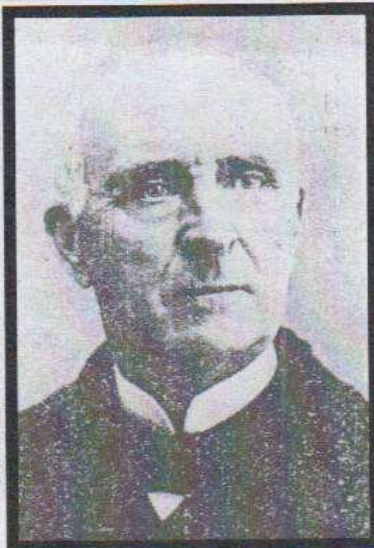


**THOMAS
NEWTON
RICE**

**And His Wabash & Erie
Canal Connections**

By Charles Davis



Thomas Newton Rice
Isaac Straus Memorial Combined
Atlas Parke County, Indiana
1874-1908-1916

Thomas Newton Rice was born June 7, 1829, the son of Isaac and Narcissa Allen Rice, on his father's farm. His father Isaac moved from Washington county, Pennsylvania to Shelby county, Kentucky in 1806 and emigrated to Montgomery county, Indiana in 1827. He settled on a farm one mile north of Waveland about eight years before Waveland was laid out as a town. He entered eighty acres of the farm from the government and bought the other eighty acres from Ralph Canine.

The Rice family were of Scotch-Irish descent and were staunch Presbyterians. Thomas spent his minority on his father's farm. During that time he obtained an academic education at Waveland. He graduated from the Waveland Academy and then went to Rockville, Indiana in 1851. He taught school in Rockville for nine months. He entered the law office of David H. and Judge Samuel F. Maxwell under whose direction he prepared himself for the practice of his profession. Along with this, he took a legal course at the Louisville University for three years before his admission to the bar. He immediately began practicing law in Rockville with Judge Elias S. Terry.

While not an alumnus of any institution of learning, Thomas was a classical scholar of no small renown. He had a profound knowledge of polite literature. The great epic poets, Homer and Milton, were his favorite authors, and he could quote them with masterly effect.

Thomas married Margaret Jane Digby on November 7, 1855. Margaret was born in Belfast, Ireland on December 25, 1832. She was graduated from the Boarding School of Miss Knowlers in Ireland. After the sudden death of her sister and the loss of her father and his ship at sea, she and her mother moved to Mansfield, Parke county, Indiana in the winter of 1848 to stay with relatives. Margaret then moved to Rockville to teach school and went to Waveland Academy where she met Thomas.

