



Photo courtesy of the Branford Historical Society

THE AVERILL HOMESTEAD once stood on Montowese Street and is now the site of the Branford Armory.

Pictures of the Past

Armory now on Averill homestead site

The Averill Homestead

The history of the Averill family in Branford revolves around the homestead that once stood at the corner of Montowese Street and Pine Orchard Road. The house was built about 1666 by John Robbins, an early settler of Branford, and had many owners during the 18th century. In 1805 Enoch Staples Jr. sold the house to Daniel Averill.

Daniel Averill was born in 1763 and served in the Revolutionary War as a fifer in the 7th Regiment of New Milford, Connecticut. According to legend, he befriended Lafayette during the war and on his 1834 tour of this country Lafayette visited Averill in Branford. After the war Averill was a sea captain and lived in Plattsburg, N.Y. During a business trip to Branford to sell grain, he so liked the town that he decided to stay. Daniel married his second wife, Hannah Tyler of Branford, and he had 12 children in all. Hannah died in 1841 and Daniel in 1842. Both are buried in Cente Cemetery.

All of Daniel's sons were seafaring men and remained in Branford. A number of descendants built houses along Montowese Street that still stand today. Among them are the Connecticut National Bank and Branford Manor. James Averill, son of Daniel and Hannah, was born at the homestead in 1807 and died there in 1897. His daughter, Lucy, and her husband, Nicholas

Terhune were the last of the family to live at the Averill home.

The State of Connecticut chose the site for a new armory and the Averill homestead was razed. The new armory, costing \$40,000, was dedicated in 1913. A corner cupboard was salvaged from the old house and is located in the Guild Room at Trinity Church.

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