

Edmund Rice (1638) Association Newsletter

2808 Superior Drive, Livermore, CA 94550

Vol. 99, No. 1, Winter 2026



Deacon Edmund Rice Homestead
Wayland, MA 1643 - 1912

The Edmund Rice Association publishes the newsletter four times a year: 1) Winter, 2) Spring, 3) Summer, and 4) Fall. The summer newsletter is devoted to the annual September Reunion and includes a description of the program and registration information. The other three newsletters include information of more general interest to our members. We invite all cousins to submit their genealogical information, newsletter corrections, items of interest, family articles and pictures, obituaries and queries. Send them to the newsletter editor: at editor@edmund-rice.org

President's Column



Greetings, Cousins!

In this new year it's time for a vocabulary update. The word is semiquincentennial. You might wonder what that means, but it's pretty simple: "semi" = half, "quin" = five, "cent" = 100. Half of five hundred years is the 250th anniversary of something notable, and we were treated to the 250-thrill at our last reunion, when the Colonial Faire held at the same time and place made a special effort to celebrate the anniversary of the "shot heard round the world".

However, I don't recall hearing anyone mention the erudite name for this phenomenon. I suppose that is because of the awkwardness of the word. It's not short and snappy, like "centennial" or the nearly-as-good "bicentennial", nor is it intriguingly exotic, like "sesquicentennial" (that's 150 years, in case you hadn't run into one of those). Another favorite is the "tercentennial" which was widely celebrated as such in Massachusetts in 1920 and more modestly observed by the

ERA in 2004 in observing the anniversary of the capturing of Rice boys in Westborough. We could have made a big deal hereabouts of the Plymouth quadricentennial in 2020, except that the Covid pandemic reset all schedules, and, besides, there has been in recent decades a growing sensitivity to the previous population displaced by the arrival of English settlers.

At any rate, we are approaching another 250th anniversary in the US, namely, that of the Declaration of Independence, and it seems appropriate to ask what role was played in that by descendants of Edmund Rice. The principal author, of course, was Thomas Jefferson, who was not of our family, but what of the signers? I consulted the list of 56 signers to look for possible kin among those with New England connections. There were in fact quite a few Massachusetts folk who signed the document, namely, John and Samuel Adams, John Hancock, Elbridge Gerry, and Robert Treat Paine. There is a widespread belief that John Adams's wife Abigail was a Rice descendant, but, alas, that is not true (her maiden name was Smith). There were other signers who were born in New England, notably Benjamin Franklin. However, the bottom line is: none of these are found in the ERA family database and thus presumably none belonged to our family.

Should we feel disappointed at this result? Given the large number of Rice descendants participating in the Lexington Alarm, why did none represent Massachusetts in the Continental Congress? The answer is a matter of the sizes of the pools: thousands of militiamen, but just five representatives.

But wait! Speaking of declarations of independence, I made an interesting discovery while browsing the database. As you may know, Texas declared its independence from Mexico in 1836, and it so happens that at least one signer of the Texas declaration was a Rice descendant -- Asa Brigham born 1788 in Marlborough, MA..

~ John Chandler

Edmund Rice (1638) Association Newsletter

Send your articles, newsletter corrections, member news, your children or grandchildren's births, obituaries, family items of interest and any queries to the newsletter editor:

email: editor@edmund-rice.org

Deadline for Spring issue 2026 is April 30, 2026.

Membership

The Edmund Rice (1638) Association, Inc. is governed by a Board of Directors, of at least five members, elected at the annual reunion and meeting, usually held on a weekend in September.

Descendants of Edmund Rice were holding reunions as early as 1851, but it was not until 1912 that the Association was formed, and officers elected. Incorporation under Massachusetts law took place in 1934.

Membership is open to anyone who claims to be a lineal descendant of Edmund Rice. Rigorous proof is not required, and many members have been able to ascertain their pedigree only after access to the books and files of other members. Spouses are also eligible for membership.

Annual dues, payable *September 1*, are:

Initial dues.....\$ 20.00

Renewals:

Under 80 years of age.....\$ 20.00

Age 80 and above.....\$ 10.00

Life membership.....\$300.00
(single payment)

Checks Payable to: EDMUND RICE (1638)
ASSOCIATION., INC.

**Membership Mailing Address and Address
Corrections:**

Kathleen H. Bond
31 Billings Rd
No. Stonington, CT 06359
membership@edmund-rice.org

IMPORTANT: Please notify Kathleen Bond of email address changes to continue to receive notices of when the latest newsletter is posted to the ERA website.