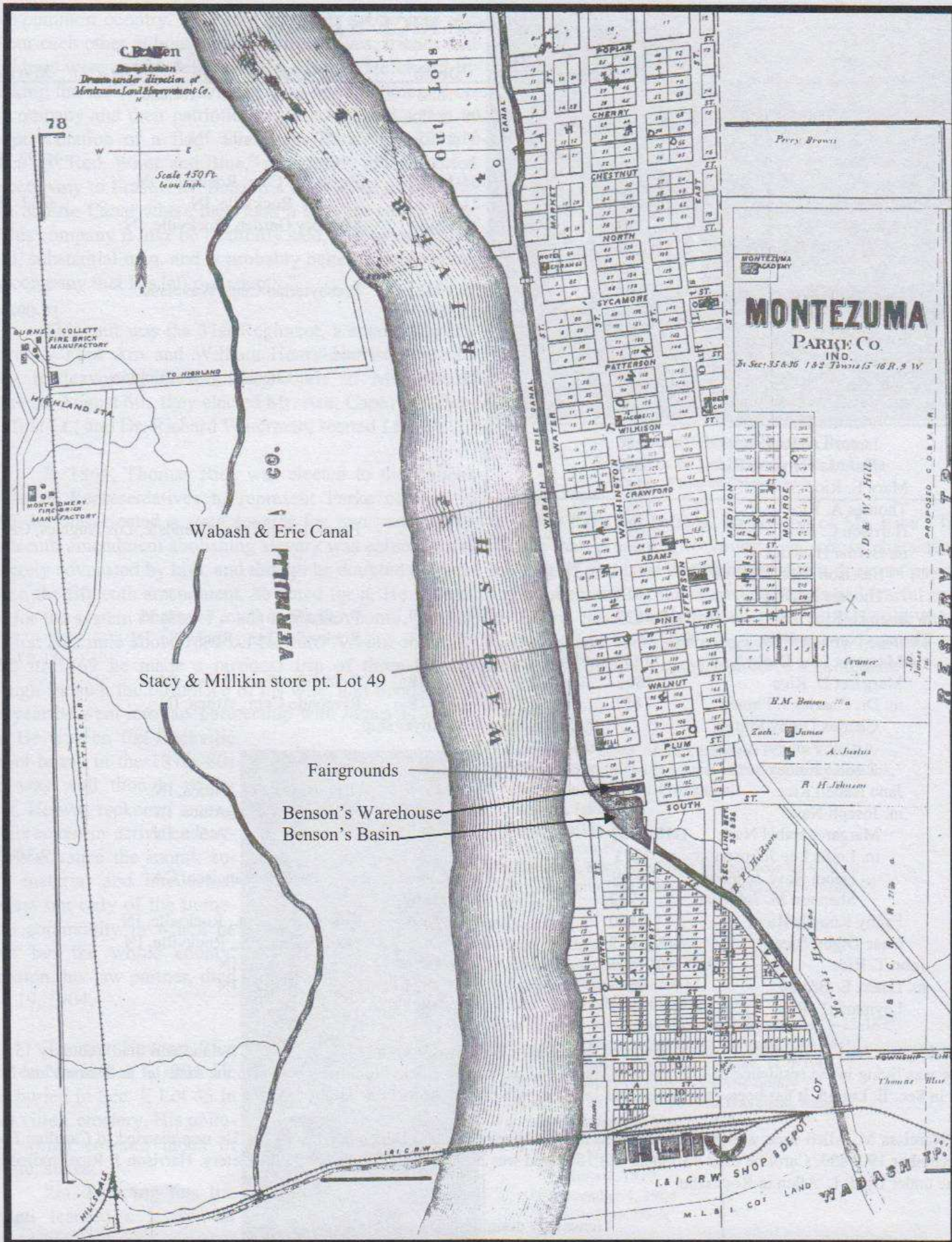
On November 2, 1856 Thomas was elected prosecuting attorney of the Common Pleas court for the counties of Parke and Vermillion, which composed the district. In the Parke county deed records, his name appears often concerning his job. On November 12, 1858 he was elected prosecutor for the eighth judicial circuit, which embraced the following counties: Boone, Clinton, Montgomery, Fountain, Warren, Parke and Vermillion. Thomas lent an active and vigorous support to the War for the Union and assisted in recruiting every company raised in Parke county. He traveled and addressed war meetings, rendering valuable service to the cause in encouraging and strengthening the loyal sentiment with patriotic speeches when the boys went off to war.

On June 7, 1861, the 14th Indiana was mustered in. On June 8th the ladies of Rockville gave Company A a dinner at Camp Vigo in Terre Haute. The citizens presented Capt. Lucian A. Foote a handsome sword. Thomas N. Rice made the presentation speech.

The Wabash & Erie Canal floated many men and soldiers off to war. The following story shows Thomas N. Rice's connection to the canal:

"August 20, 1861 at ten o'clock in the morning the Wabash Rifles marched down main street in Montezuma and formed a double line in front of Millikin & J. F. Stacy's store. Mr. Thomas N. Rice then advanced, and in behalf of the ladies of Montezuma, presented the company a flag. He accompanied the presentation with a brief but patriotic speech. He exposed the enormity of the insurrection now rife in the South, as to its origin, character, present tendency, and ultimate consequences. He spoke of the significance of our national standard and the cherished association that cluster around it, and conjured them by their love of Constitution liberty; by their devotion to their country and the institutions of their fathers; by their attachment to friend and companions; by their love of permanent and substantial peace; and by all the blessings which well organized society and obedience to law can confer; to be true to their flag, and not to return except as victors. He commended the bravery of Capt. John Tenbrook Campbell's and Lucian A. Foote's companies and believed he could with equal propriety commend that of the Wabash Rifles.

