

Born at Salisbury, August 4, 1809. Graduated at Union College, 1832. Admitted to this Bar in 1834 and practiced at Salisbury until 1849, when he removed to Danbury, where he had a successful practice and held many important offices and was Lieutenant Governor of the State during the four years of the Civil war. He was one of the organizers of the American Bar Association. He died in Danbury, December 9, 1883. (Obituary in 50th Conn. Report) p. 222

I will now speak of another gentleman, a lawyer in Salisbury, Roger Averill. He was a graduate of Union College, tall, erect and well proportioned, dignified in manners and a lawyer of fair ability. He practiced in Salisbury for some years, but the field was not sufficiently wide and he moved to Danbury and practiced there, until he was made Lieut.-Governor during a portion of the time of the distinguished was governor, Gov. Buckingham. He was my opponent in many cases that we tried and he early taught me an important lesson in table pounding. In a case we were trying before a justice I became quite vehement and brought my fist down on the table so strong and so often that he commiserated me and felt sorry for me, and he kindly placed a law book upon the table on the spot where I had been hammering and said "Brother Warner, I am afraid you will injure your hand, the book is softer." That took all the starch out of me. p.108

The Bench and Bar of Litchfield
County, Connecticut, 1709-1909
Dwight C. Kilbourn
Litchfield, Conn.
1909.

Roger Averill was born in Salisbury in this State on August 14, 1809.

He came of good New England stock, among whom were some of the earliest settlers of the State, his parents being Nathaniel P. Averill and Mary Whittlesey. One of a family of seven children, reared on a small farm, his education had, of course, to be mainly that of his own earnings. By the aid of a common school and a public library, by farming in summer and teaching in winter, he prepared for college under the guidance of his brother Chester, a professor in Union College, and was graduated from that institution with honor in 1832.

After studying law with Judge (afterward Chief Justice) Church in his native town, he was admitted to the Bar in 1837, and opened an office for practice, after teaching for a short time in the Academy there. In 1849 he removed to Danbury, and at once attained a wide and successful practice. Of fine personal appearance, with a ceremonious courtliness of the old school, a ready man of business, industrious by instinct, sound of judgment, and careful in advice, seizing and presenting in an effective way the strong points of a case to the jury, and securing the confidence of the court by the general justness of his legal propositions, he always stood well in the ranks of his profession, to which he was greatly attached, and whose honor and welfare no one had more nearly at heart. A man of instant impressiveness, his native power was constrained by a caution so guarded and ingrained that he sometimes failed to give in expression the full force of his thought. Conservative by nature and apt to keep his own secrets well, he was open, candid, and thorough in his dealings with his clients, whose lifelong fealty he held when they realized the virtue of his wise and peace-loving counsels.

In the public society he filled many functions, beginning with all the various and useful apprenticeships of the country lawyer. A town clerk, judge of probate, school visitor, trustee of the State Normal School, member of the State Board of Education, member of the Legislature, presiding officer of the Senate, and in other offices of trust, he discharged his official and fiduciary duties with acceptance.

In the spring of 1861 he was a prominent leader of the political party which opposed the election of President Lincoln, but the instant the news came of the assault on Fort Sumter, he hastened to fling his flag to the breeze, first of his townsmen, and waiting for no following. Thenceforth he devoted himself enthusiastically to the success of the Union cause.

After the war his participation in public affairs and the care of private trusts prevented that devotion to strictly legal pursuits so essential to the highest success in his profession. His interest, however, in everything tending to its welfare remained unabated. He was one of the organizers of the American Bar Association, and an active participant in its proceedings up to the year of his death. He

was for several years acting chairman of the Bar of his county. A good parliamentarian, prompt, decided, and dignified, he was often chosen to preside in public assemblages.

He married in October, 1844, Maria D. White, of Danbury, who died February, 1860. In September, 1861, he married Mary A. Perry, of Southport, who survives him. He left four children, 2 sons and 2 daughters, the sons following their father's profession--John, the only son living, being the present clerk of the Superior Court of New London County.

Mr. Averill died at Danbury, December 9, 1883 at the ripe age of 74, untouched by the infirmities of old age.

History of the Bar of Danbury, Conn.
By Elisha Whittlesey
History of Danbury, Conn.-1684-1896
p. 356.
James Montgomery Bailey
New York
1896.

1832

ROGER AVERILL:

Born August 13, 1809, at Salisbury, Conn.

