

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "H. Tift." in a cursive script.

by Gary R. Moorhouse

(CLOCKS)

In 1669, John Woodcock started a settlement near the northern limit of the Rehoboth North Purchase on the Oulde Bay Road, and in 1670 opened an inn which was also one of a series of garrisons for defense from Indians.

Woodcock became the owner of many acres on both sides of Oulde Bay Road, and by inheritance and by marriage, parcels of this land eventually became the property of Nancy Woodcock, mother of Horace Tift, and the family of Orinda Blackinton who became his wife.

A portion of the Oulde Bay Road became the main street of the growing village of North Attleborough and part of the busy turnpike between Boston and Providence in stagecoach days.

Horace Tift (December 18, 1804 — March 11, 1886) was one of eight children born to Samuel (May 4, 1770 — November 25, 1835) and Nancy Woodcock (March 24, 1779 — September 27, 1849) Tift.

Horace left North Attleborough to travel to Milbury (Mass.) to learn the machinist trade. Upon his return in 1825 he married Orinda Blackinton (June 14, 1807 — August 2, 1876) and began the manufacture of clocks opposite his home on the main road.

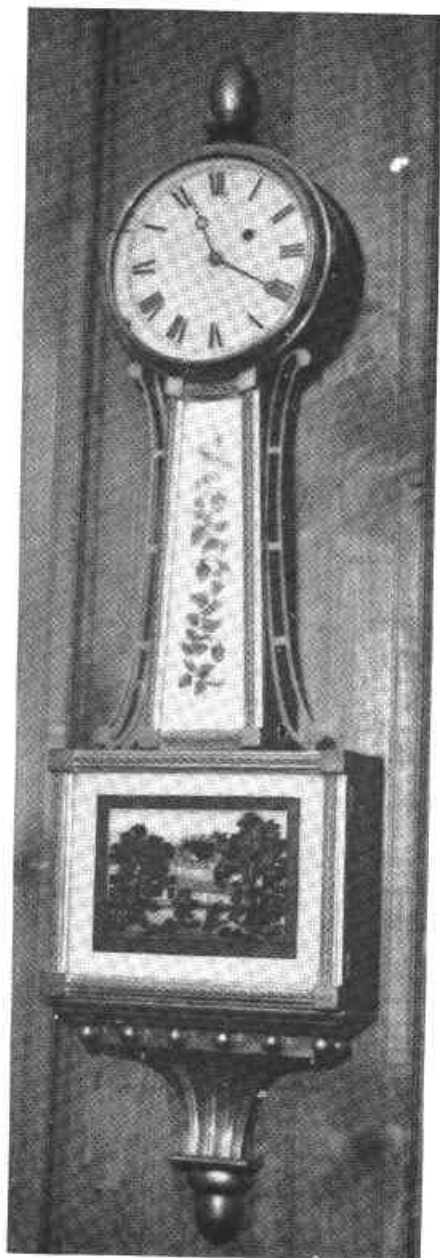
Horace's first daughter, Ann, was born in 1839 and was taken suddenly in 1841. His second daughter, Antoinette, was born February 22, 1845, and eventually married Arthur Dean.

At the rear of his old home stood a small building in which were to be found a work bench and tools used in other activities by this "born mech-

