

## Rice's Crossing Road and Bridge

Rice's Crossing Road begins at Oregon House in Yuba County, traverses the Yuba River at Rice's Crossing (former bridge site), and continues across South Yuba River State Park on its way to French Corral. For years, many of us have wondered "who was Rice" and "when were the road and bridge built?" The only clue was that the bridge builder was the Rice brothers. In 2014 Steve Pauly found that Rice and Atchison constructed a turnpike from Oregon House to Foster's Bar Bridge to Camptonville and learned that road had been built by three Rice brothers and four Atchison brothers. Digging into the Rice brothers on the internet, he found that in April 1852, Peter Rice purchased the Oregon Ranch (now at Oregon House) in Yuba County and sent for his family, then living in Ohio.

Rice had been born in Pennsylvania in 1818, came to Hangtown (Placerville) in 1849 during the Gold Rush, and was a successful miner allowing him to purchase the property at Oregon House. Sometime between 1852 and about 1855, with the help of his younger brothers Samuel and William, he built the South Branch Turnpike (later known as Rice's Crossing Road) including the bridge across the Yuba River known as Rice's Crossing. During the Gold Rush, the mining bar at the Crossing had been known as Lousy Level, Liar's Flat, and Liases Flat. In 1862 the toll for the Crossing was \$3 for 8 horses or mules or a loaded oxen team (half that for the Bridgeport bridge at the time). The Rices sold the road in 1864. In later years the turnpike was owned by Thomas Freeman, George Fagg (David Wood's son-in-law), and David Wood.

Peter Rice moved to Virginia City (1869-71) and to Ventura County in 1871 where he farmed until his death in 1890. A detailed biography for Peter Rice in the 1883 Thompson & West History of Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties confirms that he had been President and Treasurer of three turnpikes including the South Branch Turnpike (Rice's Crossing Road). Armed with names and dates, a Rice family chart was constructed, and it showed that several of Peter Rice's descendants are living. A great-great-granddaughter, living near Salinas, is one of the family historians and has located and shared much valuable information including several of Peter Rice's 1853 and 1854 letters.



*Yours Truly  
Peter Rice*

## Legal Details

March 8, 1855, a map filed in Yuba County Records office shows the distance from Oregon House to the Yuba River as 6 miles 11 chains and from the Yuba River to French Coral as 1 mile 23 chains. (There are 80 chains to a mile. One chain is 6 feet long and each link is 0.66 feet or 7.92 inches long.) This route was known as the South Branch Turnpike. (Board of Supervisors minutes BK1-491)

November 8, 1862, the South Branch Turnpike Company submits an application to the Board of Supervisors asking them to fix the toll rates on their road. The request was granted for 1 year from November 8, 1862. The rates were set as follows:

8 horses, mules or oxen team loaded	\$3.00
8 horses, mules or oxen team unloaded	\$2.00
6 horses, mules or oxen team loaded	\$2.50
6 horses, mules or oxen team unloaded	\$1.50
4 horses, mules or oxen team loaded	\$2.00
4 horses, mules or oxen team unloaded	\$1.00
2 each way	\$1.00
1 horse and buggy	\$.75
horsemen	\$.50
footman	\$.25

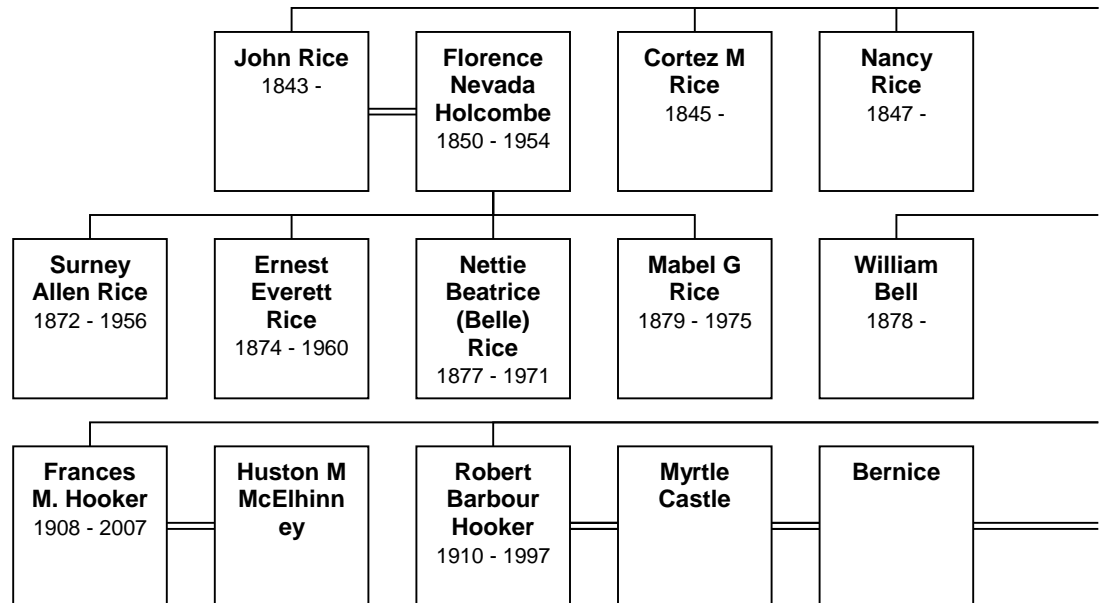
pack animal per head	\$ .10
loose cattle or horses per head	\$ .10
hog or sheep per head	\$ .05

