

## ALMY CHEST OF DRAWERS

The picture below is of an Almy chest of drawers located at the Chase-Cory House in Tiverton, RI. This chest of drawers was donated to the Tiverton Historical Society by Alice Bateman Almy (1407-5023). According to Alice, the chest was built by an Almy (possibly Job, No. 140, or his son John, No. 1407) prior to 1751.



The chest is made of pine and has two secret drawers. One drawer has the date June 18, 1751, and the message "2 dolers for milk" written on the back. It has hand made brass pulls on the top drawers. The bottom drawer originally had rope pulls which were replaced by brass pulls by Albert S. Almy (father of Alice Bateman Almy).

The above information and picture were furnished by Patricia Almy Forte (1407-1426-122).

## MARRIAGE OF THOMAS B. ALMY (1232-1218-4122)

Thomas Barton Almy, son of Eugene and Kitty (Birch) Almy, was married in Arlington, VA, on 11 October 1986 to Kathleen Anne McGinn, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edward McGinn of Alexandria, VA. Thomas and Kathleen now reside in Vienna, VA.

## MARK CHRISTIAN ALMY (1408-6612-1241)

Kenneth James and Anne (Kryder) Almy are the proud parents of Mark Christian Almy, born 15 June 1987, at Lexington, KY. Information furnished by the proud grandparents, Kenneth and Marjorie (Turner) Almy of Philadelphia, PA.

JOAN MAC GREGOR CHENEY (1232-4151-3111)

Joan M. Cheney, 61, a school teacher, died 20 June 1987, at her home in Fall River, MA. Joan was born in Hackensack, NJ, 25 August 1925, the daughter of Sherman Albert and Bertha Alva Livingstone (Hamlet) Mac Gregor. Joan married Raymond James Cheney in Amsterdam, NY, on 23 September 1950. They had four children: John Allen, Lynn Patricia, David Wayne, and Brian Thomas.

Joan Cheney was a teacher in the Fall River area for the past 20 years. She was a district representative for the Fall River Educators Association. She was president of the Bristol Genealogical Society, a member of the Allegro Glee Club and the Descendants of the New Bedford Whaling Masters. She was a communicant of Holy Name Church and a member of its choir. She received a bachelor of arts degree from Queens College in New York, and a master's degree in primary education at Bridgewater State College.

Joan attended the 1986 Almy Family Reunion. Reunion attendees were requested to submit a biographical sketch of one of their Almy ancestors. Space has not permitted including these sketches in the Almy Family Newsletters to date, but in Joan's memory, I am including her ancestral sketch in this issue. Following is her article on her ancestor, Marianna Almy.

MARIANNA ALMY (1232-4151)

Marianna Almy (1232-4151), my great-great grandmother, daughter of John Coggeshall and Ruth (Bailey) Almy, Jr., was born in Dartmouth, Massachusetts, on 1 December 1823. Wanton Howland Sherman was born in Dartmouth seven years earlier, on 17 September 1816. Dartmouth was a rather spread out area, but I would gather that the two families probably lived relatively near each other. At the age of 26, Wanton made the first of three voyages as Whaling Captain or Master of the NIMROD, a whaling ship newly built in Dartmouth in 1842 and sailed out of New Bedford, a whaling center of that time. He sailed to the Pacific Ocean, leaving 15 November 1842, and returned over two years later on 5 January 1845.

Wanton had been home for only 23 days when he and Marianna were married on the 28th of January, 1845. He was 28 and she only 21. Theirs must have indeed been a long-term, long-distance courtship. After only four months, the new bridegroom set off to sea again as the NIMROD's Master on 27 May 1845, this time to the Indian Ocean and the North West until 6 April 1848. After having her husband home for five and a half months this time, Marianna decided to accompany him on the next voyage of the NIMROD to the Pacific. The wife of the Captain was the only exception to the rule of no women allowed on board. They left on 22 September 1848 and didn't return until 1 July 1851 after which Marianna stayed home in Dartmouth while her husband returned to the sea.

Marianna's voyage had not been a boring or uneventful one even though about three years long. She kept a log of sorts (the original of which is in the special books room of the Providence Public Library) in which she made notations on their position at sea, the weather, any sightings of whales or other things of interest, and sometimes her own feelings. This was kept up fairly regularly until mid-spring of 1849 when she went on shore to stay in a boarding house on the island of Honolulu in the Sandwich Islands to await the birth of their first child, Ellen Jane, who arrived on the 6th of August. Marianna and Ellen Jane boarded the NIMROD again after a few more months ashore, but Marianna didn't keep up her log as regularly. She had other things to occupy her time.

