

Cooke family dates back to early 1800s in Branford



PICTURES
OF THE PAST

Jane Peterson Bouley

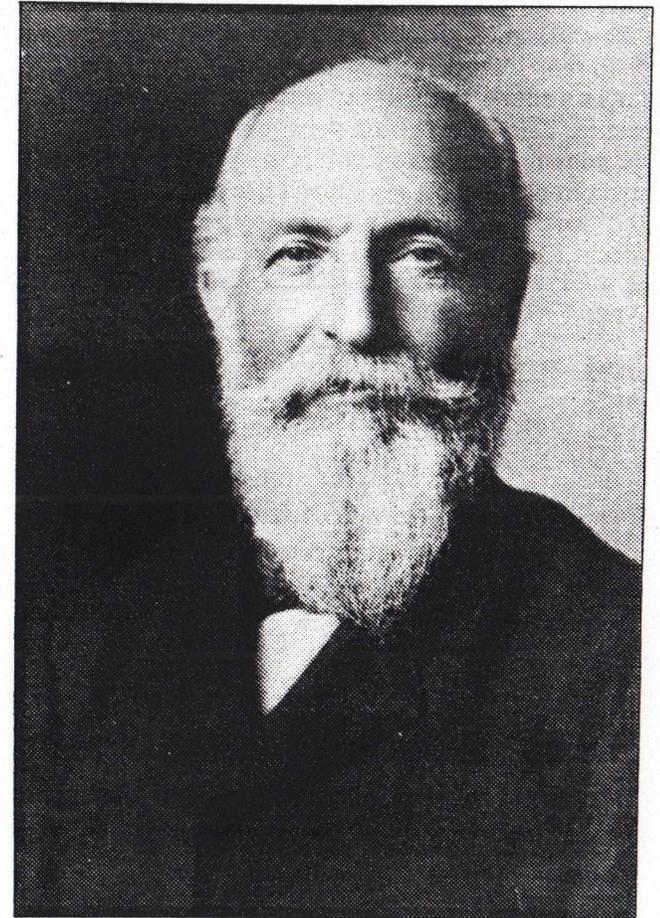
The name Cooke is fairly common in Branford, Guilford and North Branford and they all descend from Henry Cooke who was an early settler of Wallingford. Increase W. Cooke of Guilford married Harriet Delia Griffing of Branford in 1832. Like so many Connecticut residents of that period the Cookes went "west" and settled in Mendon, Ill., where Increase died in

1847. Harriet and the children returned to Branford after his death.

Samuel Griffing Cooke, the son of Increase and Harriet, was born in 1835 at Honey Creek, Mendon, Ill., where he served in Co. A of the 50th Illinois Regiment during the Civil War. After the war he returned to Branford and engaged in several businesses among them an oil business in Indian Neck and a sawmill on Paved Street. In 1872 he purchased the 148-acre Griffing farm at the corner of East Main Street and Leetes Island Road (then called the Guilford Turnpike and Paved Street). He was a farmer and fruit grower and started what is now known as Hilltop Orchards.

Samuel G. Cooke married Cornelia Augusta Palmer of Paved Street in 1868 and they raised five children. They both lived to the age of 80 and are buried in Center Cemetery. Hilltop Orchard is now being operated by the fourth generation of the Cooke family and is the oldest family-owned business in Branford.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Jane Peterson Bouley is the historian for the Branford Historical Society.)



Samuel Griffing Cooke (1835-1915) of Branford from Beers Commemorative Biography of New Haven.