

# RURAL YOUTH

THEIR SITUATION  
AND PROSPECTS



WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
DIVISION OF SOCIAL RESEARCH

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**RURAL YOUTH:  
THEIR SITUATION AND PROSPECTS**

**By**

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**RESEARCH MONOGRAPH XV**

**1938**

**UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE, WASHINGTON**



# Letter of Transmittal

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION,  
*Washington, D. C., July 15, 1938.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit an analysis of the present situation and future prospects of rural youth. The report is based on a comprehensive survey of the field studies and general literature dealing with rural youth.

Although there is already a "surplus" of rural youth, their numbers will increase steadily until some time between 1940 and 1945. Even assuming a considerable urbanward migration of farm youth, it appears that there will be over 1,000,000 more youth in rural territory in 1940 than there were in 1930. With economic opportunities in rural areas already far from adequate to meet the demands of youth, the gravity of the situation is evident. Moreover, young people in rural areas are definitely handicapped with respect to educational and recreational facilities.

Many agencies, both governmental and nongovernmental, are providing services and opportunities for rural youth, but their largely uncoordinated efforts reach only part of the rural young people who need assistance. Fundamental amelioration of the situation calls for united efforts in behalf of equalizing opportunities.

This study was made in the Division of Social Research under the direction of Howard B. Myers, Director of the Division. The data on which the report is based were collected and analyzed under the supervision of T. J. Woofter, Jr., Coordinator of Rural Research.

The report was written by Bruce L. Melvin and Elna N. Smith. It was edited by Ellen Winston. Special acknowledgment is due the personnel of the National Youth Administration and of the Office of Emergency Conservation Work both for data and for constructive criticism.

Respectfully submitted.

CORRINGTON GILL,  
*Assistant Administrator.*

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*Works Progress Administrator.*

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**Rural Youth:  
Their Situation and Prospects**

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IX



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## INTRODUCTION

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**YOUTH IS** a period of economic and social adjustments. As the transition period from childhood to maturity it has tended progressively to expand as civilization has advanced. It is here defined as including all young people 16 through 24 years of age. In a democracy it is society's obligation to make certain provisions for this transition period. Schools have been made available on the secondary and college levels to prepare youth for making their adjustments, since it has been assumed that economic opportunity is open to the youth who are prepared through education to take advantage of it. Despite the expansion of educational facilities, however, present economic opportunities are so limited that large numbers of young men and women are unable to establish themselves in a field that may be expected to lead to economic security. As a result the problems of youth have become serious and far-reaching in their implications and effects.

Lack of economic opportunity with the resultant social consequences of unemployment, underemployment, or employment at work which is unsuited to individual temperament or capacity has, of course, not been limited to youth in recent years. But the demoralizing psychological effects of idleness, discouragement, and frustration during periods of economic stress are particularly far-reaching and lasting for youth.

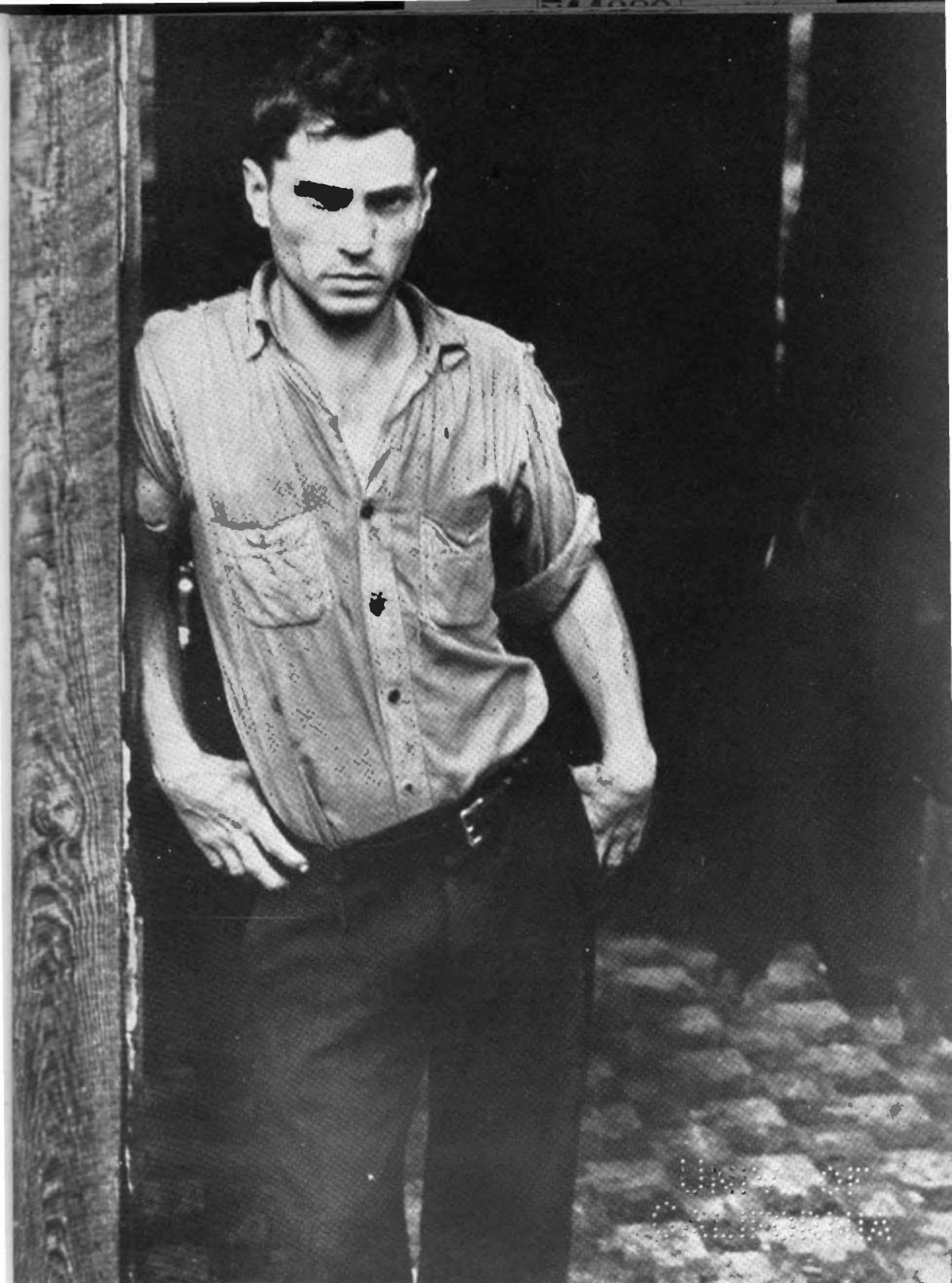
In recent years unemployment has been widespread among rural as well as urban youth, although more notice has been taken of the latter. Too often the rural youth situation has been dismissed with the statement that at least the young people on farms need not starve. Such summary disposition of the matter fails to take account of the other necessities of human living or of the fact that there are thousands of rural young people in small towns who are just as desperate as their city cousins for a chance to develop their capacities and to banish the spectre of insecurity.

Many individuals and organizations are interested in the welfare of rural youth. Numerous programs are being planned in an attempt to meet their problems. To guide this planning there has been a

distinct need for a comprehensive statement of the general situation faced by youth in rural areas as well as a digest of what is known about the condition of youth in specific areas. Before new studies and programs are undertaken, it is important to know what information past surveys, other studies, and census data have yielded.

A great deal of miscellaneous material of varying quality is available, including some studies made on a State basis. The usable data on many topics are exceedingly scanty, however, and point to the need for further research. An effort has been made in this report to summarize such data as are available and to supplement them with an evaluation of the situation and prospects of rural youth.

Chapter I discusses the distribution of youth; chapter II deals with their economic situation; chapter III treats of their educational status and opportunities; chapter IV takes up the marital condition of youth; while chapter V summarizes their recreational opportunities. Chapter VI discusses what governmental agencies and some nongovernmental agencies with programs for rural youth are doing in attempting to meet the situation faced by youth. The final chapter attempts to interpret the general situation and to point out the implications of the data presented in the preceding chapters for future programs and policies.



*Resettlement Administration (Jung).*

*What Does the Future Hold?*

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## SUMMARY

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**DURING THE** early thirties, when economic opportunity was at a minimum, more youth were maturing in the United States than ever before. In 1935 there were in this country approximately 20,800,000 youth, 16-24 years of age, almost 10,000,000 of whom were in rural areas—a record figure in each case. Moreover, it is estimated that by 1940 the total will have increased to more than 21,500,000 with well over 10,000,000 youth in rural areas.

### DISTRIBUTION OF YOUTH

Youth is the principal age of migration just as it is the period of occupational and marital adjustment. In the past migration to the cities has tended to take care of the surplus population of rural areas. The checking of this migration during the depression, as economic opportunities in urban areas were sharply curtailed, resulted in the “piling up” of youth in rural areas and the emergence of a major rural youth problem.

During the decade from 1920 to 1930 the net migration from farms totaled 6,300,000 persons of whom about 2,000,000 were youth 16-24 years of age. Girls left at an earlier age than boys, and more young people left the poor agricultural areas than the better farm lands. Southern Negroes moved in large numbers from farms to the cities in their own section as well as to the cities of the North. At the same time there was a steady migration from cities to farm areas close at hand, causing the largest population increases for the period to occur in the territory close to industrial and commercial centers.

Of the rural youth reported by the 1930 Census, over 40 percent lived in nonfarm areas. In the largely nonagricultural New England, Middle Atlantic, and Pacific Divisions nonfarm youth constituted over one-half of the rural total. In the dominantly agricultural areas the problems of farm and nonfarm youth are similar, but in primarily industrial areas the problems of rural-nonfarm youth may have little relation to agriculture. In the South race questions complicate the situation since Negro youth form an important proportion of the rural population, larger in the farm than in the nonfarm group.

Even at the beginning of the depression the pressure of farm youth on employment opportunities was more acute than that of rural-nonfarm youth. Pressure on the land as measured by replacement rates of rural-farm males was particularly heavy in the Southern States. The excess of country youth was accentuated between 1930 and 1935 as rural-farm youth increased much more rapidly than rural-nonfarm youth. While all rural youth increased approximately 13 percent, farm youth increased almost 19 percent to a record total of 6,107,000.

The checking of the cityward flow after 1930 contributed greatly to the increase by 1935 of 1,150,000 in the number of rural youth, while the youth population in the cities was declining. The net migration varied from State to State. Apparently more youth migrated to than from farms in the New England, Middle Atlantic, and East North Central States, reflecting the shutdown in industry in those regions. In other regions youth left the farms in spite of the limitations of industrial and commercial opportunities. Where farm income has normally been very low and where drought and dust storms have been severe, youth have migrated in large numbers.

The extent of migration to cities within the next few years will have an important effect on the rural youth problem through its effect on the pressure on employment opportunities in rural areas. Without such migration there would be almost 2,000,000 more rural youth in 1940 than in 1930. Even with the expected migration there will be between 500,000 and 600,000 more rural-farm youth and 500,000 more rural-nonfarm youth in 1940 than in 1930.

#### ECONOMIC SITUATION OF RURAL YOUTH

In the past, economic security in rural society has been measured chiefly by property ownership. The farm youth expected to acquire a good farm free of debt and the village youth ultimately to own a business or to attain a secure position in some profession or skilled trade. The large-scale development of lumbering, mining, and textile industries introduced a wage-earning class into this system, and there has been an increasing trend toward dependence on wages for part or all of the income. Meanwhile, youth have been "piling up" on the home farm where they receive little or no return other than subsistence for their labor.

With more and more youth accumulating on the home farms, and as the possibility of finding economic security through migration to urban areas decreases, their situation becomes of course less tolerable. In poor land areas, like the Lake States Cut-Over, the trouble is acute on account of the extremely small return for their work and the large proportion of youth who have no work at all. Even on good land the increased number of youth of employable age who cannot find a living away from the home farm is affecting the economic balance.

The situation of young women forced to remain on the home farm is probably more precarious than that of the young men since little but housework and farm labor are available to them. In general, it appears that young women working at home are less likely to receive wages from parents than are young men, and in the poorer areas their role is regularly that of unpaid servants.

Probably not less than 2,000,000 rural youth have been members of relief households at some time since 1930. The peak in the number of households was reached in February 1935 when approximately 1,370,000 rural youth were receiving aid. By October the number of youth on relief had declined to 625,000. Most of those removed from the relief rolls had been transferred to the Civilian Conservation Corps or with their families to the Resettlement Administration so that the decline in the number receiving some form of Government aid was probably not great. Young men left the general relief rolls more rapidly than young women, and older youth found more opportunities for going off relief than did those under 20 years of age.

Developments of recent years have greatly reduced the opportunities of rural youth for attaining economic security. Progress toward farm ownership is hindered and frequently prevented by the growing burden of debt, the increase in tenancy, the decreased demand for farm laborers, the trend toward large-scale ownership of land, mechanization of agriculture, and the development of large areas of agricultural maladjustment. The children of owner-operators therefore start as laborers, like their parents, but unlike their parents they often remain permanently in that or the tenant class.

The alternatives presented to underprivileged farm youth appear to be three—to remain in the country at a low level of living, to go to the cities to compete for jobs at very low wages, or, if their need is sufficiently great, to obtain jobs provided by one of the governmental agencies. There is no longer new acreage to be opened up, and much hitherto cultivated land is no longer profitable.

Nonagricultural employment, instead of offering possibilities for the greatly increased number of maturing rural youth, has reduced its labor requirements, and the supply of local labor already trained is usually sufficient for its needs. Untrained rural youth going to industrial or urban areas ordinarily find opportunities only in the hardest and most menial work, which is also the most poorly paid.

#### EDUCATIONAL STATUS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF RURAL YOUTH

Rural youth are definitely handicapped in comparison with urban youth by the lack of educational facilities. Because of comparative lack of taxpaying ability rural States have the most meager provisions for public education. Hence the areas with the largest proportions of children have the poorest schools.

Largely because of the differences in educational facilities rural youth do not attend school to the same extent as do urban youth. Rural-farm youth attend school in smaller numbers proportionately and leave school earlier than do rural-nonfarm youth, also primarily because of variations in educational opportunity. School attendance alone does not measure the educational situation, however, and many rural youth, particularly in the South, are greatly retarded with respect to grade attainment. Moreover, although marked progress has been made, illiteracy is still prevalent in States with large reservoirs of surplus youth and with large numbers of Negro or Mexican youth. As late as 1930 about 1 out of every 20 rural-farm youth in the United States was still unable to read and write.

High school attendance increased during the period when employment was hard to find, the gain occurring in both town and country. The National Youth Administration and other relief agencies have contributed to this development in recent years by assisting youth in the lowest income groups to continue in school. In rural areas where the educational handicap has been severe even in normal times, similar aid over a long period appears advisable.

Where facilities are available, a large proportion of all rural youth attend school, from which it may be assumed that with adequate opportunity a substantial increase in rural attendance can be expected. Much Federal and local effort has been expended in extending rural high school facilities and especially vocational training in agricultural and homemaking courses. One of the most significant phases of the vocational agricultural work has been the development of the organization known as Future Farmers of America with its emphasis on practical farming experience.

The desirability of nonagricultural training for farm youth is made apparent by the shortage of farm work and by the usual unfitness of such youth to compete for urban employment.

#### MARRIAGE OF RURAL YOUTH

In farm life especially, marriage represents an economic as well as a social adjustment since the farm home and the farm business are one. It does not necessarily involve a comparable economic adjustment for rural-nonfarm youth since the young man may have become established in some occupation long before his marriage.

The proportion of youth married is greater for both sexes and for all years among rural than urban youth. At each year of age more young women than young men are married in both urban and rural territory. Early marriage of girls is particularly frequent in rural areas.

More rural-nonfarm than rural-farm youth of both sexes were married in 1930. The higher rate among the rural-nonfarm group seems to be associated with large rural-industrial populations. Moreover,

most of the States with particularly high rural-nonfarm marriage rates are Southern States in which marriage rates among youth in general are high. Color also influences the proportion of youth who are married, relatively more Negro than white youth being married in all residence groups.

Between 1910 and 1920 there was an upward trend in the percent married among both rural and urban youth. In the twenties there was little change in the proportion of youth married, but during the early years of the depression (1929-1932) the marriage rate for the entire country fell, the decline appearing to be greater in urban than in rural areas. As the rural depression had begun in the twenties, and the reduction in the marriage rate was then negligible, it seems doubtful whether depression conditions have any marked effect in causing farm youth to postpone marriage. In 1933 the marriage rate began increasing and continued through 1934, returning practically to the 1929 level. This recovery was general among both rural and urban States.

#### USE OF LEISURE TIME

The social adjustments of youth largely determine the patterns of their adult lives. Hence it is particularly important for a wide variety of wholesome recreational activities to be available for them. Within recent years there have been many changes in the kinds of recreation in which rural youth indulge, as automobiles, motion pictures, and the radio have become generally available. The rural community has frequently become disorganized and as a result has less and less control over the behavior of individual members.

So far rural communities have been slow to realize the social and recreational needs of youth and have made few attempts to meet them. On the other hand, a large proportion of rural youth do not participate in such institutions and organizations as have been developed. Except for the church and Sunday school, organizations in rural areas have attracted a relatively small percentage of those eligible for membership and have often failed to meet the needs of those who did become members. The extent to which youth participate in social organizations apparently depends largely on their economic status and educational attainments.

In addition to the church and other organizations there are many informal activities which absorb the leisure time of rural young people. The extent to which youth attend motion pictures and dances, belong to athletic groups, play games, read, etc., varies widely from one section to another. The amount and type of reading is largely determined by the availability of library facilities. Recreation within the home is still of major importance and has received new stimulation and development as a result of the depression. The lack of recreational

activities is particularly acute in poor land areas. The various Federal emergency agencies established during the depression of the early thirties have made an important contribution through making available to rural areas some of the facilities for wholesome recreation, such as playgrounds, swimming pools, and community centers, which are taken for granted by city dwellers.

#### PROGRAMS TO AID RURAL YOUTH

Many organizations, both governmental and nongovernmental, have developed definite and constructive programs for aiding rural youth. The Cooperative Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, operating through the State colleges of agriculture, promotes its work for youth through the 4-H Club program and through organizations for young adults. The 4-H Club membership is composed primarily of young people below the youth group and includes chiefly young people in school from farm homes. The program for older groups, which is still largely in the experimental stage, emphasizes the promotion of better farming and the development of leadership in educational and cultural guidance and in recreational activities.

The federally-aided high schools with courses in vocational agriculture have expanded their part-time and evening classes in agricultural education since the depression of the early thirties. Unemployed and out-of-school youth have been given training to equip them for work when the opportunity comes. The Office of Education has pioneered in many programs of value to rural areas, such as conservation, radio, and public forums.

The National Youth Administration has a varied program which covers a far more extensive group than the relief group for which it was organized primarily. Its present services to youth include aid to those who cannot attend school without help, special courses at agricultural colleges for farm boys and girls, work projects for out-of-school youth, and vocational guidance and job placement. Through these various programs hundreds of thousands of youth are being aided.

The Civilian Conservation Corps has the threefold purpose of conserving natural resources, providing employment for needy young men, and giving vocational training. By January 1, 1938, approximately 900,000 rural youth from low-income or relief families had spent one enrollment term or more in camp.

The Works Progress Administration, while it has no program especially designed for youth, has reached a considerable number of rural youth through its educational projects, work projects, and provision of recreational facilities. The Farm Credit Administration through its production credit associations to finance crop and livestock production and, more recently, through its program for giving youth oppor-

tunities to rent farms is helping young men get a start in farming. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration and, more recently, the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act through assisting rural families have aided the youth in those families. Similarly the Resettlement Administration, now the Farm Security Administration, has aided rural youth through helping their families. However, direct assistance to youth in making their own economic adjustments has not been rendered by these agencies.

The United States Employment Service helps young people as well as older workers to secure jobs. So far, data on the extent to which the USES functions with respect to rural youth are not available.

Nongovernmental agencies serving youth are numerous and varied. Those which have been developed in rural areas with definite programs for out-of-school youth include the junior programs of the Farm Bureau and the Farmers Educational and Co-operative Union, the National Grange which embraces the entire family in its membership, the Wisconsin Farm Short Course for farm boys, and cooperative youth clubs. In addition there are many localized projects with varying characteristics scattered throughout the country. Often experimental in nature, they are performing important functions in widening the opportunities and outlook of rural youth.

In spite of excellent work on the part of various agencies, governmental and nongovernmental, the problems of rural youth as a whole are still far from being solved. Although much has been accomplished to ameliorate conditions resulting from the depression, probably the majority of rural youth have not had the advantages of any specialized program.

#### THE LONG-TIME PROBLEM

The long-time rural youth problem is that of an excess in numbers in relation to a dearth of rural opportunities, a situation which becomes greatly aggravated during "hard times." Yet rural youth need not necessarily face constricted opportunities if society assumes its full responsibility for this great human resource.

While equality of educational opportunity is generally accepted as a fundamental democratic principle, the fact must be clearly faced that there is not equality of educational facilities in rural America. Because of such inequalities, there are thousands of out-of-school rural youth inadequately prepared to cope with the problems of modern life. In view of the limited financial resources available in many rural areas, it seems clear that the Federal Government must extend greatly increased support if the democratic ideal of equality in education for rural youth is to be realized.

No amount of education will be of much benefit to rural youth, however, if adequate opportunities for gainful employment are lack-

ing. Agriculture cannot begin to absorb the increasing number of rural youth. Migration to urban centers will not meet the situation unless it is carefully directed. Even with guided migration cities are unlikely to be able to absorb the vast numbers of rural youth who ought, under present conditions, to leave rural territory. While agricultural developments point toward even further restrictions in opportunities for youth on farms, the expansion of the field of service occupations holds possibilities for large numbers of young people. This development, however, is contingent on rural areas being able to support the social services they so badly need.

The consequences of inequality are nowhere more apparent than in the social and recreational life of young people. Dull and uneventful communities do not necessarily breed antisocial behavior, but they may yield lethargic and restricted personalities. Society must accept the responsibility of providing not only educational and economic opportunities for rural youth but also adequate recreational and social facilities if well-rounded personalities are to be developed.

Society must recognize the exploitation and waste of its young manhood and womanhood which now exist. A concerted frontal attack has yet to be made on the long-time factors responsible for the widespread destitution and restricted social opportunities of rural youth.



# Chapter I

---

## **DISTRIBUTION OF YOUTH**

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**T**HE INTENSITY of the difficulties that rural youth encounter in making their adjustments into adult society at any particular time and place largely depends on the rate at which youth reach maturity and the extent to which they move into or out of the community. A population of one hundred may create pressure on a given number of acres of poor land but be well adjusted if on good land. In rural areas of ample opportunities the concentration of numbers—particularly of youth—does not create serious difficulties except in times of widespread unemployment. On the other hand, concentration in areas of limited economic opportunities and of restricted health, recreational, and educational facilities creates continuous maladjustment which becomes greatly aggravated in times of general economic depression.

Manifold problems confront the youth of rural America today. The problems of rural youth are, moreover, closely related to those of youth in cities, and the maladjusted situations in which the youth of the two groups have found themselves in recent years have been due both to long-time trends and to the depression.

In the Nation as a whole, in spite of slackening birth rates and restricted immigration, there were more youth in 1935 than ever before. In that year some 20,800,000 persons, or one-sixth of the population, were in the youth group (16-24 years of age). The number had steadily increased from 1930 to 1935, the period during which opportunities were at a minimum. Almost half of these youth were living in rural districts, and the growth in numbers had been greatest in rural territory.

### **EFFECT OF FERTILITY RATES ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF YOUTH**

The number of youth at any given time depends primarily on the number of births 16 to 24 years previously. The trend of births in the United States rose until 1921 when the peak was reached, with a second lower peak coming in 1924 (appendix table 1). Barring the

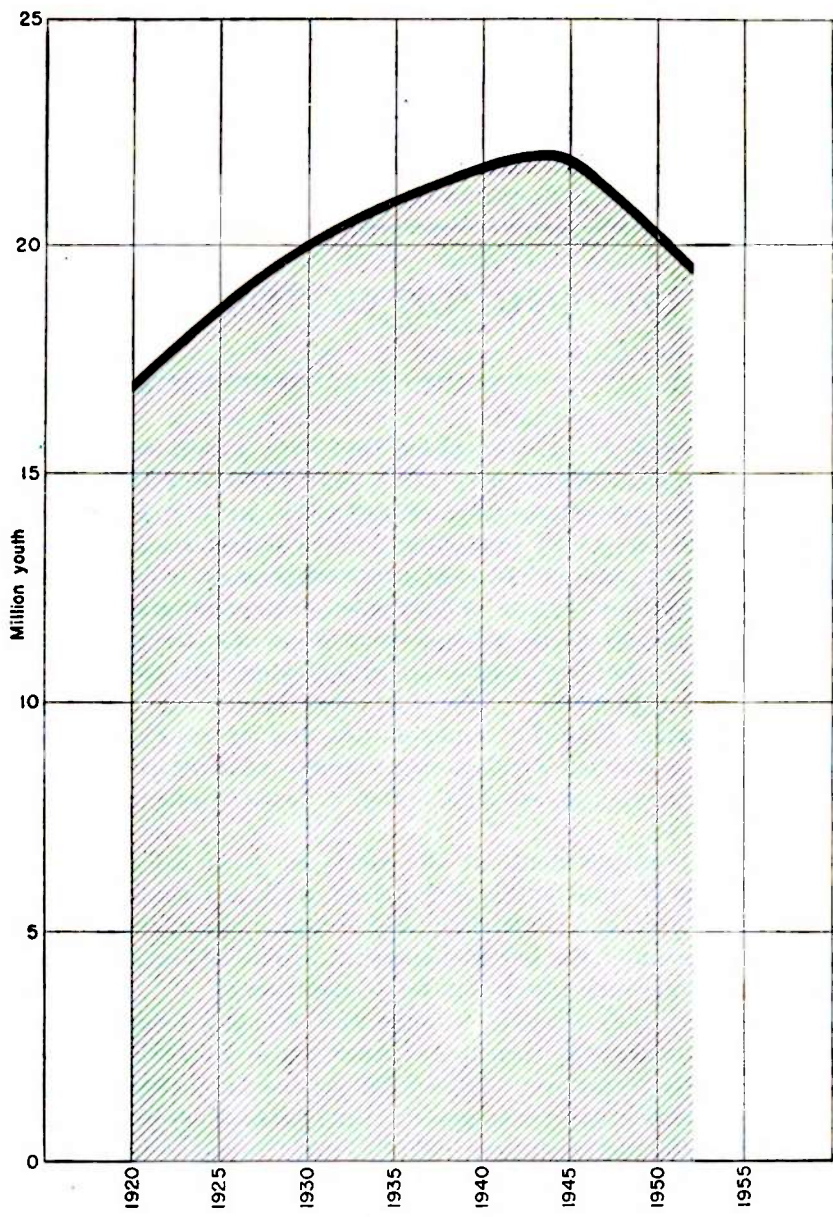


FIG. I-TREND IN NUMBER OF YOUTH IN THE UNITED STATES 1920-1952

Source: Appendix table 2.

AF-2647, WPA

possible effects of change in immigration policy and assuming a constant death rate, there will be more youth in the United States about the period 1942 to 1944 than at any other period prior to that time (appendix table 2). The total number of youth will begin to decrease shortly thereafter because the number of births per year in the United States has declined almost steadily since 1924 (fig. 1).<sup>1</sup>

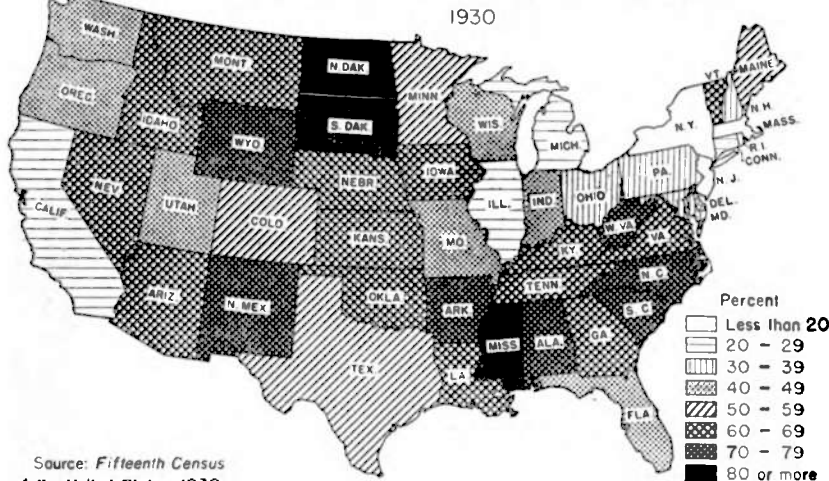
**Table 1.**—Percent of Total Population and of Total Youth Population in Urban and Rural Areas, by Geographic Division, 1930

Geographic division	Total population		Total youth population	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
United States.....	56.2	43.8	56.1	43.9
New England.....	77.3	22.7	78.7	21.3
Middle Atlantic.....	77.7	22.3	79.6	20.4
East North Central.....	66.4	33.6	68.6	31.4
West North Central.....	41.8	58.2	42.1	57.9
South Atlantic.....	36.1	63.9	35.9	64.1
East South Central.....	28.1	71.9	28.3	71.7
West South Central.....	36.4	63.6	36.4	63.6
Mountain.....	39.4	60.6	39.3	60.7
Pacific.....	67.5	32.5	67.9	32.1

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, pp. 611, 671, 674, and 694.

Although more children have been born and reared in the country than in the cities, migration to the cities has balanced the deficit of births in urban territory so that in 1930 the percent distribution of

FIG. 2—RURAL YOUTH AS PERCENT OF ALL YOUTH



Source: *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*.

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<sup>1</sup> There will be a slight upswing again in the number of youth from about 1960 through 1965. At that time the children of women born during the high birth rate years of 1921-1924 will be entering the youth group. National Resources Committee, *Population Statistics, 1. National Data*, Washington, D. C., October 1937, p. 9.

FIG.3-CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS OF AGE PER 1,000 WOMEN  
 20 THROUGH 44 YEARS OF AGE  
 WHITE RURAL-FARM POPULATION  
 1930

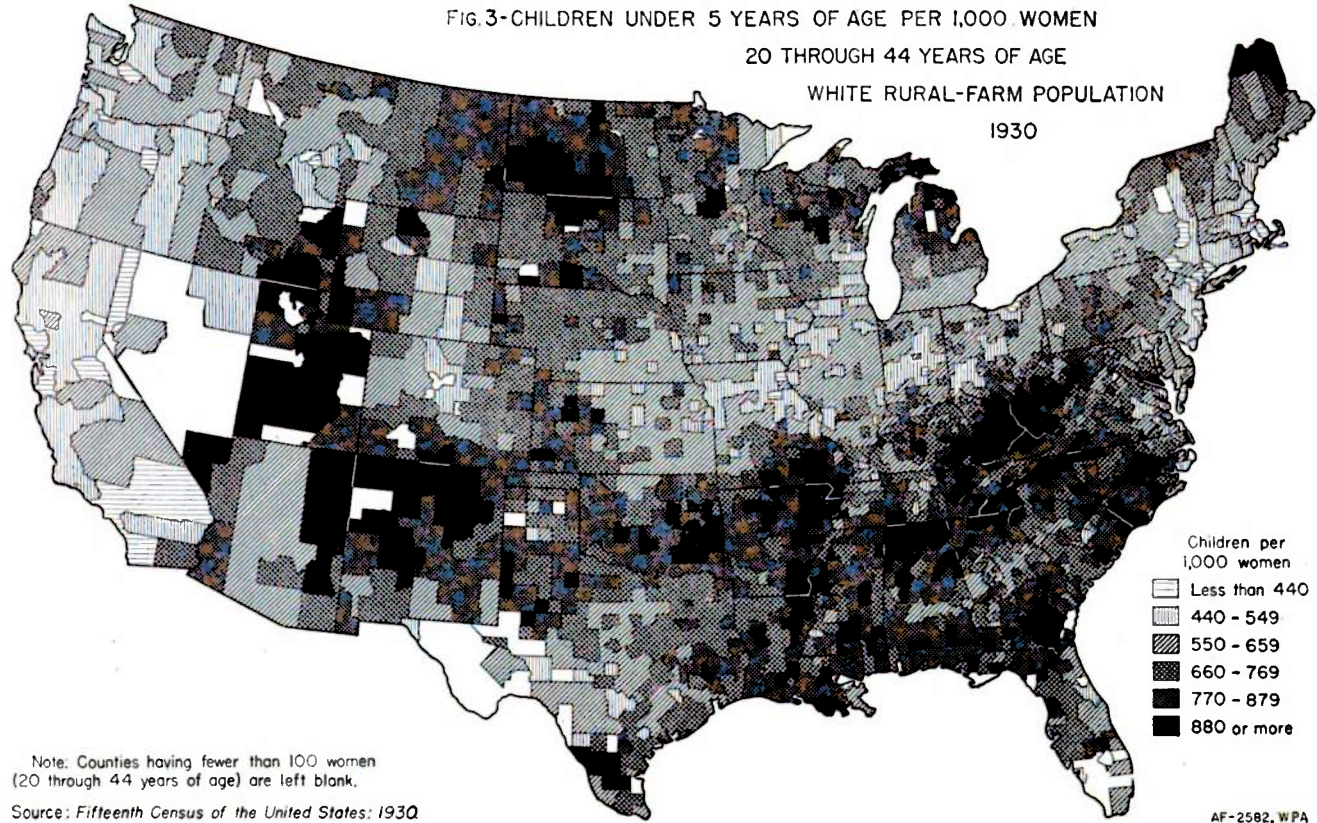
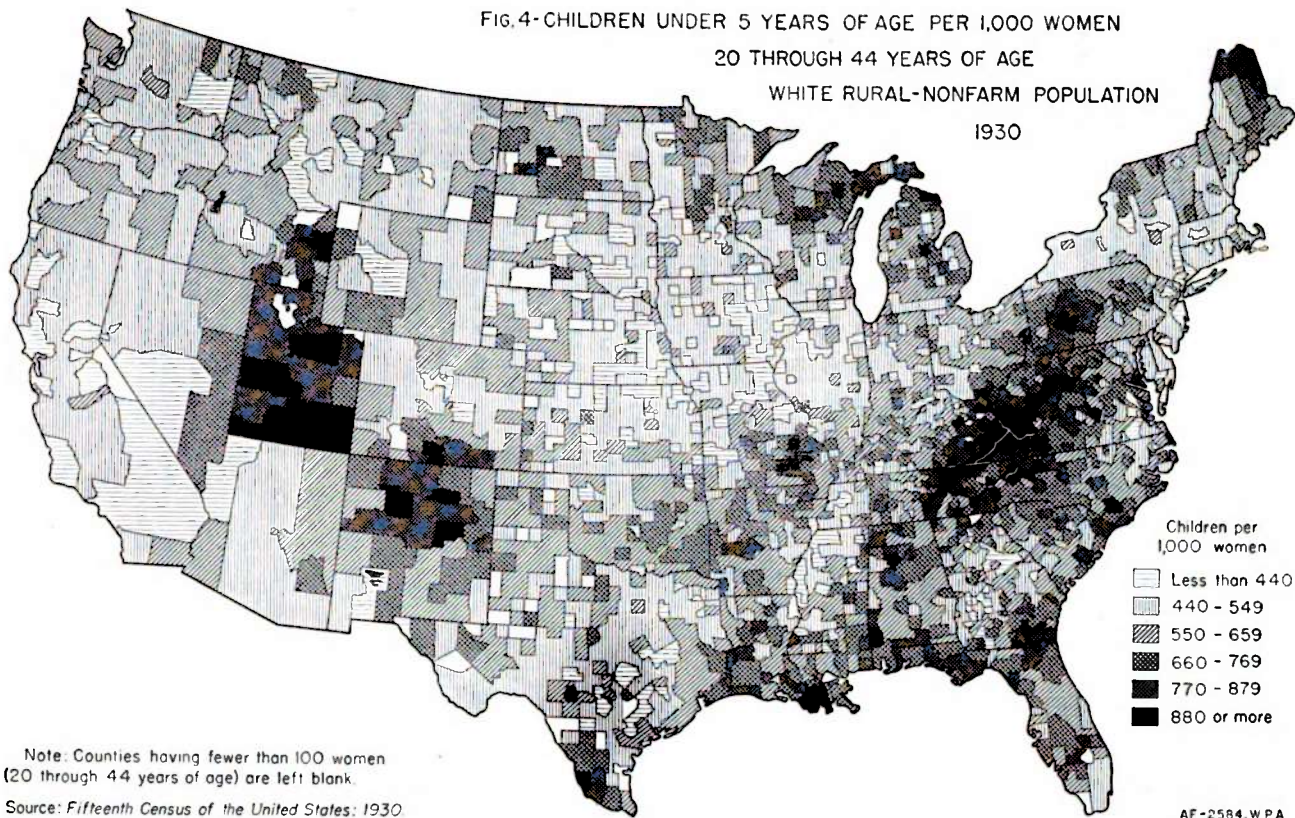


FIG. 4- CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS OF AGE PER 1,000 WOMEN  
20 THROUGH 44 YEARS OF AGE  
WHITE RURAL-NONFARM POPULATION  
1930



Note: Counties having fewer than 100 women (20 through 44 years of age) are left blank.

Source: *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930.*

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rural and urban youth corresponded closely to the percent distribution of the rural and urban population (table 1, fig. 2, and appendix table 3). It was the decline in migration that caused the emergence of the problems of rural youth after 1930. Some knowledge of fertility rates<sup>2</sup> in urban and rural territory is essential to an understanding of the distributive process which operated prior to the depression of the early thirties and was checked during the depression.

The fertility rate of the large cities is now generally below that necessary to maintain their population. Even to maintain a stationary population it was necessary, with 1930 death rates, to have 444 white children under 5 years of age for each 1,000 white women 20-44 years of age and 499 Negro children per 1,000 Negro women 20-44 years of age.<sup>3</sup> According to this standard the ratio of children to women in the native white population of the United States in all places with a population above 10,000 in 1930 was on the average below that necessary for replacement.<sup>4</sup> Only 1 city with a population of more than 100,000 in 1930 had a fertility rate sufficiently high to maintain its population. The large cities had on the average a deficit of more than 20 percent in the number of children. At the same time there was a 50 percent surplus of children in rural territory (figs. 3 and 4).

Deaths already exceeded births in 1935 in 6 cities in the United States with more than 100,000 population<sup>5</sup> as well as in a considerable number of smaller cities. The same situation existed in 130 counties located chiefly in the Northeast and the far West.

It follows that in order to maintain the urban population at its present level there must be a movement of rural people to the cities.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately or fortunately, depending on the point of view, under the present system there are not enough economic possibilities in the cities to absorb the entire rural population surplus. Hence in one respect a major youth problem is the maintenance of a rural-urban balance of population.

<sup>2</sup> Whelpton, P. K., "Geographic and Economic Differentials in Fertility," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 188, November 1936, pp. 37-55.

<sup>3</sup> Data for fertility of white women from National Resources Committee, *Population Statistics, 1. National Data, op. cit.*, table 14; data for fertility of Negro women computed by Dorn, Harold F., based on life tables prepared by the U. S. Bureau of the Census.

<sup>4</sup> Whelpton, P. K., *op. cit.*, p. 46.

<sup>5</sup> San Francisco and Oakland, Calif.; Portland, Oreg.; Seattle, Wash.; and Utica and Albany, N. Y. This was also true of 12 cities with populations between 50,000 and 100,000; 20 cities with populations between 25,000 and 50,000; and 74 cities with populations between 10,000 and 25,000. Data compiled by Dorn, Harold F., from special reports of the U. S. Bureau of the Census, Division of Vital Statistics.

<sup>6</sup> Baker, O. E., "Rural-Urban Migration and the National Welfare," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. XXIII, June 1933, p. 73.

### EFFECT OF MIGRATION FROM 1920 TO 1930 ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF YOUTH

Between 1920 and 1930 the total rural-farm population declined from 31,358,600 to 30,157,500, a decrease of almost 4 percent. During this decade, however, the number of persons 15–24 years of age in the rural-farm population rose from 5,750,400 to 5,855,200, an increase of about 2 percent.<sup>7</sup> This accretion occurred in spite of the heavy migration of youth from farms during the decade.

Limited data suggest that in the decade 1920–1930 migration was relatively heavier from the poorest land than from the good land.<sup>8</sup> During the depression, however, the flow of population from submarginal land was reversed, the population returning to these poor lands from the cities.<sup>9</sup> This necessarily caused a “piling up” of youth in submarginal areas. Moreover, during the 5-year period 1930 to 1935 there was an actual migration from regions of commercial crop production.<sup>10</sup>

The total net migration from farms between 1920 and 1930 was 6,300,000, of which approximately one-third, or, conservatively estimated, about 2,000,000, were youth 15 to 25 years of age.<sup>11</sup> In total numbers this group exceeded the age group under 15 years, the group between 25 and 35 years of age, and the group 35 years of age and over.

These data establish youth as the principal age of migration. Just as it is the period of occupational adjustment and marital adjustment so it is the period of adjustment to new communities.

The estimate that one-third of all the migrants from farms between 1920 and 1930 were youth is conservative since 25 percent of all persons who left the farms between 1920 and 1930 were 10–14 years of age in 1920 and 23 percent were 15–19 years of age in 1920 (table 2). The figures also indicate that many migrants are children who move with their families. On the other hand, the large majority of youth probably migrate independently of their families as is shown by a

<sup>7</sup> Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, table 16, pp. 588–589. Fifteen-year-olds are included in this tabulation because the 1920 Census did not give the farm population by single years.

<sup>8</sup> Analysis of the migration of rural population made in the Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C.

<sup>9</sup> Goodrich, Carter, Allin, Bushrod W., and Hayes, Marion, *Migration and Planes of Living, 1920–1934*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1935, p. 71. See also Woofter, T. J., Jr., “Rural Relief and the Back-to-the-Farm Movement,” *Social Forces*, Vol. 14, 1936, p. 382 ff.

<sup>10</sup> Folsom, Josiah C. and Baker, O. E., *A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 265, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., November 1937, p. 31. See also National Resources Committee, *Population Statistics, 1. National Data*, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

<sup>11</sup> Baker, O. E., *The Outlook for Rural Youth*, Extension Service Circular 223, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., 1935, p. 4.

## 8 • RURAL YOUTH: THEIR SITUATION AND PROSPECTS

comparison of the age distribution of the rural-farm and urban populations (table 3). If the population under 15 years of age is classed as children, those 15 to 24, inclusive, as youth, those 25 to 64 as the mature productive group, and those 65 and over as aged, and if comparisons are made of the percentages of the total population belonging to these age groups on the farms and in the cities in 1930, the years of migration become even more obvious. In the farm population 36 percent are children as against 26 percent in the city.

**Table 2.**—Estimated Percent Distribution of Migrants From Farms, by Age and Sex, 1920-1930

Age		Male	Female
1920	1930		
Total:		2,805,000	3,368,000
Number.....		100	100
Percent.....			
Under 5 years.....	10-14 years.....	5	6
5-9 years.....	15-19 years.....	7	13
10-14 years.....	20-24 years.....	25	25
15-19 years.....	25-29 years.....	26	20
20-24 years.....	30-34 years.....	13	9
25-29 years.....	35-39 years.....	6	4
30-34 years.....	40-44 years.....	4	3
35-39 years.....	45-49 years.....	3	3
40-44 years.....	50-54 years.....	1	3
45-49 years.....	55-59 years.....	2	3
50-54 years.....	60-64 years.....	2	3
55-59 years.....	65-69 years.....	2	3
60-64 years.....	70-74 years.....	2	2
65-69 years.....	75-79 years.....	2	3

Sources: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, pp. 588-589; and Dorn, Harold F. and Lorimer, Frank, "Migration, Reproduction, and Population Adjustment," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 188, November 1936, p. 287.

There is a close correspondence in the youth group, but the city population has 51 percent in the productive ages as against 40 percent in this age group in the farm areas. Thus the 15-24 year age group is the period when an excess of children on the farms is being converted into an excess of persons in the productive ages in the city.

Certain generalizations may be made about the youth contingent of migrants. In the first place girls left the farms at a younger age than boys, and in the second place more young people migrated from the

**Table 3.**—Population of the United States, by Age and Residence, 1930

Age	Rural				Urban	
	Farm		Nonfarm		Number	Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Total.....	30,158,000	100.0	23,663,000	100.0	68,954,000	100.0
Under 15 years.....	10,862,000	36.0	7,408,000	31.3	17,787,000	25.8
15-19 years.....	3,421,000	11.3	2,116,000	8.9	6,015,000	8.7
20-24 years.....	2,434,000	8.1	2,016,000	8.5	6,420,000	9.3
25-64 years.....	11,880,000	39.5	10,546,000	44.6	35,142,000	51.0
65 years and over.....	1,552,000	5.1	1,558,000	6.6	3,524,000	5.1
Unknown.....	9,000	*	19,000	0.1	66,000	0.1

\* Less than 0.05 percent.

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, pp. 587-589.





*Farm Security Administration (Rothstein).*

***Surplus Youth Must Migrate.***



poorer agricultural areas than from the better farm lands. Of the farm girls 10–14 years of age in 1920, 43 percent had migrated by 1930 while of the farm boys of the same age group 33 percent had migrated. For the next older age class, 15–19 years in 1920, 43 percent of both sexes had migrated by 1930.<sup>12</sup> In some States the migration was much more extensive. In Michigan, for example, 37.4 percent of the males on farms 10–14 years of age in 1920 and 58.8 percent of the females in this category had migrated by 1930.<sup>13</sup>

Migration was especially toward the larger cities.<sup>14</sup> According to a study in New York State for the period from 1917 to 1930,<sup>15</sup> the factors determining the migration from the farms in addition to age were opportunity, size of farm, education, distance, and capital.

Not all of the young migrants were white. The movement of Negroes from the farms of the South included many young people. It is estimated that almost 1,000,000 more Negroes left farms than moved to farms between 1920 and 1930. This number was equal to about three-fourths of the natural increase of Negroes in the United States during the same period.<sup>16</sup> The Negro as well as the white

<sup>12</sup> Dorn, Harold F. and Lorimer, Frank, "Migration, Reproduction, and Population Adjustment," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 188, November 1936, p. 280.

For discussions of migration see Anderson, W. A., *Mobility of Rural Families. I*, Bulletin 607, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, N. Y., June 1934, and *Mobility of Rural Families. II*, Bulletin 623, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, N. Y., March 1935; Smick, A. A. and Yoder, F. R., *A Study of Farm Migration in Selected Communities in the State of Washington*, Bulletin 233, Washington Agricultural Experiment Station, Pullman, Wash., June 1929; Hamilton, C. Horace, *Rural-Urban Migration in North Carolina, 1920 to 1930*, Bulletin No. 295, North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Raleigh, N. C., February 1934, and "The Annual Rate of Departure of Rural Youths from Their Parental Homes," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. I, 1936, pp. 164–179; Goodrich, Carter, Allin, Bushrod W., and Hayes, Marion, *op. cit.*; Zimmerman, Carle C., "The Migration to Towns and Cities," Nos. I and II, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXXII, 1926, pp. 450–455, and Vol. XXXIII, 1927, pp. 105–109, No. III with Duncan, O. D. and Frey, Fred C., *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXXIII, 1927, pp. 237–241, No. IV with Duncan, O. D., *Journal of Farm Economics*, Vol. X, 1928, pp. 506–515; Gee, Wilson, "A Qualitative Study of Rural Depopulation in a Single Township: 1900–1930," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXXIX, 1933, pp. 210–221; Gee, Wilson and Runk, Dewees, "Qualitative Selection in Cityward Migration," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXXVII, 1931, pp. 254–265; and Reuss, Carl F., "A Qualitative Study of Depopulation in a Remote Rural District: 1900–1930," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 2, 1937, pp. 66–75.

<sup>13</sup> Thornthwaite, C. Warren, *Internal Migration in the United States*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1934, p. 33.

<sup>14</sup> Zimmerman, Carle C., Duncan, O. D., and Frey, Fred C., *op. cit.*

<sup>15</sup> Young, E. C., *The Movement of Farm Population*, Bulletin 426, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, N. Y., March 1924, p. 88.

<sup>16</sup> Dorn, Harold F. and Lorimer, Frank, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

youth in the Southeast went not only to the cities in their own section but also to cities in other sections. Moreover, even with the migration of Negroes from rural territory as heavy as it was during the decade prior to 1930, it was not sufficient to reduce the proportion of total youth that was rural below the figure for the proportion of the total population that was rural.

So far the discussion of rural migration during the twenties has been in terms of the net movement to urban areas, but the return flow from cities during these years was likewise of considerable significance. The destination of this counter movement was principally farms<sup>17</sup> and the area immediately surrounding the large cities. This flow to the peripheries of the cities is shown by the fact that the counties that had the largest population increases through immigration between 1920 and 1930 were in the neighborhood of large cities.<sup>18</sup> The increase in the number of rural-nonfarm youth amounted to 21 percent between 1920 and 1930.<sup>19</sup>

#### DISTRIBUTION OF YOUTH, 1930

The migratory trends left the youth population of the United States in 1930 divided between urban and rural territory about as the total population was divided (table 1 and appendix table 3), 44 percent rural and 56 percent urban. Of the 11,300,000 urban youth 62 percent were in the New England, Middle Atlantic, and East North Central Divisions. Of the 8,800,000 rural youth, 65 percent were in the Southern and West North Central Divisions (appendix table 4). Before 1930 when the numbers of city youth were not being replenished by maturities to the age 16 in the city, there was a constant flow from rural to urban areas and from the farm sections of the Nation to the industrial sections. This rearing of a substantial part of the urban

**Table 4.**—Residence of Rural Youth in the United States, by Geographic Division, 1930

Geographic division	Total rural		Rural-farm	Rural-nonfarm
	Number	Percent		
United States.....	8,844,643	100.0	58.1	41.9
New England.....	261,745	100.0	27.7	72.3
Middle Atlantic.....	856,346	100.0	29.1	70.9
East North Central.....	1,240,852	100.0	54.2	45.8
West North Central.....	1,232,814	100.0	67.7	32.3
South Atlantic.....	1,814,478	100.0	58.7	41.3
East South Central.....	1,272,379	100.0	71.7	28.3
West South Central.....	1,412,705	100.0	69.7	30.3
Mountain.....	365,483	100.0	51.1	48.9
Pacific.....	387,841	100.0	42.1	57.9

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, p. 674.

