

BISHOP GEORGE FOSTER PIERCE

In February of 1811, George Foster Pierce was born in Greene County, Georgia three miles from Greensboro. He was the son of Reverend Lovick Pierce, born March 24, 1785, in Halifax County, NC. In 1804 Lovick and his brother Red Dick were admitted on trial as itinerant Methodist preachers in Charleston, SC - Rev. Lovick Pierce was first on the Great Pedee Circuit in Eastern, SC next the Apalachee Circuit in Ga. On this circuit he met and married Ann Foster, Sept. 1809.

George Pierce was nicknamed, "Bulger" and was a frolicsome, likable lad. He liked to ride, was a good shot, fisherman and sport. He entered the freshman class at Franklin College, now the University of Georgia., when he was 15 years old and was a member of the Phi Kappa society and a champion debater. After three and one half years in August 1829 he graduated with an A. B. degree before he was 19. He was licensed to preach in 1830 and preached his first sermon at Monticello, Georgia. The text was, "*they seemed to him as one that mocked*". The Quarterly conference that licensed him was held in Eatonton, GA and presided over by Rev. William Arnold. In 1832 he preached in Augusta, then his first station was in Savannah where he met and married Ann Marie Waldron and he had children Ella, Lovick, Jr., Claudia, Mary, Ann and Sarah, died.

He was made President of Georgia Female College in Macon, now Wesleyan in 1839 and was personally very popular, with his winning smile, joyous manner, hearty laugh and friendliness. He would never compromise with evil and believed the Gospel he preached.

At the age of 43 he was made a Bishop and his Conference carried him from coast to coast. He never seemed to tire and never spared himself. The Gen. Conference held in Louisiana in 1874 had among its members three distinguished members of the same family, Dr. Lovick Pierce, Bishop George F. Pierce and Lovick Pierce, Jr. a son of the Bishop. He served the Conference for over fifty years and died at the home of his son in Sparta, Georgia Feb. 1884 and was buried there.

He was always interested in education of young women, which in that day was considered very radical. He was editor of "The Southern Ladies Book". While in Macon he lived in Vineville near his sister Julia who married Rev. Alfred T. Mann. He loved his family and although his duties took him away, he always hurried home. In 1840 Transylvania College conferred the Doctor of Divinity on Pierce. His fame became national in 1844 when he headed a delegation to the Gen. Conference composed of William J. Parks, Lovick Pierce, James E. Evans and Augustus B. Longstreet. In the great debate that led to the separation of the Methodist Episcopal Church into separate parts he made a speech on the Southern side that was electric in its immediate effects and whose echos are still in the air. He was the most popular man at the Petersburg, VA. Conference in

May 1846. While he was at Columbus in 1847 he was elected Pres. Of Emory College at Oxford. Even at that time he was advocating the admission of women into the college.

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**History of Greene County, Georgia
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