

WORDS OF PEACE

TEACHER'S PACK



The legacy
of peace in
Birmingham
during and after
World War One



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**Written by Dr Sian Roberts
and Katy Wade with contributions
by Preeti Kailey, Jacob Gahir,
Scarlet Wade and Kristina Juškienė.**

Photos by Janette Bushell
Designed by Dave Walsh Creative

The Project

In 2016, Sampad worked with 162 students from across Birmingham to explore how peace was viewed and promoted locally during World War One.

Using original archive materials as stimulus, students travelled back in time to learn about those who campaigned for peace, their reasons for doing so, and how they went about it. They then looked at how people express the need for peace nowadays, using creative mediums as forms of expression.

This teacher's pack is a culmination of the research and learning that has been undertaken by students, volunteers and local historian Dr Sian Roberts as part of this project. We hope it will encourage you to work with students to discuss the importance of peace looking to the past for role models and sources of inspiration.

For more information about *Words of Peace* please visit our blog:
sampadwordsofpeace.wordpress.com

About Sampad

Sampad's mission is to connect people and communities with British Asian arts and heritage and to play a pro-active role in the creative economy.

We believe in the power of arts and heritage to impact widely on all communities – breaking down barriers, raising important issues, amplifying unheard voices and bringing people from all walks of life together.

Now in our 25th year, we continue to play an instrumental role in promoting and encouraging British Asian arts, so that they progress, break new ground and enrich mainstream culture in the UK.

We support, commission and co-produce a huge variety of arts and heritage activities inspired by diverse artforms that originate from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. We have a strong track record of delivering high-quality dance, music and theatre productions, events and workshops in education, community and outreach settings and professional development for artists, cultural leaders and young people.





How to use this pack

This pack has been designed as a complete learning resource for teachers to use in their classrooms to support lessons.

It will provide all the information you will need to cover the topic and is to be used alongside the activity sheets that have been provided for students.

The content and activities are a cross-curriculum approach to studying local history, which includes, but is not limited to:

History KS2

- ☛ A study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066
- ☛ A local history study

History KS3

- ☛ Challenges for Britain, Europe and the wider world 1901 to the present day in addition to studying the Holocaust
- ☛ A local history study
- ☛ Britain 1905 - 1951
- ☛ Britain and the First World War



World War One

World War One began on 28th July 1914 and lasted until 11th November 1918, killing approximately 9 million soldiers and wounding over 21 million during the four years of fighting. It was triggered by the assassination of Austria's Archduke Ferdinand, although foreign policy and 'defence alliances' were the long term contributing factors to the declaration of war.

The two opposing sides were the Entente (more commonly known as the Allies), which included France, Great Britain and Russia. They were fighting the Central Powers, which included Germany and Austria-Hungary. In total 30 countries were involved in the conflict, although several European countries remained neutral, such as the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark.

Most of the fighting took place in France and Belgium in what is known as trench warfare. Each side tried to capture land held by the enemy by sending men 'over the top' across neutral land known as 'no man's land', and into the trenches on the other side. Going over the top was very dangerous, with many men being shot dead or severely injured by the enemy's artillery within minutes of entering no man's land. Poisonous gases, heavy artillery from the enemy and barbed wire made advancing very difficult, with attacks often being unsuccessful and many men being killed for what often ended as a stalemate.

Conditions in the trenches were terrible, particularly for the Allies, where harsh temperatures, waterlogged living quarters and the prevalence of vermin and fleas led to many illnesses like trench foot and dysentery. Food rations were very basic and the men had long days with lots of physical labour and a lot of waiting around for orders.

At 11am on the 11th November 1918, an armistice was signed by Germany declaring that they surrendered and fighting could stop. By this time 12,320 people from Birmingham had died in the war, with many families losing brothers, fathers and sons to the war. Furthermore, the terms of surrender outlined in the treaty were to create many hardships for Germany and the rest of Europe, with the rise of Fascism and the Nazi popularity stemming from these economic and political instabilities, which would result in a Second World War in 1939.



