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History

Pearson's origins were in the construction business during the Industrial Revolution. Under the leadership of Weetman Pearson (later known as Lord Cowdray), Pearson became one of the world's largest building contractors at a time when the industry controlled development of the transportation, trade and communication links that fuelled world economies.

Pearson today is a very different company but Weetman Pearson's imagination in harnessing new technologies, bravery of vision and decency to the people and cultures he worked with are values that still underpin everything we do over a century and a half later.

1724 **Longman is founded in London by Thomas Longman.**

1844 **S. Pearson and Son is established as a small building firm in the north of England.**

1848 **'G. Putnam Broadway,' the forerunner to Putnam, is established.**
and publishes the works of Washington Irving, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and scores of other literary luminaries of the nineteenth century.

1843 **The Economist is established by James Wilson,**
a hat maker from the small Scottish town of Hawick, to campaign against the Corn Laws.

1880's **A precursor to the modern Financial Times, The Financial and Mining News, is established in 1884 in London by Harry Marks.**

A competitor, the Financial Times, is launched in 1888 as the friend of the 'Honest Financier and the Respectable Broker'. The two papers are rivals for 60 years until merging in 1946 to form the modern Financial Times.

The FT is first printed on pink paper in 1893 in a bid by its owners to differentiate it from other morning papers - and because 'tinted' paper was cheaper. In the same year, the FT becomes the first London morning paper to be composed on the revolutionary linotype machine, saving costs and production time.

1889 **Scott Foresman imprint is founded in the US.**

1890 **Weetman Pearson moves the business to London and sets his sights on bigger opportunities overseas.**

The docks he built at Milford Haven and Southampton in England led him to projects further afield such as the construction of the Halifax docks in Nova Scotia, Canada and even the Manhattan Tunnel project.

He built railroads that criss-crossed Spain, Colombia, China and Mexico; harbours in Dover, England, Vera Cruz, Mexico and Valparaíso in Chile. He even built the Sennar dam in Egypt. Other contracts covered reservoirs, tunnels and factories. By the end of his career, he had ventured into the oil business and energy, illuminating Mexico and Chile with energy generated by the countries' first hydroelectric plants.

1909 **Scott Foresman enters the elementary market with the Elson Grammar School Readers.**

Two years later, Scott Foresman is the first publisher to use four-colour printing, revolutionising textbooks.

1913 **Prentice-Hall is formed by Professor Charles W. Gerstenberg and student Richard P. Ettinger.**

Taking their mothers' maiden names for their new company, Gerstenberg and Ettinger create what becomes the premier US publisher of academic, business, and professional books. Two years later, Prentice Hall publishes the first book on taxation in loose-leaf format to respond to their colleagues' needs for completely up-to-date information on rapidly changing laws.

1921 **Pearson takes its first step into the media business,**
with the acquisition of a group of UK provincial newspapers that form the foundation of Westminster Press.

The New York Institute of Finance is founded by the New York Stock Exchange. Its first courses are held on the floor of the Exchange in the evenings so that, as Charles Gay, president of the NYSE in 1921 put it, "young men and women, while working, could get an education in finance and related subjects." Rebranded FT Knowledge Financial Learning in January 2001, the business helps train more than 20,000 professionals every year.

1930 **Scott Foresman publishes the first Dick, Jane and Spot stories, which taught generations of Americans to read.**

1935 **Allen Lane publishes the first Penguins.**

Aiming to meet the need for good quality contemporary fiction at an attractive price, the first Penguin paperbacks appear in the summer of 1935 and are a mix of biography, crime writing and novels. All the titles are by contemporary writers including Ernest Hemingway, Eric Linklater and Agatha Christie. They cost just sixpence, the same price as a packet of cigarettes. Within twelve months, Penguin sells a staggering 3 million paperbacks.

1935 **Longman publishes the first English Language Teaching (ELT) dictionary.**

1940's **As conflict in Europe draws closer, Penguin Specials such as Searchlight on Spain and What Hitler Wants achieve record-breaking sales.**

One of the best-selling titles of war years is Aircraft Recognition, which is used by both civilians and the fighting forces to recognise enemy planes. In 1946 Penguin Classics is launched, its first title being E.V. Rieu's translation of Homer's The Odyssey. The Classics range has since gone on to become a major force in education.

1942 **Addison-Wesley's reputation as a science and math publisher of note is firmly established with the debut of the best-selling Mechanics in 1942.**

Just eight years later in 1950 it publishes its first computer programming book, Programs for an Electronic Digital Computer.

