

CMDR. ALMY PARTICIPATES IN RHODE ISLAND CELEBRATION

The destroyer Edson, based in Newport, RI, and commanded by Cmdr. Gideon W. Almy, III, helped celebrate Rhode Island's 350th anniversary and the Navy's 211th birthday in October 1986. The destroyer steamed into Providence and fired a 19-gun salute which was returned by the RI National Guard. The destroyer stayed in Providence over the weekend and was open for inspection.

To the right is a picture of Cmdr. Almy (1408-3832-422) that appeared in the Newport (R.I.) Daily News of Friday, October 17, 1986. Gideon is a native of Newport, and is a veteran of more than 30 years of service. Announcement of the Change of Command Ceremony in which Gideon took command of the USS Edson DD946 was on page 2 of the last Newsletter (No. 48, October 1986).



(Newspaper articles and pictures were furnished by Mildred Almy (1233-5147-53W) of Middletown, RI, widow of Robert T. Almy.)

Patricia Gear/Daily News
CMDR. Gideon W. Almy III, Edson's commanding officer, is Newport native.

L. WESLEY ALMY (1408-6524-11)

Reverend L. Wesley Almy, 93, of Santa Fe, NM, died there, 5 October 1986. Wes was born 7 April 1893 in Aurora, IL, the son of Lemuel Canfield and Jessie (Thomson) Almy. He married Ruth Margaret Brownell on 19 June 1923 in Chicago, IL. They had two children; Jean Esther and Richard James. Besides his wife and two children, he leaves five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

I started corresponding with Wes back in 1973 when he wrote my father congratulating him on his 100th birthday. During this period of time my wife and I have enjoyed Ruth and Wes' Christmas letters which they title The Almy Almynac (see page 1 of Newsletter No. 33, January 1983). I tell about Wes and Ruth on page 1 of Newsletter No. 37, January 1984, and their 60th wedding anniversary (with their picture).

I will miss Wes as will his family and many friends.

A SIMMONSVILLE SAGA

By Richard R. Almy, Sr. (1233-5143-242)
of Front Royal, Virginia

(This article appeared in serial form in the Providence Journal-Bulletin Newspaper, starting in the issue of December 11, 1985. I have permission from both Richard and the newspaper to run his article in the Almy Family Newsletters. This is the second installment, continued from page 4, Issue No. 48, October 1986.)

When I was six years old it became time for me to attend school. For some reason my mother decided I was too young to be exposed to the danger of the first grade even though I was then nearing seven years of age. When I started the following year I was a year behind. The school was a four room structure of no particular note. The only thing I remember about going there was the name of my teacher, one Miss Graham, who seemed reasonable enough. The school was located on a hill near the residence of the Chief of Police of the town of Johnston. His son was one of my school chums. Several years after I started school the school house burned down in a mysterious fire. We then transferred to a hastily rented building with two large rooms and several smaller ones. The only thing I remember about this place was that the teachers allowed my dog Towser (a large Newfoundland and Collie crossbreed) to attend school also, and to sleep under my desk. I do not know if he absorbed any knowledge as a result of this exposure. This building was not large enough to take care of the eighth grade which was then transferred to the Thornton School. This was a much larger school building in the village of Thornton which housed the Town Clerk's Office and had two large woolen mills, the Pocassett and the Victoria. It seemed as if I had attended this school for only a few months when it too caught fire and burned to the ground. I guess arson was not suspected as no one in my class was questioned to my knowledge. Anyway, I then went to the eighth grade in the Cranston school nearby.

The main street in Thornton was the dividing line between Johnston and Cranston and the Cranston people were very generous in accepting so many non-residents. I finally graduated in 1919. The nearest high schools were in Providence and my parents arranged for me to go to Technical High there where I enrolled in a college preparatory course. This course was very enjoyable to me as it did not include any Latin and Greek, but had crafts instead. These were carpentry, art metal (jewelry), modeling (sculpture), blacksmith (ironwork), woodturning, and machine shop. In addition to the usual math, languages (English and French), we had organic chemistry and inorganic chemistry. I remember the instructors in these two subjects were in disagreement about the toxic danger of hydrogen sulfide gas (H_2S) which was present in the laboratory experiments. One said it was deadly and the other said it was harmless. I later learned that it was an extremely dangerous gas when two employees of the American Viscose Corporation in Front Royal, Virginia, died while working in a tank when they were exposed to 600 parts per million of H_2S . That settled the question.

