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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Vera Wilson Gilmore entitled "The Ruskin Colony, 1894-1901: Experimental Model for the Socialist Commonwealth." I recommend that it be accepted for nine quarter hours of credit in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in History.

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THE RUSKIN COLONY, 1894-1901:
EXPERIMENTAL MODEL FOR THE SOCIALIST COMMONWEALTH

117

A Thesis

Presented to

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

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by

Vera Wilson Gilmore

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ABSTRACT

Ruskin, incorporated as the Ruskin Cooperative Association, was a utopian socialist colony located about fifty miles west of Nashville in the 1890's. The colony was founded largely through the efforts of Julius A. Wayland, publisher of the Coming Nation, a socialist weekly which provided the main income of the colony, and made its development widely known, especially among socialist and reform circles. Ruskin, which grew quickly to a population of two hundred and fifty to three hundred, existed in Tennessee from August, 1894, to September, 1899, when the majority of the members resettled near Waycross, Georgia, for a period of about eighteen months before final dissolution of the colony.

This thesis investigates the organization of the colony, the problems faced, and causes of its breakup. The Coming Nation was the main source of information, and a few, but valuable, items from the colony were available in the collections of the University of Tennessee Library in Knoxville, and the Tennessee State Library and Archives in Nashville.

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INTRODUCTION

It is commonly acknowledged that the New World, almost from its discovery, seemed to offer an opportunity to build society anew, free from the mistakes and hindrances of the settled order of Europe. Pilgrims, Puritans, and Quakers working out their faith within the context of a community, English gentlemen reproducing the English ideal or establishing a precisely planned Georgia colony for the poor of England --all found "the American destiny," as Daniel Boorstin has asserted, "inseparable from the mission of community building."[1]

The first half of the nineteenth century saw the founding of numerous communities in the United States inspired by the philosophies and examples of Robert Owen and Charles Fourier; these were intended to demonstrate an ideal society. Arthur Bestor, Jr., has noted a relation between these communities and the existence of the frontier. The rapid westward movement impressed conservatives and reformers alike with the expanding, fluid character of frontier settlements which presented an unusual openness to influences which would determine their future pattern. The utopian communities were part of the effort to shape a better society.[2]

Americans had not given up this search for a better society through communitarian efforts in the late nineteenth century. In fact,

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[1]Daniel J. Boorstin, The Americans: The Colonial Experience (New York: Random House, 1958), 15.

[2]Arthur E. Bestor, Jr., "Patent-Office Models of the Good Society," American Historical Review, LVIII (April, 1953), 505-526.

the closing years of that century saw a notable increase in cooperative communities, one social reformer of the time reporting about eighty in the United States in 1899.[3] Even though the opportunity to decide the shape of society was no longer impressive, problems in the social order exerted a pressure which moved some men to found colonies to "prove that cooperation is superior to competition and monopoly" financially, socially, and morally, and thus bring about change.[4]

The last third of the century was a period of rapid national growth with increasing agricultural and industrial output, immigration, and urbanization. It was a time of economic upheaval marked by a long period of fluctuating depression, bank failures, mortgage foreclosures, and unemployment. Widespread discontent resulted in organization of both farmers and industrial workers, strikes, agitation against monopolies, and the formation of the People's Party.[5]

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[3]Herbert N. Casson, "The Ruskin Cooperative Colony," Independent, LI (January, 1899), 193.

[4]Coming Nation, December 31, 1898. Published by Julius A. Wayland at Greensburg, Indiana from April 29, 1893 to July 21, 1894; by the Ruskin Cooperative Association at Tennessee City, Tennessee to July 18, 1896 and at Ruskin, Tennessee to September 16, 1899; by the Ruskin Commonwealth at Ware County, Georgia to June 8, 1901; by the Mutual Publishing Company at Waycross, Georgia to July 27, 1901; by Fred D. Warren and E. N. Richardson at Rich Hill, Missouri from March 22, 1902 to December 26, 1903; merged with the Appeal to Reason published by Julius A. Wayland at Girard, Kansas, 1904.

[5]Lee Benson, "The Historical Background of Turner's Frontier Essay," Agricultural History, XXV (1951), 60-63; Joseph Dorfman, The Economic Mind in American Civilization (5 vols.; New York: The Viking Press, 1946-1959), III, 121-123, 126, 219-223, 238.

One of the most important influences directing reform impulses toward socialism was a novel by Edward Bellamy, Looking Backward 2000-1887, published in 1888, which presented the experiences of Julian West from Boston who awakened in the year 2000 to find himself in an orderly society in which social and economic problems of the late nineteenth century had been solved. The surprised young man was informed that the new cooperative society had emerged from the old competitive, chaotic system of the 1880's through efforts of the Nationalist Party, so-called because of its program of nationalization--the state ownership of utilities and the means of production. The Nationalists had been elected to office, transformed society without bloodshed and conflict by appeals to brotherhood, and ushered in an era of progress and human happiness.[6] The book was a great success, selling 210,000 copies by December, 1889, more to that time than any novel except Uncle Tom's Cabin, and was probably as important in forming a segment of public opinion favorable to all sorts of socialistic ideas as Harriet Beecher Stowe's earlier work had been for abolition before the Civil War.[7]

Beginning in Boston in 1889, Nationalist Clubs were organized across the nation with many distinguished citizens enrolled and members almost entirely from the middle class. An organization with such popular support aroused the interest of the Socialist Labor Party, but the

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[6]Elizabeth Sadler, "One Book's Influence: Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward," New England Quarterly, XVII (1944), 533.

[7]Howard J. Quint, The Forging of American Socialism (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1953), 79; John Hope Franklin, "Edward Bellamy and Nationalism," New England Quarterly, XI (December, 1938), 754.

Nationalists refused an alliance. They did attend conventions of the People's Party, however, and gave their support to Populist candidates, as did the Socialist Labor Party in areas where it was weak.[8]

One of these supporters of Populism was Julius A. Wayland, a printer and prosperous real estate dealer in Pueblo, Colorado, who had been "converted" to Socialism about 1890. He had served as the unsalaried editor of a campaign paper which he named the Coming Crisis, and had printed hundreds of Populist pamphlets for the 1892 election. The People's Party candidate for governor of Colorado, Davis H. Waite, won an unexpected victory and Wayland was impressed with the effectiveness of printed propaganda. Returning to his native Indiana in 1893, he began the publication of the Coming Nation, a newspaper designed to promulgate ideas of socialism. To introduce his weekly to a national audience, he asked other reform and labor papers for their subscription lists and mailed ten copies of his first issue, April 29, 1893, to each of their subscribers.[9]

The paper used the news of the day to illustrate the need for change and to emphasize the contrast to a socialist order. The opening of the Cherokee land strip in 1893, for example, became the occasion for an article on "Land Grabbing" which observed that all men need land and so are forced to pay landlords, but that the situation would be

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[8]Quint, Forging of American Socialism, 80-86; Sadler, "One Book's Influence," 540; Franklin, "Edward Bellamy and Nationalism," 751-753, 766-769.

[9]Quint, Forging of American Socialism, 179-180, 181.

different in the "Cooperative Commonwealth," the name Wayland often gave to a future social system. The term was in fairly common use and was the title of a book by Laurance Gronlund which, as a simplified explanation of Marxism, was among the publications sold by the publishers of the Coming Nation. In the Cooperative Commonwealth each member would be given a home and in turn would help build a home for every other member, Wayland declared.[10]

By October, after less than six months, the paper was self-supporting, selling thirteen thousand copies--ten thousand by subscription-- and readers were urged to get other subscriptions as a means of establishing a cooperative village. Wayland proposed to use the profits of the Coming Nation to purchase a site, estimating that when subscriptions reached one hundred thousand, there would be a surplus of $23,000 available. Any reader who could secure two hundred subscriptions or "contribute as much" would be eligible for membership in the community. Wayland believed that corporation laws could be adapted to a cooperative project by making each member a stockholder, but limiting stock to one share each so that every man and woman would have an equal voice. His eagerness to get the project underway revealed itself when he suggested "moving onto the ground as soon as $10,000" was on hand.[11]

Further details of the village Wayland envisioned began to emerge in his column, "Cooperative Village Jottings," and occasionally

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[10] Coming Nation, September 23, 1893.

[11] Ibid., October 21, December 16, 1893.

in other news items. The first building would house the press to carry on publication of the Coming Nation and to print reform books and pamphlets. The location of the colony would have to take into account these functions, with the printing press as the chief industry. When several hundred acres on the Pacific Coast were offered to Wayland, he suggested that the "brother" who owned the land organize a community of his own. Wayland felt his colony must be near the geographical center of the nation; it would need a railroad and a postoffice to handle its mail. To a co-worker who deplored Wayland's "going into the colony business," he emphasized the great impact of a practical, functioning example of social reform: "When we shall have proven that we know how to successfully operate our colony, that will be the time to want to fence up the earth and run it on the same methods."[12] Thus, although the founders and members never drew up a formal statement of their ultimate purposes, these aims can be found in Wayland's arguments and later in H. D. McDill's "Colony Notes," and in feature articles on the colony which appeared from time to time in the Coming Nation. The purposes were twofold: the colony was intended to be a demonstration of socialist theories in operation which would encourage the reorganization of American society into a "Cooperative Commonwealth;" at the same time the community would serve as a laboratory experiment in cooperative living through which the residents could learn how to carry out such a reorganization.

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[12] Coming Nation, December 16, 1893, February 10, 1894.

When the cooperative association and village were formed, they were given the name "Ruskin," honoring John Ruskin, the eminent British art critic who, about 1865, had set aside his publications on art because he felt the "force of mechanism and the fury of avaricious commerce to be so irresistible" as to require a radical change in industrial society before true progress in art would be possible. Ruskin had attacked the image of "economic man" as motivated by idleness and greed, and pointed out the pleasure men could find in work. He condemned the commercialism at the heart of society and declared, "Government and Cooperation are in all things the laws of Life; Anarchy and Competition the Laws of Death."[13] Julius Wayland, who was one of John Ruskin's American admirers, confessed, "To him I owe more than any other my understanding of this social evolution."[14] Ruskin's emphasis on the creativity of the worker and his importance as a human being served Wayland's colony as a philosophical background, and they quoted his view that

> Good work is done only for love. Money may be part of the incentive but where the worker has no interest in the object itself, no good work will come of it.[15]

But, except in education, it was the spirit of Ruskin rather than specific details which served as the colony's guide. In the same way,

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[13] J. A. Hobson, John Ruskin, Social Reformer (London: James Nisbet & Co., Limited, 1898), 46, 65-67, 129.

[14] Advertisement for Ruskin's Works, Coming Nation, December 23, 1894.

[15] Coming Nation, September 23, 1893.

Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward was termed "the inspiration which brought us together."

Farmers and urban workers influenced by Bellamy's description of a new society formed much of the readership of the Coming Nation. Several issues in the first year carried on the masthead "For a Government of, by, and for the people, as outlined in Bellamy's 'Looking Backward,' abolishing the possibility of poverty." The colony held a memorial service when Bellamy died and published a special "Bellamy Edition" the following year.[16] Looking Backward and its sequel, Equality, were printed on the colony presses along with Ruskin's Works and Fabian essays from England. But Looking Backward was "more a vision than a blueprint," though one member referred to the "Bellamy plan of social organization" which they had intended to use as a model until, facing the problems of nature and society, they were "turned into the grooves made by commercialism."[17]

And so the Ruskin Cooperative Association belonged to that tradition of American socialism which worked for the reorganization of society through the establishment of communities as the earlier Utopian socialists in Europe and the United States had done, and which John Ruskin had proposed in England. Contrary to the declarations of other

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[16] Ibid., May 29, 1898, April 1, 1899.

[17] Edward Bellamy, Looking Backward 2000-1887, ed. by John L. Thomas (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967), 87; [Isaac Broome], "History of the Ruskin Cooperative Association from August 1894 to September 1899; Authorized by vote of the Board of Directors," Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville. Also published serially in the Coming Nation from October 21, 1899 to April 14, 1900. Hereinafter referred to as "History," pp. 7-8.

socialists and to the feeling of Americans generally, they still believed that a demonstration of a successful cooperative village would persuade the remainder of the nation to set up the "Cooperative Commonwealth." At the same time they took inspiration from Edward Bellamy, even though his visionary society had been established through political action, and despite Bellamy's judgment that

> the cause of Nationalism [socialism] [is] more advanced by a single step taken by the city, state, or nation to its ideal, and embodied in the law of the land, than by the complete success of some small colony founded on the nationalist [socialist] plan.[18]

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[18] Edward Bellamy, Equality, 351, quoted in Quint, Forging of American Socialism, 91.

CHAPTER I

LIFE IN THE COLONY

In February, 1894, the Coming Nation was ready to announce, "We Want Land," and asked for information on available tracts of one to three thousand acres in Kentucky or Tennessee, states considered centrally located. Although Wayland proposed to focus the efforts of the community on printing and other industry, he continued to adhere to the belief that a large section of land was necessary. In April, John Miller of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, was sent out from the Greensburg, Indiana, office of the Coming Nation to look for a site in Tennessee. After the first weeks' investigation the choice of a 900-acre tract near Tullahoma seemed about to be made, but at the end of May, 1894, that location was rejected. Rousseau Hess, who had earned his place on the Coming Nation staff for his work in behalf of Wayland's colonizing project, was then sent to check on another Tennessee location, being instructed by Wayland to give priority to a railroad connection, and timber, limestone and sand which could become lumber and brick for construction purposes. Early in June, after some consideration of an Arkansas tract and a re-evaluation of the Tullahoma site, the final choice was made. On July 21, 1894, the Coming Nation published "the last issue printed in Greensburg, Indiana," as the printers prepared

to move the presses to Tennessee City, in Dickson County. The report noted that the location was a railroad stop about fifty miles west of Nashville.[1]

Arriving at the end of June, 1894, the first dozen settlers had lived in tents while erecting the building for the printing press. They found Tennessee City "a sorry collection of primitive southern homes on a railroad track" and a run-down hotel. Wayland had not seen the area but had gone ahead with the purchase against Hess' advice when the land agent, J. Franck Rumsey, offered to give five hundred acres to the north of Tennessee City if five hundred acres were purchased. Some members of the association later suspected that the inducement had been given them in order to "boom" the sale of nearby land to other socialist groups. The hills were covered with a rocky, "hard-pan" soil, well forested but only partially with good timber. Two or three of the first arrivals departed within the first week, including a George K. Watt, whom Wayland had expected to take charge of initial construction. Nevertheless, one member set up a sawmill and the early settlers were soon hard at work. The "printery" building was ready except for floors when the presses arrived; then construction was begun on other buildings. The work was hard and few of the first members had ever known such primitive conditions. Their historian described them as "less capable than the frontiersman who pushed singlehanded into the

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[1] Coming Nation, February 23, April 28, May 5, 12, 26, June 2, 9, July 21, 1894. The July issue is the only copy in the microfilmed file between June 9, 1894 and March 18, 1895. The Coming Nation, August 3, 1895, reported its file of back numbers missing.

wilderness," and a visitor in 1897 was amazed when he was shown the first site; it was "like a mining camp."[2]

On August 6, 1894, soon after the arrival of the presses and the main body of settlers, Julius Wayland and his wife, Etta, his brother-in-law Charles Bevan, Rousseau Hess, and W. H. Lawson incorporated the Ruskin Printing Company. A charter for the Ruskin Cooperative Association was drawn up and entered at the same time in the records of Dickson County, with nineteen men and nine women signing. Discovering that by state laws women could hold stock but could not be members of a stock company, the application for a charter of incorporation was repeated on August 16, 1894 with twenty men listed as the incorporators, another having joined the group. They were incorporated as the Ruskin Cooperative Association for the

> purpose of owning and operating manufacturies and acquiring land and building and owning houses for the members of the Association, and providing educational and recreational facilities for the members, and . . . [having and exercising] all powers conferred by the laws of Tennessee upon Mining and Manufacturing Corporations.[3]

The By-Laws of the Association added two other objectives: "to insure the employees against want or the fear of want," and "to promote

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[2] Ibid., January 9, April 17, 1897; Broome, "History," 10-13; Robert Ewing Corlew, A History of Dickson County (Nashville: The Tennessee Historical Commission and the Dickson County Historical Society, 1956), 140.