Married (1) Oct. 16, 1844, at Danbury, Conn., Mary D. White, b. Nov. 23, 1818, daughter of Roswell and Mary (Wildman) White, jeweler and silversmith, New York City.

Mr. Averill graduated at Union College, 1832

Mrs. Mary Averill died in Danbury, Conn., Feb. 14, 1860.

Mr. Averill married (2) at Southport, Conn., Sept. 18, 1861, Miss Mary Perry, daughter of Austin and Emily Perry, of Southport, Conn.

Roger Averill was Lieutenant Governor of the State of Connecticut, 1862 to 1866.

He died at Danbury, Conn., Dec. 9, 1883.

The children by the first marriage were:

1. Arthur Hoyt, b. July 6, 1845, at Salisbury, Conn., graduate Union College, 1869 (Note: Not in our alumni catalogue). He died Aug. 9, 1894 at Danbury, Conn.
2. Mary White, b. May, 1847, at Salisbury, Conn., died Aug. 24, 1850, at Danbury.
3. John Chester, b. Dec. 21, 1848, at Salisbury, Conn; m. Hattie Clark.
4. Roswell White, b. July 27, 1853, at Danbury; d. Dec. 9, 1853, at Danbury.
5. Harriet Evelina, b. Oct. 25, 1854, at Danbury; resides at Danbury, Conn.
6. Maria White, b. Sept. 30, 1857, at Danbury, Conn.

Whittlesley Genealogy

p. 208

Charles Barney Whittelsey

Hartford, Conn.

1898.

ROGER AVERILL, 1832, of Salisbury, Conn., was a member of the Philomathean Society.
Philomathean Catalogue 1830

(Died: 1883)

CLASS OF 1832

ROGER AVERILL

Born August 13, 1809 at Salisbury, Conn., came of good New England stock, among whom were some of the earliest settlers of the State of Connecticut. As one of a family of seven children reared on a small farm, his education had to be, of course, mainly that of his own earnings. By the aid of a common school and a public library, by farming in summer and teaching in winter, he prepared for college under the guidance of his brother Chester, a professor at Union College and was graduated from that college with honor in 1832. After studying law with Judge (afterward Chief Justice) Church in his native town, he was admitted to the Bar in 1837, and opened an office for practice, after teaching in the Academy for a short time. In 1849 he removed to Danbury and at once attained a wide and successful practice. Of fine personal appearance, with a ceremonious courtliness of the old school, a ready man of business, industrious by instinct, sound of judgment, and careful in advice---he stood well in the ranks of his profession, to which he was greatly attached, and whose honor and welfare no one had more nearly at heart. Conservative by nature, and apt to keep his own secrets well, he was open, candid and thorough in his dealings with his clients, whose life long fealty he held when they realized the virtue of his wise and peace-loving counsels.

In public service he filled many functions, such as trustee of the State Normal School and member of the State Board of Education. He was a member of the Legislature and presiding officer of the Senate, and was Lieutenant Governor of the State of Connecticut for four years,--with Gov. Buckingham, from 1862 to 1866, during the Civil War.

In the spring of 1861 he was a prominent leader of the political party which opposed the election of President Lincoln, but the instant the news came of the assault on Fort Sumter, he hastened to fling his flag to the breeze, the first of his townsmen, and waiting for no man. Thenceforth he devoted himself enthusiastically to the success of the Union arms. A company from Danbury under Capt. George M. Southmayd was called the "Averill Rifles," in honor of Hon. Roger Averill. After the war his participation in public affairs and the care of private trusts prevented devotion to strictly legal pursuits----, although his interest in everything tending to the welfare of his profession remained unabated.

He was one of the organizers of the American Bar Association, and an active participant in its proceedings up to the year of his death.

Mr. Averill was married (1) October 16, 1844, at Danbury, Conn., by Rev. Rollin S. Stone, pastor of the Congregational Church at Danbury, to Maria D. White (daughter of Roswell White, a jeweller and silversmith of New York City, and of Mary Wildman, his wife), born Nov. 23, 1818, at New York City. She was a woman of great kindness of nature, and wide sympathy for the poor and friendless, and she had the warmest affection for little children. Her great-grandfather, Ebenezer White, was pastor of the Danbury Congregational Church for twenty-three

CLASS OF 1832--Roger Averill---2

years before the American Revolution, and her ancestors were first settlers of the town of Danbury. She died February 14, 1860, at Danbury.