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Website:

www.edmund-rice.org

Social Media:



Like us on Facebook, at

Edmund Rice (1638) Association

Follow us on Twitter **@EdmundRice1638**

Contact us:

info@edmund-rice.org

Editor's Column

I am excited about the prospect of western Edmund Rice Association meeting in Carson City on September 25th and 26th, 2026. Please mark your calendars and spread the word. We will be updating the Edmund Rice Association Facebook page with information on the meeting.

There are many fascinating tales of the old west revolving around the important roles Henry F. Rice and his son "lightning" Harry Rice played in the creation of Carson City and the State of Nevada. We will tease you with more interesting stories in the coming newsletters and on Facebook.

(<https://www.facebook.com/EdmundRiceAssociation/>)

Note: For those of you who receive this newsletter by mail, I hope you enjoyed the fall color edition. It is now a collector's edition. Sorry to say that future mailed copies of this newsletter will now be black and white. Color printing cost are too high. Cousins that receive their newsletters by email will continue to get full color editions.

~ David W Rice

2025- 2026 Officers

President & Historian & DNA Project,

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Newsletter Editor, David W. Rice,

editor@edmund-rice.org

Directors Emeritus

Ruth M. Brown

George King

Beth McAleer

ERA Past Presidents

1912-1913	Eustace Bond Rice	1952-1953	John A. Bigelow	1976	Seaver M. Rice
1913-1920	Nellie Rice Fiske	1954	Sturgis C. Rice	1977-1978	Henry E. Rice, Jr.
1921-1922	H. Eugene Rice	1955	Charles W. Rice	1979-1980	C. Whiting Rice
1923-1924	John E. Rice	1956-1957	Edgar W. Rice	1981-1982	William H. Drury
1925-1928	Harry C. Rice	1958-1959	Stanley I. Rice	1983	Patricia P. MacFarland
1929-1930	Clarence E. Rice	1960	Donald H. Whittemore	1984-1985	Janice R. Parmenter
1930-1931	John A. Bigelow	1961-1963	Frederick R. Rice	1986-1987	Margaret S. Rice
1932-1934	Russell J. Rice	1964-1965	William H. Hoefler	1988-1989	Alex W. Snow
1935-1936	Daniel H. Rice	1966-1967	Ray Lowther Ellis	1990-1993	John S. Bates
1937-1939	Elsie Hawes Smith	1968	Edgar W. Rice	1994	Alex W. Snow
1940-1941	Sturgis C. Rice	1969	Erwin R. McLaughlin*	1995-1997	Frederick H. Rice
1942-1945	Arthur P. Rice	1969	Jeneve M. Melvin	1998-2006	Dr. Robert V. Rice
1946-1947	Everett E. Rice	1970-1973	Col. Allen F. Rice	2007-present	John Chandler
1948-1949	Ralph E. Rice	1974	Margaret E. Allen		
1950-1951	Ralston F. Rice	1975	Charles W. Rice		

*Note: Died in office

EDMUND RICE (1638) ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Published winter, spring, summer and fall by the Edmund Rice (1638) Association

The Edmund Rice (1638) Association, 183 Prospect Hill Road, Harvard, MA 01451 was established in 1851 and incorporated in 1934 to encourage antiquarian, genealogical, and historical research concerning the ancestors and descendants of Edmund Rice who settled in Sudbury, Massachusetts in 1638, and to promote fellowship among its members and friends.

The Association is an educational, non-profit organization recognized under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2026 Edmund Rice (1638) Association Annual Reunion

Western Meeting of Edmund Rice Association in Carson City Nevada

September 25-26, 2026 (Friday and Saturday)



Meeting will focus on the life of Henry Freeman Rice and his leadership during the Comstock Silver Boom that fueled the rapid growth of Carson City during the period 1850 – 1900. Henry was joined in Carson City by his friend Henry Melvin Yerington. Henry F. Rice and Henry M. Yerington were brothers-in-law: Rice married Jennie E. Hume and Yerington married her sister Susan Mary Hume, so the two Henrys were brothers in law, connected by the Hume sisters.

Henry F. Rice's son, Harry Hume (Lightning Harry) Rice, drove a steam locomotive on the Virginia & Truckee Railroad that Henry Yerington supervised. Henry F. Rice and Henry M. Yerington are buried in a shared

plot in the Lone Mountain Cemetery, Carson City.

