Penney

The BLACK BEAR TRAIL INC.

THE SCENIC ROUTE FOR TOURISTS
Between the North and South

Wilmington, N. C.,
May 10th, 1926.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
120 E. 19th Street,
New York City.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

Upon returning to Wilmington today I was delighted to find your letter of April 26th. I am sorry absence prevented immediate reply as I would have liked my letter to reach you in Washington.

If you have not done so, it would be very desirable for you to arrange an interview with Dr. Elwood Mead of the Bureau of Reclamation, and Mr. Copley Amory, Expert in Reclamation Economics, as they have in mind a program for initiating land reclamation and settlement in the Southern States.

As you know, Dr. Elwood Mead is the greatest authority on land settlement in this country and he is surrounded by men who have given much time to the solution of problems connected with successfully establishing people on the land. An interview which you might have with him would, I am sure, prove of great benefit to the general cause, and you would get much important information.

Probably you will be in Washington again soon, or Dr. Mead and Mr. Amory are likely to be in New York, and I am sure would be glad to arrange an interview with you.

I am tied up in Wilmington for the next twenty days to meet certain appointments here and also to work on the promotion of the Black Bear Trail which is to have its annual meeting in Winchester, Virginia, on June 1st, 2nd and 3rd, in connection with which work I have just been in Florida and South Carolina.

From the correspondence it seems that our office has sent you four of the articles referred to in my letter of February 11th, and in addition to these I will send the following:

Conserving Human Units
Potential South

If you come South again in connection with agriculture or land settlement, I want you to be sure to meet my good friend, Mr. David R. Coker, of Hartsville, South Carolina, and several other friends who have made a long study of this subject. When Mr. Coker and I were in Washington, we had conferences with Mr. Hoover and Mr. Jardine in regard to the community settlement plan of developing agriculture, and they both expressed gratifying interest and stated

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that they would be willing to cooperate through the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture. There is a Mr. Hager who made a study of the subject for the Department of Commerce in the South and I wish very much that an appointment could be made for him to give you his views. He looks at the subject from the standpoint of domestic commerce and is fully impressed with its fundamental importance.

In regard to the returned soldiers, my impression is that very little was done for them along practical lines in regard to agriculture. They were given vocational training at a number of points and those who were keen to get on farms were given a certain amount of assistance, but I think no general program was carried out and the plans inaugurated were not followed through to a point that made them effective.

We worked a great deal on the proposition with the net result that one soldier established at the St. Helena Colony. He happens to be a very good man and is satisfied and succeeding, but had he been an average man, I feel confident that he would have failed and become discouraged.

Just at what we thought was the height of his success, Government red tape took hold of him and insisted that he go away to some hospital for medical examination. It seems, after being away for some months, he managed to get back to his farm. Another fortunate thing in his case was that his wife liked St. Helena and probably was the greatest influence in causing him to return there.

Yours very sincerely,

Hugh MacRae

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