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## Personal History Questionnaires for Tenant Farm Operators and Tenant-Wife Teams

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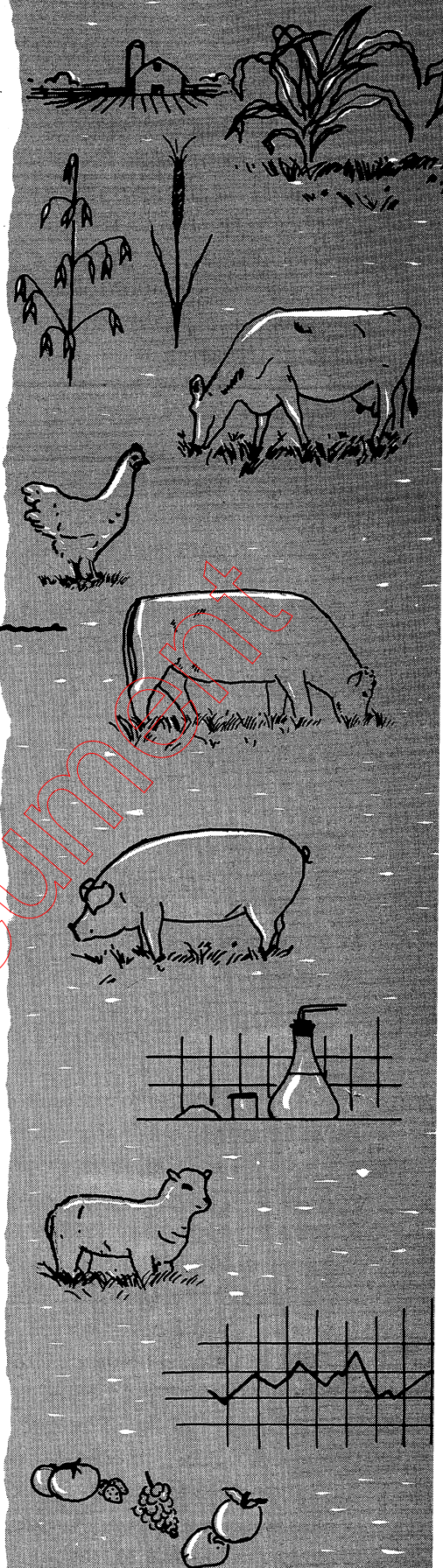
## *administration manual*

# Personal History Questionnaires for Tenant Farm Operators and Tenant-Wife Teams

D. Woods Thomas, Agricultural Economics Department,  
and Ernest J. McCormick and Robert E. Blanchard, The  
Occupational Research Center

Many Corn Belt farms are owned by absentee landlords and operated by tenants. Responsibility for many decisions concerning the organization and operation of these farms and for carrying out production plans rests with the tenant. The efficiency with which the farm's resources are employed depends on the competence of the tenant. The tenant's importance to a profitable farm business cannot be minimized. Tenant selection becomes increasingly important with larger farms, higher capital investment and technological progress in agricultural production.

Predicting the probable level of performance of prospective farm tenants is one of the major problems of landlords and farm management services. Errors in tenant selection are costly. These costs, in the form of lost farm earnings, may reach major proportions. At least one and sometimes several years pass before it is possible to recognize and replace a poor tenant. Even then, the new tenant may be no better than the one being replaced.





This manual explains the method of administering two biographical questionnaires designed to predict the probable level of performance of prospective farm tenants. \* The first questionnaire is The Personal History Questionnaire for Tenant Farm Operators, Form B. This questionnaire is to be used when it is only possible to obtain biographical information from the prospective tenant. The second questionnaire, The Personal History Questionnaire for Tenant-Wife Teams, Form A, is to be used in those situations where it is possible to obtain biographical information from both the prospective tenant and his wife.

Either questionnaire, when properly scored and interpreted, will provide the farm manager or landlord with the "odds" of a prospective tenant turning out "above average." For example, analysis of one prospective tenant's questionnaire may indicate that he has only 20 chances out of 100 of being an above average tenant. Another prospective tenant may have 80 chances out of 100 of being above average. This is important information in deciding which man to choose.

