

Edwin Ginn's Early twentieth Century Education Efforts

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Edwin Ginn was one of the most successful textbook publishers in American history. As a self-taught businessperson, he considered himself more an educator than entrepreneur. Instead of publishing books geared to rote learning, Ginn focused on addressing students' queries as to the why, where, and how things came to be. In so doing, he extended his interests to the field of peace education, which he considered critical to the welfare and well-being of society.

Ginn's fascination with world peace began in the late nineteenth century, after his publishing house became one of the premier distributors of high school and college texts in the United States. He came to the peace movement at an advanced age, but his influence was felt worldwide. In advocating the peaceful settlement of international disputes, the establishment of an international police force, and a world court, Ginn was in the forefront urging that education was the only effective instrument for achieving these goals. His own individual efforts were the primary reason for Andrew Carnegie establishing his own rival peace foundation the same year, 1910.

Ginn was born on February 14, 1838, in North Orland, Maine. His personality was forged through hard-rock discipline and strict Christian principles. Frugality and self-reliance, typical New England traits, also characterized his early upbringing. He was a disciple of the Protestant Work Ethic, extolling the virtue of hard work. In his later years, he commented that young people today shun "away from manual labor as irksome, and are too young to realize the part it plays in the building up of character" (Ginn, *Outline*, 3). This stuck with him during his formative years in school at the Universalist Church's Westbrook Seminary in southern Maine and at Tufts College, which he entered in 1862. It was during his four years at Tufts that Ginn acquired a taste for books beyond those with a theological message. Moreover, it was at Tufts, which led Ginn to explore the need for publishing textbooks that went beyond the traditional confines of McGuffey readers and rote memorization.

At the conclusion of the American Civil War, degree in hand, Ginn developed "a vision of new kinds of texts to serve an expanding population hungry for education" (Rotberg, 19). Before Ginn began changing the entire approach of textbook publishing in the United States, however, education texts failed to provide teachers and students with written materials suitable for inquisitive minds. Initially a textbook salesperson, Ginn changed all of that when he established his own company and spent considerable hours paying attention to publishing texts with numerous illustrations and attractive covers and bindings, along with commissioning noted intellectuals willing to write authoritative texts. By the 1890s, having amassed a fortune in his business, Ginn and Company, he decided it was time to devote his money and energies to the crusade for world peace.

Indeed, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed an American peace movement taking on the appearance of a cosmopolitan endeavor. Linked at home to world-minded elite of lawyers, business leaders, and politicians, this approach valued arbitration, Anglo-American cooperation, and mechanistic means of organizing an emerging industrial world of Great Power interdependence. Throughout this period new specialized organizations appeared such as the International Arbitration League (1880), the National Arbitration League (1882), and the Lake Mohonk Arbitration Conferences (1895-1916). In fact, this effort led to the creation of "130 new

international nongovernmental organizations—and to the creation of the very term *international organization*—in the last quarter of the nineteenth century” (Howlett & Zeitzer, 18).

While these developments were taking shape, Ginn, himself, began to formulate his own dislike for militarism and war. In an 1895 pamphlet, privately printed, Ginn commented that the majority of existing school textbooks glorifies warfare and patriotism. Such “glorification at young ages encourages the acceptance of the expansion of deadly armaments and greater prospects for war” (Ginn, *Are Our Schools in Danger*, 2-3). Schools should teach young people to settle differences peacefully and avoid the inhumane and devastating effects of military destruction. By the late 1890s he began attending the Lake Mohonk Arbitration meetings where he proclaimed, “arbitration is the only right way to settle differences among nations...” (*Report of Third Annual Meeting*, 6-8). The Lake Mohonk meetings became an educational tool for Ginn. He found the ideas of arbitration and a permanent World Court intriguing and, in 1901, was a featured keynote speaker. During his address he touched upon a number of important themes, including a small standing army composed of soldiers from the major powers whose job it would be to stem the tide of national aggression. Once established, nations would then be willing to submit any disputes to an international court because it would have an international army to enforce whatever decisions it deemed appropriate. Expense aside, Ginn opined that “we spend hundred of millions a year for war: can we afford to spend one million for peace?” (*Report of Seventh Annual Meeting*, 59-60).

However, accomplishing such a lofty goal required some means of educational awareness. It was at the Mohonk assemblage of 1901 that Ginn advocated, “first, gathering history and literature of the subject, second, arousing the interest of the people” (Rotberg, 81). To reach a wide audience Ginn suggested publishing a weekly popular journal devoted to the substitution of arbitration for war as well as establishing peace clubs throughout the country for enlightenment and discussion. Although the attendees gave lip service to Ginn’s proposal due to the cost involved, the textbook publisher took it upon himself to begin publishing pamphlets and tracts. One of his more important contributions to peace education in the pre-World War One period was “to re-issue the literature of the peace movement in inexpensive and attractive editions, suitable for distribution to clergy, newspaper offices, public libraries, and other opinion centers” (Rotberg, 81). At the 1903 meeting, he devoted considerable time to explaining his project in “A More Efficient Organization of the Peace Forces of the World.” He explained that his goal was to distribute this peace literature to schools worldwide in order for young people to “be taught that true patriotism does not mean helping to support vast armies, but earnest work for the uplifting of mankind” (*Report of the Seventh Annual Meeting*, 102-104).

