AN INTERVIEW WITH LAWRENCE PIERCE

March 4, 1983

By Roy Morse and Rick Brown

Morse: When did you arrive in Seattle?

Pierce: I arrived in February, 1926, on a beautiful, warm winter day. People were in

their gardens working, flowers were blooming and this was just an ideal spot for me to

locate because I had just come from a terrible eastern storm.

I found the area quite friendly. I resided out in the University District. There I met

Edward S. Campbell whose father was the Admiral at the Navy yard. He and I just

happened to arrive in town at the same time and both were looking for a place to live. We

found a place on 47th N.E. where we boarded so to speak with others in a large three-

story house surrounded by fraternity and sorority houses.

Later on we found ourselves in the summertime wanting to get away from the U District.

Henry Elliott was a lawyer friend who had been to Endolyne and had rented a summer

cottage from Mrs. Goodman. He suggested that we might ask Mrs. Goodman if she had

another cottage to rent, which she did. It was a little two room cottage with beach

privileges. We were very happy there on the beach just south of Brace Point for the next

two years.

Morse: Was this one of the Marsolais homes?

Pierce: No, it was not. It was a quarter mile north of the Marsolais beach cottages.

There we had many fine beach parties, dinners on the beach, clam bakes, fish bakes. We

met a lot of the old pioneers from Seattle who lived out there in the summer time,

including Harry Kent and E. K. Worthington, who later formed Kenworth Motors.

Morse: That is where the name came from?

Brown: That was in the summers of 1927-1928.

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Pierce: During the summer of 1927 I was introduced to Isabel Colman who lived on a 20 acre farm just to the north of our cottage. I happened to meet her at the little Fauntleroy Church. She had just finished her Masters Degree in Chemistry at the University of Washington and then became a lab assistant. I had completed my work at Yale. When we got together, we found that we had a lot in common age wise, experience wise and everything else. That started a friendship of several years which eventually led to our marriage in May, 1929. I then started to learn the history of Seattle from her folks who were living in the old home at 4th and Columbia St.

Morse: What was the course that you pursued at Yale?

Pierce: I taught High School at Hingham, Massachusetts, 1921-23, prior to my year's work at Yale which happened to be in Administrative Education.

Brown: Was Eddie Hubbard living in the community at that time?

Pierce: Eddie Hubbard was a Boeing test pilot I think in the beginning. Later he became one of the first air mail pilots. Campbell was employed as an aeronautical engineer by Boeing in 1926. He was the man with whom I was living and did live for two years down on the beach.

Brown: Did Eddie Hubbard ever bring in one of the float planes to Fauntleroy?

Pierce: No, Ed Campbell did. Ed bought a little Savoy-Marchetti plane, and we flew all over the Sound in that float plane.

Brown: On your honeymoon trip didn't you take a flight home from Victoria?

Pierce: Yes, after our honeymoon trip to Jasper Park and Vancouver Island in June, 1929, we were flown home from Victoria in Eddie Hubbard's mail plane.

Brown: We have not been able to document this until now.

Pierce: I didn't dare say anything beforehand because none of my wife's folks had flown previously. I had had experience in the East as a young 2nd Lieutenant in the Army. I had

known John Coolidge in 1923 and had been invited to the White House and ultimately got a pass to Anacostia Field where Jimmy Doolittle was a dare devil pilot. I had a chance to do aerobatics with him until I was so sick I couldn't last any longer. That was my first flying experience. Later I flew with Capt. McMurray out of Sand Point in World War I Jenny's along the routes of the parades on Memorial Day and July 4th.

Morse: That was Isabel's first flight?

Pierce: Yes, with Eddie Hubbard on our return home from our honeymoon trip.

Morse: After you were married, where did you go to live?

June 1929

Pierce: After we were married, we lived in the house in which we were married. The big house was then vacant. The downtown house at 4th and Columbia was occupied by George Colman and his mother and because of the mother's age the Laurence Colman's lived with them.

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The house in which we were married was originally built in 1922 for Isabel's sister, Katherine, who was an invalid, but she died in 1925 and it was used only occasionally.

The Park at Fauntleroy Church was named the Katherine Colman Park after the Colman Company had built the foundations for it and the Park Department assumed water management. It was low maintenance except for putting in the rhododendrons from our garden.

Morse: The house that you moved into had an elevator it it?

Pierce: The house did have an elevator well in it but there was no elevator until 1932 because power sufficient to run it was not available.

Morse: Did the elevator do down to the beach level?

Pierce: It was intended that the shaft for the elevator would go down 70' into the ground and come out at the level so that the invalid daughter could use the beach. There was no roadway up from the beach, just a steep trail so that was the real reason for the elevator being there.

Morse: Was the shaft ultimately built?

Pierce: No, the shaft served three floors only.

Morse: The elevator in the house was not used until 1932, some years after Katherine's

death?

Pierce: That is right. We used it mostly for laundry purposes.

During the kidnapping period, you might say, we had been threatened several times by unwelcome guests who had intruded into the house. We went to Olympia in 1934 and lived as the Pierce's. We found the move highly desirable. Our children enjoyed their freedom, as we did our freedom from worry about their safety.

Morse: In the early 30's that was the trend of the times, wasn't it? This followed the Lindberg kidnapping.

Pierce: The Matson, Lindberg, and Weyerhaueser. There were several others in the area here.

Morse: When you moved into the Fauntleroy house, there was approximately 20 acres around it?

Jeannie

Pierce: It was cut down a little bit by the sale of some of the beach property to Dr. Kilbourne and Miss Jenny Leveny and another lady, Miss Margaret McCarney, who became the girls' advisor at Franklin High School. She lived on the corner of Brace Point Drive on the beach.

Morse: Did that original land go as far south as the Hamlin home on Fauntleroy was?

Pierce: The original 25 acres when from the corner of 47th at W. Roxbury Street, thence to Brace Point, then along the bach to Brace Point Drive on the north and back up to 47th S.W.

Morse: The north lot line of the Hamlin property then would be the south line of the Colman property at that time?

Pierce: That is right.

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Morse: There is no street there.

Pierce: It was never cut through.

Morse: Nor was Roxbury ever cut through. At that time when you moved there what did you use the lower portion of the land for.

Pierce: The lower beach area to the North had a caretaker's home, the <u>original log beach</u> home which Kenneth occupied and a swimming pool. The South part, about 3 acres, contained chicken pens, a cow barn and pasture space. Milk and eggs went to town every day regularly on the streetcar where they were picked up at 1st and Columbia by another man who took them up to 4th and Columbia for the family living there.

