

RHODE ISLAND'S CHAMPION OF THE RHODE ISLAND REDS

The following article is written from an article that appeared in the Providence Sunday Journal of December 12, 1915, transcribed by Patricia Almy Forte (1407-1426-122). The article is about Frederick W.C. Almy, born January 22, 1872 in Little Compton, Rhode Island, the son of Oliver Humphrey and Elizabeth A. (Howland) Almy.

"A score of years ago F.W.C. Almy, a Little Compton boy, practically made up his mind to leave his ancestral home and to join the ranks of the army of youth that was rapidly deserting the farms and going into the outside world to seek their fortunes. Like hundreds of other young men born and reared on the farm, Mr. Almy had slowly come to the conclusion that he was living in an environment of no chance.

"He had long since lost all faith in the theoretical teachings of childhood that all men are created free and equal and that every boy born in the United States has an equal opportunity of one day becoming President and believed that if he was ever going to attain his much more modest ambition of getting a decent living without making a slave of himself it would be necessary for him to shake the dust of his native town from his feet. His father and grandfather before him had toiled early and late on the 160-acre farm. They had become round shouldered and grown old before their time under the heavy burdens that they had assumed and although both

were industrious, intelligent and ambitious they had barely succeeded in getting a new dollar for an old one.

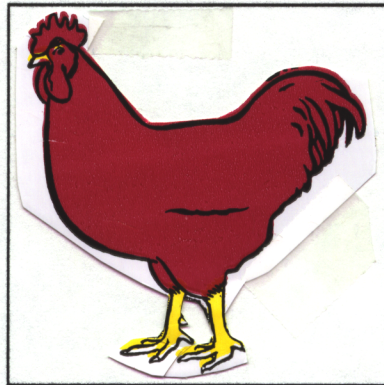
"As a young boy Almy had acquired a practical knowledge of what the future held in store. From experience he knew that to keep his head above water in general farming he would be compelled to toil continually from early morning until late at night with no hope of reward for his extra work.

"At the foot of the rainbow in distant thickly settled centres of population there were clerkship positions in the stores, places for men with mechanical ability in the large workshops and scores of other

opportunities for the ambitious young man to earn more hard cash in a single month than the average farmer handles in an entire year.

"Mr. Almy prepared to follow the rainbow, but at the psychological moment a friend suggested trying poultry as one way out. The Little Compton man decided to give this suggestion an honest trial. He remained on the farm and today is the acknowledged Rhode Island champion of the Rhode Island Reds and his name is known to every large poultry fancier from Maine to California.

"In the recent show of the Rhode Island Poultry Association in Infantry Hall, Mr. Almy, with an exhibit of 30 birds won six



first prizes; six second prizes, a number of specials and the Journal cup for the best display of Rhode Island Reds. The ribbons that were awarded to him are merely so many more to be added to a collection of several pecks of the same kind that he has stored away at Red Feather Farm in Little Compton, but the cup is prized highly, not only for its intrinsic value, but also because of the fact that it has been won by no other poultry fancier since it was offered by the Providence Journal Company three years ago.

“For the purpose of encouraging the development of the fowl which bears the State's name, the Journal offered the big cup, said to be one of the best that has been offered at any poultry show, to be awarded to the fancier making the best display of these birds. Under the conditions of the gift the cup was to be awarded to the fancier showing the best display, consisting of two cocks, two hens, two cockerels, two pullets and a pen. It was also provided that when the cup had been won three times by any one competitor it should become his permanent property.

“The cup was won the first time in 1913, the year in which it was donated, by Mr. Almy. He won it again in 1914 and in winning it this year he has established a clear title to the trophy.

“The story of Mr. Almy's success is a bit of business romance of real life in which the country boy with no apparent chance resolutely made an opportunity for himself and through sheer pluck and determination forged ahead. As a farmer's lad he spent his boyhood between working on the farm and attending school, and as is usually the case, it was taken for granted that when he grew to manhood he would follow in his ancestors' footsteps.

“The big 160-acre farm, about half of which was under cultivation, was none too

productive and after being closely analyzed by the ambitious youngster, was not over inviting. From practical experience he knew what crops could best be produced. He also knew what it cost to produce them, what they would bring in the market and he had no desire to toil his life away for the meager profits.