It was during this address that Ginn promoted the idea of an International School of Peace. What he had in mind was not a formalized structure of schooling but an educational mechanism familiarizing readers, schoolteachers, and students with the most important writings on world peace and alternatives to militarism. In 1905, Ginn commented “...my thoughts turn to the educational side of the question. The greatest educational forces are the schools, the press and the pulpit” (Ginn, “An International School,” 3-5). Naturally, Ginn’s objective was to disseminate these prepared pamphlets and books among the literate intelligentsia, who would then be in charge of instructing others as to the best way rethink their view of war. Subsidizing the International School of Peace publications out of his own pocket, Ginn also managed to secure the services of prominent Americans to serve on his editorial board. Among them were Edwin D. Mead, an influential member of the American Peace Society, David Starr Jordan, president of Stanford University, Professor James Brown Scott of the U.S. State Department, Hamilton Holt, editor of the monthly magazine *Independent*, and editor of the Toronto *Globe*, James A. McDonald.

With such an esteemed editorial board and Ginn's own personal finances backing the project, the publication of educational peace pamphlets began in earnest. He asserted, "We must make a *business* of educating the people, beginning with the children in the home and in the school" (Quoted in Patterson, 134). The price of the pamphlets was kept low in order to reach a mass audience. His international library was established in Boston. Close to 25,000 copies were printed of each pamphlet, while books were issued in smaller quantities. The initial publication was a seven-page reprint of Edwin Mead's 1902 Mohonk address, "More Earnest Work for the World's Peace." From 1902 to 1910, an array of peace works were reprinted or published for the first time. The prices ranged from 10 cents to 50 cents depending upon the number of pages. Among some of the more impressive peace classics reissued and books published were Jean de Bloch's *The Future of War* (1902), Charles Sumner's *Addresses on War* (1902), William Ellery Channing's *Discourses on War* (1904) Leo Tolstoy's *Bethink Yourselves* (1904), Walter Walsh's *The Moral Damage of War* (1906), William I. Hull's *The Two Hague Conferences and their Contributions to International Law*(1908), and in 1910 Immanuel Kant's *Eternal Peace*, Bertha von Suttner's *Memoirs*, and John Foster's *War is Not Inevitable*.

Such an outpouring of scholarly and popular peace commentaries, however, had done little to enlist the general populace as active participants in the peace crusade. Ginn did believe that citizens of the world were educable and he was driven by the belief that the dissemination of the printed word could lead to a world court and international police force. "It is not the lack of knowledge of the horrors of war and the blessings of peace that retards our movement," he surmised, "but rather the indisposition of the people to grapple with the subject in a business-like way" (Quoted in Moritzen, 291-292.) Broader educational efforts were needed. "We need a body of educators whose sole duty should be to go among teachers, awakening and developing an intelligent and adequate interest in this great subject" in order that schoolchildren will be exposed to the horrors and dangers of war (*Ibid*, 292). Ginn also argued that it was time to establish a centralized, efficient, and heavily endowed organization "that would coordinate peace efforts and conduct an intensive educational campaign on a national and even international scale" (Patterson, 134).

Primarily, Ginn believed that the crusade for peace must start with the schools. "Every book put into the hands of [school] children should be carefully examined and everything [encouraging the] martial spirit should be carefully weeded out" (Ginn, *Peace Articles*, n.p.). He was nearly seventy years-old when he decided to embark on a second peace education initiative, apart from the International Peace Library. On July 12, 1910, he formally established an International School of Peace with a personal gift of \$50,000 yearly and the promise of a million dollar endowment upon his passing. His school was designed to undertake educational work across the globe, starting with children and working its way through schools and colleges. Teachers, clergy, and editors would be employed as agents of peace education in this endeavor. The teaching of peace would focus on the waste and destructiveness of war while also promoting the importance of arbitration and global harmony. Joining him in running his new initiative were President Abbott Lawrence Lowell of Harvard University, Jordan, Alvin Fowler Peace, a former school superintendent in Massachusetts, Mark Robert Jouett, Jr., a clerk in Ginn's textbook company, George Weston Anderson, later a federal appeals court judge, Mead, and James L. Tyron, Secretary of the Massachusetts Peace Society. An advisory board was composed of more than sixty people, including Jane Addams, Fannie Fern Andrews, and Booker T. Washington.

In late December 1910, Ginn decided to reincorporate his school and renamed it the World Peace Foundation. Recognizing that the foundation could not directly interfere in classroom instruction, it focused on arousing teachers' passions about peace in order to reach children in their charge. Representatives of the foundation were recruited to act as ambassadors, who were trained to influence school curricula in order to reduce the glorification of militarism and war and how the martial spirit hampered the process of a harmonious civilization. For example, the teaching of

history, Ginn noted, "should dwell largely upon the peaceful pursuits of life—agriculture, trade commerce, schools, [and] science" (Quoted in Rotberg, 120). The Foundation's religious representatives were also encouraged to visit churches and congregations to get out the message of world peace. Editors, moreover, were prompted to eliminate materials, which would arouse nationalistic animosities and pit one nation against another.