Rice is noted as having “been associated with the express cargo services in Boston, Massachusetts” and “later engaged in coal and transportation businesses in Cleveland, Ohio during the 1840s” before moving to Nevada. Henry F. Rice first came to the area that was to become Carson City in the early 1850s, moving there with his family as the region began to grow with the silver discoveries of the *Comstock Lode* and other mining activity.

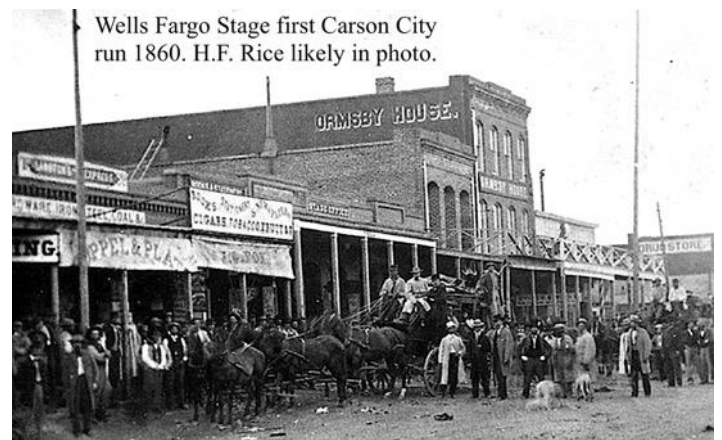
Henry F. Rice operated the first Wells Fargo Office in Carson City, became the first mayor of Carson City, and eventually the second US Carson City Mint Supervisor. Henry M. Yerington (Yarrington) became a major business & railroad man in Nevada, Supervising the Virginia & Truckee Railroad, and for whom the city of Yerington, Nevada is named. Both men moved in the same civic/business circles and served as vestrymen/wardens during the founding of St. Peter's Episcopal Church



(Carson City). H F Rice interacted with Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) while in Carson City.

Comstock silver supported the growth of San Francisco, Carson City, and the Union during the Civil War. The longest telegraph message ever sent was Nevada's petition to become a state. This was done because Lincoln needed Nevada's vote to pass the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery.

Two key elements of the Comstock flow of silver were “How to move ore and building materials?”, and “How to process the silver into useful form”. The railroad addressed the first element (Yerington), and the Mint addressed the second element (Rice).



PROPOSED REUNION MEETING AGENDA

Friday, Sept 25, 2026

- Bus Tour (4.5 hours)
 - Narrated bus tour of old town historic homes (1 hr)
 - Visit Rice (Henry F. and Harry H.) and Yerington combined family gravesite in Lone Mountain Cemetery (0.5 hr).
 - Carson City Mint and Nevada State Museum- docent guided tour. (2.0 hr)
 - Nevada State Railroad Museum – docent guided tour. (1 hr).
- Dinner at the Red's Old 395 BBQ (<https://www.reds395.com>)

Saturday, Sept 26, 2026 - Meeting at location to be determined

Morning presentations - coffee, pastries.

Light Lunch

Afternoon Presentations

Chautauqua presenter: Historian David C Woodruff.

University of Nevada, Reno School of Mines Curator: Garrett Barmore.

ERA Database

Our computer database has been and will continue to be essential for DNA studies for Edmund Rice descendants and the descendants of other early Sudbury families. We need your continuing support. If you have not submitted your family line to us, why wait any longer? Have Questions? Contact our Historian at: john.chandler@alum.mit.edu

Nine-Generation Rice Report Available on USB Flash Drive

Your Board of Directors (BoD) agreed that we would offer the nine-generation report to our members (only). The BoD approved a charge of \$10 plus \$5 shipping and handling postpaid for a USB flash drive containing the documents. Please order from the Treasurer by sending a request for the USB flash drive, your name and mailing address and a check or money order for \$15 to:

Michael Rice
201 Old Post Rd.
Wakefield, RI 02879-3908

The Board of Directors has placed three conditions on the distribution of the report:

- 1) The information is copyrighted by the Edmund Rice (1638) Association and is restricted to the personal use of association members.
- 2) The USBs will be available only to Association members who agree to its terms of use.
- 3) The Association master database is an ongoing effort through September 2024. If you find any documentable errors, please let us know!

In Celebration

Happy Birthday, dear cousins! We hope you have many more!