“The promises of a less toilsome existence beckoned. Out in the hurly burly world other natives of Little Compton were holding lucrative positions. In stores and factories young men with whom he was acquainted were earning respectable wages. Compared with farming the hours that they worked were short and the labor light and he practically decided to pull up stakes and follow in the wake of other boys who had migrated cityward, leaving the old folk on the farm.

“While he was endeavoring to decide where he would go and what he would do he met by chance an acquaintance who had been raising poultry on a small scale. This man told of the remarkable profits that there ought to be in a poultry farm, where the fowl were given the exclusive attention of the farmer and when he learned that Mr. Almy was planning to go away, he urged him to remain and take up the raising of poultry.

“This argument struck a responsive chord in the young man's heart. Breaking away from the old home was not a pleasing prospect and he determined to make an honest effort to make the farm pay. After studying the question he realized that the old farm was not an ideal location. There was plenty of room, but the land was wet, but it was the best he could do, and he started out with the determination to conquer these obstacles.”

(To be continued in the next issue.)

Obituaries

HELEN BISSELL ALMY (1233-4671-12W)

Helen Bissell Almy, 82, wife of Robert L. Almy, died May 21, 1994. She was the daughter of Raymond and Helen (Warren) Bissell. Helen was the beloved librarian in charge of the Crestwood Library in Yonkers during the 1960s and 1970s. She lived in Scarsdale for many years before moving to Hartsdale, New York in 1987.

Helen was born in Buffalo, New York, April 15, 1912, and she remembered that her father wondered if she would have a "tempestuous life," as it was the date the Titanic sank after crashing into an iceberg. She lived in Paris for a time as a youngster, and was a lifelong Francophile. Helen was a graduate of Smith College, and the Columbia University School of Library Service, yet she never bragged about her Ivy League background.

She began her career at the Crestwood Library as a children's librarian in 1964, and she knew the names and preferences of every child she helped. Helen particularly enjoyed her story hours every Thursday, and the popular summer reading programs. Later, she enriched the adult book collections through her expert knowledge of music, art, travel and poetry. She admired her former Smith College classmate, Julia Child, and never found a chocolate recipe that she didn't like!

Helen will long be remembered for her intelligence, tremendous sense of humor, religious faith, devotion to family, love of the arts and of Cape Cod, and respect for the dignity of every individual she served. She will be sadly missed.

IRIS ELIZABETH ALMY (1233-3252-52)

Iris E. Almy, 91, of Cumberland Center, Maine, died June 25, 1994. Iris was born in Avoca, New York, on 17 January 1903, daughter of Samuel Merrills and Florence (Shaffer) Almy. Iris graduated from the University of Rochester (N.Y.) and was a teacher for a year before obtaining a degree in library science from Columbia University. She then worked five years as a cataloger for a publisher in New York City before moving to Maine.

For many summers, Iris taught a course in library cataloging at the University of Maine, Orono. She also was in demand as a book reviewer for local organizations. During her retirement, she was a cataloger for the Maine Library for the Blind, under a grant from the Maine State Library Association. She continued that work long after the grant money had run out.

LAURA ALMY PECKHAM (1408-3832-43)

Laura Elizabeth "Liz" Peckham, 77, of Portsmouth, Rhode Island, died April 18, 1991. She was born in Portsmouth February 5, 1914, the daughter of Gideon Wilcox and Dora Ernestine (Reilly) Almy. Her husband, Walter E. Peckham pre-deceased her.

AN IRISH PRAYER

May those that love us, love us.
And those that don't love us,
May God turn their hearts;
And if He doesn't turn their hearts,
May he turn their ankles so we'll
know them by their limping.

**UPDATE ON GIDEON WILCOX ALMY, III
(1408-3832-422)**

This is an update on the information in Newsletter 57 (January 1989). Gideon wrote:

"It seems eons have passed since I last wrote and now that my career is winding down I thought I might drop you a line with an update.

"I believe that when I last wrote I was commanding officer of the Destroyer EDSON in Newport, RI. I decommissioned Edson on 15 December 1988...over 5 years ago, and it seems like yesterday! Virginia and I packed up and went to San Diego, California, for a two year tour as Executive Officer in USS TARAWA (LHA 1) and ensconced our oldest daughter in the house in Virginia Beach. Virginia and Gideon IV took up residence in Spring Valley, California, while I went off to steam around the Pacific Ocean along with 1800 Marines trying to maintain a breathtaking schedule of operations. From April to July 1989 we operated off the California coast in a variety of training exercises then deployed to the Far East for 6 months.

