

# AAFA Alford Wills Project

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*Janice Stogsdill was born in Dallas, TX and attended public school there. Being a member of the Christian Church influenced her decision to attend Texas Christian University (TCU) where she graduated with a degree in elementary education in 1961. Following her graduation she and John C. Smith were married January 30, 1961. They moved to College Station, Texas, and she taught second grade in Bryan, Texas until John, who was a senior at Texas A&M, could finish school. The birth of two boys interrupted her teaching. The family then lived in Corpus Christi, TX, Victoria, TX, and New Orleans, LA before settling in Plano, TX where they still live. Janice is interested in history, reading mystery books, collecting things especially antiques and painting. Those who have seen her and her work at our annual meetings know of her deep interest in photography. She and John chair the AAFA Photo Committee and maintain the photo archives in a local bank vault. Her interest in genealogy is evident in the work she does as the AAFA manager of the computer file on the Isham Alford branch of the family. -Editors*



The use of wills in the study of genealogy is a very important tool. A will can give the names of a spouse and the children in a family, as well as a date and a location where the family was living. At times an exact location is revealed when there are descriptions of the land areas being conveyed in the will.

Gil Alford published a quarterly called *About Alford's* for about nine years before the Alford American Family Association was organized. During those years, nine Alford Wills were published. Four of those wills have been republished in *AAFA ACTION*, and the plan is to publish the other five in future issues. A total of thirty-one wills have been published in *AAFA ACTION* over the last 12 years.

Franceine Rees was the first Wills Project Officer. She entered several wills in the computer and sent them to Pam Thompson for publication. She was responsible for locating many of the early North Carolina wills.

I took over as the Wills Project Officer at the meeting in St. Francisville, LA in 1993. Quite a bit of time has been spent in trying to work on copies of the handwritten wills so that they can be read and transcribed somewhat easier. I decided that a will might have more meaning if it was connected to information about the family of the person who had written the will. In the past I have tried to include something about the descendants and the names of some of the members of AAFA who are descendants of the person. It was important to be able to connect a will to a particular Alford line and also to living people that some of us could visualize in our minds and be able to somehow connect with that person who lived so long ago.

In the last few years, the objective has been to concentrate on publishing wills from the state where the meeting is going to be held for that year. Georgia is our current target state.

Six Alford wills of Georgia were

previously published: James Alford 1740-1812, Hancock Co, Summer 1993 p 53; Jephtha Alford 1797-1869, Carroll Co, Summer 1997 p 39; Julius C. Alford 1747-1820, Greene Co, Sep 1989 p 31; Lodwick Alford 1775-1857, Troup Co, Sep 1989 p 29; Thomas J. Alford 1814-1873, Pike Co, Winter 1997 p 50; William Alford 1794-1882, Morgan Co., Spring 1997 p 8; William Alford, Sr. ca 1734-1822, Hancock Co, Spring 1994 p 27. If you would like to have a copy of any of these wills send a stamped self-addressed business size envelope to address below. Specify the will(s) desired.

Two more Alford wills of Georgia are in this issue: Brittain Alford 1781-1849, Pike Co. and Guilford Alford 1798-1856, Columbia Co.

Sixteen new wills have been acquired during the last seven years bringing the total to sixty-eight wills. There are additional wills being processed as well as several sets of estate and probate papers in the collection.

At the present time the wills are being sent to Kim Savage so she can put them on the AAFA Web Site. A will index has been posted. You should visit there and check them out. There is much more concentrated there than we can ever put in one quarterly.

Our focus now is to concentrate on acquiring a copy of all existing Alford wills. Plans include the preparation of a list of all known wills at this time to publish in the next quarterly. We would appreciate the help of all of you living in an area where there might be an Alford will. It is much cheaper for you to copy a document in person than it is for AAFA to order it from out of state. We would be most grateful for your help. Go to the court house and make a copy of the will(s) and send to me: Janice Smith, 1513 Croston Drive, Plano, TX 75075 or send to AAFA, Inc. Attn: Wills, POB 1586, Florissant, MO 63031.

**WILL OF  
BRITTAIN WASHINGTON ALFORD, SR.**

Georgia,  
Pike County

In the name of God Amen, I Brittain Alford said of the county and state aforesaid being of sound mind and disposing memory do hereby constitute ordain and appoint this to be my last will and testament.

