

WILLIAM H JENNINGS For more fifty years the name of Jennings has been identified with the professional and life of Norwich The first of the family to in that town was William H Jennnigs who young manhood taught school in Greeneville later became the pioneer photographer of the city being among the first if not the first to daguerreotype work in Norwich His only son William H Jr became one of the well known members of the New London county Bar and his William H 3 who is one of the well known young men of the city is now the only male representative of the family left there William H Jennings was born in Eagleville near Willimantic Conn Aug 10 1819 and came of good old Revolutionary stock His mother Betsey Parsons was a daughter of Jesse Parsons first enlisted Feb 6 1777 for three years as a private in Capt Samuel Hait's Company Connecticut Militia He took part in the battle of Germantown Oct 4 1777 was at Valley Forge during the winter of 1777 78 was in the battle of Monmouth June 28 1778 engaged in storming Stony Point July 15 1779 and was discharged Feb 6 1780 On April 29 1781 Mr Parsons enlisted for a second time joining Capt James Dana's Company which was a part of a battalion for the defense of the sea coast from Horse Neck to New Haven and on July 2 1781 this company joined Washington then encamped at Phillipsburg From March 1 1782 to March 1 1783 Jesse Parsons name is found on the records as a member of Capt Jabez Fitch's Company of the Independent Volunteers in service of Connecticut and he is also on record as a Revolutionary pensioner by the pension laws of March 18 1818 William H Jennings was one of eight children He was only four years old when his father died and when but a lad he began to do for himself It was chiefly through his own efforts that he obtained an education and he not only accomplished that but prepared himself for teaching following that profession when a young man He taught school in Rhinebeck on the Hudson and later taught in

Greeneville in Norwich He was successful as an instructor not only as a result of his scholarly attainments but from his infusion of discipline into the school without sacrificing his popularity with the pupils In 1849 he joined in the rush to California and spent a couple of years there with much success Upon his return to New England he located in Norwich and there engaged in photographing a business he followed for about thirty five years during which time he was without doubt the best known photographer in eastern Connecticut and enjoyed a high reputation for producing artistic work For many years his studio was located in the Boswell building but later he moved to rooms over the Boston Store Disposing of his business finally he retired to private life and busied himself in looking after the care of his property on Laurel Hill Mr Jennings married Miss Nancy Rogers of Stafford Springs Conn who died in Norwich May 15 1885 aged sixty one years Two children were born to them William H who is mentioned below and Ella who became the wife of Rev EG Selden a Congregational clergyman and died Nov 17 1897 Mr Jennings made a success of life not only in the accumulation of property but in the influence he wielded and in the example he set He had a great love of books and was a wide reader with a retentive memory thus acquiring a vast fund of information He was a well known citizen and he served with ability in the common council and held other town offices He was a faithful member of the Broadway Congregational Church His death occurred at the home of his grandson on Laurel Hill Norwich Oct 27 1898 and he was buried in Yantic cemetery Three months previous he had been prostrated by a shock and for eleven weeks he had been helpless receiving every possible attention from his devoted daughter in law Mrs William H Jeninngs Jr with whom he had resided for thirteen years Mr Jennings had a kindly disposition and was in every sense a home man He had the confidence of his fellowmen and although well posted on public matters never sought office the honors in that line coming to him wholly unsolicited He led a model life and his death caused universal regret William H Jennings Jr only son of William H Jennings was born Jan 9 1855 in Norwich He received his preliminary training in the public schools of that city and later he was graduated from the Norwich Free Academy with the class of 1873 After leaving the Academy he studied law with Solomon Lucas and was admitted to the Bar of New London county He acquired a good practice and was most successful in all that he attempted great attention to detail and thoroughly all the points in the cases committed to his care For a number of years he filled the office of clerk of the city court and for two years was assistant judge of the city court In 1880 Villiam H Jennings Jr was united in marriage with Miss Luc_v Coit Elliott of Norwich daughter of the late Capt William Elliott and l lary Josephine Rawson One child came of this union Villiam H born Sept IO 1881 who is the third illiam H in direct line and now resides in the old home on

Laurel Hill William H Jennings Jr died Jan 2 1898 and was buried in Yantic cemetery He was one of the best known men in this section of the State and his personal acquaintance was as large as his personal popularity He was an enthusiastic admirer of a good horse and was one of the prominent members of the Gentlemen's Driving Club From early boyhood he was fond of athletics and while a student in the Academy took an active interest in base ball a sport that always appealed strongly to him his interest in the great national game seemed to increase with his more mature years Some few years ago he assisted in the management of one of the strongest professional teams that ever represented Norwich Any movements for the advancement or support of reputable sports found in him a substantial helper His friends were many and honest expressions of regret at his untimely death were heard on all sides His genial happy disposition was a strong characteristic and everybody who knew him liked him He was upright and honorable in all his dealings and his private life was above reproach Since the death of Mr Jennings his widow has remarried being now the wife of VWilliam F Hill the well known real estate dealer of Norwich.

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