All male students at Technical High were required to take Military Drill. This involved marching in formation once each week to the Rhode Island State Armory Building about one half mile distant from school. There we were instructed in various military formations and procedures using old Krag-Jorgenson rifles of 1898 vintage. I also became a member of the official high school rifle team which competed with other High School teams at target shooting at a local rifle range. My only athletic team membership was on the school track team where I ran in one quarter mile races with moderate success.

Traveling from home to High School could be accomplished in several ways. There was then a trolley car line which ran from Providence to Thornton and then along Atwood Ave. to a small village named Hughesdale where the tracks ended. I could either walk down the main dirt road in Simmonsville to Atwood Ave. or walk through the fields and woods along "Whistle Hill" to Thornton and ride the trolley to Providence. Walking to Thornton was pleasant during spring and fall when there was plenty of daylight. Frequently in the winter it would be dark coming home after school and sometimes a bit scary walking through the pitch black woods. I would imagine that I heard foot steps approaching from the rear, and no matter how fast I walked they persisted in keeping up (or gaining on me). I never did see anyone or anything, however, and solved the problem by using only the main road which had little or no dark woods. Incidentally the trolleyfare was five cents a ride. Sometimes, if the weather was good, and I had passed my freshman year, I would ride my bicycle all the way to High School and back. This was not my favorite means of transportation because of some steep hills. By my senior year I had saved up \$300.00 which was enough to buy a used 1920 Model T Ford pick-up. I could then travel back and forth much more quickly. In those days there were no traffic jams and parking spaces were plentiful and without meters.

Some time in the early 1900's my father had purchased a Stanley Steamer automobile. This was a two seater and was steered by a handle instead of a steering wheel. Steam was generated in a boiler by a kerosene flame. The engine had tremendous power for climbing hills and would reach speeds of 25 miles per hour or more. Most speed limits in those days were 10-15 miles per hour in built-up areas and 25 miles per hour on highways. Actually speeds were limited not by law as much as by road conditions. Some city streets were paved with cobblestones or granite paving blocks while city streets away from downtown were either dirt or gravel. Country roads were frequently one lane dirt which soon became quagmires after rain, snow or spring thaws. Cement and asphalt were practically unheard of.

When the Stanley Steamer was out grown Dad had a succession of early Buicks, Reos, Overlands, Fords and an old Cadillac. I recall many Sunday jaunts to various beaches at Naragansett Pier, Point Judith and Matunuck, all about thirty five to forty miles away. It would usually take two and one half to three hours each way assuming no flat tires. The latter were annoying problems as punctures and blowouts were frequent. The early cars had no spare tires mounted on rims for quick change. When a puncture occurred the tire and inner tube had to be removed after jacking up the wheel (this in itself was a major job on a sandy or muddy road). After a patch was applied to the tube the tube cement had to be dried for twenty to thirty minutes before returning the tube to the tire casing. Once the beach or other destination was reached a picnic lunch was usually in order. The beaches around Point Judith were particularly interesting because of several old sailing ship hulks that had wrecked during coastal storms or hurricanes. I enjoyed climbing around in these old skeletons.

In addition to the beaches, other Sunday excursions included Rocky Point Amusement Park which had fine clam bakes, the Providence Water Supply Station which had mammoth steam engines driving the pumps which supplied water to the Mains, and trips to North Falmouth on Cape Cod where my Mother's Uncle Gus had a cottage. In those days there was very little traffic. Gasoline stations were few and far between so that a full fuel tank was mandatory before starting out.

(To be continued.)

MY BUSY YEAR

This has been a busy year of travelling for my wife and I. We began the last week in February by flying out to Oregon to spend two weeks with our son Tom and family. In May we were in Norfolk, Virginia, for a weekend to attend a Society of Mayflower Descendants meeting. Then later that month we drove to Florida to visit relatives and enjoy Disney's EPCOT Center again.

In June our son Tom visited us the first weekend. The second weekend we travelled to Columbus, Ohio, for our nephew's wedding. The third weekend we travelled to southern Virginia to attend Veda's family reunion. Then the fourth weekend we travelled to Rhode Island and Massachusetts for the Almy Family Reunion. In July Veda and I went on a beautiful tour of the Canadian Rockies, followed by four days at EXPO 86 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, then a fascinating 7 day cruise up the Inside Passage to Alaska and Glacier Bay.

