"Mr. Averell will be missed by the business men of this community, where his large capital has been to a great extent employed, and where for over half a century he has been in the habit of aiding young men with loans, and assisting and sustaining scores of men who have met with unexpected trials or reverses. That he has in many cases been more controlled by sympathy and generous impulses than careful judgment, is evidenced by the fact that his papers show many losses, aggregating a large amount arising from loans made under such circumstances. As a landlord he was considerate and moderate in his demands, and the worthy poor always found in him a friend.

"Intellectually Mr. Averell had no superior in this county, and few in the State. His brain was large, his perceptive faculties acute, his mind active, his memory of events long past excellent. And yet in business transactions he was not rapid, but generally exceedingly deliberate. In controversy he was often dogmatical, as are men generally of that positive nature, and would give and take hard blows—but he never harbored a grudge, nor cherished animosity. A dispute generally ended with the time and occasion. If a man enjoyed his confidence, he was his fast friend. His opinions of public matters, local improvements, &c., were those of his earlier life unchanged, and held with characteristic pertinacity—and in the discussion of such affairs his marked peculiarities and individuality were most prominent. With advancing age he became less able, though none the less inclined, to participate actively in public matters pertaining to this village, in all of which he maintained an unflagging interest. With the prodigality and extravagance of the times, so specially marked since the inflation attending a paper currency, he was ever at war. He was of the 'old school', and held his views and opinions with firmness and tenacity. In talking of his death, his old friends and neighbors speak of his peculiarities and his many excellent deeds and kindly traits of character, of his hospitality and his usefulness.

"Mr. Averell has one amusement of which he was very fond—a game of whist; and he played it with an ability and shrewdness which few excelled. For many years past a few friends have been in the habit of meeting him once a week or two at his house for a social game, and their greeting—no matter how he might be engaged—was always most cordial. He stood defeat as well as anyone, when it did not arise from bad playing. The keenness of his intellect, which did not dim with age, always enabled him to appreciate humor and pleasantry, and his acquaintance with men and history made him interesting company for the young and middle-aged. As long as he could meet his friends and neighbors at an old-fashioned picnic at 'The Point', or in social intercourse in the village, he was a central figure. The present generation will long remember him—the writer, who knew him well, many pleasant recollections of a friendship of over twenty years.

--Local News Summary
Freeman's Journal, August 21, 1873.

"In this village, on the 17th inst. William H. Averell, aged 79 years. The funeral will be attended at 4 o'clock Wednesday afternoon."
"Another of the oldest and for more than half a century one of the most prominent citizens of Cooperstown has passed away. Mr. Averell died on Sunday morning last apparently without any particular disease; the vital forces were exhausted though his mind retained its accustomed strength. Nine days before he had returned home from a visit of several weeks at Cleveland, where Mrs. Carter, his only child resides, and where he owned a large landed estate. He had enjoyed his visit, was at the office of his agent almost every day, and appeared no more feeble than usual on his return; but after two or three days he complained of increased weakness, and kept his bed, but till within an hour or two of his decease his physician and attendants did not seriously apprehend that death was so very near.

"Mr. Averell's ancestors were English, and were early settlers of this country. His grandfather served for a short time in the army of the Revolution. His father came to this town in 1787, and moved into the village in '92 where he was extensively engaged in manufacture and business. He was public-spirited—Mr. Cooper informs us in his "Chronicles"—and 'was much connected with the increase of Cooperstown and its vicinity in wealth and industry'. The subject of this notice received a thorough collegiate education, studied law and was admitted to practice. That he did not continue actively engaged therein, we have heard him remark, was mainly owing to the fact that on the death of his father he found his time fully occupied with the management of his business and estate.

"Mr. Averell never held any public office except that of Bank Commissioner to which he was appointed in 1841 by the Governor and Senate, the duties of which he had the reputation of discharging with marked intelligence and fidelity. His political convictions and opinions were always of the most pronounced character; and for the greater part of his active political life contending in the minority, he was a valuable and influential man in that organization—recognized as a leading mind by the most prominent Whigs of the State during the life-time of that party. He once or twice accepted the nomination for Congress against great odds, and with no expectation of an election. He was one of the original Directors of the Otsego County Bank, organized in 1830, always remained a member of the Board, was for several years its President, and continued in the First National as Director and principal shareholder."
I. William H. Averill
A.B. 1816 Union
Attended three sessions at Fairfield—last in 1812 from Cooperstown and Otsego

Want middle name
Want place, day, month, & year of birth
Want place, day, month, & year of death
Son of James Averell, Jr., was born in Cooperstown 1794, and spent his long life there residing in the brick house on Main Street, adjoining the Village Library, where he died in 1873.