JANUARY

William A Amidon
Laura S Anders
Kathleen H Mitchell Bond
Megan Cunningham
Debra J Georgantis-Miller
Amy Hall
Stanley Heisler
Sandra S Hyden
Ginger A Kleerup
Lynn McLaughlin
Bob McLaughlin
Lois Morlock
Sue Mullen
Nancy B Murphy
Christopher Proctor, MD
Calvin W Rice
Jeffrey S Rice
Robert M Rice
Amy Roth
Julie Shafer, PhD, LLC
Merrie Kathleen Sodder
Beth Marie Stone
Peggy Ann Wendt

FEBRUARY

Peter A Bungard
William R Drury
Stephen Frazel
James Fullerton
Guy Leath Gettle
Roslyn Cutting Haddock
Bonnie Johnson
Charles Robert Rice
George L Rice Jr
Hubert Lee Rice II
John W Rice III
R Craig Rice
Ronald Curtis Rice
Tom W Rice
Karen Roop
Joan E Schacht
David Staublin
Craig Tally
Janice E Vanlysel
Wendy Wesen

MARCH

Peggy J Brown
Tori Ellis
Diana R Hageboeck
Deborah L Fairbank Hurtig
George W King
Susan Lee Sternberg Phyfe
Douglas J Rice
Michael A Rice
Philip M Rice
Stephen J Rice
William J Rice Sr
Brenda Carol Rice
Linda Karen Rice
Stephen Dowd Rice
Steven R Stocks

Obituaries

Lillian Jeanne Rice, (February 4, 1937 – November 3, 2025)



Lillian Jeanne Rice (Lumbert) of Leslie, Michigan, passed peacefully to her Lord and Savior on November 3rd, 2025 at the age of 88. Lillian was born on February 4th, 1937 at home in Eagle, MI to Joseph and Beryl (Milligan) Lumbert. Her family moved to Felt Plains when she was 7 years old. Lillian attended the Felt Plains School through the 8th grade. Lillian formed a relationship with a neighbor Donald Rice and they became forever sweethearts. She graduated from Ingham Township High School in 1955, one month later she and Donald Rice married on July 2nd, 1955.

Besides Lillian being married to a farmer, and raising four children, Lillian and Donald worked side by side most days. Lillian was able to operate tractors, mixed feed, fed livestock, did vet work, baled hay, and cultivated the crops. Lillian would by herself deliver the hogs to multiple sale barns across the state, also directly to Farmer Peet's Meats. Lillian was a great homemaker. She prepared the meals, baked delicious desserts, and canned fruits and vegetables. She enjoyed sewing and knitting, she made many of her children's clothing, as well as her own. Lillian also drove school bus for 7

years with Dansville Agricultural School. One of her greatest accomplishments was that she was Bunkerhill Township Clerk for 30 years, for which a building was named in her honor.

Lillian was preceded in death by daughter Janice Quinn, son David Rice, her husband of 64 years, Donald Rice, and siblings John Lumbert and Carolyn McGauley. She is survived by her brother Jim (Barbara) Lumbert, children: Doyle Rice and Nancy (Ralph) Herberg, son-in-law Bob (Cheryl) Quinn, and daughter-in-law Virginia Rice.

An adored and proud Grandmother to Randy (Amber) Quinn, Racquel (Juan) Garza, Derek (Jessica) Quinn, Kyle (Brandy) Quinn, Nathan (Kristen) Herberg, Helana (CW) Cooley, Andy (Aliyah) Rice, Alexander Rice, Ariel Rice, Yaqirah Rice, and Samuel Rice; 18 great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

It has been said that Lillian was the eternal optimist. She leaves behind a legacy that was rich in faith, hard work, unconditional love, forgiveness and sacrifice that will forever be treasured. A celebration of life was held on Saturday, November 8th, 2025, at Holt Baptist Church located at 2020 Dean Ave., Holt MI 48842.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Holt Baptist Church or Youth Haven Ranch.

Cherished Memories of Joan C. Miller (Reed, Georgantis)

Looking for her Elusive Mayflower Pilgrims



Joan (Jo-an), Carol (Reed, Georgantis) Miller, 93, passed away on Sunday, May 18, 2025, at her home in East York, PA., surrounded by her three children, William Georgantis, Denise Georgantis Price, and Debra Georgantis-Miller. A native of Woonsocket, R.I., Joan was born on June 19, 1931. She is the second child of the late Cedric Earl Reed and Donna Sybil (Bailey) Reed. She lived most of her life in a home built by her father in 1945, on the Old Victory Highway (which is still standing today).

Joan remembers questioning her family about whether they were descendants of the Mayflower pilgrims. She was given a miniature wooden rocking crib by her grandmother, Nellie (West) Reed, with the name "White" written on the bottom of the crib. But her dad would tell her, "We are all just damn sweep Yankees." It was not until the early 1980s that she would realize just how many Mayflower Pilgrims she was a descendant of.

