A Study of Withdrawals from a Small Rural High School

Evelyn Lindsey Berry

College of William & Mary - School of Education

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A STUDY
OF
WITHDRAWALS
FROM A
SMALL RURAL HIGH SCHOOL
by
EVELYN LINDSEY BERRY
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS
OF
THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
1941
Every withdrawal from school calls for inquiry. It should be properly recorded. A study of such records is certain to disclose the existence of adverse influences or circumstances, which in many instances is the responsibility of the school to correct.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author is grateful to Doctor Kremer J. Hoke, to Doctor George H. Armacost, and to Doctor Daniel J. Blocker for their wise counsel, constructive criticism, and encouragement during the writing of this thesis.

Data included in the study were secured through the courtesy of Mr. Nicholas Orem, Superintendent of Schools, Prince George's County, Maryland, and Mr. Thomas Gwynn, Jr., Principal of Oxon Hill High School, Maryland.

The writer is also indebted to those pupils of the Oxon Hill High School for their splendid cooperation during the study.
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CHAPTER I

THE INTRODUCTION

One of the most disheartening features of the public school system in the United States is the high percentage of pupils who drop out of school before graduation. The problem is not a new one, and for many years educators have been seriously concerned about it. Although a larger percent of pupils enrolled in high schools during the last decade reach college than during the previous decade, the schools have come to accept the added and important responsibility of helping to prepare children for a life in which the economic and social competition has never been as great. There is extensive literature on the subject and many recommendations for curricular developments to meet the needs of the pupils have been proposed.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The present study was undertaken to ascertain the number and causes of pupils withdrawing from the Oxon Hill High School of Prince George's County, Maryland, during the period September 1934 to June 1939, inclusive, and find out what changes in the curriculum and other school program might have kept them in school until they were better fitted to leave.
Analysis of the problem. The problem of withdrawals from the Oxon Hill High School during the five-year study period was analyzed in the following manner:

I. To determine the extent of withdrawals.
   1. How many pupils withdrew?
   2. At what age level did they withdraw?

II. To determine the causes of withdrawals.
   1. How did reasons given by pupils compare with reasons entered on office records?
   2. Had pupils repeated one or more years?
   3. What were the school marks of those withdrawing?
   4. What were the intelligence quotients of those withdrawing?
   5. What subjects did the school offer?
   6. What extra-curricular activities were offered in the school?
   7. What extra-curricular activities did those withdrawing participate in?
   8. What was the health of those withdrawing?
   9. What were the standards of the school?
  10. What were the methods of teaching in the school?
  11. What was the family background of withdrawals?
      a. Occupation of parents.
      b. Size of the family.
c. Economic status.

d. Education of the parents.

III. To determine the after school success of pupils withdrawing.

1. Vocational.
   a. How many are employed?
   b. What type of employment do they have?
   c. How many jobs have they had?
   d. What handicaps did they find in obtaining jobs?

2. Community.
   a. What kind of citizens are they?
   b. Could the school have caused them to be better citizens?
   c. How do they spend their leisure time?

IV. To determine the pupil's evaluation of the school.

1. What subjects did those withdrawing find most valuable?

2. What subjects did they find of little value?

3. What subjects might the school have offered that would have been valuable?

4. What extra-curricular activities did the withdrawal find valuable?

5. What extra-curricular activities would they like to add?
Significance of the problem. At a time when 70 per cent of the children five to seventeen years of age in the United States attend school, it hardly seems necessary to emphasize the importance of cooperative research upon the problem of keeping children in school.

At the present time, in the schools where the new educational philosophy is being successfully applied, as exemplified by the Matthew Whaley School in Williamsburg, Virginia, children who drop out of school are not a major problem. But as yet the vast majority of schools are struggling under the old regime. In the State of Maryland the survey made by the National Youth Commission\(^1\) indicated that five out of every ten children entering high school did not remain to receive diplomas. This is a deplorable state, and it would seem that the secondary school system had failed to exert its holding power upon the boys and girls intrusted to its guidance.

II. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The period 1934-1936 followed a depression, and the years 1937-1939 were years when there was an upward trend in the economic status of the American public. This greatly affected the migration of families, and the status

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of those remaining in the community. It was considered to be an advantage to study former pupils who had been out of school long enough to take their place in the community in order to determine their after-school success.

The author was a member of the Oxon Hill High School faculty during the period included in this study and was in close contact with the school and school community. The reader must bear in mind that prejudices that enter into the judgments and conclusions drawn are purely unintentional.

The office records were unusually complete, yet there is a possibility that small discrepancies may have appeared as a result of withdrawals during the summer.

Those interviewed were chosen at random from former students who at the time of the interview lived in or near Oxon Hill. There is good reason to believe that the ones who were interviewed were the pupils which the school might have held had the circumstances been different.

It is well to note that interviews were conducted and judgments of home conditions made on a basis of the individual's status at the time of the interview, and not at the time of withdrawal. This may mean that economic and social circumstances may have changed slightly since the time they withdrew due to the change in economic conditions.
In the majority of cases it was believed that the pupils spoke soberly and frankly when they were questioned, yet there may have been cases when psychological attitudes towards the school or towards the author caused the child to withhold the true answer.

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The remainder of the thesis is divided into five chapters. In Chapter II is found an intensive review of literature in the field. Chapter III outlines the collection of material and definition of terms. In Chapter IV the school and school community are discussed. The analysis of data is covered in Chapters V and VI, the former concerned with the total enrollment and total withdrawals, and the latter with the data collected from the interviews. From this analysis the author offers recommendations summarized in Chapter VII.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE IN THE FIELD

I. GENERAL SURVEY

F. P. O'Brien,¹ Director of Service and Research Bureau at the University of Kansas, emphasizes the need for cooperative research upon the problem of high school drop-outs.

Edward L. Thorndike,² Professor of Educational Psychology at Teachers College, Columbia University, in 1907 made an intensive study of the elimination of pupils from public schools, using data from records in twenty-three large cities over the period, 1894 to 1896. Some of his outstanding findings were:

1. One-fifth of the children (white) entering city schools stay only to the fifth grade.

2. Less than one in ten graduate from high school.

3. Only one-third graduate from an elementary school of seven grades or more.

4. One main cause of elimination is incapacity for and lack of interest in the sort of intellectual work demanded by present courses of study.


² Edward L. Thorndike, Elimination of Pupils From School (U. S. Bureau of Education Bulletin No. 4 1907), pp. 7-63.
Ellas J. Kline, University of Pennsylvania, in 1933 followed up this study to discover the nature of changes in elimination since 1900. According to his findings, elimination has been postponed two and one-half to three years, the largest amount occurring between the ninth and tenth grades. He pointed out that cities having no junior high school showed the same postponement in elimination during identical periods of time as cities which have junior high schools.

Emery M. Foster, Chief of the Statistical Division, U. S. Office of Education, in a more recent study stated that the Nation's senior class of 1936 indicates a 48.4 per cent greater holding power through its years leading to graduation than did the Nation's graduating class of 1931. In 1928 approximately 25 per cent of the first year high school students dropped out at the end of the year, but in 1933 the drop-out rate decreased to 15 per cent for the same class.

