

# BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

**Submitted by James W. (J.J.) Johnson, AAFA #1189**

## **Charles Alford and Mary Elizabeth Tipton**

*By James William Johnson.*

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Charles Alford was born on Thursday, September 30, 1790 in North Carolina. As a small boy, he migrated to Loudon County, Tennessee with his family. His parents settled in the Sweetwater Valley near the village of Philadelphia, Tennessee. Sometime before 1814, he married Mary Elizabeth Tipton, said to be the daughter of Mashack Tipton. Mary Elizabeth was born on June 30, 1795 in Harriman, Tennessee.

It is probable that the John Alford living nearby was his brother. John was born about 1786 in North Carolina. His wife, Jane, was born there about 1792. Their children (ages in 1850) were: Luisa 20, Thomas 18, Margaret 15, Rebecca 13 and Alexander 6 - all born in Tennessee.

Charles Alford's family moved about considerably: they were in Blount County, Tennessee about 1814; Limestone County, Alabama about 1819 and enumerated in the U.S. Federal Census at that location in 1820; in Sevier County, Tennessee in 1828; in Cocke County, Tennessee in around 1833; in Roane County, Tennessee from 1834 until some time after 1850; and finally in Macoupin County, Illinois, where Charles died on Wednesday, March 17, 1858.

Charles Alford paid real estate taxes in Roane County, Tennessee in 1834, 1835 and 1836 and, although he was called a farmer, he would be best described as a rancher or horseman.

Charles Alford died on Wednesday, March 17, 1858 in the South Palmyra Township of Macoupin Co., Illinois at the age of sixty-seven. He was buried in the Old

Union Cemetery in North Palmyra Township of that same county and was survived by seven sons and daughters and many grandchildren.

(Note: It is possible that another son existed, whose name was Riddle Alford, however that name did not appear on Charles Alford's Will as one of his sons. It is equally possible that Riddle Alford was a son of Charles and Mary, but had died at an early age.)

Two days before his death, he wrote or had written his Last Will and Testament. (Note: Given the gravity of his illness, it was probably penned by someone other than Charles.)

By testimony, he lived, at the time the Will was written, in Macoupin County, Illinois. If he had published any other Will prior to this one, it was revoked and made void by the one under examination.

In his will, his first concern was the debts accrued by his funeral expenses and any other debts that he might owe. So, he directed that all of these items be paid first from his estate.

Next, he bequeathed to his "... beloved wife, Mary Alford..." household and kitchen furniture, any livestock she might want and half of the real estate that he owned.

Mary Alford was allowed by this document to sell her portion of the real estate, if she desired to do so, however, when she died in 1863, she mentioned in her Will "... all the real estate left me by the will of my

beloved husband..." From this, it appears that she did not sell the property.

Thirdly, Charles Alford directed that the other half of his real estate be divided equally amongst his children, who were named in the Will and included:

John C. Alford, husband of Sarah Maddy,  
 William Donald Alford, husband of Minerva Jane  
 Butcher,  
 Matthew Nelson Alford, husband of Martha Caroline  
 Young,  
 Rachel Rebecca Alford, wife of George Franklin Riddle,  
 Mashack Tipton Alford, husband of Sarah Rebecca  
 Edwards,  
 Robert F. Alford, husband of Alsa Evans and  
 Sarah Alford, wife of B.S. Riley.

Finally, he named Joseph Liston as executor of his estate. This was probably Joseph Liston, Senior, a resident of Macoupin County, Illinois, and may have been a long time neighbor.

Charles Alford signed his name to the Will and it was witnessed by:

P.F. Lightfoot and  
 G.J. Sinnett.

On March 22, 1858, the Will of Charles Alford was filed in the Probate Court by Joseph Liston through the County Clerk, Enoch Wall, and, after being dutifully sworn, witnessed by George J. Sinnett and Philip F. Lightfoot.

Liston was also sworn as the Executor of the Estate of Charles Alford and charged with the duties elemental to that position as stated by Charles Alford. Once done, he was to present his report to the Probate Court again for approval.

On 5 Feb 1865, Joseph Liston, Executor of the Estate of Charles Alford, presented to the Probate Court a final settlement of Alford's estate. (Note: During the time between the filing of Charles Alford's will in March of 1858 and the Report of the final settlement in February of 1865, several transactions no doubt were processed and reported to the Probate Court; however, at the time of this article, we do not have those records.)

According to Liston, the Estate of Charles Alford, on the date of the final settlement, was worth \$178.71, cash moneys. From these proceeds, the following disbursements were recommended:

Robert Alford \$25.14  
 John C. Alford \$25.14  
 G.F. Riddle \$25.14  
 M.T. Alford \$25.14  
 M.N. Alford \$25.14  
 William Alford \$25.14  
 B.S. Riley \$25.14

G.F. (George Franklin) Riddle was the husband of Rachel Rebecca Alford, while B.S. Riley was the husband of Sarah Alford. It was customary in those days to award moneys inherited by females to their husbands.

