



Ray Dortey Alford
1911 - 2010
AAFA #0459

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Jan 23 1911 - Apr 10 2010

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Ray Alford, about age 85

SACRAMENTO BEE

Sacramento, Sacramento Co. CA

Wednesday, 14 April 2010

Ray Dortey Alford, age 99, died in his sleep on April 10, 2010, in Valley Skilled Nursing Facility, Sacramento. He was born January 23, 1911 in Leesville, Vernon Parish,

Louisiana, the second son of James Maxie Alford and Isabel Vogel.

He married Marie Louise Arnst on June 7, 1947. Their four

children were born in San Francisco before the family moved to Santa Clara in 1957. Ray and Marie settled in Sacramento in 1974.

Ray was a professional boxer during the Depression. During WWII he served in the U.S. Army. After the war he became a sheet metal mechanic in San Francisco and also began investing in real estate, his occupation for the next 50 years. After Marie died, he continued to live independently in their home until one month ago, when he fell and fractured his hip.

In 2003 Ray's daughter Cherie published a book about Ray's life from birth to his marriage: *Ringside, A Collection of Stories from the Life of Ray Dortey Alford* [see below]. He was a great story-teller and loved the process of talking about his early life while the tape recorder ran. He was so proud of the finished book.

Ray is survived by his four children: Pamela Rae and her husband Bruce Thompson of Granite Bay; James Maxie of Watsonville; Cheryl Marie and her husband Garth Cheff of Eugene, OR; and Ray Dortey Jr. of Loomis. He is also survived by grandson Nathan Alford

Cole [Pam's son] and his wife Michelle Jurjavcic Cole of Roseville, and their daughters, Carson Kayela Cole and Ashlan Reese Cole; sister Audell Helena "Nina" Shaw of Salem, OR; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 57 years in 2004; and his brothers, Tolbert Maxie "Tommy" Alford, James Burnice Alford, and Lavern Chester "Chuck" Alford.

No services are planned, but family and friends will gather to celebrate the long life of this fearless fighter.

AAFA NOTES: SSDI records confirm the birth and death dates of Ray Dortey Alford (SS# issued in CA), last residence Sacramento, Sacramento Co., CA.

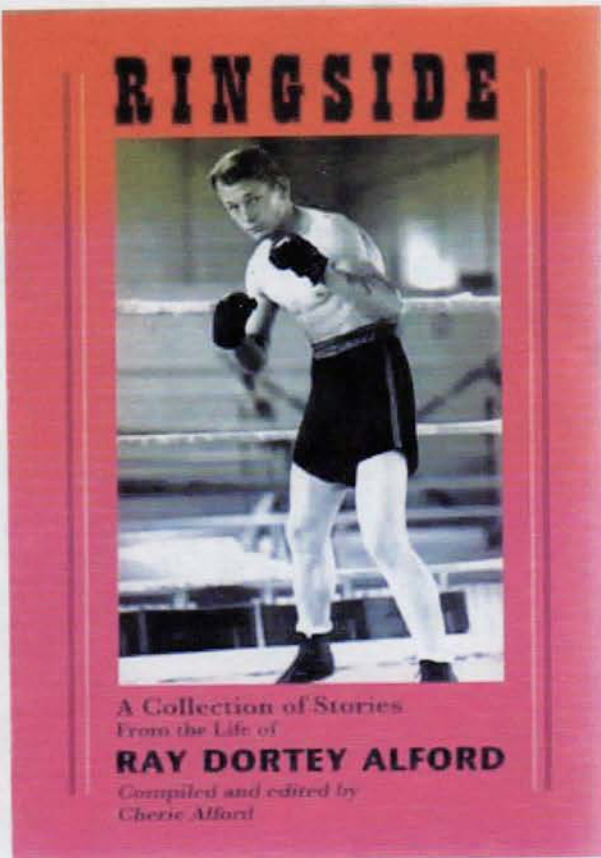
We published the obituary of his wife, Marie Louise Arnst Alford, in the California Obituaries compilation; and of

his brother Lavern Chester "Chuck" Alford in the Nevada Obituaries compilation.

From his daughter, Pamela Alford Thompson, AAFA #0030: Dad accompanied my husband Bruce and me to the 1991 Annual Meeting in Jackson, MS. That was the only time he flew since WWII! He pasted his name badge from the meeting on his bedroom door, and it's still there. He also never removed the AAFA lapel pin from the jacket he wore at the meeting—it was still on that jacket in his closet.

Boxing played a large part in Dad's life. Even when he was 99 he liked to say, "I can beat any man my age!" In the last couple of weeks of his life, we had trouble interesting him in anything, but Bruce found a DVD entitled "70 Greatest Knockouts" that perked him up. He was watching it the last time he went to sleep.

His lineage: Ray Dortey 1911 LA¹, James Maxie 1877 TX², John Paten Phillip 1850 GA³, Pierce Lewis 1829 GA⁴.



Cover of the book about Ray's early life

Ringside brings to life the story of a Depression era boxing sensation. In his own words Ray Dorsey Alford describes his hardscrabble life growing up in the South, his family's struggle to lift themselves out of poverty, and his rise to local boxing stardom in Salinas, California. We also hear the heartbreaking story of Ray's

deep love and loyalty to a tough father who is unable to return his devotion. Their relationship is forged during hard times as they follow the seasons in search of work. In straight shooting, unadorned language Ringside chronicles the making of a fighter, from grade school battles with bullies to evening boxing matches at migrant

camp, to short-lived boxing fame. Along the way, Ray offers us a ringside seat to the ups and downs of a life lived fearlessly by a man who took plenty of punches, but never went down for the count. These stories were recorded, transcribed and edited by his daughter.

Hi Gil,

I'm sorry to report that my dad died at 3:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 10, of respiratory failure. He fell in his front yard and broke his hip on March 5, was in the hospital for a week, and then transferred to a skilled nursing facility. Tough as he was, he couldn't recover. The last time he went to sleep he was watching a DVD of The World's Greatest Knockouts! (He was a boxer in the 1930s.) And he knew us all until the very end.

--Pam