

## **Pearson, Thomas** <sup>[1]</sup>

### **Pearson, Thomas**

by Robert O. Conway, 1994

**24 June 1893–16 Apr. 1963**

See also: [Pearson, Richmond](#) <sup>[2]</sup> (from the *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*)

Thomas Pearson, international economic adviser, was born at the family home [Richmond Hill](#) <sup>[3]</sup>, in [Asheville](#) <sup>[4]</sup>, the son of [Richmond](#) <sup>[2]</sup> and Gabrielle Thomas Pearson. His grandfather was [Richmond Mumford Pearson](#) <sup>[5]</sup>, chief justice of the [North Carolina Supreme Court](#) <sup>[6]</sup> during the [Civil War](#). <sup>[7]</sup> He attended St. Paul's School, Concord, N.H., and was a 1915 graduate of [Princeton University](#) <sup>[8]</sup>.

Pearson worked for the American International Corporation in New York between 1916 and 1920, except for service in France as a captain in the U.S. Army (1917–19) during [World War I](#) <sup>[9]</sup>. After the war he was the foreign trade editor of the *New York Evening Post* (1920–21). From 1922 to 1927 he was in Persia with a group that took over the finances of the government by request and operated them during that period. From 1929 to 1936 Pearson was with the International Chamber of Commerce in Paris, an organization established after the war to improve world business conditions and the prospects for world peace. In 1937 [President Franklin D. Roosevelt](#) <sup>[10]</sup> appointed him deputy receiver of customs in the Dominican Republic to help supervise repayment of a \$25 million U.S. loan. In 1941 he was named to the board of directors of the National Bank of Haiti. Returning to the Dominican Republic in 1948, he was director of the department of economic research for the Central Bank of the Republic.

During his long stay in the Caribbean, Pearson became an authority on the culture and social customs of the people and was instrumental in establishing the Dominican-American Cultural Institute. He retired from foreign service in 1951 and returned to Asheville. Pearson never married; his only survivor was a sister, Marjorie Pearson, who had helped him to restore Richmond Hill. He was buried in Riverside Cemetery, Asheville.

#### **References:**

*Asheville Citizen*, 17 Apr. 1963.

*Who Was Who in America, 1961–1968* (1968).

#### **Additional Resources:**

Thomas Pearson Papers, 1916-1963, #4051, Southern Historical Collection, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. <http://www2.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/p/Pearson,Thomas.html> <sup>[11]</sup> (accessed January 28, 2014).

"Richmond Hill House." Asheville, NC, National Register of Historic Places Travel Itinerary. National Park Service. <https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/asheville/ric.htm> <sup>[9]</sup> (accessed January 28, 2014).

"Thomas Pearson in military dress. Captain of ports and Haiti." Photograph. Item # pear010, Richmond Pearson Collection, D.H. Ramsey Library, Special Collections, University of North Carolina at Asheville. [http://toto.lib.unca.edu/findingaids/mss/pearson/default\\_pearson.html](http://toto.lib.unca.edu/findingaids/mss/pearson/default_pearson.html) <sup>[12]</sup> (accessed January 28, 2014).

"Thomas Pearson and his dog 'Tehran Persia' seated in front of doorway. c. 1922-27." Photograph. Item # pear013, D.H. Ramsey Library, Special Collections, University of North Carolina at Asheville. [http://toto.lib.unca.edu/findingaids/mss/pearson/default\\_pearson.html](http://toto.lib.unca.edu/findingaids/mss/pearson/default_pearson.html) <sup>[12]</sup> (accessed January 28, 2014).

#### **Subjects:**

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[World War II \(1941-1945\)](#) <sup>[14]</sup>

[Post War 20th Century \(1946-2000\)](#) <sup>[15]</sup>

[Biographies](#) <sup>[16]</sup>

[Economics and Economic Development](#) <sup>[17]</sup>

[Military personnel](#) <sup>[18]</sup>

[Public officials](#) <sup>[19]</sup>

[Public service](#) <sup>[20]</sup>

#### **Authors:**

[Conway, Robert O.](#) <sup>[21]</sup>

#### **Origin - location:**

[Buncombe County](#) <sup>[22]</sup>

Asheville <sup>[23]</sup>

**From:**

Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.<sup>[24]</sup>

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