

John C. Alford

I have an old ragged sheet of yellow legal paper that was the beginning of my journey to identify John C. Alford, my great, great, grandfather. According to my grandmother Ola Mae Gore Palmer, her grandfather John C. Alford married Sara Ann Jones and his sister (her grandmother) Susan Alford married Elias Gore. Susan Alford and Elias Gore had a son, Edward Pinckney Gore. John C. Alford and Sara Ann Crawford had a daughter named Louisa Jane Alford. Edward and Louisa married (they were first cousins) and their eldest daughter was my grandmother, Ola Mae Gore.

Many miles have been traveled and many hours spent in an attempt to identify the parents of John C. Alford. The Alford Association has an immense data bank on Alfords, including DNA, but they do not place John C. Alford within their genealogy.

A History of Marion County by Sellars discusses the migration of the Alfords from North Carolina. According to Sellars, Neill, James L. and Lodwick B. Alford came to Marion, South Carolina. Neill Alford had a large family with a son named John. They lived on Big Reedy Creek nears Rains. In addition to the Marion Alfords, there were Horry Alfords to consider but Grandma Palmer (Ola Mae Gore Palmer) said we were Catfish Alfords from Marion.

The first Marion, SC Alford I found was James, enumerated in the 1800 South Carolina Federal Census for Craven District. The 1820 census lists only a Peachman Alford. The 1830 census has four Alfords, Neil, James, James, and Elias. In the 1840 Marion District census there are seven Alfords enumerated, Neil, LB, James, Elias, Moses, William, and Joel.

My John C. Alford was born c1830 but I have been unable to document his parents. My research shows that John's story is intertwined with that of the Jones and Gore families (two other of my family lines). Reubin Jones had a daughter by his second wife, Louisa, named Rhoda, born c1861. This was proven by the will of Reubin Jones. Also proven was the marriage of another daughter, Sara Ann Jones, to John C. Alford; thus Rubin is the father-in-law of John C. Alford. There are numerous documents at the Marion County Archives documenting this relationship.

The 1850 Marion District census lists a Prudence Alford, HOH, with six children. Since Prudence does not appear in an earlier census it could be presumed that she was an unmarried Alford, or her husband died before 1850. (Note: The Alford Association suggests that Prudence was married to an unknown Alford. She had a son William N. who established his own household in 1850.) Prudence was enumerated with another son, John, and daughters Rebecca, Sarah, Elizabeth, Louisa, and Prudence. I suggest that John Alford, son of Prudence is my John C. Alford.

1850 Cades Godbold, Marion, South Carolina Census:

Prudence Alford	56
John Alford	21
Rebecca Alford	20
Sara Alford	18
Elizabeth Alford	16
Louisa Alford	14
Prudence Alford	8

In 1860 Jon C. Alford is in Mars Bluff, Marion, South Carolina, with wife Sarah A. Alford, and daughter S. R. (Sarah Rebecca) Alford. His father-in-law, Reubin Jones, is now married to Louisa Alford, the sister of John C. Alford. (Note: During the Civil War, John C. Alford served in Company D, 7th Battalion under Captain W. H. Crawford. According to a pension application filed 27 Dec 1919 by Sarah Annie Alford, they were married 2 March 1859. She was 22 years old at the time of their marriage, born 20 August 1838. John William Alford, son of Ruben Jones and Elizabeth Alford stated in the above application that John C. Alford served in the Civil war.) John C. Alford died 21 January 1909, Sarah Ann died in 1923.

1860 Census, Mars Bluff, Marion, South Carolina Census, House # 644

Jon C. Alford	26
Sarah R. Alford	22
S. R. Alford	4/12

1860 Census, Marion, Marion, South Carolina, House # 578

Margaret Alford	50 (do not know who this is)
Rebecca Alford	32 (daughter of Prudence)
Elisabeth Alford	30 (daughter of Prudence)
Sarah Alford	28 (daughter of Prudence)
Miranda Alford	6 (granddaughter of Prudence, daughter of Sarah)

1860 Census, Mars Bluff, Marion, South Carolina, House # 385

Reubin Jones	56
Louisa Jones	24 (daughter of Prudence)
M. L. Jones	14 (daughter of Reubin and Sara Ann Crawford)