Troops of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, 85th Brigade, 28th Division manning a trench near Bairakli Jum'a, May 1917.
© Imperial War Museum



The concept of peace during World War One

Attitudes towards peace

During the lead up to World War One many people living in Birmingham were excited about the prospect of going to war. The general attitude was that it would be an exciting adventure that would be over by Christmas after a swift victory against the Germans. Men and boys were keen to sign up, with many boys lying about their age so that they could be enrolled into the army, as they feared they would 'miss out'.

As the war developed and it became clear it would not end quickly, there was a pressure for young men to sign up and 'do their bit' for the country. With thousands of men being killed, some women put pressure on men to enrol into the army, often handing out white feathers as a sign of cowardice if they did not do what was seen as their patriotic duty. From 1916 men were conscripted into the army, meaning they had to fight whether they wanted to or not.

The first Military Service Act came into force on 2nd March 1916 and compelled 'eligible' men to join the armed forces. Initially it affected single men between the ages of 18 and 41 but eventually conscription included every able-bodied man between 18 and 51. The Act included exemptions such as those for the medically unfit, certain classes of industrial workers and clergymen, it also included an exemption for reasons of conscience.

Conscientious Objectors

There were individuals during World War One who opposed the war and wanted to promote peace instead. Some had political motivations such as local members of the Independent and Socialist Labour Parties. For others their opposition was based on their faith and religious beliefs including members of a range of denominations and in particular, Quakers and Christadelphians.

Objections to war further increased with the introduction of military conscription. Some conscientious objectors were classified as absolutists (those who would not consider any work that would contribute to the war effort), but many would do alternative work which did not directly involve killing, such as ambulance drivers, ammunition manufacturers and people collecting bodies at the front. Many conscientious objectors were assigned to the Non-Combatant Corps (NCC), which was established in March 1916 as part of the reserve.

Its members were army privates and wore uniforms but did not carry weapons or fight and undertook physical labour in support of the military. Many conscientious objectors who signed up to the NCC as alternative service were often treated harshly by the officers who were from the regular army, and the press often referred to the NCC as the 'No Courage Corps'.

Absolutists were often imprisoned and sentenced to hard labour, due to their refusal to undertake alternative services offered to them. The first conscientious objector from Birmingham was reported in *The Tribunal* in 1916, a newspaper run by those who supported objections to fighting during World War One. The objector's name was W.J. Fleming and he was taken to Budbrook Barracks in Warwick and sentenced to 12 months imprisonment, which was later reduced to four months. The historian George Barnsby has documented over 50 conscientious objectors from Birmingham, but this list is far from complete.

When the war was over it took a long time for the release of absolutists. The last imprisoned conscientious objectors were not freed until August 1919, and many suffered great hardships in prison which had long term physical or physiological consequences. They also found it difficult to get work after their release, and they were disenfranchised with the result that they could not vote or stand for election, although this was not strictly enforced.



Men of the Non-Combatant Corps on the march.
© Imperial War Museum



CASE STUDY: HARRY PAYNE

- ◆ Born in 1884 he built up a successful shoe repairing business in Birmingham.
- ◆ At the outbreak of war he supported the Allies' cause, but due to his work as a shoemaker, he was exempt from joining the army and was asked to focus on producing shoes instead.
- ◆ In December 1914 he observed a demonstration on how to use a bayonet most effectively to injure and kill. He was sickened by this and decided it was against Christian values to do that to anyone, even a German.
- ◆ In 1916 he went to a tribunal to ask that one of his employees be deferred from military service. Although this was granted, the military representative decided Harry himself should be in the army.
- ◆ Harry refused to fight on religious reasons, but lost his tribunal and his appeal.
- ◆ Harry was sent to Norton Barracks near Worcester but refused all orders given to him.
- ◆ After three weeks he was court martialled and sentenced to 116 days hard labour.
- ◆ He was sent to Wormwood Scrubs and was soon placed in solitary confinement for protesting and revelling against degrading conditions.
- ◆ He was transferred to Dartmoor prison and spent the remainder of the war in prison.
- ◆ After World War One Harry became a Quaker and dedicated his life to undertaking good deeds. He set up The Harry Payne Trust in 1939 which has given money to good causes since then.