He received a thorough collegiate education, graduating from Union College in 1817. He studied law and was admitted to practice in 1819. Later in life he relinquished his legal practice to care for his landed and banking interests. He was one of the original directors of the Otsego County Bank, and was, for several years, its president. For some time he was one of the State Bank Commissioners.

He employed much of his capital in assisting and developing local enterprises and business and in this way did much to develop the interests of the community.

He married Jane A.M. Russell, daughter of John Russell, Esq., a lawyer of Hudson and Troy, and a granddaughter of Stephen Hogeboom, Esq., of Claverack, N.Y. He left one child, a daughter, Jane Russell Averell, who became the wife of William Lawson Carter, and several of their children and grandchildren reside in Cooperstown and its vicinity a part of the year in the house known as "Holt-Averell."

The Cooperstown Centennial Celebration
p. 167
1907.

WILLIAM H. AVERELL, A.M., 1816, a resident of Cooperstown, N.Y., was a member of the Philomathean Society. (Died: 1873)

Philomathean Catalogue 1850
CLASS OF 1816

WILLIAM HOLT AVERELL

Was born July 8, 1794, at the old Averell Homestead in Cooperstown, N. Y. He passed his life in that town and was interested in its prosperity and development. His home was one of the oldest and most attractive in that locality.

He was a banker, and as early as 1830 he was on the Board of Directors of the first bank, called Otsego County Bank, now the First National Bank, and he was elected President of that bank in February, 1855.

William Holt Averell was one of the Bank Commissioners of the State of New York, having been appointed by the Governor and the Senate in 1841. His advice was often sought by the leaders of the "voting party" in New York State, as correspondence with leading men of that party shows; but he was adverse to running for office himself. He was educated at Fairfield Academy, Conn., and later at New Union College, N. Y., from which institution he received his degree in 1814.

He was married, 1829 at Clauverack, Columbia Co., N. Y., to Jane Augusta Maria Russell, (dau. of John Russell, of Troy and Clauverack, N. Y., and of Christina Hoeboom, his wife), who was born 1805. Her grandfather was Judge Stephen Hoeboom of the old Dutch family at Clauverack.

Mrs. Averell died at Cooperstown, N. Y., October 19, 1833.

Mr. Averell took a deep interest in his family and in his ancestry, and carefully preserved all records of value or interest; among them are many old deeds, the old family Bible of James Averell, and some portraits.

(In 1855 he wrote "The family name has always been spelled by us, Averell, as far back as I have records, signed by the family, i. e., to William of Windham, 1739")

Mr. Averell died at Cooperstown, August 17, 1873.

Inspiring monuments mark the resting places of himself, his wife and parents.

The only child of William H. and Jane (Russell) Averell who lived to maturity (one child having died in infancy), was:

1. Jane Russell, born Sept. 29, 1833 at Cooperstown, N. Y.
   She married William Lawson Carter.
William Holt Averill, a distinguished citizen of Cooperstown, was born at that place in 1794, and died there in August 1873. His ancestors were mainly of English origin, and were among the early settlers of this country. His grandfather was a patriot in colonial times, and served for a while in the army of the Revolution. Mr. Averill enjoyed all the advantages of a liberal and thorough education, and in due time was graduated from Union College with a view to a professional career. He subsequently studied law prepared himself fully and was admitted to practice. He did not long continue actively engaged in his profession, inasmuch as the death of his father made it necessary for him to give his whole time to the management of his business and estate. Alto recognized as an able and influential citizen. Mr. Averill never held any public office except that of Bank Commissioner, to which he was appointed in 1841, by the Governor and Senate, and the duties of which he filled with consummate intelligence and fidelity. In politics he was an ardent Whig and his opinions and convictions were of the most pronounced character. Alto contending in the minority for the greater part of his active political career, he rendered valuable service to his party, and was a power in the councils of the most prominent Whigs of the State during the existence of that party. He accepted once or twice a nomination for Congress against great odds and with no expectation for election. Nevertheless, he made the canvass with his accustomed vigor and accomplished all that could be done under such adverse circumstances. Mr. Averill was actively interested in all that pertained to the advancement of his native village, and people but he had no sympathy with the prodigality and extravagance of the times, which he never failed to combat vigorously and effectively. He was one of the original Directors of the Otsego County Bank, organized in 1830, always remained a member of the board of direction and was several years President of that institution. The first National Bank of Cooperstown succeeded the Otsego County Bank and Mr. Averill continued as Director and principal stockholder in the new corporation. Intellectually he had no superiors in his county, and few in the State. His brain was large, his perceptive faculties acute and his memory remarkable. He had some French blood in his veins, and inherited many of the characteristics of that people. With fine conversational powers, coupled with a keen sense of humor, and a large acquaintance with men and history, he was esteemed a most interesting and entertaining companion by both young and old. He belonged to the old school of thinkers and workers and held his views with great tenacity, yet he was of a most kindly nature and never cherished animosity.

