



Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

Form 16

Confidential

COPY

WASHINGTON D C

JANUARY 15 1935

HUGH MACRAE
WILMINGTON N C

Retel you requested investigation which I put under way at once STOP
An investigation cannot be made over night STOP
This was done with utmost expedition and report is being studied here STOP
It is better to decide this question right than hastily and I counsel patience on your part until we have had a reasonable opportunity to look into matter carefully and give judgment based on facts STOP
I am just as anxious as you are to go forward with Penderlea and it is having preferred attention

SECRETARY ICKES

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WILMINGTON N C

JANUARY 15 1935

HON HAROLD L ICKES
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON D C

I greatly appreciate your telegram of this date and the spirit which it conveys PERIOD
Through full cooperation and quick action after your judgment has been formed an outstanding success can be made at Penderlea

HUGH MacRAE
Project Manager
Penderlea Homesteads

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Image, 2009, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

HUGH MacRAE & CO.
(INCORPORATED)

REAL ESTATE
RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES
AGRICULTURAL LANDS
COLONIZATION
TIMBER RESOURCES
COAL PROPERTIES
RESORT PROPERTIES
TOURIST HOTELS

WILMINGTON, N. C.,

January 12th, 1935.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
120 East Nineteenth Street,
New York City.

Dear Miss Tarbell:-

When I addressed my letter to New York and sent it by Air Mail, I hoped for good results but really could not have expected such a splendid response as you have made.

It would be a pleasure and an honor to Mrs. MacRae and myself to have you come to Wilmington as soon as you can.

Over a period of years we have just used up the extra copies of magasines and the special edition we had printed of your article, and we believe it is spreading the gospel over a wide area. I am enclosing one of the two last copies we can find this morning.

The situation as to rural life is extremely critical. Great forces are in play - for and against. The President is distinctly favorable. The Department of Agriculture is, or has been, distinctly unfavorable; and by the way, I want to talk to you about this fact.

The particular project at Penderlea has fallen under an unfriendly and unasked for Division of the Department of the Interior, whereas in another Division of the Department is Dr. Elwood Mead, who is the ablest and most sympathetic man to direct a movement of this kind in America.

The Southern delegations in Congress would, I am sure, back to the limit a comprehensive rural life program. All the forces of Government are available through the tremendous financial plan which is being formulated, so that this program, which you and I and many of our friends thoroughly believe in as basic, may come into fruition even beyond our dreams.

Secretary Ickes has made "a thorough and impartial investigation" of the Penderlea Project, but I feel that this is largely technical and that his pleasure would be to find that his action in plac-

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Hon. Harold L. Ickes,
Secretary of the Interior,
Washington, D.C.

Wilmington, N.C.
January 10, 1935.

While recognizing pressing matters demand your consideration may we ask your decision as a result of your investigation of the Penderlea Rural Life Project undertaken about the middle of November of last year PERIOD We assume your ruling will be based on the efficiency of the local management up to that time and on the question of competence of local management to build a successful rural community in Eastern North Carolina PERIOD

If found unsatisfactory it is clearly desirable to substitute some efficient and competent management PERIOD

Success in a rural community is a question of adjusting paramount human interests to seasons, thus determining crop activities and earning power PERIOD Constructive work is necessarily planned and executed so that it does not make adjustments impossible because short delays at certain points involve the loss of a year PERIOD

Practically no requisitions sent to the Division of Subsistence Homesteads by the local management of Penderlea since November first nineteen thirtyfour have received attention, no local policies decided, and the interests of a number of qualified families are being sacrificed PERIOD

For reasons both social and economic we urge that this Demonstration Project be rushed to completion.

HUGH MacRAE
Project Manager
Penderlea Homesteads.

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Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

Form 81.

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Wilmington, N. C.

January 14, 1935.

Hon. Harold L. Ickes,
Secretary of the Interior,
Washington, D. C.

Because an emergency involving human interests exists at Penderlea may I recommend that you send at once an experienced official of the Interior Department, one who has a sympathetic understanding of rural life interests, with authority to make immediate constructive decisions PERIOD

There are sixty five families which we have after personal examination carefully selected from three hundred forty-three families examined and reported on through the fine cooperation of the State Extension and Home Demonstration Agents, and the future of these families is at stake because of their dependence on getting farms now available at Penderlea PERIOD Just criticism has come to us from the annual meeting just held of State Agents who are fully conversant with the facts, which cannot fail to come to public attention PERIOD We can, under your authorization and if we receive full cooperation, put into effect a plan which will provide these families with adequate and acceptable shelter in time to plant their Spring crops, thus saving them a year and in some cases their future PERIOD

We have on hand ample food supplies to meet the emergency PERIOD Because the President personally approved of this Project and expects it to be a success and because failure must react unhappily, may I suggest that if there be apparent cause for further delay, you bring this matter to the President's attention and ask that any obstacles be cleared by executive order in time to save the interests of these families - thus making a decisive step toward a realization of the purposes of the Rural Life Program.

HUGH MacRAE
Project Manager
Penderlea Homesteads.

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Penderlea Homesteads.

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