

## CYRUS AND EMILY FERNALD

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All AAVSOers who knew them have been saddened on learning of the recent passing, within three months of each other, of Cyrus Fernald and his wife Emily. Longtime residents of Wilton, Maine, they had, since retirement, been located in Longwood, Florida, where their deaths occurred.

"Cy," as we all knew him, was born in Wilton in 1901, the only child of an only child, which circumstance left him quite without close relatives. He attended Bowdoin College and graduated from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and then became a Certified Public Accountant. He joined the AAVSO in 1937 and soon became its "ace" observer. By 1949 he had accumulated a total of some 50,000 variable star estimates. In that year he made no less than 7,654 estimates and over a ten-year span he averaged 600 estimates per month, with never less than 233 in any single month. To me, the very thought of making out a monthly report 12 pages long is quite appalling. Perhaps it was well that Cy was a CPA and doubtless felt quite at home while wading through such a sea of figures.

Cy used a Springfield-mounted telescope and made an average of about 20 estimates per hour for a lifetime total of some 134,000 observations. When glaucoma and a cataract operation interfered with variable star observation in his later years, he turned his attention to a nearer star, the Sun, and made many sunspot counts. He received the AAVSO's Merit Award in 1947 and I recall that he was the first to announce the third outburst of the recurrent variable RS Ophiuchi in 1958.

Cy died at Longwood on October 19, 1979, and Emily followed just three months later on January 19, 1980. She is survived by her twin brother Foster Sanborn and her sister Muriel Armstrong, both of Wilton. They left substantial bequests to the AAVSO, to the Audubon Society, to Bowdoin College and MIT, and to numerous local organizations. They also left those who knew them many fond memories of pleasant hours with a happy and contented couple who now have "drunk their Cup a round or two before, and one by one crept silently to rest."