

DISCLAIMER

This biography is a rough draft and a work-in-progress.
The research has not been completed, so there may be errors and omissions.
Please return to Tuscania1918.org in the future to see if a revised and
finalized version is available.

Abbreviations:

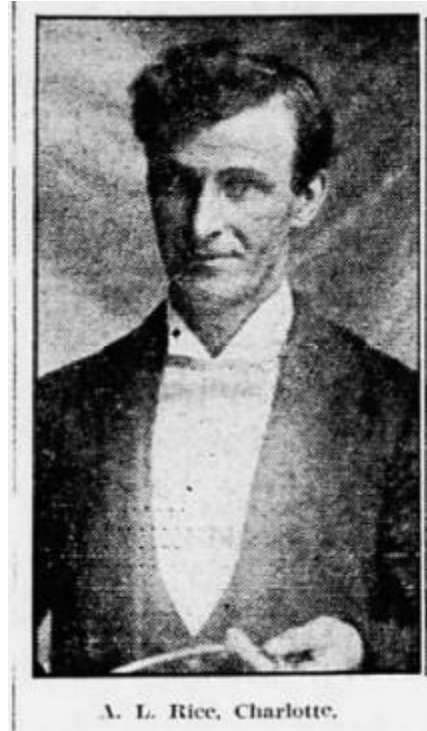
b = born

d = died

F: = Find A Grave (www.findagrave.org)

NOK = next-of-kin

TUSCANIA**Tuscania casualty****Rice, Alpha Leroy****1881 MI – 5 February 1918 Tuscania**



A. L. Rice, Charlotte.

Alpha Leroy Rice - "Lansing (MI) State Journal" 9 Feb 1918 p 1 -

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/205396366/?terms=%22a%20%20rice%22%20correspondent&match=1>



Alpha L. Rice, Charlotte.

escaped drowning.

Alpha L. Rice and Glenn F. Dennison of Charlotte were aboard the transport, but no word has been heard from either. Rice is 36 and a steam engineer. He ran a matrimonial bureau and published a matrimonial paper at Charlotte. He enlisted in the 20th engineers last fall as a foreman of a portable sawmill outfit. Dennison moved to Lansing recently from Charlotte, but spent most of his life in Eaton county.

"Grand Rapids (MI) Press" Saturday 9 Feb 1918 p 1 -

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/1111519297/>

Pvt. Alpha L. Rice, 18th Co., 20th Engineers, died in the torpedoing & sinking of the troopship "Tuscania" on 5 February 1918 in the North Channel between Scotland & Ireland by German submarine UB-77. He is missing in action.

While on "Tuscania," he listed his father, Nelson F. Rice, RFD 1, Charlotte, Michigan, as his next-of-kin. The "Lansing [Michigan] State Journal" of 9 February 1918 p. 7 reported: "Alpha L. Rice, who is 36 years old, is a steam engineer and has spent nearly all of his life in Eaton county. He is a member of the Woodman lodge at Needmore ... Rice, who is single, enlisted last fall in the forestry service as a foreman for a portable sawmill outfit, and was assigned to the 20th engineers." ... "Mr. Rice is probably known from coast to coast, in every hamlet and city, as the head of a matrimonial bureau and the publisher of The Correspondent, a matrimonial paper four years old. This paper is still being published in Charlotte during Mr. Rice's absence. He was also known as the 'Handcuff King' and had traveled extensively with circus sideshows and on vaudeville circuits. His father, Nelson Floyd Rice, resides in Charlotte, and a brother, Charles, lives near Needmore." The advertisements run by Alpha in newspapers across the country read: MARRY - Photos, descriptions free; honest advertisers; no rich widow fakes; plain sealed wrapper. Alpha Rice, Charlotte, Mich." The "Detroit Free Press" of 13 February 1918 on p. 2 wrote that Alpha was still missing. It describes him as a "juggler, sleight of hand performer, and head of a theatrical paper." Alpha was born circa 1881 or 1882 in Michigan. The 1910 census lists "Floyd" (age 52), Alpha (28) and Charles (26) in Roxand, Eaton County, Michigan.