[3] Records of Register, Dickson County, Trust Deed Book F, 465-469, 474-476, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville; Harold J. Shepstone, "A Modern Utopia," Wide World Magazine, III (June, 1899), 262. (See Appendix A.)

and maintain harmonious social relations on the basis of cooperation."[4] The Board of Directors, thirteen members elected for a term "no longer than one year," met once each week and a stockholders' meeting, nominally including every adult, was held each month. An unexcused absence of any officer or stockholder from a regular meeting carried the penalty of a two dollar deduction from wages.[5] In addition to the President, Vice-President, and Secretary-Treasurer, a Superintendent of Education and Recreation was elected by all the stockholders, and a superintendent of each of the departments--Agriculture (including lawns and parks), Manufactures, Sanitation and Medical Care, Public Works, Cuisine, and Distribution--was elected by the members working in a given department.[6]

In May, 1897, a change in the By-laws placed all the affairs of the Association in the hands of the Board of Directors; thereafter the stockholders' meeting was held only annually. "So," lamented their historian, "we did away with the principle of the New England town meeting, concluding not to come together at all . . . because we felt that we could not transact our own affairs without friction."[7] He would have been enlightened and perhaps consoled had he known that in the New England town of Dedham in 1639, only three years after its founding,

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[4] By-laws of the Ruskin Cooperative Association, R. C. A. Minutes, August 24th 1894 to March 6th 1895, Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville, Article I, Section 2.

[5] Ibid., Article III, Sections 1 and 2; Article IV, Sections 1 and 2; Article V, Section 32.

[6] Ibid., Article III, Sections 1, 5, and 6.

[7] [Broome], "History," 121-122.

the townsmen delegated their privileges to the selectmen because the general meeting "had wasted much time." Kenneth A. Lockridge, who has made a study of Dedham's first century, sees this action as the first breaking down of the unity of the settlement--"all in the name of efficiency."[8] Socialist leaders of the 1890's, however, would doubtless have applauded the decision at Ruskin, critical as they were that the practice of socialist groups had

> allowed the fetish of false democracy to paralyze our organizations. There is not a local organization in America that does not habitually waste two or three hours debating detail and routine business that an efficient committee of three could dispose of in ten minutes.[9]

By the first spring, 1895, there were ten houses and one hundred people in Ruskin, Tennessee, near Tennessee City. The standard house was fourteen by twenty feet, although a member could have a larger home if he paid for the additional lumber required. The colony bustled with activity as a kiln was built for firing brick, one member brought in a planing mill, and another member who held a patent on his design for hay balers set up a shop for their manufacture. Cows owned by individual members were purchased by the Association, so that the cooperative herd numbered eight and furnished "plenty of milk for cooking." The Superintendent of Cuisine announced that if he had a building he could cook for all families more efficiently than each woman cooking

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[8]Kenneth A. Lockridge, A New England Town: The First Hundred Years (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1970), 80.

[9]New York Call, November 14, 1909, quoted in Jessie Wallace Hughan, American Socialism of the Present Day (New York: John Lane Company, 1912), 211.

separately for her family; thus community dining, seen by Bellamy as a practice in his ideal society, soon became a feature of life in Ruskin.[10]

A prospective member who arrived in Ruskin in this period detrained at Tennessee City very early in the morning and started off to

> find the Ruskin Colony about a quarter of a mile down the track. By this time I could see a barnlike building through the slight fog. It looked spooky. When I knocked on the door and Marsden came with a lantern he looked still more spooky. . . . I asked when I could catch a train out of there. I thought I had enough of Ruskin Colony already. No Train until night. I had to spend the whole day in that God forsaken place.
>
> I went inside. It was a printing plant. A real up to date shop with a Hoe perfecting press. Capacity, twenty five thousand copies per hour. Sterotyping [sic] plant and all. In that old barn. The Coming Nation had fifty thousand subscribers. This was interesting. . . . The Colony store was a room built in front of a dug out in the hill side. . . . There were some drugs in the store. Pretty soon word got out that I understood medicine and all the ailing came up for treatment.
>
> Dinner time came. It was just like a Sunday School picnic. McCoy beat a tattoo on a big circular saw hanging in a tree. And here they came. From every direction.
>
> To make a long story short, I joined the Ruskin Colony. So did my Father and Mother and two brothers.[11]

Even as the construction went forward, many members of the group became convinced that a location with better natural resources was a necessity. Inquiries were made in several states but the cost of moving seemed prohibitive. Then it was learned that there was an estate for sale in fertile Yellow Creek Valley, just four miles west of the boundary of Ruskin land. It included some houses, barns and paddocks, a blacksmith shop, a flour mill, a cotton gin, a store, and the Cave

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[10] Coming Nation, March 30, June 1, 15, 1895; R. C. A. Minutes, 129; Franklin, "Edward Bellamy and Nationalism," 749.

[11] J. Theodore McDill, "The Happiest Days of My Life," Typed reminiscences, April 16, 1932, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Ruskin Cooperative Association File, 1.

Mills post office, so named for the large caves on the property. The purchase of the new site was announced in February, 1896, and the move began with the construction of a three-story "printery." The workers slept in the unfinished top floor or crowded into the farm buildings while the structure was being completed. The first issue of the Coming Nation from the new building was printed and mailed on July 18, 1896, bearing the new name of the post office, Ruskin, Tennessee. A large room on the second floor of the printery was designated as the library which boasted 1,100 volumes a year later. The third floor was planned as a meeting and entertainment hall, but was put to use immediately as the dining room as well.[12] Buildings at "old Ruskin" were moved and even the little houses were taken down and reconstructed on the new location. The feeling of expectancy which the colonists experienced in their improved situation was recorded by their historian, Isaac Broome:

> Although our shanties were placed on the creek bottom (which was considered our business location) until the new town site was laid out for permanent homes, still there was a feeling of general satisfaction at the wonderful progress made. Hope began to run high for better days in the near future. Indeed all nature as well as conditions favored the building and realization of a cooperative paradise with no intervening obstacles except the defects within ourselves.[13]

A visitor to Ruskin a year later, in early 1897, commented on the fine farm land, the extensive printing business which included publication of twenty-six labor papers in addition to thirty-five to fifty thousand

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[12] Coming Nation, February 22, July 4, 11, 18, 1896, July 17, 1897.

[13] [Broome], "History," 57, 59.

copies weekly of the Coming Nation, and the several other industries of the colony. The organization, the accomplishments, and the spirit of the community convinced the visitor that Ruskin need fear destruction from only two forces: internal quarrels, and the neglect of its educational purpose because its financial success was so great.[14]

Nearly two years later in the fall of 1898, Herbert Casson, arriving as the new editor of the Coming Nation, found a population of two hundred and fifty to three hundred people including children, with the majority of adults between thirty and forty years of age. They impressed him as

> emphatically an earnest and serious people. They are conscious of having a mission. . . . Ruskinites do not loaf around the woods and rhapsodize about the dignity of labor and the glorious civilization of the twenty-second century.[15]

There were now seventy small whitewashed houses in the village, most with only two or three rooms and no kitchens. Some better homes were being built on the permanent town site. The people of Ruskin operated the publishing business, and in addition, a sawmill, grist mill, steam laundry, machine shop, coffeehouse, bakery, photo gallery, school, store, tinshop, henhouse, piggery, and stable. A large cave with an arched rock ceiling forty-five feet high and lighted by a seventy feet wide entranceway served as a cannery and in summer as an "air-conditioned" meeting and recreation hall. A short passageway connected it to another large cavern used for storage. About two hundred feet from the

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[14]Eltweed Pomeroy, "A Sketch of the Socialist Colony in Tennessee," American Fabian, III (April, 1897), 2-3.

[15]Article by H. N. Casson, reprinted from New Time in Coming Nation, December 3, 1898.

entrance was a crystal clear lake, seventy by sixty-three feet and about thirty-five feet deep which filled the back of the cave and provided a stream to turn the mill wheel. A reservoir was built on the bluff above and with the addition of a steam engine and pump, water was raised one hundred and eighty feet to the top to supply water for the community.[16]

Ruskin products advertised in the Coming Nation in the summer of 1898 were cereal coffee, chewing gum, leather suspenders and belts, a steam bath cabinet, sanitary after-shave powder, soda, baking powder, a patent medicine, screen doors and fixtures, and white Plymouth Rock eggs for setting, besides job printing of stationery and office supplies. The policy of the paper had always been that no advertising fees were charged. The soap manufactured by Joseph Fels, a friend of the colony, was perhaps the only exception among the advertisements for products of cooperative groups. Free advertising was given to other cooperative projects and their products, since Ruskin alone published and was supported by a propaganda paper.[17]

The emphasis had been placed on industry; nevertheless, the agricultural enterprise of the colony was vital to its existence. Though they did not produce all that they consumed in foods, the Association members seemed to be striving for self-sufficiency with diver-

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[16] Ibid., February 29, 1896; Atlanta Journal, November 12, 1898, p. 11; J. T. McDill, "Happiest Days of My Life," 2; "Subterranean Industrial Plant," Scientific American, (August 5, 1899), p. 89.

[17] Coming Nation, February 3, 1894; Grace Stone, "Tennessee: Social and Economic Laboratory," Sewanee Review. XLVI (1938), 316 n.

sified produce. One member many years later recalled the apple orchard, the grapes, the strawberries and the wild berries raised in Yellow Creek Valley. Plants and seeds, grape roots, and hundreds of plum, peach, and other fruit trees were donated to Ruskin by well-wishers. These were set out and flourished in the moderate Tennessee climate, but the Ruskinites had gone before some of the young trees bore fruit. A herd of beef cattle was put on the land at old Ruskin when the colony moved to the valley. There was also a dairy herd, hogs, chickens, vegetable gardens, and flowers from which they sold the seeds and bulbs.[18] The agricultural and horticultural enterprise at Ruskin merited an article in the Rural New Yorker on February 19, 1898.[19]

The organization of work gave evidence of the influence of certain ideals of John Ruskin and Edward Bellamy. "Every man must do the work which he can do best," a summary of Ruskin's views declares, "and in the best way, for the common good and not for individual profit, receiving in return property consisting of good things which he has honestly got, and can skillfully use." Bellamy had considered all work of equal value, stating, "All men who do their best do the same."[20] The Association By-Laws guaranteed employment for all, at a preferred task

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[18]Earl Miller, "Recollections of the Ruskin Cooperative Association," ed. by Charles H. Kegel, Tennessee Historical Quarterly, XVII (March, 1958), 54. Hereinafter referred to as "Recollections." Coming Nation, April 18, May 2, 1896, April 10, 1897; [Broome], "History," 50.

[19]Coming Nation, March 19, 1898.

[20]Hobson, John Ruskin, Social Reformer, 154; Bellamy, Looking Backward 2000-1887, p. 94.

if possible; but everyone was expected to work wherever needed, especially in an emergency. When the Association was scarcely a month old, the members reinforced the idea of the equality of work by amending their By-laws with an additional article which declared, "All . . . who do the best they can . . . are entitled to the regular rate of wages."[21] In March, 1895, this was set at five dollars per week for men and women and one dollar per week for children under eighteen years. The Ruskinites were putting into practice a theory of equality of income which nearly all the younger American socialists regarded as possible only in Marx's final stage of ideal communism. As these socialists considered the problems of incentive, remuneration and work assignment, they concluded that in the development of the socialist state there would continue to be competition in the field of labor.[22] The incentives of the more distant future, however, would be pleasure in work, made possible through the use of machines which would relieve the worker of hard toil, and material rewards from increased production since each worker would share in the product. Socialists saw a problem in applying this incentive to society at large, for

> if a million workers are to share the reward and the shirking of one laborer merely decreases the total by a millionth, the prospect of losing the millionth part of a millionth is not likely to prove an adequate spur to labor.[23]

In Ruskin, by contrast, each member could see the value of his contribution and was closely observed by his comrades as well, so that the

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[21] By-laws, Article V, Section 33.

[22] Hughan, American Socialism of the Present Day, 135-137, 140.

[23] Ibid., 138-139.

spirit of cooperation carried the work forward. Then, too, the rule of choice of task where possible seems to have functioned reasonably well in the small community. When a large building was under construction nearly every man was called to work on it. The whole population responded to the call for volunteers for "pea-picking or weeding" the gardens. For example, on one occasion sixty acres were cleared of weeds in a day and a half.[24] Disagreements on work assignments seem to have been minor, with only an occasional protest from someone who felt he was having to neglect his own task in order to work elsewhere. There was also, a visitor noted, "an undercurrent of complaint" about a few shirkers. The five dollar weekly wage appears minuscule to more modern eyes, but the members did not have to pay for food or rent; and many services including medical care, education, laundry, and even shoe repair were furnished without charge.[25] After a time the Ruskin Cooperative Association issued its own hour coupons for wages instead of using currency. This was in keeping with John Ruskin's assertion that the price of an article should be determined by the quantity of labor required to produce it. Prices in the colony store were marked in hours for members and in dollars for outsiders, so that anything produced by the community could be purchased on an "hour for hour" basis.[26]

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[24] Coming Nation, June 25, 1898.

[25] Pomeroy, "Sketch of the Socialist Colony in Tennessee."3, states that at the time of his visit in 1897 members were charged $1.50 per week for food, but this was probably a temporary measure instituted because of the cost of purchasing the new site.

[26] Charles H. Kegel, "Ruskin's St. George in America," American Quarterly, IX (1957), 418.

The whole community was kept on a schedule marked by the sound of a whistle, beginning with the 5:30 a.m. awakening blast. Then followed 6 a.m. breakfast, 7 a.m. work, 12 noon dinner, one o'clock back to work, and then an early (5 p.m.) supper to complete the day. After the evening meal, through much of the year, there was a half-hour period of voluntary work in the gardens to gather vegetables or fruits for the next day. At first the cooking was done by women, working in shifts. Later five or six young men under twenty-five served as cooks with help from older women who prepared the vegetables. The quality of the cuisine depended on the ability of the young men assigned to a turn as cooks, but every meal required a large quantity of food--as much as twelve hundred pancakes, or seven hundred biscuits for a meal. Evenings were free of duties. Friday or Saturday nights the dining hall became the setting for the theatre, with dances on alternate weeks, the music being provided by the Ruskin Band. During the week there were evening classes in music or gymnastics, and lectures on Saturday evenings or Sunday afternoons were given by members of the colony or distinguished visitors.[27]

When the "printery" was finished in Ruskin's new location and the third floor became the community dining hall, the women petitioned "for independence." They asked to receive "their maintenance fee separate from husbands," and true to the spirit of Edward Bellamy, the

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[27]Miller, "Recollections," 66-67; Coming Nation, June 25, 1895 and passim; J. T. McDill, "Happiest Days of My Life," 3-4.

Board of Directors granted their request.[28] John Ruskin's ideal for women was somewhat different. Though he refused to speak of the superiority of either sex, considering them completely different, in fact he conceived the role of women as subordinate, or at least supportive. The education of a woman, for example, should include all knowledge which would "enable her to understand and even to aid the work of men."[29] The Coming Nation had long called for the participation of women in politics, pointing out that many were leaders of, and the force behind, reform and welfare movements, and had urged more freedom for women, acknowledging that even a rich woman was in this case no better off than the poorest women, being still dependent upon her husband.[30] At Ruskin, married women worked five hours, it being understood that the remaining hours of the working day were to be given to their families. Single women worked the same number of hours as men, and all men and women were given equal pay.[31] Although labor movements of the time were pressing for an eight-hour day, the amount of work to be done in the colony necessitated a nine-hour day, and in urgent circumstances, ten; but the feeling of cooperation and the sense of common ownership enabled most members to work cheerfully and even to share in the volunteer work after hours.

