THE COLONIZATION AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF EMMIGRANTS BROUGHT TO SOUTHEASTERN NORTH CAROLINA BY HUGH MACRAE

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO

the Faculty of the Graduate School

Appalachian State Teachers College

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Education

by

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August 1957

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Just after the turn of the century the late Hugh MacRae, a financier, real estate operator, and agricultural-minded citizen of Wilmington, North Carolina, decided farming practices and methods in North Carolina could be improved, particularly in the Southeastern area centered by Wilmington. He sought personally to bring about an improvement by importing European farmers or those recently migrated to the United States to the Southeastern region to introduce their specialized methods of intensive farming.[1] Observers have lauded MacRae's colonies as highly successful---colonies located in a wilderness of waste land whose inhabitants, by application of modern scientific methods, have made the "wilderness blossom and bear fruit and food products a hundredfold!"[2] But no scholarly examination of the colonies as a whole and their contributions has been made.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this

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[1] Carl Goerch, Characters...Always Characters (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Company, 1945), p.275.

[2] James Sprunt, Chronicles of the Cape Fear River (Wilmington: Orton Printing Company, 1906), p. 268.

study (1) to record a brief history of the colonies St. Helena, Van Eden, Castle Hayne, Marathon, New Berlin, and Artesia; and (2) to ascertain their contributions to the betterment of Southeastern North Carolina, as revealed through records, documents, letters, periodicals and personal observations and interviews by the author of this paper.

Importance of the study. Northern United States has often been described as a melting pot of the world. Practically all nationalities have mixed in the region and a Northern American has emerged, described by some as a mixture of some of the better qualties of the various races. This could be a contributing factor to the North's progress. On the other hand the predominant racial strain in the South is Anglo-Saxon, giving the South the largest purest group in United States. Few ethnic groups other than Negroes have settled south of the Mason-Dixon Line. Compared with other regions, this has hindered Southern progress according to some observers. Hugh MacRae attracted representatives of several European nationalities to Southeastern North Carolina---injections of new, different blood to local Anglo-Saxon veins. This study is an attempt to show whether new people, new ideas, new ways and new philosophies can help areas suffering degradation.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Colonization. In this treatise the term "colonization" refers to the settling of various nationalities in certain areas of Southeastern North Carolina under the sponsorship of Hugh MacRae. Purpose of the settlements was for the inhabitants to apply their specialized methods of intensive farming in their settlements. In so doing they would be carving a new life for themselves and at the same time introducing new methods to natives of the area and increase their productivity. "Colonization" is also interpreted to include a brief history of the colonies from their inception in the mind of Hugh MacRae to the present, two generations later. The colonies, however, are no longer considered as such but as integrated American communities with little or no distinction between natives and colonists.

Contributions. The term is interpreted as things, tangible or intangible, which the colonists and their descendants have given in common with others of the area. The word "given" does not necessarily mean a consciously "given." For example, one settler introduced cultivation of commercial flowers, which became highly profitable. Natives noticed the flowers and a few began raising them also with equally profitable results. The settler gave nothing directly to the natives. Yet indirectly he con-

tributed much. "Contributions" may also include such intangibles as pride in work, farm appearance, community improvement and friendly but serious competition which some immigrants introduced as a carry-over from their highly competitive European background.

CHAPTER II

HUGH MACRAE

Many played important roles in establishing the farm colonies of St. Helena, Van Eden, Castle Hayne, Marathon, New Berlin and Artesia. But the man who envisoned them, provided the ways and means for their initiation, and led them through various stages of growth from 1905 to 1951 was Hugh MacRae. A treatise on the colonies would not be complete without a biography of MacRae. The colonization was largely a physical demonstration of his constructive philosophy of life.

I. BIOGRAPHY

Hugh MacRae was born in Carbonton, North Carolina, a small hamlet in Chatham County, March 30, 1865, the son of Donald and Julia Norton MacRae.[3]

MacRae was of Scotch and English descent. His paternal grandfather was General Alexander MacRae, civil engineer and son of Amelia Martin, daughter of William Evans, famous Revolutionary leader. Grandfather MacRae was one of the first presidents of the Wilmington and Weldon Railway. He famed himself in the lower Cape Fear River region for having organ-

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[3]News story, The Sunday Star-News (Wilmington, North Carolina), October 21, 1951.

ized a battalion of artillery and coast defense for activities in the Civil War. General MacRae had five sons, ranging from private to brigadier general, who served during the conflict.

Hugh MacRae's father was Donald MacRae, a merchant, manufacturer and farmer. Prior to the Civil War Father MacRae served as British Vice Consul in Wilmington. After the war's outbreak, he resigned. The output of his iron mills was used by the Confederates during the war.

Hugh MacRae's mother was Julia Norton, daughter of a New England couple, Jethro and Jane Norton. She married Donald MacRae October 1, 1857.[4]

Hugh MacRae's parents returned to Wilmington, following the Federal occupation, when Hugh was two years old.

After completion of preparatory school education in Wilmington and at Bingham's School in Mebaneville, North Carolina,[5] young Hugh was sent to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston. He graduated in 1885, and the following year began his life's work of seeking to develop the resources of his native state.

From 1886 to 1889, Hugh MacRae was a mining engineer

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[4]R. H. Fisher, Biographical Sketches of Wilmington Citizens (Wilmington: Wilmington Stamp and Printing Company, 1929), p. 65.

[5]Interview with Mrs. J. W. Morton, Wilmington, May 1957.

at Bailey Mountain between Burnsville and Spruce Pine. Burnsville was his headquarters. Spruce Pine is the center of a large Western North Carolina mining region,[6] the most important producer of mica, feldspar and kaolin in United States.[7]

In 1889 he located the property and formed the Linville Improvement Company, which contributed greatly to the resort development of the Northwestern part of North Carolina.

Linville, a beautiful resort village in Avery County, was created from a mountain wilderness under MacRae's direction. He was also responsible for construction of the Yonahlossee Road, connecting Linville and Blowing Rock, another well-known resort town in Watauga County. The road cuts through some of the highest and most rugged terrain in Eastern America.

MacRae introduced Grandfather Mountain as a major tourist attraction. It is located near Linville, and has since become, under the direction of one of his grandsons, Hugh Morton, a leading North Carolina scenic attraction.

MacRae became president of the Wilmington Cotton Mills Company in 1895 and, five years later, the Wilmington Gas Light Company. In 1907, he merged the gas concern, the Wilmington Street Railway and the Seacoast Railway into the

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[6]News story, loc. cit.

[7]Bill Sharpe, North Carolina Counties (Raleigh: Warren Publishing Company, 1948), p. not listed.

the Consolidated Railways, Light and Power Company. This eventually became the Tide Water Power Company, which he sold in 1929.[8]

MacRae electrified a car line from Wilmington to Wrightsville Beach on the Atlantic Ocean, laying a foundation for the area as a seaside resort. Along the double-tracked trolley line to the beach, he developed Winter Park, Audubon and Oleander suburban areas.

He built Lumina, a well-known dance pavillion, at Wrightsville Beach. Extension of his trolley line to Carolina Place, Sunset Park and Carolina Heights made possible the development of these Wilmington sections.

Editoralizing on MacRae's work, The Wilmington Morning Star stated April 26, 1922, that "It would take a book to go into all the details about the wonderful growth that Wilmington has experienced in all directions because MacRae 'touched the button' with a master developer's hand."[9]

In field of finance, he organized the Hugh MacRae Banking House, with headquarters in Wilmington and a branch office in New York. Through it, he financed the Rockingham

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[8]News story, loc. cit.

[9]Editorial in the Wilmington Morning Star, April 26, 1922.

Power Company, his biggest effort in water power development.[10]

In 1903, Hugh MacRae began what was later to be the chief interest of his life---land development, promotion and settlement. Out of this interest came six rural colonies carved from the then Southeastern North Carolina wilderness, peopled mostly by immigrants from Europe. The colonies located in the counties of Pender, New Hanover, and Columbus. The original plan called for keeping various nationalities en bloc. Italians were settled at St. Helena, Hollanders at Castle Hayne and Van Eden, Greeks at Marathon, Poles at Artesia and Germans and Hungarians at New Berlin.[11]

The colony development received wide acclaim. The Federal Government made motion pictures of the Castle Hayne district which have been shown throughout the Southern States.[12]

A Committee on Irrigation and Reclamation of the United States House of Representatives called on MacRae to

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[10] Fisher, loc. cit.

[11] Melville Chater, "Making People Into Folks," The Red Cross Magazine, XIV (December 1919), pp. 51-55.

[12] Fisher, loc. cit.

explain his colonization project in 1930. The committee was conducting hearings on two bills which would authorize creation of rural communities to demonstrate benefits of planned settlement and supervised rural development.[13]

The North Carolinian was promiently mentioned as a candidate for Secretary of Agriculture during administrations of Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Herbert Hoover. The Wilmington Star once editoralized that "With a Hugh MacRae of North Carolina...at the helm, the agricultural Department would be placed immeasurably closer to the farming interests of the country."[14]

Numerous publications have devoted extensive space to MacRae. He has been featured in Collier's Magazine, La Vita Internazionale, an Italian magazine printed in New York, News Week, Sunday supplements in scores of newspapers, Manufacturers Record, The Red Cross Magazine, and many newspapers. Dr. Alvin Johnson devoted a chapter in his book Pioneers to MacRae and the Van Eden colony.

MacRae's interest in agriculture lay not only in rural colonization but in all facets of farming. He tried

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[13]United States Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Irrigation and Reclamation, Organized Rural Communities, Hearings before the Committee, 71st Congress, 2nd Session, on H.R. 1677, January 27-28, 1930. (Washington: Government Printing Office), 1930.

[14]Editorial in the Wilmington Star, January 7, 1930.

to improve methods of selection, cultivation, harvesting and marketing of crops such as strawberries, cucumbers, onions, beans, lettuce, squash and cabbage grown on his own farm and each colony model farm. His most publicized work, however, was that of "continuous grazing," a phrase coined by MacRae meaning the raising of cattle without heavy expense of winter feeding.

He interested himself in the "continuous grazing" project because he thought the South would have a marked advantage in animal husbandry if annual crops suitable for pasturage could be found adaptable to the South's long seasons and warmer winters. He said:

> The greatest gain to the South, and one beyond estimate, will come by using the six months of open fall, winter and early spring, which we together with other Southern farmers have been throwing away. We have failed to appreciate and make use of the inestimable merits of the Temperate Zone----and we right in the heart of it.[15]

A mockingbird gave MacRae the continuous grazing idea. "I looked out my window one winter day and saw this bird eating green berries. I thought, 'That bird's doing all right. There should be some way cattle could feed off the land in winter.' Well, there is."[16]

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[15] Hugh MacRae, Continuous Grazing at Invershiel (Wilmington: 1938), p. not listed.

[16] Feature story in News Week, a Sunday supplement to newspapers. (Story clipped from newspaper, date not shown.)

MacRae worked out to his satisfaction the crop formula for continuous grazing at Invershiel, his 1,400-acre farm near Rocky Point in Pender County. The farm was named for his clan's erstwhile home in Scotland.

