

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, DUNTON BASSETT, LEICESTERSHIRE, ENGLAND

In the article on the English Ancestry of William Almy in the New England Historic and Genealogical Register of October 1917 (pp. 310-324) it states that our immigrant ancestor William was born, probably at Dunton Bassett or South Kilworth, co. Leicester, about 1600.

On my recent trip to England (article on next page) I went into the little church in Dunton Bassett. While there I was able to obtain some of the history of the church and I thought you would find it interesting.

Dunton Bassett was already an ancient village when the Danes came after the Battle of Edington in 878. The Saxons before them had marked its site as a good defensible position and had given it the first part of its name — the enclosure (ton) on the hill (dun) — Dunton. By 1181 the manor of Dunton Bassett belonged to Hugh, Earl of Chester; for in that year he died leaving the village to his daughter, Geva. This Geva caused the church to be built soon after 1200 AD. Of course, additions and changes were made during the succeeding centuries. The belfry has three bells dated 1619, 1621, and 1711.



Bassett, the other part of the village name, came about as follows. Bassett is a Norman nickname meaning short or low in stature. Geva, daughter of Hugh, Earl of Chester, inherited the manor of Dunton on her father's death in 1181. She married Sir Geoffrey Ridel. By him she had a daughter Matilda who married Sir Richard Bassett. This marriage augmented the already vast land holdings of that family. There was hardly a Leicestershire village where the Bassetts did not own land; and it is said that the Bassetts eventually owned about half of England.

NEWS OF ROSEMARY ALMY SNYDER (1407-1426-123)

Rosemary Almy Snyder of Spring Lake, NC, has been selected Outstanding Volunteer of 1986 for Branch F of the North Carolina Department of Correction's Division of Adult Probation and Parole. Branch F encompasses eight NC counties.

Rosemary volunteered her services to the Lillington, NC, probation office as an office and court volunteer during 1986. She worked 12 hours a week as an assistant to a probation/parole officer. Her duties included court intake work, record checks, client visits and receptionist. In addition, she worked one-on-one with an adult offender on probation by providing counseling, support and transportation as needed. Rosemary was also active in her community having performed volunteer services with the YMCA, Armed Services, and a church youth group.

Rosemary, daughter of Richard C. and Edith (Anderson) Almy, married Douglas Paul Snyder on June 8, 1985 in Warwick, RI. Douglas is presently serving in the United States Army.

VEDA AND MERWIN ALMY VACATION IN ENGLAND

From April 20 to May 11, Veda and I spent three glorious weeks in England and Wales. The weather was outstanding - the best in 40 years according to all those we talked with. We rented a beautiful little car at Heathrow Airport and spent three weeks driving on the left side of the road, although in many places in Wales the road was barely one lane wide. We stayed for two nights with Fred and Joyce Almy in Cardiff, Wales. The first evening there, we went with them to a Forester's skittles party. The next evening we went to a Forester's dinner dance in Bristol, England. We had a delightful time with Fred and Joyce and their Forester friends. To commemorate our visit, Fred had a beautiful plate specially made and presented to us at the skittles party. I will show this plate at the next Almy Reunion. It is truly beautiful and we will always treasure it -- not just for its' beauty, but also for the beautiful cousins who gave it.

After our stay with Fred and Joyce, we toured around the coast of Wales, exploring cathedrals, castles, and quaint coastal towns. From Wales we went to St. Anne's, Lancashire, where Veda participated in a church retreat. From there we went to Derby where we stayed with Jim and Lou Almy. We made a day trip with Jim, Lou, and her sister Vi, to Earl Shilton, Broughton Astley, Dunton Bassett, Leire, and other Leicestershire towns where Almeys have lived the past 500 or more years. A very interesting and enjoyable day. Leaving Jim and Lou's the next day, we travelled to Holbeach, Lincolnshire and stayed a night with Fred's brother George and his wife Doris. We had a lovely visit with them. While there the four of us went to see Stephen Almy and family who live near King's Lynn, Norfolk.

On our way South to London, we stopped to see Brian and Catherine Almy in Saffron Walden, Essex. Their daughter Nancy and Husband James Jelley also stopped by and we had an enjoyable visit with these Almeys. We also had a nice visit with Helen Burke and her mother Hilda (Almy) Burke in the London suburb of Walthamstow. In some future Newsletter I will tell about the different Almy genealogical lines in England and to which line these Almeys belong. I think all of the Almeys mentioned above are related and the common Almy ancestor was in or around Leicester between 500 and 900 years ago.

Concerning our three weeks, Veda and I have concluded that this was the most enjoyable trip we have had so far in our world-wide travels. And this is due to our many cousins with whom we visited. We thank all of you for making our trip so outstanding.

