andrew Carnegie and J. P. Morgan, a few decades later, would never have handled similar transactions for Carnegie Steel or U.S. Steel.⁷

James Allaire's business letters to his wife fall generally into three categories: management; assessment of employees' character and actions; and entrepreneurialism. Allaire's letters asking Calicia to manage various aspects of the work being done at the Howell Works or on the adjoining farms are by far the most prevalent type of letters.

James Allaire often sent messages to the managers of his farms and the Howell Works through Calicia, and he expected that she would help to see that his employees met his demands. In 1848, for example, Allaire told Calicia that he would write to Mr. Hale "about his doing the

⁷ Joe Zetner, "Strolling Through History in Hopewell Village," *Pennsylvania Heritage*, XXIX, no. 3 (Summer 2003): 24-31; Coombe, "Life and Times of James P. Allaire," (PhD Dissertation: New York University, 1991), 264; Harold C. Livesay, *Andrew Carnegie and the Rise of Big Business* (New York: Longman, 2000). For an example of a successful family-owned iron and brass foundry in which men from multiple generations contributed and women remained outside the family business, see Domenic Vitiello, *Engineering Philadelphia: The Sellers Family and the Industrial Metropolis* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013).

work at Brookside” farm, but asked her to underscore his message by personally telling Hale “that I do not want any of his men to work at Brookside I want him or I will send someone from New York.” Similarly, after sending cement to New Jersey, Allaire asked Calicia to have Hale “get to work immediately so that the foundation of the Brookside House may be secured before winter—it must be done this summer so that the cement can get hard.” Allaire followed up two weeks later by asking Calicia to “let me know if Mr. Hale is doing any kind of mason work at Brookside.”⁸ Calicia was to have another manager, Mr. Potter, “have a hen house built somewhere below the necessary,” on the grounds of the Big House. The ten hens and rooster that Allaire had bought would then become Calicia’s responsibility, for he wished her to “have it made so that you can get at it yourself.”⁹

Allaire also expected Calicia to help in the oversight of the Howell Works. In September 1849, he wrote to ask her to have Stephen Garrison, the Howell Works’ manager, “send down the Iron,” and the following spring he directed her to tell Garrison that, if he arranged to have wood cut and corded, “he must reserve the oakwood, timber, and saw logs.” Similarly, Calicia was to let Joseph McNinney, the moulder, know that a man would be coming to see how he was getting on with making sash weights.¹⁰

Frequently, Allaire asked Calicia to arrange transportation between the Howell Works and Red Bank, the port where Allaire would send goods from New York by steamship. She was to have David Edmonds “send a team” to pick up lime and urine from Red Bank, to have Mr. Potter “send a team” to deliver sash weights and to collect the flour and pork Allaire would send, or to

⁸ JPA to CTA, September 11, 1848, June 21, 1848, July 11, 1848, Allaire Family Papers and Records, Monmouth County Historical Society, Box 1 Folder 2. Collections of James P. Allaire’s letters in historical societies do not include letters from his wife Calicia.

⁹ JPA to CTA, January 3, 1848, Allaire Family Papers and Records, Monmouth County Historical Society, Box 1, Folder 2; emphasis in the original.

¹⁰ JPA to CTA, September 18, 1849, May 21, 1850, June 8, 1848, Allaire Family Papers and Records, Monmouth County Historical Society, Box 1, Folders 3, 4, and 2.

inquire why Potter had failed to send an expected team.¹¹ Allaire also relied upon Calicia to distribute goods that he had sent, and to set the prices for goods to be sold at the General Store. In August and September 1849, for example, Allaire sent down several bales of sheeting and print cloth, each pattern to be sold at a different price; Calicia was to deliver the accompanying bill to Stephen Garrison, “and explain to him what I have said I think they should be sold for.”¹²

