

**ADDRESSES AND POEM IN
COMMEMORATION OF THE
CAPTAIN MICHAEL PIERCE
FIGHT, MARCH 26, 1676**

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Addresses and Poem in Commemoration of the Captain Michael Pierce Fight, March 26, 1676
by Thomas W. Bicknell

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THOMAS W. BICKNELL

**ADDRESSES AND POEM IN
COMMEMORATION OF THE
CAPTAIN MICHAEL PIERCE
FIGHT, MARCH 26, 1676**



HON. EDWIN C. PIERCE

⊙

ADDRESSES AND POEM

IN COMMEMORATION OF

The Captain Michael Pierce Fight

MARCH 26, 1676

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori

MEMORIAL SERVICES

AT CENTRAL FALLS, RHODE ISLAND

OCTOBER 15, 1904

DEDICATION OF MONUMENT

SEPTEMBER 21, 1907

THOMAS W. BICKNELL

Editor

1908

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Edward D. Pearce,
Providence

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Foreword

BY THOMAS W. BICKNELL.

On the 20th of June, 1904, the Bristol County Historical Society celebrated the Two Hundred and Twenty-ninth Anniversary of the opening of King Philip's War, in the Baptist Church, at Barneyville, Swansea. As President of that society I made an address giving an account of the origin of Philip's War and the story of the first assault on the people and Church of Swansea. The large audience in attendance and the great interest manifested in the details of the great tragedy of 1675, led me to believe that the leading events of that early struggle of the Colonists with the savages should be properly commemorated by exercises and monuments and I selected the Michael Pierce Fight on the Blackstone River as the first event to be noted. Accordingly a program was prepared and exercises were held at the Congregational Church, Central Falls, R. I., near the scene of the Pierce tragedy. Hon. Edwin C. Pierce of Providence, a descendant of Michael Pierce of Scituate, was invited to deliver the principal address and Hezekiah Butterworth accepted an invitation to read a poem.

The following program was successfully carried out before an interested audience many of whom were descendants of the participants in the fight and of victims of the massacre.

THE CELEBRATION
OF THE
228th ANNIVERSARY
OF THE
CAPTAIN MICHAEL PIERCE FIGHT
WITH CANONCHET,
Chief of the Narragansetts,
AT
PAWTUCKET FALLS, R. I.
March 26, 1676.
PUBLIC EXERCISES
AT
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,
High Street, Central Falls, R. I.

Exercises

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, AT 2.30 P. M.

THE CHAIRMAN, HON. THOMAS W. BICKNELL,
President of The Bristol County Historical Society, will
take the chair at 2.30 o'clock in the afternoon.

THE OLD HUNDRETH PSALM,
will be sung by the congregation.

THE DIVINE BLESSING,
will be invoked by Rev. J. H. Lyon, D. D., Pastor of the
Congregational Church, Central Falls.

HON. ALBERT H. HUMES, AND HON. JAMES H. HIGGINS,
Mayors of Central Falls and Pawtucket will give Ad-
dresses.

EDWIN C. PIERCE, ESQ.,
of Cranston, R. I., a lineal descendant of Capt. Michael
Pierce of Scituate, Mass., will deliver an oration on *Pierce's*
Fight.

HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH,
of Boston, Mass., will read an original poem.

THE TOWNS OF SCITUATE, MARSHFIELD, DUXBURY,
SANDWICH, BARNSTABLE, EASTHAM, AND
YARMOUTH, MASS., whose sons were slaughtered in
the Indian Massacre, have been invited to send representa-
tives to the celebration, and short addresses may be ex-
pected from those present.

THE NATIONAL HYMN, "AMERICA,"
will be sung by the congregation.

Memorial Services

The services in commemoration of the Captain Michael Pierce Fight were held in the Congregational Church, at Central Falls, not far from the fateful battlefield. A large audience, made up in part of descendants of Captain Michael Pierce and his gallant Company was in attendance, and in addition to the addresses published, appropriate words of welcome were spoken by Mayor Humes of Central Falls, and Mayor Higgins of Pawtucket. After prayer by Rev. Dr. Lyon and singing, the addresses of the program and the poem were thoroughly appreciated by the audience. On motion, the chairman was authorized to name a committee to make plans for a monument to be erected at some future day, and the following persons were appointed: Col. Alonzo E. Pierce, Frederick P. Pearce, Addison P. Munroe, Amasa M. Eaton, Edward E. Pierce M. D., E. C. Pierce, Thomas W. Bicknell and John H. Pierce. At the close of the exercises at the church, a visit was made to the battlefield of the historic fight near the Blackstone River, a few rods north of the N. Y. & N. H. R. R. bridge.

The committee on a suitable monument to commemorate the Michael Pierce Fight organized by the choice of Hon. E. C. Pierce as chairman and Hon. Thomas W. Bicknell as secretary.

It was voted to raise funds for a monument and also to publish the addresses and poems delivered at Central Falls.

After several meetings of the committee at which various plans were discussed, it was finally voted to make Mr. John H. Pierce, Addison P. Munroe and Thomas W. Bicknell a committee to raise money and to secure if possible a white quartz boulder for a monument. By the efforts of Mr. J. H. Pierce a suitable boulder was found on the farm of Hon. Arthur Perry Brayton of Fall River, which was donated by that gentleman. The expense of its removal to Central Falls and of setting and fitting for the bronze tablet was paid from the funds, amounting to about fifty dollars, collected and paid out by Mr. Pierce. The bronze tablet was contributed by the Committee on Historical Sites from the fund of \$1,500, set apart for marking historic spots by the State of Rhode Island.

The quartz boulder is about five feet high, four feet wide and

three feet thick, and weighs about five tons. The bronze tablet was cast by the Gorham Company, Providence, R. I., and is perfectly fitted and fastened to the boulder, which faces west on a lot at the corner of High street and Aigan street, Central Falls, about five hundred feet from the west bank of the Blackstone River. The right to the location rests in the State and was conveyed by the Harris Steam Engine Company, through its treasurer, Esq., of Providence, R. I.

The inscription is as follows:

"PIERCE'S FIGHT"
HERE CAPTAIN MICHAEL PIERCE
AND HIS COMPANY OF
PLYMOUTH COLONISTS
AMBUSHED AND OUTNUMBERED
WERE ALMOST ANNIHILATED
BY THE INDIANS
MARCH 26, 1676

The following program was issued at the dedication:

Dedicatory Exercises at
Central Falls, R. I.,
Saturday, September 21, 1907, at 2.30 P. M.,
in connection with the marking of
the Site of Pierce's Fight.
Introductory Address by WILFRED H. MUNRO,
President of the Rhode Island Historical Society.
Address by Rev. JAMES H. LYON of Central Falls.
Historical Address by EDWIN C. PIERCE, Esq., of
Providence.

At the dedicatory services at the monument on Saturday, September 21, there was a good attendance of citizens of Central Falls, with about twenty descendants of the men who fell in the fight and more than thirty members of the Rhode Island Citizens Historical Association. In addition to the speakers named on the program, addresses were made by John H. Pierce, Esq., of Providence, and Hon. Thomas W. Bicknell, President of the Bristol County Historical Society, etc.

The addresses at the Memorial services and at the Dedication are printed in full, so far as they could be secured. The address of the Hon. Edwin C. Pierce was the same on both occasions and was considered a model of historic statement and rhetorical finish.