Conclusion

Census records for the period list the Murphy family next to the Dykes family which suggests their farms may have been adjacent to each other in the area east of Altoona where the Allen post office was established. Several other large farming families were also listed in the area which may account for the perceived sixty people expected to be served by the Allen P.O.

Why the name Allen was chosen instead of the original Black Water name is unknown. Historical references for the area show only a Mr. Allen who owned land next to the Altoona school which was five miles away from the P.O. site. The name may have been that of a member of either the Dykes or the Murphy families. They both have members listed with the initial "A".

Endnotes

1. National Archives, Record Group 28: Records of the Post Office Department, Series: Reports of Site Locations.
2. Ancestry.com, Florida, U.S., Spanish American War Compiled Service Records, 1898.
3. "A History of Altoona and Its Surrounding Area," published by the Altoona Centennial Committee. https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/viewer/837071
4. Genealogy Bank, Newspaper Archives.
5. https://lakecopropappr.com/property-search.aspx

The Tragic End of USS Sturtevant (DD-240) in Florida Waters

By Juan L. Riera, Ph.D.

The USS Sturtevant (DD-240) (Figure 1) was a Clemson-class destroyer laid down at Camden, N.J., by the New York Shipbuilding Company less than two weeks after the end of World War I. The Sturtevant launched July 29, 1920, and was commissioned September 21, 1920.

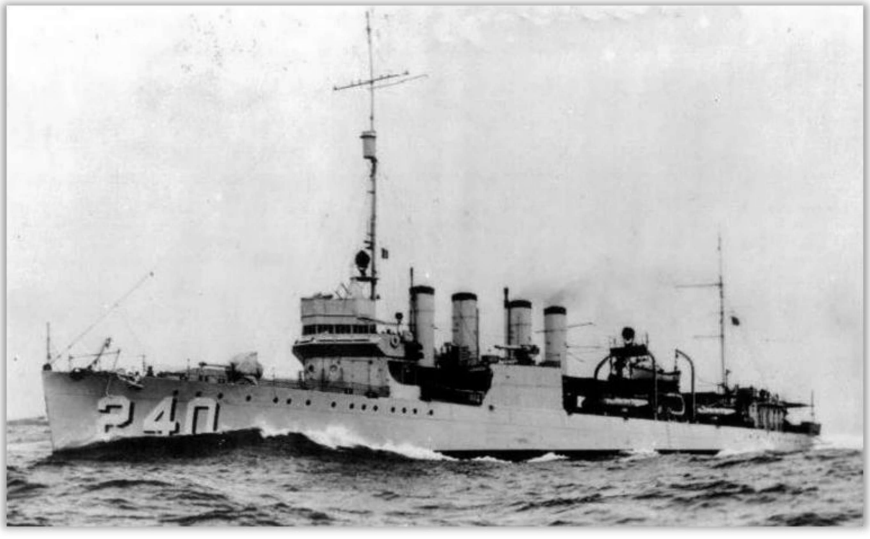
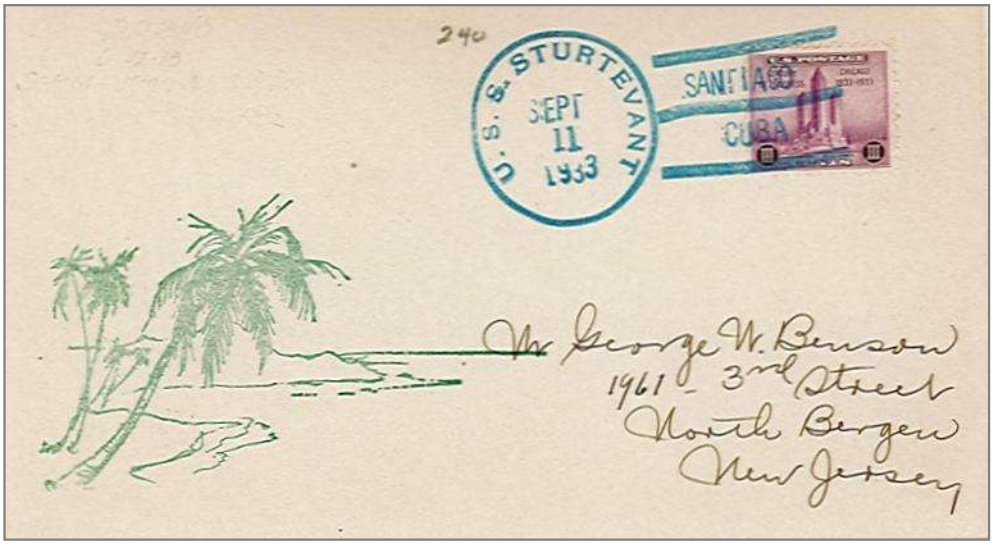


Figure 1. USS Sturtevant (DD-240).