To the poor he was a valued friend and constant benefactor; and when a man enjoyed his confidence he was his friend for life. Mr. Averill took active interest in the work of promoting the abolition of slavery and contributed liberally for educational purposes. He was an Episcopalian and long a Vestryman in Christ's Church, Cooperstown. Among those by whom he was best known he will be long remembered for his many excellent deeds, kindly traits of character, his genial, courtly manners, warm heart, generous hospitality, and his long career of usefulness. Mr. Averill married Miss Jane A. M. Russell, daughter of John Russell, a prominent lawyer in Troy, and from whose office many eminent men were graduated, such as Ambrose Spencer, Governor Marcy and others, since famous in the history of the State. Miss Russell's mother was a daughter of Stephen Hogeboom, of Claverack, Columbia County, whose ancestors came to this country from Holland in 1637, along with the Van Cortlands, Van Rensselaers and other historical names. Mr. Averill had the misfortune to lose his wife - to whom he was devotedly attached- only three years after their marriage. He never remarried and left but one child, Mrs. Jane R. A. Carter, who now resides at Cooperstown, and whose mansion and fine grounds and surroundings, near the lake, constitute one of the many attractions of that delightful village.

Contemporary Biography of New York; published March 1882:
CLASS OF 1816

WILLIAM H. AVERELL

Was born in Cooperstown, N. Y., in 1794, seven years after his father came to the town of Otsego. He received a thorough education, and graduated at Union College. He subsequently studied law, and was admitted to practice. He did not long continue actively engaged in his profession, owing to the fact that, on the death of his father, he found his time fully occupied with the management of his business and estate. Mr. Averell continued to reside in Cooperstown until his death which occurred in August, 1873. His ancestors were mainly of English origin, and were among the early settlers of this country. He had some French blood in his veins, and inherited many of the characteristics and distinguishing features of that people. His grandfather served for a short time in the army of the Revolution.

Mr. Averell never held any public office except that of bank commissioner, to which he was appointed in 1841 by the governor and senate. The duties of this office were discharged with marked fidelity and intelligence. His political convictions and opinions were of the most pronounced character; and for the greater part of his active political life—contending in the minority—he was a valuable and influential man, and was recognized as a leading mind by the most prominent Whigs of the State during the existence of that party. Mr. Averell once or twice accepted a nomination for congress against great odds and with no expectation of election.

He was one of the original directors of the Otsego County bank, organized in 1830; he always remained a member of the board, and was several years its president. He continued in the First National bank as director and principal shareholder.

Intellectually, Mr. Averell had no superiors in the county and few in the State. His brain was large, his perceptive faculties acute, his mind active, and his memory excellent. He had a keen sense of humor; and his acquaintance with men and history made him a most interesting companion for young and old. He was of the "old school" and held his views and opinions with firmness and tenacity; but he never harbored a grudge or cherished animosity. To the poor he was a constant benefactor; and when a man enjoyed his confidence he was his friend for life.
His interest in his native village was unflagging; but with the prodigality and extravagance of the times, so especially marked after the inflation attending a paper currency, he was ever at war.

He was an Episcopalian, and long a vestryman in Christ Church in this village.

The friends who knew Mr. Averell well for many years will long remember him for his many excellent deeds, kindly traits of character, his great courtesy, his warm heart, his hospitality, and his usefulness.

From History of Otsego County    P-280
Hurd
Everts & Fariss, Philadelphia, 1878