The following presentation was made at the Council of Geor-
gist Organizations conference July 10, 2014 in Newport
Beach, CA. Alex W. Lough received her Ph.D. in American
History from Brandeis University. Her dissertation was “The
Last Tax: Henry George and the Social Politics of Land Re-
form in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era.”

Over this past year, I’ve had the opportunity to work
on an exciting new project with the Henry George School of
Social Science, so I thought I’d spend just a few minutes tell-
ing you about the newly formed Henry George Birthplace,
Archive and Historical Research Center, or the BAHRC for
short.

Last fall, I signed a contract with the Henry George
School of Social Science to lead the effort to transform the
Henry George Birthplace in Philadelphia, into a central re-
spository of archival material on Henry George, the HGSS, and the
Single Tax movement.

In addition to important historical material at the
Birthplace, the Henry George School of Social Science in
New York housed a couple dozen boxes of uncatalogued ar-
chival material dating back to the school’s founding in 1932.
I was hired to help organize, digitize, and preserve this materi-
al at the Birthplace. Also helping with this project is Marcial
Cordon, Director of Operations of the HGSS; Ed Dodson, the
Senior Researcher; and Ibrahima Drame, the Digital Archives
Coordinator for this project.

For those of you unfamiliar with the Henry George
Birthplace, this is the residence on South 10th Street in Phila-
delphia where Henry George was born September 2, 1839.
The Henry George School of Social Science purchased the
building in 1957 from the Henry George Foundation, which
had acquired it in 1926. It is the only surviving residence of
Henry George.

The dwelling had changed quite a bit from the time
of George’s birth. In 1839 it was a modest one-story frame
house, with one front room, two back rooms, a second floor
attic, kitchen, and cellar. By 1957, the house included two
additional stories, and top floor attic.

When the HGSS purchased the birthplace in 1957, it
was in bad shape. With the help of Henry George’s grand-
daughter, Agnes de Mille, a renovation fund was established
and minor rehabilitation work was completed. This included
the restoration of the bedroom on the second floor to resemble
a room from the 19th century. Agnes donated many items to
this bedroom including the bed in which Henry George was
reportedly born.

In 1976 the Birthplace was first nominated for the
National Registry of Historic Places, but the HGSS was told
the building needed more restorative work before the nomi-
 nation would be accepted.

Inspired by the approach of the 100th anniversary
of Progress & Poverty in 1979, the HGSS established the Henry
George Birthplace Building and Restoration Fund. Philadel-
phia Architects Charles Peterson and Jim Collins were hired
for their projects for the Historical American Buildings
Survey. In 1983, the Henry George Birthplace was officially
entered in the National Register of Historic Places and a new
historical marker was approved by the City of Philadelphia.

Once again inspired by an impending anniversary—
the Sesquicentennial of George’s birth (150)—in 1987,
school officials re-hired Charles Peterson and James Collins
to restore the Birthplace to its original 1839 appearance. The
restoration was completed in 1989.

To prepare the Birthplace to receive and house ar-
chival material, I’ve consulted with an architect who special-
izes in libraries and museums. He has prepared recommenda-
tions for maximizing storage space without compromising
the structural or historical integrity of this fabulous building.

On the other end of the things, the HGSS staff in
New York has cataloged over 10,000 documents and is in the
process of digitizing as many as possible. I’ve created a
website—harchives.org—and have been publishing the
digitized documents as I organize them into collections and
prepare finding aids.

So far, I’ve organized and published three collec-
tions: 1) The Henry George and Anna George DeMille Family
Collection; 2) The Henry George Birthplace Rehabilitation
and Restoration Projects; and, 3) The Henry George Birth-
place Portrait, Textile, and Artifact collection

I am in the process of organizing two other collec-
tions including, The Henry George School of Social Science
Collection, which includes founding documents and other
material related to the early history of the Henry George
School of Social Science and its satellite campuses. Addition-
ally, I’m working on a (continued on page 10)