To get a combination of grasses and clovers that would grow year-round, MacRae experimented with some eighty crops over a period of 25 years. Six crops provided the perfect combination, he said: crimson clover, white Dutch clover, manganese bur clover, lespedeza, chess and Johnson grass.

The formula was published in booklet form February 3, 1938, by MacRae and made available to the public at a cost of nine cents.

Invershiel, made up of parts of three colonial farms once belonging to the Moores, Ashes, and Claytons, which were worn out under the tenant system prevailing after the Civil War, had no particular soil advantages, MacRae wrote. The soil varied, ranging from poor sand to lime gumbo and to black muck.[17]

In 1933, because of his experience in rural settlement, the United States Government selected MacRae to direct a subsistence homestead project in Pender County, which was to be patterned similar to his colonies.

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[17] MacRae, loc. cit.

The government-sponsored farmstead community, called Penderlea Homesteads, Inc., was designed to help tenants and other low-income farmers get a new chance in life during the economic depression of the 1930s.[18]

The name Penderlea was invented by MacRae, according to W.H. Robbins, who later became community manager after MacRae's resignation. Pender comes from the county and "lea" from a Scotch word meaning countryside.

Publicized as "America's First Farm City," Penderlea started on a 4,550-acre tract northwest of Burgaw purchased at an average price of $7.10 per acre.

The community lay-out was designed by John Lolan and surrounds a civic center. Each farm was twenty-acres in size and included a house, chicken house, barn, and pump house. Each house had a bathroom, sewage system, and electric system.[19]

The original plan called for each homesteader to hold the properties under lease for five years. After that time, the homesteader could buy the properties on the basis of a 40-year amortization period at a three-per cent interest

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[18] Feature story in The Sunday Star-News [Wilmington, North Carolina], April 26, 1937.

[19] Hugh MacRae, "Penderlea Farms Federal Project--- Community of Intensive Farms to Demonstrate Small Farm Possibilities" (paper from Hugh MacRae private file, no date).

rate.[20]

MacRae resigned his position as President of Penderlea Homesteads, Inc., in February, 1935.[21]

In all, 193 farmsteads were built at Penderlea. These were sold by 1947 and the Government terminated its offices at that time.

Today, Penderlea is one of the most progressive communities in Pender County. The neat and prosperous appearing farms are all inhabited by actual owners. Thirty-two dairies are located in the area. There are also two nurseries, three flower farms, one blueberry farm, and a unique holly farm.[22] There is a handsome plant where cosmetics are manufactured.

During his active career, MacRae was a member of the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce, Cape Fear Club, Cape Fear Country Club, and the Carolina Yacht Club in Wilmington, the National Arts Club in New York, and the Chevy Chase Club in Washington.

He was Chairman of the Board of the Hugh MacRae and Company and a trustee of the Hugh MacRae Land Trust, holder

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[20]Feature story, loc. cit.

[21]Letter from Lee M. Brooks to Dr. S.H. Hobbs, Department of Rural-Social Economics, University of North Carolina, March 20, 1935.

[22]Interview with W.H. Robbins, former Community Manager of Penderlea, now retired from Government Service, Burgaw, North Carolina, May, 1957.

of coal lands in Western Virginia.

He took an active but independent interest in politics and was "by logic" a Democrat. During the Bryan campaigns, he belonged to the "gold or sound money wing."

For his exceptional achievement in Southern agriculture and industry, the University of North Carolina awarded him an honorary degree.[23]

The late Dr. E. C. Branson of the University faculty said of MacRae:

> He has long been genuinely and generously interested in preserving and enriching the rural civilization of the South; he has profoundly believed that no civilization flourishes while its agriculture languishes and that no civilization languishes while its agriculture flourishes; he has stoutly maintained that the only successful farming is ownership farming, and that home-owning, home-loving, home-defending instincts are the surest defense for commonwealths and nations; he has clearly seen the fine and final significance of home-owning farmers dwelling together in compact groups and together attacking the common problems of life, livelihood and civic rule; he has believed that agriculture alone can solve none of its problems, that no occupational group of any sort can afford to organize for group advantage alone and that the problems of all groups can be solved only in terms of generous good will, good manners and measure and without stint to the farm life of the state and the nation.[24]

Hugh MacRae died October 20, 1951, at eighty-six

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[23] News story, The Sunday Star-News [Wilmington, North Carolina], October 21, 1951.

[24] News story, The Charlotte Observer Charlotte, North Carolina , January 7, 1934.

years of age, at the James Walker Memorial Hospital in Wilmington. He had retired from active business affairs eighteen months previously and had been seriously ill for several months.

Surviving him were his widow, Miss Rena Nelson before their marriage in 1891; one daughter, Mrs. J. W. Morton, of Wilmington; and six grandchildren, Hugh M. Morton, Thomas L. Morton, of Wilmington; Julian Morton, Jr., of Los Angles, California; Mrs. Agnes M. Cocke, of Charlotte; Hugh MacRae II, and Miss Marguerite MacRae, of Wilmington, and seven great grandchildren.[25]

Louis T. Moore, Chairman, New Hanover Historial Commission, described MacRae as "Eastern North Carolina's outstanding citizen in the last 100 years." In the field of business, economics and agriculture, Moore placed MacRae at the "head of Wilmington's list."

In 1954, New Hanover County perpetuated the memory of Hugh MacRae by dedicating a beautiful one-hundred-acre park in Wilmington in his honor. Called the "Hugh MacRae Memorial Park," it is located at the intersection of Oleander Drive and Masonboro Loop Road opposite the Winter Park School.[26]

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[25] News story, The Sunday Star-News [Wilmington, North Carolina], October 21, 1951.

[26] News story, The Wilmington Star [Wilmington, North Carolina], March 26, 1954.

A marker at the park's entrance bears the following inscription:

> "Hugh MacRae - 1865-1951 - Honored Citizen of North Carolina - He was an Economist, Developer of Colonies, Urban Areas, Agricultural and Industrial Projects, Resorts, and Public Utilities - This Park was Presented by Him to Residents of New Hanover County to be Enjoyed by Them. Fellow citizens Have Dedicated This Plaque in Memory of a Kindly and Gracious Son of The Old South."

II. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND OF COLONIZATIONS

The embryo of the rural, foreign colonies---Castle Hayne, St. Helena, Van Eden, Marathon, Newberlin, Artesia, first began in the inquistive mind of Hugh MacRae when he was a boy. Among large property holdings of his father was a tract of some 1200 acres of "savanna" land which lay along the railroad a few miles from Wilmington. Savanna land is open, level land. Young MacRae once heard his father remark, while passing through the land on the train, that he did not know what he was going to do with it. The statement started the boy thinking along lines that extended farther than what to do with this one particular tract. The use or non-use of it meant little to him or his family, for it had cost a small sum, and as it stood counted for little. But to young MacRae's mind it typified a problem that stretched across the South---what should be done to make productive the South's millions of acres of similar fertile lands at that time lying idle.

MacRae's youthful mind was not able to produce an answer to the problem, but an inception had been made. It would be years before it would come to life.[27]

Meanwhile, MacRae finished college and spent three years developing mines and land in Western North Carolina. He managed, with his brother Donald, his father's cotton mill in Wilmington. Then for about fifteen years he utilized his efforts to consolidate Wilmington's light and traction franchises into the Tidewater Power Company, and forming a banking house whose interests drew him into wide association with the country's financial groups. "Industrialism, corporation-labor, capitalism---he had now faced the problems and learned the limitations of each in turn."[28]

All along, MacRae continually rendered thought to the problem of how to best utilize the South's economic and social problems. In the search for an answer, he formed some pronounced opinions on the South and factors affecting its, and the nation's, future. The opinions for most part are acceptable today. But at the beginning of the Twentieth Century, many were deemed radical.

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[27]George Byrne, "Hugh MacRae's Practical Application of Common Sense in Colonization," Manufacturers Record, (May 30, 1914).

[28]Melville Chater, "Making People Into Folks, "The Red Cross Magazine, XIV (December 1919), pp. 51-55.

Like President Thomas Jefferson, MacRae believed a nation is built on a sound and stable agriculture. That the farmer should be highly respected of men because he is an important part of the whole delicately balanced economic machine, and that his well-being makes the whole machine work better and to the advantage of every part. He felt that a contented, virile and prosperous rural people best maintains the stability of a nation. He cited the country of Denmark as an example.[29]

MacRae saw Southern tenant-farms, which averaged 38 per cent on non-cotton farms and 73 per cent on all cotton farms in 1934,[30] as a shortcut to impoverishment of land, the man on it, the landlord, the South, and the nation as a whole.[31]

> Tenancy as it is generally practiced, violates every principle of good farming. It ends with the depletion of the soil. We have with the tenant, therefore, the typical poor farmer, following obselete methods, on land robbed of its fertility. The system has by degrees

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[29]News story, The Charlotte Observer [Charlotte, North Carolina], January 7, 1934.

[30]Hugh MacRae, "The Southern Plantation and Its Future," (Address made at Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York, November 4, 1939).

[31]Hugh MacRae, "The Land Settlement Problems of the South," (Address made at Conference on Reclamation, Settlement and Farm Development, Washington, D.C., December 14, 1925).

> degenerated to one of impoverishment...has the bad characteristics of peonage...will no longer support a satisfying standard of civilization.[32]

MacRae reasoned that labor conditions prevailing in the South accounted for much of the South's lack of progress. The Negro composed the bulk of the South's labor supply, both on the farm and in industry.

He saw the uneducated Negro as one who furnishes muscle power, but not brain power. The Negro accepts a low standard of living, is easily contented and is easily exploited. MacRae was convinced the South, with such persons composing its labor base, could not come into its own.[33]

He thought the South's system of farming was antiquated. It was based on pre-Civil War conditions of cheap labor, vast plantation acreage, and planting one crop for money. Little scientific farming or effort to conserve or improve soil existed. Securing new land was apparently easier and cheaper. The major money crops, cotton and tobacco, when grown on new, fertile land, required little skill or know-how. Muscle-power was the basic requierment, he observed. Farming which provides contentment and happiness

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[32]Hugh MacRae, "Shifting Agriculture." (Address made at the North Carolina Club, New York, New York, October 27, 1930)

[33]MacRae, loc. cit.

"has now become a science and must receive general recognition as such," he once declared in an address at a conference on farm development in Washington, D. C. [34]

MacRae possessed an ability for coining phrases to describe his observations and opinions. He referred often to "human engineering," a term which he spoke of in 1919 as a coming science. He felt it had as much place in national development as does physical engineering, which is constructive and revolves around huge projects of engineering---dams, reservoirs, canals and drainage ditches.

Human engineering, however, is creative in a different way and forms around social and economic conditions, homes, families, crops and markets, MacRae defined. Its aim is to promote development out of the larger opportunity afforded to individual development. "The men who will study our complex, often deformed mass-life, and will reconstruct it on a basis of mutual adaptation between all units---just as the bees evolved their marvelous communal life---will be Human Engineers of a new society, "MacRae prophesied.[35]

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[34] Hugh MacRae, "The Land Settlement Problems of the South." (Address made at Conference on Reclamation, Settlement and Farm Development, Washington, D. C., December 14, 1925).