"Capt. Fred Arn received the flag and briefly assured the citizens of Montezuma that their hopes of noble and soldier-like conduct on the part of the company should not be disappointed, and urged them to let no political differences distract them, but to stand as a unit in defense of



Craven
 Draughtsman
 Drawn under direction of
 Montezuma Land Improvement Co.

Scale 450 Ft.
 to an Inch.

VERMILLION & CO.

Wabash & Erie Canal

Stacy & Millikin store pt. Lot 49

Fairgrounds

Benson's Warehouse
 Benson's Basin

MONTEZUMA
PARK CO.
INC.
 In Secs. 35 & 36 T. 22 S. R. 15 W. R. 9 W.

I. & C. R. W. SHOP DEPOT

WABASH TP.

THOMAS NEWTON RICE'S FAMILY

Name	Birth/Place	Death	Burial/Place	Marriage
Isaac Rice	3-25-1795	1-11-1852	Presbyterian Cem. Waveland	
m. Narcissa M. Allen**	1803	9-09-1845		
Harrison J. Rice M.D.	8-25-1823	6-07-1895	Rockville, IN	
m. Nancy Moxley				10-??-1849
Victoria C. Rice	1851	6-04-1921	Rockville Cem. Rockville, IN	
m. Jeremiah H. Brown	4-22-1847	2-21-1936	Rockville, IN	6-11-1874
Kate M. Rice		7-??-1946	Memory Garden, Rockville, IN	
m. Frank E. Stevenson	1862	1947		
Haller Rice				
James Martyn Rice	2-17-1826	4-25-1902	Presbyterian Cem. Waveland	
m. Mary Ellen Demaree	2-22-1829	9-12-1890		10-09-1848
Charles C. Rice	1854			
Susan E. Rice	1854			
William Albert Rice	1856	5-24-1909	Ellensburg, Washington	
m. Mary Ella McCampbell				
Victoria Emma Rice	1883			
James Lee Rice	1886			
Thomas Harrison Rice	1892	1971		
Mary E. Rice	1859			
Thomas A. Rice	1864			
Harrison C. Rice	1869	1950	Forest Lawn Cem., Glendale, Los Angeles, CA	
m. Bertha Hancock	1873	1949		
Harrison Rice	1912	1991		
Thomas A. Rice	1915	1962		
William H. Rice	7-15-1827	9-27-1859	Presbyterian Cem. Waveland	
Thomas Newton Rice	6-07-1829	11-03-1904	Rockville Cem., Rockville, IN	
m. Margaret Jane Digby*	1833	7-21-1913		11-07-1855
Margaret D. Rice	1865	11-04-1919	Riverside Cem., Attica, IN	
m. Dr. Charles J. Finney	1857	11-19-1918	Riverside Cem., Attica, IN	
Charles Digby Finney		living 1918 on a destroyer ship		
Arthur Finney		student IU 1918		
Louise Finney		student IU 1918		
Jane Isabell Rice	1858	1945	Riverside Cem., Attica, IN	
m. Joseph Nave	1850	8-24-1937	Riverside Cem., Attica, IN	
Margaret Isabel Nave	1-10-1882	1993	Attica, IN	
m. Louis Lee Johnson	1873	1950		9-30-1904
Isabel Nave Johnson	1909	1996	San Francisco, CA	
Shannon M. Johnson	1912	1969		
Fanny Knowls Rice	1860	1-29-1864	Rockville Cem., Rockville, IN	
Isaac Digby Rice	1-??-1873	5-28-1873	Rockville Cem., Rockville, IN	
John T. Rice	1833	9-11-1916	Attica, IN	
m. Loana E. Brown	1844	1921	Attica, IN	1866
Layman aT. Rice	1877	1877		

*Margaret Jane Digby Rice is the daughter of Jane Digby, who was born in 1792 in Belfast, Ireland and died February 15, 1865. She was living in the residence of Thomas and Margaret Jane Rice in Rockville. She is buried in the same lot as Thomas and Margaret in Sec. E. Lot 45. It has been determined that Jane Digby's husband was Isaac Digby.

