



Bio & Character Sketch of

University
Professor

Dr. Charles Ellwood

January 20, 1873 – September 25, 1946

Age in April, 1923: 50 Age at Death: 73

Age when picture was taken: (est) 55

Charles Abram Ellwood was born on January 20, 1873 near Ogdensburg, NY. He graduates from Cornell University in 1896, and had also studied in Chicago and Berlin, Germany. In 1899 he was a lecturer at the University of Nebraska, a position which also required him to run a local Charity Organization Society (COS) and raise his own salary. By 1900, he became a professor in the new field of study called “Sociology” at the University of Missouri. (He was also required to continue his COS work, a common expectation of sociologists at the time.) By 1925, the University of Missouri’s Sociology Department was ranked in the top five of all such courses in the United States.

He was the editor of the American Journal of Sociology and the associate editor of the Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology. In 1924 he served as the president of the American Sociological Association.

Ellwood argued that sociology should address social problems and contribute directly to social reform. He was later classified as a “do-gooder” by some of the more scientifically aligned sociologists. His influential textbook, *Social Problems*, sold over 200,000 copies and established a model for social problems courses around the country.

In 1930 Ellwood accepted a position to start a department of sociology at Duke University in North Carolina. The offer came largely because of his widely read religious writings offering a pacifist position that enhanced Duke’s aspirations to provide Christian education. Ellwood retired from Duke in 1944.

Dr. Ellwood’s fundamental interest in good citizenship led him to prefer teaching to research. He crusaded mightily for his ideal of world citizenship and he conceived of sociology as worth little if it were not directly instrumental to that end. He had very little patience for those who would make Sociology a natural science.

Ellwood died in Durham, North Carolina on September 25, 1946.



Bio & Character Sketch of

University
Professor

Dr. Charles Ellwood

January 20, 1873 – September 25, 1946

Age in April, 1923: 50 Age at Death: 73

Age when picture was taken: (est) 55

Character Sketch

Dr. Charles Ellwood was an accomplished researcher. Though he graduated from an Ivy League Institution (Cornell University), he was not an elitist. To the contrary, Ellwood was deeply concerned and spent most of his time with the poor and indigent members of society.

He was a master study of people and their motivations, especially where socio-economic factors were involved. Ellwood felt that heredity was an important factor in humanity's development, but the power of the environment a person was brought up in was at least equally important.

In the new field of Sociology, Ellwood defended a scientific conception of sociology, but he also argued that sociology should address social problems and contribute directly to social reform.

He did not mind that others in the community felt that he was a "do-gooder." He knew his work in the area of social reform was important. It resulted in the sale of 200,000 books.

When Ellwood sensed what Barkwell was planning at Harrison's Barber Shop, he immediately sought to "ring the alarm bell." He instinctively knew that Mayor McDonnell was going to do what all politicians do – nothing.

It was also Ellwood who advised Ruby Hulen on Chief Rowland's likely errors in obtaining Regina's identification of James Scott, his voice and the scent of his clothes. He told Hulen about the Clever Hans theory, where the person who **knows** the answer can influence the person who **does not**.

Rightfully so, Ellwood blamed all of Columbia for allowing the lynching of James Scott to take place. He felt that the act all-but-defined the morality of the town, and he was not afraid to say so – despite the resulting character assassination of him by the Columbia Tribune – and threats from the KKK.

Seven years after the lynching, when he had finally had enough, Ellwood decided to make a fresh start by accepting an attractive offer at Duke University where he lived out the rest of his years.