

#LPRD# A Field Worker's Diary [#Part 42](#) # 1 September 2020

As our 7-member team that was supposed to go to Kansas city had to make a one day stay in Chicago (5th August 2017) due to unforeseen circumstances, coordinator Voytek proposed a visit to Jane Addams Hull-House Museum. Jane Addams, the first American woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize, is said to have pioneered the social work profession in America. Having heard a little about her, we decided to go there. There was heavy rainfall in Chicago the day we arrived, so the next day was extremely cold. Since the bruises on my face from the small accident the day before were still very painful, I decided to go to the museum and come back immediately without going for any other programs.

The Hull House, founded by Jane Addams in 1889, was the first settlement house in America. Those were the days when the American settlement movement was in full swing. The House aimed to provide social and educational opportunities for the poor, especially women and immigrants living in the surrounding areas. People from various countries, especially European countries, who came to work in American factories and settled there not only received the lowest wages but also lacked access to proper education and medical facilities. The primary work the House did was to bring such immigrants closer together and set up a social network for them.

Residence, Research and Reform used to be the main objectives of this House. Anyone who did not have a proper residence to stay used to reside there. Initially, around 25 people used to live in the House along with Addams. According to the information provided by the museum, to participate in the various programs conducted there everyday, around 2000 people used to come and go there every week. The first Adult Education Center in America was started here. Addams, who set up this center to help adults to continue their education, is said to be the inspiration for many countries to launch their non-formal education programs.

Not just night schools for adults, the House was very busy with many other facilities and activities such as specialized clubs for girls, children, library, public kitchen, gym, music school, employment bureau, theater group, meeting rooms for discussion, etc. Valuable research has been done in this House on many topics like housing, nursing, typhoid, TB, waste management. The House, which was the focus of much research and debate, is now preserved as a historic site. To help visitors learn about Jane Addams and Hull House and its programs, information was available in many forms in the museum. It was interesting to introduce the history of the house and the life of Jane Adams in various forms such as notes with information printed on them, flip cards, colourful cubical blocks, videos, wall paintings, etc..

We wanted to just see the Hull House and come to the hotel but could not resist going for sightseeing in such a beautiful city. We managed to cover the city well. After arriving at the hotel I and Elenora, a friend from the European country of Moldova, talked for a long time, remembering the notes we had read in the museum about Jane Addams.

It was written in a note that Jane Addams' father encouraged her to read a variety of books and discuss them with him after reading. After looking at another note where it was written that she was inspired to found the settlement house in Chicago after reading about settlement houses in Europe in a book, I wondered about the strong impact of books on human beings.

A book not only inspired her to do social work, it spread light in the lives of thousands of people through her. It was able to infuse enough consciousness to win her the Nobel Peace Prize. She has laid the path for so many people to choose social work as a profession by being a role model. We both wondered how far and wide the impact of a good book could extend.

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