1860 Census, Marion, Marion, South Carolina, House 579

John Alford	30 (do not know who these Alford are but they are
Elizabeth Alford	20 living next to Margaret Alford)

In 1870, John C. and Sarah Alford were in Jefferys Township living next door to his father-in-law, Reubin Jones. John is listed as age 52, born in South Carolina, with a birth date of 1818. Sarah's age is listed as 33 born in South Carolina with birth date of 1835. They now have four children, Sarah (Rebecca), Ellen, Reuben (Caldwell), and Louisa (Jane). William Alford, age 47 and Eliza Alford, age 37, are next door in house # 21. In house # 22 is David Bailey, whose wife Mary is the daughter of Reubin Jones. In house # 25 is Lizzie Alford age 53 with Unity and Ann. Reubin Jones is the only person listed with real estate (\$500) and personal property (\$170) values.

1870 Census, Jeffreys, Marion, South Carolina, House # 20

John Alford	52
Sarah Alford	33
Sarah Alford	10
Ellen Alford	6

Reuben Alford	3
Louisa Alford	6/12
Samuel Alford	18 (do not know who this. Too old to be son of Sarah ?)

1870 Census, Jeffreys, Marion, South Carolina, House # 21

William Alford	47 (Living next to John C. Alford)
Eliza Alford	37

1870 Census, Wahee Township, Marion, South Carolina, House # 37

Barbary Alford	70 (unknown - ? Barbary Alford in Horry 1830 census as HOH)
Rebecca Alford	35 (Daughter of Prudence)
Sarah Alford	34 (Daughter of Prudence)
Maranzan	16 (Miranda from the 1860 census, daughter of Sarah)
Rhodey A	8 (Daughter of Reubin Jones and Louisa Alford, granddaughter of Prudence Alford)
Henry	20 (Son of William N. Alford, son of Prudence)

John was listed as J. C. Alford, age 63, in the 1880 census. He and Sarah, age 45, are still living in Jefferys Township with five children, S. Rebecca, a 21, Caldwell, a 13, L. Jane, age 10, Julia, age 7, and Nancy, age 3.

1880 Census, Jeffries Township, Marion, South Carolina, House #5

J. C. Alford	63
Sarah	45
S. Rebecca	21
Caldwell	13
L. Jane	10
Julia M.	7
Nancy	3

1880 Census, Wahee, Marion, South Carolina, House # 257

Sallie Alford	48	Head (Sarah, Daughter of Prudence)
Rebecca Alford	44	Sister (Daughter of Prudence)
Ellen Foxworth	29	Servant
Rhoda A Jones	18	Niece (has epilepsy) (Daughter of Louisa, granddaughter of Prudence)
Mary I. Smithy	3	Help (daughter of William N. Alford's daughter, Mary E Alford who married M. E. Smithy and died before 1880)
Sallie Alford	11	Niece (Rebecca's daughter)

1880 Census, Wahee, Marion, South Carolina, House # 258

James Wiggins	25
Maranzan Wiggins	26 (daughter of Sarah, granddaughter of Prudence)
Elly James Wiggins	2

Rhoda Jones did not stay with her parents, Reubin and Louisa Jones. She is listed with a family of Alford's composed of Alford women, a "family" group that continued through 1920. The basis for this group are the daughters enumerated with Prudence Alford in 1850. It appears that they took in various family members. Maranza Alford, daughter of Sarah married James Wiggins and moved next to Prudence.

The 1900 census has John, Sarah and Sarah Rebecca still in Jefferys Township, Florence, SC. His age is given as 84, wife Sarah age 63, and daughter Sarah Rebecca age 40. Sarah had 10 children and only five are alive in 1900, Sarah Rebecca, Caldwell, Louisa Jane, Julia M., and Nancy. Susannah Gore is two houses away with six children born and one living. This is most likely John's sister, Susan, who married Elias Gore per oral history (not proven). Sarah Rebecca was not married at this time. Caldwell married Bonnie Cain, Louisa Jane married Edward Pinckney "Ned" Gore, and Nancy married William Frank Hyman. There is no further information on Julia at this time.

