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Four-H Club Work in West Virginia

BY T. L. HARRIS



Livestock—A Popular 4-H Enterprise

AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY
F. D. FROMME, Director
MORGANTOWN



A 4-H Camp Among the Hills

*Four-H Club Work in West Virginia**

by T. L. HARRIS

I. INTRODUCTION

SINCE the passage of the Smith-Lever law in 1914, boys' and girls' 4-H club work has developed rapidly in farming communities of the United States, having become an important phase of the agricultural extension activities in many states. The present study, dealing with such work in West Virginia, was pursued in cooperation with the Division of Farm Population and Rural Life of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study includes:

1. An analysis of the structure, functions, and influences of 341 clubs in 39 counties. (Section II.)
2. A county study of farm boys of club age (10 to 18) who are not club members. (Section III.)
3. A case-study of a county in which 4-H work has made steady progress from its inception to the present time. (Section IV.)
4. A case-study of a county in which 4-H work once flourished, later greatly declined, and now is at a standstill. (Section V.)
5. A case-study of one club which is in some respects outstanding, in other respects average or below. (Section VI.)
6. An account of what 39 county supervisors of club work think are the chief problems, values, and obstacles in 4-H work. (Section VII.)
7. An analysis of the effects of club experience in the socializing of personal character. (Section VIII.)
8. Diary notes on a regional club leaders' conference. (Section IX.)
9. A specific statement about club work by a mother of six children, all of whom have been active in 4-H work. (Section X.)
10. Strong points and weak points of 4-H work. (Section XI.)

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Methodology. The data for this study were gathered from 1926 to 1929 inclusive. The larger portion of the facts was obtained through personal interviews in the field. As a consequence of experimentation, original schedules were simplified, and the questions upon which information was sought were, in so far as possible, made to deal with objective data rather than with personal or group opinions. In Section II practically all of the information was obtained directly from club leaders or older boys or girls who were members of the particular club studied.

II. AN ANALYSIS OF THE STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONS, AND INFLUENCES OF 341 CLUBS IN 39 COUNTIES

In this section an analysis is made of significant sociological facts concerning a random sample of 341 of the 828 clubs in existence in the state during 1927-28. The median enrollment in these 341 clubs was 13, the average enrollment 15.5. The total 4-H enrollment in the state during 1927-28 was 13,328—an average of 16 per club.

Seventy-one percent of the clubs studied were in neighborhoods where general farming was the chief occupation. Four-H club work has had only slight success in mining communities for at least three reasons: (1) the 4-H projects, especially for boys, are designed primarily for practice on farms; (2) the mining population is so transient as to make it extremely difficult to retain even a moderately permanent club membership; (3) nearly all county supervisors of 4-H work consider their chief job to be with the farm boys and girls. Only two counties, Kanawha and Fayette, enrolled any considerable number of boys and girls from mining families.

In an endeavor to determine how many competing (or cooperating) groups of young people of club age were present in the respective club neighborhoods, it was found that substantially more than one-half of the clubs studied were in neighborhoods having no other organized group of young people.

Many Clubs Short-Lived

One of the greatest problems of 4-H work in West Virginia is that of keeping the clubs alive and active. Too many clubs lead a flickering existence and die out. It was found that 42.1 percent of all clubs studied were only in their first or second year, and 62.7 percent of the clubs were in neighborhoods that had not previously had a club. Undue effort on the part of county supervisors and local leaders is spent in organizing new clubs, and not enough time and effort are spent in carefully selecting the neighborhoods where clubs are to be started and then intelligently and persistently fostering these clubs through a series of years. About one in five of the clubs organized dies out. Adolescent groups change rapidly in personnel—a possible explanation of the circumstance.

The median age of the clubs studied was 2.7 years; the median

number of leaders, 1.1. On the average, the length of service for a club leader is between two and 2½ years.

The great majority of the 64 clubs having enrollments of more than 20 are found in villages or even larger towns. Four county seat towns, one with a population of 25,000, are found in this group. There is a tendency for the 4-H clubs in towns to suffer in vitality and interest because their members are active in other groups; also because the recreational or play element is likely to be emphasized more in these clubs than in those found in the open country.

Majority of Leaders Are Teachers

About three-fourths of the club leaders are school teachers. This situation has its advantages in that practically all club members are school pupils. Disadvantages are discussed in Section XI. It would be desirable to enlist the services as club leaders of a larger number of intelligent farm men and women, especially those who have had successful experience in 4-H work.

Nearly two-thirds of the club leaders have never had experience as rank and file club members. This is largely to be expected in view of the recency of the 4-H movement and the rather mature age of a large proportion of rural teachers in West Virginia, especially the men teachers.

Seventy percent of the clubs hold regular meetings once a month. Nearly all clubs have one or more special meetings during the year. These usually partake of the nature of picnics, wiener roasts, or hikes; some are intended to expedite project completions. The typical club meeting consists of three parts: opening service, consisting of club songs, other music, and devotions; business, with the chairman presiding, assisted by the adult leader; and recreation, games, and stunts.

The majority of the club meetings are held in the late afternoon, just before school is dismissed. In some cases ample time is allowed by the teacher and club leader for an unhurried and satisfactory meeting.

Seventy percent of the clubs receive adequate supervision as to frequency of visits by county workers. The ten percent visited by the county supervisor at every meeting are for the most part the new clubs which need help and the accessible clubs near the county seat.

In at least one county is club work so well organized and conveniently located that every club, weak or strong, near or distant, is regularly visited by either the county agent or home demonstration agent.

Not Enough Summer Supervision

A well-planned and well-executed activity for adolescent youth (like the 4-H program) is a vital formative influence in the development of boys or girls who actively participate in the program, yet

nearly one-third of the clubs are without their regular leader during the summer period, when project completion work and recreational activities should be at their height. In a relatively small number of cases special club agents are obtained for summer supervision. In Section XI this lack in a large number of clubs is pointed out as one of the weaknesses in the program. The situation is, however, not so untoward as might be expected in view of the fact that 249 of the club leaders were teachers and that only 100 of the leaders did not remain in their respective communities during the summer.

Making a liberal allowance for the clubs supervised by special agents during the summer, about 200 of the 945 clubs (1928-29) were without satisfactory summer supervision. Perhaps there is no single point in the whole range of club activities where a relatively small amount of money would go so far in raising standards of achievement as would the money necessary for at least a part-time 4-H club agent in every county of the state during the three summer months.

TABLE 1.—*Do 4-H club families have more good books in their homes than families in which there are no club members?*

| | Yes | No | Unknown | Total |
|------------------|------|-----|---------|-------|
| Number | 286 | 33 | 22 | 341 |
| Percentage | 83.8 | 9.7 | 6.4 | 99.9 |

TABLE 2.—*Are the parents of club members recognized as community leaders more than are parents of non-club members?*

| | Yes | No | Unknown | Total |
|------------------|------|------|---------|-------|
| Number | 287 | 39 | 15 | 341 |
| Percentage | 84.1 | 11.1 | 4.4 | 99.6 |

FOUR-H FAMILIES ANALYZED

Tables 1 to 4 present a brief analysis of the intellectual, financial, and social (or community) status of 4-H club families. These tables show a high degree of correlation between club membership and the following four factors: more-than-average intellectual interests of the families from which club members come; above-the-average capacity of club members' families for community leadership; education of parents; and financial prosperity of parents.

The lowest degree of correlation in these four pairs of factors is found in the relation between club membership and education of parents. In 43 percent of the club neighborhoods there is no recognizable superiority of parents of club members over parents of non-members in the matter of formal education. Perhaps the chief explanation of this lies in the fact that until the last 15 or 20 years, opportunity for education in many parts of rural West Virginia has been rather limited.

In only four percent of the club neighborhoods was the attitude of parents found unanimously favorable to club work. On the other hand, practically no active opposition or hostility was noted any-

where. In the very few cases of actual opposition the reasons given were generally related to the parents' notion that club work was an unprofitable fad. The increasingly frequent demonstrations of the financial value of club work, especially in livestock and crop projects, are removing nearly all opposition to club work.

In only a few instances do club leaders consciously attempt to transform parental indifference into whole-hearted support. Nearly all clubs invite parents to their programs at least once a year. Other devices and methods could be used to accomplish this much-to-be-desired end of intelligent, general, and enthusiastic cooperation of the parents in support of the 4-H aims, ideals, and activities.

Movement Lacks Deserved Support

While considerable progress has been made in a few counties in obtaining some financial support and friendly sponsoring of 4-H work, a reasonable goal in this respect seems far in the future. From the viewpoint of value to the community, interest to themselves, and encouragement of developing boys and girls, there is no more promising and fruitful project for civic clubs and women's clubs than the intelligent fostering of 4-H work.

