

Captain Albert William Pearse JP FRGS

6th April 1857 to 12th July 1951

Founder of the League of Ancient Mariners 1903

President 1940-1941



Albert William Pearse was born at Hornsey, London, on 6th April 1857, was educated at Deal College, Kent, and went to sea at the age of 17. He spent several years in sail, passing for second and chief mate and for master (in 1885) in London, and subsequently served as an officer in the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co., trading to the West Indies and Brazil, and later in the Orient S.N. Co.

In 1887 he left the sea and was goldmining in New Zealand till 1891 when, in association with the late R. E. N. Twopeny, he founded the *Australasian Pastoralists' Review*, now the *Pastoral Review*, filling the position of editor for many years and, until a few weeks ago, taking an active interest in the business of the Pastoral Review Pty. Ltd., of which, as already stated, he was managing director.

Captain Pearse was a man of immense energy, and though for a long while the *Pastoral Review* occupied much of his time and attention, in addition to which he acted in an executive capacity in many organisations devoted to social service and found opportunity to write a few books, he filled for 15 years—from 1922 to 1937—

the responsible post of Representative of the Port of London Authority in Australia and New Zealand. This involved extensive travelling as well as innumerable lectures on the Port's services and activities, and in spite of the fact that in the latter part of the time he was well on in his seventies Captain Pearse carried out his duties with a zest and energy that would have done credit to a much younger man.

In 1908, and again in 1918, he represented the Commonwealth Government and the Australian and New Zealand meat companies at International Refrigeration Congresses overseas, on the former occasion in Paris and on the latter in Chicago. He made a close study of the meat export trade and live stock production generally, eventually embodying his investigations and experience in a book entitled *The World's Meat Future*. During World War I he served for two years as Commissioner of the Australian Comforts Fund in Egypt.

In 1902 Captain Pearse founded in Sydney, together with Dr. Scot Skirving, the League of Ancient Mariners, an organisation of which he was at times president and vice-president and which has flourished with the passing of the years to such an extent that its periodical reunions have become headline news in the Sydney daily press, while the League itself is now world-famous among master mariners and others interested in the days of sail.

Apart from *The World's Meat Future*, other books by Captain Pearse have included *A Windjammer 'Prentice* and *Windward Ho*, both written in the crisp, breezy style of the practical seaman and affording a close insight into the rough and tough conditions of windjammer life seventy years ago.

Captain Pearse was a liveryman of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners, a member of the Master Mariners' Association of Australia, a Freeman of the City of London, A Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, vice-president of Toc H (Sydney branch), vice-president of the Mission to Seamen (Sydney), and at different times during his life vice-president of the Bush Brotherhood (Dubbo) and vice-president of the Church of England Homes, Burwood, Sydney.

Few men have had a fuller life than Captain Pearse or spent their years to greater advantage. A strongly religious but the least sanctimonious of men he had a very high moral code and applied it to his every act, whether in his private or business life. Everything he did, in work or play, he did with tremendous zest and typical sailor-like thoroughness, and to his wise guidance, honesty, and sound common sense the *Pastoral Review* primarily owes the high reputation which we believe it enjoys. He knew what he wanted, and so far as those who have so long served with him have been concerned he saw that his instructions were carried out with the thoroughness, efficiency, and despatch that in his early days were demanded of him under ship's discipline. At the same time he was absolutely fair and never failed to give praise or credit where he felt they were deserved.

Captain Pearse married, in 1887, Emily Mary, daughter of the late John Mills, of Cooleham, Berkshire, Eng. She died two years ago, and there are five surviving children of the marriage—Evan (editor of the *Pastoral Review*), Ernest (manager of the Sydney office of the Australian, Mercantile, Land and Finance Co. Ltd.), Margaret (Mrs. A. S. Waterhouse, of Sydney), Phyllis (Mrs. V. Vincent, of Tasmania),

and Cecile (Mrs. Ian Dodds, of Sydney). Another son (Maurice) was killed in France during World War I.

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