[35] Melville Chater, "Making People Into Folk," The Red Cross Magazine, XIV (December 1919), p. 54.

In America's Western region, MacRae saw the need of physical engineering as naturally predominating. But he assigned human engineering---"the creation of a new society" ---as most important in the South.[36]

Like thousands of other thinkers before him in history, MacRae tried to determine why mankind has failed to achieve complete understanding, peace, and happiness. And like countless others had concluded, he verified the underlying stumbling block as "HUMAN GREED," which, he said, "MAY BE BROKEN DOWN INTO STUPIDITY AND SELFISHNESS."[37]

He named this stupidity and greed as opposing forces to a formula he devised for "the permanent improvement of the well-being of Southern people."[38]

The formula required: (1) collective vision, (2) common purpose, (3) effective organization, and (4) continuing constructive work.

Blind stupidity offsets vision and purpose, while greed blocks organization and constructive work. The two opposing forces have as their main backing a "policy often

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[36]Hugh MacRae, "To Stop the Back Drift of Farming; To create Satisfying Rural Life Conditions; To Increase the Purchasing Power of the Farmers: An Objective." Not dated.

[37]Hugh MacRae, "The Southern Plantation and Its Future," (Address made at Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York, November 4, 1939).

[38]Letter from Hugh MacRae to potential leaders of the South, August 19, 1933.

camouflaged under the name 'laissez faire' and championed by men who claim to believe in the 'status quo.'"[39]

MacRae strongly advocated showing people how to farm, not telling them. "There has been more harm done in the South by swivel-chair farmers who didn't know the game, telling the other people what they ought to do, than any other way that I know of," he told a Congressional Committee on Irrigation and Reclamation in Washington, D. C., in 1930.[40]

About 1903, a concrete plan in corporating his progressive views emerged in the mind of Hugh MacRae for development of the vast lands around Wilmington. It would bring in outside settlers to clear and farm the land. The settlers were to live on the land and work it themselves. This would be a step in defeating absentee-landlordism and tenancy, which MacRae thought were chaining down the South.

He first tired to get settlers from the American Midwest. A competent agent was obtained in St. Louis to induce a trainload of Western farmers to come at MacRae's expense to examine North Carolina conditions, and, if they

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[39] Ibid.

[40] United States Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Irrigation and Reclamation, Organized Rural Communities, Hearings before the Committee, 71st Congress, 2nd Session, on H.R. 1677, January 27-28, 1930. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1930). p. 93.

were pleased, to make a settlement.

The Westerners liked the Wilmington area, but local citizens discouraged them because they thought agricultural development around Wilmington was destined to fail. The trainload of people returned to the Midwest, again at MacRae's expense.

Southeastern North Carolina during this period was one of the great naval-store bases in the world. On the fertile river-bottom lands grew rice, an important source of wealth for generations, and indigo, one of the most important crops in early days. People used to these sources of livelihood could not picture outside types of farming becoming successful, and tried to discourage new attempts.[41]

MacRae may have been thinking of the failure to settle the Western farmers when he commented to an United States Congressional Committee in 1930, "We will find that everything gets into a certain status and if you change the status, you will meet opposition. All progress is made against opposition. That is what progress means. It is to upset the psychology of the moment."[42]

The defeat, however, stimulated MacRae's interest.

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[41]Feature story, The Charlotte Observer [Charlotte, North Carolina], July 23, 1939.

[42]United States Congress, op. cit., p. p. 166.

He determined to make a success of the undertaking. He would settle on land not native farmers but selected immigrant farm families from abroad or the industrial centers of the United States. He planned to divide the land into ten-acre farms for the purpose of developing intensified agriculture. MacRae thought that the immigrant farmer would get the maximum results since European agricultural methods are based on small farm operation. MacRae also felt the ten-acre farm idea would have more chance of excluding "the evil evil tenant-system whereby the cultivator almost invariably bleeds rather than enriches the soil, on the principle that it is not his own, and that any improvement thereof will only serve to raise its rental value.[43]

He planned to make the colonists land-owners and future Americans, not mere crop-growers.[44]

To carry out the colonization project, MacRae organized the Carolina Trucking Development Company with headquarters at Wilmington, North Carolina. Expressed purpose of the company was to develop Eastern North Carolina farm lands by intensive farming and demonstrate the section's

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[43] Melville Chater, "Making People Into Folks," The Red Cross Magazine, XIV (December 1919), p. 52.

[44] Ibid.

agricultural advantage for early spring vegetables and small fruits for Northern markets.[45]

It was purely a private undertaking without Government support, MacRae told a Congressional Committee in Washington, D. C., during hearings on organized rural communities in 1930. Capital was obtained through his ownership of the public utilities of Wilmington.[46]

A strong backer of the company was the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, which had its main offices in Wilmington, according to Miss Mary P. Bell, treasurer of the Hugh MacRae and Company at one time. The railroad officials were eager for new settlements to open on land along the tracks.

Officers of the Carolina Trucking Company were C. Van Leuven, President; M.F.H. Gouverneur, Vice President; R. M. Sheppard, Secretay; and J.C. McEachern, Treasurer. Directors were Hugh MacRae; Junius Davis, Davis and Davis, attorneys; M.F.H. Gouverneur, Hugh MacRae and Company, bankers in Wilmington; H.M. Chase, Vice President, Investment Trust Company, Wilmington; Cameron F. MacRae, MacRae and MacRae, attorneys; C. Van Leuven, President, Wilmington; J. C. McEachern,

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[45]Hugh MacRae, "Farm Colonies Near Wilmington, N.C.," (Paper from MacRae's private file, no date).

[46]United States Congress, op. cit., p. 161.

Treasurer, Wilmington.[47]

More than a half million acres of land were examined by expert soil and drainage engineers in Pender, New Hanover and Columbus Counties for the company. Carefully selected boundaries of the best types of land were purchased. The land was bought at low prices. Owners considered the land practically worthless at the time and most were glad to sell.[48]

Several land areas were divided into ten and twenty-acre plots. Drainage and roadways were constructed. Portions of the small farm plots were cleared and ploughed. Small buildings were erected.

Agencies were established for securing settlers. An experienced farm superintendent was placed in charge of each development to assist newly arriving colonists, and to instruct them in proper land preparation, selection of seeds and fertilizers, and cultivation, gathering, grading and marketing of products.

It was the company's purpose to devote itself to the colonization of selected farm families from Europe. They would come either directly from abroad or from American industrial centers. A few Americans settled in the colonies.

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[47] Carolina Trucking Development Company, "34 Cents A Day" (Wilmington: no date). (Advertisement.)

[48] Interview with Miss Mary P. Bell, Wilmington, May 1957.

The company sent officials to Europe to study agricultural conditions and select nationalities best suited for Eastern Carolina agriculture. C.L. Fisher, one official sent to Europe, was a former advertising specialist for a St. Louis, Missouri, advertising firm. He went to Italy, Belgium and Holland in search of prospective colonists.

A group of seven Italian families from Rongo, North Italy, were the first to locate in one of the colonies. They settled at St. Helena in September, 1905.

During the same period other colonies were also being established; Greeks at Marathon; Hollanders at Van Eden; Germans at New Berlin; Hollanders, Hungarians, Poles and Americans at Castle Hayne.

The farms were sold at reasonable prices and on easy terms. Individual credits were provided from time to time as needed during earlier years of each development.[49]

"It is no philanthropy, you understand," MacRae once told a magazine reporter, "but a business experiment in co-operative farming."[50]

The colonists encountered many discouragements and

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[49] Hugh MacRae, "Farm Colonies Near Wilmington, N.C.," (Paper from MacRae's private file, no date).

[50] Melville Chater, "Making People Into Folks," The Red Cross Magazine, XIV (December 1919), p. 52.

setbacks during initial stages of their developments. This was due partly to pioneer nature of the effort, lack of capital by the colonist and absence of a satisfactory marketing system for farm products.

At first, MacRae thought it desireable to segregate the nationalities into separate groups. But he later learned it to be a distinct advantage to combine them. This way they became more quickly "Americanized," he said.[51]

During an United States Congressional Committee hearing on organized rural communities in 1930, MacRae declared that he would not start a colony of any one nationality, English, American, or Scotch. The last he would start a colony with would be English or Scotch, although he was a Scotchman himself. We want to get different points of view, he told the Committee. We want to bring into focus the experience of many nations.[52] Earlier MacRae said:

> The South must stop bragging about its Anglo-Saxon civilization, lay aside its prejudices, and import thousands of skilled farmers of all nationalities if it is to successfully and permanently solve its reclamation and agricultural problems.[53]

Women and children were found necessary to sound

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[51] Hugh MacRae, op. cit., p. 3.

[52] United States Congress, op. cit., p. 166.

[53] News story, clipping from Birmingham, Alabama, newspaper (name not shown), October, 29, 1925.

colony development. MacRae and his company learned this early when a Greek settlement failed at Marathon. Greek men came to the colony alone, without wife or children. They soon gave up the venture.[54]

Carolina Trucking Company officials showed their appreciation of family-building by establishing a custom at some of the colonies of giving a present of five dollars in gold to each bride and a gift of ten dollars in gold for each newly-born child.[55]

The company publicized the colonies through booklets, newspapers and agents. Brochures illustrated with colorful pictures of colony activities were printed in Dutch, German Slovak, Italian and Polish languages. They were distributed abroad and in foreign settlements of American industrial centers.

Several features distinguished colonization as carried on by the Carolina Trucking Development Company from other plans called "colonization," which in reality were mostly schemes that accepted no responsibility beyond selling land to colonists, getting what payments could be made, and then leaving the colonists to work out their own salvation

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[54] Ida M. Tarbell, "Will Your Home Be Happy As Theirs?" Collier's The National Weekly, Vol. 70, No. 3 (July 15, 1922), p. 6.

[55] Hugh MacRae, op. cit., p. 10.

the best they could.

The Carolina Trucking Development Company's method was more benevolent. Its basic concern was not how much land could be sold or how much money secured, but how the farm work progressed and whether families were prosperous and happy. If this could be brought about, adjoining company land would naturally rise in value and saleability. To all who showed inclination to settle and work, the company helped in every way. Many colonists were furnished mules, implements, feed, fertilizers, even provisions, until they could make a start and become self-supporting.

The company had work going on most of the time--- cutting timber, chopping cordwood, digging ditches, which furnished employment for those needing it. Some colonists first worked for wages, got a little money ahead and then returned to their farms and planted crops or prepared land for planting. When it again became necessary to earn ready money, they returned to the company. In this way the slender resources of numerous families were strengthened and farm failures prevented.

At each colony the company kept a superintendent who was a practical farmer, thoroughly competent to give instructions in proper methods of farming. The superintendents knew the various soils and purposes to which they were best

adapted. They aided the settlers not only in planting and cultivating, but in disposing of farm products as well, and in other matters of business which newcomers sometimes found themselves embarrassed for lack of knowledge in local customs.