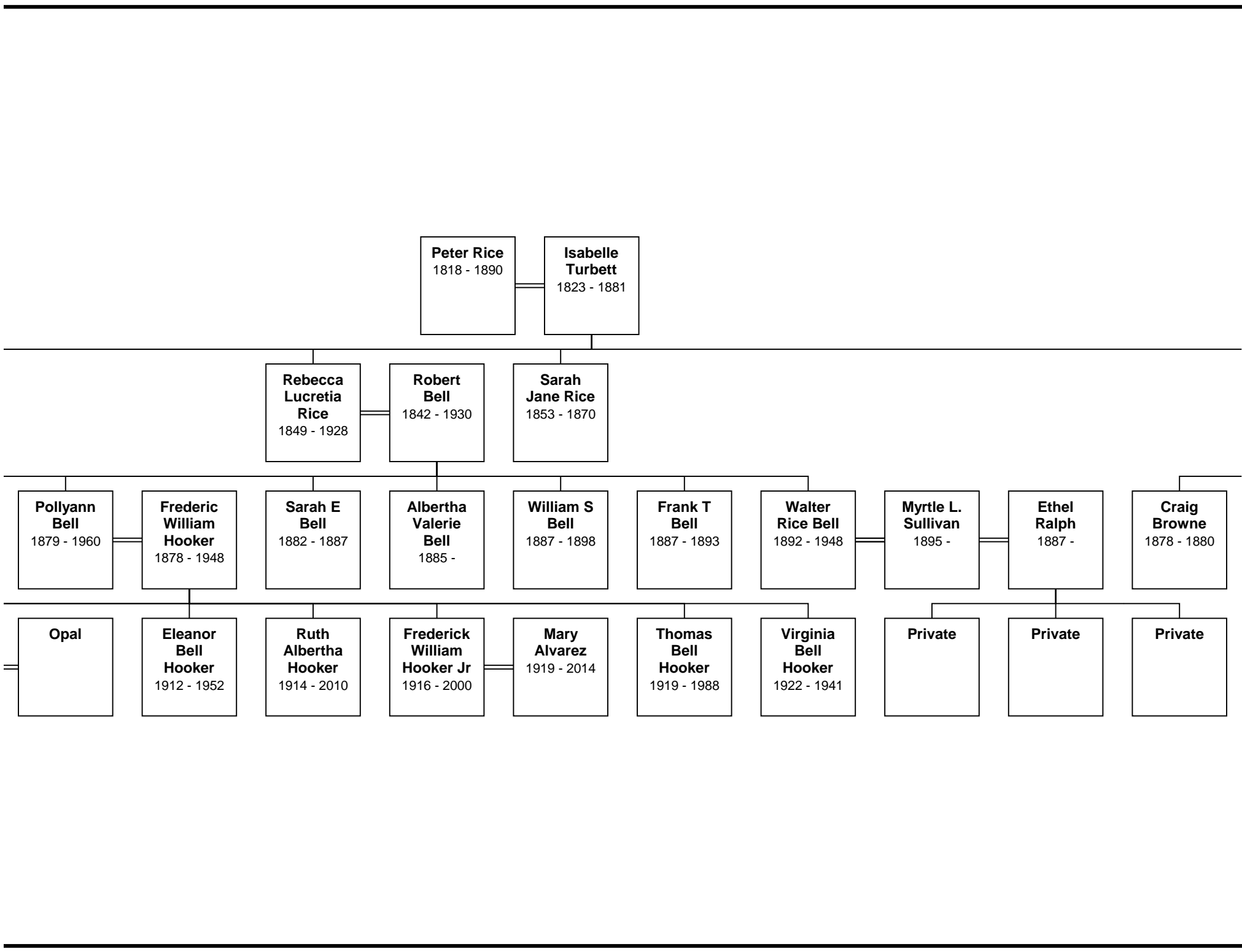
February 1, 1864, the South Branch Turnpike Company applied for a license renewal. Granted for 1 year from February 1, 1864 with rates to remain the same. (Board of Supervisors minutes BK2-67)