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[28] [Broome], "History," 58.

[29] Hobson, John Ruskin, Social Reformer, 271.

[30] Coming Nation, December 23, 30, 1893.

[31] [Broome], "History," 58.

Every child had his few hours of work to perform each day for which he received pay. The colonists intended this as training for the child, part of the educational program which the Association had agreed to provide for the children of stockholders, each member being forbidden to "allow his children to grow up in ignorance."[32] Although the first school was opened with few books and one teacher for "a b c through high school," a full educational program was envisioned by leaders of the community. In 1895 the officers of the school district in which Ruskin was located discovered that the village contained half the school population of the district. They agreed to supply money from school funds at the regular rate of two dollars per pupil, which would normally support five months of school. Ruskin furnished a building and its teachers continued classes for a ten-month school year.[33]

In the summer of 1896 a qualified kindergarten teacher, Mrs. L. C. Brown, was hired to spend four months at Ruskin establishing a kindergarten and while teaching, also training two or three women of the colony as kindergarten teachers. A broad curriculum stressing practical subjects was announced for the 1896-1897 school year, including drawing, painting and sculpture as well as the industrial arts of architecture, construction, mechanical drawing and "technical" chemistry. In the academic department an emphasis would be placed on oratory and

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[32] Coming Nation, July 9, 1898; By-laws, Article V, Sections 11 and 23.

[33] Isaac Broome, The Last Days of the Ruskin Cooperative Association (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company, 1902), 90; Coming Nation, June 28, 1895; Ernest I. Miller, "Some Tennessee Utopias" (unpublished special study in Sociology, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1942), 57.

speech; music classes, with two teachers, would offer history, theory and composition as well as vocal and instrumental lessons. In the same winter, night classes were proposed for those over eighteen who were unable to attend during regular hours because of their work.[34] It was an ambitious program, but some of Ruskin's teachers were well-qualified, one so progressive as to advocate ungraded classes. Friedrich Froebel, whose founding of the kindergarten was an educational landmark of the nineteenth century, gave the inspiration for their approach to children's education. His portrait hung in the dining-meeting hall along with those of Ruskin and Shakespeare. Applying Froebel's insights to socialist hopes, the educational leaders agreed that the future lay with the children, who could be freed from the old competitive ways of thinking and acting, and so live more successfully in a cooperative society.[35] The proclaimed aim of the educational efforts of the Ruskin colony was the production of men and women useful to society, developed to their highest level physically, mentally, and spiritually, for, as one of their educators declared, "Ruskin builds not for itself alone, but for the race and the future."[36]

When the settlement was re-located at Cave Mills in 1896, twenty-five acres overlooking the valley were set aside for a college in which socialist principles would be taught. As Ruskin College of

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[34] Coming Nation, May 2, June 13, August 22, 29, 1896.

[35] [Broome], "History," 173, 201. Interestingly, Bellamy's portrait is not mentioned but Broome may have planned for one (see page 45, below).

[36] Coming Nation, April 4, 1897.

the New Economy, it would be the first socialist college in the world. Architectural plans were drawn by Isaac Broome, and a fund was established to which contributions were made by the people of the colony and by readers of the Coming Nation. The foundations were laid; one member, Conrad Broeg, hauled in a block of Ruskin marble which was prepared for the cornerstone. Neighbors and out-of-state friends attended, three hundred marching in the procession to the site, and the cornerstone was set in place on June 19, 1897, accompanied by a Masonic ceremony and an address by Henry Demarest Lloyd, a leading journalist and reformer of the period. By small gifts ranging from twenty-five cents through one, two, and an occasional five dollars, the college fund totalled $920.23 at the final report of November, 1898, of which $519.55 had been spent for the foundation and cornerstone.[37] No further construction took place, and although some members negotiated in 1898 with the People's Institute of Chicago to establish a People's University at Ruskin, the project lacked support from other Ruskinites and was rejected.[38]

Having progressed beyond the crude facilities of old Ruskin, the Association, under the leadership of new officers elected in 1897,

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[37] Ibid., May 29, July 3, 1897, November 26, 1898; Caro Lloyd, Henry Demarest Lloyd, 1847-1903: A Biography (2 vols.; New York and London: The Knickerbocker Press of G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1912), II, 62. Contents of the cornerstone were the Charter, By-laws, historical sketch, and list of the stockholders of the Ruskin Cooperative Association, a copy of the Coming Nation, a few labor coupons used in the colony, some 1897 United States silver coins, a list of the officers and members of Yellow Creek Lodge No. 319, A. F. & A. M., Lloyd's personal card, and a copy of the program of the day's festivities.

[38] Broome, The Last Days of the Ruskin Cooperative Association, 60-63.

made an effort to improve manners, since some members "felt the . . . obligation to be what an expectant world wished us to be under an improved social organization." Broome, who undoubtedly favored the new emphasis, reported that one new regulation required men to remove their hats in the "ballroom"--the cause of dispute and some embarrassment when over-zealous members insisted on strict compliance.[39] The theater, though a welcome recreation after a week of hard work, was sometimes made to serve a serious purpose. Skits were designed to present faults in an exaggerated and entertaining form, so that with awareness of errors, correction might be made. For example, from their experience in old Ruskin of temporary housing and makeshift arrangements, the colonists had developed a feeling of impermanence. A song at one entertainment was directed at this attitude and at half-hearted socialists:

> We're a temporary lot and we're temporary got
> And are always temporary hustling.
> We were temporary brought to the temporary plot
> Which we called after John Ruskin.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> We get temporary members with temporary tempers
> That temporary try to cooperate;
> But their temper soon is spent and their friendship
> soon is rent,
> When they strike the socialistic gait.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> We've a temporary, temporary, temporary world,
> Which we wouldn't trade off for the sun;
> We like our temporary views and we'd rather be excused
> From giving up our temporary fun.[40]

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[39] [Broome], "History," 63-64.

[40] Ibid., 65-67.

Such poetical jabbing was perhaps effective in bringing some changes, but its "satirical vein" and ridicule made enemies of some criticized individuals. There were more direct forms of adult education in the lyceum programs and the Women's Literary Circle where the "virtues of the socialistic state" were studied and discussed.[41] A study of communistic groups in the United States published in 1875 concluded that nearly all neglected the aesthetic and intellectual aspects of life.[42] Editor Herbert Casson, however, boasted that with its school, library, art studio, music, and lyceum the Ruskin Association provided not only for the physical and material needs of its members, but for their souls and minds as well.[43]

There was no church in the village, and Casson, formerly founding minister of a non-sectarian, nontheological Labor Church in Lynn, Massachusetts, assessed the attitude of most Ruskinites as indifferent toward churches. He noted that many felt their cooperative life was "in harmony with the teachings of Christ," a view Casson certainly shared. Frequently articles in the Coming Nation condemned the church and religious people, though seldom, if ever, condemning Christianity--rather, socialism was seen as the fulfillment of Christ's teaching. The By-Laws of the Association guaranteed the free exercise of individual preferences "in all private, religious and domestic affairs," and

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[41] Ibid., 68.

[42] Charles Nordhoff, The Communistic Societies in the United States (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1875), 416-417.

[43] Casson, "The Ruskin Cooperative Colony," 194-195.

in May, 1895, a Sunday School was organized with Charles Corbett as superintendent, which continued to meet in homes throughout the period in Tennessee. The Coming Nation reported in the winter of 1896 that the young people gathered around the organ in the hotel to sing church music for half an hour or longer every evening.[44] Evidently there were also those with definite feelings against the church, for on the occasion of the Coming Nation's third anniversary, President J. K. Calkins found it necessary to warn against anti-religious bigotry. He explained that the Association was secular, neither religious nor anti-religious, and pointed out that the reason no church could be erected by the Association was that funds could only be used for the benefit of the whole membership. There were among the colonists adherents of various healing faiths and spiritualism. A few Ruskinites attended worship services in the small Edgewood Methodist Church about two miles from their settlement, and some may have attended a church in the town of Dickson. On occasion, several were present in the Edgewood church, but evidently they did not become members or otherwise involve themselves in church activities.[45]

And so life went on in the world of the Ruskin colony. John Humphrey Noyes, founder of the Oneida community, had deplored the fact

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[44] Ibid.; By-laws, Article V, Section 10; Coming Nation, May 4, 1895, January 18, 1896, January 21, 1899.

[45] Coming Nation, May 16, 1896, September 3, 1898; Helen Dahnke, "Ruskin--A Brief Utopia in Rural Tennessee," Nashville Tennesseean Magazine, March 20, 1932, p. 16; Francelia Butler, "The Ruskin Commonwealth: A Unique Experiment in Marxian Socialism." Tennessee Historical Quarterly, XXIII (December, 1964), 340; Shepstone, "A Modern Utopia," 267; J. C. Matthews, Letter to Vera Gilmore (Matthews is a Methodist minister, retired, familiar with the Edgewood Church; he grew up in Dickson County about four miles from Ruskin.), February 16, 1973.

that socialistic groups established themselves away from centers of population. The members of Ruskin, though isolated, did not try to separate themselves entirely from society. Their main contact and means of influencing events in the nation were the newspaper and other publications from their press, and the colony attracted the attention of reform and other papers. In February, 1897, the Knoxville Sentinel commented on a Coming Nation article which expressed regret for the loss of craftsmanship as machines took over work formerly done by glassblowers. The Sentinel pointed out the long-term benefits which machinery brought to working people. A Memphis reader sent the Sentinel item to Ruskin with his observation that socialists were very much in favor of machinery when "owned and operated by and for the benefit of the workers," and the Coming Nation carried his comments on its front page. In June of the same year the Sentinel noted editorially that the Ruskin colony, named for John Ruskin, was "losing ground " and that Ruskin, himself, was in "almost needy circumstances." The Nashville American in July, 1897, however, carried an article reporting on the colony and the proposed college which declared Ruskin to be "eminently successful."[46]

The Atlanta Journal devoted the entire front page of its regular Saturday supplement of November 12, 1898, to an account of the Ruskin colony. A thousand copies of a special edition of the Coming

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[46] John Humphrey Noyes, History of American Socialisms (New York: Hillary House Publishers, Ltd., 1961), 18-20; Editorials, Knoxville Sentinel, February 5, June 17, 1897; Coming Nation, February 20, 1897; Nashville American, July 12, 1897.

Nation distributed in Atlanta by the Municipal Ownership League just before the city election in October evidently had aroused the Journal's interest. William T. Biggs was sent to investigate, and after completing his report, applied for membership in the Ruskin Cooperative Association.[47]

The colony and its paper received some notice abroad. In 1896 an Associated Press dispatch from London reported that circulars describing Ruskin, Tennessee, had been received by labor leaders in leading commercial centers in Britain. An article written by Eltweed Pomeroy for the American Fabian appeared also in the London Clarion.[48] Ruskin residents and visitors, such as Herbert Casson and Henry Demarest Lloyd, who made contacts with reform and cooperative groups abroad, also spread news of the Tennessee experiment.

The colony's connection with John Ruskin was the source of some attention. The London Daily News for February 18, 1897, recalling Ruskin's disdain for things American, hoped he would be complimented by the establishment of a colony bearing his name. John Ruskin regularly received the Coming Nation, though because of ill-health he was unable to contribute to a series of articles, "Ruskin Labor Letters," which the paper published in 1897. Walter G. Treacher of Bombay, India

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[47] Atlanta Journal, November 12, 1898, pp. 11-12; Coming Nation, December 3, 1898.

[48] Coming Nation, December 26, 1896, April 24, 1897; Pomeroy, "A Sketch of the Socialist Colony in Tennessee," American Fabian, III (April, 1897), 1-3.

and London, wrote an article about the Ruskin Cooperative Association for the London Clarion, contributed to the Ruskin College Fund and on several occasions sent books and pamphlets for the Library. In May, 1897, he went to Tennessee to visit the colony and wrote an account of his "Pilgrimage to Ruskin" for the Coming Nation. In the same week Treacher's friend, Arthur Baker, visited William G. Collingwood, John Ruskin's secretary and biographer, to tell him of Treacher's trip, and was assured that Ruskin would be informed of it.[49] Both Collingwood and Sir Edward Tyas Cook included a passing reference to the Ruskin Colony in their biographies of John Ruskin, Collingwood taking note of the "Labor Letters' published in the Coming Nation. Articles appeared in the New Order, the journal of the Brotherhood Trust in England, and in 1897, in the Halifax, Nova Scotia, Daily Echo. In distant New Zealand, T. G. Leech, who sold Coming Nation subscriptions, published a pamphlet on the colony and urged the founding of a similar settlement in Paraguay.[50]

Ruskinites did not remain aloof from their Dickson County neighbors, who were generally hostile and suspicious of the newcomers. Since the colonists did not produce all the food needed in the village, a "huckster wagon" was sent out over a ten or twelve mile route buying eggs, chickens, and farm produce for use in the community and for sale

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[49] Coming Nation, March 27, January 9, 1897; October 10, December 19, 1896, February 6, March 20, 27, May 1, 8, 22, 1897.

[50] Ibid., June 19, 1897, January 29, 1898; W. G. Collingwood, Life and Work of John Ruskin (London: Metheun & Co., 1900), 395; E. T. Cook, The Life of John Ruskin (2 vols.; New York: Macmillan Company; London: George Allen & Co., Limited, 1911), II, 343; W. H. G. Armytage, Heavens Below: Utopian Experiments in England, 1560-1960 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), 346; Advertisement, Labour Co-Partnership Yearbook, IV (London: Labour Association, 1898), 166.

in the Ruskin store at Hortense, Tennessee, where a good trade was established among area residents. Troubled by the thought that they were socialists making a profit, the Ruskin settlers reduced their prices to five percent above purchase cost. When this proved financially impractical they returned to normal market prices, angering some neighbors who had been customers. Eventually, as neighboring Tennesseans observed the hard work and thrift of the majority of the settlers, though they still believed some to be undesirable citizens, relations became cordial. From the first year, neighbors were included in Christmas celebrations at Ruskin, and Dickson County people were invited to attend the free lectures, especially to hear prominent visitors such as Jacob Coxey, who in 1894 had led the famous march of the unemployed to Washington, D. C. Farmers came long distances on horseback to the store, or the mill at Ruskin; one Dickson County family even became members of the colony.[51] The cave at the Ruskin settlement had been a traditional place for the celebration of Independence Day by the people of the county. The colony continued the custom, inviting everyone to a free barbecue. Only about one hundred and fifty men, some armed, and a few women attended the first occasion, but the celebrations of the following years brought nearly two thousand neighbors to share in the festivities.[52] In 1896 the newspaper of nearby Waverly reported

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[51] Coming Nation, December 28, 1895, April 17, 1897, February 19, 1898; Miller, "Recollections," 68; Dahnke, "Ruskin--A Brief Utopia in Rural Tennessee," 16.

[52] Coming Nation, December 3, 1898; Miller, "Recollections," 55; J. T. McDill, "Happiest Days of My Life," 6-7.

a "perfect" celebration, declaring that the people of Ruskin were "not anarchists or revolutionists, but good, law-abiding citizens whom any county would be glad to claim." By 1898 the opinion expressed to a Ruskin visitor by a young Dickson County resident was, "We wish there were more colonies for they have increased the value of our land and pay the highest taxes in the county."[53]

Since Tennessee law exempted $1000 of personal property, no individual colonist paid other than the poll tax and the road tax. The latter included a small cash assessment and the rest was paid in work on the highways; Ruskin's quota for 1898 was one hundred and eighty-five days. Nearly all the male members who came to Ruskin in its first year were enrolled in the Dickson County list of those paying the poll tax. Taxes on community property paid by the Ruskin Cooperative Association in 1899 amounted to $285.20 in District 11 and $11.50 in District 13 where the "old" Ruskin property was located.[54] The socialists at Ruskin seem to have found the political mood of Dickson County fairly congenial, since there was an active Populist group which, according to the Coming Nation, had carried the county in the 1892 election and was working hard in 1896. Of the nearly two hundred votes cast at the Ruskin precinct of Cave Mills in 1896, more than eighty percent were for William Jennings Bryan, the Democratic presidential candidate

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[53] New Era (Waverly, Tennessee), quoted in Coming Nation, July 18, 1896; Atlanta Journal, November 12, 1898, p. 11.