Morse: How many cows did they have?

Pierce: Two. We skimmed our own cream and made our own butter. We lived well in those days. It was real good Jersey cream. We still have the pans and butter churn and pails.

Brown: Did you have any horses?

Pierce: There was a stable down there at the lower level. Ken had horses later after the war when we no longer were able to keep cows and chickens.

Morse: On the upper level where Fauntleroy was paved from Brace Point Drive up the hill, wasn't that originally a creek?

Pierce: The creek came down off Harris' hillside right through your (Morse's) place and came down in front of where our pond is now.

Morse: So the actual creek bed was a little west of the pavement.

Pierce: Yes, it was a little bit west of the street pavement today. Our cornfield and strawberry patches were on the upper side where Sweeney's live now (9310 Fauntleroy Way S.W.).

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Morse: In the development of Laurentide the pavement and all was put in about 1935?

Pierce: Yes. The J. M. Colman Company paved the street and dedicated it to the City in about 1936.

Morse: I think I recall having seen a drawing showing a date on the drawing of the street itself of 1936.

Pierce: All around us on the upper level above the beach was a wood lot and during the storm of 1931 many of the larger fir trees and cedars were blown down in the ice storm. It also affected Lincoln Park. That was the biggest fall down of trees I have ever seen.

Morse: It was a year later in 1932 when they had the tremendous period of rainfall and the slides occurred.

Pierce: Down at Habenstreit's side hill site above 51st S.W.

Morse: Years later there was a little bit of ground that let go on the west edge of the lot that we bought. Down into the Baths. It went across the road and landed inside the turn. Where the private road is.

Brown: What happened during this ice storm that you talk about?

Pierce: It rained and then froze quickly. The trees were loaded down with ice and they toppled over. We had a man working two years on our place alone just cleaning up the mess. We have had one storm since taking some of the tops out of some of our trees. We have never had an ice storm like that since.

Pierce

Morse: I was interested in the early history of Fauntleroy — to go back to 1860 when a member of the Coast Geodedic Survey from New Harmony, Indiana, which happened to be the national headquarters during Lincoln's period. I always assumed that he was surveying the Olympic Mountains lower range and named them from Pt. Williams, which is now a part of Lincoln Park, after the members of the Fauntleroy family that he was the one responsible for the Fauntleroy name and the cove there he called Fauntleroy cove on his maps. His name was George Davidson Assistant Superintendent of the Coast Survey which subsequently became the USC&GS.

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Pierce: In the spring of 1934 a tree arrived from New Harmony, Indiana, a gift from the Fauntleroy family. Professor Meany of the University who was the beloved historian of the time was asked to come out and make the dedication and as president I used the shovel and planted the "rain" tree in Lincoln Park. Mrs. Calvin can tell you exactly where it is.

Morse: I asked Mrs. Calvin to identify it and she said she would have to wait until it was in bloom.

Pierce: It is in the upper part of Lincoln Park. It isn't too far inland about 15' over the bank. Mildred Calvin has always wanted us to get a plaque and put it there. It is important because George Davidson had done his work in 1860, and he had married into the Fauntleroy family in New Harmony, Indiana, and named the Olympic peaks on the south after the sisters Ellen, Eleanor and Constance. The twin peaks he called "Two Brothers" after the Fauntleroy sons.

Morse: We did not know that Professor Meany had participated in the dedication.

Brown: We found a story on it in a book called "The Old Fauntleroy Home", of which there is a copy at the Church. There is a two page story about the tree, which is the only thing that gets back to Fauntleroy in the book.

Morse: When you first came out to live here in the cottage south of the Colman property, did you come out on the streetcar or boat?

Pierce: I had an old Model T Ford that looked like a greenhouse on wheels. It was my first car. I drove that back and forth over dirt roads.

Morse: How close could you get to the house you lived in?

Pierce: We had to go down Pilgrim Hill, which was very dangerous especially in the winter time because it was very icy. We managed except one time when the brakes did not hold, so I had to use the reverse in the center and I just managed to get around the corner without crashing.

Morse: 47th must have been open to and beyond Pilgrim Hill at 48th at that time.

Pierce: Old Mr. Glenn lived at the head property just around the bend. He owned all that property. There was some old families like the Reeds there.

Morse: Did Hall Johnson's father's family live at the hairpin turn on Pilgrim Hill?

Pierce: No, when I knew the Hall Johnsons, they lived up in Arbor Heights.

Morse: I was thinking of his father.

Pierce: I don't recall that. The Sibleys lived down there on that corner. Then one of the assistant city engineers, Thompson, lived on the opposite corner. The sanitorium was going full blast then and T.B. was very prevalent. As a matter of fact, one of the Sibley boys, when he came back from naval service, was in the sanitarium and died there. He happened to be engaged to Elizabeth Taylor who was Isabel's cousin. I remember going down there and seeing him. That was in 1927-1928.

Morse: You mentioned Elizabeth Taylor, she was Isabel's cousin and school mate along with the Sibley girls.

Pierce: She lived on the corner house of 47th and Brace Pt. Drive.

Morse: The old library table that was in the old parsonage was a Colman or a Pierce?

Pierce: We donated that and it was used in the parsonage for years. Now it is down at Larry's home in Eugene, Oregon. He has put a whole new top on it. The interesting parts are the solid legs that were sculptured.

Morse: That served the various ministers in the church.

Pierce: The Baskervilles and Miss McKee, until the new parsonage was built. The stairs in the present church in the back of the sanctuary going down to the choir room on both sides were the carpets out of the old house.

Morse: The carpets out of the Pierce's house. Did you know anything about the little organ in the chapel upstairs?

Pierce: That was a donation by Ken's family in memory of Ida B. Colman, his mother.

Morse: Isabel and Ken's mother's name?

May Per Lawrence Pierce 11-4-87

Pierce: Ida Burwell Colman. The organ was used by the Sunday School in the upper chapel during the period of our church school's rapid growth.

Morse: It is still in the room now but not being used. There has been a request to rehabilitate that room for more use. Presently it is only used by the choir as a practice room.

Pierce: It used to be used for small marriage ceremonies.

Morse: The intent is to bring it back into that. Do you know whether there is a plaque on the organ indicating how it got there, because I have never known where it came from?

Pierce: I doubt if there ever was a plaque there. I think Ken preferred not to.