- 1945 **Post-war economics prompt rivals the Financial Times and the Financial News to merge into what is today's modern FT.**
The pink paper is kept.
- 1950 **Prentice Hall forms its first Educational Book Division.**
- 1956 **Addison-Wesley School Division is created.**
and, within two years, the 'Science Education Series' (later Science and Mathematics) is published for the secondary, college preparatory market. Two years later, Addison-Wesley International Division is created.
- 1957 **Pearson purchases the Financial Times as "a sound, conservative investment".**
As the owners of Lazards, a leading merchant bank, Pearson was aware that it would be open to criticism if it appeared to influence the paper's editorial policies. So from the start, Pearson has protected the editorial independence of the Financial Times, a principle that continues to this day.
- 1958 **Censorship in America: Putnam publishes Lolita by Vladimir Nabokov, unleashing a storm of controversy.**
Banned by public libraries in some American cities - and officially banned by the government of France - the book becomes a best-seller. Along with Norman Mailer's Deer Park, published by Putnam in 1955, Lolita is a landmark victory against the threat of censorship.
- 1960's **Censorship in Britain.**
The 1960's bring a revolution in popular culture, and Penguin finds itself firmly at the centre of debate on "the permissive society". The publication of the first unabridged version of Lady Chatterley's Lover sees Penguin charged under the Obscene Publications Act. Against a backdrop of immense publicity the company is acquitted, marking a turning point in censorship laws in Britain.
- 1961 **Prentice Hall Business and Professional Books Division is created.**
- 1968 **Longman is acquired by Pearson and brought into Pearson's publishing arm alongside Westminster Press and the Financial Times.**
- 1969 **Pearson goes public on the London Stock Exchange. The company's interests now range from banking to investment to publishing.**
- 1970 **Penguin is acquired by Pearson and is restructured: a new flexible style in editorial, marketing and production is introduced.**
The company continues as a major and vital publishing force.
- 1975 **Penguin Books merges with the prestigious New York-based Viking Press,**
whose impressive group of authors, including John Steinbeck, Saul Bellow and Arthur Miller, gives Penguin a strong presence in the US market for the first time.
- 1983 **Penguin expands significantly in the 1980's.**
They emerge as one of America's favourite children's publishers with the acquisition of Grosset & Dunlap, publishers of Nancy Drew, The Hardy Boys and The Bobbsey Twins. In 1983, Penguin acquires Frederick Warne, best known for children's books featuring Peter Rabbit. The imprints Michael Joseph and Hamish Hamilton are added to the mix in 1985.
- 1985 **The FT begins printing in New York and, a year later, worldwide circulation passes the 250,000 mark.**
Two years later, France's leading business daily, Les Echos, and the Spanish media group, Recoletos, are acquired by Pearson and are aligned with the FT Group. By 1990, the FT is being printed in London, New York, Frankfurt, Roubaix and Tokyo.
- 1988 **Math and science publisher Addison-Wesley is purchased by Pearson and merged with Longman to create Addison-Wesley Longman.**
- 1995 **FT.com, the Financial Times' website, is launched.**
The FT sets out on a campaign of international expansion and begins printing in Madrid, Stockholm and Los Angeles.
- 1996 **The Putnam Berkley Group is acquired by The Penguin Group. Putnam Berkley is merged with Penguin USA to form Penguin Putnam Inc.**
Pearson purchases school and college publisher HarperCollins Educational Publishing and merges it into Addison-Wesley Longman.
- 1997 **The FT launches its US edition.**
- 1998 **Pearson Education, the world's leading education business, is created from the merger of Addison-Wesley Longman and the educational businesses of Simon and Schuster.**
Pearson Education leads in every major sector of educational publishing, including elementary and secondary school, higher education, professional education, English Language Teaching (ELT), and educational technology, both in the U.S. and internationally. Over 100 education brands including Scott Foresman, Prentice Hall, Allyn & Bacon, Addison-Wesley, Silver, Burdette and Ginn, Longman, Benjamin Cummings and Macmillan Publishing USA fall under Pearson's umbrella.
Pearson sells the Tussauds Group to a private equity firm, managed by Charterhouse Development Capital
- 1999 **FT Deutschland, the only non-English language paper to carry the FT brand, is launched in Germany.**
It is the first new national newspaper in the country for 40 years.
Pearson Technology Group is formed, creating the world's largest technology publisher.
The new group houses imprints including Macmillan Software, Que, Sams, BradyGAMES, Macmillan Reference, Prentice Hall PTR, Peachpit Press, Addison-Wesley Professional, New Riders, Cisco, and Adobe Press.

- 2000 **Pearson acquires Dorling Kindersley, the premier and distinctive illustrated reference publisher and integrates it within Penguin to form the Penguin Group (UK).**
- Pearson reshapes the world of education with its \$2.4 billion acquisition of National Computer Systems (NCS), the leading educational testing and data management company in the US.**
Brought into Pearson Education as NCS Pearson, the company forms the cornerstone of Pearson's aim to connect the home and school, personalize courses and link curriculum, assessment and testing.
- Pearson completes the sale of its interest in investment bank, Lazard's**
- 2002 **Pearson acquires Rough Guides, the highly acclaimed publishers of travel and music writing, and brings it under Penguin.**
- Pearson sells its 22% stake in broadcasting and content company RTL Group, to Bertelsmann AG.**
- 2003 **Financial Times launches its Asia edition in print and online, as well as Chinese.FT.com, its first Chinese language business website.**
- Pearson acquires a stake in Edexcel, the UK's largest examination awarding body.**
- 2004 **FT takes a 13.85% stake in the Business Standard, one of India's leading financial newspapers.**
FT starts printing in Sydney, Australia, bringing the total number of print sites to 23 worldwide.
- 2005 **Pearson acquires AGS Publishing from WRC Media for \$270 million.**
The acquisition enables Pearson to strengthen its position in testing and publishing for students with special educational needs.
- Pearson sells its 79% stake in Spanish media group, Recoletos.**