The questionnaires described in this manual may be used for predicting the probable level of performance of prospective farm tenants in all situations similar to the ones in which the questionnaires were developed. They were developed from a study of tenants operating farms under professional farm management services. These farms were located in Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Illinois. A majority of the farms were in Indiana. Distributions of farms included in the original study by type and size are given in Tables 1 and 2. The questionnaires will provide reliable predictions of prospective tenant performance on farms under professional farm management or similar managerial arrangements, in areas where farming is like that in the study area, and

on farms of the types and sizes listed in Tables 1 and 2. The questionnaires should not be used in other situations.

No technique or instrument designed to predict human behavior during some future period is perfect. There is always room for the exception. Consequently, results of the questionnaires should be interpreted only as an indication of the probable performance of tenant applicants. Used in conjunction with other information, such as the applicant's financial status, credit rating, reputation, references and interests, the questionnaires will help in obtaining competent farm tenants.

Table 1. Frequency distribution of farms according to type of farm business; 453 farms under professional farm management, 1957.

Type of farm	Number of farms	Percent of total
Cash grain	166	37
Hog-feeder cattle	95	21
Dairy-hog-beef	78	17
Hog	41	9
Dairy	36	8
Hog-beef cow herd	17	4
Feeder cattle	15	3
Beef cow herd	5	1
Total	453	100

Table 2. Frequency distribution of farms according to acres in cropland; 453 farms under professional farm management, 1957.

Acres in cropland	Number of farms	Percent of total
Less than 40	3	1
40 to 119	67	15
120 to 199	179	39
200 to 439	186	41
440 or more	18	4
Total	453	100

\* For a detailed discussion of research methodology, see Purdue University Agricultural Experiment Station Research Bulletin 678.

## OBTAINING QUESTIONNAIRES

Copies of The Personal History Questionnaire for Tenant Farm Operators, Form B, and of The Personal History Questionnaire for Tenant-Wife Teams, Form A, are supplied with this manual. Additional copies may be obtained by writing:

Personal History Questionnaires  
Department of Agricultural Economics  
Purdue University  
Lafayette, Indiana

## ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES

The Personal History Questionnaire for Tenant Farm Operators, Form B, should be used when it is only possible to obtain information from the prospective tenant.

The Personal History Questionnaire for Tenant-Wife Teams, Form A, should be used when it is also possible to obtain biographical information from the prospective tenant's wife. In this case, have the tenant complete Form B and his wife complete Form A.

It is important to carefully explain the directions for completing the questionnaire to each applicant. These directions are given on the front of each questionnaire. They are:

"The following questions are about your personal history, your activities, those of your family, and your work history. Answer as frankly and accurately as possible. If you are not sure which answer or answers are right for you, make the best judgement you can. Select the answer which you feel best applies to you and put an X in front of it. Check only one answer unless the question tells you to check more than one. Be sure to answer every question that applies to you."

There is no time limit for completion of the questionnaire. Each person should be given as much time as necessary to complete it accurately. Most applicants will take from 20 to 30 minutes.

## SCORING AND INTERPRETING THE QUESTIONNAIRES

Upon completion, each questionnaire must be scored and interpreted. Scores and interpretations are based on known relationships between tenant performance and biographical characteristics of tenants and tenant wives. The interpretation will give the "odds" of a prospective tenant turning out "above average."

Purdue University will score and interpret completed questionnaires. A confidential report will be made to the agency or individual involved.

For scoring and interpretation, mail completed questionnaires to:

Personal History Questionnaires  
Department of Agricultural Economics  
Purdue University  
Lafayette, Indiana

PERSONAL HISTORY QUESTIONNAIRE

FOR

TENANT FARM OPERATORS

FORM B

Applicant's Name\* \_\_\_\_\_

Last

First

Middle

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Code Number \_\_\_\_\_

Farm Management Service \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared by

The Department of Agricultural Economics

and

The Occupational Research Center

Purdue University

\* Applicant code number may be used in lieu of name

PERSONAL HISTORY QUESTIONNAIRE  
Tenant Farm Operator (Form B)

DIRECTIONS

The following questions are about your personal history, your activities, those of your family, and your work history. Answer as frankly and accurately as possible. If you are not sure which answer or answers are right for you, make the best judgment you can. Select the answer which you feel best applies to you and put an X in front of it. Check only one answer unless the question asks you to check more than one. Be sure to answer every question that applies to you.