Allaire likewise requested Calicia to keep watch over his money. She was to “keep the key of the office and not make out a bill for [local businessmen to whom Allaire owed money] or permit Mr. Potter or anybody else to do so—let them wait until I am at Howell and then I will settle and pay them.” Earlier that summer, Allaire had asked Calicia to pay to Richard Corlies the \$18 in interest that Allaire owed him on one piece of property; “the receipt must be put on the bonds and a separate receipt taken in my receipt book marked (duplicate)—now as you are a girl of business see that you have it done right,” Allaire concluded.¹³

Allaire expected that Calicia would be able to work quickly and to complete work on deadline. Writing on Thursday, June 22, 1848, Allaire asked Calicia to have the “fine large Dutch Man” whom he had sent to New Jersey introduced to David Edmonds, but “if Edmonds is not at the works you must take him or have him sent to the farm and get Van Tassel to interpret for him.” She was then to have John Van Tassel bring a cow to Red Bank by Saturday morning at 11:00 am, to be exchanged with another cow Allaire was sending from New York, and arrange transportation for three casks of lime to Brookside. Allaire concluded the letter, “I began this letter on Thursday

¹¹ JPA to CTA, July 7, 1848, September 12, 1848, Allaire Family Papers and Records, Monmouth County Historical Society, Box 1, Folder 2; see also JPA to CTA, September 27, 1848, Box 1, Folder 2. Lime is calcium hydroxide; it is used in building construction and agriculture.

¹² JPA to CTA, August 29, 1849 and September 18, 1849, Allaire Family Papers and Records, Monmouth County Historical Society, Box 1, Folder 3; see also JTA’s letters to CTA of September 11, 1848 and September 27, 1848, Box 1 Folder 2.

¹³ JPA to CTA, September 27, 1848, July 11, 1848, Allaire Family Papers and Records, Monmouth County Historical Society, Box 1, Folder 2.

night but am now writing to you on Friday morning, now as I expect you will come to New York tomorrow (Saturday) you will have to attend to all this about the Dutchman and the cow this afternoon.”¹⁴ No record indicates whether or not Calicia completed her tasks on time. Since Allaire operated complementary businesses in two states in an era predating the telegraph, he needed Calicia to manage his affairs with alacrity.

In his long and frequent absences, Allaire also relied on Calicia to judge the character of his employees and the wisdom of the actions they undertook. Given his problems with his children and brother-in-law, Allaire probably greatly valued Calicia’s service in this capacity.¹⁵ In March 1848, Allaire wrote to Calicia regarding the man who oversaw the farms around the Howell Works: “Mr. Potter is a weak man altho’ I believe a very honest man—I depend more on you than him—you must try and get him to visit you every evening and talk to him about all the things that have transpired during the day—I am sure you can advise him and prevent his doing the many foolish things that he is continually doing, such as employing and letting that drunken wretch Jonty More have the wagon.” When Allaire met a man in New York who was willing to bring down families to settle and farm his New Jersey lands, Allaire initially requested that Calicia “pay some little attention and have him shown about.” Allaire soon reconsidered as he feared that “everyone we have about us is either a fool or will take more trouble to persuade him to stay away than encourage him to settle there.” “[P]erhaps you had better saddle up your horse,” he wrote Calicia, “and take him up to Brookside and the Jones Farm, passing by . . . any other lands that you know I own there and that I have other lands about[;] if he should like the place I will come down myself and attend

¹⁴ JPA to CTA, June 22, 1848, Allaire Family Papers and Records, Monmouth County Historical Society, Box 1, Folder 2.

