

Julius Caesar "Paddy" Alford, 1848-1876

By James P. Alford, AAFA #115
Great-grandson of J.C. Alford's
brother Erasmus L. Alford

*A Concise Recitation of What Little Is
Known About The Short And Exciting
Life of A Real Texas Fighter And
Lover, One Who Lived And Died By
The Gun*

To his Family, he was known as "Paddy"
but most folks just called him "J.C."
When his Daddy was around,
they quickly added "Sir".

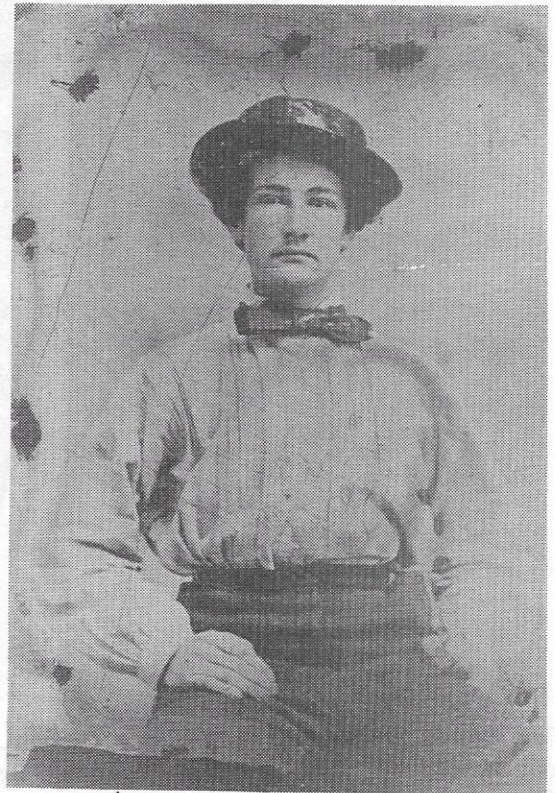
Julius Caesar Alford was born on
the family plantation ten miles east
of Marshall, Texas in the Spring of
1848. There were probably a neighbor
woman and a few slaves present when
he emerged into the Nineteenth
Century Antebellum world. His Daddy
was a powerful and ruthless East Texas

Lawyer, Planter and
Speculator named
Colonel Lodwick C.P.
Alford. Baby J.C. was
the fifth child and his
arrival was probably not
well observed, being
overshadowed by the
celebration of Daddy's
recent acquittal for the
murder of Judge John M.
Hansford.

J.C. was either named for
his famous uncle, the
Honorable Julius Caesar
Alford, Member of
Congress and leader of
the Georgia Whig Party
or, for his famous great
granddaddy, Captain
Julius Caesar Alford who
had commanded a

Company
of the
North
Carolina Continental
Line in the American
Revolution. Great
Granddaddy had served
under General Nathaniel
Green and had fought in
the North Carolina
campaigns of 1780-81
that led to the ultimate
surrender of Lord
Cornwallis at Yorktown.
Aw shucks, he was
probably named for both
of them!

When J.C. was five,
Mama went on the war
path about having to live
out in the country like a
bunch of hicks while all
her friends were moving
into Marshall and
partying it up. Daddy,
who had just taken a
sucker for \$3,000 on a



Erasmus Lodwick Alford

land deal, decided to keep the peace at
home and bought a square block of
downtown Marshall.

During the winter of 1854-55 Daddy
had the slaves build a new house and
entertainment complex for Mama. It
was a really fancy compound with a
separate kitchen in the back, stables
and slave quarters on the northeast
corner and a combination Office and
Stag Club on the northwest corner. It
was all surrounded by a white picket
fence and a high privacy shrub. It was
in this environment that little J.C. grew
up and attended private school with the
other rich kids.

Like any Southern lad born with a
silver spoon in his mouth, he learned to
ride the fastest horses, shoot the finest
guns, drink the smoothest bourbon, and
properly browbeat poor white trash.



*Lodwick C.P. Alford (1812-1896) and his wife
Martha Ann Elizabeth Sherrell (1818-1888)*



The Alford's can boast of at least one Mardi Gras Queen. Mary Eugenia Alford, above, (born 1846), daughter of Lodwick C.P. Alford, was the first Queen of the Jefferson, Texas, Mardi Gras and presided over the Queen Mab Ball April 2, 1875. At one of the Balls it was reported that 150 costumes were borrowed from New Orleans and 100 more were made locally. The Ball drew three hundred rail cars of revelers from Texas and Louisiana.

In 1861, when war broke out, his older brothers, Erasmus Lodwick Alford and Josiah Perry Alford, immediately joined the Noble Cause. "Ras" enlisted in the 10th Texas Calvary because he could stay in the saddle, sober or not, and "Joe" went into the 7th Texas Infantry. Mama and their oldest sister, Catherine Louisa Haynes, sewed them pretty new uniforms and they left for Lee's Army of Virginia.

