In 1866, the New York Lumber Company – which had opened mills at Marinette in 1858-1859 – established the New York Farm at the junction of the Menominee and Sturgeon Rivers. The farm was operated to supply food for the logging camps and feed for the horses used at the camps in the area and north and east of the present site of Vulcan, and as a place where the horses could be summered without making the long trip to the Marinette-Menominee area. Thomas Rice, the first manager of the 2,000-acre farm, was also the first permanent white settler in what is now Norway Township.

Thomas Rice was born January 1, 1836, in Douglas, Renfrew County, Ontario, Canada.

On the 1861 Canadian census Thomas Rice, living in Bromley, Renfrew County, Ontario, Canada, was listed as a Roman Catholic single man.

In 1862, at the age of 26, Thomas Rice married Margret [sic] Dorsey, of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Margret Dorsey was born June 26, 1841. The couple moved to Chicago, Illinois, in about 1865, where they remained for two years. The Rices then moved to Menekaunee, Wisconsin, where they lived for four years, and then moved to their Sturgeon River farm where Thomas remained for the rest of his life.
On the 1870 U.S. Census for Oconto, Marinette County, Wisconsin, Thomas Rice was listed as the 33-year-old head of the household, born in Canada. His wife was listed as 29-year-old Margarett [sic], born in Canada. Their children were 4-year-old daughter Mary, born in Canada; and 2-year-old Margarett [sic], born in Illinois.

Sarah Dorsey, the 22-year-old sister of Margret, born in Canada, was also listed as a member of the household.

In June of 1871, Margret Rice joined her husband Thomas at the New York Farm, becoming the first white woman to settle on the Menominee Range. She arrived from Menominee on a stormy night, accompanied by her three oldest children – Margaret, Mary and Edward. Edward was only six months old.

Mrs. Rice described her arrival as reported below in an article which appeared in the December 5, 1908 edition of Norway’s The Current:

"Mrs. Rice’s description of the incidents and occurrences of those early days are of great interest. There was at that time and during the whole of 1871, a general rush to secure pine lands and special messengers were on the river trails carrying land minutes to the mouth of the Menominee and bringing instructions back to the cruisers. So great was the rush that no weather conditions were supposed to deter the safe delivery of letters, or packages at their destinations up or down river. Mrs. Rice’s description of her first crossing of the Sturgeon river is to say the least graphic.

"It appears that she and her husband and children arrived at the south bank of the river near where the present wagon bridge now is; that it was raining and lightning heavily and continuously, that the camp was so far from the opposite side of the river that the attention of no one could be attracted, and so as it had grown dark, one of the men was forced to swim the river and summon help from the camp, in the shape of a bark canoe, in which the water soaked woman and children were ferried across with much difficulty."

At that time what was known as the State Road (now County Road 577) was called the "Tote Road," and was the only link with Menominee, which at that time was the nearest town.

The early settlers’ farms naturally clustered around the “Tote Road” or the “State Road,” as it soon became known. Among other early State Road settlers were the families of James Rice and Richard Reath, as well as the Barkers, the Duncans, the Underwoods, the Giesens and the Tavis family.

Thomas Rice operated a sawmill on the banks of the Sturgeon River for many years. When he brought his family there, Menominee Indians were still occupying the land. However, they were friendly, and whenever a band of these Indians rode up to the Rice cabin, Tom would share his food with them. No one was ever turned away from Tom Rice’s cabin.

In those days the settlers had to travel to Marinette and Menominee for supplies. With no bridges, they would ford the river at the lowest point. The round trip took two days.

In 1873 daughter Katherine “Kate” was born to the Rices. However, because there were no medical facilities in the wilderness, Margret Rice returned to Marinette to have her baby. In 1876, she gave birth to another son, Joseph.

An item in the column "Menominee Range Items" in the August 4, 1877 edition of Marquette’s The Mining Journal noted: “A child belonging to Mr. Thos. Rice, of the New York farm, was severely burned last Saturday about the neck and shoulders. I believe the doctor thinks the child will
recover.” The column was written under the pseudonym “Wolverine.”

In 1880 Thomas Rice bought the acreage that was still the Rice farm at the time of Vulcan’s centennial in 1972 from the Menominee River Lumber Company which had acquired the properties of the New York Lumber Company.