January 3, 1866, Thomas Freeman deeds to George Fagg (D. I. Wood's son-in-law) for \$5,000. the South Branch Turnpike which begins at Oregon House (Yuba County) to French Coral (Nevada County) with a bridge and toll house. (Deeds 20-674)

September 26, 1866, George Fagg deeds to D. I. Wood of Virginia City, Nevada, the South Branch Turnpike which begins at Oregon House (Yuba County) to French Coral (Nevada County) with a bridge and toll house. (Deeds 26-396)

**Descendant Chart for  
Peter Rice  
December 2014**





**Peter Rice**  
1818 - 1890

**Isabelle Turbett**  
1823 - 1881

**Rebecca Lucretia Rice**  
1849 - 1928

**Robert Bell**  
1842 - 1930

**Sarah Jane Rice**  
1853 - 1870

**Pollyann Bell**  
1879 - 1960

**Frederic William Hooker**  
1878 - 1948

**Sarah E Bell**  
1882 - 1887

**Albertha Valerie Bell**  
1885 -

**William S Bell**  
1887 - 1898

**Frank T Bell**  
1887 - 1893

**Walter Rice Bell**  
1892 - 1948

**Myrtle L. Sullivan**  
1895 -

**Ethel Ralph**  
1887 -

**Craig Browne**  
1878 - 1880

**Opal**

**Eleanor Bell Hooker**  
1912 - 1952

**Ruth Albertha Hooker**  
1914 - 2010

**Frederick William Hooker Jr**  
1916 - 2000

**Mary Alvarez**  
1919 - 2014

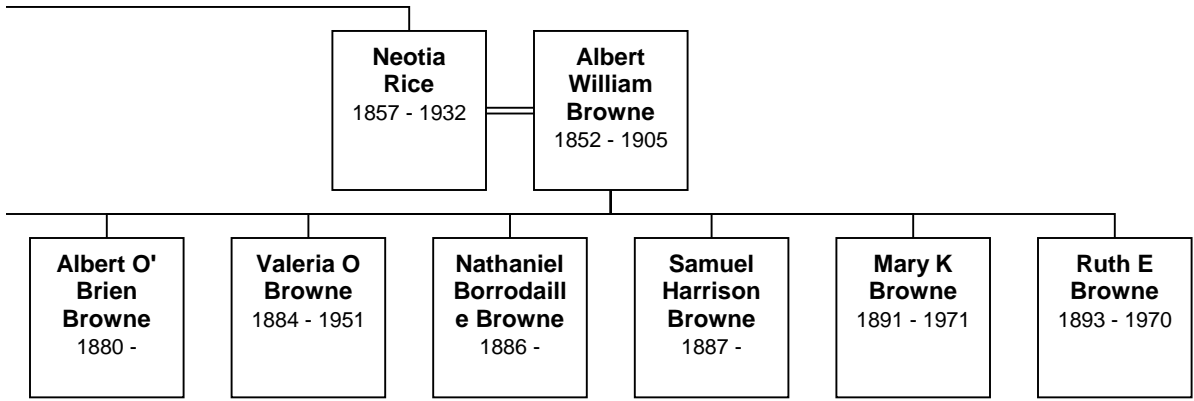
**Thomas Bell Hooker**  
1919 - 1988

**Virginia Bell Hooker**  
1922 - 1941

**Private**

**Private**

**Private**



**Albert O'  
Brien  
Browne**  
1880 -

**Valeria O  
Browne**  
1884 - 1951

**Nathaniel  
Borrodaille  
Browne**  
1886 -

**Samuel  
Harrison  
Browne**  
1887 -

**Mary K  
Browne**  
1891 - 1971

**Ruth E  
Browne**  
1893 - 1970

**Neotia  
Rice**  
1857 - 1932

**Albert  
William  
Browne**  
1852 - 1905