It was good that they left when they did because the Governor of Missouri and his Cabinet arrived the next day and moved into their bedrooms and the combination Office and Stag Club! It seems that the Yankees had captured the Missouri Capitol and had driven the lawful government out of the state. It must have been peculiar to townfolk to see the Missouri flag flying in front of Daddy's Office and Stag Club.

Little J.C. was fired up and raring to go too but, he had to grow big and strong so he could ride all night and carry a respectable load of

weapons. Mama emphatically said "No!" Besides, he was thirteen and he would have outgrown his first uniform in only a few months and Mama needed time to sew him several changes. He was naturally disappointed that he had to wait a bit before he could ventilate Yankees but he knew he would get his chance, so, he whiled away the time honing his shooting skills, spitting tobacco, learning bawdy campfire songs, and minding his manners around the ladies.

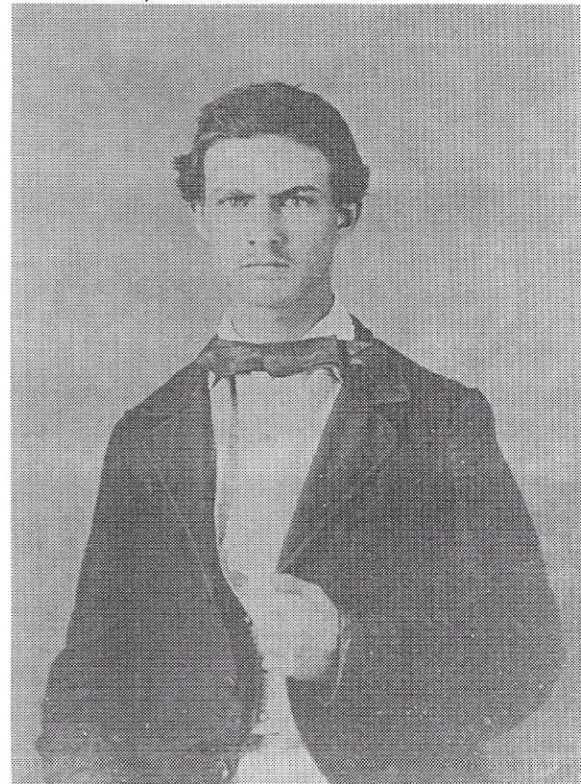
As far as his manners went, J.C. had a lot of help from Big Sister, Mary Eugenia, who firmly believed that little brothers should be seen and not heard. She was a

pouty, attractive flower of Southern womanhood who danced late, slept late and expected her beaux to line up at the door with flowers and offers of rides in their one and two horsepower carriages by four o'clock each afternoon. J.C., who was barely into puberty, watched this courtship ritual in amazement.

The war went well through 1862 and into 1863. The news was always good. Letters from Ras and Joe told how they were kicking Yankee butts on a regular basis.

About September 22, 1863 word came that Joe had lost his right leg in a major battle at some place called Chickamauga. Ras was in the same fight but he didn't come down with disabilities. It was too dangerous to cross the Mississippi to go home, so Joe was shipped to one of his uncles down in West Point, Georgia to recuperate.

Mama finally couldn't hold J.C. back



Josiah Perry Alford

any longer and he enlisted in Company A of Morgan's Battalion of Calvary during the Summer of 1864. Not much is known about his service except that he probably stayed west of the Mississippi.

The war continued to turn progressively worse for the South and finally ended in 1865. J.C. was captured before war's end and was released June 16, 1865 at Shreveport, Louisiana. Like tens of thousands of other unemployed soldiers, he walked home.

Carpetbag Tax Collectors immediately descended on Marshall, Texas in 1865 and 1866 extorting "tribute" from the vanquished. They visited Marshall at least four times and thoroughly shook the pockets of the bitter citizens. They looked high and low every trip, but the Alford's simply could not be found

When the tax robbers left for good, the Alford's came out of hiding, sold the now defunct 2600 acre plantation at a profit to some dumb Yankees who thought it could be worked without slave labor, and moved a few miles north to the booming riverport of Jefferson, Texas to become merchants. J.C., now nineteen, opened a general mercantile store called J.C. Alford & Company. He was situated in a prime location facing the docks. Daddy and Mama, who thought the world of this ambitious boy, had gone to their secret

stash in the woods, dug up their gold and spent nearly \$16,000 to set him up in business.

Meanwhile, Carpetbaggers and Scalawags were inciting the ex-slaves to violence against their former masters and a number of secret organizations sprang up across the South. In East Texas, the Knights of The Rising Sun was formed to counter the threat. One of the founders and leaders was Daddy Lodwick. His sons were never named publicly but it is safe to assume that they wore white sheets, too.

In 1869 after he exterminated a Carpetbagger and two of his negro gang members in the Jefferson City Jail, Daddy was arbitrarily sentenced to life imprisonment by a prejudiced Yankee military court and carted off to prison! J.C. was left to take care of his Mama, Sister Mary and all the younger kids. Mom made ends meet by buying land from hard-up folks and re-selling it at a profit while Mary continued entertaining her endless stream of suitors.

