

From Illinois to Taney County

by Goldie Rice Moore Thomas

My grandfather, James Bolten Rice, a millwright was born in Kankakee, Illinois (*he was born in New York*). When eighteen years old he joined the Union army to serve in the Civil War.

On the way to the Wilson Creek battlefield near Springfield, James Rice passed through Taney County. He fell in love with the country and vowed to bring his family and return. He did. He brought his wife and their son, Frank Rice, my father. Frank was a then six year old.

In due time James Rice acquired all the land he could homestead in the county including Short Creek Valley located west of the recent Tomahawk Trading Post. He farmed the bottom lands and raised stock in the hills.

Both Grandfather and Grandmother started teaching school in separate districts. Later Grandfather Rice was presiding Judge of the County Court.

When my Grandfather saw the need of a flour mill, he and my father built a three story mill and my father, Frank Rice, engineered a dam across Long Creek, about four miles above the now Table Rock Dam.

Later they added a cotton gin and a blacksmith shop. And my father was justice of the peace.

My mother, Mant Rice, kept the general store and was postmistress of Cedar Valley Missouri. Three sons, Roy, Bernie, and Phil and one daughter, Goldie, (that is I) were born in the upstairs of that two story store building. We all learned to swim in that mill pond.

My father would take several wagons to haul freight to and from Springfield, a week-long trip. I sometimes wanted to tag along. My father would say, "We could hang you on for tar bucket". I remember making the trip a couple of times, camping out along the way. Also shopping in Springfield.

Later my father purchased a farm which is now Clearwater Acres, a development.

You see I was born and bred to love the Ozarks, best place in the nation for year-around living.