She would reminisce about learning about the Bible and playing the piano from her Grandmother Nellie Eliza (West) Reed, who used to dance with the Blackfoot Indians on the reservations in Colorado.

In 1951, Joan left R.I. for a job with the U.S. Navy Department in Washington, D.C., where she met and married John Georgantis in 1955. They moved to Silver Spring, MD, and had three children. While Joan is taking care of three babies in diapers, John is making a name for himself throughout Washington D.C. as a Metro Detective and guard for the Presidents of the U.S. and Special Dignitaries. Joan embraces her energetic spirit by teaching, joining programs with the Board of Education and the University of MD, and meets Catharyn Elwood, agreeing to edit and type her book "Feel Like A Million." After moving to Middletown (Frederick), MD, Joan continues to make friends and influence others by volunteering and working for Frederick Community College (FCC), directing and developing programs for seniors called The Golden Age. Joan enjoyed cooking, entertaining, poetry, and writing (musing) throughout her life. Her daughters found her writings everywhere throughout the house, her pockets, and purses.

In 1976, her husband John unexpectedly passed "in the line of duty", leaving her and her three teenage children devastated. By the 1980s, Joan met Donald L. Miller. Her time with her nieces,

nephews, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren was filled with laughter, cherished moments, arts and crafts, and educating all who would listen about her Mayflower Ancestors.

While Joan travels the eastern and southern parts of the United States with Don, during his time on the road as a Regional Manager with Hechinger's, she begins her family history search for answers. She joins the Mayflower Society of PA (SMDPA) and quickly becomes the go-to person for all things genealogy and the Mayflower. Her library takes over the entire space in one of her bedrooms. She is deeply engaged in her Mayflower/family research, moving up the ranks in the National (GSMD) and Commonwealth of PA (SMDPA) societies. Joan held prominent positions: as former Governor of SMDPA, Founder and Governor of PHSK, and former Deputy Governor General and Assistant Governor for GSMD, attending the board meetings and Mayflower General Society Triennials in Plymouth, MA, for close to four decades.

Driven by her research, she and her family journeyed to England, the Netherlands, Canada, and destinations across the United States on multiple occasions.

In 2019, Joan's husband Don passed away from cancer. Joan spends her days on the computer in her genealogy library, searching for answers to her Reed and Bailey "roadblocks". Joan had documented over twelve descendants. (Alden, Brown, Chilton, Cooke, Doty, Eaton, Mullins, Standish, to name a few).

She advocated for an inclusive educational platform that would resonate with all generations of Mayflower descendants. The Mayflower Playing Cards were born.

For decades, Joan has been a dedicated leader guiding the Mayflower Society with her wisdom and experience, a pillar ensuring our society's continued growth, a visionary member and leader creating a lasting legacy for future generations, and a truly inspirational individual, leaving a lasting impact on all those she met and mentored.

Her accomplishments throughout her personal life bear witness to Joan's devotion, passion, and grace in her faith in God.



Joan's last project was a joint venture to create informative, functional, educational playing cards with facts about the 1620 Mayflower passage and early settlement in Plymouth (Pawtuxet). Unfortunately, after finishing and receiving the final order, Joan became bedridden and needed 24/7 care.

To keep her dream and candle lit, her daughters will be visiting Plymouth in 2026 during the Triennial General

Congress to share and celebrate her life. All donations will be given back to Mayflower Education projects and events.

Any questions, please email dgprice57@gmail.com or call/text 415.500.5059

Joan Rice Franklin (June 27, 1931–December 28, 2022)

Joan Rice Franklin, daughter of Elizabeth Davis Drinkwater and William Ball Rice II, was born June 27, 1931, in Boston and grew up in Hingham, Massachusetts. She attended Derby Academy, Milton Academy, and Bennington College. A classically trained pianist, she also studied with the German-born American pianist, Claude Frank, at the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

She met her beloved husband of 66 years, Edward Ward Franklin, at the cast party of a production at the Brattle Theater in Cambridge in which she had appeared. Throughout their long marriage, Joan

and Ed pursued theater as an avocation and a vocation, co-founding American Kaleidoscope, whose mission was presenting original American plays and classic revivals in New York, and appearing in numerous productions for The Snarks, Ltd. and the Amateur Comedy Club, as well as for The Colonial Dames and The York Players.