In some cases, such as the influence of improved methods taught in club work, the causative effect exerted upon parents by their children who are in club work is unmistakable and considerable; for there is no other ascertainable factor at work to produce the particular effect. For instance, definite improvements in sheep and dairy cattle breeding and in potato growing are traceable to the effects of 4-H work in certain sections of the state.

TABLE 3.—*Have parents of club members had more schooling than parents of non-club members?*

| | Yes | No | Unknown | Total |
|------------------|------|-----|---------|-------|
| Number | 194 | 123 | 24 | 341 |
| Percentage | 56.9 | 36 | 7 | 99.9 |

TABLE 4.—*Are the families of 4-H club members more prosperous, financially, than families of boys and girls who do not belong to a 4-H club?*

| | Yes | No | No difference | Unknown | Total |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|---------------|---------|-------|
| Number of clubs | 256 | 17 | 54 | 14 | 341 |
| Percentage of clubs ... | 75 | 4.9 | 15.8 | 4.1 | 99.8 |

Beneficial Results Are Noticeable

An attempt was made to analyze the supposed effect in 4-H work of bringing about more intelligent and scientific farm practice and more adequate and satisfactory home and living conditions. One intelligent farm woman assured the field worker that she had learned many valuable methods in the canning of fruits and vegetables from her daughters, who had learned methods and technique through their 4-H canning projects.

If the data in Table 5 approximate accuracy, it seems that in about 85 percent of the clubs there has been more or less of this process to bring about better farming and farm homemaking. In 146 of the 341 clubs it is estimated that 25 percent or more of the 4-H members have thus definitely influenced their parents.

In 27.3 percent of the clubs studied there was evidence of some influence by club members upon their parents in the matter of keeping accounts of receipts and expenditures. This was true most frequently in potato and livestock projects.

TABLE 5.—*What percentage of 4-H club boys and girls in each club have influenced their parents to adopt better farming methods or get more home conveniences?*

| | Percentage of boys and girls in each club who have exerted beneficial influence on parents | | | | | | | Un-known | Total |
|-------------------------|--|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|----------|-------|
| | 0 | 5 to 10 per-cent | 15 to 20 per-cent | 25 to 30 per-cent | 35 to 40 per-cent | 45 to 50 per-cent | Over 50 per-cent | | |
| Number of clubs | 53 | 93 | 49 | 34 | 21 | 35 | 11 | 45 | 341 |
| Percentage of all clubs | 15.5 | 27.3 | 14.3 | 9.9 | 6.5 | 10.2 | 3.2 | 13.2 | 100.1 |

The connection between club membership and enrollment in certain public schools was found very close. Practically all club members were school pupils; each of the 47 clubs with fewer than 100 percent of their members enrolled as school pupils had very few such members. The usual number of boys or girls in any one club who were not attending school was one or two. In practically all cases the club members who were not pupils at the time the particular club was studied had recently been in school and were merely retaining their club membership a year or so until their fellows left school also.

On the other hand, 65 percent of the clubs enrolled fewer than one-half of the boys and girls of club age in their respective schools. Twenty-two percent of the clubs numbered fewer than one-fifth of the boys and girls eligible for membership. Parental indifference and cost of project materials were found the chief reasons why boys and girls did not join clubs. In a few isolated cases the club seemed to have been kept deliberately an exclusive group for children of certain families or of a select circle. One county agent mentioned this tendency among some of his clubs as a real problem.

Club Program Attracts the More Alert

In nine-tenths of all the clubs studied the leader seemed definitely convinced that the club program was more attractive to the brighter boys and girls. Possibly there should be an associate membership, without full privileges, for those boys and girls willing to do their part with projects and to cooperate in all club group activities, but for some reason unable to complete all the requirements for full-fledged membership. The move now in progress in West Virginia to have "standard" or "honor" clubs: i. e., to give special recognition

to clubs with almost a perfect score in project completion, is a step in the right direction. However, the real leadership training phase of 4-H work should not be diluted in order to allow weaklings to call themselves full-fledged 4-H members.

In 75 percent of the clubs there were evidences that non-club members did better school work because of the presence of a club in their school, even though they did not belong to the club themselves. The spirit of emulation and the effect of personal example are especially strong among adolescent boys and girls. This favorable effect of the presence of a club is perhaps one chief reason why progressive teachers, ambitious for their pupils, are willing to put forth the effort needed to supervise 4-H clubs in their respective schools.

In the matter of contributing toward higher standards of conduct, it seems that 4-H club influence scores even higher than in stimulating to better study. While 75 percent of the clubs showed the latter influence, 88 percent exerted the former.

Socializing Effects Are Evident

The connection between standards of personal and social conduct above the average on the one hand, and 4-H club experience on the other hand, seems definitely traceable. Both by precept and by example the 4-H program emphasizes clearly and strongly the value of wholesome moral character. It is very similar in this respect to the program of the Boy Scouts, Camp-Fire Girls, Girl Scouts, and Girl Reserves.

Nearly 75 percent of the clubs studied showed evidence that their club members remained in school longer than non-club members in the same school. No doubt this was only partly due to their club experience, because their greater native mentality, greater encouragement by parents, and greater financial prosperity of parents would all tend in this direction. The personal testimony of former club members, as shown in Section VIII, as well as the fact that a vital part of club experience is intellectual and educational, seem to make it certain that one factor in causing club members to continue their formal education longer than do non-club members, is the factor of ambition and stimulus toward the complete personal development which they had received from their 4-H club experience.

Practically all the clubs studied revealed distinct leadership qualities in play and recreation at school.

The training which club members receive in recreation at county and state camps and in their home club meetings is one of the most valuable contributions of the whole 4-H program to personal and community advancement. Inasmuch as most rural communities are decidedly lacking in adequate group recreation, it is especially fortunate that the 4-H clubs emphasize this aspect of their work. Typical games used by 4-H leaders are mentioned in Section IX.

Useful Reading Enhanced

The encouragement of good reading habits was found in 88.3 percent of the clubs. In the great majority of cases active interest was secured in completing the requirements of the regular pupils' reading-circle books, which compose a standard part of the extra-curricular activities of West Virginia elementary schools. In a considerable number of cases, however, the reading of club members went far beyond these requirements and included five to ten books of excellent fiction as well as biography, poetry, and history. Sometimes resourceful club leaders were found who occasionally would devote most of a regular meeting to reports and discussion of stories read by different members.

In a very large number of the farm homes good books are a luxury, and some of the brighter 4-H boys and girls are almost pathetically eager for good books to read. The owning and circulating among its members of even a few wholesome books is a real boon to many a club and to the homes from which the club members come.

Not many clubs have as yet been able to accumulate sufficient funds to undertake the responsibility of furnishing community library facilities. The fact that even 28.4 percent of the clubs studied are doing something in the way of providing books for the community speaks well for their ability at least to sense community needs in these respects.

The fact that 86.8 percent of the clubs exerted influences in the direction of new ideas and practices indicates that the ferment of at least friendly attitudes toward new and improved ways of doing things has been set to work by many of the clubs.

Wide Range of Social Activities

The 341 clubs exhibited a wide variety of social activities, ranging from hikes, picnics, box suppers, and socials to dramatics and money-making affairs.

Clubs with no members in county or state camps one year may have been represented in previous years. Thirty-five percent of the clubs in 1927 had no representative at any county camp. This circumstance was due chiefly to distance from the camp, pressure of farm work at home, financial inability, and, in a few cases, the fact that no county camp was held in their own county. On the other hand, nearly one-half of the clubs had three or more members at camp in that year.

The state camp at Jackson's Mill, while nearly in the geographic and population center of the state, is yet quite distant from the majority of the clubs in the state. Time, money, and an outstanding achievement record at home are necessary for the privilege of attending State Camp. One hundred eighteen of the 341 clubs were represented by at least one member at Jackson's Mill in 1927.

More than two-fifths of the clubs had honors or prizes to report for 1926-27. A wide variety of prizes and honors, many of them of a very substantial character, are available to West Virginia 4-H boys and girls. Cash prizes at state and county fairs, scholarships donated by railroad companies or farm women's clubs, and prizes by manufacturing concerns, are among the material rewards offered for real achievements in 4-H work.

"International" Honors Make Strong Appeal

For boys carrying livestock projects, the honor of participation in the work of a judging team at the International Livestock Exposition at Chicago is one of the most valued of the prizes.

Members in 68.3 percent of the clubs carried bank accounts. The practice of keeping careful records of costs and profits bears further fruit in helping to develop the habit of saving and of doing business in the modern way: i. e., through the banks. It is fair to assume that by their experience in buying materials, in keeping an account of amounts and values of feed used, and in buying cloth or eggs, the 4-H boys and girls who have bank accounts have found their club work a real factor in the development of thrift and of business-like attitudes and practices.