1871 was a year of rapidly occurring events for the family. President Ulysses S. Grant felt sorry for Daddy and pardoned him early in 1871. Then Mary was chosen Jefferson Mardi Gras Queen. Then J.C.'s store which had grown to be worth \$183,000 burned to

the ground when an arsonist torched the Jefferson riverfront. He quickly rebuilt and restocked the store, then left his one-legged brother Joe to run it while he chased petticoats in his shiny new two-horsepower carriage. When Daddy came home from jail, he went to the river bank and withdrew a few thousand in gold to pay for a new wing on the house. Two huge rooms were added, one for Mama's real estate business and the other for Mary's boyfriends.

By now, J.C. was one of Jefferson's most desirable young swains. His bachelor lifestyle was great until he met a foxy lady in 1875 and a love affair ensued. For reasons not spoken of, the affair was abruptly broken off and on October 21, 1875, J.C. penned this little poem to his now ex-sweet-heart:

*"Many months we have spent together
Swiftly did they pass away
Now we part perhaps forever
Sometimes think of me when far away."*

With that bit of irony, he hastily bid farewell to his family, his business, and the piney woods of East Texas. He took Horace Greeley to heart and went west—all the way to San Antonio where he joined a cousin, Stephen W. Stone, in his hardware business. He bummed around the area for a while taking in the sights, then after a couple of weeks sent the following letter to his sister.

San Antonio Dec 3 / 75
Dear Sister

Here I am at the great Alamo City a stranger in a strangers land. I was not well during my first weeks stay here which was caused by the extreme bad weather and goodly proportions of turkey &c that I ate during thanksgiving & holidays. but since I have been takeing a general view and sight seeing generally and can but say it is a place of rare attractions where art has

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Jefferson, Texas, 1871

lovingly dressed nature. four miles north of the city, the river San Antonio has its rise amidst a lovely walled in park owned by a banker. the population is about seventeen thousand which is about equally divided between the Americans Germans & Mexicans. there is thirteen churches sixteen schools & three daily news papers. the town is lighted with gass. I attended the Episcopal Church last Sunday. in consequence of the extreme bad weather there was but few in attendance. the Church is a fine structure said to be the finest in the state. I am boarding with a nice family where there is three very misschievous young Ladies. one of them asked me last night at the supper table what my name was before I came to San Antonio which caused considerable laughter and of course teased me but I very promptly replied that I left my Country for my Countrys good.

Yes I remained in Marshall untill the following Monday in order to regain what I thought to be entirely lost and I assure you in future that I shall never voluntarily lend another Young lady my ring. M C Stone arrived last night with his Brigade of children. He only had the nominal numbers of eleven (11) including Mr. Hoffmans family. they will no doubt like the town.

how is my better half Charlie getting along? tell him if he ever expects to hear from me that he can write the first letter. Say to Dan & Capt. Deware that I will write to them as soon as I am permanently located in business. how are all the young ladys Miss Lula and Miss Ella Hodges in particular. has Miss Ella recovered from her spell? If she is still in Jefferson present my best love with best love to yourself & the remainder of the family, love to ma Kate & Sid

*I Remain your brother
J.C. Alford*

Sometime in the Spring or early

Summer of 1876 while mingling in San Antonio society, J.C. met a treacherous creep named Jackson E. Labatt. They had words, possibly over the attentions of a young lady, or perhaps because Labatt had kicked sand in his face. Anyway, J.C. promised to thrash Labatt with a cane the next time he saw him.

At noon on June 15, 1876, J.C. and Captain J.M. DeWare, mentioned in the letter, stepped out of Stephen Stone's hardware store on Commerce Street headed for lunch.

Labatt had been skulking a few doors away and now stepped into their path. He approached J.C., saying to him that he could "give him that caning now." J.C., who was unarmed, said nothing but quickly punched Labatt with his fist driving him backward into the street. Labatt drew a concealed pistol and shot at J.C. three times before mortally wounding him. With that shot, the lights went out on the most dynamic and promising son of Lodwick C.P. Alford. Labatt was wrestled to the ground by enraged bystanders, arrested and charged with First Degree Murder.

J.C. Alford's body was shipped promptly back to Jefferson, Texas where he was buried the following day. His obituary in the East Texas *Daily Leader* read in part:

"The funeral of the late J.C. Alford took place on the evening of the 16th of June from the residence of Mrs. Philips on Alamo St. The young man's friends paid every attention to his body and attended it to the grave in the most respectful manner. His pallbearers and friends were the first to cover him with earth and quantities of flowers were strewn by sorrowing friends... Here in the home, in the youth and freshly budding manhood we need not speak of the past of Paddy Alford... All, even the aged father, had come to regard Paddy as the future guide and stay of his family. In a fatal hour he left his home, believing it best for himself and those depending on him. And now comes the cruel news of his tragic

death..."

Labatt was tried that October. He came to trial with four lawyers and his arrogant show of force so intimidated the jury that he was freed. Such was Justice then and now....

P.S. Sister Mary, who was variously called "Puss" and "Pet," finally settled on a suitor and married in 1878, just before her 32nd birthday.

[See Lodwick C.P. Alford's obituary on p. 21 of this issue.] ❖