

Gaston Haxo: Sixty Years a Georgist

It would take many, many pages to print a biography, or even a proper profile, of Gaston Haxo. In fact, a comprehensive account of his activities, his endeavors, and his accomplishments is disseminating and fostering the philosophy of Henry George would "fill a book." So, in the limited space available, dates and details must give way, for the most part, to a regrettably brief statement of appreciation and tribute to this dedicated and devoted Georgist.

Gaston Haxo, then a recent immigrant from France, first became acquainted with George's ideas in 1912, when a street-corner political rally attracted his attention. At the start he was puzzled, but soon was intrigued, by the novel views of the speaker who, he recalls, was explaining the true source of wages — and why they declined. He spent five cents for a Georgist pamphlet, spent much of the night reading it, and (to quote him), "That did it; I had discovered a new world."

Within a few days, Gaston joined the Land Value Tax Party, and shortly thereafter became a member of the Manhattan Single Tax Club. Some weeks later, when the club honored Francis Neilson, at the time a member of Britain's Parliament, at a banquet in a large hall crowded with enthusiastic guests, he enjoyed his "biggest thrill." That night, truly, a Georgist was born.

Throughout the ensuing sixty years, Gaston Haxo not only has maintained his fervent interest in Georgism, but has energetically worked to promulgate George's principles and to further their adoption. One sad circumstance did interrupt his Georgist activities,

a more urgent personal need, to care for his dear wife during her illness of several years; Gaston watched over her, to the exclusion of almost all else, until her untimely death. Gaston then turned again to his destined labors in the Georgist movement.

Though he heartily endorses the value of education in promoting Georgist ideas and proposals, Gaston is an avowed and outspoken advocate of politics as a means toward the desired end. "Only through political action," he has said, "can the principles of Henry George ever be enacted into law, and it will never be too soon to begin." Six decades ago, during the Wilson-Taft-Teddy Roosevelt presidential campaign, he sought write-in votes for the candidate of the Land Value Tax Party. Today, approaching his eighty-sixth birthday, he still gives generously of his time, his energy, and his finances to aid the cause he so devoutly believes in. In between, he has consistently supported every Georgist organization and activity that has come to his attention.

In recent years, Gaston Haxo has lectured all over the United States and in Canada. He directs the Henry George Society, headquartered in St. Petersburg, Florida, whose aim is to organize politically to "demand an end to the undemocratic land system which causes most of our social and economic ills." He continues to write extensively, and is completing a new pamphlet, "America at the Crossroads," shortly to be published. His dedication and efforts must be an inspiration to believers in George's ideals, who should be grateful to him for it.

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