In August we travelled to Plymouth, Massachusetts, for the Pilgrim John Howland Society annual meeting (I am the Treasurer). In September we went to Capon Springs, West Virginia, for a church retreat; then in October to Williamsburg, Virginia, for a church conference. In November we drove to Miami, Florida; left our car with friends there; and flew to Freeport, Grand Bahama Island, for two weeks in our time-share apartment.

In between all these trips I have tried to keep up with my genealogical correspondence. If I have failed to recognize what you have written or to answer your letters, please forgive me.

MILDRED ALMY (PARKER) YOUNT (1233-5143-311)

Mrs. Barton K. Yount, 94, of Washington, DC, died at the Army Distaff Hall in Washington on 24 February 1986. Mildred was born on 10 May 1891 at Fort Washakie, WY, the daughter of Montgomery Davis and Lizabeth Emily (Almy) Parker. She married Barton Kyle Yount 29 July 1914 in Princeton, IL. Barton retired as a Lieutenant General in the United States Air Force and had quite an illustrious military career. They had one son, Barton K. Yount, Jr. who died 25 February 1969 in Spain. Mildred's remains were laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery next to her husband and son.

UNTHANK/ONTHANK CONNECTION WITH ALMY FAMILY

I hope to put some interesting information in a future Newsletter on the Unthank/Onthank connection with the Almy Family. I need more time than I have at present to put the information together.

ANYONE HAVE BASEBALL CARDS?

I have been informed that Philip B. Almy (1408-3833-1133) was injured in a motorcycle accident on 16 June 1984 and is paralyzed from the neck down. His main interest is his baseball card collection and he would be most appreciative if any Almys would send him some. His address is 36 Townsend St., Apt. 203; Augusta, ME 04330.

PHILIP B. WILBUR (1407-1C43-11)

Philip Brownell Wilbur, 70, Little Compton's Town Clerk for 41 years and a respected official who dedicated most of his life to public service, died on election day, 4 November 1986, as voters once again re-elected him at the polls. Philip was named deputy town clerk for Little Compton in April 1940 and in January, 1945, at the age of 29, he was appointed town clerk of the council, filling the unexpired term of his late father, Lester E. Wilbur, who had been in office for 22 years. He was one of the youngest town clerks in Rhode Island at the time of his appointment, and retained his position in town government until his death. Philip was born in Little Compton, 14 November 1915, the son of Lester Emerson and Lillian Alice (Dunbar) Wilbur. He married in Little Compton, 25 June 1944, Jacqueline Lorraine Manchester.

Patricia Almy Forte (1407-1426-122) sent me Philip's obituary from the Fall River Herald News of November 5, 1986 and gave me his line of descent from William¹ Almy. The above write-up is from the newspaper article and Little Compton Families.

Philip's Almy line is William¹ Almy, Job², Job³, John⁴, Sanford⁵, John Edwin⁶, Harriet Levina⁷ who married Brownell Snell, Mary Louisa Snell⁸ who married Jere Bailey Wilbur, Lester Emerson Wilbur⁹, and Philip Brownell Wilbur¹⁰.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

I thank all of you that sent Christmas cards and Christmas letters this year. There are just too many for me to reciprocate, but be assured that I appreciate your greetings. The Newsletters will have to serve as my greetings to you all.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Following is a listing of those cousins who have helped defray the costs of printing and mailing the Almy Family Newsletters since the last issue was published. Many thanks to each of you.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Almy Number</u>	<u>Residence</u>
Juanita (Almy) Dalga	1232-1272-432	Arizona
Harold D. Almy	1233-4668-132	Washington
Edith (Almy) Atwell	1233-5180-33	North Carolina
Mrs. Joseph W. Woods, Jr.	1233-8618-122	Massachusetts
Constance M. Price	1235-4131-1111	Ohio
Madeleine M. Anderson	1235-4131-1113	Ohio
Mignon Almy	1407-1C74-1	Nebraska
Mrs. Israel T. Almy	1407-2512-2W	Massachusetts
Charles S. Gifford	1407-5561-22	Virginia
Mrs. Raymond G. Johnson	1408-3822-11W	Arizona
Richard E. Almy	Unknown	Florida
Paul S. Onthank		New Hampshire

Your cousin (1408-3312-112),

Merwin

Merwin F. Almy
7703 Elgar Street
Springfield, VA 22151

HAPPY NEW YEAR !!