Photo courtesy of Donald Payne

Protests and Campaigns

Women's International League

The outbreak of war divided the women's suffrage movement in England. A pacifist group split from Millicent Fawcett's National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) and helped to organise the Women's Peace Congress, which was held at The Hague between 28th April and 1st May 1915. At this event 1,200 women from 12 countries met, resulting in The Women's International League (WIL) being formed.

The WIL argued that international disputes should be settled by negotiation and arbitration, rather than by war. The event was very controversial and the women were attacked in the press as foolish, unpatriotic and pro-German. 25 out of 180 British women were given passports for the event, but they were prevented from travelling at the last minute by the Government. In the end only three British women were able to attend.

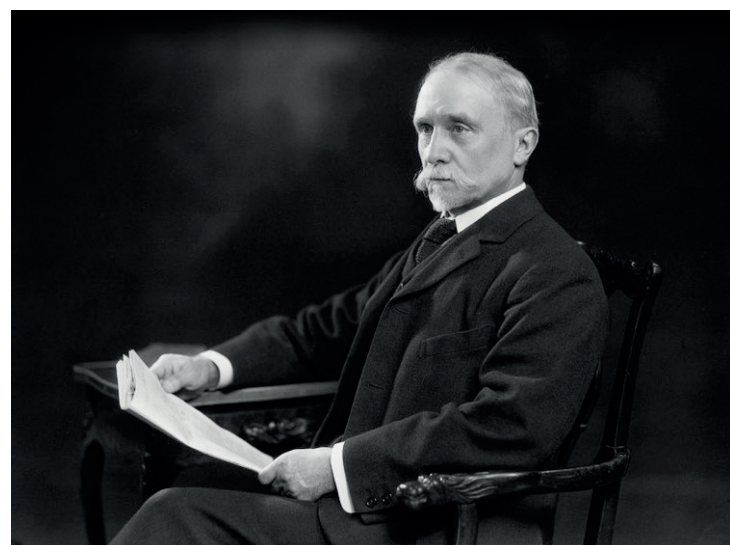
After this event a British Committee was formed which included five Birmingham women, all Quakers - Maria Catharine Albright, Geraldine Sophia Sturge (daughter of the antislavery campaigner Joseph Sturge) Mary Snowden Braithwaite and Ethel C. Wilson. A local committee of the WIL was then launched in Birmingham in early 1915 and the local branch had 117 members by October 1916. They organised women's peace meetings in Birmingham during the war. On Christmas Eve 1916, a peace meeting was held in the Bull Ring when a procession of women walked from a prayer meeting in the Priory Rooms, Bull Street. They were addressed by Margaret Haly, a local peace activist and a former suffragette. A similar women's peace meeting was held a few days later on New Year's Eve 1916.

On 29th July 1917 a peace meeting was held in the Bull Ring as part of the national Women's Peace Crusade. By this period the local branch of WIL had about 254 members. The local press reported that a crowd of about 300 assembled in Old Square and marched to the Bull Ring.

In 1919 the league renamed itself to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). The local branch of the WILPF continued to campaign for peace after the war. In 1931 for example, they participated in a disarmament campaign when they had a disarmament shop in Bull Street. The WILPF still exists and continues to campaign for peace.

Anti-War meetings and publicity

There were many anti-war meetings held in Birmingham, particularly by members of the various Labour Party Associations. A notable individual was Joseph Southall from Edgbaston, who was the chair of the Birmingham branch of the Independent Labour Party. In March 1916 he addressed the Erdington branch on the 'Futility of War', and then in July 1916 ran a joint rally with the No Conscription Fellowship, which was reported to be attended by 1,200 people. Another local, William Holliday, became a regular sight to the public as he held anti-war meetings in the Bull Ring every week from the start of the conflict. He was known as 'Bull Ring Billy'.



Joseph Southall. © National Portrait Gallery

Literature was also used as anti-war publicity to promote the cause. Joseph Southall used his artistic talents to promote peace by producing powerful anti-war drawings. These were published in periodicals, polemical books and pamphlets including his pamphlet called *Fables and Illustrations*, and *The Ghosts of the Slain*, where he provided the illustrations for a text written by R.L. Outhwaite. Producing such material, however, did run several risks, as during the war the law stated that a censor committee had to approve publications under the terms of the 'Defence of the Realm Act'. Failure to do so could result in heavy fines and even imprisonment, and the committee did not look favourably upon literature which was seen as pacifist or 'pro German'.