[54] Coming Nation, June 8, 1895, August 6, 1898; Tax Records, Dickson County, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, 1895-1899, passim, 1899, pp. 223, 250.

supported by the People's Party.[55] In a normally Democratic county, however, it is difficult to see this as proof of Populist strength. The Ruskinites, about forty of whom were eligible to vote in 1898, were not active in partisan politics but they did have an interest in the 1898 contest between the towns of Dickson and Charlotte over which was to be the county seat.[56]

The Association was financially sound, having followed one of Wayland's principles for success--no debt.[57] Sources of income were the $500 shares bought by new members, profits from the Coming Nation, and proceeds from the sale of their products. In the winter of 1895-1896 this included supplying ten thousand railroad ties for the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway Company.[58] Occasionally substantial donations came from interested friends, such as Joseph Fels, who gave $500 with which the Ruskinites purchased tools.[59] Numerous gifts were received ranging from seeds to musical instruments. Especially prized was an autographed, finely-bound copy of the Works of John Ruskin, sent by that revered man. A silkweaving loom arrived from a friend in Paterson, New Jersey, and spinning machinery for a woolen mill from a Vincennes, Indiana, admirer. Remembering John Ruskin's encouragement of the revival of such crafts in England, these gifts were welcomed.[60]

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[55] Coming Nation, February 1, November 7, 1896.

[56] Ibid., August 13, September 5, 1898.

[57] Ibid., December 23, 1893. [58] Ibid., November 23, 1895.

[59] Miller, "Recollections," 60; Joseph Fels was the owner of the Fels Naptha Soap Company, Philadelphia (see below, page 43.)

[60] Coming Nation, June 12, 1897, March 5, 1898; [Broome], "History," 141-142.

Only the purchase of better land at Cave Mills involved the Association in debt, which was reduced as rapidly as the Directors could manage. In March 1896 the buildings and land of two Rogers tracts were purchased for $10,500, of which $6,500 had been paid eighteen months later. A friend bought the adjoining Smith farm of about 130 acres in July, 1897, giving the colony free use of the land for three years with an option to buy it at his cost of $3,000. The next spring the Adams farm of approximately 280 acres was acquired jointly by the Association and some members for $3,000 with the same free use and option to buy provisions. The Directors were able to report in 1898 that the debt stood at $3,000 on the Rogers tracts of 385 acres, $6,000 optional debt on land they planned to buy, and a $500 mortgage on the old Ruskin property.[61] The annual inventory in January, 1899, set the value of the Association's assets at $94,000.[62]

The Ruskin Cooperative Association had certainly achieved notable progress toward its goal of insuring the members against want, and some measure of success in establishing a harmonious relationship among the colonists. The members, through their work and investments, with some help from outsiders, were provided with employment, homes, food and clothing, education, recreation, medical care and some personal

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[61] Coming Nation, July 3, 1898.

[62] [Broome], "History," 182.

services. The "Colony Notes" editor cautioned his readers, however, that any who think "Ruskin is a paradise and trouble never comes to its citizens . . . get a wrong idea of our colony. We are but human with 5000 years of inherited prejudices. . . . We can't change human nature in four years." [63]

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[63] Coming Nation, July 12, 1898.

CHAPTER II

THE PEOPLE OF RUSKIN

Twenty-seven members signed the By-laws of the Ruskin Cooperative Association on August 25, 1894. Nine women inscribed their names as shareholders, though they could not be listed with the signers of the charter of incorporation which had been accepted the preceding day at the first meeting of the Association. Among the members, by occupation, were five printers, two carpenters, a clerk, baker, butcher, barber, cooper, wiremaker, salesman and a surveyor. Three doctors, two ironworkers, a blacksmith, an artist, a sawmill operator, woodworker, nurseryman, civil engineer, shoemaker, photographer, and several teachers and farmers were among later arrivals. Unlike many other communities which were made up largely of people from a nearby area, or of an entire group which moved together from one state or country to the site of their communal venture, the residents of Ruskin came singly or as one or two families from widely separated points of origin. During the period of Ruskin's existence, members came from at least thirty-two of the states: Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, New Jersey, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming and Tennessee. One family came from England, one from Bombay, India; two brothers and

their families arrived from Nova Scotia, two members each from Russia and Italy, and three from Germany.[1] A visitor in 1897 noted that

> Ohio and Pennsylvania furnish the largest quota. . . . There are none here from the extremely poor and ignorant class. There are none from the rich. Many of them are educated; a few are writers, and almost all of them are good debaters and talkers.[2]

A writer surveying the cooperative groups in the United States in 1901 described the Ruskinites as "plain country people," but alert, with more information and interest in current affairs than a comparable group of common people.[3]

The editors of the Coming Nation were well-known in socialist and reform circles. Julius A. Wayland, the founding editor, was an outstanding leader in the socialist movement in the Mid-West. After leaving Ruskin he published an even more successful socialist paper in Girard, Kansas, the Appeal to Reason, similar indeed to Thomas Paine's Revolutionary-era pamphlet in its name and in its ability to stir the people. Alfred S. Edwards, who became editor of the Coming Nation when Wayland departed, had been a leader in the Bellamy-inspired Nationalist Party in Minneapolis before becoming Wayland's associate editor in Greensburg, Indiana. He went to Ruskin as the editor of the Coming Nation in 1895, then resigned in the spring of 1898 to travel in the middle west in a covered wagon, spreading socialist doctrine. When the Social Democratic Party was formed that summer in Chicago, he was

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[1] Coming Nation, passim; Miller, "Recollections," 50, 54. (Also see Appendix B.)

[2] Pomeroy, "Sketch of the Socialist Colony in Tennessee," 3.

[3] Alexander Kent, "Cooperative Communities in the United States," Bulletin of the Department of Labor, Vol. VI, No. 35 (July, 1901), 609.

chosen as the national organizer, but soon became editor of its official paper.[4]

Edwards was succeeded in July, 1898, by Herbert N. Casson, whose weekly sermons and whose letters from his 1897 visit to England had been carried in the Coming Nation. In 1894 Casson, a Methodist minister, had founded in Lynn, Massachusetts, a Labor Church patterned after those begun by John Mitchell in England in 1891 as a non-sectarian expression of the religion of the labor movement. Casson had been active and influential in the Socialist Labor Party, but like Bellamy, Laurance Gronlund, and other reform leaders, he was opposed to the theory of the class struggle. He was expelled from the Party in 1896 for his criticism of such beliefs. During his stay at Ruskin, Casson and the poetess, Lydia Kingsmill Commander, were married in a civil ceremony; interestingly, she retained her maiden name. She wrote the woman's column in the Coming Nation in 1898-1899. By 1900 both were working for the Bellamy Review and during the presidential contest , Casson served as an editorial writer for Hearst's Chicago American. He was among those supporting the Democratic Party candidate, William Jennings Bryan.[5] In 1901 Casson published a history of the American labor move-

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[4]Quint, Forging of American Socialism, 83, 320.

[5]Coming Nation, July-August, 1897, June 18, September 3, 1898; William D. P. Bliss, ed., The New Encyclopedia of Social Reform (3d ed.; New York and London: Funk & Wagnalls, 1910), 677-678; Miller, "Recollections," 68; Quint, Forging of American Socialism, 270, 370; Eltweed Pomeroy, "Herbert N. Casson and the Lynn Labor Church," Coming Nation, January 8, 1898.

ment, and in 1905, while editor of Munsey's Magazine, wrote on "Socialism, Its Growth and Its Leaders." Two years later, however, his interests took another direction in a book titled The Romance of Iron and Steel: the Story of a Thousand Millionaires. This trend was evident also in the publication of Creative Thinkers, the Efficient Few Who Cause Progress and Prosperity an Explanation of the Rise and Fall of Business firms and Nations. In 1909 he completed a biography of Cyrus McCormick.[6]

The Ruskin colony attracted the attention of a number of prominent social reformers and entertained some of them as visitors. One of these was Eltweed Pomeroy, president of the National Direct Legislation League which included among its several vice presidents Edward Bellamy, Jacob Coxey, Susan B. Anthony, Eugene Debs, J. A. Wayland and A. S. Edwards. The league worked for the initiative and referendum and had influenced the inclusion of such a plank in the 1896 People's Party platform. Pomeroy visited Ruskin in 1897 and contributed an article about the colony to the American Fabian. Like Casson, he was a "non-partisan" socialist--he did not support the idea of a separate Socialist Party and in the election of 1900 he worked for the Democratic Party. Pomeroy joined with others at that time to urge Eugene Debs to with-

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[6]Henry Jacob Silverman, "American Social Reformers in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century," Ph. D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1964 (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms), Bibliography.

draw his candidacy for the office of President so as not to divide the reform vote.[7]

Probably the best known visitor to Ruskin was Henry Demarest Lloyd, who was invited by the Association to make the address at the laying of the cornerstone of Ruskin College, June 19, 1897. Lloyd, a successful journalist, had attacked monopolies in his popular book, Wealth Against Commonwealth (1894), and had continued to write on social problems, traveling widely to observe conditions in several countries. He attended the International Cooperative Alliance in Delft, Holland, in September, 1897, as the delegate of the Ruskin Cooperative Association. His reports of the sessions of the Alliance appeared in the Coming Nation. Lloyd found that the Ruskin colony was known to a number of delegates; while traveling in England following the Delft meeting, he heard praise for the proposed college at Ruskin. His account of the laying of the cornerstone appeared in the New York Herald, and in 1898, Lloyd, who supported both political action and communitarian efforts toward reform, commended the example of the Ruskin colony in an item in the London journal, Labour Co-Partnership.[8]

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, another reformer, visited the Ruskin settlement in Febraury, 1899. A talented poetess, she had lectured for

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[7] Coming Nation, August 1, 1896; Bliss, New Encyclopedia of Social Reform, 915; Pomeroy, "Sketch of the Socialist Colony in Tennessee," American Fabian, III (April, 1897), 1-3; Quint, Forging of American Socialism, 370-371.

[8] Coming Nation, July 3, August 28, 1897; Lloyd, Henry Demarest Lloyd: A Biography, 62, 68; New York Herald, June 20, 1897, sec. 1, p. 4; Labour Co-Partnership Yearbook, IV (1898), 161.

the Nationalists in 1890, was associated with the People's Party and later, the Socialist Party. Especially active in the women's rights movement, she published Women and Economics, Concerning Children, and The Home in addition to her poetry, and articles contributed to the American Fabian.[9] Another visitor, and benefactor of the Ruskin enterprise as well, was Joseph Fels, owner of the Fels Naptha Soap Company in Philadelphia, but whose main residence was in England, where he developed interests in labor colonies. In Philadelphia he sponsored a project much like one of John Ruskin's--vacant lots were loaned to the unemployed for vegetable gardens. In 1896 eight hundred families participated in this program.[10] Jacob Coxey appeared in Ruskin as a visitor and lecturer in 1894. Another guest was Carl Browne, an artist who had marched to Washington in 1894 with Coxey's army of unemployed, trying to promote a program of public works. Browne later married Coxey's daughter, who accompanied her husband to Ruskin.[11] Another artist, Guy Lockwood, lived in the colony for a time but did not become a member. Mary Harris "Mother" Jones, an eccentric but determined woman who traveled among the mining camps taking part in strikes, and was known as the "patron saint of miners," was a visitor in September, 1897. She lectured for the Ruskin Lyceum and a few days later spoke

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[9] Coming Nation, February 11, 1899; Bliss, New Encyclopedia of Social Reform, 547.

[10] Bliss, New Encyclopedia of Social Reform, 489, 1255; Miller, "Recollections," 60.

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in Nashville. Members of other communal groups also visited Ruskin from time to time.[12] Communication among reformers and reform groups, however diverse, seems to have been frequent and continuous in the 1890's and the Ruskin community was well known.

Although the charter members qualified for entry into the Association on the basis of their contribution to its founding either through subscriptions which built up the circulation of the Coming Nation or by needed equipment, a sawmill for example, and pioneer work, the colony soon set up a system for admission. Prospective members were invited to visit the settlement before deciding to apply. The Board of Directors drew up an examination which by 1899 consisted of about forty questions on the principles of cooperation and socialism. The entire membership voted on applicants in the stockholders' meeting. The May, 1897, amendments to the By-Laws reduced from two-thirds to a simple majority the vote needed to elect new members, but also eliminated the monthly meeting of stockholders. Thereafter members voted during a two-hour period each Saturday afternoon on any applications for membership, which had been posted on the colony bulletin board for the week preceding the election.[13]

Information on individual members is fragmentary and scattered, consisting of passing references in special articles and the "Colony

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[12]Miller, "Recollections," 60, 67-68; Matthews, Letters, February 16, 28, 1973; Coming Nation, September 25, 1897.

[13]Shepstone, "A Modern Utopia," 263; [Broome], "History,"

Notes" written by H. C. McDill for the Coming Nation, and in a few reminiscences from later years. Among the members of the colony was a widely known artist, Isaac Broome, who had served as a commissioner to the Paris Exposition of 1889. He arrived at Ruskin with his wife in March, 1896, interested in the projected college as a prospective faculty member. Broome modeled a bust of John Ruskin for the theater-dining hall, and taught art and architecture in the colony school. For Christmas, 1897, he presented a painting of Friedrich Froebel as the first of a gallery of eminent men which he planned for the colony. In February, 1898, he completed his portrait of John Ruskin, and in April, a portrait of Eugene Debs. The portrait of Shakespeare which hung near the stage in the dining hall was probably his also. Broome wrote the official history of the colony and later a disillusioned account, The Last Days of the Ruskin Cooperative Association.[14]

Physicians in the group were T. Eliot Tait, a signer of the charter of incorporation, and Reece C. Townsend; both withdrew from the colony after a brief time. Two other medical doctors were active during the life of the colony: W. H. Charlesworth, who remained to practice in Tennessee when Ruskin removed to Georgia, and H. C. McDill, who went with the colony. Walter Van Fleet went to Ruskin as a retired physician and through his interest in horticulture, served in the

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[14] Coming Nation, March 18, April 11, 1896; July 24, August 14, 1897, January 8, February 19, April 9, 1898; Isaac Broome, The Last Days of the Ruskin Cooperative Association (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company, 1902).

community gardens; in 1898 a large public flower garden was his project. His medical knowledge was also called into service occasionally. Mrs. John Eschman, a native of Zurich, Switzerland, who had come to the United States in 1883, was a qualified midwife.[15]

One rare account of a family was given by Eva Gordon, who wrote poetry and articles for the Children's Department of the Coming Nation. Her column of April 21, 1898, carried a letter from her elder brother and an explanation for her young readers that the Gordon family had moved to Ruskin from Nebraska, where they had owned a sheep ranch. Eva Gordon's brother, however, had remained in Nebraska to teach and become a school principal. But, as she explained, he had visited Ruskin the previous summer and remembered it with pleasure.[16] The Gordons were fairly typical of the people who went to Ruskin to enter whole-heartedly into a new kind of life. Some families came with experiences in another communal group. Among these were the J. C. Herrings and the John Heastons who had lived for three years in a colony at Topolobampo, Mexico.

There was recognition in the official history that the venture attracted some unsuitable people, exemplified by a man who sold subscriptions to the Coming Nation in California and other western states, and who traveled four thousand miles in his wagon to become a member of the Ruskin Cooperative Association. He is described as

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[15] Coming Nation, May 4, 1895, June 11, 1898; Corlew, History of Dickson County, 143.

[16] Ibid., April 21, 1898.

