

These feelings of unrest did erupt in Chicago. The Haymarket Square violence had exploded in 1886. In 1894 the Pullman Strike took place with disastrous results for the workers. Many men had been attracted to Chicago by the possibility of work on construction of the Columbian Exposition--- George Gray's "world's fair". When the fair was over all those laborers were suddenly out of work. It was into this kind of economic environment that George Gray became a "city missionary". And it was here that he opened a Settlement House on South Halsted Street in 1894. One source claimed that Gray opened his work in a basement beneath a saloon on the corner of Halsted and Harrison streets, just up the street from Jane Adams' Hull House. Today the Hull House Museum has a building-by-building map of their area of concern, but it stops south of Harrison. Nowhere is there any mention of George Gray's efforts or the Forward Movement in either the Hull House files or the Chicago Circle Campus archives.

On Monday, December 22, 1913 two of the Chicago newspapers---Daily Tribune and the Evening Post--- printed articles about Gray on the occasion of his death the day before. They re-told the story of his founding of the settlement house. They claimed that it began when Gray found "two ragged boys" on Blue Island Street in 1893. Gray housed the boys in the basement of a saloon on Halsted Street. That corner is now the northeast corner of the Chicago Circle Campus, and Blue Island used to run diagonally through the campus itself. Out of that chance encounter came the Forward Movement Association in 1896.

BIRTH & EARLY YEARS

EARLY YEARS

George Gray was born on December 6, 1834 near the south central Ohio town of Piqua, about 35 miles northwest of Dayton. His father, Amos Gray was born on June 13, 1789 in New Jersey. His mother, Sophia Christian, was born on June 5, 1792 in North Carolina. She was the daughter of a German Presbyterian minister, but beyond that we have no other information about her. His father, though, at the age of eighteen walked from his home in Newark, New Jersey to Cincinnati, Ohio in 1807.

The Cumberland Gap, at the border of Virginia and Kentucky, was discovered in 1750. Until then most of the colonial settlement was east of the mountains, but the discovery of the Gap opened the middle west to settlers. In 1802 Congress passed the Enabling Act authorizing a National Road going west from Baltimore, although plans for its construction were not ready for another five years. By the time that Amos Gray was ready to head west there were already over 200,000 settlers in Kentucky, and hundreds more were going down the Ohio River. The account of his trip says that Amos had only ten dollars with him. No account of his route still exists, but he probably headed for Pittsburg and then took a raft down the Ohio River. Amos Gray was described as a man of industry and integrity. He married Sophia on March 15, 1811 somewhere in Ohio. By hard work and some good luck he purchased a farm near Piqua, and together he and Sophia raised a family of eleven children, of which George was the youngest.

The US Census of 1850 lists the Gray family with father, mother, and four children. They ranged in age from twenty-two to George who was then sixteen. Three of their children died by the age of sixteen; a girl died at age three, a son at ten, and another son at sixteen.

A curious account of the early life of George is recorded in the United States Biographical Dictionary of 1876. He was 42 years old at the time and a Methodist Minister at the church in Lincoln, Illinois. Lincoln was founded in 1853, and was said to be the only town named "Lincoln" to which Abe Lincoln himself consented to. It was claimed that he helped in its organization and christened the town with the juice of a watermelon. In the account about Gray's childhood the fact that he was