MARRIAGE OF SANDRA J. ALMY (1239-2145-2311-2)

Sandra Jean Almy, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard T. Almy of Cranston, RI, married in East Greenwich, RI, on 6 June 1987, Bruce Curtis Cooley, son of Gordon Cooley of East Greenwich and Shirley Carr of Miami, FL. Sandra's sister Cynthia was maid of honor. Bridesmaids were Dawn Cooley, sister of the bridegroom, Judith Coutu, sister of the bride, and Lisa Farrell. Sandra is an executive at Filene's in Chestnut Hill, MA, and Bruce is a city employee in Warwick, RI. They will live in Cranston, RI.

MARRIAGE OF COLBY D. LUNDGREN (1235-5773-933)

Colby Dodge Lundgren was married on May 23, 1987 at the Chapel by the Sea, Newport, RI, to Dr. Robert John Ciccone. Colby is the daughter of Raymond G. and Nancy (Almy) Lundgren of Tiverton, RI. Robert is the son of Dr. and Mrs. Vincent J. Ciccone of Alexandria, Virginia. The bride is a 1984 graduate of the University of Rhode Island and the bridegroom is a graduate of Randolph-Macon College and the Medical College of the Virginia School of Dentistry. He is a lieutenant in the U.S. Naval Reserve and they will live initially in Newport News, Virginia.

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 fourth installment, continued from page 4, Issue No. 50, April 1987.)

When I was around five or six years old my father and mother would take me camping at a naturally formed pond called Lake Moswansicut at North Scituate, RI, about six miles north of Simmonsville. It was a very pretty small lake with mostly wooded shores and few cottages at that time. We had a large wall tent with cots for sleeping. Cooking was done over open wood fires. There was good fishing at the lake and plentiful blue berry bushes near the tent site, and many quarts of berries were picked for use at home. Camp Moswansicut was pleasant enough in the day time but Camp Mosquito would have been more of an apt name at night because of the voracious insects.

I learned the basic camping procedures at this pond so that by the time I was in high school I could strike out on my own along with a couple of high school chums by the names of Jimmy Ballou and Dorrance Cook. I had my own canoe by this time and with the old reliable Ford we camped and explored at numerous other ponds and reservoirs mostly in northern Rhode Island. My dog Towser, while beginning to slow up with age, usually went along and liked to survey the scenery from the middle of the canoe. Sometimes he would spot a nearby grebe swimming around and would leap out of the canoe (nearly up-setting it) and start swimming furiously in pursuit. Grebes are small ducks that swim under water for long distances and as soon as Towser got too near they would dive under and come up out of sight which greatly mystified our hound. We couldn't take him back into the canoe without capsizing so he had to swim along in the rear until we reached a camping place. He never learned not to jump overboard.

We eventually tired of Rhode Island camping and struck out for distant Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire at which lake my father and Uncle Howard and friends camped about 1900 near Melvin Village. Our camp site was at an abandoned boys camp on Moultonboro Neck. It was very secluded with no nearby cottages. There was a good sandy beach for swimming and a fine spring. Fishing was good and we had lots of bass and other fish to eat. One year Mother, Dad, Ben Almy, III, and sister Esther came and camped nearby for several days about 1923. After I started college at Brown University in the fall of 1923, I gradually lost touch with my old camping friends Jimmy and Dorrance.

During the winters in Simmonsville the Almy children had great fun coasting down the lawns and the fairly steep road just west of our house. We had Flexible Flyer sleds and later a long "Double Runner" which was two low sleds connected by a long plank and a "steering wheel" for steering the front sled. This arrangement would seat eight or ten people and with the right road conditions we could coast down the big hill near our house, rumble across the bridge over the stream, whiz through the village, turn right towards the cider mill, turn left at this mill and end up at the old "Sucker Head" mill, a run of about one half mile. This ride was a real "upper". The "downer" was pulling the heavy sled back to the starting point. We also did a lot of ice skating.

With the first cold snap, the various ponds would freeze over with "black" ice about one inch thick. There were no air bubbles in it to give the white color of thick ice which gradually formed later. The black ice was really hazardous as it would crack, crackle, and bend as one skated across it. If enough people skated on it for too long it would break and someone would fall through. We had brains enough not to do this except on shallow water where you could stand up and walk out if the ice broke. This sport was known as "Running the Bends" because of the roller coaster feeling as the ice sank as you passed over it and came up again behind you. I don't think any of our parents were aware of this little known sport. I doubt that it will ever be accepted as an olympic winter event, but we sure had a lot of fun doing it. In the evening many

of us would again head for the ponds and build a fire on the shore so we could see to skate and keep warm.

In those days there were no electric refrigerators and ice was harvested from the ponds each winter to fill large ice houses on hundreds of lakes and reservoirs all over New England. There was an ice storage house on the lower Simmons reservoir and I watched the operations there for several years. At first all the work was done by hand saws and chisels, after the ice had reached a thickness of about ten to twelve inches. The saws had large coarse teeth instead of the finer teeth used for sawing wood. The area to be cut was marked off on the ice into a large rectangle or a square which was then marked off into the smaller ice cakes which might be around twelve inches by fifteen inches long. After an open water channel had been cut from the harvesting place to the ice house, long strings of cakes would be pushed along the channel to the ice house to conveyors (operated by a gasoline engine) which raised the cakes to the ice house doors. The cakes then were stored in layers with saw dust between layers to prevent the cakes from sticking together and also to provide insulation to prevent melting in the spring and summer. Sometimes when it was very cold the cakes would freeze together again and a large chisel was used to separate them. The sawing of cakes by hand was a hard and tiring job. Eventually a gasoline powered circular saw was developed to cut the ice. It could be pushed along the marked lines and greatly speeded up the whole operation. However, the advent of electric and gas refrigerators marked the beginning of the end for most of ice harvesting companies.