> an indefatigable talker with a voice pitched in a high key. His appearance far from inviting. . . . He was a rough representative of the Coming Nation, but he had the subscriptions to show, and that was a pretty good recommendation.
>
> As soon as he was rested up a little he voluntarily struck out to convert our neighbors, . . . took up his position on the street corner and announced to the people, 'This is a church ridden town' and followed with other denunciations of their piety and customs.[17]

His "loudmouthed anarchy and free love" proved disruptive in the colony, so they sent him out to canvass Texas. He eventually withdrew to join another colony, quite critical of the disapproval he had received at Ruskin.

Soon after this incident, two young men arrived to spend the winter. Traveling in a wagon in the style of a medicine show, they had attracted audiences with music and comedy and dispensed socialistic theory. While in Ruskin they helped with the Saturday night entertainments and proved very popular with the young people. Their wagon became a gathering place, and since the community had already been disturbed by the subject, it was rumored that "free love" was the topic of discussion. Another young man, formerly in the United States Army, who took out membership in the association, taught the young people the latest dances and he, too, came to be regarded by some Ruskinites as part of the "anarchy and free love" element.[18]

These experiences were only passing incidents in the life of the colony, but they reveal in part the divisions that were beginning

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[17] [Broome], "History," 107.

[18] Ibid., 109-110.

to be felt. More serious perhaps were the differences in basic attitudes. When Wayland had been planning the cooperative village, he had been asked if they would sell their products for financial gain. Wayland's reply had been, "Yes," and he pointed out that the Coming Nation was making a profit. Most of the earlier members agreed with Wayland's position. Among the newer leadership, however, were men who declared, "We don't want to make money; business is just what we don't want. . . . It will corrupt our young people." They considered auditing and bookkeeping accounts as parts of the system which they had come to Ruskin to escape. Opportunities to sell at off-season prices celery bleached and stored in the cave or to provide laundry service for a nearby college and town were passed by. To those of the opposing view this was mismanagement and an unrealistic "disregard of fact."[19]

Contributing to division was another factor. When Eltweed Pomeroy visited Ruskin early in 1897 he noted that "very few come from farms, and those who do have lived at least for a few years in cities, so that it can be said to be wholly a city community." Earl Miller, a member of the community for nearly six years, pointed to the same factor when he noted that more of the later arrivals were rural people in whom some older members had no confidence. There was disagreement, perhaps related to the same circumstance, on educational standards. While the leaders had projected a full twelve-year program, many members thought

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[19] Coming Nation, December 1, 1893, April 6, 1901; Broome, Last Days of the Ruskin Cooperative Association, 150.

schooling to about age ten an adequate education. When parents decided thus, enforcement of the By-laws requiring school attendance was difficult. The proposed college lacked support and the laying of the cornerstone saw a number of "hostile and resentful" members in attendance.[20]

In contrast with certain of the communities of the early nineteenth century, in particular those with religious foundations, the membership of Ruskin was not a permanent, continuing group. The records show fifty-one members entering in the first twelve months. The Coming Nation on June 28, 1895, reported ten withdrawals in the same period--a loss of twenty percent. At the end of five years, Isaac Broome drew up a simple chart showing the fluidity of the membership. Of the twenty-seven charter members of the association only three remained in 1899. Of thirty-three who entered in 1895 only four were still members on June 29, 1899 when the new Ruskin Commonwealth was formed. The chart shows the yearly losses in percentages; the average is just under nineteen percent for the five years. Nearly one-fifth of the membership withdrew each year. There were always new applicants, however, and the colony grew to and maintained a fairly constant population of two hundred and fifty to three hundred persons, including wives, children, and visitors.[21]

In July, 1898, the Coming Nation reported a total of twenty births in the four years since the founding of the village. A year

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[20]Pomeroy, "Sketch of the Socialist Colony in Tennessee,"3; Miller, "Recollections," 57-58; [Broome], "History," 172; Butler, "Ruskin Commonwealth," 340.

[21]Coming Nation, June 29, 1895; Broome, Last Days of the Ruskin Cooperative Association, 21.

later, as the colony prepared to move, the weekly remarked that during the five years in Tennessee there had been seven deaths in the Ruskin community. Five were of children--one each from the Miller, Wallace, and Chase families and two Kemp children. Two men had died, both unmarried and both charter members, among the first arrivals in June, 1894. Sinclair Marsden's death in January, 1898, had followed a two-to-three week illness in a Nashville hospital. John Wagner evidently had gone alone to bathe and, being unable to swim, had drowned in Yellow Creek in June, 1898.[22]

The reasons for withdrawal of members is not documented, but the Coming Nation did report some departures. Several Ruskin families --Funk, Kirsch, Chase, Paulus, and Tubbs--withdrew in the fall of 1897 and early 1898 to form a new colony at Dixie on the Tennessee River, which lasted only until the end of the year. The Knorrs, the Hassmanns and the Wheelers moved to farms in northern Arkansas where two Ruskin families had already gone, and the E. M. Lewis family bought a farm in McKenzie, Tennessee, also in 1898. In the same year the John Keastons took up residence in Nashville, the C. F. Conley family returned to Missouri, and John McLean and Thomas Jones set out for the Klondike. In the spring of 1899, William Rohde and W. H. McMahon went to Ohio and the Williams family moved to Tennessee City. In a rare instance where a reason is mentioned, it was reported that the Van Fleets were returning to New Jersey, because they still owned property there which could not be managed from such a distance. In two cases at least, there was

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[22]Coming Nation, January 8, June 24, July 2, 1898, August 19, 1899.

an exchange of a Ruskin membership by the departing member. H. Chilcoate traded his share to Frank O. Clarke for a farm in Arkansas, and the membership of Albert Sharpe was exchanged for the New York residence of C. M. Rust, so that those members were replaced immediately. Two charter members, W. H. Lawson and J. A. Sturgis, went to Charlotte, Tennessee, in the fall of 1898, where, as experienced newspapermen, they revived the Dickson County Press.[23]

The fact that it was Association policy, though not required by the By-laws, to return the $500 share to the withdrawing member, as soon as it could be done without jeopardizing the colony, made it possible to leave without that loss.[24] The primitive conditions of the village, especially on the first site, must have caused the departure of some half-hearted socialists. Later, some who might have proved valuable members were repelled by the atmosphere of disorganization and mismanagement. On the other hand, the tenacity of the Ruskin group was noted by an analyst of their failure. The colony had survived the mistake of the first site and a relocation, and a majority of the members made the second move to Georgia.[25] Certainly a number of the people of Ruskin were committed to enduring hardship for the values they found in the community.

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[23] Ibid., September, 1897-April, 1899, passim; Dickson County Press, November 3, 24, 1898.

[24] John Southworth, "The Cooperative Colony at Ruskin, Tennessee," Home Magazine, IX (October, 1897), 333.

[25] Coming Nation, April 6, 1901; Walter G. Davis, "Failure of the Ruskin Colony," Gunton's Magazine, XXI (December, 1901), 531, 534.

CHAPTER III

THE END OF THE EXPERIMENT

In the Summer of 1895, when the colony was less than one year old, the Coming Nation announced that "by mutual consent" Julius Wayland, founding editor and Association president, had resigned. The insistence that all was well in Ruskin, and explanations for the break gave evidence of a crisis in the community. The interim editorial committee acknowledged Wayland's important contributions to the colony but declared that his "toleration of private ownership of the principal means of production" could not be accepted in a socialist society.[1] Wayland had purchased the first one thousand acres in his name, but had transferred the title to the Ruskin Cooperative Association within six months.[2] He had pledged the income from the Coming Nation to the support of the colony but had retained ownership of the paper, or at least its management. Perhaps the relationship had not been clearly spelled out, for in December, 1894, Wayland had requested and been granted a lease giving him "sole and exclusive management and control" of all the printing business, because the members of the Association believed they would be unable to continue publication without his direction.[3] When, in July,

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[1] Coming Nation, July 27, August 3, 1895.

[2] Corlew, History of Dickson County, 223 n.

[3] R. C. A. Minutes, August 24th to March 6th 1895, p. 169. The lease states that the Association had decided to cease publication of the Coming Nation. [Broome], "History," 25.

1895, he asked that a newly acquired press also be placed under his control, the stockholders' meeting gave him notice to terminate the lease. The temporary editors of the Coming Nation characterized the disagreement as a struggle of "personal greed versus public welfare."[4] The new editor, Alfred S. Edwards, had been associate editor of the Coming Nation in Greensburg, Indiana, but had not moved originally with the paper to Tennessee. Years later one former member reported a suspicion that Edwards had taken some part in urging the charter members to ask for control of the printing plant, noting that after Wayland left, Edwards arrived very quickly to take over the editorship and was voted into membership without being required to buy a share.[5]

The Coming Nation, characteristically, reported very little of later trouble. One of the very few members who have recorded their memories of the colony, Earl Miller, who became a member in 1896 but returned to Kansas to teach a term of school, "waited anxiously for . . . the Coming Nation and Dr. McDill's column" for news of events in Ruskin. But he recalled, "I did not know until my return in the spring of 1897 that the winter had been a stormy one for the colony. Some disgruntled members had tried, though unsuccessfully, to get a receiver appointed."[6] That was the first of a series of attempted injunctions, but none was reported in the colony paper. In June, 1897, three members, John Eckleman, Albert Holst, and E. G. Schultz, asked for the return of their $500

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[4] Coming Nation, August 3, 1895.

[5] [Broome], "History," 27; J. A. Kemp, Letter to Earl Miller, "Recollections," 50.

[6] Miller, "Recollections," 55.

shares, as usual on withdrawing from the Association. When the request was refused, they brought suit against the Ruskin Cooperative Association. Holst also wrote to the People, a Socialist Labor Party paper, complaining of ill-treatment and poor conditions in Ruskin. Because of this publicity, the Coming Nation gave front-page space to explain the whole affair, denying Holst's charges and revealing that the stock in question had been seized and sold for debts by the constable and was no longer held by the Association. A letter from Henry Demarest Lloyd testifying to the good character and situation of the colony was included in the article. The Association brought counter suits against Holst and Schültz on libel charges. In the August Term (1898) of Chancery Court at Charlotte, Tennessee, both suits were dropped with the understanding that the complainants' rights in their stock would remain unchanged, but they were to pay the court costs.[7]

The front page of the Coming Nation on February 29, 1899, carried an address given in the People's Church at Washington, D.C. lauding the example of the Ruskin community and attributing its success to recognition of the principle of absolute democracy, financial conservatism and avoidance of debt, careful selection of new members, and a complete program of education and wholesome recreation. On April 29, 1899, a rumor of the imminent failure of the Ruskin colony which was

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[7]Coming Nation, July 31, 1897; Clerk and Master's Minutes, 1899, Dickson County Records, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, 366-368.

reported in the Workers' Call, a Socialist Labor Party publication, was emphatically denied by the Coming Nation.[8]

One week later the headline, "Injunction and Receivership," must have been read with surprise and shock by the subscribers to the socialist paper.[9] Because the Association was found to be in excellent financial condition, the receivership was dismissed by the judge, to the great rejoicing of the Ruskinites. The experience brought them, however, to the decision that they could no longer continue under a stock company charter that left them open to the call for liquidation by a few dissatisfied stockholders. The majority held a closed meeting and voted to accept a new covenant and charter as the Ruskin Commonwealth.[10] To effect the transfer, it was planned that all Association property would be sold and the proceeds prorated among the members; those who wished could enter the new Commonwealth organization, and those who preferred to leave could do so. The court had given permission for the sale, which was advertised in the Dickson Home Enterprise to be held June 22, 1899. The lawyer who had helped the majority draw up the new charter had advised that they keep it secret and wait until after the sale to organize and elect officers. The leader of the group, nevertheless, went ahead with the organization and published the news of the "Ruskin Commonwealth" in the Coming Nation. The "injunctionists," believing that the plan was designed to give those withdrawing less than

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[8] Coming Nation, February 29, April 29, 1899.

[9] Ibid., May 6, 1899.

[10] Ibid., May 20, 1899.

the value of their shares, took the matter to court and protested that the operation of schools, dining room, and library was in violation of the Association's charter. On this point the court ruled against the majority and another receiver was appointed.[11]

After a few days of "general depression" the members of the new organization decided to stay together. They appointed a Ways and Means committee; some men took jobs as carpenters; and thirteen young men found employment cutting wood for the charcoal iron smelter located at Cumberland Furnace, eighteen miles away. From June 22, when the industries of the colony were closed by the receiver, until September, twenty to thirty-five of the men lived in tents, worked at Cumberland Furnace, and sent their wages to support Ruskin colony.[12] At the Fourth of July celebration that year neighbors from nearby towns and countryside showed their concern and support. Although approximately fifteen hundred people attended, they bought five thousand admission tickets, as well as large quantities of ice cream and lemonade, all the flowers and vegetables the colonists could spare, then the decorations in the cave, and finally they gathered together some money for a donation to the people of Ruskin.[13] Five of these same neighbors, Thomas Rodgers, M. V. Smith and Dr. Smith, and two Nesbitt brothers, offered to loan $10,500

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[11] Home Enterprise (Dickson, Tennessee), June 9, 1899, p. 4; Broome, Last Days of the Ruskin Cooperative Association, 152-153; Miller, "Recollections," 61-65; H. C. McDill, "Why the Ruskin Colony Failed," Gunton's Magazine, XXII (May, 1902), 438-439.

[12] Coming Nation, July 8, August 5, 12, 19, 1899; H. C. McDill, "Why the Ruskin Colony Failed," 438; J. T. McDill, "Happiest Days of My Life," 6.

[13] J. T. McDill, "Happiest Days of My Life," 7.

and among themselves the colonists managed to raise over $4,000 in cash by the time of the auction sale which had been set for July 26, 1899.[14]

On the day of the auction the men of Ruskin marched by twos to the cave, followed by a crowd of farmers and traders, reminding Charles Cornforth, Nashville American reporter, of a funeral. He found the former Association divided into three groups: the minority who had secured the injunction, a majority who had formed the new Ruskin Commonwealth, and about thirty persons, some the "cream" of the membership, who were making their own individual plans for the future.[15]

The majority group was determined to keep the Coming Nation, giving it priority in the use of their resources, even though subscriptions had dropped from sixty thousand to eleven thousand. They also hoped to retain the site since only one-fourth of the bid would be required in cash. The auction began with the sale of the land and the buildings, the three sections at Cave Mills being offered separately at first, and when no bids were made, bids were asked on the property as a whole. It was sold to Ransom Leech, acting as trustee for the minority who then declared their intention to continue a colony on an individualized rather than a cooperative basis. Members of the new Commonwealth, having lost the land, but with an invitation from the

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[14]H. C. McDill, "Why the Ruskin Colony Failed," 439; Coming Nation, August 5, 1899.

[15]Charles Cornforth, "Their Utopia Is No More," Nashville American, July 27, 1899, p. 8.

Immigration Commissioner of Virginia and contacts in Alabama and Georgia, planned to relocate. On the second day of the sale most of their cash went to purchase the Coming Nation and the printing business. The majority also were able to salvage the laundry, coffeehouse, tinshop, shoeshop, some horses and some of the crops in the gardens. Since they had lost the steam engine, a neighbor loaned his threshing machine to power the presses so that publication of the Coming Nation continued. They counted their share of the $25,000 expected from the sale, an amount which would give each stockholder approximately $190, among their assets.[16]

In August the receiver reported that the high bidder had not complied with the terms of the sale and the property was offered to the Commonwealth group at his bid, but they had no funds; new bids were asked. In the Special Term of Chancery Court at Charlotte, Tennessee, November , 1899, after the members of the Commonwealth had moved, Judge W. L. Grigsby ruled, over vigorous protests from lawyers on behalf of the members, that the property having been offered twice for sale, and bids being open since the end of September, the sale of the three tracts to Thomas Rogers for $1,505 was confirmed.[17] After creditors, court costs, receiver and lawyers were paid, the amount of each share was about $36--a great loss to all stockholders.[18]

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[16]Coming Nation, August 5, 26, 1899; Nashville Banner, July 27, 1899, p. 4; Cornforth, "Their Utopia Is No More," 8.