<sup>17</sup> Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Agriculture Vol. IV, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1932, p. 12.

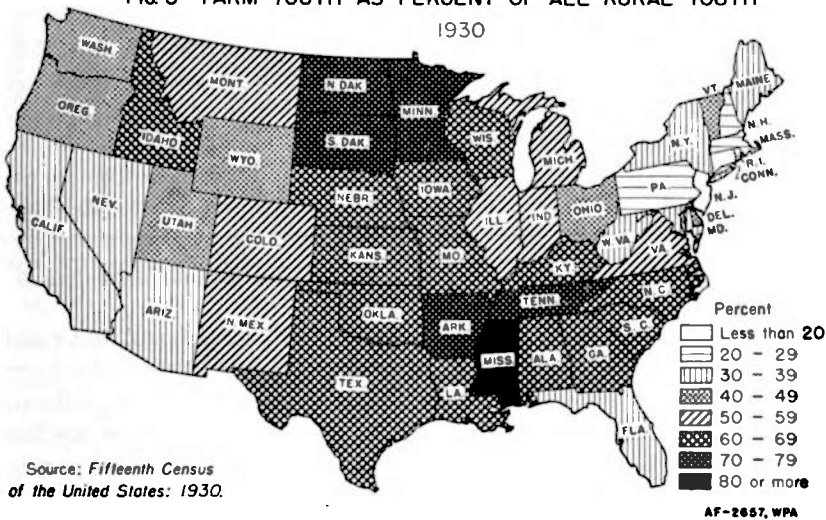
<sup>18</sup> Thornthwaite, C. Warren, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

<sup>19</sup> From 3,409,100 in 1920 to 4,131,600 in 1930, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 589. Fifteen-year-olds were included in this tabulation because the 1920 Census did not give the rural-nonfarm population by single years.

population on the farms represents a notable financial contribution by rural areas to the urban labor market.

The location of rural youth is further shown by comparing the concentration of rural-nonfarm youth with that of rural-farm youth. Over 40 percent of all rural youth in the United States in 1930 were classed as rural-nonfarm (table 4). In three of the nine geographic divisions—New England, Middle Atlantic, and Pacific—nonfarm youth made up more than 50 percent of the rural youth population. These regions are for the most part comprised of dominantly nonagricultural States, such as Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and California (fig. 5).

FIG 5 - FARM YOUTH AS PERCENT OF ALL RURAL YOUTH  
1930



In the dominantly agricultural States the problems of rural-nonfarm youth are closely related to the problems of farm youth. In the States that are primarily industrial, however, such as West Virginia, in which a large proportion of the rural population is engaged in mining, or Pennsylvania, which has both mining and manufacturing, the conditions confronting the rural-nonfarm youth may have little relation to agriculture.<sup>20</sup>

In the South race further complicates youth's situation. In 13 States Negro youth formed a considerable segment of both the farm and nonfarm rural youth population in 1930, although their residential distribution differed widely among the various States. On the whole, Negroes made up a larger percentage of the farm youth than of the nonfarm youth (table 5). In three States—Arkansas, Mississippi, and South Carolina—Negro youth comprised more than 50 percent of all farm youth. In two additional States—Georgia and

<sup>20</sup> For a discussion of industrial villages see Brunner, Edmund deS., *Industrial Village Churches*, New York: Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1930.

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Louisiana—more than 40 percent of all farm youth were Negroes. Negro youth constituted as much as 40 percent of all rural-nonfarm youth in only one State, which signifies that the problem of the young Negro in rural territory is more likely to be localized on farms than in the villages.

Table 5.—Color of Rural Youth in 13 Southern States, by Residence, 1930

State	Rural-farm				Rural-nonfarm			
	Total		White	Negro	Total		White	Negro
	Number	Percent			Number	Percent		
Alabama.....	246,797	100.0	62.1	37.9	107,057	100.0	65.4	34.6
Arkansas.....	206,027	100.0	47.8	52.2	61,866	100.0	80.0	20.0
Florida.....	47,972	100.0	70.2	29.8	74,866	100.0	61.1	38.9
Georgia.....	267,889	100.0	58.5	41.5	115,440	100.0	63.0	37.0
Louisiana.....	152,863	100.0	54.2	45.8	78,849	100.0	65.0	35.0
Maryland.....	38,015	100.0	79.4	20.6	65,465	100.0	80.0	20.0
Mississippi.....	255,916	100.0	42.6	57.4	57,926	100.0	59.2	40.8
North Carolina.....	292,768	100.0	65.4	34.6	141,656	100.0	74.5	25.5
Oklahoma.....	187,114	100.0	85.5	14.5	95,855	100.0	89.7	10.3
South Carolina.....	172,764	100.0	43.2	56.8	91,066	100.0	62.5	37.5
Tennessee.....	215,544	100.0	84.7	15.3	90,743	100.0	85.9	14.1
Texas.....	438,507	100.0	69.7	30.3	191,624	100.0	75.0	25.0
Virginia.....	162,200	100.0	71.9	28.1	118,171	100.0	73.1	26.9

Sources: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, pp. 681-686; and special tabulation by U. S. Bureau of the Census.

The proportion youth form of the total rural, rural-farm, and rural-nonfarm population, respectively, affords an additional basis for interpreting the rural youth situation. The more intense youth problems are likely to be found in areas where economic opportunities are limited, whatever may be the reason for such limitation. In 1930 persons 16-24 years of age made up 16.4 percent of the total rural population.<sup>21</sup> In the farm population the corresponding percentage was 17.1, while for the nonfarm population it was 15.6. Thus, even at the beginning of the depression the nature of the population structure was such that the pressure of farm youth for employment opportunities was more acute than that of the nonfarm group within their respective areas.

REPLACEMENT RATES OF RURAL-FARM MALES

The replacement rate of males in a specified segment of the population provides an objective measure of the pressure of youth on the older age groups. This replacement rate is a percentage relationship between the number of males 18 years old and 18 to 64 years of age, inclusive. It is obtained by subtracting from the total number of males becoming 18 years of age in any given year the number of males becoming 65 years of age and the number of deaths during that year of males 19 through 64 years of age. The result is then computed

<sup>21</sup> Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, *op. cit.*, pp. 599-600.

as a percentage of the number 18 through 64 years of age to secure the annual replacement rate (table 6).<sup>22</sup>

**Table 6.**—Replacement Rates of Males 18 Through 64 Years of Age in the Rural-Farm Population, 1920 and 1930

Item	1920	1930
Number 18 years of age.....	336, 827	363, 793
Number 65 years of age plus deaths 19-64.....	160, 165	162, 390
Excess maturities.....	176, 662	201, 403
Age group, 18-64.....	8, 363, 674	8, 283, 405
Annual replacement rate.....	2.1	2.4

Source: Woofter, T. J., Jr., "Replacement Rates in the Productive Ages," *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, Vol. XV, 1937, p. 350.

The replacement rate is also a measure of pressure on opportunity, which in farming areas means pressure on the land. In the country as a whole the replacement rate for rural-farm males was higher in 1930 than in 1920, indicating that competition for opportunity between those becoming 18 years of age and those who were older was growing increasingly severe. This competition was particularly acute in three geographic divisions—South Atlantic, East South Central, and West South Central—in which replacement rates were considerably above the United States average in 1930 and in which a substantial increase in the rate occurred between 1920 and 1930 (table 7 and fig. 6).

**Table 7.**—Replacement Rates of Males 18 Through 64 Years of Age in the Rural-Farm Population, by Geographic Division, 1920 and 1930

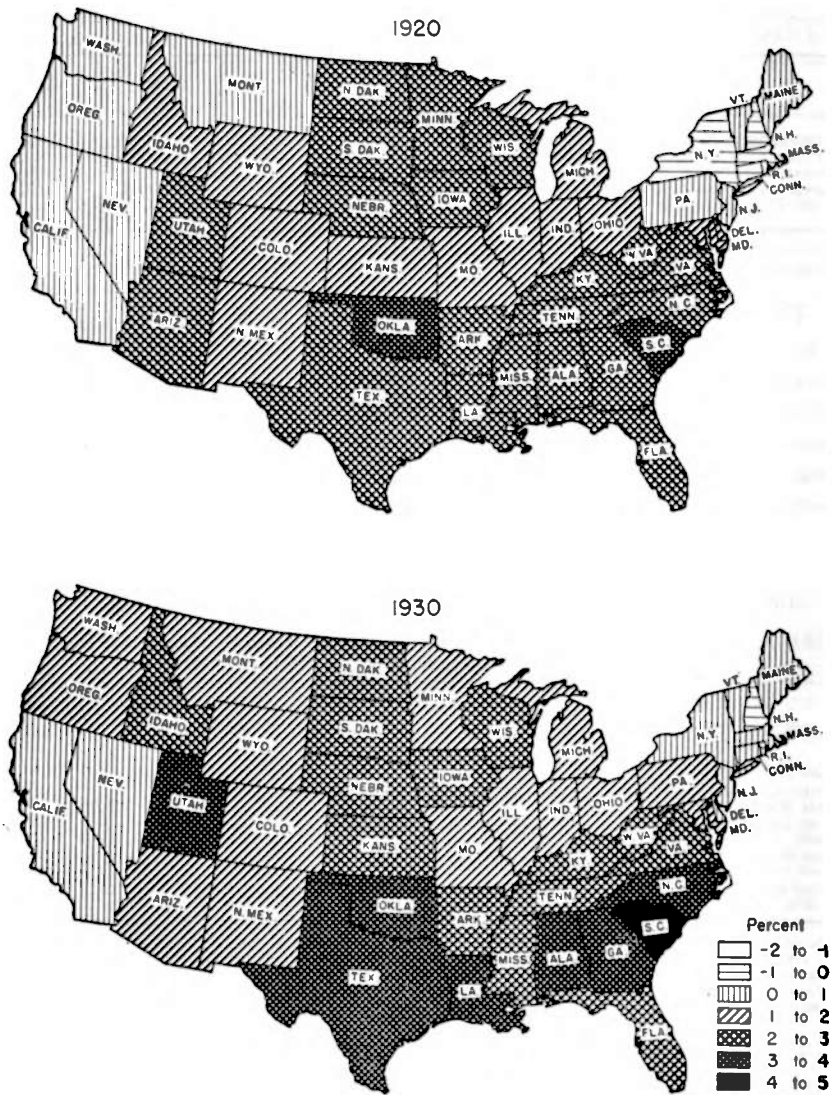
Geographic division	1920	1930
United States.....	2.1	2.4
New England.....	-0.1	0.4
Middle Atlantic.....	0.3	0.8
East North Central.....	1.4	1.4
West North Central.....	2.0	2.0
South Atlantic.....	2.6	3.2
East South Central.....	2.4	2.8
West South Central.....	2.8	3.1
Mountain.....	1.5	1.7
Pacific.....	0.5	0.7

Sources: Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920 and Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C. Special tabulation from the Bureau of the Census for age 65 for 1920. The number of deaths 19 through 64 years of age was obtained by applying rates from Dublin, Louis I. and Lotka, Alfred J., *Length of Life*, New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1936.

The replacement rate varied widely among the different geographic divisions and States, the rates generally being much higher in those divisions and States that are agricultural than in those that are industrial (appendix table 5). Even in the Dakotas, prior to the visitation of the droughts, there were more than twice as many young men becoming 18 years old as could possibly be absorbed by the economic opportunities being opened through death and senescence.

<sup>22</sup> Woofter, T. J., Jr., "Replacement Rates in the Productive Ages," *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, Vol. XV, 1937, pp. 348-354.

Fig 6 - REPLACEMENT RATES OF MALES 18 THROUGH 64 YEARS OF AGE IN THE RURAL-FARM POPULATION



Source: Appendix table 5.

AF-2663, WPA

RURAL YOUTH IN 1935

The number of rural youth increased about 13 percent during the 5-year period ending in 1935, reaching an estimated total of 9,991,600 (table 8). The increase was greatest in the industrial States of New England and in the Middle Atlantic and East North Central Divisions. The variation among the States ranged from a 1 percent



decrease in South Dakota to a 30 percent increase in Nevada <sup>23</sup> (appendix table 6).

There were an estimated 6,107,000 rural-farm youth in 1935, which represented an increase since 1930 of 18.8 percent. This increase likewise was greatest in the three industrial regions, the New England, Middle Atlantic, and East North Central Divisions, and undoubtedly may be accounted for largely by the fact that numbers of families in industrial areas turned to the land during the depression.

**Table 8.**—Number of Rural Youth in 1930<sup>1</sup> and Estimated Number in 1935,<sup>2</sup> by Geographic Division and Residence

Geographic division	Total rural			Rural-farm			Rural-nonfarm		
	1930	1935	Per- cent in- crease	1930	1935	Per- cent in- crease	1930	1935	Per- cent in- crease
United States.....	8,844,643	9,991,600	13.0	5,140,910	6,107,000	18.8	3,703,733	3,884,600	4.9
New England.....	261,745	304,700	16.4	72,388	106,600	47.3	189,357	198,100	4.6
Middle Atlantic.....	856,346	1,002,100	17.0	249,071	365,000	46.5	607,275	637,100	4.9
East North Central.....	1,240,852	1,479,500	19.2	672,382	885,200	31.7	568,470	594,300	4.5
West North Central.....	1,232,814	1,329,600	7.9	834,861	910,100	9.0	397,953	419,500	5.4
South Atlantic.....	1,814,478	2,085,500	14.9	1,065,628	1,300,800	22.1	748,850	784,700	4.8
East South Central.....	1,272,379	1,433,500	12.7	912,120	1,056,700	15.9	360,259	376,800	4.6
West South Central.....	1,412,705	1,530,900	8.4	984,511	1,080,300	9.7	428,194	450,600	5.2
Mountain.....	365,483	393,100	7.6	186,701	206,600	10.7	178,782	186,500	4.3
Pacific.....	387,841	432,700	11.6	163,248	195,700	19.9	224,593	237,000	5.5

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, p. 674.

<sup>2</sup> For method of estimation see appendix B.

The increase in the number of farm youth varied widely among the several States (appendix table 6). For example, although the increase for the United States as a whole was less than 19 percent, in Pennsylvania it was 51 percent and in West Virginia and Michigan it was around 48 percent. Virginia and Maryland likewise showed large gains. Kentucky and Tennessee in the Appalachian Area had the highest percentage increases in the number of youth on farms of all the South Central States. In the West, Utah, Washington, and Oregon likewise experienced a considerable increase in the number of farm young people.

The percent change in the number of rural-nonfarm youth during the 5-year interval was much less than for farm youth, particularly if Rhode Island and Nevada are excluded. Both of these States have unusual population characteristics which make the estimation of their respective nonfarm populations for 1935 exceedingly problematical. Though the other States presented variations ranging

<sup>23</sup> The New England States are not referred to specifically in the discussion of the increase in number of farm youth because there is some question about the accuracy of the 1930 Census of Agriculture for some of the New England States. The data for Connecticut are known to be incorrect. Though the percentages calculated are misleading, they are included for what they are worth to complete the tabulation. Their inclusion has no appreciable effect on the percent change for the United States as a whole.

from a 4.4 percent decrease in Idaho to a 16.8 percent increase in Delaware, the variation by divisions appears to have been very slight—only a little more than 1 percent (table 8). It would be hazardous to draw conclusions from the figures for the rural-nonfarm youth population since the estimates were made on a purely arbitrary basis.<sup>24</sup>

#### TRENDS IN THE NUMBER OF YOUTH AFTER 1930

The increase in the number of youth in rural areas, especially on farms, between 1930 and 1935 helped to accentuate the phenomenon which has been designated as the rural youth problem. The flow of young people from the farms to the cities that prevailed during the twenties was checked with the coming of the depression of the early thirties while greater and greater numbers of boys and girls were coming into the youth group (16–24 years).

There were probably about 700,000 more young people in the United States in 1935 than in 1930 (table 9). It is estimated that by 1940 the accretion will amount to twice that number (table 11, p. 20). The checking after 1930 of the cityward flow of young people which characterized the twenties was an impelling factor in changing the trend of the distribution of youth and contributed greatly to the increase of 1,150,000 in the number of youth in rural territory by 1935. There would have been 200,000 more youth in rural areas had there not been a net migration of youth from the farms to the cities of about that number. The tremendous increase of youth in rural territory was due largely to the "piling up" process on the land.

Table 9.—Youth Population of the United States, by Residence, 1930<sup>1</sup> and 1935<sup>2</sup>

Residence	1930	1935	Increase or decrease
Total.....	20, 126, 800	20, 786, 700	659, 900
Urban.....	11, 282, 200	10, 795, 100	-487, 100
Rural.....	8, 844, 600	9, 991, 600	1, 147, 000
Farm.....	5, 140, 900	6, 107, 000	966, 100
Nonfarm.....	3, 703, 700	3, 884, 600	180, 900

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, pp. 598–600.

<sup>2</sup> For method of estimation see appendix B.

Exactly the opposite trend was manifest in the cities where the number of youth declined by more than 450,000 from 1930 to 1935. This decline in the number of youth in the cities during the depression did not prevent the rise of a youth problem of critical proportions, but the problem would have been even greater if there had been more young people coming in from the farms and if the birth rate in the cities had not dropped so precipitately some years ago.

The interfarm-city migration varied somewhat for individual years from 1930 to 1935 and involved in it was a considerable contingent

<sup>24</sup> For method of estimation see appendix B.

of young workers from industrial centers who sought refuge on farms.<sup>25</sup> The movement of population from cities to farms was greater than the reverse flow only in 1932, however.<sup>26</sup> Beginning in 1933 the number going to urban centers has been greater than the outward trek. Probably relatively few people who migrated to the cities in 1933 when the tide of migration first turned were youth going to the city for the first time.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, the movement of youth has no doubt varied considerably the country over. Some indication of the variation may be gained from a survey made in October 1934 of the mobility of the rural and town population in 139 counties scattered over the United States. "Sixty [counties] reported the existence of significant population shifts at the time the survey was made. In 35 of these the dominant movement was from open country to villages and towns, in 13 it was from villages and towns to the open country, while the 12 remaining counties reported the 2 types of movement to be approximately equal in volume."<sup>28</sup>

**Table 10.**—Estimated Migration of Youth to and From Farms, by Geographic Division, 1930-1934<sup>1</sup>

Geographic division	Net migration of youth from farms, 1930-1934	Net migration of youth to farms, 1930-1934
United States.....	274, 300	77, 900
New England.....	—	17, 100
Middle Atlantic.....	—	42, 600
East North Central.....	—	18, 200
West North Central.....	78, 900	—
South Atlantic.....	55, 400	—
East South Central.....	43, 000	—
West South Central.....	75, 700	—
Mountain.....	20, 000	—
Pacific.....	1, 300	—

<sup>1</sup> Based on data from the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

The net migration varied considerably among the different geographic divisions (table 10). Thus, during the 5 years since 1930 apparently more youth migrated to than from farms in the New England, Middle Atlantic, and East North Central States, reflecting the shutdown in industry in these regions which forced people to take refuge on the land. In Michigan, for example, youth 15-24 years of

<sup>25</sup> State Emergency Welfare Relief Commission, "Age, Sex and Employment Status of Gainful Workers in Five Types of Communities," *Michigan Census of Population and Unemployment*, Lansing, Mich., July 1936, p. 6. See also Goodrich, Carter, Allin, Bushrod W., and Hayes, Marion, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

<sup>26</sup> Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Farm Population Estimates, January 1, 1936*, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., release of October 27, 1936.

<sup>27</sup> Baker, O. E., *The Outlook for Rural Youth*, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>28</sup> Division of Research, Statistics, and Finance, *Mobility of Rural and Town Population*, Research Bulletin F-7, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Washington, D. C., April 16, 1935, p. 1.

age made up 17.2 percent of the total population in the rural townships in 1930 but in 1935 they made up 22.8 percent of the total.<sup>29</sup> In the other divisions of the country, despite the limitations in industrial opportunity, youth were forced to leave the farms. In the South Atlantic and East South Central Divisions, where the average farm income is notoriously low, and in the West North Central and West South Central States, where the ravages of drought and dust storms have been most severe, youth left the land in large numbers. This movement in the 2 latter divisions conformed to the decline in the farm population in the 10 drought States between 1930 and 1935.<sup>30</sup>

Data gathered in North Carolina show that young people from relief families did not leave home as rapidly as did children from nonrelief families during the years 1931 to 1934.<sup>31</sup>

Evidence is conflicting in regard to the pattern of youth migration during the early thirties. According to mobility studies in certain sections of Ohio it adhered to the general pattern of the twenties with respect to age and sex.<sup>32</sup> Other evidence suggests that the young women have been remaining in rural territory in larger proportions than formerly and in greater proportions than the young men. The increasing proportion of young women in rural relief households is one evidence of this.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, the National Youth Administration reports show that during several months in 1937 there were more young women than young men employed by this agency.<sup>34</sup>

The increase in the number of rural-nonfarm youth between 1930 and 1935 was estimated at a little less than 200,000.<sup>35</sup> It seems

<sup>29</sup> Calculated from base tables secured from the State Emergency Welfare Relief Commission, *Michigan Census of Population and Unemployment*, Lansing, Mich.

<sup>30</sup> Taeuber, Conrad and Taylor, Carl C., *The People of the Drought States*, Research Bulletin Series V, No. 2, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., March 1937, p. 25. See also Goodrich, Carter, Allin, Bushrod W., and Hayes, Marion, *op. cit.*, p. 62; and Hill, George W., *Rural Migration and Farm Abandonment*, Research Bulletin Series II, No. 6, Division of Research, Statistics, and Finance, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Washington, D. C., June 1935.

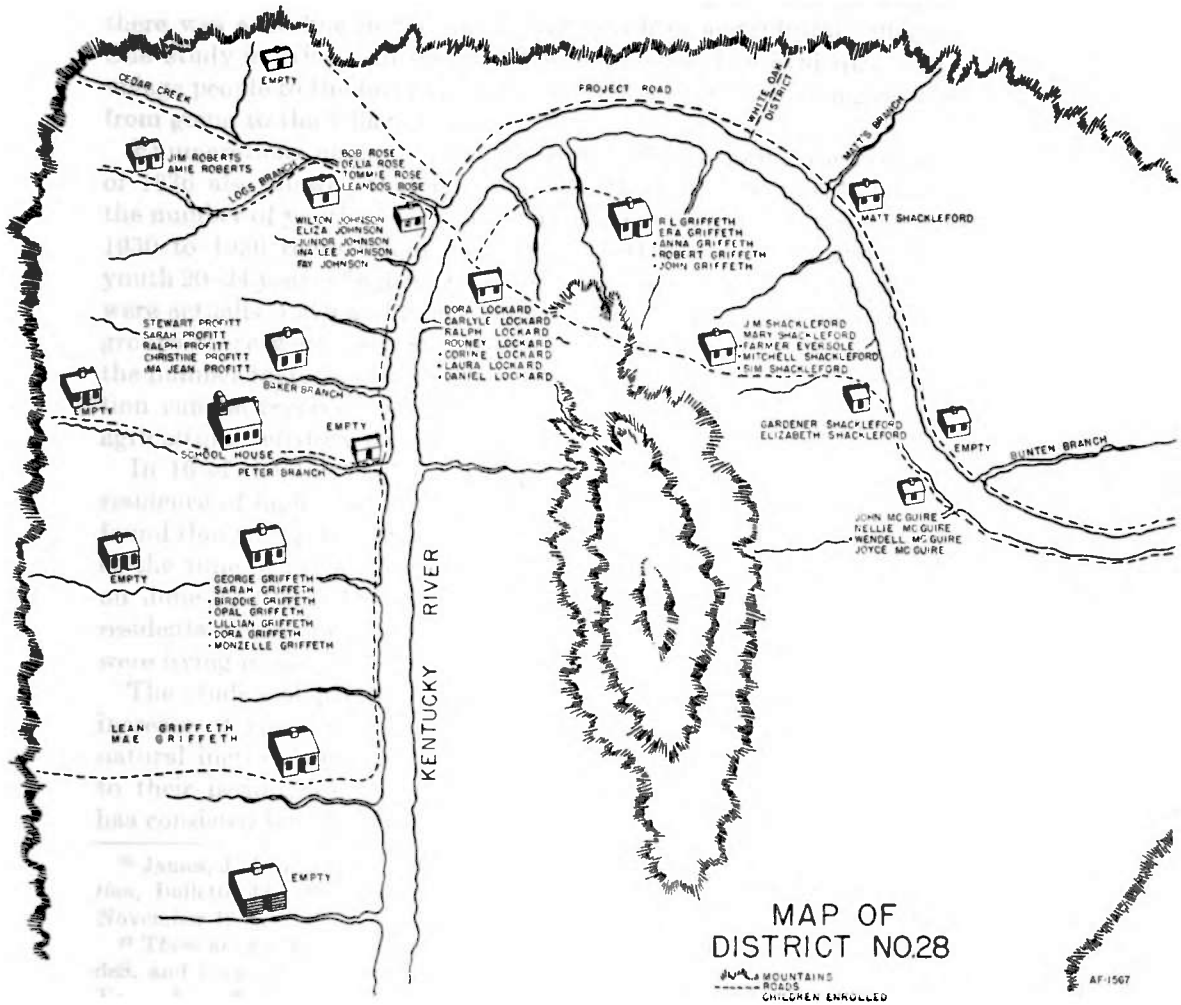
<sup>31</sup> Hamilton, C. Horace, *Recent Changes in the Social and Economic Status of Farm Families in North Carolina*, Bulletin No. 309, North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Raleigh, N. C., May 1937, pp. 123-125.

<sup>32</sup> Lively, C. E. and Foott, Frances, *Population Mobility in Selected Areas of Rural Ohio, 1928-1935*, Bulletin 582, Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, Wooster, Ohio, June 1937, p. 33.

<sup>33</sup> Melvin, Bruce L., *Rural Youth on Relief*, Research Monograph XI, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., 1937, pp. 17-20.

<sup>34</sup> Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, *Report on Progress of the Works Program, December 1937*, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., table 40, p. 65.

<sup>35</sup> The estimate for the rural-nonfarm youth was made on the assumption that there had been no migration from rural-nonfarm territory. See appendix B.



*That mountain children must still go long distances to school is illustrated by this sketch of a typical school district in Kentucky. The distance from the McGuire house on the right to the school house on the left is approximately 5 miles. If the weather permits, Wendel McGuire can save about 2 miles by going across the mountain on foot or horseback and fording the river. Other distances are in proportion. Until recently the "Project Road" was little more than a narrow mountain trail, at times impassable, but it has been improved somewhat through the emergency work programs. The roads across the mountain and up the creek hollows are mere trails.*



probable that the natural increase in the number of youth, that is, the aging of those 11-14 in 1930, on the fringes of the cities would by itself account for most of this. In fact, limited evidence indicates that there was a decline in the number of youth in agricultural villages. One study in Wisconsin states, "The depression has evidently sent village people to the farm and it has certainly kept farm young people from going to the village and city."<sup>36</sup>

Enumerations made in 45 agricultural villages during the summer of 1936 also showed that on the whole there had been a decline in the number of youth since 1930.<sup>37</sup> Had there been no migration from 1930 to 1936 there would have been 4,994 youth 15-19 and 4,910 youth 20-24 years of age in these villages in 1936, whereas the numbers were actually 4,379 and 3,568, respectively. Thus, for these two age groups there were only 88 percent and 73 percent, respectively, of the number there would have been without emigration. If this situation can be regarded as typical, the "piling up" of youth in rural agricultural territory has been largely on farms.

In 16 of the 45 villages a detailed study was made of the present residence of high school graduates of the classes of 1930-35. It was found that 62.9 percent of the graduates who were residents of villages at the time of graduation still resided in their own or other villages on June 1, 1936. On the other hand, of the graduates who were residents of the open country at the time of graduation, 73.4 percent were living in the open country on June 1, 1936.<sup>38</sup>

The studies of part-time farmers bear out the conclusion that the increase of youth in the rural-nonfarm population has been due to natural increase and not to the movement of youth from the cities to their peripheries. The part-time farming movement apparently has consisted largely of persons above the youth age.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> James, J. A. and Kolb, J. H., *Wisconsin Rural Youth, Education and Occupation*, Bulletin 437, Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, Madison, Wis., November 1936, p. 13.

<sup>37</sup> These are 45 villages selected from the 140 villages used by Brunner, Edmund deS. and Lorge, Irving for their study reported in *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1937. Data on population will be given in a forthcoming monograph by Melvin, Bruce L. and Smith, Elna N., *Youth in Agricultural Villages*, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C.

<sup>38</sup> Melvin, Bruce L. and Olin, Grace E., "Migration of Rural High-School Graduates," *The School Review*, Vol. XLVI, 1938, table 3, p. 281.

<sup>39</sup> Salter, L. A., Jr. and Darling, H. D., *Part-Time Farming in Connecticut: A Socio-Economic Study of the Lower Naugatuck Valley*, Bulletin 204, Connecticut State College, Department of Agricultural Economics, Storrs, Conn., July 1935, p. 25. See also Beck, P. G., *Recent Trends in the Rural Population of Ohio*, Bulletin 533, Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, Wooster, Ohio, May 1934; and Morison, F. L. and Sitterley, J. H., *Rural Homes for Non-Agricultural Workers—A Survey of Their Agricultural Activities*, Bulletin 547, Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, Wooster, Ohio, February 1935.

The extent of cityward migration within the next few years will have much to do with the rural youth problem in so far as it may be defined as a pressure of people for opportunity on the land and otherwise. Without heavy migration from the farms there will be a greater "piling up" of youth on the farms by 1940 than in 1930 <sup>40</sup> (table 11). At the same time, without migration the number of urban youth will be almost 600,000 less in 1940 than in 1930. If the "piling up" in rural territory above the number in 1930 is not to occur, the cities must absorb between three and four times the decline that would occur in the cities without migration. In fact, without migration there would be almost 2,000,000 more rural youth in 1940 than in 1930. Even with the expected migration there will be over 1,000,000 more youth in rural areas in 1940 than there were 10 years previously. <sup>41</sup>

Table 11.—Youth Population in 1930<sup>1</sup> and 1940<sup>2</sup> With No Rural-Urban Migration Assumed for the Decade, by Residence

Residence	1930	1940	Increase or decrease
Total.....	20, 126, 800	21, 526, 800	1, 400, 000
Urban.....	11, 282, 200	10, 696, 200	-586, 000
Rural.....	8, 844, 600	10, 830, 600	1, 986, 000
Farm.....	5, 140, 900	6, 627, 000	1, 486, 100
Nonfarm.....	3, 703, 700	4, 203, 600	499, 900

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, pp. 598-600.

<sup>2</sup> For method of estimation see appendix B.

<sup>40</sup> Because of the acceleration of migration during the later thirties, it is estimated that there will be somewhat fewer youth on farms in 1940 than there were in 1935. This decline, however, will have little effect on the current problem of population pressure on the land.

<sup>41</sup> Since data at hand show that some migration is in process, it seems reasonable to make certain assumptions from which to forecast the distribution of rural and urban youth in 1940. It has already been indicated that the net emigration of farm youth from 1930 through 1934 was almost 200,000. Assuming that one-third of the net migration from farms to cities was youth, there was a cityward movement of approximately 125,000 farm youth during the year 1935 and 150,000 during both 1936 and 1937. If 150,000 continue to migrate each year during the years 1938 and 1939, the total migrating for the 5 years, January 1, 1935, to January 1, 1940, will be approximately 725,000. If the 200,000 migrating between 1930 and 1935 are added to this number, an estimated total of 925,000 youth will have left the farms between 1930 and 1940. Subtracting this total from the estimated increase in the number of youth on farms between 1930 and 1940, assuming no migration, there will still be between 500,000 and 600,000 more youth on the land in 1940 than in 1930. At the same time there will be an increase of 500,000 rural-nonfarm youth. Thus, even with the expected migration of farm youth there will still be over 1,000,000 more youth in rural territory in 1940 than there were in 1930. For total number migrating see Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Farm Population Estimates, January 1, 1936*, *op. cit.*; and Taeuber, Conrad, "Farm Population Decreases During 1936," *The Agricultural Situation*, Vol. 21, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Washington, D. C., July 1, 1937, pp. 17-18.



## Chapter II

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### THE ECONOMIC SITUATION OF RURAL YOUTH

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**T**RADITIONALLY, economic security in rural society has been measured by property ownership. Farm youth who expected to be farmers looked forward to possessing an adequate amount of land free of debt. Youth who were reared in villages expected to own some business or to attain a secure and relatively independent position in some profession or skilled trade. With the passage of time, however, such industries as lumbering, mining, and textiles were developed on a large scale in rural territory, and a wage-earning class was created. In rural America the trend in recent years has been toward dependence on wages for work. The idea of having a job has become dominant, particularly among the younger generation.

Any analysis of the economic situation of rural youth must recognize this trend as well as the traditional background both of the rural economic system and of the economic relationship between parents and children. The economic status of rural young people who are living with their parents and working at home can be but partially measured by money income, by property owned, or by whether or not they receive wages for their work. It must frequently be measured by the prospects for ultimately owning a farm or business in the community or becoming established in a profession, in a secure salaried position, or in a skilled trade.

Statistical statements concerning the number of unemployed youth, especially farm youth, in rural territory will not be of much value until the term *unemployment*, as it may be applied legitimately to rural people, is clearly understood. One discussion of methods of making unemployment estimates contains the following statement: "All family farm labour (employables in the farm family who work on the farm without receiving a stated wage) \* \* \* are included as employed persons. Thus, gainful workers who have moved from cities to farms to live with and help their families and relatives, or to

engage in subsistence farming, are counted among the employed.”<sup>1</sup> This definition of employed would include many farm youth in relief households who were working on the home farm. Moreover, it would consider as employed a mass of surplus rural youth just above the relief level who were working at home with little or no economic return, merely because they could not migrate. Furthermore, whether to include people who are working on subsistence farms as employed when they have no regular source of cash income is an open question.

Consequently, in analyzing the opportunities of rural youth for obtaining economic security it must be borne in mind that in rural territory this does not necessarily mean a job with wages. Many studies of youth have been made on the assumption that the job criterion was applicable to rural young people without qualification, and this has resulted in much confusion among the data of the various studies. In order to interpret the situation of rural youth fully, it is necessary to analyze such studies in terms of opportunities for farm youth to attain farm ownership or a satisfactory tenant status, if they remain in rural territory, or for village youth to become permanently established in some nonagricultural occupation. At the same time some attention must be given to the possibility of these youth finding security through migration to urban areas.

Rural youth may be grouped into three economic categories: (1) those gainfully and advantageously occupied or otherwise advantageously situated; (2) those who have remained above the relief level but whose situation is precarious; and (3) those who are at the relief level. Unfortunately, data are not at hand to show in any comprehensive quantitative way the number, residence, or occupation of those who belong to the first two categories, although objective information is available regarding their economic condition in general. Where rural conditions were particularly unfavorable, thousands of families were forced on relief, and it is from this group that the third category of youth is recruited. Considerable data are available for this latter group.

#### EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

Farm youth between 15 and 24 years of age form the bulk of the unpaid family labor and a large proportion of the hired labor on farms, and these two categories comprise most of the agricultural workers within these ages (table 12 and fig. 7). To be specific, over 95 percent of all the young men 15–19 years of age and over 70 percent of those 20–24 years of age listed in the 1930 Census as agricultural workers belonged to one or the other of these two groups, which together totaled over 1,843,000 youth. By 1935 probably 500,000<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nathan, Robert R., “Estimates of Unemployment in the United States, 1929–1935,” *International Labour Review*, Vol. XXXIII, January 1936, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> See ch. I.

more young men in this age group had "piled up" on the farm, which sharpened the competition for available farm labor jobs and no doubt greatly increased the number of unpaid family workers. It is significant that the predominant shift of the young men from unpaid family labor appears to come between the ages of 15 and 24 years and the shift from hired labor between 20 and 30 years. If the shift is not made from hired labor during this time, the young men tend to remain in that status.

Table 12.—Type of Employment of Workers in Agriculture, by Age and Sex, 1930

Age	Total workers		Farm operators		Unpaid family workers		Wage workers	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total.....	9,562,059	909,989	5,815,626	263,008	1,184,784	475,008	2,561,649	171,323
10-14 years.....	224,084	95,173	—	—	196,474	87,187	27,610	7,966
15-19 years.....	1,080,008	172,149	49,043	—	606,141	140,431	422,824	31,718
20-24 years.....	1,156,936	112,811	344,438	4,846	239,143	77,494	573,355	30,472
25-29 years.....	902,211	70,047	497,771	7,965	62,032	42,002	342,408	20,080
30-34 years.....	825,680	57,883	575,773	13,145	25,838	29,467	224,069	15,271
35-39 years.....	895,899	68,689	691,090	23,901	14,175	28,658	190,034	16,130
40-44 years.....	849,079	65,157	682,340	30,163	8,277	21,407	158,462	13,587
45-49 years.....	844,949	67,113	687,713	36,467	5,723	18,805	151,613	11,841
50-54 years.....	802,094	61,344	660,557	39,153	4,493	12,844	137,044	9,347
55-59 years.....	662,246	46,234	547,392	33,321	3,864	7,484	110,990	5,429
60-64 years.....	539,104	38,200	442,800	29,106	4,273	4,673	92,031	4,421
65-69 years.....	385,893	26,198	314,196	21,009	4,461	2,576	67,236	2,613
70-74 years.....	241,862	16,063	196,398	13,684	4,156	1,124	39,308	1,355
75 years and over.....	147,369	12,440	121,133	10,777	3,551	726	22,685	937
Unknown.....	4,645	438	2,382	172	183	130	2,080	136

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. V, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, pp. 118 and 352.

Since a large proportion of all farm laborers are youth, data on the wages of farm laborers provide one measure of the income of farm youth. In 11 counties studied in 1936 the average annual earnings among male agricultural workers per county ranged from \$178 among Negro cotton pickers in Louisiana and \$125 among white workers in a Tennessee county to \$347 among white laborers in Pennsylvania and \$748 among orientals in Placer County, Calif.<sup>3</sup> In some cases this represented cash income over and above board and room but in a large proportion of cases board and room were not furnished. These data on low annual earnings of wage workers in agriculture are substantiated by monthly data published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture.<sup>4</sup>

The most common types of cash income of farm youth in southern New York were found to be: first, spending money or irregular contributions from parents; second, wages earned at home; third, receipts from the boys' own property; and fourth, wages earned away from

<sup>3</sup> Vasey, Tom and Folsom, Josiah C., "Farm Laborers: Their Economic and Social Status," *The Agricultural Situation*, Vol. 21, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Washington, D. C., October 1, 1937, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Statistics, 1936*, Washington, D. C., p. 349.

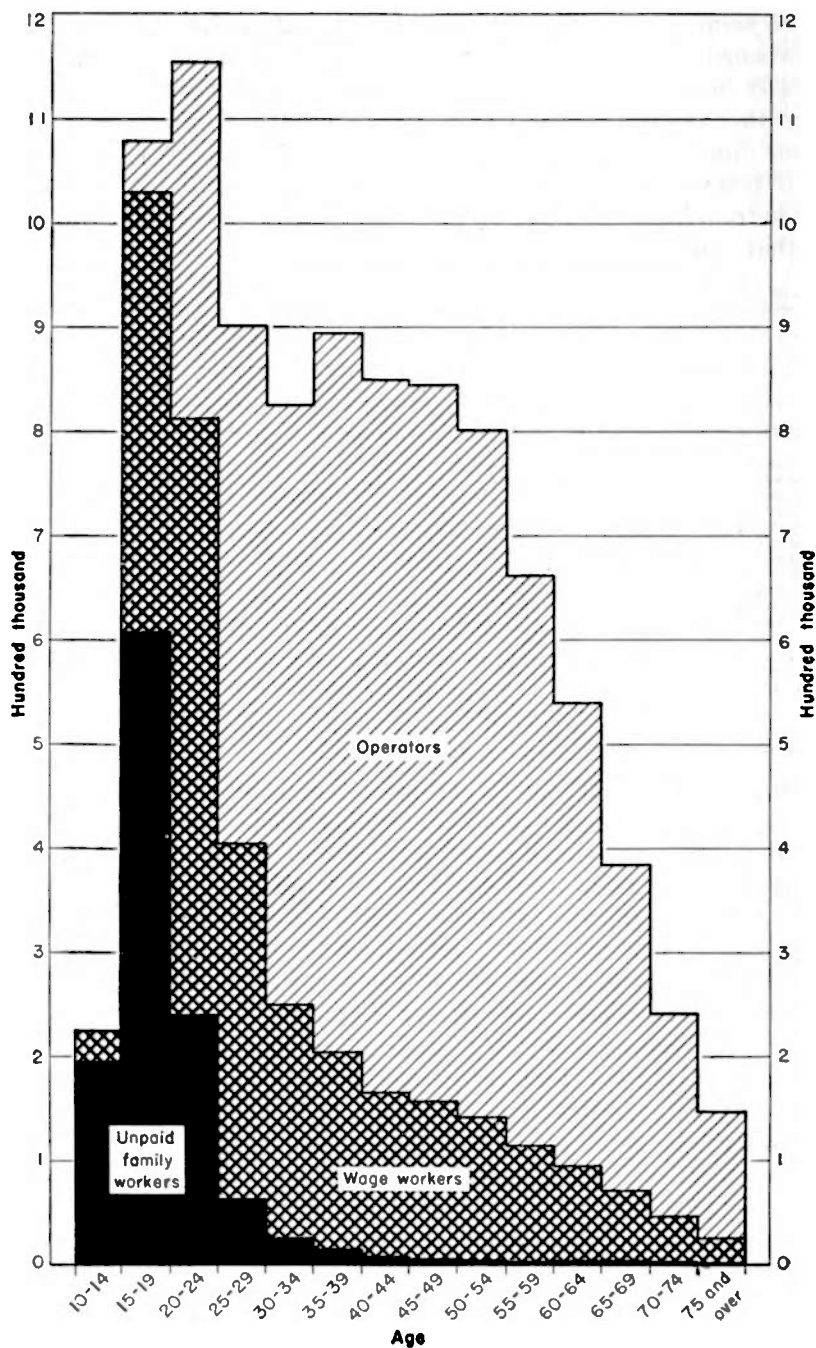


Fig. 7-NUMBER OF MALE WORKERS IN AGRICULTURE, BY TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT AND AGE, 1930

Source: Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930.

AF-2619, WPA

home.<sup>5</sup> Only a very small percentage of farm boys have any understanding with their fathers respecting a definite return for their labor on the farm. Hence, an Iowa study made in the summer of 1934 of 1,107 out-of-school farm youth showing that only 286 of them reported that they received wages<sup>6</sup> does not mean necessarily that the remaining 821 were unemployed.

The employment and the income of rural youth, when used as measures of their economic welfare since the depression of the early thirties, generally show a widespread lack of gainful employment. In Tompkins County, N. Y., only 42 percent of the unmarried rural young men 15 to 29 years of age, not in full-time day school, were employed full time in 1935, leaving 58 percent employed part time, at home, or not at all. Indeed, 30 percent were unemployed or were working only occasionally. Even on farms 21 percent of the young men were unemployed. Of the total employed in both village and open country, farm laborers, unskilled laborers, and skilled mechanics were most numerous in descending order of importance. The average weekly earnings of the entire employed group were \$13.<sup>7</sup>

Of 110 married young men in the same county 81 percent were employed full time, 11 percent were employed part time, 3 percent were in school, 1 percent were occupied at home, and only 4 percent were out of school and unemployed.<sup>8</sup> "The average weekly earning of the 101 young men who reported weekly remuneration was \$18 \* \* \* 21 percent received less than \$15 a week \* \* \* 54 percent received between \$15 and \$24 a week \* \* \*." Incomes of village youth were somewhat higher than those of farm and nonfarm youth of the open country.<sup>9</sup>

In 5 Connecticut townships the average money income of 282 unmarried rural young men and women, 182 of whom were out of school, was \$221 for 12 months ending in the spring of 1934.<sup>10</sup> The range in average income of the young men was from \$112 for those 16-17 years old to \$378 for those 21-25 years old. The sources were

<sup>5</sup> Beers, Howard W., *The Money Income of Farm Boys in a Southern New York Dairy Region*, Bulletin 512, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, N. Y., September 1930, p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> Starrak, J. A., *A Survey of Out-of-School Rural Youth in Iowa*, Committee on Education, Iowa State Planning Board, Des Moines, Iowa, 1935, p. 10.

<sup>7</sup> Anderson, W. A., *Rural Youth: Activities, Interests, and Problems, II. Unmarried Young Men and Women, 15 to 29 Years of Age*, Bulletin 661, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, N. Y., January 1937, pp. 10-16.

<sup>8</sup> Anderson, W. A., *Rural Youth: Activities, Interests, and Problems, I. Married Young Men and Women, 15 to 29 Years of Age*, Bulletin 649, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, N. Y., May 1936, pp. 10-11.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>10</sup> Brundage, A. J. and Wilson, M. C., *Situations, Problems, and Interests of Unmarried Rural Young People 16-25 Years of Age*, Extension Service Circular 239, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., April 1936, pp. 14-16.

work at home, work away from home, allowances, and gifts, including spending money. In addition to the money income many of the Connecticut young people had board, lodging, and clothing provided. The authors of the report remark that "the young people studied were well provided for from the standpoint of funds to care for their social and recreational needs." The question might be raised, however, as to whether the maximum average income here shown is adequate for a young man who wishes to marry. Even so, the situation in Connecticut at the time this study was made appears unusually favorable in the light of other studies and of the widespread rural destitution at that time.

A recent survey of unmarried young people conducted by the Cooperative Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture in Arkansas, Maryland, Iowa, Utah, and Oregon yielded significant data on employment.<sup>11</sup> Of the young men who were out of school, only 26 percent were not dependent upon their father's farm for employment; 36 percent were needed on the home farm and were operating it or replacing a hired man; while 38 percent were dependent on the home farm but were needed only for seasonal labor or were not needed at all.

In 9 townships in Ohio information was gathered in the spring of 1932 on 300 unmarried young men and women 16 to 24 years of age. "These young people were unable to obtain remunerative employment. Subsistence was essential. Even though these youth were of legal age and no longer in school their parental families stood willing to provide that subsistence, but not much more. In a few cases the parental business was in such a state that it could utilize the labor of such youth and pay wages. In most cases the young people were forced to be content with subsistence plus whatever else the parents felt able to give, which frequently was nothing at all."<sup>12</sup> This study also showed that only a small proportion (31 percent) of the young men not attending school received cash according to any definite plan.

The welfare of young people in such a category as that indicated above, while obviously not as problematical as that of youth in marginal or relief families, nevertheless presents a serious challenge.

Low incomes of youth may be a reflection of the "piling up" process discussed in the previous chapter. In a study made in Douglas

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<sup>11</sup> Reported by Joy, Barnard D., Extension Studies and Teaching Section of the Division of Cooperative Extension, U. S. Department of Agriculture, at the conference of State leaders in charge of developing older rural youth programs in the State Extension Service, held during the annual meeting of the Land-Grant College Association, Washington, D. C., November 14-17, 1937.

<sup>12</sup> Lively, C. E. and Miller, L. J., *Rural Young People, 16 to 24 Years of Age, A Survey of the Status and Activities of 300 Unmarried Individuals in Nine Ohio Townships*, Bulletin No. 73, Ohio State University and Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, Columbus, Ohio, July 1934, p. 7.

County, Wis., which is one of the poorest counties of the State,<sup>13</sup> unemployment was found to be serious among 857 young people 16–28 years of age.<sup>14</sup> About three out of four of these young people reported that they were unemployed at the time of the survey, the fall of 1934. They probably meant that they were not receiving wages. In Wood County of the same State, where 2,176 young people replied to a questionnaire in the winter of 1934–35, the proportions which were not self-supporting ranged from 88 percent for those 15–19 years of age to 39 percent for those 25–29 years of age. When the study was made, only 23 percent of the young men and 17 percent of the young women were employed with pay. This indicates a high percentage of idleness since only a little over 21 percent of the youth were in school.<sup>15</sup>

The economic handicap of youth in submarginal land areas, such as the cut-over regions near the Great Lakes, is typified by the case of the Harvey family. Three boys 15–25 years of age “worked out” whenever they could. During 1932 they worked in a logging camp and at odd jobs until they earned in all practically \$100.<sup>16</sup> In McCracken County in the poor land area of Kentucky it was found that of 242 out-of-school rural young men 15–24 years of age, 173, or 71.5 percent, were farming at home and only 18.6 percent were farming away from home in 1936.<sup>17</sup> In Breathitt County of the same State data were gathered in 1935 on 104 young men and 75 young women. Only 13 were working for a cash wage although 121 were doing some work.<sup>18</sup>

These examples illustrate the situation in the poor land areas, but even on good land the effect on economic opportunities of the “piling up” of youth is also manifested. In Nebraska,<sup>19</sup> for example, it was found that of 6,232 young men, all but 437 of whom were 16–24 years of age, 4,449, or 71.4 percent, were working on the home farm in 1935.