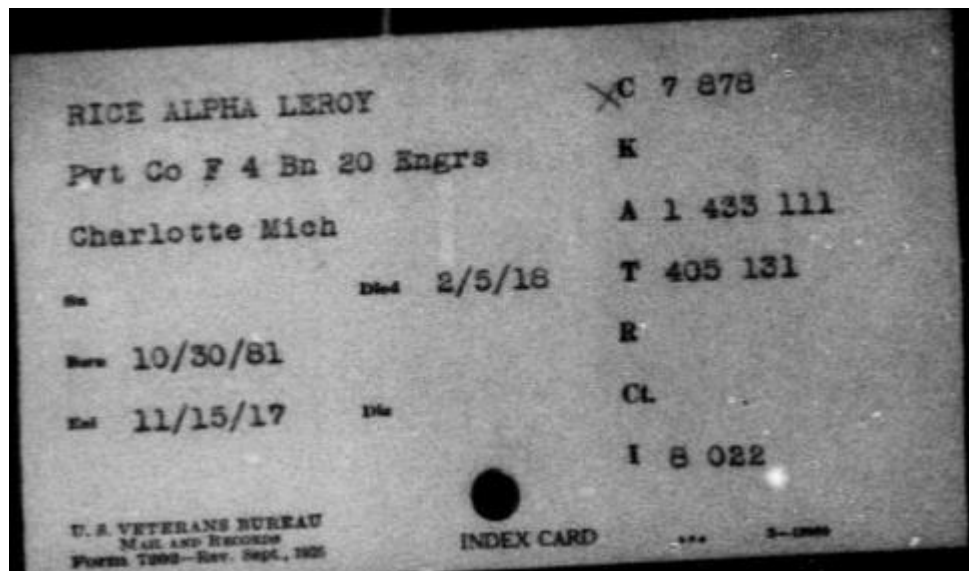
Find A Grave 55953963

Alpha L Rice

in the U.S., Headstone and Interment Records for U.S., Military Cemeteries on Foreign Soil, 1942-1949

Name:	Alpha L Rice
Rank:	Private
Residence Place:	Michigan
Military Unit:	20th Engineer Regiment
Military Branch:	U.S. Army
War:	World War I
Death Date:	5 Feb 1918
Cemetery Section:	Tablets of the Missing
Cemetery:	Suresnes American Cemetery
Burial Place:	Paris, France

https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/30228529:9170?tid=&pid=&queryId=2e08aa2c3ea5a02e4721abe2db7baba2&_phsrc=hFB48574&_phstart=successSource



<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:WQW1-PXT2>

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MICHIGAN: WHITE: INDUCTED INTO NATIONAL ARMY OR ASSIGNED THERETO UPON ENLISTMENT.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>SERIAL NO</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION AT TIME OF DEATH</u>	<u>DATE OF DEATH</u>
Rice, Alpha L	--	Pvt	Co F 6 Bn 20 Engrs	Feb 5/18

<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3MW-K9N6-9?cc=2996059&personUrl=%2Fark%3A%2F61903%2F1%3A1%3AAPH4-SH1X>

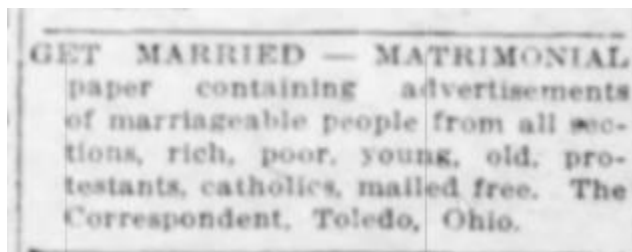
Alpha Rice

Military • Michigan, Census of World War I Veterans with Card Index, 1917-1919

Name	Alpha Rice
Residence Place	Charlotte, Eaton
Death Date	5 Feb 1918
Birth Date	30 Oct 1881
Birthplace	Albion, Mich
Father's Name	Nelson Floyd Rice
Mother's Name	Emma Rice
Event Type	Military Service
Event Date	12 Nov 1918
Event Place	Columbus, Franklin, Ohio, United States
Event Place (Original)	Columbus Bks