Item 1<sup>st</sup> -- It is my will and desire that my body be burried (sic) in a decent and christian like manner and suitable to my circumstances.

Item 2<sup>nd</sup> -- I give and bequeath to my beloved wife, Barshebee (Bathshebe) Alford for and during the time of her natural life or widowhood all the land attached to the premises that I at present occupy together with any of their negro slaves and their increase that I may disposed of that in the said Barshebee may choose. Also any part of all the farming utensils, (sic) stock of all kinds including horses, oxen, and household and kitchen furniture and provisions. Also my road wagon and harness, barouche and harness and of cash.

Item 3<sup>rd</sup> -- It is my will and desire that at the death or intermarriage of my wife Barshebee all of the above property given and bequeathed to her as aforesaid be taken by my executor whoever I may hereafter appoint and divided among all my heirs according to this my last will and testament.

Item 4<sup>th</sup> -- I give and bequeath to my children, Isham, Spire, Betsey Ann, Winney, Decey (Dicey), Jefferson, Jimmerson, and Nancy and Brittain an equal portion of the residue of all property that I may die seized and possessed of.

Item 5<sup>th</sup> -- I will that the distribution shares of each of my daughters, Betsey Ann, Winney, Decey, and Nancy shall belong to them and their heirs of their bodies and not subject

**Brittain Alford  
(1781-1849)**

Brittain Alford, son of Isham and Anna Ferrell Alford, was born February 4, 1781 in Franklin Co., NC. While still a small child his family moved to Greene Co., GA. Brittain married Barshaba Brassell, daughter of Brittian Brassell and La Dicey Davis, in Greene Co., March 19, 1805.

Children born to them were:  
Isham Alford Dec 21, 1805  
Spire Washington Alford Oct 1, 1807  
Elizabeth Ann Alford Abt 1809  
Winifred V. Alford Dec 21 1810  
Thomas Jefferson Alford Abt 1814  
Dicey Alford estimated 1817  
Jemmerson Spiro Alford Jun 6, 1819  
Brittain Washington Alford, Jr. Jan 6, 1826.

Brittain Alford Sr. was enumerated in Walton Co., GA in 1820, and he was a successful entrant in the 1821 Georgia Land Lottery having entered from Walton County and won property in Monroe County, Richs Militia District, lot 32, section 13.

Monroe County was adjacent to Pike County where the family finally settled and where Brittain died February 10, 1849 and is buried on the old family cemetery.

For more on Brittain Alford's see *AAFA ACTION* Vol. VI. No. 4, Spring 1994 p. 34

AAFA has compiled a genealogy listing over 975 descendants of Brittain. Thirty AAFA members descend from Brittain, including AAFA member mentioned elsewhere in this issue: Dr. Cecil O. Alford AAFA #0751.

to the debts of their present or any future husbands.

Item 6<sup>th</sup> -- It is my will and desire that my executor cause to be divided by their disinterests present the residue of my negro slaves after my wife Barshebee shall have made her choice as aforesaid the persons appraised by my executor for that purpose shall value and lot off said slaves into parcels as equal as possible to be drawn for by all my children the said lots to be made equal by those drawing lots of greater value paying to those who draw lots of less value.

Item 7<sup>th</sup> -- It is my will and desire that my executors make an equal distribution of all ready money, notes and accounts that I may desire (die ?) possessed of among all my children.

Item 8<sup>th</sup> -- I hereby constitute ordain and appoint my sons Isham Alford and Jefferson Alford my executors to execute this my last will and testament.

Witness my hand and seal this sixth day of December one thousand eight hundred and forty eight.

Brittain X Alford

(His mark)

Signed in presence of George \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Isaac \_\_\_\_\_ ?

A. J. McAfee

The will was probated 5 March 1849.

Will Book C, pages 36-37.

Pike County, Georgia

## WILL OF GUILFORD ALFORD

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State of Georgia

Columbia County

In the Name of God, Amen! I Guilford Alford, believing that I must shortly die, and having a desire to arrange the distribution of the substance a Kind Providence has blessed me with among my children, do make and ordain this my last will and testament in relation there to.

Item 1st. I direct that all my just debts be paid.

