

Military Pension Claim: John Rankin Alford

We are deviating from our practice of printing information from military records of the Alford's in the Revolutionary War to provide you information about an Alford in other military records. We do this to emphasize to you the importance of your acquiring, and providing AAFA a copy, of the military and pension records of your ancestors—and *your* military record if you were in service.

Notice that this claim for a pension was not approved. That was unfortunate for the claimant but for our purposes the documents are very valuable. Extensive information is provided on the claimant and his family.

AAFA Texas Genealogist, Lucille Mehrkam #032, sent copies of the records from which the following information was extracted. She probably obtained these records from the Texas State Archives rather than from the National Archives. The claimant is the ancestor of several association members. If you would like a copy of the actual military records, write to the Association.

JOHN RANKIN ALFORD

May 28, 1917, in Hamilton County, Texas, John R. Alford signed, before a Notary Public, a "Declaration for Survivor's Pension - Indian Wars" as authorized by Acts of July 27, 1892, June 27, 1902, May 30, 1908, and March 4, 1917.

He declared that he was Dr. J. R. Alford, age 83, born January 18, 1834 at Lawrence County, Tennessee. He is an actual bona fide resident of Hico, Hamilton County, Texas. It was he who enlisted at Hamilton, Hamilton County, Texas as J. R. Alford in the spring of 1863 as a Lieutenant in Captain J. N. Rice's Company. He was honorably discharged Spring of 1865 in Hamilton

County. He served thirty days or more "in the war or disturbance with, or campaign against, the Different tribes Indians," in the State of Texas.

He described himself as 5' 5.5" tall with light complexion, blue eyes, and auburn hair. He was a farmer at the time of his enlistment. Since leaving the service he has resided in or near Hico, Hamilton County, Texas. He had been a physician since 1874 and is not a pensioner.

June 5, 1917 John R. Alford signed a Power of Attorney with Wm. Fletcher & Co., a Washington D.C. law firm. In this document he indicated he was entering a claim for service with Captain J. N. Rice's Co., Texas Volunteers in the Indian Wars 1861-1865 under the Act of March 4, 1917.

July 8, 1917 (dated August 3 1917 in the Bureau of Pensions) he completed a claims form or pension application which provided the following information.

Ind Sur No 13546 Texas Vols INDIAN WARS Mr John R. Alford Hico TX

Full name is John Rankin Alford born January 18, 1834 in Tennessee. Enlisted 1863 in Hamilton, Hamilton Co. Before that lived in Hico, Hamilton Co. TX and continues to live there. Occupation at enlistment was farmer. Discharged 1865 in Hamilton. Since discharge lived "in and around Hico". Present occupation is Physician. Described as 5' 3.5" tall, weight 125 with blue eyes and light hair and complexion. No scars.

July 8, 1917 (apparently received in Pension Office August 13, 1917) he completed a more detailed questionnaire or form pertaining to his service. From it the following information was extracted.

Born 1834 in Tennessee. Served in Captain J. M. Rice's Company of Texas Rangers. Enlisted Hico, Hamilton Co. Married first to Martha Ann Malone by Rev. Friend in Freestone Co. November 17 1859. There is no official or church record of the marriage. Married second to Lerona Elizabeth King by Rev. Wilson in Erath County, TX. He was then living with his wife and there had been no separation. Their children were (1) Byron Alford born August 2, 1860 in Hico, Hamilton County, TX and he died February 6, 1879 (2) Ruffus Alford born May 5, 1862 and died January 22, 1876 (3) Emily Alford born June 5, 1864 (4) Arabell Alford born December 27, 1866 (5) Ira Alford born May 22, 1869 and died November 12, 1883 (6) Marshall Alford born February 2, 1872 (7) Aron Alford born [obliterated see 1927 record below] (8) Aleyse Alford born July 27, 1878 (9) John A. Alford born October 11, 1879 (10) Etta Alford born November 4, 1880 (11) Laura Alford born March 29, 1883 (12) Van Alford born May 14 1885 and (13) Ursie Alford born June 17, 1896.

July 23, 1917, in Hamilton County, Texas, under pension claim #13546 he stated, before a Notary Public, that he was John Rankin Alford, age 83 who lived Hico, Hamilton County, Texas. He declared, "I was in the Frontier Service from 1863 to 1865 As a Ranger my duties were to protect this Country from the Indians I was in Capt. J. M. Rices Company.

