

PRESIDENT'S PRECEPT

GREETINGS COUSINS! THIS IS THE CAPTAIN SPEAKING!

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Welcome aboard to the new members since our last newsletter. What took you so long? For all members, draw up a chair. And you shall hear more about Alford's, far and near (apologies to Long fellow). That is, if the ambitious plans of our Association for nationwide Alford research begin to bear fruit.

You will remember that at our first annual meeting in Atlanta last October, we reached a consensus that the focus of our Association in 1989 would be two-fold: build our membership base and pool our efforts in Alford research. Increase in membership is coming along nicely but could be better. Encourage your kinfolks to join and tell your cousins how they can stand taller if they know where they came from. Be generous with gift memberships. About Alford fever! Catch it!

But our Alford research has not progressed as much as our membership drive. While a lot of progress had been made, it has largely been by way of gearing up for research. One of the things which has become apparent is the need to split off the job of Association Genealogist from that of Historian. We are in the process of doing that now. More on this later. We may combine the job of Librarian with that of Historian.

Meanwhile, a comprehensive research resource questionnaire has been prepared and will be sent out soon to all members to find out what research talent we have, what records members may have in their possession now, what research facilities members may have access to and if members are willing to do research for AAFA.

Another questionnaire will attempt to identify potential project officers for such categories as census, marriage, military, wills and estate records, etc. I trust you will all answer these questionnaires to the best of your abilities. And for those whose only contribution will be a donation, please do so.

Elsewhere in this newsletter is an obituary of a magnificent Alford Rear Admiral John Morris Alford II, US Navy Retired. I first knew him when I entered the U.S. Naval Academy in 1934. He was two years ahead of me and had already acquired a reputation which stayed with him the rest of his career. He was smart and a "Star" man at USNA (equivalent to Phi Beta Kappa) and in his senior year was the Five Striper (top midshipman of the regiment). In the Fleet he was efficient, tough (some would say mean), strict (some would say martinet). But personally and privately he was a warm, cordial individual, a good shipmate. It was a high honor to have known him. While living he was the senior Alford in the Navy. Now that distinction has passed to me and everybody now has to do as I say. You hear!

Now, about the myth that Alford's have similar attractive physical characteristics, listen to this.

One of my Alford nephews in Jacksonville, Florida, recently went to a farmers market and at a fruit stall behind the counter, was a little lady he had never seen before. She looked at him in a rather funny way and he looked at her the same way. Then she said, "You have got to be an Alford." She was An Alford too, and he is trying to find out more about this family we had not known. Put this down in the "Gee whiz" and "Believe it or not" categories. Can you top that?

\Lodwick H. Alford
AAFA President