In 81.2 percent of the clubs some contribution toward the informal social life of the neighborhood was found. In 90 percent of the cases studied, 4-H members were found more active in the social and recreational life of the community than other young people of the same age. Community singing, dramatics, or demonstrations of some phase of club work often add zest and interest to the informal aspects of rural social life, and also make the adults more intelligent as to the nature and merits of club work. The more socially minded young people are drawn into the club work; and it is only reasonable to suppose that the 4-H experience of such young people definitely adds to their social efficiency by giving outlet and guidance to their potential sociability.

Nearly 90 percent of the club neighborhoods find that their 4-H young people are more active and helpful in church, Sunday School, and young people's societies than are other young people. This probably is partly a result of the emphasis upon the religious element in the 4-H program.

Interest in beautification projects, as demonstrated in nearly three-fourths of the clubs studied, does not always mean actual work along these lines, but at least it is a step in that direction. The 4-H influence here comes from the favorable attitude of all effective club leaders toward the practice of cleanliness and neatness, about the home, the school and church grounds, and, in a few cases, the community highways. It is not infrequent for a 4-H club to assume the responsibility of cleaning up the school yard, cutting weeds around the church building, or setting out trees and shrubbery on the school grounds. Also there is an increasing number of boys and girls who

carry home beautification projects, from which they receive intelligent guidance as to how to add beauty to their everyday surroundings.

Better Farming, Better Living Is Goal

Inasmuch as the 4-H program is maintained by the state and federal governments for the express purpose of promoting more intelligent agriculture and farm home-making, it would fall short of its purpose if it did not help the boys and girls who participate in its activities to put as much as possible of their education and knowledge into daily practice. This reasonable goal of 4-H work is, to a considerable extent, actually achieved.

Large community enterprises in rural communities are few. That is one reason why only two percent of the clubs have achievements of this kind to their credit. Only in rare instances do club members have the age, experience, and leadership capacity to function in a prominent way among the adult, tax-paying members of the community. One notable instance, however, is on record where the 4-H club members were the chief factor in the voting of bonds for a new high school.

The improvements in community life mentioned in the cases of 249 of the 341 clubs ranged from material improvements such as a new high school building to intangible factors such as better relationships between adults and young people or between town and country people. Most of the 92 club neighborhoods where no such improvement was in evidence were those neighborhoods in which club work was of very recent origin.

III. A COUNTY STUDY OF BOYS OF CLUB AGE WHO ARE NOT CLUB MEMBERS*

(A STUDY OF 557 BOYS IN ONE COUNTY)

Monongalia County, a representative farming and mining county in northcentral West Virginia, was selected. With the exception of the city of Morgantown, practically all the people of the county live under rural or semi-rural conditions. Three small incorporated villages, but none of the schools of the city of Morgantown, are included in this study.

The county is probably above the average in the development of 4-H club work. The farm people have had the advantage of the leadership of a competent county agent and home demonstration agent for several years, and the State University is situated at Morgantown.

The fact that Morgan district, in which Morgantown is located, has 12 4-H clubs in its 22 rural schools, and Clinton district, one of the isolated agricultural sections, has only three clubs in its 22 rural schools, makes it apparent that proximity to the county seat and the

presence of a hard-road system are significant factors in determining the extent of 4-H club development. This situation prevails quite generally over the state.

RELATION OF CLUBS TO SIZE OF SCHOOLS

The 147 country schools vary in size from one to three or more rooms. The 43 schools with two rooms or more are found mostly in neighborhoods where the population is partly mining and partly agricultural. The 104 one-room country schools had 18 clubs, and 82 percent of the distinctly farming neighborhoods of the county were without any 4-H program.

Of the 43 schools having two or more rooms, 17 schools, or 40 percent, had 4-H clubs, as compared with 18 percent of the 104 one-room schools. Nearly all the larger schools are found on or near hard roads.

The three magisterial districts lying nearest Morgantown, the county seat, and also having the best hard road system, averaged one club to three schools. The school enrollment in these three districts averaged 29. The four magisterial districts lying farthest from Morgantown, having the poorest roads and an average school enrollment of 20, averaged one club to six schools.

While the 4-H program is valuable in the larger schools it is still more valuable and more urgently needed in the one-room school neighborhoods. These more isolated neighborhoods usually have very slightly developed group activities of any worth-while kind.

Small Schools a Handicap

Small school enrollments are handicaps to effective 4-H club organization. While it is possible to have a club of five members, eight, ten, or 12 members are necessary to a vitally functioning group. Many one-room schools do not have enough boys and girls of club age (10-18) to encourage the organization of a club. A school enrollment of 20 or more is usually necessary to include enough older boys and girls to make a worth-while club.

The average school enrollment in the four magisterial districts of the county having the most purely farming population was 20, with a considerable number lower than 20. In the other three districts the average enrollment was 29. Small enrollment in a large number of the schools in distinctly farming neighborhoods is an additional factor tending to determine the extent and quality of club work in this county.

*Dr. C. B. Smith, chief of the office of cooperative extension work in the United States Department of Agriculture, made the following suggestion in regard to this study of 4-H work in West Virginia: "That objectives include:

"(1) An analysis in one or more counties of the number of rural boys between the ages of 10 and 18 not in any school and not in club work, with their respective ages.

"(2) The present occupation of such boys; or how they are spending their time.

"(3) The reasons why such boys are not in school."

Personal interviews with teachers, former schoolmates, and brothers and sisters of the boys who were the object of the study, were employed.

When one takes into account the combined facts that, in this county, a very high percentage of the small one-room schools are in the more isolated and inaccessible neighborhoods, distant from the county seat and away from hard roads, one can readily understand that this combination of unfavorable conditions creates a limiting circle of cause and effect and operates to keep the 4-H club program at a minimum where its services are most needed.

An illustration of how rural migration also sometimes affects 4-H club work is found in the following note of the field worker concerning a certain school visited: "There was a 4-H club here, but it ceased to exist when the chief families moved away two years ago." In the farm neighborhood the moving away of a few families is often fatal to the neighborhood organizations.

None of the six schools for negro children in the county had a 4-H club.

Age of 15 Often is Turning Point

Most boys left school at about 15 years of age and beyond. The rather sharp increase in the number of those dropping out at 16 as compared with age 15 is explained partly by the fact that the West Virginia law allows boys to work in coal mines at 16. Twenty-four percent of the 557 boys included in this analysis were actually working in coal mines when the data were obtained. The 4-H program is not designed especially for coal miners and naturally the boys who left school to work in the mines would be inclined to drop their 4-H club membership at the same time.

TABLE 6.—*Chief reasons why the boys dropped out of school*

| Chief reason given | Number of boys for whom this reason was given | Percentage |
|---|---|------------|
| Indifference | 172 | 30.9 |
| Help needed to support family | 140 | 25.1 |
| Had completed eighth grade in school | 98 | 17.6 |
| Wanted to go to work | 66 | 11.8 |
| Parents not interested in having the boy stay in school | 44 | 7.9 |
| Prolonged sickness | 20 | 3.6 |
| Inability to do school work | 7 | 1.3 |
| Conduct problems | 5 | .9 |
| Too great a distance from school | 5 | .9 |
| Total | 557 | 100.0 |

The two leading causes given for dropping out of school, as shown in Table 6, were lack of interest in school work on the part of the boy, and economic necessity. As to the economic cause, one should probably not interpret it to mean that 140 boys were compelled to drop out of school to prevent actual suffering in their families. It rather means, in most cases, that the standard of living of farm families in this county is slowly rising and that the older boys of the larger families desired to help maintain this rising stand-

ard when they reached the point where they could make tangible contributions to the family income.

Ninety percent or more of the boys of 4-H club age who had left school were not enrolled in 4-H club work. It was found that 155 lived near enough to a club to make membership possible, but only 16 of these availed themselves of the opportunity.

One-fifth of Boys Farming

About 80 percent of the fathers of the 557 boys earn their living entirely or chiefly by farming. Table 7 shows that only 111 of the boys, or 20 percent, were following that occupation.

