

24 AUG 1989
GRANTSVILLE, WV

Calhoun Chronicle:

Saturday, Sept. 2, marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of Henry George. Perhaps his is not a household name today, thanks to social studies education, but when George died in 1897 more people attended his funeral than did anyone else during the 19th century, except for that of Abe Lincoln. Henry George re-discovered the Single Tax which had been a big issue in 18th century France, and M. Mirabeau, one of the Physiocrats who formulated this tax on land rent, ranked the 'impôt unique' as equal in importance to the invention of writing and the use of money for barter. British philosopher and member of Parliament, Francis Neilson said, "The world owes Henry George a debt which it can never repay." Hardly an approbation of an unknown!

So how does all this relate to Calhoun County in 1989? Henry George based his philosophy on several Holy Bible statements concerning who made the earth. Most of us will admit after some soul-searching that Joe Doaks did not make the earth. God or some Supreme Being must have been responsible. But you will say, "this is the 20th century and Joe Doaks owns the earth, so let's be practical"

Well, Henry George discovered that there are two aspects to land ownership—the other is the annual economic rent. Joe Doaks is not only not responsible for making the physical earth, but neither is he responsible for the annual rent of land. We all contribute to land rent when we agree to pay an owner to use it. But Henry George discovered and then made a career telling people that when rent is taxed the selling price declines.

God did not place the distribution of land titles in the hands of brokers. Neither did God intend that people buy his land in order to mine, build, timber, farm or for any other activity. God GAVE the earth to mankind. This relates to our county and our times because, when rent is lightly taxed, a few people own the earth, and when social problems occur and ordinary government expenses are needed, workers wages get taxed.

We have Henry George to thank for the law of wages, and for pointing out how to abolish involuntary unemployment. So on Sept. 2, think about how we can repay Henry George, and on Sept. 5 go tell our assessor and legislators that you deserve a wage increase; that you deserve to live in a county where unemployment and poverty is unknown; that you wish to share the value of land—not your wages.

Moses and the other authors of the Bible could not have known about the Single Tax. But we know today because Henry George's best selling book, "Progress and Poverty", until our generation, outsold all other non-fiction books in the world, except the Holy Bible.

One of the ministers at George's funeral (and all religions were represented) said that "Here was a man sent by God".

Lets all think about Henry George on Sept. 2.

Carl Shaw
Mt. Zion, WV