

Burt Alvord, Outlaw Sheriff—Part 1

By Gil Alford

I first heard of Burt Alvord several years ago when Seanne Carrigan, AAFA #335, called me from California to report having found a headstone on Boot Hill in Tombstone, AZ, with an inscription that said "Shot by Burt Alvord."

Burt is mentioned in *A Genealogy of the Descendants of Alexander Alvord, An Early Settler of Windsor, Conn., and Northampton, Mass.*, by Samuel Morgan Alvord (Webster, NY: 1908). As you will see below, it merely reported that "he is a well known character in the Southwest."

That proved to be a gross understatement. Just today, as I write this, we received a large package of "Alford papers" from Jean H. Brown, AAFA #143. Her cover letter said, "Most of this information is on Burt Alvord. It's hard to separate fact from fiction here. I was planning to write a little story on him for the AAFA newsletter, but got kind of side tracked."

I find the information most interesting—different sources have conflicting information about Burt, but all agree that he was both a lawman and an outlaw. We have too much to cover in one issue of the quarterly, so watch future issues for more. In this issue, is Burt's ancestor table or ahnentafel prepared using the data as it was published in the 1908 genealogy. Following it are two biographical articles from reference works.

Burt's Ancestry

1. Albert Wright Alvord b. Sep 11 1867, Susanville, Lassen County, California; m. in Tucson, Pima County, Arizona, Lolo Ochoa. "Albert Wright Alvord was deputy sheriff at Wilcox [sic], Ariz. Under the name of

'Burt Alvord' he is a well known character in the Southwest."

Parents

2. Charles Elbridge Alvord b. Jun 22 1826, near Brockport, Monroe County, New York; m. 1852 in Weston, Platte County, Missouri, Lucinda Jane Shields. Charles died Feb 9 1898, Willcox, Cochise County, Arizona. "Charles Elbridge Alvord went to Cal in 1852 with Ben Halliday and engaged in mining in Plumas and Lassen Cos. Later he moved to Santa Barbara and worked at the trade of harness and saddle making which he had learned of his father. He also served as judge at Santa Barbara for several years. After 1880 Mr. Alvord lived at Tombstone, Ariz."

3. Lucinda Jane Shields b. Dec 29 1832, Louisville, Jefferson County, Kentucky, d. Oct 25 1886, Tombstone, Cochise County, Arizona.

Grandparents

4. William Alvord b. Mar 22 1795, probably in Lanesboro, Berkshire County, MA; m. Orpha Maria Gould. William died July 5 1848, Brockport, Monroe County, NY.

5. Orpha Maria Gould.

Great-Grandparents

8. Daniel Alvord b. May 4 1758, Northampton, Hampshire County, MA, baptized: May 28 1758, Northampton, Hampshire County, MA, m. (1) Mar 20 1783, in Northampton, Hampshire County, MA, Susanna Judd, m. (2) Jan 17 1797, Anna Tower. Daniel died Jun 20 1847, De Ruyter, Madison County, New York.

9. Susanna Judd b. July 27 1762,

Northampton, Hampshire County, MA, d. Apr 15 1795, Worthington, Hampshire County, MA.

Great-Great-Grandparents

16. Elisha Alvord b. Mar 15 1731, Northampton, Hampshire County, MA, m. Oct 27 1757, Mary Hamilton. Elisha died Nov 23 1807, Cazenovia, Madison County, New York.

17. Mary Hamilton b. abt 1734, probably Blanford, Hampden County, MA; d. Jan 2 1794, Northampton, Hampshire County, MA.

18. William Judd.

19. Susanna Gibson.

3rd Great-Grandparents

32. Joseph Alvord b. Mar __ 1697, Northampton, Hampshire County, MA, m. July 30 1730, in Northampton, Hampshire Co., MA, Clemence Wright. Joseph died Jan 1 1786, Northampton, Hampshire County, MA. The Alvord book shows death "or Jan 9".

33. Clemence Wright b. Nov __ 1703, d. Mar 25 1777, Northampton, Hampshire County, MA.

4th Great-Grandparents

64. Ebenezer Alvord b. Dec 23 1665, Northampton, Hampshire County, MA, m. (1) 1691, in Northampton, Hampshire County, MA, Ruth Baker, m. (2) abt 1708, Elizabeth Bird. Ebenezer died Nov 29 1738, Northampton, Hampshire County, MA.

