

History of Missouri Alford

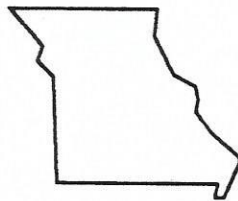
Missouri was made a territory in 1812 and a state in 1821. A census taken in 1820 showed the territory had 66,586 persons, including 10,222 slaves.

Early Alford

The first records of Alford in Missouri came in the 1830 Census when George G. and Allen E. Alford were enumerated in New Madrid Co., 19 years after the strongest earthquake ever to hit the United States occurred in the area without a single loss of life. There is an early published account of George G.'s son, General George F. Alford, of Dallas, Texas, that contains the following:

"... General Alford was born August 4, 1836, in the ancient Spanish pueblo of New Madrid (MO). The building owned by his father in which General Alford first saw the light of day, was once the royal palace of the viceroy of Spain. On the day of his birth, and for some months prior, his father, the late General George G. Alford, lay a prisoner of war, in a Mexican dungeon in Matamoras, Mexico, from which he was, with his brother Major Johnson H. Alford, soon after released, by command of his powerful personal friend, General Andrew Jackson, then president of the United States, who threatened to declare war and invade Mexico unless these prisoners were at once delivered, unharmed, to the Texan authorities at San Antonio. They were captured on the brigantine Julius Caesar by the blockading fleet off Galveston. As soon as released, General Alford, who was quartermaster general of the Texan army, obtained leave of absence from President Sam Houston, returned to Missouri, and moved his family, including the subject of this sketch, and all his numerous slaves, to another very old Spanish Pueblo,

later Texas, first settling at Nacogdoches, Texas, moving to Crockett, the county seat of Houston county. Gen. George G. Alford, for many years judge, died at Crockett, full of honors, April 1, 1847, preceded by his estimable wife, Mrs. Ann Barfield Alford, February 10, 1847. George F. Alford, then 10 years of age, with his doubly orphaned brothers and sisters, was then sent back to New Madrid



and put to school; but he soon became impatient of restraint, inured as he was to wild frontier freedom, and at the tender age of 12, when the average American boy was holding tenaciously to his mother's apron strings, this typical Texan boy found his way to the Indian tribes of the far western wilds, where he remained nearly three years, adopting their language, costume and customs, and acquiring their skill and endurance in the chase and woodcraft. At the age of 14 he again became restless, and the desire for further adventure became so irresistible that he left the Indians with whom he had been so long happily associated and his dusky little sweetheart, Li-quot-qu-esh-oos-ta-ha-nah-la, and started with a single pony across the trackless plains—thousands of miles—for the new Eldorado of California. The journey consumed six months, from April 19 to October 16, through hostile tribes of Indians. . . . Six years later, young Alford returned to Texas with a princely fortune for a boy not yet 20 years of age; started a commercial business in Palestine, Texas, with his elder brother, Hulbert M. Alford, in 1856, and on February 16, 1857, he

was married to Miss Annie Marie Maulsby. She was the acknowledged belle of Southeast Missouri. . . ."

1840 Missouri Census

There were six Alford families listed in the 1840 Census of Missouri: Joshua H. in Jefferson Co., Planean or Pleney in St. Louis, Laudey (Alford) in Buchanan Co., Victoria in New Madrid, John C. in Lewis Co., and Peyton (Alfred) in Pike Co. So far we have been unable to learn any details of these persons and their families. In 1850 there were 21 Alford (Alfred) "households" as follows: Jefferson Co. Adaline; New Madrid Co., Albert, Emma, George, George F., Harriet, and M. D.; Ralls Co., Catherine, James H., and John; St. Louis, Charles Sr., Pleney, William, Charles H. (Alfred), Henry (Alfred), and Els (?) (Alfred); LaFayette Co., John A. and Thomas; Lewis Co., Nancy and Sidney Alford; and in Cooper Co., Patsey (Alfred). A study of the New Madrid Co. families disclosed that all were young folks. Albert and Emma, apparently siblings, were living with the John H. Wacker family. Albert, age 8, and Emma, age 4, were born in Texas. M. D. Alford was a student, but the record was so poor as to be useless. Harriett was age 19, and her record was also illegible. George F. was a clerk, appeared to be age 20, and the other George was age 26 and born in Missouri. He was living with John and Sarah Till and if the census is correct he would have been born in MO in 1824, making him the first Missouri-born Alford known to date. Research is continuing on the other Alford in the 1850 Census. Considerable information is available in our files on Missouri Alford of 1880, 1900, and 1910.

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From the Southern States

One of the larger Missouri Alford clans is that which settled in Dallas Co. about 1854. John M. and Orlando Dixon Alford, sons of John and Jane McElhattan Alford, were the settlers who moved from Tennessee. Many of the Alford's in southwest Missouri belong to this clan.

In the early 1830's, Thomas Alford, born in Virginia in 1802, along with his son Russell Alford, who was born in 1824 in Tennessee, settled temporarily in Chariton Co., Missouri, while their family was en route to Oregon. Thomas had nineteen children and three wives.

Another Thomas Alford, born about 1811 in VA, and his wife Malinda Miller Fife Alford, moved to Lexington, LaFayette Co., Missouri, about 1840 with Thomas' brother John Alford. William Alford, born 1803 in NC, and his wife Jane moved to Wright Co. Missouri, about 1856-57.

At least some of the Ralls Co. Alford's came from Kentucky, and the Oregon Co. clan originated in Tennessee. One of the St. Louis families of 1880 came from England (and his wife from Ireland), and a Marion Co. family came from Illinois.

The Civil War

By the time of the Civil War there were many Alford's in Missouri, a state with a most interesting Civil War history. As early as 1818, when application was made for statehood, there was controversy as to whether or not slavery should be permitted in Missouri. Many settlers were from the southern states, and they wanted Missouri to come in as a slave state, but the U.S. Congress opposed that.

The issue was settled, temporarily at least, with the Missouri Compromise, in which Missouri was admitted as a slave state in return for Maine's admission as a free state. However, the controversy continued through the Civil War, leading to divided loyalties in the state. Although in many parts of

Missouri the sentiment was strongly in favor of secession, in 1861 the state convention refused to commit the state to secession. Within a few months after the outbreak of the war the greater part of Missouri was under the control of the Federal forces. Governor Claiborne Jackson declared the state out of the Union, and Confederate forces were assembled in the southwestern part of the state. By the beginning of 1862 the Confederates held nearly half of the state, but their strength gradually waned.

Missouri furnished 108,773 troops to the United States during the Civil War, and more than 50,000 to the Confederate army, keeping the state's quota full without draft or enforced enlistment—not merely in one but in both armies, a record unequalled among the States North or South. As we learn more about Missouri Alford's of this period, it will be interesting to see how they were involved in this confusing situation.

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