<sup>13</sup> Kirkpatrick, E. L. and Boynton, Agnes M., *Wisconsin's Human and Physical Resources*, Research Section, Resettlement Administration, Region II, Madison, Wis., July 15, 1936, pp. 4, 12, and 17.

<sup>14</sup> Wileden, A. F., *What Douglas County Young People Want and What They Are Doing About It*, Rural Youth and Rural Life Series, Extension Service, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis., December 1935, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> Kirkpatrick, E. L. and Boynton, Agnes M., *Interests and Needs of Rural Youth in Wood County, Wisconsin*, Rural Youth and Rural Life Series, Extension Service, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis., January 1936, p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> Kirkpatrick, E. L., Tough, Rosalind, and Cowles, May L., *How Farm Families Meet the Emergency*, Research Bulletin 126, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis., January 1935, p. 20.

<sup>17</sup> Woods, R. H., *A Study of the Status of Rural Youth in Ten Counties in Kentucky*, Heath High School, McCracken County, Ky., 1936, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> Office of the County Schools, *Programs for Which Out-of-School Young People in Breathitt County, Kentucky Are Asking*, Jackson, Breathitt County, Ky., 1935.

<sup>19</sup> Nebraska Vocational Agriculture Association, *Summary of the 1935 State Study of the Educational Needs of the Out-of-School Group of Farm Boys in Nebraska*, Lincoln, Nebr., p. 1.

It has already been shown how the underemployment of young people in Iowa, one of the best agricultural States, has pushed itself into the realm of rural problems. Similarly in Michigan, "in the rural townships, over half of the male workers in the 15-19 year class and over one-quarter in the 20-24 year class were working without pay for relatives."<sup>20</sup>

These studies indicate that rural youth were probably receiving little return when working at home and, at the same time, had little opportunity to work away from home. Indeed, farm youth in dominantly farm territory are limited in the number of jobs they may be able to secure away from the farm. In Connecticut, however, where opportunities away from the farm are more frequent, only 37 percent of the young men studied in the spring of 1934<sup>21</sup> were engaged in farm work away from home. Other leading occupations in order of percentage employed were road work, millwork, and day labor.

Lack of opportunities for earning more money obviously constitutes a serious problem among farm boys. Increased incomes for youth dependent on farms are inextricably linked with increasing farm income as a whole since many of the farms upon which these young people are living could not be increased either in size or in number of enterprises, "particularly because national policies emphasize agricultural conservation on a historical base."<sup>22</sup>

The situation of the rural young women who have been forced to remain at home is probably more precarious than that of the young men. The traditional job of the woman on the farm is housework or farm labor. The farm offers little else to the unmarried young woman although the villages do afford some opportunity for remunerative employment. Anderson found in Tompkins County, N. Y.,<sup>23</sup> that of 161 out-of-school rural young women who were single, 50, or 31 percent, had no work of any kind. The chief occupations of those working were homemaking, teaching, and office and stenographic work. He states: "Remunerative work for young women was scarce, and, if these figures are typical, the problem of employment was more difficult for young women than for young men." Of those considered employed, 49, or 30 percent, were doing housework, usually at home, and very few received regular wages.

Wileden points out, however, that in Douglas County, Wis., the average income of young women was more than twice that of young

<sup>20</sup> State Emergency Welfare Relief Commission, "Age, Sex and Employment Status of Gainful Workers in Five Types of Communities," *Michigan Census of Population and Unemployment*, Lansing, Mich., July 1936, p. 26.

<sup>21</sup> Brundage, A. J. and Wilson, M. C., *op. cit.*, p. 20. See also data reported by Joy, Barnard D., *op. cit.*, for young people in five other States.

<sup>22</sup> Joy, Barnard D., *op. cit.*

<sup>23</sup> Anderson, W. A., *Rural Youth: Activities, Interests, and Problems, II. Unmarried Young Men and Women, 15 to 29 Years of Age*, *op. cit.*, p. 11.





*Resettlement Administration (Rothstein).*

*Learning to Farm.*



*Farm Security Administration (Lec).*

*Topping Sugar Beets.*

men, \$266 and \$130, respectively, for the preceding year. This difference is accounted for by the fact that a considerable number of the young women in the upper ages were teachers.<sup>24</sup>

Young women are, on the whole, more dependent on the generosity of their parents than are young men. Thus, in Connecticut<sup>25</sup> only 2 percent of the girls reported receiving wages for work at home although 11 percent received an allowance averaging \$87 for the previous year and 50 percent received gifts from their parents averaging \$83 for the year. Of the boys 16 percent received wages for work at home but only 7 percent had an allowance and only 29 percent received gifts from their parents. The annual average from the latter two sources was \$69 and \$58, respectively. Eighty percent of the boys but only fifty-seven percent of the girls had incomes from wages for work away from home.

In Wisconsin one study showed that 65 percent of the girls depended on their parents for spending money and only 20 percent reported themselves as being economically independent.<sup>26</sup> Lively found in Ohio that 82.8 percent of the girls 16-24 years of age were not gainful workers.<sup>27</sup> It has been pointed out that the role of the girls in the tobacco and cotton farm families of the South is that of an unpaid servant.<sup>28</sup>

The restricted opportunities of young women in rural areas to obtain remunerative employment make their plight particularly distressing.

#### YOUTH ON RELIEF

The large number of rural youth who had to be assisted directly or indirectly by the Government during the depression of the early thirties indicates the seriousness of their situation. Probably not less than 2,000,000 rural youth have been members of relief households since 1930. The peak in the number of households on general relief was reached in February 1935 when approximately 1,370,000 rural youth—14 percent of all rural youth—were receiving aid.<sup>29</sup> By October of that year the number had declined to approximately 625,000.

<sup>24</sup> Wileden, A. F., *op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> Brundage, A. J. and Wilson, M. C., *op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>26</sup> Kirkpatrick, E. L. and Boynton, Agnes M., *Interests and Needs of Rural Youth in Wood County, Wisconsin, op. cit.*, pp. 4 and 6.

<sup>27</sup> Calculated from Lively, C. E., *The Status of Rural Youth, 16-24 Years Old, in Selected Rural Areas of Ohio*, Preliminary Research Bulletin, Ohio State University and Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, Columbus, Ohio, November 1, 1935, p. 4.

<sup>28</sup> Miller, Nora, *The Girl in the Rural Family*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1935, pp. 50 and 61.

<sup>29</sup> Melvin, Bruce L., *Rural Youth on Relief*, Research Monograph XI, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., 1937.

This did not mean that 700,000 youth became self-supporting, although the general improvement in agricultural conditions undoubtedly took some rural households containing youth off the relief rolls. The decline was chiefly due to the expansion of the Civilian Conservation Corps enrollment and to the transfer of rehabilitation families, among which were several hundred thousand youth, from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration to the Resettlement Administration.

Certain facts about the relief situation of rural young people provide a further basis for evaluating the economic problem presented by these youth. There was an increase between February and October 1935 in the relative proportion that young women constituted of the total number of youth on relief because enrollment in the Civilian Conservation Corps and most agricultural labor and other opportunities were available only to young men. During the same interval there was a tendency toward more concentration in the age group 16-19 years than in the age group 20-24 years, as such opportunities were more generally available to the older than to the younger age group. There appeared to be greater need for assistance to the youth in the villages than to those in the open country. This does not signify, however, that youth in the open country were better off economically than village youth. They may have been living on a mere subsistence level in the open country where some food could be produced on the land. As was to be expected, youth on relief were found in greater numbers proportionately in poor than in good land areas.

In relief families less than one-half of the young men and slightly more than one-tenth of the young women who were out of school had some employment. They were employed chiefly as farm laborers, domestic servants, and unskilled laborers.

Unlike urban youth most young men in rural areas and about one-half of the young women who were in the labor market had had work experience. This experience of rural youth on relief, however, was of such a limited nature that it qualified them only for jobs at the bottom of the occupational ladder.

#### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Rural youth obviously must find their employment opportunities within the prevailing economic system. According to the American tradition the youth in agriculture climbs the agricultural ladder—that is, by beginning as a farm laborer, becoming a tenant, and then a farm owner. The village youth likewise progresses in some occupation, gradually attaining increased responsibility. Eventually he shares in a business and perhaps owns it or has a secure position in one of the professions or trades. Are the trends in rural life increasingly restricting the chances of youth to start at the bottom and climb these ladders?

### Within Agriculture

Several factors have combined to make it more and more difficult for young people to pass up the rungs of the agricultural ladder. Chief among these are: (1) the growing burden of debt on farms; (2) the increase in tenancy; (3) the decreased demand for farm laborers; (4) the trend toward large-scale ownership of land; (5) the mechanization of agriculture; and (6) the development of areas of general agricultural maladjustment. These will be discussed in order.

Farmers are steadily losing the ownership of the land they cultivate. The equity of the farm operators dropped from 54 percent of the value of all farm real estate in 1900 to 42 percent in 1930. It is probable that this equity was considerably less in 1935 than in 1930. The equities of farm operators in 1930 ranged from an average of less than 30 percent in Illinois, Iowa, and South Dakota to an average of over 70 percent in Maine, New Hampshire, and West Virginia.<sup>30</sup>

Two kinds of debts burden the farmer—long-time and short-time. The short-time debts bear very heavy interest rates. Of the landlords interviewed in a study of landlord and tenant relations in the South, 52 percent had short-term debts. The interest rates ranged from 10 percent on Government loans to 15 percent on bank loans and 16 percent on merchant accounts. For tenants and croppers interest rates were still higher.<sup>31</sup>

The growing number of farms operated by tenants, especially in good land areas, makes it constantly more difficult for youth to rise on the agricultural ladder. A permanent tenant class is developing from which relatively few are able to emerge into ownership.<sup>32</sup> Tenancy has increased from 25 percent of all farmers in 1880 to 42 percent in 1935.<sup>33</sup> Between 1930 and 1935, depression years, the percentage of the total number of farms operated by tenants in the country as a whole declined slightly, but the actual number of tenants increased. Because the increase in the total number of farms was sufficient to offset the increase in tenants, the statistics show a slight percentage decline in tenancy.

This increase in tenancy seems to be occurring in all sections of the country. In the South, for example, "Since bad years outnumbered good in the 25 years ending in 1935, the net shift was down the [agricultural] ladder, with losses in ownership and independent renting and large gains in the helpless sharecropper class, fixing the insti-

<sup>30</sup> Turner, H. A., *A Graphic Summary of Farm Tenure*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 261, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., December 1936, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> Woofter, T. J., Jr., *Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation*, Research Monograph V, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., 1936, pp. xxv-xxvi.

<sup>32</sup> National Resources Committee, *Farm Tenancy*, Report of the President's Committee, Washington, D. C., February 1937, p. 54.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

tution of tenancy more firmly in the southern agricultural organization."<sup>34</sup> In some sections of the South, such as the Mississippi Delta, the proportion of tenancy has now reached 90 percent; in the Red River Bottoms it is 80 percent; and in the Black Belt, 73 percent.<sup>35</sup> Some tenancy is not incompatible with a healthy state of agriculture, but when it reaches such high proportions, a serious condition begins to develop.

That the problem of tenancy was becoming serious for youth even before the depression is shown by a study in the Middle West. "In Wisconsin the farmers who acquired their farms 30 to 50 years ago were tenants, on an average, some 4 or 5 years. Those acquiring farms recently have been tenants 6 or 7 years \* \* \*. In recent years, 1912-1922, somewhat over one-fifth of those reporting had been tenants 10 or more years. In Kansas the same change has occurred except that the early tenant stage of 4 years has stretched out to 9 years. In Nebraska, starting with about the same period of tenancy in the early years it has recently lengthened to more than 10 years."<sup>36</sup>

The difficulties encountered by tenants in becoming owners are paralleled by the even greater difficulties of farm laborers in moving to the next rung of the agricultural ladder. This is especially important in an analysis of the outlook for rural youth since they usually are destined to start on the lowest rung. As one author puts it, "The children of owner-operators [in the Cotton States] start in as laborers or sharecroppers at the bottom of the agricultural ladder, and in increasing numbers remain to swell the lower ranks. The rest of the country appears to become progressively less immune to the same general influences that render ownership difficult in the Cotton States."<sup>37</sup>

This condition is further illustrated by the fact that while the number of all agricultural workers in the United States declined 1.8 percent from 1920 to 1930, the paid agricultural laborers increased 17.0 percent. But in this interim the number of unpaid family laborers dropped 10.3 percent (table 13).<sup>38</sup> The increasing number of hired farm laborers between 1920 and 1930 was concomitant with the growing commercialization of agriculture, which is especially marked by intensive production requiring seasonal labor. Added to

<sup>34</sup> Woolfer, T. J., Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>35</sup> Odum, Howard W., *Southern Regions of the United States*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936, p. 61.

<sup>36</sup> Hibbard, Benjamin H. and Peterson, Guy A., *How Wisconsin Farmers Become Farm Owners*, Bulletin 402, Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, Madison, Wis., August 1928, p. 33.

<sup>37</sup> Watkins, D. W., "Agricultural Adjustment and Farm Tenure," *Journal of Farm Economics*, Vol. XVIII, 1936, p. 469.

<sup>38</sup> The figures for 1920 and 1930 are not exactly comparable since the 1920 enumeration was made as of January 1, a slack time for farm labor, and the 1930 enumeration as of April 1, a peak period for farm labor.

this situation is the fact that the depression seemingly forced many persons who at one time were farm owners, tenants, or croppers into the status of agricultural laborers.<sup>39</sup>

**Table 13.—Workers in Agriculture<sup>1</sup> in the United States, 1920 and 1930**

Type of worker	1920	1930	Percent increase or decrease
Total.....	10, 665, 812	10, 471, 998	-1. 8
Farm operator.....	6, 479, 684	6, 079, 234	-6. 2
Farm laborer <sup>2</sup> .....	4, 186, 128	4, 392, 764	+4. 9
Wage worker.....	2, 336, 009	2, 732, 972	+17. 0
Unpaid family worker.....	1, 850, 119	1, 659, 792	-10. 3

<sup>1</sup> 10 years of age and over.

<sup>2</sup> The figures for 1920 and 1930 are not exactly comparable since the 1920 enumeration was made as of January 1, a slack time for farm labor, and the 1930 enumeration as of April 1, a peak period for farm labor.

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. V, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, p. 40.

During the depression the total number of farm laborers, including both wage hands and unpaid family workers, increased from 4,393,000 in April 1930 to an estimated 5,919,000 in January 1935.<sup>40</sup> In addition to the effect of the variation in the dates of the 1930 and 1935 Censuses, the number of hired laborers declined rapidly because of lessened demand. In 1935 there were only an estimated 1,646,000 hired laborers while unpaid family laborers had increased to 4,273,000.

The tendency for ownership of the land to become concentrated in the hands of corporate landlords also makes for an even larger number of laborers and tenants. Corporate ownership of land in Iowa, where this movement has been studied intensively, reached 11.2 percent in January 1937, an increase of 3.3 percent since September 1933.<sup>41</sup> In Emmet County, Iowa, in which it was estimated that over 70 percent of all farms were operated by tenants in 1936, 40 percent of all farms so operated were corporately owned.<sup>42</sup> In 1934, 14 percent of the land area of Montana was owned by corporations.<sup>43</sup> This represents an increase of 18 percent in this type of

<sup>39</sup> National Resources Committee, *Farm Tenancy*, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

<sup>40</sup> Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. IV, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, p. 25; and Folsom, Josiah C. and Baker, O. E., *A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 265, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., November 1937, p. 6.

<sup>41</sup> Murray, W. G. and Bitting, H. W., *Corporate-Owned Land in Iowa, 1937*, Bulletin 362, Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station, Ames, Iowa, June 1937, p. 95.

<sup>42</sup> Schickele, Rainer and Norman, Charles A., *Farm Tenure in Iowa, I. Tenancy Problems and Their Relation to Agricultural Conservation*, Bulletin 354, Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station, Ames, Iowa, January 1937, p. 181.

<sup>43</sup> Renne, Roland R., *Montana Land Ownership*, Bulletin No. 322, Montana Agricultural Experiment Station, Bozeman, Mont., June 1936, pp. 17-29, and *Readjusting Montana's Agriculture: IV. Land Ownership and Tenure*, Bulletin No. 310, Montana Agricultural Experiment Station, Bozeman, Mont., February 1936, p. 17.

ownership between 1925 and 1934. In the Southeastern Cotton States large banks, insurance companies, and mortgage companies began to take over vast acreages during the boll weevil period through foreclosures. During the twenties the trend was well under way and the depression of the early thirties increased the corporation holdings still more.<sup>44</sup>

In addition, mechanization has been rendering unnecessary the presence of large numbers of unpaid farm laborers—the farmer's own sons—as well as paid laborers. With modern machinery the farm operator can manage more acres with less help than formerly, especially on the large commercial farms. While the total number of farms in Kansas, for example, rose from 166,600 in 1890 to 174,600 in 1935, the number of farms of 500 to 1,000 acres increased from less than 4,000 in 1890 to more than 15,000 in 1935. Farms of 1,000 acres and over increased from a few more than 1,000 to over 5,000 during the 45 years. At the same time the number of small farms, those having less than 50 acres on which little machinery could be used, increased, and the number of farms having 50 to 174 acres, those that would compete with the larger farms in commercial production, declined.<sup>45</sup>

The average amount of cropland per worker will continue to increase as the tractor and other power machinery are perfected and displace horsepower, if judgment can be based on what has happened in the past.<sup>46</sup> In 1930 there were about 920,000 tractors on farms, but by 1935 the number had increased to approximately 1,175,000.<sup>47</sup> Because of this mechanization process the agricultural output per worker increased 23 percent from 1919 to 1929.<sup>48</sup> For example, by 1933 in the wheat producing areas of the Great Plains only about 25 percent as much man labor was required to produce 1 acre of wheat as was required in 1919,<sup>49</sup> and the labor requirements of many other crops have also been sharply reduced.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Woofter, T. J., Jr., *op. cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>45</sup> Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture: 1935*, Vol. III, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1937, p. 96. Comparison of the number of farms with 50 to 499 acres was made for 1900 and 1935.

<sup>46</sup> Hurst, W. M. and Church, L. M., *Power and Machinery in Agriculture*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 157, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., April 1933, p. 8.

<sup>47</sup> Cooper, Martin R., "Displacement of Horses and Mules by Tractors," *The Agricultural Situation*, Vol. 21, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Washington, D. C., June 1, 1937, p. 22.

<sup>48</sup> Ezekiel, Mordecai, *\$2,500 a Year*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1936, p. 24.

<sup>49</sup> Cooper, Martin R., "Mechanization Reduces Labor in Growing Wheat," *The Agricultural Situation*, Vol. 21, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Washington, D. C., April 1, 1937, p. 12.

<sup>50</sup> National Resources Committee, *Technological Trends and National Policy*, Washington, D. C., June 1937, pp. 99-101.



The mechanization of farming is a mark of progress in that machine labor is substituted for human labor. Since the demand for food products is relatively stable, little expansion of the demand for agricultural products can be expected unless there is a tremendous increase in their use in industry. Hence, what is to become of those whose labor is displaced by technological changes? Unless the present pre-occupation with commercial agriculture is modified, only three courses seem open to these people: they may remain in rural territory at a low level of living; they may go to the cities, usually to work at miserably low wages; or they may go on relief or take jobs provided by one of the governmental agencies.

All of these trends in rural America, impinging on the steadily growing number of rural youth, have created a pressure for land and opportunity unprecedented in American history. Youth can no longer "go West." This pressure is becoming more and more severe in the face of already existing widespread areas of intensive economic maladjustments.

Early in the depression it was found that there were six extensive rural areas in the United States in which poverty was rampant, with 20 to 30 percent of the families in many counties on relief. These areas were: (1) the Appalachian-Ozark, (2) the Lake States Cut-Over, (3) the Spring Wheat, (4) the Winter Wheat, (5) the Western Cotton, and (6) the Eastern Cotton.<sup>51</sup>

The Appalachian-Ozark Area represents an extreme in maladjustment. Already overpopulated in 1930, particularly on submarginal land, both population and the number of farms increased between 1930 and 1935. In this area there was a migration to the land during the earlier years of the depression.<sup>52</sup> Here, too, many people who were in nonfarm occupations previously turned to farming.<sup>53</sup> For some time it has been recognized that the principal problems of the region as a whole involve the excess of population in relation to the economic opportunities available under prevailing conditions. There are large numbers of persons, particularly among the younger generation, who will welcome opportunities for employment elsewhere.<sup>54</sup> It has been estimated that the area has a surplus of at least 340,000 people.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Beck, P. G. and Forster, M. C., *Six Rural Problem Areas, Relief—Resources—Rehabilitation*, Research Monograph I, Division of Research, Statistics, and Finance, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Washington, D. C., 1935.

<sup>52</sup> Goodrich, Carter and Others, *Migration and Economic Opportunity*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1936, pp. 73-74.

<sup>53</sup> Hamilton, C. Horace, *Recent Changes in the Social and Economic Status of Farm Families in North Carolina*, Bulletin No. 309, North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Raleigh, N. C., May 1937, pp. 57-59 and 69.

<sup>54</sup> Gray, L. C. and Clayton, C. F., in *Economic and Social Problems and Conditions of the Southern Appalachians*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 205, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., January 1935, p. 5.

<sup>55</sup> Goodrich, Carter and Others, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

The Cotton Belt with its excess of population is an area of disorganized agriculture, characterized by extensive waste of human ability and energy as well as of land and resources. It has been estimated that nearly 3,000,000 young people matured into the age group 15-25 years between 1930 and 1935 in the rural districts of 11 Southern States. "Hardly a half million of these stepped into places vacated by deaths of their elders, hardly a half million remained in school, about a quarter of a million are cared for in the increases in farms—mostly subsistence farms."<sup>56</sup>

Youth in the other three areas also face restricted opportunities because of general conditions. The Lake States Cut-Over Area is suffering on the one hand from an exhaustion of its natural resources and on the other from a turning to the land both of persons in the area previously engaged in nonagricultural occupations and of others induced to settle there by colonization promoters.<sup>57</sup> The two Wheat Regions belong to the drought area in which there is probably an excess of 900,000 people over the number who can profitably inhabit these Plains States.<sup>58</sup> This area has been characterized of late years by intensive distress and important fluctuations in population.<sup>59</sup>

The proportion of youth in relief families in these areas is generally high. In addition there is a mass of young people in marginal families, some on good land, more on poor land, but all continually on the borderline of distress. This large number of marginal youth is an impelling force operating to cause the spread of areas of maladjustment. Under present conditions the farm population of America is already above the maximum needed for maintenance of the agricultural output. Hence, unless unusual demands for labor develop in the cities, more and more rural youth may look forward to living only on a self-sufficing basis.<sup>60</sup>

#### Outside of Agriculture

Can the nonagricultural fields of employment absorb the excess number of rural youth? If these fields are to solve the problems of rural youth, they will have to provide employment in 1940 for ap-

<sup>56</sup> Woofter, T. J., Jr., "Southern Population and Social Planning," *Social Forces*, Vol. 14, 1935, p. 19.

<sup>57</sup> Beck, P. G. and Forster, M. C., *op. cit.*, pp. 11-15.

<sup>58</sup> Goodrich, Carter and Others, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

<sup>59</sup> Tæuber, Conrad and Taylor, Carl C., *The People of the Drought States*, Research Bulletin Series V, No. 2, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., March 1937, p. 52.

<sup>60</sup> See Kolb, J. H. and Brunner, Edmund deS., "Rural Life," ch. X in *Recent Social Trends*, New York: Whittlesey House, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1934; and Nelson, Lowry and Hettig, T. David, "Some Changes in the Population of Utah as Indicated by the Annual L. D. S. Church Census, 1929-1933," *Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters*, Vol. XII, 1935, p. 107 ff.



*Bureau of Agricultural Economics.*

*One Type of Seasonal Employment.*



proximately 1,400,000 more rural youth than they did in 1930.<sup>61</sup> Two barriers, however, stand in the way of absorption of this potential rural labor supply: namely, competition of the older age groups and the labor situation in the cities which is complicated by many factors.

During the depression of the early thirties industries kept many of their workers with families on part-time employment. When industry began to pick up, naturally these part-time workers were put on full time and those who had been released but were still employable and available were taken back. Consequently, many youth who had reached maturity during these years could not find employment. This is one manifestation of the competition of youth with the older age groups which must remain intense for many years. Even for some years after 1944 the increase in the number of persons in the productive ages above 24 years will be proportionately more rapid than the decline in the number of youth.

The continued expansion of technology<sup>62</sup> is one force that constantly complicates the labor situation that rural youth face in trying to find employment in industry. For rural youth technology acts as a two-edged sword. The harvester-thresher combine, tractor, and corn-husker displace farm wage earners, but the industries that manufacture such machinery obviously do not absorb these same laborers. Unless there is a greater demand than now appears probable<sup>63</sup> on the part of industry for agricultural products to be used in manufacturing, displaced farm labor is forced to turn to nonagricultural occupations for a livelihood. But at the same time the introduction of labor-saving machinery in industry inevitably forces men to seek other jobs. Rural youth who go to the cities, therefore, find themselves competing with this displaced group for work.

The increasing advance of technology has made the expansion in production of manufactured goods possible but in recent years the introduction of new or improved machines has not been accompanied by increased employment. In 1935 the volume of total employment was 18 percent below the 1920 level, but the volume of production was 14 percent higher. Taking the employee man-years per unit of production in 1920 as 100, the unit labor requirement index in 1935 was 72.<sup>64</sup> The trend toward restriction of the number needed to produce

<sup>61</sup> Ch. I, table 11.

<sup>62</sup> National Resources Committee, *Technological Trends and National Policy*, *op. cit.*

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 103 and 133. See also Goodrich, Carter and Others, *op. cit.*, pp. 404-408.

<sup>64</sup> Weintraub, David and Posner, Harold L., *Unemployment and Increasing Productivity*, National Research Project, Works Progress Administration, Philadelphia, Pa., March 1937, pp. 19-20. See also *Federal Reserve Bulletin*, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Washington, D. C., January 1938, p. 44.

manufactured goods is further shown<sup>65</sup> by the fact that during the third decade of this century production in the manufacturing industries increased about 40 percent, but the number employed decreased about 2 percent from 1919 to 1929.

While such changes in productivity and employment must be qualified by the fact that over a period of time there are changes in the relative importance of different products and different industries, with their varying labor requirements,<sup>66</sup> they do show that the manufacturing field is not absorbing an increasing number of rural youth. Moreover, new machines and new processes are constantly being developed,<sup>67</sup> which will result in extensive changes in labor demands in the future. In the cases where the change involves displacement of labor, unemployed persons are continually being thrown on the labor market automatically to become competitors of youth seeking employment for the first time.

During the twenties much of the unabsorbed labor that previously would have gone into manufacturing turned to "service" industries—trade, professional service, public service, and personal and domestic service. In 1920 persons employed in the service industries comprised 30 percent of all those gainfully employed. By 1929 this percentage had risen to 38 percent of the total. Though this percentage fluctuated in the years following 1929, it had reached 42 percent by 1935.<sup>68</sup> Whether the long-time trend in this field can continue is an open question. On the other hand, the need for the services of more teachers, doctors, recreation leaders, etc., is unquestioned.

Technology is not the only force that has made it difficult within the last few years for youth of both country and city to obtain employment in nonagricultural occupations. In many localities the exhaustion of natural resources, such as timber and minerals, has left a substantial segment of the rural population in those localities without their chief source of income. Other localities have felt the effects of the increased tendency to substitute materials, such as scrap iron and plastics, for raw materials formerly in use and have consequently experienced a lessened demand for their products. The general economic depression also brought in its wake a decrease in demand for many manufactured articles as well as for many services, and the attendant widespread unemployment has exercised particular hardships on youth.

<sup>65</sup> Weintraub, David and Kaplan, Irving, *Summary of Findings to Date, March 1938*, National Research Project, Works Progress Administration, Philadelphia, Pa., 1938, p. 23. See also Goodrich, Carter and Others, *op. cit.*, p. 469.

<sup>66</sup> Weintraub, David and Kaplan, Irving, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>67</sup> Ezekiel, Mordecai, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>68</sup> Weintraub, David and Posner, Harold L., *op. cit.*, p. 26. See also Goodrich, Carter and Others, *op. cit.*, pp. 490-491.

In the South, where the oversupply of rural youth is especially large, the outlook for labor outside of agriculture appears inauspicious. The cotton factories that have afforded employment for youth as well as others from the country have apparently reached their peak in the number of workers needed.<sup>69</sup> "With few alternative avenues of employment the southern labor supply must take its choice of agriculture or the cotton mill \* \* \*. The labor advantage has tended to mask in the balance sheets the symptoms of disorganization in the industry, and its factors of decadence thus have passed unnoticed and uncorrected."<sup>70</sup>

In a sample studied in Detroit, Mich., in 1934, 50 percent of the out-of-school youth were unemployed when the index of employment was higher than it had been for 4 years.<sup>71</sup> In a study of youth in Denver, Colo., in 1935, 27.5 percent were in school full or part time, but 31 percent were out of school and unemployed with only 19.1 percent employed full time.<sup>72</sup> Of the remainder 8 percent were employed part time and the rest were either occupied at home or were unable to work or attend school. In New York City an estimated 390,000 young people were unemployed in the 5 boroughs in 1935 with 140,000 of them never having had a job.<sup>73</sup>

It has been the experience of the United States Employment Service that it is more difficult to place youth than persons in the older age groups. Thus, for the year ending July 1, 1936, youth below 25 years of age constituted 34 percent of all applicants but only 21 percent of all persons placed.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, of the total number of applicants those with past experience in agriculture, forestry, and fishing formed the largest segment. These facts reflect the widespread unemployment of rural youth.

The problem of unemployment of urban young people seems to be somewhat concentrated in the age group below 20 years. In the Michigan study of unemployment 25.3 percent of the male workers and nearly 21 percent of the female workers under 20 years of age in the 14 largest cities (first-class cities) were seeking work for the

<sup>69</sup> Allen, R. H., Cottrell, L. S., Jr., Troxell, W. W., Herring, Harriet L., and Edwards, A. D., *Part-Time Farming in the Southeast*, Research Monograph IX, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., 1937, p. 90.

<sup>70</sup> Vance, Rupert B., *Human Geography of the South*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1932, p. 297.

<sup>71</sup> Stutsman, Rachel, *What of Youth Today*, Detroit Youth Study Committee, Detroit, Mich., 1934, p. 46.

<sup>72</sup> *Survey of Youth in Denver*, University of Denver Reports, Vol. 12, No. 4, 1936, p. 10.

<sup>73</sup> Matthews, Ellen Nathalie, "Unemployed Youth of New York City," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 44, 1937, p. 270.

<sup>74</sup> Computed from reports of the U. S. Employment Service.

first time.<sup>76</sup> According to the survey of workers on relief made in March 1935, 49 percent of all urban workers 20 years of age and under were inexperienced workers in comparison with only 14 percent of those 21 to 24 years of age.<sup>76</sup> Such data are significant because youth have supplied a large percentage of the urban-bound migrants from rural territory. Under present circumstances such migrants are likely to find the labor market already glutted with young people of their own age.

Undoubtedly there was an improvement in opportunities for the employment of youth in urban territory prior to the business recession of 1937-38, but it is well to examine the types of opportunities which seemed to be most numerous. According to the director of the National Youth Administration for the State of Illinois<sup>77</sup> youth who were willing to perform hard physical labor could find work. In the service fields, including hotels, restaurants, and household service work, it was thought that about two out of three seeking such employment in the spring and summer of 1937 would find jobs. The same held true for factory employment, but only two applicants out of every seven were considered likely to find employment in white-collar jobs. This suggests that the chief employment even in cities will be unskilled labor.<sup>78</sup> To rural youth will fall the lot of performing the most menial and unremunerative types of labor in the cities because their city cousins refuse to accept the pitiably low wages paid for such work and because few rural youth are trained for skilled work.

Even with a substantial increase in urban employment it is doubtful if there will be a demand for workers approaching the available supply. Faced with restricted opportunities in urban areas rural youth can no longer solve their economic problems by leaving the village or the farm.

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<sup>76</sup> State Emergency Welfare Relief Commission, "Age, Sex and Employment Status of Gainful Workers in Five Types of Communities," *Michigan Census of Population and Unemployment*, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

<sup>76</sup> Calculated from data given in Hauser, Philip M., *Workers on Relief in the United States in March 1935* (Abridged Edition), Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., 1937, table 7, p. 15.

<sup>77</sup> Report based on a 30-day study of youth employment in Illinois by the National Youth Administration. Released for the newspapers June 8, 1937.

<sup>78</sup> Leybourne, Grace G., "Urban Adjustments of Migrants From the Southern Appalachian Plateaus," *Social Forces*, Vol. 16, 1937. p. 242.





*Works Progress Administration.*

*Young Loafers in a Mountain Town.*



## Chapter III

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### EDUCATIONAL STATUS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF RURAL YOUTH

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**T**HE PRESENT educational system in America is based on the assumptions of the necessity for equality of opportunity, freedom of thought and inquiry, and the inevitableness of economic and social change. In this connection three fundamental questions are raised in this chapter: To what extent are rural youth being reached under our present educational organization? Are they being adequately prepared for farm living? Are they being adequately prepared for nonfarm living?

#### AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOL FACILITIES IN RURAL AREAS

The educational facilities available to large numbers of rural youth are meager. Paradoxically, the best and most adequate educational facilities are concentrated in areas where there are the fewest children in relation to the total population and where under present conditions there will continue to be the fewest children in the immediate future.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, in the submarginal territory of the Appalachian-Ozark Area and in other parts of the South where the birth rates are high and the educational needs great, school facilities are far from adequate. The Southern States rank lowest in the value of school property per pupil enrolled, in the average salary of teachers, and in per capita expenditures for public day schools.<sup>2</sup>

This low ranking is due to the inability of these States to support education as there are great differences in the relative ability of the States in this regard. Some of the richest States have a per capita taxpaying ability at least six times greater than the poorest States. Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, Arkansas, Georgia, and Ken-

<sup>1</sup> Osborn, Frederick, "Significance of Differential Reproduction for American Educational Policy," *Social Forces*, Vol. 14, 1935, pp. 23-32.

<sup>2</sup> Odum, Howard W., *Southern Regions of the United States*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936, pp. 103 and 105. See also *Report of the Advisory Committee on Education*, Washington, D. C., 1938.

tucky, all highly rural States, are at the bottom of the list in taxpaying ability. It is, therefore, not surprising to learn that they rank 44th, 45th, 40th, 48th, 47th, and 42d, respectively, in opportunity for education as reflected in per pupil expenditures.<sup>3</sup>

In many States it would require more than 100 percent of the available tax resources to bring the amount spent per child for education even up to the national average. The disparities among communities in ability to cope adequately with the burden of child care and education are apparent when the distribution of the national income is considered. The farmers of the Southeastern States have to support more than 13 percent of the Nation's children 5-17 years of age but receive only 2.2 percent of the national income, whereas the adult nonfarm population of the Northeastern States supports only about twice as many children (27 percent) on its share of the national income which is almost 42 percent.<sup>4</sup>

Table 14 shows concretely that rural areas are at a marked disadvantage in comparison with urban areas with regard to school expenditures and length of school term. Moreover, the South Atlantic, East South Central, and West South Central Divisions lag behind the others.

Accessibility of high school facilities is reflected in part by statistics on enrollment in rural public high schools. In 1930 about 30 percent of the rural population in the United States 14-17 years of age, inclusive, were in high schools in rural communities.<sup>5</sup> This percentage varied considerably among the States for several reasons. In the New England and Middle Atlantic States town and city schools are frequently readily accessible to rural youth. Consequently, on the whole, they do not attend rural high schools in the same proportion as in some other States. It has been estimated that 13 percent of the enrollment in the urban high schools of the country come from rural territory.<sup>6</sup> The percentage of rural youth 14-17 years of age in rural high schools in 1930 was above the United States figure in the States of the East North Central and West North Central Divisions except in Wisconsin which barely approximated it. Rural schools are more readily accessible in these States than in some of the other States.

<sup>3</sup> *Hearings Before the Committee on Education and Labor, United States Senate, 75th Cong., 1st sess., on S. 419, "A Bill to Promote the General Welfare Through the Appropriation of Funds to Assist the States and Territories in Providing More Effective Programs of Public Education,"* p. 23.

<sup>4</sup> National Resources Committee, *The Problems of a Changing Population*, Washington, D. C., May 1938, pp. 206-207.

<sup>5</sup> Gaumnitz, W. H., "The Place of the Small School in American Secondary Education," *Economical Enrichment of the Small Secondary-School Curriculum*, Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, Washington, D. C., 1934, p. 16.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

The Mountain and Pacific States with the exception of New Mexico and Arizona also exceeded the national average, but most of the South Atlantic, East South Central, and West South Central States were considerably below the average. In these States there are not enough high schools to care for all youth. Moreover, in many sections of these States the lack of transportation facilities makes school attendance at a distance impracticable.<sup>7</sup> Walking long distances day after day is not conducive to sustained school attendance.

Negro youth in rural territory are especially handicapped by lack of available high schools. The United States Office of Education estimated that in the early 1930's at least 900,000 Negroes of high school age were not in school. In two States—Arkansas and Mississippi—

**Table 14.—Comparative Average Expenditure per Pupil and Length of Session in Urban and Rural Schools, by Geographic Division, 1933-34**

Geographic division and residence	Number of counties, towns, and parishes reporting rural schools and number of urban school systems	Total current expenses per pupil	Average number of days in school session
<b>UNITED STATES</b>			
Urban.....	145	\$86.42	181.7
Rural.....	440	43.10	156.2
<b>NEW ENGLAND</b>			
Urban.....	11	106.96	185.6
Rural.....	83	78.47	174.9
<b>MIDDLE ATLANTIC</b>			
Urban.....	11	121.69	189.3
Rural.....	12	76.02	177.4
<b>EAST NORTH CENTRAL</b>			
Urban.....	23	85.30	178.6
Rural.....	43	62.46	167.7
<b>WEST NORTH CENTRAL</b>			
Urban.....	18	79.86	182.2
Rural.....	70	64.31	167.2
<b>SOUTH ATLANTIC</b>			
Urban.....	10	49.96	174.3
Rural.....	55	31.16	149.9
<b>EAST SOUTH CENTRAL</b>			
Urban.....	10	50.13	179.9
Rural.....	81	24.66	144.0
<b>WEST SOUTH CENTRAL</b>			
Urban.....	14	54.27	176.9
Rural.....	21	34.39	159.1
<b>MOUNTAIN</b>			
Urban.....	26	75.81	178.6
Rural.....	54	77.83	175.2
<b>PACIFIC</b>			
Urban.....	22	105.32	183.2
Rural.....	21	73.41	176.8

Source: Herlihy, Lester B., "Urban and Rural School Expenditures," *School Life*, Vol. 21, 1936, p. 272.

<sup>7</sup> For the situation in southwestern Texas in 1924-25, see Works, George A. and Others, *Organization and Administration*, Texas Educational Survey Report, Vol. I, Texas Educational Survey Commission, Austin, Tex., 1925, p. 224.

only 4.7 percent of the Negro population of high school age are actually enrolled in high school. In 5 other Southern States the percent is below 10. In 15 Southern States there are 230 counties having a population of 159,000 Negroes 15-19 years of age and having no high school facilities for colored pupils within their boundaries. In the same States there are 195 more counties, with nearly 200,000 Negroes of high school age, which have no 4-year high schools for Negroes.<sup>8</sup>

The effect of lack of educational opportunity is reflected not only in general statistics on school attendance but also in specific instances. The situation in Breathitt County, Ky., is typical of a large section of the mountainous, submarginal Appalachian Area. During the 5-year period, 1931-36, more than 2,000 of the 2,443 youth who finished the elementary schools of Breathitt County did not go to high school because of their poverty and the difficulty of reaching the 1 county high school.<sup>9</sup>

In areas where facilities are available, a large proportion of all rural youth attend school.<sup>10</sup> Of 300 young unmarried persons 16-24 years of age interviewed in rural Ohio in the spring of 1932,<sup>11</sup> 179 were still in school, including practically all who were 16 years of age. Over 50 percent of those out of school were high school graduates. A study in a number of rural counties in Indiana showed a substantial relationship between attendance and the adequacy with which high schools are provided when measured on the basis either of population or of area.<sup>12</sup> Hence it may be assumed that given adequate opportunity for public school attendance a substantial proportion of persons of school age will take advantage of this opportunity if they can possibly do so. There are always some, however, who, like 50 percent of the out-of-school youth interviewed in Taylor County, Wis., will be unable to go on to school because of "lack of funds" while others will be "needed at home" and therefore cannot continue their education.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Caliver, Ambrose, *Secondary Education for Negroes*, Bulletin, 1932, No. 17, National Survey of Secondary Education, Monograph No. 7, U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C., 1933, pp. 14-15 and 27.

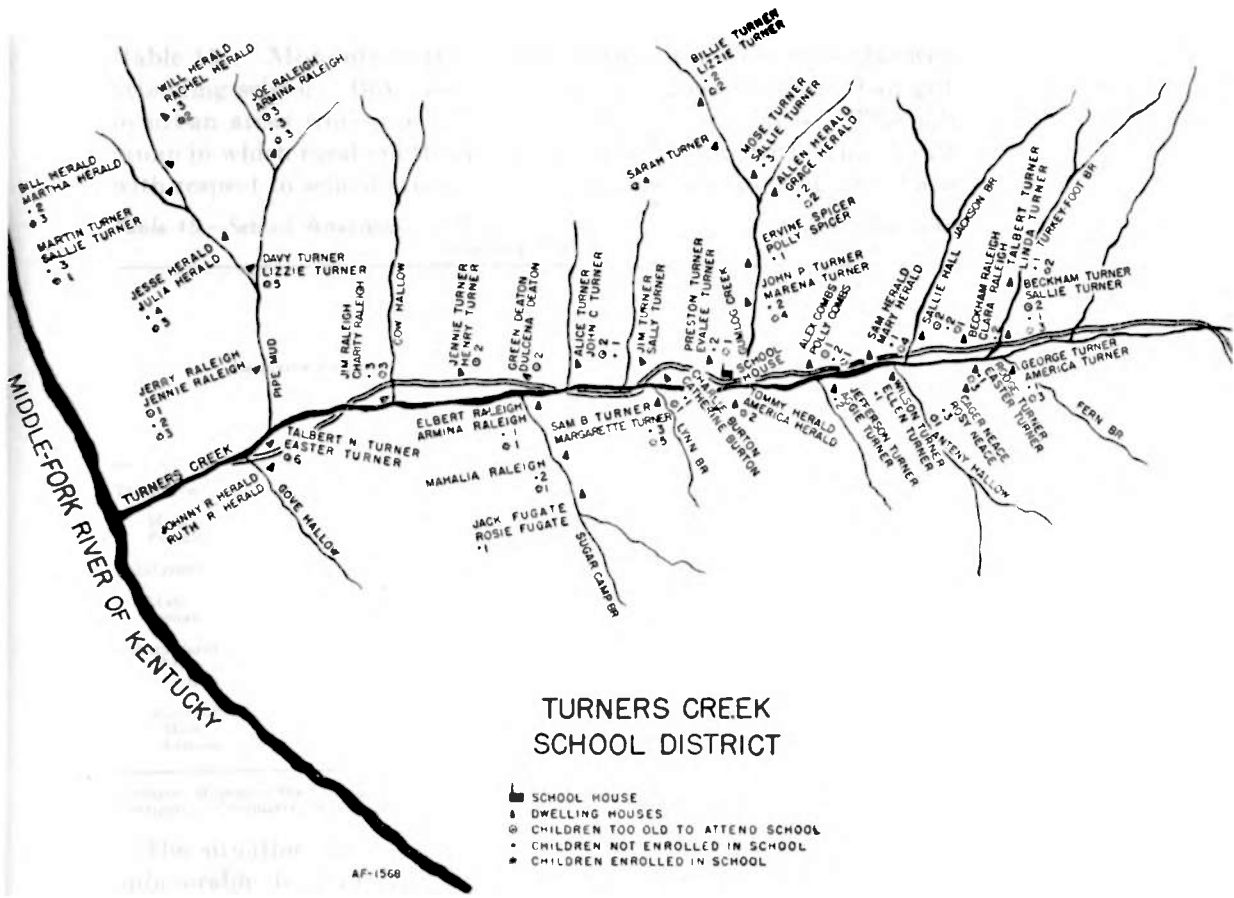
<sup>9</sup> Gooch, Wilbur I. and Keller, Franklin J., "Breathitt County in the Southern Appalachians," *Occupations*, Vol. XIV, 1936, p. 1027.

<sup>10</sup> Dawson, Howard A., *Satisfactory Local School Units*, Field Study No. 7, Division of Surveys and Field Studies, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tenn., 1934, pp. 31-32.

<sup>11</sup> Lively, C. E. and Miller, L. J., *Rural Young People, 16 to 24 Years of Age, A Survey of the Status and Activities of 300 Unmarried Individuals in Nine Ohio Townships*, Bulletin No. 73, Ohio State University and Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, Columbus, Ohio, July 1934, pp. 7-8.

<sup>12</sup> *Report of the Indiana Rural Education Survey Committee*, Indianapolis, Ind., March 1926, pp. 26-32.

<sup>13</sup> Gessner, Amy A., *Young People in Taylor County*, Rural Youth and Rural Life Series, Extension Service, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis., October 1936, p. 5.



*Nowhere is the pressure of population on physical resources more clearly demonstrated than in Turners Creek School District. Thirty years ago this small valley provided a meager living for four families. Now worn-out, eroded hillsides, denuded of their forest cover 2 decades ago, and the narrow valley must give sustenance to almost 10 times that number since there is practically no means of securing supplemental income.*





SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OF RURAL YOUTH

Largely as a result of differences in educational facilities, rural youth do not attend school to the same extent as do urban youth. During the school year 1929-30 more than 6 out of every 10 youth 16 and 17 years of age in urban territory were attending school in comparison with little more than 5 out of every 10 in rural territory (table 15). More urban than rural youth in the older ages also were attending school. Boys were in school to a greater extent than girls in urban areas while the reverse was true in rural areas. The only group in which rural youth were on an equal footing with urban youth with respect to school attendance was among girls 18-20 years of age.

Table 15.—School Attendance of Youth 16 Through 20 Years of Age, by Residence and Sex, 1929-30

Residence and sex	Age in years			
	16-17		18-20	
	Total number	Percent attending school	Total number	Percent attending school
Total urban.....	2, 373, 283	60. 5	3, 744, 064	22. 5
Male.....	1, 149, 003	62. 2	1, 736, 338	25. 4
Female.....	1, 224, 280	58. 9	2, 007, 726	20. 0
Total rural.....	2, 289, 854	53. 9	3, 071, 646	19. 9
Male.....	1, 190, 067	51. 1	1, 594, 208	19. 1
Female.....	1, 099, 787	56. 9	1, 477, 438	20. 9
Rural-farm.....	1, 432, 010	52. 0	1, 838, 904	19. 1
Male.....	766, 663	48. 1	990, 221	17. 3
Female.....	665, 347	56. 5	848, 683	21. 2
Rural-nonfarm.....	857, 844	57. 2	1, 232, 742	21. 3
Male.....	423, 404	56. 6	603, 987	22. 0
Female.....	434, 440	57. 7	628, 755	20. 6

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, p. 1099.

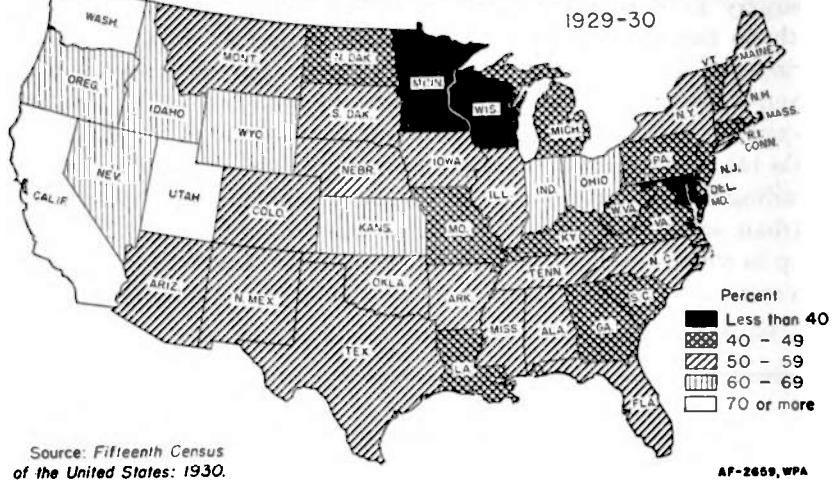
The situation with regard to high school attendance is even more unfavorable to rural youth than is total school attendance.<sup>14</sup> According to a recent report, "In urban areas (1931-32) one school child in four was attending high school, while in rural areas only one in seven of the school population was in high school. The difference is a product primarily of difference in opportunity rather than difference in native ability or even in interest."<sup>15</sup>

Comparison of school attendance in 1929-30 of rural-farm youth 16 and 17 years of age and of rural-nonfarm youth of the same age shows the advantage to be with nonfarm youth in all geographic divisions of the United States except the South Atlantic and the East South

<sup>14</sup> Gaumnitz, W. H., *op. cit.*, pp. 15-17.

<sup>15</sup> *Human Resources*, report submitted to the National Resources Committee by the American Council on Education, Washington, D. C., January 1936, pp. 55-56.

