

Collection Summary

ID Number: CS 203

Title: Fairhope Colony

Extent: 1 Folder(s)

Span Dates: 1990-1993

Language: English

Geographic Location: Fairhope, Alabama

Abstract: This collection consists of publications by the community and clippings.

Selected Search Terms

Subjects: Collective Settlements; Single tax; Fairhope (Ala.)

Historical Notes: What is now the city of Fairhope, Baldwin County, was established in 1894 as a model community based on what Ernest Berry Gaston, a young Iowa journalist and Populist Party officer, called "cooperative individualism," a term he introduced to the lexicon of American reform. To strike a balance between the two extremes of unregulated individualism and state socialism, he advocated public ownership and operation of so-called "natural monopolies" such as transportation, utilities, and communication while favoring free enterprise in the areas of production and distribution. He envisioned a society that would simultaneously encourage individual initiative and promote cooperative ventures and attitudes. The centerpiece of the Fairhope plan came from the writings of Henry George, author of *Progress and Poverty* (1879) among other books. George argued that land should be common property, made available for use rather than speculative profit. To achieve this end, he and his followers proposed to raise all government revenue from a single tax on land values, akin to a rental charge for the use of commonly owned land. Fairhope thus became known as the Single Tax Colony. Its main founding principle was that the value of land was created by the community, not the individual; the rent charged for the use of the land thus constituted a group investment in the value of the community. The members chose the name Fairhope when one of their number remarked that they had a "fair hope" of succeeding. Originally called the Fairhope Industrial Association, the colony's name was changed in 1904 to the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation. In accordance with George's principle, the colony issued 99-year leases, free of charge, to its members (and later to nonmembers as well). In return for the annual payment of a single tax on the land value of the lease, the colony paid the lessee's local, county, and state property taxes.

<http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1161>

Administrative Information

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Contents	Date	Container	Location
Gaston, Paul M. <i>Man and Mission: E.B. Gaston and the Origins of Fairhope Single Tax Colony.</i> Montgomery: Black Belt Press.	1993	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 12-E
Gaston, Paul M. <i>A Utopian Heritage: The Fairhope Single Tax Colony.</i> Alabama Humanities Foundation	n.d.	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 12-E
Smothers, Ronald. <i>From a Utopia Dream. A Single Tax Remains.</i>	1990	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 12-E