¹⁵ Allaire was also disappointed in his daughter Frances, who recorded the deed to a farm he had given her when he had expressly asked her not to do so, then sold the farm for less than Allaire had paid for the house on it without letting her father know of her plans; he would have bought it back from her had he known her intentions. Coombe, “Life and Times of James P. Allaire,” (PhD Dissertation: New York University, 1991), 245-246, n 37; 273.

to him.” Thus, Calicia would have been responsible for persuading this prospective tenant of the desirability of farming the Allaires’ lands, while the hours she spent with him in the saddle would have allowed her to gain some insight into his character that she could have relayed to her husband. Calicia Allaire was the on-site manager whom her husband trusted to act prudently and always in his best interests.¹⁶

A few letters suggest that Calicia also had an entrepreneurial side to her, finding additional ways to earn some money for the family. In November 1847, Allaire responded to a previous letter from his wife by writing, “I note what you say about the chickens and if you think Brookside knows how to prepare poultry for market I think they had better send some on Wednesday next and money they bring will do to pay David Edmonds. You may tell them so.” In addition to suggesting that chickens raised at Allaire could be sold at market to raise cash, Calicia also took charge of arranging for the sale of bricks produced at the Howell Works. James wrote to her in September 1848, “I have just received your business letter—I think you may sell the soft Brick for four dolls a thousand and the [brick]bats at half that price.” Calicia also turned some of her personal possessions into ready money. Stephen Garrison, manager of the Howell Works, included a message to Calicia in a letter addressed to her husband in December 1849: “tell Mrs. Allaire that them hats is sold she told me to sell them if I could en my wife took them one for herself and the other for [our daughter] Mary.” The letters suggest that, as the Allaire Works was sliding toward bankruptcy and James Allaire was facing personal failure, Calicia was looking for new ways to earn some money. Her sacrifice of bonnets was not enough to stem the tide, however, as Allaire was forced from his business by his creditor, John Haggerty, in 1850.¹⁷

¹⁶ JPA to CTA, March 3, 1848, July 6, 1848, Allaire Family Papers and Records, Monmouth County Historical Society, Box 1, Folder 2.

¹⁷ JPA to CTA, November 13, 1847 and September 29, 1848, Stephen Garrison to JPA, December 10, 1849, Allaire Family Papers and Records, Monmouth County Historical Society, Box 1, Folders 1, 2, and 3.

Other employees of James Allaire were aware of his reliance upon Calicia for assistance, even before they married. James T. Hart, writing from the Howell Works in March 1846, notified Allaire that he had received the grape vines Allaire had sent, then continued, “I should like to have them cherry trees whilst Calestia is up to greensburgh you had better send up for her to get them.”¹⁸ By 1846, Calicia had been part of the Allaire household for eighteen years because she had served as a longtime caregiver and companion to Allaire’s first wife, Frances, so asking her to assist Allaire in his affairs had become natural for James Allaire and those in his employ.

James Allaire’s surviving letters to Frances do not reveal the same reliance upon her for help in his business affairs; instead, the letters primarily record news of family and friends.¹⁹ Frances Allaire was an invalid for many years, however, so would have lacked the strength and ability to travel about the Howell Works, carrying out her husband’s commissions.

James Allaire did, however, rely on another female relative, Katherine S. Johnston, to act as his deputy. Kate Johnston, an unmarried cousin of Frances Allaire who lived at the Allaires’ home on Cherry Street in New York, received charges in the 1840s similar to those that James Allaire sent Calicia, requesting her to convey messages to Allaire’s employees, to have accounts charged, or to have teams dispatched to pick up shipments.²⁰

Calicia Allaire, however, offered James the most consistent support in his business transactions. He counted on her, he wrote, to “be the manager of my concerns there as you are the manager of your affectionate James P. Allaire.” Allaire complimented Calicia for being “really a

¹⁸ James T. Hart to JPA, March 17, 1846, Allaire Family Papers and Records, 1808-1901, Monmouth County Historical Society, Box 1, Folder 1. Greenburgh, New York, was the home of Calicia Tompkins’ family.

¹⁹ JPA to Mrs. James P. (Frances) Allaire, September 11, 1825, September 5, n.d., Allaire Family Papers, 1808-1901, Monmouth County Historical Society, Box 1, Folder 1.

²⁰ JPA to Miss Katherine S. Johnston, April 19, 1849 and July 18, 1849, Allaire Family Papers and Records, Monmouth County Historical Society, Box 1, Folder 3.

good manager, better than your predecessor.”²¹ The letter does not reveal, however, whether the predecessor to whom Allaire alluded was his first wife, Frances; cousin Kate; a hired male manager; or someone else.