TABLE 7.—*Present occupations of the boys*

| Occupation | Number | Percentage |
|---|------------|-------------|
| Miner | 133 | 23.9 |
| Farmer | 111 | 19.9 |
| Loafing | 80 | 14.3 |
| Glass worker | 74 | 13.3 |
| Day laborer | 41 | 7.3 |
| Clerk in store | 13 | 2.3 |
| Dairyman | 11 | 2.0 |
| Working in stone quarry | 9 | 1.6 |
| Teamster | 9 | 1.6 |
| Truck driver | 9 | 1.6 |
| Lumberman | 7 | 1.1 |
| Mechanic | 6 | 1.0 |
| Tin plate worker | 4 | 0.7 |
| Junk collector | 3 | 0.5 |
| Porter in hotel | 3 | 0.5 |
| Working in shoe shop | 2 | 0.4 |
| Selling papers | 2 | 0.4 |
| Working in restaurant | 2 | 0.4 |
| Making and selling moonshine whiskey... | 2 | 0.4 |
| Working in pool room | 1 | 0.2 |
| Working in bakery | 1 | 0.2 |
| Unknown | 34 | 6.0 |
| Total | 557 | 99.6 |

Only one-fourth of the boys in farm families were following their fathers' occupation. No doubt this fact is a large causal factor in the low percentage of older boys out of school who are doing 4-H club work. The whole 4-H program is organized primarily for boys and girls whose families make their living in agriculture. When an older boy leaves that occupation his chief incentive to 4-H club work is gone.

In the more purely agricultural counties the percentage of boys and girls who stay in club work for a short time after they leave school is higher than it is in Monongalia. In the large number of counties, however, where the occupations of farming and mining are much intermingled, very much the same conditions prevail as in Monongalia County.

IV. A CASE-STUDY OF A COUNTY IN WHICH 4-H WORK HAS GONE STEADILY FORWARD

Four-H club work in Barbour County had its origin in corn clubs. The first of these was organized in 1911 with a membership of five boys. In 1912 the clubs were conducted by the teachers under the direction of the county superintendent of schools. The total membership of these clubs was 300; of these, 47 percent exhibited at the county fair. These clubs were intended to give the farm boys and girls something of their own and to give them recognition as owners and operators. In 1913 the name of these clubs was changed from "West Virginia Boys' Corn Club" to "West Virginia Boys' and Girls' Agriculture Club."

Local Fairs Popular at Start

During the early years of club work in the county, communities held local fairs in which the boys and girls held the most prominent part. Local citizens contributed money and suitable articles for prizes and thus stimulated and maintained the interest of the boys and girls. Valley District was the only one to continue this practice for any length of time. One member received a trip to Morgantown as a prize for his Reid's yellow dent corn, which yielded 33 bushels per acre.

With the help of its first county agent, Barbour County in 1915 ranked fifth in the state in club membership, with an enrollment of 204 in about eight clubs. Six boys received prizes which entitled them to a trip to the Prize Winners' Course at Morgantown in January, 1916. All were from the Kerr Club. Four of them received prizes on exhibits or on judging.

In 1917 more than 100 boys and girls in six clubs carried on pig, corn, potato, or poultry projects.

The first girls' club in the county associated with the Agricultural Extension Division of the State University was organized at Mountain View in 1918 with cold-pack canning and sewing projects. The club was discontinued because of lack of local and county leadership.

Several of the clubs survived the War. Emphasis now was put on organization, and the social and religious phases were stressed for the first time,—a feature which distinguishes 4-H clubs from other agricultural clubs. Eight or ten clubs were active in 1919.

First County Camp in 1919

The first county camp was held in 1919 at Audra. Four local leaders, three camp instructors, and 20 boys and girls attended. For the first time the 4-H idea was emphasized, and from that time it has developed steadily.

A few more clubs were organized in 1920. The county agent endeavored to strengthen the clubs by urging old members to continue, developing club spirit, making home visits, encouraging more complete organization, and emphasizing the social hour.

The second county camp was held in 1920. The first county 4-H organization was formed at this camp. About 30 club members attended, and six directors and instructors. The camp did much to strengthen club work in the county.

This was the first year for local leaders to receive financial reward. Four were employed. In November, 1920, the first coupons of credit were offered to teachers who would sponsor club work.

Lack of appreciation of the value of the work on the part of farmers, and a feeling on the part of certain business men that farmers' organizations would hinder their business, proved a deterrent to effective club work from the beginning. The county was without a county agent for six months in 1921. As a result no camp was held, and club work declined somewhat.

Many New Clubs in 1922

In 1922 many new clubs were organized. Three women as local leaders helped with the girls' work, and three men assisted with the boys' work. Sewing and canning projects were introduced this year. Thirty-five members attended camp and two won their 4-H pins.

In 1923 several state leaders visited the county. Two women and one man were employed to work on part time during the summer. There were 21 clubs with a membership of more than 300, and during the summer the work was carried to new communities.

Many of the clubs had efficient local leaders, as illustrated in the Silent Grove Club. In 1922 regular, well-planned programs were given. In 1923, when there was no local leader, meetings became irregular and several members dropped out.

In 1923 the camp site was changed from Audra to a more centrally located place near Volga. A banker at Philippi, the county seat, gave land for a camp site. Men of the community dug a well and put the grounds in condition for camp. There were nine camp instructors, four local leaders, and 60 regular campers. Three received their 4-H pins.

In the fall of this year a home demonstration agent was employed.

Kerr's History Given

Kerr club is one of the oldest and most outstanding clubs in Barbour County and in the state. Starting as a corn club and never boasting a large membership, it has had an unusual influence upon the individual club members and the community. Although it was the first corn club to be organized in the county, it has a steady record of achievement for every year down to the present. The terrain is rough and the soil is poor. The 4-H club and the one-room school, which is used for headquarters for 4-H activities, are the only vital community institutions.

Besides fostering excellent project work and winning many prizes, Kerr Club members have promoted school entertainments, debating, literary programs, and picnics which have become genuine

community affairs. One family has contributed in an unusually effective manner to the maintenance of high standards of club work, and the club has, in turn, meant much to the social development of these men and women personally. They are now teachers and leading citizens of the community; two are succeeding in business in out-of-state cities, and two younger ones are still in club work.

The services of this 4-H club to the community have been the more valuable and needed because of the rather extreme isolation of the neighborhood, five miles from a passable road and 12 miles from the nearest town.

Mountain View Club was another small but successful club. At first there were only six members, and their record for 1915 shows an attendance of 100 percent at the meetings. One member, now in partnership with his father and one of the outstanding farmers in the county, attributes much of his success to the training received in 4-H club work. Others hold responsible positions in various occupations.

Genuine Support from Business Men

The period from 1923 to 1928 was one of steady growth and constant achievement in Barbour County. The 4-H program became familiar to all citizens of the county. Perhaps the greatest single reason is seen in the impetus given to more successful potato growing and sheep raising—the chief sources of cash income. The two Kiwanis clubs in Philippi and Belington, as well as the bankers and merchants, have given cordial and substantial support to the 4-H work, both because of their interest in the boys and girls and because 4-H work has contributed directly toward better business. Assistance has been in the form of loaning money for purchase of lambs and seed potatoes, in taking a friendly interest in the boys and girls and in their projects, and in giving all who completed their potato projects a recognition dinner at the close of the harvest.

The business and professional men of the county also give encouragement to the 4-H work by visiting the county camp, making talks to the campers, and by speaking a good word for the 4-H program in their daily contacts.

RESULTS AFTER 17 YEARS

Some of the more significant and valuable results of 17 years of continuous 4-H club work in Barbour County may be summarized as follows:

1. A substantial contribution to more scientific and more profitable agriculture, especially in the fields of potato production and sheep raising.

2. A large contribution to a more vital recreational life of the teen-age young people. This has been accomplished largely through the training in group games, stunts, and group singing fostered by the county camps and by the more resourceful club groups in their respective local communities.

3. The bringing about of a more friendly and mutually helpful relationship between the farm people of the county and the business and professional people of the two leading towns of the county. The good will thus engendered and the increase in actual money profits obtained as a result of this helpful cooperation between town and country are plainly noticeable.

4. The all-around personal development that has been brought about in the lives and characters of a large number of boys and girls who have been active in 4-H work. This personal development includes ability to achieve substantial results in the technical and business aspects of agriculture, creation of interests and ambitions for high school and college education, and ability to serve the community as effective leaders. One specific evidence of this developing effect of club work is found in the large number of state prize winners coming from this county and the fact that one small club (Kerr) won so many prizes for two or three years that it was temporarily forbidden to compete for prizes.

An interesting example of how certain 4-H projects may be used to develop community interest and pride is found in the community beautification project performed by the 4-H club of Philippi, the county seat and largest town in the county. This rather large club, of more than 30 members, took as its group project the beautifying and improving of the school grounds. Through the planting and the setting out of shrubbery, the appearance of the school grounds, in which all the community is interested, was greatly transformed. No doubt the creation of a more vital pride and interest in their community by the team work on the part of the boys and girls who carried the project through was the most valuable result of this enterprise.

REASONS FOR SUCCESS

In summarizing some of the more important reasons why 4-H club work has gone steadily forward in Barbour County, the following factors should be noted:

1. More competent and more permanent county leadership than most of the West Virginia counties have had. This is especially true in the 1923-28 period, during which there was no change in personnel of either the county agricultural agent or the county home demonstration agent.

