

Cook, Ralph P.

b 1832, Lyme, N. H.

m 1853 Margaret L. Evans of Goshen, Ind. She
was b in Eng. 1835.

Chil: Sears, Carroll, Wm. D., Nellie, Frank

The gr. gr. grandfather came to America in an
early day and settled in N. H.

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COOK, RALPH P.—Section 23, P. O. Deep River. Two brothers came to America, probably from England, in an early day, and one of them settled on the seashore and the other in New Hampshire, thus becoming separated forever. The latter was the great-grandfather of the subject of our sketch, whose grandfather was born and raised on a farm in New Hampshire, and died about 1809, leaving thirteen children, all of whom grew up and raised families. The youngest son (Sears) was born August 28, 1802, in Grafton county, New Hampshire, where he was raised on a farm. When

twelve years old he served his brother, Major James Cook, as body servant in the War of 1812, and died July 3, 1875. His son Ralph, one among ten children, was born in Lyme, New Hampshire, April 30, 1832, raised on a farm, and received his primary education in the district schools of his native place, and afterward attended the high schools of Lebanon, New Hampshire, St. Johnsbury and Johnson, Vermont, where he commenced studying the languages, and was shortly afterward forced to discontinue his educational pursuits by impaired health. In the spring of 1852 he went to Elyria, Ohio, where he clerked in a store for two years, when he came to Iowa, and, in co-partnership with J. C. Cutting, entered 760 acres in this, and 160 in Cedar county, and the next year bought Cutting's interest. After securing his land he was employed by the contractors of the Muscatine and Washington Railroad, sent to Pond Creek station, Illinois, after horses and carts, and upon his return the first Irish shanty was built, and the first railroad grading was accomplished west of the Mississippi River under his supervision; he also shipped the first freight on the Mississippi and Missouri (now Chicago and Rock Island) Railroad, December 31, 1861, from Victor to Marengo. During his subsequent clerkship at the Oglesby House, in Muscatine, he first met with J. B. Grinnell, who had just arrived with his colony. He then returned East, entering into various kinds of enterprises until 1862, when he again came to Iowa, bringing a drove of sheep, which he herded on his land until 1869, 3,000 of which were lost by disease. In the fall of 1862 he was burned out of stables, feed and lumber, sustaining a loss of about \$500. In 1865 he commenced improving his land and built his house. Mr. Cook married, July 9, 1863, Margaret L. Evans, of Goshen, Indiana, who was born in Flinchire, England, March 6, 1835, and came to America, with her father's family when fourteen years of age. Their children are as follows: Sears Carroll (born September 16, 1864), William D. (born March 23, 1867), Nellie (born September 29, 1869, died April 2, 1872) and Frank E. (born June 16, 1873); besides these an adopted child, Louisa Ellen (born February 23, 1878). Mr. Cook owns one of the most beautiful farms in the State, comprising 450 acres, unsurpassed in quality, besides eighty acres of excellent pasturage in Lincoln township, section 23. His property is in excellent condition, and he has the reputation of handling more stock of all kinds of his own raising than any other man in his township. He is a wide-awake man of enterprise, whose energies are ever active, and a gentleman of wide acquaintance and great influence.