<https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/sources/LT65-58T>

Long before dating apps or online dating – Alpha Rice’s “The Correspondent” matrimonial paper, published by a bachelor:



“Muskogee (OK) Daily Phoenix & Times-Democrat” Sunday 27 Oct 1912 p 14



“Camden (NJ) Courier Post” Wednesday 19 Feb 1915 p 7

PROMINENT EATON MAN ON TUSCANIA

**A. L. Rice, Publisher of The
Correspondent, and Vaude-
ville Artist, Aboard.**

Special to The State Journal.

CHARLOTTE, Feb. 9.—Two former Charlotte men were on the ill-fated Tuscania, according to Friday's press reports—Alpha L. Rice and Glenn F. Dennison. The latter's home is now in Lansing, but he has spent nearly all his life in Charlotte and is a nephew of Mrs. W. E. Garman of this city. Alpha L. Rice, who is 36 years old, is a steam engineer and has spent nearly all of his life in Eaton county. He is a member of the Woodman lodge at Needmore, which recently hung out a service flag with a lonely star in honor of his enlistment. Rice, who is single, enlisted last fall in the forestry service as a foreman for a portable sawmill outfit, and was assigned to the 20th engineers. Illness had prevented him leaving for France earlier with the rest of his company.

Mr. Rice is probably known from coast to coast, in every hamlet and city, as the head of a matrimonial bureau and the publisher of The Correspondent, a matrimonial paper four years old. This paper is still being published in Charlotte during Mr. Rice's absence. He was also known as the "Handeuff King" and had traveled extensively with circus sideshows and on vaudeville circuits. His father, Nelson Floyd Rice, resides in Charlotte, and a brother, Charles, lives near Needmore.

Glenn Dennison left a sweetheart in Charlotte when he enlisted in the Michigan field artillery at Lansing last summer, as he is engaged to marry Miss Gladys Brown, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Brown of this city. He was recently transferred from the 119th field artillery at Camp MacArthur to the 107th engineers, composed mostly of Wisconsin men.

No word has been received in Charlotte as yet regarding the fate of either men, except the press reports that they were on the ill-fated transport.

Corp. Charles Goff and Lauren Lennon, who were at first believed to have been on the transport are safe at Camp Merritt in New Jersey, having been transferred there from Camp MacArthur, Waco, which gave rise to the story that they were about to sail for France.

FATE OF CHARLOTTE MAN ON TUSCANIA UNKNOWN

CHARLOTTE, Feb. 13.—No word has been received as yet concerning the fate of Alpha L. Rice, Charlotte man, who was aboard the Tuscania. It can not be learned whether he was among the survivors or not, and an appeal will be made by his father, Nelson Floyd Rice, to war department authorities at Washington, to ascertain his fate. Glen Dennison, former Charlotte boy, is among the survivors from the Tuscania catastrophe, according to a telegram received by his father, Isalah Dennison of Lansing, from the war department at Washington. No further particulars were given, but press reports carry the story that he is among those in a hospital in an Irish seaport, presumably Londonderry. Mrs. W. E. Graham of this city, an aunt, telegraphed Congressman J. M. C. Smith at Washington, Tuesday night, to find out where he was and in what condition. Mr. Dennison had spent the greater part of his life in Charlotte with his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Byron Hill, but for the past year or two had worked in Lansing for the Reo company, enlisting last summer in the Lansing batteries and later being transferred to the 107th Engineers' train.

