

Pop's Ancestors

by Patty Rice

Records show that Joseph Henry Tice (Jost Henrich Thies) came to America from Germany in 1735. His father started with him but died at sea. He settled in Orange County, New York. Joseph's son was Henry Tice, captain in the Revolutionary War. Henry's son was Solomon Van Gordon Tice I. He was born in Canada and when he was about twenty years of age, he moved to Yale, Michigan, where he married Elizabeth Hart. They had fourteen children. Besides this family, he supported an illegitimate daughter, Emily. Solomon's children were:

1. Jemina (ca 1836-1900) married (1869) Sam Bowers, and moved to Ames, Iowa.
2. Henry Pheneas (1838-1885) another soldier in the Civil War, married (1865) Delilah Radley and moved to Tennessee.
3. Huldah (1839-1899) Married (1862) Joel Bonney and moved to Mecosta County.
4. Jonathan (1841-1921) was a soldier in the Civil War. His wife was Mary Ann and married in 1865. They lived in Yale, Michigan
5. Phoebe (1843/6 – 1910) married (1864) John Condon, a soldier in the civil war, and went to Nebraska to live.
6. Elizabeth (1848-1922) married (1864) a brother to John Condon. Her husband, Jim, was also a soldier in the Civil War. They went to Nebraska to live.
7. Harriet (1842-1864), who married (1873) a man by the name of David Bagley, lived in Mecosta County but she died at the age of 22.
8. Albert (1853-1922) and
9. Alfred (1853-1872) were twins. Albert "Bert" lived in Mecosta County. He was the father of Clarence, Henry, and John. Alfred died at the age of nineteen.
10. William "Bill"(1855-1920) lived in Mecosta County. His sons were Charlie and George.
11. Jane and
12. Jenny were twins. Jane died in infancy and Jenny (1856-1875) died in her teens.
13. Mary (about 1857- 1920) married Billy McCormack. Her children were William, Frank, and John. They lived in Mecosta County.

Jonathan and Henry were soldiers as were their sisters' husbands, the Condon brothers. Jim Condon enlisted three times under different names. He would desert, then someone would offer him \$100.00 to go in his place and he would soon run away again. They called it "jumping the bounty." One time, he and a Negro jumped from a boat on the Detroit River and swam to shore. Jim swam with a gold watch in his mouth. Once he came near being caught. He went home and while

soldiers were searching his house, he hid under some junk in the attic. Grandpa Tice (Solomon II {1847-1913}) used to say, "Miserable, miserable man." He got an honorable discharge and drew a pension.

When Mary, the youngest child was four years of age, Solomon I(1810-1880) brought his family consisting of wife and seven children who were still at home, to Mecosta county, Michigan, to take up a homestead (1858). He was one of the earliest pioneers in that area. The nearest towns, when Solomon I came to Mecosta County, were Big Rapids, Sherman City, and Evert. Sometimes they would walk or ride a horse to Big Rapids for supplies. In the winter, they pulled a bobsled. They always carried a gun in the event that they might see something to shoot for food. It was woods all the way.

One winter night the men expected to be back early but a storm delayed them. They were out of flour and meal. Grandpa Tice said that his mother cried as the children went to bed without supper. Nearly midnight, the men came home and his mother woke the children up and gave them mush and milk.

Grandpa Tice told of a man who lived near Chippewa Lake that wasn't very bright. He had been to Big Rapids for groceries. When he was putting the groceries away, he noticed that he had forgotten to get soda. He was so angry that he whipped himself all of the way back to Big Rapids saying, "I'll teach you to forget your *sody!*"

Harriet was a young married daughter that still lived in Yale. She and her husband, Mr. Bagley, decided to move to Mecosta County too. They left home with horses and a wagon and drove through, stopping overnight with whomever would keep them. They were south of Big Rapids the last night of their trip when they stopped at a cabin to stay overnight. The man said they could stay, but he lived alone and was getting ready to go to town.

Harriet was too tired to go to town, but her husband said that he would go. The country was all dark woods and she was afraid. Just before dark, she looked out of the window and saw a big dog. She felt better then and thought if she could only call him in, he would be company for her. She went to the door and coaxed and called, but the dog ran off into the woods. Later in the evening, the men returned and a pack of wolves were around the cabin. The man told her that the big dog that she had seen was a wolf. Harriet died when she was only twenty-two.

When the Civil War was over, Henry Tice came to Mecosta County. In the early days, there was lots of wrestling and fighting to see who was the best man. Uncle Henry seemed to be the champion. He would fight everyone's battles. Grandpa Tice wasn't far behind.

Someone called Uncle Henry a bad name when he was in a saloon in Evert. Uncle Henry beat him up so badly that someone called the law officer. While he was being called, Uncle Henry slipped out of the back door, came around to the front and went in with the officer. The officer asked who beat the man up, but no one dared to answer.

