



In Memoriam  
John Bartlett Pierce  
1843-1917

**J**OHN BARTLETT PIERCE of Lynnfield, Mass., a founder and the much honored first Vice-President of the American Radiator Company, passed away on Saturday morning, June 23rd, at Boston, after a brief illness.

In a literal sense Mr. Pierce was the founder of the cast iron radiator industry. The better part of his thought and energy for nearly half a century was dedicated to the up-building thereof; and since the organization of the American Radiator Company, twenty-five years ago, his counsel and support were ever present influences for its growth and prosperity. Where he did not suggest, he supported all projects which made for progress, with a faith which was unwavering and a courage which was boundless.

Mr. Pierce was born at Emden, Maine, on June 2nd, 1843, and was a descendant of two of the oldest families of the Pine Tree State. His father was Benjamin Pierce of Gardiner, Maine, and his mother was Lois Hill Pierce of Minot, Maine. Mr. Pierce spent his boyhood at the family homestead at Norridgewock, Maine. He was a graduate of the Westbrook (Me.) Seminary.

In 1868 he was given a clerkship in a hardware store in a New Hampshire village. After establishing himself for about a year on his own account in the hardware line, at Ware, Mass., he removed in 1873 to Buffalo, N. Y., where he continued until 1881 in the mercantile hardware business, undertaking at the same time contracts for the installation of steam and hot water heating boilers and radiators, which led him to see the possibilities for the scientific development of

radiating and ventilating apparatus. In 1880 he built his first humble factory at Buffalo, for the manufacture of steel boilers, and shortly thereafter began (about 1882) at Westfield, Mass., the manufacture of cast iron radiators.

This business grew so rapidly that in 1892 his firm, The Pierce Steam Heating Company, which in 1884 had established itself at the location now constituting the splendid Pierce Plant, was consolidated with other interests to form the American Radiator Company.

Mr. Pierce became the First Vice-President and a Director, which offices he retained until his demise. The Company owes much of its uniform success to Mr. Pierce's extensive practical experience, inherent sound judgment, and breadth of vision. Like most successful men, he was a good judge of character, and was ever concerned to surround himself with men of exceptional ability and talent in the various technical and special branches of the business.

The last nine years of his life were passed mainly upon his fine estate at Lynnfield, where he had an opportunity to gratify his passion for arboriculture. This estate, circling Suntaug Lake, consists of some 800 acres, upon which Mr. Pierce personally superintended the planting of over 300,000 trees. The estate embraces the historic grant of the "Plantation of 500 acres" made in 1635 to John Humphrey, Deputy Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Company, one of the founders of the first Pilgrim Colony.

Mr. Pierce is survived by his brother, George Pierce, Baraboo, Wis.; his sisters, Mrs. Ellie P. Watts, Boston,

and Mrs. Charles H. Richardson, Pasadena, Cal.; and by his wife, Adelaide Leonard Pierce.

Mr. Pierce lived above all else to carry forward steadfastly the life work which he was ever grateful that God had given him the wisdom, the courage, and the years to do. Amid the distractions and temptations of a remarkable business career he preserved the sweetness and simplicity of Christian living.

His Will is a document of utmost nobility to all persons interested in educational, philanthropic, and industrial problems. This instrument exhibits a heart quality without precedent in the annals of modern industry, for it makes distribution of \$1,000,000 in the Common stock of the Company to a list of over 400 of "my business associates who have demonstrated keen business ability, combined with a fine sense of honor, a high quality of integrity, and a conscientious and loyal devotion to the performance of duty. There also developed in the business organization a splendid spirit of cooperation in its various departments and among its employees, steadily advancing the range of the Company's operations throughout this and foreign countries."

Sixty percent of the income from the residue of the estate is to be paid, with certain limitations, to these older employees. All surplus from the estate shall go to create the "John B. Pierce Foundation," whose object shall be the promotion of all or either: research, educational, technical, or scientific work in the general field of heating, ventilating, and sanitation, for the increase of knowledge to the end that the general hygiene and comfort of human beings and their habitations may be advanced."

Within a decade we shall all better appreciate the vision and the scope of this remarkable, affectionately conceived plan of Mr. Pierce's for the broad and generous advancement of the whole heating and ventilating industry. To the industry which owes him so much he felt that all he had was owing and regarded his life and success but as a trusteeship.

The memory of this strong, simple, good man will ever prove a rich heritage.

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*“ ‘I pray thee then,  
Write me as one that loves his fellowmen!’  
The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night  
It came again with a great awakening light,  
And show'd the names whom love of God had blessed,  
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.’”*