65. Ruth Baker b. May 6 1668, Northampton, Hampshire County, MA, d. Mar 4 1706, Northampton, Hampshire County, MA.

66. Ebenezer Wright.

67. Hannah Hunt.

5th Great-Grandparents

128. Alexander Alvord baptized: Oct 15 1627, Bridport, County Dorset, England, m. Oct 29 1646, in Windsor, CT, Mary Vore. Alexander died Oct 3 1687, Northampton, Hampshire Co., MA.

129. Mary Vore.

130. Joseph Baker m. Ruth Holton.

131. Ruth Holton.

6th Great-Grandparents

258. Richard Vore.

259. Ann _____.

Jay Robert Nash, *The Encyclopedia of World Crime: Criminal Justice, Criminology, and Law Enforcement, Vol. A-C* (Wilmette, IL: CrimeBooks, Inc., 1990), pp. 107-108.

Alvord, Burton, 1866-c.1910, U.S., law enfor. off.-west. outl. Moving west with his father, a justice of the peace, Alvord settled in Tombstone, Ariz., where, as a teenager, he found a job as a stable hand at the O.K. Corral. Shortly after he began work there, Alvord witnessed one of the most spectacular gunfights of the Old West, the showdown shoot-out between the Earp-Holliday clan and the Clanton-McLowery outlaws, a bullet-spitting incident that would remain with him for the remainder of his days. Though he was only fifteen at the time of this legendary gun battle on Oct. 26, 1881, Alvord watched carefully as the Earps bested the outlaws by their cool composure and deliberate aim, a hallmark that was to be Alvord's adopted character when acting as a lawman or an outlaw.

At age twenty in 1886, Alvord was selected as a deputy by John Slaughter,

the newly-elected sheriff of Cochise County. Slaughter had already seen the mettle of this young man a year earlier when Alvord had been challenged by a local Tombstone tough ubiquitously named "Six-shooter Jimmy." Both men had gone for their guns and Alvord had killed his opponent with one deliberately-aimed shot. From 1886 to 1890 Alvord served as Slaughter's back-up man in many a shoot-out with outlaws, rustlers, and gunmen of all kinds. Alvord accompanied Slaughter and another deputy, Cesario Lucero, in May 1888, in a pursuit after three Mexican train robbers, tracking these men down to their camp near the Whetstone Mountains one night. The lawmen found the thieves sleeping in their blankets around a smoldering campfire and ordered them to surrender. The three bandits dove for their guns and a pitched battle took place in which one of the train robbers was shot. When he fell, the other two men meekly surrendered.

A month later, in the same area, on May 7, 1888, Alvord helped Slaughter capture three more Mexican bandits. Again, the lawmen crept up on their prey at night and caught the robbers asleep. A gun battle ensued and one of the bandits was killed, another wounded, the unharmed bandit surrendered quickly. The wounded Mexican, however, managed to escape. The following year, in February of 1889, Alvord began to slip from his role as the ramrod tough deputy. He began drinking heavily and frequently mixed with the outlaw element that drifted into Tombstone. On one occasion, Alvord got drunk with two surly cowboys named Fortino and Fuller, the threesome then in a private house near Slaughter's residence. Fuller exploded over a remark made by Fortino and seized Alvord's six-gun, shooting Fortino to death with it. The deputy was too drunk to stop Fuller at the time. When Slaughter arrived and learned of his deputy's involvement and how Alvord's own weapon was

used in a killing, the sheriff exploded, verbally chastising Alvord in front of dozens of witnesses. The deputy was put on notice; either he mended his ways or he would be an unemployed lawman.

Alvord soured on Slaughter and Tombstone following this incident and he moved to Fairbank, Ariz., in the early 1890s where he became the town constable. His drinking and cavorting with known criminals soon caused town fathers to ask for his resignation and Alvord moved on to Wilcox, Ariz., where he was made the town constable. He continued to drink heavily and most of the young outlaws labeled him a hopeless alcoholic from whom they had nothing to fear. One such gunman was Billy King, a rough-and-tumble cowboy who harassed Wilcox one day in 1898. Alvord appeared and ordered King to put up his gun and stop racing his horse up and down the main street. King gave the constable a winning smile and suggested that the two "settle matters over drinks" in the nearby saloon. Alvord and King went to the saloon and belted down a few drinks, but the cowboy grew sullen and threatening so Alvord asked him to step outside. As soon as King went through the back door of the saloon, Alvord drew his pistol and fired every bullet in his gun into King's face, killing him instantly. Burt Alvord was not a man to waste time.

