

Guy Alford, Part 8: James Alford's Will

Compiled from Guy Alford's work by Gil Alford, AAFA Executive Director. [see "Guy Alford," p.30, AAFA ACTION March 1991 for background on Guy Alford.]

Following the pattern set in the last issue we are publishing data from pages 43-45G, which pertain to the will of James Alford. We have several versions of the Lodwick Alford will covered in the last issue. We have two versions of the James Alford will: the one by Guy Alford and a copy sent to AAFA by Landon Alford, AAFA #2. The two are essentially the same with some differences in the spelling of names: Luraner vs Lurena, Phereba vs Pheraba vs Pheriba, and especially the slaves name and also in the format. For example in the Guy Alford version the "items" in the will are numbered. In the other version they are not. In Guy's version "and" is written out and in the other they use "+". Guy's text below is printed in italics.

Page 43

SOURCE: *Page 7, Family and Bible Records Vol. 1, 1945-1946*

[See Bible Notes at the end of this article.]

NAME: *Alford, James*

FACTS: *"Son of Ludwick Alford. Born May 20, 1741.*

Married _____ Boykin Dec 14, 1769."

And this note: "Ref. Holy Bible Pub. 1857—J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, Penn. First owned by James D. Cunningham."

Comment: Recheck this source, a typewritten manuscript, at Ga Dept of Archives and Hist., for a better description of 'source' note. Other possible facts, too.

Pages 44-44A

SOURCE: ?

NAME: *Alford, James*

FACTS: *Will of:*

Dated: July 29, 1812

Probated: Feb 7, 1814, Hancock Co Ga

Witnesses: *Elijah Jourdan, Thomas Howell, Benjamin Reed*

Executors: *Collin Alford & Allen Alford, sons, and Solomon*

Lockett & John Bush, sons-in-law

Legatees: *Lurena Alford, wife*

Pheraba Alford, daughter

Collin Alford, son

Kinchen Alford, son

Solomon Lockett, son-in-law

John Bush, son-in-law

Collin Wooton, son-in-law

Redman Thornton, son-in-law

Allen Alford, son

Willie Alford, son

Comment: Incomplete note; get Bk and Page No from Hancock Co records.

In another note, I will copy will, obtained from Mrs. U S Gunn.

Page 45 repeats much of the above and will not be included here. One new item on this page was:

Executrix: Lurena Alford, wife

Pages 45A-45F

[These pages are out of order and have duplicate numbers. The actual order Guy has them in is: 45D, 45A, 45B, 45B, 45B, 45F.]

Will of James Alford, deceased

"In the name of God Amen this 29th day of July, 1812, I, James Alford of Hancock County being well in health of body, of sound and disposing mind and memory do make and declare this to be my last will and testament in the manner and form following, viz:

I lend to my beloved wife Lurena Alford the use of my plantation wherein I now reside with the following negroes, viz: Sane, Peter, Sally, Zilpha, Amy, Cresia, Milly, together with a horse, bridle and saddle, the household and kitchen furniture and plantation tools, stock of every kind during her natural life (and after paying out the following legacies) my will and desire is, after her death that all the negroes mentioned above, except the negro girl Milly, whom I intend for my daughter Pheraba, be equally divided amongst all my children.

Item 1 I give and bequeath to my son Collin Alford, fifty dollars together with all that he has already received.

Item 2 I give and bequeath to my son Kinchen Alford, fifty dollars together with all that he has already received.

Item 3 I give and bequeath to my son in law Solomon Lockett fifty dollars together with what he has already received.

Item 4 I give and bequeath to my son in law John Bush fifty dollars together with what he has already received.

Item 5 I give and bequeath to my son in law Collin Wooton fifty dollars together with what he has already received.

Item 6 I give and bequeath to my son in law Redman Thornton fifty dollars together with all that he has already received.

Item 7 I give and bequeath to my son Allen Alford the following negroes viz: Sue, Ned, Hampton, Martin, Pompey, Step and Daniel. Also the tract of land adjoining James Bird and others, Whitfield, beginning at a Post Oak running with Bird's line to a branch, thence down the branch to a Post Oak, thence with Whitfield's line to Powells Creek, thence with Davenport's line to John Wilson to Powells Creek, thence Matthew Howells to a corner Hickory, thence his line to Kinchen Alford's line, thence with line belonging to Clark Place to the beginning together with what he has already received.