May 5, 1927 he completed and signed, before Notary Public, a "Declaration for Survivor's Pension - Indian Wars" under act of March 3, 1927. There is little new information in this application. He did state that he had been a physician since about 1875 and prior to 1875 was a stockman. He was "wholly" unable to support and is "almost totally blind, very deaf, and has been very deaf

several years, and nearly blind two years.

Answering questions on marriages he identified first wife as Lerona King whom he married March 8, 1877 in Erath County, Texas by Rev. John Wilson (minister Christian Church). The marriage license record is at Stephenville, Erath Co. Texas. He was previously married to Martha Ann Malone, November 17, 1859. She died December 20, 1876. Children listed at this time were: Emily Alford (now Steen) born June 5, 1864; Arabell Alford (now McFatt) born December 27, 1866; Marshall Alford born February 2, 1872; Aaron Alford born October 12, 1875; Aley Alford born July 27, 1878; John A. Alford born October 11 1879; Etta Alford born November 4, 1880; Laura Alford (now Cox) born March 29, 1883; Ursie Sarah Alford born June 17, 1896.

A government document signed September 21, 1927 rejected the application with the following comments, "Approved for rejection under Act of Mar. 3, 1927, on the ground that the official records of the US afford no evidence of claimant's service or of payment for service in above named organization as alleged there is no muster or pay roll or other record of the company on file in the Texas State Archives and claimant is manifestly unable to furnish satisfactory evidence to show 30 days service in connection with active Indian hostilities as a member of a Military Company officially recognized as a part of the State forces of Texas." ♦

OPPORTUNITY

AAFA is a member of the American Genealogical Lending Library. Members may borrow or purchase film from AGLL with the AAFA membership number.

New Project: "Alf's" in Business

NOTE: As usual, when we say "Alford" in this article, we mean any variation of the name.

Business Directory

Several members in Jackson had a great idea: begin an Alford Business Directory! AAFA agrees that this is a worthwhile project, and Willie M. Alford of Bradenton, FL, Member #128, has generously offered to be our first Alford Business Directory Project Officer. It will include businesses owned by or services provided by:

1. all members, Alford names or not, no matter how many generations removed from their Alford ancestor, and
2. other Alfords that members know about and contribute information on (like relatives who are not members).

In a computer database Willie will maintain a directory of all the known Alford businesses and professionals, beginning, of course, with AAFA members! The directory will include name, address and phone number, a description of the business or profession, and any remarks the owner/person cares to make. Like the Booklist, submissions will first be listed in the quarterly, and Willie will accumulate and maintain the master computer file, printing in total on request. In addition to being a valuable genealogical record, we have had more than one instance where one of our members went out of his way (even to go to another city) to do business with another member!

Business Museum

In this same vein, we are beginning a collection of Alford advertising material or business-related memorabilia. For now, Willie will also archive this material for AAFA's Business Museum. "Business museum" items should be about Alfords or women

whose maiden name is Alford only. Examples of items we're talking about:

- emery boards printed with the name and address of the Alford Drug Company of Columbus, MS, that Ann Alford brought to Jackson
- a paper bag from the Alford Drug Company imprinted with its information, also from Ann Alford
- a pen and knife imprinted with the logo and name of the Alford Oil Co. of Many, LA, sent by former member W.R. Alford of Many
- any Alford/Alfred/etc.'s business card, whether self-employed or employed by a company (send several—think how exciting it would be for one of your descendants to write to AAFA 100 years from now asking for information about you, and getting by return mail one of your business cards!

Distribution of these items to members is possible—with the quarterly or at the annual meetings, for instance—is possible. (Clearly, our distribution of these items will not constitute endorsement of the business or the product.) If received in very limited quantities, the items will be held for the Alford Business Museum and posterity.

ACTION ITEMS

1. If you are a business owner or provide a professional (or other) service, write a short description and mail it with your name, address, and phone number to:

WILLIE M. ALFORD
3311 33RD STREET COURT W.
BRADENTON, FL 34205-2859
(813) 756 2809

2. Send Alford advertising items you have or come across—preferably the original rather than a copy.
3. Send your business cards.
4. Send published articles about Alford businesses—preferably the original with the periodical's name and date attached. ♦