James Allaire’s reliance on his female relatives to assist in his business transactions dovetails with his decision to have girls as well as boys educated at the school he provided for his employees at the Howell Works. He recognized that it was sometimes necessary for women to assist their husbands in their work or to work for pay themselves, and he provided the female students at Allaire with the skills to do so.

While Calicia Allaire was a valuable deputy to her husband, the letters also reveal limits to the role she played in the family’s financial transactions. James Allaire reserved for himself the right to pay bills or to enter into contracts, telling her to keep the office under lock and key, rather than settle any accounts in his absence. Allaire continued to rely on male managers to run the day-to-day affairs at the Howell Works and on his farms, while asking Calicia to convey messages to them. The letters from James to Calicia Allaire do not provide evidence that he solicited her advice. While he was pleased to listen to her suggestions and ideas, James Allaire did not pose problems to Calicia and ask her what she thought he should do. Finally, while Calicia suggested to her husband new ways to secure some cash, such as selling chickens at market, she did not become a business woman herself. Women could earn comfortable incomes in the nineteenth century as midwives, dressmakers, proprietresses of schools, or writers, but Calicia did not enter into any of these professions; she did not step out of the role of wife and deputy husband.²² Given

²¹ JPA to CTA, September 12, 1848 and September 29, 1848, Allaire Family Papers and Records, Monmouth County Historical Society, Box 1, Folder 2.

²² For more on the professions into which 19th century women could enter, see Virginia G. Drachman, *Enterprising Women: 250 Years of American Business* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Angel Kwolek-Folland, *Incorporating Women: A History of Women and Business in the United States* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1998).

the Allaires' economic and social status, it might have appeared quite inappropriate and perhaps desperate if she had worked.

Women who were contemporaries of Calicia Allaire did take leading roles in their families' businesses when driven by necessity. Rebecca Lukens of Chester County, Pennsylvania, became sole manager of her family's ironworks after the deaths of her father and husband in the 1820s. She rescued the works from the financial losses incurred by her husband, and turned it into the leading American manufacturer of boiler plate by the 1840s. Orders came from as far away as Boston, New York City, and New Orleans; Lukens Steel remained a Fortune 500 company until the late 1990s. After she had turned the firm's fortunes around, Rebecca Lukens fended off the claims of her mother and brothers to the business. Several factors may have enabled Lukens to manage the ironworks successfully. As a Quaker, Lukens came from a religious tradition that valued female leadership. Relatively well educated for the era, Lukens understood accounting and mathematics. Her "quick and seemingly assured decisions" when she took control of the ironworks suggest that either her father or her husband had shared information about the firm's management with her. Finally, Lukens was a widow heading a family-owned firm, and so answered to neither husband nor stockholders.²³

Another contemporary of Calicia Allaire's who entered a traditionally male field, Martha Coston, learned about pyrotechnics from her husband while he ran a laboratory for the United States Navy. When his death left her a penniless widow with three small children, Coston developed, patented, and marketed signal flares with which her husband had been experimenting,

²³ Joseph Gustaitis, "Woman of Iron," *American History*, 30, no. 1 (April/May 1995), accessed May 17, 2016, available at <http://www.historynet.com/woman-of-iron-apr-95-american-history-feature.htm>; Drachman, *Enterprising Women*, 33-40; Kwolek-Folland, *Incorporating Women*, 59. Lukens's father had left the business to her in his will at his death in 1824; at the time, Rebecca Lukens's husband Charles was managing it but he died in 1825; Drachman, *Enterprising Women*, 35.

selling them to both the United States government and in Europe. Realizing that men in the Navy “begrudged a woman her success,” Coston disguised her sex in her correspondence and applied for a patent in her husband’s name. Despite these obstacles, she continued to develop and patent new inventions. Her Coston Night Signals became standard Coast Guard equipment, and she managed the Coston Signal Company for decades before handing control over to her sons.²⁴

As the experiences of Lukens and Coston suggest, widowhood could force women to become responsible for businesses in traditionally male fields.²⁵ Considering the twenty-six year differences in their ages, perhaps James thought it prudent to involve his wife in the management of his concerns. During his lifetime, though, Calicia had a subordinate role, and James lost control of his ironworks firms through bankruptcy before he died. After James’s death, Calicia fought tenaciously to retain the inheritance he had left to her and their son.