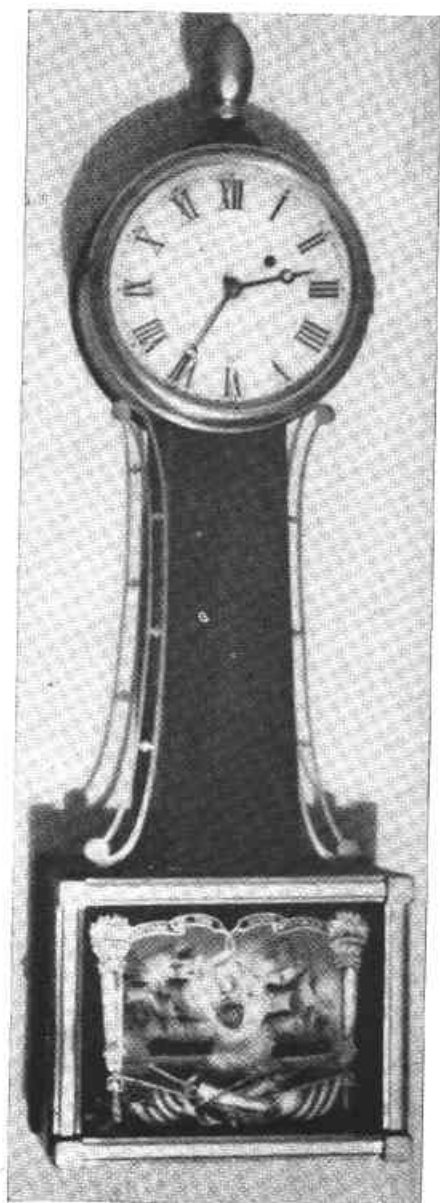
Machinist Clockmaker Businessman



The photographic detail fails to show, adequately, the wooden side-rails of this Tift clock {Author's Collection}



"An unusually handsome" Tiff clock
(Leonard Rutlin Collection)



Tiff clock with metal side-rails (Author's
Collection)

anic." His son-in-law, Arthur Dean, conducted his jewelry-chasing business in that building also, employing as many as ten men when business was "good."

John Tifft, older brother of Horace, became very prosperous in the jewelry business. With partners, he operated the first factory of considerable importance in the town, beginning in 1821 in a shop north of the ancient Woodstock Garrison.

Albert C. Tifft, younger brother of Horace, began manufacturing jewelry in 1840, in partnership with William D. Whiting. They were so successful that in 1853 Albert "was satisfied," retired, and built a palatial residence on land north of Horace's home. The firm continued and became the famous W. D. Whiting Co., makers of fine silverware.

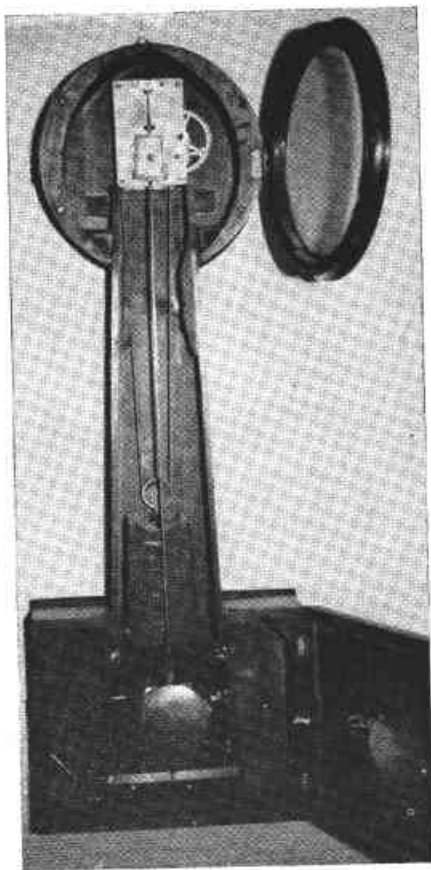


Tifft clock in Gabriel Rich Collection. This style attests to the resumption of clockmaking by Tifft after 1857, says the Author

Horace gave up clockmaking in 1845 and erected a building a few hundred feet west of his home, dedicated to the manufacture of jewelry. Horace, and his partner, Milton Blackinton, remained in the jewelry business until the serious financial depression of 1857 when the business passed into new hands.

Horace resumed clockmaking after 1857 and continued in manufacturing until his second marriage at the age of 77 to Mrs. Martha Hall. Horace went to live in her home in Providence, Rhode Island, but he may have taken up residence elsewhere in Providence long before his second marriage.

On March 11, 1886, at the age of 82, Horace died.



Under the glass view of the Tifft clock in the Gabriel Rich Collection