2. The more-than-average interest of the representative and influential adult people of the county in the 4-H program.

3. In recent years the building of a well-coordinated system of county and state roads in Barbour County has greatly increased the ease and efficiency of county supervision.

4. It has been partly accidental that a considerable number of energetic and intelligent families have been actively connected with club work. These have made notable contributions to club work through their perseverance, intelligence, industry, and loyalty to club ideals and principles.

V. A CASE-STUDY OF A COUNTY WHERE 4-H WORK HAS DECLINED

Monroe County, situated in the southeastern part of the state on the edge of the Blue Ridge Mountains, is of rolling topography. Union, the county seat, is the largest town, with a population of about 1000. General farming and beef cattle raising are the chief occupations.

There are four high schools: Union, Peterstown, Gap Mills, and Greenville. The average attendance at each is about 90. Several graded schools and many one-room schools are to be found in the county.

Bad roads have been the chief drawback to social betterment in the county, but with the coming of good roads social conditions are improving.

Practically no foreigners live in the county, but there are several settlements of negroes. A considerable number of the characteristic mountain people may be found.

GROWTH OF 4-H CLUB WORK

Monroe was one of the first counties in West Virginia to take an interest in 4-H club work. Corn clubs were organized in 1912 or 1913—forerunners of 4-H club project work.

In 1915 the first county camp was held. Monroe was thus the second county in the state to hold a county camp. The Extension Division of the College of Agriculture sponsored a number of contests, and in this county five members entered the acre corn contest, 45 the 200-hill corn contest, one the poultry, one the pig, and one the potato contest.

The county's first agricultural agent began work in July, 1916. At this time 4-H club work was establishing itself in the state as well as in the county. Forty-six boys and girls attended the county camp in that year. Salt Sulphur Springs, an old but attractive summer resort situated four miles from Union and almost in the center of the county, was the site for this and later camps.

There were games, story telling, nature classes, study of Bible characters, first aid, Indian lore, stunt nights, and campfire. In spite of the constructive character of the meetings, some of the people in time withdrew their support and their children from 4-H work, fearing too much recreation.

The camp of 1917 was called a "Boys' Institute", although girls also attended. About 75 campers attended the five-day event.

There were three girls' clubs in the county in 1917. The projects were limited to a few activities such as raising chickens and pigs. Canning and sewing were introduced. Up to this time most of the clubs had been organized in the eastern part of the county and around Union.

Many new clubs were organized in 1918. Almost every school

had a 4-H club, with the teacher as volunteer leader. The county camp attendance for 1918 was 166. Several of the state leaders assisted. A 4-H fair was held at Salt Sulphur Springs.

Two Club Agents Employed in 1919

During 1918-19 between 20 and 30 4-H clubs existed in the county, with a total membership of about 650. In 1919 both a girls' and a boys' club agent were employed.

In the summer of 1918 six girls in the Sinks Grove Community, calling themselves "The Big Six", held a practice meeting prior to county camp. At camp they asked to be placed in a single tribe. This request was granted on the condition that they would allow a first-year girl to be chief (The Big Six had all been in club work five years). The other tribes had experienced chiefs, but this one worked hard, finishing camp with more points than any other tribe.

The mutual friendship of the girls in this unique club has proved to be one of its outstanding features. Coming in contact with experienced leaders and working with other groups also has brought its benefits. Their work attracted attention to the county, at that time one of the foremost in 4-H club work in the state.

Good Attendance at County Camp

The attendance at the county camp in 1919 was about 100. Six state leaders assisted with the camp. Each club had its own exhibit.

Five club agents were employed in 1920. During 1920 and 1921, 12 local paid leaders helped with the work. There were ten representatives of the county.

The 1920 county camp had an attendance of 115, while that of 1921 dropped to 73—a decrease due primarily to lack of leadership, for the county agent had left the county in February, 1920.

In September, 1921, a home demonstration agent was appointed. In the spring of 1922 district club days were held with the assistance of the agent and the club leaders.

Practically all of the clubs organized in 1919 were still in operation in 1922. In both this year and the next, two camps were held each year: a senior camp for club members 14 years and older, and a junior camp for those from 10 to 14 years.

In the spring of 1923 the home demonstration agent was instrumental in arranging public school days as well as the county public school day. These occasions consisted of literary, dramatic, and athletic events and proved strong drawing cards for the adult people of the neighborhood.

Fall leaders' meetings were held in 1922 and 1923 at "The Salt".

Interest Waned with Loss of Leader

There were 20 organized and active clubs in 1923, with a total enrollment of 350 members. In 1924 this had dropped to ten clubs with an enrollment of 197 and an attendance of 43 at the county camp. The slump was due largely to lack of leadership, for the home demonstration agent left in 1923. In 1924 a county agent was employed who did not stress 4-H work as his predecessors had done. The camp of 1924 was the last one held in the county, for the buildings at The Salt were now old and unsafe. Those who wished to attend camp now went to the Summers County camp at Barger's Springs.

From 1921 to 1925 many boys and girls from Monroe County attended the camps and volunteers' conferences at the Jackson's Mill state camp. Many demonstration and judging teams were sent to district and state fairs, where they won many prizes.

In 1924 a campaign was begun for funds for a Monroe County cottage at Jackson's Mill. The cottage was completed in 1927 at a cost of \$3000, and the necessary funds were raised by 1928.

In 1925 sixteen boys and girls from Monroe County attended the 4-H camp in Summers County. Interest in camp work was at low ebb. In 1926, 152 children were enrolled in 4-H clubs. Thirty volunteer leaders assisted.

During 1927 there were only seven clubs with an enrollment of 82, in spite of the fact that a county agent was employed. One of the clubs organized a Christian Endeavor Society; another undertook an anti-fly campaign; another took care of the school grounds during the summer months. The girls of one club completed a piece of sewing each month so that their sewing projects were completed when school closed. Twenty-one members attended camp in Summers County. Twenty-eight completed their projects in time to exhibit them at the Greenbrier Valley Fair. Two clubs made club exhibits. The Waiteville Club demonstrated with a club night program at the close of the club year and invited adults. This entertainment revived considerably the sentiment in favor of 4-H work.

The decline of club work in Monroe County dates from the time paid leadership was discontinued. By 1929 the county had neither county agent, home demonstration agent, nor paid club leader.

FACTORS WHICH CAUSED 4-H WORK TO SLUMP

1. The county home demonstration agent who first built up 4-H work in the county was an enthusiastic leader herself, but failed to develop leadership in others.

2. The district leaders who were paid relatively small amounts for their work were important cogs in the wheel of good club work. When their pay was stopped most of them felt they could no longer afford to supervise club work.

3. Some dissatisfaction was felt because the financing of the county cottage at the state camp was ardently pursued, perhaps ahead of some of the local work.

4. The county court became more interested in building hard roads than in helping finance 4-H club supervision.

5. Rather frequent shifts in county agents. The last agent was more interested in building up young people's religious societies than in fostering 4-H club work.

VI. A CASE-STUDY OF ONE 4-H CLUB*

This chapter is a chronological case-study of an influential 4-H club in northern West Virginia. With a longer history than most clubs, this club was selected because of its relatively long process of evolution and because it illustrates several significant conditions which make for success or failure in 4-H clubs. Among these conditions of success are: adequate, intelligent, responsible leadership; a homogeneous and stable population type in the club community; the sensitiveness of 4-H groups to friendly support, or lack of such, from their elders; and the possibilities of 4-H clubs as vital factors in community improvement.

1916: the Progressive Young Farmers' Club was organized in April with 21 charter members; 2 meetings held, but club was forced to discontinue for 1 year, and leader resigned because of parental opposition.

1918: club reorganized with 12 members and a new leader; projects carried through the summer; club discontinued for one year.

1920-21: new leader took charge; nearly all members completed projects; good meetings every two weeks; sponsored a community meeting which aroused interest of parents; 14 members attended county 4-H camp.

1921-22: club had 40 members and 2 leaders; nearly all members completed projects and attended fair; a social, with money-making features, held every month during summer; club presented a play (the first ever presented in one community) in two communities and cleared \$50, to send winning members to Prize Winners' Course at Morgantown; 15 attended county camp and 3 won the 4-H emblem; club sponsored successful community meeting; club party given at end of year; club began to attract attention even outside county.

1922-23: community meeting sponsored by club attended by 300 people; another play given; attitude of parents and patrons had changed from one of hostility to one of approval; club sent 2 representatives to 2 of state camps.