[17]Miller, "Recollections," 63; Clerk and Master's Minutes, 1899, Dickson County Records, 536-539; Coming Nation, August 26, 1899.

[18]Corlew, History of Dickson County, 149.

In the meantime, the Ruskin Commonwealth had decided to join forces with the American Settlers' Association, organized only a year earlier. The Settlers, a group of eight or nine families from Indiana, agreed to dissolve their association and become members of the Ruskin Commonwealth; in exchange, the Commonwealth was to pay the $3,000 debt owed by the Settlers for their land in Georgia. The new location, six miles south of Waycross in extreme southern Georgia, was described as an eight-hundred acre trace with a number of good frame buildings, two large houses, a store, post office and railroad depot. In spite of objections from members who believed it unwise, those who had charge of printing the Coming Nation publicized the need for $7,000 to cover payment of the $3,000 debt and the expenses of moving. Readers and friends responded with renewals of subscriptions, loans, and purchases of colony products, and members gave their wages. Two hundred and forty-nine passengers with fifteen cars of freight traveled in one train, arriving at Duke, Georgia, on September 16, 1899, thereby joining the forty-six socialists there. The new Ruskin Commonwealth was incorporated on October 9, 1899.[19]

Once on the site the newcomers found a long building with two parallel rooms. In one the all-important press was set up; the other was prepared for use as the dining hall by the addition of a kitchen and bakery. Twenty-two tables were arranged in the room and following

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[19] Coming Nation, August 12, 1899; F. A. Bushee, "Communistic Societies," Political Science Quarterly, XX (December, 1905), 664; H. C. McDill, "Why the Ruskin Colony Failed," 441; Robert Latimer Hurst, "Ruskin--Lost Utopia," Times-Union and Journal Magazine (Jacksonville, Florida), June 4, 1967, p. 8.

the practice at Ruskin, Tennessee, families sat together with the young people serving as waiters and dishwashers.[20] There was a school building on the property and another building was granted for their use by the county. Forty pupils were enrolled in the upper grades and two-year high school in one building, fifty in the lower grades in the other, and twenty kindergarten children were taught in separate quarters. The schools were declared open to all neighborhood children. Soon the suspender, broom and coffee factories were operating, as were the print-plant, shoeshop and photo studio. Ruskin Cereal Coffee was displayed at the Ware County Fair of 1899. On January 1, 1900, the Duke, Georgia, post office was renamed Ruskin. The relocated colony had made a hopeful new beginning.[21]

Many of the factors, however, which had enabled the Ruskinites tobuild up a progressing community in Tennessee were missing. It became more difficult to make friends in the area as neighbors' suspicions of "misplaced Yankees" were strengthened by rumors of the "free love" and quarreling which had troubled the colony in Tennessee. The hot, humid climate, the location at the edge of the Okefenokee Swamp, malaria, and poor soil, or at least a very sandy soil which the settlers had no experience in farming, made life hard. A long, cold, rainy winter in 1901-1902 caused crop failure; and with no proper food, sickness and death struck the colony. Divisions grew among the people; fire destroyed the dining hall and coffee factory. Even though the people

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[20] Coming Nation, November 18, 1899.

[21] Ibid., December 2, 1899; Hurst, "Ruskin--Lost Utopia," 8-9.

struggled valiantly, pulling the plows themselves when their animals died, hope was destroyed.[22] Having experienced the loss of their former settlement, perhaps even the most optimistic and tenacious were now more easily discouraged. By February, 1901, after less than eighteen months in Georgia, many had left, taking the offer of $10 for each house from the remaining Board of Directors. In March several of the leaders, on leave of absence, went to nearby Kinderlou for employment in a wood-working mill. The resident members declared their intention to maintain the organization, but by May more were preparing to leave. In June, 1901, to protect the paper from the colony's creditors, the Mutual Publishing Company was formed at Waycross, with two local citizens--J. Arnold Brash as president and J. S. Bailey, Citizens' National Bank president, as treasurer--joining with some Ruskin men as owner of the Coming Nation. On July 23 the absent members protested that their leave had been cancelled without proper notice. Subscriptions to the Coming Nation continued to decline and the paper was sold to Fred D. Warren, publisher and associate of Julius A. Wayland, in Rich Hill, Missouri. In September the other property was sold by the sheriff at the Waycross court house.[23]

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[22]Coming Nation, May 26, 1900; Hurst, "Ruskin--Lost Utopia,"9; Miller, "Recollections," 67-69; H. C. McDill, "Why the Ruskin Colony Failed, 442; Francelia Butler, "From Fantasy to Reality: Ruskin's King of the Golden River, St. George's Guild, and Ruskin, Tennessee," Children's Literature, I (1972), 70; Kent, "Cooperative Communities in the United States," 609.

[23]Hurst, "Ruskin--Lost Utopia," 9; Coming Nation, April 6, June 8, 1901; H. C. McDill, "Why the Ruskin Colony Failed," 443. A copy of the protest is in Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville.

As might be expected, members of the colony and those who had followed its progress tried to assign some reasons for its failure in Tennessee. An editorial in the New York Journal declared, just two days after the June, 1899, sale of the property at Cave Mills and old Ruskin, that

> the failure was not commercial. The association was perfectly solvent. . . . The cause of the trouble was the dissatisfaction of less than a dozen members. These people attempted to disseminate the doctrines of anarchy and free love, but were prevented by the remaining two hundred.[24]

The Coming Nation's current editor, Herbert Casson, diagnosed the underlying cause as the "individualistic character of the organization under its charter," which the members believed had been corrected in the new Commonwealth agreement; it would enable them to be truly socialist.[25] In 1899 after the move to Georgia, the official history was published which asserted that

> a secret ring had controlled the affairs and destinies of Ruskin since the founder, Wayland, had left and were insidiously drifting her away from the Socialist movement into a closed corporation for a favored few where the shallow philosophies of anarchism and free love would prevail.[26]

Another account of the events at Ruskin, Tennessee, termed "a secret history," appeared in the Coming Nation on April 6, 1901, shortly before the final dissolution of the colony in Georgia. More matter-of-fact in tone than the official history, the report defended the charter

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[24]Editorial, New York Journal, July 29, 1899, quoted in Coming Nation, August 12, 1899.

[25]Coming Nation, August 12, 1899.

[26]Ibid., December 16, 1899.

and older members, recognizing that discord had begun over the question of stockholding, but accusing the newer leadership of mismanagement and impractical ideas. H. C. McDill, active in the community almost from its beginning, pointed out three errors: location, lack of understanding among the members, and most important--the capitalistic charter. Earl Miller, looking back after forty years, also concluded that most of the trouble stemmed from a corporation charter and an unequal basis for membership.[27] On the other side, one analyst argued that Ruskinites did not realize that their most successful period at Cave Mills was the result of the application of capitalistic rather than socialistic principles.[28]

Wayland, however, recognized that the colony was using capitalist measures, but he believed that the laws favoring corporations could be made to work for the benefit of a cooperative venture, so the Association had been incorporated as a stockholders' company under Tennessee laws for mining and manufacturing companies. The newspaper and the land formed the capital for the company; charter members who had secured two hundred subscriptions to the Coming Nation or shared in the work of founding the colony were issued stock for these contributions; among charter members both husband and wife were stockholders. Subsequently members obtained one share of stock for $500 or its equivalent in implements or labor. A wife could take out her own share of stock, but

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[27] Ibid., April 6, 1901; H. C. McDill, "Why the Ruskin Colony Failed," 435; Miller, "Recollections," 49-50.

[28] Davis, "Failure of the Ruskin Colony," 535-536.

she and children under twenty-one would receive the benefits of the colony without it through the one share held by her husband. Although there seems to have been no such instance, a bachelor justifiably could have complained of this inequality. Since only stockholders could vote, and only the wives of charter members were stockholders, some members began to insist that stock be issued to wives of the other members without an additional $500 payment.[29] Agitation for stock and the right to vote took on the issue of women's rights and equality. In 1897 the charter members agreed to grant stock, and voting rights, to the rest of the women if the charter were amended to allow it. When the amendment was rejected by the stockholders' meeting, the charter members secured the first injunction--to prevent issue of stock contrary to the charter.

Reviewing the experience forty years later, Earl Miller could see that part of the trouble was due to tensions created as the charter members, who had filled the offices and directed the association from its founding, saw some of the leadership passing to new people. They were reluctant to admit more people to voting privileges.[30] In this situation the injunction against issuing stock to women without changing the charter takes on the aspect of a delaying legal tactic. Wayland had projected as a method of earning stock, the using of hours of labor to build credit equal to $500 rather than exchanging hours for colony

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[29] Coming Nation, February 10, 1894, April 4, 1896; By-Laws, Articles I and II; Miller, "Recollections," 57.

[30] Miller, "Recollections," 66.

products.[31] It was on this basis that the court dismissed the injunction. The continued push for the franchise resulted in a proposal by the Directors to issue stock to certain women but not to Mrs. Allen Fields, who had arrived after the pioneer work was done. Real division seems to have begun at this point, with the other women insisting that they would stand by Mrs. Fields. Thereafter, each "faction tried to gain support of new members coming in."[32] At about the same time a Board of Directors consisting of newer members was elected, partly with the aid of the charter group who thought that the new officers would soon demonstrate their incompetence.[33]

The charge of mismanagement was not confined to newer officers, in the view of Jacob Braam, who had been a member of the association during its final five months in Tennessee. Writing a study for a sociological journal, he noted the poor choice of the first location among other mistakes. From his knowledge of the inventory methods used, he concluded that the value of the property at Ruskin had been set too high, and he pointed out that Dun and Bradstreet had rated the colony "C" and not "A1," as the Coming Nation had reported. Evaluating the economic factors of the community, he found the Coming Nation and the Fourth of July celebrations very profitable, and claimed that the laundry,

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[31] Coming Nation, December 23, 1893.

[32] Ibid., April 6, 1901.

[33] Broome, Last Days of the Ruskin Cooperative Association, 130-131.

dining room and sawmill provided real saving in time and money for the residents. Many other enterprises, however, brought only small returns; and some products, such as hay balers and window sashes and doors, had required expensive machinery and proved to have only a small market in the area. The new cylinder press, of which members were proud, Braam considered a luxury since they already owned a press adequate to handle the Coming Nation and other printing. He was critical of the outlay of capital for hiring outsiders to do menial chores and for buying vegetables and other items of food. Good management should have enabled the colonists to supply all their own food and to take advantage of opportunities for supplemental income, such as providing laundry service for a nearby town.[34] This charge of mismanagement had been one of the points of contention in the colony.[35]

The differences between older and newer members involved other considerations. Earl Miller recalled a meeting at which the "relative merits" of office workers and outdoor workers were discussed. "As a rule," he observed, "the charter members considered themselves head-workers as distinguished from manual workers," implying superiority.[36]

It was the policy of the Ruskin Cooperative Association to return $500 for the non-dividend stock of any member who withdrew. In 1898 the "injunctionists" offered to leave the colony, asking for the

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[34]Jacob W. Braam, "The Ruskin Co-operative Colony," American Journal of Sociology, VIII (March, 1903), 655-680.

[35]Coming Nation, April 6, 1901.

[36]Miller, "Recollections," 68.

value of two shares for each man and wife. J. K. Calkins, who was President of the Association at that time, wanted to make such a settlement, though he was not aligned with the charter group. He was criticized by the Directors who decided to allow only $500 per couple. Neither side was willing to compromise on this basic point of the original disagreement. Following this incident the "injunctionists"--mostly charter members--were ostracized by the other Ruskinites; and they began a determined effort to recover their shares in the corporation, though from time to time various members withdrew. One charter member, William W. White, who held the office of postmaster and was paid by the United States government, withheld his paychecks from the Association in order to secure the $1,000 he regarded as the value of the shares held by himself and his wife. Under pressure from the Directors to turn the money into the treasury, he left when the amount saved had reached $843.[37]

Against this background of antagonism the issues of "anarchy and free love" seem less a cause than a symptom of the division. In 1896 F. A. Cowell, a printer on his way to the west coast had taken a temporary position in the pressroom at Ruskin. He had been associated with the Fire Brand, a paper which was being sued because of its support of anarchy and free love. Through his influence the Coming Nation carried a request for contributions to help pay costs of the trial, which dis-

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[37] Coming Nation, May 6, 1899, April 6, 1901; Miller, "Recollections," 58.

turbed some Ruskinites. Cowell's theories became the topic of conversation among the colonists; some may have given the idea of "free love" complete support.[38] An example cited by Broome in his account was a statement by a Wilda Bloomfield advocating variety in sexual partners for married women, which was posted on the colony bulletin board. Also, according to Broome's evidence, a publication, Lucifer, praised Cowell and Anna Marcus, the mother of his son, congratulating the "free couple and their free child."[39] There may have been those in the colony who agreed with Cowell. It is probable, too, that some remarks were misunderstood; for example, some may have quoted Edward Bellamy's suggestion that the independence of a woman would make her free to love any man--in Bellamy's meaning, to marry for love rather that economic security.[40] There were rumors that the storage room off the large cave was used as the rendezvous of free lovers. Whatever their conversation and theory, the consensus of witnesses is that the actual conduct of the members of the colony, of either faction, upheld a monogamous marriage relation.[41] They report only one illegitimate birth, after which the young father and mother were married; one couple who lived as man and wife for a short time before they married; and one case of a wife who left her husband and children to live with a married man also from Ruskin, but

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[38] Coming Nation, September 25, 1897, February 1, 1898, April 6, 1901; Broome, Last Days of the Ruskin Cooperative Association, 107.

[39] Broome, Last Days of the Ruskin Cooperative Association, 106-107.

[40] Bellamy, Looking Backward 2000-1887, p. 267.

[41] Raymond Lee Muncy, Sex and Marriage in Utopian Communities: 19th Century America (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), 118.

not in the colony, and about the time the colony moved to Georgia.[42] The "anarchy and free love" views, however, were attributed to the injunctionists as a whole by the opposing faction in order to discredit the group in the settlement.[43] So that the colony would be protected from further disruption on the subject, the stockholders' meeting voted to place a new question on the membership application blank: "Do you, or does your wife, believe in anarchy, or free love?"[44]

As "free love" proved a term susceptible to misunderstanding, similarly, the meaning of "anarchy" was vague. During Cowell's residence at Ruskin twenty-two members presented a petition protesting the articles on "voluntary cooperation" and others written by "prominent anarchists" which had been appearing in the Coming Nation.[45] Among the articles was one which defined anarchy as both "freedom . . . which we praise," and the lawlessness and disorder of capitalistic society. Its general meaning was synonymous with individualism, and individualism was selfishness.[46] To Ruskinites and other socialists of the 1890's, anarchy stood for all that challenged their concept of an ordered, cooperative society.

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[42] Braam, "Ruskin Co-operative Colony," 675; Miller, "Recollections," 56-57; Earl Miller, letter to Mrs. Grace Reaves, July 12, 1961, Ruskin Cooperative Association File, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville; Earl Miller, letter to John Dobson, Librarian, Special Collections control file, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville; Matthews, letters to Vera Gilmore, February 16, 28, 1973.

[43] Coming Nation, April 6, 1901.

[44] [Broome], "History," 85.

[45] Coming Nation, December 16, 1899.

[46] Ibid., December 19, 1896; Hughan, American Socialism of the Present Day, 88-90.