Morse: Some fancy bedroom and dining room furniture came from the 4th and Columbia house.

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Pierce: After the demolition of the downtown 4th and Columbia old house in 1937 most of the bedroom and dining room sets of old walnut were stored in the basement of the Junction building.

It was not until 1954, after the sale of the property to Mr. Wyckoff, and after Betty's marriage in 1954, did we pass on to her the lovely old bedroom and dining room sets she has so nicely refinished.

The town bed set and bureau with marble top was kept and used by us during most of our 53 years of marriage. They are in Jack's home now.

Morse: You mentioned the Colman property at the Junction. Where was that?

Pierce: Do you remember where the old West Seattle Hospital was, on the S.W. corner of the of the Junction where the bank is now, that was called the Junction building? Morrison Campbell had an office there for many years. Across the street the Company owned all those stores and on the west side of the street. They did not own anything on the north side it was all on the S.E. and S.W. corners and down a block on each side.

Morse: You mentioned the Dairy on the 42nd side of the block.

Pierce: The West Seattle Dairy was there for years. It is now a parking lot in back of the A&P.

Pierce: George Colman invented and perfected the rotating knife machines that perforate logs and ties before they enter retorts for creosoting. Under high pressure penetration up to an inch permits the creosote to preserve lumber.

Morse: George Colman must have been quite a mechanic?

Pierce: Yes, he was. He ran the carpenter and machine shop at 4th and Columbia as well as the creosote works on Harbor Island.

Brown: Can you tell us about the steamers that J. M. Colman and his sons built?

#### LATONA

Another suburb that has come and gone is Latona. About fifty-six years ago this sprightly little village at the edge of the woods on the north side of Lake Union with a depot, post office, sawmills and boat landing, was boomed as an industrial center. But trains no longer stop there. The post office and mills have been taken away. The depot is gone, for a carload of logs piled up against it and smashed it to smithereens. All that is left to bear the name of Latona is the avenue which begins at Lake Union and leads north to the limits of the city. This little place that was once advertised as "the new suburban village laid out at the north shore of Lake Union ... an excellent site for builders", has been swallowed by Seattle.

James A. Moore, who laid out and developed much of the territory east of Edgewater and north of Lake Union, including Latona, was at a loss for a name for the new suburb. He finally named it "Latona" after a launch that steamed up to the landing one day. The story of this launch gives a vivid picture of water transportation at that time.

The "Latona" was a steam launch about thirty feet in length and eight feet beam built by James M. Colman and his two sons for a pleasure craft on Puget Sound. It was sold to Dr. E. C. Kilbourne in 1891. He took it from Elliott Bay up the Duwamish to Mox La Push (the confluence of the White and Black rivers) and on through the crooked Black River into Lake Washington, where it carried passengers to the settlements and logging camps.

After the canal was cut across the portage from Lake Union to Portage Bay in 18 the Latona was brought into Lake Union.

There it carried passengers around the lake from one landing to another, one of the most important stops being the "new suburban village of Latona."

Source: When Seattle was a Village by Sophie Frye Bass 1947 pg. 103-106 Pierce: There was the Xanthus, the Latona, and Cyrene on Lake Washington—they were going back and forth from Leschi Park to Kirkland. These little steamers were the only means of transportation across the lake for many years. The Osprey, built in 1892, was the last one of five that he built.

Morse: Was the Osprey built for passenger service or for the Colman family?

Pierce: It was built primarily for J. M. Colman and the two sons for business and pleasure. Originally the Osprey used wood to fire the boilers. Later, when oil became available, it was converted. From 1914 to 1940 it was used to take campers to Horsehead, and by the family. During the war, 1941-45, it was out of commission due to oil shortage. A fire at the Creosote Works in 1946 destroyed its deck structure and it was sunk in Elliott Bay.

Morse: I haver had the pleasure or riding on that one.

Pierce: I had the privilege from 1927 to 1941 going out on the Osprey sailing the Sound from Olympia to Orcas Island.

Morse: Ken enjoyed being the skipper on those trips for 6 years following his father's death.

Pierce: After his father died Kenneth got a Captains license. When Isabel and I took it out alone, we had to take Capt. Coffin who was the "Indianapolis" skipper. He lived down by the Alki Lighthouse. He came from Nantucket. When we would take parties out with us, he would skipper the Osprey. I remember being in the Nisqually Delta area, and he said he was sure that he knew where he was going; but just then got stuck on the flats so we sat there for 3-4 hours before the tide took us out. We had a whole group from Olympia with us on the ship at the time.

My sister married a Nantucketer in 1919. I remember going there first in 1921 when shark fishing was an industry. The elder Barneys were partners and whaling ship owners. By trade Hadwen Barney was a silversmith. My sister has in her home now small items used on the whaling ships and hand made silver pieces from the period 1830-1865.

Morse: Your sister still lives?

Pierce: She is 88. I finally got her to dispense with several silver spoons made on Nantucket. One was dated 1832. Later this company was the forerunner of Gorham Silver Co. I got these two years ago from my sisters' collection. These are all the original designs.

Morse: She still lives in Nantucket in the summer . . . St. Petersbury in the winter.

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To Rick

### AN INTERVIEW WITH LAWRENCE PIERCE

November 12, 1984

By: Roy Morse, Rick Brown

Morse: You told us about a camping story at Windemere.

Pierce: The ladies were scared to death while camping in 1902 on Lake Washington because Tracy the Bandit was on the loose in the area. The kids thought it was some kind of a joke because thereafter they were always playing Tracy through the woods at Fauntleroy too. They would chase each other up and down the hill. Tracy would be the hare and then the rest of the kids would try ot find him. He was the big bandit at the time. He actually came up from California through Oregon, threatened everybody and made them take care of him, came up to this state and finally was caught here.

Morse: In our first interview just more than a year ago, we kind of passed over two to three items I would like to get information on. We do not have information on your children, their names, birthdates and so forth.

Pierce: Jim was born in Seattle, March 7, 1930 in Seattle General Hospital, one block away from the old house on Columbia Street. I mention this because I was able to be a guest at the old home during Isabel's confinement.

James was named for his grandfather James Colman, after being politely informed that the name we had chosen, Robert Hutchins, meant nothing within the Colman Seattle heritage, hence the name change. Uncle "Gigi" felt most concerned.

