

AAFA ACTION

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President's Precept

Greetings, Fellow Members! This is the Captain speaking!

For many of us, it's membership renewal time. I hope you *will* renew, and I urge you to do so. In making your decision, you may well ask, "What have I gotten from my membership the last year?" It's a good question and deserves a good answer.

During this first year, the work of the Association has been primarily organizational. This gargantuan task, invisible to the majority of the membership, has been ably performed by our Executive Assistant, Gilbert K. Alford, Jr. Our hats off to him!

The organizational work had to be done before any of the purposes of the Association could be addressed in any depth. Your founding membership has helped to establish a viable family association that is off the ground and running, a functioning organization built on solid foundations. And that is no small potatoes (to mix a few metaphors). Now we *can* get on with the purposes of the Alford American Family Association.

Actually, the organizational work has already served to advance some of the purposes of our Association: cementing our ties of fellowship and kinship, compiling acceptable family records, and pooling our resources for professional genealogical research. While our first venture in hiring a professional researcher of Virginia Alford's has not proven very productive, we have gained some valuable experience. [See "Virginia Research Project, pg. 6.]

One important project we've undertaken has been the design and development of a family badge, emblem, or logo, if you please. This time-consuming process has in turn held up the adoption of official family stationery and membership cards incorporating the family emblem. Some of you may have wondered why you had not received your membership cards. Have patience and bear with us. Our heraldic designer has submitted a design for the family

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badge and suggestions for changes have been made. We expect soon that a final version will be received for approval. [Since this was written, AAFA officers did approve the emblem—an article on this subject will appear in the next issue of *AAFA Action*.] But please keep in mind that our family emblem cannot in any sense be considered a coat of arms or crest, although it may include some elements of previous historic Alford coats of arms.

In a broad, philosophic sense, you should renew your membership because you belong. You are an Alford or descendant and that means something. Whether you realize it or not, a big part of your self is a sense of who you are and who your parents were, their parents, and so on. You've heard the expression, "I wonder where he's coming from?" Well, this is where we're coming from—the Alford family.

Another reason to renew your membership is to be a part of the never-ending search for more facts about our ancestors—in other words, to find out just where we *do* come from. The search is interesting and more likely fascinating. Besides, let's face it—it's fun! I will never forget the thrill and goosebumps I got when reading the minutes (now well over 100 years old) of a country Baptist church in Wake County, NC, and finding, quite unexpectedly, the instantly recognizable handwriting of my father, who was then serving as clerk of the church while a teenager. Again I had a thrill last year on reading the will of John Ferrell, learning that in addition to his daughter Rebecca, who married Lodwick Alford, he had two other daughters who married Alfords. But who were the Alfords they married? Stay tuned, renew your membership, and help us find out!

Lodwick Alford
AAFA President