Thomas Rice Farm was located near the New York Farm on the Sturgeon River. In 1972 remains of the original one-room log cabin Thomas Rice built for his family still stood in the farm, as did traces of the larger two-story house built of squared white pine logs, pictured above, that was the Rice farm home for three generations. At the time of the Vulcan Centennial celebration in 1972 the farm Tom Rice settled remained in the Rice family, owned by his great-grandson, William Rice, of Detroit, who was a coach at Dearborn High School. [Vulcan Centennial Book]

An item in Norway’s The Current on September 25, 1886, stated: “Thomas Rice will go up on the Paint river next week to build two camps for the M.R.L. Co. [Menominee River Lumber Company] and will run one of them this winter.”

Just over four years later – on April 5, 1890 – Thomas Rice, Vulcan’s pioneer resident, died of pneumonia at his home at the age of 54.

Just a month later – on May 7, 1890 –, The Current reported that Patrick Rice, Thomas Rice’s brother, had been struck by a train while walking through the rock cut on the Loop about a mile west of Fumee. Being deaf Patrick did not hear the approach of Engine No. 448, which struck
him and threw him about 20 feet, breaking his back and causing instant death. Patrick had a small farm on the State Road and worked in the woods.

Margret Rice was seriously injured when the king bolt of the wagon she was driving came out and the horse walked away with the front wheels, pulling her to the ground, on June 11, 1897, according to an account in *The Current*.

In the 1900 United States Census for Norway Township, Dickinson County, Michigan, Margret Rice was listed as the 59-year-old, widowed head of the household, born in June, 1841, in Canada. She immigrated to the United States in 1864, and her father and mother were both born in Ireland. She was the mother of eight children, five of whom were living in 1900.

Her son Joseph was listed as a 25-year-old single male born in Wisconsin in June, 1875. His parents were both born in Canada.

Her daughter Elizebeth [sic – Elizabeth] was listed as a 19-year-old single female born in Michigan in June, 1881. Her parents were both born in Canada.

Angelo Tomasi, a 36-year-old single male born in Italy in October, 1864, was listed as a boarder and probably was a farm hand, assisting Joseph. Angelo immigrated to the United States in 1895.

An article in the December 5, 1908 edition of *The Current* noted Margret Rice was then making her home with her daughter, Mrs. Albert W. (Katherine) Anderson, at the Penn Mining Company’s hydraulic plant at Sturgeon Falls.

Margret’s son Joseph contracted tuberculosis and spent some time at the Michigan Tuberculosis Hospital in Howell beginning in June, 1911. He returned to his farm near the Sturgeon River in Norway Township, but suffered a relapse. In early October, 1912, Joseph left for Silver City, New Mexico, hoping that the change of climate would restore his health. His wife and three children joined him in the spring of 1913.

At times Joseph showed signs of improvement, but it became evident that there would be no permanent betterment of his condition. Margret and her daughter Elizabeth Gorman left for Tyrone, Grant County, New Mexico, arriving a few days before Joseph’s death on July 5, 1914. Together with Joseph’s immediate family, they accompanied the remains back to Norway, where he was buried.

Margret (Dorsey) Rice died February 17, 1921.

Thomas and Margret (Dorsey) Rice were the parents of eight children according to the 1900 United States Census information given by Margret. At that time five were living. Six of their children were:

Mary, born in 1863 in Illinois; married Alexander Miller; died July 11, 1894 (30 years, 7 months, 11 days);

Margaret, born in 1868 in Wisconsin; married (1) Richard (?) Knight; married (2) John Carroll; died April 22, 1907, in Bessemer, Gogebic County, Michigan;

Edward James, born January 17, 1871 in Marinette, Wisconsin; married (1) Mary A. Farnand, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh (wife’s maiden name – Cosgione) Farnand, on October 30, 1911, in Iron River, Iron County, Michigan; Mary was born January 6, 1873 and died March 21, 1915 in Palatka, Iron County, Michigan; (2) Elvina Kenny, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joe (wife’s maiden name – Saltzeiter) Kenny, on June 10, 1915, in Iron River, Iron County, Michigan; died October 26, 1933, in Quinnesec, Dickinson County, Michigan;

Katherine “Kate”, born June, 1873, in Menominee, Menominee County, Michigan; married Albert W. Anderson, son of Andrew
and Carrie (Peterson) Anderson, born January 11, 1894, in Chicago, Illinois, on May 7, 1900, in Vulcan, Dickinson County, Michigan; died in June, 1955;

Joseph T., born in June, 1875 in Wisconsin; married Annie Young, daughter of Peter Young, on July 22, 1907, in Norway, Dickinson County, Michigan; died July 5, 1914, in Tyrone, Grant County, New Mexico;

Elizabeth “Lizzie”, born June, 1881 in Michigan; married Phillip Gorman, on April 27, 1894, at St. Barbara’s Church in Vulcan, Dickinson County, Michigan.

