

Pictures of the Past

Branford Savings Bank celebrates 100th anniversary

Branford Savings Bank was incorporated April 3, 1889 and has served the community for the past 100 years. The incorporators were well-known business men of Branford and included Thorvald Hammer, Lester Nichols, Frederick Jourdan, George Parker, Michael Harding, Walter Foote and Jay Russell. The first meeting was held at the Robinson and Foote Drug Store at the corner of Main Street and Rogers Street where the officers were elected.

Much of the history of the bank involves the Foote Family of Branford. Walter Foote, an original incorporator, was elected secretary and treasurer of the bank in 1891. The bank opened for business Sept. 1, 1891 at the town hall and shared an office with the town clerk (who happened to be the same Walter Foote). The first account was opened by Forrester L. Hammer and deposits in those early years were brought by stage to New Haven every evening by George W. Beach.

The Foote family would be involved in the management of the bank for many years. William R. Foote was elected secretary and treasurer following his

brother Walter's death in 1899. The position was also held by William's son Wallace H. Foote from 1913 until 1953. Another bank in town was the Branford Trust, a commercial bank which was founded by the Foote family in 1907. The Foote family continued in the banking business until the death of Wallace Foote in 1966.

Branford Savings outgrew its quarters at the town hall and built its first building in 1911 at the corner of Main Street and Harrison Avenue. Also sharing this building when it first opened was the Branford Trust. At that time there was only one teller and William Foote had a large wooden desk in the back of the bank in front of the safe. Branford Trust moved to Montowese Street in 1954 but Branford Savings remained in the Main Street building until they moved to its present location in 1975.

During its 100 years Branford Savings has witnessed the monumental changes of the last century and remains one of Branford's oldest businesses.

Jane Peterson Bouley



Photo by Mason Foote Smith, courtesy of the Branford Historical Society

BRANFORD SAVINGS BANK, as it looked in the 1920s.