"After a month in home port (San Diego), we charged off to Hawaii for six weeks to participate in a major fleet exercise then entered the shipyard in Long Beach, California, for maintenance and repair. Shortly after we left the shipyard, Saddam Hussein did his dirty deed and in early December 1990 we deployed to the Persian Gulf as the flagship for Amphibious Group Three and the centerpiece of the largest amphibious force to deploy from the west coast since WW II. We arrived on station in early January in time to join with Amphibious Group Two (from the East coast) and conduct rehearsal landings in Oman in preparation for what we thought would be the invasion of Kuwait. When the

air assault began, we moved into the Persian Gulf (or Arabian Gulf if you prefer) and took up station just south of Kuwait. As the ground assault began, we put 2500 Marines from the 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade ashore at Al Mishab, Saudi Arabia...about 30 miles south of the Kuwait border.

"To provide a blocking force and prevent Iraqi troops from coming down the coast. The rest is history, of course...the ground war ended quickly and we recovered our 2500 troops with no casualties. The amphibious group then took up station in the middle of the Gulf. I received transfer orders and after being relieved, left the ship on April 1st 1991 by helicopter and returned home by way of Hahrain, Torremolinas, Westover Air Force Base and Victorville, California.

"After loading the wagons, Virginia, Gideon IV and I trekked back to Virginia Beach and I assumed duties as Chief Staff Officer for Commander Surface Warfare Development Group in Little Creek, Virginia, where I remained until July 1993. I then transferred to my current duty as the Officer in Charge of the Navy Inactive Fleet with Headquarters in Portsmouth, Virginia. I have since submitted my letter of resignation and expect to retire with over 38 years of service on 1 September 1994. We have already sold the Virginia Beach house and purchased our 'snug harbor' in Kodak, Tennessee...a small rural community about 20 miles from Knoxville. In the meantime, we are renting a home which is the primary purpose of this letter, to provide a current address.

"His Virginia Beach address is a mere two blocks from their former address because they wanted to keep their son in the same school system."

MY ALMY GENEALOGY BOOK

A number of you have asked about the status of the Almy genealogy book I am writing and when copies can be obtained. I have made no decisions as to the form the book will take. I favor a 3-ring system so that future pages can be added (families, pictures, etc.) However, this would not be suitable for libraries. Maybe I can have pages for individuals 3-hole punched while the pages for libraries are bound. Also, I do not know the costs involved. Publishing a book was not intended to be a money-making proposition. My objective is to put in print as much current and accurate information as possible about the Almy families so that current and future researchers (which will include your children's children) will have the greater portion of their search already done. I have weeded out much misinformation and also uncovered new data.

I would like to make the genealogy information available in segments so that those only interested in a certain line can obtain that part. I currently have the pages for 800 Almy families drafted, but references to sources and other information has to be added and verified. We have a rich heritage and I want the book to contain as much of this information as possible. I am also waiting for family information from the following so that I can complete their pages in the book. I would appreciate it if the following would furnish the family information I have requested.

1232-1213-1555-1	Douglas Almy
1232-4014-1311	Stephen Almy
1233-5147-512W	Mrs. Donald Almy
1239-2145-2914	Douglas F. Almy
1239-2145-203W2	Lena Almy
1239-2165-172	Marjorie Yates
1252-95A6-81W	Mrs. Clifford Almy
1407-1194-112	Robert N. Almy
1407-1426-21	Mrs. Gerald Scott

CONTRIBUTIONS

Following is a listing of those cousins who have sent in contributions, since the last issue of the 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>
Donald S. Mathison	1232-4151-382	Massachusetts
Mrs. Arthur B. Harris	1233-3252-431	Florida
H. Raymond Almy	1252-9532-741	New York
Donald G. Almy	1407-1C74-31	California

Your Cousin (1408-3312-112),



Merwin F. Almy
17835 SW Shasta Trail
Tualatin, OR 97062-9408

HAVE A DELIGHTFUL THANKSGIVING!, and a
MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!