Figure 2. U.S.S. STURTEVANT postmarked SEPT 11 1933, SANTIAGO, CUBA. (Author's collection)



The USS Sturtevant was named in honor of Albert D. Sturtevant (Figure 3), a pioneering U.S. Navy aviator who earned the Navy Cross for distinguished service during World War I.

Figure 4 shows a naval cover commemorating the USS Sturtevant and Ensign Albert Sturtevant.



Figure 3. Ensign Albert D. Sturtevant (1894–1918).

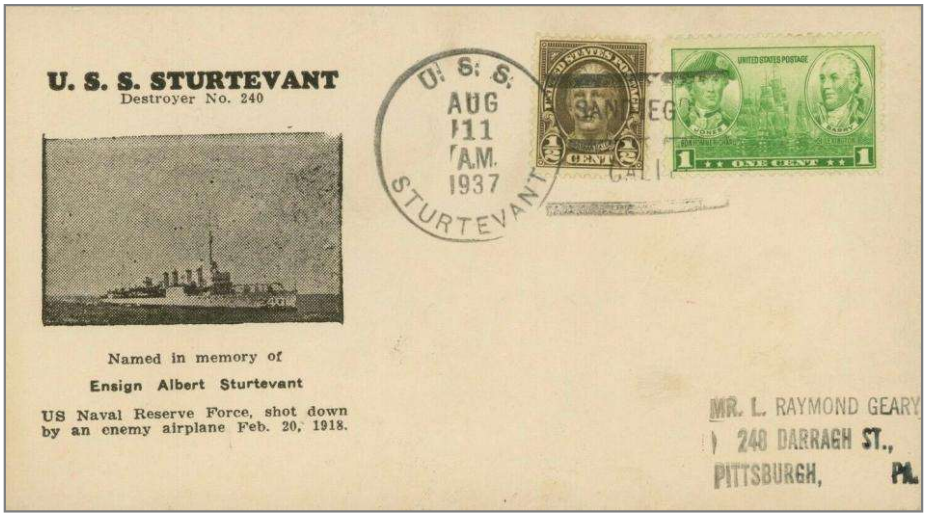


Figure 4. U.S.S. Sturtevant postmarked AUG 11 1937.

Initially, the ship was assigned for a couple of years to the Adriatic, eastern Mediterranean, and the Black Sea (southern Russia) for various assignments including scouting Russian ports for relief supplies to be supplied by the American Relief Administration. She then became the flagship of Division 41, Squadron 14, Scouting Fleet which took her along the east coast of the U.S., the Caribbean, and a tour of the Pacific conducting military exercises near Oahu in Hawaii. In the fall of 1930, she was homeported in Charleston and in January of 1931 was ordered to Philadelphia to be decommissioned effective on January 31.

DD-240 was recommissioned March 9, 1932, reporting for duty on April 30 at Coco Solo in the Panama Canal Zone as part of the Special Service Squadron until early 1934.

During this period, she served the area of the Gulf and Caribbean frequently supporting marines in Nicaragua, Haiti, Cuba, and Latin America in general. In 1934 and most of 1935, she was homeported in Norfolk, Virginia. For part of 1935, she was assigned to the Battle Force in the Pacific until being decommissioned yet again on November 20, 1937 (Figures 5 and 6).



Figure 5. U.S.S. STURTEVANT DECOMMISSIONED cover to Honolulu, Hawaii.

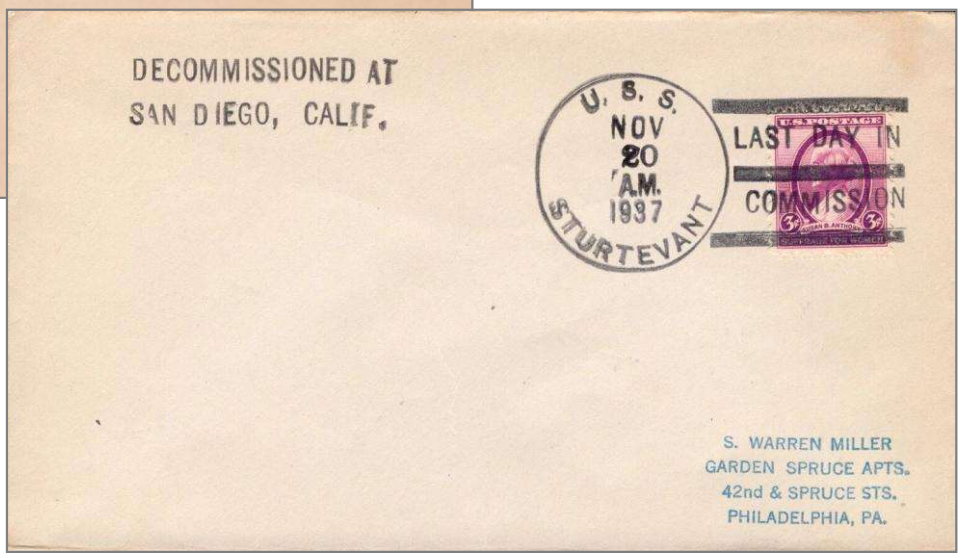
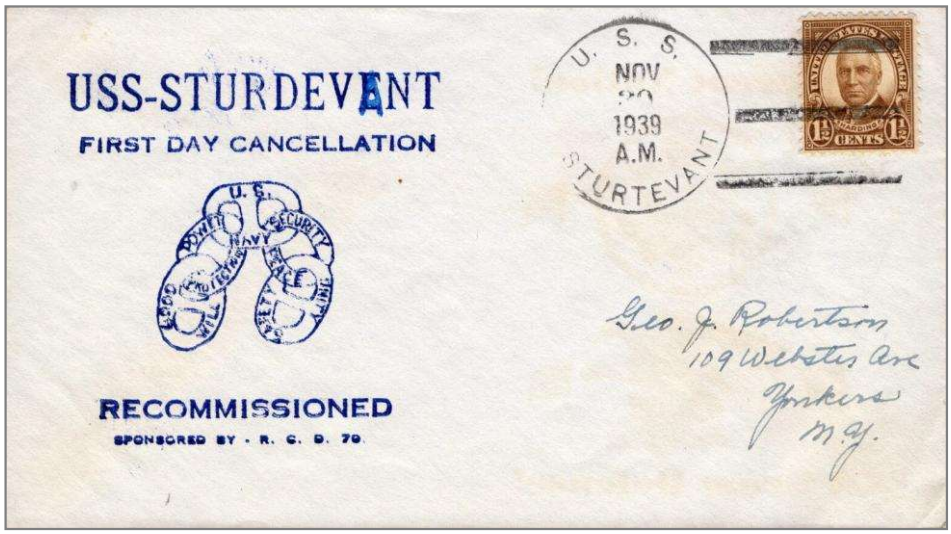