Item 2nd. I give and bequeath unto my son James H. Alford, my negro man Harry (called Harry Briscoe), his wife Mariah and their three children Dick, Harry & John, also my four negro men Ned, Primus, Wiley, and Shop Harry, also a woman Caty and her two youngest children Ann and James, & I hereby confirm unto my said son the gift of two negroes Johnson and William heretofore made.

Item 3rd. I give and bequeath unto my daughter, Henrietta A. Wimberly, my three Negro boys Bob, Washington and Isaac (called young Isaac), also a woman named Lucy and a girl named Florinda, for the use of said daughter and her children, free from the disposition of her present or future husband. I

### Guilford Alford (1798-1856)

Guilford Alford, the probable son of Benjamin and Lucretia (Edwards) Alford, was born 1798 in Wayne Co., NC. His wife, Elizabeth, was born about 1894 in Georgia so we assume they were married in Georgia about 1825. He was probably in Georgia in 1820 but part of that census is missing. He was in the 1821 Land Lottery from Columbia Co., winning land in Monroe Co. but he obviously stayed in Columbia Co.

In 1830 he had one son age 5-10, probably James and 2 sons under five, probably John and one whose name we don't know. He also had a daughter age 5-10 who was probably Henrietta who married Samuel Wimberly in 1847.

Their known children were:

Henrietta Alford 1825 GA

James Alford 1826 GA

John M. Alford 1831 GA

Mary Alford 1839 GA

Caroline Alford 1842 GA

Living next door to Guilford in the 1850 census of Columbia Co. GA was Ben E. Alford b. 1806 in NC, and we suspect that he was a brother. He married twice and had a very large family.

Guilford died September 1856 in Columbia Co.

also confirm unto the said daughter the gift of six negroes Joe and his wife Patience, and their four children, heretofore made.

Item 4th. I give and bequeath unto my daughter Mary Ann Barnett my negro woman Moll and her child Frank, a negro girl named Lavinia, and my negro man Aaron, for the use of said daughter and her children, free from the disposition of her present or any future husband. I also confirm unto the said daughter the gift of six negroes, a negro man Buck and a negro woman Amanda, and their four children heretofore made.

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*(AAFA "Alford" Wills Project Continued from p. 83)*

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Item 5th. I give and bequeath unto my daughter Caroline Augusta Alford my negro woman Lucinda and her four children viz: Benjamin, Eliza, Allen and Mary, also negro woman Julia and her two children Jane and Dilsey, a negro girl named Selina, a negro man named Obe, and old Isaac, for the use of said daughter and the lawful issues of her body; should the said daughter marry, said bequeath property to free from the disposition of said or any future husband. And I hereby constitute and ordain my son James H. Alford Master for said property.

In Open Court Oct.7th 1856  
N. Colvard or  
J. H. Stockton  
Jas. S. Jones  
Recorded 17 Nov 1856.

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Item 6th. As it is my desire that all of my children shall share equal in my property, I direct that my Executor hereinafter named shall appoint three men as appraisers to value the property bequeathed to each of my children including the Negroes mentioned as before given to said children and upon a comparison of the expressed valuation of the present given to each, he, my Executor, shall make up the difference to such as may have received less than others, out of the residue of my estate hereinafter described.

Item 7th. I direct that my Executor hereinafter named shall dispose of the residue of my property (including the negroes not bequeathed) and all the real and personal property I may be possessed of at my death, using his own discretion, as to disposing of the negroes and lands at public or private sale. And the balance of my property, after the settlement of my debts, and necessary expenditures, and after carrying out the provisions contained in the preceding Item, I direct shall be equally divided among my four children.

Item 8th. I appoint and constitute my son James H. Alford Executor of this my last Will and testament.  
In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 17th day of September 1856.

G. Alford

Signed, sealed and declared to be the last will and testament of Guilford Alford, in the presence of said testator and of each of us this 17th day of September 1856.

Joseph H. Stockton

Thomas S. Harrison

James S. Jones

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Georgia

Columbia County

Personally came into open court Joseph H. Stockton and James S. Jones two of the subscribing witnesses to the within will & testament, who being duly sworn say that they saw the testator sign & seal the same, declaring it to be his last will & testament; that he was of sound mind & memory; that they signed the same at the request of & in the presence of the testator, & of each other, that Thomas S. Harrison also signed the same at the request of testator & in his presence & in the presence of affiants.

**AAFA ACTION #47**