Demonstration farms were maintained by the company where colonists could see results obtained by following certain methods. The demonstration farms introduced many crops not previously grown in the area. These included alfalfa, vetch, crimson clover and lupine, all of which were easily raised and yielded abundantly.

Various agricultural experts were brought to the colonies. They instructed in the most approved scientific methods of their business. An advantage from their visits was shown in strawberries. The Krevitt method of cultivating the strawberry was introduced in 1911 in the colonies, which increased berry yields greatly on the same acreage. An instructor in sweet potatoes from New Jersey taught the colonists new techniques in marketing this crop. As a result, colonists' potatoes were put on the market several weeks earlier than would have been possible by the old method and consequently received a higher price.[56]

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[56] George Byrne, "Hugh MacRae's Practical Application of Common Sense in Colonization," Manufacturers Record, (May 30, 1914), p. 4.

Although farms could be bought at the various colonies up to the time of MacRae's death, active promotion of the colonies by MacRae was discontinued several years before. Governmental restrictions on immigration was one reason for this. Voicing opposition to Federal curbs on immigration, MacRae once told a Senate Immigration Committee in Washington, D. C., that a fixed quota restrictive principle should be replaced by a flexible selective system. He further said:

> The South's greatest need is a supply of intelligent, high class, intensive farmers, like the Swedes, Danes and Hollanders, who have proven and always will prove good citizens.
>
> These desireable people want to come to the South, not as laborers, but as independent farm owners. As evidence of this I submit letters from the Central Immigration Foundation of Holland, from the director of immigration of the Netherlands. For the first time in the history of this country we can get any desired number of these splendid people.[57]

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[57] Newspaper clipping from MacRae's private file, name of newspaper and date of publication not shown.

CHAPTER III

ST. HELENA

The St. Helena colony was started in a pine forest. It covered an area of 3,824.25 acres.[58] Located some two miles south of Burgaw in Pender County in the southeastern part of North Carolina, the land flanked both sides of the present Highway 117. It bordered the line of the Wilmington and Weldon Division of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad. The land was bought from local farmers and businessmen, who were happy to sell because the land was considered then practically worthless.[59]

A detailed layout scheme of the colony was planned and drawn by Humphreys and Rapalje of Wilmington. It was completed May 24, 1906. Surveys were done by Humphreys, Hatch and Taylor.[60] Topographical maps and lawyer's fees cost about $100,000,[61] a figure not considered authentic by Hugh Morton, MacRae's grandson.

The colony was originally divided into eighty-four

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[58] Records of land sale at St. Helena, filed in office of Hugh Morton, Wilmington, North Carolina.

[59] Interview with Miss Mary P. Bell, Wilmington, May 1957.

[60] Official Map of Ten-Acre Farms at St. Helena, Pender County, North Carolina, (May 24, 1906).

[61] News story, Bollettino dela Sera, [New York], June 10, 1909.

ten-acre farms, according to an official company map. A townsite was also laid out, covering 28.125 acres. It was sectioned into sixteen blocks labeled "A" to "P." Block "A" was reserved for the Carolina Trucking Development Company and a portion of Block "D" for a church. Six streets were given Italian names. Three were for North Italian cities of Milan, Verona, and Rovigo. One for Giuseppe Garibaldi, the Ninteenth Century Italian patriot and general. Two others were labeled Sebastian and Villanova.[62]

St. Helena was named in honor of the Queen of Italy.

The colony was founded in September, 1905, by seven North Italian men. There were also two South Italians at the beginning, but they did not remain. The seven Italians were peasants from the Province of Venetia near the city of Rovigo.

One of the agents representing the Carolina Trucking Development Company who chose the settlers was a lawyer named Ernesto Valentini. He made three trips to Rovigo before completing the selections. He found from records that no serious crime had been committed in the peasants' home district for more than four-hundred years.

The peasants had little money. They arrived in debt for their fare from New York and owed money in Italy. On

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[62] Official map, loc. cit.

their arrival at St. Helena, they were lodged in several small houses built for them by the company. They were immediately employed in clearing their ten-acre plots of ground at a weekly salary paid by the company.

With a few months, the former Venetian farmers had transformed the woods into productive farms. Potatoes, beans, peas, tomatoes, lettuce, and strawberries were gathered the first harvest season.[63]

According to Father Joachim Dunn, present priest of St. Joseph Catholic Church at St. Helena, who obtained his information from church records, the settlers were Cajetan Perseghin, his wife and two children; Perseghin first name not given; Domenico Bertazza; Gerviazo Trevisan; Ginezio Berto; Domenico Laghitto Berto; and G. Garbo. Father Dunn was not sure of the correct spelling of the names because the records had greatly faded, making the handwriting on them difficult to read. Others to come later during 1906 were L. Borin and family, C. Marcomin, E. Rossi, V. Farnesiera, A. Leoda, Ettore Tammasia and family and Ferro no first name shown.

The Reverend Joseph A. Gallagher was Catholic priest in 1906.[64]

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[63] News story, loc. cit.

[64] Church records at Saint Joseph Catholic Church, St. Helena, North Carolina.

Hugh Overstreet, of whom the Italians were "very fond", was superintendent of the colony, reported a group of New York Italian visitors. A "life and spirit" of the colony was a Major Van C. Lucas.[65]

The road to Wilmington was but two wagon tracks in the mud. It was a good half-day journey on wagon and team to Burgaw during the rainy season. The safest, surest, and quickest method of transportation was the railroad, well patronized at that time.[66]

More Italian settlers arrived in March, 1907. Some were related to colonists already established. The new colonists were V. Perseghin, G. Farnesiera, Gregoria Mallosti and family, and another member of the Rossi and Berto family.

In 1908 a small frame church was built by the three Perseghin brothers and several Wilmington carpenters.[67] The new church accomodated two-hundred people, making it no longer necessary to use private homes for services. The building was white-washed on the inside and tarred on the outside. The Bishop of Belmont Abbey, Most Reverend Leo

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[65] News story, Bollettino dela Sera, New York, June 10, 1909.

[66] Feature story, The Wilmington [North Carolina] Star, March 28, 1948.

[67] Church records, loc. cit.

Haid, O.S.B., the Extension Society, and the MacRae estate donated funds to build it. The church was under the patronage of St. Joseph, and under the charge of Father Umberto Donati.[68]

A new contingent of Italians arrived in 1908. They were Farsienio Valentino, Bruno Tamburin, Angelo Latano and wife, Antonio Chiradello and family, Carlo Bonincontri and family, Luigi Bonincontri and family, Antionio Cado and family, Pietro Del Lago and family, Antionio Componmicci, Antionio Garrillo and family.[69]

Many of the newer colonists were employed one-half of their time working for the company, ditching, fencing, and building roads. The women and children spent all their time preparing land for the first crops. The men gave half their time doing the heavy, rough work.[70]

Contracts between the company and colonists provided that profits from sale of products grown on the farms be divided into two parts---one going to the colonist for his support and use, the other to the company in payment for the land and house. In this way it was expected that each family could own its land in several years.

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[68]Feature story, loc. cit.

[69]Church records, loc. cit.

[70]Hugh MacRae, "Bringing Immigrants to the South," (Address made before North Carolina Society of New York, New York, New York, December 7, 1908).

To check progress at St. Helena, a group of New Yorkers interested in Italian immigration to America visited the colony June 5, 1908. In the group were De Palma Castiglione, Director of the Labor Bureau for Italians in New York, and Ernesto Valentini, the lawyer who first recruited settlers from Italy.

The group reported that they were greeted at the colonists' homes with

> open-hearted cordiality and cheer by the mothers and wives, all surrounded by beautiful healthy children of both sexes, all rosy checked and happy, recalling by sad contrast the thousands of children of our countrymen, all pale and thin, living crowded in awful rooms of the tentements, very death holes in the Italian quarters of New York City, where thousands of consumptives die yearly.[71]

A large co-operative store called the Co-operative Italiana di Consumo was built in 1908. It was formed by the colonists to sell everything they might need at cost price.[72]

A brass band of fifteen pieces was organized. It played on holidays, feast days and welcomings for newcomers to the colony. During presentations the band played alternately the favorite airs of Italy and America.[73]

In an address before the North Carolina Society of New York December 7, 1908, Hugh MacRae reported sixty-six

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[71]News story, Ballettino dela Sera, [New York], June 10, 1909.

[72]News story, The Morning Star Wilmington, North Carolina , February 6, 1908.

[73]Hugh MacRae, loc. cit.

farms had been sold. About three-hundred people made up the population of the colony. Two-hundred-and-fifty acres of land were under cultivation, and two-hundred acres of additional land had been cleared ready for the plow. One-hundred acres of strawberries had been planted, forty acres of cotton, fifteen in corn, fifteen in potatoes, and eighty in miscellaneuous vegetables.

MacRae further stated that the colony experimental work had been done at great expense, and the usual mistakes had been made which might be expected in pioneer work.[74] Among obstacles encountered were the opposition of Southern people to Italian immigration because of prejudice existing toward Italians caused by the "so-called Black Hand," difficulty of obtaining laws for admission of immigrants and drainage of lands.[75]

The three Perseghin brothers, original settlers of the colony, welcomed their father and family on arrival at the colony in 1909. Others joining the settlement the same year were Martino Martenello, John Canavessio and family, Gregori Piereno, Bonchetto, Leonardo Grandegiacamo and Dominico Leimone.[76]

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[74]Hugh MacRae, loc. cit.

[75]News story, Ballettino dela Sera, [New York], June 10, 1909.

[76]Church records, loc. cit.

Father Donati, the colony priest who came from a grape and olive raising family, was one of the first to experiment with grape growing. But he was called away to another church before the experiment reached the advanced stage. Later, grape growing became a prominent pursuit in St. Helena.[77]

On July 7, 1911, Father C. Kneusels arrived to take up duties as first resident pastor of the Catholic Church, then known as the St. Helena Mission. Virgillo Perseghin greeted him, saying there was no home for Kneusels and that he would have to sleep in the church on an old iron bedstead with only a mattress.

The following month, however, the company loaned Kneusels a small house and three acres on Farm 34 to raise a graden.

Father Kneusels immediately interested himself in education of the children. They were instructed in the Community Hall opposite the railroad station. He used his home for adult instruction in evenings.

After teaching two years in this manner, he appealed to the Superintendent of Public Schools in Burgaw for a teacher to help. A young girl was appointed who made a daily trip

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[77] News story, The Evening Sun New York, New York , July 14, 1909.

from Burgaw to St. Helena on bicycle. The arrangement was not practical because the children failed to make progress due to the fact they knew little English. This in turn, reversed the situation, and Father Kneusels was invited to teach in the Burgaw public school, a position he held for a year.

Father Kneusels was responsible for laying out a new cemetery. The first person buried in it was 77-year-old Santa Trevizana.

In 1913 the Carolina Trucking Development Comapany changed the color of many of the colony homes from red to white with green window shades. Some of the Italians had painted the houses red in sympathy with the Garibaldi movement in Italy where soldiers wore red shirts.[78]

The typical cost of a farm in 1913 was $1300. This included "8½ acres cultivated, all drained, special type house, 3 rooms, small barn, one-acre vineyard, 80 fruit trees."[79]

More and more land was devoted to grape culture, from which wine was made and marketed through Italian wine merchants in New York. But the North Carolina Legislature enacted a prohibition law which blocked further effort along this line. Because of this, many Italians became discouraged

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[78] Church records, loc. cit.