"Lansing (MI) State Journal" Wednesday 13 Feb 1918 p 7

TWO STATE MEN BELIEVED LOST

Nelson F. Rice and Clarence
Allen Are Among Missing On
the Tuscania

(By The Associated Press)

Charlotte, Mich., Feb. 16. — No word has been received by Nelson Floyd Rice of this city as to the fate of his son, Alpha Rice who went down with the Tuscania. None of the reports show his name among the survivors and so far no lists have contained his name among the dead, but it is feared by relatives that his body may have been one of the unidentified buried on the Scotch coast. A telegram has been sent to Congressman Smith giving the number of the case and works of Mr. Rice's watch.

"Port Huron (MI) Times Herald" Saturday 16 Feb 1918 p 1

FINGER PRINTS MAY HELP IDENTIFY TUSCANIA DEAD

WAR DEPARTMENT HOPES TO RECOGNIZE SOLDIER
VICTIMS OF TORPEDOED TROOPSHIP BY
COMPARING IMPRINTS WITH RECORDS.

NINETY MICHIGAN MEN ON STRICKEN LINER

Ship's Roster Shows Names of Soldiers From All Sections of
State—Exact Loss Still in Doubt—Several
Wolverines Unaccounted For.

Washington—The war department has ordered finger prints of all the unrecognized soldiers whose dead bodies were recovered from the Tuscania. By comparison with records here, it will be possible to identify them.

The entire list of survivors must be sent this government before an accurate list of the missing can be made.

The gigantic task of compiling over 2,000 names may be realized when it is known that as the names reached here by cable, they were sent to the statistical bureau, where they had to be checked up with the ship's roster.

Ernest Monroe, private, Webberville.
William J. McCartney, corporal, Pontiac.

Archie E. Moore, sergeant, Elsie.
Fred Adolph Krey, private, Harrisburg.

William R. Johnson, corporal, Metamora.

Alpha L. Rice, private, Charlotte.

Herbert C. J. Besner, corporal, Saginaw.

George E. Schwartz, private, Richmond.

Cosmers H. Slater, private, Munising.

[article continues]

Michigan's Honor Roll.

Michigan's honor roll of men that have died in their country's cause while in service overseas during America's first year in the Great War is as follows:

CAPTAIN PHELPS COLLINS, aviator, of Alpena and Detroit.

LIEUTENANT GEORGE O. MIDDLE-DITCH, aviator, Detroit.

LIEUTENANT E. R. WHEATLEY, aviator, Detroit.

CORPORAL GEORGE ALLIE, Detroit.

PRIVATE HOMER KLEIN, Detroit.

DIED WHEN THE TUSCANIA SANK.

ANTHONY ABBONI, Detroit.

HERBERT C. J. BRESNNER, Saginaw.

WILBUR W. CLARK, Jackson.

WILLIAM R. JOHNSON, Metamora.

LEIGH A. WRIGHT, Hillsdale.

MISSING FROM TUSCANIA:

CLARENCE W. ALLEN, Traverse City.

ALPHA L. RICE, Charlotte.

DIED AT SEA:

STANLEY WING, Detroit.

RALPH McCLUER, Detroit.

In addition to these men, about 20 from Michigan have died in the training camps of this country, either from disease or accident, and their sacrifice is counted every bit as great as the sacrifice of the men who gave up their lives "over there."

"Detroit (MI) Free Press" Sunday 31 Mar 1918 p 76

Father:

State Deaths

(Special to The State Journal)

Nelson F. Rice

SUNFIELD, July 24—Nelson Floyd Rice, 88, died at the home in Sebewa Sunday after a short illness. He was born September 4, 1857, in Roxand township.

Surviving, besides the widow, Josephine, are one son, Charley; two sisters, Mrs. Blanche Blaiser, Charlotte, and Mrs. Laura Oliver of Eaton Rapids and several nieces and nephews. A son, Alpha, died February 5, 1918.

The funeral was to be held Tuesday afternoon at 2 o'clock from Needmore. Rev. Merle Benson officiating. Burial was to be in Needmore cemetery. Pallbearers were to be Frank King, Velour King, Carson Moyer, Jake Gonser, Ghy Blouche, James Bedell.