PART I

1. Circle the last year of school you completed.

(A) Elementary: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

(B) High School: 1 2 3 4

(C) College: 1 2 3 4 5 6

2. How would you say you rank in amount of education compared to your brothers and sisters (if any)?

- 1. About the same
- 2. I have slightly more
- 3. I have slightly less
- 4. More than some, less than others
- 5. I have no brothers and sisters

3. When you had difficulty understanding your school work, what did you generally do?

- 1. Asked the teacher for help
- 2. Asked my father or mother for help
- 3. Studied the problem through myself
- 4. Did not let it bother me
- 5. I seldom had difficulty with school work.

4. How far do you believe your father (step-father or foster father) went in school?

- 1. Elementary (8th grade or less)
- 2. Some high school
- 3. Graduated from high school
- 4. Some training after high school but not college
- 5. Some college
- 6. Graduated from college

5. How old were you when you completed the 8th grade?

- 1. Under 10
- 2. 10 to 12
- 3. 13 to 14
- 4. 15 or over
- 5. I did not complete the 8th grade

6. Was there at least one classroom for each grade in your elementary school?

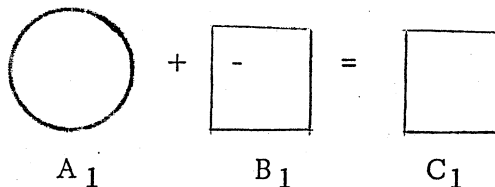
- 1. Yes
- 2. No

7. How many times did you change schools? (Elementary and high school)

- 1. 0 to 1 time
- 2. 2 to 3 times
- 3. 4 to 5 times
- 4. 6 to 7 times
- 5. More than 7 times

8. Which of the following subjects did you like best in school?

- 1. English
- 2. Arithmetic
- 3. Science Courses
- 4. History
- 5. None of these
- 6. More than one above



9. At the time you finished school, how many close friends did you have?

- 1. None
- 2. One or two
- 3. Several
- 4. Many

10. How many pupils were in the high school you attended? (If you went to more than one, answer for the one you attended longest.)

- 1. Less than 50
- 2. From 50 to 99
- 3. From 100 to 199
- 4. From 200 to 499
- 5. More than 500

11. What were your main subjects in high school?

- 1. Business or commercial
- 2. Trade or shop courses
- 3. Agricultural courses
- 4. Science courses
- 5. College preparatory
- 6. Other than above

12. Why did you leave high school?

- 1. I graduated from high school
- 2. To get married
- 3. To get a job
- 4. Because of poor health
- 5. Because I was not interested, or because I got too far behind
- 6. None of these

13. When you were growing up to what extent did your parents discuss plans with you about your future?

- 1. Very often
- 2. Fairly often
- 3. Occasionally
- 4. Rarely
- 5. Never

14. How many brothers and sisters have you had who were:

(A) younger than you? 0 1 2 3 4 5

(B) older than you? 0 1 2 3 4 5

15. Were your parents born in the same county where you were born?

- 1. Both my mother and father were
- 2. Only my mother was
- 3. Only my father was
- 4. Neither one was

16. Which of the following do you most resemble as a person?

- 1. Your father
- 2. Your mother
- 3. A brother
- 4. A sister
- 5. None of these

17. When you were in your teens, with whom did you most often talk over your problems?

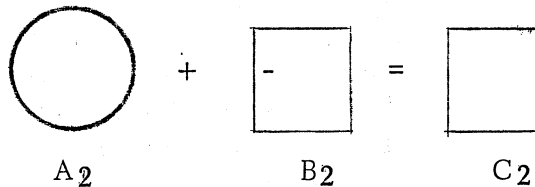
- 1. Father
- 2. Mother
- 3. A brother
- 4. A sister
- 5. A friend
- 6. No one

18. Did you collect such things as stamps, coins, insects, rocks, etc., when you were growing up?

- 1. Frequently
- 2. Occasionally
- 3. Seldom
- 4. Never

19. Of all the physical activities you undertook in your teens, which did you enjoy most?

- 1. Baseball, football or basketball
- 2. Fishing or hunting
- 3. Tennis, golf or swimming
- 4. Boxing or wrestling
- 5. Bowling
- 6. Something else





20. How old were you when you had your first regular paid job, part-time or full-time?

- 1. 12 years or less
- 2. 13 to 15
- 3. 16 to 18
- 4. 19 or more
- 5. I never had a paid job

PART II

21. Did you live on a farm during your boyhood?

Yes  No

If you answered "yes" above, please answer questions 22 through 26.

