

101st BIRTHDAY PARTY

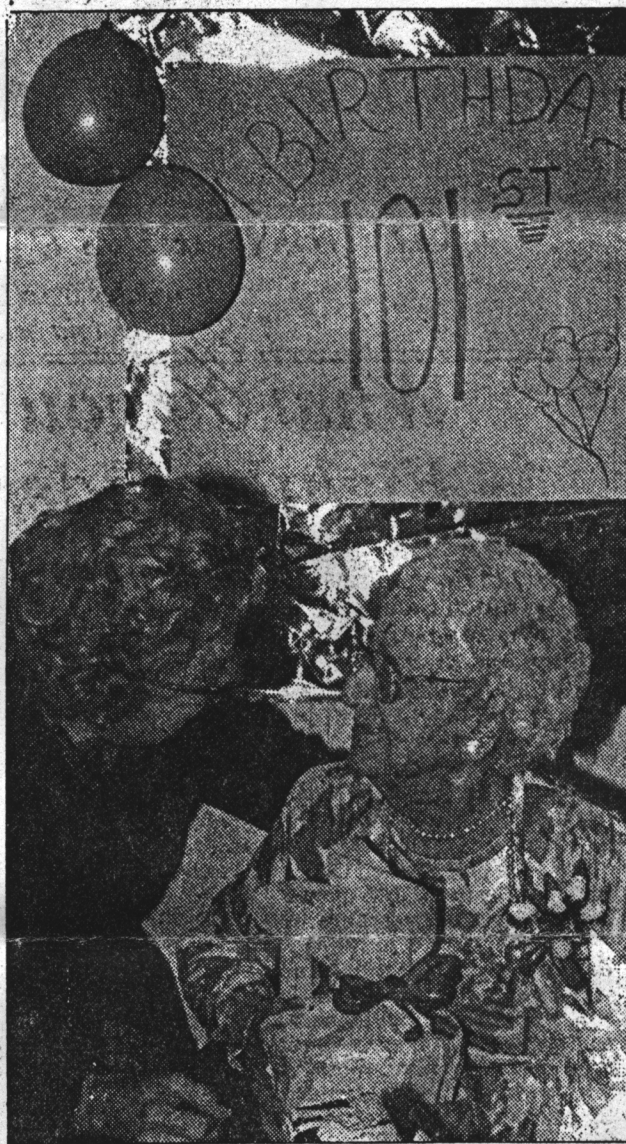
The picture to the right was taken at Alice Bateman Almy's 101st Birthday Party. Alice, (1407-5023), who lived on Constitution Street in Bristol, RI, for about 90 years, now lives at the Silver Creek Manor in Bristol.

Among the many friends who came to visit her there on her birthday, November 16, 1984, were members of the DAR, who provided the cake. The manor provided the ice cream. Her cousins from Long Island came up for the occasion and she received about 100 birthday cards.

For more about Alice, see the article on her 100th birthday in the April 1984 (No. 38) issue of the Almy Family Newsletter.

I know the entire Almy Family wishes Alice a very happy and interesting 102nd year.

The photo at the right was taken by the Phoenix-Times Newspapers.



JOHN L. PRICE, III (1235-4131-1111-1) MARRIES

Connie Price (1235-4131-1111) informs me that her eldest son, John, married Deborah Wieser of Wheeling, West Virginia, on December 8, 1984. The Almy Family sends best wishes for a long and happy marriage.

MURDERER -- FRANK ALMY?

The following is from a newspaper article in the *Valley News* of November 29, 1983, sent to me by Sylvia Nichols (1233-5147-233). I am including it in the Newsletter so that you can answer inquiries you may receive about this Frank Almy from your friends and relatives, or enemies.

In the summer of 1891, the pleasant little farm village of Hanover was the scene of a brutal murder, followed by the greatest manhunt in New Hampshire history. While hundreds of angry men searched the woods and fields, the murderer, Frank Almy, evaded them for 31 days simply by hiding in a barn owned by the father of the woman he killed.

It is a strange story. Frank Almy killed his sweetheart, Christina Warden, almost within sight of her sister, after lurking in the Warden barn for 32 days, waiting an opportunity to speak to the young woman alone. Frank Almy, 34, murdered Christina Warden on the night of July 17, in what was then known as the Vale of Tempe, now part of the Hanover golf course.

Frank had fallen in love with Christina, called Christie, the previous year when he worked for her father, Andrew Warden, on the family farm. Though Christie, 24, was attracted to him, she had doubts about the handsome young man who was so reluctant to talk about his past. In one of her letters to him, she noted "You came to us a mystery and remain one yet. We know nothing of your past life, except what you have been pleased to tell." In another, she said, "Your conduct at the card table has given me more insight into the dark side of your character, of which you have spoken, than any other one thing."

Her apprehensions may have been well-founded. Though Frank Almy denied it to the end of his life, it is likely that he was actually George Abbott, whose criminal career in New Hampshire and Vermont created a considerable stir a decade before. Abbott, who came of good Vermont Yankee stock, was born in Massachusetts in 1857 but grew up in North Thetford. His grandfather, Eliphalet Abbott, was a well-to-do man who owned several mills in Fairlee. His mother died shortly after his birth, and George was adopted by his uncle and aunt and lived with them on the Abbott farm.

