

Letters Concerning the Early Lodwicks

We began printing this series of letters between Lodwick Alford, Chairman of the Board, and Jim Alford, Board Member and AAFA #115, in the March 1992 issue. The letters below are continued from the June 1992 issue. The first letter is from Gil Alford, Executive Director, who jumped into the fray once in a while!



5 March 1990

Dear Wick:

.... Concerning James Alford, son of Lodwick. I have seen conflicting information on his date of birth—1740 and 1741. With the latter comes the May 20. I'm not sure of the original source of that data. My best source is a family group record of Mrs. Bowman's which cites the DAR Pat. Index as well as a Family Bible owned 1970 by Mrs. Clyde R. Bennett of Columbia, SC. I have a page from an 1812 newspaper that announced his death and it says he died Friday (November 6) morning after two o'clock and had a few months previous to his death entered the 72nd year of his age. That would make him born 1740. Boddie (Vol. 12, p. 60) showed he was born about 1739/40. A birth in 1741 causes a problem with several legal transactions—land and probate, but the 1740 birth would just get him by.

You were having trouble with James' land transactions in Robeson County in 1790 after James has moved to Georgia in the 1780s. A different James. Robeson County James Alford was the son of Jacob (Lodwick's son) and Mary Pace. This James was born 1764 and died 1839 in Mississippi. He is from Julius

(treasurer) Alford's branch of the family.

Enough for now. I'm sending a copy of this to Jim to help him plug a couple of the many gaps in the accounts of Lodwick.

Gil



March 28, 1990

Captain Wick,

.... Welcome to the New Debate, cousin! This time around a much larger, faster computer is accumulating and evaluating the thousands of Alford facts that swirl about the cosmos. In a year or two, you'll thank me for straightening out this confusing North Carolina mess for you!

For now, let me thank you for quoting the exact text from the Cane. I can see clearly now that the great great granddaughter who was concerned enough about history to have the gold band placed around it did not know it's exact owner, so inscribed it James Lodwick Alford OR Major Tanner Alford! That's terrific because the names and location perfectly match brothers James and Lodwick Jr.! Obviously, if only one person were intended, the inscription would have been 'Major James Lodwick "Tanner" Alford'. The Strickland pension papers further clarify and strengthen the case for two separate people by referring to Justice Ludy "Tanner" Alford.

Are you through yelling, "Heresy!" yet? Remember, you proclaimed that your mind is always open to new evidence. Okay, let's move along. We have a lot to cover.

First, don't scoff at the possibility of James and Lodwick Jr. being twins and consider these facts:

Where did you get those 1741 and 1743 birthdates for James and Lodwick Jr.? I haven't seen an original record yet that supports this. This is what I have found thus far:

Neither James nor Lodwick Jr. appeared as a taxable/tithable of Lodwick Sr. in 1755. Only Jacob did. (Incidentally, where was William?) This means they were both younger than sixteen in the Summer of 1755. So, they were both born after the summer of 1739, right?

Now let's focus on them individually:

James Alford

a. Captain James Alford of Hancock Co., GA, age 72, died November 6, 1812 according to his obituary printed in the *Augusta Herald* (See *Marriages And Deaths, 1763 to 1820, Mary Bondurant Warren, 1968.*). This means he was born between November 7, 1739 and November 6, 1740. Gil has a record indicating that he was born in May, 1740 which is in the middle of the possible range. I don't think anyone will argue that he was the James who left Wake County in 1784.

b. James Alford received a Granville Grant July 24, 1761 which rather neatly coincides with his probable 21st birthday, right?

Lodwick Alford Jr.

a. Lodwick Alford Jr. ALSO RECEIVED A GRANVILLE GRANT JULY 24, 1761. The Bute County deed books attest to this in at least three different entries. Doesn't this sound suspiciously like he may have been the same age as his brother James?

Lodwick Jr. left home BEFORE James according to the 1762 Bute County Tax List indicating that he may even have been older! However, this was probably because his grant on Turkey Creek was a distance away from Lodwick Sr.'s house while James' grant was conveniently next door.

Were There Two Men Named James?