Norway Township Cemetery Records
Block 3, Lot 13
With Tombstones

Grave 6: Thomas Rice (not on records) name on stone – Thomas Rice; death date – April 5, 1890; 54 years

Grave 1: Margret Rice, buried February 20, 1921, age 79 – name on stone – Margret Rice – Mother; birth date June 26, 1841; death date February 17, 1921
Grave 2: Albert Anderson, buried November 15, 1940; name on stone – Albert W. – Father; birth date – 1874; death date – 1940

Grave 4: Kate (Rice) Anderson, daughter of Thomas and Margret (Dorsey) Rice, buried June 29, 1955, aged 82; name on stone – Katherine – Mother; birth date – 1873; death date – 1955

Grave 10: Margaret, daughter of Albert W. and Katherine (Rice) Anderson – name on stone – Margaret; birth date – 1903; death date – 1906 [died March 17, 1906]
Grave 9: name on stone – Bernadette; birth date – 1910; death date – 1912 (not on records in Norway Cemetery)

Grave 3: Royce E. Anderson, buried March 31, 1952, age 42; name on stone – Royce E. Anderson; birth date – 1910; death date – 1952

Grave 8: name on stone – Harry R. Anderson – Father; birth date – 1914

Grave 5: Marian Anderson, buried October 31, 1964; age 47; wife of son Harry; name on stone – Marian J. – Mother; birth date – 1917; death date – 1964
Grave 7: Mary (Rice) Miller, daughter of Thomas and Margret (Dorsey) Rice – Name on stone – In Memory of Mary, wife of Alexander Miller; death date – July 11, 1894; age 30 years, 7 months, 11 days
Norway Township Cemetery Records
Block 3, Lot 6
With Tombstones

Joseph T. Rice Family
Joseph T. Rice – Father – Born June 10, 1875, Marinette, Marinette County, Wisconsin; Died July 5, 1914, Tyrone, Grant County, New Mexico

Anna A. (Young) Rice, daughter of Peter Young (1845-1907) and Mary Jane Chamberlain (1864-1948)

Children of Joseph T. and Anna A. (Young) Rice:
Margaret Rice (1903-1906)
Walter J. Rice (1908-1985)
Inez E. (Rice) Olson (1910-2004)
Bernadette Rice (1910-1912)

Siblings of Anna A. (Young) Rice:
John Young (1875-1958)
Fred Young (1878-1931)
Anna A. (Young) Rice (1879-1958)
Guy R. Young (1894-1976)
Jessie D. Young (1896-1918)

Norway Township Cemetery Records
Block 13A, Lot 115
With Tombstones

John and Margaret (Rice) Geisen Family

John Giesen, born 1869; died March, 1962
Margaret (Rice) Giesen, daughter of Thomas and Margret (Dorsey) Rice, wife of John Giesen, born January 13, 1878 in Ontario, Canada; died March 12, 1920, in Green Bay, Brown County, Wisconsin

Children of John and Margaret (Rice) Giesen:
Helen (Giesen) O'Donnell (1900-1949)
Harry J. Giesen (1901-1907)
Lawrence D. Giesen (1903-1997)

Hubbard Giesen, father of John Giesen, born 1836; died March 27, 1920, in Norway, Dickinson County, Michigan

Additional Rice Family Information

Elizabeth “Lizzie” (Rice) Gorman (1881-1920)

The Current, Norway, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume XX, Number 13 [Saturday, April 30, 1904], page 1, column 3

Married at Vulcan.

Wednesday morning, Rev. Fr. Cavicchi of St. Barbara’s church, Vulcan, joined in wedlock Mr. Phillip Gorman and Miss Lizzie Rice. The bride is a daughter of Mrs. Thomas Rice, who lives on her farm near the mouth of the Sturgeon River. She is well known in this city where she has resided for some years. She has many friends who will wish her unmeasured happiness. The groom is well known in this city where he has made his home for years and is popular with all. The happy couple took the morning train south for a short trip after which they will perhaps make their home for a time on the farm. Many friends and relatives of the wedded couple attended the ceremony and extended earnest congratulations.