Figure 6. U.S.S. STURTEVANT DECOMMISSIONED cover to Philadelphia, PA.

On September 26, 1939, the Sturtevant was recommissioned yet again as seen in the Figure 7 RECOMMISSIONED cover.



There are two items associated with this cover. First, note the use of "FIRST DAY CANCELLATION" as part of the cover's cachet. This of course was not to signify the philatelic "first day" use of the 1 ½ cents Warren G. Harding stamp (issued December 1, 1930) with which the cover was franked, but instead to announce the date of the Sturtevant's recommissioning.

Figure 7. U.S.S.-STURTEVANT RECOMMISSIONED cover to Yonkers, N.Y.

Secondly, and more importantly however, the FIRST DAY CANCELLATION notation included with the cachet is inconsistent with the cover's postmark of November 20, 1939. As presented above, the Sturtevant's recommissioning was September 26, not November 20, 1939.

The Sturtevant was assigned to Neutrality Patrols and escorting convoys. After escorting a convoy from New York to the Canal Zone, DD-240 reported for duty to the Caribbean Sea frontier screening convoys between the various ports of the Caribbean.

On April 26, 1942, Sturtevant departed Key West with a convoy and a couple of hours later a violent explosion lifted the stern out of the water, but apparently no damage was done to the ship. Suspecting a submarine attack, countermeasures were carried out with two depth charge barrages. This led to a second detonation that rocked the ship, but it settled on an even keel. Minutes later, a third explosion ripped the keel apart and half the ship sank immediately, while the bow remained afloat for hours before sinking. The Sturtevant sank about eight miles north of the Marquesas Islands. It lays in two pieces in sixty feet of water. Fifteen crew members were lost with the ship.

It was later determined that the ship passed through an American-laid minefield that the ship had not been notified about. The vessel was withdrawn from the Naval Vessel Register on May 8, 1942.

Steamship "Indian River"

By Phil Eschbach

Until 1900, most east Florida towns were settled on the mainland and not on the beaches. There are barrier islands down the coast that separate the Atlantic Ocean from the mainland, with a lagoon between them and the mainland, and several inlets out to the ocean along the way. Therefore, most of these islands were uninhabited and inaccessible except by boat. Bridges were not usually built to these islands until the 1920s.

This extensive lagoon system from Jacksonville to Miami was used for transportation and to supply the towns along the mainland coast after settlements arose before and after the Civil War. These water bodies were mostly incorrectly named as rivers, such as the Guana, Halifax, Matanzas, Tolomato, the two Indian Rivers, Smith Creek, Hobe Sound, even Lake Worth (although it originally was a lake). The Mosquito Lagoon is the only correctly named body of water along the whole length.

This continuous waterway is now officially known as the Intracoastal Waterway, even though the local names are still used. It was and still is the preferred route instead of going outside in the ocean, thus avoiding reefs and rough seas. It is still used by NASA to transport missile components to Cape Canaveral.

However, there was one obstruction in this water system, called the Haulover, opposite Titusville (Figure 1, next page), which was between the Mosquito Lagoon, sometimes called the North Indian River, and the main Indian River to the south. It was a land barrier that prevented a water connection between the two. Prior to 1852, smaller boats were "hauled over" at this point and larger boats forced to return to the Atlantic Ocean