Item 8 I give and bequeath to my son Willie Alford the land and plantation on which I now live including Clark Place together with the following negroes viz: Jim the blacksmith, Sampson, Little Jim, Solomon, James and Clary, a horse, saddle and bridle, four cows and calves, four sows and pigs, the still with all its apparatus, two feather beds and furniture, the blacksmith tools, and after the afore mentioned legacies is paid out at the death of my wife, all the plantation tools and all the stock of every kind the household and kitchen furniture and everything belonging to the plantation.

Item 9 I give and bequeath to my daughter Pheraba the following negroes viz: Jude and her three children Pink, Phillis and Bob also her two twins and Jerry (and Milly after the death of my wife) together with what she has already received.

Item 10 I do make ordain, constitute and appoint my wife Lurena Alford Executrix and sons Collin Alford and Allen Alford and my sons in law Solomon Locket and John Bush Executors of this my last will and testament and hereby disannulling and making void all other wills and bequests by me in anywise heretofore made do make and declare this and this only to be my last will and testament.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal the day and year above written.

Signed, sealed, published and declared in presence of
 Elijah Jourdan
 Thomas Howell
 Benjamin Read
 Georgia, Hancock County:

The last Will and Testament of James Alford was proven in open court by the oaths of Elijah Jourdan and Thomas Howell two of the subscribing witnesses and ordered to be recorded this 7th day of February 1814.

James H. Jones
 Dept Clerk Court Ordinary

State of Georgia }
 Hancock County, } ss.
 Ordinary's Office }

I, T.L. Reese, Ordinary and Ex-officio Clerk of the Court of Ordinary of said County, do hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing copy of the Last Will and Testament of James Alford, deceased, and the Probate thereof, with the original record thereof, now remaining in this office, and the same is a correct transcript therefrom, and of the whole of the original record.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Court of Ordinary this the 7th day of March, 1931.

T. L. Reese (Seal)
 Ordinary and Ex-officio
 Clerk C.O.

[There follow about 7 pages of Guy Alford's comments. After a short reminder that his comments and conclusions are

tentative, he continues:]

...In the preservation of family background—record proof on the part of ourselves, our forebears and people generally, I think has been and is one of procrastination as well as sort of trusting to luck that someone else in the family is keeping a record or will remember, etc. Even, if we today, as an example, sit down to write some essential record facts about our own parents and grand parents, all now deceased, we will soon appreciate the point that memories die with a person and that record facts, if made by our forebears, soon succumbs to the wear and tear of time. In both sides of my family and the family of my wife I find that valuable written records were, at onetime, in existence and in their transmission from one hand to another, they fell into the hands of some great grandchildren and these descendants, I am sorry to record, seemed to have had little or no appreciation, themselves, for these old records or the sentiments of their kinsmen. Believing records I had seen in my youth were still in the hands of lineal descendants of my maternal forebears, I discovered, only a few years since, that these old papers had been destroyed by a cousin and his wife. And each of this relatives are now deceased. (Parenthetically, I am going to also record this boyhood impression of this cousin: he was an odd character; since I have kept this impression to myself: that he was like a mule, one of our common animals, and one of Nature's creatures so endowed as being unable to leave a posterity behind, etc. A mule can't change his nature and this cousin deliberately elected 'not to have a care' about a posterity, etc. You and I have known such people, thoughtless and heedless about tomorrow, but live, eat, drink and be merry today. I am not cruel or unkind. Our paths never crossed after my boyhood days or I would have made these statements to his face.)

I am not moralizing or preaching a sermon here, but am tempted to make these passing observations for the purpose of explaining one of the problems we face when we come to look into something about our forebears—their correct names, parentage, dates—all very human in their day and generation, as we are today. As I have stated, the wear and tear of time from generation certainly takes it tolls on the landmarks of preceding generations.

Back to James Alford and this record. I am not seeking to challenge the record of any one. I am taking the facts as I see them today and, in these comments to this note, will seek to point out some facts I am trying to establish. They are probably shown in the DAR records of Mrs U S Gunn (nee Olive Alford) and Mrs Susan Cunningham Bucknell and Mrs Mary Louise Cox Wright (see pages _____ of this tentative compilation of a portion of my notes). If not, I hope to obtain the answers to the questions or point I have in mind when I complete my research in Hancock and adjacent Georgia counties and in North Carolina (the home of my forebears before they settled in Georgia.)

And I am making this somewhat lengthy 'comment' on this particular note—the will of James Alford—because it will save repeating elsewhere or in letters to members of my family.