22. How many years did you live on a farm before you were 19 years old?

- 1. Less than 1 year
- 2. 1 to 4 years
- 3. 5 to 9 years
- 4. 10 to 14 years
- 5. 15 to 19 years

23. How large was the farm on which you lived? (If you lived on more than one, answer for the one you lived on longest.)

- 1. Less than 40 acres
- 2. 40 to 119 acres
- 3. 120 to 199 acres
- 4. 200 to 439 acres
- 5. Over 440 acres

24. As a boy (under 19) did your parents or guardian give you (check all that apply):

- 1. Money only for necessities?
- 2. A fixed allowance?
- 3. Cash wages?
- 4. Spending money when you needed it?
- 5. A percentage of a crop or livestock sale?
- 6. A piece of land to use, or livestock of your own to raise?
- 7. Something other than the above?
- 8. I never had money of my own for any reason.

25. Would you rather have lived in a town or city than on a farm?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Undecided

26. How profitable was the farm you lived on during your boyhood for your parents or guardian?

- 1. A paying proposition
- 2. Generally broke even
- 3. Just about broke even
- 4. Usually lost money

27. Were you ever in the Armed Forces of the United States?

(A) Yes  No

If you answered "yes", how many years of active duty did you serve?

(B) 1 2 3 4 5 6

28. Was your father or guardian a:

- 1. Farm operator (Owner)
- 2. Farm operator (Tenant)
- 3. Paid farm hand
- 4. None of these

(If he was more than one, check the one he was longest)

29. Have you at any time operated a farm as owner or tenant?

Yes  No

If you answered "Yes" above, please answer questions 30 through 34

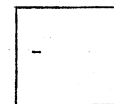
30. Did you take part-time non-farm jobs during slack periods?

- 1. Frequently
- 2. Occasionally
- 3. Seldom
- 4. Never



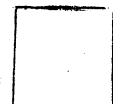
A<sub>3</sub>

+



B<sub>3</sub>

=



C<sub>3</sub>



31. What was the size of the farm you operated longest?

- 1. Less than 40 acres
- 2. 40 to 119 acres
- 3. 120 to 199 acres
- 4. 220 to 439 acres
- 5. 440 acres or more

32. Are you leasing a farm at the present time?

(A) Yes  No

(B) If you answered "yes" above, for how long have you operated the farm?

- 1. Less than 1 year
- 2. 1 to 2 years
- 3. 3 to 4 years
- 4. 5 to 6 years
- 5. 7 or more years

33. What has given you the most difficulty on any farm you have operated?

- 1. Lack of capital to work with
- 2. Lack of experience
- 3. Uncooperative landlord
- 4. Poor farm
- 5. Continual poor weather conditions
- 6. Animal diseases
- 7. None of these

34. Which one of the following characteristics of farming do you most enjoy?

- 1. Living in the country
- 2. Being my own boss
- 3. Satisfaction of growing things
- 4. Working out of doors
- 5. Being able to work by myself
- 6. Working with animals

If you were married while operating a farm, please answer questions 35 and 36.

35. Did your wife help you with any of the actual field work?

- 1. All the time
- 2. Frequently
- 3. Occasionally
- 4. Seldom or never

36. Did your wife help make decisions on what to produce, how to produce it, or how much to produce?

- 1. All the time
- 2. Frequently
- 3. Occasionally
- 4. Seldom or never

PART III

37. What is your present marital status?

- 1. Single
- 2. Married, no children
- 3. Married, one or more children
- 4. Widowed
- 5. Separated or divorced

(A) If you checked #3 above, how many children do you have?