1923-24: a "get acquainted" community social held at beginning of year; 8 new members added, making total of 37; 75 percent of members completed projects; club exhibit won first prize at county

*The information contained in this section was gathered by C. H. Hunter, a senior in the College of Agriculture of West Virginia University and a resident of the neighborhood in which the club is situated. (Stewartstown Club, Monongalia County.)

fair; 1 girl took grand championship, and numerous other prizes were won by members; 8 attended county camp; 1 member earned 4-H emblem; 3 formed a stock-judging team and represented county in state contest, winning first place there and twelfth place at Chicago in International Non-collegiate Livestock Judging Contest; at state fair, club leader was awarded \$100 scholarship given by State Bankers' Association for being West Virginia's best all-around club member for that year; members took part in school programs and entertainments; cleared \$24 at social; took active part in clean-up campaign; club pledged and paid \$50 toward community building; Community Council arranged stunt night, at which club won second prize; a Hallowe'en party and a "wind-up" party held in two of the homes.

1924-25: slump in coal business in the two villages which had furnished many club members affected club, for families moved in and out and members did not remain long enough to complete projects; only 9 members completed theirs; no county or community fair held, but county agent judged projects; 1 boy attended State Boys' Camp; 2 members attended Volunteer Club Leaders' Camp; 1 of these elected to All-Star group; 9 members attended county camp; 1 boy earned 4-H emblem; several chosen as outstanding in fourfold development; 2 socials and a festival held; club aided toward completion of community building.

1925-26: club had 11 old and 5 new members; 10 of these completed projects and exhibited at community fair; 2 members attended Volunteer Leaders' Camp at Jackson's Mill; 11 went to county camp; of these, four chosen as outstanding; 3 won 4-H honors; fat pig raised by one of members won first prize in state contest; more than usual number of meetings held in order to keep up interest; at two meetings vesper services held, followed by camp fire; club pledged \$300 to fund for county cottage at Jackson's Mill; illustrated lecture, festival, food sale, amateur circus, and play were employed to help liquidate amount of pledge.

1926-27: 14 old members and 6 new ones enrolled—about 60 percent of those eligible for club work; 2 regular meetings held each month; sewing, pigs, corn, potatoes, and poultry projects carried on; 3 of All-Star members attended All-Star Camp and Volunteer Leaders' Camp; club leader was editor of camp paper; 1 girl sent to girls' state camp; 11 members went to county camp; 1 member chosen as outstanding in fourfold development; 3 of older members served as volunteer instructors.

1927-28: leader, who had ably directed the club since 1923, was now sophomore in State University and unable to continue work with club; club slumped and nearly died; 4 boys and 6 girls enrolled (3 moved away); 1 completed his project and exhibited it; meetings scheduled every month, but chairman, high school student, often was unable to attend and called off many meetings; 1 member attended county camp.

1928-29: small enrollment, made up of first and second-year members; gave large basket of food and clothing to Salvation Army at Christmas time.

Of 40 charter and early club members (1916-20), 21 are still living in the same community, but not all of these are farming. Three of the 40 have died.

VII. WHAT THIRTY-NINE COUNTY SUPERVISORS OF CLUB WORK CONSIDER SOME OF ITS GREATEST VALUES AND PROBLEMS*

Questionnaires were sent to 40 county agents, 20 home demonstrations agents, and six special club agents. Thirty-nine replies were received from the 66 questionnaires.

Out of 25 values mentioned, the following head the list: training in leadership, initiative, selfcontrol, good workmanship, friendship and education from contact with others, and personal development.

Twenty-three community or neighborhood values were listed. Those associated with community spirit, cooperation, and training for community leadership ranked highest, with the value of improving community conditions in farming and home-making a close second.

Competent local leadership was regarded as the most important factor in club work direction. The other two factors placed distinctly in the lead were favorable attitudes of parents and teachers and a vital interest on the part of the boys and girls themselves.

Lack of adequate local leadership, scarcity of vitally favorable parental attitudes, and poor roads were listed among the chief hindering factors that prevent both greater quantity and better quality of club work.

More than two-thirds of the county leaders were of the opinion that flexibility of standards for the admission of new club members is justified, but they also averred that the development of the potential leaders in the club group and community should always be kept in mind.

Sixteen reasons were given why boys and girls drop out of club work. Parental indifference, lack of ambition and of persistence on the part of club members, and inadequate leadership loomed up as the chief explanations of the unfortunately rapid turnover in club membership. If the estimate is correct that the average period of individual club membership is about one year, then herein lies one of the great unsolved problems of more effective club work. The large army of joiners and quitters get little or no benefit from their club experience; rather, they often create real problems for the leader and the more faithful and persistent members.

*The information upon which Section VII is based was obtained entirely by correspondence.

VIII. WHAT SEVENTY MEN AND WOMEN SAY THEIR CLUB EXPERIENCE DID FOR THEM*

This part of the study is an attempt to analyze the effects of fairly extensive 4-H experience as they reveal themselves in the present attitudes, character traits, and social behavior of 34 men and 36 women. Fifty-two of these had three or more years' experience as club members; they were more or less outstanding members, for the average period of club membership in the state is about one year.

Fifty-six had graduated from high school, 18 had graduated from college, and 22 were attending college at the time of inquiry.

Practically all these 70 men and women were under 30 years of age. More than one-half were under 25.

One-third Began 4-H Work at Advantageous Age

Only 23 began their club work at the most favorable ages—10, 11, and 12. More than one-half began their club experience at older ages. No doubt the rapid turnover in club membership has been due partly to the fact that a large proportion of boys and girls join at an age when they have only one or two years of most active club interest ahead of them. Ages 12 to 15 are the period of adolescence when club life makes its strongest appeal to nearly all boys and girls.

The median number of years spent in club work by these 70 was nearly $3\frac{1}{2}$. This was a long enough contact with club activities to make it fairly certain that their latest interests, attitudes, and activities were, to a considerable extent, due to their 4-H work and relationships.

The median number of projects completed was 3.1. The number of completions averages almost exactly one for each year for each boy or girl under consideration. This means that these outstanding boys and girls did twice as well as the rank and file of club membership, since only about 50 percent of the projects enrolled for were actually completed (1927-28).

Returns Re-invested in Four Directions

Expenditures of money made on 4-H projects seem to have been mostly for education, travel, clothes, and savings. These four items reflect fairly well the most urgent needs or desires of most farm boys and girls, whether or not they belong to 4-H clubs.

Nearly one-half of the 70 belonged to relatively small clubs (under 16 persons). The fact that 15 belonged to very small clubs (5 to 10 members) shows that a group need not be large to furnish an environment which will help produce outstanding individuals. Probably 12 to 15 members make the most desirable size of club for the average leader and the usual circumstances found in rural neigh-

*This study was undertaken upon the suggestion of Dr. C. J. Galpin, economist in charge of the Division of Farm Population and Rural Life, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

borhoods. Smaller groups are distinctly limited in what they can undertake as group projects or activities.

The one or more club offices held by 46 of the 70 inevitably contributed to their ability as group leaders and added to their capacity for taking responsibility.

Inasmuch as club leaders, supervisors, and rank and file members are all agreed that attendance at county camps is one of the most vitalizing and socializing factors in the whole 4-H program, it is unfortunate that one-third of these men and women never had or used the opportunity to attend even one county camp. (In the earlier days county camps were relatively few.)

The state 4-H camp at Jackson's Mill is of even more recent origin than the county camps. Fifty never attended the state camp.

The three honors most desired and cherished by the 70 boys and girls were the 4-H pin (an emblem of high achievement in the four-fold life—head, hand, health, and heart); the trip to Morgantown (where the State University is situated and where the early prize-winners' courses were held, before the state camp was developed); and All-Star membership. The All-Stars are regarded as the most active and interested group of men and women in the state in the promotion of the 4-H program.

Honesty, Industry Rank Highest in Calendar of Useful Traits

These 70 must have received quite definite impressions of their club leaders to be able to mention 21 traits a total of 452 times, six or eight years after their club experience had come to an end. Honesty and industry ranked highest, with dependableness, patience, and good judgment next in importance.

The percentage of those who are affiliated with the church and active in some phase of its work is considerably higher than the percentage of such in the general population. Because of the fact that the West Virginia 4-H program places considerable emphasis on the vesper services and other religious or spiritual elements of its program, it seems fair to conclude that a part of the reason for this greater showing lies in the influence of club work.

Only 25 Now in Agricultural Occupations

Only 25 are now farmers, farm home makers, county agents, or home demonstration agents. Possibly ten of the 22 who are now students may later return to the farm. About one-half of the more capable 4-H boys and girls, it seems, are leaving the country for town and city life and work.

Not only are farm taxpayers educating many boys and girls in the schools who later became citizens of towns and cities, but the same process goes on in the field of 4-H work. In so far, however, as 4-H work is supported by federal and even state funds, much of its financial support comes from town and city taxpayers.

