Anzac and Empire is the remarkable story of George Foster Pearce – a carpenter who became one of Australia’s most influential politicians, and the man central to how Australia planned for, and fought in, the First World War.

The nation’s longest-serving defence minister – holding the portfolio before, during and after the Great War – Pearce saw no contradiction in being both a fierce Australian nationalist, and also a loyal subject of the British Empire.

Pearce was almost single-handedly responsible for creating the key institutions of Australia’s modern defence organisation: the Royal Australian Navy, the Royal Military College, Duntroon and the Royal Australian Air Force. Controversially, when he saw the rising military threat from Japan in the early 1930s, it was his belief in a White Australia and conscription that led to rearmament, preparing Australia to defend itself in its darkest hour.

Anzac and Empire is the first full-length biography of this extraordinary Australian. Written by one of Australia’s leading military historians, this book shows that to understand Australia in the Great War, you must understand the man behind it.

John Connor is Senior Lecturer in History, University of New South Wales at the Australian Defence Force Academy, Canberra.
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Anzac and Empire
GEORGE FOSTER PEARCE AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE

JOHN CONNOR

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-00950-9 - Anzac and Empire: George Foster Pearce and the Foundations of Australian Defence
John Connor
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More information
To my mother Claire Connor (née Boyles) 
and my father Bryne Connor
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This book could not have been written without the assistance of many people. The idea came when I was working as a research assistant on *The Centenary History of Australian Defence*, and the late Eric Andrews encouraged me to pursue it. Jeffrey Grey was an exacting and generous supervisor of the PhD that followed. I thank the Army History Unit for the grant that enabled me to carry out extensive research in the United Kingdom and New Zealand and the WA Branch of the Australian Labor Party for granting permission to consult its records.

I owe an eternal debt to Carl Bridge, Ian Henderson and Kirsten McIntyre for their support as I completed the thesis while lecturing at the Menzies Centre for Australian Studies, King’s College, London. Special thanks must go to Bernadette McDermott at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of New South Wales at the Australian Defence Force Academy, for all her assistance in submitting the thesis while overseas.

David Horner, in his dual roles as editor of the Australian Army History Series and the official historian of the *Official History of Australian Peacekeeping, Humanitarian and Post Cold War Operations*, made many useful comments on the manuscript.

At Cambridge University Press it was a pleasure to work with the always friendly and ever-professional Susan Hanley, Jodie Howell and Cathryn Game. Thanks must also go to Marilyn Anderson-Smith, Joan Beaumont, Frank Bongiorno, Stephen Clark, Tim Cook, Peter Dennis, Damien Fenton, Glyn Harper, Mark Hearn, Keith Jeffery, Jennifer Keene, Kate Lamb and Gareth Mitchell, David Lee, David Lovell, Ian McGibbon, Brock Millman, John Moreman, Jo Muggleton, Shirley Ramsay, Jan Rüger, Jason Sears and Sonali Rajanayagam, Stuart Ward, Gerry Walsh and Craig Wilcox. I am especially thankful to Ian van der Waag for providing information at short notice on South African defence organisation in the First World War. Finally, and most importantly, I must thank my family, especially Karen and Claudia, *mo bheist mna mo chroi*. 