

the city work began with Gray "finding two ragged boys in Blue Island... (and that) he installed them in a basement room under a saloon at Halsted and Harrison Streets."

If the location of Gray's first settlement house work is correct it was within eyesight of Hull House, begun by Jane Addams. Unfortunately, personal inquiry at the Hull House Museum lists no mention of Gray's work there. In 1894 his address was listed as 49 Pearce Ave (although no modern Chicago map records it) in one account, but as still at 229 1/2 South Halsted in the Chicago Directory. The Pearce address is not listed in the Directory until 1896-7. From then on there seem to be a number of moves. The Obituary states that the encroachment of factories forced the move from Halsted. In 1896 he moved to 219 South Sangamon and remained there about four years.

GRAY AND THE FORWARD MOVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Forward Movement Park

During February and March 1899 a young man living in Oak Park, Illinois, wrote some letters back home to his mother in Saugatuck, Michigan. His stationary had these words, "Edwin H. House, Real Estate, 708 Steinway Hall...Michigan Summer resort property a specialty". At that time he was a student with an interest in dramatics. In the letters he mentions that he has a part in a play, perhaps a comedy (he calls it a "farce"), which lasts thirty minutes.

The first letter was dated February 8th, and in it he gives his mother a hint of "something likely to happen that will be as good as a Rail Road for Saugatuck". Then he describes his efforts to persuade a "George Gray" and his Forward Movement Association to settle their summer operation near Saugatuck. This group, he writes, is "backed by the best people of Chicago" and then adds, that they are to form a "kind of Chautauqua for the poor class of the city". They have been looking at places along the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, but House thinks that arrangements will soon be decided in favor of Saugatuck. He closes the letter with the advice that his mother not say anything about this outside the family.

In a letter to his sister, dated February 13th, he casually mentioned that they have had a "cold spell" but dismisses it as nothing unusual. The Chicago Sun-Times newspaper of January 17, 1977 gave front page coverage to the weather, which on that day was 13° below zero. It was the coldest weather since February 9, 1899 when it was 14° below zero. In this letter House again refers to George Gray. He wrote that he had been present at a meeting of the Forward Movement and heard a number of speakers address the question, "What shall we do with the boys?" At the meeting he was introduced to David C. Cook (later to become famous in Sunday School curriculum circles) by Major W.S. Harbert, a member of the Forward Movement board. Harbert is a lawyer who has been working on the property title situation with House. House wrote of his efforts to get the area "from Thompson's clear through to the lake which would be about 200 acres".

In a March letter (15th) to his mother he wrote of another meeting with Gray and Harbert. Gray had just returned from a trip to Big Rapids, Michigan and stayed in the home of Professor W.N. Ferris (in the conversation with Ferris, Gray learned that the Ferris family were closely related to the House family). House continued by saying that Gray had completed his arrangements to purchase property in Saugatuck, and expects to be ready by June 17-18. He also listed some of the plans for opening day. Professor Ferris is to be there, also Dr. Gunsaulus (Methodist minister from Chicago), Luther Laflin Mills (Chicago lawyer) as speakers. Then House writes about getting a ticket to see the Libby Prison Museum. It was a Confederate military prison in Richmond, Virginia during the Civil War. It was completely dismantled, transported to Chicago, and rebuilt. It was then torn-down and the Coliseum built on the site.