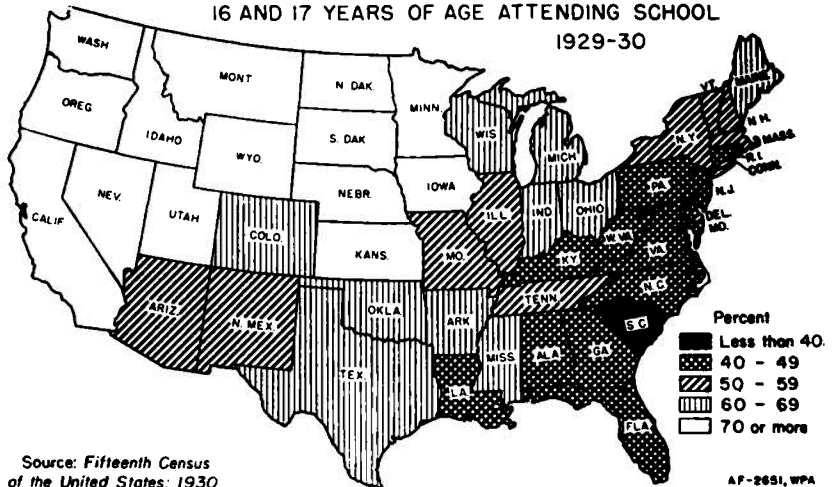
Fig. 8—PERCENT OF RURAL-FARM YOUTH  
16 AND 17 YEARS OF AGE ATTENDING SCHOOL  
1929-30



Central (appendix table 7). Among the 18- to 20-year-olds farm youth had the advantage in school attendance in the South Atlantic, Mountain, and Pacific Divisions.

In some States the difference between the two rural groups in school attendance was marked. In Michigan, for example, 62.2 percent of the nonfarm 16- and 17-year-olds were attending school in 1929-30 while only 47.5 percent of the farm youth of the same age were in school (figs. 8 and 9 and appendix table 7). An even greater discrepancy existed in Minnesota where 70.9 percent of the nonfarm youth but only 39.9 percent of the farm youth were in school. In both States the proportion of nonfarm youth in school exceeded the

Fig. 9—PERCENT OF RURAL-NONFARM YOUTH  
16 AND 17 YEARS OF AGE ATTENDING SCHOOL  
1929-30



United States average while the proportion of farm youth was well below the average. In the Northern States, in general, where a large percentage of the rural-nonfarm population is concentrated in agricultural villages and in areas immediately surrounding the cities, rural-nonfarm youth were attending school in greater relative numbers than were rural-farm youth.

The various States show a wide disparity with respect to the percentage of farm youth attending school. In Minnesota and Wisconsin, where much of the Cut-Over Area is located, 39.9 and 34.3 percent, respectively, of the farm youth 16 and 17 years of age were in school in 1929-30. The only other State in which the proportion in school was less than 40 percent was Maryland (37.0 percent), largely because of the low attendance rate among Negroes. The highest percentages were in Utah (80.0 percent), Washington (72.1 percent), and California (71.8 percent).

In most of the southeastern section of the United States, comprising the South Atlantic and East South Central Divisions, the school attendance of the 16-17 year old farm group was below the national average of 52.0 percent. Exceptions were Florida, Tennessee, and Mississippi.

Negro youth in rural areas were at an especially great disadvantage with respect to school attendance. According to the 1930 Census only 46.4 percent of Negro farm youth 16 and 17 years of age and 39.7 percent of the nonfarm youth of that age were in school.<sup>16</sup>

School attendance alone does not measure the educational situation since many rural youth, particularly in the South, are greatly retarded. While in such States as Minnesota and Wisconsin most of the youth 16 and 17 years of age attending school are in high school, in Georgia and South Carolina or Tennessee and Mississippi many youth in this age group, white as well as Negro, are still in the grades. In fact, in Wisconsin in 1930 over 30 percent of the rural youth 14-17 years of age were in high school in comparison with only 15 percent in Georgia.<sup>17</sup>

#### ILLITERACY AMONG RURAL YOUTH

The educational situation of rural youth is clearly revealed by the incidence of illiteracy.<sup>18</sup> About 1 in 20 rural-farm youth 15-24 years of age was illiterate in 1930. The comparable proportion for the rural-nonfarm group was 1 in 33 (appendix table 8). In contrast less than 1 in 100 urban youth 15-24 years of age was illiterate in 1930.

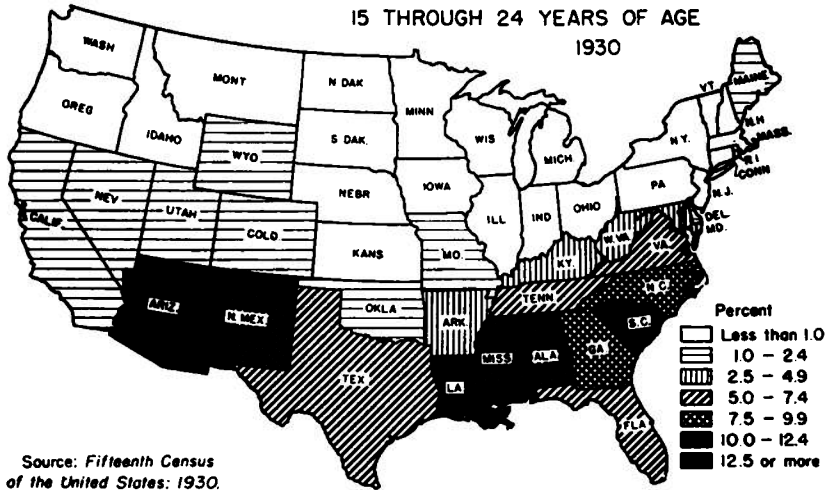
Illiteracy is especially prevalent in the States with large reservoirs of surplus youth and with large numbers of Negro or Mexican youth (figs. 10 and 11). In the South Atlantic States over 8 percent of all

<sup>16</sup> Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, table 10.

<sup>17</sup> Gaumnitz, W. H., *op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>18</sup> The U. S. Bureau of the Census defines as illiterate any person 10 years of age and over who is not able to read and write, either in English or in some other language.

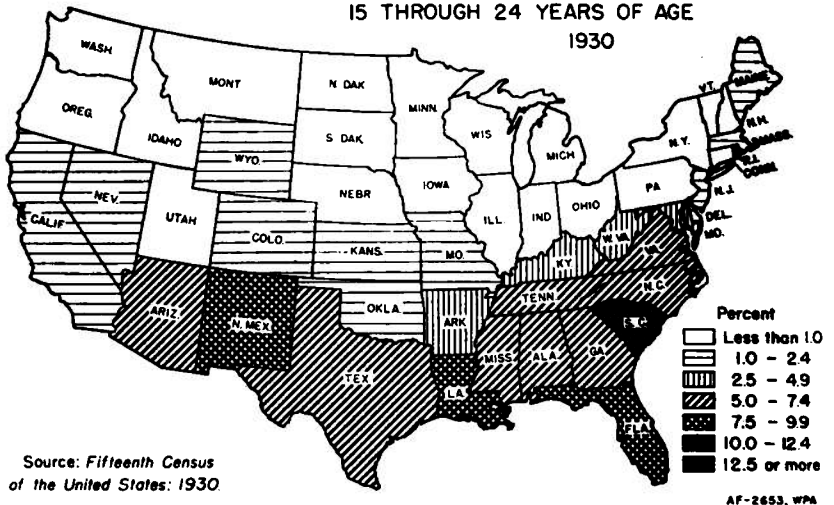
FIG. 10-ILLITERACY AMONG RURAL-FARM YOUTH  
15 THROUGH 24 YEARS OF AGE  
1930



rural-farm youth 15-24 years of age were illiterate in 1930. More than 1 out of every 10 youth on farms in South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Arizona were illiterate. Percentages of illiteracy among nonfarm youth in these same States were also far above the average. Except in the three Southern and the Mountain Divisions illiteracy rates were slightly higher among rural-nonfarm than among rural-farm youth.

The increased school attendance during the decade prior to 1930 had an important effect in reducing the incidence of illiteracy in the younger age group in comparison with those 20-24 years of age in 1930 (table 16). Moreover, since 1930 the work of the adult educa-

FIG. 11 -ILLITERACY AMONG RURAL-NONFARM YOUTH  
15 THROUGH 24 YEARS OF AGE  
1930



tion program of the Works Progress Administration and the education program of the Civilian Conservation Corps, as well as locally sponsored programs, have contributed to reducing illiteracy among young people in rural areas.<sup>19</sup>

**Table 16.—Illiteracy Among Rural Youth 15 Through 24 Years of Age, by Residence, 1930**

Residence	Age in years			
	15-19		20-24	
	Total number	Percent illiterate	Total number	Percent illiterate
Total rural.....	5, 536, 704	3. 3	4, 450, 070	4. 9
Rural-farm.....	3, 420, 969	4. 0	2, 434, 241	5. 9
Rural-nonfarm.....	2, 115, 735	2. 3	2, 015, 829	3. 7

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, p. 1227.

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENTS OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL RURAL YOUTH**

Farm youth apparently attend school less regularly and leave school earlier than village youth, especially in dominantly agricultural areas. Consequently, they have a lower grade attainment than rural-nonfarm youth. In five counties of Wisconsin 71.3 percent of the young men on farms, 20-25 years of age, had not completed any work above the eighth grade in comparison with only 30.0 percent among village young men. Among farm young women 60.2 percent in contrast to 21.0 percent of the village young women had completed only the eighth grade or less.<sup>20</sup> The lower grade attainment of farm youth is substantiated by other studies in Wisconsin<sup>21</sup> and in Iowa.<sup>22</sup>

As indicated by the data for Wisconsin, young men in rural America do not receive as much formal education as do young women. A recent study of unmarried youth in Tompkins County, N. Y., revealed that 72 percent of the single young men in comparison with 81 per-

<sup>19</sup> The Education Division of the Works Progress Administration estimated in September 1937 that the literacy program had reached approximately 200,000 persons of all ages in rural areas (based on unpublished data). The Education Division of the Civilian Conservation Corps reported that 2.7 percent of the enrollees between April 1 and October 1, 1936, were illiterate, amounting to approximately 9,000 men. This percentage has remained practically constant among enrollees of the past year.

<sup>20</sup> James, J. A. and Kolb, J. H., *Wisconsin Rural Youth, Education and Occupation*, Bulletin 437, Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, Madison, Wis., November 1936, p. 5.

<sup>21</sup> Kirkpatrick, E. L. and Boynton, Agnes M., *Interests and Needs of Rural Youth in Wood County, Wisconsin*, Rural Youth and Rural Life Series, Extension Service, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis., January 1936, p. 3.

<sup>22</sup> Starrak, J. A., *A Survey of Out-of-School Rural Youth in Iowa*, Committee on Education, Iowa State Planning Board, Des Moines, Iowa, 1935, table VII.

cent of the single young women 15–29 years of age, who were out of school, had received some high school or college training.<sup>23</sup> Surveys made in both Waushara County<sup>24</sup> and Wood County,<sup>25</sup> Wis., as well as in Ohio<sup>26</sup> and Virginia,<sup>27</sup> give further evidence of the fact that young women in rural areas tend to stay in school longer than young men.

The poor land areas show the worst conditions with respect to educational attainment. Data gathered from seven southern Appalachian counties show that 54.0 percent of the out-of-school rural youth 16–18 years of age in 1932 had not gone beyond the sixth grade and 93.4 percent had not gone beyond the eighth grade (table 17).<sup>28</sup>

**Table 17.**—Grade Completed by Out-of-School Youth in 7 Submarginal Counties,<sup>1</sup> by Age, 1932

Age	Total		Grade completed									
	Number	Percent	3 or less	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Total...	1,165	100.0	9.3	13.4	13.1	18.2	23.7	15.7	2.6	1.4	2.3	0.3
16 years.....	381	100.0	13.8	15.8	13.1	16.5	22.3	14.2	2.1	1.3	0.8	0.3
17 years.....	413	100.0	8.7	13.8	13.6	18.4	25.7	14.3	1.9	1.5	1.9	0.2
18 years.....	371	100.0	5.4	10.5	12.7	19.7	22.9	18.9	3.8	1.3	4.3	0.5

<sup>1</sup> Lumpkin County, Ga.; Jackson and Wolfe Counties, Ky.; Macon County, N. C.; Monroe County, Tenn.; and Mercer and Pendleton Counties, W. Va.

Source: Computed from schedules provided through the courtesy of W. H. Gaumnitz, U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

In Virginia's poor land and mountain areas "many of the present generation of young people are not getting much more formal training than did their parents. \* \* \* The children of unskilled laborers, subsistence farmers, and miners are the ones most prone to drop out of school in the earlier grades."<sup>29</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Anderson, W. A., *Rural Youth: Activities, Interests, and Problems, II. Unmarried Young Men and Women, 15 to 29 Years of Age*, Bulletin 661, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, N. Y., January 1937, pp. 5–6.

<sup>24</sup> Kirkpatrick, E. L. and Boynton, Agnes M., "Rural Young People Face Their Own Situation," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 1, 1936, p. 156.

<sup>25</sup> Kirkpatrick, E. L. and Boynton, Agnes M., *Interests and Needs of Rural Youth in Wood County, Wisconsin*, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>26</sup> Johnson, Thomas H., *A Study of Rural Youth, 18 to 25 Years, Out of School and Unmarried*, College of Education, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, May 1935, p. 34.

<sup>27</sup> Magill, Edmund C., *Handbook on Out-of-School Youth Education in Virginia*, A Summary of the Minutes of the Out-of-School Youth Training Conference, National Youth Administration and Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Va., August 1935, p. 8.

<sup>28</sup> Computed from schedules provided through the courtesy of W. H. Gaumnitz, U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

<sup>29</sup> Garnett, W. E., *A Social Study of the Blacksburg Community*, Bulletin 299, Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, Blacksburg, Va., August 1935, p. 61.



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## HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE SINCE 1930

High school enrollments increased during the depression of the early thirties in both rural and urban territory although an upward trend was already in evidence prior to 1930. In that year 58.0 percent of all urban youth and 39.5 percent of all rural youth 14-17 years of age were in high school; by 1934 these percentages had risen to 67.9 and 60.5, respectively.<sup>30</sup> Not only did more young people attend high school but also a larger proportion was graduated. One study found that of 1,000 pupils in the fifth grade in 1910-11 only 139 were graduated from high school in 1918, whereas of 1,000 pupils in the fifth grade in 1928-29, 383 were graduated in 1936.<sup>31</sup>

Comparative data for the school years 1931-32 and 1933-34 show that the percentage increase in school attendance was almost twice as great in rural as in urban high schools (appendix table 9). The aggregate number enrolled in urban high schools actually declined in the South Atlantic and West South Central Divisions. Only the New England Division showed a decline in the number attending rural high schools. The increase in high school enrollment for the United States as a whole between the school years 1933-34 and 1935-36 was only about half as great as between the years 1931-32 and 1933-34. During the more recent period, however, the percentage increase in rural areas was almost three times as great as in urban areas. Only in the urban areas of the Pacific Division was there an actual decrease in enrollment. In spite of the greater proportionate increase in each period, however, youth in rural areas were still not attending high school to the same extent as were those in urban areas.

Although the expansion of high school enrollment during depression years was in conformity with a general trend, at the same time it was apparently due partially to the "piling up" of youth in rural territory. Youth who would normally have gone to the cities remained in rural areas and attended high school. Moreover, high school facilities for rural youth and transportation facilities between the open country and towns have been constantly increasing so that expanded facilities have also operated to increase enrollments. The growing tendency for high school graduates to take postgraduate high school work before, or in lieu of, college work accounted for the increase in this type of student from 686,355 in 1931 to an estimated 945,000 in 1936 for the country as a whole.<sup>32</sup> No doubt the high school graduates in rural territory were well represented among this number.

<sup>30</sup> Cook, Katherine M., *Review of Conditions and Developments in Education in Rural and Other Sparsely Settled Areas*, Bulletin, 1937, No. 2, U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C., 1937, p. 7.

<sup>31</sup> Foster, Emery M., "School Survival Rates," *School Life*, Vol. 22, 1936, p. 14.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

Without critical analysis figures on rising school attendance may obscure the influence of economic maladjustments on the education of young people. Although there is no reliable information on the extent to which youth in low income or relief families have been forced to leave school, there are data which indicate that rural youth in the lowest economic classes are greatly retarded educationally.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, it is a well-known fact that, on the whole, youth from the lowest income classes drop out of school very shortly after they reach the maximum compulsory school age. Rural youth are no exception.<sup>34</sup>

The activities of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the Works Progress Administration, and the National Youth Administration have helped to ameliorate the devastating effects of the depression for many youth in the lowest income groups by making it possible for them to remain in school. These agencies helped either the family of the youth or the youth himself. In those rural areas having an excess of youth, however, where young people have been severely handicapped even in normal times and where school attendance has always been exceedingly low, aid similar to that which has been extended during the depression must be continued and expanded if youth are not to be permanently underprivileged.

#### VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN RURAL SCHOOLS

Many of the high schools that do exist in rural areas offer no vocational training and hence do not adequately meet the needs of youth who will enter either agricultural or nonagricultural occupations. Those which do offer vocational training are usually limited to agricultural and/or home economics courses and therefore do not provide for youth who will enter nonagricultural occupations.

Regardless of whether girls seek employment outside the home, it is important that they be adequately trained for homemaking. No published data are available on the number of rural high schools including home economics courses in their curricula. When a check was made about 1933<sup>35</sup> on the location of the Smith-Hughes high

<sup>33</sup> Melvin, Bruce L., *Rural Youth on Relief*, Research Monograph XI, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., 1937, ch. IV; and Hummel, B. L. and Bennett, C. G., *Education of Persons in Rural Relief Households in Virginia, 1935*, Rural Relief Series, No. 8, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Va., January 1937, p. 10 ff.

<sup>34</sup> For example, see Nelson, Lowry and Cottam, Howard R., "A Comparison of Educational Advantages and Achievements of Rural Relief and Nonrelief Households of Two Counties in Utah," *Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters*, Vol. XII, 1935, p. 128; and McCormick, T. C., *Comparative Study of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households*, Research Monograph II, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., 1935, pp. 33-34.

<sup>35</sup> Information obtained from U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Division of Home Economics, Washington, D. C.

schools teaching home economics, it was found that approximately 75 percent were in places of less than 2,500 population.

Federally-aided schools reached about 196,000 girls in 1936 in their full-time day school courses and an additional 37,000 in part-time classes for employed girls. Classes for adults had an enrollment of better than 142,000, many of whom no doubt were young wives and mothers seeking guidance in meeting their homemaking problems more intelligently, efficiently, and economically.<sup>36</sup> In addition there were thousands of girls taking homemaking courses in schools operated under State plans, but there is no way of knowing how many of them were rural.

Vocational agriculture was included in approximately 40 percent of the rural high schools of the United States by 1934. It was estimated at that time that 14 percent of the farm boys 14-20 years of age who were in school were being reached by this vocational work.<sup>37</sup> Since that time the number of federally-aided vocational agricultural schools has increased considerably, but because of the provision that every dollar of Federal money must be matched by State funds, the schools are not always located on the basis of need or of farm population.

By 1936 there were 5,612 of these day schools. Computing the average number of farm males 14-20 years of age per school in the various States,<sup>38</sup> it becomes apparent that these schools have been located without enough regard to the number of farm youth that ought to be served. While Massachusetts and Connecticut average about 360 and 370 farm males of this age group, respectively, per school and the Middle Atlantic and East North Central States average 340 and 350, respectively, such highly rural States as West Virginia, Georgia, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Tennessee, Alabama, Arkansas, and Oklahoma average approximately 550, 660, 640, 930, 640, 620, 700, 620, and 710, respectively. Missouri, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, though less rural than the other States mentioned, nevertheless have almost one-half of their population classified as rural, and these States have an average of 590, 600, and

<sup>36</sup> Vocational Division, *Digest of Annual Reports of State Boards for Vocational Education to the Office of Education*, Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1936, U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C., p. 53.

<sup>37</sup> Office of Education, *Vocational Education and Changing Conditions*, Bulletin No. 174, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C., 1934, p. 106. See also Hamlin, Herbert M., "Our Dual System of Rural Education," *School Review*, Vol. XLIV, 1936, p. 181.

<sup>38</sup> Vocational Division, *Digest of Annual Reports of State Boards for Vocational Education to the Office of Education*, *op. cit.*, table 1; and Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, *op. cit.*, were used as the basis for this computation for the purpose of illustration although it is recognized that the number of persons 14-20 years of age has increased considerably since 1930.

670 farm boys, respectively, 14–20 years of age for every school giving courses in vocational agriculture.

A survey in seven Southern States in 1933 showed that the departments of vocational agriculture already established constituted about 57 percent of the number needed. It was believed then that other regions might have an even lower percentage of rural schools providing this instruction in comparison with the total number operating under such conditions as to indicate a need for this type of work.<sup>39</sup>

By the fall of 1937 the number of federally-aided vocational agricultural high schools had increased to almost 7,000,<sup>40</sup> and as a result of the passage of the George-Deen Act in 1936<sup>41</sup> providing for the further development of vocational education in the several States and territories a still further expansion of vocational agriculture will undoubtedly take place.

One of the most significant phases of the vocational agricultural work in rural high schools has been the development of the organization known as Future Farmers of America. This organization is now more than 10 years old and includes more than 120,000 boys between the ages of 14 and 21 enrolled in vocational agricultural courses in the federally-aided high schools of the country. Active membership may be retained 3 years after the boy has completed his systematic instruction in vocational agriculture and high school.<sup>42</sup> While the members secure practical experience in farming through their agricultural instruction and membership in the organization, the ultimate objectives are chiefly educational.<sup>43</sup> Since the distribution of the local chapters is restricted to schools including vocational agriculture in their curricula, this program is denied a large mass of rural boys who do not have access to a Smith-Hughes high school or who do not attend high school.

A parallel organization, called New Farmers of America, for Negro boys enrolled in the approximately 600 federally-aided Negro high schools had a national membership of 47,000 in 1937.<sup>44</sup> The upper age limit for membership is slightly higher than for white boys.

Not all rural or even farm boys are to become farmers, however. A large proportion have for many years gone into nonagricultural occupations, and for the good of agriculture as an industry under the

<sup>39</sup> Office of Education, *Vocational Education and Changing Conditions*, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

<sup>40</sup> Office of Director of Vocational Agriculture, U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

<sup>41</sup> Public, No. 673, 74th Cong., approved June 8, 1936.

<sup>42</sup> *Future Farmers of America, Revised Manual*, 1936, p. 9.

<sup>43</sup> Ross, W. A., "What Do You Mean—F. F. A?" *School Life*, Vol. 21, 1935, pp. 94–97.

<sup>44</sup> Office of Executive Secretary of the New Farmers of America, U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C.



*Vocational Division, Office of Education.*

*An FFA Boy's Test Plot of Hybrid Corn.*

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present system the proportion leaving farm territory ought to be greater. Vocational openings are not easily found by graduates of rural high schools in fields other than agriculture.<sup>45</sup> Inadequate as the vocational training is for farm boys and girls who are to become farmers or wives of farmers, the chances of obtaining training for other occupations are almost nonexistent for rural young people within reasonable distance and at a reasonable cost. A count was made of the number of federally-aided schools in three States—Alabama, Minnesota, and California—having vocational agriculture and at the same time offering instruction in trade and industry. The first of these States had 175 federally-aided schools, white and colored, teaching vocational agriculture in 1936. Of these 16 white and 9 colored, or one-seventh of the total, also offered courses in trade and industry. Only 6 of the 25 were in places having a population of less than 2,500. Minnesota had 114 federally-aided vocational agricultural high schools but not a single school offered instruction in trade and industry. California had 15 federally-aided schools that provided vocational training in agricultural and nonagricultural fields but only 1 was in rural territory, that is, in a place having a population of less than 2,500.<sup>46</sup>

The desirability of vocational training other than agricultural training for rural young people has been recognized by many. Galpin stated the problem concisely as follows: "The fact is that not all children of farmers are to be farmers and housewives on farms. The need of guidance in the matter of vocational careers among farm youth is especially urgent, just because so many farm youth as a necessity must select rationally or else drift ignorantly into a great variety of occupations."<sup>47</sup>

Vance has recently emphasized the importance of providing training for white and Negro youth in the direction of more flexible skills which may open the way to a choice of jobs in the more complex urban environments. This is necessary because many southern farm youth must inevitably go to the cities for employment.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Frayser, Mary E., *Attitudes of High School Seniors Toward Farming and Other Vocations*, Bulletin 302, South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Clemson, S. C., June 1935, pp. 30-31.

<sup>46</sup> Computed from lists of the federally-aided schools giving instruction in vocational agriculture and in trade and industry provided through the courtesy of the U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

<sup>47</sup> Galpin, C. J., "The Need of Guidance Among Farm Youth," *The Vocational Guidance Magazine*, Vol. IX, 1930, p. 25.

<sup>48</sup> Vance, Rupert B., *New Orleans Item-Tribune*, April 12, 1936.





## Chapter IV

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### MARRIAGE OF RURAL YOUTH

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FOR ALL youth marriage is a major social adjustment; for farm youth it is usually both a social and an economic adjustment. In agricultural society marriage may well mark the time in life when the young man begins to operate a farm for himself. The young woman submerges her economic role within that of her husband rather than embark on or continue an independent career. Traditionally the farm home and the farm business are one. For rural-nonfarm youth, however, marriage does not necessarily involve a comparable economic adjustment since the young man in the small town may have been on the way to becoming established in business, in a profession, in a secure salaried position, or in a skilled trade for some time prior to his marriage.

The normal sequence for American boys is school, employment, marriage, and a new family.<sup>1</sup> The sequence for girls is similar except that employment is not a necessary requisite to marriage. A break in this cultural pattern is certain to have significant consequences. Previous chapters have shown that rural young people on the whole are handicapped—more in some regions than in others—in securing a satisfactory education and that the problem of employment and becoming established in a life work is acute in some sections. Youth who leave school at a relatively early age face a fairly long period of enforced leisure before they find regular employment.

The marriage rate in the United States has been declining more or less steadily since the early twenties; the decline was greatly accentuated early in the depression,<sup>2</sup> affording evidence of widespread postponement of marriage among youth as a result of unemployment or underemployment. That the postponement of marriage may have

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<sup>1</sup> May, Mark A., "The Dilemma of Youth," *Progressive Education*, Vol. XII, January 1935, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Stouffer, Samuel A. and Spencer, Lyle M., "Marriage and Divorce in Recent Years," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 188, November 1936, pp. 58-59.

serious effects upon the birth rate has been shown<sup>3</sup> and that it affects the emotional life of those unable to marry as well as the sex mores is generally accepted. What are the facts regarding the marriage of rural young people, and what are their implications for the future of rural life?

PROPORTION OF YOUTH MARRIED

Youth is the period during which the majority of all marriages occur. The proportions of youth which are married, however, vary importantly by residence, sex, age, and color.

Rural and Urban Youth Compared

A larger percentage of the total rural than of the total urban population is married. If the farms and the cities having a population above 500,000 had had the same age distribution of the total population 15 years of age and over in 1930, there would have been 15 percent fewer persons married in the big cities than on the farms. The percent of young people below 20 who were married was about twice as great on farms as in the large cities, and among those 20-24 years of age the percent was about one-third higher on farms than in cities.<sup>4</sup>

The proportion of youth married in 1930 was greater for both sexes and for all years among rural than urban youth (table 18 and fig. 12). At each year of age there is a considerable difference between the sexes, many more young women than young men being married in both urban and rural territory. Apart from the fact that rural as well as urban young women marry earlier than men, there is the additional fact that early marriage for girls is the custom in many rural communities. At the age of 24 years a little less than one-half

Table 18.—Percent Married of Total Youth Population, by Age, Residence, and Sex, 1930

Age	Urban		Rural	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
16 years.....	0.1	2.7	0.2	6.1
17 years.....	0.4	7.1	0.9	13.2
18 years.....	1.5	14.9	3.0	24.5
19 years.....	4.3	23.6	7.4	35.5
20 years.....	9.3	32.4	14.2	45.5
21 years.....	16.8	40.1	23.3	53.1
22 years.....	25.2	47.8	32.2	60.2
23 years.....	34.3	54.8	41.2	66.4
24 years.....	42.4	60.4	48.8	71.4

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, p. 851.

<sup>3</sup> Stouffer, Samuel A. and Lazarsfeld, Paul F., *Research Memorandum on the Family in the Depression*, Bulletin 29, New York: Social Science Research Council, 1937, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Ogburn, William F., "Recent Changes in Marriage," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XLI, 1935, p. 290.

(48.8 percent) of the young men but almost three-fourths (71.4 percent) of the young women in rural areas were married. Among the urban youth of this age 42.4 percent of the young men and 60.4 percent of the young women were married in 1930.

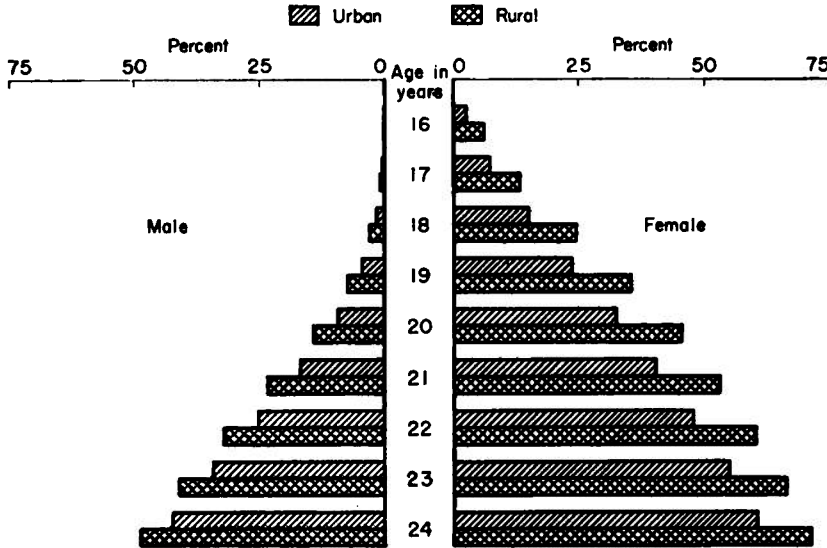


FIG. 12- PERCENT MARRIED OF TOTAL YOUTH POPULATION  
1930

Source: *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930.*

AF-2677, WPA

The difference between the sexes in the percent married in 1930 was considerably greater for rural youth than for urban youth, particularly in the lower age range. Of the young men and women in urban territory 20 years old in 1930, 9.3 and 32.4 percent, respectively, were married. In comparison, of the rural young men and women of the same age 14.2 and 45.5 percent, respectively, were married. Since young women migrate to the cities at an earlier age than young men,<sup>5</sup> it is probable that a larger proportion of the girls remaining in rural territory marry than would otherwise do so, many of them taking husbands older than themselves.

In this connection attention should be called to the fact that between 1910 and 1920 the trend in the percent married of both sexes was upward for both urban and rural youth. Thus 1.4 percent of the rural young men 15-19 years of age were married in 1910, but by 1920 the corresponding percent was 2.4.<sup>6</sup> During the same interval the percent of the rural young women of the same age who

<sup>5</sup> See ch. I.

<sup>6</sup> Stouffer, Samuel A. and Spencer, Lyle M., *op. cit.*, p. 60.

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were married rose from 10.2 to 14.5 (table 19). Among the urban youth 15-19 years of age 0.7 percent of the young men were married in 1910 but by 1920, 1.7 percent of this age were married. Of the young women of the same age the percents married were 7.7 and 10.4 for 1910 and 1920, respectively. A corresponding trend may be observed for those 20-24 years of age of both sexes.

Table 19.—Percent Married of Total Youth Population, by Residence, Age, and Sex, 1910, 1920, and 1930

Residence	Age in years											
	15-19						20-24					
	Male			Female			Male			Female		
	1910	1920	1930	1910	1920	1930	1910	1920	1930	1910	1920	1930
Urban .....	0.7	1.7	1.3	7.7	10.4	10.2	20.6	25.8	25.8	42.4	47.6	47.1
Rural .....	1.4	2.4	2.2	10.2	14.5	15.5	27.3	31.1	31.2	57.5	58.4	58.8

Sources: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, p. 848 and *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920*, Population Vol. II, p. 516, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.; and Stouffer, Samuel A. and Spencer, Lyle M., "Marriage and Divorce in Recent Years" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 188, November 1936, p. 60.

Between 1920 and 1930 the proportion of all rural young women who were married increased slightly, but there was practically no change in the proportion of young men (table 19). The percent change among urban youth in both age groups was negligible for this decade. The fact, however, that in rural areas there was even a slight increase in the percent of young women married and no decrease in the percent of young men married during the decade 1920 to 1930, when the price level of farm products was already much below that of industrial products, suggests that rural youth may not postpone marriage to any great extent under adverse economic conditions.

Rural-Farm and Rural-Nonfarm Youth Compared

When the number of married rural youth was analyzed with respect to residence, it was found that with the exception of boys below 20 years of age and of girls 16 years of age, proportionately more rural-nonfarm than rural-farm youth of both sexes were married in 1930 (table 20, fig. 13, and appendix table 10). This situation is difficult to interpret since little is known about the marital status of the various segments of the rural-nonfarm population, such as the population of agricultural villages, industrial villages, and the peripheries of cities. However, an examination by States and by divisions of the percent of rural-nonfarm youth of both sexes married suggests a tentative explanation.

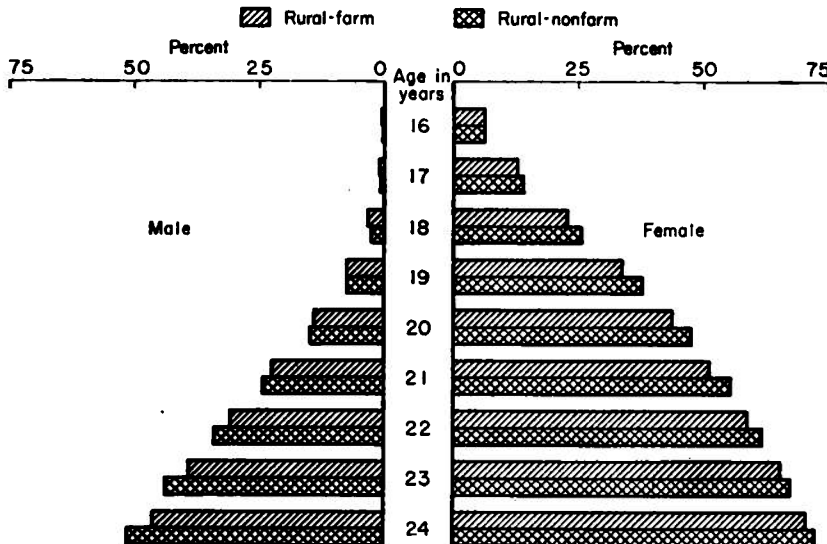
Rural-nonfarm youth 20-24 years of age were married in greater proportions in those States in which there was a large contingent of rural-

**Table 20.—Percent Married of Rural Youth Population, by Age, Residence, and Sex, 1930**

Age	Rural-farm		Rural-nonfarm	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
16 years.....	0.3	6.1	0.2	6.1
17 years.....	1.0	12.8	0.8	13.8
18 years.....	3.2	23.7	2.6	25.7
19 years.....	7.4	33.7	7.3	37.9
20 years.....	13.9	43.8	14.7	47.7
21 years.....	22.5	51.2	24.4	55.3
22 years.....	30.8	58.8	34.0	61.8
23 years.....	39.1	65.4	43.7	67.5
24 years.....	46.3	70.4	61.5	72.3

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, p. 851.

industrial population than in other States. For example, in West Virginia with its coal mining settlements 71.3 percent of the young women and 39.3 percent of the young men 20–24 years of age were married in 1930, whereas the corresponding percentages for this age group in the United States as a whole were only 60.8 and 33.7, respectively. This explanation probably holds likewise for Kentucky which also has many coal settlements, for Oklahoma with its coal, oil, and natural gas settlements, and for Texas with its oil and natural gas settlements, all three States having high percentages of both sexes in this age group married. The proportions married of the younger age



**FIG. 13.—PERCENT MARRIED OF RURAL YOUTH POPULATION 1930**

Source: *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*.  
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AF-2679, WPA

group in the rural-nonfarm population in these same States also exceeded the comparable United States percentages.

In most other States in which the percent of the rural-nonfarm youth of both sexes married exceeded the United States figure,<sup>7</sup> a considerable proportion of the rural-nonfarm population is composed of inhabitants of mining, lumbering, or other types of nonagricultural settlements. While the industrial composition appears significant, it is important to note that most of the States with particularly high rural-nonfarm marriage rates are Southern States in which marriage rates among youth in general are high.

The percentages of rural youth married by sex and age groups varied widely from one section of the country to another (appendix table 10). Thus, of the rural-nonfarm women 20–24 years of age the proportions married ranged from 48.1 percent in New England to 67.1 percent in the West South Central States while the same two regions yielded the two extremes for the same age group of farm young women, namely, 43.0 percent and 65.3 percent, respectively.

New England and the Pacific States had the lowest percentages of both rural-farm and rural-nonfarm young men 20–24 years of age who were married. The other extreme was provided by the East South Central States, a highly rural division.

In New England, where the population is concentrated heavily in industrial centers, the young people marry, on the whole, later than in such rural States as Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. The same variation is apparent within the New England States themselves. Whereas Connecticut and Massachusetts had exceedingly low percentages of their rural youth married in 1930, Vermont and Maine, both highly rural States, were not far below the United States total for each age group.

Individual studies bear out the generalizations above regarding the effect both of industrialization and of custom on the age of marriage which in turn are related to the proportion of young people married in any given rural area. In the rural sections of Tompkins County, N. Y., which have been in the process of urbanization for many years, the age of the married young men, ranging from 15 through 29 years, averaged 28 years while for the married young women of the same age range the average was 24 years.<sup>8</sup> In contrast, in a submarginal area in Virginia, well removed from the cities, "Reports on the age of marriage

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<sup>7</sup> For example, Indiana, New Mexico, Louisiana, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Florida. Mississippi and Arkansas both exceed the United States figure but the percent of rural-farm youth married in both age groups exceeds the percent of rural-nonfarm youth. Both States are highly agricultural and have a negligible rural-industrial population.

<sup>8</sup> Anderson, W. A., *Rural Youth: Activities, Interests, and Problems, I. Married Young Men and Women, 15 to 29 Years of Age*, Bulletin 649, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, N. Y., May 1936, p. 7.

for 501 women showed that 21.6 percent married at 16 or younger, 10.8 percent at 15 or below, and 38.3 percent between 17 and 20. Slightly over a fifth of the men were married by the time they were 20.”<sup>9</sup>

#### White and Negro Youth Compared

Color and residence both influence the proportion of youth of the various ages which is married. In 1930 relatively more Negro than white youth were married in all segments of the population—urban, rural-farm, and rural-nonfarm (table 21). While more Negro young men in rural-farm than in rural-nonfarm territory were married, the reverse was true for Negro young women with the exception of those 24 years of age.

Table 21.—Percent Married of Total Youth Population, by Age, Residence, Color, and Sex, 1930

Age	White		Negro	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>URBAN</b>				
16 years.....	0.1	2.3	0.3	7.1
17 years.....	0.3	6.3	1.2	15.7
18 years.....	1.3	13.5	4.4	27.7
19 years.....	3.8	21.9	10.4	38.9
20 years.....	8.4	30.6	19.9	47.3
21 years.....	15.7	38.6	31.3	54.5
22 years.....	23.8	46.6	40.6	58.7
23 years.....	33.1	53.8	49.3	63.3
24 years.....	41.4	59.7	55.2	65.9
<b>RURAL-FARM</b>				
16 years.....	0.2	5.6	0.5	8.2
17 years.....	0.8	11.7	1.6	17.5
18 years.....	2.7	21.4	5.5	31.8
19 years.....	6.3	31.5	13.6	42.2
20 years.....	11.9	41.3	24.8	51.7
21 years.....	19.0	49.6	40.7	58.0
22 years.....	27.0	57.3	51.0	63.6
23 years.....	35.4	64.5	59.7	68.3
24 years.....	42.9	69.9	65.6	72.1
<b>RURAL-NONFARM</b>				
16 years.....	0.2	5.5	0.5	11.2
17 years.....	0.7	12.8	1.5	21.8
18 years.....	2.4	24.3	4.7	34.8
19 years.....	6.8	36.5	12.2	46.8
20 years.....	14.0	46.4	21.6	54.4
21 years.....	23.3	54.5	35.4	60.7
22 years.....	33.1	61.2	43.5	64.9
23 years.....	43.2	67.1	52.0	69.5
24 years.....	51.5	72.2	56.2	71.6

Sources: Special tabulation by the U. S. Bureau of the Census of the number of married youth; and Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population Vol. II*, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, pp. 598-601.

In 13 Southern States, where a high proportion of all youth was married, there was a general tendency for more Negro than white youth in rural areas to be married. This was true of both young men and young women in the rural-farm and rural-nonfarm groups (table 22), although there were numerous exceptions, particularly among females. In almost all of the Southern States and among both sexes more Negro youth in rural-nonfarm than in rural-farm territory were married.

<sup>9</sup> Garnett, W. E., *A Social Study of the Blacksburg Community*, Bulletin 299, Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, Blacksburg, Va., August 1935, p. 16.

Table 22.—Percent Married of Rural Youth Population in 13 Southern States, by Residence, Color, and Sex, 1930

State	Rural-farm				Rural-nonfarm			
	White		Negro		White		Negro	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Alabama.....	21.9	43.6	23.8	39.1	27.3	50.3	31.1	53.6
Arkansas.....	22.3	48.0	30.0	53.4	25.8	51.1	29.6	52.1
Florida.....	13.9	37.9	19.7	40.1	21.7	52.2	28.8	60.5
Georgia.....	19.2	40.7	26.1	41.3	23.0	43.7	33.7	51.9
Louisiana.....	19.5	43.3	25.7	46.7	22.3	46.7	26.5	51.0
Maryland.....	10.4	29.8	10.5	31.1	16.8	40.8	16.4	27.8
Mississippi.....	21.5	44.6	31.1	51.5	22.2	44.4	31.1	53.9
North Carolina.....	16.8	36.4	18.6	33.4	26.8	45.8	24.5	41.1
Oklahoma.....	19.2	45.7	20.9	45.1	25.0	52.1	25.4	49.8
South Carolina.....	16.7	38.6	21.2	33.8	25.9	46.4	33.5	48.2
Tennessee.....	19.5	40.4	24.2	43.5	27.4	48.7	23.0	41.8
Texas.....	17.8	40.8	25.3	46.2	22.0	48.4	28.5	50.6
Virginia.....	12.7	30.4	12.1	29.2	20.8	44.5	19.1	37.3

Source: Special tabulation by the U. S. Bureau of the Census.

#### MARRIAGE DURING THE DEPRESSION OF THE EARLY THIRTIES

The marriage rate for the country as a whole fell from 10.1 per 1,000 population in 1929 to 7.9 per 1,000 population in 1932, the lowest point in the recorded history of marriage in the United States (appendix table 11). Since the bulk of all marriages occurs within the youth group, it is fair to assume that approximately the same decrease occurred in the marriage rate of young people 16–24 years of age. Many youth postponed marriage during the depression of the early thirties. Among 13,500 youth 16–24 years of age interviewed in Maryland approximately 20 percent of those over 20 years of age stated that their marriage had been delayed. More than one-half of this group gave some economic reason as the cause of the delay, while others reported such causes as no opportunity, family objections, or personal illness.<sup>10</sup>

Two conclusions drawn from limited evidence seem tenable: the decline in the marriage rate was not consistent in all States, and it tended to be greater in urban than in rural States. It is very difficult to judge the effects of the depression on the marriage rate among the farm population because the depression for farmers really began in the early 1920's.<sup>11</sup> Hardships of farmers during this period, however, apparently did not cause farm youth to postpone marriage. Consequently, it is an open question whether the general depression beginning in 1929 was the primary cause of the drop in the marriage rate in rural areas.

The decline in the rate of marriage in the urban population was not

<sup>10</sup> Bell, Howard M., *Youth Tell Their Story*, American Youth Commission of the Council on Education, Washington, D. C., 1938, p. 43.

<sup>11</sup> For a discussion of research on rural life from this approach see Sanderson, Dwight, *Research Memorandum on Rural Life in the Depression*, Bulletin 34, New York: Social Science Research Council, 1937.



consistent, if the situation in Philadelphia is typical.<sup>12</sup> It was found in this one city that the effect of the depression of the early thirties was not uniform on all groups or classes of the population. In some areas the rates fell, in others they rose, and in still others they were stationary.

Though a study in rural areas in North Carolina seems to demonstrate clearly a relationship between a decline in marriage rates and economic conditions,<sup>13</sup> it is not known whether similar studies in other rural sections would yield the same relationship of these two factors. It seems unlikely that the effect of the depression would be any more uniform in rural territory than it was found to be in the urban study just referred to.

A comparison among the States further confirms the two conclusions drawn above. According to the United States Census of 1930 there were 21 States in which more than one-half of the population was urban. Eleven of these States had an average marriage rate for the period 1926-1929 above the national average for that period. In 1932 the rate was above the national rate in only nine of these States (table 23). Whereas among the 27 rural States there were 14 in which the average marriage rate for the period 1926-1929 was above the national average, by 1932 this number had increased to 17.

Trends in marriage rates among the States were not consistent, but on the whole they tended to confirm the statement that the decline was less in rural than in urban areas. In 10 States—New Hampshire, South Dakota, Nebraska, Virginia, South Carolina, Kentucky, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona, and Nevada—the rates were higher in 1932 than the average of their respective rates from 1926 to 1929. Only one—New Hampshire—is more than 50 percent urban. Of the remaining 38 States that experienced a decline in 1932 from their marriage rate for the 1926-1929 period, 18 had rates below the national figure both in 1932 and for the period 1926-1929. Of these 8 were dominantly rural—Maine, Vermont, Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, North Carolina, Idaho, and Wyoming—and 10 were urban—Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Delaware, and Oregon. In the other 20 States, equally divided between the rural and urban categories, the marriage rates were, with a few exceptions, above the national rate both in 1932 and for the period 1926-1929.

Marriages began increasing in 1933 and continued through 1934,<sup>14</sup> when the national rate was only 0.4 per 1,000 below the 1929 level

<sup>12</sup> Bossard, James H. S., "Depression and Pre-Depression Marriage Rates: A Philadelphia Study," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 2, 1937, pp. 686-695.

<sup>13</sup> Hamilton, C. Horace, *Recent Changes in the Social and Economic Status of Farm Families in North Carolina*, Bulletin No. 309, North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Raleigh, N. C., May 1937, pp. 146-148.

<sup>14</sup> Stouffer, Samuel A. and Spencer, Lyle M., *op. cit.*, pp. 58 and 63. The 1934 rate is given as 10.28 and that for 1935 as 10.41 per 1,000 population.

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Table 23.—Marriage Rate per 1,000 Population in Urban<sup>1</sup> and Rural<sup>2</sup> States, 1926-1929 and 1932

State	Rate per 1,000 population	
	Average rate 1926-1929	1932
United States.....	10.1	7.9
<b>NEW ENGLAND</b>		
Urban:		
New Hampshire.....	10.7	11.6
Massachusetts.....	7.1	5.3
Rhode Island.....	7.6	5.9
Connecticut.....	7.5	5.6
Rural:		
Maine.....	7.9	7.0
Vermont.....	8.0	6.7
<b>MIDDLE ATLANTIC</b>		
Urban:		
New York.....	10.2	8.1
New Jersey.....	7.6	5.5
Pennsylvania.....	7.3	5.8
<b>EAST NORTH CENTRAL</b>		
Urban:		
Ohio.....	9.0	4.4
Indiana.....	13.1	11.0
Illinois.....	11.1	8.4
Michigan.....	8.3	5.7
Wisconsin.....	5.8	4.7
<b>WEST NORTH CENTRAL</b>		
Urban:		
Missouri.....	10.6	9.6
Rural:		
Minnesota.....	8.9	6.7
Iowa.....	8.7	3.2
North Dakota.....	6.3	5.3
South Dakota.....	9.2	10.3
Nebraska.....	7.1	8.5
Kansas.....	11.0	8.9
<b>SOUTH ATLANTIC</b>		
Urban:		
Delaware.....	4.8	3.8
Maryland.....	15.7	13.8
District of Columbia.....	10.5	10.0
Florida.....	15.7	10.0
Rural:		
Virginia.....	8.8	10.1
West Virginia.....	11.1	10.5
North Carolina.....	7.2	3.6
South Carolina.....	14.0	14.6
Georgia.....	9.9	8.9
<b>EAST SOUTH CENTRAL</b>		
Rural:		
Kentucky.....	11.6	12.0
Tennessee.....	12.8	6.8
Alabama.....	11.5	9.4
Mississippi.....	16.3	11.1
<b>WEST SOUTH CENTRAL</b>		
Rural:		
Arkansas.....	14.8	13.8
Louisiana.....	10.2	9.0
Oklahoma.....	12.6	13.9
Texas.....	13.0	6.7
<b>MOUNTAIN</b>		
Urban:		
Colorado.....	11.6	6.3
Utah.....	11.3	11.2
Rural:		
Montana.....	9.8	9.2
Idaho.....	9.0	3.4
Wyoming.....	7.9	3.4
New Mexico.....	13.0	20.6
Arizona.....	12.7	17.1
Nevada.....	41.1	76.2

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 23.—Marriage Rate per 1,000 Population in Urban and Rural States, 1926-1929 and 1932—Continued

State	Rate per 1,000 population	
	Average rate 1926-1929	1932
PACIFIC		
Urban:		
Washington.....	12.1	10.1
Oregon.....	8.4	6.9
California.....	11.2	7.3

<sup>1</sup> With at least 50 percent of the population living in centers of 2,500 or more.