In May 1918 three Quakers, including the Birmingham Councillor Harrison Barrow stood trial in London's Guildhall for refusing to submit a pamphlet *A Challenge to Militarism* to the censor committee. The pamphlet described the stance taken by conscientious objectors and their imprisonment, and had been published by the national Friends Service Committee which Harrison chaired. On 24th May the two men were sentenced to six months' imprisonment and the

third, a woman, was fined £100 plus costs (she later served three months in prison after refusing to pay the fine). *The Birmingham Post* was outraged and attacked Harrison in its pages describing his views on war as 'peculiar' and demanded that he resigned from his many public activities. He resigned as a Councillor and from his role as Chairman of the Executive of the Birmingham Citizens' Committee.

Practical Support

Some Birmingham residents chose to manifest their support for peace through practical methods rather than campaigning directly. Many Quakers supported this peaceful path and undertook humanitarian quests to spread peaceful activity. William Albright and Henry Lloyd Wilson, both Quakers, provided advice and advocacy to conscientious objectors, wrote letters, and visited absolutists in prisons and work camps. They also campaigned for better conditions in prisons and assisted the families of local German, Austrian and Hungarian born men who were arrested and interned as 'enemy aliens' leaving their British families destitute. Assistance took the form of money, gifts and work for the families, and visiting the men in internment camps on the Isle of Man and elsewhere.

CASE STUDY: LAURENCE CADBURY

- ◆ Born in 1889 he was the son of the Birmingham Quaker George Cadbury.
- ◆ He was raised in a traditional Quaker family, but was not a practicing Quaker.
- ◆ Unlike his brother Egbert – known as 'Bertie' he did not fight in the war. Instead he was an active member of the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU).
- ◆ After the war, he returned to work at his father's chocolate factory named Cadbury's, becoming the chairman in 1945.
- ◆ Laurence was awarded for his service to both France and Britain with the Mons Star and Military OBE.



Quakers were also very active in helping Belgian and other refugees in Birmingham and the surrounding area. Elizabeth Cadbury chaired the Birmingham War Refugees Committee and several local Friends including Evelyn Sturge and Dr. Mary Sturge worked for the committee. They provided accommodation and work for the refugee families and Geraldine Cadbury ran a Belgian maternity hospital in Edgbaston, where a large number of Belgian children were born during the war. They also ran a Belgian school, the Birmingham Ecole Belge.

Several locals engaged in humanitarian work during and immediately after the war in France, Russia, Austria, Germany and Poland, providing food and medical aid to civilian non-combatants. Florence Barrow, for example, was based in France in 1916, before moving to Russia for two years and then to Poland where she worked in humanitarian relief until 1924.

CASE STUDY: ELIZABETH CADBURY

- ◆ Elizabeth Cadbury was born into an established family of Quakers in London in 1858.
- ◆ In 1872 she married George Cadbury, also a Quaker, and moved to Bournville in Birmingham in 1881.
- ◆ Soon, together with other Quaker families, the Cadbury family opened medical services for their local community.
- ◆ Elizabeth's beliefs were based upon her religious beliefs and practices. She actively encouraged peace and friendship whilst helping and supporting others
- ◆ During World War One, Elizabeth wished to help people who were tortured by war in Europe, so she worked at the refugee camp in Birmingham.
- ◆ When the first 50 Belgian refugees arrived in Birmingham in September of 1914 Elizabeth became the chairman of an Allocation Committee to help plan for their care and support. Her role was to interview each member on arrival, discover their needs and find a suitable home for newcomers. In many towns 'strangers' caused serious problems, but in Birmingham due to careful arrangements, many Belgians soon settled down among the English Citizens.



© National Portrait Gallery

- ◆ Many Serbian boys were sent to England by French Military Authorities. A Committee was formed in Birmingham to deal with these child refugees and Elizabeth also chaired this. Under Elizabeth's supervision, the boys were sent to schools in Kings Norton and Bournville to be educated. A home was also made for them in Selly Oak.
- ◆ For her service to these young Serbian boys, Elizabeth was given the Serbian Red Cross of Honour at the end of the War.