The remainder of the \$178.71, which was \$2.73, was probably used to pay court and filing expenses.

Upon examination, the Court approved the disbursements and approved the Report submitted by Joseph Liston.

Mary Elizabeth Alford, wife of Charles Alford, died on 18 Feb 1863 in North Palmyra Township of Macoupin Co., IL. She was buried in Old Union Cemetery. (Note: It is believed that some of her siblings lived there also.)

In 1861, being unable to write, she had someone write her Last Will and Testament in Macoupin County, Illinois.

To two of her children, she bequeathed the following:

Robert Alford \$1.00  
 Mashack Tipton Alford \$1.00

To the remainder of her children, that is, John C., William Donald, Matthew Nelson, Rachel Rebecca and Sarah, she bequeathed in equal shares "... all the real estate left me by the will of my beloved husband, Charles Alford..."

Given these gifts, the children, absent Robert and Mashack Tipton Alford, were charged with the responsibility for paying any debts owed by Mary Alford at the time of her death.

She further directed that some of her personal property be sold in order to give Robert and Mashack Tipton Alford one dollar each. The remaining personal property was left equally to Rachel Rebecca and Sarah Alford.

As with her husband, Joseph Liston was appointed as the Executor of her Estate and Mary's written declaration made invalid any previous Wills that she may have made.

Mary placed her mark, an X, beside her name.

Witnesses of the signing of this Will were:

D.N. Solomon and  
W.J. Vanwinkle

On 21 March 1863, about one month after her death, her Will was filed at the Macoupin County Courthouse with the County Clerk, G.W. Holliday. D.N. Solomon and W.J. Vanwinkle, dully sworn, testified to the fidelity of Mary Elizabeth Alford's Will.

The children of Charles Alford and Mary Elizabeth Tipton were:

John C. Alford (1814-),  
William Donald Alford (1817-1892),  
Matthew Nelson Alford (abt 1819-1868),  
Rachel Rebecca Alford (1812-1882),  
Mashack Tipton Alford (1828-1905),  
Robert F. Alford (1833-1887) and  
Sarah Elizabeth Alford (1837-)

### Susan Isabelle Alford and Marion J. Newton

By James William Johnson.

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The daughter of *Alsa Evans* and *Robert F. Alford*, Susan Isabelle Alford was born on Sunday, July 31, 1864, in Carlinville of Macoupin County, Illinois and died on Sunday, September 29, 1957, in Dallas of Dallas County, Texas at the age of ninety-three. She was buried at the Restland Cemetery in the County of her death.

Preceding her birth, five children were born to Belle's parents:

*William Thomas "Tom" Alford*, aka *Richard Joseph Johnson* (1853-1948)

*Sarah Elizabeth "Sissy" Alford* (1856-1928),

*George Mashack "Zack" Alford* (1858-),

*Patrick Mason "Mace" Alford*, aka *James William Johnson* (1860-1934)

*Rachel Rebecca "Becky" Alford* (1862-1927).

In 1866, her sister, *Alsa Eveline Alford*, was born in Macoupin County. When she was four years old, in 1869, her brother, *Robert Henry Alford*, was born at that location. Belle, as she was called, was enumerated with her family in the 1870 U.S. Federal Census for Macoupin County, Illinois as Susan Alford. Later that year, Belle's brother, *Charles Parks*, was born and in 1873, her sister *Minnie Louella Alford* was born. Also, in 1876, Belle's maternal grandmother, *Rebecca Parks*, died at the age of sixty-three and in 1875, her maternal

grandfather, *Patrick Henry Evans*, died at the age of seventy-three.

In 1875, another sister, *Ida May Alford*, was born in Macoupin County, Illinois.

Around 1876, the family moved from Illinois to Arlington, Texas. On 27 Aug 1877, Belle's brother, *Charles Parks*, died in Tarrant County, Texas at the age of six. Family tradition suggests that he died of snake bite and he was buried at the Watson Cemetery in the County of his death.

Belle was enumerated with her family in the 1880 U.S. Federal Census for Tarrant County, Texas. Her name on that Census was Susan I. Alford. Later that year or early in 1881, some of the family moved to Roane County, Tennessee. It included Belle's mother, *Alsa Evans-Alford*, and her siblings: *Robert Henry*, *Minnie Louella* and *Ida May*. They were later joined by another sister, *Alsa Eveline Alford*.

In September of 1881, Belle's sister, *Minnie Louella* died, probably of influenza, in Roane County, Tennessee. She was buried at the Bowman-Bower's Cemetery in the County of her death.

On March 30, 1882, Belle married Marion J. Newton in Arlington, Texas.