1900 Census, Jeffreys, Marion, South Carolina, House # 485

John Alford,	84
Sarah A	63
Sarah R.	40

1900 Census, Wahee, Marion, South Carolina, House #

M. A. Wiggins	46
E. J. Wiggins	21
Sallie Jane Alford	18
Sarah Alford	69 (mother)
Rebecca Alford	72 (sister)
Rhody Jones	40 (cousin)

The 1910 census shows Sarah A. Alford age 73, living in Cain Township with her daughter, Sarah Rebecca. Sometime after 1910 Rebecca married William Jenson and her mother, Sarah, moved in with her youngest daughter, Nancy, who had married William Hyman. Rebecca was more than 50 years old when she married and had lived at home with her parents all this time. John C. died in 1909 so maybe she had a beau all this time and decided to marry him after her father died, who knows!

1910 Census, Cain, Florence, South Carolina, House # 366

Sarah A. Alford	73
Rebecca Alford	50

The Report of the State Officers Board and Committees to the General Assembly for fiscal year 1911 notes that John was enrolled in the Confederate Pension Program in 1908. He received his pension for the fiscal year of 1910 (7-09 to 7-10) but was noted as "dead" in the report for the fiscal year of 1911. Sarah A. Alford was enrolled in 1910. So Sarah picked up his pension after

he died. As already noted, under the Act of 1919, she applied for a second pension listing herself as C-4. (Widow's pension) Sarah Ann Alford died 25 August 1922.

Oral family history relates that John died in 1909 while on a trip to Newport News, Virginia, to visit family, and was buried there. A research trip made to Newport News in 2010 to investigate this story was unsuccessful. Recent records seem to indicate that he was buried at Mt. Elon Church in Florence County where Sarah Ann Jones Alford is buried.

After much research, grief, and pain, I came to the conclusion that only DNA testing would determine the father of John C. Alford. (I sponsored DNA for Harris Alford, descendant of William N. Alford, son of Prudence. To my knowledge, the DNA has not connected to a known Alford Line.) Based on available information, I believe my John C. Alford's mother was Prudence. So, to do DNA testing, I had to find a living male heir. I went hunting for John C's only son, Caldwell. Caldwell married Bonnie Cain, they had seven children: Ruth, John, Mintylene, Marie Elizabeth, Hyacintha, Nathan Alfonso, and June Caldwell. Unfortunately, John, Nathan and June only had girls so the DNA option is not available.

1900 Census, Jeffreys, Florence, South Carolina, House # 48

Cotwell Alford	35
Bonnie Alford	28
Ruth Alford	7
John W. Alford	5
Mirtie Alford	2
Elizabeth Alford	4/12

1910 Census, Florence Township, Florence, South Carolina, # 459

Callwell Alford	43
Barney Alford	38
Ruth Alford	17
John Alford	16
Midlean Alford	13
Marie Alford	11
Hyacintha Alford	9
Alfonse Alford	6

June Caldwell was born in 1908, but not listed in the 1910 census. I have been unable to find him in 1910.

The children of Caldwell Alford and Bonnie Cain married: Ruth married Spurgeon Bailey (her first cousin); John Jeffery married Ruby Hendrix, Clara Mae Blackwell (niece of Ruby Hendrix) and Margaret Plessinger; Mintylene married James Wiggins; Marie married Charles Foster; Hyacintha married Lewis Williams and N. J. Jones; Nathan Alfonso married Jettie Hendrix; and June married Annie Inu and Maude Crofton. All of the children went to the Newport News area except Nathan Alfonso and Ruth who stayed in Florence, SC

1920 Census, Newport News, Ward 2, Newport News, Virginia

Charles Foster 23

Marie Foster 20 (Marie Alford, daughter of Caldwell Alford)

1920 Census, Jeffers, Florence, South Carolina, House # 180

Calwell Alford 53 Died 3 February 1929 in S. C. State Hospital of
"General paralysis of the insane"

1920 Census, Back Swamp, Florence, South Carolina, House # 72

Charlie Bailey 53

Ruth Bailey 28 (Ruth, daughter of Caldwell Alford and Bonnie Cain)

Spurgeon Bailey 8

Geneva Bailey 7

Savage Bailey 5

Pearl Bailey 1 6/12

Except for the above individuals I have been unable to find the rest of the family in the 1920 census. All of the males from Caldwell's line do not appear to have any male children, so the DNA option is out.