Calicia Allaire’s marriage to James P. Allaire had not endeared her to her stepchildren but instead had stirred family discord, possibly because other members saw in the young Mrs. Allaire a threat to their own inheritances. A year after her marriage to Allaire, she gave birth to her only child, Hal, who became Allaire’s fifth surviving child.²⁶ Periodically, James P. Allaire had threatened to disinherit his older children because he was unhappy with their behavior; his conflict with his children also reduced his ability to rely on them as his fiduciaries. The will submitted for probate at his death in 1858 left three of his children, Frances, Maria, and James, just \$100 each, while giving \$100 and a deed to a farm to his son Throckmorton and \$500 to his deceased son Charles’s daughters. The rest of his estate went to Calicia, who was also named executrix, and, at her death, to Hal. Frances, Maria, and James immediately contested the will, claiming that Calicia

²⁴ Drachman, *Enterprising Women*, 55-61.

²⁵ Drachman, *Enterprising Women*, 4.

²⁶ Coombe, “Life and Times of James P. Allaire,” (PhD dissertation), 57-58.

was only his alleged, not his actual, widow; that Calicia had kept the children from their father and surrounded him with her own family and friends, preventing him from disposing of his wealth as he might have wished; and even that James P. Allaire had died of arsenic poisoning. In fact, Allaire had kept his second marriage secret for a time, perhaps because of objections from Calicia's family to the twenty-six year age difference between the bride and groom.²⁷

Calicia Allaire spent her first eighteen years as a widow defending the will in courtrooms in New York and New Jersey before she secured final judgments in her favor. Her attorney argued that she was "attentive and kind" to her husband, declining to leave his bedside during his final illness, and pointed out that the youngest "orphan" left from Allaire's first marriage had been 46 years old when her father died, and so all his children had been capable of acting independently to arrange to see their father, if they had chosen to do so. In fact, relations with other Allaire family relatives had generally been cordial, with friends and relatives invited to stay at Howell with Calicia for extended visits. Calicia had also tried to get her husband to mend fences with his son James, whom Allaire had cut off from the rest of the family at the time of the son's marriage; James P. Allaire only wrote to his son in 1856, at his wife's urging.²⁸

By the time the fight over the will had ended, Allaire's estate was heavily indebted. Calicia died just two years later, at Howell, on October 2, 1878. Hal Allaire allowed the holdings to further deteriorate during his lifetime, finally selling the property to William J. Harrison shortly before his own death in 1901.²⁹

²⁷ Coombe, "Life and Times of James P. Allaire," (PhD dissertation), 255-257, 270-271, 245.

²⁸ Coombe, "Life and Times of James P. Allaire," (PhD dissertation), 193-194, 257-258, 271, 274; *Argument of John Cochrane, Esq., on behalf of the Proponent in the Matters of the Probate of the Last Will and Testament of James P. Allaire* (New York: Thomas Holman, Printer, 1860), 21, 31, 38-39, 41.

²⁹ Coombe, "Life and Times of James P. Allaire," (PhD dissertation), 258.

Calicia Allaire had served as her husband James P. Allaire's deputy; she had not acted as an independent businesswoman, nor is there evidence that she wished to do so. When James Allaire lost his foundries, Calicia reverted to the traditional woman's role of caregiver. After her husband's death, however, in the long fight over his will, she demonstrated a tenacious determination to fight to protect her son's legacy. The management skills she had developed as her husband's assistant would enable her to see that James P. Allaire's final instructions were carried out.

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