Uncle Bert got in trouble one day. The fellow wanted to fight him. Uncle Bert said, "I've a brother, Solomon at home that can whip you." The fellow came home with him and asked, "Where is the man that can whip me?" Grandpa Tice was in bed with the measles. He jumped out of bed, went outside, and whipped the man. There was snow on the ground and Grandpa had poor eyes for the rest of his life as a result of the cold that he caught.

Uncle Henry married Delilah Radley. They had five children when they decided to move to Tennessee. The children were Will, Mary, Huldah, Jennie, and Alfred. Huldah was a triplet. The other two babies died at birth. Soon after the family was settled in Tennessee, Mary, who was very young, married Dick Olmstead. A short time later, her brother, Will married. Uncle Henry had epileptic seizures after he came out of the army. During one of these seizures, he died. This left Delilah with three children still at home and another child to be born in four or five months. She didn't know how she could care for her family. She finally sold everything that she had, took her three children and went to the depot to buy a train ticket. It was hard for her to decide whether to go to her husband's parents or to hers. She said that she didn't know until she came to the ticket window then decided to go to Big rapids and to the Tices. Arthur was born there. When he was ten months old, she married her husband's brother Solomon II. When Arthur was two years old, Dudley Van Gorden was born on September 13, 1887. Grandpa Tice had been a bachelor for 38 years when he married. Jennie married a man named Sweeny and Huldah (Delilah and Henry's child) married Will Wolf. Grandpa (Solomon II) and Grandma (Delilah) Tice lived near the old homestead where Dudley was born. They lived there until he was ten years of age. Then they moved one and one-half miles south and west of Barryton where Dudley went to the Hunt School.

When Dudley was five years old, he and his brother were quarreling over the axe. Dudley wanted it and Arthur said that when he struck it into the block of wood, he

could have it. Dudley thought he wouldn't be able to get the axe loose so he reached out to push the block over, thus sticking his finger under the axe. His finger hung by a piece of flesh. His father took him to a doctor in Chippewa Lake who said that he could put the finger back on but it would always be still and in his way, so he cut it off. Fortunately, it was his left hand. Dudley's parents were converted in the Free Methodist Church, which was a log church. They were very strict with their children. The boys were not allowed to toss a ball to each other on Sunday. If the boys caught a fish or picked a few wild strawberries on Sunday Grandma Tice wouldn't let them prepare them for dinner.

Alfred got work in a livery barn in town. The men there used to play cards for a pastime. One day a man gave him an old deck of cards. The boys slept upstairs and their parents made them take a kerosene lantern to go to bed as they might knock a lamp over. They would get in bed and play cards. If they heard their parents coming, they would put the lantern under the blankets. Dudley said that they would take the cards to the field with them when they went to hoe and when they got far enough away so that their father couldn't see them, they would play cards behind a stump.

When he was in the eighth grade, Dudley had to quit school and go to work as his father's eyes were so bad. He went nearly blind. Dudley worked in the lumber camp when he was sixteen years of age. He always gave his earnings to the father as long as he lived at home.

The boys always went to church with their parents. Everyone sat quietly until the members knelt for a long session of prayer, then the fun would begin. A lot of the young fellows would sneak outside to see what mischief they could do. One night Dudley was chosen to go down to the basement of the church and turn the damper on the furnace to make it smoke. The church was filled with smoke quicker than they thought and an Elder came down to see what was the trouble while Dudley was still down there. Dudley told him that he was trying to see what the trouble was.

A strange young man came to church one night. They thought that they would have some fun with him. One of the boys went in and tapped him on the shoulder and told him that he was wanted outside. They took his suspenders down and made him think they were going to undress him. Then they let him get away and chased him into the church carrying his coat. A young fellow brought his girl friend to church one night in a bright shiny carriage. During the meeting the young rowdies filled the whip socket of the buggy with fresh cow manure so that when he took his whip

out he would get his hands dirty. They changed the wheels of the buggy by putting the back wheel in front. The back wheels were larger than the front ones. I have heard them tell of lots of things that they did.

Sometimes the boys were caught and arrested, but Dudley and Arthur didn't happen to be. Their parents would hear about the trouble and would be so glad that their boys had been in church with them. Mary, who had married Dick Olmsted and had stayed in Tennessee, had two children. Dick was much older than she and used to beat her and kick her, she said, until she was so afraid of him that she ran away and worked her way back to Michigan, leaving a boy who was five or six years of age (Henry) and a two year old baby, Clyde. She never saw the younger boy again, but when Henry was about sixteen, he and his uncle, Will Tice rode horses from Tennessee to Michigan. Will's wife and a child came later. They lived here a few years and then went to California. We never heard from them after the "flu" epidemic took so many lives in 1918.