(1) Until I discussed, at length and on several occasions, the subject of Alford family history, I could see no connection, on my part, with James Alford of Hancock Co. because of his reference (Item 8 of his will, above) to "my son Willie". In the Hancock County records, I had reference to William H. Alford, Sr. and Jr., and William, Sr. and Jr. In my own immediate family, the tradition, I heard all my life, is that our forebear, William (see page _____ for his will [will come in a later issue of AAFA ACTION]) came from Wake Co. N.C. Other facts from the Hancock Co. records may determine that "Willie" and William, as well as William, Jr. (See William Alford's will page _____) is one and the same person. If so, he undoubtedly, was born in N.C. Specifically, about James Alford's will are these points:

(a) Mrs Gunn, who spent some time and money with genealogists to get up her record, says the Kinchen Alford named in the will of James is, without question, her ancestor, and that the Willie named in Item 8 of the will is my ancestor. Mrs. Gunn's ancestor is Kinchen Alford, named in Item 2, who would be the Kinchen Alford, Sr. we see on the Hancock Co. records, and he had a son name Kinchen, Jr. also Mrs Gunn's ancestor.

(b) In my family, I often heard the name of Kinchen Alford frequently. I heard him referred to as Uncle Kinchen, so I assume this was either Kinchen Sr or Jr. I am not sure. But Mrs Gunn's family and my family were related and my father and his immediate family visited and fraternized with them, as close relatives do. [James Alford, the subject of this will was the son of Lodwick Alford. James had a brother Kinchen Alford who remained in North Carolina but he had a son name Kinchen Alford who moved to Georgia. Guy Alford does not seem to recognize him.]

(c) In Item 7 of James' will, he names a son, Allen. And this is familiar in my immediate family. I have often heard my father and his brothers refer to Allen Alford, but this was Allen S. Alford, a son of John (Jack Alford), a son of Willie (or William Jr.). Allen S. Alford's children possess a family record left to them by him and this record, according to data sent to me by J. Gordon Alford and Roy Stephens Alford (sons of Allen S. Alford) shows that their father, John (Jack) Alford (and brother of Green B. and William Alford) bore the name of John Allen Alford instead of the John (Jack) Alford as members of my family. This is logical and following custom, both as to the use of family forenames and as to dropping initials and the Sr and Jr behind names. Coming from Allen S. Alford, a member of the family possessing enough interest and pride in his family

name or ancestry, to sit down and write out what he knew and what he had heard about his forebears, adds to the conviction, in my mind, that Allen, Kinchen and Willie, sons name in James' will, were brothers and that Willie, William, Sr., and William (who died in 1825) was one and the same person. [The William who died 1825 was born in 1740, a year before, James the father of "Willie" Alford, was born. It is most likely that the William who died in 1825 was the brother of James Alford—the subject of this article.]

(d) Referring to the Allen S. Alford family data, mentioned next above, recorded his grandfather's name as William B. Alford. Taking this as being true, we see here that the full name "Willie" (mentioned in item 8 of his father's will) would be William B., and that he would be one and the same person. And here again, in this family, we see the passing of the same forenames from generation to generation or using a forename used in a previous generation, for my father's oldest brother was William Benjamin Alford (b. 1851 d. 1942; son of Wm Alford and Susan Bryant Alford, for he never bore Jr. after his name or other distinguishing identity, although he was living in the same community as his grandfather, Willie (or William Jr or William) for many years, as his birth date will reveal. In this connection, we must remember that William and Benjamin are favorite forenames in the Alford family. [Not just this branch of the family but all branches and in with other surnames as well.] It is probable, I think, William B. was the full name of Willie (Item 2 of James Alford's will.)

(e) As to an initial in the name of James Alford, I have a few notes showing there was a James W. Alford and James A. Alford on the public records in his day and generation. The W could stand for William and the A could represent Allen, remembering he had sons bearing each of these names. I hope those of the family who read these notes will keep these points in mind. Before, during and after the Revolution, I think, we will see that men of that era, generally, used only one name, even though it was the custom in many families to bestow two forenames upon their sons.

(f) See Lodwick Alford's will, page _____. It would be interesting to know why Julius and James Alford, sons, are not mentioned in Lodwick's will.

Bible Notes

AAFA has a copy of a handwritten, very difficult to read Bible page. It appears to have been entered in the same handwriting for all entries. The following typed notation is at the bottom: "Ga. Daughters of the American Colonists 1939-1941 Page 175. Holy Bible first owned by John D Cunningham. Present owner: W.M. Graham, 486 Rock Springs Road, N.E., Atlanta, Ga. This record taken from the original Bible. Note: Several errors in the typescript copy of D.A.C. Volume."

