

**Finding Aid to the Martha's Vineyard Museum**  
**Record Unit 383**  
**Benjamin Rice Family Papers**  
By Zachary Gerson-Nieder

**Descriptive Summary**

**Repository:** Martha's Vineyard Museum

**Call No.**

**Title:** Benjamin Rice Family Papers, 1868-1920

**Creator:** various

**Quantity:** .50 cubic foot

**Abstract:** The Rice family papers consist of the personal and business related documents of Captain Benjamin Rice, Mary A. Rice, and their son, Frank Rice. The majority of the collection contains bills and receipts from the Rice family's two businesses. First, Captain Rice's schooner, the *Mary A. Rice*, and later, the Ocean View House in Oak Bluffs of which they were proprietors. In addition, there are personal and business correspondence, legal documents, tax records, and account books.

**Acquisition Information:** The Benjamin Rice Family Papers were acquired by the Martha's Vineyard Museum in \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

**Processing Information:** Zachary Gerson-Nieder

**Access Restrictions:** none

**Use Restrictions:** none

**Preferred Citation for Publication:** Martha's Vineyard Museum, Benjamin Rice Family Papers, Record Unit 383.

**Index Terms**

- Captain Benjamin Rice
- Mary A. Rice
- Frank F. Rice
- Schooner *Mary A. Rice*
- Ocean View House
- Order of the Eastern Star

**Series and Subseries Arrangement**

Series I: Personal Correspondence

Series II: Business Correspondence

    Subseries A: Schooner *Mary A. Rice*

    Subseries B: Ocean View Hotel

Series III: Personal Papers

Subseries A: Bills and Receipts  
Subseries B: Legal Papers  
Subseries C: Miscellaneous  
Series IV: Schooner Papers  
Subseries A: Bills and Receipts  
Subseries B: Miscellaneous Papers  
Series V: Ocean View House Papers  
Subseries A: Bills and Receipts  
Subseries B: Account Books  
Series VI: Business Advertisements

### **Biography/Historical Note:**

This collection documents the personal and professional lives of Captain Benjamin Rice, his wife, Mary A. Rice and their son, Frank Rice. We have little in our archives which illuminate the Rice's lives. What we do know is that in the 1870's Captain Rice captained the schooner *Mary A. Rice* on repeated voyages up and down the north-eastern seaboard. He sold the *Mary A. Rice* in 1883. There is some evidence that at this time they resided in New York.

By the beginning of the 1880's, the Captain Rice and his wife had become the proprietors of the Ocean View House, in Cottage City. They renovated and enlarged the Ocean View and its surrounding cottages on at least one occasion. They sent their son Frank to the East Greenwich School during the first half of the 1890's. Captain Rice died in 1902, leaving Mrs. Rice as sole proprietor of the Ocean View. Frank Rice begins to appear on bills and receipts for the Ocean View starting in the early 1900's. Mary Rice passed away on October 26, 1922. Frank passed away on April 29, 1938.

### **Scope and Content Note:**

The majority of the Rice family papers consist of bills and receipts from both their schooner and the Ocean View House. The bills and receipts are organized chronologically between 1870 and 1910. There are account books included in the collection from various Island businesses. In addition, there is personal and business correspondence to and from the Rice family. The collection also contains legal documents such as tax receipts, and deeds to Captain Rice's schooner.

### **Series Descriptions:**

#### **Series I: Personal Correspondence**

Box 1 of 1

Folder 1: Letter to Mrs. Rice from Captain Rice, 1/1/1873

Folder 2: Letter to 'Brother B' from anonymous, 3/23/??

Folder 3: Letter to Captain Rice referring to property bought in New York City, 9/27/1886

Folder 4: Typed Note from Family Attorney to Mrs. Rice, 7/25/1899  
Folder 5: Letter of Sympathy to Mrs. Rice at the death of Captain Rice, 3/6/1902  
Folder 6: Letter Addressed to Mrs. Rice from Edmund Glover, 9/24/1920

## **Series II: Business Correspondence**

### **Subseries A: Schooner Mary A. Rice**

Box 1 of 1

Folder 7: Letter to Captain Rice regarding finances of his Schooner, 12/31/1873  
Folder 8: Letter to Captain Rice from another Captain in Vineyard Haven, ??/??/1870

### **Subseries B: Ocean View House**

Box 1 of 1

Folder 9: Letter to Captain Rice enquiring about vacancies in Ocean View

## **Series III: Personal Papers**

### **Subseries A: Bill and Receipts**

Box 1 of 1

Folder 10: Bills and Receipts, 1870-1879  
Folder 11: Bills and Receipts, 1880-1889  
Folder 12: Bills and Receipts, 1890-1899  
Folder 13: Bills and Receipts, 1900-1910

### **Subseries B: Legal Papers**

Box 1 of 1

Folder 14: Assorted Tax Forms

### **Subseries C: Family Papers Miscellaneous**

Box 1 of 1

Folder 15: Assorted East Greenwich Academy Papers  
Folder 16: 25<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary Invitation for Captain and Mrs. Rice, 1868-1895  
Folder 17: Directions for making a barrel stove hammock  
Folder 18: Wedding Invitation sent to the Rice's.

## **Series IV: Schooner Papers**

### **Subseries A: Bills and Receipts**

Box 1 of 1

Folder 19: Bills and receipts 1870-1879

### **Subseries B: Schooner Papers Miscellaneous**

Box 1 of 1

Folder 20: Commissions and manifests for the *Mary A. Rice*  
Folder 21: Deed for the sale of the *Mary A. Rice*, 1/19/1883

## **Series V: Ocean View House Papers**

### **Subseries A: Bills and Receipts**

Box 1 of 1

Folder 22: Bills and receipts, 1880-1889

Folder 23: Bills and receipts, 1880-1889, cont.

Folder 24: Bills and receipts, 1890-1899

Folder 25: Bills and receipts, 1900-1910

### **Subseries B: Account Books**

Box 1 of 1

Folder 26: A.R. Gifford Account Book, 1884

Folder 27: Pierce's Memorandum and Account Book, 1886-87

Folder 28: Non-Specific Account Book, 1888

Folder 29: Butcher's Account Book, 1889

Folder 30: Grocer's Account Book, 1890

Folder 31: Louis H. Pease's Fish Store Account Book, 1895

Folder 32: Grocer's Account Book, 1895

Folder 33: Star Fish Market Account Book, 1900

## **Series VI: Business Advertisements**

Box 1 of 1

Folder 34: Miscellaneous Advertisements 1876-1900