

COMMITTEE ON BIOGRAPHY

JOHN WESLEY PIERCE

O.L.S., D.L.S., M.L.S., M.E.I.C.

John Wesley Pierce, member of the Ontario, Dominion and Manitoba Land Surveyors' Associations, died at his home in Peterborough on March 8th, 1949, in his 64th year.

Born at Eaton, Que., on July 14th, 1885, he was the oldest son of the Rev. Barrie Pierce and his wife Catherine Farnsworth. His father being a Methodist minister, John's early childhood was spent at numerous places throughout Southern Ontario, the Eastern Townships, and the Gaspé Peninsula.



While enrolled as a student of Electrical Engineering, class of 1906, at the University of Toronto, he was engaged by the late J. W. Fitzgerald, O.L.S., as chairman on a summer survey party, and so became interested in land surveying in which he later achieved a high standard in his chosen profession.

On completion of his articles with the late H. J. Beatty, O.L.S., at Eganville, he obtained his O.L.S. (February 20th, 1909) and D.L.S. commission later in the same year, following which, he served a short time with the late Alexander Niven, O.L.S., in

Northern Ontario. His first partnership was formed with C. H. Fullerton, O.L.S. and D.L.S., at Haileybury, and later the firm of Pierce & Phillips was formed at South Porcupine, where he and E. P. A. Phillips, O.L.S., carried on extensive mining claim surveys. This partnership was dissolved by the disastrous Porcupine fire of 1911 and Mr. Pierce returned to Southern Ontario, entering again into a partnership with his former associate, H. J. Beatty, O.L.S., at Pembroke. In the years that followed he became well known as a township subdivider in various parts of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, his contracts taking him into the Athabaska and Peace River districts.

In 1919 the former Topographical Surveys Branch of the Dominion Department of the Interior at Ottawa was carrying on extensive mapping operations and Mr. Pierce became actively

ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO LAND SURVEYORS

engaged in this work where he was chiefly concerned with control work throughout Ontario and as far east as New Brunswick.

He obtained his M.L.S. qualifications in the year 1920 and when it became evident that the demarcation of the boundary line between Ontario and Manitoba should be established he was the logical choice of the Provincial and Federal Governments to supervise the field work of this important line. This he always regarded as his greatest responsibility.

From 1932 until the date of his death he was engaged in private practise in Peterborough, where he built up a very extensive business in land surveying and was highly respected as a man of great ability and integrity.

Between the periods of 1921 and 1937, he extended his work on the Inter-Provincial Boundary between the Provinces of Ontario and Manitoba from the International Boundary to within 168 miles of Hudson Bay. One of the greatest disappointments of his life was that failing health prevented him from assuming charge of this latter stretch to Hudson Bay in 1947, but he had the satisfaction of seeing his son appointed as Ontario's representative on this last lap and of learning of the satisfactory closure at the terminal point, which was due in a large measure to his capabilities on the earlier work.

Mr. Pierce was a past President of the former Dominion Land Surveyor's Association, which was incorporated in the Canadian Institute of Surveying and Photogrametry. He was an ardent supporter of this organization and took an active interest in its affairs until the date of his death. He was also a past President of the Ontario Land Surveyors' Association and in latter years a member of the Board of Examiners, taking an active part in the tuition recently provided for articed students. His membership also included the Professional Engineers of Ontario and the Engineering Institute of Canada. He was a member of the Masonic Corinthian Lodge, Peterborough, Scottish Rite and Rose Croix, and a member of the Peterborough Kiwanis Club.

His busy life did not interfere with his beliefs in the church and his quiet, honest and unassuming nature exemplified in his life that fine blending of love of God and love for man which is the mark of a Christian. He was a revered steward and member of the Official Board of Trinity United Church.

In 1911 he married Mabel Gourley of Eganville and Winnipeg, who survives him, also his son, John Gourley of Peterborough, and two daughters, Mrs. D. A. (Helen) Thomson of Cape Town, South Africa, and Mrs. D. L. Wilson (Mary) of Boston, Mass.

The members of our association will long remember Mr. Pierce

COMMITTEE ON BIOGRAPHY

as one of the most regular attendants at annual meetings. Professionally he was serious to a marked degree and with his very extensive experience his contributions to the discussions were of great value. Truly he was an asset to the association of very great moment.

JOSEPH EDMUND ROSS

B.Sc., O.L.S., D.L.S., B.C.L.S.

One of the members of our association who early heard the call of the west was the subject of this brief sketch. He was born and grew to early manhood in Ontario, graduated from the School of Practical Science, Toronto, in 1888, and was admitted to practice as an Ontario Land Surveyor on November 11th, 1890. He then qualified as a Dominion Land Surveyor and went west; established himself in New Westminster, B.C., became one of the original members of the Corporation of British Columbia Land Surveyors, and there was engaged in private practice till 1899.

In that year he entered the service of The Dominion Topographical Surveys Branch as chief of surveys in the railway belt, with headquarters in Kamloops, B.C. This post he held till 1911, when he resigned and re-entered private practice in Kamloops. Two years later he met with a serious accident which handicapped him seriously during the later years of his life. He passed away in Kamloops January 19th, 1944, at the advanced age of 84.

CAPT. WILLIAM ALGERNON SIBBETT

O.L.S., D.L.S., B.A.Sc.

"Al" Sibbett was born in Bracebridge, Ontario, November 4th, 1890, the son of Mr. and Mrs. George W. O. Sibbett, and in the public school of that place and in the collegiate institute at Barrie, he received his early education. He was a brilliant student.

He then entered the school of Practical Science (Toronto University), took a course in civil engineering, and graduated therefrom in 1911 with the degree of B.A.Sc. Next followed an admission to practice as an Ontario Land Surveyor on May 6th, 1912, followed by admission to the Dominion Land Surveyors' Association.

So equipped, he entered the service of the Canadian Pacific Railway Co. and was for some years engaged on surveys in Western Ontario. He then entered the service of the Dominion Government as a D.L.S., and was engaged on work chiefly in the Peace River country. Coming out in the fall of 1914 he learned, upon reaching