



Virginia Alford Bray
1919-1998

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 Jan 1 1919 - Feb 24 1998
 AAFA #0437

VIRGINIA ALFORD
 BRAY
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 AAFA #437
 JEP797NC!!!!!!NC

COMMERCIAL DISPATCH
 Columbus, MS—27 Feb 1998

Virginia Alford Bray, 79, died Feb. 24, 1998, at her residence in Ft. Myers, Fla.

Services are Saturday at 11 a.m. in the Gunter and Peel Funeral Home chapel. A graveside service will be held Saturday at 2 p.m. in Houston Cemetery....

Mrs. Bray was born Jan. 1, 1919, in Thorn to the late Wattie Washington Alford and Elmer Olive Berry Alford. She was a member of Wesley United Methodist Church, a homemaker and a hospital volunteer. She was a lifetime blood donor for the American Red Cross and was preceded in death by her husband, Jack Augustus Bray, and a daughter, Jeannie Dell Bray.

Survivors include: daughter, Nancy B. Elkin of Ft. Myers, Fla. [AAFA #618]; brothers, Curtis Alford of Houston and J.W. Alford of Portersville, Calif.; sister, Geraldine Allen of Houston; two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren....

Virginia's daughter, Nancy Elkin AAFA #618, wrote this memorial to her mother:

On January 1, 1919 in the Thorn Community of Chickasaw Co., MS, the third child was born to Watty Washington Alford and Elmer Olive Berry Alford. They named her Virginia. There has always been some discrepancy as to her birthdate. When she applied for Social Security, she saw her birth certificate for the first time, with her birthdate listed as December 31, 1918. However, she always celebrated her birthday on New Year's Day.

As a child and young woman, Virginia attended the Thorn Methodist Church. A fond memory that she related was enjoying her mother's singing. She especially liked the first Sunday in August, when there was always an "all-day singing with dinner on the ground."

Even as a child, she rarely missed a family reunion. When she was a little older, she always wanted to be the first one at the reunion and the last one to leave. She attended several of AAFA's annual meetings. Her ancestry can be traced back to Jephtha Alford, the progenitor of the Alford families of Chickasaw County, MS.

My mother often spoke of stories from her childhood. Once she was walking home from a school when a hail storm began. She quickly took

off her coat and wrapped her school books in it—those were very important to her. During the Depression, her family lived on a farm and raised their own food, so she said she really never knew they were poor. They would gather food and take it about once a month to relatives who lived in town and were not as fortunate as they were!

She attended Houston High School, quitting school the day before graduation because her parents could not afford a white dress for the ceremony. She later received her high school diploma from Owen County High School in Owenton, KY.

Virginia married Jack Augustus "Gus" Bray on May 30, 1936 in Chickasaw County, MS. They were blessed with two daughters, Jeannie Dell Bray (11/18/1942-7/5/1954) and me, Nancy Cheryl Bray Elkin (b. 8/28/1946). Gus began his lifelong career with the Kraft Cheese Plant in May 1928 in Houston, MS. Shortly



Virginia Alford Bray, 22 Nov 1997

after their marriage he was transferred to Columbus, MS, and was with the Kraft Foods Company for 40 years when he retired. The family moved 27 times during their 47 years of marriage.

Virginia was known to her daughter, grandson, and granddaughter as a tender, loving, and caring mother and grandmother. To her siblings, other relatives, and close friends, she was lovingly known as "Mama Gin." She had a friendly, outgoing personality and made lifelong friends with each move they made. She was a marvelous homemaker and loved to make things by hand. She made so many quilts and afghans during her life that no one knows what they numbered.

She was a member of Wesley United Methodist Church, a lifetime blood donor for the American Red Cross, and a volunteer at Southwest Florida Regional Medical Center.

On February 24, 1998, my mother passed quietly away in my home in Ft. Myers, FL, of ovarian cancer. She was 79. She is also survived by her grandson, W. Michael Elkin of Indianapolis, IN, and her granddaughter, Tracie L. Angelastri of Gainesville, VA. There are three great-grandsons: Clayton Murphy Elkin, Charles Augustus Elkin, and Colten Michael Elkin, all of Indianapolis. Two brothers, Curtis Etoy Alford of Houston, MS, and J.W. Alford of Portersville, CA, and one sister, Margaret Geraldine Allen of Houston, MS, also survive. She was preceded in death by her daughter Jeannie Dell, her parents Watt and Ollie Alford, and two sisters, Georgia Olline Alford Lawson (8/25/1927-8/21/1987) and Mary Ethel Alford Wimberley (11/21/1911-11/18/1995).

A celebration of Virginia's life was held in the Gunter-Peel Funeral Home, Columbus, MS on February 28, 1998, with burial in the Houston Cemetery in MS, next to her husband and daughter.

ALFORD ANCESTORS

Parents

2. **Watty Washington Alford** born Nov 28 1891, Chickasaw Co., MS, married **Elmer Olive Berry**.

Grandparents

4. **Oscar S."Bud" Alford** born Jan 29 1867, AL, married **Sarah Frances Griffin**, born Aug 9 1875, GA, died Nov 12 1953. Oscar died Aug 3 1947.

Great-Grandparents

8. **George Washington Alford** born Feb 22 1840, GA, occupation farmer, blacksmith, married **Mar 22 1860, in Carroll Co., GA, Sarah Frances Irwin**, born Jun 23 1846, died 1923, Elzey, Calhoun Co., MS. George died 1925, Elzey, Calhoun Co., MS. Both buried: Elzey Cemetery, MS.

In his early life he lived in SC. He served in Co. F., 19th Georgia Infantry, CSA. He was wounded and captured. His family moved from AL to Chickasaw Co., MS in 1879.

Great-Great-Grandparents

16. **James Richard Alford** born about 1821, GA, married (1) **Jane Piper**, born about 1820, GA, married (2) Jun 16 1866, in Carroll Co., GA, **Martha Williams**, born Feb __ 1830, GA. James died after 1866. Both buried: Bowdon, Carroll Co., GA.

3rd Great-Grandparents

32. **Jeptha Alford** born about 1797, NC [from 1850 Carroll County, GA census] married (1) Jul 30 1820, in Jones Co., GA, **Jane Scoggins**, born about 1804, GA, died before 1855 [assume she died before Jeptha's 2nd marriage]. Jeptha died 1869, GA. See *AAFA ACTION* Summer 1997, p. 38 for more on Jeptha.

Jeptha married (2) Dec 28 1855, in Carroll Co., GA, **Nancy Williams**, born about 1824, NC. ♦