This is possibly the Bible Guy Alford referred to on his Page 43, and perhaps he used the D.A.C. records from their Volume 1 rather than the original. The data in the Bible may or may not be valid. The latest legible date seems to be 1881, so the entries made for the 1700's are probably hearsay. Our transcription is often based more on our prior knowledge about these people than being able to decipher the handwriting on the copy.

The page is divided into two columns. The title on the right top half seems to be "Putnam Co. Relatives of J.H. Cunningham." There seems to be only one Alford in that right column—the name is not legible and only September can be read in the date. I do know that Emily Louisa Alford, born 28 February 1805, married J.H. Cunningham about 1821 or 1823. Emily was the daughter of Cullen and Pheribe Wooten Alford—more on them below. The title on the left top half seems to be "Matriarchal Relatives of J.D. Cunningham" and it lists, to the best of my ability to read it:

James Alford son of Lodwick Alford
born May 20 1741 married
Luraner Alford Boykins [illegible date]
My mother's grandparents
_____ daughter born _____ 1770 [the first name
looks like Patty; the last or second name does not
look like Alford]
Fanny [?] Alford born Dec 10 1771
Cullen Alford my grandfather
was born August 31 1775 married
Apl 14 1801 to Pheriba Wooten died Dec 15 1834
_____ Baily Alford born Aug 17 1777 [we don't know
who this is—first name could be Mary]
Kinchen Alford born Oct 28 1779
Sarah _____ Alford born Oct 12 1784 [AAFA records
show the second name to be Hart, which it looks
like.]
Wyly Alford born _____ [Might be Oct 2 1789—was he
Wilkins S.?
Pheriba Alford born Aug 13 1794
Lucia Luranier _____ Alford born Aug 14 1800
died Sept 4 1803 (illegible phrase containing the word
"child")]

[The names from _____ Baily to Lucia are enclosed on the left margin by a bracket. A margin note looks like it says "his brothers and sisters." All the names below are enclosed by a similar bracket with the note, "my uncles and aunts".]

James Alford born Feby 24 1804
Allen Alford born Dec 8 1805
Emily Louise Pheriba Alford (my mother)
was born Feby 25 1808
G.W. Alford born Feby 26 1812 died Oct 16 1884
[another source shows death in 1834]
John Q.A. Alford born Sept 7 1814
Kinchen Cullen Alford born Mch 10 1817
Emeline C.A. Alford born Jany 6 1821 ♦

(From Gil's Mailbox, cont. from p. 24)

folks believe that Lodwick later married Sarah, his widowed sister-in-law. Whether he married her or not I believe that he assumed some responsibility for his nieces and that Lany Freeman mentioned in the will was actually Lucy Alford Freeman, Susannah Freeman was Susannah Alford Freeman and Sarah Cole was Sarah Alford Cole—all three either his nieces or step-daughters. I repeat that is my theory—not a shred of proof.

4. I expect the "all the rest of my estate" division was based again on what he had bestowed on each of the heirs before his death. Two of the nieces or step-daughters had gotten more than Susannah and he was just making up for it with her. Likewise with the other children listed. He may have been making the distinction with Mary Alford his daughter because she had married an Alford, her cousin Isaac Alford, and he felt some word of clarification was necessary.

5. Jim will have to answer.

6. It's all these "known" children of Lodwick who were not listed in the will that gives rise to the idea that we are talking about two different Lodwicks and two different sets of children. Some think that those known children who were not listed—William, Elizabeth, Jacob, James, Lodwick Jr., and Julius—were children of the Lodwick mentioned in New Kent County Parish records while the fellow with the will and those children are another family—probably Lodwick Jr. A recent phone call from Wick Alford indicates he has some new evidence that will influence our thinking on this so we will see what that is in the next issue. ♦

(From Awards Program, cont. from p. 12)

Bob Sterling, "Alfords from Adabama in the Civil War," March
Karen Alford, "Little Berry Alford's Seven Sons in Gray,"
Summer

Best Biographical Sketch

Gil Alford, "Jeptha Martin Alford, 1862–1948," March
Mary Alford Helms, "Remembering Robert Warren Alford,
1909–1973," Summer

The following two articles were not written by the submitters, but the submitters added information to the text, and in Don's case, transcribed the original handwritten document:
Orville Alford, "Albert Alford of Knox County, Kentucky,"
Summer
Don Alford, "Autobiography: Abner A. Alford, 1854–1927,"
Summer ♦