Contemporary accounts of the Warden murder accept without question not only that Frank Almy was really George Abbott, but that Abbott had a streak of larceny in his character even as a youth, stealing pencils and jackknives from his schoolfellows, clocks and jewelry from the neighbors, and at age 14, a cast-iron stove. When he was 17, Abbott and another man, Pete Duplissy, whose family was described by a Thetford acquaintance as a "mess of egg-sucking, doughnut-robbing, cigaroot-smoking scallawags," were convicted of a number of burglaries in Orford. Abbott was sentenced to four years in the Concord state prison. On learning of the sentence, Abbott's father hanged himself, but left his estate, valued at \$3,000-\$5,000 to his son.

When Abbott was released from prison in 1878, he collected the money. Apparently he spent it all on riotous living, since a year later he appeared penniless at his uncle's home in North Thetford. He worked for his uncle for a few weeks and then disappeared. During the next year or so, a series of burglaries upset the residents and law officers of towns on both sides of the Connecticut River, from White River Junction in Vermont to Woodsville in New Hampshire. Though Abbott was blamed, he couldn't be located until a boy stumbled across a cave on Thetford Mountain where Abbott was hiding out. After a gun battle with a posse, Abbott was wounded and taken prisoner. Despite his injuries, he escaped when the sheriff who was guarding him left the room for a moment. He was recaptured the next day and jailed in Chelsea until he was convicted and sentenced to 15 years at the Windsor state prison. Six years later, in September 1887, he climbed the 12-foot wall that surrounded the prison, using a rope ladder constructed from thousands of pieces of string braided together.

At that point, George Abbott vanished and Frank Almy appeared. If, in fact, they were one and the same, it's surprising that Almy wasn't spotted as Abbott sooner, particularly after he turned up in Hanover three years later and got the job at the Warden farm, only a few miles from

Thetford. Frank Almy, courting Christie, took her to church suppers, husking bees, sleigh rides, card parties and church services, all social activities at which he must have been aware he might well run into someone who knew him as Abbott. Perhaps his infatuation with the young woman was so great he ignored the possibility he might be recognized. He carried an old glove of hers with him, wrote her love letters and poetry, and even -- amazing in that day of male chauvinism -- helped her with her household chores, wiping dishes, cooking fritters for breakfast, and wringing out the family wash.

When Warden let him go in April 1892, he went to Massachusetts and got a job in a woodworking shop in Dorchester. But in mid-June, he returned to Hanover, arriving at the Warden farm about 2 a.m. He hid in the barn, because, he said at his trial, he wanted to see Christie alone. It seems curious that it took him 32 days to manage the meeting, particularly since he evidently had little with him in the way of money or supplies. He subsisted on eggs stolen from the Warden chickens and vegetables from nearby gardens, sneaking out at night on foraging trips. It also seems a bit strange that in the small-town Hanover of the era, no one noticed his depredations nor, alerted by a barking dog, caught sight of him during his nightly prowls. And despite his previous record as Abbott of burglary and theft, apparently he never stole anything more than the food he needed.

Eventually Frank either lost patience or nerved himself to approach Christie, even though she was accompanied by her mother, her sister Fanny, and another woman, Louisa Goodell. He stopped them as they were returning from a Grange meeting about 9 p.m. Stepping out from the shadow of a tree with a revolver in his hand, Frank told Mrs. Warden who he was, and said he only wanted to speak to Christie. He took hold of Christie's arm and asked the others to leave. But Fanny grabbed her sister's other arm, and there was a brief struggle, during which Frank threatened to shoot Fanny. He then yanked Christie away and into the field, with the indomitable Fanny following, even though Frank shot at her twice, missing both times. Meanwhile Mrs. Warden and Louisa Goodell ran down the road screaming for help.

Frank succeeded in dragging Christie into a group of willows. According to testimony at his trial, there was a scuffling sound, then a cry from Christie: "Help, Fan! He is tearing off my clothes!" Emmet Marshall, a farmer, heard the screaming and came to help. He arrived in time to hear a shot in the willows, a cry, and another shot. Frank then ran from the clump of trees and into the nearby woods. Christie, shot through the head and the body, was dead.

More than 200 men formed a search party and went looking for Frank that night, but were unable to find him. For weeks afterwards, with a reward of \$4,000 posted by the town of Hanover and the state to encourage them, posses searched the woods on both sides of the Connecticut River. Frank, of course, was back in his hidey-hole in the Warden barn, still venturing out at night for food, after the search parties had disbanded and gone home. He also, according to newspaper reports of the trial, spent considerable time at Christie's grave in the cemetery in Hanover village. He even picked flowers in the Warden garden and put them on the grave. Finally Mrs. Warden, hunting some wandering chickens, found a collection of empty jars and cans that had contained food in a space under the barn. Further search by police indicated clearly that someone had been living in the barn for a period of time.