[79] Hugh MacRae, "Farm Colonies Near Wilmington, N. C." (Paper from MacRae's private file, no date).

and began moving away.[80] By 1914, all but one Italian family had sold their farms and left. World War I was underway and high wages in Northern industrial centers attracted many. The lone remaining family was that of Domenico Leimone.[81]

Replacing the Italians were a new group speaking several languages. It was wartime and many Europeans sought refuge. In the spring of 1915, twelve families, numbering about seventy-five persons, from Belgium moved onto the farms. The Belgians, who were not farmers, tried to adjust themselves to rural life, but failed. All left the colony the same year except one family---A. H. Fleuren's.

Eight Hungarian families succeeded the Belgians, arriving in 1916.[82]

Bishop Leo Haid bought ten acres of land for the Catholic church in 1916. The priest's house was built on the land at a cost of $2,000.[83]

Twelve Slovak and six Serbian families joined the diverse ethnic congregation in 1918. The same year twelve more families, mainly Ukranians, Austrian-Galicians and Russians, came.[84]

A lot on which to build a Catholic school was bought

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[80] Church records, loc. cit.

[81] Hugh MacRae, loc. cit.

[82] Feature story, The Wilmington North Carolina Star, March 28, 1948.

[83] Church records, loc. cit.

[84] Feature story, loc. cit.

December 21, 1918 for $125. Father Kneusels and a Mr. Eugene Mottes began making concrete blocks, which were to be used in the construction of the building, on July 22, 1920. The structure was to cost $10,000. Father Kneusels figured 18,000 blocks eight by sixteen inches in size would be needed.[85]

Father Kneusels never realized the fulfilment of his dream. On one of his many trips to the North, he was taken seriously ill and died on July 31, 1924. He was buried at St. Helena. A headstone given by the Knights of Columbus, Wilmington Chapter, denotes his place of rest.

The school was not officially opened until September 30, 1924. The Franciscan Fathers, Order Minor Conventuals, and the Third Order Franciscan Sisters whose Motherhouse is located in Syracuse, New York, directed the school.

An average of fifty children per year sought their education through the Catholic school.

In 1932, the Russian element of the colony under leadership of Father John G. Baruch built a brick church facing the railroad. Father Baruch is still priest of the Greek Orthodox Church.[86]

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[85] Church records, loc. cit.

[86] Feature story, The Wilmington [North Carolina], Star, March 28, 1948.

Other priests serving at the Roman Catholic church since Father Kneusels' death were Fathers John Murneane, M. Imhoff, Roland Gross, Joel Arnold, Mallachy White, and Daniel Lutz. Father Joachim Dunn is the present priest. He serves at a new, handsome church erected in 1952 near Highway 117.[87]

The soil of St. Helena has been tilled by immigrants of ten European backgrounds---Italian, Polish, Hungarian, Ukrainian, Belgian, Danish, Slovak, Serbian, German and English. All did not come to the colony directly from Europe. Many previously lived in northern areas of United States, working in coal mines, factories or on farms.

Among those who at one time acquired farms at St. Helena but do not live there now because of death, failure to occupy the land, or moval are listed below. The date after some names shows years the farms were acquired. Identification of nationalities as far as possible, was done by John Leimone and John M. Fedoronko. The Leimone family is the colony's senior family.

John Bertalli, 1916, Italian; John Vargo, 1929, Hungarian, son living at Wrightsboro, North Carolina; Charles Kasell, 1921, Hungarian; Theodore Bweachok, 1929; Frank S. Chap, 1914; Agostam Domoszlay, 1920; Joseph Honecak, 1920; John Bertello, 1912, Italian; John Canavesio, 1911, Italian; Nat Perseghin, 1917, Italian; Michael and John Szedlak, 1917;

87Church records, loc. cit.

Joseph Gytvai, Hungarian; G. Piereno, 1910, Italian; Mrs. K. L. Hertenberger, 1916; Alex Kowal, 1925, Russian; John Soltisik, 1920, Hungarian; Simeon Opoka, 1924, Polish; Frank Koos, 1919, Hungarian; Henrik Rondum, 1925, Danish; Michael Wayda, 1925, Polish; Stephen Zacharkow, 1924, Ukrainian; John Kovach, 1920, Polish; Asafat Keklac, 1927, Polish; A. Domonkos, 1928; Clement Zacharkow, Ukrainian; Nikolai Zuravio, 1925, Russian; Nick Trkua, 1932; Charles Dudic, 1925, Ukrainian; M. Dudic, 1924, Ukrainian; Anthony Nester, 1924; C. J. Carter, 1909; A. Boratynsky, 1925, Polish; Peter Stanczak, 1925, Polish; P. Feciuch, 1926; Stephen Kroughta, 1929; N. Reshetor, 1924; D. C. Scott, 1920; W. E. George, 1920; and V. De Lenardo, 1908, Italian.[88]

Only one family of the original Italian settlement live today at St. Helena. It is the family of Domenico Leimone. Others living there now came mainly during the 1915-1925 decade. Most are engaged in truck farming. A few live in the community, but rent out their land and work elsewhere.

St. Helena is no longer known as a colony or settlement distinct from other communities. It is an integrated part of Pender County's large trucking region. The railroad station and post office are no longer at St. Helena. Speed

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[88]Records of land sale at St. Helena, filed in office of Hugh Morton, Wilmington, North Carolina.

of modern trucks and automobiles has put it only a few minutes' distance from Burgaw.

Homes in the area, while not pretentious, are warm and functional. Few bear earmarks of European style except for basements which most native rural homes in Eastern North Carolina do not have. The Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches are about the only physical marks that set the community apart. The Baptist Church predominates the rural setting in North Carolina. The Catholic school still stands, but its operation as been discontinued. The children in the Community now attend the Catholic school at Castle Hayne or Burgaw public school. Congregation point of the community has shifted from the original townsite along the railroad to Highway 117, where several gasoline stations and a cafe are located.[89]

St. Helena farmers are among the most prosperous of the county. Because of modern machinery, many have increased their acreage many fold. To do so, they have gone outside the St. Helena area and bought land.

Farming remains the principle occupational pursuit. Lettuce, strawberries, cabbage, snap beans, squash, cucumbers, and various greens are the chief money crops. The growing

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[89] Observation by the author, May 1957.

season, which begins early in spring and lasts to October enables two crops to be raised.[90]

The heterogenous group of nationalities has integrated into a seemingly homogenous group. Marriages between the various nationalities have been extensive.

One of the most successful settlers is Michael Boryk. He came with his Polish father, Andrew, to St. Helena in 1925. Michael was thirteen years old at the time. He had to quit school to work on the ten-acre farm. At present he grows more vegetables than any other grower in the county, planting some five-hundred acres in various vegetables each year. He has fifty acres of strawberries, probably the largest strawberry tract in the state. The tract was once a depleted field, which Boryk built up with lime and proper drainage. Boryk operates his well mechanized farm with eleven tractors, two passenger buses, three automobiles and five trucks. He has entered the produce buying and selling business, working under the name of Pender Fruit Company. His cucumbers are sold under the trade name of "Mike's Brand." Boryk was the first to wax cucumbers in Pender County. He credits much of his success to his Polish wife, the former Anna Gmytruk of the Castle Hayne colony. She is active in all phases of the

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[90]Interview with Joe Honeycutt, Pender County farm agent, Burgaw, North Carolina, March 1957.

business, but generally supervises harvesting operations while Boryk occupies himself with the all important selling activities. Boryk can do everything from building a house, repairing tractors, to marketing over the telephone. He has been instrumental in forming a strawberry selling co-operative which selected members hope will increase quality of berries leaving the section and thereby command higher prices. Boryk's father died in 1940.[91]

Domenico Leimone, who was the oldest settler in the colony, died in 1956. He came from the rural village of Chiesannova in Italy. He started on a ten-acre plot in 1912. He once raised grapes at St. Helena, but when a prohibition law was enacted, he switched completely to dairying and truck farming. His wife, four sons, and one daughter still live in the community. The family altogether owns some four-hundred acres of land, fourteen tractors, three silos, two dairies, and seven trucks. The oldest son, Angelo, operates the family dairy with a herd of forty Holsteins. Justo runs another dairy of forty-nine animals. Two other sons, John and Mario, truck farm, each growing about twenty-five acres of lettuce. John serves as president of a local vegetable selling co-operative---the United Truck Growers Association. The daughter Mary, who is married, continues

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[91]Interview iwht Michael Boryk, Burgaw, April 1957.

residence at St. Helena.[92]

Another successful St. Helenian is James A. (Jim) Pecora who came from Italy in 1921. He joined the colony in 1924 and introduced the growing of several new vegetables in the area. Among his introductions were Chinese cabbage, chicory, fiva beans (similar to Lima beans), butternut squash (resembling cooked sweet potatoes) and Calabria broccili. Pecora came from a vegetable growing region in Italy near Cozensa in the southern district of Calabria. Pecora farms seventy acres of land in St. Helena and 220 acres nearby. He raises lettuce, beans, squash, wheat and soybeans, operating four tractors. He has a few beef cattle to clean up grass around low places on the farm.

Pecora married Herminia Gytvai, daughter of a Hungarian who settled at St. Helena. Her job is supervising the laborers. She remembers her father, John Gytvai, as the first to grow lettuce at St. Helena. After arriving in America from Hungary, her father first worked at Dante, Virginia, as a coal miner. He became sick and doctors advised more fresh air. An advertisement in an Hungarian newspaper describing St. Helena caught his attention. He moved to the colony in February, 1917. He died in 1926. His wife and five of twelve children still live in the community. The five are Herminia, Bill, Julia,

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[92]Interview with John Leimone, St. Helena, November, 1956.

Bessie and Helen.[93]

John Fedoronko came from the Polish village of Sanok to United States at the age of fifteen in 1904. He first worked in factories making automobile tires and railroad cars in Pittsburgh. He heard about the colony through his cousin, who was an agent at the time for the Carolina Trucking Development Company. Fedoronko first bought ten acres. Two months later he got ten more acres, followed by another ten in 1931. In 1933 he bought 282 acres, much of it woodland. Fedoronko labored hard, practiced thrift, and made a habit of paying cash for all purchases. He as not afraid to take a "risk on big scale growing," which contributed much to his monetary success. Produce sold well during the depression, which also helped. Fedoronko had eight children, three of which were sent to college. One son attended the North Carolina State College and now works as an agricultural insecticide expert in Wallace, North Carolina. Fedoronko raises lettuce, cucumbers, beans, squash, and beets, operating four tractors and three trucks. His first wife died. A second wife, Helen, is a Czechoslovakian whom he met while vacationing in Miami. Both are members of the Greek Orthodox Church.[94]

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[93] Interview with Jim Pecora, St. Helena, April, 1957.

[94] Interview with John Fedoronko, St. Helena, April, 1957.