James graduated from the U of W in 1952, married Hildegarde Lewis and went to Switzerland to live for two years where Louise was born. He attended the University of Lausanne, receiving their Certificate in Business Administration. Upon his return he was with Foster & Marshall brokers. Elliott, a son, was born in Seattle, June 19, 1956.

Since his 2nd marriage, to Linda Eason in 1975, he has had two daughters, Elizabeth born August 3, 1978, and Isabel born February 4, 1982. their home is on the north slope of Capitol Hill overlooking Lake Washington and the University of Washington It 1520-14th Avenue East.

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Elizabeth Marie Pierce (Betty), born June 25, 1932 in Seattle. Coming as she did, in a hurry with a full head of red hair, she typically grew up in haste, eagerly pursuing her childhood dreams and fancies. She was a top student in High School. She graduated from Stanford in 1954, marrying shortly thereafter her classmate Thomas Atchison. They have four children; Michael, Marie, Steven, and Patrick, all of whom have now graduated from colleges and three are married.

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Betty and Tom live in La Mesa, California. Her activities include School Board (12 years), Director of San diego County School District Association, and President of the La Mesa YM-YWCA Board. Both are very active in the La Mesa United Church of Christ.

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Thomas Atchison, her husband, received his PhD from the University of Washington and has since been Professor and Head of Business School at San Diego State University.

On December 24, 1936, a boy and a girl (twins) arrived as a pleasant Christmas present fulfilling Isabel's desire to have a large family. Lawrence Colman Pierce arrived twenty minutes before his sister Katharine May Peirce, both premature by one month. Because of outside weather conditions the twins remained in their hospital cribs for two months longer than usual.

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Larry graduated from Yale in 1959, followed by graduate work in Public Administration and Finance at Cornell University, where he earned a PhD. He is now Vice Chancellor for the State of Oregon and lives in Eugene. He has one son, Eric.

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Katharine graduated from the University of Washington in 1961. Was married to Richard Johnston and has three sons, all of whom are in college in Arizona where she lives.

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She has taught in Phoenix for many years—has earned her Masters Degree in Educational Administration, and is now studying under a grant on how to utilize compluers in the school system.

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She is very active in the united Church in Scottsdale. She has recently remarried, to Joseph Ramfield, a former rancher from Arizona.

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While we were still in Olympia a third son arrived on April 16, 1939. He was first seen by Gov. Clarence Martin who was visiting St. Peters Hospital and heard him cry loudly. As a proud father, I had to confess to Gov. Martin it was my youngest, and fifth child.

Since there had always been a John in our Pierce family, we traditionalists wanted to carry on the name.

Fortunately for us, "Jack" as he is known, grew up to be competition with his older brothers and sisters. In High School, he was student body President. At Yale he took a pre-Med course, and upon graduation came out here to the UW Medical School, graduating in 1965.

After Navy service and residency Jack began his orthopedic practice in Seattle.

Fortunately, he was able, upon our retirement, to move into the family home where he can be convenient to his work and enjoy the old home and garden.

He was married to Leila Haugen in 1966. They have three children, Galen, Kacey, and Jon.

Galen is now at Cornell University interested in engineering. Kacey expects to enter Washington State University next fall. Jon is still at Lakeside Preparatory School.

Morse: That is a quick rundown on a marvelous family and a lot of real pluses as to what they have done, and I know you feel like a proud parent as to their accomplishments.

Pierce: I really do. When I think of some of the misfortunes people do have, I go back to my own mother who said, "get a good education and that is something that nobody can take away from you". I think she instilled that in me, and I think in turn going to Middlebury College helped me reinforce my enthusiasm for education as a goal in life.

Middlebury was a very fine liberal arts school in those days. Now it has become a little more citified in that it brings a different type of person to Middlebury, but still specializes in the liberal arts and languages.

As an aside, in the summer of 1922, I enrolled as a graduate student in English at Middlebury College's Breadloaf Summer School. Waiting on table to help pay my board and room I was fortunate to be assigned Table 5 hosted by Katharine Lee Bates. She taught Shakespeare that summer and I was lucky to be in one of her classes.

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One evening when Edwin Markham, poet laureate, was visiting with her, it was my good fortune to sit on the veranda with them late one July hot summer evening listening to their discussions.

As we all know, Katharine Lee Bates is the author of "America the Beautiful", which I think is now worthy of being our national anthem, for we may be past celebrating the "bombs bursting in air". A copy of the four stanzas was given to me with her signature, something I have treasured all these years.

At the same time Edwin Markham wrote out for me his famous quatrain, called A Creed:

There is a destiny that makes us brothers,

None goes his way alone.

All that we send into the lives of others

Comes back into our own.

These two famous people have been a big influence on me during my lifetime, as they have been to my family.

Emphasizing natural beauty, "America the Beautiful", in our home surroundings seems so much more intelligent than glorifying war-like tyrants and their goals.

Likewise, Edwin Markham's "Creed" is the basis for doing and caring for others less fortunate. One could live a fruitful life by Markham's Creed.

From Middlebury, I taught school in Hingham, Massachusetts. It is one of the oldest towns in New England. The old Unitarian Church was founded in 1636. The bell chimes I have had the privilege of ringing. I have also had the privilege of teaching in that church and preaching, too, as a lay preacher, choosing as my subject, "Character, the Key to Success". I stayed there two years, saved enough money with the help of some AT&T

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rights given to me by my landlady, Mrs. Helen Whiton, a dear old saint known as "the fish woman of Cohasset".

In those days when people were riding on stage coach, they would see Mrs. Whiton calling the hornpout to feed. They always called her the little fish woman. The hornpout is a small variety of fish common in our New England ponds.

She was very famous in those days. Her son later became Superintendent of the Hudson River Steamboats. She gave me the best room in the house when I was staying there and teaching at Hingham. I lived within two blocks of the High School. She also had her Swedish maid furnish me with cocoa bean tea at 6:30 AM every morning at my door sitting in a pan of hot water. She gave me the rights to the AT&T stock, and with that and the money I had saved, I was able to go to Yale for graduate work the next year. In those days we paid as we went along. We went if we had the money. Prior to that time I had planned to go to Harvard Business School but because of the Depression in 1931, I chose to earn the money before I went to Harvard. Later on after Yale, I became Principal of the High School in Lakeville, Connecticut.

Morse: What was your work at Yale?

