NEILL HERBERT ALFORD JR.

Neill Herbert Alford, Jr., professor emeritus of law at the University of Virginia, died Saturday, October 20, 2007, in Charlottesville. He was 88.

He was born July 13, 1919, in Greenville, S.C., the only child of the late Neill Herbert Alford Sr. and the late Elizabeth Robertson Alford.

He was a distinguished legal scholar and teacher, a loving husband, an imaginative father, a devoted grandfather, and a thoughtful son and son-in-law. He will be remembered for his integrity, unpretentious manner, keen mind, kindness and generosity, adventurous spirit, and good sense of humor.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Elizabeth Talbot Smith Alford, with whom he married on June 26, 1943, in Columbus, Ga.

He also is survived by three children, Neill H. Alford, III of Virginia Beach and his wife, Pattie; Margaret Dudley Alford Cloud of Hillsborough, N.C., and her husband, Bill; and Eli Thomas Stackhouse Alford of Raleigh, N.C., and his wife, Anne. He is also survived by three grandchildren, Diane Elizabeth Alford Croce and her husband, Andrew, of Springfield, Va.; Eli T.S. Alford, Jr. of Alexandria, Va.; and Lindsay Talbot Alford Ramspott and her husband, Jason, of Fort Huachuca, Ariz.; and one great-grandson, Walker Merritt Ramspott.

Prof. Alford earned a B.A. in history from The Citadel in Charleston, S.C., in 1940; an LL.B. from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1947; and a J.S.D. (doctoral degree) from Yale University Law School in 1966. He was a Sterling Fellow at Yale in 1950-51 and a Ford Fellow at the University of Wisconsin in 1958.

He joined the University of Virginia law faculty in the fall of 1947 and spent most of his career at Virginia, teaching there from 1947 to 1974 and from 1976 until his retirement in 1990. He was Doherty Foundation professor of law from 1966 to 1974 and Percy Brown Jr. professor of law from 1976 to 1990.

He was a gifted teacher whose lively law lectures were remembered vividly years later by former students. He taught courses including trusts and estates, international law, professional responsibility (ethics), legal history, tax law and insurance law.

From 1961 to 1962, he held the Chair of International Law at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, R.I.; he was a consultant for the war college from 1962 to 1968.

From 1974 to 1976, he was dean of the law school and Joseph Henry Lumpkin professor of law at the University of Georgia.

He was Lehman distinguished visiting professor of law at Washington University (St. Louis) in 1991; DrinkoBaker & Hostetler professor of law at Ohio State University in 1992; and a visiting professor at the Washington and Lee University law school in 1992.

He was a summer law teacher at George Washington University, the University of North Carolina, and the University of Alabama.

He was chairman of the board of directors of the University Press of Virginia from 1970 to 1974 and from 1987 to 1989. He also served on numerous university committees.

In 1990, he received the University of Virginia’s Raven Award in recognition of excellence in service
and contributions to the university.

At the University of Virginia, he was special counsel to the president and was legal adviser to the rector and board of visitors from 1972 to 1974. In this position, he was attorney for the university and its hospital.

He was state reporter (the editor of court opinions) for the Supreme Court of Virginia from 1977 to 1984. He was special counsel to the Virginia Code Commission from 1954 to 1957.

He was the author of a book, Modern Economic Warfare: Law and the Naval Participant (1967); and co-author of a widely used law casebook, Cases and Materials on Decedents Estates and Trusts (Ritchie, Alford and Effland; 8th edition, 1993). He also wrote numerous legal articles for professional journals.

After he retired from teaching, he practiced law in Charlottesville from 1991 to 1997 as counsel to Slaughter & Redinger (later Woods, Rogers & Hazlegrove).

During his career, he provided thousands of hours of free legal assistance to people from all walks of life.

He was a fellow of the Virginia Bar Foundation and the American Bar Foundation. He was a member of the American Bar Association, the Virginia Bar Association, the American Law Institute, the Selden Society, the American Society for Legal History, the Selden Society, Omicron Delta Kappa, Order of the Coif, Phi Alpha Delta, the Raven Society, and the Colonnade Club.

He served on active duty in the Army as an infantry officer from 1941 to 1946. He was deployed to Europe in December 1944 with the Army's 65th Infantry Division and fought in France, Germany and Austria. He was awarded the Bronze Star and the Combat Infantry Badge for his service. After the war ended, he remained on Army duty in Europe. He oversaw displaced persons camps near Linz, Austria, being responsible at the age of 25 for the welfare of 225,000 people. Later, he was the officer in charge of the Allied military government in Berchtesgaden, Germany. He returned to the United States in March 1946 and was discharged from active duty at the rank of lieutenant colonel. He served in the Army Reserve from 1946 to 1969, commanding a civil affairs unit in Charlottesville for many years. He retired at the rank of colonel in 1969.

He loved reading, especially history. He also liked traveling and was an energetic person who walked to work and took his family on camping trips and other adventures. While in law school in 1941, he walked from Charlottesville to Scottsville one day to prepare for Army infantry duty. He liked animals and cared for dogs, cats and other creatures over the years. He never found a home or yard project that was too difficult. He was a gifted woodworker who repaired, refinished and built furniture.

The Alford family thanks David L. Morris, MD, for his compassionate care of Mr. Alford. The family also thanks the staffs of the Martha Jefferson House Infirmary and the Hospice of the Piedmont for their kindness and skillful care.

Memorial contributions may be made to The Citadel Foundation (The Citadel Foundation, The Citadel, 171 Moultrie Street, Charleston, SC 29409); to Brookgreen Gardens, a garden and wildlife preserve that Mr. Alford loved (Brookgreen Gardens, P.O. Box 3368, Pawleys Island, SC 29585); or to an organization of one's choice.

A memorial gathering will be held at a later date.