<sup>2</sup> With at least 50 percent of the population living in the open country or in centers of less than 2,500.

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Marriage and Divorce*, Annual Reports, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

(appendix table 11). The recovery from the low rate of marriage was general among both rural and urban States.

If judgment can be drawn from the situation in North Carolina, the rate of marriage was somewhat higher among the rural nonrelief population than among the rural relief population during the depression years of 1932 to 1934, inclusive.<sup>15</sup> “\* \* \* the marriage rate of the nonrelief population rose substantially in 1933; whereas, the marriage rate of households (to be on relief in 1934) continued to decline.”<sup>16</sup>

Data are not sufficient to determine to what extent the findings in North Carolina are applicable to the country as a whole. Taking all the youth on relief in October 1935 the percent married was slightly greater than was the case in the total rural youth population in 1930. Of all the youth on relief in October 1935, 41 percent of the young women and 20 percent of the young men were married, while in 1930 in the total rural population 39 percent of the young women and 17 percent of the young men were married.<sup>17</sup>

The abnormal marriage rates in some States are undoubtedly due somewhat to State laws or other special circumstances.<sup>18</sup> In North Carolina, for example, the couples go from their home State to Virginia and South Carolina to avoid conforming to laws requiring publicity and certificates of physical fitness prior to marriage. As a consequence the rate in North Carolina was extremely low in 1932 and for some years previous in comparison with neighboring States (appendix table 11). Nevada's tremendous increase is related to the large

<sup>15</sup> Hamilton, C. Horace, “The Trend of the Marriage Rate in Rural North Carolina,” *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 1, 1936, p. 455.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 461.

<sup>17</sup> Melvin, Bruce L., *Rural Youth on Relief*, Research Monograph XI, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., 1937, ch. III.

<sup>18</sup> Bureau of the Census, *Marriage and Divorce: 1932*, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., p. 14.

number of divorces and subsequent remarriages that take place in that State.

A summary review of the statutes of the various States in order to determine, if possible, whether or not there is any relation between the laws regarding the minimum age of marriage and marriage rates yielded the following results: Of the 23 States where the minimum age for marriage of girls is 16 years or above, 12<sup>19</sup> are urban according to the classification in table 23 and 11<sup>20</sup> are rural. Of the remaining 25 States where the minimum age of marriage is below 16 years, 9<sup>21</sup> are urban and 16<sup>22</sup> are rural. That is, on the whole there is a tendency for rural States to have a lower minimum age of marriage than urban States. There probably is some connection between the laws of the rural States and the fact that larger percentages of rural than of urban girls in the younger ages are married. Only in New Hampshire is the minimum age fixed by statute at 18 years.<sup>23</sup>

The period of delay before marriage has been instituted by only one-third of the rural States but by more than one-half of the urban States. The rural States taking this precaution against hasty and unwise marriages of young people are Georgia, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, and West Virginia; the urban States are California, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, and Wisconsin.

The limited data available for the depression years indicate that in spite of fluctuations in rates the fundamental factors in the marriage situation of rural youth have remained about the same. Rural youth do marry at a somewhat earlier age on the average than urban youth; but this is associated with the cultural pattern in rural areas where early marriage is socially approved. It is also a well-known fact that early marriages are characteristic of the lower economic groups and hence of the groups with the lowest standards of living and the most limited educational attainments. Because such large proportions of rural youth are underprivileged in these respects, a high rate of mar-

<sup>19</sup> California, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island.

<sup>20</sup> Arizona, Kansas, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

<sup>21</sup> Colorado, Florida, Maryland, Missouri, New Jersey, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin.

<sup>22</sup> Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

<sup>23</sup> Heisterman, Carl A., "Marriage Laws," *Social Work Year Book*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1933, pp. 276-278. These and other data on marriage laws were brought up to date, October 1937, by the Legal Section of the Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C.



*Resettlement Administration (Lange).*

*What Is Their Chance for Security?*



*Resettlement Administration (Shahn).*

*Perplexed Young Parents.*

riage naturally occurs. Yet these youth have such limited economic opportunities that they face appalling handicaps in their efforts to attain a reasonable economic base for family life.

The factors which are associated with early marriage are also conducive to high birth rates. It is not only the lowest economic groups in general but these groups in rural areas in particular which are contributing far more than their proportionate share of births. Modern methods of birth control are as yet little known in most rural areas. Moreover, it is in such areas, where economic need is greatest and birth rates are highest, that opposition to artificial family limitation is strongest.

The inevitable result of having a large proportion of rural youth married, with the attendant high birth rate, is increased population pressure on submarginal land areas and hence an increase in the number of economically marginal and submarginal families. Under conditions which might provide a satisfactory minimum standard of living for small families, the economic situation of large families becomes intolerable. Hence this is a vicious circle in which poverty begets poverty.

Escape by migrating to better land or through industrial opportunity is becoming possible for a constantly decreasing proportion of rural young people. Consequently, it has been observed in some mountainous areas that a new cabin is built by a young couple farther up the hollow where there are already too many cabins, and another family is started on its tragic cycle.

The situation is not limited to farm youth. Through their high marriage rate rural-nonfarm youth are augmenting the number of families on the poverty level in rural-industrial areas just as are farm youth in submarginal open country areas. The fact cannot be too strongly emphasized that rural youth need guidance and assistance under present circumstances in making the economic and personal adjustments associated with successful family life.





# Chapter V

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## THE USE OF LEISURE TIME

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**T**HE CONSTRUCTIVE use of leisure time is of more importance to the individual during youth than during any other equal number of years of his life. Social adjustments that have permanent consequences to the individual are largely made through the social and recreational activities of these years. Such activities follow three general lines: (1) participation in the programs of the institutions and organizations of the community, such as the church, the Farm Bureau, and the Grange; (2) recreation through organized community facilities, such as community houses, playgrounds, and swimming pools; and (3) spontaneous group and individual activities, such as reading, dancing, visiting, fishing, or going to motion picture shows. It is important that youth have the opportunity to secure adequate recreation through these three channels. Crime, to say nothing of restricted personalities, is too often the result of inadequate recreational facilities.

### RURAL CHANGE AND THE USE OF LEISURE TIME

Within recent years a number of forces active in rural life have brought about great changes in the kinds of recreation in which rural youth indulge. Among these the most important are: (1) the breakdown of the social solidarity of old neighborhoods and communities; (2) new methods of transportation and communication with the consequent more intensive contact with the city; (3) the expansion of commercialized forms of recreation, such as dance halls, roadhouses, and movies, in rural areas; and (4) the increase of rural recreational activities. Along with these forces has come an increasing belief in the value of recreation, although rural communities have been much slower than urban communities to recognize the need for leisure-time activities planned solely for pleasure. In some rural areas marriage is still "frequently accepted as the end of 'good times',"<sup>1</sup> but this idea is now much less widespread than it once was.

<sup>1</sup> Frayser, Mary E., *The Use of Leisure in Selected Rural Areas of South Carolina*, Bulletin 263, South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Clemson, S. C., March 1930, p. 58.

The community of 25 years ago, now largely disorganized <sup>2</sup> and in a state of change, provided the means of recreation in its natural environment and institutional life and exercised rather sharp approval or disapproval of what youth might do. Leisure-time pleasures of youth were closely associated with the family and the activities about the farm. Family recreation consisted on the one hand of games, practical jokes, and "roughhouse," and on the other hand of associations with friends and neighbors. Hunting and fishing were both individual and neighborhood affairs. Opportunities for the association of young men and young women were provided through visiting and the assemblages of the community institutions.

The church performed a distinct function as a social and recreational institution, although its supporters frequently would have resented such an implication. Young people went to church and attended church suppers and other events in order to be together. Seasons of protracted meetings provided the approved social and psychological settings for the association of the sexes. The spelling bees of the school, the programs of the old literary societies, and the special activities of the Grange were all very important in the lives of the youth. In a social and recreational way the community was a closed corporation. Its standards of conduct brooked little variation; the behavior of individuals followed socially approved patterns.

The rural community is no longer a closed unit. Its boundaries have been broken. Its institutions and organizations have changed. In many cases the rural churches have died. Some schools have declined and others have been consolidated. Economic and educational organizations, such as the cooperatives and the clubs that cooperate with the extension services of the States, have arisen in community life.

Probably the automobile and motion pictures have been the most potent forces in changing community boundaries and in expanding the social and recreational activities of young people. Isolation no longer exists for the rural youth who has the use of an automobile; he has access to the best that Hollywood produces. How many of the 15,273 motion picture theaters in the United States in January 1935 <sup>3</sup> were in definitely rural areas or what proportion of the weekly attendance consisted of rural youth is not known, but young people from the country frequently drive many miles to participate in this

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<sup>2</sup> See Melvin, Bruce L., *The Sociology of a Village and the Surrounding Territory*, Bulletin 523, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, N. Y., May 1931.

<sup>3</sup> *The 1935 Film Daily Year Book of Motion Pictures*, p. 762. The number of theaters has decreased during the depression. In 1931 there were 22,731 theaters according to Steiner, Jesse F., "Recreation and Leisure Time Activities," *Recent Social Trends*, New York: Whittlesey House, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1934, p. 940. In 1930 the weekly attendance was estimated at 100,000,000.

form of diversion. Moreover, the automobile is itself a form of social life since "just riding around" is now one of the important types of recreation for a large number of youth.<sup>4</sup>

The growth of transportation facilities has also been a major factor in developing commercialized forms of amusement other than motion pictures in rural areas. Casual observation attests to the fact that the dance hall, the tavern, the roadhouse, all of varied type and cost, are now scattered on main roads throughout wide stretches of rural territory. Whether these places are attended primarily by the young people from the cities or from the country is an open question. But inevitably they must influence the leisure-time activities of rural young people.

The radio, too, has frequently invaded the most isolated homes. "Popular dance orchestras no longer furnish entertainment to their immediate patrons alone; their reputations are national; their music is relayed to the most distant places \* \* \*; the people throughout the entire country may hear the roar of the crowd and share in the thrill of great sporting events \* \* \*."<sup>5</sup>

Aside from the extension of commercialized recreational facilities, such facilities as public parks, playgrounds, swimming pools, and community and recreational centers have recently been greatly expanded in both rural and urban territory. The proportionate distribution of these facilities in rural areas cannot be determined, but definite effort has been made through the programs of the various Federal emergency agencies to enrich rural life by making available some of the facilities for wholesome recreation which are taken for granted by city dwellers. Casual observation of empty swimming pools and unfrequented community halls in some rural sections raises a legitimate doubt, however, regarding the extent to which these new facilities were bolstered by an adequate community organization to foster their proper utilization.

In view of the numerous changes that are influencing rural society, there arise certain fundamental questions which help define more

<sup>4</sup> Substantiating data will appear in a forthcoming monograph by Melvin, Bruce L. and Smith, Elna N., *Youth in Agricultural Villages*, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C. See also Frayser, Mary E., *The Play and Recreation of Children and Youth in Selected Rural Areas of South Carolina*, Bulletin 275, South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Clemson, S. C., June 1931, p. 34.

<sup>5</sup> Steiner, Jesse F., *op. cit.*, pp. 941-942. For more detailed treatment of the subject by the same author, see *Americans at Play*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1933.

The study in four rural counties in South Carolina showed that in 1931 "Radio sets were found in relatively few of the homes of the young white people \* \* \*." See Frayser, Mary E., *The Play and Recreation of Children and Youth in Selected Rural Areas of South Carolina*, *op. cit.*, p. 20. This is undoubtedly not general since radios are widespread in the farm homes of good land areas.

clearly the problem of youth's expenditure of leisure time. Are the youth of low-income families able to take advantage of the new opportunities for social and recreational life? Are rural institutions and agencies providing opportunities for social life and recreation for rural youth by performing deliberately functions which they once performed in the course of their regular activities? Are rural youth being regimented and standardized in their leisure-time activities so that the spontaneity that once accompanied rural recreation is being lost? And if so, does it matter, or is it even desirable?

#### PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH IN RURAL ORGANIZATIONS

Data on the activities of rural youth yield a few tenable conclusions. In the first place communities have not been sufficiently aware of the social and recreational needs of youth. In the second place a great mass of rural youth are in no way participating in the work or programs—social, recreational, or otherwise—of such community institutions and organizations as have been developed. These statements may require slight modification in view of the activities of the various emergency agencies in recent years, but by and large they still hold.

The church probably has more youth in its membership than any other rural institution, but it is doubtful if it is reaching many youth in a social and recreational way. In Virginia it was estimated that less than 20 percent of the rural young people between 15 and 24 years of age were being reached by young people's religious organizations.<sup>6</sup>

The role of the church in a community's social and recreational life, however, seems to be variously interpreted. Fewer than a dozen of all the churches in 140 villages studied in 1936 had well-rounded programs of recreation, adult education, or welfare. In one of the villages studied "a socially-minded pastor, concerned over the obvious revolt of youth against moral conventions and mores, initiated a program of activities and discussion for the young people of the community. To compete with roadhouses, weekly dances were included. The response of the youth was almost unanimous. Immediately, quite unanimous opposition arose from the other churches. Proselyting was charged. The program was, therefore, discontinued; and the youth problem rapidly assumed more serious proportions. In another village, a young people's program in a well-equipped community building was offered to the WPA recreation officials; but the building was closed and the program discontinued when it was discovered that WPA leadership meant that persons of any church could be admitted."<sup>7</sup>

The extent of church attendance and membership varies greatly with

<sup>6</sup> Hamilton, C. Horace and Garnett, W. E., *The Role of the Church in Rural Community Life in Virginia*, Bulletin 267, Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, Blacksburg, Va., June 1929, p. 88.

<sup>7</sup> Brunner, Edmund deS. and Lorge, Irving, *Rural Trends in Depression Years*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1937, pp. 314-315.



*Farm Security Administration (Shahn).*

*When Urban Amusements Come to Rural Communities.*



the locality. In Douglas County, Wis., about 40 percent of the young people reported attending church and 27.5 percent were members.<sup>8</sup> These proportions were lower than those for the other Wisconsin counties where youth surveys were conducted. In these counties almost 40 percent of the youth were church members and a slightly larger percent attended church services and church functions.<sup>9</sup> In parts of rural Ohio the church seems to play a larger role in the lives of the young people. Practically two-thirds of 300 young people interviewed replied that they held a church membership, but the survey also showed that outside of church and Sunday school their organizational affiliations were very meager.<sup>10</sup> Even higher percentages for participation in church activities were reported in Iowa,<sup>11</sup> in Genesee County, N. Y.,<sup>12</sup> and in Connecticut.<sup>13</sup> No doubt still higher percentages would be reported for youth in the rural South were comprehensive data available for youth separate from adults. One study in South Carolina, for example, showed that church attendance ranged from 90 to 100 percent for young people between the ages of 14 and 21.<sup>14</sup>

Some studies point out that more girls than boys attend church, and there are indications that the church, as well as other community organizations, plays a part in the lives of more village than open country young people.<sup>15</sup> An exception to this generalization appears

<sup>8</sup> Wileden, A. F., *What Douglas County Young People Want and What They Are Doing About It*, Rural Youth and Rural Life Series, Extension Service, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis., December 1935, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Kirkpatrick, E. L. and Boynton, Agnes M., *Interests and Needs of Rural Youth in Wood County, Wisconsin*, Rural Youth and Rural Life Series, Extension Service, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis., January 1936, p. 9; and Gessner, Amy A., *Young People in Taylor County*, Rural Youth and Rural Life Series, Extension Service, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis., October 1936, p. 7.

<sup>10</sup> Lively, C. E. and Miller, L. J., *Rural Young People, 16 to 24 Years of Age, A Survey of the Status and Activities of 300 Unmarried Individuals in Nine Ohio Townships*, Bulletin No. 73, Ohio State University and Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, Columbus, Ohio, July 1934, pp. 8-15. See also Johnson, Thomas H., *A Study of Rural Youth, 18 to 25 Years, Out of School and Unmarried*, College of Education, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, May 1935, pp. 12-13.

<sup>11</sup> Starrak, J. A., *A Survey of Out-of-School Rural Youth in Iowa*, Committee on Education, Iowa State Planning Board, Des Moines, Iowa, 1935, p. 10.

<sup>12</sup> Thurow, Mildred B., *Interests, Activities, and Problems of Rural Young Folk: I. Women 15 to 29 Years of Age*, Bulletin 617, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, N. Y., December 1934, p. 38.

<sup>13</sup> Brundage, A. J. and Wilson, M. C., *Situations, Problems, and Interests of Unmarried Rural Young People 16-25 Years of Age*, Extension Service Circular 239, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., April 1936, p. 25.

<sup>14</sup> Frayser, Mary E., *The Play and Recreation of Children and Youth in Selected Rural Areas of South Carolina*, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>15</sup> Punke, Harold H., "Leisure-Time Attitudes and Activities of High-School Students," *School and Society*, Vol. 43, 1936, p. 887; Kirkpatrick, E. L. and Boynton, Agnes M., *op. cit.*, p. 9; and Dennis, W. V., *Organizations Affecting Farm Youth in Locust Township, Columbia County*, Bulletin 265, Pennsylvania State College Agricultural Experiment Station, State College, Pa., June 1931, p. 38.

in New York State, however, where the greatest need for organizations is among the village and nonfarm married young people.<sup>16</sup>

Except for the church and Sunday school, organizations in rural areas have succeeded in attracting a relatively small percentage of those eligible for membership<sup>17</sup> and have often failed to meet the needs of those who did become members. One survey states that 56 percent of the young men and 46 percent of the young women who were not married did not belong to any organization, while 62 percent of the young men and 54 percent of the young women who were married indicated that they received no benefits from organizations. The young men and women out of school indicated in much larger proportion than those in school that they received no benefits from the organizations of which they were members.<sup>18</sup> One writer makes the statement in regard to a rural section of Pennsylvania that the young people "participated to a very limited extent in the organizational life of the community. The clubs, lodges, and other organizations set up by the community either were not attempting to attract the youth, or their purposes and programs were not of sufficient interest to young people."<sup>19</sup>

Scattered surveys report the membership of specific organizations. One-fourth of all the unmarried young people interviewed in Connecticut were members of the Grange.<sup>20</sup> Less than 2 percent of the young men were members of other farm organizations and less than 1 percent of the young women belonged to a home demonstration group. There are, however, no comparable data for married young people of the same age in the same locality. Communities in Iowa varied widely in the percentage of out-of-school youth belonging to organized groups, the extremes being 10 and 35 percent. Outside of

<sup>16</sup> Anderson, W. A., *Rural Youth: Activities, Interests, and Problems, I. Married Young Men and Women, 15 to 29 Years of Age*, Bulletin 649, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, N. Y., May 1936, p. 47.

<sup>17</sup> Garnett, W. E. and Seymour, Aja Clee, *Membership Relations in Community Organizations*, Bulletin 287, Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, Blacksburg, Va., June 1932, p. 22. See also Kirkpatrick, E. L., "Forgotten Farmers," *Rural America*, Vol. XI, May 1933; and Frayser, Mary E., *The Play and Recreation of Children and Youth in Selected Rural Areas of South Carolina*, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-26 and 65-66.

<sup>18</sup> Anderson, W. A., *Rural Youth: Activities, Interests, and Problems, II. Unmarried Young Men and Women, 15 to 29 Years of Age*, Bulletin 661, Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, N. Y., January 1937, pp. 27 and 29, and *Rural Youth: Activities, Interests, and Problems, I. Married Young Men and Women, 15 to 29 Years of Age*, *op. cit.*, p. 38. See also Sones, Ellwood, *A Study of 100 Boys and Girls in Centre County, Pennsylvania*, Master's thesis, Pennsylvania State College, State College, Pa., 1933.

<sup>19</sup> Dennis, W. V., *Social Activities of the Families in the Unionville District, Chester County, Pennsylvania*, Bulletin 286, Pennsylvania State College Agricultural Experiment Station, State College, Pa., April 1933, p. 21.

<sup>20</sup> Brundage, A. J. and Wilson, M. C., *op. cit.*, p. 26.



religious organizations (other than church and Sunday school) which claimed about 6 percent of the total, 4-H Clubs had slightly more than 4 percent, lodges had more than 2 percent, and Future Farmers of America and women's clubs each had a little more than 1 percent of the total in their memberships. Only 23 percent of the total surveyed belonged to any organized group.<sup>21</sup> There is no indication in any of these studies whether the various types of organizations were available to all of the youth surveyed.

It is possible that youth are being reached in equal proportions with other groups since the factors bringing change to rural areas are influencing the whole of the rural population as well as the youth. A recent study in Connecticut shows that "There has been a movement toward the abandonment, the realignment, and the centralization of many rural social, economic, and professional agencies, and much of this movement has been cityward."<sup>22</sup> The attractions of rural institutions may be about as great for youth as for the older population. On Muscatine Island in Iowa, for example, the few young people on the Island attended Island organization meetings in much the same proportion as did the older people.<sup>23</sup>

In Wisconsin the extension program in community activities, including drama, discussion, music, and recreation, was analyzed to find what age groups were furnishing the leadership. This survey comprised a sample of 383 of the 1,500 volunteer local and county leaders of all ages working on all of the various phases of this project. The age group furnishing the greatest proportion of leaders was assumed also to be providing the greatest proportion of participants. It was found that about 50 percent of the drama leaders and about 31 percent of the discussion leaders were in the 15 to 30 age group. This is significant when we find that only about 25 percent of the rural-farm population and 22 percent of the rural-nonfarm population in Wisconsin fall in this 15 to 30 age class. These figures indicate that this kind of program as a whole in Wisconsin is reaching youth 15 to 30 years of age more extensively than it reaches any other corresponding age group.<sup>24</sup>

Youth's participation in social organizations apparently depends to a large extent on two factors: economic status and educational attainment. In Pennsylvania it was found that the children of farm owners

<sup>21</sup> Starrak, J. A., *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>22</sup> Hypes, J. L., *Social Participation in a Rural New England Town*, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City, 1927, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> Wakeley, Ray E. and Losey, J. Edwin, *Rural Organizations and Land Utilization on Muscatine Island: A Study of Social Adjustments*, Bulletin 352, Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station, Ames, Iowa, December 1936, p. 103.

<sup>24</sup> Wileden, A. F., "'Neglected' Youth—What About Them?" *Rural America*, Vol. XII, May 1934, p. 10.

had more varied and more extensive social activities than the children of farm tenants and laborers. The latter had very little share in the organized social life of the community.<sup>25</sup> Although data on the relationship of education to social participation are not available for youth separately, it is likely that the relationship is the same as for groups composed of all ages. In Illinois it was found that the participation of farm people in community activities was directly related to the extent of their formal schooling. While 90 percent of the high school graduates took an active part in the organizations of which they were members, only 60 percent of those with less than an eighth grade education were active members. Voluntary organizations, such as the church, farm and home bureau, 4-H Clubs, cooperatives, social clubs, and lodges, drew their support chiefly from the most stable members of the community, farm owners who stayed on the same farm over a long period of years and who had at least some high school education.<sup>26</sup>

In certain selected rural areas of South Carolina there appeared to be a more or less close relationship between educational attainment and economic status and the types and uses of leisure. The disparity was especially marked between Negroes and whites.<sup>27</sup> Even the church does not serve all occupational groups equally. According to conclusions drawn from one Virginia study, farm and labor groups "either do not care to participate in church activities as much as other groups or [they] do not have the advantage of as much or as efficient church service as do other occupational groups."<sup>28</sup> A survey of the community participation of a relatively immobile group of hired farm laborers in 11 selected counties yielded the conclusion that they did not participate in organizations to any appreciable extent but that they did take some part in the social and informal community life, such as visiting, motion pictures, religious meetings, and shopping trips.<sup>29</sup>

In Arkansas it was found that age and automobile ownership had more effect upon the participation of farm people at religious, social, and recreational events than any other factors tested. "When other things were equal, youth and automobiles each multiplied attendance by three. If age and automobile ownership had been the same in each tenure class, there would have been no significant differences between the attendance of farm owners, tenants, and laborers. As it was, however, farm owners attended 2.5 times as often as laborers and 1.4

<sup>25</sup> Dennis, W. V., *op. cit.*, p. 22. See also Lindstrom, D. E., *Forces Affecting Participation of Farm People in Rural Organization*, Bulletin 423, Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station, Urbana, Ill., May 1936, pp. 103 and 110.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 110 and 125.

<sup>27</sup> Frayser, Mary E., *The Use of Leisure in Selected Rural Areas of South Carolina*, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-80.

<sup>28</sup> Hamilton, C. Horace and Garnett, W. E., *op. cit.*, p. 97.

<sup>29</sup> Vasey, Tom and Folsom, Josiah C., *Survey of Agricultural Labor Conditions*, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Security Administration and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Washington, D. C., 1937.



*Works Progress Administration.*

*A Village Joint.*

DEPT. OF  
CALIFORNIA



times as often as tenants.”<sup>30</sup> In one section the highest attendance rate at religious, social, and recreational events was found among members of farm owners’ families under 25 years of age with automobiles, and the lowest rate was among members of farm laborers’ families under 25 years of age without automobiles.<sup>31</sup> Thus, social stratification may play a major role in determining the recreational opportunities of rural youth.

Organizational life for youth is particularly limited in poor land areas, such as the Blue Ridge, Cumberland, and Allegheny Plateaus,<sup>32</sup> and in other parts of the South.<sup>33</sup> In some of these communities the only social contacts are those obtained at church gatherings and funerals and through informal house-to-house visits. In one community it was deemed inadvisable to have social gatherings of young people because of the drinking of the young men.<sup>34</sup> In many sections of the country youth are passing into maturity after having had little influence exerted upon them by the regularly established institutions and organizations of rural life.

The foregoing discussion very largely applies to the social and recreational participation of farm youth. Limited data suggest that conditions vary so widely in the rural-nonfarm population that specific generalizations may be made only about particular groups. Thus, in agricultural villages youth who are in high school on the whole engage in numerous social and recreational activities both within and without the school. Those out of school, however, show a very low degree of social participation in comparison with those in school.<sup>35</sup> There seems to be a decided drop in the participation of youth in social and recreational activities when their school careers close.

Among the youth of part-time farming families, who may be considered rural-nonfarm from some points of view, a fairly high

<sup>30</sup> McCormick, T. C., *Rural Social Organization in the Rice Area*, Bulletin No. 296, Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station, Fayetteville, Ark., December 1933, pp. 37-38. See also McCormick, T. C., *Rural Social Organization in Washington County, Arkansas*, Bulletin No. 285, Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station, Fayetteville, Ark., May 1933, pp. 37-40, and *Rural Social Organization in South-Central Arkansas*, Bulletin No. 313, Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station, Fayetteville, Ark., December 1934, pp. 29-34.

<sup>31</sup> McCormick, T. C., *Rural Social Organization in South-Central Arkansas*, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

<sup>32</sup> Garnett, W. E., in *Economic and Social Problems and Conditions of the Southern Appalachians*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 205, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., January 1935, p. 164.

<sup>33</sup> Raper, Arthur F., *Preface to Peasantry*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936, chs. XVIII, XIX, and XX. See also McCormick, T. C., *Farm Standards of Living in Faulkner County, Arkansas*, Bulletin No. 279, Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station, Fayetteville, Ark., October 1932, pp. 9-11.

<sup>34</sup> Garnett, W. E., in *Economic and Social Problems and Conditions of the Southern Appalachians*, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

<sup>35</sup> Melvin, Bruce L. and Smith, Elna N., *op. cit.*

proportion of young people participate in such social activities as are available. In a study of part-time farming in the Southeast it was found that young people's organizations, for example, were available to 83 percent of the part-time farms with 40 percent of the families having one or more members participating in such organizations. This percent of participation was higher than for nonfarming industrial families studied in the same area, about two-fifths of whom were living in towns, villages, or the open country. Young people's organizations were available to 88 percent of the families but participated in by one or more members of only 24 percent of the families.<sup>36</sup>

#### INFORMAL LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITIES OF RURAL YOUTH

Outside of the church and other organizations found to a greater or less extent in rural territory, there is quite a gamut of activities that may absorb the leisure time of young people. These range from organized group recreation, such as athletic teams promoted by some local agency or by youth themselves, parties, and picnics, to individual activities, such as swimming, reading, and attendance at motion pictures, public dance halls, and roadhouses.

The literature presents a very confusing picture of the leisure-time pursuits of young people the country over outside of organizations. At one extreme is the statement for one section of the South: "The majority of both races find nothing to do but to sit idly around, tramp off to their neighbors, or while away the time at the store. Their houses are unattractive and their minds unstimulated."<sup>37</sup> At the other extreme is the situation among the unmarried rural youth in five Connecticut townships where the young people enjoyed social activities of a diversified character.<sup>38</sup> Attendance at movies was reported by 93 percent of this group with an average of 28 times a year. Three-fourths of the young women reported attending dances and averaged 22 dances a year, and two-thirds of the young men attended dances on an average of 26 times a year. Between these two situations lie all degrees of extent of recreational activities.

In Ohio the 10 most widespread activities reported were reading, attending shows, automobile riding, playing cards, attending parties, playing basketball, friendly visiting, listening to the radio, attending picnics, and swimming.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Allen, R. H., Cottrell, L. S., Jr., Troxell, W. W., Herring, Harriet L., and Edwards, A. D., *Part-Time Farming in the Southeast*, Research Monograph IX, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., 1937, p. 67.

<sup>37</sup> Raper, Arthur F., *op. cit.*, p. 401.

<sup>38</sup> Brundage, A. J. and Wilson, M. C., *op. cit.*, pp. 25-28.

<sup>39</sup> Lively, C. E. and Miller, L. J., *op. cit.*, p. 15. See also Kirkpatrick, E. L. and Boynton, Agnes M., *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8; Gessner, Amy A., *op. cit.*, pp. 5-7; and Anderson, W. A., *Rural Youth: Activities, Interests, and Problems, II. Unmarried Young Men and Women, 15 to 29 Years of Age*, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-23.

Recreation within the home is still of great importance. In Taylor County, Wis., where 90 percent of the young people indicated that their recreational needs were inadequately met, "Almost two-thirds of these boys and girls found some recreation in their homes \* \* \*. Homes of friends were also important agencies of recreation providing for about 45 percent of the boys and girls. The movie theater is fourth in importance as an agency of recreation."<sup>40</sup>

One important form of recreation in the home is reading but the extent to which this is indulged in varies from locality to locality. Comparable studies made in Illinois and Georgia indicate that the high school youth of Illinois spent more time reading than did the youth of Georgia while the reverse was true of attendance at athletic games.<sup>41</sup> Reading is, however, almost always high on the list of leisure-time activities,<sup>42</sup> although the type of reading matter ranges from newspapers and magazines of varying caliber to books, mostly fiction.<sup>43</sup>

Both the amount and the type of reading on the part of young people are probably largely determined by the availability of a library to any given group. That rural people are on the whole seriously handicapped by lack of library service has been long recognized by the American Library Association. In 1935 it was said that 37 percent of the Nation's population—slightly more than 45,000,000 people—were still without library service. Of these 88 percent lived in the open country or in villages of less than 2,500 population. Moreover, the 40,000,000 rural people who lived outside library service areas formed 74 percent of the total rural population. There are still more than a thousand counties in the United States without a single library within their boundaries.<sup>44</sup>

Surveys in individual States yield the same contrast in library service to rural and urban people. In South Carolina 39.6 percent of the population lived in library areas in 1930-31. But whereas 94 percent of the urban residents of the State had some kind of book service, only 25 percent of the rural people were so favored.<sup>45</sup> In Missouri almost 95 percent of the rural population receive no service from public libraries, while more than 95 percent of the urban population of the State have such service.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Gessner, Amy A., *op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>41</sup> Punke, Harold H., *op. cit.*, p. 885.

<sup>42</sup> Gessner, Amy A., *op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>43</sup> Anderson, W. A., *Rural Youth: Activities, Interests, and Problems, II. Unmarried Young Men and Women, 15 to 29 Years of Age, op. cit.*, pp. 24-26.

<sup>44</sup> "Contrasts in Library Service," *Bulletin of the American Library Association*, Vol. 29, 1935, p. 249.

<sup>45</sup> Frayser, Mary E., *The Libraries of South Carolina*, Bulletin 292, South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Clemson, S. C., October 1933, pp. 7-8.

<sup>46</sup> Morgan, E. L. and Sneed, Melvin W., *The Libraries of Missouri, A Survey of Facilities*, Research Bulletin 236, Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station, Columbia, Mo., April 1936, p. 15.

In recent years the emergency agencies have done a great deal to help equalize library service. Under the Works Progress Administration about 2,500 free libraries have been established where such services had either been discontinued or had never existed, and 2,000 traveling libraries are providing services for about half a million persons in sparsely settled rural areas, especially in Arkansas, Ohio, Virginia, Georgia, and Texas.<sup>47</sup> In this work the National Youth Administration has had an important part.<sup>48</sup>

The American Library Association indicates that at present there are about 300 tax-supported, county-wide library systems serving the people in the open country and in villages. There are also a number of experiments under way in service to areas larger than a city or county. In the last 2 years State aid for rural library development has been an important factor in building up this service.

One study shows that the leisure-time activities engaged in by both young men and young women are predominantly of the indoor passive type, such as reading, card playing, checkers, chess, and other games, and listening to the radio, but the young men stated that they would prefer to engage in more outdoor activities.<sup>49</sup> Another study also indicates a wish to shift from the more common activities to other activities for which opportunities are often largely lacking, such as tennis, swimming, boating, golf, and camping.<sup>50</sup> This lack in rural areas has been poignantly described as follows: "What I have seen has frequently saddened and distressed me. In some places the country lacks cultural privileges today quite as much as it did a century ago, and the young men and women of farming districts must look to the cities for whatever of social life and amusement and entertainment it is their fortune to purchase. As long as this is the case we cannot make a well balanced race of agriculturalists; we cannot make of country life a life worth living."<sup>51</sup> That lack of opportunities for wholesome recreation is particularly acute in the poor land areas, where there is a "surplus" of youth, is a matter of common observation.

There is a more hopeful side, however. In the 1936 report of the Youth Section of the American Country Life Association the young people stated that "Wiser use of leisure, including recreational programs, activities and facilities seems to be an outstanding need in the

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<sup>47</sup> Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, *Report on Progress of the Works Program, June 1937*, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., p. 61.

<sup>48</sup> National Youth Administration, *Facing the Problems of Youth*, Washington, D. C., December 1936, pp. 27-28.

<sup>49</sup> Anderson, W. A., *Rural Youth: Activities, Interests, and Problems, II. Unmarried Young Men and Women, 15 to 29 Years of Age*, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>50</sup> Hubbard, Frank W., "Today's Youth Problems," *The Journal of the National Education Association*, Vol. 25, 1936, p. 21.

<sup>51</sup> Beattie, Jessie Louise, "Recreation Experiments in Rural Communities," *Recreation*, Vol. XXIX, 1936, p. 537.





*American Library Association.*

*Bringing Books to Rural Youth.*



local community \* \* \*.”<sup>52</sup> This group recommended the development of various forms of group recreation already carried on successfully in different communities, such as softball leagues; drama and music festivals; folk games and songs; development of art appreciation; hobbies, such as marionettes, metalcraft, and weaving; and discussion and other educational meetings.<sup>53</sup> In some instances the depression has caused rural people, especially youth, to use their initiative in developing recreational activities at home.<sup>54</sup> “With the depression has come almost universally a home talent, home-grown social and recreational life the like of which we have not seen for decades. A little checking up indicates that this program is manned and participated in largely by young people themselves.”<sup>55</sup>

While the lack of adequate facilities or programs for wholesome recreation is no doubt partially due to the lack of financial resources in an area, it is not infrequently due to the lack of awareness in communities of the recreational needs of youth. It is often assumed that youth will adopt the practices of adults. The fact that the young people have not accepted the adult patterns of recreation and use of leisure time does not seem to have discouraged community leaders in adhering to this belief. The recreational interests of young people need to be studied as a problem in community organization, and an effort should be made to find ways and means of interesting them in activities that at least will not be harmful.<sup>56</sup> This would apply with equal force to communities that have been overrun with cheap commercial types of recreation and to communities where drunkenness and disorder accompany such social activities as are attempted.<sup>57</sup>

#### CRIME AND DELINQUENCY IN RURAL AREAS

Urban studies of youth have revealed that the key to the problems of many young people lies in the use they make of their leisure hours.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>52</sup> *Education for Living in the Rural Community*, National Conference, Student Section, American Country Life Association, Kalamazoo, Mich., August 10-13, 1936, p. 2.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>54</sup> The part that the social and recreational program sponsored by the Works Progress Administration has played in meeting the needs of rural youth during the depression is discussed briefly in ch. VI.

<sup>55</sup> Wileden, A. F., “What Kind of Rural Life Have Young People Reason to Expect in the United States?” speech at Ninth National 4-H Club Camp, Washington, D. C., June 13, 1935, p. 4.

<sup>56</sup> Hoffer, C. R., “Youth as an Object of Sociological Study,” *Sociology and Social Research*, Vol. XX, 1936, p. 420.

<sup>57</sup> Gooch, Wilbur I. and Keller, Franklin J., “Breathitt County in the Southern Appalachians,” *Occupations*, Vol. XIV, 1936, pp. 1011-1110.

<sup>58</sup> Thrasher, Frederic M., *The Gang*, 2d ed., Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1936, p. 79.

It has also been found that the wholesome use of leisure time plays an important role in preventing crime and delinquency. There is no reason to believe that this relationship is any less effective in rural than in urban areas.

The frequency of youthful crime is appalling. J. Edgar Hoover says "Persons who are little more than children form one-fifth of our most dangerous heritage. It appears inconceivable; yet it is a stark fact that our misguided boys and girls are thieving, robbing, holding up banks and stores, and shooting down employees, proprietors and the police who attempt to capture them."<sup>59</sup> In 1934 the United States Census Bureau gathered information from 116 State and Federal prisons, reformatories, and camps and found that 20 percent of the total commitments were under 21 years of age.<sup>60</sup> From 1932 through 1934 the number of youth 19 years of age arrested outnumbered any other age group, but in the last half of 1935 youth 21-23 years of age constituted the largest number. The single age group having the largest number of arrests during 1936 and the first quarter of 1937 was the 22-year-olds.<sup>61</sup>

Crimes of youth were on the increase during the early part of the depression. According to one statement the number of youth below 21 sent to reformatories and prisons was 11 percent greater in 1930 than in 1929, and for those 21 to 24 years of age the increase was more than 15 percent.<sup>62</sup> The survey of youthful crime in Breathitt County, Ky., confirms the fact of an increase for that particular section of mountainous territory.<sup>63</sup>

Table 24 seems to show that youthful crime measured by the number of young people received by Federal and State prisons and reformatories from the courts increased through 1931 but that thereafter there was a consistent decline for all ages until 1935 when those 20 years of age and 21-24 years of age showed a slight increase. While these figures do not by any means measure the extent of criminality among youth,<sup>64</sup> they are useful in indicating the trend.

A number of attempts have been made in the past to discover whether or not there was any relation between crime and economic conditions. These studies and the few studies on the depression of

<sup>59</sup> Speech at a Boys' Club dinner, Chicago, Ill., November 9, 1936.

<sup>60</sup> Johnston, James A., "The First Line of Defense," *School and Society*, Vol. 44, 1936, p. 43.

<sup>61</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports*, U. S. Department of Justice, Washington, D. C., Second Quarterly Bulletin, 1936, pp. 82-83, and First Quarterly Bulletin, 1937, p. 39.

<sup>62</sup> Office of Education, *Vocational Education and Changing Conditions*, Bulletin No. 174, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C., 1934, p. 82.

<sup>63</sup> Gooch, Wilbur I. and Keller, Franklin J., *op. cit.*, p. 1052.

<sup>64</sup> Shalloo, J. P., "Youth and Crime," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 194, November 1937, p. 81.

the early thirties were recently summarized.<sup>65</sup> The conclusion drawn was that on the whole there appears to be little correlation between crime and economic conditions.

Difference of opinion exists in regard to the prevalence of crime among youth in rural territory. One authority believes that conditions in rural areas are more serious than statistics would indicate.<sup>66</sup> Attorney General Lutz of Indiana asserts that "there is more crime in proportion in the country than in the city; that arch criminals learn their first lessons of crime in the country, for instance, John Dillinger \* \* \*."<sup>67</sup> On the other hand, studies in five institutions located in California, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio, and New York, exclusive of New York City, indicate that crime in rural communities is not as great as in urban centers.<sup>68</sup>

**Table 24.**—Prisoners 15 Through 24 Years of Age Received From Courts by Federal and State Prisons and Reformatories, 1929-1935

Age	Rate per 100,000 population of same age <sup>1</sup>						
	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935
15-17 years.....	44.8	46.1	49.3	41.0	37.9	39.4	37.9
18 years.....	146.4	154.1	164.5	150.5	138.0	138.6	130.0
19 years.....	180.1	194.5	207.8	199.3	174.0	168.2	165.9
20 years.....	166.8	187.7	210.2	183.9	170.7	155.0	165.7
15-20 years.....	103.9	111.5	120.9	108.6	98.7	96.3	95.5
21-24 years.....	152.8	171.2	193.6	184.7	167.0	155.8	159.2

<sup>1</sup> Calculations based on population July 1, of each successive year estimated by the Bureau of the Census.

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Prisoners in State and Federal Prisons and Reformatories*, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1929-1935.

The types of crime most prevalent in urban and rural areas appear to differ significantly. Of the rural arrests reported for the first quarter of 1937, 10.5 percent were offenses against the person (homicide, rape, aggravated assault) but only 4.2 percent of urban crimes were of this type.<sup>69</sup> It is well to remember, however, that rural areas are not policed as adequately as the more populous areas; hence only the most serious crimes are brought to justice. These would most likely be offenses against the person. In cities the proportionate

<sup>65</sup> Sellin, Thorsten, *Research Memorandum on Crime in the Depression*, Bulletin 27, New York: Social Science Research Council, 1937, ch. III.

<sup>66</sup> Letter from L. J. Carr, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich., May 6, 1936.

<sup>67</sup> Lutz, Philip, Jr., "Cooperation in Curbing Crime on Indiana Farms," radio address, February 13, 1936. Obtained from Attorney General's Office, Indianapolis, Ind. See also Thompson, Dave, "Farm Stealing Must Stop!" *The Prairie Farmer* (Indiana edition), Vol. 108, February 29, 1936, pp. 1-2.

<sup>68</sup> Bowler, Alida C. and Bloodgood, Ruth S., *Institutional Treatment of Delinquent Boys*, Bureau Publication No. 230, U. S. Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, 1936, Part 2, p. 35.

<sup>69</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports*, *op. cit.*, First Quarterly Bulletin, 1937, p. 14.

percentage is decreased by the greater frequency of other types of crimes.

Generalizations from much of the statistical data are extremely questionable because of variations in legal practice. A study conducted near Nashville, Tenn., in an agricultural county containing a small town shows that most of the juvenile cases up to a certain degree of seriousness had been settled by the judge and the families involved and not even a record was kept unless a commitment was made. But when psychiatrists and social workers were brought in they made the local leader conscious that there was a youthful crime problem.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, definitions of crimes are inconsistent. In a west Tennessee county chicken stealing is a crime but drawing a knife on another person is not. Thus delinquency is largely a function of the cultural pattern of a community.<sup>71</sup>

When this is recognized, as well as the fact that much of the crime in rural sections, as in urban, may be explicable in terms of under-privilege, obviously the major methods of attack will be through education and personal and vocational guidance. This was perceived by the workers on the Child Welfare Survey of Missouri<sup>72</sup> who repeatedly pointed out that youth and children in particular rural counties were in need of supervision and guidance because of behavior problems.

Surveys of youthful crime in rural territory indicate that the solution lies largely in providing better economic opportunities, guidance for living, and provisions for wholesome social expression of maturing personalities through participation in organizations and through satisfying recreation. Furthermore, conditions of rural living outside the areas that are strongly affected by urban influences seem to provide values that are the antithesis of crime.<sup>73</sup> A recognized method of combating youthful crime whether in rural areas or city centers is the provision of wholesome social and recreational life.

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<sup>70</sup> Reckless, Walter C., "Juvenile Delinquency and Behavior Patterning," *Proceedings, Second Biennial Meeting, Society for Research in Child Development*, National Research Council, Washington, D. C., October 31, 1936.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> Child Welfare Survey conducted by the Civil Works Administration in 1934 in a number of rural counties in Missouri.

<sup>73</sup> Mann, A. R., "Some Foundations for a Philosophy of Country Life," *Rural America*, Vol. X, June 1932, pp. 8-11; and Baker, O. E., *Farming as a Life Work*, Extension Service Circular 224, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., October 1935, p. 6.

## Chapter VI

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### MEETING THE PROBLEMS OF RURAL YOUTH

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**V**ARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS are expanding and adjusting their programs to aid in solving the problems of rural youth. The most important agency in rural society whose function has been, and still is, to prepare youth to make their adjustments into adult life is the public school. The school, like other agencies, has been expanding its program. Since chapter III is devoted to a discussion of the problems of education with emphasis on the public schools, however, attention is focused in this chapter on the special activities of agencies directed primarily toward meeting the needs of out-of-school young people.<sup>1</sup> These agencies, both governmental and nongovernmental, are performing valuable service in pointing out new paths to follow in assisting youth to meet the many problems with which they are confronted in the present-day world.

The major concern of this chapter is not with the number and proportion of rural youth being reached by the various agencies but rather with the type of work that is being promoted. Furthermore, activities designed to help rural youth have been studied with specific attention to the fact that the complex situation confronting rural youth is not a phenomenon of the depression of the early thirties alone and that remedial measures must be designed to meet the long-time situation.

#### GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

Both old and newly established governmental agencies are taking special cognizance of the problems of out-of-school rural youth and have developed constructive programs to meet some phases of their problems. Probably more than 7,000,000 young men and women,

<sup>1</sup> The U. S. Office of Education in cooperation with the States fulfills an important function in teaching vocational education in the Smith-Hughes high schools (see ch. III). The organization, Future Farmers of America, is also discussed in chapter III since membership is restricted to boys who are or have been enrolled in vocational agricultural courses in federally-aided high schools.

16 through 24 years of age, living in rural territory, are out of school.<sup>2</sup> Youth in school are occupied and, on the whole, may be said to be adjusted. With leaving school, either through graduation or by dropping out, there comes the anxious period of striving to find a place in the economic world. At least two regular agencies—the Cooperative Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture and of the State colleges of agriculture and the federally-aided high schools with regular courses in vocational agriculture—and three emergency agencies—the Civilian Conservation Corps, the National Youth Administration, and the Education Division of the Works Progress Administration—have performed special educational functions for out-of-school youth during the depression as well as providing their regular programs of work. The Office of Education in the Department of the Interior has done much to promote the cause of education for this group.

Education is not the only channel, however, through which services are available to rural youth to help them meet their problems of adjustment and development. The Works Progress Administration, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, and the Resettlement Administration have been playing important roles in this respect but in such a way that it is very difficult to differentiate the particular benefits accruing to youth from those received by the general population. The United States Employment Service attempts to find jobs for youth as well as for their elders. The Farm Credit Administration has tried to help youth in a financial way. All of these agencies have been accumulating experience along various lines that should be of great value in formulating future policies and programs.

#### Cooperative Extension Service

The Cooperative Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture and of the State colleges of agriculture promotes its work for youth through the 4-H Club program and through organizations for young adults. The membership of the 4-H Club begins with boys and girls 10 years of age and includes about 1,000,000 young people below 21 years of age. Only 20 percent of the total membership is composed of youth 16 years of age and over,<sup>3</sup> and apparently there is no tendency for the proportion in this age group to increase.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> According to the 1930 Census (Population Vol. II, pp. 1184-1185) 22.6 percent of the rural youth 16-24 years of age were in school. Applying this percentage, even though it is conservative, to the estimated number of rural youth in 1935 (table 9) yields more than 2,000,000 of the almost 10,000,000 rural youth in school.

<sup>3</sup> Calculated from figures for 1935 provided through the courtesy of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Cooperative Extension Service, Washington, D. C.

<sup>4</sup> Joy, Barnard D., *Statistical Analysis of Trends in 4-H Club Work, With Special Reference to 1935*, Extension Service Circular 247, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., August 1936, p. 16.





*Extension Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture.*

*A Typical 4-H Club Project.*



Furthermore, an analysis of the 4-H Club members 16-20 years of age shows that the out-of-school youth are not being reached proportionally since more than two-thirds of the members of this age are in school while only approximately one-third of the rural young people 16-20 years of age are in school.<sup>5</sup>

The 4-H Club work is organized primarily for boys and girls whose families make their living from agriculture<sup>6</sup> and largely fails to reach the nonfarm segment of the youth population. Moreover, if the situation in Illinois is typical, it draws its members primarily from the homes having the greater economic and social advantages,<sup>7</sup> thus not serving the lower income groups. Apparently, difficulty has been encountered in developing a program of 4-H Club work which appeals to youth above the sixteenth year except to those in positions of leadership.<sup>8</sup>

The failure of the 4-H Club program to hold rural youth in the upper age group has caused the extension service to promote a program outside the 4-H Clubs especially designed to appeal to this age. The work thus far is largely in the experimental stage. The principal lines of activity have been the promotion of better farming and the development of leadership in educational and cultural guidance and in recreational activities.<sup>9</sup> In 1935 there were more than 1,800 older youth groups with an enrollment of nearly 45,000.<sup>10</sup> By 1936 the number of groups had increased to approximately 2,000 with a total enrollment of 51,000.<sup>11</sup>

These clubs are widely scattered, and the total enrollment in any one State is not large. In only 2 States, Illinois and Arkansas, was the membership more than 4,000 in 1936 (table 25). In some States the groups have arisen spontaneously while in others they have been fostered by the State extension service. It is encouraging to see that this work is being carried forward in the States with large areas of submarginal land as well as in those in which fertile farming areas predominate.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> Harris, T. L., *Four-H Club Work in West Virginia*, Bulletin 241, West Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, Morgantown, W. Va., April 1931, p. 15.