(Circle your answer)

Boys: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Girls: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

38. What is the general state of your health?

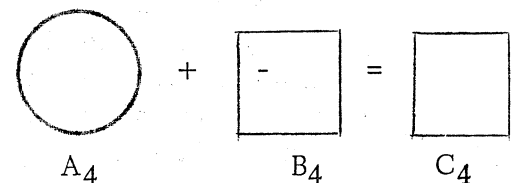
- 1. Excellent
- 2. Good
- 3. Fair
- 4. Poor

39. Do you own any farm machinery?

- 1. I do not own any farm machinery
- 2. I own a part interest in some
- 3. I own some debt free
- 4. I own some with a mortgage
- 5. I own some debt free and some with a mortgage

40. At the present time, do you

- 1. Own a car or truck debt free?
- 2. Have a car or truck you are paying for on time?
- 3. I do not have a car or truck



41. How many years of farm experience have you had as a:

(A) Farm operator (owner or tenant)

- 1. None
- 2. Under 5 years
- 3. 5 to 9 years
- 4. 10 to 14 years
- 5. 15 to 19 years
- 6. Over 20 years

(B) Paid farm hand?

- 1. None
- 2. Under 5 years
- 3. 5 to 9 years
- 4. 10 to 14 years
- 5. 15 to 19 years
- 6. Over 20 years

42. How many different types of paid work, other than farming, have you had in the past 10 years? (Circle your answer)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

43. How many full-time jobs, other than farming, have you had in the past 10 years? (Circle your answer)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

44. Which of the following types of insurance do you carry? (Check all that apply)

- 1. Life insurance
- 2. Accident insurance
- 3. Health insurance
- 4. Hospitalization insurance
- 5. Other personal insurance
- 6. I don't have any insurance

45. Which of the following organizations do you belong to or attend? (Check all that apply)

- 1. Local church organization
- 2. Farmer's CO-OP
- 3. Grange
- 4. Farm Bureau
- 5. Farmer's Union
- 6. County Agent Meetings
- 7. Kiwanis, or other service clubs
- 8. Other than the above
- 9. I do not belong to any organization.

46. Check any of the following that you buy or read frequently. (Check all that apply.)

- 1. Farm magazines
- 2. Farm organization publications
- 3. Publications of experiment stations or extension services
- 4. Sports magazines
- 5. News publications
- 6. Pictorial magazines
- 7. None of the above

47. Have you held an office in any of the following organizations?

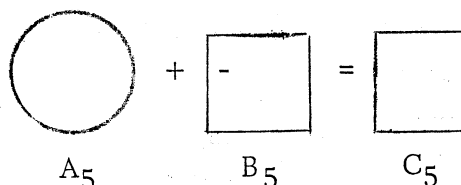
- 1. Farm Bureau
- 2. Farmer's Union
- 3. Grange
- 4. Farmer's CO-OP
- 5. Kiwanis or other service clubs
- 6. Local church organizations
- 7. Other than above
- 8. I have never held an office

48. Do you have income from sources other than farming?

- 1. I do not have other sources of income
- 2. Less than \$200 per year
- 3. \$300 to \$499 per year
- 4. \$500 to \$1,999 per year
- 5. Over \$2,000 per year

49. Which of the following do you have at the present time?

- (Check all that apply)
- 1. Checking account
  - 2. Savings account
  - 3. Building and loan account
  - 4. Stocks and bonds
  - 5. Real estate
  - 6. Other savings and investments
  - 7. I have no savings and investments
  - 8. None of these



50. What type of radio programs do you generally listen to?

(Check all that apply)

- 1. Classical music
- 2. Western music
- 3. Market and farm report programs
- 4. News programs
- 5. Plays
- 6. Sports broadcasts
- 7. Popular music
- 8. None of the above
- 9. I seldom listen to the radio

51. Which of the following types of TV programs do you generally watch?

(Check all that apply)