Obituary of father Nelson Floyd Rice – "Lansing (MI) State Journal" Tuesday 24 Jul 1945 p 12

Mother:

Name	Nelson F. Rice
Name Note	Residence - Albion. Occupation - Laborer
Sex	Male
Age	23
Birth Year (Estimated)	1858
Birthplace	Michigan
Race	White
Ethnicity	American
Spouse's Name	Mary E. Damm
Spouse's Sex	Female
Spouse's Age	19
Spouse's Birth Year (Estimated)	1862
Spouse's Birthplace	Michigan
Spouse's Race	White
Spouse's Ethnicity	American
Marriage Date	2 Feb 1881
Marriage Place	Albion, Calhoun, Michigan, United States
Event Type	Marriage
Source Details	bk2 p124 no4356

marriage of Nelson Floyd Rice to Mary Emma Damm on 2 Feb 1881 in Albion, Calhoun MI -
<https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/sources/93DW-R2M>

Father's 2nd wife (after Alpha had died,):

Josephine Derby

in the Michigan, U.S., Marriage Records, 1867-1952

Name:	Josephine Derby [Josephine Satterly]
Gender:	Female
Race:	White
Age:	76
Birth Date:	abt 1856
Birth Place:	Jackson County, Michigan
Marriage License Place:	Ionia
Marriage Date:	22 Dec 1932
Marriage Place:	Sunfield, Eaton, Michigan, USA
Residence Place:	Danby Township
Father:	Isaac L Satterly
Mother:	Julia Colf
Spouse:	Nelson Floyd Rice
County File Number:	8842
State File Number:	34 1722

No. 1842

Marriage License

34 1722
193 2IONIA County, Michigan

To any person legally authorized to solemnize marriage,

Greeting:

Marriage May Be Solemnized Between

Mr. Nelson Floyd Rice and M. Josephine Derby

affidavit having been filed in this office, as provided by Public Act No. 128, Laws of 1887, as amended, by which it appears that said

Nelson Floyd Rice is 75 years of age,
color is white, residence is Eaton Co. Mich., and birthplace was
Eaton Co. Mich., occupation is farmer, father's nameNelson Freeman Rice, and mother's maiden name was Alrona Sprague
has been previously married one time; and that said Josephine Derby
is 76 years of age, color is white, residence is Danby Twp. and
birthplace was Jackson Co. Mich., occupation is _____, father's nameIsaac L. Satterly, and mother's maiden name was Julia Colf
and who has been previously married two time s, and whose maiden name was
Josephine Satterly, and whose _____ consent, in case she

Parent's or Guardian's

has not attained the age of eighteen years, has been filed in my office.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto attached my hand and the
seal of IONIA County, Michigan, this 20th.
day of December, A. D. 193 2.

L S

County Clerk.

Certificate of Marriage	
Between Mr. <u>Nelson Floyd Rice</u>	and M ^{rs.} <u>Josephine Derby</u>
I hereby certify that, in accordance with the above license, the persons herein mentioned were joined	
in marriage by me, at <u>Sunfield</u>	County of <u>Eaton</u> , Michigan,
on the <u>22nd</u>	day of <u>December</u> , A. D. 193 <u>2</u> , in the presence
of <u>Kenneth P. Carrick</u>	of <u>Sunfield, Michigan</u>
and <u>Florence D. Carrick</u>	of <u>Sunfield Michigan</u>
as witnesses,	<u>Don H. Carrick</u>
	Name of Magistrate or Clergyman.
	Official Title.
This copy is to be retained by the County Clerk until the original is returned; then it is to be completed by endorsement and forwarded on the first of the following month to the Michigan Department of Health.	

