

# Wilbur Johnson

One day in 1942 a cook from Baltimore and Ohio Railroad walked into the Chicago office of the Henry George School. He had a long chat with the Director, John Lawrence Monroe, seeking answers to the problem of poverty which he had well experienced in his youth. John gave him Progress and Poverty and Wilbur read it within a few days. He was converted.

He found several small black neighborhood newspapers and proceeded to bombard them with his articles about Georgist philosophy. For a short time he took leave of B&O and tried to run a small lunchroom close to John Monroe's office; but the world didn't beat a path to his bistro so he returned to B&O. He kept writing and talked with diners on his favorite subject. Some became interested enough to take classes.

Around 1950 Wilbur was seriously injured in a train wreck. He spent months in hospital where he again preached Henry George. Obligated to retire on railroad disability, he continued to write. He brought copies of his articles in local black papers to meetings of the Henry George Woman's Club, and Robert King helped distribute them.

Born in New Castle, Pennsylvania, he was very pleased when that city was won over to the two-rate property tax. Some years ago he moved from Chicago to Raleigh, North Carolina where he continued writing for black newspapers. After an illness, he died February 26 of this year at age 82. A memorial service for him is planned in Chicago.

- Robert A. King