The son of *Elsa Dalton* and *Kenneth Anderson Newton, Junior*, Marion J. "Dick" Newton was born in April of 1862 in Tarrant County, Texas and died around 1941 at the age of seventy-eight. His burial location is unknown though it suspected that he was buried in Missouri. A memorial marker stands beside the burial markers of Belle and their daughter, *Allean*, at the Restland Cemetery in Dallas, Texas.

Early on in the marriage Dick and Belle lived on a farm in Tarrant County, Texas but around 1882, they moved to Dallas, Texas where Dick worked as a general contractor, hauling contractor, ice dealer, wood dealer, carpenter and street car driver. Their original home was at 101 Douglas Street in Dallas and after they moved to a newer home, Dick used the Douglas building as an office for his business.

On February 28, 1883, Belle's sister, *Ida May*, died in Roane County, Tennessee at the age of seven. She was buried at the Bowman-Bower's Cemetery in the County of her death.

During the period of 1883 through 1885, both Belle and Dick received numerous subpoena and attachment orders from the District Court in Tarrant County, Texas regarding Belle's brothers, *Tom* and *Zack*. Before it went to trial, the charges against her brothers were dismissed.

In December of 1887, Belle's father, *Robert F. Alford*, was murdered in Burleson County, Texas at the age of fifty-four. He was buried somewhere in Texas.

On October 13, 1891, Belle and Dick had their first and only child, a girl, whom they named *Else Allean Newton*. In 1896, Dicks father, *Kenneth Anderson Newton, Junior*, died in Tarrant County, Texas at the age of ninety-one.

In 1900, Belle, Dick and *Allean* were enumerated in the U.S. Federal Census for Dallas County, Texas. In October of 1908, *Elsa Dalton*, Dick's mother, died in Tarrant County, Texas at the age of seventy-nine. There are some reasons to believe that *Elsa Dalton*, Dick's mother, and *Elsa Evans*, Belle's mother, were cousins; however, concrete evidence has not been found to support this position.

Belle, Dick and *Allean* were counted in the 1910 U.S. Federal Census for Dallas County. Sometime after the 1910 Census, Belle and Dick divorced. Dick went to

Missouri, according to one source, and started another family.

On November 24, 1918, Belle's mother, *Alsa Evans-Alford* died in Roane County, Tennessee at the age of eighty-six. She was buried at the Bowman-Bower's Cemetery in the County of her death. On July 31, 1927, Belle's sister, *Rachel Rebecca Alford-McFadin* died in Tarrant County, Texas at the age of sixty-five. She was buried at the Watson Cemetery in the County of her death. In 1928, another sister, *Sarah Elizabeth Alford-Moore* died in Tarrant County, Texas at the age of seventy-one. She was buried at the Watson Cemetery in the County of her death. On May 24, 1934, Belle's brother, *Patrick Mason Alford*, aka *James William Johnson*, died in Sevier County, Arkansas at the age of seventy-three. He was buried at the West Line Cemetery in the county of his death. On October 4, 1946, Belle's brother, *Robert Henry Alford*, died in Roane County, Tennessee at the age of seventy-seven. He was buried at the Bowman-Bower's Cemetery in the County of his death. On June 12, 1948, Belle's brother, *William Thomas Alford*, aka *Richard Joseph Johnson*, died in Fulton County, Georgia at the age of ninety-four. His remains were returned to Sevier County, Arkansas and he was interred at the Redmen Cemetery in that County.

On Sunday, September 29, 1957, Susan Isabelle Alford-Newton died of hypostatic pneumonia in Dallas, Texas at the age of ninety-three. She was buried at the Restland Cemetery in the County of her death.

Belle and Dick Newton owned as many as six properties of land concurrently during their lives and paid city, county and state taxes on these properties throughout their lives. Some of the properties were situated in downtown Dallas and provided lucrative returns over the years.

Belle was a charter member of the Ervay Baptist Church, a member of Sunday School and of the Missionary Union. Her only occupation ever found was that of a "housewife."

Four photographs of Belle and one of Dick Newton survive. Currently there are over three hundred documents in our research data regarding Belle and Dick including Belle's Last Will and Testament.

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Because Belle's stature was short, Dick built her special counter tops and cabinets in her kitchen so that she could reach them. Their daughter, *Elsa Allean Newton* died on August 19, 1976 in Tarrant County, Texas at the age of eighty-four. She was buried near her mother at the Restland Cemetery in Dallas County, Texas; she probably never married and had no known offspring.

Belle was likely named after her great great grandmother, *Isabella "Eby" Wilson-Ogle*.

Like so many of her siblings, Belle was a determined lady who once took on the city of Dallas regarding a small portion of land she claimed to own. After years of infighting inside and outside the Dallas County Courts at no small expense, she prevailed. Once Belle was named as the official and rightful owner of the property, she donated it back to the City.

As some of her family remember her, "...she was just that kind of woman."