The Current, Norway, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 30, Number 21 [Saturday, June 27, 1914], page 1, column 3

Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Gorman, formerly of Norway, were in the city from Palatka, Tuesday. Mrs. Gorman accompanied by her mother, Mrs. Thos. [Thomas] Rice, left on the evening train for Silver City, N. Mex. [New Mexico], at which place Jos. [Joseph] Rice has been located for nearly two years in the hope of bettering his health.
Margaret “Maggie” (Rice) Giesen
(1868- )

Iron Mountain Press, Iron Mountain, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 1, Number 41 [Thursday, March 4, 1897], page __, column __

John Gleason [sic – Geisen – ?] and Miss Maggie Rice, of Vulcan, were married last Tuesday evening by Justice Bergeron.

Joseph T. Rice
(1876-1914)

The Current, Norway, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume VII, Number 33 [Saturday, September 19, 1891], page 1, column 1

Joseph Rice, of the State Road, intends to dispose of his three forties of land and move with his family to Dakota. See ad.

The Current, Norway, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume VII, Number 42 [Saturday, November 21, 1891], page 1, column 2

Joseph Rice has disposed of his homestead, [sic] of 80 acres on the State road, [sic] to Otto Marinelli and Wm. Pellegreni and will, with his family, depart for Grand Forks, North Dakota on Monday next. His two daughters, Misses Sophia and Mary Rice, now at Iron Mountain, will not go west until next spring. Mr. Rice has a brother-in-law at Grand Forks who has arranged a farm for him to move onto at once. The many friends of the family wish their success in the far west.

The Current, Norway, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume XXI, Number 46 [Saturday, December 16, 1905], page 1, column 1

Joseph Rice[,] who came from Bessemer a week or two ago to look after things at the Rice homestead on the Sturgeon river, has decided to open a saloon in the old home. Its proximity to the dam construction work of Penn Iron Mg. [Mining] Co. probably having much to do with the venture.

The Current, Norway, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume XXIII, Number 26 [Saturday, July 27, 1907], page 1, column 4

MARRIED.


The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Young, of this city, and has resided here nearly all her life, having very many friends who will wish her a happy future. It might be said that while she has not met every resident of the range she has been on “speaking terms” with all, as she was for some years employed in the Michigan State Tel. [Telephone] office in this city.

The groom is also well known to all as the son of Mrs. Thomas Rice, of State Road, and a resident of this county for almost his whole life time until five years ago when he left the farm and wen to Bessemer, and began a business career, that has been, so far, a very prosperous one, and feeling doubtless that “It is not good for man to live alone” he very properly came back to his old home for a wife. That
they may live long and prosper is the common wish of all.

After the ceremony Mr. and Mrs. Rice left on the 10:30 C. & N-W. train for Escanaba to begin an extended lake trip, after which they will be at home to their friends at Bessemer, Mich.

The Current, Norway, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 27, Number 20 [Saturday, June 17, 1911], page 8, column 4

Advices from Joseph Rice, formerly of this city, but late of Bessemer, Mich., who has been seriously sick for some months, are to the effect that he is now at Howell, Mich., under treatment, and that he has improved somewhat.

The Current, Norway, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 28, Number 38 [Saturday, October 19, 1912], page 1, column 4

Gone To New Mexico.

Joseph Rice, well known here, who has been an invalid from an affection [sic – affection] of the lungs for many months and who has resided for some time (since returning from the state tuberculosis hospital at Howell) on his farm near the Sturgeon river, left last week for Silver City, New Mexico, hoping that the change of climate will aid his return to his normal health. His family has moved to this city to remain pending the result of his western trip.

The Current, Norway, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 30, Number 23 [Saturday, July 11, 1912], page 1, column 2

JOSEPH RICE DEAD

Former Well Known Resident Dies Of Tuberculosis in New Mexico.

Through a wire message received here Monday be relatives it was learned that Joseph Rice had died on Sunday at his temporary home at Tyrone, New Mexico.

The deceased had been suffering for several years from tuberculosis of the lungs, had spent some time at the Michigan Tuberculosis Hospital at Howell and receiving some benefit had returned to his farm near Sturgeon river in Norway township. Having suffered a partial relapse he went to New Mexico leaving his family in this city to join him later. Something better than a year ago his wife and three children went to him at Silver City, where later the youngest child died. During his sojourn there, a period of about two years, he had at times shown signs of improvement, but it became evident that there would be no permanent betterment of his condition. His mother, Mrs. Thomas Rice of this city[,] and his sister, Mrs. Phillip Gorman of Palatka[,] left for Tyrone and arrived there but a few days before the end came.