Frank, hidden in the hay, watched the searchers. That night, he left the barn. At his trial, he said "I started out and went below West Lebanon. But I could not go away from the place where we had been so happy. I went back to Hanover, and went to the cemetery, where I stopped for a few minutes, after which I went on to Mr. Warden's." The following night, two watchers saw him leave the barn, pick apples in a nearby orchard, and return to his hideout. The pair promptly went to Hanover and collected some 40 armed men to search the barn. At daylight, under the direction of the sheriff, volunteers entered the barn and began probing the hay. Frank rose up firing his revolver, and was hit three times himself by gunfire. Nevertheless, the volunteers made a hasty exit, leaving Frank in the barn. Two hours later, the badly wounded man offered to surrender, provided he could be guaranteed he wouldn't be lynched by the crowd of bystanders that had gathered. He was promised a fair trial and threw down his guns. He was

taken to the Wheelock House, now the Hanover Inn, where some 1,500 people were allowed to file past the cot where he lay.

At some point, he was identified as George Abbott, though there is no record of who recognized him. Because of the animosity against him, he was jailed in Manchester. At his trial in Plymouth, Frank made no attempt to exonerate himself, though he continued to deny that he was George Abbott. He was hung on May 16, 1893 at Concord. A special train was run from Hanover to Concord to accommodate the crowd that came to watch him die. So ends the story of the man who purloined the Almy name and did a dastardly deed.

CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY

I received the following invitation to a United States Navy Change of Command Ceremony early in March. Commander John H. Almy II is Almy No. 1408-6612-121.



*The Commanding Officer
USS KAMEHAMEHA (SSBN 642) (BLUE)
requests the honor of your company
at the Change of Command Ceremony at which
Commander Richard W. Krom, United States Navy
will be relieved by
Commander John H. Almy, II, United States Navy
as Commanding Officer
USS KAMEHAMEHA (SSBN 642) (BLUE)
on Friday, the first of March
Nineteen hundred and eighty-five
at eleven o'clock
Gilmore Hall Auditorium, Building 84
Naval Submarine Base New London
Groton, Connecticut*

*Participants - Full Dress Blue
Military Guests - Service Dress Blue*

The Almy Family congratulates John on his new command. The invitation came while my wife and I were on a trip, so I could not reply to the invitation. I know it was a beautiful ceremony and would have loved to be there.

MISS AMERICAN CO-ED CONTEST

Karen Marie Habberfield (1252-9532-7511-1), daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lonnie Habberfield of Scio, New York, has been chosen as a state finalist in the Miss American Co-ed Contest. Karen, 16, is a member of the class of '87 at Scio Central School. She is active in girls' softball, soccer, volleyball, band, choir, FHA, and is a member of the National Honor Society.

Contestants are judged on academic records, extra-curricular activities, community service, school honors, and personal recommendations. The pageant takes place April 19-21 at the Stouffer Plaza in Rochester. If Karen is a winner, she will travel to Honolulu, Hawaii in August to compete for the national title. Above furnished by Thelma Wise, proud grandmother.

MIDDLE NAME OF ALMY NOT NECESSARILY RELATED

A number of years ago the Governor of the Maryland Society of Mayflower Descendants informed me that one of the members of that Society had the middle name of Almy and lived near Richmond, Virginia. This February I finally was able to contact this person, John Almy Thompkins, while attending a 2-day meeting of the Virginia SAR.

Although he could not give me the reason for his middle name or his exact line of descent, he did know that he was the fourth John Almy Tompkins in succession, that he came from the Tompkins family of Little Compton, RI, and that one of his John Almy Tompkins ancestors married Anne Russell Tillinghast.

When I returned home, I looked up the Tompkins genealogy in the Little Compton Families book. I found his ancestor that married Anne R. Tillinghast. His ancestors that were identified did not include an Almy. However, I noted from the will of John Almy Tompkins' father John, that his land was bounded on one side by land of Sanford Almy (1407-1). This John Tompkins and Sanford Almy were of the same age and lived on adjoining land.

So evidently John Tompkins named a son (his ninth child), John Almy Tompkins after his good friend and countryman, Sanford Almy.

MARGARET CHATIGNY (1407-2C23-21)

I have heard, by a round about way, of the death of Margaret Chatigny. I have no details whatsoever, but hope to have information for the next Newsletter.

CONTRIBUTIONS

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

<u>Name</u>	<u>Almy Number</u>	<u>Residence</u>
Iris M. Buchand	1232-4013-362	Rhode Island
Marguerite B. Wightman	1233-3251-282	New York
Betsey Miller	1233-5147-234	New York
Dear J. Almy, Jr.	1235-5792-112	Maine
Stephen O. Almy	1235-5792-113	Virginia
Thelma Wise	1252-9532-751	New York
Frank W. Knowlton, Jr.	1252-9773-32	Florida
Philip W. Almy	1407-1532-1	Rhode Island
Lois B. Almy	1407-1532-3	Rhode Island
Nancy P. Lantz	1407-2B31-11	Rhode Island
Clara J. Almy	1407-5041-1	New Hampshire
Nini Almy	1408-6262-42	Illinois
Frances Wiseman	Friend	Massachusetts

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

Your cousin (1408-3312-112),

Merwin

Merwin F. Almy
7703 Elgar Street
Springfield, VA 22151