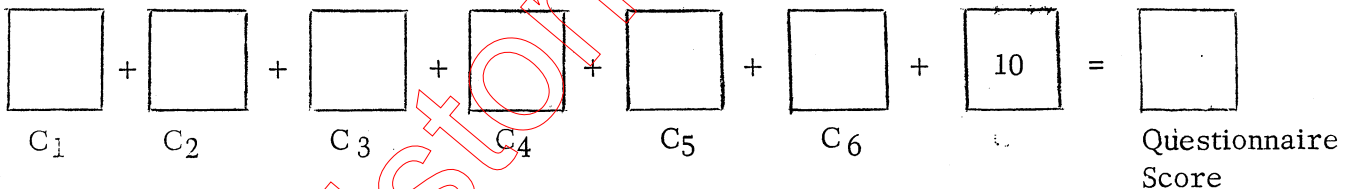
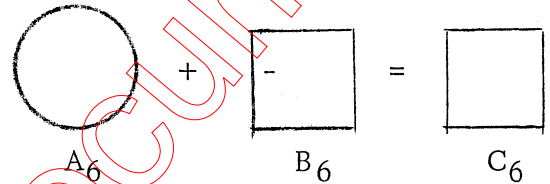
- 1. News programs
- 2. Comedy shows
- 3. Panel shows
- 4. Plays
- 5. Variety shows
- 6. Sports (boxing, baseball, etc.)
- 7. Farm information programs
- 8. None of the above
- 9. I do not have TV

52. Check any of the following that are your outside interests or hobbies. (Check all that apply)

- 1. Baseball or softball
- 2. Dancing
- 3. Photography
- 4. Cards
- 5. Horseshoes
- 6. Boating
- 7. Chess or checkers
- 8. Horseback riding
- 9. Hunting or fishing
- 10. Other than the above
- 11. I do not have any hobbies

53. How many vacations (at least 1 week, or more away from home or the job) have you taken in the past 5 years? (Circle your answer)

- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8







TENANT-WIFE TEAM QUESTIONNAIRE

Tenant Wife Form

(Form A)

DIRECTIONS

The following questions are about your personal history, and the activities of yourself and your family. Answer frankly and as accurately as you can. If you are not sure which answer or answers are right for you, make the best judgment you can. Select the answer which you feel best applies to you and put an X in front of it. Check only one answer unless the question tells you to check more than one. Be sure to answer every question that applies to you.

PART I

1. Circle the last year of school you completed.  
(A) Elementary: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8  
(B) High School: 1 2 3 4  
(C) College: 1 2 3 4 5 6
2. How would you say you rank in amount of education compared to your brothers and sisters (if any)?  
 1. About the same  
 2. I have slightly more  
 3. I have slightly less  
 4. More than some, less than others  
 5. I have no brothers and sisters
3. When you had difficulty understanding your school work, what did you generally do?  
 1. Asked the teacher for help  
 2. Asked my father or mother for help  
 3. Studied the problem through myself  
 4. Did not let it bother me  
 5. I seldom had difficulty with school work
4. How far do you believe your father (step-father or foster father) went in school?  
 1. Elementary (8th grade or less)  
 2. Some high school  
 3. Graduated from high school  
 4. Some training after high school but not college  
 5. Some college  
 6. Graduated from college
5. How old were you when you completed the 8th grade?  
 1. Under 10  
 2. 10 to 12  
 3. 13 to 14  
 4. 15 or over  
 5. I did not complete the 8th grade
6. Was there at least one classroom for each grade in your elementary school?  
 1. Yes  
 2. No
7. How many times did you change schools? (Elementary and High School)  
 1. 0 to 1 time  
 2. 2 to 3 times  
 3. 4 to 5 times  
 4. 6 to 7 times  
 5. More than 7 times
8. Which of the following subjects did you like best in school?  
 1. English  
 2. Arithmetic  
 3. Science Courses  
 4. History  
 5. None of these  
 6. More than one above
9. How many pupils were in the high school you attended? (If you went to more than one, answer for the one you attended longest.)  
 1. Less than 50  
 2. From 50 to 99  
 3. From 100 to 199  
 4. From 200 to 499  
 5. More than 500

10. What were your main subjects in high school?

- 1. Business or commercial
- 2. Home economics
- 3. Fine arts or music
- 4. Science courses
- 5. College preparatory
- 6. Other than above

11. Why did you leave high school?

- 1. I graduated from high school
- 2. To get married
- 3. To get a job
- 4. Because of poor health
- 5. Because I was not interested, or because I got too far behind
- 6. None of these