Adrian Fleuren, the only one of fourteen Belgians arriving in 1914 who stayed at St. Helena, died in 1951. His son, Anthony, remains in Pender County and operates a dairy at nearby Penderlea.[95]

John Spisak was a native of the farming village of Trebiov in southern Czechoslovakia. He migrated to America in 1904, worked in Pennsylvania as a coal miner; Newark, New Jersey, as a boiler shop laborer; Washington State as a lumberjack; and Leigh, Montana, as a coal miner. He came to St. Helena in 1918, attracted by a calendar sent by Agent John Nemaph advertising the colony. Carolina's warmer climate appealed to Spisak. He paid $1400 for a twenty-acre farm and house. He started a dairy with one cow, eventually increasing it to twelve. Milk was sold in Wilmington. He also raised lettuce. In 1930, using money saved from milk and lettuce profits, Spisak built an eight-room brick home with running water, electric lights and a two-car garage. Spisak and his wife have four children. Helen attends business school in Charlotte. Mary F. is a captain in the Army Nurse Corps. In service for fifteen years, she served as flight nurse and has seen much of the world. John is in the printing business in Cleveland, Ohio, and George remains at home working on the farm. The Spisak family has 125 acres today, on which truck crops and small grains are raised.

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[95] Interview with Anthony Fleuren, Penderlea, North Carolina, January 1957.

There are two tractors, two trucks and one car. "Money is in the bank" and there's adequate insurance.[96]

Others now living at St. Helena are A. M. Marianovsky, Ukrainian; Mrs. M. Gomore, and son, Hungarian; Ilia Ivanovic and son; Simeon Opoka, owns a farm but lives in New York; John and Julia Kravechi, operate a gas station; three sons of Andrew Tokoly, deceased; widow of Melethy Hubriak, Russian, deceased; wife and son of Wasyl Naumuk, Russian, deceased; Wasyl Nakoneczny, Russian, has a son who is a mechanical engineer; Michael Hulak; Elia and Powell DeBaylo; Joseph Horvath; son of Gregory Horsky, Russian, deceased; wife and son of Stephen Mezerak, deceased; I. Bakan, Russian; Elia Ivanovich, Serbian; wife and son of Justyra Mandrik, deceased; wife of B. Dupelevich, Ukrainian, deceased; Wasye Nakoneczny, Ukrainian; Peter Krochmalny, Ukrainian, deceased; John Banadyga, Polish; Peter Paluch, Polish; wife of Andrew Smith, deceased; son of L. Zandigiocomo, Italian, deceased; Robert Katalinic, Polish; Joseph Meszes, Hungarian; and Peter Katalanic, Polish. Names and their spellings came from records of land sales at St. Helena, kept in the office of Hugh Morton, Wilmington, North Carolina, grandson of Hugh MacRae.[97]

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[96] Interview with John Spisak, St. Helena, November 1956.

[97] Interview with John Leimone and John Fedoronko, who provided information concerning nationalities and present status of residents, St. Helena, April 1957.

CHAPTER IV

VAN EEDEN

Van Edden was hewed out of woodland about five miles north of Burgaw and just south of the village of Watha. The area consisted of 537.2 acres, and was surveyed into 48 ten-acre farms with a townsite of two blocks. Not all the land was cleared.[98]

The colony was named for a Dr. Frederik Van Eeden, of Walden, Holland, and was planned for Dutch settlement. Van Eeden had done some colonization in Holland that operated on a socialistic basis. Just what the connection was between him and the Carolina Truck and Development Company was not made clear. But in a booklet printed in Dutch and published in Holland, Dr. Van Eeden calls himself the colony's "Godfather." In the book he encouraged settlers to operate their affairs in a collective manner.[99]

The colony was started with Hollanders, people of higher financial and educational condition than the first settlers at St. Helena. The Dutch were given the use of land free for five years. They were supposed to build houses

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[98] Records of land sale at Van Eeden, filed in office of Hugh Morton, Wilmington, North Carolina.

[99] "Van Eeden-Colony in North Carolina U. S. A.," 1912, booklet from private file of Hugh MacRae.

at their own expense. Later, this was changed to one-fourth down and the balance in three equal annual payments. Price per acre of land, ditched and cleared of trees and provided with a road to the farm, was $50.[100]

The family of Wilhem Rond was the first to live at Van Eeden. Altogether some eighteen Dutch families settled in the colony. Most came during the year 1912. But within a few years all except two had left. According to William Plevier, a settler who remained until 1938, there was a drainage problem which made the land too wet for truck farming. This made it extremely difficult to earn a living. Plevier stayed because "some people said I couldn't make it," and "I was too stiff-headed" to leave.

Plevier came from Haarlem, Holland, where he was a conductor on an electric railroad running between Amsterdam and Sandvood. "Itching feet" made him come to America, he said.

In 1911 Plevier acquired a ten-acre farm at New Berlin with a $25 down-payment. He did not like the place and later traded it for a farm at Van Eeden.

He first raised truck crops, but failed because of the swampy nature of the land. He then tried cotton, but

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[100]Private paper from Hugh MacRae's file, no title or date.

insects destroyed the crop. Eventually success was won by turning to dairying. This was done by pasturing cows on borrowed land and shipping milk and butter by train from the nearby Watha station to Wilmington markets.

Plevier left Van Eeden in 1938, trading his thirty acres to Hugh MacRae for a farm near Watha. In 1941 Plevier moved to Penderlea, continuing with a small dairy.[101]

In 1939 the Alvin Corporation bought 210 acres of Van Eeden land. The corporation was headed by Dr. Alvin Johnson, a renowned economic and social reformer. He established a farm colony at Van Eeden for Jewish refugees from Europe.

Johnson was backed by the Refugee Economic Corporation, an organization headed by Charles Liebman and Bernard Flexner, which financed refugee settlements around the world.

Many jobless Jewish refugees who had fled Hitler's persecutions in Germany were creating employment problems in America. Johnson believed small farms of their own would give them useful work and purpose.

The new colony began late in 1939 with about fifty Jewish families starting the new venture. Farming was either too difficult for the Jews or they could earn a

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[101] Interview with William Plevier, Penderlea, North Carolina, November, 1956.

better livelihood elsewhere.[102] All left the colony except the family of Egon Rosenblum.

Rosemblum was a German-Jew who had worked as a wholesale grocery salesman in Landau, Germany. He became interested in dairying and succeeded in this pursuit at Van Eeden. However, it must be pointed out that he had use of much of the corporation's land without charge. Rosenblum moved to Penderlea when the Alvin Corporation liquidated and sold Van Eeden in 1949.[103]

An American World War II veteran, John Wilkins, bought Van Eeden, paying $11,000 for the land and buildings. He made a down-payment of $5,000 and paid off the balance the following year.

Wilkins and his wife, a former Navy nurse, turned Van Eeden into a large dairy. Seventy-five Holstein-Fresian cows were placed in the lush pastures of the former Dutch and Jewish colony.[104]

Only the following names of colonists who had lived at Van Eeden could be located: Wilhem Rond, William Flevier, and G. D. Sluyter.

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[102] Alvin Johnson, Pioneer's Progress (New York, Viking Press, 1952), p. 364.

[103] Interview with Egon Rosenblum, Penderlea, North Carolina, November, 1956.

[104] Interview with John Wilkins, Van Eeden, North Carolina, January, 1957.

CHAPTER V

CASTLE HAYNE

Castle Hayne, unlike the other colonies, was not in woodland when established. Its land was previously part of a plantation that dated before the American revolution. Much of the land had been cultivated for years in various crops. A Reverend Richard Marsden was one of the first owners. Captain Roger Hayne married Marsden's daughter and came into possession of the plantation. It was later named after Hayne. "Castle" refers to the Hayne home. One of Captain Hayne's daughters married General Hugh Waddell. She and the general were given the plantation by a son of Captain Hayne who had inherited it. General Waddell, who died before 1773, and his wife were buried at Castle Hayne.[105]

Sometime during the early 1800s Sam Blossom, a Wilmington storekeeper, acquired much of the Castle Hayne land. His real name was Antionio Velazia, but he anglicized to Blossom. He came from a Portuguese family of grape growers in Portugal. He ran away from home and led an adventuresome life on the high seas before settling at Wilmington. After acquiring the Castle Hayne land, Blossom moved from Wilmington

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[105] Alfred Moore Waddell, History of New Hanover County (Wilmington: publisher not given, 1909), pp. 53-54.

to it. He opened a store, located next to the depot, and began operating a ferry across the Northeast Cape Fear River which flows by Castle Hayne. The ferry crossed the river near the site of the present Atlantic Coast Line Railroad bridge.

Hugh MacRae bought the Castle Hayne land from Blossom about 1900.[106]

It was on this tract in 1905 that MacRae developed most of the Castle Hayne foreign colony. It is located approximately eight miles north of Wilmington on U. S. Highway 117. Much of another colony, Marathon, and part of Wrightsboro are popularly thought of as Castle Hayne. Actually the colony comprises only the area between the Northeast Cape Fear River and Prince George Creek.[107]

Since the Civil War Castle Hayne as a plantation had gone through a process of deterioration "incidental to farm tenancy...and was producing for its owners the remanants of an income, not exceeding $1,000 per year; an income which should have been substracted from capital because it was taking the last bit of fertility from the soil."[108]

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[106] Interview with Mrs. Edelweiss Shearin Mishoe, granddaughter of Sam Blossom and Castle Hayne postmaster, Castle Hayne, May 1957.

[107] Interview with Ethna Baldwin, leading merchant of Castle Hayne, Castle Hayne, May 1957.

[108] Hugh MacRae, "To Stop the Back Drift of Farming; To Create Satisfying Rural Life Conditions; To Increase the Purchasing Power of the Farmers; An Objective." Not dated.

MacRae divided the plantation into some fifty ten-acre farms, draining the land, and constructing road-ways where needed. Small farm buildings were erected as necessary.

Various nationalities bought farms at Castle Hayne---Poles, Hollanders, Hungarians, Norwegians, and a few Americans. The colony was begun in the summer of 1905 with land costing $50 per acre.[109]

Most of the settlers were truck farmers. But in 1908 a nursery was established on a 50-acre plot. It was formed by J. Honduis, A. Van Leeuwen, and Hugo DeWilt, who came from Worcester, Massachusetts. Van Leeuwen and DeWilt had lived in Holland. Their nursery, named the Horticultural Company, imported, grew, and sold fruit and ornamental trees and shrubs, herbaceous plants and bulbs. The nursery was located near the present Peter Braak farm.[110]

A second nursery, The Holland Nursery, was started in 1909 under H. Van Nes and E. I. Tinga. The partnership was dissolved in 1912. Van Nes kept the Castle Hayne nursery and Tinga retained a 30-acre tract at Wrightsboro. Tinga's nursery is still in operation at Wrightsboro, but is managed

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[109] Paper from MacRae's private file, no title or date given.

[110] News story, The Evening Dispatch Wilmington, North Carolina , January 10, 1908.

by a son, E. H. Tinga, following the elder Tinga's retirement in 1949. Van Nes died in 1955 but his nursery, now a flower farm, is operated by his daughter, Mr. A. C. Coley.

