

E. W. RICE JR. DIES; A UTILITY PIONEER

Honorary Chairman of Board
and Former President of the
General Electric Company.

RECEIVED EDISON MEDAL

Helped to Establish Research
Laboratories—Union College
Trustee for 25 Years.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.
SCHENECTADY, N. Y., Nov. 25.—
Edwin Wilbur Rice Jr., honorary
chairman of the board and former
president of the General Electric
Company, pioneer in development
of industrial research laboratories,
foremost among the pioneers in the
electricity industry, pioneer in the
efficient expansion of mass produc-
tion methods and inventor, died
suddenly this afternoon of a heart
attack at his home overlooking the
campus of Union College. He was
a trustee of Union College for more
than twenty-five years. Dr. Rice
observed his seventy-third birthday
last May.

Born at Lacrosse, Wis., he moved
to Philadelphia, where at 14 he met
Professor Elihu Thomson, the elec-
trical authority, whose assistant he
became four years later in the new
Thomson-Houston electrical manu-
facturing plant. He continued this
association through the formation
of the American Electrical Com-
pany, the Thomson-Houston Com-
pany and finally, in 1892, the Gen-
eral Electric Company.

Chosen President in 1913.

He became its technical director,
then vice president in charge of
manufacturing and engineering, and
finally president in 1913. He brought
Charles Steinmetz to the General
Electric and with the late Charles
A. Coffin, whom he succeeded as
president, he built up the great
General Electric Company. In 1922
he was succeeded as president by
Gerard Swope.

Dr. Rice was chiefly responsible
for the General Electric research
laboratories, whose establishment
he recommended in 1900. It was his
pioneering investigation of the
Curtis steam turbine which helped
to bring about the vast electric
power system.

Union College ordered its flag at
half-staff. President Dixon Ryan
Fox of Union said:

"Union College mourns the death
of Dr. E. W. Rice with deep and
peculiar regret. As a trustee he
had guided the development of
its work in physical sciences for
many years, generously and most
helpfully. He devised cooperation
between the college and the General
Electric Company in ways novel
and productive.

"As chairman of the trustees he
gave distinguished leadership to the
college enterprise in every phase.
A great man of science, he was
likewise interested in the rounded
development of American young
men."

Honored by Harvard in 1903.

Mr. Rice was named chairman of
the board of the General Electric
Company in 1922. He was son of
Edwin Wilbur Rice and Margaret
Eliza Rice.

He received an A. B. from Cen-
tral High School, Philadelphia, in
1880, and an M. A. in 1885. Harvard
awarded him an honorary M. A. in
1903, Union a Sc. D. degree in 1906,
and the University of Pennsylvania
a Sc. D. in 1924, while the Rensse-
laer Polytechnic Institute made him
a Doctor of Engineering in 1917. He
was decorated with the Chevalier of
the Legion of Honor by France, and
the Order of the Rising Sun, Third
Class with Cordon, by Japan. In
1928 he received the Edison Medal.

He was a Fellow of the American
Institute of Electrical Engineers, of
which he was president in 1917,
and belonged to the Institution of
Civil Engineers of England, the In-
stitution of Electrical Engineers of
England and the Society of Illumi-
nating Engineers. His clubs were
the Engineers, Bankers, University,
and Century of New York, the Har-
vard of Boston and the Pilgrims of
London.

E. W. Rice Dies; Was Pioneer in General Electric

30th Pres.
Honorary Board Chairman
and Former President
Passes at Schenectady

Special to the Herald Tribune

SCHENECTADY, N. Y., Nov. 25.—
Edwin Wilbur Rice Jr., honorary chair-
man of the board of directors of the
General Electric Company, died here
today at his home, 102 Lenox Road.
He was seventy-three years old.

In association with the late Charles
A. Coffin, Mr. Rice had a conspicuous
part in the building of the General
Electric. He was largely instrumental
in adding to the company technical
staff the late Charles P. Steinmetz.
He encouraged the investigation by
the company of the Curtis steam tur-
bine and gave it a fair trial through
a period of uncertainty until it be-
came the foundation of a vast electric
power system development. He also
was chiefly responsible for the estab-
lishment of the General Electric re-
search laboratory, having recom-
mended that step to the directors in
1900.

Born in La Crosse, Wis., Mr. Rice
moved to Philadelphia, where as a
schoolboy, in 1876, he met Professor
Elihu Thomson, then a teacher in
Boys' Central High School. His natural
fondness for mechanics and later for
electricity was quickly developed by
this association and when, in 1880, Mr.
Thomson gave up teaching to go into
electrical manufacturing, as scien-
tist and inventor, Mr. Rice gladly
accepted an opportunity to become his
assistant. He went to New Britain,
Conn., and for three years was with
Mr. Thomson in the American Electric
Company there and in Philadelphia,
engaged in the manufacture of arc
lamps and dynamos.

In 1883 Mr. Rice went with the
scientist to Lynn, Mass., upon the
organization of the Thomson-Hous-
ton Company, when a majority inter-
est of the American Electric Company
was purchased by the former con-
cern. At twenty-two he was made
plant superintendent and had this
responsibility until the consolidation
of the Thomson-Houston and Edison
General Electric in 1892 to form the
present General Electric Company.

In the new company Mr. Rice was
first made technical director, and in
1896 vice-president in charge of man-
ufacturing and engineering. He event-
ually became senior vice-president,
and in 1913 he succeeded Mr. Coffin
as president of the company. In 1922,
after nine years of service in that
office, he was succeeded by Gerard
Swope, and was made honorary chair-
man of the board.

He contributed much through or-
ganization methods, improved factory
routine, technical development, and
engineering and scientific inventions
to the pre-eminence attained by Gen-
eral Electric, having more than a
hundred patents to his credit.

Mr. Rice's home since 1914 has been
in Schenectady, where he was a trus-
tee of Union College. He held an
honorary A. M. from Harvard 1903; a
D. Sc. from Union University 1906;
a D. Eng. from Rensselaer Polytechnic
Institute 1917, and a D. Sc. from the
University of Pennsylvania. He was a
Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, and
was decorated with the Third Order
of the Rising Sun by the Emperor of
Japan in 1917.

Mr. Rice was president of the Amer-
ican Institute of Electrical Engineers
in 1917, from which organization he
received in 1931 the Edison Medal "for
his contributions to the development
of the electrical systems and his en-
couragement of scientific research in
industry."

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E. W. Rice, Jr.