Mr. Averill married (2) September 18, 1861 at Southport, Conn., Mary Perry (daughter of Austin Perry of Southport and Emily Milne, his wife)

Mr. Averill died at Danbury, December 9, 1883, at the ripe age of 74, untouched by the infirmities of old age. Mrs. Averill survived him several years. She died November 23, 1902, at the family residence in Danbury.

Children:

1. Arthur Hoyt, born July 6, 1845, at Salisbury; was graduated at Yale, Class of 1869. He followed his father's profession and practiced law with him in Danbury. He was Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, and later Prosecuting Attorney. He died August 9, 1894, at Danbury.

2. Mary White, born May, 1847 at Salisbury; died Aug. 24, 1850 at Danbury.

3. John Chester, born Dec. 21, 1849 at Salisbury; married Hattie Clark.

4. Roswell White, born July 27, 1853 at Danbury; died there December 9, 1853.

5. Harriet Evalina, born October 25, 1854 at Danbury.

6. Maria White, born September 30, 1857 at Danbury.

Miss Averill and Miss Maria White Averill have travelled extensively, though retaining the family residence at Danbury.

Photograph of the family residence accompanies this sketch.

Averell-Averill-Avery
Clara A. Avery

pp. 747-51

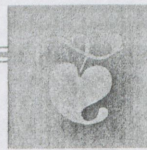
CLASS OF 1832

ROGER AVERILL

Was born in Salisbury, Conn., August 14, 1809. He was educated at Union College, graduating in the Class of 1832. He studied law with Chief Justice Samuel Church, of Salisbury, Conn. He was admitted to the Litchfield County bar and practiced in Salisbury until, in 1849, he removed to Danbury, where he has since practiced. In 1843 he represented the town of Salisbury in the State Legislature, and was elected judge of the Probate Court, District of Danbury, which position he held for three years; he also held the office of trustee of the State Normal School for thirteen consecutive years. He was elected Lieutenant Governor in 1862-65, and represented Danbury in the Legislature in 1868. He was appointed Commissioner for the State of Connecticut to the World's Fair to be held in New York in 1883, on the One Hundredth anniversary of the treaty of peace and recognition of American Independence.

Mr. Averill was twice married----first to Miss Maria D. White of Danbury. By this marriage he had four children: Arthur H., a practicing lawyer with his father, in Danbury John C., practicing with Jeremiah Halsey, Norwich, Conn. Harriet E., and Minnie W. His second wife was Miss Mary A. Perry of Southport, Conn.

History of Fairfield Co., Conn. pp. 14-5
D. Hamilton Hurd
J. W. Lewis & Co
Philadelphia 1881



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April 12, 2014

Ms. Marlene Deschamps
Archives Specialist
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Dear Marlene,

The information on Chester and Roger Averill arrived safely yesterday. I sat down straightaway to read it all and found it exactly what I wanted. Now I have an image of what these two men were like as well as their accomplishments. Thank you SO much for having it sent to me.

The Averill family first came to America in 1637, one of eight families among my forebears who came stateside within twenty years of the Mayflower's arrival in 1621! I am following these family trails until they meet in my grandparents, Admiral and Mrs. Reginald Rowan Belknap. Chester Averill was my grandmother's grandfather, and not much was known about him --- until now! You have helped me tremendously by filling in this gap.

After my grandfather died in 1959, the US Navy named a ship after him, USS BELKNAP. This guided missile frigate was launched in 1963 in Bath, ME, (I was there) and commissioned in 1964. She served our nation well until being decommissioned in 1995. Several years ago the men who served aboard her formed the USS BELKNAP Association and gather annually for a reunion. This coming October they will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the ship's commissioning. Those men love to hear me tell about our family, so I hope to have this project completed by then for their edification and pleasure.

As a matter of fact, my grandfather was himself the son of Adm. George Eugene Belknap, for whom the Navy named a first ship USS BELKNAP; my mother (then a teenager) was the one who Christened her in 1914. That ship was a destroyer and met her fate in a Japanese kamikazi attack in 1945. So you can see that, although Chester Averill had only one son, his son sired a remarkable daughter who married well and through whom the family heritage waxed rich!

Again, my thanks to any and all who provided the Averill information.

Mary Walmsley

Roger Averill

A.B. 1832

Roger Averill

1832
H. B.