Tinga recalled that at the beginning it was difficult to sell shrubbery to Wilmington people because they believed shrubs harbored snakes.[111]

The nurseries were the foundation for Castle Hayne becoming a flower growing region.

In February, 1912, Dirk Boet, who had been apprenticed on his father's flower farm at Heilo, Holland, came to Castle Hayne to work for the Horticultural Company. He worked for the company two years before it was liquidated in 1915. Boet then worked as superintendent of the W. L. Parsely estate at Masonboro Sound, south of Wilmington. After a trip to Holland in 1919, he returned to Wrightsboro, a rural community adjoining Castle Hayne, and bought an interest in Tinga's nursery. Boet had been interested in bulbs since first coming to the section. He imported some from Holland shortly after arriving and planted them in Wilmington gardens with encouraging results. Boet, A. Ludeke, E. I. Tinga, and Peter Buis decided to go into the business of growing bulbs. In 1923, the trio sent an order to Holland for daffodil bulbs.

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[111] Interview with E. I. Tinga, Wrightsboro, North Carolina, May 1957.

Within twelve months they shipped by railway express flowers from the bulbs to Atlantic City and Philadelphia. Will Rheder, a Wilmington florist, furnished dealer addresses.

The following year, a New York wholesale commission agent visited Castle Hayne and bought their entire crop of daffodils---less than an acre in extent---at six cents per dozen blossoms. This was a low price considering the same floweres sold for fifty cents a dozen in New York.

By 1925 the growers had established their own connections in New York, cutting out the middle-man's profit. They also found that there was more profit in flowers than bulbs.

In 1927 nematodes were discovered on bulbs imported from Holland. Boet, Ludeke, and Buis made a trip to Washington to urge officials to place an embargo on imported bulbs. The embargo was instituted and the home-grown bulb business expanded considerably.

The flower growers formed the North Carolina Bulb Growers Association in 1928 for the purpose of buying and selling collectively. E. I. Tinga was the first president, but resigned after a short tenure in office, being succeeded by A. Ludeke. Boet was vice-president.

The bulb embargo lasted for approximately six years, which meant greater profit for American growers. But imported

Holland bulbs are generally considered best because of Holland's climatic and soil conditions. Thus local growers now produce part of their needs and import the remainder, which is considerable.[112]

The association was instrumental in getting a horticultural research station located at Castle Hayne. The station was started in 1946 and has contributed much to the flower and vegetable growing industry. It developed the "Smoothie" cucumber, a superior variety easily grown in Southeastern North Carolina.[113]

Membership in the North Carolina Bulb Growers Association has reached 100, but averages forty to sixty members.

Ludeke resigned as president in 1955 and was succeeded by Boet.

In the Castle Hayne and surrounding area, about 1,400 acres are planted in flowers. Gladioli comprise 800 acres, daffodils 400, and iris 200. These flowers bring in approximately three million dollars annually.[114]

Although the flower growers are mostly Dutch, others

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[112] Interview with Dirk Boet, Wrightsboro, May 1957.

[113] Interview with Dr. J. M. Jenkins, in charge of the Horticulture Research Station, Castle Hayne, May 1957.

[114] Interview Dirk Boet, Wrightsboro, May 1957.

have entered the industry. Probably the second largest flower grower in acreage is Heide Trask, an American native who observed the Hollanders' success and began growing flowers for himself. He raises some 100 acres of gladioli at nearby Rocky Point.[115]

Poles also raise flowers. John A. Lorek, son of one of the colony's original settlers, works acreages in both flowers and vegetables.[116]

Wide publicity has been given to flower growing because of its unusual and colorful nature. As a result, Castle Hayne is generally considered strictly a flower raising area. Actually, more vegetables are grown, with lettuce, cucumbers, squash, beans, and beets being the main crops.

Vegetable growers, like the flower producers, understand the merits of organization. Some 28 citizens formed the Castle Hayne Shippers and Growers Incorporation in 1926. Adam Sondej was the first president. A building for packing and crating was erected in 1941. Heading the organization now is S. J. Janicke, president; Tony Dumbroski, vice-president; and A. Levendowski, secretary and treasurer.

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[115] Interview with Heide Trask, Rocky Point, North Carolina, June 1956.

[116] Interview with John A. Lorek, Castle Hayne, May 1957.

Directors are John Sondej, Alexander Janicke, and A. C. Coley.[117]

There is also another group, Independent Growers Association, with twenty members.[118]

Of all the colonies established by Hugh MacRae, Castle Hayne is the "most widely known and can be safely designated as the most prosperous rural community in the Southern states."[119] Castle Hayne land is valued at $400 or more per acre.[120]

The region is now populated mostly by Poles and Hollanders with a few representatives of other nationalities.

Probably the colony's most successful and well-known settler has been A. Ludeke. A former butler at The Hague, Holland, Ludeke came to America in 1907. He worked in a Manhattan Shirt factory at Patterson, N. J., as an ironer at $24 per week. Later, he labored on a New Jersey truck farm for $18 weekly. He then sold vegetables from a wagon in Patterson for a year.

Tiring of city life and the New Jersey climate, he settled at Castle Hayne in November, 1911. He paid $250 down for a ten-acre farm with house. Two months later

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[117] Interview with Alexander Janicke, Castle Hayne, May 1957.

[118] Interview with Ted Glod, Castle Hayne, May 1957.

[119] News feature, The Charlotte Observer Charlotte, North Carolina , July 23, 1939.

[120] Interview with E. I. Tinga, Wrightsboro, May 1957.

Ludeke had spent his last penny.

He began raising vegetables. To sell them, he went to Wilmington by mule team and wagon. Neighbors recalled that they often heard the creaking of his wagon wheels at three o'clock in the morning.

By 1920 Ludeke was financially successful to the extent that he was able to buy a new car, ship it to Holland, and use it for a six-week vacation in that country. He has since visited the Dutch homeland seven times, and South America once.

In 1924 he built a new home, considered the nicest in the area; it included a bathroom and other conveniences. He has driven a Buick automobile since 1922.

Ludeke installed in 1930 the first irrigation system in the area.

He discovered a method to regulate the blooming time of flowers. He had been keeping some bulbs in a refrigeration plant during the summer months. Through some misunderstanding the temperature of the cold storage compartment was allowed to go several degrees too low. The bulbs when planted in November seemed "to think" that spring had come and in a very short time began to bloom, at least a month earlier than usual. The phenomenon at first puzzled Ludeke until he found that the temperature had not been correctly regulated.

Thus it was learned that by lowering or raising the temperature of his cold storage plant, blooming time can be fixed for certain flowers.

The former Dutch butler retired in 1955, selling his 200-acre farm to two of his foremen, H. Van Schalie and Peter B. Braak.

Ludeke's explanation of his success is "hard work, economical living and using sense."

His answer to why many natives have not succeeded in agriculture when immigrants like himself have is "they don't stay on the job."

Possessing no haughty pride, Ludeke attributes Hollanders' relative success to their competitive background. "Overpopulation in Holland has caused a keen competitive quality," stated Ludeke. "This naturally gives a Dutch immigrant in America an advantage over the native who has not been so conditioned."

Ludeke declined to state the extent of his wealth, but admits he is "well off." He has large investments in stocks and bonds.[121]

The Polish family of Joseph Glod is another example of what a colonist did to improve himself and in a small way

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[121]Interview with A. Ludeke, Castle Hayne, May 1957.

his new country. In 1909 Glod left his grain farm near Tarnow, Poland, for America. He first located at a Utica, New York, textile mill, but came to Castle Hayne when his brother-in-law, Andrew Lorek, told him about the colony. After buying twenty acres in 1927, he began raising lettuce, cucumbers, beets, and beans. Profit was made from the first year on. Glod gradually increased his holdings until fifty acres were acquired. He believed in education for his children. One son, Albert, attended Wake Forest College and Bowman Gray School of Medicine and is now a surgeon conducting a private practice in Winston-Salem. Albert also served as a captain in the Army Medical Corps. Glod sent antother son, Walter, to North Carolina State College where he earned an electrical engineering degree. This son served as a major in the Army Engineers and now works as a Navy electrical engineer in Washington. A daughter, Mary Ann, graduated from the University of North Carolina. She is now married and works as an accountant for the E. I. Dupont Company at Wilmington, Delaware. A third son, Ted, chose to stay on the farm, which he helps his father manage.

In 1932 the Glods built a pretty brick home with complete fixtures. It cost $4,500 at the time, but would range in the $20,000 bracket today.

Glod and his son Ted are ever on the alert staying abreast of agricultural developments and trends. Three years

ago their vegetable earnings declined when tobacco farmers, whose acreage allotments were reduced, began raising vegatables. The Glods believe this would overstock vegetable markets, with low prices resulting. They sought new markets which they found in frozen foods. A $20,000 freezer plant was erected on their farm and they began vegetable freezing for institutional markets, such as hotels, cafes, and hospitals. The plant can freeze one ton of vegetables per hour, which are packaged in 2½-pound containers.

Glod set up a revolving washer for vegetables which State College has signaled out as an ideal arrangement. Ted constructed the washer at a cost of $500. He got the idea from a similar arrangement for packing shirts at a New Jersey factory.[122]

Even though settlers live somewhat to themselves in the colony, they have mixed well with natives of adjoining communities. Many have become highly respected citizens in the Wilmington area. Some are agricultural and business leaders. Children have married native Americans, often reaching high social and economic levels. E. I. Tinga's son, Eelco, married the daughter of New Hanover County's superintendent of schools. His daughter married a doctor.

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[122] Interview with Ted Glod, Castle Hayne, May 1957.

Another son, who has a doctorate in horticulture, teaches at Virginia Polytechnic Institute at Blacksburg, Virginia. He is engaged to marry an American girl.[123]

Dirk Boet's two daughters married outside the Dutch element. One daughter, who holds a doctor's degree in child pyschology, married the administrator of a large Greensboro hospital. The other married a Wilmington candy manufacturer.

Boet believed that mixing through marriage makes better Americans and encouraged his children in this direction.[124]

There are indications, however, that Poles, in many cases, tend to keep to themselves. John Lorek, a Pole, readily admitted that he wants his children to carry on the language and traditions of his nationality. He thought this could best be done by speaking the native tongue at home and not encouraging undue mixing with other natives. Lorek possessed intense pride in his racial heritage.[125]

The townsite of Castle Hayne consists of a cluster of homes, some seven gas stations and stores, a post office, railroad depot, vegetable shipping warehouse, and the McClure Memorial Presbyterian Church. The church was established by Dr. A. D. McClure. Willie Sprunt, of Wilmington, donated

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[123]Interview with E. I. Tinga, Castle Hayne, May 1957.

[124]Interview with Dirk Boet, Castle Hayne, May 1957.

[125]Interview with John Lorek, Castle Hayne, May 1957.

money in 1925 for the church's erection. Until January 1957, it was maintained as a mission of the Covenant-Andrews Presbyterian Church of Wilmington, assuming a self-supporting status at this time.