By the turn of the century Alvord had given up on keeping the peace. He would rather break it and join with the outlaws he had befriended over the years. He had physically changed into a dour-faced man with a bald head and a black beard; his dark eyes were full and anger and menace. For some years he led a band of ruthless train robbers. He was arrested first in 1900 and then in 1903 when he and his sidekick, Billy Stiles, were imprisoned. Both men managed to escape after Stiles was made a trustee at the Tombstone Jail and stole the keys to the lockup,

allowing him to set Alvord free. Alvord, then much wanted, reasoned that the best way to effect a permanent escape was to play dead. He and Stiles located two corpses (they either killed two Mexicans or unearthed them from recent graves) and sent these bodies to Tombstone in sealed coffins, spreading the word that the pine boxes contained the wanted outlaws, Burt Alvord and Billy Stiles. The ruse failed, however, when suspicious lawmen broke open the coffins and found the ripening bodies of the Mexicans.

Arizona rangers set off in grim pursuit of Alvord and Stiles, locating the pair at their secret camp [in Mexico]. The rangers ignored international law and crossed the border into Mexico to confront the two bad men. Both Alvord and Stiles went for their guns and both were wounded in the battle, Alvord shot twice in the leg, Stiles in the arm. Alvord was immobilized and could not reach his horse while Stiles managed to get into the saddle and ride wildly out of the trap, escaping. The rangers took Alvord into custody and he was sent to the Arizona prison at Yuma, serving two years for robbery. He was released in 1906 and decided that he would leave the American west forever, seeking his fortune in Central America. He was later reported to be in Venezuela and Honduras and, as late as 1910, the year he was presumed to have died, seen working as a canal employee in Panama.

Carl Sifakis, *The Encyclopedia of American Crime* (New York, NY: Facts on File, Inc., 1982), p. 18.

ALVORD, Burt (1866-1910?):
Lawman and outlaw

A notorious law officer turned bad, Burt Alvord seems to have enjoyed long simultaneous careers as a lawman and bandit. The son of a roving justice of the peace, Alvord was a youth in Tombstone during the time of the

vaunted gunfight at the O.K. Corral. Although only 15, he was astute enough to spot one of the underlying motives for the battle—control of the county sheriff's office, with the special duty of collecting taxes, which might or might not be turned over to the treasury.

When the celebrated lawman John Slaughter was elected sheriff of Cochise County in 1886, Alvord, who was 20 at the time, became his chief deputy and began building a solid reputation as an enforcer of the law, tracing down numerous rustlers and other thieves. There is little doubt, however, that during the same period he was also an outlaw. In time, Slaughter, an honest man, became disenchanted with his deputy. Yet when the sheriff retired from his post in 1890, no crimes had been pinned on Alvord. In the mid-1890's Alvord switched from wearing a badge to rustling cattle in Mexico. But by 1899 he was a constable in Willcox, Arizona Territory despite some murders under his belt. Here Alvord teamed up with Billie Stiles to pull off a number of train robberies and other holdups. The entire Alvord-Stiles gang was captured after a train robbery near Cochise in September 1899, but they escaped from jail and went back in business. Alvord and Stiles were caught again in 1903 but once more broke free. After that, Alvord tried to fake their deaths, even sending coffins allegedly carrying their remains to Tombstone. The trick failed, and the law kept hunting for the two outlaw chiefs. Finally, the Arizona Rangers swept into Mexico in 1904 and cornered Alvord.... Alvord was wounded and brought back to Arizona. This time he spent two years in prison. Thereafter, Alvord's record becomes murky. He was spotted, according to various stories, all over Latin America and even in Jamaica. When a canal worker in Panama died in 1910, he was said to be Alvord, but the identification was not conclusive. ♦

(Greene Co. Obits, cont. from p. 17)

Mrs. Josie E. Cox, 87, a former resident of Buffalo, will be at 2 p.m. Saturday in Montgomery Chapel here. Burial will be in Hope Cemetery north of Buffalo.

Mrs. Cox died of natural causes at 4 p.m. Wednesday in her Little Rock AR home.

Survivors include two sons, Elmer, of 808 Westview, Springfield, and Willard (Short) of Santa Paula CA; two daughters, Mrs. Dorothy Dees of Little Rock, and Mrs. Beula Moore of Santa Paula CA; two brothers, Clint Alford of Des Moines, and Tommy of Springfield; a sister Mrs. Cecil Svoboda of St. Louis; and seven grandchildren.