12. How many brothers and sisters have you had who were:

(A) younger than you? 0 1 2 3 4 5

(B) older than you? 0 1 2 3 4 5

13. Were your parents born in the same county where you were born?

- 1. Both my mother and father were
- 2. Only my mother was
- 3. Only my father was
- 4. Neither one was

14. Which of the following do you most resemble as a person?

- 1. Your father
- 2. Your mother
- 3. A brother
- 4. A sister
- 5. None of these

15. When you were in your teens, with whom did you most often talk over your problems?

- 1. Father
- 2. Mother
- 3. A brother
- 4. A sister
- 5. A friend
- 6. No one

16. Did you collect such things as stamps, dolls, ceramics, etc., when you were growing up?

- 1. Frequently
- 2. Occasionally
- 3. Seldom
- 4. Never

17. Of all the physical activities you undertook in your teens, which did you enjoy most?

- 1. Softball or basketball
- 2. Fishing or hunting
- 3. Tennis, golf or swimming
- 4. Badminton or ping pong
- 5. Bowling
- 6. Something else

PART II

18. Did you live on a farm when you were a girl?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

If you answered "Yes" above, please answer questions 19 through 22.

19. How many years did you live on a farm before you were 19 years old?

- 1. Less than 1 year
- 2. 1 to 4 years
- 3. 5 to 9 years
- 4. 10 to 14 years
- 5. 15 to 19 years

20. How large was the farm on which you lived? (If you lived on more than one, answer for the one you lived on longest.)

- 1. Less than 40 acres
- 2. 40 to 119 acres
- 3. 120 to 199 acres
- 4. 200 to 439 acres
- 5. Over 440 acres

21. As a girl (under 19) did your parents or guardian give you (check all that apply):

- 1. Money only for necessities?
- 2. A fixed allowance?
- 3. Cash wages?
- 4. Spending money when you needed it?
- 5. A percentage of a crop or livestock sale?
- 6. Livestock of your own to raise?
- 7. Something other than the above?
- 8. I never had money of my own for any reason.

22. Would you rather have lived in a town or city than on a farm?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Undecided

23. Was your father or guardian a:

- 1. Farm operator (Owner)
  - 2. Farm operator (Tenant)
  - 3. Paid farm hand
  - 4. None of these
- (If he was more than one, check the one he was longest)

24. Which of the following organizations do you belong to or attend?

- (Check all that apply)
- 1. Local church organizations
  - 2. Farmer's CO-OP
  - 3. Grange
  - 4. Farm Bureau
  - 5. Farm Women's Society
  - 6. County Agent Meetings
  - 7. Women's club
  - 8. Other than the above
  - 9. I do not belong to any organization.

25. Check any of the following that you buy or read frequently.

- (Check all that apply)
- 1. Farm magazines
  - 2. Household magazines
  - 3. Publications of experiment stations or extension services
  - 4. Fashion magazines
  - 5. News publications
  - 6. Pictorial magazines
  - 7. None of the above

26. Have you held an office in any of the following organizations?

- 1. Farm Bureau
- 2. Farm Women's Society
- 3. Grange
- 4.
- 5. Women's club
- 6. Local church organization
- 7. Other than above
- 8. I have never held an office

27. What type of radio programs do you generally listen to?

- (Check all that apply)
- 1. Classical music
  - 2. Western music
  - 3. Market and farm report programs
  - 4. News programs
  - 5. Daytime radio plays
  - 6.
  - 7. Popular music
  - 8. None of the above
  - 9. I seldom listen to the radio

28. Which of the following types of TV programs do you generally watch?

- (Check all that apply)
- 1. News programs
  - 2. Comedy shows
  - 3. Panel shows
  - 4. Plays
  - 5. Variety shows
  - 6. Homemaking shows
  - 7. Farm information programs
  - 8. None of the above
  - 9. I do not have TV

29. Check any of the following that are your outside interests or hobbies.

- (Check all that apply)
- 1. Raising flowers
  - 2. Dancing
  - 3. Sewing or knitting
  - 4. Cards
  - 5. Collecting things
  - 6. Raising livestock
  - 7.
  - 8. Horseback riding
  - 9.
  - 10. Other than the above
  - 11. I do not have any hobbies