<sup>7</sup> Lindstrom, D. E. and Dawson, W. M., *Selectivity of 4-H Club Work: An Analysis of Factors Influencing Membership*, Bulletin 426, Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station, Urbana, Ill., August 1936, p. 255; and Duthie, Mary Eva, *4-H Club Work in the Life of Rural Youth*, Ph. D. thesis, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis., 1935, p. 95.

<sup>8</sup> Wileden, A. F., "'Neglected' Youth—What About Them?" *Rural America*, Vol. XII, May 1934, pp. 10-11.

<sup>9</sup> Statement by Graham, A. B., U. S. Department of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, Washington, D. C.

<sup>10</sup> Wilson, M. C., *Statistical Results of Cooperative Extension Work, 1935*, Extension Service Circular 244, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., June 1936, p. 7.

<sup>11</sup> Calculated from reports in the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Cooperative Extension Service, Washington, D. C.

**Table 25.**—Young People Reached by the Cooperative Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture Through the Older Young People's Program, by Geographic Division and State, 1936

Geographic division and State	Number of groups organized	Number of members		
		Total	Young men	Young women
United States.....	1,981	50,733	24,530	26,203
<b>New England.....</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>3,083</b>	<b>1,450</b>	<b>1,633</b>
Maine.....	3	108	34	74
New Hampshire.....	20	452	220	232
Vermont.....	14	1,043	476	567
Massachusetts.....	11	755	333	422
Rhode Island.....	4	88	35	53
Connecticut.....	19	637	352	285
<b>Middle Atlantic.....</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>2,108</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>908</b>
New York.....	39	1,268	777	491
New Jersey.....	14	238	102	136
Pennsylvania.....	28	602	321	281
<b>East North Central.....</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>13,990</b>	<b>7,341</b>	<b>6,649</b>
Ohio.....	62	3,530	1,825	1,705
Indiana.....	66	2,401	1,190	1,211
Illinois.....	92	6,029	2,992	3,037
Michigan.....	27	736	444	292
Wisconsin.....	62	1,294	890	404
<b>West North Central.....</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>5,813</b>	<b>2,791</b>	<b>3,022</b>
Minnesota.....	35	1,148	606	542
Iowa.....	40	1,912	980	932
Missouri.....	24	614	308	306
North Dakota.....	41	772	165	607
South Dakota.....	3	145	92	53
Nebraska.....	10	161	71	90
Kansas.....	32	1,061	569	492
<b>South Atlantic.....</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>10,770</b>	<b>4,507</b>	<b>6,263</b>
Delaware.....	3	90	43	47
Maryland.....	26	751	356	395
Virginia.....	65	1,256	285	971
West Virginia.....	87	1,920	954	966
North Carolina.....	91	1,790	762	1,028
South Carolina.....	40	600	233	267
Georgia.....	203	3,894	1,732	2,162
Florida.....	56	569	142	427
<b>East South Central.....</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>4,761</b>	<b>2,110</b>	<b>2,651</b>
Kentucky.....	46	914	467	447
Tennessee.....	53	1,398	642	756
Alabama.....	26	613	198	415
Mississippi.....	119	1,836	803	1,033
<b>West South Central.....</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>8,373</b>	<b>4,363</b>	<b>4,010</b>
Arkansas.....	268	5,124	2,520	2,604
Louisiana.....	9	446	204	242
Oklahoma.....	32	1,704	798	906
Texas.....	98	1,099	841	258
<b>Mountain.....</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>1,506</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>935</b>
Montana.....	9	226	109	117
Idaho.....	6	68	68	—
Wyoming.....	3	43	11	32
Colorado.....	6	59	18	41
New Mexico.....	42	581	211	370
Arizona.....	—	—	—	—
Utah.....	32	517	149	368
Nevada.....	1	12	5	7
<b>Pacific.....</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>132</b>
Washington.....	2	33	10	23
Oregon.....	5	103	64	39
California.....	7	193	123	70

Source: U. S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Cooperative Extension Service, Division of Extension Studies, Washington, D. C.

There is at the present time a committee known as the Older Rural Youth Committee of the Extension Section of the Land-Grant College Association whose duty it is to promote the organization of such groups. It is the policy of this committee to "help young people to analyze their own problems and to formulate their own programs." In accordance with this position the committee recently made the

following suggestions to the several States:<sup>12</sup>

- (1) At present, our primary interest should be with young men and women who are out of school, at home on farms, and are not yet married, or are not farming on their own account.
- (2) The Director of Extension should appoint a college older rural youth committee.
- (3) At each college, two persons, one representing agriculture and the other home economics, should be designated by the Director as leaders for the program on older rural youth.
- (4) A few demonstration counties should be selected in each State in which to institute this program.
- (5) When there are less than 25 interested youth members in a county, a county organization should be formulated. When the number grows sufficiently to warrant them, local units may be formed.
- (6) Each unit of young persons should have its own officers, counselors, and leaders.
- (7) Two other organizations are needed: (a) a county council of officers of the local units of young people; (b) a county committee of counselors and leaders and the extension agents.
- (8) Additional studies of the interests, activities, and problems of the young people should be made."<sup>13</sup>

The diversity of approach in the various States is well characterized by the situation in the Northeastern States where "Some States are concentrating on honor clubs or outstanding 4-H members; others are broadening the field to include all farm youth, regardless of 4-H experience; and others are opening the field up to all rural youth. In some cases the young men organize separately from the young women, although provision is usually made for bringing the two groups together. Again, the approach occasionally has been along father-and-son lines."<sup>14</sup>

A few examples of the interests of these older youth groups will suffice to illustrate further the scope of the programs being promoted. In Illinois, for more than 2 years, these youth groups have been holding forum discussions on present-day problems. The development of

<sup>12</sup> From the report of the committee presented by L. R. Simons, Chairman, at the meeting of the Land-Grant College Association, Washington, D. C., November 17, 1937.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Kendall, J. C., "Integration of Extension Programs in Order to Present a Continuing Program Through 4-H Clubs, Older Youth Groups, Young Married Groups, and Adult Organizations," paper read at the Land-Grant College Association, Washington, D. C., November 17, 1937.

the programs has been largely in the hands of the young people themselves with the Extension Service offering advice and suggestions for the conduct of the meetings. In Indiana a small group has been studying methods of agricultural cooperation. In Montana the programs consist of four phases: economic and social improvement; general education, largely through the medium of group discussion; social and recreational programs for both the clubs and the community; and special community service.<sup>15</sup> The young people of Missouri have held institutes dealing with farm problems. During the winter of 1933-34 instruction in typewriting, farm and home record keeping, and amateur dramatics was given in the South Dakota clubs.<sup>16</sup> Dramatics have a prominent place in many of the young people's groups.<sup>17</sup> In the Utopia Clubs of Kentucky emphasis has been given to such projects as landscaping, farm accounts, clothing budgets, poultry, and other subjects, following the pattern of the 4-H Clubs.<sup>18</sup> Study groups also make up the bulk of the activity of the group in St. Louis County, Mo., where the members meet one night each week to study dramatics, chorus work, orchestra, English, and public speaking under instruction secured from the Adult-Education Service of the State. But social hours are also indulged in after the regular business meetings are concluded.<sup>19</sup>

Of particular promise is the direction being taken by an Iowa club. In September 1937 some of the members of the Boone County Rural Young People's Club were hosts to a group of representatives of the Boone Junior Chamber of Commerce from the county seat, Boone, a town of 12,000 inhabitants and the only one of any size in the entire county, at a meeting called for the purpose of discussing plans for cooperative community activities. A joint rural-urban committee was appointed to arrange the details of a plan of action.<sup>20</sup>

At least three States—Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri—maintain a regular service at the State college of agriculture for sending out material to assist youth in the development of programs. Fourteen States have a person attached to the extension staff of the State college of agriculture whose particular duty it is to promote these

<sup>15</sup> Extension Service, *Organization and Programs for Farm Young People*, Extension Service Circular 229, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., December 1935, p. 19.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>17</sup> For a statement concerning the rural arts program of the Extension Service in the various States, see Patten, Marjorie, *The Arts Workshop of Rural America*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1937. This book does not refer specifically to older youth groups but surveys the general program which benefits young and old alike.

<sup>18</sup> Extension Service, *Organization and Programs for Farm Young People*, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>20</sup> Rural Youth Section, *Over the State With Rural Youth Organizations*, Extension Service, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa, October 1937, p. 6.

older youth groups. In some cases this person is attached to the 4-H Club office, and in other cases he reports to the director of the extension service in the State.

#### Office of Education and the Federally-aided High Schools

The federally-aided high schools with courses in vocational agriculture have for many years promoted part-time and evening classes in agricultural education. This work has been greatly expanded during and since the depression of the early thirties.<sup>21</sup> This program of work was designed to assist those who were out of school and unable to find employment by giving training which would equip them for work when the opportunity came.<sup>22</sup>

In some cases the plans called for informal instruction in agriculture, agricultural shopwork, and community activities. One of the most comprehensive State-wide programs of this kind was set up in Louisiana for farm boys 14-25 years of age without regard to previous schooling.<sup>23</sup> The purpose was threefold: to assist boys to establish themselves as farmers on a satisfactory basis; to assist those interested in related work, such as farm shop, blacksmithing, sirup making, etc.; and to provide training for participation in home and community improvement. An individual program was worked out for each boy.

In Ohio there were, in 1935, 167 part-time classes in vocational agriculture for out-of-school boys 16-25 years of age. The Ohio plan has been followed successfully for some years.<sup>24</sup> It begins with "finding surveys" to get in touch with out-of-school farm youth. These surveys are followed by home surveys of needs and resources which form the basis for planning what phase of instruction is to be taken up in the group meeting once a week. The instruction period is followed by a period of recreational activities. The completion of the unit course of instruction frequently leads to the formation of a Young Farmers Association, thus giving continuity to the program from year to year.

Part-time classes for out-of-school young men in Catchings, Miss.,<sup>25</sup> combine vocational agricultural training with individual business pro-

<sup>21</sup> Vocational Division, *Digest of Annual Reports of State Boards for Vocational Education to the Office of Education*, Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1935, U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C. Data for 1936 show a slight decrease in enrollment in part-time and evening classes in vocational agriculture.

<sup>22</sup> Swanson, H. B., *Youth . . . Education for Those Out of School*, Bulletin 1936, No. 18-III, U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C., p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>25</sup> Waller, T. M., "Things Done With Out-of-School Boys in Catchings School District," *Mississippi Vocational News*, Vol. XVI, No. 12, 1935, p. 3.

grams designed to establish the youth in farming. Trades related to agriculture are also taught.

The horizon of activity of the public schools is being expanded more and more to include the out-of-school group. This tendency shows itself in the increasing emphasis on nursery schools and kindergartens and on the subject of parent education, both of which are particularly helpful to young parents. The development of these two phases in rural territory has, as usual, lagged behind the cities. While programs for part-time training of young people who have either dropped out of school or been graduated have most frequently emphasized the vocational motive, some progress has been made in orienting part-time education toward other important objectives, such as good citizenship, improved home membership, and worthy use of leisure time. In the vanguard of this movement has been the Office of Education of the Department of the Interior, which in addition to its usual services to the field of education, has pioneered in conservation education, radio, and public forums.<sup>26</sup> Each of these fields needs further development in rural territory.

#### National Youth Administration

The National Youth Administration came into existence on June 26, 1935. It has four major objectives:<sup>27</sup>

- (1) To provide funds for the part-time employment of needy school, college, and graduate students between 16 and 25 years of age so that they can continue their education.
- (2) To provide funds for the part-time employment on work projects of young persons, chiefly from relief families, between 18 and 25 years of age, the projects being designed not only to provide valuable work experience but to benefit youth generally and the communities in which they live.
- (3) To encourage the establishment of job training, counseling, and placement services for youth.
- (4) To encourage the development and extension of constructive leisure-time activities."

<sup>26</sup> *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior, For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1937*, Washington, D. C., pp. 262-263. See pamphlets prepared by the Committee on Youth Problems which functioned in the U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, from the fall of 1934 to the spring of 1936. The Committee's activity was made possible by a grant from the General Education Board. The pamphlets are: *Youth . . . How Communities Can Help*, Bulletin 1936, No. 18-I; Glover, Katherine, *Youth . . . Leisure for Living*, Bulletin 1936, No. 18-II; Swanson, H. B., *Youth . . . Education for Those Out of School*, Bulletin 1936, No. 18-III; Kitson, Harry D., *Youth . . . Vocational Guidance for Those Out of School*, Bulletin 1936, No. 18-IV; Harley, D. L., *Youth . . . Finding Jobs*, Bulletin 1936, No. 18-V; and Jessen, Carl A. and Hutchins, H. Clifton, *Youth . . . Community Surveys*, Bulletin 1936, No. 18-VI.

<sup>27</sup> National Youth Administration, *Facing the Problems of Youth*, Washington, D. C., December 1936, p. 8.



Although the National Youth Administration was established primarily to assist youth of relief status, in its operation it has helped many others. This discussion therefore is oriented toward the broader rather than the restricted service<sup>28</sup> that this organization has rendered through the several phases of its program. The work has been accomplished largely through State organizations, the National Office and National Advisory Committee functioning primarily as coordinating and advisory units. The program operates in each State with the advice of a State Advisory Committee.

Student aid is extended on a work basis to youth who cannot attend school without financial assistance. Local school authorities select the youth and supervise the work for which the students are paid. A total of 404,700 secondary school, college, and graduate students were being helped in April 1936, the peak month of that year.<sup>29</sup> Of this number 275,500 were in high school, but there is no way to determine accurately how many of these were rural youth.

The peak month during the following year was also April when the total number receiving student aid reached almost 444,000.<sup>30</sup> The next year the number of students receiving student aid was cut one-third, chiefly because of the reduction in funds made available to the National Youth Administration.

The wages paid have been for "Clerical and office work; library, museum, and laboratory assistance; the conducting of forums, adult education classes, and other civic ventures; special research; grounds and building maintenance \* \* \*."<sup>31</sup> The youth going to high school may receive no more than \$6 a month. The maximum that may be paid in any one month to a student receiving college aid is \$20, while those in graduate schools may not earn in excess of \$40 in any one month.<sup>32</sup> The pay has been low but it has enabled thousands of youth who were close to the poverty line to continue their education.

An analysis of the NYA student aid quotas for 1936-37 indicates that rural youth may be receiving more than their proportionate share of this type of assistance. About 18 percent of the total was allocated to counties having no incorporated place with more than 2,500 population. According to the 1930 Census only 13 percent of the

<sup>28</sup> See Melvin, Bruce L., *Rural Youth on Relief*, Research Monograph XI, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., 1937, ch. VI, for a discussion of the National Youth Administration as an agency for meeting the needs of youth in rural relief families.

<sup>29</sup> A small number of grade school pupils were included who were 16 years of age and over.

<sup>30</sup> Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, *Report on Progress of the Works Program, December 1937*, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., p. 64.

<sup>31</sup> National Youth Administration, *Facing the Problems of Youth*, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>32</sup> National Youth Administration, *School Aid 1937-1938*, Bulletin 9, p. 4, and *College and Graduate Aid 1937-1938*, Bulletin 10, p. 5, Washington, D. C., 1937.

total population of the country lived in these counties. Another 23 percent was allocated to counties having incorporated places with populations of from 2,500 to 10,000. These counties contained 21 percent of the country's population.<sup>33</sup>

This apparent advantage of rural youth<sup>34</sup> may reflect the disadvantages in educational opportunity which rural youth face and which the National Youth Administration, despite certain handicaps, is helping to overcome. The regulations for giving student aid do not limit the expenditures to youth on relief. This is one of the few emergency activities that was not restricted to the relief group and can thus contribute to the solution of the larger problem of making up the deficit in education among the youth of all underprivileged rural groups.

In 1937 a new educational program for out-of-school young people was initiated by the National Youth Administration in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture and various agricultural schools and colleges. This is a Nation-wide resident training project which is making it possible for boys and girls from low income farm families to spend from 6 weeks to 6 months at the State agricultural colleges, working for their subsistence while taking courses in agriculture and home economics. The students are selected with the assistance of the local county agents and vocational agricultural instructors. By October 3,300 students from families receiving some form of public relief were attending 40 schools in 10 States.<sup>35</sup>

Approximately half of each student's time is devoted to work on projects established in connection with the schools. These consist of various forms of construction work about the school property, such as the construction of workshops and cooperative dormitories, maintenance of demonstration plots and plant nurseries, work in the barns and dairies, assistance to farm and home demonstration agents, and similar tasks. Students earn a monthly sum not exceeding one-half of the Works Progress Administration security wage prevailing in the region but sufficient to cover their expenses for room, board, medical care, and equipment. In addition, they earn from \$5 to \$10 each month with which to meet personal needs. The monthly payments per student range from \$18 to \$28, depending on the locality.<sup>36</sup> To reduce costs to a minimum the students cooperate in doing most of the work in connection with their living arrangements, even raising a considerable portion of the food in some instances.

<sup>33</sup> Melvin, Bruce L., *op. cit.* There is so little difference between the percent of the population 15 through 24 years of age and of the total population living in these residence groups that separate calculation of the total youth by residence was unnecessary.

<sup>34</sup> It is not known how many youth in the second group of counties were rural.

<sup>35</sup> Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, *Report on Progress of the Works Program, December 1937, op. cit.*, p. 67.

<sup>36</sup> Office of the Director of the National Youth Administration, Washington, D. C.



*Works Progress Administration.*

*NYA Trains Prospective Farmers.*



*Works Progress Administration.*

*NYA Gardening Project.*

Because many of the students selected have had less than a high school education, the bulk of the training is given through demonstration methods in such fields as farm practices, soil conservation, soil chemistry, dairying, poultry raising, crop diversification, and care of farm equipment. Girls are trained with a view to instilling certain standards of home maintenance and are instructed in personal hygiene, cooking, marketing, home gardening, and food preservation. The course of study is reduced to as practical terms as possible, and methods of instruction are informal.

The NYA has also established many youth training centers designed to provide inexperienced youth with a knowledge of and training in occupations found in their home communities. These centers are widely scattered over the United States; the extent to which rural youth are reached depends on the location of a particular project. The setup at Passamaquoddy Village, Maine, affords an excellent example of the methods and objectives followed.

The first year of the Passamaquoddy experiment ended on October 30, 1937. Each of 225 young men had been provided work experience for 5 to 6 weeks on 3 different types of jobs. Among the score or more types of occupational experience provided were painting, electrical work, carpentry, plumbing, steam fitting, and automotive work. Besides being given the chance to acquire occupational experience, these youth were also afforded an opportunity to acquire sound work habits. Supplementing the industrial training were classes in mathematics, science, and English closely associated with their work activities.<sup>37</sup>

The work projects of the National Youth Administration are confined to out-of-school youth who have been certified as eligible for employment on the Works Program and who have registered with the United States Employment Service. An analysis of the distribution of work among 2,120 counties in the United States in January 1937 showed that 18 percent of the youth employed on work projects were in counties having no incorporated place with over 2,500 population although only about 13 percent of the total population of the United States live in the 1,400 counties belonging to this class. The counties that have incorporated places of 2,500 to 10,000 population had about 16 percent of the employment although this group of counties has 21 percent of the total population of the country.<sup>38</sup>

The work projects upon which youth are engaged are related in so far as possible to the training, skills, and aptitudes of the individuals. The development of skills is perhaps one of the most important

<sup>37</sup> Brown, Richard R., "NYA Uses Quoddy in Education Test," *New York Times*, October 24, 1937.

<sup>38</sup> Melvin, Bruce L., *op. cit.*, ch. VI. This chapter calls attention to the obstacles encountered in the operation of the National Youth Administration program in rural areas.

phases of this work since almost 50 percent of those working on the projects of the National Youth Administration have had no previous work experience. An analysis of the work being done in the latter part of 1936 by 180,703 youth on work projects showed that 24 percent were assigned to recreation and community service projects, 10 percent to construction projects where skills in trades, such as carpentering and bricklaying, were taught, and 14 percent to public service projects. Other projects provided activities in sewing, domestic science, guide service, agriculture, land development, and highway beautification. The last three types were in operation especially in rural areas. The average pay per month for all youth employment on work projects was \$15.46, the range being from \$10.44 per month in Kentucky to \$21.28 in California.<sup>39</sup> Since then the average monthly earnings have been a little higher, fluctuating between \$16 and \$17.<sup>40</sup>

The all time peak in employment on NYA work projects was in April 1937 when more than 192,000 youth were employed. The number fluctuated between 180,000 and 190,000 during the first 5 months of 1937, after which the number steadily declined. Several factors combined to bring about this decline. Funds for the operation of the program were reduced somewhat. The effect of this curtailment was not as serious as it might have been, however, since at the same time there was a temporary increase in employment opportunities in both regular and seasonal occupations because of the temporary improvement in economic conditions.

Another analysis was made of the type of experience being obtained by these youth during the first part of October 1937. Unfortunately the categories used are not identical with those used in 1936, which makes comparison difficult. This analysis shows that 30 percent were employed on professional and clerical projects among which clerical projects predominated. Goods projects occupied more than 16 percent of the youth (10.8 percent working on sewing projects and 5.6 percent on workshop projects). About 13 percent of the youth worked on the development of recreational facilities and almost 12 percent were recreational leaders in parks and play centers. Public buildings jobs occupied more than 10 percent of the youth. Other construction activities (highway, road, and street projects and conservation projects) were less important. At that time there were about 123,000 young men and women employed.<sup>41</sup>

How many of these youth were rural is not known. If the same percentage applied in October 1937 as applied roughly to an analysis of NYA employment in June 1936, then slightly more than one-fifth were

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<sup>39</sup> National Youth Administration, *Administrative and Program Operation of the National Youth Administration, June 28, 1935-January 1, 1937*, Washington, D. C., pp. 6 and 32.

<sup>40</sup> Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, *Report on Progress of the Works Program, December 1937*, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66.

rural young people.<sup>42</sup> Included among these would be the youth from farms who participated in the resident training projects previously mentioned.<sup>43</sup> How many additional farm youth were employed on other types of projects is not known. The resident training projects were developed particularly for farm youth. There was a definite need for this type of training program for out-of-school young people who were forced to remain in rural areas. The usual type of work projects was difficult to operate in many rural areas where the young people who are eligible for employment by the NYA often live scattered over wide areas, thus making the cost of transportation and supervision prohibitive. These educational projects cannot entirely take the place of regular work projects for needy farm young people since the maximum cash income on the resident vocational training projects is \$5 per month.

The National Youth Administration may be reaching a larger percentage of the rural-nonfarm than of the rural-farm youth. This is of particular importance since youth in industrial villages as well as their elders have been among the most intense sufferers during the depression. Furthermore, since youth are probably among those having the least opportunity to receive special training for a vocation, the NYA program of uniting work and training is a distinct service to a much neglected group. Its functions, however, might well be extended to others than those certified as eligible for employment under the Works Program.

The Junior Placement Service of the National Youth Administration operates in conjunction with 65 offices of the United States Employment Service in as many cities where junior placement counselors concentrate on placing youth in jobs. Efforts are made to place the youth in positions for which they are adapted.<sup>44</sup> Through these offices and others of the Federal and State employment services youth are being aided in finding jobs, but the proportion of those placed who are rural residents cannot as yet be determined.

Unfortunately for rural youth these counselors are usually located in cities with the result that their efforts are necessarily confined to job opportunities in the cities. Hence this service can be taken advantage of by rural young people only when they come into the city. Moreover, the fundamental need for the migration of some youth from rural areas of limited resources, though recognized in the abstract, has not been incorporated into the policy of the Junior Placement Service. It has been felt that rural young people coming into

<sup>42</sup> Melvin, Bruce L., *op. cit.*, p. 51.

<sup>43</sup> See p. 96.

<sup>44</sup> Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, *Report on Progress of the Works Program, December 1937, op. cit.*, p. 68. See also *Hearings Before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, in Charge of Deficiency Appropriations, 75th Cong., 1st sess., January 13, 1937, pp. 56-57.*

the cities in any considerable number would jeopardize the opportunities of the excess unemployed youth already in the cities, and the chances for success or security of the rural youth migrants would be restricted by the competition of the unemployed urban youth.

Vocational guidance is an important function being performed by the National Youth Administration to assist youth—especially out-of-school youth—to make occupational adjustments. The guidance consists largely of giving information about various fields of work, training required, pay and promotional possibilities, and relative availability of jobs. This work is usually promoted by cooperation with sponsors of work projects, individual guidance bureaus, and other agencies that advise youth on occupational opportunities. In many States special bulletins on occupations and occupational opportunities have been prepared. This service operates in practically every State in one form or another and in varying degrees of extensiveness.<sup>45</sup>

Apprentice training has also been promoted by the National Youth Administration through the Federal Committee on Apprentice Training. While this should contribute somewhat to broadening employment opportunities for young people, its chief purpose is to set up standards to safeguard those entering the skilled trades. This work was made a permanent function of the Department of Labor by a congressional act signed August 16, 1937.<sup>46</sup> Since industry is located chiefly in urban centers, the bulk of the apprentices will naturally be drawn from urban youth. The proportion of the apprentices in the Nation's industrial establishments which comes from the farms and small towns is not known. A realistic approach to the problems of the "surplus" of youth in some regions<sup>47</sup> would involve more intensive exploration of the possibility of extending opportunities for apprenticeships to rural young people.

It must be remembered, however, that the term *apprentice* is being defined in a very restricted sense<sup>48</sup> and that those occupations which either have or could have apprentices in this restricted sense include probably little more than 10 percent of the gainfully employed persons in the United States. The apprenticeship system does not,

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<sup>45</sup> National Youth Administration, *Report on the Placement and Guidance Program*, Washington, D. C., February 1938.

<sup>46</sup> Public, No. 308, 75th Cong., 1st sess.

<sup>47</sup> See ch. I.

<sup>48</sup> Special Release No. 3, U. S. Department of Labor, Federal Committee on Apprentice Training, March 1938, defines the term to mean "A person at least 16 years of age who is covered by a written agreement with an employer, and approved by the State Apprenticeship Council or other established authority, which apprentice agreement provides for not less than 4,000 hours of reasonably continuous employment for such person, for his participation in an approved schedule of work experience through employment and for at least 144 hours per year of related supplemental instruction."



therefore, safeguard the training period—varying from a few weeks to a few months or a year or two—of the other thousands of young people who must enter the labor market every year with no assurance of advance or ultimate security. Rural youth are more likely to be found engaged in occupations other than those protected by apprenticeship, if indeed they are fortunate enough to obtain employment at anything but unskilled labor.

During 1936-37 the National Youth Administration experimented with setting up educational work camps for young women.<sup>49</sup> This phase of the program was discontinued after a year's trial, chiefly because of the high per capita cost of maintenance.<sup>50</sup>

#### Civilian Conservation Corps

The Civilian Conservation Corps, initiated in 1933, was created originally "for the purpose of relieving the acute condition of widespread distress and unemployment \* \* \* and in order to provide for the restoration of the country's depleted natural resources and the advancement of an orderly program of useful public works \* \* \*."<sup>51</sup> Though the original act did not contain any provision as to the ages of the men to be employed, executive and administrative action in the early days of operation determined that the emergency conservation work should be primarily a young man's program.<sup>52</sup> The types of jobs performed by the youth in the CCC camps fall into 10 general classifications:<sup>53</sup> (1) structural improvements (including bridges, fire towers, service buildings, etc.); (2) transportation improvements (including truck trails, minor roads, airplane landing fields, etc.); (3) erosion control (including check dams, terracing, terrace outletting, vegetative covering, etc.); (4) flood control, irrigation, and drainage (including dams, channel work, ditching, riprap, etc.); (5) forest culture (including planting of trees, stand improvement, nursery work, seed collection); (6) forest protection (including fire fighting, fire prevention, and presuppression, pest and disease control, etc.); (7) landscape and recreation (including public camp and picnic-ground development, lake- and pond-site clearing, landscaping, etc.); (8) range (including stock driveways, elimination of predatory animals, etc.); (9) wild life (including stream improvement, stocking fish, emergency wild life feeding, food and cover planting,

<sup>49</sup> Melvin, Bruce L., *op. cit.*, ch. VI.

<sup>50</sup> Office of the Director of the National Youth Administration, Washington, D. C. This program was an outgrowth of the camp program for women begun under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in 1934. The emphasis in the earlier camps was on workers' education, whereas in the NYA camps the emphasis was on work projects.

<sup>51</sup> Public, No. 5, 73d Cong.

<sup>52</sup> World War veterans were also enrolled.

<sup>53</sup> *Annual Report of the Director of Emergency Conservation Work, Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1936*, Washington, D. C., p. 4.

etc.); (10) miscellaneous (including emergency work, surveys, mosquito control, etc.).

In the Act of June 28, 1937, extending the life of the Civilian Conservation Corps 3 more years, the additional purpose of providing general educational and vocational training was written into the act. By the end of 1937, 1,800,000 unemployed, unmarried young men from 17 through 28 years of age had been enrolled in the camps.<sup>54</sup> The regular period of enrollment is 6 months although many youth have had two or more periods. The new act limits the enrollment to 2 years<sup>55</sup> but specifies that enrollment need not be continuous. The peak in the number of men in the camps was reached in August 1935 when there were 427,300 enrolled juniors,<sup>56</sup> that is, unemployed single men 17 through 28 years of age. The camps were established principally for the benefit of this age group. Since July 1, 1937, the enrolled strength of the Corps may not exceed 300,000 at any one time, of which not more than 30,000 may be World War veterans.<sup>57</sup>

In September 1935 the age limit for enrollment was reduced from 18 to 17 years. This caused a considerable increase in applications since a great many youth 17 years of age are out of school and unemployed. The bulk of the enrollment is composed of young men under 21 years of age. During the year prior to April 1937, 75 percent of the enrollees had not reached their twenty-first birthday. Well over one-half of the juniors selected during that year were 17 or 18 years of age.<sup>58</sup>

It is probable that 50 percent of all junior enrollees who have passed through the CCC camps have come from rural territory.<sup>59</sup> This would mean that by January 1, 1938, about 900,000 young men from low income or relief families in rural areas had spent varying periods of time in a camp. This is a substantial proportion of the

<sup>54</sup> Information from Office of the Director of Emergency Conservation Work, Washington, D. C. See also Persons, W. Frank, "Selecting 1,800,000 Young Men for the C. C. C.," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 46, 1938, pp. 846-851.

<sup>55</sup> The length of the service to be counted from July 1, 1937, the effective date of the act.

<sup>56</sup> *Annual Report of the Director of Emergency Conservation Work, Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1936, op. cit.*, p. 2; and Melvin, Bruce L., *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97.

<sup>57</sup> See Section 7 of the Act of June 28, 1937, which provided for additional Indian enrollees as well as territorial and insular possession enrollees. These had also been enrolled since the beginning of the Civilian Conservation Corps.

<sup>58</sup> *Fourth Anniversary Report to the President, Director of Emergency Conservation Work, Washington, D. C., April 5, 1937, p. 10.* Evidence of the need of 17- and 18-year olds for the type of training and experience available in CCC camps continues to be borne out by later enrollments. See CCC Office, *Quarterly Selection Report, Covering the January 1938 Enrollment of the Civilian Conservation Corps*, prepared by the U. S. Department of Labor, March 4, 1938, pp. 2-3.

<sup>59</sup> Information from Office of the Director of Emergency Conservation Work, Washington, D. C.

more than 2,000,000 rural youth who have been on relief rolls since 1933 when the Federal Government first began dealing officially with the problem of destitution.<sup>60</sup> The percentage of youth in the camps from rural territory has steadily increased since early in the history of emergency conservation work. Whereas in the beginning the bulk of the enrollment came from the cities, by January 1937 rural youth made up 54.7 percent<sup>61</sup> of the total enrollment. By that time, therefore, the young people from rural areas were in the camps in numbers disproportionate to the percentage they constituted of the total youth population. In 1930, according to the census, the proportion of all youth who were rural was 43.9 percent and in 1935, according to estimates, it was approximately 48 percent.<sup>62</sup>

In January 1937, when an analysis was made of the place of origin of the youth then in the camps, the Civilian Conservation Corps had an enrollment of 350,350. Seventy-five percent, or 262,760, were from the open country or from centers with less than 25,000 population. Of these 191,494 were rural, but of this rural group only a little over one-third, 35.9 percent, were from farms. The others, approximately two-thirds (64.1 percent), were rural-nonfarm youth. This indicates that the Civilian Conservation Corps is reaching a much greater relative proportion of rural-nonfarm youth than farm youth. Furthermore, if the number of rural-nonfarm youth is added to the number of youth in centers from 2,500 to 25,000 population, it is found that this group constitutes 55 percent of all enrollees.<sup>63</sup> Thus, more than one-half of the enrollees at the time of the survey came from 35 percent of the total population.<sup>64</sup>

At least two hypotheses may be offered for this situation. One is that the publicity about the Civilian Conservation Corps may not reach the open country youth as it does the youth of the villages and towns; the other is that poverty-stricken families from the open country have been going to the county seats as well as to other towns and small cities because they could no longer subsist on the farms or could not get farms to operate and that the youth from these families constituted a large proportion of those who went to the CCC camps from places of this size.

The January survey of the enrollees in the camps previously referred to revealed the fact that the Negro enrollees remained in the camps for much longer periods of time than the white boys. Whereas

<sup>60</sup> Melvin, Bruce L., *op. cit.*, ch. VII.

<sup>61</sup> *Annual Report of the Director of Emergency Conservation Work, Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1937*, Washington, D. C., p. 35.

<sup>62</sup> See ch. I, tables 1 and 8, and appendix table 2.

<sup>63</sup> Calculations made from data contained in *Annual Report of the Director of Emergency Conservation Work, Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1937, op. cit.*, p. 34.

<sup>64</sup> Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population Vol. II*, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933.

the median period of enrollment was 8.9, 9.9, and 9.6 months, respectively, for white enrollees classified according to place of origin as rural, small city, and large city, the corresponding percentages for Negro enrollees were 16.2, 15.8, and 11.5 months.<sup>65</sup> The holding power of the Corps for Negro youth, most of whom come from the rural South, may be indicative of the fact that opportunities for Negroes in their home communities were exceedingly restricted and that in many cases subsistence was not even available at home. As a result many Negroes re-enrolled two or more times.

It is not unlikely that the same type of factor operating in a different way may have played a part in swelling the number of rural-nonfarm enrollees in the camps at the time of the survey. When the average white farm boy left the camps, he returned at least to subsistence on the home farm if he did not have remunerative employment awaiting him after his discharge, whereas the village boy returning to his family without prospect of employment became an extra drain on the family's financial resources. Hence, the village boy might elect to re-enroll in a greater number of cases than the farm boy. By January 1937 this process of re-enrollment on the part of the nonfarm youth may have meant that there were at that time a considerable number of long-term nonfarm enrollees augmenting the number of new enrollees from nonfarm residences that came into the Corps at each succeeding enrollment period.

The statute under which the Civilian Conservation Corps operated during the first 2 years of its existence did not contain specific language restricting enrollment to men of relief status. In practice, however, enrollment was limited primarily to persons in this category since there were more than enough of them to fill up the Corps. Beginning in April 1935 a relief requirement for the selection of enrollees was in force until June 30, 1937. The Act of June 28, 1937, states that "The enrollees in the Corps \* \* \* shall be unmarried male citizens of the United States between the ages of seventeen and twenty-three years, both inclusive, and shall at the time of enrollment be unemployed and in need of employment." Doing away with the relief restrictions has made it possible for the youth in economically marginal families to take advantage of the work and training provided by the Civilian Conservation Corps though the great bulk of enrollees still comes from families which are receiving some form of public assistance or are eligible for such assistance.

The words *unemployed and in need of employment* are not defined in the act. By administrative action priorities have been established

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<sup>65</sup> The median length of enrollment of juniors in all of the camps at the time of the survey was 9.7 months. The median for the total in each of the three categories—rural, small city, large city—did not vary appreciably from this figure. Information from Office of the Director of Emergency Conservation Work, Washington, D. C.

which attempt to give a preferred selection status in the Corps to youth from families below the normal or average standard of living in their home communities. The determination of what constitutes a normal or average standard of living is the responsibility of the local selection agents who, because of their familiarity with local conditions, are the best judges of which boys should be given the opportunity of the camp experience.

Since the new act went into effect there has been a steadily increasing pressure for enrollment in the Corps. By the time of the October 1937 enrollment there were many more youth wishing to enroll than were needed to fill the approximately 130,000 vacancies. This was the third largest number of vacancies in the history of the Corps and was followed in January by one of the smallest enrollments in the history of the Corps at which time there were several times as many young men wishing to go to the camps as could be selected.<sup>66</sup> This increased demand for enrollment was undoubtedly a reflection of the increase in unemployment, the effects of which began to be felt by October and became increasingly noticeable in the succeeding months.

Many of the young men who enter the camps have never had any work experience of any kind, and a significant proportion of those who could claim some experience had not had it in any line or under circumstances that would fit them for steady employment in the future. It is apparent, therefore, that the opportunity to obtain worth-while work experience through Civilian Conservation Corps employment is doing much to take up the slack of unemployment between leaving school and securing work. That the need for employment immediately following a young man's leaving school is widespread in economically marginal families is accepted. When enrollment was restricted to youth from families certified for relief, it was found that during 1 year 25 percent of the youth selected had had no employment prior to entering the camp. The importance of a program which helps break the vicious circle of jobs being unavailable to young persons without experience and experience dependent upon jobs cannot be overemphasized.

The enrollees are at work on national, State, and private forest lands, on State and national park lands, on eroded agricultural lands, on drainage and reclamation projects, and on overgrazed portions of the public domain.<sup>67</sup> From the enumeration of the major categories into which the more than 150 types of work undertaken may be listed,<sup>68</sup> it can readily be seen that the work of the Corps has contributed im-

<sup>66</sup> Information on October 1937 enrollment supplied by the U. S. Department of Labor, CCC Office. See also CCC Office, *Quarterly Selection Report, Covering the January 1938 Enrollment of the Civilian Conservation Corps*, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>67</sup> Statement of Robert Fechner, Director, CCC, before the United States Senate Special Committee to Investigate Unemployment and Relief, March 15, 1938, p. 7.

<sup>68</sup> See p. 101. See also *Annual Report of the Director of Emergency Conservation Work, Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1937*, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

measurably to the conservation of our natural resources at the same time that it has been a force in disseminating knowledge about conservation methods.

The work experience given the youth through this broad program is designed to provide instruction in the jobs being performed, such as auto mechanics, steam shovel operation, concrete construction, clerical work, surveying, stonemasonry, etc. The thousands of enrollees who participate in this job-training program not only receive instruction from the foreman while on the job but also attend at least one class a week dealing with the subject related to their job.<sup>69</sup>

The educational work is a significant aspect of the service being rendered youth by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Special vocational training and regular formal schooling are offered. During the first 4 years of operation approximately 50,000 youth have been taught to read and write. More than 500,000 enrollees have taken work in grade school subjects; 400,000 have received high school instruction; and some 50,000 have taken college work. Cultural training is furthered through the promotion of dramatic clubs, circulation of books, the formation of music groups, and arts and crafts production.<sup>70</sup> In these activities the youth are being taught constructive use of leisure time. The new act specifies "That at least 10 hours each week may be devoted to general educational and vocational training" which will make possible a broader development of this aspect of the camp experience.

#### Works Progress Administration

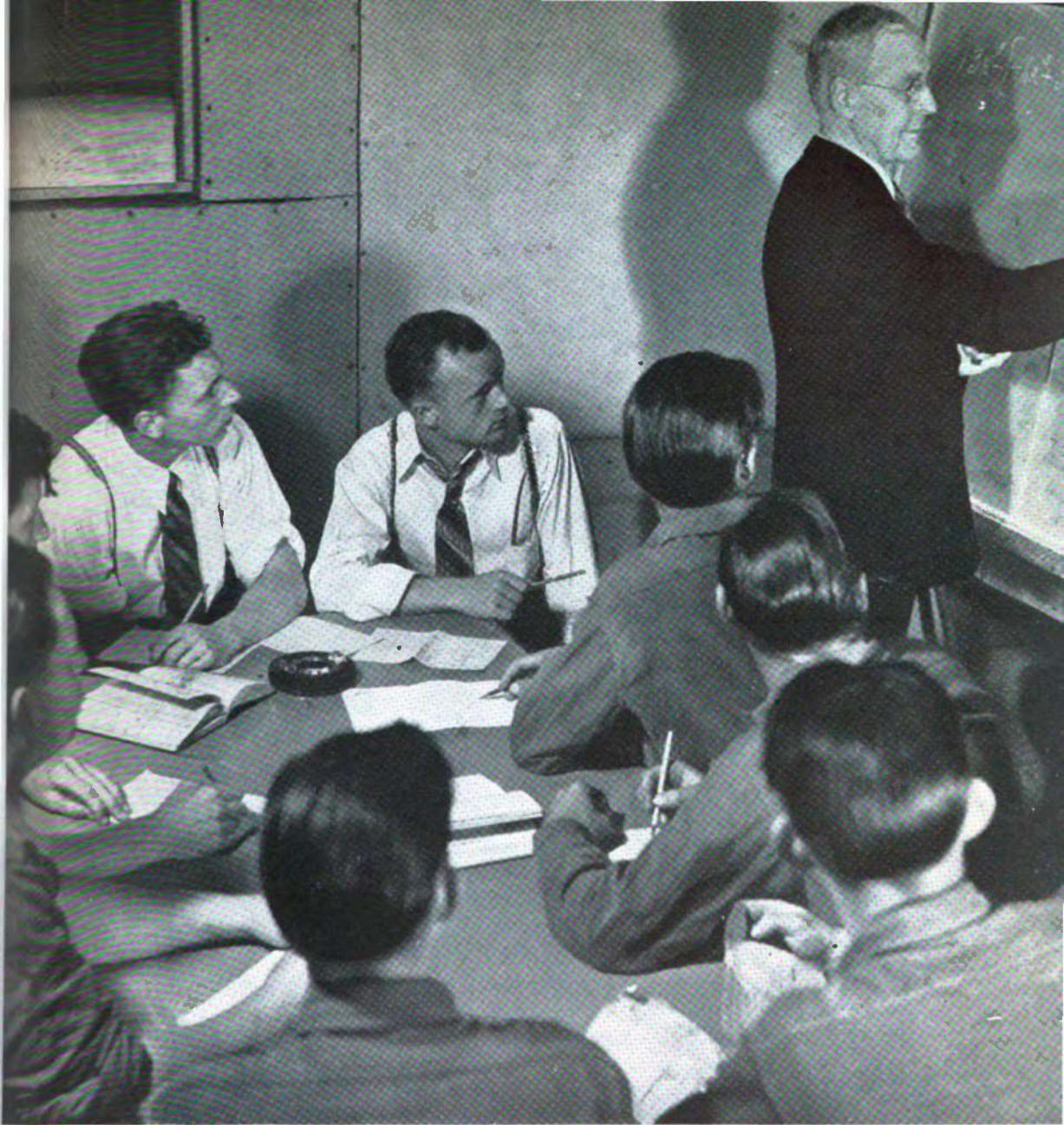
The Works Progress Administration, independent of the National Youth Administration, has aided youth both directly and indirectly in its various programs. Most persons employed on WPA projects are the chief breadwinners of their families. Many young persons who have such responsibilities have been thus aided through obtaining employment in this agency. In a few selected States for which accurate data were available (table 26), a tabulation of the age distribution of those employed on all WPA projects showed that persons 16-24 years of age constituted from about 3 to 12 percent. Relatively more young women than young men were employed.

Most of the projects promoted by the Works Progress Administration have been in the field of construction, such as highways, roads and streets, public buildings, parks and other recreational facilities, conservation, sewer systems, and airports.<sup>71</sup> In addition projects for

<sup>69</sup> Office of Education, *Semi-Annual Report of CCC Educational Activities (July 1-December 31, 1936)*, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C., p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> *Fourth Anniversary Report to the President, op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>71</sup> For a discussion of the work of the Works Progress Administration see Division of Research, Statistics, and Records, *Report on Progress of the Works Program, June 1937, op. cit.*



*Works Progress Administration.*

*CCC Boys Going to School.*



*Works Progress Administration.*

*Study Hour in a South Dakota High School Dormitory.*



white-collar workers and in the fields of public health, the arts, education, and recreation have been put into operation. The latter type of projects probably has been of greatest significance for young people.

**Table 26.**—Number and Percent That Youth Constituted of All Workers on WPA Projects in 9 Selected States, November 10, 1937

State	Total persons employed	Youth		Male			Female		
		Number	Per-cent of total	Total	Youth	Per-cent of total males	Total	Youth	Per-cent of total females
Georgia.....	21,984	2,708	12.3	15,064	1,984	13.2	6,920	724	10.5
Louisiana.....	21,882	2,007	9.2	17,794	1,372	7.7	4,088	635	15.5
Maine.....	3,041	312	10.3	2,442	247	10.1	599	65	10.9
Minnesota.....	33,631	2,971	8.8	27,920	2,217	7.9	5,711	754	13.2
Oklahoma.....	40,415	3,471	8.6	33,380	2,947	8.8	7,025	524	7.5
Oregon.....	10,060	944	3.4	8,080	247	3.1	1,980	97	4.9
Pennsylvania.....	154,781	19,409	12.5	133,894	15,002	11.2	20,887	4,407	21.1
Wisconsin.....	34,148	2,821	8.3	29,617	1,784	6.0	4,531	1,037	22.9
Wyoming.....	1,717	172	10.0	1,007	75	7.4	710	97	13.7

Source: Special tabulation, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., February 7, 1938.

The Education Division of the Works Progress Administration, for example, has conducted a variety of educational projects, including the so-called emergency colleges,<sup>72</sup> with the cooperation of the State boards of education and local educational authorities. At least 4,000,000 adults have availed themselves of the opportunities thus provided during the past 3 years.<sup>73</sup> Though the program does reach rural areas, no estimate is available of the relative proportion of the students in rural and urban localities except for the literacy classes.<sup>74</sup> Nor is there any estimate of the number of students in the youth group attending these education classes. It is reasonable to suppose, however, that a considerable percentage consists of youth.

One of the most helpful educational phases of the emergency program begun by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and continued by the Works Progress Administration and National Youth Administration in South Dakota is the establishment of the high school dormitory system. Buildings in a number of small towns and villages have been equipped as boarding and rooming establishments where young people from the surrounding rural territory may live while attending the local high school. This is the result of the joint efforts of the local school boards and the Government agencies. Almost 6,000 youth of high school age were being assisted when the program was at its peak in 1936.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Swanson, H. B., *Youth . . . Education for Those Out of School*, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-15.

<sup>73</sup> "Education Program of Works Progress Administration," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 45, 1937, p. 140.

<sup>74</sup> See ch. III, p. 49.

<sup>75</sup> Information from the Women's Division, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C.

A still further contribution of the Works Progress Administration to the needs of youth is in the recreation field. Not only have many communities been supplied with physical facilities for wholesome recreation, such as swimming pools, baseball diamonds, tennis courts, parks and picnic grounds, and recreation and community centers, but also great strides have been made in promulgating a philosophy concerning the place of recreation in modern life and in emphasizing the relation of recreation to community organization and community vitality. As a result of the recreational program undertaken, many youth have shared in the training for leadership roles in the recreation field in particular and in community life in general. In the country as a whole approximately 20 percent of all persons employed on recreational projects at that time were young persons under 25 years of age.

Aside from giving work to youth the recreational program has made available to all youth, not just those in relief families, recreational activities that otherwise might never have been developed in many communities. In an analysis of the recreational work promoted by the Works Progress Administration in 320 selected counties in the United States in August 1937 it was found that participation hours of persons 16 to 24 years of age were approximately 25 percent of the total hours.<sup>76</sup>

#### Farm Credit Administration

The Farm Credit Administration has a definite program for helping young men to get started in farming, although it is doubtful if its benefits are sufficiently widespread. Under its supervision about 550 production credit associations have been established in the United States<sup>77</sup> which have as part of their function lending money to small groups of boys to finance crop and livestock production. In 1936 approximately 200 groups, including about 2,500 boys, secured money from this source. The chief requirement for the youth to secure a loan is that a responsible sponsor have charge. Though the lending has been confined primarily to groups from 4-H Clubs and Future Farmers of America, other groups may secure aid.<sup>78</sup>

The Farm Credit Administration, through the Federal Land Banks, has another plan that is being tried out in cooperation with teachers of vocational agriculture. Promising young students from the classes in vocational agriculture are given an opportunity to rent a farm which has come into the hands of the Administration with a view to accumulating money and buying the farm. As yet there is no wide-

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<sup>76</sup> Williams, Aubrey, "Rural Youth and the Government," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 3, 1938, p. 8.

<sup>77</sup> *The Fourth Annual Report of the Farm Credit Administration*, Washington, D. C., 1936, p. 42.

<sup>78</sup> Information from Farm Credit Administration, Washington, D. C.

spread program of this nature, but the undertaking is well along in the experimental stage.<sup>79</sup>

#### Agricultural Adjustment Administration

The Agricultural Adjustment Administration has initiated constructive measures which are assisting youth in an indirect manner. The provisions of the act which established the original AAA in 1933 "related to the purchasing power of a group of commodities, to the establishment of a price relation between agricultural and urban products, and to the economic status of farm producers as a group \* \* \*."<sup>80</sup> The second act, passed to take the place of the original act invalidated by the Supreme Court and known as the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, has five specified purposes: preservation of soil fertility, diminution of soil exploitation, promotion of the economic use of land, protection of rivers and harbors against the results of soil erosion, and the attainment of parity income for agriculture.<sup>81</sup> This program was not, of course, designed primarily for youth. It will help thousands of youth by assisting their families although it cannot solve the problems of other thousands on poor land nor can it enlarge a farm to make room for two boys when the farm has only enough acres to require the care of one.