AAFA NOTES: Josie Alford was a daughter of Thomas Richard and Rena Cook Alford of the Dallas County family. She married Earn Cox in 1903 and had the children named above.

VERNA L. DELZELL ALFORD

Tuesday, August 19, 1975

Mrs. Verna L. Alford, 81, 2248 North Rogers, died Monday afternoon at Maranatha Manor after a short illness.

A lifetime resident of Springfield, Mrs. Alford was a member of the Dale Street Methodist Church.

She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Margaret Stoddard, Wichita KS; three brothers, Winnie Delzell and Doug Delzell, both of Springfield, and Jack Delzell of Rogersville; six grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Services will be at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday at Greenlawn Funeral Home. Burial will be in White Oak Cemetery in Rogersville.

AAFA NOTES: Verna was the widow of Everett Alford (of the Greene County Alfords) who died in 1973. See his obituary for more information. ♦

Burt Alvord, Outlaw Sheriff—Part 2

See Part 1 in the Fall 1996 issue, pp. 18–20, for Burt Alvord's lineage and two biographies from encyclopedias of crime. Much information is in print about Burt and his exploits. As befits a legendary character, many of the details about his life are conflicting. In the two articles that follow, you'll find him on both sides of the law.

FATAL SHOOTING

William King Killed by Constable Bert Alvord.

WILLCOX NEWS

Willcox, AZ—date unknown

Thursday afternoon William King, a cowboy in the employ of Cogswell & McNair, was shot and instantly killed by Constable Bert Alvord, whose life he had threatened. The affray occurred in an enclosure to the rear of Kasper Bauser's saloon, where the two parties had gone to adjust their differences. One bullet passed through King's head and another entered his body near the heart, either wound being sufficient, according to Dr. M.J. Nicholson's testimony, to cause death. A coroner's jury was impaneled and several persons who were thought to know something of the circumstances were examined. Two witnesses testified to having heard King threaten to kill Alvord. It was also shown that the deceased was drinking and that he had a fancied grievance against the officer. There were no witnesses to the killing, but after hearing all the evidence in the case the jury believed the act to have been justifiable and rendered a verdict to that effect.

King was a native of Texas, and aged about thirty-two years. He had worked in Southern Arizona and Northern Sonora for about eleven years as a cowboy or foreman on different ranches. He was, we are informed, one

of the crowd who supported Andy Darnell in his defiance of the local constabulary when he shot up the town last spring.

A few nights before the fatal meeting, as Constable Alvord was escorting an intoxicated man to the jail, King approached him and Alvord, apprehending interference, searched him for concealed weapons. This act, it was stated, so aroused King's hostility that he declared his intention of doing something which would render him liable to arrest so that he could have a chance to shoot the constable. The next morning while sober he was, according to the evidence, asked by the constable if he meant what he had said the night previous, and he answered in the affirmative. This being the case, it is not strange that a subsequent meeting resulted fatally.

The relatives of the deceased were notified and Friday night's train brought his brother-in-law, W.B. Foster, of Duncan, Ariz., a brother from Texas and also the bereaved mother. The party left Saturday morning with the remains.

Now don't be thinking about giving Burt a peace officer's award. Some of the other articles about Burt were published under headings like "Great Western Gunfights—Jeff Milton Vs Burt Alvord's Gang," "A Hard-Hunted Train-Robber," "Arizona Outlaws Dead," "Robin Hoods of Southern Arizona," and "Alvord, Bandit Sheriff." They wrote about him for fifty years, the stories containing conflicting dates and details. One of the tales of Burt's outlaw life was published in *Arizona Highways* magazine, February 1993. Permission to reprint was granted by the magazine and the author.

MONEY, JEWELS FROM A TRAIN HEIST LOST NEAR WILLCOX

By Leo W. Banks

The sound of the safe exploding shattered the night silence. The dynamite charge created a thunderous boom that reverberated for miles across the huge alkalai [sic] flat called Willcox Playa, setting off a frightening howl of coyotes.

It was Saturday, September 9, 1899, and Arizona's last successful train robbery was under way.

Four days later, the *Arizona Range News*, speculating on who held up the Southern Pacific Express at Cochise, 11 miles southwest of Willcox, noted that probable suspects included "haymakers, cowboys from Willcox, McGinnis and a partner of the Folsom gang, and other mysterious strangers."