Pierce: Education Administration. I think partly because Uncle Jonathan Fairbanks, who was Superintenddent of Schools in Springfield, Missouri. He was a great influence on my mother and, likewise his letters to me always encouraged me to go to college. Then only 3% of H. S. graduates ever went to college, in 1917. It was rather unusual for me, and a lot of my relatives thought it was a waste of time and money. They thought I could become an Episcopal minister by so doing. I was determined that I was going to be a scientific farmer when I went to college and with that I was on my own.

Morse: Scientific Farmer. That is the first time I have heard that.

Pierce: That came about due to the man from the University of Wisconsin becoming the President of the Massachusetts Agricultural College in Amherst, Massachusetts. He was a great advocate of Scientific Farming.

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It was my privilege to be employed during the summer months of 1917 - 1918 on Dr. Minot's estate three miles from my home. He was a famous heart surgeon of his day and a real blue blood. They had a beautiful 16 acre estate. I rode my bicycle back and forth. At the time when WWI was declared, I was a senior in high school, and they waived the last six weeks of my high school period if I would go to work. Presumably to put in potatoes on fallow ground. On most of these estates there was a lot of grassland and they were plowed up and potatoes were planted for domestic use. Potatoes from Idaho and larger areas like Maine all went to France for the soldiers. It was our civic duty to get out and perform.

For so doing we were eligible for college without examination. We were just allowed to enter without any formality at all. Then I applied for and received a scholarship in the State of Vermont, which had small \$60.00 scholarships.

With that I went off on my own. The biggest expense being the transportation from Boston to Middlebury using mileage tickets. They were long books of tickets and you would take out 200 miles each time. I graduated from Middlebury in 1921. My first summer job thereafter was as a tutor for Governor Clements' grandsons. There were three of them, and they came from New York where the father was in the newspaper business. I taught them in the morning and lived with them in a cottage, played games with them, went fishing and swimming. It was one of the best summers I ever had, up in Mendan, Vermont, not far from the Coolidge farm in Plymouth.

Without expecting to be asked to teach, my friend in Hingham, assachusetts, a Middlebury graduate and Superintendent of Schools, called me and asked me if I would come and take a job, so I did for I had to be self supporting. What a break!

My experience at Yale after teaching two years in Hingham proved to be very fruitful. Dr. Spalding was head of the department, with Dr. Chapman and Dr. Courts. There I met many people who assisted me. Noteably, Dr. Sam Brownell who later became head of the U.S. Department of Education.

After Yale it was my good fortune to travel by ship through the Mediterranean countries, with the help of my spinster Aunt. It was the summer of 1924, just after I had finished Yale, that I went on a Cook's tour through the Mediterranean countries thinking I would be

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a better history teacher. We visited Spain, Italy, Rome, Venice, all those old ancient cities in Greece, Turkey, the Holy Land.

Then to Egypt and down the Nile River. There I climbed the Pryramids and crawled up on the Sphinx. I did all the things that a healthy and wreckless boy of 24 would do. It was a great educational experience. My educational diary of that trip with its many notes is still good reading.

Luckily, on this trip I met Dr. George Coleman who was then President of Babson Institute. He was also President of the Ford Hall Forum in Boston, which was the Sunday night big town meeting. At his urging I attended the Institute for a three-month period in 1925.

In the fall of 1925, after the Lakeville experience, I went ot Babson Institute and did research work in Carnegie Pensions and wrote a paper as a graduate student. At that time Babson Institute had been in existence for about 4-5 years and Roger Babson, the founder and donor of all the property and buildings, was still active in its management. There I bacame interested in business administration. With that in mind and with that experience back of me, I told my mother I would like to go west to begin employment. Studies I had seen at Babson Institute convinced me that growth was westward. Mother was assured that I had carfare home if my Horace Greeley dream failed.

I came out in February, 1926 to Seattle, which was recommended by Babson Institute from their commercial studies as the growing city in the west. I have always considered myself fortunate because my Eastern training aided me in communicating with the Puget Sound Power & Light Company (PSP&L) owned by the Stone and Webster, and also owners of the Seattle Transit Co. My first contact was a good one and it lasted for six years.

Morse: Did you go to work for Stone and Webster?

Pierce: I worked in the Public Relations Department of the PSP&L after serving a period of two years in the Comptrollers Office. That took me up to 1932.

Then Ed Campbell and I started the glass company which was called the Northwestern Glass Company. I remained there with Ed for 1½-2 years at which time prohibition was

repealed and the liquor business became quite prominent. Instead of doing the Crescent Manufacturing type of work, and vegetable, oil and vinegar type type bottles, we did get into the whiskey flasks and larger bottles as well. In deference to Laurence Coleman and his thinking, I resigned as the first secretary-treasurer to Northwestern Glass company in 1934.

Brown: At which time did you meet Isabel?

Pierce: I met Isabel in 1927. I was residing in Endolyne at 51st S.W. in one of the Goodman cottages. Ed Campbell and I had decided to bach it together for several years, and we found the cottage on the beach to our liking. There we met some famous characters. People like Mr. Worthington and Mr. Kent who later formed Kenworth Motors Co. They were always down there. Mr. Dornburg lived next door. The Guinns lived there too. Mrs. Goodman introduced me at the little church, Fauntleroy, to Isabel who had just finished her masters degree in Chemistry. It was not the first time I had seen her. She appeared at the Engineers Open House as the first woman to cook with peanut oil. She was making donuts for the Engineers open house when I met her at the University of Washington.

Morse: The year following that I was in charge of the Engineers Open House.

Pierce: We continued our friendship for several years while my past was being checked by Isabel's parents. We were married May 29, 1929 about 2½ years after we first met.

Morse: You went from Northwestern Glass to what?

Pierce: I was asked to go down to Olympia with Mr. Charles Ernst. It was during the period of the kidnapping era and several unfortunate things had happened in our home, such as letters received by her parents. We were very pleased to move after having lived in the big house for 5 years to be away for a 6 year period in Olympia where we were known as Pierces and without any connection with the J. M. Colman Company.

Morse: Your occupation in Olympia?

Pierce: I had 3 or 4 assignments. The first one of which was the economic reports that I had to write for Charles Ernst. Secondly, I was assigned to the School Department to help Mr. Dimmitt finance the schools left unfinished during WPA and the Washington Emergency Relief period. There were 300 schools left unfinished, and Mr. Dimmitt and I had the job of finishing them throughout the state. Mr. L. M. Dimmitt was the State Supervisor for High Schools. The third job I had was the completion of the CCC program. The administrator had resigned when it was announced that the funds were no longer available, so I was asked to step in at the state level to complete that program in detail. Following that Governor Martin appointed me to be the first State Treasurer of the Unemployment Compensation Division which had the duty of collecting the social security taxes for two years to build the unemployment fund to a point before payouts could begin. I did this for four years. We returned to Seattle in 1940 and lived in the big house until 1979.