In a nutshell, yes. The one who was the judge and doing all the legal work in Bute/Franklin Co. was older while the younger James pursued a somewhat different career as evidenced by his later tax assessor/collector/surveyor activities in Wake Co. However, some anomalies remain:

a. Only one James appeared in the 1762 and 1766 Bute Co. tax rolls and he was identified in the household of Lodwick Sr., which would virtually make him a son. Why wasn't the other James on the tax rolls?

There is one INTERESTING answer to this: THE OLDER JAMES WAS TOO OLD TO BE TAXED. Remember, Colonial taxables were between the ages of 16 and 60. Rather than being Lodwick's brother, this old gentleman was probably his father! Supporting this, an examination of the court minutes shows that James served as a judge for only two court sessions (once each in 1766, 1769), probably in a relief role. At his advanced age, he would have declined a more rigorous schedule.

b. In a 1770 deed, James who had received the 1761 Granville Grant was called James Esq. when he acknowledged his deed in court. Esquire was a title reserved for judges, sheriffs and perhaps other local officials. I believe that the 1761 grant was received by James the son and that he probably held a Bute County office in 1770 when he was called Esquire.

Were There Three Men Named Lodwick?

I can support you on the two James', but not on three distinguishable Lodwicks.

The records clearly show a Lodwick Sr. in Franklin County and a Lodwick Jr. in Franklin/Wake/Nash Counties. The records also show sufficient interaction between them and the other son/brothers to satisfy a prudent researcher as to their relationship.

Lodwick Sr. signed his name "Senior" as late as 1792 (his will) and Lodwick Jr. signed his name "Junior" as late as 1793 (as Co-Executor of the Will of Frederick Spane—the other Executor was Michael Rogers, a close friend and probable family tie of Lodwick Jr. and James.).

This would preclude either of them having died in Georgia in 1789.

Like I have suggested to Gil, Johnston County, just four miles east of Wakefield, shows considerable promise for revealing a third Lodwick. Beginning in 1799, the tax lists show:

Lodwick	1799-1820
Lodwick of Wake Co.	1801-1818
Lodwick of Wayne Co.	1800-1803

Lodwick of Franklin Co. isn't shown, but he was out of the picture by then. The overwhelming number of entries are just plain Lodwick. He doesn't appear in the Poll Tax listing though, just in the land entries. This could mean that he was an absentee land owner, a Revolutionary Veteran, or over 60 (55?) years of age!

Supporting Notes and Miscellaneous Thoughts

1. It was not necessary to be 21 to buy land in Colonial North Carolina, only to sell it. We have this from several authoritative sources. In all likelihood though, a young man would have been near 21 when he initiated application for

a Granville Grant and would have been 21 when he actually received the deed, so it is still a reasonable indicator of a man reaching his majority.

2. I don't feel that "Sr." and "Jr." had any different meaning than they do today. Too many other "Sr.'s" and "Jr.'s" in Colonial times used the terms in a manner consistent with modern usage.

3. When reading old records, realize that a person's peers tagged on only enough suffixes or prefixes as were necessary to identify the person adequately. Ask Gil how often he is called "Junior" by those outside his family.

4. On the other hand, when given the opportunity to identify themselves, they would be more careful and use the more familiar "Senior"/"Junior" suffixes.

5. Tax rolls in our region of Colonial North Carolina seem to have been uniformly prepared in the summer months and returned to the Third Quarter Court.

6. A witness to a deed was required to be 21 or older. Member Ben Spratling III first advised me of this and several other lawyers have since acknowledged it. The young sons seem to have awaited an opportunity to witness a deed. It was a visible Right of Passage and helps today to pinpoint their birthdate.

7. Don't forget, this was an Expansionist country until recently and Sons had to move away from Fathers to secure new land for themselves. This is the main reason that families became scattered.

8. I read the Lodwick Hartley letter. The old boy sounds like he has researched his family well, but he doesn't mention Alford's. If we're going to run a tight ship, we must have more substantive evidence before we can consider the possibility of an Alford-Hartley connection....

Jim/Houston

P. S. The material I have on published lineages of Green Alford is enclosed. Green was probably named for Nathaniel Green who defended North Carolina against Lord Cornwallis at the battles of Cowpens and Guilford Courthouse.