Trying to find the proper educational program for creating a peaceful world order caused Ginn to use his newly-created Foundation to sell to the public the idea "of an international police force as a substitute for national armaments and designing the arrangements for the protection of national sovereignty from potential abuses of the international army"(Paterson, 134-135). By 1911, three years before the outbreak of world war in Europe, Ginn's Foundation laid plans for studying the best methods for achieving disarmament and establishing a permanent court of international justice. The World Peace Foundation laid out an ambitious agenda.

During its formative years the Foundation followed four lines of action. First, from 1911-1914, it continued the publishing activities begun a decade earlier with new works such as Raymond L. Bridgman's *First Book of World Law* (1911) and Charles F. Dole's *The Coming of People* (1914) as well as numerous 12 to 30-page booklets discussing international relations, jingoism, the economics of militarism, the drain of armaments, and foreign missions and peace. Second, the Foundation sponsored a broad peace education program of speeches and lectures in the United States and overseas. Jordan, alone delivered more than 100 lectures across the United States and sixty-four in Japan and Korea. In the spring of 1914, Jordan also traveled to the Balkans to investigate the causes of war. It was "envisioned as an exercise in scientific investigation" and although Jordan "did nothing more systematic than merely travel and observe" looking at "the immediate effects of a small war at first hand seemed an appropriate way of collecting useful data"(Marchand, 112). Norman Angell, author of the best-selling *The Illusion of War* presented a number of Foundation-sponsored talks in 1913. Third, the Foundation encouraged teachers and school systems to discuss with their students in class why war is the wrong solution to the settlement of international differences. It generously subsidized the American School Peace League and sent out numerous spokespersons to talk to pupils. The Foundation was an enthusiastic backer of the League's school textbook peace curricula, and provided its leader Fannie Fern Andrews with numerous resources and ideas. In addition, the Foundation assisted German émigré Anna B. Eckstein, a teacher of languages, in obtaining more than six million signatures in support of "the idea of pact by which nations mutually pledge themselves to use none but specified means for effecting any change in the autonomy or territorial integrity of any signatory." A violation of the pledge, moreover, "was to be penalized by an economic boycott on the part of the other signatories" (Curti, 203). This idea later became the basis for the 1928 Kellogg-Briand Pact outlawing war as an instrument of national policy.

Nevertheless, the Foundation's most important contribution was its fourth approach to peace education. It specifically organized and financed the peace movement in colleges and universities. More specifically, it furthered the interests and activities of the Intercollegiate Peace Association and the Association of Cosmopolitan Clubs. It was the Foundation's commitments to the Cosmopolitan Clubs, initially organized in 1907, which highlights the expansion of peace education in prewar America. The Clubs were designed to promote closer contacts between foreign students and their American counterparts while seeking to break down national prejudices and encourage greater international understanding. The World Peace Foundation carried the Cosmopolitan Clubs' motto—"Above all Nations is Humanity"—to new heights once it became involved. With over two thousand members in twenty-two American colleges and universities and Foundation backing, the Clubs quickly gained the support of university presidents such as Jordan of Stanford, Charles F. Thwing of Western Reserve, Charles R. Van Hise of Wisconsin, and Andrew D. White of Cornell. Many of the Foundation's members regularly addressed the clubs and student interest in pacific-minded internationalism. Benjamin Franklin

Trueblood and Edwin and Lucia Ames Mead of the American Peace Society were frequent speakers. The Foundation also provided a yearly subvention for the publication of a monthly magazine devoted to internationalism. The Foundation's involvement in the Cosmopolitan Clubs was responsible for making peace education a viable political force on behalf of internationalism and arbitration.

While the World Peace Foundation made significant advances in the field of peace education in schools and colleges, the death of Ginn on January 21, 1914, inevitably led to infighting among the board of directors over how best to proceed after World War I broke out in August. For all practical purposes, Foundation members were hopeful that the United States could remain outside of the conflict and that promoting internationalism remained a viable option. However, once the United States entered the war in 1917, the Foundation's influence diminished and its primary objective became support for a League of Nations. The Foundation shifted its focus from disarmament and arbitration to a postwar arrangement to maintain world peace. At the same time, the pressures of patriotic conformity and diminishing financial resources caused the Foundation to support the paradoxical goal of winning the peace as well as the war. By 1920, with the establishment of the League of Nations the Foundation ended its twenty-year involvement in the crusade for world peace.

In terms of peace education, Ginn and his Foundation made important contributions. The International Library of Peace, created in 1902, published a number of important books and pamphlets designed to enlighten the public as to the benefits of arbitration and internationalism through legal means. His World Peace Foundation, moreover, was an ambitious attempt to subsidize programs and organizations committed to the fundamental goal of world peace through educational means. Although the war destroyed his ultimate dream of lasting global harmony, Ginn would have taken satisfaction in knowing that nations were willing to establish an international peacekeeping body once the guns were silenced on the European landscape only four years after his death.

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