Morse: What did you continue to do when you returned to Seattle?

Pierce: We came back in 1940. Pierce: I was with the J.M. Colman Company. I became Vice President until it sold in 1946. From 1946-1957 I was financing Seattle Steel Products Company doing finance work for them on individual jobs. Seattle Bronze Company and the International Trading Company. The first aluminum doors in the Seattle Airport were financed by me. Built and delivered by the Seattle Bronze Co. and Seattle Steel Products Co. was the second company that I was interested in and stayed with them for 5-6 years financing their construction. The International Trading Co. financed shipments of wheat to China and

Morse: Your connection was still in the financing portion of the business?

Chile and imports of hardwoods to the U.S.

Pierce: IN 1957 when Mr. Dimmitt was the King County Superintendent of Schools, he asked me to come back with him to work for him in the County School Superintendents Office, editing a monthly paper and doing work with the various school district boards on the boundary lines between districts. They were always conflicting with the section lines which used to form the boundary lines between school districts. With the rapid growth in the outside areas in King County at that time the boundary lines always conflicted with the developers guidelines. Later (1966), I wrote the Head Start program for King County and was its manager until 1970 when I officially retired.

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Morse: It was about that time when you took up the propagation of rhododendrons in earnest?

Pierce: During a period of time in the 1950's, Mrs. Charles Anderson, Mrs. Calvin and my wife got interested in hybrid rhododendrons. I was partially interested in native rhododendrons which we had on the place sold to us during the depression by unemployed men who gathered them in the Olympic region across the sound. They sold them by the truck load. After many of the trees were knocked down by the storm of 1931, there was plenty of space on our 25 acres where we replaced many of them with native rhododendrons. From that led to the study of rhododendron hybrids and how to create them. In 1964, we built a greenhouse in order to cultivate them, grow them from cuttings and then following that we became interested in the various species of rhododendrons from their native countries. Over the course of many years, we developed a collection of some 300 different species from many different countries.

Morse: It took about 40 years for the scientific farmer to come out.

Pierce: The scientific farming ambition of my youthful days finally came to conclusion.

Brown: How many plants do you have on the grounds today?

Pierce: My best guess would be about 2,000.

Brown: One thing you mentioned was you worked for the Colman Company for six years. What type of businesses and work did you do and what type of ventures was the Colman Company involved with at that time?

Pierce: From 1940-46 there were problems of building management and maintenance of buildings. My work was in the end collecting rents due from the depression days. All through Chinatown and the lower part of Seattle. There were rents due, many rents were paid in kind when cash was not available, and I did adjust and settle up all the delinquent accounts. That was my first real assignment. Then getting tenants for buildings was my second assignment and thirdly the investments of the Colman Co.

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Morse: We have had a very interesting account of your personal history up till now. I know that we have a number of pictures and items that we would like to ask specific questions about. Will you identify the photos as you look at them?

Brown: Some of these are Dr. Kilbornes' photography.

Pierce: Just before he died he came to me and deposited many of his negatives. The closet they were in has been torn out. They were included in our other collection of memorabilia.

Morse: We have some negatives and prints of Dr. Kilborne's pictures Most of them are of children in the Fauntleroy district.

Pierce: When I first came out here, I remember people complaining about the size of Adam's lots. They were too small and they didn't like it. When we first plotted Laurentide, we staggered the lots so everyone had a view in Laurentide with lots at least 70' wide.

Morse: What size lots did John F. Adams propose were too small?

Pierce: As I recall, 50-60'. He didn't become very popular with his plotting of Fauntleroy.

Ivan Myers was a tenant in the Colman Building and an architect; he built the first home on the Colman property. We built the next three homes ourselves starting with Sweeney, Linde, and the Smith home where Dick Farman lives. Those were the homes we built and could not sell for many months. People were starting however to move south to Gatewood Hill. We sold them for just what they cost us eventually in 1946-47.

Morse: I though the concrete bulkhead at the church was put in the same time the Katherine Colman Park was dedicated. Katherine Colman died in 1925. Before that there was a wooden bulkhead.

Pierce: I think you are right.

# Colman family is back on the dock

P-I Reporter

The Colman family isn't the only group rejoicing to see the Seattle ferry terminal renamed the Colman Dock. The cabbies of Seattle never have called that central waterfront ferry dock anything else, even though Washington state changed the original dock and name in the 1960s.

But the Colman family will star today in a public ceremony to: 1) rededicate the overwater real estate first built by Scottish immigrant James M. Colman in 1882; 2) kick off Maritime Week in Seattle May 17-23; and 3) unveil a permanent, museumquality collection of old Colman Dock photographs at the terminal, many by the late, great Seattle photographer Asahel Curtis whose studio was in the Colman Dock building.

To illustrate the hazardous life of a sitting dock, Curtis wielded his camera in 1912 when the landmark Colman Dock clock tower was knocked right off the grandiose structure into the water by the Alaska Steamship Lines' Alameda.

The oldest surviving Colman, Isobel Colman Pierce, 80, James M. Colman's granddaughter, was 10 years old when it happened, living in the Italianate Victorian mansion where she had been born, the home built by her grandfather at Fourth Avenue and Columbia Street (now the site of a planned Martin Selig skyscraper).

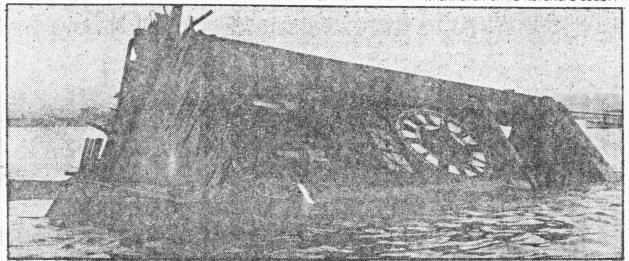


Isobel Colman and Lawrence Pierce in their Horizon House apartment in front of a watercolor of the schooner J.M. Colman.



Colman Dock, as seen through the camera lens of Asahel Curtis, in 1916 with its rebuilt clock tower.

WASHINGTON STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Asahel Curtis was on hand in 1912, when the original clock tower was knocked into the water by a ship.