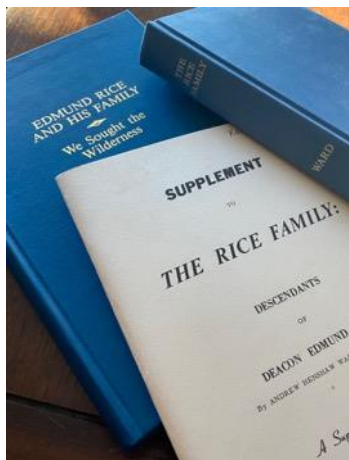
She and her family happily summered for almost 60 years in Watch Hill, Rhode Island, where they were active in the Colonial Theater of Westerly, in whose annual Shakespeare in the Park productions Ed Franklin appeared for over 40 years. Although a New Englander by birth, Joan lovingly adopted New York City as her hometown, living and raising her three children there. The home she created with her husband in Carnegie Hill was the scene of memorable gatherings for friends from the worlds of theater, music, finance, law, and philanthropy for many years.

In the '60's and '70's, Joan led her children and their friends in memorable dawn clean-ups of East Beach and Napatree Point in Watch Hill, as well as in creating summer fairs and carnivals in support of the Westerly Animal Shelter. A lifelong protector of children and animals, she will be remembered for her loving kindness, sympathetic intelligence, sparkling wit, and extraordinary personal charm and beauty.

Joan died peacefully in Mystic, Connecticut on December 28th, after a long and challenging illness, holding the hand of her beloved husband Ed. She was predeceased by her sister, Anne Elfers of Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts, and her brother, William Ball Rice III of South Yarmouth, Maine. As well as her husband Ed. Joan leaves her three children, Caroline Noel Franklin, Melissa Franklin Keyte (James), and Edward Ward Franklin, Jr. (Lori Zummo); her seven grandchildren, Nicholas and William Berry, Jamie (Kate Delisio), Harry, and Claire Keyte, and Amelia and Emma Franklin; and a great grandson, James Costas Keyte.

Those wishing to make a gift in her memory are welcome to do so through Animal Haven at 200 Centre Street, New York, NY 10013, or at www.animalhaven.org.

Rice Books Available



The Rice Family, by Andrew Henshaw Ward [5]

Hard-cover reprint. New, unused. A genealogical history of descendants of Deacon Edmund Rice who came from Berkhamstead, England, and settled in Sudbury, Massachusetts, in 1638. Includes a soft-cover supplement (1967) containing additions and corrections. 379 pages.

The Rice Family, Supplement 2 (Part 1) [7]

Supplement Number 2 (Part 1) to *The Rice Family*, compiled by Margaret S. Rice (1983). Hard-cover reprint. New, unused. Additional lines of descent through the first eight generations, which were unknown at the time of publication of *The Rice Family* and the 1967 supplement. 224 pages.

The Rice Family, Supplement 2 (Part 2) [8]

Supplement Number 2 (Part 1) to *The Rice Family*, compiled by Margaret S. Rice (1985). Hard-cover reprint. New, unused. A continuation of *The Rice Family Supplement 2 (Part 1)* from the ninth generation to the present (1985). 720 pages.

Edmund Rice and His Family and We Sought the Wilderness [5]

Two manuscripts in one binding. Hard-cover reprint. 1986. New, unused.

Edmund Rice and His Family, by Elsie Hawes Smith (1938) A historical narrative about the early days of the Rices. Contains much genealogical information, as well as being a charming story.

We Sought the Wilderness, by Rev. Clayton Rice (1949) A historical narrative based on those Rices who pushed Westward to the prairies after short stays in New Hampshire and Vermont. 357 pages.

A Genealogical Register of Edmund Rice Descendants [\$15]

Published by the association in 1970. A continuation of A.H. Ward's Rice Family (1858) and the supplement to that book, bring it up to date at the time of publication. 1594 pages. *This book is out of print but is available for purchase on USB drives - Association members only.*

Sudbury 1890-1989: 100 Years in the Life of a Town, by Curtis F. Garfield [\$10]

Published by Sudbury Historical Society and Porcupine Enterprises in 1999, Sudbury, MA. ISBN 0-9621976-3-7. 242 pages.

Heartbeat of History: A Collection of Short Stories from the Saltbox House, by R.M. Rasey-Simpson [\$5]

Published by Sharpe & Company in 1999, Sanborn, NY. ISBN 0-966789-2-9. 182 pages.