A year and a half later on 24 February 1851, this time in Tahiti in the Society Islands, a son Humphrey was born. Humphrey's life began and ended at sea since at age 26 he died while on a voyage to Amatape, Peru. Marianna and Wanton's next four children were all born in Dartmouth. Clara Clifford Sherman (my great-grandmother) was born on 12 November 1852 while her father was at sea, but he was at home for the remainder of them. Marianna Almy Sherman was next

on 16 April 1856; Wanton Howland Sherman, Jr., born 11 March 1858 died the following year on 13 June 1859. The last baby, born on 31 July 1860, was also named Wanton Howland Sherman.

In the 23 years from the time of their marriage until his retirement from the sea in 1868 at the age of 52, Wanton spent only seven years at home with Marianna in Dartmouth. At some point after this they moved inland to Middletown, Connecticut, where Wanton died in 1895 at age 78½, while Marianna lived on there until she died in 1910 at age 87. Both were buried in the family plot back in South Dartmouth.

### WESTPORT WHALING INDUSTRY

Both Patricia Almy Forte (1407-1426-122) and Lois B. Almy (1407-1532-3) of Little Compton, Rhode Island sent me the article on the Westport whaling industry from the June 8, 1987 issue of their local shopping newspaper. I have extracted part of that article because it relates to the connection of Almy to the whaling industry.

The whaling industry started in Westport about 1760. Westporters went from cod catching to whaling. The years 1833 to 1859 were considered the "Golden Age" of the whaling business in Westport. In 1831 many sloops and schooners gave up fishing and went into freight trade bringing supplies of every description to fit out the whalers leaving Westport Point. However the change was gradual. Three cooperage shops owned by the Howland Brothers supplied oil casks which the captains at the start filled with provisions for the voyage. Three brigs, INDUSTRY, ALMY, AND MEXICO made Westport Point a famous whaling town.

In May 1836, two ships had just finished loading at Westport Harbor. Two humpbacked whales were discovered just outside the breakers near Horseneck. Captains Thomas Mayhew and Edward Sowle with others went out in three boats and towed the whales to the Westport Point wharf and oil was taken. The price of sperm whale oil was \$2.60 to \$2.70 per gallon. When kerosene came into use the price fell to \$1.28 a gallon. The average price in 1859 for sperm oil was \$1.36 while whale oil was 48½¢. With the decline of the whaling industry Westport Point was no longer a thriving busy town.

Starting with fitting out in home port until the last barrel had been filled with whale oil could take as much as four years. An old whalers' joke tells of how the captain who had forgotten to kiss his wife goodbye said to his first mate, "It doesn't matter, we're on a short trip this time, only two years."

### SARAH E. (CASWELL) HATHAWAY (1239-2145-25?)

Sarah E. (Caswell) Hathaway, 76, of Fall River, Massachusetts, wife of Warren P. Hathaway, died 16 September 1987. She was born in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, the daughter of David S. and Mary Elizabeth (Almy) Caswell. A 1929 graduate of B.M.C. Durfee High School, she was a member of the Unitarian Society of Fall River. She was also a member of the Philanthropic Society and the Hathaway Family Association.

I do not have genealogical information on her brothers and sisters. I would appreciate receiving data on the Caswell and Hathaway families.

### AN ALMY IN AUSTRALIA

In February of this year while in Melbourne, Australia, I found an Almy in the phone book. Although I called several times, I was unable to reach anyone. After I returned home I wrote and in August I received a nice letter from Brian Almy, the son of Cyril Victor Almy, deceased, whom I corresponded with in Salisbury, England. Brian emigrated to Australia in 1980.

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 *Journal-Bulletin* to run his article in the Almy Family Newsletters. This is the fifth installment, continued from page 4, Issue No. 51, July 1987.)