Aside from the raising and marketing of flowers and vegetables, there is only one other industry in Castle Hayne--- the Rosedale Abattoir.[126]

Among the original settlers or their descentants now living at Castle Hayne are A. Lüdeke, Mike Brezan, Mrs. C. Greer, Balos Puskos, Steve Sandoos, Paul Kosh, Victory Netreba, Andy Lewandowski, Mrs. E. R. Jones, Mrs. N. J. Baldwin, Peter and Nicholas Kalinin, Frank Janicke, Mrs. A. C. Coley, Jim Peti, Wasyl Dmytruk, Adam Sondej, John Gmytruk, Mrs. Andrew Lorek, Andrew Braak, Theodore Glod, and Mrs. Charles P. Burgess.[127]

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[126] Interview with Mrs. Edelweiss Shearin Mishoe, Castle Hayne postmistress, Castle Hayne, May 1957.

[127] Records of land sale at Castle Hayne, filed in office of Hugh Morton, Wilmington, North Carolina.

CHAPTER VI

MARATHON

Marathon originally consisted of an area of 1,384.2 acres located about five miles north of Wilmington on U. S. Highway 117. Some 130 ten-acre farms were surveyed from this. The colony is south of Prince George Creek, which separates it from the Castle Hayne colony.[128]

The colony started as a Greek settlement in 1905. The Greeks failed, and Poles replaced them as settlers.[129]

The Poles were successful in farming. The Lewandowski, Sondej, Hajduk, and Janicke families were among the region's pioneers in truck farming. Lettuce, cabbage, beans, cucumbers, squash, and beets were the main crops.[130]

Because of its closeness to Castle Hayne, no townsite was laid out for Marathon. As a result, the colony has practically lost its identity. It has no railroad depot or post office, being served by Castle Hayne. Many residents trade at Castle Hayne stores. St. Stanislaus Catholic Church

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[128] Records of land sale at Marathon, filed in office of Hugh Morton, Wilmington, North Carolina.

[129] Ida M. Tarbell, "Will Your Home Be Happy As Theirs?" Collier's The National Weekly, Vol. 70, No. 3 (July 15, 1922), p. 6.

[130] Interview with Mrs. Anthony Lewandowski, Marathon, May 1957.

and parish school is probably Marathon's only distinguishing mark. The church serves a large Catholic following from the entire area. Children from St. Helena attend its school.

Since Marathon and Castle Hayne are so closely associated, they have largely fused together socially and economically. Both colonies are now generally considered the Castle Hayne area. Only old settlers appeared familiar with the name Marathon.[131]

Among Marathon's original colonists and descenants are Mrs. Tomarz Mazur, J. M. Dunajcan, Antoni Kowalski, Andrew Janicke, Thomas Hajduk, J. Rykaczewski, Alexander Musial, John Denitson, Jr., Mrs. F. Sondej, Mathew J. Janicke, and Edward Grien.[132]

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[131]Interview with Mrs. Edelweiss Shearin Mishoe, Castle Hayne postmaster, Castle Hayne, May 1957.

[132]Records of land sale at Marathon, filed in office of Hugh Morton, Wilmington, North Carolina.

CHAPTER VII

NEWBERLIN

Newberlin colony was developed from an area of 1,689.25 acres of land located about 19 miles west of Wilmington in Columbus County. Approximately 193 farms and a townsite of 23 blocks were surveyed from this.

Two small lots were set aside for parks in the townsite. The main street was named Kaiser Street, and two others were given German names---Hamburg and Bismark Streets.[133]

The colony began in January 1906 with German settlers, many of whom had lived from one to several years in America. It was called Newberlin after German's capital city. Farms were also sold to Hungarians, Hollanders, and a few Americans. The price of land was $30 per acre, uncleared but provided with ditching and roads.[134]

H. S. Lippincott, of New Jersey and a graduate of the agriculture department of Cornell University, was named superintendent of the colony in February 1908.[135]

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[133] Official map of Newberlin Colony, Carolina Truck and Development Company, (April 1907).

[134] Paper from MacRae's private file, no title or date given.

[135] News story, The Morning Star Wilmington, North Carolina , February 16, 1908.

Colonists engaged themselves in truck farming. However, many became discouraged for various reasons, and by World War I most had left.[136]

Because of what some sources termed patriotism and anti-Germanic sentiment, the colony's name was changed during World War I from Newberlin to Delco. L. R. Hobbs, who was postmaster at the time, had a part in the renaming. The name Delco, according to several sources, was derived from the commercial trade-name of a portable power generator for electric lights. Such a generator was owned by Hobbs at the time. The name Delco appealed to Hobbs and a number of citizens and it became the new name of the colony. Few Germans were living there then.[137]

Only three colonists of foreign extraction could be located---Carl Griener, John Morris, and Andrew Kranicke.

Griener was the oldest colonist.

John Morris appeared to have been the most successful. The fact that he was a brickmason and built homes in addition to farming was probably a contributing factor.

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[136]Interview with Mrs. John Morris, Delco, May 1957.

[137]Interview with Mrs. Ester Bullock, daughter of L. R. Hobbs, Delco, May 1957.

Morris' real name was Moritz. He changed it to Morris because most Americans pronounced it that way. He was a Hungarian and came from near Budapest. His wife was German.

In America, Morris first worked in Philadelphia. Thinking he would like farm life better, he bought in 1907 a ten-acre place at Newberlin for $450 and a three-room house for $240.

Morris died five years ago. His wife still resides in the area.[138]

Andrew Kranicke left Hungary in 1902. He worked at a Dayton, Ohio, blacksmith shop and Hamilton, Canada, machine shop before coming to Newberlin in 1912. He purchased twenty acres of land and later increased it to 27. He made a living by raising vegetables. Now 77 years old, he raises soybeans, corn, peanuts, and one acre of tobacco. Kranicke was one of the few colonists who grew tobacco.[139]

Practically all the farms and townsite lots are now owned by native Americans.

Delco is an active village. It has an Atlantic Coast Line Railroad depot, a school, post office, movie theater

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[138] Interview with Mrs. John Morris, Delco, May 1957.

[139] Interview with Andrew Kranicke, Delco, May 1957.

drug store, several stores and gas stations, and three churches. Two are Baptist churches and one is the St. Elizabeth of Hungary Catholic Church. A large lumber company located at Delco several years ago but has been moved.[140]

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[140] Personal observations by the author, Delco, May 1957.

CHAPTER VIII

ARTESIA

Artesia was a farm development from 983 acres of woodland beginning in 1906. It is located about forty miles west of Wilmington in Columbus County. Sixty-eight farms and twelve townsite blocks were mapped out for the Carolina Truck and Development Company. The colony was not designed for any one nationality.[141]

The name is evidently derived from the fact that several artesian wells were located in the colony.[142]

J. Heinzel, a German colonist, was in charge of the company property.

Artesia was not successful. Only a few farms were sold, and the owners of these eventually left. Not one foreign settler remained.

The development is now inhabited by some twenty native American families.

Two gas stations and a cafe are the only business places on the townsite.[143]

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[141] Records of land sale at Artesia, filed in office of Hugh Morton, Wilmington, North Carolina.

[142] Interview with W. L. Ray, Artesia, May 1957.

[143] Interview with Arthur Q. Dew, Artesia, May 1957.

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

From a colonization standpoint, three of the colonies can be considered successful---Castle Hayne, St. Helena, and Marathon. Although some turn-over occurred during the years, a fairly stable population emerged, with mostly Poles, Hollanders, and Hungarians at Castle Hayne; Poles, Russians, and Italians at St. Helena; and mostly all Poles at Marathon. Only a few native Americans moved into the colony areas.

Van Eeden, Newberlin, and Artesia failed. Not one foreign settler or descendant remained at Van Eeden and Artesia. Only three families stayed at Newberlin, the name of which was changed to Delco during World War I. Van Eeden was colonized in 1939 into a Jewish settlement. This also played out within ten years.

The colonies were formed by the Carolina Truck and Development Company, of Wilmington, which was headed by Hugh MacRae. The colonization was a money-making venture, but operated on the principle of benevolence. MacRae termed it a "business experiment in cooperative farming."

MacRae saw it as an enterprise which showed one way to improve Southern economic and social levels.

Its main feature was intensified farming, similar to that done in land-scarce European countries like Holland and Denmark. It was advertized that a ten-acre farm planted in truck crops and highly cultivated would reap greater profit than the large-acreage type farming prevailing in the South.

And colonists did prove that smaller farms well tended and planted in more than one crop each year were profitable. But most found a need for more than ten acres. With the coming of modern farm machinery, additional acreage was desireable. Mike Boryk, of St. Helena, for instance, cultivates 500 acres. Most colonists, however, have maintained comparatively small farms and obtained profitable livelihoods from them.

The idea that foreign immigrants could introduce new techniques, customs, and ways of doing things was sound. Most colonists became excellent citizens, showed appreciation for education, demonstrated a progressive spirit, tried new things, and maintained remarkable working habits and perseverance. They believed in good homes and farm equipment. Even in depression days, the colonists constructed new homes, many of them brick structures. Bathrooms were included, which was an unusual feature in rural homes until recently.

Vegetables and fruits were grown in limited amounts before the colonizations, but the colonists actually established

Southeastern North Carolina as a truck region. They raised a wide variety of crops---in many cases getting two a year such as spring and fall lettuce.

The settlers introduced new crops such as Chinese cabbage, chicory, and broccoli.

They pioneered dairying in Southeastern North Carolina, resulting in the area having to import less milk from out-of-state regions.

They consistently stuck to their type of farming---even through low-price periods. The colonists' consistency in truck farming has maintained the Pender County area as a vegetable section, stated farm agent Joe Honeycutt.

Flower growing was an exclusive colonist introduced activity. It is now a $3 million business.

Practically all the colonists' farms are modernly operated. Tractors, irrigation systems, and other equipment is widely used. One settler developed a system for crating cabbage in the field.

Benefits of cooperative organizations in buying and selling are well understood. There are four cooperatives at the colonies.

Various nationalities mixed in the colonies, resulting in reasonably homogenous groups. No particular group has surpassed the other in achievement. The Poles, Italians, Hungarians, and Slovaks have pioneered in

vegetable and fruit growing, generally speaking. The Hollanders developed the flower growing industry. Neither pursuit is limited to a specific nationality, however.

At first children of the colonists had difficulty adjusting in school, but in time they fell in with the local ways and customs. Many children married outside their ethnic lines. And many have done well, becoming doctors, engineers, nurses, university professors, and prominent businessmen.

Probably the colonists' greatest contribution to the area has been a display of hard work, thrift, and application of common-sense. Land the colonists settled on was once considered practically useless by natives. The colonists have physically demonstrated what could be done with it. Castle Hayne land is now worth $400 or more per acre.

The demonstrations have had their effects on many natives previously contented with a non-progressive way of life.

Some attribute the colonists' successes to their European backgrounds of fierce competition. This undoubtedly has some validity. And it might also be pointed out that many of the colonists reached their success through a "survival of the fittest." Many settlers failed at the colonies and moved away. However, the colonists who remained have shown that different ethnic groups with different

ways of doing things, different outlooks, different spirits, and different customs can mean advancement and a better way of life for themselves and the area.

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