But Cochise County residents were shocked when the truth was revealed. Not only were none of the four men involved in the heist strangers in Willcox, but one of them, Burt Alvord, was constable there at the time, and another, Bill Downing, held the same job in Pearce, a nearby mining town. (See *Arizona Highways*, October '92)

Alvord and Downing helped set up the robbery, but it was the other two, longtime outlaw Billy Stiles and cowpuncher Matt Burts [AAFA Note: according to another article, an alias of outlaw Thomas E. "Black Jack" Ketchum], who boarded the train at Cochise brandishing six-guns. Working quickly, the masked men uncoupled the express car and engine from the passenger cars and directed the engineer to steam ahead a half-mile to a thicket of mesquite trees.

There the robbers rigged the safe with dynamite and blew it up. According to an account in the *Tucson Citizen* in 1923, the explosion littered the ground with bags of money and boxes of jewels. "The money and jewels were placed in gunnysacks . . . [after which] the robbers spurred their horses and dashed into the mesquite," the *Citizen* reported.

When word of the robbery reached him, Constable Alvord quickly assembled a posse and set out in pursuit of the culprits. Given his complicity in the deed, the search was predestined to fail.

Alvord inspected the area of the heist, declared he'd discovered the robbers' trail, and led his posse onto Willcox Playa, exactly the wrong direction. Just how much money the robbers made off with is a matter of considerable debate.

Most accounts agree that the train, at least early in its run that night, carried the payroll for the mine workers in Pearce, an amount estimated at up to \$75,000. But some reports say rumors of an impending holdup reached the Southern Pacific, and the money was removed from the train at Willcox and hauled to Pearce by buckboard, leaving only \$2,000 to \$3,000 in the safe.

Although that theory gained some credence, word-of-mouth reports have long contended the take was indeed huge, and that part of it lies buried near Willcox waiting to be found.

But those tales took time to spread. In the days following the robbery, area residents tried to figure out who did it, while the four thieves were concerned with the doggedness of the Wells Fargo detectives looking for them.

First to be captured was Billy Stiles. Suspecting that he knew more than he was letting on, the detectives eventually extracted a confession and an agreement to testify against the others.

Burts had quit the territory, fleeing to the state of Washington. But he was found, arrested, and held for trial. Alvord was arrested in Willcox February 21, 1900, and Bill Downing was picked up about the same time in Pearce. The two were taken to jail in Tombstone.

Details of the heist, based on Stiles' testimony, were published in the *Tombstone Prospector*. Stiles said he and his cohorts had plotted the train robbery for two months. Downing's role was to supply the horses and Alvord's, to provide the powder and fuse to blow the safe, which he did by breaking into the Soto Bros. Mercantile in Willcox days before the holdup.

Stiles and Burts, who also testified for the prosecution, contended that immediately after the robbery, the loot was taken to Alvord's house and later transferred to Downing's Willcox ranch where it was hidden in a haystack.

Railroad employee Charles Adair, who was on the train the night of the heist, testified that the take was about \$3,000: \$1,700 of it in cash, \$300 in Mexican pesos, and the balance in jewelry, mostly watches. Adair said \$344 in Mexican money was left behind.

Three of the four robbers were eventually convicted.

Burts and Downing were sentenced to serve time at the Yuma Territorial Prison, but Burts was pardoned after five months by Governor Nathan O. Murphy. Downing served about seven years.

Alvord, who had broken out of the Tombstone jail, with Stiles' help, fled to Mexico where he stayed on the run for several years before being picked up by the law again. He eventually paid for his part in the train robbery with 18 months in the Yuma prison,

getting out October 9, 1905. On July 22, 1910, *The Arizona Daily Star* reported that "Alvord, a notorious outlaw . . . died of fever three months ago in Barbados, West Indies." [AAFA Note: At least one other published report says he died in Panama in 1923.]

Because of his testimony, Stiles was never tried for the crime. Some reports state he was shot dead years later in Sparks, Nevada, while working as a sheriff under the name William Larkin. But no one is certain if that story is true.

Despite the persistence of local legend about a buried cache of train loot, Mark Simmons, a Willcox businessman who has researched the case, doesn't believe the tales.

But many others have doubted the paltry \$3,000 figure given by the Southern Pacific's Adair. Among them were Arizona Ranger William Speed and W.L. Tay Cook, a Willcox resident and former speaker of the Arizona House of Representatives whom Simmons interviewed before the politician's death.