Journalist Mark Sullivan described the mood of the common man in the closing decades of the nineteenth century as one of irritation. With the ending of the frontier and the rapid increase of population through immigration, the ordinary man could sense a restriction of his freedom, a limitation of the formerly overwhelming abundance of natural resources, a loss of economic freedom.[47] Eugene Hollon, an historian of the American West, asserts that the depression of 1888-1896 "transformed the people of the prairies and plains into radicals who saw nothing un-American in asking for direct federal aid and in resorting to force if necessary to bring about a new order."[48] The increasing complexity of society put a man's well-being beyond his control, and Americans began to turn from independence and individualism to forms of united social action. The colonists of Ruskin were trying to show how the economic injustices of industrialization could be solved by turning from a competitive to a cooperative commonwealth.

One of the unformulated aims of the Ruskin colony was the testing of theories and part of its evaluation was made on that basis. The official historian maintained that the "keenest and most intense knowledge" gained from the Ruskin experiment was

> that the mass of the people under the freedom and independence of our economic system show the great virtues of the heart which are smothered and latent under competitive life.[49]

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[47] Mark Sullivan, Our Times: The United States, 1900-1925, I: The Turn of the Century (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931), 137, 141.

[48] W. Eugene Hollon, The Great American Desert (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 149.

[49] [Broome], "History," 30.

He believed that they had proved that "men can live successfully under cooperation. . . . Men can cope with the vices of individualism. . . . Poverty is not heaven ordained." It was clear, however, that "good circumstances do not make people good." Failure was attributed to the time-consuming demands of building the community which left no energy for the institution of an educational system "on which to build ethics" and develop a people who could live together without friction.[50]

The existence and experiences of groups such as Ruskin must have emphasized to many people the serious need for reform in the larger society. After the failure of Ruskin, it is likely that few groups wished to follow its example.[51] The New York Journal reminded its readers, however, that Edward Bellamy

> himself predicted . . . [failure] at the time the colony was founded, [declaring] 'The world cannot be redeemed by a few people shutting themselves away from it. . . . Social reformers should remain right in among their fellow-men and work for the advancement of the nation as a whole.'[52]

The new publishers of the Coming Nation at Rich Hill, Missouri, in 1902 declared that they had "no connection with Ruskin or any colonization scheme, except the organization of the entire United States into one fraternal and industrial colony--the Cooperative Commonwealth." Their

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[50] Ibid., 266, 230, 144.

[51] Mark Holloway, Heavens On Earth: Utopian Communities in America, 1680-1880 (London: Turnstile Press, 1951), 216-217, states, however, that Ruskin was a model for a number of cooperatives in the present century.

[52] Editorial, New York Journal, July 29, 1899, quoted in Coming Nation, August 12, 1899.

conviction was that "Socialism must come by political and industrial revolution."[53]

But Ruskin had a share in the political area also, by sponsoring a union movement which contributed to the formation of the Socialist Party. Early in 1896 the colony leaders conceived the idea of inviting representatives of the many national cooperative endeavors to hold a meeting at Ruskin in July following the People's Party convention in St. Louis.[54] Because of the extra fare involved in travel to the village, other arrangements were made and the Coming Nation instead issued a call for a National Cooperative Congress to be held at St. Louis on July 24, 1896, to unify all cooperative movements. In the July 18th issue the purpose was stated: "to perfect the organization of the Brotherhood of the Cooperative Commonwealth."[55] Chosen to represent the Ruskin Association were Alfred S. Edwards, scheduled to address the congress, Louis Justement, who would have charge of a bookstand offering Coming Nation publications, and J. K. Calkins and Isaac Broome, who would inform those attending the meeting about Ruskin and suggest an excursion to the colony. The prolonged meetings and the excitement of the political sessions of the People's Party and the Silver Convention being held at the same time in St. Louis made it difficult to get the necessary

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[53]Coming Nation, March 29, 1902.

[54]Ibid., February 29, 1896.

[55]Ibid., May 16-July 18, 1896.

attendance at the Congress, but a representative group was able to lay the base of the organization. Isaac Broome and A. S. Edwards were elected secretary and director, respectively, of the American Cooperative Union; further organization of the Brotherhood was to be accomplished by mail.[56] The members of the Ruskin Cooperative Association in Tennessee met in the third floor hall of the printery on the third of August to hear the report of their representatives. In keeping with the practice of American Socialists since 1886, they resolved to support Socialism, but to remain independent of political parties.[57]

In June, 1897, the Brotherhood of the Cooperative Commonwealth met in Chicago with Eugene Debs' followers from the defunct American Railway Union to form the Social Democracy of America. The Coming Nation, through the interest of Editor J. A. Wayland, had carried messages from "Debs to the people from prison" in 1895 while Debs was serving a term for contempt of court incurred during the Pullman strike in 1894. Wayland later secured Debs as a special correspondent to his new publication, the Appeal to Reason, giving Debs freedom to write on any subject he chose.[58] The Coming Nation, too, continued its connection with Debs, printing a "Liberty Edition" in November, 1895, to celebrate his release from jail. When Debs spoke in Nashville in 1896, a number of

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[56] Ibid., July 11, August 1, 1896.

[57] Ibid., August 8, 1896; Hughan, American Socialism of the Present Day, 213-214.

[58] McAlister Coleman, Eugene V. Debs: A Man Unafraid (New York: Greenberg, Publishers, 1930), 225; Coming Nation, March 30, July 27, 1895.

Ruskin people were present and excerpts from his speech were printed in the next issue of the socialist paper. Debs' address setting forth his proposed Social Democracy, given at the Chicago convention which then accepted it, was carried on the front page of the Coming Nation on July 3, 1897, taking precedence, even, over Lloyd's address at the founding of Ruskin College, which was reported in the same issue.[59] The Coming Nation published the "Declaration of Principles" and the constitution of the Social Democracy in its July issues. Debs' plan was to locate a large colony in one of the western states, gain control of the state government through regular election procedures and set up a socialist regime in the state.[60] The German Socialist press in the United States commended the political aspects of the plan and predicted failure for the colonization scheme, but sent hearty greetings to "Debs' new movement" as a Socialist party with American roots.[61] It was this difference in opinion which divided socialists of the period into supporters of political action only, and those who believed the founding of colonies would point the way to a changed society. The conflict caused a split in the Social Democracy of America: after a reunion the group joined with one part of the divided Socialist Labor Party to form, in

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[59] Coming Nation, November 23, 1895, June 13, 1896, May 8, 29, July 3, 1897.

[60] Ray S. Baker, "The Debs Cooperative Commonwealth," Outlook, LVI (July, 1897), 539; Morris Hilquit, History of Socialism in the United States (Rev. ed.; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1910), 302.

[61] Philadelphia Tageblatt, Milwaukee Vorwaerts, and Sheboygan Volksblatt, quoted in Coming Nation, July 3, 1897.

1901, the Socialist Party.[62] In that year the Ruskin experiment came to an end.

Why and how did it fail? Some of its successes and failures have already been noted. It seems that economic reasons were not the main cause. With the income from the Coming Nation as a base, a colony could have survived some errors. Given the fact that many of the colonists were dedicated to cooperative living and that family members who may have been indifferent to policy would have followed, the key to failure seems to have been in the leadership. Julius A. Wayland was a strong personality with a genius for effective journalism. Although he proclaimed absolute democracy for his cooperative colony, he hesitated, perhaps wisely, to turn over the management of the newspaper to inexperienced members. The charter group, after their struggle to force Wayland to relinquish control--on socialist principles, were equallay reluctant to share power with the newer members of the community, in whom they lacked confidence. Leaders among the more recent members were determined to gain equality of membership for all men and women in the colony. Once divided on that issue, real cooperation seemed beyond reach. After the first receiver had been dismissed, Isaac Broome attempted to bring the two factions to a settlement which would avoid a public sale and loss to all.[63] The charter group was willing to work

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[62] Hughan, American Socialism of the Present Day, 42-43; Hillquit, History of Socialism in the United States, 304-305, 310.

[63] Broome, Last Days of the Ruskin Cooperative Association, 153-154.

out a solution but the majority would not consider it. When the court granted the petition of the charter group and appointed another receiver, the majority sent a committee to seek an agreement but the charter group insisted that nothing could be done. There were, evidently, men and women in both factions who would not compromise their point of view for the good, or even for the survival, of the colony.

The places to which Ruskin members moved were as widely scattered as their points of origin. J. Theodore McDill, son of Dr. H. C. McDill who wrote the "Colony Notes" for the Coming Nation, made an effort to keep former members in touch by mimeographing, and later printing, a newsletter called the Ruskin Eagle, containing information on the location and activities of former Ruskinites. Some families went to the Single Tax Colony at Fairhope, Alabama, and one family to the Bellamy-inspired colony at Burley, near Tacoma, Washington, thus continuing their communal experience. Several families migrated to Dolores, Colorado, and a number to California; others went to Montana, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Texas. One couple were doing maintenance and printing for the Ruskin Cave College, now being operated on the former colony property. One or two former Ruskinites were thinking of founding colonies; another, in the newsletter, advised against such plans. Many were active in Socialist Party organizations. J. T. McDill, residing in Nashville, was state secretary of the party in Tennessee. Band leader Charles Smith joined the Barnum and Bailey band; Walter Van Fleet, who raised beautiful flowers at Ruskin, later became head of the rose division of the United States Department of Agriculture's

Beltsville, Maryland, station.[64] Julius A. Wayland again became the publisher of the Coming Nation when it merged in January, 1904, with the Appeal to Reason. Within a few weeks after his departure he had founded the Appeal which was soon even more successful than the Coming Nation, reaching a circulation of three hundred thousand, of "outstanding rank" among all Socialist publications. He committed suicide in 1912 declaring, "The struggle against the capitalistic system isn't worth it. Let it pass."[65] Earl Miller returned to teaching in Kansas and later to fruit ranching in Montana; eventually he moved to San Diego, where he continued to vote the Socialist ticket until 1940.

Whatever the success or failure of Ruskin, many individuals must have agreed with Earl Miller, who concluded that "though we lost five years time and all our money we were enriched by an experience that was unique."[66]

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[64] Miller, "Recollections," passim; "Ruskin Bugle," Special Collections, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville; Ruskin Bugle, Ruskin Cooperative Association File, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville.

[65] Coming Nation, December 26, 1903; Coleman, Eugene V. Debs: A Man Unafraid, 224, 266.

[66] Miller, "Recollections," 45, 69.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

RUSKIN COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION CHARTER OF INCORPORATION

SECOND CHARTER, AUGUST 16, 1894

Be it Known, That by virtue of the general laws of the land J. A. Sturgis, E. B. Ionsbury, Charles Bevan, Sinclair Marsden, L. A. Rowe, Paul Schneider, Herman E. Hoch, M. F. Rodgers, W. H. Lawson, J. J. Malsnar, Wm. W. White, Henry Hess, Allen Fields, Louis Justement, J. A. Wayland, John H. Dodson, C. J. Carnegie, T. Eliot Tait, Rousseau Hess, and John Wagner* are hereby constituted a body politic and corporate by the name and style of The Ruskin Co-operative Association for the purpose of owning and operating manufactories and acquiring land and buildings and owning houses for the members of the Association and providing educational and recreative facilities for the members,** and it shall have and may exercise all powers conferred by the laws of Tennessee upon Mining and Manufacturing Corporations. The general powers of said corporation are to sue and be sued by the corporate name, to have and use a corporate seal which it may alter at pleasure, if no common seal then the signature of the name of the corporation by any duly authorized officer shall be legal and binding. To purchase and hold or receive by gift in addition to the personal property owned by said corporation any real estate necessary to the transaction of the corporate business and also to purchase or accept any real estate in payment or part payment of any debt due to the corporation and sell realty for corporation purposes. To establish by-laws

*Refer to end of Appendix for asterisked notes.

and make all rules and regulations not inconsistent with the laws and constitution deemed expedient for the management of corporate affairs and to appoint such subordinate officers and agents in addition to a president, secretary or treasurer as the business of the corporation may require, designate the name of the office and fix the compensation of the officer:

The following provisions and restrictions are coupled with said grant of powers: A failure to elect officers at the proper time does not dissolve the corporation, but those in office hold until the election or appointment and qualification of their successor. The term of all officers may be fixed by the by-laws of said corporation, the same not however to exceed two years. The corporation may by by-laws make regulations concerning the subscription for or transfer of stock; fix upon the amount of capital to be invested in the enterprise; the division of the same into shares; the amount to be called for at any one time and in the case of failure of any stockholder to pay the amount thus subscribed by him at the time and in the amount thus called, a right of action shall exist in the corporation to sue said defaulting stockholder for the same. The Board of Directors [which] *** may consist of five or more members at the option of the corporation to be elected in person by a majority of the votes cast, each share representing one vote, shall keep a full and true record of all their proceeding and an annual statement of receipts and disbursements and [shall] be copied in the minutes subject at all times to the inspection of any stockholder. The books of the corporation whall show the original or subsequent stockholders their respective interest, the

amount which has been paid on the shares subscribed, the transfer of stock by and to whom made, also other transactions in which it is presumed a stockholder or creditor may have an interest.

The amount of any unpaid stock due from a subscriber to the corporation shall be a fund for the payment of any debt due from the corporation. Nor shall the transfer of stock by any subscriber relieve him from payment unless his transferee has paid up all or any of the balance due on said original subscription. By no implication or construction shall the corporation be deemed to possess any powers except those hereby expressly given, or necessarily implied from the nature of the business for which the Charter is granted and by no inference whatever whall said corporation possess the power to discount notes or bills, deal in gold or silver coin, issue any evidence of debt as currency or engage in any business outside of the purpose of the Charter.

The right is reserved to repeal, annul or modify this Charter. If it is repealed or if the amendments proposed being not merely auxiliary [but fundamental] are rejected by a vote representing more than half of the stock, the corporation shall continue to exist for the purpose of winding up its affairs, but not to enter upon any new business. If the amendments or modifications being fundamental are accepted by the corporation as aforesaid in a general meeting to be called for that purpose any minor, married woman or other person under disability or any stockholder not agreeing to the acceptance of the modification shall cease to be a stockholder, and the corporation shall be liable to pay said withdrawing stockholders the par value of their stock if it is worth so much; if not then so much as may be its real

value in the market on the day of the withdrawal as aforesaid; Provided, that the claims of all creditors are to be paid in preference to said withdrawing stockholders.

A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum and shall fill all vacancies until the next election. The first Board of Directors shall consist of the five or more corporators who shall apply for and obtain the Charter. Said corporation shall have the power to raise, buy, sell, and deal in agricultural products, operate flouring and other mills, and deal in merchandise.

The said corporation shall have the right in pursuance of the general law authorizing the condemnation of private property for works of internal improvement as set forth in Sections 1325 to 1348 inclusive of the Code to condemn a right of way necessary for the transaction of corporate business not exceeding thirty feet in width over the lands of any private person or corporation and such right of way is hereby declared to be a public road. Annually, during the month of January the President shall make and publish in a newspaper printed in the county where the principal office of business is located or if no newspaper is printed in that county, then in an adjoining or the nearest county where a newspaper is printed a sworn statement showing the amount of the capital stock and existing liabilities and a list of the names of the stockholders.

Nothing but cash shall be taken in payment of any part of the capital stock or land at a fair cash valuation or patents to the amount of their value as agreed on by the subscriber and the corporation and no loan of money shall at any time be made to any stockholder thereof;

and any such loan shall render the Directors consenting thereto individually liable for the amount thereof; this liability to extend in favor of innocent stockholders as well as creditors. The making of a false statement to be printed as aforesaid shall render all persons assenting thereto individually liable to all persons dealing or trading with said company upon the faith of said fraudulent statement.

If the indebtedness of said company shall at any time exceed the capital stock paid in the Directors assenting thereto shall be individually liable to the creditors for said excess. The stockholders are jointly and severally liable individually at all times for all moneys due and owing to the laborers servants clerks and operatives of the company in case the corporation becomes insolvent.

If the Directors declare and pay any dividend when the company is insolvent in which declaration of a dividend would diminish the amount of the capital stock they shall be jointly and severally liable to creditors for the amount of dividends thus declared. Any Director may avoid liability by voting against the dividend or by filing his objections in writing as soon as he ascertains a dividend has been made.