The remains, accompanied by the relatives who were at Tyrone when death occurred, arrived in this city Friday morning and were taken to the Asp undertaking rooms and then to the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Chamberlain; and interment will take place this morning in Norway cemetery after services at St. Mary's Catholic church. A number of relatives and friends from other cities are here to attend the last rites over the remains of one whom they loved and respected. Among those are Ed. Rice and wife, Philip Gorman and wife[,] Palatka, Al. Anderson and wife, Sturgeon Falls, Capt. W.H. Knight, wife
and daughter[,] Bessemer, Messrs. Wm. Wroblewski and Hod Morrel, Bessemer, Mrs. E. Charbaneau, Superior, Mrs. McGibbon, Powers, and Mr. and Mrs. Noel Turner of Iron Mountain. Joseph Rice was born at Marinette, Wis. June 10, 1875 and was therefore a little better than 39 years old.

Edward James Rice (1871-1933)

Married at Iron River.

At St. Agnes church, at Iron River last Monday morning, Rev. Father Lenhart performed the ceremony which united in marriage Miss Mary Farnand of Buckingham, Quebec, Canada, to Edward Rice, a well-known resident of Palatka. After the ceremony, Mr. and Mrs. Rice came to Iron Mountain and spent the day with friends leaving on the evening train for this city, from when they proceeded to Sturgeon Falls to spend a part of their honeymoon with relatives. The bride is a sister of Dr. Farnand, a former resident of Norway, and she is also related to the O’Callaghan and Bush families. The groom is related to the pioneer Rice family of Norway township. His boyhood days were spent on the Rice farm and he is credited with being the first white child to cross the Sturgeon River. Mr. and Mrs. Rice will make their home at Palatka, where the groom has a position at the Caspian mine. They enter upon a wedded life attended by the best wishes of a wide circle of friends.

The Current, Norway, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume 31, Number 8 [Saturday, March 27, 1915], page 10, column 2

Died At Palatka.

Mrs. Mary Rice, wife of Edward Rice, died at Palatka, Sunday. Mrs. Rice was well known in this city, where she lived for some time, being then Miss Mary Farnand. She was about forty years old. The remains were buried, Thursday, at Iron River. There were present at the funeral, which was attended by a very large number of friends from all parts of the range, the three brothers of the deceased, viz: John Farnand, of Buckingham, Canada; M.J., of Bottineau, N.D. and Frank, of Massie, Canada. A nephew, Arthur Farnand, of Hibbing, Minn., Mrs. J.P. Roach, of Muskegon, and J.D. Bush and Mrs. Joseph Rice, of this city, were also in attendance. Beside the stricken husband, one child is left to mourn an irreparable loss.

Breitung Township Death Certificate for Edward James Rice, male, white, married, wife Elvira Rice, date of birth January 17, 1871, date of death October 23, 1933, age 62 years, 9 months, 6 days; carpenter; born in Marinette, Wisconsin; father Thomas Rice, mother Margaret Docey [sic - Dorsey], information Mrs. Elvira Rice, Quinnesec; buried in Quinnesec Cemetery on October 16, 1933

Alexander and Mary (Rice) Miller

The Current, Norway, Dickinson County, Michigan, Volume X, Number 26 [Saturday, July 28, 1894], page 1, column 5
MARY MILLER – Died July 12, 1894.

The following resolutions were presented and adopted at the last meeting of the Ancient Order of the United Workmen.

WHEREAS, the all wise Providence has called from our midst by death the loving wife of our much esteemed brother Alexandri Miller, to that home whence no traveler returneth, be it therefore.

RESOLVED, That the deep sympathy of this lodge, the A.O.U.W., be, and the same is hereby, tendered to Bro. Miller.

RESOLVED, That we extend to Bro. Miller and children our heartfelt sympathy for the loss they have sustained, and that we will ever remember the deceased as a kind and loving wife.

RESOLVED, That our lodge be draped in black for thirty days, that these resolutions be spread on the records of our lodge, a copy presented to the family, and that they be printed in THE CURRENT. Signed,

JOHN LINDQUIST,  
MOSES TAYLOR,  
PATRICK FLANAGAN.