#### Family property

She will be at the rededication today in a wheelchair, following surgery three weeks ago. Sitting in her Horizon House apartment with husband Lawrence Pierce, her eyes sparkle when she discusses the return of her family name to the dock and assists the visitor in listing all the other ways the name is part of Seattle history.

There is the Colman Building, Colman Park, Colman Pool, Colman School and lesser-known Camp Colman. From 1914 to 1965 Camp Colman for children thrived on family property at Horsehead Bay near Carr Inlet. It continues today at nearby Long-

branch.

It's less well known that the Colman family donated the Seabeck Conference Center land as well as the acreage of YMCA Camp Orkila on Orcas Island. The first Colman was a co-founder of the YMCA here as well as the charitable fund that became United Way. Pierce and her brother Kenneth Colman administered a Colman Charitable Fund for 50 years.

Kenneth Colman died April 27 this year, missing the restoration of the family name to the terminal by less than a month. But his two sons, V. Keith and Dr. Lauren K. Colman, and daughters, Audrey Colman Burdett and Mary Agnes Sartor, will be there.

So will Isobel and Lawrence Pierce's sons James Colman Pierce, Laurence C. Pierce and Dr. John Pierce. The two Pierce daughters, Elizabeth Pierce Atchison and Katharine Pierce Johnston, won't be present.

#### Charismatic man

These are the nine grandchildren of the young Scotsman who, as his grandson-in-law Lawrence Pierce says, brought extremely useful engineering and millwright skills to Seattle in 1860 and accepted land in lieu of cash for his services. He died in 1906, leaving the development of the Colman fortunes to sons Laurence and George.

Bachelor George was an inventor but Isobel, eyes lighting up again, remembers her father Laurence Colman as a charismatic, charming man, "generous, often giving volunteer time to teach manual-training classes

how to build boats."

He was also a smarter businessman than his father, according to friend and business ally, Joshua Green, who, in Colman family history, is on record as saying Laurence owned "a mile of storefronts" in Seattle. This second-generation Colman was also the second-largest stockholder in Green's People's National Bank

He built an English-style Arthur Loveless mansion overlooking Puget Sound in Fauntleroy in 1922 "when there wasn't another house in sight," Isobel says, commuting to the Colman Dock downtown in the family steam yacht, the 102-foot Osprey. He developed Windemere as a real estate venture on family property north of Laurelhurst in 1929, five years before he died.

#### Rhododendron gardens

Isobel's grandmother, Mrs. James M. Colman, "a Queen Victoria" kind of woman, according to Isobel and Lawrence Pierce, lived on at the Fourth and Columbia mansion until 1936, always wearing long skirts and coming down to the street to give meal tickets to the drunks — after they listened to her temperance lectures.

The Pierces, married in 1929, have lived in the Colman West Seattle mansion most of their married life. Lawrence developed three and a half acres of rhododendron gardens there, naming a lovely new hybrid Isobel Pierce and seeing a species named Pierce by the Royal Botanical Gardens, Edinburgh, Scotland.

"We're in the botanical books," Isobel says, smiling. Lawrence still spends six hours a day in the rhododendron gardens, often giving horticultural tours to students or foreign visitors, though the Pierces moved to

Horizon House in 1979.

Their son Dr. John Pierce lives in the big house now, has a West Seattle orthopedic surgery office and continues the Colman tradition of community service by serving on camp boards and starting the Fauntleroy Children's Center in West Seattle.

"The Colmans never were a society family," Isobel Pierce says. "My father was accepted by men but he was too busy to become involved in leisure life." Unlike many Seattle pioneer women, she is not a member of the women's Sunset Club.

#### Too many interests

Her husband, a Bostonian Middlebury and Yale graduate, is not a member of the Men's University Club. "I've had too many other interests," he says. "I liked gardening rather than golf. After six hours a day in the garden, why go to the Washington Athletic Club to have someone rub you down? I felt so foolish.

"But you were madame volun-

teer," he says, turning to his wife. As president of the Women's University Club she led the 1960 drive for a new building. She has served on YWCA and other charitable boards. Her husband is an internationally honored past president of the Seattle Rhododendron Society.

Both are pleased at going, soon, to Horsehead Bay for the summer, land they share with Kenneth Colman's family. Of the lodge, caretaker's house, big house and guest cottage on the 40 acres with 500 feet of waterfront, the Pierces choose to stay in the small guest cottage. "There's good swimming, clams, oysters and fishing — though the fishing is not what it used to be," Lawrence Pierce says.

#### LAWRENCE J. PIERCE

Place of birth: Hyde Park, Massachusetts June 3, 1900

Came to Seattle from Boston, 1926

Married to Isabel Colman on May 29, 1929

Family - James Colman Pierce, Seattle

Mrs. Thomas (Betty) Atchison, San Diego, CA

Lawrence Colman Pierce, Eugene, OR

Mrs. Joseph (Katherine) Ramfield, Phoenix, AZ

John H. Pierce, M. D., Seattle

Family residence - 9343 Fauntleroy Way S. W., Seattle and

Horizon House

Educational background:

Middlebury College: B.S. English and History

Yale University:

Education Administration

Harvard University: Business Admin. and Education Admin.

Babson Institute: Business Administration

#### Church service:

Fauntleroy Church 1929

Superintendent Church School - 1929-1931

Leader in Christian Endeavor - 1929-1934

Reorganized Men's Club to become a Community Men's Club - 1930

Superintendent Jr. and Sr. Highs - 1945

Member, Board of Trustees - 1945

Member, first Building Fund Committee - 1945

Chairman, Board of Christian Education, six years - 1954-1960

Dean, Lenten School (the first one) - 1955-1958

#### Wider service:

Treasurer State Unemployment Compensation Comm. 1936-40

Director, King County Head Start 1966-1970

YMCA Downtown Branch: Christian Educ. Comm.

President Kiwanis Memorial Fund

President Seattle Rhododendron Society 1973-1975

President Rhododendron Species Foundation 1977-1979

#### Hobbies:

Lawrence's interest in Rhododendron's started in the early 1950's. Today the Pierce gardens are known internationally and have been opened many times for people to see and enjoy. In 1975 Lawrence was honored by the Royal Botanical Gardens of Edinburgh, Scotland, who named the species "Rhododendron Piercei" for him. A hybrid specimen was awarded local distinction and is named "Isabel Pierce" for Lawrence's wife. Gold medal award, American Rhododendron Society given him in San Francisco, May 3, 1981.