Mail your check/money order made payable to: Edmund Rice (1638) Association, Inc. send to:

Michael A. Rice
201 Old Post Rd
Wakefield, RI 02879-3908

Edmund Rice's Descendants – Stories of our Ancestors

An Ancestry Tale: Why are so many Rice boys named Adonijah?

by
Susan Sternberg Phyfe

So here is my story: With no living relatives except my brother, I started my journey of tracing my family roots. Doing my ancestry was extremely difficult for me as I had nothing to go on beyond my grandparents and the help of two professional genealogist friends of mine, and the Park Ranger at the Saratoga Battlefield in New York State, this is what I learned:

It started with my father, Leonard E Sternberg's (1921-1994) humble beginnings as a family farmer on Stannard Mountain, Caledonia County in the Northeast Kingdom, Vermont. My Father's grandmother was Lucretia Taylor Sternberg (1847-1927). I visited the Sternberg family plot this past summer and yes, it's dirt roads and the home where my father grew up is still there and the owners were kind enough to take me inside.

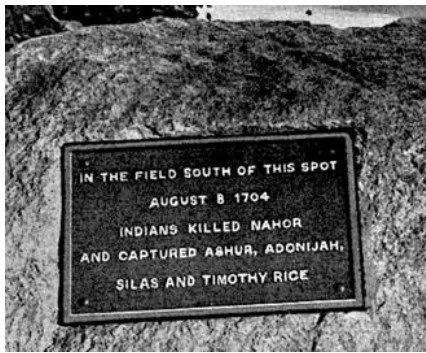


I was able to trace the family line to my 5th Great Grandmother Hannah Crosby (1733-1771) in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts. Documents show she was a member of the 1st Congregational Church of Shrewsbury MA, of which I am also a member. Hannah Crosby married Adonijah Rice (1727 – 1777), my 5th Great-grandfather of Westborough, MA, on July 3, 1751. They had a large family and lived in Westborough at the sight of the current town hall. Her last known children were born (twins) in 1771. Adonijah and Hanna also had a son named Adonijah.



Charles Rice House
1711

As I researched, I wondered why there were so many Adonijah Rice in my family tree. Charles Rice (1684-1773) is my 6th Great Grandfather, and he named his son Adonijah to remember the Rice boy captured by Mohawk Indians. Charles was the son of Thomas Rice (1654-1748), my 7th Great Grandfather. It was Thomas, who was the founder of Westborough MA, and it was his son Adonijah who was captured by the Kahnawake Warriors, a tribe of the Mohawk Nation.



Westborough was not founded in the usual sense. It grew up as a neighborhood called Chauncy in the town of Marlborough and eventually split off as a separate town. At the time of the raid in 1704, it was still part of Marlborough. In 1717, just 13 years after the attack, the settlement formally separated from Marlborough and was incorporated as the town of Westborough.

As it turns out, there were many Rice family members named Adonijah. The son of Jonas Rice (also son of Thomas) was named Adonijah. Incidentally, this

Adonijah had a son also named Adonijah, but nothing is known about Jr besides his birth in 1761. Also, Jonas Rice (1672/3-1753) who is associated with Worcester, had two sons named Adonijah, not to be confused with the various other Rice family members named Adonijah.



When Hannah died, the Adonijah Rice (son of Charles) in my line, joined the Continental Army, and as told to me by Eric Schnitzer (Park Ranger), he joined Captain Daniel Barns' Company, in Colonel Timothy Bigelows' 15th Massachusetts Regiment, on May 15, 1777. The December 1777 muster roll recorded casualties sustained during the previous months, and Adonijah was listed as having died on October 24th, 1777. Nature of death not recorded. The Park Ranger thinks he died of illness or injuries sustained in battle. Adonijah was listed on the New York City General Hospital list of returned soldiers and likely he died at the hospital. He also would have been buried on their grounds in Lansingburgh NY (North Troy). All records of where have been lost. I grew up in Troy NY, and this was an amazing discovery for me.

As is common then and now children are named after a relative. This I believe is the case of Charles naming his son in Memory of Thomas' son Adonijah. One taken by the Indians, the other a Son of the American Revolution.

What became of the Captured Rice Boys?

Because of ongoing conflict during King William's War (1688 – 1697) and later Queen Anne's War (1702 -1711), settlers fortified some homes. The Rice home was strengthened into a garrison house — a dwelling capable of temporary defense, often reinforced with thicker walls, barred windows, and nearby stockades. This garrison served not just the Rice family, but neighboring settlers during times of alarm.