<https://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=9093&h=5142397&tid=&pid=&queryId=78300a9f5c08debe24d0f25ecc180c08&usePUB=true&phsrc=hFB48586&phstart=successSource>

Sibling:

Name	Charley Rice
Sex	Male
Age	36y
Birth Date	1883
Birthplace	Mich.
Father's Name	Nelson F. Rice
Mother's Name	Emma Darwin
Spouse's Name	Ida C. King
Spouse's Sex	Female
Spouse's Age	20y
Spouse's Birth Date	1899
Spouse's Birthplace	Arkansas
Spouse's Father's Name	Fred King
Spouse's Mother's Name	Minnie Eades
Marriage Date	8 Nov 1919
Marriage Date	8 Nov 1919
Marriage Place	Charlotte, Eaton, Michigan
Marriage Place	Charlotte, Eaton, Michigan
Event Type	Marriage

<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:N3T1-FPZ>

ROLL, MRS. CECIL
Rural Charlotte

Mrs. Cecil Roll, age 77, died Sunday, Dec. 26 at a Charlotte hospital. She was born July 15, 1899 in Bald Knob, Ark. She was a member of The Needmore Cemetery Society, the Needmore Missionary Society and the Royal Neighbors of America. Surviving are: 1 sister, Mrs. Grace Sprung of Southgate; and several nieces and nephews. Services will be held at 1 p.m. Wednesday at the Barker-Leik Funeral Home in Mulliken with Rev. Peter Jansen officiating. Interment in Meadowbrook Cemetery.

Obituary of Charles Rice's widow Cecil Ida King Rice Roll – "Lansing (MI) State Journal" Tuesday 28 Dec 1976 p 4

Half-siblings (by his mother's 2nd marriage:

https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/60872/images/44471_354726-01649?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&usePUB=true&usePUBJs=true&pld=2316937

Body not recovered – missing in action

World War I draft registration (1917):

Veterans Administration Military Index:

Born: 30 Oct 1881

Enlisted: 15 Nov 1917

Died: 5 Feb 1918

Address: Charlotte MI

Rank/unit: private, Co. F, 4th Battalion, 20th Engineers

Birth & death:

Born: 30 Oct 1881 Albion, Calhoun MI

Died: 5 Feb 1918 Tuscania (missing in action)

Find A Grave record: 55953963 – presence on Tuscania indicated in text

Burial location: Suresnes, Departement des Hauts-de-Seine, Ile-de-France, France

Cemetery: Suresnes American Cemetery & Memorial

Tombstone: on plaque of missing – from MI

Father: Nelson Floyd Rice, 4 Sep 1857 Roxand, Eaton MI – 22 Jul 1945 Eaton Co. MI. Son of Nelson Freeman Rice & Cythera Alrena Sprague (F: 41758487). Buried in Needmore Cemetery, Needmore, Eaton MI.

Find A Grave: 40278886

Mother: Mary Emma Damm (Dahm) [also found as Darwin] Rice Wood, 14 Oct 1862

Marshall, Calhoun MI – 8 Nov 1903 Ithaca, Gratiot MI. Daughter of Peter Damm. He might be the Peter Dahm buried in Azalia Cemetery, Azalia, Monroe Co. MI, F: 60651405. Peter died 4 May 1886 in Monroe Co. MI according to the “flower” on his Find A Grave record.

Mary E. Damm Rice married Edwin A. Wood (25 Jun 1862 MI – 5 Jul 1924 MI, buried in Mount Park Cemetery, Pontiac, Oakland MI, F: 235259581), the son of William Francis Wood & Mary Elizabeth Griffin, on 9 Apr 1890 in Ithaca, Gratiot MI. Both were age 27. His parents are listed, but hers are not.

In the 1900 census for Ithaca, Gratiot MI, Edwin A. Wood, 37 WI, b. Jun 1862, father b. MI, mother's birthplace unknown, day laborer, lived with wife Emma (37 MI, b. Oct 1862, parents b. Germany) & daughter Rutha L. Wood (4 MI, Nov 1895, at school) & son Willie G. (2 MI, Aug 1897). Emma reported giving birth to 4 children, 4 of whom were living [which would include Alpha & Charles Rice]. Following Emma's death in 1903, Edwin married Martha Cordray Runyon (1882-1946) in 1905.