**Narcissa M. Allen Rice was a sister of Dr. James L. Allen, who died December 19, 1858. He was married to Caroline Foot on December 19, 1833. Caroline died on January 6, 1862 and was buried in the old Rockville Cemetery. Harrison J. Rice studied medicine under Dr. J. L. Allen in Rockville.

their common country. He besought them not to bite and devour each other at home while their relatives, friends and neighbors were absent defending their rights. He closed by thanking the ladies for their many kind favors conferred on the company and their patriotic consideration and action in the presentation of a flag. The Brass Band immediately struck up "Red, White and Blue," and shortly after escorted the company to Erastus M. Benson's warehouse on the Wabash & Erie Canal where they took a boat for camp Vigo. Of this company it may be truthfully said, it is composed of good, substantial men, and is probably better officered than any company that has left our county."

This unit was the 31st Regiment, a small company raised by Fred Arn and William Henry Harrison Beadle. They rendezvoused at the Fairgrounds in Montezuma, where on August 6th, they elected Mr. Arn, Capt.; Mr. Beadle, first Lt.; and Dr. Richard Waterman, second Lt..

In 1864, Thomas Rice was elected to the Indiana House of Representatives to represent Parke county. In 1866, he was elected a state senator for two years. The fourteenth amendment abolishing slavery was earnestly and sincerely advocated by him, and though he doubted the wisdom of the fifteenth amendment, he voted for it. He is credited for the system of gravel roads in Parke county, grading the first half mile about 1865 on Howard Avenue in Rockville. In 1869 he made a business trip of three months through Ireland, the birthplace of his wife, and Scotland. In that year he went into law partnership with James T. Johnston. He was on the Rockville school board in the 1870s-80s and was well thought of by most. He was reckoned among the foremost in active endeavors to advance the moral, social, material and intellectual interest not only of the immediate community in which he lived but the whole county. Johnston, his law partner, died July 19, 1904.

Thomas Newton Rice died on November 3, 1904. He was buried in Sec. E Lot 45 in Rockville Cemetery. His obituary, which covered much of his life, states:

"In departing this life we all learned a lesson for

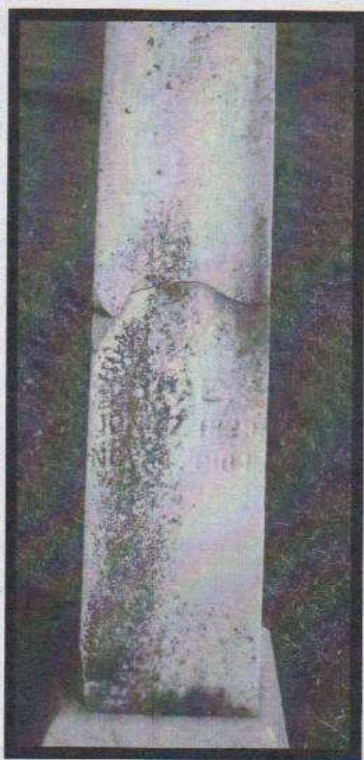


Home of Thomas Newton Rice
South half of Lot 8 Rockville, Indiana
Photo by Charles Davis

those we have left behind. The lesson of Mr. Rice's life is plainer than preaching to young men whose characters are forming. If you have ever thought that it does not pay to be a good man, look at the uncovered heads and tearful eyes of his fellow citizens who followed him to the grave; think of his happy and honorable career and take to heart the lesson that it pays beyond comparison to be a good man."

Sources:

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- Deed records, Rockville Court House recorder's office
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- Rice, James Martyn 104374188
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- Rice, William H. 104476582
- Rice, Harrison J. obituary, *Rockville Republican*, 6-12-1895.
- Rice, John T. obituary, *Rockville Tribune*, 5-26-1909.
- Rice, T. N. obituary, *Rockville Tribune*, 11-9-1904.
- Rockville cemetery records, Rockville library
- Walk in Presbyterian Cemetery in Waveland, Indiana
- Waveland *Independent* May 2, 1922



Thomas Newton Rice
B. June 7, 1829
D. November 4, 1904
Photo by Chas. Davis