"The Rice Family" by Andrew Henshaw Ward, A.M. was published at Boston 1858. This early family history, published 75 years ago, does not refer to any tradition in the family concerning an exalted ancestry. At that period some such tradition might easily have been handed down and probably would have been. Quite evidently the compiler either had not heard of any such tradition or else thought it not worthy of notice. This book, on page 11, gives baptisms of some of the children of EDMUND RICE, obtained from the parish register of Great Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire. Edmund was not referred to as Mr. or gent. in these entries.

Rev. Edwin B. Rice, MA, published "Descendants of Benjamin Rice of Conway, Mass" at NYC 1909. On pages 3 and 4 he gave some account of Deacon Edmund Rice and stated: "No one has yet been able to get the slightest trace of his parents, or of his ancestors or where he lived prior to his coming to Berkhamsted, England.

Since publication of "The Rice Family" in 1858, no additional authentic records of EDMUND RICE or his family in England have appeared in print until January 1934 when an article by Mrs. Mary Loering Holman was published in TAG 10:133-137. This proved that EDMUND resided at Stanstead, Suffolk, before moved to Great Berkhamsted and indicated that he was son or younger brother of a HENRY RICE who also lived in Stanstead, Henry being the name which Edmund bestowed on his own eldest son.

In 1911 a book called "By The Name of Rice" was published at Alliance, Ohio by Dr. Charles Elmer Ricer. It states on pages 6 to 9 a line of ancestry for Edmund RICE, meager as to facts and presenting no evidence of any kind. The following direct statements are made..."Sir Griffith Rice was made a knight of Bath in 1501." "To William Rice, of Bohmer, in Buckinghamshire, a grandson of Sir Griffith, a coat of arms was granted...May 1555." "Deacon Edmund Rice was modestly descended from Sir Griffith Rice, Knight of the Bath (1501), being his great-great-grandson." "Antiquity is not my private property and it has been a long and difficult chase, this search for the origin of the family. It took much research in the British Museum and years of study at home and abroad."

Before checking these statements, we would call attention to the entire absence of documentation. Without such documentation, statements of this type are rarely worth investigation because of the fact that many such claims have been innocently accepted and put into print by those who have purchased the concoctions of fraudulent genealogists. It will be noticed that Dr. Rice fails to state that he made the investigation personally and I would not be understood as reflecting in any way on his own sincerity in putting these statements into print. The only reference given is the vague "research in the British Museum" without any citation of definite records or authority either documentary or printed.

To those who have accepted the statements made in this book, investigation is disillusioning. The "Victoria History of Buckinghamshire" written by scholars of repute and published in four large volumes, with complete index in a smaller 5th volume, gives history of every parish in the county. The index does NOT contain the name Bohmer or Boemer from which we may deduce that its importance and quite probably its actual existence is somewhat dubious.

The only RICE family mentioned in this monumental history is found in Volume III, page 87. The manor of Medmenham located in Medmenham, Desborough Hundred, was held by the Pole family. Henry Pole, Lord Montague, was attainted and executed and the manor forfeited to the crown. In 1553
it was granted by Edward VI to Sir Thomas PALMER. On Palmer's attainder the same year, Queen Mary made a grant on this manor to WILLIAM RICE and his wife Barbara. This William RICE died without issue in 1588 and in 1593, his widow and the collateral heirs sold their interests in the manor.

This WILLIAM RICE who received a manor from Queen Mary in 1553 somewhat resembles the alleged William of Bohmer in Dr. Rice's book for in the front of that book is a picture of a "coat of arms granted to William Rice, of Buckinghamshire, England by Queen Mary, 5/2/1555." The date is very close to the date on which the actual William Rice received the manor of Medmenham in Buckinghamshire from Queen Mary, as stated in the Victoria History with full citation of documentary proof. The coat of arms pictured in Dr. Rice's book is an elaborate one and under it appears the motto, "By the Name of Rice," surrounded by decorative devices.

The statements made in Dr. Rice's book, undocumented and with generations not filled in between Edmund Rice and his alleged grandfather William and between William and his alleged grandfather, Sir Griffith, scarcely require further consideration. However, a more complete line has appeared in print as for example in the genealogical columns of "The Boston Transcript" where the articles are signed by initials only. Mrs. Horatio Ford of South Euclid, Ohio corresponded with a gentleman who had published the full line in the Transcript and the present writer has seen this man's letter. He disclaimed personal responsibility for the information and referred to Dr. Rice as his authority. Condensed, the following is the line of descent as it appeared in print:

A. Sir Griffith Rice, knight of Bath, 1501
B. Rice ap-Griffith b 1500 m Katherine Howard
C. William Rice b 1522 of Boemer, Co Bucks, granted arms 1555
D. Thomas Rice father of Edmund and Robert (twins) who were born 1594

NO doubt exists as to generations A & B for the present Lord Dynevor descends from Griffith ap Rice who was s/o Rice ap Griffith (generation B), and this line can be found in books on the peerage. The illuminated pedigree in possession of Lord Dynevor is doubtless the basis, or the chief authority for the earlier generations. Burke's Peerage, 1928 edition, page 838, under title Dynevor states that Rhys ap Griffith FitzUryan married Katherine, d/o Thomas Howard, 2nd Duke of Norfolk and by her (who m. 2ndly Henry Daubeny, Earl of Bridgewater, and was bur 11 May 1553) had issue a son and heir Griffith ap Rice from whom the pedigree continues down and also a daughter, Agnes, who married Sir Edward [Aayntunk] Knight.

It will be noted that Burke, though going out of his way to mention a daughter of Rhys ap Griffith does not mention a son William or any other son but Griffith. IF William had been son of Rhys ap Griffith, it is unlikely that he would have received a grant of arms since there was nothing to prevent his using the paternal arms perhaps with a difference to indicate that he was a younger son. The granting of arms (if it really occurred) would more probably indicate that he was a "Tudor upstart" desirous of establishing his position as a gentleman.

William (Generation C) is given no wife, and no mention is made of his will. He is called of "Boemer", a place we cannot located in Buckinghamshire. Thomas (Generation D) is given no baptism, no burial date, no will and no wife. Apparently he is only a name, a kind of disembodied spirit necessary to make a connection between Deacon Edmund RICE and the important Rice family of County Carmarthen. He is not even assigned a residence which makes it impossible for the independent investigator to check the allegation that he had twin sons, Edmund and Robert born 1594. No genuine claim to ancestry in England needs to be cloaked in such obscurity.
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