

the Henry George News

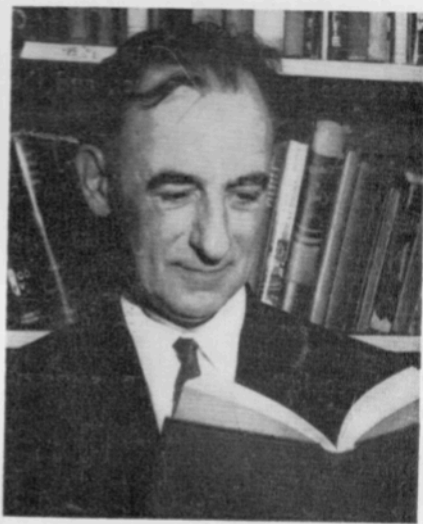
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Joseph A. Stockman

THE HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL has lost its beloved Wang-tzu—Joseph A. Stockman, director of the Philadelphia extension since 1941. A Wang-tzu in Chinese is a "scholar of a man" with feet firmly planted on the ground but with aspirations that ever reach toward heaven. And that was Joe!

In many ways, says his faithful assistant at the school, Lucia Cipolloni, he had the same adventuresome spirit as Henry George. In his youth he worked in a lumber camp in Maine. Next he went to sea in a four-masted schooner. He was shipwrecked off the New England coast in a storm but thoroughly enjoyed the breeches-buoy rescue.

Joe was at his best in a storm. He was by nature optimistic and serene, and if confusion reigned or tempers grew edgy he drove the clouds away with his notoriously sunny disposition. When he was still too young for the army he enlisted and prevailed on his parents to give their consent. Though wounded several times and totally blind for six months, his valor won him the purple heart and other medals which, characteristically, he never mentioned. Always outspoken for fair dealing, he was almost court-martialled on one occasion for defying authorities when he refused to order his men to fight without having eaten for several days owing to a misappropriation



of their food supply. The officers did not pursue the court-martial because of his youth and the boldness of his action.

He had known something of Henry George since his youth through his father's association with Dr. McGlynn's Anti-Poverty League. After his release in 1920 from the 39th Infantry, Fourth Division, he lived in New York City and became acquainted with the Henry George School. Here, in 1940, he found his niche. The following year he and his wife moved to Philadelphia when he was appointed director of the Philadelphia extension

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Joseph A. Stockman

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of the Henry George School. There he served faithfully to the end.

A British uncle had taught him Chinese, and many a pleasurable evening will be recalled by fellow Georgists who knew him when he could be prevailed on to give pictorial explanations of Chinese word-meanings in their warm human context.

Things Chinese delighted him. From the East he had borrowed much of his patience, gentleness, humor and forbearance. In his letters he often employed quaint Oriental phrases redolent of classical writings. He exemplified the philosophy that being a part of nature one should not try to dominate her but should cooperate with her. Sometimes when he seemed to be proceeding with exasperating deliberation he would explain that in some cases it was necessary to take two steps back to take one forward.

Mr. Stockman, like Henry George, was practically self taught, and like him too, his alert mind took in a broad canvas. His father and mother endowed him with moral integrity, never to be shaken — and in turn he and his wife became the envied parents of a wise and devoted daughter, now married, and a son who a few years ago was plied with a most amazing array of coveted college scholarships and is now in his third year at Drexel University taking an engineering course.

Joseph Stockman taught adult education classes at two high schools, and was a member of the Educational Council of Philadelphia and the Washington Square Association. He lived at Trevoise in suburban Phila-

delphia, and was a charter member and officer of his local civic association. On weekends he was a volunteer baseball coach.

Joe never missed an annual conference held by the Henry George School until illness prevented his attendance at Toronto in 1963. He always had to travel the least expensive way, but this he did with great and cheerful grace, though it often meant riding in buses for one or more nights and days. He also lent his smiling presence at all annual banquets of the school in New York and at many headquarters meetings. For months he fought his final enemy with strong determination until at last on January 14th he accepted his discharge with stoical dignity. In his will he gave permission for his body to be used for medical research, following which, burial will be in Mount Peace Cemetery.

Scores of tributes and reminiscences have been received at New York headquarters from the many friends of this dear director, who, as recalled in *The Gargoyle*, often referred to himself as the "Misdirector."

Since 1957 he was the beneficent curator and guiding spirit of the birthplace of Henry George at 413 South 10th Street, Philadelphia, which will continue to be the headquarters of the extension, with Lucia Cipolloni as voluntary secretary. A meeting will be held there on February 9th in thankfulness for a treasured life. It will be strange in the little house that he brooded over so affectionately, to find that this time Joe is invisible — but he will surely be there. You could always count on Joe. He was a good man, wise and kind, and his spirit lives.

The International Conference, from August 30th to September 5th, sponsored by the Henry George School and the International Union for Land Value Taxation, will be held at the Henry Hudson Hotel, 353 West 57th Street, in New York. With World's Fair reservations at a premium, visitors should make plans now.