Forty-three asserted that certain benefits had been derived from their 4-H experience which had been of use to them in their present occupation.

The fact that 33 of the 70 declared that their 4-H experience had not influenced their choice of a permanent occupation may mean that more attention should be given by club leaders to the problems of vocational guidance. These leaders are in a strategic position to give valuable aid if they are sufficiently trained in adolescent psychology and sufficiently informed concerning occupational trends and requirements.

Contact with leaders and 4-H camps decidedly head the list of the phases of club work which have most influenced these 70 men and women. Self-reliance and ambition are distinctly in the forefront of personal or character traits which they believe were developed through their 4-H experience.

Influence Cited by Parents

Many parents commented, with pathetic emphasis, on how much the 4-H club had done for their boy or girl in helping him or her to "stand on his feet and express his own ideas."

The simple but essential health principles emphasized in the 4-H program had noticeable and favorable effects on 60 percent of these men and women. The 4-H program, when participated in with good cheer and heartiness, is bound to make a real contribution toward better conditions in rural health.

Club members are naturally most affected (in the matter of particular skills acquired) by the type of project carried. For example, the sewing project was listed as most helpful in the acquiring of skill. Farm people are in special need of more technical skill and business-like practices, and 4-H work makes a definite contribution toward such. It also helps to develop special technical skills.

In about 85 percent of the 70 cases definite contributions to social development were noted. Nearly every element of club activities has at least some social aspect; and some of the features of the work are included especially for their socializing effect. It seems strange that even 15 percent of these men and women could testify that their 4-H experience had had no such effect.

The effectiveness of the moral and spiritual phase of 4-H activities is evidenced by the fact that nearly 80 percent of the 70 attribute a definite part of their moral and spiritual development to their 4-H experience.

Need for Trained Leaders Emphasized

It is significant that the greatest single need mentioned for the improvement and extension of 4-H activities is the need for a greater number of trained and selected leaders who are able and willing to devote themselves wholeheartedly to self-imposed tasks.

Some further evidence of the nature of the social behavior of these 70 selected men and women is found in the following facts:

Twenty-nine are members of a civic, community, or fraternal club. Thirty-one have held one or more offices in such organizations. In these respects the proportion of group activity and leadership is considerably above the proportion found in the rank and file of farm men and women or even of those in town or city, to which about half of these former club members have gone. Twenty-seven are married and six of these married former club members.

IX. DIARY NOTES ON A REGIONAL CLUB LEADERS' CONFERENCE*

The regional conference (May 16-18, 1929) was in charge of the district county agent and the district home demonstration agent. About ten of the most competent county agents, home demonstration agents, and local club leaders also had charge of certain sections of the three-day program.

The conference was made up of 45 local club leaders, picked from nine counties, and ten persons of the directing group. This was one of seven district conferences held in the state in the spring of 1929. It is the aim of the Agricultural Extension Division to make these sessions annual affairs.

The following abbreviated narrative of the conference is taken from diary notes.

FIRST DAY

Afternoon and evening spent in getting room assignments and in informal recreation. Delegates housed in inexpensive but comfortable and attractive summer hotel on banks of beautiful Greenbrier River. Dart baseball most popular lawn game. Much group chatting and visiting. Supper served at 5:30, followed by more lawn play until sunset, when all gathered in dining room for well-planned series of songs and stunts. A grand march, dancing, humorous reading, group singing, serving of punch. Evening closed with 4-H benediction, an Indian chant sung with hands uplifted. After announcements everyone went to bed at 11 o'clock.

SECOND DAY

Rising whistle, 6:30. Breakfast, 7:15. At 8:30 entire group went into a discussion and study session in nearby schoolhouse. District home demonstration agent in charge. Twelve interesting

*This narrative is incorporated because:

(1) It serves as an example of intensive club leadership training.
(2) The specific problems that arise in every-day club work are here presented and analyzed, and suggestions are made for their handling or solution.

(3) The conference exhibits the personal traits and characteristics of about one-seventh of the most effective club leaders of the state.

(4) The general plan of the conference is an exemplification of club work principles and technique, at least in respect of showing how the balance of work and play, of group and individual activities is fostered.

problems discussed. Five-minute intermission, with songs and stunt. Representative discussion: "Important points and problems in booklet making." At playground, games suitable for county camps demonstrated. Price of supplies and where they could be obtained was explained. Group singing. A discussion led by district home demonstration agent on best club meeting of year brought these responses: (1) an open meeting for mothers; (2) a regular Council Circle meeting with parents invited; (3) Council Circle for neighbor clubs. One county agent reported 50 adults present at one of his best open meetings. Typical May meeting given by state specialist. A demonstration, led by district agent, on "Organizing a 4-H Club." Goals for coming year discussed.

12 noon to 12:45, dinner. 12:45 to 2:00, games, recreation. District agent discussed judging teams and contests at Greenbrier Regional Fair; object: to stimulate better project work. Demonstration of simple and inexpensive game called "ring toss." District agent announced state, national prizes. State extension club specialist discoursed on county camps. Handicraft work learned at camp: decorative stitches, book racks, pocket books, 4-H pillows, basket weaving, lamp-shade making. Harder to provide class work for boys: rope making, poultry culling, game equipment, nature study, every-day manners, first aid, mechanics, camp cookery, fire building, swimming, reed-bottoming chairs. State camp dates announced. 4:30 to 5:30, recreation. 5:30, supper. After supper, informal recreation and rehearsals for stunts. 7:00, vespers—a beautiful 45-minute service on river bank. 8 to 11, Council Circle and stunts by tribes. Good singing throughout the conference, some trained voices, spontaneous spirit.

THIRD DAY

8:30, model club meeting. Personal development talk by county agent. Demonstration of sewing by three girls. Entire group resolved itself into an assumed new club.

Home demonstration agent: "Demonstrations probably are not used as much as they might be. They should not be considered only as work for a few of the best ones. Visiting clubs can put on demonstrations for new clubs."

County agent: "One of the greatest problems of the leader is the selection of projects. Where there is a large number of clubs the county agent can usually get at these problems through sectional leaders' meetings."

One leader stated that he visited each home and discussed projects with parents before selection. It was pointed out that leaders should consult county agent to see how projects fit in with county Agricultural Extension program. Demonstration of how a group can have real recreation in crowded place on rainy day. Eligibility rules for exhibition of projects at fairs. Club group exhibits discussed.

Conference closed at noon.

X. CLUB WORK AS SEEN BY A FARM MOTHER OF SIX CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN 4-H ENTERPRISE

The following statements give some clue to favorable parental attitudes toward 4-H club work and the effects of these attitudes. Twenty questions were submitted to a farm woman of Monroe County whose six children had had a total of 39 years of experience in 4-H club work, an average of $6\frac{1}{2}$ years each. This family is exceptional in the sense that the parents and children have constantly and intelligently worked together to make the most of their 4-H club opportunities and experiences; and also in the sense that the effects are seen in the very substantial personal development of the members of the family.

With a more complete analysis of the community situation, the answer to question No. 7 might have been more favorable as respects the effect upon the community of one of the best 4-H clubs in this particular county. The informant's answer may be a suggestion to club leaders that in order to make a 4-H club of vital value to the community or institutional life, some technical knowledge of or training in community affairs should be an integral part of a club leader's equipment.

The club to which these boys and girls belonged furnished seven of the 25 All-Stars of the county.

SIGNIFICANT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What projects were carried by your children? Beans, potatoes, turkeys, chickens, pigs, canning, sewing, bread.
2. What proportion of these projects was completed? Three-fourths.
3. What leadership (officers, etc.) activities were carried by different individuals? District leader, club agent, and local leader; president of home club; volunteer leader and president; president.
4. In what definite ways have you or your husband aided or encouraged the children in their 4-H work? My husband and I were always glad to help the children in any way we could. Provided horses to ride and food to serve, and helped with their projects. We could not help them much financially, but we showed interest and a willingness to help them.
5. Why have you considered it worth while to give this aid and encouragement? I have seen the benefit of 4-H work develop with every child. Every word of encouragement just made them strive harder and reach higher until it has really been worth while to my family.

6. In what definite ways has experience in club work been of value to your children? Club work has developed them fourfoldwise. They are not timid to appear in public. They will try to lead meetings. They are more interested in Sunday School. They have learned how to do things with their hands that I couldn't have shown them myself or never knew of at all. They have tried to build their character. For that I am very thankful.

7. In what definite ways has 4-H work benefited your community? I can't say that 4-H work has really benefited my community at all. We have no women's clubs or men's clubs. You can really see no benefit except among individuals in this community. The younger ones that have stuck through all the draw-backs and obstacles, are all.