Activities

As well as completing the activities on the worksheets we have some suggestions for activities you can do with the students based on their ages.

KS2

Tribunal

Tell the class that they are going to be arguing about whether a Quaker should be sent to a hard labour camp for refusing to take part in the war effort.

1. Split the class in two, assigning one half the role of a Quaker defending why he does not want to fight, and the other half the role of an army officer who is arguing that it is the Quaker's duty to help the war effort.
2. Give each side 15 minutes to plan an argument, then get each side to nominate a spokesperson to deliver their arguments.
3. Once this has been done, let the students address any points raised (or that were not addressed) in the main speeches.
4. Make a decision as to which side has the stronger case.

Campaign

Put the students into groups of three or four and tell them they have to recreate a peace campaign from World War One. It will need to include the following:

1. A logo
2. A slogan
3. A poster
4. Badges/rosettes

You may want to ask them to create a campaign based on one of the World War One peace groups studied – such as the WIL or the Quakers.

Peace Tree

Get the students to create a large paper tree which can be hung on a wall. Ask them to create and decorate their peace pledges and then cut them out so that they can be stuck onto their very own 'peace tree'.

**KS3****Display board**

1. Ask the students to pick one of the individuals mentioned in this pack
2. Ask them to undertake individual research into their selected person's life (NB. access to a library and computers will be required).
3. Ask each student to create a fact file on the individual's life or to prepare a short presentation on them

Social media campaign

Ask students to create a World War One peace campaign using modern day technology to make it go viral.

Ask them to think about the following:

1. What photo or image will they use to address their main view/point?
2. Where will they share it?
3. How will they get users to engage with it?
4. Will there be any slogans or twitter handles attached to it?
5. How will they address negative comments that may be posted?
6. Will they make any videos?

Motivations for War through the ages

Ask the students to create something which highlights the similarities between barriers to peace during World War One and in modern day conflicts today e.g. egotistical politicians, desire to protect wealth, the way decisions are made. What they produce is up to the individual but could be any of the following:

1. A poem
2. A drawing
3. A satirical cartoon
4. A video documentary



Further sources of study

Archives

Birmingham Archives, Library of Birmingham

Jim Simmons Papers

Jim Simmons autobiography 'Soap Box Evangelist'

Political & Trade Union Collection

Papers of Oliver Banwell (MS 536)

including his letters from the NCC camp and Winchester Prison.

The records of Central England Quakers for the period of the First World War

Birmingham War Refugees Committee papers (MS 652)

Woodbrooke Library, Woodbrooke Centre, Birmingham

The Tribunal

(newspaper of the No-Conscription Fellowship)

National database of over 16,000 war resisters compiled by Cyril Pearce
which has been incorporated in the Imperial War Museum's
'Lives of the First World War' digital platform.

The Friend

(periodical)

A Challenge to Militarism

The National WILPF Archive, Women's Library at the LSE Archives, London

Towards Permanent Peace:

*A Record of the Women's International Congress held at The Hague,
April 28th - May 1st 1915*
(London: 1915)



Further sources of study

Books

Barnsby, G. 1998.

Socialism in Birmingham and the Black Country 1850-1939

(Wolverhampton: Integrated Publishing Services)

Haslam, O. 2014.

Refusing to Kill: conscientious objection and human rights in the First World War

(London: Peace Pledge Union)

Johnson, M. 2013.

'Simmons, Charles James (1893-1975)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

Outhwaite, R.L. 1915.

The Ghosts of the Slain, with drawings by Joseph Southall

(Manchester: National Labour Press)

Southall, J. 1918.

Fables and Illustrations

(London: National Labour Press)

Websites

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www.livesofthefirstworldwar.org

www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk (subscription required)

www.peacepalacelibrary.nl

www.lse.ac.uk/library/collections/archives

www.iwm.org.uk

www.sampad.org.uk

www.quaker.org.uk

www.npg.org.uk

www.libraryofbirmingham.com/archives

