

? AVERILL ?

Somebody once asked me, Is Averill Park named after Averill Hariman a former Governor of New York State? The answer is of course no. t But the question got to me. how did it come about? The Hamlet was formerly called Sand Lake, on Sand Lake. But know we have Averill Park on Crystal Lake! How did it happen. First the Averill family and its decedents lived in Sand Lake from its earliest days, was it named after the family? were did Park come from? Then, here were a number of famous early settlers such as the Fox's, Knowlson's, Akins etc. Why Averill!

The answer may be found by a look at the history of the Averill's in the Sand Lake area. Who were they?

We can trace the Averill family back to Isaac Averill. Isaac, the original Puritan emigrant was born in 1685 in Milford Haven, Wales. He landed in Mass. Bay and settled first in Topefield. Mass. Later he moved to Preston Conn. Sometime before 1748 settled in the Town of Kent, now Washington.

Dr. Isaac Averill a decedent of the emigrant he was both on June 25, 1750 in Melfotd Conn. died July 30, 1815 <

The doctor was a Revolutionary Surgeon. He married Hanna Miles, on Jan. 25, 1775 among their children were two sons who are part of our story, William Franklin Averill. and James Gill Averill.

As far as can be determined William F Averill was the first Averill to live in the area that became the Town of Sand Lake in 1813. He was born in Columbia County on March 3 1790, In the early 1800s he came to Sand Lake and had a farm on Teal Road. *OK*

William built and was proprietor of a Stage Coach House called the Phonex Hotel on the Troy Sand Lake Turnpike in 1829. The hotel was located diagonally across from the Glass Lake Inn, not far from the Glass Factory It was not uncommon for twenty to thirty teams of horses tied up in the yard. The hotel was destroyed by fire in 1845.

William Averill was active in Town government, a Town Clerk in 1825, was elected Supervisor of the Town of Sand Lake in 1827 and later a Justice of the Peace for a number of years. William died Sept. 2, 1838.

The second brother, James Gill Averill, was born in Flatbush, N. Y. on May 28, 1804. Some time later he moved to Sand Lake and in 1827 married Clarissa Sliter the daughter of Clemint Sliter. They had six children, two of which, Horatio F and James K are the main characters in the naming of Averill Park. James Gill, lived until 1881 and saw the name of the Town change. ~~James Gill Averill~~ is best remembered as leading the memorial Day Parade on his horse "Moscow",

????! OK
~~Two~~ Two of the sons of James Gill Averill and Clarissa Shuyler (Sliter) his wife both led interesting lives, being born in The Town of Sand Lake, and becoming prominent lawyers in New York City, as well as having homes in Sand Lake.

Horatio F. Averill, the oldest son of James Gill Averill was born in Sand Lake in , 1834. He received his early education at the Sand Lake Academy, a local Academy. At the age of 15 he left school and was employed in Troy at the law offices of David Seymour. David was a cousin of Governor Seymour. Horatio read law in Troy six years He was admitted to the Bar in 1855. and then moved to New York City and worked in the office of Clark & Rapals.

During his stay in New York City he often came back to Sand Lake. On one of his visits he became involved in a run away slave episode that is famous in Troy's History. In 1859 Charles Nalle, a slave, ran away from his owner in Virginia and ended up working at the steam saw mill in the mountains in Sand Lake. Horatio Averill communicated with Nalle owners in Virginia and arranged to have him arrested. In 1860 Nalle left Sand Lake and was employed as a coachman by Uri Gilbert on 2nd Ave. In April Averill as counsel with the agent of Nalle owners, had Nalle arrested and jailed. The story caused a great outpouring of sympathy by the citizens of Troy. A great crowd gathered before the United States Marshal office and when Nalle was brought out to appear before Judge Gold he was rescued by the crowd, taken across the river and escaped. It is reported that Averill seeing the spirit of the crowd went to the livery stable rented a rig and left Troy for Sand Lake as rapidly as possible. ~~He was never afterwards welcomed in Troy.~~

In 1864 Horatio moved to West Virginia and founded the Averill Coal & Oil Co. A Development of some 5000 acres of coal and oil lands in the great Kanawhs River in Putman Co. West Virginia. Among his associates were Henry J. Raymond of the New York Times and his cousin W. Averill. His obit credits Horatio as founding Raymond City, W. Va. In 1867 Horatio Averill sold his interest in the Averill Coal & Oil Co. and returned to New York City. He was an eminent counsellor of law and was admitted to practice in the Circuit and District Courts of New York State and the Supreme Court of the United States.

Although living in New York he returned regularly to Sand Lake living at his Sand Lake home (Sunset Lodge) on Burden Lake Road.

Horatio Franklin Averill died at his residence, 45 E 7676 St. New York City on May 14, 1887. He was interred in the Sand Lake Union Cemetery

James K. Averill, Horatio's younger brother was born in Sand Lake on October 12 1846. He was a student at Yale in 1865, but temporary illness and strained finances caused him to drop out. He spent a year as a teacher in Berlin N. Y. before entering Columbia Law School. James Averill graduated in 1869 and was admitted to the bar in Troy the same year. Between 1869 and 1873 he practiced law in New York City with his brother Horatio Averill. He then practiced alone in New York City for 4 years before he returned to Troy. From 1877 to 1883 he was in partnership with Albert Wooster then district attorney of Rensselaer County., in Troy and had his home in Sand Lake.

The development of Averill Park that led to its present name all began about 1870's. The information needed to back up this story is sketchy at best. Horatio F Averill and his brother James K Averill come into the picture at this time. From the review as outlined above both men born in Sand Lake they both spent most of their working days as lawyers in New York City. In Sand Lake both men had homes in Sand Lake and became active in real estate. Horatio Averill began purchasing farms and large plots of land. The first recorded development was in 1874. A 77 acre subdivision Named "Interlaken Park" was divided into building lots and offered for sale. This parcel was located on today's Burden Lake Road and Prospect Ave.

In 1875 William F. Scram the head of the Scram Collegiate Institute died and the school closed. Horatio Averill purchased the Institute and renovated into the "Averill Park Hotel" which became a famous summer resort. Located in a large grove with boats and fishing on Sand Lake. Daily stage coach from Troy to the Hotel was available.

The Hotel was

The Hotel also served as

*Telephone
& Road*

The Hotel was also the office for the Troy Sand Lake Telephone Co with connection to A. P. Knowlson Drug store in Troy. *original*

About 1878 the Averill brothers started the Averill Park Improvement Association, which combined their land holdings, laid out subdivisions, Advertising the health, comfort and convenience of the area. *Paul*

With this increase of activity the need of a post office was felt. In checking past records no information as to the effort and the people involved in bring the post office to this hamlet could be found. But on May 3, 1880 a Post Office was established and named "AVERILL"

In December of 1880 James K Averill purchased the old Rerchard farm on the north side of Sand Lake. his intentions were to lay out a mile race tract and build an elegant club house. and to building lots on the lake shore

Did this activity result to the renaming on ??, ?? 1882 of the Post Office to "AVERILL PARK" It would appear that the hamlet of Averill Park was named after both Horatio F Averill and James K. Averill. *5*

Horatio Averill died in 1887

James Averill continued his interest in real estate. The Averill Park Land Improvement Company was incorporated in 1896 with James the principle share holder with a number of Troy business men. In 1887 he was instrumental in organizing The Troy New England Railway, running from Troy to Averill Park.

James K Averill died in 1900. The Land Company continued operating into the 1900's but was in financial trouble. It Is said that Rebecca Jane Davis Averill, whom he married in 1886, spent her final years paying of the family debts.