#### Resettlement Administration

The Resettlement Administration, now the Farm Security Administration, has promoted a varied program which also has indirectly aided youth in the families assisted. Two phases of the program—rehabilitation and resettlement—could be of special significance for youth if directed toward helping young people make their adjustment into farming. The rehabilitation work has consisted largely of making loans and direct grants to families on the relief level in order to give them a new start. The work of resettlement proper has consisted in taking families from poor land areas and resettling them on good land.<sup>82</sup> As a long-time measure it would be more advantageous to help youth obtain good land when they begin to farm rather than to rehabilitate or resettle them and their families later.<sup>83</sup> In one or two of the resettlement units the families selected have been chiefly young

<sup>79</sup> Pearson, James H., "Progressive Establishment of Young Men in Farming Occupations," *American Vocational Association Journal and News Bulletin*, Vol. XI, 1936, p. 146.

<sup>80</sup> Agricultural Adjustment Administration, *Agricultural Adjustment, 1933 to 1935*, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., 1936, p. 7.

<sup>81</sup> U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Report of the Secretary of Agriculture, 1936*, Washington, D. C., p. 11.

<sup>82</sup> Resettlement Administration, *First Annual Report*, Washington, D. C., 1936, pp. 9-18 and 33-40.

<sup>83</sup> See discussion of this suggestion in Rainey, Homer P. and Others, *How Fare American Youth?* New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1937, ch. VI.

couples below 30 years of age. The selection of such families, however, did not constitute a definite policy on the part of the Resettlement Administration.

#### United States Employment Service

The years since 1933 have seen an enormous development of the Federal and State machinery for assisting the citizens of the country to find work. While almost every county in the United States had some persons registered as seeking work,<sup>84</sup> there are still no data on how far the service is really able to deal with unemployment in rural territory in the light of the factors that have been complicating the employment situation during the last decade.

Though the problem of obtaining employment is serious for the older workers, the difficulties of the young people appear even more pressing, according to Employment Service experience.<sup>85</sup> Mention has already been made of the presence of junior counselors in some employment offices and of their probable effectiveness in dealing with the problems of unemployment among rural young people. In offices where there are no junior counselors the young people must take their chances in competition with older workers.

#### NONGOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

Nongovernmental agencies serving youth are numerous and varied—character building, religious, political, fraternal, civic, cultural, social, and recreational<sup>86</sup>—but it is doubtful that many are penetrating very far into rural territory.<sup>87</sup> Attention has therefore been directed only to a few which are designedly working in rural territory and definitely fostering programs for out-of-school rural youth. This is admittedly an incomplete list. There have been no definite criteria for the selection of those that have been included. Some are mentioned because they seem particularly suggestive and promising; others are discussed because of their timeliness or their extensiveness.

#### Farm Bureau

The Junior Farm Bureau has recently been formed under the direct guidance and sponsorship of the American Farm Bureau Federation. The primary purpose of this developing organization is to supply the

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<sup>84</sup> In July 1936 the active files of the registrants in 37 States and the District of Columbia comprised between 9 and 18 percent of the total number gainfully employed in 1930, and in 6 States more than 18 percent of the total gainfully employed were registered. U. S. Employment Service. *Who Are the Job Seekers?* U. S. Department of Labor, Washington, D. C., 1937, pp. 17-18.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>86</sup> Chambers, M. M., "Non-Governmental National Youth-Serving Agencies and Organizations," *School and Society*, Vol. 44, 1936, pp. 544-547.

<sup>87</sup> Douglass, H. Paul, *How Shall Country Youth Be Served?* New York: George H. Doran Company, 1926.



*Works Progress Administration.*

*At the Employment Office.*



need for "social, recreational and educational development of rural young people \* \* \*."<sup>88</sup> In order to realize this purpose the Farm Bureau Federation has perfected a standard plan of organization consisting of local and county units. The members of the county organization consist of young persons living on farms who have reached the age of 18 years or who are former members of 4-H Clubs or Future Farmers of America or similar organizations. Membership is automatically terminated at the age of 25 years or at the time youth establish homes or engage in farming on their own account. The promotion of social and recreational activities and educational work on agricultural problems<sup>89</sup> will be of value to the youth, but the sponsoring agency has an institutional purpose also in securing Farm Bureau membership. It would "develop an intelligent, constructive leadership in the ranks of the Junior Farm Bureau, who would be prepared to take up the responsibilities of leadership for the Farm Bureau when they became members."<sup>90</sup> In Ohio and Indiana this means leadership in the promotion of the cooperatives fostered by the Farm Bureau. Hence, youth who go to the Farm Bureau camps in these States are given thorough instruction in the theory and organization of cooperatives.<sup>91</sup>

#### Farmers Educational and Co-operative Union

The Farmers Educational and Co-operative Union is particularly strong in the Dakotas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Montana, and Oklahoma but functions also in several other States, chiefly in the Middle West. Membership of the entire family in the organization is encouraged. To this end the Farmers Union has organized the Juveniles, children of members who are under 16, and the Juniors, those between the ages of 16 and 21. Not until they are 21 years of age do the boys become dues-paying members. At the same time the girls become honorary members. The Juniors have all of the rights of dues-paying members; they may hold office in the local organization, vote, and be sent as delegates to county or State conventions. They study social problems, legislation, and cooperation and enter contests in essay writing and speechmaking. In some States they attend summer camps for a period of intensive study and training in leadership.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Strayer, George, "The Junior Farm Bureau," address before the Midwest Rural Youth Conference, Ames, Iowa, July 23, 1936.

<sup>89</sup> Vaniman, V., "Relationship Between the Junior Farm Bureau and the Farm Bureau Movement," address before the Midwest Rural Youth Conference, Ames, Iowa, July 23, 1936.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> Letter of August 3, 1937, from the Extension Sociologist, State College of Agriculture, Columbus, Ohio, and letter of August 13, 1937, from Office of State Farm Bureau, Indianapolis, Ind.

<sup>92</sup> Edwards, Gladys Talbott, *The Farmers Union Triangle*, Farmers Educational and Co-operative Union of America, Jamestown, N. Dak., 1935, pp. 54-59.

The history and methods of cooperation are emphasized, but instruction is also given in the various aspects of economic problems that touch the farmer's interest, such as money, credit, and taxation, as well as in conservation of natural resources, handicraft, and social and recreational leadership.

Like the plans of the Farm Bureau for its youth the work of the Farmers Union on behalf of the Juniors is designed to prepare youth to take their part in furthering the basic program and philosophy of the parent organization. The Junior program is a development of the last 10 years, having received official recognition at the national convention of the Farmers Union in 1930.

#### National Grange

Like the Farmers Union the National Grange also embraces in its membership the entire family though the children must be 14 years of age to be voting members. The national office estimates that 35 percent of the membership is less than 30 years of age.<sup>93</sup> The 1936 membership was said to include 800,000 persons in 35 States.<sup>94</sup> No special effort has been made on a national scale to enlarge the program of the Grange to meet the needs of young people although in some States the youth problem has been recognized.<sup>95</sup> The educational and social services rendered youth by this organization are therefore through the medium of the regular program.

#### Wisconsin Farm Short Course

The Wisconsin State College of Agriculture provides a Farm Short Course each year from the middle of November to the middle of March for young men from the farms. There are no entrance requirements or examinations. Most of those who have attended thus far ranged from 19 through 26 years of age. Since the course is adapted from the Danish Folk School program, it is founded on the theory that "The satisfactory solution of many of our agricultural problems will be greatly aided by the education of our farm youth. This education should be in the economic and social fields which train for better rural organization and able rural leadership as well as in the arts and sciences of agriculture."<sup>96</sup> Unlike the Danish schools, however, there

<sup>93</sup> The National Grange Publicity Bureau, Springfield, Mass. All locals do not present this picture. In 1 farm community in Pennsylvania only 15 out of a total membership of 91 were less than 30 years of age and these were between 25 and 30.

<sup>94</sup> The National Grange Publicity Bureau, *Official Roster*, Springfield, Mass., 1936.

<sup>95</sup> Volunteers for Youth Service and Department of Sociology, *Michigan Youth*, Vol. I, No. 2, Michigan State College, East Lansing, Mich., November 1933.

<sup>96</sup> Christensen, Chris L., *An Educational Opportunity for Young Men on the Farm*, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis., June 1935, pp. 3 and 11.



is no course for girls. Classes are held in principles and practices of business cooperation, the social sciences, and the humanities. The maximum enrollment of 325 was reached in the 1936 term.

#### Cooperative Youth Clubs

With the growth of the cooperative movement in America there have developed a number of youth clubs in various parts of the country. These clubs act as educational and cultural centers for youth in localities where there already are cooperative societies and aid in the formation of consumers' clubs in places where there is as yet no cooperative society or enterprise.<sup>97</sup> In two sections of the country youth clubs have been united into leagues—The Northern States Cooperative Youth League with headquarters in Superior, Wis., and The New England Federation for Cooperative Clubs with headquarters at Gardner, Mass.<sup>98</sup> While most of the cooperative youth clubs are not rural, they are to some extent reaching rural youth in their respective localities. Their extension is definitely linked with the progress of the consumer movement in rural territory. The most significant rural development in the direction of cooperation is the educational and cultural programs for youth promoted by the Ohio<sup>99</sup> and Indiana Farm Bureaus through their summer camps.

#### Douglas County, Wis.

In Douglas County, Wis., the young people themselves requested the establishment of a forestry camp during the winter of 1934-35. The camp was financed under the forest crop law<sup>100</sup> and was attended by 60 young men. Although the project lasted only 1 year, it was considered unusually successful because: (1) it provided employment for young men who were idle; (2) it gave opportunity for a practical type of education for that county; and (3) it was a feasible method of promoting reforestation and conservation.<sup>101</sup>

#### Breathitt County, Ky.

Breathitt County, Ky., is an area in which youth are especially handicapped by poverty and lack of opportunity. In an attempt to ameliorate the adverse situation a program of study and planning was begun in 1934 with the specific purpose of building up a guidance

<sup>97</sup> Letter from secretary-treasurer of Massachusetts League of Cooperative Clubs, October 1936.

<sup>98</sup> Letter from The Cooperative League of the United States of America, 167 West 12th Street, New York City, November 15, 1937.

<sup>99</sup> Jones, Inis Weed, "Not by Bread Alone," *Good Housekeeping Magazine*, July 1937, pp. 38-39.

<sup>100</sup> Wileden, A. F., *What Douglas County Young People Want and What They Are Doing About It*, Rural Youth and Rural Life Series, Extension Service, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis., December 1935, p. 7.

<sup>101</sup> Letter from A. F. Wileden, April 8, 1936.

program. The experiment has been under the direct guidance and control of the County Planning Board in which the moving spirit has been the County Superintendent of Schools. The Alliance for the Guidance of Rural Youth—formerly known as the Southern Women's Educational Alliance with headquarters at Richmond, Va.—has been helpful in planning and advising on certain phases of the program.

The first step in this undertaking was to gather basic facts on economic and social conditions in the county with special reference to the problems which the youth themselves were facing. Although the county has approximately 2,700 out-of-school youth, the educational, occupational, and recreational opportunities are greatly limited.<sup>102</sup> In an economic way this program is helping the youth to adjust occupationally both within and without the county in so far as this has been possible. Socially it is stimulating the youth to individual initiative and self-reliance, to develop a better way of life under adverse economic conditions. Educationally it is assisting in building up opportunities for youth who are out of school as well as for those who are in school.

#### Rockland County, N. Y.

A unique experiment in building and maintaining a unified county-wide program of guidance in 47 schools in the semirural county of Rockland, N. Y., was initiated in a modest way in 1929.<sup>103</sup> Two years later the County Board of Supervisors, in accordance with the authority granted by State law, appointed a county vocational and extension board and authorized the employment of a county director of guidance, but, because of the straitened circumstances of county finances at that time, only limited funds were available for the experiment. Despite financial handicaps, however, a twofold program was embarked upon: first, a series of community surveys was undertaken for the purpose of revealing pertinent information about the county, characteristics of its population, and its educational, health, and occupational situation; and second, a county-wide program of guidance was promoted as well as guidance programs in such individual school systems as contracted for the services of the county director of guidance.

On the basis of the knowledge gained and interest aroused through the various surveys, and by pooling the resources of the State, foundations, and local institutions, a mental hygiene program has been initiated. Teachers have been given the opportunity of obtaining some training in guidance. A Junior Placement Service has been inaugu-

<sup>102</sup> Gooch, Wilbur I. and Keller, Franklin J., "Breathitt County in the Southern Appalachians," *Occupations*, Vol. XIV, 1936, p. 1027.

<sup>103</sup> Gooch, Wilbur I. and Miller, Leonard M., "Vocational Guidance in Rockland County," *Occupations*, Vol. XIV, 1936, pp. 835-911.

rated and a service providing guidance and training in household employment and child care has also been set up.

This program has been credited with bringing together many diversified interests in the county, vitalizing the curriculum of practically the entire school system from the elementary grades through the high school, and broadening the outlook of pupils and citizens alike in regard to the forces operating to produce the unemployment situation in Rockland County. To many of the pupils now in the secondary schools in this county, or recently graduated, the selection of an occupation has been presented as an orderly, logical, and thoughtful process instead of a haphazard chance process with its attendant human waste in occupational misfits and in feelings of frustration and futility. Though the system has been attached in its initial stages directly to the public schools and serves, therefore, the in-school group primarily, there is a follow-up of those who leave school or are graduated. Moreover, the placement service is intended to serve more than merely the in-school group.

#### Private Institutions Serving Rural Areas

Scattered throughout some of the underprivileged areas of rural America are private schools or settlement centers of varying character and purpose, many of which are rendering valuable service to specific communities. Some of them have labored under severe handicaps, but in many communities they have rendered the only social service available to the people. In some communities they have blazed trails of economic and social rehabilitation, trails which too often have later been neglected for want of resources to render the programs really effective. Because their sphere of activity is restricted, they know their people and their community background as few social leaders do who are entrusted with the development of broad programs. Their personnel, often seasoned by years of self-sacrificing labor, are eager to cooperate with any agency that can help raise the standards of living of the poverty-stricken folk among whom they work.

Some of these private endeavors lay special emphasis on youth though they maintain the general community approach. This is certainly true of the Campbell Folk School at Brasstown, N. C.,<sup>104</sup> the Farm School at Asheville, N. C.,<sup>105</sup> and the Ashland Folk School at Grant, Mich. Another interesting rural community development under way in Michigan is known as the Hartland Area Project. Financed by a foundation, it has markedly enriched the lives of the young people of the community.<sup>106</sup> Pine Mountain Settlement School

<sup>104</sup> "The People of an American Folk School," *Survey Graphic*, Vol. XXIII, 1934, pp. 229-232.

<sup>105</sup> White, Edwin E., *Highland Heritage*, New York: Friendship Press, 1937.

<sup>106</sup> Western State Teachers College, *The Educational News Bulletin*, Vol. VII, Kalamazoo, Mich., October 1936, p. 20.

in Harlan County, Ky., is still another type of school performing an educational service for the young people who come to stay at the school's quarters and to younger children in the community who come as day pupils. In addition the school's leaders are ministering to the social needs of the community and assisting in planning for its economic enrichment.<sup>107</sup> These illustrations do not exhaust the roster of private institutions affecting the lives of rural young people, but they suffice to suggest that a significant service is being rendered by this type of organization.

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<sup>107</sup> Glyn A. Morris, Director of Pine Mountain Settlement School, Pine Mountain, Ky.

## Chapter VII

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### CONCLUSIONS

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**YOUTH IS** an adjustment period. It is the age when most young people leave school. It is the time when they strive for economic adjustment, which frequently involves migration from one community to another. It is a short period in the life of each individual when marriage and preparation for marriage and other social adaptations into adult life are made. During these transition years most of life's patterns are fixed. Society's maladjustments are of particular concern when they intensify the problems of youth. To the extent that these maladjustments make a permanent imprint on the personalities of large numbers of youth, their consequences will be lasting—enduring for at least a generation.

The plight of rural youth is not a problem of the country alone. It is of vital significance to the cities as well. In one respect the crux of the rural youth problem is the relation of rural youth to city youth. Except in periods of severe depression it is probable that urban youth could make their economic adjustments with relative ease, at least on a minimum subsistence level, if they did not face the competition of rural youth who migrate to the cities. Death among the older city dwellers opens opportunities about as fast as urban youth mature. But the long-time rural youth problem is that of an excess in numbers in relation to a dearth of rural opportunities, a situation which becomes greatly aggravated during "hard times." Hence, rural youth must go to the cities in large numbers as long as there is any hope of employment.

During the next 15 to 20 years there will be a continual increase in the working population of the entire country. The number coming into the productive ages and automatically competing for employment opportunities, particularly with workers immediately older than themselves, will for some years be much greater than the deaths within the productive ages. As a result the intensification of the problems of youth in making their economic adjustments is likely to continue for some time.

While most rural young people encounter some difficulties in making their economic adjustments and in obtaining an adequate education

and the opportunity for satisfactory personal and social development, those encountered since 1930 have been more acute than ever before. This does not mean that the majority of all rural youth have been on relief or that all have faced insurmountable handicaps in "getting a start," but it does mean that great numbers of young people have faced serious obstacles in making their transition into adult activities. Moreover, without definite public policies directed toward aiding young people, America is facing the prospect of successive generations of youth, among which many young people will be seriously maladjusted and some will be idle or only partially occupied throughout their mature years.

The future of American rural life, and to a large extent of urban life, rests on increased industrial production, a closer integration of industry and agriculture, and an expansion of the cultural and human services so badly needed in rural society. Rural youth as they approach the threshold of citizenship responsibility need not necessarily face contracting opportunities. It is the responsibility of a democratic society to see that these new citizens receive a fair share of the national income in order that they may become effective consumers as well as producers and thus contribute in just measure to the prosperity of both agriculture and industry.

Rural America must choose between two courses. One is the active planning for the conservation of its human resources, recognizing the fact that with no age group will the planning produce greater returns than with young people. The other is to let present trends continue. Until free land in the West was exhausted and the cities ceased their mass absorption, youth could escape from their home communities. But the problems of rural youth can no longer be wholly transferred to other communities. Never has this country been faced so forcefully with the necessity of charting a course for its rural youth.

#### THE NEED FOR EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE

The ability of the individual youth to make his economic adjustment when opportunities are available depends largely upon the education and guidance that may have been afforded him. That education gives an advantage in the struggle for security and that equality of educational opportunity is an inherent right of youth are traditions in American life. The fact must be clearly faced, however, that there is not equality of educational facilities in rural America and that the areas which supply the largest portion of the oncoming generation are those in which educational opportunities are most severely restricted.

A heavy increase in rural high school enrollment has occurred during the same years that the most serious problems of rural youth have emerged. While this enrollment may have been partly due to expanded school facilities, it undoubtedly has been in large measure a

result of present-day employment conditions. In numerous instances youth have gone to school because there was nothing else to do. Moreover, during recent years there has been a definite movement to keep youth in school longer. This raises certain questions. Will the fact that youth attend school for longer periods solve the problems of rural youth? Or does continued attendance in the average public school of today only postpone the time when the same problems must be faced, with little better chance for successful solution? To what extent have the schools been shock absorbers for the depression? How effective have they really been in assisting youth to make their social and economic adjustments?

These queries cannot be answered categorically. They point, however, to the desirability of a redefinition of the functions of the rural schools in terms of current conditions, especially with respect to vocational education and guidance.

Guidance toward occupations is almost entirely lacking in rural areas. Youth commonly pass through the rural school curriculum with the hazy assumption that they are being prepared to enter adult life. But the preparation they receive other than that core of knowledge recognized as general fundamental training too often has only indirect relation to their future work. Most youth enter adult occupations by chance. Giving them greater opportunities for both general and specific occupational training and for learning more about occupational openings is a special need facing rural America.

Rural schools are responsible for the training and guidance of three broad groups of pupils: those who will go into commercial agriculture; those who will enter nonagricultural occupations in either rural or urban areas; and a third large group comprising those who under present circumstances are destined to remain in rural territory living on the land on a more or less self-sufficing basis. It is being increasingly recognized that one of the first duties of the school is the discovery of the particular potentialities and aptitudes of the developing pupil so that on reaching the youth age the individual has some idea of the vocation or vocations in which he or she could reasonably expect to succeed if given additional and proper training. It is, of course, not to be expected that every rural high school can be equipped to train youth in a wide variety of skills, but there are certain fields in which they must provide training if a large proportion of rural young people are to have any vocational training at all. Vocational training in agriculture is doing much to prepare youth for farming, but with all the efforts in this direction it is doubtful if at present enough youth are being trained in high schools and colleges to provide an adequate number of farmers to raise the agricultural products needed for market at the highest possible level of efficiency and at the same time to operate their farms in accordance with the best principles of soil conservation.

That does not affect the fact that there is a "surplus" of youth on the land; it only indicates that youth are not being prepared in sufficient numbers to engage in scientific agriculture.

The rural-nonfarm youth who will enter nonagricultural occupations and the farm youth who will leave the farms receive little special consideration in the educational system. These two groups together constitute considerably more than half of all rural youth. Usually these groups can secure only the general education provided by a standard curriculum. Moreover, it is usually a curriculum built on the assumption that at high school graduation the young people will go on to college. This is in spite of the fact that many of the professions and white-collar occupations for which young people are being trained are at present overcrowded when judged in relation to the economic demand.

Schools have not been sufficiently aware of the fact that for youth in economically marginal families—and in recent years in families that have been on relief—the problems of social and economic adjustment are intensified. Though some of this group of rural youth will migrate, the large number that will remain presents a continuing challenge to the schools to teach them a better way of life in their home communities.

In analyzing the educational needs of rural youth, it must be kept constantly in mind that high school facilities are not readily available for all rural youth. The above discussion respecting vocational education does not apply to many areas because even general secondary schools are lacking. Despite past and pending commendable efforts to remedy the gross inequalities in educational opportunity, the goal is far from being reached. There has been a justified movement to place better schools in these areas through extending Federal support. In view of the limited financial resources available in many rural areas, it seems clear that unless the Federal Government does extend support, the democratic ideal of equality in education will remain unrealized for rural youth.

Because inadequacies and inequalities in educational opportunity do exist, there are thousands of out-of-school rural youth poorly prepared to cope with modern life. It has been the function of the National Youth Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps to provide some education and training for this group. These two agencies have done more than merely help the youth from underprivileged families. They have provided experience from which to project permanent policies to aid such out-of-school youth. Unfortunately, limitation of funds has prevented them from meeting fully the needs of this mass of young people, who constitute the bulk of all rural youth and who need above all both training and guidance for occupational adjustment.



Consideration of the youth group, whether in or out of school, whether employed or unemployed, should be a definite and integral part of a program of social planning. Such a program should go hand in hand with economic planning whether under Federal, State, or local auspices. In areas that are predominantly rural the unit for local planning is likely to be the county, though any particular type of plan that might be set up should be adapted to the particular situations of the communities concerned. Representatives of such agencies as the extension service with its county farm and home demonstration agents; women's and business men's organizations of the villages and towns; the welfare agencies; the farmers' organizations, such as the Farm Bureau, the Grange, and the Farmers Union; the National Youth Administration; land banks; the Civilian Conservation Corps wherever possible; employment services; the schools, including particularly the county superintendent, principals, and vocational education teachers; the churches; and other special groups in particular counties that may be interested in youth's welfare could well constitute county planning councils to deal with the problems of youth.

Such councils could have at least three functions: planning for the general welfare of the youth of the county; acting as channels through which information on opportunities for work could be given to the youth of the county; and providing for adequate guidance for youth. Such guidance involves encouraging youth to remain in school as well as helping them to make their adjustments when they leave school. The efforts of such county councils would be increased in effectiveness if coordinated and guided by State-wide councils organized on somewhat the same basis. The programs for such councils might be developed along somewhat the following lines.

In each State a division of occupational information and guidance with paid leadership and responsible financial backing could be established through the cooperation of such agencies as the State college of agriculture, the State department of education, the National Youth Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps, the employment services, the State department of public welfare, and other governmental and nongovernmental agencies concerned with the problems of youth. In fact, occupational information is now being gathered in many States.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The National Youth Administration, for example, has already made industrial and occupational studies in Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Texas, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. Among the industrial studies made are those of aviation manufacturing, air transportation, baking, candy making, canning, cotton growing, furniture making, insurance, and millinery. The occupational studies include aviation, beauty culture, diesel engineering, forestry, photography, plant pathology, radio service, soil science, school teaching, and salesmanship (data secured from the Office of the National Youth Administration, Washington, D. C.).

Through this office to the county planning councils would pass the results of the work of the many agencies that are working with youth and are assembling data on available opportunities and personal characteristics necessary for success in various occupations. With the passage of time a State agency of this type would be able through both personal representation and literature to render assistance to county councils or other county organizations that deal with youth problems.

With the available facts about occupational opportunities at hand, together with the school records and a working knowledge of the interests and aptitudes of the youth, the county planning councils would be in a position (1) to help youth locate employment opportunities; (2) to advise them as to whether or not they should accept some job that might be available in the community or vicinity or go to urban centers; and (3) to recommend whether or not they should seek further education (with assistance from the National Youth Administration if necessary), go to a Civilian Conservation Corps camp, seek an apprenticeship in industry, take advantage of one of the training centers established by the National Youth Administration, or enroll in part-time training courses available through the schools. Through this mechanism, moreover, the migration of youth either to cities or to other rural areas could be directed, thereby reducing the hazards of seeking to become established economically in a strange community.<sup>2</sup>

Both the National Youth Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps have been making their programs of training more and more practical. Both agencies have demonstrated their usefulness in assisting youth to make their adjustment from the public school into an occupation. It appears essential that these agencies be allowed to plan on a more permanent basis, thereby increasing both their efficiency and their effectiveness.

In connection with advising young men about going into farming it would be well to emphasize the desirability of expanding the plan now being fostered by the Division of Vocational Agriculture of the United States Office of Education and by the Farm Credit Administration to place graduates of vocational high schools on good farms and to provide agricultural guidance until they are able to assume full responsibility for their farming operations. By this method the

<sup>2</sup> State and county councils have been organized in New York State on a voluntary basis. Efforts are now in progress to establish these councils on a legal basis. The movement is a result of cooperation between the State department of education, the State college of agriculture, and the National Youth Administration. While this plan differs in certain details from the one suggested here, the chief objectives are the same. See mimeographed statement of New York State Advisory Committee of the National Youth Administration, 30 Lodge Street, Albany, N. Y., February 11, 1938.



*Farm Security Administration (Lee).*

*The Rural Community Must Plan for Its Youth.*



youth is given a chance to help himself and, if he is successful, in time he can purchase the farm from the Farm Credit Administration. To the extent that rural youth can be started on good farms at the beginning of their careers they will be spared the destitution and financial hardships that have been the lot of so many tenant, laborer, and share-cropper families.

Another educational activity which needs expansion is the discussion and evaluation of the problems of youth by the youth themselves. This is being done to some extent on other age levels by the extension method in both rural and urban areas. By this means farmers themselves are planning soil conservation and crop control programs and are becoming acquainted with the broad aspects of agricultural problems in America through the help of the State colleges and of the United States Department of Agriculture. Agencies dealing with rural youth might well embark on the promotion of discussions to help the youth understand their own problems. Youth want to talk about their own problems and the problems confronting the world. A democracy is obligated to give to its youth the facts about the complex economic and social world in which they live and which is so largely responsible for the difficulties they face in making their own adjustments. Moreover, the solution of problems in a democracy must be a continuing process. The discussions may not produce immediate results in economic and social changes, but the conclusions reached by youth today are likely to form the groundwork for the programs of tomorrow.

### THE BAFFLING ECONOMIC SITUATION

In the past rural youth entered farming or found work in a town or city as a matter of course. There was never any question on the part of themselves or their parents about opportunities being available when adulthood was reached. If the individual wanted to work, he could find employment at home, in a city, or on new lands. The person who failed was generally considered to do so because of indolence.

"Go West, young man," was a guiding principle for decades. While agricultural areas were expanding, it was almost traditional that one son would take over the father's farm, a second go West, and a third go to the city. During the first quarter to a third of the present century, while these traditional avenues were narrowing, education came increasingly to be looked upon as a necessary prerequisite to satisfactory adjustment into adult life. No amount of education and training, however, will be of much benefit to youth if adequate opportunities for gainful employment are lacking. In spite of increasing pressure on the land in both good and poor farming areas many youth not needed for agricultural work have been forced

to remain on farms, and many rural youth in nonfarm territory have turned to the land for a meager living.

Farm youth who are fortunate enough to be members of one- or two-child families and live on a family-sized farm largely free of debt in a good land area have the prospect of future security. They stand a chance of coming into ownership through inheritance and of making the adjustments in their operations that may be required by developments in technology and commercial production. Not so fortunate are youth who belong to large families, particularly in poor land areas, or who are the children of tenants, sharecroppers, and farm laborers.

More emphasis could well be placed on settling young married couples from this group, who want to go into farming, on land which will provide them a decent living and which they ultimately can expect to own or to hold under an equitable long-time lease and on giving them whatever assistance and supervision may be necessary to place their farming operations on a sound basis, instead of waiting until they have lived half or more of their lives on poor land. Bases for programs to establish qualified youth on good land are supplied by the experience of the Farm Credit Administration and the Division of Vocational Agriculture in the plan already referred to for starting youth in agriculture, as well as by the experience of the Farm Security Administration. The experience of the latter agency in selecting farm families in the lowest income class and supervising their agricultural activities has shown that with proper supervision and with the provision of other badly needed assistance many of these families can attain economic self-sufficiency. The youth of these families if properly taught and supervised can likewise succeed.

Unless present trends are checked and specific action taken to start youth on the road to farm ownership, more and more rural youth will never climb above the first or second rung of the agricultural ladder. The difficulties of getting started in nonagricultural occupations also appear to be increasing. There is need of definite policies to prevent the logical consequences of these trends from blighting the lives of thousands of rural young people.

It must be remembered that probably less than one-half of the youth in agricultural territory today can be placed on good commercial farms. Consequently, the other half face one of two alternatives, accepting a lower standard of living or going into nonagricultural occupations. This latter course involves either migrating to the cities or entering nonfarming occupations in rural territory. Such trends as increasing mechanization of agriculture, removal of submarginal land from cultivation, and limited foreign markets for farm products are factors restricting the opportunities for rural youth which have been discussed sufficiently (ch. II). Introduction of new

types of agricultural production and wider use of farm products already grown may offer some possibilities. For example, soy beans are being utilized for purposes other than food. Cornstalks are used in insulation and synthetic materials of many kinds. This is all to the good. But farm products, it is well to remember, are largely consumed as food and fibers, and the expansion in consumption of both occurs very slowly. Increase in consumption depends upon an expanding population and the ability of that population to buy. As long as population was increasing rapidly in this country through the excess of births over deaths and immigration, the increase in demand for farm products was greater than the increase in production per man. Since population is no longer rapidly increasing, this outlet for farm products cannot be expected rapidly to augment the opportunities for commercial farming.

Owing to the fact that the solution of the problem of "surplus" youth on the land would appear to lie in the direction of expansion of opportunities in other fields than agriculture, brief consideration is given to a few possibilities. Migration to urban centers of those not having economic opportunities in rural territory is one method of relieving the situation and preventing the increase of the lowest income group.<sup>3</sup> If it proceeds too rapidly or on too large a scale, however, migration to the cities is fraught with dangers both to the migrants and to laborers already there. Rural migrants are frequently in the position of having to accept work at any wage and under any conditions. Untrained persons going from submarginal areas to the cities tend to follow unskilled occupations, and of unskilled laborers the cities already have an oversupply. These newcomers find it difficult to establish themselves while facing desperate competition in a strange environment. Frequently these young people have no way of effectively relating themselves to other workers, to employers, and to society.<sup>4</sup> Hence, thousands of young people who have sought work in urban centers within the last few years have been advised by employment agencies and employers to return to their home communities.

Directed migration could prevent in large measure the waste attendant upon unsuccessful search for urban employment and at the

<sup>3</sup> For a full discussion of migration see Goodrich, Carter and Others, *Migration and Economic Opportunity*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1936.

<sup>4</sup> A study in Cincinnati, Ohio, on the adjustments of migrants from the Kentucky mountains to the city showed that in comparison with residents of the same urban neighborhoods and of the same social class more highlanders worked at low-skilled occupations and more earned less than \$1,000 a year. In slack times they were laid off earlier and were rehired later. See Leybourne, Grace G., "Urban Adjustments of Migrants From the Southern Appalachian Plateaus," *Social Forces*, Vol. 16, 1937, pp. 238-246.

same time smooth the way for those who are able to enter the skilled trades, services, and professions. It appears unlikely, however, that the cities will be able to absorb the vast numbers of rural youth who are now pressing for a start in life and who ought, under present conditions, to leave rural territory. While a limited number were being directed to satisfactory adjustments outside of rural territory, there would still be the problem of the adjustment of the remaining surplus. Some of these should be enabled to prepare themselves for skilled trades and services so badly needed in rural communities. This should be paralleled by definite steps to make possible the utilization of these trained persons for the benefit of rural society.

It has frequently been proposed that this surplus, or part of it, might be satisfactorily provided for through part-time farming combined with employment away from the farm. The system has long been in operation in New England, and the industrial villages of the Southeast were frequently laid out on the assumption that the workers could tend small plots of land in their off-time from industrial employment. This practice of living on the land and securing a wage from some source other than farming is common near cities and in rural industrial areas. It has several distinct advantages, such as low cost of housing, home ownership, and the production of a more adequate food supply than might be purchased, all of which supplement wages. However, without an extension of opportunities for industrial labor with hours adapted to some work on the land, the expansion of this way of life to meet the needs of more youth appears unlikely. Industry must evince additional signs of actual decentralization into more widely scattered areas of rural territory before this combination may be encouraged on a significant scale, except in connection with labor made available through conservation and forestry programs and such other occupations as may be developed in hitherto undeveloped rural areas. The prospects for expansion of the principal rural industries, such as mining and small manufacturing plants, do not in general seem promising.<sup>5</sup> Development of commercial services is becoming increasingly noticeable along extensions of hard-surfaced highways into remote rural territory, but neither the nature nor the extent of such possibilities has as yet been accurately gauged.

While developments in scientific agriculture and mechanization of the farming process in the years to come promise to restrict even further opportunities for youth in agriculture and expansion in industrial opportunity appears problematical, the field of service

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<sup>5</sup> See Allen, R. H., Cottrell, L. S., Jr., Troxell, W. W., Herring, Harriet L., and Edwards, A. D., *Part-Time Farming in the Southeast*, Research Monograph IX, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., 1937; and Creamer, Daniel B., *Is Industry Decentralizing?* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1935.



occupations holds possibilities for absorbing large numbers of young people if adequate financial provision can be made for supplying more adequate social services in rural areas. There is a distressing need for more doctors, nurses, and teachers. Society could also use more librarians, social workers, and recreational leaders. The field of personal services is only beginning to be exploited in rural areas.

In recent years the Nation has been awakened to the consequences of unrestrained exploitation with its attendant waste of the country's natural resources. It is time society recognized the cruel exploitation and waste of its young manhood and womanhood which now exist.

The foregoing analysis may have a pessimistic outlook. The task of absorbing this surplus labor is not as easy as it might seem, nor can it be done with the facility that is implied when expansion or decentralization of industry is so glibly prescribed as the remedy for unemployment. Talk alone does not bring about either of these developments. One prerequisite to a solution of the problem is the recognition on the part of both urban and rural society that the problem is a mutual one and that both need to appreciate the complementary relationship the other bears to the solution. The difficulty in bringing about a full realization of the situation rests in the fact that temporary remedial measures are in danger of obscuring the long-time trends which were causal factors in the depression of the early thirties. However, America will choose during the next few years between letting more and more of her rural youth drift into debilitating poverty and making provisions for them to travel a road to economic security.

#### THE SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL SITUATION

The consequences of inequality of opportunity are nowhere more apparent than in the social and recreational life of young people. Since apparently rural youth marry at almost as great a rate in bad times as in good and in even greater proportions in the States with large destitute rural populations than in States with the higher rural incomes, it is clearly important to provide, in low as well as high income areas and in bad times as well as good, an environment conducive to wholesome family life and individual development. It has been said that greater emphasis should be given "to values of family life, to ways of living which promote physical vigor, and to conditions which guarantee a larger measure of economic security, especially to young couples during the early reproductive years."<sup>6</sup> While education in its broader sense can do much to develop a more wholesome family life and is exceedingly important both to insure a wide selection of the marriage partner and as training for parent-

<sup>6</sup> Lorimer, Frank and Osborn, Frederick, *Dynamics of Population*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934, p. 348.

hood, economic security is fundamental to the promotion of family welfare. The attainment of economic security for a substantial proportion of the families now in the marginal or submarginal class economically, in either rural or urban society, must occur through a process of social and economic evolution at times painfully slow.

Some of the debilitating effects of inequality of economic opportunity may be offset by more adequate provision for wholesome social and recreational life. Youth who cannot afford commercialized recreation because of their poverty may in the long run be better off if they can be guided to use their leisure time in pursuing interests that will provide a chance for full activity and self-expression. Moreover, as already suggested, leadership in the field of wholesome recreation would afford opportunities for employment for some of the "surplus rural youth" if a program, along the lines of that now carried on by the Works Progress Administration, could be greatly expanded and placed on a more permanent basis.

Regardless of what the future holds in the way of recreation in rural areas, a fundamental question remains: To what constructive use is the leisure time of youth being put? Too often youth in rural communities are looked upon as a "floating population," meaning that they are past the age of high-school activities and have not yet reached the age for joining adult organizations.<sup>7</sup> This period in a young person's life should be bridged not only by wholesome individual activities but also by group activities that will both train and encourage him to enter into and assume responsibilities for the success of adult social-civic organizations.

Youth's participation in adult organizations outside the church is negligible if the entire bulk of the rural youth population is considered and is, moreover, definitely conditioned by social status. This, in turn, is usually conditioned by economic status. While some of the farm organizations have made noteworthy attempts to appeal to the younger generation, they appear, with few exceptions, to have succeeded better with the juvenile age group than with youth. Moreover, they serve only a fraction of the rural population and chiefly those in the higher income brackets.

There are many factors in the situation. The fault lies not entirely with either the adults or the young people. In some cases the older generation may not take cognizance of the desire of youth to be effective participating members of local community organizations. In other cases young people may scatter their energies over such wide areas in pursuit of commercialized urban amusements or the cheap counterpart which has invaded the countryside that there is no time or desire to join with the older folk to consider community

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<sup>7</sup> Office of Education, *Young Men in Farming*, Vocational Education Bulletin No. 188, U. S. Department of the Interior, 1936, p. 101.

problems or to participate in such group recreation as there may be. Roadhouses, "beer joints," and other "hangouts" in many cases provide the meeting places for the younger generation. In some communities the tradition of what recreation should be restricts the actions of the young people with the result that they go to more distant places to do as they please. Those young people who do not have transportation facilities are then dependent upon communities that all too frequently have meager opportunities for recreation. In those isolated rural areas where most of the families are at the poverty level, very few of the young people are able to seek diversion outside of the local community. These are precisely the communities that have a dearth of facilities for constructive leisure-time activities with no financial resources to remedy the situation. It is not surprising therefore that in some areas of this type the principal forms of recreation indulged in by youth are drinking and fighting.

The attack on the problem of leisure-time activities cannot be uniform but must vary with the community. In some areas the first need is the provision of physical equipment, such as parks, swimming pools, tennis courts, baseball diamonds, recreational centers, and libraries. The emergency agencies have made a beginning in this direction. Not only have they placed facilities for recreation in hundreds of communities but they have also provided motivation for orderly behavior by providing work projects for young people. These absorb the energy and interest of youth, and they yield a small money income. They also give youth a vision of what constructive activity can mean to the individual, and they offer the hope that life need not always be drab, monotonous, and tragic. Local leaders in backward rural areas have many pathetic tales to tell of the hardships that some young people endure in order to be able to get to the county seat from their homes to participate in a shopwork or mechanics training project. A major result of the work of the National Youth Administration has undoubtedly been a reduction in the volume of crime among young people. Moreover, a boy's experience in a Civilian Conservation Corps camp often does much to change his attitude toward life and to give him an appreciation of constructive recreation. This avenue of experience should certainly be kept open, and it probably should be extended to girls

Dull and uneventful communities do not necessarily breed anti-social behavior, but they may yield lethargic and restricted personalities that are no asset to the community and that make the execution of progressive programs in any sphere of endeavor extremely difficult. Individuals with such personalities are almost sure to lack social insight and even the elementary understanding of the workings of present social, economic, and political institutions which is so necessary as a background for a fundamental attack on local problems. In

vitalizing young people who were in imminent danger of being set in the mould of a dwarfed personality, the programs described in the preceding chapter have been of great benefit.

In rural areas that are not economically underprivileged, where there are or could be adequate recreational facilities, the approach is less obvious and may involve a change in ideology of both youth and adults.<sup>8</sup> In these areas youth must be encouraged to appreciate the wholesome value of community endeavors and neighborly fun as over against the doubtful, expensive, and ephemeral value of the mere seeking of diversion and thrills. Adults must be willing to relinquish some of their control of local affairs and accept younger people into their councils. All this requires skillful leadership among both adults and youth, leadership which must, in large part, be consciously developed within the community, if not actually imported. In an earlier day satisfactory rural leadership may have evolved naturally. Today, however, there are too many hazards in the path of developing socially-minded rural leadership to risk trusting it to spontaneous growth.

Society must, therefore, accept the responsibility not only of providing opportunity for adequate physical and mental development on the part of maturing young people but also of providing trained leadership. Moreover, it must accept responsibility for bringing within the reach of the "other half" the means for developing rounded personalities, well equipped and eager to contribute to the life of their community.

Rural communities, and the youth who live within them, hold the power to solve their leisure-time problems. The youth themselves can do it if given direction. In addition to direction, of course, it may be necessary for help to be extended in providing facilities. There are very few young people who would not rather engage in sports than sit around and plan mischief. The principle of keeping active young bodies engaged in wholesome physical recreation is just as applicable to maturing youth as to adolescents. One fundamental principle to follow, however, in developing activities among youth for the wholesome use of leisure time is to give the youth themselves a chance at leadership. Questions have been raised frequently respecting the competition of the roadhouse and other forms of commercialized amusement with community activities. Often the commercial agencies win. It seems probable, however, that when this is the case programs have not been built with and by the youth but have been imposed by well-meaning adults.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Lindeman, Eduard C., "Youth and Leisure," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 194, November 1937, pp. 59-66, especially p. 65.

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of this point see George, William R., *The Adult Minor*, New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1937.

### GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The problems confronting rural youth today are the results of long-time trends as well as of the depression of the early thirties, but the depression has revealed the trends and intensified the problems. Many long-time remedial measures must be directed at the roots of the social-economic structure of society. They should be directed in some cases to specific problem areas that cross State boundaries, in other cases to specific inequalities within local areas which need correction. Some measures will benefit youth only through bettering the general condition; others should be promulgated expressly for youth's benefit.

Since all public services must, in the main, be paid for by taxation and since the States vary so widely in taxpaying ability, it is not to be expected that all States will be in the same position to deal with their youth problem. Nor could the wealthier States be expected to contribute gratuitously to financing educational and welfare programs for youth in the less fortunate States merely because some of these youth may eventually become their citizens. Hence, attempts to deal with the youth problem as a whole and to embark on a program of equalizing both social and economic opportunities, if these are to be effective, would appear to require the active participation of the Federal Government.

The Government's principal responsibilities to youth in this connection appear to fall into four categories: (1) assisting to equalize and to broaden educational opportunity; (2) helping young people find work for which they are fitted by training or aptitude; (3) providing work when private employment is not available; and (4) making provision by which youth can develop their full potentialities through wholesome leisure-time activities.

The Government has for some time past accepted limited responsibility in the first category. It has discharged this responsibility by assisting the States to bring instruction in vocational agriculture and home economics to schools serving rural areas and through the Co-operative Extension Service. During the depression the Government has accepted additional responsibility for vocational training as well as general education for hundreds of thousands of young men from the lowest income families through the Civilian Conservation Corps camps. Also, the National Youth Administration has extended vocational training to thousands of other young men and women from low income families by means of vocational training centers established over the country and through special training courses for rural young people at various State colleges of agriculture and other colleges. This program, combined with the provision of student aid for students who cannot otherwise attend public schools and colleges, is evidence of the acceptance of the obligation on the part of the Federal Government

to remove the economic barrier to educational opportunities, particularly on the high school level and above, for youth in low income families. The need for these types of service has been demonstrated. Public opinion must decide how far the Federal Government should go in the future in supplementing the educational efforts of the various States.<sup>10</sup>

The second and third categories of responsibility have been accepted on a broad scale only since the recent depression. Never before had the Government undertaken to provide work for its unemployed citizens or to engage in a wholesale search for employment in private enterprise for those who do not have work. The second category of responsibility has now been accepted on a permanent basis by the expansion of the United States Employment Service of the Department of Labor and the inclusion of the work of an apprentice training committee as a regular function of the same department. Their activities should, however, be made more effective in rural communities.

Under present conditions it appears probable that great numbers of youth—those from families above the relief level as well as those who have been the recipients of public assistance—will be unable to find satisfactory employment within a reasonable period after leaving school, particularly if they leave school at an early age. How far the Federal Government should go in providing work and other assistance in making economic adjustments during this transition period remains to be determined. In this respect American democracy has as yet formulated no definite, inclusive policy.

Assumption of the last responsibility on a broad scale has also come since the initiation of the recreational program of the Works Progress Administration. In giving work by this means social and recreational life, much needed in times other than in a depression, has been provided in many places. The work of this agency has pointed the way to permanent guidance and assistance for the more widespread and advantageous use of spare time by rural youth. It has no adequate program, however, to train people in underprivileged rural communities in effective utilization of such physical resources as are at hand. It would be the better part of wisdom for America to provide an acceptable minimum of public services to these people, through Federal subsidy if no other means seems possible, to the end that a more satisfactory standard of living may be obtained.

The final outcome of the complex situation in which youth find themselves today depends upon whether definite, comprehensive, constructive policies for meeting the situation are adopted or only opportunist program building is followed. Accumulated experience points the way to enlarging and intensifying constructive action.

<sup>10</sup> See *Report of the Advisory Committee on Education*, Washington, D. C., 1938.



*Farm Security Administration (Mydans).*

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America has adopted a policy of conservation of natural resources; human resources are likewise in need of conservation. One step in the direction of human conservation has been taken through Social Security legislation,<sup>11</sup> but on the whole it does not contribute importantly to the solution of the immediate problems of youth.<sup>12</sup> Public opinion directed toward the conservation of youth must be the ultimate arbiter of governmental policy.

#### LOCAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Thoughtful students of rural life are constantly cautioning about the dangers of the inculcation of unhealthy dependence on Federal funds and leadership for the amelioration of the problems of rural youth. In spite of the necessity of, and the advantages to be secured through, Federal aid, the danger that many rural youth will come to feel that the Government owes them a living, that the Government is responsible for making available the facilities needed in rural areas, must be constantly guarded against.

Local groups have a tremendous responsibility in seeing that governmental assistance does not cloud the issue so far as the local situation is concerned. Many communities, though often loathe to admit it, can go a long way toward helping themselves. The local leaders are keenly cognizant of local conditions. They should feel responsible for getting needed help for their youth and for encouraging and training them to participate constructively in community life. From this approach the values of local leadership and initiative developed over a long period cannot be overemphasized.

Only wise local leadership, moreover, can successfully incorporate into the local community life the full advantages offered by governmental agencies. Such leadership must be appreciated and retained while making available resources for carrying out programs impossible of achievement without outside financial aid.

It is easy to cite statistics concerning the accomplishments of various programs but far more difficult to evaluate their results in terms of the development of self-reliance and an appreciation of citizenship responsibilities on the part of the youth benefited. Here is where the community faces a tremendous task in helping youth to profit most by this assistance and gradually to reach the point of relying on their unaided efforts.

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<sup>11</sup> Public, No. 271, 74th Cong.

<sup>12</sup> Unemployment compensation may be paid to young people if they have had employment of the types covered by State legislation for a specified period during the year prior to their application for benefits. Since the Social Security Act does not apply to agriculture, however, it is apparent that this legislation cannot directly affect any very large number of rural youth unless they have employment in covered industries.

Numerous local nongovernmental agencies for helping rural youth were described in the preceding chapter. Since these organizations are limited in their scope, their effects are likewise closely bounded. However, their value as indigenous efforts to solve some of the difficulties faced by youth are incalculable and should not be overshadowed by the more extensive Federal and State programs. With their rural leadership, with their emphasis on training children and youth for wholesome rural living and for eventual responsibility, they are deeply significant with respect to contemporary rural life. The majority of rural youth are not touched by governmental programs, and it is on locally developed institutions that they must primarily depend.

While continuation and expansion of governmental programs for youth are earnestly to be desired, the increased development of nongovernmental programs is equally as urgent. To allow local programs to be curtailed or supplanted would bear tragic consequences in terms of the development of youth as well as of a well-rounded community life. An equilibrium must be reached between what the community itself can and should do for its youth and the assistance it must have from outside sources.