In 1986 a hybrid specimen Lem #23 was awarded local distinction and renamed "Lawrence Pierce". Both rododendron's can be seen in the center of the Katherine Colman Park adjacent to the Fauntleroy Church.

#### Other affiliations:

Kiwanis Club, Olympia 1937-40 Kiwanis Club, Seattle 1940-52 Horizon House Resident's Council-Chairman 1980-81 Seattle Chamber of Commerce, 1940-54 Seattle Municipal League, 1940-61

#### Hobbies:

Lawrence's interest in rhododendron's started in the early 1950's. Today the Pierce gardens are known internationally and have been opened many times for people to see and enjoy. In 1975 Lawrence was honored by the Royal Botanical Gardens of Edinburgh, Scotland, who named the species "Rhododendron Piercei" for him. A hybrid specimen was awarded local distinction and is named "Isabel Pierce" for Lawrence's wife. Gold medal award, American Rhododendron Society given him in San Francisco, May 3, 1981.

#### Other affiliations:

Kiwanis Club, Olympia 1937-40 Kiwanis Club, Seattle 1940-52 Horizon House Place of birth: Seattle, Washington March 5, 1902

Affiliated with Fauntleroy Church May 3, 1917 Married to Lawrence J. Pierce May 29, 1929 at

Family - James Colman Pierce

Mrs. Thomas (Betty) Atchison: San Diego Lawrence Colman Pierce: Eugene, Oregon Mrs. Richard (Katharine) Johnston John H. Pierce, M. D.

Family residence - 9343 Fauntleroy Way S. W., Seattle

Educational background:

University of Washington : B. A. Chemistry Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio : Voice and Piano

Church service:

Soloist and choir member for many years.

Member of Young Women's Guild, 1920's.

\*Active member of Christian Endeavor, 1920's, to 1940.

Chairman, Board of Trustees, 1956.

Chairman, Organ Commission, 1958.

Active Leader in Christian Endeavor 1927-1934.

Soloist and choir member Olympia Church 1934-1940.

Wider service: A. A. U. W., Olympia, Washington 1934-40

National Board Y.W.C.A., twelve years.

President Seattle Y.W.C.A.

President Board of Trustees, Ruth School for Girls

President Board of Trustees, Horizon House

President, Women's University Club, 1960-61

The United Way (Seattle): very active many years on Budget,

Executive, and Planning Committees.

Other affiliations:

University of Washington Arboretum Northwest Horticultural Society Rhododendron Species Foundation Seattle Rhododendron Society

Hobbies:

Music Gardening

<sup>\*</sup>Immediately following their marriage, Isabel and Lawrence were in charge of Christian Endeavor every Sunday night.

## Services Friday for Isabel Colman Pierce

Isabel Colman Pierce, awardwinning rhododendron cultivator and descendant of a Seattle pioneer family, died Thursday.

Mrs. Pierce, who was active in many community organizations, was well-known for the three-acre rhododendron garden she and her husband Lawrence developed at their home in Fauntleroy, where they lived for more than 50 years.

Born at the family home at Fourth and Columbia streets on March 5, 1902, Mrs. Pierce attended Oberlin College and the University of Washington.

Her grandfather, James M. Colman, a Scottish millwright, came to Washington in 1867, where he established the first railroad and the first coal mine.

With her brother, Kenneth B. Colman, who died on April 27, Mrs. Pierce operated Camp Colman, a YMCA camp on Horsehead Bay from 1914 until 1965.

Laurence J. Colman, Mrs. Pierce and her brother gave Colman Pool in Lincoln Park to the city of Seattle, and deeded the property of Seabeck Conference Grounds to the non-denominational, charitable corporation of Seabeck Christian Conference. They also provided the Camp Orkila property to the YMCA.

Mrs. Pierce was president of Seattle YWCA and a member of its national board for 12 years; president of Women's University Club, and president of Ruth School for Girls.

In addition, she was a volunteer and member in community organizations including Community Chest, United Way, Orthopedic Guild, Ryther Child Center, Seattle Opera Guild, Lake Washington Garden Club, Seattle Rhododendron Society, and Rhododendron Species Foundation.

She served on the Senior Citi-In memory of their father, zens Committee of the Washington Congregational Christian Conference and on the board of trustees of Horizon House.

member of Fauntleroy Community Church and, in the past two years, of Plymouth Congregational.

Besides her husband, Lawrence, Mrs. Pierce is survived by two daughters, Elizabeth P. Atchison of San Diego, Calif., and

Katherine P. Johnston of Phoenix Ariz.: and three sons. James C. Pierce, Lawrence C. Pierce of Mrs. Pierce was an active Eugene, Ore., and John H. Pierce, M.D.

A memorial service will be conducted at Fauntleroy Commuinity Church on Friday at 1 p.m.; Memorials are suggested to Camp Colman in care of Fauntleroy Community Church.

"Gigi" as he was affectionately called by his family members was the second son of agues of James Column.

at The age of twelve he arrived in Stall with his mother and older hother haverned after brown apent. In early bughted in milwankee quaiting word from his pioneering father who spent the years setablishing himself as the foremost modernical engineer in the Paget Sound Rawmell industry.

Men arrival in Scottle both bothers attacked Eather before and the Territarial University when there were three foundly members the President, his wife and one other.

In 1880, the family returned to be bland and Eurose for a west with relatives and to purchase.

When I would clearly to they are to the specification the bill blade.

Eurose for a visit with relatives and to purchase super charts for their new home about surgeon the half block between 4 + 5 th on Columbia St. a partine of which is welled here often. Completed in 1882 it matched in style the eligance of yealer's mansion two blocks South.

Gigi's hast in the family business was developed over the years centeres around the Creosol works and the Machine Schop both I which he managed.

Her, patented invention of the perforated cutting disks

Her, patented invention of the perforated cutting disks used on large tumbers, pilings, ties before retart preserve treatment added greater preservation to the wood treatment. Today these disks marks are seen as every bridge, Instead to the second treatment.

railroad tie and piling.

Though unmarried Jigi gave himself and money to aid the leas fortunate superially the newstoys in the city for whom he provided a gymasum, and manual traduing and Sunday School at Plymouth Church. For regular sittereduce he sewarded them with Sound ex cursions on the "Opprey and a weeks compune at Barrohad Bay each summer. He perced away at the age of 93. probably by Lawrence Pierce in 1985