We the undersigned apply to the state of Tennessee by virtue of the laws of the land for a Charter of Incorporation for the purposes and with the powers etc. declared in the foregoing instrument.

Witness our hands this 16th day of August 1894.****

*The names of the corporators in the opening paragraph, and the signatures to the second charter, omitted the following which were in the first application:

Mrs. Henry Hess
Mrs. Mamie R. Hess
Mrs. Louis Justement
Mrs. E. B. Lonsbury
Harriet E. Ray
Mrs. L. A. Rowe
Mrs. J. A. Sturgis
Etta B. Wayland
Emma White

The name of Allen Fields is not in the first charter.

**The phrase beginning with the words "for the purpose" did not appear in the first charter.

***Word, or words, omitted, probably unintentionally, in the second charter are in brackets.

****The signatures are of the same names as in the first paragraph.

APPENDIX B

MEMBERS OF THE RUSKIN COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

This list was compiled from the roll of those signing the By-Laws of the Ruskin Cooperative Association as they became stockholders, and checked against the list of members for 1897 and 1898 published in the Coming Nation annually as required in the charter, and the list of those holding shares on June 24, 1899, made by the receiver, Horace Bowers. The roll, with rare exceptions, seems to have been carefully kept, with a difference of date not unusual between the issue of stock and the signing of the By-laws. The place of origin, however, had to be found among the news items in the weekly "Colony Notes" and in historical sketches which were carried from time to time in the Coming Nation. A few members' names appear, some for three or four years, others only once, on the tax lists of Dickson County. The list of the members of the new organization, the Ruskin Commonwealth, appeared in the Coming Nation, August 5, 1899.

Member	Date	Origin	Dickson County Tax List	Joined Commonwealth in Georgia
Albrecht, Otto	March 13, 1895	Germany		
Armstrong, Edward P.	April 12, 1898	Iowa		
Baldwin, Winfield S.	April 10, 1899			x
Barnett, S. M.	May 6, 1897	New York City		
Bell, George W.	May 28, 1898	Colorado		x
Bellig, Sam	September 30, 1895	Minnesota		

Member	Date	Origin	Tax List	Commonwealth
Bennett, Sam T.	February 7, 1899	Alabama		
Benton, W. E.	March 27, 1897	Missouri		x
Bevan, Charles	Charter Member	Colorado	x	
Bevan, Harry	May 27, 1895	Colorado		
Blakely, Lewis	May 6, 1897			x
Bosrner, Henry	February 3, 1899	Kansas		x
[1]Bosworth, Harriet	October 23, 1896	Minnesota		x
Braam, Jacob W.	March 31, 1899			
Broeg, Conrad W.	March 9, 1897	Ohio		x
Broome, Isaac	March 11, 1897	Pennsylvania		
Broome, Victoria	May 6, 1899	Pennsylvania		
Butler, Anne E.	April 21, 1899	Connecticut		x
Butler, John Albin	March 31, 1899	Connecticut		x
Calkins, Annah B.	May 16, 1899	Wyoming		x
Calkins, J. K.	May 12, 1897	Wyoming	x	x
Carnegie, C. J.	Charter Member	Pennsylvania	x	x
Carnegie, Delia C.	May 1, 1899	Pennsylvania		x
Casner, George	May 27, 1895	Pennsylvania		
Casson, Herbert N.	September 7, 1898	Canada; Massachusetts		
Caswell, Frank C.	January 21, 1897	Ohio		
Charlesworth, W. H.	September 30, 1895		x	
Chase, J. E.	September 30, 1895	Minnesota		
*Chilcoate, J. W.	July 28, 1896	Missouri		
Chilcote, H.	October 26, 1896	Missouri		

*Name appears again in By-laws list, February 6, 1897

[1]Refer to end of Appendix for numbered notes.

Member	Date	Origin	Tax List	Commonwealth
Clarke, Charles W.	March 19, 1898	Arkansas		x
Clarke, F. O.	September 27, 1897	Arkansas		x
Clarke, Lucy	May 6, 1899	Arkansas		x
Commander, Lydia K.	October 8, 1898	Wisconsin		
Conley, Charles R.	May 6, 1897	Missouri		x
Corbett, Charles W.	July 28, 1896	Missouri	x	x
Corbett, Jessie V.	May 1, 1899	Missouri		x
Croy, J. C.	April 2, 1895			
Culbertson, Robert I.	March 29, 1898	Washington	non-resident	
Dahlman, Gust	May 12, 1897	Michigan		
Denny, J. W.	November 2, 1898	Illinois		x
de Vries, Herman	September 27, 1897			x
DeWolf, James W.	November 10, 1896			
DeWolf, Susanna	May 2, 1899			
Dinnick, Michael	July 6, 1898	New York City		x
Dodge, C. W.	September 27, 1897	Kansas		
Dodson, A. M.	September 19, 1894	California		
Dodson, J. H.	Charter Member	California	x	
Ecklemann, Jacob J.	January 2, 1897	Wisconsin		
Edwards, Alfred S.	December 7, 1895	Indiana		
Edwards, Ray	May 12, 1897			
Egeberg, Holger	April 6, 1899	North Dakota		
Elliott, M. J.	December 17, 1897	Montana		
Ellyson, Alfred	March 19, 1898	Iowa		x
Eschmann, Jacob	February 19, 1895	Wisconsin		

Member	Date	Origin	Tax List	Commonwealth
Eskridge, W. A.	October 14, 1898	Chattanooga, Tenn.		
Fields, Allen	Charter Member	Colorado		x
Fields, Laura E.	May 5, 1899	Colorado		x
Foulkes, D. E.	December 31, 1898	Iowa		
Funk, W. F.	April 2, 1895	Harriman, Tenn.		
Gordon, Drusilla	May 1, 1899	Nebraska		x
Gordon, R. P.	December 4, 1896	Nebraska		x
Gottstein, Christ	March 13, 1895	Germany		
Gwynn, K. D.	December 5, 1898			
Hammond, B.	April 29, 1897	New York City		
Hammond, B. C.	December 19, 1896	New York	non-resident	
Hammond, France M.	February 26, 1898			
Harrington, G. K.	October 14, 1898	Texas		
Hassmann, John	January 2, 1897	Wisconsin		
Hathaway, Anna	May 5, 1899	Ohio		x
Hathaway, Lewis	January 1, 1898	Ohio		x
Heaston, John	December 10, 1894	Mexico	x	
Herring, J. C.	September 19, 1894	Kansas	x	
Herring, Nettie I.	September 19, 1894	Kansas		
Hess, Henry	Charter Member	Ohio		
Hess, Mrs. Henry	Charter Member	Ohio		
Hess, Mamie R.	Charter Member	Ohio		
Hess, Rousseau	Charter Member	Ohio	x	
Higley, Edwin F.	February 10, 1898	New York City		x
Hoch, Herman	Charter Member	Pennsylvania	x	

Member	Date	Origin	Tax List	Commonwealth
Holeton, F. H.	November 28, 1894			x
Holst, Albert	October 23, 1896			
Hooper, Edith B.	December 2, 1896	Ohio		x
Hooper, James	November 19, 1896	Ohio		x
Hooper, Joanna	May 26, 1899	Ohio		x
Horton, William H.	January 29, 1898	Arkansas		x
Hudson, W. R.	January 3, 1899			x
Hunter, B. Franklin	July 6, 1898	Pennsylvania		
Hunter, Edith Fantini	March 7, 1899	Pennsylvania		
Hyatt, Charles	December 14, 1896	Illinois		x
Jackson, A. N.	September 16, 1898	Kansas		x
Jackson, A. W.	January 26, 1899	Illinois		x
Jacques, C. H.	January 1, 1898	Florida		x
Jarden, Robert	October 30, 1897	Minnesota		
Jensen, Jacob	May 12, 1897	Iowa		
Jones, Frank E.	March 9, 1897	Pennsylvania		
Jones, Thomas	May 11, 1899			
Justement, Henriette	Charter Member	New York City		x
Justement, Louis	Charter Member	New York City	x	x
Kane, George W.	November 7, 1898	Maryland		x
Kellam, Arthur A.	November 5, 1897	New Mexico		
Kemp, John A.	May 27, 1895	Pennsylvania	x	x
Kemp, Martha J.	May 11, 1899	Pennsylvania		x
Kennedy, Delilah A.	May 1, 1899	Arkansas		x
Kennedy, G. M.	September 27, 1897	Arkansas		x

Member	Date	Origin	Tax List	Commonwealth
[2]Klamroth, Louis		California	x	
Knorr, Gustave Emil	December 21, 1895	Pennsylvania		
Knorr, Helene	March 22, 1897	Pennsylvania		x
Koch, Albert	November 21, 1896			
Lawson, Jennie K.	Charter Member	Pennsylvania		
Lawson, W. H.	Charter Member	Pennslyvania	x	
Lewis, E. M.	March 19, 1895	Kansas		
Lewis, Fannie	May 9, 1895	Kansas		
Lilygren, John N.	May 12, 1897			x
Livingston, John R. S.	November 17, 1895	Russia		
Lonsbury, E. B.	Charter Member	Ohio	x	
Lonsbury, Minnie	Charter Member	Ohio		
Loschenkohl, Ben	October 12, 1898	Nevada		x
Loschenkohl, F. W.	January 12, 1899	Nevada		
Lyons, Jesse C.	January 9, 1897	Montana		x
McCoy, M. J.	May 27, 1895	Pennsylvania		x
McCoy, Sarah	May 6, 1899	Pennsylvania		x
McDill, H. C.	April 11, 1896	Illinois		x
McDill, Jeanette	May 20, 1899	Illinois		x
McDill, J. Theodore	March 15, 1898	Illinois		x
McDill, W. Harper	February 7, 1898	Illinois		x
McLean, John	September 5, 1894	Canada;Washington	x	
McMahon, M. H.	March 9, 1896			
Malsnar, Jacob	Charter Member			
Malsnar, Mary	Charter Member			

Member	Date	Origin	Tax List	Commonwealth
Mardfin, Marcus	December 27, 1898	New York City		x
Marsden, Sinclair	Charter Member	England; Ohio	x	deceased
Mathern, Silvester	June 10, 1898	New Jersey		x
Miller, Earl	March 27, 1897	Kansas		x
Morgan, William J.	October 7, 1898	Pennsylvania		x
O'Neil, Mary	May 1, 1899			x
O'Neil, W. H.	October 6, 1897			x
Pattison, Fred L.	November 10, 1897			
[3] Paulus, William			x	
Preacher, John	June 13, 1898	Indian Territory		
Ramsdell, Dewitt	December 3, 1897	Wisconsin		x
Rawlings, J. H.	April 20, 1899	Guatemala		
Ray, Harriet	Charter Member			
[4] Read, A. R.		Oregon		x
Ribley, W. J.	May 12, 1897	New Mexico		
Rodgers, Kate	Charter Member	Pennsylvania		
Rodgers, M. F.	Charter Member	Pennsylvania	x	
Rohde, August, Sr.	December 7, 1895			
Rohde, August, Jr.	December 21, 1895			
Rohde, William	December 7, 1895			
[5] Rosselle, Louis O.		Memphis, Tenn.		x
Rowe, Ida	Charter Member			
Rowe, L. A.	Charter Member			
Rowson, Benjamin	May 2, 1898	Virginia		x
Ruedy, August	March 27, 1897	Ohio		

Member	Date	Origin	Tax List	Commonwealth
Rust, C. M.	October 6, 1897			x
Sanderson, Albert E.	December 23, 1896	Missouri		
Satra, Philip	May 31, 1898	New York City		
Schneider, Paul	Charter Member	Michigan	x	
Schofield, Alfred S.	April 21, 1899	Michigan		x
Schultz, E. G.	April 1, 1896	Montana	x	
Sharpe, Albert E.	September 27, 1897	England		
6 Shaw, Loretta D.				x
Sherwin, Joseph	January 5, 1897			x
Sickles, W. J.	December 29, 1897	New Mexico		x
Simpson, Alex D.	May 30, 1899	Dickson County, Tenn.		x
*Simpson, J. H.	September 7, 1898	Ohio		
Sinclair, William	May 25, 1895			
Smedes, Alex	1898	New York City, nonresident		
Smith, C. W.	May 12, 1897	Pennsylvania		x
Smith, John	May 9, 1895	Colorado		
Snow, G. A.	October 8, 1898	California		
Stanton, David B.	March 1, 1898			
Stillwell, N. H.	May 16, 1898	Minnesota		
Stokes, Walter	April 3, 1895	Colorado		x
Stoll, Jane	May 1, 1899	Indiana		x
Stoll, John	April 11, 1896	Indiana		x
Sturgis, J. A.	Charter Member	Pennsylvania	x	
Sturgis, Myrtle	Charter Member	Pennsylvania		

*Receiver's notes show J. H. Simpson's share transferred to A. D. Simpson.

Member	Date	Origin	Tax List	Commonwealth
Swanson, N. O.	September 24, 1897	South Dakota		
Tait, T. Eliot	Charter Member			
Taylor, B. W.	November 14, 1894			
Taylor, Charles G.	October 26, 1896	Michigan		x
[4]Taylor, Ezra		Kansas		x
Taylor, Robert	March 21, 1898	Pennsylvania		
Townsend, Reece C.	November 14, 1894			
Tull, Anna R.	March 31, 1899	Ohio		x
Tull, J. S.	March 28, 1899	Ohio		x
Van Fleet, Walter	November 13, 1897	New Jersey		
VanKirk, J. E.	November 12, 1897	Pennsylvania	non-resident	
Wagner, John	Charter Member	Germany; Arkansas	deceased	
Wallace, Hiram	March 23, 1899			
Wallace, Thomas	September 28, 1898	Nova Scotia		x
[4]Walsh, S. P.		Iowa		x
Wayland, Julius A.	Charter Member	Indiana	x	
Wayland, Etta	Charter Member	Indiana		
Wells, H. F.	July 28, 1896			
Wheeler, S. W.	November, 1897	Kansas		
White, Emma	Charter Member	England; Rhode Island		
White, William W.	Charter Member	England; R. I.	x	
Whitmore, Edward	December 17, 1896	Ohio		
Wilkerson, Jean	May 5, 1899			x
Wilkerson, T. G.	January 13, 1897			x
Williams, Evan	October 26, 1896	California		

Member	Date	Origin	Tax List	Commonwealth
Wilson, John	September 27, 1897	Massachusetts		x
Wilson, M. Agnes	May 6, 1899	Massachusetts		x

[1]Harriet Bosworth married a member of the colony, John N. Lilygren.

[2]Louis Klamroth's name appears as the traveling representative of the Coming Nation and he paid the Dickson County poll tax, although he did not sign the By-Laws.

[3]William Paulus is referred to as a member in the Coming Nation and he paid the Dickson County poll tax, although his name is not among those signing the By-Laws.

[4]The Coming Nation reported A. R. Read, Ezra Taylor, and S. P. Walsh as new members who joined the colony after the arrival of the receiver in the summer of 1899, thus showing their confidence in the Ruskin Cooperative Association.

[5]The Coming Nation reported that Louis Roselle was elected as a member at the same time as Herbert Casson, although his name does not appear among those signing the By-Laws.

[6]The Coming Nation referred to Miss Shaw as the last member to join the colony in Tennessee. Her name is not among those signed to the By-Laws, but she is on the Ruskin Commonwealth list.

VITA

Vera Wilson Gilmore was born in Sherrard, West Virginia, on October 21, 1920. She attended elementary school there and graduated from Sherrard High School in 1938. She entered Maryville College in Maryville, Tennessee, in 1966 and graduated *magna cum laude* in June, 1970, receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in History.

She entered the Graduate School of the University of Tennessee in September, 1970, serving as a graduate assistant in the Department of History, and began study toward a Master's degree. She received the Master of Arts degree with a major in History in June, 1973.

She was married in 1938 to O. Loland Gilmore of West Chester, Pennsylvania. They are the parents of one daughter and five sons.