

0. Settlement House - Story Preface

1. The Way It Was

2. Early Life

3. Settlement House

4. Jane's Philosophy

5. Peace Movement



In the summer of 1887, Jane read a magazine article about a settlement house in England whose mission was to establish a community center to bring poor and rich together, where middle-class workers would live and share knowledge and culture with their low-income neighbors in hopes of raising them from the poverty in which they lived.

Jane was inspired! She dreamed of opening a settlement house in the United States where classes and activities would be available to change people's lives, and the boundaries between culture, class and education would be expanded to include all people.

In 1889, Addams and her college friend Ellen Starr co-founded Hull House, a settlement house in Chicago. They bought a run-down mansion that was in need of major repair. Jane paid for a new roof, repainting all the rooms, and furniture. Soon, a number of wealthy women from the community became interested in Jane's mission and made donations to the effort. Jane and Ellen moved into the house. They transformed a big neighborhood eyesore into a community center for recent immigrants to the United States and provided a place for research, study, debate, and a forum for establishing new and trusting relationships between many ethnic people.

Hull House became an active advocate for the people they served. They fought to upgrade housing, midwifery, healthcare, garbage collection, and educational opportunity. They started a night school for adults, clubs for children, a public kitchen, an art gallery, a gym, a library, a music school, an employment bureau, and a theatre.

In addition, Jane took many young people into the house and trained them to become social workers. She taught them that establishing settlement houses would provide safety, community and opportunity for the poor.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Settlement-House-Jane-Addams-Challenging-a-Nation>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Settlement-House-Jane-Addams-Challenging-a-Nation>

Media Stream



Hull House

The Social Welfare History Project,

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