Summer in Simonsville was generally a very pleasant time. My grandmother, Ellen Baylies Almy, would agree I think to this statement except for one thing: thunderstorms. At the first distant clap of thunder she would take to bed as she had an overpowering fear of such natural goings on. Not only did she go to bed, but would also completely cover herself with bedclothes as added protection. If I came to her room during such times she would admonish me about my foolhardiness in not seeking similar safety. She would issue warnings to the effect that I would never be long for this world if I didn't change my brash disregard of the powers on high.

My grandparents bed rooms were on the main floor and the rest of us slept upstairs which became very hot in the summer. My father built a large screened sleeping porch on the north side of the house. This was a great idea and a most pleasant place to sleep. It overlooked a large lawn with a background of large elm trees. On moonlit nights it gave the impression of being in a giant room.

At the west end of the lawn there were few trees and a fine view of the setting sun. I particularly remember the year 1910 when Halley's Comet was last closest to the sun in it's orbit. At sundown it was a spectacular sight because of it's long tail streaming away from the sun. This comet returns in 1986.

I became interested in fishing at an early age due to the numerous ponds in the area. Most of the fish were perch, sun fish, suckers, horned pout, or pickerel. I managed to catch all five varieties at one time or another. My mother seemed to appreciate these donations to her larder only after I had cleaned them of undesirable fins, heads and insides. As I recall, she didn't care much for the first three mentioned above, but did enjoy the last two. The horned pout (a small variety of catfish) were well named. They had spiny projections at the top of the head which had poison equal to the sting of a bee if one of the horns pierced your skin. These fish were tasteful eating, however. The pickerel were also enjoyable. At first I caught pickerel with the usual hook and line method, but later, when I was twelve or thirteen (my father had given me a .22 caliber Remington repeating rifle) I discovered that these residents of the shallows could be stunned by shooting a bullet near their heads. Apparently this caused a shock wave in the water so that one could simply reach into the water and lift out these fish. This was probably not a very sportsman-like procedure, but was very productive in "bringing home the bacon" so to speak.

(to be continued.)

MARRIAGE OF LAURIE PRATT (1407-1532-214)

Laurie Ann Pratt, daughter of Charles and Marcia (Almy) Pratt, was married to Douglas Allen on April 25, 1987. Laurie is the granddaughter of Charles B. and Marion E. (Williams) Almy of Little Compton, RI. Her grandaunts and granduncle, Dorothy and Philip Almy, and Lois B. Almy, hurried home from Florida to attend the wedding. An exciting time for all!

MARTHA (SEABURY) MANCHESTER (1407-1C57-7)

Martha Manchester, 71, of Tiverton, RI, wife of Francis B. Manchester, and office manager of Manchester Seafood and the Point Trap Fishing Company for more than fifty years, died May 22, 1987. Martha was born in Little Compton, RI, on 3 January 1916, the daughter of Lester A. and Harriet M. (Jennings) Seabury, and granddaughter of Albert and Emeline (Almy) Seabury. In her immediate family she leaves her husband; two sons, Bruce B. Manchester of Alexandria, VA, and Michael S. Manchester of Middletown, RI; a daughter, Gladys Almy Manchester of Los Angeles, CA; and two grandchildren.

MARJORIE A. ARCHER (1239-2145-27X)

Marjorie A. Archer, 75, of Tiverton, RI, widow of Garnett E. Archer, died 7 June 1987. Marjorie was born in Tiverton, the daughter of Alonzo and Sarah Louise (Almy) Rose. She leaves three sons, Ronald E. Archer of Tiverton, Robert W. and Jeffrey E. Archer, both in California; a brother, Charles F. Rose of East Providence, RI; four sisters, Annie McCathy of Newport, RI, Abbie Hart and Bessie Brown, both of Tiverton, Wealthy Marley of Middletown, RI; and two grandchildren.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Following is a listing of those cousins who have sent in contributions, since the last issue of the Almy Family Newsletter, to help defray the costs of printing and mailing these Newsletters. This help is most appreciated. Many thanks to you all.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Almy Number</u>	<u>Residence</u>
Frances (Almy) Culler	1232-1218-411	Ohio
Thomas B. Almy	1232-1218-4122	Virginia
Lee (Almy) Harris	1233-3252-431	Florida
Hazel V. Almy	1233-4655-11W	South Carolina
Frank Knowlton, Jr.	1252-9773-32	Florida

Your cousin (1408-3312-112),



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HAVE A WONDERFUL SUMMER !!!