On August 8, 1704, a group of French and Caughnawaga Mohawk people raided the settlement of Westborough (then part of Marlborough), Massachusetts. Adonijah Rice was one of several boys captured during this attack. One child was killed during the raid (Nahor); four were captured (Adonijah, Ashur, Silas, and Timothy). Silas and Timothy were taken to Canada (specifically Kahnawake, near Montreal) and assimilated into Mohawk families. Asher was eventually ransomed by Thomas Rice. Thomas raised the ransom by selling his house. The event became one of the most significant early frontier tragedies in the region.

Unlike his brother Asher, who was ransomed after four years, Adonijah remained in Canada for the rest of his life. Adonijah reportedly married a French woman and became a farmer north of the St. Lawrence River. Y-DNA testing has confirmed a genetic link between some male members of the Mohawk nation and the Edmund Rice family lineage.

To understand why the Rice boys were taken captive and adopted at Kahnawake we have to understand the world view of the Kanienkehaka and their motives for taking captives. The people of

Kahnawake were influenced by a cultural tradition known as the *mourning war*. The mourning war was a system meant to replace family members who had died during war, sickness, or by an enemies' medicine. The women, to assuage their grief over the loss of a child or family member, could initiate a mourning war. Children and young men or women were viewed as suitable candidates for adoption because they could be more readily incorporated into Kaniienkehaka society.

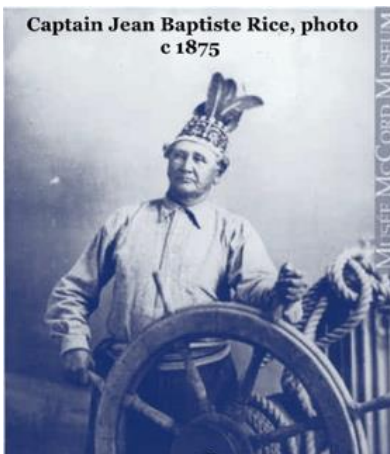
An example of this can be found in the journal of James Scoouwa Smith, an Englishmen adopted by Kahnawake people. Smith wrote:

“At length one of the women made out to speak a little English (for I believe they began to be afraid of me) and said, no hurt you; on this I gave myself up to their ladyships, who were as good as their word, for though they plunged me under water, and washed and rubbed me severely, yet I could not say they hurt me much. These young women then led me up to the council house, where some of the tribe were ready with new cloths for me. They gave me a new ruffled shirt, which I put on, also a pair of leggings done off with ribbons and beads, likewise a pair of moccasins, garters dressed with beads, Porcupine-quills, and red-hair –also a tinsel laced cappel. They again painted my head and face with various colors and tied a bunch of red feathers to one of these locks they had left on the crown of my head, which stood up five or six inches. They seated me on a bear skin, and gave me a pipe, tomahawk, and polecat skin pouch, which had been skinned pocket fashion, and contained tobacco, killigenico, or dry sumach leaves, which they mix with their tobacco, - also spunk, flint, and steel. When I was thus seated, the Indians came dressed and painted in their grandest manner. As they came in, they took their seats and for a considerable time there was a profound silence, everyone was smoking, -but not a word was spoken among them. –At length one of the chiefs made a fine speech, which was delivered by an interpreter, -and was as followeth: -

“My son, you are now flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone. By the ceremony which was performed this day, every drop of white blood was washed out of your veins; you are taken into the Caughnawago nation, and initiated into a warlike tribe; you adopted into a great family, and now received with great seriousness and solemnity in the room and place of a great man; after what has passed this day, you are now one of us by an old strong law and custom – My son, you have nothing to fear, we are under the same obligations to love, support and defend you, that we to love and to defend one another, therefore you are to consider yourself as one of our people.”

This adoption ceremony was probably similar for Silas, renamed *Jacques Tannhahorens* (he splits the door). Silas married *Marie Tsiakohawi* (alias *Tsionnakwannen*), date unknown, and died on May 16, 1779, at the age of 84 years. His wife's death preceded his by two days.

One of Silas' great grandsons was Jean Baptiste Rice, who was a well-known river pilot. Today, descendants of Silas are prominent members of the Edmund Rice Association.



Timothy was renamed *Jacques Oserokohton* (*he passes through the year*). Timothy became renowned for his abilities and became a chief at Kahnawake. Timothy was reported to have visited Westborough, Massachusetts, in September 1740.



~ David W Rice
Editor

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The dues year is September 1st to September 1st each year. Dues rates are per person; there is no discount for a spouse or children. The Board of Directors voted to insert the "Additional Voluntary Contribution" line in an attempt to offset the erosion of our treasury due to the current low interest rates. Additional contributions are appreciated.

The schedule of dues is as follows:

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