

Pictures of the Past

# Gaylord founded Branford Visiting Nurse Association

One of Branford's leading citizens at the turn of the century was Dr. Charles Woodward Gaylord. He was born Aug. 28, 1846 in Wallingford, the son of David and Bertha (Bartholomew) Gaylord. One of his ancestors was William Gaylord, a first settler of Windsor.

Charles Gaylord graduated with a medical degree from Yale College in 1870 and trained at Bellevue in New York. He came to Branford and opened his practice November 1872 in the Post Office Block and soon gained a reputation for his expertise.

In 1878 the Methodist Church disbanded and Dr. Gaylord purchased their building at 85 South Main St. He converted the church into the Gaylord Opera House and for many years it offered a wide range of entertainment to the public. In 1896 the opera house closed and Dr. Gaylord remodeled it for his medical office. The doctor and his family lived next door at 93 South Main St.

Dr. Gaylord contributed many hours of his time to the town of Branford. He was the health officer for Branford and North Branford, was chairman of the Board of Education for 20 years, a member of the Branford Village Improvement Society and was an original trustee of the James Blackstone Memorial Library. His foremost contribution was the founding in



Photo courtesy of the Branford Historical Society  
**DR. CHARLES WOODWARD GAYLORD** as pictured in the *History of New Haven by Rockey.*

1910 of the Branford Visiting Nurse Association.

Dr. Gaylor died Aug. 4, 1918 in Branford at the age of 71. His practice was continued by his son, Dr. Charles William Gaylor, until his death in 1971. The South Main Street homestead is still occupied by the family.

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