2 May 1990

Dear Jim:

Now it is my turn to apologize to you for the inordinate delay in replying to your letter of 28 March. When I closed my letter of 26 Feb. with a quote from "Macbeth", little did I realize just how thick you would lay it on. Guess I asked for it and now you are giving it to me. Of course you realize that it is all a ploy to get you and others to do research. Ha!

Anyhow you rose to the bait and since research is the name of the game—let's have at it. Indeed the game is afoot and may the winner be a final clearing up of the confusion of the many Lodwicks. But in the process let us have a little more Holmesian logic and less wild-eyed speculation—twins indeed!

I have been chuckling ever since over your explanation of how the gold band on the walking stick came to be inscribed as it is. "O ye of little faith." I guess my next move to convince all you doubting Thomases will be to have the cane carbon dated. But I believe healthy skepticism is a good thing. And you will never hear me crying heresy although you may be close to it. . . .

You asked about the birthdates of James 1741 and Lodwick Jr. 1743 and I cannot recall offhand where I got the dates. I am in the process of reviewing all my old notes and papers with a mind to finding where I got the dates and assigning them a number on the reliability scale—from

proven down through family tradition, logical deductions and wild speculations such as your twins. Right now I can't even recall the criteria for the numbers on the reliability scale. Perhaps you can refresh my memory. I know we all need to keep them in mind.

I also know that using dates over and over again tends to give them acceptance that may not be justified. It is well to draw ourselves up short once in a while. And you know what, I am not set in concrete on the birthdates of 1741 and 1743 for James & Lodwick Jr. Assuming they were born a year or two earlier, that would make them eligible for some of the land grants. But that does not alter the picture very much and still leaves us with doubt as to which, James the elder (father of my James Lodwick) or James son of ole Lodwick.

But now I wonder if you realize you may have opened up another can of worms. When you bring in a James too old to be taxed in the 1760's, you have a third James. Now you have James b. ca. 1687, father of ole Lodwick, James Jr., Warren, Goodrich and Julius. Then we have James son of ole Lodwick. That makes three James and great balls of sheet iron! Here we go again! In the 1760's James Sr. would have been about 75 and entirely possible. Let's see how Gil reacts.

On the matter of three Lodwicks, I prefer to think in terms of four of them, namely, Ole Lodwick, b. ca. 1710, his son Jr. b. ca. 1741, my James Lodwick, b. 1749 (son of James Jr.) and Lodwick IV, b. 1768, son of William and grandson of ole Lodwick. Lodwick V, b. 1775, we can ignore for the moment. Now if you accept that ole Lodwick had a son Lodwick Jr. then you cannot merge the two and say the will of 1792 probated 1801 was of old Lodwick himself because their children were entirely different. The will of 1820 of Wake County Lodwick precludes merging with the Lodwick will of 1792 in Franklin County. My James Lodwick cannot be

the Lodwick of Franklin. Q.E.D. they are not the same person. You cannot have it both ways. I don't think you have faced up to these two wills. You have got to account for three Lodwicks. If you think that the Franklin will of 1792 applies to ole Lodwick, then what have you done with Lodwick Jr. b. ca. 1741?

Now I have brought Lodwick IV, b. 1768 (of Wayne County) into the picture because he appears in the lineage set forth in *Men of Mark*, edited by W.J. Northen. And let me thank you for sending me copies of the pertinent biographies. But of course my father owned a complete set of the *Men of Mark* volumes first edition and one of my earliest memories when I learned how to read ca. 1920 was the fascination evoked by reading of illustrious Alford history. I set out then to find out if it was true. Much of it is not. The genealogy is atrocious and all the flowery words are just puffery—ego trips designed to sell books. In the Navy we used to call it "boiler plate." My father used to laugh about it. He knew all that garbage was put in there by Uncle Columbus' oldest daughter.

I am not sure you are familiar with the genealogy research of Hugh Edwin Alford. He did a pretty good job of debunking the early genealogy appearing in *Men of Mark* and as far as I know was the first to do so. But of course we still have the job of straightening things out. I am not familiar with the lineage of Hunsicker but at first glance it looks pretty good as far as it goes. . . .

Cordially,
Wick ♦

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