"Just about the whole town, not just Speed and Cook, believed there was a lot more than \$3,000 taken," says Simmons. "That's because it was a payroll train, and the mine at Pearce was still going great guns."

One of the stories Cook told Simmons was that Downing, after his release from prison, would pace up and down along the fence next to his ranch house, looking for the post near which he buried his cut of the loot.

No one knows if Downing ever found his stash, or whether someone else retrieved it while he was in prison. But Downing's persistence in keeping to his search convinced many in town the loot was still there.

(Continued on p. 43)

we have visited. She is an older sister of the late Eulon Alford AAFA #213 who is perhaps better known in AAFA. Haidee, AAFA #210, was inducted into the Alford Hall of Fame at the meeting in Springfield.

Mrs. Elizabeth Alford Williams—Liz proved to be a dear friend. She was AAFA #040, present among the dozen or so in the first AAFA meeting in Atlanta in 1987, and she attended every other meeting until cancer prevented it. Of course she is no longer with us.

Folks frequently ask me "why do you do this?" and when I reflect on these things and review our correspondence I'd have to respond "how could I not do it?" There are so many fond memories and real blessings among the pages in these notebooks in this basement. ♦

(Burt Alvord, cont. from p. 40)

An intriguing aside to the legend of the train robbery emerged in a 1988 story in the *Tucson Citizen* that quoted B.A. Gardener, a lifelong Willcox resident, now deceased: "I'll tell you something about Downing that nobody around here knows. Downing would take his cash from the saloon and whorehouse [the Free and Easy, which he owned in Willcox] and convert it into gold coins every day early in the morning."

But in 1908, after Ranger Speed shot and killed Downing while trying to arrest him for assaulting a saloon girl, \$212.55 was taken from the body. This caused Gardener to wonder what happened to Downing's cache of gold coins. "There's a pile of loot," Gardener told the *Citizen*, "buried someplace."

As in most tales of vanished fortunes, though, it's the location of the money that gets lost in telling.

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Texas Confederate Pensions

The Winter 1996 issue, p. 57, lists Alford's found on the Internet file of the index to Confederate Pension Application Files in the Texas State Archives. No spelling variations were found at that time, but a second search yielded one Hallford:

Claimant: Hallford, D.H.L.
Pension Number: 08625
County: Bexar

Additional information about the pension file list:

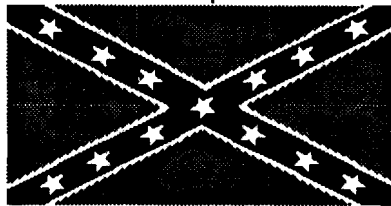
The Index provides the names, county of residence, and pension number of some 54,634 approved, rejected, and home pensions issued by the Texas government between 1899 and 1975. The listing for a widow's pension includes her husband's name as it appears on her application form. If the husband also applied for a Texas Confederate Pension, the number of that pension (or the specification "Rejected" or "Home") is noted as well.

Confederate veterans and their widows were dependent upon the generosity of the already impoverished former Confederate states for any postwar pension benefits. In awarding pensions for Confederate service, Texas, like most other southern states, confined its relief payments to veterans or their widows resident in Texas since 1880 who were disabled or indigent.

Therefore, the index of applicants for Confederate pensions in no way represents a complete roster of Texas residents who had fought for the Confederacy. If you do not immediately find the name you are researching it might be because the person did not

submit an application for a pension.

The application forms and their attached records and correspondence are on file in the State Archives Division of the Texas State Library. [See Winter 1996 issue for ordering info.] To obtain an approved pension, give the applicant's name and pension number. If the Index lists the pension application as a Rejected or a Home pension, give the applicant's full name as it appears in the index, the county of residence, and "Rejected" or "Home," whichever is appropriate.



Each file will vary in number of pages and content; therefore, the State Archives staff will copy each complete file requested and bill you for the total

number of pages reproduced.

The State Archives Division has a number of other Civil War-related records that might give additional information about a Confederate veteran or his family. These records include the Confederate Home Roster, the Confederate Muster Roll Abstract Cards, Confederate Service Records, and the Confederate Indigent Families Lists. While these records are all available for on-site use by patrons, researchers may request staff searches of any of these resources by mail, phone, or E-mail.

