

# Clarence L. Alford Collection

## Collection Summary:

**Title:** Clarence L. Alford Collection

**Summary:** A collection of correspondence, military records, photographs, post cards, and travel guides and documents ranging from 1913 to 1951. Bulk dates: 1918-1919.

**Physical Description:** 5 full Hollinger boxes, 1 small box of post cards; 2.1 linear feet.

**Language:** English (bulk), French

**Stack Location:** Section 12, Shelf 13

**Repository:** Metropolitan Government Archives of Nashville-Davidson County, 615 Church Street, Nashville, TN 37219

## Historical/Biographical Note:

Clarence L. Alford (1896-1975) was born in Nashville, Tennessee on 27 June 1896. Alford graduated from Hume-Fogg High School in 1913. In 1914, Alford began working as a clerk for Abb Landis in the Independent Life Building. Alford enlisted with the National Guard of Tennessee on 24 November 1917. He then attempted to join the United States Marines, but he was turned down due to his poor eyesight. As Alford was still eager to serve in some capacity, Abb Landis helped Alford secure a position in the military. After arriving in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia in June 1918, Alford was assigned to Supply Company #323 in Camp Johnston. He and his Company embarked for France on 14 August 1918.

Alford and Supply Company #323 arrived in Brest, France on 26 August 1918. His company was then stationed in the town of Chateau du Loir where they erected barracks and other facilities. In September, Alford was transferred to the Military Justice Hospital Group operating outside the town of Toul. There, Alford worked in a finance office as a payroll clerk. His job involved determining the pay for the doctors, nurses, and ever-rotating sick or injured servicemen in the hospital group. Alford celebrated the signing of the armistice in Toul, but he remained working in the finance office until April 1919. Alford was then transferred to the town of Neufchateau where he continued to work as a payroll clerk. Alford was relieved 6 June, 1919, and left France through Marseilles.

After the war, Alford returned to work for Abb Landis. Alford married Marie Hall on 25, December 1930. In 1964, he began work as an actuary in the Third National Bank Building. Alford died in Nashville of a stroke on 1 January 1975, at the age of 78. He was survived by his wife, Marie Hall, and his sister, Helen Alford Estes.

**Scope and Contents of the Collection:**

The Clarence L. Alford Collection, added 1984, consists of correspondence, military records, photographs, post cards, and travel guides belonging to Nashville native and World War I veteran Clarence L. Alford, and ranges from 1913 to 1951. The bulk of this collection consists of correspondence spanning from 1918-1919: Alford's years in the Army. Through his correspondence, Alford communicates a clear longing for home and communicates many of the logistical challenges that World War I servicemen faced. These challenges ranged from difficulties with infrequent and lost mail, transportation difficulties, and the frustration of not being able to secure a leave. Ominously, Alford also predicted that the uneasy peace negotiated after World War I would not last. He makes explicit his frustration with the League of Nations and his belief that the United States will have a war with Japan. Alford also collected many postcards dating from before and during World War I. Alford also collected a great deal of general correspondence sent to him before and during his time in the service. This includes dozens of letters from Ruth Lacy Nichols – a friend and romantic interest of Alford's. The collection also includes several photographs of Alford's family and friends.

**Index Terms:****Subjects:**

Cannes, France  
Correspondence  
Hostile attitudes towards Germans  
Letters  
Military logistics  
Photographs  
Post cards  
Toul, France  
World War I

**Arrangement:**

This collection is arranged alphabetically by series.

**Contents Listing:****Box 1: Correspondence**

Folder 1: Collection and biographical information  
Folder 2: Correspondence – Birthday cards received – 1918  
Folder 3: Correspondence – Christmas cards received – 1915-1917  
Folder 4: Correspondence – Christmas cards received – 1918  
Folder 5: Correspondence – Christmas cards received – 1919  
Folder 6: Correspondence – Davidson County Memorial Committee – 1919-1920

Folder 7: Correspondence – Family received – June-July 1918

Folder 8: Correspondence – Family received – May-July 1919

**Box 2: Correspondence**

Folder 1: Correspondence – Family sent – June-July 1918

Folder 2: Correspondence – Family sent – August-September 1918

Folder 3: Correspondence – Family sent – October-November 1918

Folder 4: Correspondence – Family sent – December 1918

Folder 5: Correspondence – Family sent – January-February 1919

Folder 6: Correspondence – Family sent – March-June 1919

**Box 3: Correspondence**

Folder 1: Correspondence – General received – 1916

Folder 2: Correspondence – General received – 1917

Folder 3: Correspondence – General received – January-May 1918

Folder 4: Correspondence – General received – June 1918

Folder 5: Correspondence – General received – July 1918

Folder 6: Correspondence – General received – August-December 1918

Folder 7: Correspondence – General received – January-August 1919

Folder 8: Correspondence – General received – September-December 1919

Folder 9: Correspondence – General received – 1920

Folder 10: Correspondence – Miscellaneous

Folder 11: Correspondence – Post cards received – 1915-1919

Folder 12: Correspondence – Post cards sent – 1915-1919

**Box 4: Correspondence, Ephemera, Hume-Fogg High School, Military Records**

Folder 1: Correspondence – Ruth Nichols Lacy received – 1916-1917

Folder 2: Correspondence – Ruth Nichols Lacy received – 1918

Folder 3: Correspondence – Ruth Nichols Lacy received – 1919

Folder 4: Ephemera

Folder 5: Hume-Fogg High School

Folder 6: Military records – Manual of Military Training – 1917

Folder 7: Military records – Miscellaneous

Folder 8: Military records – Notebooks

**Box 5: Military Records, Newspaper Clippings, Photographs, Post Cards**

Folder 1: Military records – Orders and Bulletins – 1917-1918

Folder 2: Military records – Pamphlets

Folder 3: Military records – Passes

Folder 4: Newspaper clippings

Folder 5: Photographs – Family

Folder 6: Photographs – Friends

Folder 7: Photographs – Military Justice Hospital Group

Folder 8: Photographs – Monte Carlo & Nice  
Folder 9: Post cards – Cannes  
Folder 10: Post cards – Florida  
Folder 11: Post cards – Minnesota  
Folder 12: Post cards – New York  
Folder 13: Post cards – New Jersey  
Folder 14: Post cards – Saint-Mihiel  
Folder 15: Post cards – Strasbourg  
Folder 16: Post cards – Tanger (Tangiers)  
Folder 17: Post cards – Tennessee  
Folder 18: Post cards – Toul  
Folder 19: Post cards – Utah  
Folder 20: Royal Tour of Quebec – 1951  
Folder 21: Song Lyrics  
Folder 22: Travel guides – France  
Folder 23: Travel guides – New York

**Box Six: Post card books**

Antibes  
Long Beach, California  
Camp Gordon, Georgia  
“Camp Life”  
Canada Steamship Lines  
Cannes  
The Somme  
Texas and Mexico  
Turbie  
Toul  
Ventimiglia  
Verdun

**Restrictions:**

**Restrictions on Access:** In-library use only.

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**Administrative Information:**

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**Provenance:** Originally donated to the Tennessee Historical Society in 1984 by

Marie Hall.

**Processing Information:** Processed by Tyler Powell, July 2017

**Accruals:** No further accruals expected.