In addition to the main stream on our property, there was a smaller brook and a fine cold spring which had some time been enlarged and lined by stone walls into a rectangle measuring roughly 8' x 15'. This spring supplied water to our house by means of an electric pump and piping installed by my father. The water issued into the pool from a submerged cave shaped opening at one end and ran out at an overflow channel at the other. The water was cool and clear so that the bottom was visible even though it was four feet deep or more. At some time in the past some one had placed a couple of brook trout in the spring and I had discovered them at an early age. For several years I occasionally fed them worms from the garden. These fish would spend a lot of time in the inlet cave and would dash out to gulp the worms before they hit bottom. As these trout were more or less family pets, I made no attempt to catch them. I did, however, execute a somewhat diabolical experiment. I tied a large juicy looking worm on the end of a string and lowered said worm into the spring near the inlet. A trout dashed out (as hoped for), grabbed the worm and swallowed same. I still had the other end of the string and after an interval I slowly retracted this line to see what the trout's reaction would be to this surprising turn of events. As I pulled on the string the trout resisted giving up what it must have thought to be a most peculiar worm. I kept on pulling until the fish came to the surface and reluctantly spit out (or lost it's grip) on a fine meal which it just couldn't seem to keep down.

Speaking of trout and other denizens of ponds and streams, I am reminded of a story my father told me. There were many bull frogs which inhabited the area and my father and his brother (my Uncle Howard) would catch some and take them to fish markets in Providence to sell, as frog legs were in great demand. My father remembered one time when they took a batch to a market where they usually went and the owner asked Uncle Howard what they had to sell. "Trouts legs" he replied. The market man looked amazed and asked to see them. It then became apparent that they were just ordinary frogs legs and not "trouts legs" after all. We have jokingly called them "Trouts legs" ever since.

Neither my father or mother smoked, but my cousin John and I had observed other residents of the village smoking long black Italian cheroots which had a rather strong and overpowering odor. Tobacco stems were available in the greenhouses where they were burned to create smoke to kill bugs on the flowers being grown for market. John and I decided to pass up the noxious tobacco and seek other smoking materials. We tried making cigarettes of dried corn silk. These were found to be wanting because they burned too fast and the smoke was too hot. Next to be tested was dried grape vine leaves which were shredded and smoked in an old clay pipe found on the place. This was better than the corn silk, but was still not considered satisfactory. We recalled that there were many low growing shrubs in the woods known as sweet fern. The leaves had a pleasant aroma when ground into a coarse "tobacco" and dried. When smoked in a pipe it smelled rather good and didn't bite the tongue as much as the previously tried materials. We continued to smoke sweet fern off and on for several years until we were 12 or 13 years old. One day we bought an Italian cigar which was black in color and eight to ten inches long. We cut it in half and John smoked half and I the other half. There were no ill effects for perhaps ten minutes, then we noticed that we began to feel a little dizzy plus a queazy sensation in the stomach. We lost all interest in continuing to smoke the stogy and rapidly lapsed into a nauseous state of unimagined illness and total aversion to smoking. Several years passed before any further experiments with tobacco were conducted.

During late summer months our vegetable garden had a fine crop of various vegetables. For some reason (I never figured out why) I developed a craving for tomatoes. I recall going to the tomato patch one afternoon and eating about a half dozen large juicy tomatoes. Several hours later my stomach rebelled at this ill-advised and inconsiderate treatment with the result that it refused to accept the said tomatoes and threw them back up and out forthwith. For many years after this episode I had no interest in eating tomatoes either raw or cooked.

My cousin John and I occasionally raided the garden for ripe ears of sweet corn which we boiled over a fire built in a secluded area in the wood lot on the farm. I am sure my mother wondered why I wasn't hungry at supper time following these cook-outs. We did learn that a maximum of five minutes in boiling water was about right for cooking corn.

(to be continued.)

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>
Robert Allen Greene	Desc. of Anne <sup>2</sup> Almy	Rhode Island
Fred H. Almy	1232-1218-331	California
Donald S. Mathison	1232-4151-382	Massachusetts
Iris M. Bachand	1232-4013-462	Rhode Island
Thomas P. Almy	1233-4657-11	New Hampshire
William C. Durbin	1233-4668-122	California
Mrs. Robert T. Almy	1233-5147-53W	Rhode Island
Ernestine Almy Benson	1233-5147-531	Puerto Rico
Donald C. Almy	1239-2145-2312	Maine
William A. Knowlton	1252-9773-34	Virginia
Patricia Almy Forte	1407-1426-122	Rhode Island
J. Robert Almey	England	Canada
Brian Almey	England	England

HAVE A WONDERFUL THANKSGIVING !

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR !

Your cousin (1408-3312-112),

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR --  
 THE 1988 ALMY FAMILY REUNION  
 WILL BE ON SATURDAY & SUNDAY  
 AUGUST 20 & 21, 1988  
 IN SEEKONK, MA, AND TIVERTON  
 AND LITTLE COMPTON, RI

\* \* \* \* \*

*Merwin*

Merwin F. Almy  
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 Springfield, VA 22151