AAFA NOTE: If one of the people on the list is your ancestor, please try to obtain a copy of the pension file and send AAFA a copy for our files. If you haven't already sent whatever other information you have about your ancestor, please submit that as well. We'll publish further information about these Civil War veterans as we accumulate information about them. ♦

Burt Alvord, Outlaw Sheriff—Part 3

See Part 1 in the Fall 1996 issue, pp. 18–20, for Burt Alvord's lineage and two biographies from encyclopedias of crime. Much information is in print about Burt and his exploits. As befits a legendary character, many of the details about his life are conflicting. In Part 2, Winter 1997, you'll find two articles that present his life on both sides of the law. In this issue, we're printing excerpts about Burt from two books about the old West.

Ball, Larry D. *DESERT LAWMEN, THE HIGH SHERIFFS OF NEW MEXICO AND ARIZONA, 1846-1912*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1992.

Chapter 2, p. 31

These frontier sheriffs were also compelled to deputize men with shadowy backgrounds or persons known to be associates of badmen. To fight fire with fire was a not uncommon tactic of other law enforcement agencies....

Elsewhere, in Cochise County, Arizona, Sheriff John Slaughter deputized Burt Alvord, whom many citizens regarded as a saloon bum. Slaughter may have desired an entre into the underworld that thrived in the local bars.

FOOTNOTE: From pp. 228-229 of Allen J. Erwin's *The Southwest of John H. Slaughter, 1841-1922: Pioneer Cattleman and Trail-Driver of Texas, The Pecos, and Arizona and Sheriff of Tombstone* (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark, 1965).

Chapter 9, pp. 193-194

The prospect of having to kill a person during an arrest always loomed large. John Slaughter, sheriff of Cochise County, Arizona, cautioned

his deputies about arresting a "bad sort."

"I'd advise you to fire first and then yell, 'throw up your hands,'" said the noted manhunter....

"One historian asserts that Western lawmen did not worry about public censure when they killed a suspect. Frontier juries "almost invariably" ruled in favor of them or accepted the lawman's plea of justifiable homicide.

A Cochise County coroner's jury accorded Sheriff John Slaughter a clean bill in the death of two train robbers. Slaughter, Deputy Burt Alvord, and two possemen caught them asleep in the Whetstone Mountains on the morning of 7 June 1888. In frank, if colorful, language, Slaughter related this engagement to the jury:

"This morning, after daylight, I crawled up to within 50 yards of [the band] ... and asked them if they would surrender. They answered with their guns.... Just at this time, one of the men fired a shot, and knocked the bark off the tree close to my ear. Just about that time, I shot him. About a second afterwards, [a second man] jumped with a six-shooter in his hand and I said, 'Burt [Deputy Alvord], there is another Son-of-a-bitch,' and I shot him. Just after that this man Manuel [Robles who evidently escaped] ran down the Canyon, ... and I said, 'Burt, there is another Son-of-a-bitch. Shoot him!' and I shot him...."

Slaughter's biographer notes that the sheriff "seldom waited for the other party to make the first move."

FOOTNOTE: Same source as previous footnote, pages 214-217.

Chapter 14, p. 293: "The Shrievalty Enters the Twentieth Century"

Advancement in communications promoted the efficiency of the sheriffs and other law enforcers. The telephone possessed much potential. The United States Army introduced the first Bell

devices into Arizona in 1878.... By the turn of the century, conversations were possible between the larger towns of Arizona....

Only a year later [1901], telephones in the border towns of Douglas and Naco were employed to coordinate with Mexican police in the pursuit of the Burt Alvord band of train robbers.

FOOTNOTE: *Arizona Republican*, 30 March, 2 April and 17 November 1901.

Patterson, Richard. *HISTORICAL ATLAS OF THE OUTLAW WEST*. Boulder, CO: Johnson Books, 1985.

In the section titled "Arizona," p. 4, with towns or locations as subdivisions

Fairbank [Cochise County] is not much to look at today, but at the turn of the century it was an important stop on the railroad to Mexico and a stage terminal for mail and express....

The most exciting day Fairbank ever experienced was February 15, 1900, the day of the attempt to rob a Wells Fargo express car. Most western train robberies occurred on a lonely stretch of track, usually far enough outside the nearest town to give the robbers plenty of time to raid the express car or the passenger coaches and disappear over the nearest ridge. The robbery attempt at Fairbank was unique in that it took place at the depot in the midst of a crowd.

The holdup was planned by the notorious Burt Alvord and his gunhappy henchman, Bill Stiles. At the time both were peace officers at Wilcox, Arizona.

