

MEMORIAL TO

\* FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

ALEX F. SMITH, JR.

\* CADDO PARISH, LOUISIANA

MAY IT PLEASE THE COURT:

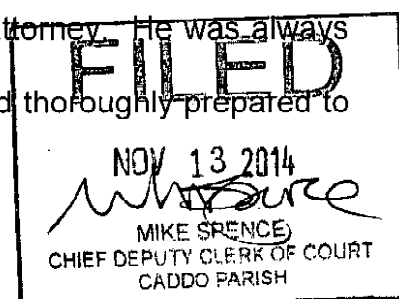
As I stand before the court, my colleagues, family members and friends, it is an honor and a privilege to speak on behalf of Alex F. Smith, Jr.

Alex was born in Shreveport on December 18, 1924 to Alex and Sally Smith. He died in Shreveport on March 12, 2014. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Betty, and his children, Alexis, Byron, and Dan, who lovingly carry on his name and family legacy. Alex is also survived by all of the current and former partners, associates, and staff of Mayer, Smith & Roberts, who proudly carry on his professional name and legal legacy.

Alex served our country in the Navy in WW II. Alex was a graduate of LSU Law School and a founding member of Mayer, Smith & Roberts, where he worked for 40 years, and where I began in 1980 and am proudly still a member. He retired "cold turkey" in 1989 never to return to the legal grindstone, and because of that, was the envy of many in this room. He was a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church. His avocation was that of a "die hard" Dallas Cowboys fan.

I first met Alex in 1979 during my interview with Mayer, Smith & Roberts. I knew nothing of the firm, but when offered a job, I asked local lawyer, and long-time family friend, Harry Nelson, about Mayer, Smith & Roberts. Harry's response was simply that Mayer, Smith & Roberts was "top drawer." I was thrilled to have been offered a job at Mayer, Smith & Roberts (then located at 307 Wall Street), with Alex as my mentor. My law school classmates were equally thrilled that I was working with a lawyer at a "Wall Street firm," until they learned it was Wall Street in Shreveport, halfway between a soft drink bottling plant and a funeral home. However, in Alex, they could not have found a better man in all of Manhattan.

Alex's legal legacy is that of a personal injury defense attorney. He was always thoroughly knowledgeable of the issues in a particular case and thoroughly prepared to



present his client's position, all the while insuring that the trier of fact was able to decide the case with the benefit of all the relevant information. He was the embodiment of what is noble and honorable about the legal profession. Alex epitomized what a lawyer and a leader should be, as he led by the example of his work and the manner in which he conducted his life. He never had to tell you what he was about, you could see it for yourself. Alex believed that to maintain integrity and consistency leads to an abundant and fulfilling life. He earned the respect of those who knew him and inspired others to follow his lead.

He lived his professional, family and religious life by a law that comes from a higher authority than any legislative body: Treat others as you would want to be treated. He was a zealous advocate for his client's position while treating the judiciary, his opposing attorney and opposing litigant with respect. He was faithful to the law, without cheating on its spirit.

In our families, I hope we have all been blessed with exemplary parents to guide our lives. In my profession, in Alex, I was blessed with a professional parent to similarly guide me, to teach me about law and to teach me about life. And since I later became a partner with my professional parent, it seems as though there are many fitting words beginning with the letter "p" to describe Alex's traits:

- professional
- prepared
- persuasive
- pleasant
- patient
- precise
- positive
- prudent

However, I could pick any letter in the alphabet, and list a similar number of traits to describe Alex.

Though there are many, several examples epitomize how Alex lived his professional life. He would always tell me to conduct myself professionally at all times, as someone is always watching how you handle yourself, or in sports terms, "every play is a tryout." In a medical malpractice case, Alex was representing one of several defendants, who were adverse to each other. When the case was over, one of the defendants who had been adverse to Alex's client, was so impressed with the skilled and professional way Alex handled his client's part of the case, that they immediately retained Alex to represent them in future cases. They remain a client of ours today.

The highlight of my legal career was working with Alex in representing Bruce Smith (defensive lineman for Virginia Tech) to gain his eligibility for the 1984 Independence Bowl. Right before we entered the judge's chambers for the hearing, Alex's precise sense of detail caused him to put a small souvenir American flag in Bruce's front jacket pocket. Though we felt the law and facts were clearly on our side, a little subtle patriotic persuasion certainly did not hurt. Bruce was granted his eligibility for that game and later went on to be the #1 overall pick in the NFL draft, and the NFL career leader in sacks. Alex brought that level of fully prepared, no-stone-unturned representation to all of his clients, even if they did not play in the NFL.

There can be no higher honor than to be respected by your peers. Paraphrasing a line from the old western song best describes what fellow lawyers thought of Alex, "never was heard a disparaging word." Though his professional honors were numerous, he was most proud of receiving one of our highest professional honors – an invitation to membership in the American College of Trial Lawyers. Membership in this organization is limited to one percent of all the lawyers in Louisiana. Alex was the *crème de la crème* of the Shreveport bar.

As one who dealt in facts, Alex's example as a lawyer paid respect to the fact that we are all subject to laws, and with all due respect, to a Judge far greater than those found on Earth. It is as if the "Lawyers Prayer," invoking St. Thomas More as the patron saint of lawyers, was written of Alex's legal life:

*Pray that, for the glory of God and in the pursuit of His justice, I may be trustworthy with confidences, keen in study, accurate in analysis, correct in conclusion, able in argument, loyal to clients, honest with all, courteous to adversaries, ever attentive to conscience. Sit with me at my desk and listen with me to my clients' tales. Read with me in my library and stand always beside me so that today I shall not, to win a point, lose my soul.*

To his family, who only knew him as "dad" or "grandpa," and to the lawyers who did not know him at all, the manner in which he conducted his professional life served as a shining example to the members of his firm, to the members of his profession, and to all with whom he came in contact. As Alex, and lawyers of his era, leave us, we hear how we are losing our greatest generation. But that does not mean that we have to lose all for which they stood. All lawyers, especially the newly christened, should follow the ideals of Alex Smith so that our profession will continue to reflect his sterling service. It would be a tremendous disservice to Alex's memory for his example to not be emulated.

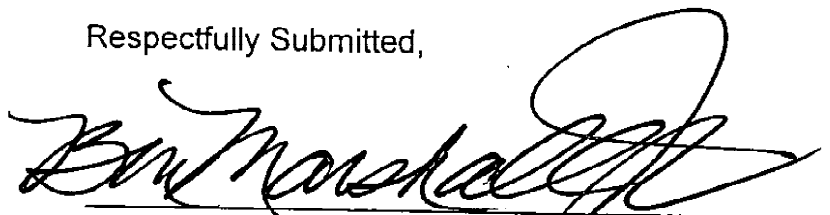
Sadly, his portrait now hangs on our wall, but happily, his influence still guides us all.

Alex F. Smith, Jr. – top drawer.

Your Honor, we move that this memorial be duly recorded and made a part of the permanent record of the First Judicial District Court and that copies be presented to Alex's family and forwarded to the Louisiana Supreme Court for further recordation.

THUS DONE AND SIGNED on this 13th day of November, 2014.

Respectfully Submitted,



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