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# Appendixes

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# Appendix A

## SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES

**Table 1.—Number of Births in the United States, 1910–1936**

Year	Number of births	Year	Number of births
1910.....	2,542,000	1924.....	2,893,300
1911.....	2,588,000	1925.....	2,829,400
1912.....	2,633,000	1926.....	2,767,000
1913.....	2,674,000	1927.....	2,733,000
1914.....	2,781,000	1928.....	2,612,100
1915.....	2,800,000	1929.....	2,525,500
1916.....	2,816,000	1930.....	2,585,200
1917.....	2,821,000	1931.....	2,459,900
1918.....	2,834,000	1932.....	2,400,400
1919.....	2,636,000	1933.....	2,278,100
1920.....	2,850,800	1934.....	2,373,000
1921.....	2,956,200	1935.....	2,359,200
1922.....	2,792,000	1936.....	2,330,000
1923.....	2,823,700		

Source: Thompson, Warren H. and Whelpton, P. K., Scripps Foundation for Research in Population Problems, Oxford, Ohio.

**Table 2.—Number of Youth in the United States, 1920–1952**

Year	Number of youth	Year	Number of youth
1920.....	16,846,032	1937.....	21,120,000
1921.....	17,242,300	1938.....	21,386,000
1922.....	17,608,500	1939.....	21,450,000
1923.....	17,858,000	1940.....	21,526,800
1924.....	18,506,200	1941.....	21,707,000
1925.....	18,513,100	1942.....	21,880,000
1926.....	18,809,700	1943.....	21,876,600
1927.....	19,079,400	1944.....	21,900,000
1928.....	19,548,600	1945.....	21,716,000
1929.....	19,852,100	1946.....	21,540,000
1930.....	20,126,794	1947.....	21,186,000
1931.....	20,258,700	1948.....	21,006,000
1932.....	20,452,700	1949.....	20,492,000
1933.....	20,519,100	1950.....	20,175,000
1934.....	20,736,800	1951.....	19,813,000
1935.....	20,786,700	1952.....	19,457,000
1936.....	21,006,400		

Sources: Number of youth for 1920 from Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920* and for 1930 from *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C. For the years subsequent to 1930 estimates were made by applying the probable mortality rates to the population 5 through 23 years of age, 1930, and to the number of births 1926–1936. For the years 1921 through 1929 estimates were made by taking the number of persons 17 through 38 years of age in 1930 and calculating the probable number from whom these survived for the different years. Data on the number of births were secured from Thompson, Warren H. and Whelpton, P. K., Scripps Foundation for Research in Population Problems, Oxford, Ohio.

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Table 3.—Residence of Total Population and of Total Youth Population, by Geographic Division and State, 1930

Geographic division and State	Urban		Rural	
	Urban population as percent of total population	Urban youth as percent of total youth population	Rural population as percent of total population	Rural youth as percent of total youth population
United States.....	56.2	56.1	43.8	43.9
<b>New England.....</b>	77.3	78.7	22.7	21.3
Maine.....	40.3	41.2	59.7	58.8
New Hampshire.....	58.7	61.2	41.3	38.8
Vermont.....	33.0	34.7	67.0	65.3
Massachusetts.....	90.2	91.0	9.8	9.0
Rhode Island.....	92.4	93.0	7.6	7.0
Connecticut.....	70.4	72.3	29.6	27.7
<b>Middle Atlantic.....</b>	77.7	79.6	22.3	20.4
New York.....	83.6	86.0	16.4	14.0
New Jersey.....	82.6	84.3	17.4	15.7
Pennsylvania.....	67.8	69.2	32.2	30.8
<b>East North Central.....</b>	66.4	68.6	33.6	31.4
Ohio.....	67.8	69.8	32.2	30.2
Indiana.....	55.5	57.9	44.5	42.1
Illinois.....	73.9	75.8	26.1	24.2
Michigan.....	68.2	70.6	31.8	29.4
Wisconsin.....	52.9	54.7	47.1	45.3
<b>West North Central.....</b>	41.8	42.1	58.2	57.9
Minnesota.....	49.0	49.1	51.0	50.9
Iowa.....	39.6	39.6	60.4	60.4
Missouri.....	51.2	52.9	48.8	47.1
North Dakota.....	16.6	16.8	83.4	83.2
South Dakota.....	18.9	19.3	81.1	80.7
Nebraska.....	35.3	34.9	64.7	65.1
Kansas.....	38.8	39.4	61.2	60.6
<b>South Atlantic.....</b>	36.1	35.9	63.9	64.1
Delaware.....	51.7	53.3	48.3	46.7
Maryland.....	59.8	60.7	40.2	39.3
District of Columbia.....	100.0	100.0	—	—
Virginia.....	32.4	33.7	67.6	66.3
West Virginia.....	28.4	29.2	71.6	70.8
North Carolina.....	25.5	26.8	74.5	73.2
South Carolina.....	21.3	21.5	78.7	78.5
Georgia.....	30.8	31.2	69.2	68.8
Florida.....	51.7	50.6	48.3	49.4
<b>East South Central.....</b>	28.1	28.3	71.9	71.7
Kentucky.....	30.6	30.4	69.4	69.6
Tennessee.....	34.3	35.2	65.7	64.8
Alabama.....	28.1	28.5	71.9	71.5
Mississippi.....	16.9	17.0	83.1	83.0
<b>West South Central.....</b>	36.4	36.4	63.6	63.6
Arkansas.....	20.6	20.6	79.4	79.4
Louisiana.....	39.7	39.2	60.3	60.8
Oklahoma.....	34.3	34.9	65.7	65.1
Texas.....	41.0	41.0	59.0	59.0
<b>Mountain.....</b>	39.4	39.3	60.6	60.7
Montana.....	33.7	34.2	66.3	65.8
Idaho.....	29.1	30.2	70.9	69.8
Wyoming.....	31.1	29.6	68.9	70.4
Colorado.....	50.2	48.9	49.8	51.1
New Mexico.....	25.2	25.2	74.8	74.8
Arizona.....	34.4	34.8	65.6	65.2
Utah.....	52.4	53.2	47.6	46.8
Nevada.....	37.8	38.3	62.2	61.7
<b>Pacific.....</b>	67.5	67.9	32.5	32.1
Washington.....	56.6	57.6	43.4	42.4
Oregon.....	51.3	53.0	48.7	47.0
California.....	73.3	73.5	26.7	26.5

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, pp. 611, 671, 674, and 694.*

Table 4.—Number of Youth, by Geographic Division, State, and Residence, 1930

Geographic division and State	Total	Urban		Rural							
		Number	Percent of all youth	Total		Farm			Nonfarm		
				Number	Percent of all youth	Number	Percent of all youth	Percent of rural youth	Number	Percent of all youth	Percent of rural youth
United States.....	20,126,794	11,282,151	56.1	8,844,643	43.9	5,140,910	25.5	58.1	3,703,733	18.4	41.9
New England.....	1,228,115	966,370	78.7	261,745	21.3	72,388	5.9	27.7	189,357	15.4	72.3
Maine.....	115,166	47,503	41.2	67,663	58.8	22,881	19.9	33.8	44,782	38.9	66.2
New Hampshire.....	65,788	40,242	61.2	25,546	38.8	7,317	11.1	28.6	18,229	27.7	71.4
Vermont.....	52,868	18,335	34.7	34,533	65.3	16,314	30.9	47.2	18,219	34.4	52.8
Massachusetts.....	637,313	580,021	91.0	57,292	9.0	12,133	1.9	21.2	45,159	7.1	78.8
Rhode Island.....	106,962	99,522	93.0	7,440	7.0	1,595	1.5	21.4	5,845	5.5	78.6
Connecticut.....	250,018	180,747	72.3	69,271	27.7	12,148	4.9	17.5	57,123	22.8	82.5
Middle Atlantic.....	4,188,224	3,331,878	79.6	856,346	20.4	249,071	5.9	29.1	607,275	14.5	70.9
New York.....	2,000,613	1,721,287	86.0	279,326	14.0	98,137	4.9	35.1	181,189	9.1	64.9
New Jersey.....	642,413	541,315	84.3	101,098	15.7	18,901	2.9	18.7	82,197	12.8	81.3
Pennsylvania.....	1,545,198	1,069,276	69.2	475,922	30.8	132,033	8.5	27.7	343,889	22.3	72.3
East North Central.....	3,946,396	2,705,544	68.6	1,240,852	31.4	672,382	17.0	54.2	568,470	14.4	45.8
Ohio.....	1,025,667	716,255	69.8	309,412	30.2	149,228	14.5	48.2	160,184	15.7	51.8
Indiana.....	493,964	285,782	57.9	208,182	42.1	118,262	23.9	56.8	89,920	18.2	43.2
Illinois.....	1,218,123	923,438	75.8	294,685	24.2	153,142	12.6	52.0	141,543	11.6	48.0
Michigan.....	749,667	529,061	70.6	220,606	29.4	113,340	15.1	51.4	107,266	14.3	48.6
Wisconsin.....	458,975	251,008	54.7	207,967	45.3	138,410	30.1	66.6	69,557	15.2	33.4
West North Central.....	2,128,536	895,722	42.1	1,232,814	57.9	834,861	39.2	67.7	397,953	18.7	32.3
Minnesota.....	405,083	198,971	49.1	206,112	50.9	147,676	36.5	71.6	58,436	14.4	28.4
Iowa.....	379,413	150,322	39.6	229,091	60.4	157,399	41.5	68.7	71,692	18.9	31.3
Missouri.....	576,793	305,291	52.9	271,502	47.1	172,456	29.9	63.5	99,046	17.2	36.5
North Dakota.....	121,903	20,490	16.8	101,413	83.2	74,186	60.9	73.2	27,227	22.3	26.8
South Dakota.....	115,232	22,229	19.3	93,003	80.7	66,235	57.5	71.2	26,768	23.2	28.8
Nebraska.....	226,851	79,084	34.9	147,767	65.1	101,282	44.6	68.5	46,485	20.5	31.5
Kansas.....	303,261	119,335	39.4	183,926	60.6	115,627	38.1	62.9	68,299	22.5	37.1
South Atlantic.....	2,830,915	1,016,437	35.9	1,814,478	64.1	1,065,628	37.6	58.7	748,850	26.5	41.3
Delaware.....	37,189	19,814	53.3	17,375	46.7	7,361	19.8	42.4	10,014	26.9	57.6
Maryland.....	263,197	159,717	60.7	103,480	39.3	38,015	14.4	36.7	65,465	24.9	63.3
District of Columbia.....	77,790	77,790	100.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Virginia.....	422,917	142,546	33.7	280,371	66.3	162,200	38.4	57.9	118,171	27.9	42.1
West Virginia.....	294,911	86,080	29.2	208,831	70.8	76,659	26.0	36.7	132,172	44.8	63.3
North Carolina.....	593,213	158,789	26.8	434,424	73.2	292,768	49.3	67.4	141,656	23.9	32.6
South Carolina.....	335,920	72,090	21.5	263,830	78.5	172,764	51.4	65.5	91,066	27.1	34.5
Georgia.....	557,045	173,716	31.2	383,329	68.8	267,889	48.1	69.9	115,440	20.7	30.1
Florida.....	248,733	125,895	50.6	122,838	49.4	47,972	19.3	39.1	74,866	30.1	60.9

Table 4.—Number of Youth, by Geographic Division, State, and Residence, 1930—Continued

Geographic division and State	Total	Urban		Rural							
		Number	Percent of all youth	Total		Farm			Nonfarm		
				Number	Percent of all youth	Number	Percent of all youth	Percent of rural youth	Number	Percent of all youth	Percent of rural youth
East South Central.....	1,774,416	502,037	28.3	1,272,379	71.7	912,120	51.4	71.7	360,259	20.3	28.3
Kentucky.....	428,845	130,449	30.4	298,396	69.6	193,863	45.2	65.0	104,533	24.4	35.0
Tennessee.....	472,650	166,363	35.2	306,287	64.8	215,544	45.6	70.4	90,743	19.2	29.6
Alabama.....	494,811	140,957	28.5	353,854	71.5	246,797	49.9	69.7	107,057	21.6	30.2
Mississippi.....	378,110	64,268	17.0	313,842	83.0	255,916	67.7	81.5	57,926	15.3	18.5
West South Central.....	2,221,507	808,802	36.4	1,412,705	63.6	984,511	44.3	69.7	428,194	19.3	30.3
Arkansas.....	337,230	69,337	20.6	267,893	79.4	206,027	61.1	76.9	61,866	18.3	22.1
Louisiana.....	381,222	149,510	39.2	231,712	60.8	152,863	40.1	66.0	78,849	20.7	34.0
Oklahoma.....	434,377	151,408	34.9	282,969	65.1	187,114	43.0	66.1	95,855	22.1	33.9
Texas.....	1,068,678	438,547	41.0	630,131	59.0	438,507	41.1	69.6	191,624	17.9	30.4
Mountain.....	601,971	236,488	39.3	365,483	60.7	186,701	31.0	51.1	178,782	29.7	48.9
Montana.....	83,395	28,521	34.2	54,874	65.8	32,136	38.5	58.6	22,738	27.3	41.4
Idaho.....	72,963	22,041	30.2	50,922	69.8	30,624	42.0	60.1	20,298	27.8	39.9
Wyoming.....	36,673	10,861	29.6	25,812	70.4	11,918	32.5	46.2	13,894	37.9	53.8
Colorado.....	163,302	79,923	48.9	83,379	51.1	46,665	26.6	56.0	36,714	22.5	44.5
New Mexico.....	72,444	18,248	25.2	54,196	74.8	27,393	37.8	50.5	26,803	37.0	51.1
Arizona.....	72,598	25,281	34.8	47,317	65.2	16,505	22.7	34.9	30,812	42.5	65.1
Utah.....	87,843	46,726	53.2	41,117	46.8	19,029	21.7	46.3	22,088	25.1	53.7
Nevada.....	12,753	4,887	38.3	7,866	61.7	2,431	19.1	30.9	5,435	42.6	69.1
Pacific.....	1,206,714	818,873	67.9	387,841	32.1	163,248	13.5	42.1	224,593	18.6	57.9
Washington.....	240,722	138,663	57.6	102,059	42.4	45,741	19.0	44.8	56,318	23.4	55.2
Oregon.....	144,682	76,767	53.0	68,115	47.0	32,714	22.6	48.0	35,401	24.4	52.0
California.....	821,110	603,443	73.5	217,667	26.5	84,793	10.3	39.0	132,874	16.2	61.0

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, p. 674.



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Table 5.—Replacement Rates of Males 18 Through 64 Years of Age in the Rural-Farm Population, by Geographic Division and State, 1920 and 1930

Geographic division and State	1920	1930
United States.....	2.1	2.4
New England.....	-0.1	0.4
Maine.....	0.0	0.5
New Hampshire.....	-0.8	-0.3
Vermont.....	0.5	0.8
Massachusetts.....	-0.5	0.3
Rhode Island.....	-1.1	-0.1
Connecticut.....	-0.2	0.4
Middle Atlantic.....	0.3	0.8
New York.....	-0.4	0.0
New Jersey.....	0.4	0.6
Pennsylvania.....	0.9	1.4
East North Central.....	1.4	1.4
Ohio.....	1.1	1.1
Indiana.....	1.3	1.2
Illinois.....	1.6	1.3
Michigan.....	1.0	1.4
Wisconsin.....	2.0	2.0
West North Central.....	2.0	2.0
Minnesota.....	2.2	1.9
Iowa.....	2.0	2.0
Missouri.....	1.6	1.3
North Dakota.....	2.1	2.9
South Dakota.....	2.0	2.4
Nebraska.....	2.2	2.3
Kansas.....	1.9	2.0
South Atlantic.....	2.6	3.2
Delaware.....	1.2	0.9
Maryland.....	1.6	1.3
Virginia.....	2.2	2.7
West Virginia.....	2.6	2.8
North Carolina.....	2.7	3.7
South Carolina.....	3.1	4.1
Georgia.....	2.8	3.5
Florida.....	2.2	2.2
East South Central.....	2.4	2.8
Kentucky.....	2.3	2.5
Tennessee.....	2.4	2.8
Alabama.....	2.5	3.1
Mississippi.....	2.4	2.7
West South Central.....	2.8	3.1
Arkansas.....	2.6	2.9
Louisiana.....	2.8	3.0
Oklahoma.....	3.1	3.3
Texas.....	2.9	3.2
Mountain.....	1.5	1.7
Montana.....	0.7	1.0
Idaho.....	1.7	2.1
Wyoming.....	1.1	1.4
Colorado.....	1.3	1.7
New Mexico.....	1.7	1.9
Arizona.....	2.0	1.5
Utah.....	2.9	3.1
Nevada.....	0.2	0.6
Pacific.....	0.5	0.7
Washington.....	0.9	1.0
Oregon.....	0.8	1.0
California.....	0.2	0.6

Sources: Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920* and *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C. Special tabulation from the Bureau of the Census for age 65 for 1920. The number of deaths 19 through 64 years of age was obtained by applying rates from Dublin, Louis I. and Lotka, Alfred J., *Length of Life*, New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1936.

*Method of calculation:* The number of persons 65 years of age and the number of deaths 19 through 64 during the year were subtracted from the number of persons 15 years of age. The result (the annual increment in the group) was computed as a percentage of the number 18 through 64 years of age to secure the annual replacement rate.

Table 6.—Number of Rural Youth in 1930<sup>1</sup> and Estimated Number in 1935,<sup>2</sup> by Geographic Division, State, and Residence

Geographic division and State	Total rural			Rural-farm			Rural-nonfarm		
	1930	1935	Percent increase or decrease	1930	1935	Percent increase or decrease	1930	1935	Percent increase or decrease
United States.....	9,844,643	9,991,600	13.0	5,140,910	6,107,000	18.8	3,703,733	3,884,600	4.9
New England.....	281,745	304,700	16.4	72,388	106,600	47.3	189,357	198,100	4.6
Maine.....	67,663	76,200	12.6	22,881	29,600	29.4	44,782	46,600	4.1
New Hampshire.....	25,546	31,600	23.7	7,317	12,200	66.7	18,229	19,400	6.4
Vermont.....	34,533	41,700	20.8	16,314	22,300	36.7	18,219	19,400	6.5
Massachusetts.....	57,292	65,600	14.5	12,133	19,000	56.6	45,159	46,600	3.2
Rhode Island.....	7,440	10,100	35.8	1,595	2,300	44.2	5,845	7,800	33.4
Connecticut.....	69,271	79,500	14.8	12,148	21,200	74.5	57,123	58,300	2.1
Middle Atlantic.....	856,346	1,002,100	17.0	249,071	365,000	46.5	607,275	637,100	4.9
New York.....	279,326	332,500	19.0	98,137	142,200	44.9	181,189	190,300	5.0
New Jersey.....	101,098	108,600	7.4	18,901	23,100	22.2	82,197	85,500	4.0
Pennsylvania.....	475,922	661,000	17.9	132,033	199,700	51.3	343,889	361,300	5.1
East North Central.....	1,240,852	1,478,500	19.2	672,382	885,200	31.7	568,470	594,300	4.5
Ohio.....	309,412	377,500	22.0	149,228	210,500	41.1	160,184	167,000	4.3
Indiana.....	208,182	247,700	19.0	118,262	154,500	30.6	89,920	93,200	3.6
Illinois.....	294,685	321,800	9.2	153,142	174,200	13.8	141,543	147,600	4.3
Michigan.....	220,606	280,400	27.1	113,340	167,700	48.0	107,266	112,700	5.1
Wisconsin.....	207,967	252,100	21.2	138,410	178,300	28.8	69,557	73,800	6.1
West North Central.....	1,232,814	1,329,600	7.9	834,861	910,100	9.0	397,953	419,500	5.4
Minnesota.....	306,112	329,300	11.3	147,676	167,200	13.2	58,436	62,100	6.3
Iowa.....	229,091	237,500	3.7	157,399	163,700	4.0	71,692	73,800	2.9
Missouri.....	271,502	319,200	17.6	172,456	214,300	24.3	99,046	104,900	5.9
North Dakota.....	101,413	100,700	-0.7	74,186	73,500	-0.9	27,227	27,200	0.1
South Dakota.....	93,003	92,100	-1.0	66,235	64,900	-2.0	26,768	27,200	1.6
Nebraska.....	147,767	152,200	3.0	101,282	101,700	0.4	46,485	50,500	8.6
Kansas.....	183,926	198,600	8.0	115,627	124,800	7.9	68,299	73,800	8.1
South Atlantic.....	1,814,478	2,085,500	14.9	1,065,628	1,300,800	22.1	748,850	784,700	4.8
Delaware.....	17,375	21,100	21.4	7,361	9,400	27.7	10,014	11,700	16.8
Maryland.....	103,480	115,500	11.6	38,015	49,500	30.2	65,465	66,000	0.8
Virginia.....	280,371	339,800	21.2	162,200	215,500	32.9	118,171	124,300	5.2
West Virginia.....	208,831	253,400	21.3	76,659	113,500	48.1	132,172	139,900	5.8
North Carolina.....	434,424	493,100	13.5	292,768	345,500	18.0	141,656	147,600	4.2
South Carolina.....	263,830	302,800	14.8	172,764	205,700	19.1	91,066	97,100	6.6
Georgia.....	383,329	419,900	9.5	267,689	299,500	11.8	115,640	120,400	4.3
Florida.....	122,838	139,900	13.9	47,972	62,200	29.7	74,866	77,700	3.8
East South Central.....	1,272,379	1,433,500	12.7	912,120	1,056,700	15.9	360,259	376,800	4.6
Kentucky.....	298,396	362,900	21.6	193,863	254,100	31.1	104,533	108,800	4.1
Tennessee.....	306,287	360,300	17.6	215,544	263,200	22.1	90,743	97,100	7.0
Alabama.....	353,854	397,500	12.3	246,797	284,900	15.4	107,057	112,600	5.2
Mississippi.....	313,842	312,800	-0.3	255,916	254,500	-0.6	57,926	58,300	0.6
West South Central.....	1,412,705	1,530,900	8.4	984,511	1,080,300	9.7	428,194	450,600	5.2
Arkansas.....	267,893	301,900	12.7	206,027	235,900	14.5	61,866	66,000	6.7
Louisiana.....	231,712	253,700	9.5	152,863	172,100	12.6	78,849	81,600	3.5
Oklahoma.....	282,969	311,600	10.1	187,114	210,600	12.6	95,855	101,000	5.4
Texas.....	630,131	663,700	5.3	438,507	461,700	5.3	191,624	202,000	5.4
Mountain.....	365,483	393,100	7.6	186,701	206,000	10.7	178,782	186,500	4.3
Montana.....	54,874	56,000	2.1	32,136	32,700	1.8	22,738	23,300	2.5
Idaho.....	50,922	55,100	8.2	30,624	35,700	16.6	20,298	19,400	-4.4
Wyoming.....	25,812	26,800	3.8	11,918	11,300	-5.2	13,894	15,500	11.6
Colorado.....	83,379	87,700	5.2	46,665	48,800	4.6	36,714	38,900	6.0
New Mexico.....	54,196	58,700	8.3	27,393	31,500	15.0	26,803	27,200	1.5
Arizona.....	47,317	50,600	6.9	16,505	19,500	18.1	30,812	31,100	0.9
Utah.....	41,117	48,000	16.7	19,029	24,700	29.8	22,088	23,300	5.5
Nevada.....	7,866	10,200	29.7	2,431	2,400	-1.3	5,435	7,800	43.5
Pacific.....	387,841	432,700	11.6	163,248	195,700	19.9	224,593	237,000	5.5
Washington.....	102,059	117,600	15.2	45,741	59,300	29.6	56,318	58,300	3.5
Oregon.....	68,115	81,100	19.1	32,714	42,300	29.3	35,401	38,800	9.6
California.....	217,667	234,000	7.5	84,793	94,100	11.0	132,874	139,900	5.3

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, p. 674.

<sup>2</sup> For method of estimation see appendix B.

Table 7.—School Attendance of Rural-Farm and Rural-Nonfarm Youth 16 Through 20 Years of Age, by Geographic Division and State, 1929-30

Geographic division and State	Rural-farm				Rural-nonfarm			
	16-17 years		18-20 years		16-17 years		18-20 years	
	Total number	Percent attending school	Total number	Percent attending school	Total number	Percent attending school	Total number	Percent attending school
United States.....	1,432,010	52.0	1,838,904	19.1	857,844	57.2	1,232,742	21.3
New England.....	20,214	51.6	25,875	20.5	46,147	54.8	63,815	21.4
Maine.....	6,269	54.8	8,171	21.1	10,552	61.2	15,034	23.2
New Hampshire.....	2,011	59.6	2,596	24.1	4,298	57.0	6,197	23.2
Vermont.....	4,516	48.0	5,903	17.9	4,253	58.9	6,146	22.4
Massachusetts.....	3,515	52.4	4,280	23.1	11,432	56.5	14,928	23.4
Rhode Island.....	435	40.9	602	18.3	1,435	40.9	2,026	13.9
Connecticut.....	3,468	46.5	4,323	18.5	14,177	48.1	19,484	18.5
Middle Atlantic.....	72,604	47.1	89,906	17.5	149,189	49.6	203,865	18.0
New York.....	27,423	52.7	34,873	21.2	41,202	59.9	59,651	23.6
New Jersey.....	5,406	48.4	6,613	16.8	19,630	48.7	26,913	17.0
Pennsylvania.....	39,775	43.0	48,420	14.9	88,357	45.0	117,301	15.4
East North Central.....	195,982	52.4	239,070	19.0	137,266	63.9	186,957	22.8
Ohio.....	43,641	66.7	53,497	23.5	38,540	68.0	52,739	23.5
Indiana.....	34,560	63.4	42,311	23.6	21,339	65.3	30,094	23.8
Illinois.....	42,385	50.1	53,949	18.1	35,489	59.2	46,448	20.9
Michigan.....	35,174	47.5	40,448	17.6	25,119	62.2	34,868	21.7
Wisconsin.....	40,222	34.3	48,865	12.5	16,779	65.4	22,808	25.7
West North Central.....	222,329	50.2	293,950	18.6	95,770	70.8	132,247	30.1
Minnesota.....	39,964	39.9	51,398	14.4	14,822	70.9	19,283	31.9
Iowa.....	40,855	54.2	55,200	18.9	17,556	74.9	23,678	31.8
Missouri.....	48,162	46.5	60,820	17.2	23,273	58.0	33,119	22.2
North Dakota.....	19,444	47.3	26,625	17.2	6,984	78.5	9,182	37.8
South Dakota.....	17,061	52.4	23,366	20.6	6,570	80.2	9,131	38.0
Nebraska.....	25,841	53.2	35,489	17.6	11,193	76.1	15,575	31.6
Kansas.....	30,982	62.2	41,052	26.4	15,372	73.9	22,279	31.0
South Atlantic.....	308,078	46.8	389,862	16.7	168,296	44.9	253,313	15.6
Delaware.....	2,124	47.5	2,609	15.7	2,208	56.3	3,363	20.3
Maryland.....	11,057	37.0	13,376	11.9	14,853	44.1	21,728	14.7
Virginia.....	47,975	46.8	58,332	16.9	27,101	45.2	40,152	16.1
West Virginia.....	22,414	46.9	27,846	18.8	31,134	46.9	44,056	17.3
North Carolina.....	84,237	50.8	105,937	19.7	31,888	45.7	47,798	16.7
South Carolina.....	50,783	47.9	65,192	17.7	20,366	38.8	31,915	14.2
Georgia.....	75,669	41.2	99,739	12.0	24,645	43.4	39,906	13.8
Florida.....	13,819	55.9	16,831	21.3	16,101	48.3	24,395	14.8
East South Central.....	253,645	52.9	322,022	19.5	78,744	62.5	119,521	19.7
Kentucky.....	54,678	47.5	68,383	17.8	24,020	49.7	34,648	19.4
Tennessee.....	59,720	52.8	77,690	19.6	20,446	53.8	30,903	20.3
Alabama.....	71,349	50.9	85,464	18.0	22,808	49.2	35,122	16.0
Mississippi.....	67,898	59.3	90,485	22.2	11,470	62.3	18,948	26.4
West South Central.....	264,382	54.5	353,610	18.9	92,928	60.2	140,977	22.0
Arkansas.....	54,584	57.0	73,690	20.8	13,540	62.1	20,541	23.7
Louisiana.....	40,488	47.6	54,577	17.0	17,083	48.7	26,179	17.2
Oklahoma.....	51,727	58.2	67,524	22.6	21,560	66.5	31,644	27.3
Texas.....	117,583	54.1	157,819	17.1	40,745	61.1	62,613	20.8
Mountain.....	49,815	62.2	66,748	26.2	40,670	66.0	59,376	24.9
Montana.....	8,274	58.6	11,034	22.8	5,792	73.8	7,704	32.3
Idaho.....	8,443	68.8	11,061	31.3	4,693	72.9	6,671	30.6
Wyoming.....	2,993	60.3	4,290	22.5	2,719	73.1	4,518	25.7
Colorado.....	12,530	57.9	16,689	24.2	8,426	64.1	12,309	25.7
New Mexico.....	7,239	58.3	9,889	23.5	6,122	52.1	9,123	16.8
Arizona.....	4,417	54.0	5,969	25.7	6,478	54.6	9,931	18.0
Utah.....	5,325	80.0	6,929	33.9	5,332	78.4	7,418	28.9
Nevada.....	594	69.7	867	29.6	1,108	75.9	1,702	27.6
Pacific.....	44,961	71.2	57,861	30.9	48,834	73.6	72,671	27.6
Washington.....	13,251	72.1	16,453	33.8	12,880	73.2	18,430	30.4
Oregon.....	9,369	68.2	11,663	30.1	8,065	70.6	11,608	28.3
California.....	22,341	71.8	29,745	29.6	27,889	74.7	42,633	26.2

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, pp. 674 and 1133.

Table 8.—Illiteracy Among Rural Youth 15 Through 24 Years of Age, by Geographic Division and State, 1930

Geographic division and State	Rural-farm		Rural-nonfarm	
	Total number	Percent illiterate	Total number	Percent illiterate
United States.....	5,855,210	4.8	4,131,564	3.0
New England.....	82,683	1.0	212,960	1.1
Maine.....	26,104	1.9	60,162	1.5
New Hampshire.....	8,341	0.5	20,465	0.5
Vermont.....	18,621	0.6	20,363	0.7
Massachusetts.....	13,888	0.6	51,186	1.6
Rhode Island.....	1,796	1.4	6,544	2.7
Connecticut.....	13,933	0.4	6,240	0.8
Middle Atlantic.....	286,067	0.5	684,842	0.8
New York.....	112,474	0.5	202,800	0.9
New Jersey.....	26,502	0.9	92,318	1.1
Pennsylvania.....	152,091	0.4	389,726	0.7
East North Central.....	771,774	0.4	638,609	0.8
Ohio.....	171,236	0.4	179,942	0.6
Indiana.....	135,447	0.4	100,671	0.6
Illinois.....	174,343	0.4	158,186	0.8
Michigan.....	131,585	0.4	120,369	0.7
Wisconsin.....	159,163	0.3	78,441	0.8
West North Central.....	945,477	0.5	445,407	0.8
Minnesota.....	167,925	0.3	66,088	0.3
Iowa.....	177,867	0.2	66,088	0.3
Missouri.....	196,834	1.4	60,635	0.4
North Dakota.....	83,776	0.4	110,459	1.4
South Dakota.....	74,776	0.4	30,844	0.3
Nebraska.....	113,861	0.3	29,956	0.5
Kansas.....	130,438	0.3	51,833	0.7
South Atlantic.....	1,220,269	8.4	75,572	1.2
Delaware.....	8,358	2.0	829,132	6.1
Maryland.....	43,579	3.0	11,172	1.4
Virginia.....	185,550	7.3	72,844	6.5
West Virginia.....	87,736	2.7	181,226	6.5
North Carolina.....	335,067	8.4	147,005	2.7
South Carolina.....	198,069	13.9	156,841	5.6
Georgia.....	305,947	8.1	100,384	11.5
Florida.....	54,933	7.3	126,966	6.4
East South Central.....	1,035,758	8.1	82,694	8.7
Kentucky.....	221,032	4.9	397,084	5.9
Tennessee.....	244,335	4.9	116,072	4.7
Alabama.....	281,718	5.9	100,253	5.0
Mississippi.....	288,673	10.4	117,595	7.3
West South Central.....	1,116,300	6.6	63,164	6.6
Arkansas.....	233,691	6.6	473,978	4.9
Louisiana.....	173,335	4.9	68,448	2.8
Oklahoma.....	212,604	13.4	87,301	8.8
Texas.....	496,670	1.9	106,468	1.6
Mountain.....	211,305	6.9	211,761	5.5
Montana.....	35,686	3.9	200,151	3.3
Idaho.....	34,930	0.5	20,505	0.7
Wyoming.....	13,265	0.2	22,614	0.6
Colorado.....	53,006	1.0	15,303	1.1
New Mexico.....	31,013	1.5	40,972	2.4
Arizona.....	18,675	10.6	29,800	9.5
Utah.....	21,899	1.1	33,997	5.8
Nevada.....	2,731	1.9	24,940	0.9
Pacific.....	185,577	1.2	6,020	2.2
Washington.....	52,478	0.3	249,401	1.6
Oregon.....	37,353	0.2	62,874	0.7
California.....	95,746	2.0	39,452	0.8
			147,076	2.2

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, p. 1256.*

**Table 9.—High School Enrollment in the United States, by Geographic Division and Residence, 1931–32, 1933–34, and 1935–36**

Geographic division	Total			Percent increase or decrease		Urban			Percent increase or decrease		Rural			Percent increase or decrease	
	1931–32	1933–34	1935–36	1931–32 to 1933–34	1933–34 to 1935–36	1931–32	1933–34	1935–36	1931–32 to 1933–34	1933–34 to 1935–36	1931–32	1933–34	1935–36	1931–32 to 1933–34	1933–34 to 1935–36
United States.....	5,140,021	5,669,159	5,974,537	10.3	5.4	3,216,073	3,466,922	3,575,360	7.8	3.1	1,923,948	2,202,237	2,399,177	14.5	8.9
New England.....	363,595	394,676	410,555	8.5	4.0	283,247	319,114	321,618	12.7	0.8	80,348	75,562	88,937	-6.0	17.7
Middle Atlantic.....	1,059,709	1,253,456	1,342,791	18.3	7.1	859,249	1,015,908	1,059,491	18.2	4.3	200,460	237,548	283,300	18.5	19.3
East North Central.....	1,153,451	1,255,741	1,285,813	8.9	2.4	746,481	799,477	829,546	7.1	3.8	406,970	456,264	456,267	12.1	0.0
West North Central.....	623,270	670,296	681,793	7.5	1.7	305,077	321,380	330,754	5.3	2.9	318,193	348,916	351,009	9.7	0.6
South Atlantic.....	562,459	627,796	682,922	11.6	8.8	271,007	242,216	255,206	-10.6	5.4	291,452	385,580	427,716	32.3	10.9
East South Central.....	278,101	313,906	325,139	12.9	3.6	100,421	107,336	114,940	6.9	7.1	177,680	206,570	210,199	16.3	1.8
West South Central.....	488,240	506,411	560,397	3.7	10.7	242,624	237,085	249,165	-2.3	5.1	245,616	269,326	311,232	9.7	15.6
Mountain.....	192,984	205,382	216,511	6.4	5.4	89,188	94,349	97,030	5.8	2.8	103,796	111,033	119,481	7.0	7.6
Pacific.....	418,212	441,495	468,646	5.6	6.1	318,779	330,057	317,610	3.5	-3.8	99,433	111,438	151,036	12.1	35.5

Source: U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

Table 10.—Percent of Rural Youth<sup>1</sup> Married, by Geographic Division, State, Residence, Age, and Sex, 1930

Geographic division and State	Rural-farm				Rural-nonfarm			
	15-19 years		20-24 years		15-19 years		20-24 years	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
United States.....	2.2	14.7	29.2	57.0	2.1	16.8	33.7	60.8
New England.....	0.8	7.9	15.7	43.0	1.1	9.0	24.8	48.1
Maine.....	1.4	11.6	20.8	52.3	1.9	13.4	32.4	58.4
New Hampshire.....	1.0	8.3	16.2	40.1	1.5	11.7	28.9	50.6
Vermont.....	0.7	9.4	18.2	50.9	1.3	12.5	27.7	56.6
Massachusetts.....	0.6	3.9	9.4	31.3	0.6	6.5	20.9	41.6
Rhode Island.....	0.5	5.1	13.1	31.6	1.0	7.8	23.6	45.6
Connecticut.....	0.2	3.3	8.9	28.5	0.5	5.8	19.5	41.4
Middle Atlantic.....	0.9	7.7	17.5	44.3	1.2	11.3	28.5	55.4
New York.....	0.7	8.2	16.3	47.1	0.9	9.9	24.5	51.4
New Jersey.....	0.5	6.4	13.2	39.3	0.8	10.1	25.4	53.2
Pennsylvania.....	1.0	7.4	19.1	42.9	1.4	12.3	31.5	58.3
East North Central.....	0.8	8.1	18.1	49.5	1.5	13.3	31.9	60.6
Ohio.....	0.9	7.6	18.4	45.8	1.7	14.0	33.6	62.3
Indiana.....	1.2	9.1	22.4	50.4	2.2	15.2	35.7	63.2
Illinois.....	1.0	9.4	20.9	51.1	1.3	13.0	30.0	58.0
Michigan.....	0.8	7.8	16.1	51.6	1.3	14.3	34.0	65.4
Wisconsin.....	0.4	6.6	13.1	49.0	0.7	8.8	23.8	51.3
West North Central.....	0.9	9.0	19.4	52.0	1.3	11.2	27.8	50.8
Minnesota.....	0.4	5.5	11.0	43.6	0.5	6.1	18.6	40.9
Iowa.....	0.7	8.1	19.9	52.8	1.2	9.7	28.0	47.7
Missouri.....	1.8	14.7	29.0	58.8	2.2	17.5	35.5	61.4
North Dakota.....	0.4	6.1	13.4	47.1	0.5	5.8	18.3	40.7
South Dakota.....	0.5	7.7	16.0	51.2	0.8	7.4	21.3	44.1
Nebraska.....	0.8	8.6	20.3	54.2	1.2	9.5	26.8	48.0
Kansas.....	0.9	9.1	21.9	52.4	1.7	13.9	29.7	56.4
South Atlantic.....	2.7	15.1	34.0	55.2	3.3	21.4	39.8	64.4
Delaware.....	1.2	12.1	26.1	55.0	2.4	15.6	32.9	61.1
Maryland.....	1.0	9.9	21.0	50.4	1.4	14.7	28.8	58.7
Virginia.....	1.6	11.5	25.6	48.8	2.3	18.0	34.6	60.8
West Virginia.....	1.4	11.4	21.9	49.8	2.3	23.7	39.3	71.3
North Carolina.....	2.5	14.3	34.5	55.5	3.9	19.4	43.9	61.8
South Carolina.....	2.9	14.7	39.6	55.0	4.9	22.7	47.8	63.7
Georgia.....	4.4	19.8	41.9	59.7	5.0	23.3	42.5	62.4
Florida.....	2.0	16.5	30.7	53.3	3.3	28.5	39.7	71.8
East South Central.....	4.0	20.9	42.0	62.5	4.2	25.2	44.6	66.5
Kentucky.....	3.4	19.3	35.9	61.4	4.4	26.4	45.4	70.2
Tennessee.....	3.9	18.8	38.2	59.9	4.4	22.9	44.7	64.8
Alabama.....	3.7	19.6	43.4	60.9	4.1	26.3	45.1	67.0
Mississippi.....	5.0	25.3	48.4	66.7	3.9	24.6	40.4	61.9
West South Central.....	3.2	20.9	38.6	65.3	2.9	22.8	39.1	67.1
Arkansas.....	4.2	25.4	44.9	69.2	3.7	24.9	44.0	67.9
Louisiana.....	3.3	21.1	41.2	64.6	2.8	22.4	39.2	65.0
Oklahoma.....	3.0	20.5	36.7	67.1	3.1	23.5	41.6	70.4
Texas.....	2.8	18.8	35.6	62.8	2.7	21.8	36.3	66.1
Mountain.....	1.1	13.0	21.4	59.9	1.7	18.4	29.9	65.5
Montana.....	0.7	10.3	15.5	59.0	0.8	11.4	22.3	56.0
Idaho.....	1.0	11.5	21.2	58.8	1.4	16.9	31.6	65.4
Wyoming.....	1.1	13.8	17.9	62.4	1.3	17.7	21.6	65.6
Colorado.....	1.1	13.8	23.7	62.4	1.8	17.7	30.5	62.2
New Mexico.....	1.6	17.4	26.0	61.8	2.4	24.5	37.9	70.5
Arizona.....	1.7	17.4	26.2	62.6	2.1	24.0	31.0	71.6
Utah.....	1.0	7.9	19.3	50.3	1.8	13.9	32.9	65.4
Nevada.....	0.7	11.7	13.3	56.3	1.1	21.0	23.3	69.2
Pacific.....	0.7	9.5	14.4	54.0	1.2	16.3	25.6	66.3
Washington.....	0.7	7.4	13.6	50.3	1.4	15.8	25.7	65.1
Oregon.....	0.7	9.2	15.1	54.1	1.4	18.0	31.3	68.9
California.....	0.7	10.8	14.6	55.9	1.1	16.1	24.2	66.0

<sup>1</sup> Persons 15 through 24 years of age.

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Population Vol. II, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1933, pp. 848, 934, and 936.

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Table 11.—Marriage Rate per 1,000 Population, by State, 1926–1934

State	1926 <sup>1</sup>	1927 <sup>1</sup>	1928 <sup>1</sup>	1929 <sup>1</sup>	1930 <sup>1</sup>	1931 <sup>1</sup>	1932 <sup>1</sup>	1933 <sup>2</sup>	1934 <sup>2</sup>
United States.....	10.3	10.1	9.9	10.1	9.2	8.6	7.9	8.4	9.7
<b>New England:</b>									
Maine.....	8.1	7.9	7.8	7.8	8.1	7.8	7.0	7.8	8.8
New Hampshire.....	10.2	10.7	10.5	11.2	11.0	11.9	11.6	13.7	15.5
Vermont.....	8.0	7.9	8.5	7.6	7.3	7.1	6.7	—	—
Massachusetts.....	7.3	7.2	6.8	7.2	6.4	6.1	6.3	6.3	7.0
Rhode Island.....	7.7	7.8	7.1	7.8	7.0	6.7	5.9	6.7	7.9
Connecticut.....	7.7	7.4	7.0	7.7	6.9	6.2	6.6	6.2	7.3
<b>Middle Atlantic:</b>									
New York.....	10.7	10.4	9.9	9.8	9.3	9.0	8.1	8.3	9.4
New Jersey.....	7.7	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.0	6.4	6.5	5.8	6.9
Pennsylvania.....	7.5	7.3	6.9	7.4	6.7	6.2	5.8	6.5	8.0
<b>East North Central:</b>									
Ohio.....	8.4	8.8	8.7	10.0	9.0	6.4	4.4	—	—
Indiana.....	12.9	13.1	12.9	13.6	11.9	11.8	11.0	—	—
Illinois.....	11.5	11.0	10.8	11.1	9.9	9.3	8.4	—	—
Michigan.....	9.1	8.1	8.1	7.7	6.1	5.9	5.7	6.6	8.5
Wisconsin.....	5.8	5.8	5.4	6.2	5.2	5.0	4.7	5.3	6.7
<b>West North Central:</b>									
Minnesota.....	8.9	8.7	8.5	9.5	8.8	7.5	6.7	—	—
Iowa.....	8.7	8.7	8.5	8.9	8.4	5.7	3.2	6.5	8.1
Missouri.....	10.8	10.6	10.5	10.6	9.6	9.3	9.6	—	—
North Dakota.....	6.2	6.2	6.7	6.1	5.6	5.3	5.3	6.0	7.0
South Dakota.....	8.7	8.6	9.6	9.7	9.4	10.0	10.3	10.7	11.9
Nebraska.....	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.4	7.4	8.0	8.5	8.2	9.0
Kansas.....	11.1	10.8	10.7	11.2	10.6	9.7	8.9	9.7	10.9
<b>South Atlantic:</b>									
Delaware.....	4.6	4.8	4.7	5.2	4.7	4.2	3.8	4.2	4.8
Maryland.....	16.4	15.7	15.0	15.5	15.0	15.0	13.8	14.7	17.2
District of Columbia.....	10.4	10.3	9.6	11.7	11.0	10.8	10.0	—	—
Virginia.....	8.5	8.7	8.3	9.8	9.8	10.4	10.1	11.5	12.5
West Virginia.....	11.0	11.4	10.7	11.2	10.2	10.4	10.5	13.0	16.0
North Carolina.....	7.9	7.7	7.3	6.0	4.6	4.1	3.6	—	—
South Carolina.....	13.1	13.8	13.4	15.7	15.0	15.2	14.6	—	—
Georgia.....	9.1	9.6	9.5	11.2	10.4	9.7	8.9	—	—
Florida.....	21.6	15.6	12.8	12.7	11.6	11.5	10.0	11.7	14.5
<b>East South Central:</b>									
Kentucky.....	11.3	11.9	11.4	11.7	11.9	13.0	12.0	—	—
Tennessee.....	13.3	13.5	13.5	10.9	7.9	7.5	6.8	—	—
Alabama.....	11.9	11.6	11.2	11.2	10.4	9.7	9.4	11.5	11.9
Mississippi.....	16.0	16.6	16.9	15.8	12.8	10.7	11.1	13.5	14.7
<b>West South Central:</b>									
Arkansas.....	14.8	13.9	14.1	16.4	13.5	13.2	13.8	15.2	15.8
Louisiana.....	10.8	10.3	9.5	10.0	9.9	9.5	9.0	—	—
Oklahoma.....	11.7	12.0	11.7	15.1	15.2	14.0	13.9	—	—
Texas.....	13.2	13.7	13.9	11.0	7.7	6.9	6.7	—	—
<b>Mountain:</b>									
Montana.....	7.5	9.8	10.6	11.4	10.1	9.4	9.2	—	—
Idaho.....	8.4	8.4	8.5	10.8	10.1	5.1	3.4	8.6	11.1
Wyoming.....	8.1	7.5	7.3	8.7	7.8	5.5	3.4	—	—
Colorado.....	11.3	11.1	11.1	12.7	11.3	9.5	6.3	—	—
New Mexico.....	11.5	12.1	12.4	16.1	20.5	19.6	20.6	—	—
Arizona.....	9.2	10.8	13.5	17.3	17.6	17.1	17.1	—	—
Utah.....	10.6	11.0	11.0	12.5	11.1	11.2	11.2	—	—
Nevada.....	15.9	31.0	53.9	63.7	67.0	82.9	76.2	70.1	101.3
<b>Pacific:</b>									
Washington.....	11.6	12.0	11.9	12.7	11.7	11.3	10.1	—	—
Oregon.....	8.1	8.3	8.5	8.8	8.0	7.6	6.9	—	—
California.....	13.1	12.1	10.3	9.4	8.8	8.1	7.3	7.7	8.4

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of the Census, *Marriage and Divorce*, Annual Reports, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

<sup>2</sup> Estimates furnished by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company through the courtesy of Louis I. Dublin. These estimates are lower than those published by Stouffer, Samuel A. and Spencer, Lyle M., in "Marriage and Divorce in Recent Years," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 188, November 1936, p. 58.





## Appendix B

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### METHOD OF ESTIMATING THE NUMBER OF YOUTH

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**E**STIMATING THE number of youth for 1935 and 1940 involved two basic steps: (1) the application of expected mortality rates, and (2) adjustments for the probable migration from farms to urban areas. The total number of youth in 1935 was estimated as the number 11-19 years of age in 1930 who survived to 1935. The probable percentage decrease because of deaths was computed from life tables prepared by the Bureau of the Census.<sup>1</sup> This procedure was also followed in estimating the total number of youth in 1940 by using the group 6-14 years of age in 1930.<sup>2</sup> Similar methods were followed as the first step in estimating urban, rural-nonfarm, and rural-farm youth for both 1935 and 1940.

The second step, that of estimating the probable migration of youth from farms between 1930 and 1935, was made as follows. Since it has been estimated that one-third of the net migration from farms consist of youth, one-third of the estimated net migration from farms to villages, towns, and cities by States<sup>3</sup> were subtracted from the total survivors in the rural-farm group 11-19 years of age and added to the survivors in the same age group in the cities. This gave the approximate number of youth on the farms and in urban territory in 1935 by States.

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of the Census, "Life Tables for White Males, White Females, Negro Males, and Negro Females, Continental United States: 1930," *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. I, No. 20, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., July 27, 1936, pp. 389-399.

<sup>2</sup> The estimates for both years are subject to a slight error since the probable decline in the number of white males was applied to the total youth population in all cases.

<sup>3</sup> Calculated from data prepared by O. E. Baker and Conrad Taeuber. See Baker, O. E., "Rural and Urban Distribution of the Population in the United States," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 188, November 1936, p. 264; and Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Farm Population Estimates, January 1, 1936*, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., release of October 27, 1936.

The estimate of the number of rural-nonfarm youth by States was made without taking into account any expected migration, since estimates of the rural-nonfarm population made by Thompson and Whelpton of the Scripps Foundation for Research in Population Problems show a differential of only about 33,000 between the estimates of rural-nonfarm youth aged 15-24 years in 1935 with and without migration.<sup>4</sup>

If one-third of the net migration from farms to cities were youth, there was a cityward movement of approximately 125,000 farm youth during the year 1935 and 150,000 during both 1936 and 1937. Assuming that migration will continue at the same rate during 1938 and 1939, it was possible to correct the total estimates for 1940 for migration. No attempt was made to estimate the probable migration to cities between 1935 and 1940 by States.

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<sup>4</sup> See Dorn, Harold F. and Lorimer, Frank, "Migration, Reproduction, and Population Adjustment," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 188, November 1936, p. 280 ff.

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