To carry out the affair, Alvord called on local hard cases "Three fingered Jack" Dunlap, George and Louis Owens, Bravo Juan Yoas, and a man named Bob Brown. The plan was to hit the Wells Fargo car just as it was unloading at the station, using innocent

bystanders as shields. In arranging the details, Alvord and Stiles took great pains to select a night on which Wells Fargo express messenger Jeff Milton, a former lawman and Texas Ranger, was not on the run. Milton was an experienced gunfighter, and the outlaws did not want to have to contend with him. But as luck would have it, Milton substituted for another messenger that night, and when the train pulled in around dark, there he was at the door of the car, ready to hand out packages.

When a voice from the station platform shouted "Hands up!" Milton thought it was a joke and continued with his work. But the next command was "Throw up your hands and come out of there," and a shot knocked off Milton's hat. Jeff had left his pistol on his desk inside the car. His sawed-off shotgun was within reach beside the door, but he could not use it for fear of hitting bystanders. The bandits' next shots struck Jeff in the left arm,

knocking him to the floor of the car. His attackers, thinking he was finished, rushed the door. But Milton now had his shotgun, and he put eleven pellets into the belly of the first robber, Jack Dunlap. A twelfth pellet hit Bravo Juan Yoas, taking the fight out of him and sending him on his way to find his horse.

The three remaining attackers riddled the interior of the car with their Winchesters. Inside, Milton, although weak from loss of blood, pulled the keys to the safe from his pocket and threw them into a corner behind some packages. Then he passed out. The bandits, unable to find the keys and not prepared to force the safe, put their wounded comrade on his horse and galloped off.

FOOTNOTES: From pp 302-308. of J. Evetts Haley's *Jeff Milton: A Good Man with a Gun* (Norman OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1948); and pp 100-107 of Lambert Florin's

Ghost Towns of the West (Seattle, WA: Superior Publishing Company, 1970).

AAFA NOTE: J. Evetts Haley's grandmother was a sister of Richard Ervin Alford, the great-grandfather of D.L. Alford, AAFA #54 and former member of the AAFA Board of Directors.

1860 Census

Burt (Albert) was born in 1867; his family appears in the 1860 CA census in Plumas County, CA:

Rich Bar Township, Mead Valley P.O. Page 929, Dwelling 511, Family 510

Charles ALVOID	33	M	Miner	NY
Lucy J.	28	F		KY
Mary E.	7	F		CA
Wm. E.	4	M		CA



(The President's Piece, cont. from p. 2)

Sometime during the three days the board of directors will slip in a meeting. Usually the main one is on Friday evening after the reception and then another short one during the break on Saturday morning, after the new board is elected, for them to vote on officers.

Saturday afternoon we have the Alford family forum and talk about "Alford" history and concentrate on the "Alford" ancestry of those present, with slides showing how the attendees relate to each other. Some folks say that this is the real "heart" of the meeting. Don't worry if you're bashful because you won't be called on to make a presentation—unless you want to. There are enough of us who are "gabby" to more than fill the time.

The dinner on Saturday night is really a banquet—if you can have a buffet at a banquet—with lots of good food and a little talking after it's over. The food is always better and more plentiful than most banquets I've been to, and the talking is more fun and shorter.

Sunday morning there is a very informal session with no presentations. I will bring all of the "dead Alford books" I have in the basement that will fit into our van. It really is a mini-library. They will be available in a "research room" throughout the meeting but there will be "helpers" present

on Sunday morning. We are going to dispense with the refreshment break on this informal Sunday morning—those who want coffee can break whenever they like.

At noon on Sunday the official part is over. We sometimes have folks who have arranged for tours following the meeting, or some just get together on their own and see things.

We do have to charge a fee for each of the sessions to defray the cost of the refreshments and to cover a small administrative expense. It has always been the policy that the general membership would not have to pay for part of a meeting that was enjoyed by only a fraction of the membership. Those who participate pay all the costs. The fees for each meeting are set to try to break even. We have come very close every year but last year had a slight overage and offered refunds to those who desired one. (As far as I know no one claimed one, so the money stayed in the treasury.)

The folks that do this are not quite perfect so there may be something that you feel ought to be added, changed or dropped. We would like to hear from you on that—or if you have any questions at all.

If you can possibly make it to the California meeting—or the one next year in Paducah, KY—I promise you will enjoy it. You'll want to come back again and again. ♦