

“Single Tax Colonies,” or “Enclaves of Economic Rent”

THOSE WHO THINK ALIKE ABOUT RELIGION, ECONOMIC justice or other matters which they believe to be important are often disposed to join in establishing a community. In this way they hope to live in a more congenial environment and accomplish what otherwise might be impossible. The history of the United States tells of many such efforts, beginning with the Pilgrim Fathers in Plymouth, Massachusetts. The great expanse of vacant or sparsely settled land may have encouraged other idealists to create new communities for themselves. In any event, such communities were created by Socialists, Anarchists and other groups as well.

It was therefore in the American tradition when some of those who believed that publicly created land values should be used for public purposes decided to establish their own communities. They held the hope—which time has largely justified—that those intelligent enough to share their opinions would be agreeable neighbors. Even more important was the fact that by creating such communities they could—so far as state laws permitted—demonstrate the advantages which would follow from the public appropriation of the economic rent of land. These “colonies” or “enclaves” are significant, not be-

cause of the scale of their operations, but because of the lessons they teach. Their founders were pioneers who had the courage to demonstrate what could be accomplished by a rational solution of the "land problem"—even in small communities. The following pages give a brief account of the achievements of the existing colonies and, for the sake of the record, a short account of some of those that have disappeared.