Buried in Ithaca Cemetery, Ithaca, Gratiot MI.

Find A Grave: 61873869

Parents' marriage: Nelson R. Rice, 23, resident of Albion MI & Mary E. Damm, 19, resident of Marshall MI, both b. MI, married 2 Feb 1881 in Albion, Calhoun MI

Father's second wife (after Alpha's death):

Second wife: Josephine E. Satterly (Satterlee) Hampton Derby Rice, 6 Oct 1856 NY – 24

May 1948 Chester, Eaton MI. She was the daughter of Isaac L. Satterly (F: 35259310) & Julia

Ann Cobb (also found as Goff & Colf, F: 35259394. – Josephine Satterly, age 23, married on 22 Aug 1882 in Lansing, Ingham MI to Charles L. Hampton. - Married in 1904 to Edwin Charles Derby (1843 NY – 1921 MI, F: 129944614). Edwin had previously married, in 1866, to Ellen D. Carpenter (1844-1902).

Buried in Needmore Cemetery, Needmore, Eaton MI.

Her Find A Grave:40278914

Their marriage: 22 Dec 1932 in Sunfield, Eaton MI. Nelson Floyd Rice was age 75 & Mrs. Josephine Derby was age 76. He reported he had been married once before; Josephine said she had been married twice before.

Spouse:

Spouse Find A Grave:

Marriage:

Children:

Sibling:

- Charles (Charley) Rice, 20 Oct 1883 Eagle, Clinton MI – 11 Oct 1946 Eaton Co. MI. Married Ida Cecil / Cecil Ida King (b. 15 Jul 1899 Russel, White AR – 26 Dec 1967 Charlotte, Eaton MI, SSN 363-48-5138) on 8 Nov 1919 in Charlotte, Eaton MI, F: 40278976. [Her side of their shared tombstone is empty of death information.] She was the daughter of Fred King & Minnie May Livermore King Eades. After Charles's death, Cecil Rice married Lawrence Karl Roll. Buried in Needmore Cemetery, Needmore, Eaton MI. F: 40278945

Half-siblings: by his mother Mary Emma Damm's 2nd marriage, to Edwin A. Wood

- Ruth Emma Wood, 1 Nov 1894 MI – 20 Apr 1909 Grand Ledge, Eaton MI. Records list her as daughter of Edwin A. Wood & Emma Daum. Died of tuberculosis at age 14 years, 5 months, 19 days. According to her MI birth record, she is buried in Ithaca (likely Ithaca Cemetery, Ithaca, Gratiot MI) but is not on Find A Grave as of 28 Aug 2022.
- Willie G. Wood, Aug 1897 MI (1900 census).

Notes:

Pre-war:

Operated 1 of the best-known matrimonial connection newspapers in the country, "The Correspondent." Ads for it appeared nationwide. He was not married.

Also known as "The Handcuff King" - an escape artist, juggler, sleight-of-hand performer in traveling circuses.

Wartime:

As of 21 Feb 1918 - "Yale [MI] Expositor" - his name was not on the dead or alive list.
Enlisted when past draft age. [See Find A Grave record for full story](#)

Post-war:

Obituary:

Censuses:

1900 Roxand, Eaton MI – his father, but no children listed

Floyd N. Rice, 42 MI, Sep 1857, divorced, father b. NY, mother b. MI, farmer [head of household]

1910 Roxand, Eaton MI

Floyd Rice, 52 MI, widow, father b. NY, mother b. MI

Alpha, 28 MI, single, parents b. MI, painter, house [son]

Charles, 26 MI, single, parents b. MI, laborer, odd jobs

1920 Roxand, Eaton MI – after Alpha's death

Charles Rice, 30 MI, parents b. MI, farmer, farm

Cecil J. Rice, 20 MI, father b. MI, mother b. IL [wife]

Nelson F. Rice, 62 MI, father b. NY, mother b. MI [father]