

Jackson H. Ralston

Jackson Harvey Ralston, an authority on international law and for twenty-seven years attorney for the American Federation of Labor, died of a cerebral thrombosis on October 13th, at his home in Palo Alto, Calif. His age was 88.

For over fifty years Judge Ralston was identified with measures associated with land reform. A follower of Henry George, he was in 1892 president of the Board of Commissioners of the town of Hyattsville, Maryland, where that body made a notable fight to abolish all taxes upon improvements. Not long after, he made the first public suggestion of a campaign to abolish improvement taxes in Delaware. Later, he drew up a constitutional amendment making possible in Maryland the levying of all taxation upon land values, and this was adopted by popular vote.

With Lincoln Steffens, Frederic C. Howe, George W. Briggs and Daniel Kiefer, he formed the Fels Commission to assist movements in this general direction throughout the country. From 1934 to 1933 he was at the head of a contest in California to limit taxation to land values.

Born in Sacramento, Judge Ralston at 19 had obtained a degree in law from the Georgetown University Law School in 1876. In 1897 he received the degree of Doctor of Law from National University in Washington.

He had lectured on international law at Stanford University and was the author of "Law and Procedure of International Tribunals," "International Arbitration from Athens to Locarno", "Democracy's International Law", "What's Wrong with Taxation", and other writings. His most recently published book, "Confronting the Land Question", appeared in the summer of 1945.

He leaves a widow, Opal V. Ralston.