8. What do you consider the most valuable or successful phases of 4-H work? The project and the camp life (the associations, the instruction, the handicraft, and good sportsmanship).

9. Should 4-H club members be selected or should membership be open to all interested children of the specified ages? Club work should be open to all boys and girls of specified age. Cull them in the beginning and there won't be so many quitters.

10. How can club work be made more effective and reach more boys and girls? More boys and girls could be reached with 4-H work through leadership and enthusiasm of parents and school teachers, along with their cooperation.

11. What mistakes have been made in carrying on 4-H work in your community and county? When club work first came to my home it just seemed to be "carry a project" and "got to go to camp." In our county, much stress was given to club work in the upper end and for several years we hardly existed to them. The coming of a home demonstration agent put us on the map. When she left, it was all asleep, with a few exceptions.

12. Why are there about twice as many girls as boys in 4-H work in West Virginia? It's the father's fault. Many boys are made to believe they are fit for nothing, not dependable, and don't deserve encouragement. If the fathers would be 4-H'rs the boys would most likely be too.

13. Why is 4-H work, once so flourishing in your county, now at low ebb? This county just made a poor selection of leadership, or else we are not developing much. Our school teachers are "dead." Our farmers are "set on old time methods." The young folks can't go alone. They must have an older companion and leader.

XI. STRONG POINTS AND WEAK POINTS IN THE 4-H PROGRAM IN WEST VIRGINIA

STRONG POINTS

1. *County Camps and the State Camp.* Almost without exception club leaders and members informed the field workers that they considered the county camp the most valuable single factor in the whole 4-H program. The week of intensive training in the various phases of club work seems to leave a lasting impression on those who attend. The handcraft work, the council circle, vespers, swimming, club songs, and other forms of work and recreation make a unified and effective group of activities. Many club members, now active leaders, told the field workers that they never really knew what club work was until they had gone to county camp. This remark was probably an unconscious testimony to the fact that many, perhaps the majority, of local club leaders are not themselves sufficiently trained to make it clear to the beginners in club work what it is all about.

A very real value of the county camps lies in the opportunity it gives for forming new friendships and making old ones stronger. It is the only opportunity many farm boys and girls have of learning to know other boys and girls of similar tastes, capacity, and ambitions, from other sections of the county.

The State 4-H Camp at Jackson's Mill, Lewis County, one of the strongest, best organized phases of the whole 4-H program in the state, contributes vitally to the maintenance and further development of the work.

2. *A Well-Balanced Program of Work, Including Considerable Emphasis on the Spiritual or Religious Element in Life.* The farm population in West Virginia is 98 percent native white, and Protestant in religion. Since the religious element in the 4-H program is non-sectarian, it is easier and more natural for the club leaders to emphasize this aspect than it would be in certain other states where the distribution of the population is different as to religion.

3. *The Emphasis in Club Activities Is on the Human and Social Rather than on the Technical and Economic.* There are certain aspects of West Virginia farm life (such as isolation and poorly developed social and recreational life for the young people of club age) which seem to justify a strong emphasis upon these phases of the 4-H program. This greater attention to the human and social side does not necessarily weaken the project side of the work in agriculture and home economics. One definite result of the West Virginia policy is that clubs are organized on the boy and girl basis and not on the project basis, as in some states. There are numerous examples of successful small clubs in sparsely settled territory where there could be no club at all if the organization were on the project basis.

4. *The Regional 4-H Fairs Which Have Been Made Possible by a Small State Appropriation (1929) Promise to Vitalize and Broaden 4-H Interests in a Substantial Way.* Many county fairs have been discontinued, and even where they are still carried on, a group of five or six counties makes a more stimulating basis for competition. The plan is to pay expenses of prize-winning 4-H boys and girls to these fairs. A three-day program, including recreational and educational features and training in the preparing and judging of exhibits, makes a trip to one of these regional fairs a coveted prize for farm boys and girls of the districts.

WEAK POINTS

All of the deficiencies listed can be remedied at least partially.

1. *The Percentage of Project Completions Is Too Low.* For the club year 1927-28 (the year covered for most of the data of this study) about 50 percent of the enrolled members completed their projects. The counties with small enrollments had the highest percentage of completions. The county with the largest enrollment had about 25 percent of completions.

2. *The Proportion of Boys Among the Club Members Is Too Low.* Approximately two-thirds of the total enrollment is girls. The state of Tennessee in 1927-28 had a 4-H enrollment of 24,408, almost equally divided between boys and girls. Some probable reasons for the situation in West Virginia may be: (1) Greater cost of boys' project material. (2) Most of the club supervision is usually left to the home demonstration agents in counties where there is both a man and a woman county agent. (3) The illustrated booklet, which is part of the project completion requirement, is much more attractive to girls than boys. (4) On the whole, girls' projects (baking, sewing, and canning especially) are more easily and quickly brought to completion. If a boy's pig or calf dies he is sometimes too much discouraged to continue. (5) Probably girls are conformists more than boys and respond to the persuasion or pressure of their leaders to persevere to the finish.

3. *The Period of Active Club Membership Is Too Short.* There is a serious waste of time and money in allowing such a heavy turnover in membership and such transient contacts with the club program of work.

4. *Too Much Delay in Selecting Projects.* Most clubs are organized in October or November, but a large percentage of the projects, especially the boys' projects, are not selected until the following February or March, when the enthusiasm and interest of many have waned.

5. *Not Enough Trained and Responsible Local Leaders, Especially for the Summer Season.* A relatively small outlay of money would add considerably to the supervising personnel, especially in the summer, when all crop and livestock projects are in full swing and when records and exhibits are to be completed for display at the fairs. The high mortality in club membership toward the end of the year could largely be prevented by more use of even part-time supervisors.

6. *Inflated Enrollments in a Few Counties or Districts.* One county agent declared club membership worth while if the boy or girl attends only one club meeting. His county had about 1800 members in 1927-28, one-fourth of whom completed their projects.

A certain district in another county was organized on the high pressure basis about eight years ago. Two years later there was hardly a club member left in the whole district; and in 1928 it was very difficult to organize a real 4-H club there.

7. *Too Frequent Change of County Leadership.* It is unfortunate that so few of the county workers remain in their counties long enough to get hold of the club situation by learning to know local communities, club leaders, and the various factors in the county situation which make for success or failure in the 4-H program.

8. *Inadequate Records.* In very few, if any, counties are adequate records to be found embracing a considerable number of years. Perhaps the central office of the Agricultural Extension Division could encourage more widely spread practice of keeping records if simple forms were furnished by state headquarters of 4-H work to the county and home demonstration agents and if it were made clear that the keeping of reasonably accurate and complete records is an essential part of the regular work of 4-H club supervision.

9. *Not Enough Definite Sponsoring of 4-H Club Work by Interested and Helpful Adults.* Both the Farm Bureau and the Farm Women's Bureau theoretically make the sponsoring of 4-H work a regular, integral part of their program. In fact, however, only a few local Farm Bureau or Farm Women's club units give any consistent and substantial help to their 4-H club, if there is one in the neighborhood.

10. *Too Much Dependence upon School Teachers for Local Club Leaders.* While it is true that in many respects teachers make ideal club leaders, there are inevitable handicaps in a great many cases. Perhaps the most serious handicap is that of the non-resident teacher who leaves the community just when her club needs her most. As time goes on and there are more farm men and women who have had successful experience as club members, a larger number of these should be enlisted as club leaders. Having children of their own and being permanent residents of the community, they are in a strategic position to do excellent club leadership work.

11. *In Many Cases not Enough of a Selective Process Is Used in Enrolling Club Members at the Beginning of the Year.* One of the best procedures found in this respect was that used by an enterprising young principal of a junior high school. When she started her club in the fall she made it plain that all of suitable age who were interested could enroll as temporary members. During the next six weeks she made perfectly clear, by explanation and demonstration, that club membership carried with it responsibility and hard work as well as good times in the way of hikes and picnics. At the end of the probationary period 18 of the 25 temporary members chose to continue; and in the late spring when this club was visited it was in flourishing condition and all 18 members were functioning.

The genuine success of the club mentioned above is in strong contrast to two others (in two different counties) which were organized on a free-for-all basis.

12. *Club Meetings Often Are Poorly Planned, or Hardly Planned at All.* At one of the sessions of the regional conference described in Section IX, great emphasis was properly placed on the necessity of using foresight and planning meetings at least one month ahead (allowing for changes due to unforeseen circumstances). Both the adult club leader and the club president (a boy or girl who is a member of the club) are jointly responsible for intelligent and foresighted planning of meetings. If the cooperation and respect of active boys and girls are to be retained and they are to be helped to develop character and efficiency through their 4-H activities, some way must be found to increase the proportion of genuinely successful club meetings.

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY