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In the Cooperative Study of Secondary School Standards, 5 198 high schools with an enrollment of 19,732 pupils at the beginning of the school year took part. Two visits, thirty-one weeks apart, were made to the schools for the purpose of administering tests. In these weeks, 2,431 of the 19,732 pupils, or 14.1 per cent, were missing from school upon the second visit. Each test administrator was instructed to secure reasons for the absence of pupils who were not present for the retesting program. Data showed that 55 per cent of absences were permanent.

Reasons for these drop-outs are listed in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Per cent of pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor scholarship</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved away</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown - other reasons</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 718 included in "other reasons", 133 dropped out because of work.

When analysis was made by schools, it was shown that absences varied from 4.9 per cent to 44.9 per cent. The mortality for those of very inferior intelligence was four to five times as great as for the very superior in intelligence. There was no marked difference in drop-outs among

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the sexes. Within the classes it was noted that the sophomores ranked highest in withdrawals.

The Division of Social Research of the Works Progress Administration,\textsuperscript{6} made a study covering the years 1929, 1931, and 1932, in which 25,000 youths were interviewed from the schools of Binghamton, New York; Birmingham, Alabama; Denver, Colorado; Duluth, Minnesota; St. Louis, Missouri; San Francisco, California; and Seattle, Washington. The purpose of this study was to find out how youths enter the labor market, what kind of jobs they get, and what difficulty they find in obtaining jobs. It was found that forty-six out of one hundred who enter high school do not graduate. The drop-out is approximately proportional from the eighth grade through the third year high school. Nine out of ten children of professional men complete their secondary education, while more than one-half of those having unskilled laborers as parents drop out before completion of high school. The percentage table shows the graduation for various occupation groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Per cent of graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical workers</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proprietors and managers</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled workmen - foremen</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled workers</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled workers</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{6} "Elimination of High School Students," \textit{School and Society}, April 8, 1939, p. 441.
The New York Regents Inquiry\(^7\) published in book form the findings of an extensive study made of the youth in fifty-one communities in New York State, covering sixty-two schools, over a period from June 1936 to June 1937. The aims of this survey were: First, to outline the characteristics of pupils leaving the secondary school, and thereby to secure material which would reveal the clues needed to modify school practices. Second, to find out how the school views its leaving pupils.

Information was based upon official records, interviews with the school staff, interviews with the employers of the out-of-school youth, and with the youths themselves.

When the students' home background was investigated, the data showed that one out of two withdrawing pupils belonged to homes classified as poor. Two out of three withdrawing before the ninth grade came from homes rated as poor or on relief. In one-third of the homes of withdrawals the English language was not spoken. Of every four homes of withdrawals, three were scored unfavorable and offered limited cultural opportunities and ethical training. The reports indicated that the school knew little of the home background of their pupils, and the little information they had acquired was voluntarily brought to the school by the parents themselves.

When evidences of social competence were studied, the committee concluded that "pupils who leave school appear as handicapped from the standpoint of socially useful abilities as previous findings have indicated that they are from the standpoint of general aptitude and home background". The lack of control of the basic skills and information needed for meeting life needs would lead us to conclude that that portion of our youth is incapable of assuming duties of citizenship.

When classifying the interest of secondary school pupils, it was observed that they fall into definite group patterns.

In a consideration of plans for the future it was found that "among withdrawing pupils, graduates, and post-graduates alike, the majority are entirely without a career motive or are so definitely fixed on one field that change will involve difficult adjustment". In making adjustments pupils seldom turn to the school for guidance and advice. There was noted a general spirit of independence. When interviewed, the youth considered

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8 Ibid., p. 123.
9 Ibid., p. 155.
their meager education their greatest handicap in the field of getting a job, and their lack of knowledge in the duties of a good citizen their major civic deficiency.

The survey summarized the defects in the school system as:

1. The school has placed scant emphasis on problems of immediate and practical living.

2. "The school has shown little appreciation of the differing goals of students and has made small provision for meeting special and individual needs."

3. The school has made little effort to accumulate knowledge concerning its students.

When asked what problems troubled them most now that they were out of school, the three top ranking answers were: getting a job, advancing on the job, and "no problems". Students aim high when stating the job they hope to have, and recognize the need for more training. In general, employers seemed optimistic with regard to the advancement of youth on the job.

It was noted that the school, home, and church had little influence upon the social adjustment of the pupils. Many constructive activities begun in school were not

10 Ibid., pp. 136-190.
continued upon leaving. Most of the activities of out-of-school youth were of a purely recreational nature, few educational.

**General Summary of Report:**

1. "The former pupils, especially those in the large communities, had little contacts with adults."

2. "The young people just out of school had little home life."

3. "Lines of educational and recreational activity started in school were usually discontinued immediately after the pupils left school."

4. "After the pupils left school, they had little contact with it."

5. "Although graduates seemed to be better adjusted than withdrawals, they also needed help after leaving school."

6. "Hundreds of high school graduates and withdrawals later attended proprietary schools."

7. "High school diplomas were not at all descriptive of the individuals who received them."

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**Ibid.,** pp. 310-315.
II. MARYLAND SURVEY

The National Youth Commission\textsuperscript{12} carried on a study in the State of Maryland and published its findings in a book entitled "Youth Tell Their Story", about the same time the New York Regents Inquiry made its survey. Because Maryland offered rural, suburban, and urban situations, and many other characteristics which are "American" in nature, it was considered a typical State and selected as a basis for this study. Between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four, 13,528 youths were interviewed for the purpose of investigating their home and school background and their out-of-school activities and success.

Youth and home

Low incomes and large families tend to cut short the period in which the youth is encouraged to train for his own future. They force him out of school into work or marriage at an early age. Although they state that they desire small families, it is probable that the same forces that were accountable for the home conditions in which they were born and reared will be dominating factors in their lives. According to the survey, they suggest

that what is needed is a more effective educational, vocational, and recreational program for all youth.

**Youth and school**

The survey indicated that four out of every ten children never went beyond the eighth grade in school; five entered high school but did not finish. Factors influencing these withdrawals were race, relief status, sex, size of the family, and the occupation of the family. When interviewed as to the reasons for withdrawal, the following results were found:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for withdrawing</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic reason</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of interest</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied with graduation</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this it would appear that economic reasons, and general lack of interest in the school program are responsible for driving out youth from school before the completion of their secondary education. The survey naturally suggests that it is a national problem. They feel that the labor market will be improved when the Nation makes it possible for all youth to obtain an education before entering the market. Then, too, they feel that the school must provide a program that is more
realistically adapted to the interest and needs of those taking part in it. "The steps suggested would result in a larger number of youth remaining in school for longer periods, and their ultimate effects would, in all probability, be the elevation of the national educational level and a reduction of unemployment."13

Youth at work

Data revealed that of every ten youths in the labor market approximately four were not employed on full-time jobs, and three of these four had no employment whatever. Those employed were in a large measure working in the lower-paid occupational fields. The median weekly wage for the group was $12.96. The young person who has graduated from high school will earn 50 per cent more than the youth who chooses, or who is forced, to leave school before he has finished the eighth grade. Generally speaking, "it seems that the lower income fathers, with their large families, provide their children with less schooling which, in turn, tends to route them into the more poorly paid jobs."14

13 Ibid., p. 98.

14 Ibid., pp. 124-125.
The jobs youth want and the jobs they get seem to be widely separated. Ranking high in their desire is the professional or technical job, while data show that in reality the office or sales, and semi-skilled jobs claim many of our youth of today. This naturally leads to a general feeling of discontent.

When asked why they were unemployed, 55 per cent gave "lack of available jobs" as the chief reason. When asked what they were doing about getting a job, it was found that the large proportion of them were not registered in any employment agency. The committee did not know whether this was due to lack of interest or failure of the community to provide this service.

The report emphasized the danger of social stratification resulting from the economic and social conditions of our youth today.

Outside activities

It was noted that the youth of today need and want outside recreation. Again, we note that those who take part in activities in school do not appear to be active outside of school. There seems to be little continuity between the life lived in the school and the life lived when they leave the school's supervision. A large number of youths do not use the public libraries at their dis-
posal, and give as their main reasons "not interested in reading" and "read magazines". It was recognized by 69.2 per cent of the youths interviewed that their recreational programs were inadequate.

Interesting to note was the fact that most of the youth wished to be connected with some church. This was not in their minds considered a recreational activity but still, as in the old days, a place of worship.
CHAPTER III

COLLECTION OF MATERIAL AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

I. TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES USED IN THE STUDY

Sources of data. Data concerning the life history of pupils who withdrew from the Oxon Hill High School, Prince George's County, Maryland, during the five-year period from September 1935 to June 1939, were gathered from the records in the County Superintendent's office and the cumulative records kept in the files of the Principal's office in the School. Every attempt was made to find the name and history of all pupils leaving the school before graduation during the period of the study. It is apparent that some of those who did not return to school following the summer vacation transferred to other schools. Others, over sixteen years of age, who failed to return in September had found jobs during the summer months and were reluctant to give them up to further their education.

From this group, seventy-three pupils who had withdrawn during the period of the study were interviewed personally. These seventy-three were chosen at random; the only factor entering into their choice being their
proximity to the school community. In most cases these interviews took place in the homes of the pupils. In every case the pupil was made to understand the purpose of the interview, and encouraged to express his opinion of the school and the curriculum freely. He was urged to give his reason for withdrawing and to make recommendations for the improvement of the school. From frank open questions, as well as from the general conversation, the after-school success of the pupil was determined. Home conditions were observed. There was, however, a possibility that these conditions had changed during the years the child had been out of school.

Method of collection. The following interview sheet was used in tabulating observations and answers made concerning the interview. In some cases these blanks were filled in while the interview was taking place, but when it was known that the person being interviewed was timid or shy, they were filled in immediately following the visit. Every effort was made to make the case feel free to "open up" and tell all he knew and thought concerning the questions.

Tables were made summarizing the pupil's reactions.
INTERVIEW SHEET

CASE NO. __________

NAME ______________________________ ADDRESS __________________________

SEX _______ DATE OF WITHDRAWING ___________ AGE _______

CLASS IN WHICH HE WITHDREW __________________________

CAUSES OF WITHDRAWING: (A) RECORDS __________________________

(B) INTERVIEW __________________________

YEARS RETARDED _______ WHAT CLASS _______ WHY ____________

DID DROP-OUT TRANSFER FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL? ________________

I. Q. _______ COURSE TAKEN _______ AVERAGE GRADES _______

GRADES AT TIME OF WITHDRAWAL IN SUBJECTS TAKEN AT THAT TIME:

ENGLISH _____ HISTORY _____ SCIENCE _____ MATHEMATICS _____

SHOP _____ HOME ECONOMICS _____ OTHERS ______________________

______________________________

EXTRA ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION: ACTIVE _____ INACTIVE _______

LITERARY SOCIETY _____ DRAMATIC CLUB _____ SCHOOL PATROL _____

CHORAL CLUB _____ ATHLETICS ________________________________

OTHERS ________________________________

HEALTH __________________________

FAMILY BACKGROUND _______ RADIO _____ CAR _____ BATH _______

HEATING SYSTEM ___________ OTHER CONVENIENCES __________

OCCUPATION OF PARENTS: (A) MOTHER __________________________

(B) FATHER __________________________
INTERVIEW SHEET (CONTINUED)

ECONOMIC STATUS OF FAMILY ________ SIZE OF FAMILY ________

EDUCATION OF PARENTS: (A) MOTHER ________________________
(B) FATHER ________________________

IS DROP-OUT EMPLOYED? ______ WHERE? ______________________

JOBS HAD SINCE WITHDRAWING ______________________

HANDICAPS IN FINDING JOB ______________________

TYPE OF CITIZEN IN COMMUNITY ______________________

HOW HE SPENDS HIS LEISURE TIME ______________________

SUBJECT MOST VALUABLE TAKEN ______________________

SUBJECT LEAST VALUABLE TAKEN ______________________

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY MOST VALUABLE ______________________

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY LEAST VALUABLE ______________________

RECOMMENDATIONS ______________________

________________________________________

OTHER ITEMS OBSERVED ______________________

________________________________________

PUPIL'S CONVERSATION IN GENERAL ______________________

________________________________________

________________________________________
II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Curriculum.** Included in the curriculum are those subjects offered in the school, for which credit is given by the State Department, and lead to the student's being issued a high school diploma.

**Extra-curricular activities.** Those activities which the child participates in for which he receives no credit towards graduation. These include clubs, athletics, and other activities that are carried on by the student not a part of his regular course of study.

**Withdrawal.** A pupil leaving school before receiving a high school diploma.

**Summer withdrawals.** Those pupils who fail to return in September to enter the next class or repeat the class failed.

**Retarded.** A pupil who had failed in one or more subjects and is repeating that subject is considered as retarded.

**Grade.** By grade is considered the evaluation the teacher gave the pupil upon completion of a given subject.

**Class.** The particular classification that a pupil may have at the time considered. In this study there are four classes, namely, freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

These grades represent a scale by which the teachers evaluate the pupil's work in school. They begin with "A" superior, "B" good, "C" average, "D" poor, and "E" failing.

Secondary school enrollment. By secondary school enrollment is meant the number of pupils in the secondary school at the time under consideration.

Five-year study period. In this study, five-year study period includes the time from September 1934 to June 1939.

Oxon Hill School Community. The communities from which the pupils come are considered the Oxon Hill School Community.
CHAPTER IV

THE SCHOOL AND THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

I. THE SCHOOL

Location. Oxon Hill Consolidated School was located in a southeastern direction approximately five miles from the District of Columbia Line on the Maryland State highway number 224, in Prince George's County, Maryland. The school drew pupils from a large area. The red circle on the following map shows the territory included in the school community. Maps in the appendix show the location of the school in comparison with the location of the District of Columbia.

Buses brought pupils from Oxon Hill, Temple Hills, Phelps Corner, Padgetts Corner, Fort Foote, Broad Creek, Silesia, Friendly, Fort Washington, Piscataway, and Accokeek. The maximum distance pupils were transported on buses was fourteen miles. Most of these buses made two trips; the earliest arrived at the school at eight o'clock in the morning.

The most striking feature of the school was its proximity to the City of Washington. Regardless of being rural in nature, the school was close enough to a large
city to feel the urban influence. This resulted in pupils obtaining fairly easy employment during the summer months. After once finding a job it was difficult for them to realize the value of an education.

Size. During this study Oxon Hill Consolidated School had an average enrollment of approximately 600 pupils ranging from the first grade to the senior year high school. The school operated on the 7-4 plan. There was no junior high school located nearby to cause any large influx in enrollment after the freshmen entries. Never at any time during the study did the secondary school enrollment exceed 200 pupils.

The school plant. The elementary and secondary departments were housed under one roof, using the same auditorium and lavatory facilities. Up until 1935-1936 the secondary department was composed of three large rooms and one small inadequate typing room. At this time two new class rooms were added and two lavatories for the high school department. One of these rooms was equipped for home economics, which was offered to freshman and sophomore girls for the first time in 1936-37. In 1937-38 a
basement room in the elementary section was constructed and equipped as a shop to be used by the freshman and sophomore boys in the high school. This was new, and the equipment in no way adequate to meet the needs of the school. The following September 1938, four new class rooms and a teacher's room were added to the high school section, one of these serving as a library. The absence of hot water made a cafeteria impracticable. As a whole, the building was poorly constructed, inconvenient from the standpoint of housing pupils of all ages using the same auditorium and equipment, and far below the standards of the average plant. The playground was large compared to many playgrounds in larger and better equipped schools. It was far enough away from the highway to afford an excellent opportunity for play with little danger.

Offerings of the school. During the study period the majority of courses were academic in nature. In 1934-1935 and 1935-1936, the commercial department offered shorthand and typing, the only vocational aspect of the school. This department was limited to seniors and juniors, so that during 1934-1935 and 1935-1936 the freshman and sophomore pupils were forced to take a standard course of study with no choice. In 1936-1937
home economics was added to the curriculum for the freshman and sophomore girls, and in 1937-1938 shop for the freshman and sophomore boys. These courses afforded some outlet for those who had been taking subjects they felt did not meet their needs. The most drastic aspect of the set-up was found in the method of handling a failing pupil. Until 1937-1938 there was no place provided in the curriculum for a misfit, and a pupil who failed one or more subjects was required to repeat the entire year's course, including the subjects he had mastered and passed. This resulted in pupils reentering classes they had formerly taken, which had a bad influence on the morale of those pupils as well as the morale of the class beginning the work for the first time. In these classes the pupils began to feel that they were wasting their time and became disinterested as a result of the limited curriculum.

The following table shows the subjects offered by years in each of the subject matter fields. It will be seen that some growth had been made, but the progress was slow, and pupils anxious to get through high school and earn money for the support of large families found the curriculum limited and uninteresting.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Problems of democracy</td>
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**TABLE I (continued)**

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<td>Amer. hist.</td>
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<td>Shorthand I</td>
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<td>Economics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The table compares the curriculum offerings across different academic years in both junior and senior levels.
The school staff. At the beginning of this study Oxon Hill High School consisted of four teachers and the principal. All of the staff held college degrees and attended summer school at regular intervals, as required by the State Department of Education. In 1936-37 a part-time home economics teacher was added. In 1937-38 this home economics teacher was made full time and a full-time shop teacher was employed, increasing the teaching staff to seven. All of the teaching staff lived not less than fifteen miles away from the school, the majority living in Washington, D. C. This resulted in long drives battling with city traffic, a lack of interest in the community affairs, and limited knowledge concerning the environment of their pupils.

In 1938-1939 there was a change in administration in the school and the staff was encouraged to interest itself in school procedures and progressive educational practices.

Methods of teaching. In the majority of cases the methods used were textbook teaching and assignment recitation. The past and present experiences of the pupils were given little consideration as a basis for lesson and
unit planning. The teachers were seldom encouraged to visit the homes of failing or retarded pupils, and showed little interest in the home background of the high school group as a whole. It seemed that the backward child was looked upon as impossible and merely endured until he saw fit to withdraw of his own accord. The changes initiated in 1938-1939 came too late to influence the results of this study appreciably.

The philosophy and objectives of the school.\(^1\) During the first four years of the study there were no written formulated philosophy and objectives of the school. In 1938-1939 many meetings were held for the purpose of writing a school philosophy and set of objectives that would serve as a guide in future instruction in class rooms and outside of class activities. The result of this work is shown in the following:

**Philosophy:**

Since the school population is a rural, heterogeneous group who desire occupational duties upon graduation, the faculty of Oxon Hill High School, through their instructional and extra-instructional performances, seeks to implant within the student those qualities of manners, scholarship, citizenship, and tolerance that will aid the student in becoming a good neighbor and a desirable personality in the community.

\(^1\) Written by the faculty of Oxon Hill High School.
To afford the pupils maximum growth toward becoming a good neighbor - a person of high morals, cooperative, economically satisfying, a church attendant and an educational supporter, situations providing for individual pupil growth are sought in both the instructional and extra-instructional curricula. The desire to further educate himself is instilled in the child.

If the philosophy of this school were to be molded into one statement it would be to aid the largest number of pupils by instruction and guidance to acquire habits and develop abilities which will enable them to live and participate advantageously in a democratic environment.

Objectives:

I. To develop within the child the realization of citizenship:
   a. Through active participation in class exercises.
   b. Through opportunities of extra-curricular activities.
   c. Through guidance in assemblies, meetings, and discussions.

II. To create a desire on the part of the child for perpetual learning or intellectual development:
   a. By presenting problems calling for intellectual ponderance.
   b. By arousing an interest in the child to increase his knowledge.
   c. By presenting functional and applicable subject matter.
   d. By making provision for those seeking further education.

III. To aid students in becoming tolerant, broad-minded, and well mannered.
   a. Having frequent opportunities in class and in activities.
   b. Stressing such things when subject matter is otherwise distasteful.
IV. To arouse an interest in the student for the attainment of a higher standard of living.
   a. Description of different levels of living.
   b. By causing an ambitious will power to succeed.

V. To have the pupil become a good neighbor.
   a. Through examples of high morals, cooperation, good will, church worship, law-abiding, and economically stable.

The extra-curricular activity program of the school. The activity program of Oxon Hill High School was highly developed, and much time was spent by faculty members in making it outstanding. A school boy patrol, dramatic club, and two literary societies thrived, with additions made in the form of a school publication, choral club, and school bank. These clubs, however, carried with them little real serious idea of educational development, and were far more social in nature. They were things apart from the regular classroom work. Probably the worst aspect of the activity program, as far as affecting the people in this study, was the limitation set upon them for participation. A pupil, in order to belong to a club, had to maintain a passing average. This resulted in the selected few carrying the activity program, and the mass
of those included in this study eliminated from participation because of class room standards. Those making poor or failing grades were sent to study hall during the regular activity program.

The athletic program was similar in nature, and it was often the case when the "better group" in school enjoyed the sunshine and fresh air so essential to good health, the problem children and those failing to meet class room standards were in study hall with little of interest to occupy their minds.

Table II shows the activity program and the growth that took place during the five-year study period.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>School Boy Patrol</th>
<th>Dramatic Club</th>
<th>Two Literary Societies</th>
<th>Athletics-Basketball-Speed ball-Badge tests</th>
<th>Athletics-Basketball-Speed ball-Badge tests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1934-1935</td>
<td>School Boy Patrol</td>
<td>Dramatic Club</td>
<td>Two Literary Societies</td>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>Athletics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-1936</td>
<td>School Boy Patrol</td>
<td>Dramatic Club</td>
<td>Two Literary Societies</td>
<td>Speed ball</td>
<td>Speed ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936-1937</td>
<td>School Boy Patrol</td>
<td>Dramatic Club</td>
<td>Two Literary Societies</td>
<td>National Honor Society</td>
<td>Student Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937-1938</td>
<td>School Boy Patrol</td>
<td>Dramatic Club</td>
<td>Two Literary Societies</td>
<td>National Honor Society</td>
<td>Student Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938-1939</td>
<td>School Boy Patrol</td>
<td>Dramatic Club</td>
<td>Two Literary Societies</td>
<td>National Honor Society</td>
<td>Student Forum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE II**

**ACTIVITIES OFFERED BY THE OXON HILL HIGH SCHOOL**

**SEPTEMBER 1934 TO JUNE 1939**
II. THE OXON HILL SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Economic factors. The Oxon Hill School Community was rural in nature; however, the land was too flat and unproductive for it to be called a farming district. Tobacco and small truck farms composed the main livelihood for a certain section of the community, but, like most suburban areas, those living nearer to the urban district found employment in the city. There was no outstanding wealth among the parents of the pupils, but there were a few wealthy people in the community. These had an effect upon the school and community in that they had contributed financially to the school and used their political influence in finding employment for those out of jobs. The parents of the school were employed in most cases in semi-skilled or unskilled jobs, bringing in meager incomes for the family support. There was much relief work done in the community by the government during the years of the depression. As is to be expected, the families were large, the incomes small, and it had its effect upon the health, living conditions, and tenure of education of the pupils attending schools.
Housing factors. The homes of the school community were frame structures in most cases, with little or no modern conveniences. Wood was still used as the main fuel, and few homes had bathrooms. Many of them were badly in need of repairs and might have been termed as "run down". These things were especially true of the homes of pupils who withdrew from school.

Density of population. The problem of overcrowded population difficulties was not one for the Oxon Hill School Community. Although the homes were often overcrowded, this was not due to the lack of land but the size of the family. Generally there was enough land to have a good garden and yard. This, of course, meant that the problem of food was not as serious as is often found in overcrowded sections.

Racial factors. The population of the school community was largely American born. This eliminated that misunderstanding of traditions, customs, and language difficulties that so often cause pupils to withdraw in communities where there is a mixture of races.

Recreational facilities. The community offered few recreational facilities for the youth. The school was the recreational center. Plays, dances, and card
parties formed the source of amusement for many of the population. The group close to the city sought recreation within the city limits. Then, the proximity to the Potomac River made swimming one of the main recreational outlets for leisure time in summer.

**Educational facilities.** There were no art galleries, concert halls, lecture courses, museums, or other educational opportunities. However, there was an opportunity for the children to learn to know and love nature, a thing that many city children woefully miss. Many of the parents had not completed high school, and their development of the cultural side of life had not kept abreast with their physical development.
CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF TOTAL ENROLLMENT AND TOTAL WITHDRAWALS

It is a well-known fact that schools interested in maintaining a stable enrollment regard excessive withdrawals a serious obstacle to efficient and continuous progress. Since school administrators realize the wastage involved in constant changing of pupils, surveys have been made to discover the causes and to seek remedies. However, the causes are so variable and remedies for different schools are so diverse that a specific study of the needs of individual communities is required.

The analysis and interpretation of data from the Oxon Hill High School were divided primarily into two parts.

I. A summary of the total enrollment and total withdrawals during the period September 1934 to June 1939 to determine the extent of withdrawals. These data were obtained from records on file in the office of the Oxon Hill High School and from reports submitted to the Superintendent of Schools, Prince George's County, Maryland.

II. An intensive study of seventy-three of the withdrawals during the same period, selected at random, to determine the reasons for withdrawal, the after-school
success of the pupil who withdrew, and the pupil's evaluation of the school.

I. TOTAL ENROLLMENT AND TOTAL WITHDRAWALS

Extent of withdrawals by years. The total enrollment and the withdrawals from September 1934 to June 1939 are presented by years in Table III, figure 1. The numbers are not shown separately by sex. However, the five-year enrollment amounted to 785, which represented 388 individuals. There were 197 different boys and 191 different girls, who enrolled during the study period. Of the 152 withdrawals, seventy-two were boys and eighty girls. Approximately 37 per cent of the boys and 40 per cent of the girls who entered the Oxon Hill High School between 1934 and 1939 withdrew before graduation.

In 1938-1939, the enrollment had increased by 46 per cent as compared with 1934-1935. The enrollment increased in each of the intervening years, as Table III shows. During the five years of the study the Oxon Hill community was recovering from the great economic depression and unemployment in the neighborhood decreased, which seems to be reflected in the increase in school enrollment. Table III also shows the per cent of withdrawals by years. In 1934-1935 the enrollment was 126,
and forty-nine of these withdrew from the school. If the fifteen graduates be added to the forty-nine withdrawals, only sixty-two pupils who entered in the fall of 1935 had been in the high school the previous year. With an enrollment of 148 during 1935-1936, pupils from other schools and the promoted seventh grade pupils outnumbered the old pupils who were accustomed to the teachers and the routine of the school. During 1935-1936, the conditions were much better, but again in 1936-1937, the proportion of new pupils was high. Again, in the fall of 1937, the old pupils were outnumbered by the incoming seventh grade and by new entries.

**TABLE III**

**NUMBER AND PER CENT OF PUPILS WHO WITHDREW FROM OXON HILL HIGH SCHOOL, BY YEARS SEPTEMBER 1934 TO JUNE 1939**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Withdrawals</th>
<th>Total high school enrollment</th>
<th>Per cent of increase from 1934-1935</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1934-1935</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-1936</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936-1937</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>1937-1938</td>
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<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938-1939</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>152</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Before making an intensive study of the withdrawals due to personal reasons, the enrollment turnover will be given some consideration. As is shown by Table IV, the migration of families from the neighborhood was more active in 1934-1935 and 1936-1937 than the other years. In each year thirty-one pupils moved, as previously stated. It is not known whether or not these entered other schools. Only five pupils withdrew from school on account of moving during the other three school years.

The personal reasons for withdrawing have been divided into four subgroups, as follows:

1. Work at home - 13; economic reasons - 1; total - 14.
2. Physical incapacity - 7; committed to an institution - 3; mental incapacity - 8; total - 18.
3. Over sixteen years of age - 19.
4. Miscellaneous group, including marriage - 6; other reasons - 5; total - 11.

During the five years, sixty-two pupils were recorded as having left for the above reasons. When deductions are made for those moving and transferred to other schools, it is estimated that approximately 40 per cent of the pupils entering the freshman class in the Oxon Hill High School completed the full four-year course in that school.
The most effective way to show enrollment changes is by showing the average attendance and the per cent of withdrawals during the year. The base is the total enrollment during the year. This is divided into the total number of withdrawals during the year. If the average attendance had been taken as the base, the per cent withdrawals would have been much higher. It would be difficult to estimate the indirect and hidden drawback to both pupils and teachers caused by this excessive enrollment change in 1934-1935 and 1936-1937.

Causes for withdrawals. The reasons for withdrawing recorded on the files in the principal's office for the 152 pupils are shown in Table IV. The reasons given for withdrawing have been divided into two broad groups; namely, enrollment turnover and personal reasons.

Enrollment turnover included "moved away" and "transferred to another school". One pupil died. These are factors over which the school apparently had no control. Although all of the pupils who "moved away" did not enter other schools, they ceased to be the responsibility of the Oxon Hill High School. The ones recorded as "transferred" were known to have entered another school.

"Personal reasons" included pupils who permanently left school and remained in the community. From a broad
viewpoint these withdrawals were the responsibility of the Oxon Hill High School, and therefore the proper ones upon which to base a study of the causes of withdrawal, and from whom to seek recommendations for remedies.

**TABLE IV**

NUMBER AND PER CENT OF PUPILS WHO WITHDREW FROM OXON HILL HIGH SCHOOL, BY REASON SEPTEMBER 1934 TO JUNE 1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of withdrawals</th>
<th>Enrollment turnover</th>
<th>Reason for withdrawals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Enroll-</td>
<td>Moved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>res-</td>
<td>ment-</td>
<td>away,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sons</td>
<td>turn-</td>
<td>died</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934-1935</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-1936</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936-1937</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937-1938</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938-1939</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NUMBER OF PUPILS WHO WITHDREW FROM OXON HILL HIGH SCHOOL, BY YEAR AND BY REASON
SEPTEMBER 1934 TO JUNE 1939

**Figure 2**

- **Total enrollment**
- **Total withdrawals**
- **Withdrawals - Enrollment turnover**
- **Withdrawals - Personal reasons.**
While fourteen withdrew for work at home and economic reasons, if these pupils had been doing especially good work in school, doubtless some, if not all, of the parents would have found some means of keeping them there. The mentally incapacitated—eight in number—probably deserve more consideration than educators are prone to give. It is a recognized fact that the obviously incapable pupils should have been "weeded out" before they entered high school. These pupils were considered mentally incapable because they could not pass the required subjects in their respective classes, yet some of them have become good and successful citizens, and it may be assumed that instead of the pupils being mentally incapable of doing the work, the high school curriculum was not adapted to their mental development.

Seven of the pupils in this group were recorded as physically incapacitated. If the defects in these pupils had been discovered at an earlier date and corrected, it is conceivable that they might have developed into strong, healthy men and women. It ordinarily is impossible, if not inadvisable, to attempt to examine all children each school year, but those who show tendencies of mental or physical defects should be given a physical examination. An experiment was tried out by the School Health Service
of the Detroit Department of Health in 1921, what they termed a "Teacher Health Inspection" program. 1 This program seems to have been very successful and similar programs in other schools may reduce the number of pupils withdrawing for physical and mental reasons.

An investigation made by the United States Public Health Service, covering fifteen years of school health administration, has attracted wide attention and has been helpful in the stimulation of general movement for the corrections of harmful conditions. The data on physical defects were obtained by examination of 30,000 school children, and the results were amazing. Many children were unknowingly not seeing, suffering from anemia, tooth decay, and poor hearing. These defects naturally cause failures and eventually withdrawals. Practically all defects among children can be remedied or cured, and some form of physical supervision would pay in any school.

There were nineteen who gave as reason for withdrawal, "over sixteen years of age", and not required by law to remain in school. One of the most disheartening

1 Don W. Gudakunst, "School Health Inspection By Teachers," The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly, 15: 139-149, April, 1937.
features of the depression was the way children were permitted to pay for the breakdown of our economic system. The 1930 Census figure showed that approximately 50 per cent of the boys and girls, ages sixteen to eighteen, are not enrolled in school but were helping to swell the overcrowded labor market or were idling away their time. The "stay in school" movement is not only justified, but is demanded today as never before. Any movement to keep boys and girls sixteen to eighteen years of age in school places an added responsibility upon the schools. A program combining culture with practical training to a degree which will meet the needs of all children, whatever their interest, presents an important problem. Many of those withdrawing doubtless hoped to obtain work, and perhaps did, for a time. A further responsibility of the school for the sixteen to eighteen-year-old pupils is to provide opportunity for the temporarily unemployed to seek further training in intervals between jobs. If idleness is disintegrating for adults, it is much more so for the growing boy and girl. The eleven classified as "miscellaneous" included six who married at the age of sixteen to nineteen, with little education and less money.
II. SUMMARY

The analysis of total enrollment and total withdrawals may be summarized as follows:

1. Approximately the same proportion of girls and boys withdrew from the Oxon Hill High School during the years 1934-1939.

2. In September 1935 and September 1937 the old pupils were outnumbered by the new entries.

3. The migration of families was most active between 1934 and 1937.

4. It is estimated that approximately 40 per cent of the pupils who entered the Oxon Hill High School completed the four-year course and received diplomas from that school.

5. A large number of parents made their children leave school and work at home.

6. Children who failed to pass their subjects were considered mentally incapacitated, and the school did little to adjust the work to the needs of the pupils.

7. Physical defects often led to pupils withdrawing from school at an early date.

8. Pupils took advantage of the school-age law and withdrew as soon as they reached sixteen years of age.

9. Pupils left school to marry young and raise families in an environment lacking in education and cultural aspects.
CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECTED FROM INTERVIEWS

As previously stated in Chapter III, to supplement the records in the office of the Superintendent of Prince George's County, seventy-three former pupils of the Oxon Hill High School, who had withdrawn during the five-year study period, were interviewed individually. The pupils were questioned as they appeared or could be seen, without reference to age, reason for withdrawal, or present occupation.

Information regarding the family background and economic status was recorded in order to afford a basis for judging the concealed or hidden causes for withdrawals. The present occupation of the withdrawals and their suggestions and criticisms were recorded as given.

The economic status of the district as a whole was much better in 1939-1940 at the time of the interviews than during the years covered by the study, 1935-1939.

The seventy-three pupils represented 48.0 per cent of the 152 withdrawals during the same period.
I. CAUSES OF WITHDRAWING AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS

Distribution by school-year and class. The class and per cent of withdrawals interviewed by school year and by class at the time of withdrawing are shown in Table V.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total pupil withdrew</th>
<th>Total interviewed</th>
<th>Total withdrawn</th>
<th>Per cent of total withdrawn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1934-1935</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-1936</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936-1937</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937-1938</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938-1939</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As may be observed, the seventy-three pupils were scattered throughout the five-year study period: Fourteen in 1934-1935; fifteen in 1935-1936; twenty-three in 1936-1937; eleven in 1937-1938; and twenty-two in 1938-1939.
NUMBER OF PUPILS WHO WITHDREW FROM OXON HILL HIGH SCHOOL, CLASSIFIED BY YEAR
SEPTEMBER 1934 TO JUNE 1939

Figure 3
They constituted 29.6 to 83.3 per cent of the total withdrawals for the corresponding years. This indicates that the reasons for withdrawals for one year would not weight the average unduly if the period were considered as a whole in making the analysis.

Also in Table V are shown the number of pupils by class at the time of withdrawing. Thirty-four were freshmen, twenty-six sophomores, eight juniors, and five seniors. This high rate of loss of freshmen would indicate that pupils entering high school with "good intentions" of receiving a high school diploma soon became discouraged and left. Of the seventy-three pupils chosen at random, 46.6 per cent were freshmen, from which it seems that pupils were quick to realize the ineffectiveness of the school in meeting their needs.

Age. Although ages fourteen to nineteen years were tabulated separately, the figures for each specific age were too small to be of much value, and consequently the years fourteen and fifteen, sixteen and seventeen, and eighteen and nineteen, have been combined. The number and per cent of withdrawals by class and age are shown in Table VI.
TABLE VI
NUMBER AND PER CENT OF PUPILS INTERVIEWED WHO WITHDREW FROM OXON HILL HIGH SCHOOL, BY AGE SEPTEMBER 1934 TO JUNE 1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age at time of withdrawal</th>
<th>All classes</th>
<th>Freshman</th>
<th>Sophomore</th>
<th>Junior</th>
<th>Senior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All ages</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For all classes twenty-four, or 33 per cent, of the withdrawals were fourteen to fifteen years of age; forty-two, or 58 per cent, were sixteen to seventeen; and seven, or nine per cent, eighteen to nineteen years of age. Six sophomores and three juniors were fourteen to fifteen years of age. These pupils had evidently skipped grades or had been forced through at early ages.

In a district where few pupils go to college or attend any school after leaving high school, the desire or urge on the part of parents and teachers to rush children through high school by sixteen or seventeen years of age should be discouraged. Throughout elementary and high school, the pupil should have been encouraged to develop
such attitudes and appreciations that would lead to good citizenship. Loyalty, service, leadership, the ability to think and accept responsibility, consideration for others, unselfishness, and kindness are only a few of the traits that should result from the school's guidance and the pupils' association with fellow students. The ages fifteen and sixteen years are too young to interrupt this influence, for at these ages the child is still formative, and his environment is of extreme importance. It would be better to encourage the children to stay in high school more than the four years, even if they took more credits than necessary for graduation.

The nineteen-year-old freshman and his family showed a certain "determination" and if he had been started in the right line of work he would undoubtedly have "made good".

Average grades at the time of leaving school. The school grades at the time of withdrawal are shown in Table VII. Probably these grades throw more light on the needs for curricular changes than any other factor.
TABLE VII

NUMBER AND PER CENT OF PUPILS INTERVIEWED WHO WITHDREW FROM OXON HILL HIGH SCHOOL, BY AVERAGE GRADES, SEPTEMBER 1934 TO JUNE 1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average grade at time of withdrawing</th>
<th>All classes</th>
<th>Freshman</th>
<th>Sophomore</th>
<th>Junior</th>
<th>Senior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Num-Per</td>
<td>Num-Per</td>
<td>Num-Per</td>
<td>Num-Per</td>
<td>Num-Per</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>cent</td>
<td>cent</td>
<td>cent</td>
<td>cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All grades</td>
<td>73 100</td>
<td>34 100</td>
<td>26 100</td>
<td>8 100</td>
<td>5 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade A</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade B</td>
<td>4 5</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>3 12</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>1 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade C</td>
<td>11 16</td>
<td>2 6</td>
<td>5 19</td>
<td>4 50</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade D</td>
<td>25 34</td>
<td>8 24</td>
<td>14 54</td>
<td>3 38</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade E</td>
<td>33 45</td>
<td>24 70</td>
<td>4 15</td>
<td>1 12</td>
<td>4 80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the seventy-three pupils interviewed, only four (three in the sophomore class and one in the senior class) were making "B" or better. The reasons they gave for withdrawing were two "not interested", one "work at home", and one "marriage". If the school had a curriculum that met their needs, and a program so organized that pupils could obtain part-time employment while attending school, it is probable that it could have increased its holding power upon these individuals. Eleven pupils were making "C" or average...
grades in their classes. Fifty-eight, or 79 per cent of the pupils, were making poor or failing grades, and few, if any, of the pupils or parents of these pupils expected them to be promoted to the next higher class, and it was less embarrassing to leave school than to remain or reenter the next fall in the same class. It is also obvious from Table VIII that some of these pupils had already repeated a year or more. This suggests that after a pupil has repeated a year, he should be observed carefully and when found failing again, a change in his curriculum or teacher should be recommended.

It is realized that the step from the elementary to the high school is hard for most pupils, and the thirty-two freshmen making "poor" or "failing" grades might have been encouraged to spend another year in the freshman class had they been permitted to repeat one or more subjects they failed in and substituted new subjects for the ones they had passed. As explained in the previous chapter, pupils who repeated classes had to cover the same subjects they had studied before, although some of these subjects had been mastered. The four seniors who "failed" were either "poor" during the three former years or some factor, such as health, conditions at home, or a lack of interest in the curriculum
caused their failure, as the senior year is not usually hard for the average pupil. If it were true that they had been on the border line during their entire high school career, then they were not the caliber to be recommended for college. Instead of trying to make the regular high school course, a year of vocational training would have prepared them for earning a living.

Those who had repeated one or more years. The number and per cent of pupils who had repeated one or more years are shown in Table VIII. This table was referred to in a previous paragraph.

**TABLE VIII**

NUMBER AND PER CENT OF PUPILS INTERVIEWED WHO WITHDREW FROM OXON HILL HIGH SCHOOL, CLASSIFIED BY THE NUMBER OF CLASSES THEY HAD REPEATED SEPTEMBER 1934 TO JUNE 1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>All classes</th>
<th>Freshman</th>
<th>Sophomore</th>
<th>Junior</th>
<th>Senior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Num-Per cent</td>
<td>Num-Per cent</td>
<td>Num-Per cent</td>
<td>Num-Per cent</td>
<td>Num-Per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All interviewed</td>
<td>73 100</td>
<td>34 100</td>
<td>26 100</td>
<td>8 100</td>
<td>5 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No classes repeated</td>
<td>50 68</td>
<td>26 76</td>
<td>15 58</td>
<td>7 88</td>
<td>2 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or more classes repeated</td>
<td>23 32</td>
<td>8 24</td>
<td>11 42</td>
<td>1 12</td>
<td>3 60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PER CENT OF PUPILS INTERVIEWED WHO WITHDREW FROM OXON HILL HIGH SCHOOL, SEPTEMBER 1934 TO JUNE 1939 AND PER CENT OF REPEATERS BY YEARS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PER CENT</th>
<th>All classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

Total withdrawals
Total repeaters

Figure 4
Approximately one-third of the withdrawals had repeated one or more years. If they had been allowed new subjects for the ones they had passed and only repeated the subjects failed in, there would be no great disadvantage from the pupils' point of view in repeating a year. Of course, it is never well to crowd a school with repeaters, but for pupils whose education stops with the high school, five years in the high school will do no harm. Three out of the five seniors had repeated one or more years, and it would seem that after displaying perseverance and a definite ambition to get a high school diploma, the high school failed in its job of meeting the pupil's expectations.

**Intelligence quotient.** The intelligence quotients in this study were based on one test and are given by class in Table IX. The table indicates that approximately 48 percent of the pupils interviewed had an intelligence quotient of below ninety-five. It seems these pupils were not college caliber, and would have profited more by less technical subject matter.
### TABLE IX
NUMBER OF PUPILS INTERVIEWED WHO WITHDREW FROM OXON HILL HIGH SCHOOL, CLASSIFIED BY I. Q. SEPTEMBER 1934 TO JUNE 1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Q. of withdrawal</th>
<th>All classes</th>
<th>Freshman</th>
<th>Sophomore</th>
<th>Junior</th>
<th>Senior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All I. Q.</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115 and over</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105-114</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95-104</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-94</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 85</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extra-curricular activities. Of the seventy-three pupils interviewed, forty-four did not participate in any form of activities. These pupils, as has been explained in a previous section, were barred from participation by low grades and undesirable citizenship traits. If they could have become actively interested in some hobby, or in athletics, dramatics, or literary work which might have unearthed some latent talent, they could have acquired better citizenship habits. As it was, they were in school, but hardly could be considered a really active part of the school. It is especially important that the retarded
pupil not be made to feel "left out". Ostracism is a cruel punishment. It might be all right for the bad, but certainly not for the dull pupils. Even if dull pupils cannot benefit from classes, they can learn good social habits from nonacademic activities. There is little incentive to stay where you are not contributing to the betterment of the whole set-up. Had there been a connecting link between the activity program and the classroom, these pupils would have undoubtedly become more interested in their regular subjects. For instance, had plays, literary work, and hobbies grown out of classroom activities, then the actual subject matter would have taken on a broader meaning. From babyhood to old age the "play instinct" is strong in most people. Those children who did not enter into any form of athletics were undoubtedly shy and timid, and they were therefore hesitant to exhibit their ignorance before more active proficient groups. Intermural athletics and interclass games would have given them the opportunity to learn, along with their fellow students, the rules and techniques of basketball, softball, and other "play" activities.
Health. An inspection of the case histories would indicate that the health of the individuals inter­viewed was good. Only three actually said that ill health had been the underlying cause for their withdrawal. Yet it must be remembered that the judgment of good health is a job for an expert. Many children who look and perhaps feel well are actually suffering from physical defects that gradually have their effect upon a child's ability to benefit from school attendance.

Home environment. In order to have some conception of the home environment of these former students, Table X shows the relation of several criteria, namely, radio, car, bathroom, type of heating, and reading matter, to the stated reasons for leaving school.

Probably the most significant fact revealed by Table X is that twenty-one of the withdrawals came from homes where there was no newspaper and thirty-four where there were no signs of current books or magazines. It would also appear that those withdrawing for "other reasons" were slightly higher in the scale of social environment than for the other classifications. These factors have a distinct effect upon the child's interest, and when the home does not provide these cultural aspects, then the
school should do something towards filling in the gap left by the home. It is not thought that the school should shoulder the entire responsibility of training that the home is supposed to offer, yet the school can do a large part in unveiling interests and experiences for the child when the home is not equipped to do so. Much can be done in this respect through a program of adult education that is being offered in many sections of the country. The school should at least, through its library facilities, encourage the child to develop an interest in good books and magazines.
TABLE X

NUMBER OF PUPILS INTERVIEWED WHO WITHDREW FROM OXON HILL HIGH SCHOOL, CLASSIFIED BY HOME ENVIRONMENT
SEPTEMBER 1934 TO JUNE 1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home environment at time of interview</th>
<th>Totals</th>
<th>Economic reasons needed at home</th>
<th>Economic reasons not needed but interested, did not fail like school</th>
<th>Other reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owns radio</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No radio</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has car</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No car</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathroom</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No bathroom</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil-gas heat</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal or wood fire</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No newspapers</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current books or magazines</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No books or magazines</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Economic status. Reference to the summary sheet in the appendix will show that forty pupils out of the seventy-three, or 54.3 per cent, came from homes that ranked "fair" in their economic status. This judgment was based entirely upon what the interviewer saw when the home was visited and compared it with other homes in the community. It is possible that the economic status of the home might have been better at the time of the interview than when the child left school. A study would indicate that the fathers of the withdrawals held positions in the lower range of the employment level. Not one of the fathers was in a professional job. The mothers were housewives in the majority of cases. This seems to indicate that the pupils were not lacking in home care as educators are prone to believe.

II. THE AFTER SCHOOL SUCCESS OF THE PUPILS INTERVIEWED

The after school success of pupils leaving school before graduation was judged by the employment status of the pupils at the time of the interview, their leisure time activities, and the type of citizen they had become since leaving. This was considered a guide in determining whether or not the school could have done more towards developing the child for after school life.
Employment status. Table XI shows the number of pupils interviewed by employment status at the time of the interview.

**TABLE XI**

NUMBER OF PUPILS INTERVIEWED WHO WITHDREW FROM OXON HILL HIGH SCHOOL, CLASSIFIED BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS
SEPTEMBER 1935 TO JUNE 1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment status at the time of interview</th>
<th>Number of pupils interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not employed</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed at home</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed outside of the home</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garage</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk in store</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five and ten cent store</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Reserves</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. C. C. Camp</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Errand boy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work on the road</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeper</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florist shop</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the table it would appear that those working on the outside had jobs which required little education and when asked the handicaps they had encountered, few considered "lack of education" a drawback. Either they had not gone far enough in school to realize the value of an education, or they were not applying for positions above their educational level.

Table XII shows a comparison between the pupils' reasons for leaving school and their employment status at the time of the interview.

TABLE XII

A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE PUPILS' REASONS FOR WITHDRAWING AND THEIR EMPLOYMENT STATUS AT THE TIME OF THE INTERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupils' reasons for withdrawing</th>
<th>Employment status at the time of interview</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Not employed</th>
<th>Employed at home</th>
<th>Employed outside</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B. G.</td>
<td>E. G.</td>
<td>B. G.</td>
<td>B. G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not interested</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic or help at home</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illness</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To take art</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To join Navy</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table XII indicates that only three out of the thirty-four boys leaving school were not employed. Those boys leaving because of "failing" or "not interested in school" seem to have found jobs. Those boys leaving because of "economic reasons" had either stayed at home helping on the farm or had obtained employment outside of the home. This would indicate that the boys had a definite determination and "push" to earn a living and be respectable citizens. Regardless of their school record or the school's ability to interest them and meet their needs, they had found a place for themselves in the economic world. Few had had more than one job, which showed that they were willing to work and that their work was satisfactory.

The school might have increased its holding power on these boys had it included in its curriculum subjects whereby these boys could have been fitting themselves for the industrial world. Those leaving because of "economic reasons" might have stayed had the school looked into their economic situation and in some way found part-time jobs for them whereby they could have had some source of remuneration. In doing this the school might have increased their tenure of education, and at the same time prepared them for jobs on a higher employment level and increased their earning power.
Of the thirty-nine girls leaving school, thirty-one were still at home or married in their own homes. Most of the girls helped at home with the housekeeping and cooking. This would indicate that the girls intended to be homemakers. The school could have done a great part in making them better homemakers and wives, had it offered in the curriculum subjects along these lines.

Leisure time activities. Regardless of their proximity to a large city offering many cultural opportunities, the pupils as a whole had not taken advantage of these. They attended movies, dances, and spent much time "just hanging around". Not one mentioned attending art galleries, concerts, or lectures. None spoke of reading nonfictional literature. The boys did show a particular interest in local politics, which would indicate that they possessed the ability to enjoy and express an interest in the more serious aspects of life.

As a whole, the pupils had little interest in improving the community. They were honest, hard-working citizens, but not at all progressive. The school might have further developed these cultural ideals, appreciations, and attitudes by a change in the methods of teaching, weaving into the factual learning certain interest
and needs arising from the local conditions and the child's experience.

III. THE EVALUATION OF THE SCHOOL AS GIVEN BY PUPILS INTERVIEWED

Evaluation of subjects offered. When asked to select the subject that they had found most valuable to them since leaving school, the pupils in the majority of cases were not anxious to express an opinion. This was no doubt due to the fact that they had been away from the school and had forgotten the type of work they had encountered in each subject. However, some did express opinions and these are summarized in Table XIII.

Examination of the table will indicate that the boys were not as responsive in evaluating the subjects taught as the girls. This might be attributed to the fact that more boys have jobs than girls, and have interests that have taken them away from the school. However, when they did express an opinion, their answers showed no significant choice.
### TABLE XIII

**EVALUATION OF SUBJECTS TAUGHT AS GIVEN BY THE PUPILS INTERVIEWED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Pupils' evaluation of subjects taken</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most valuable</td>
<td>Least valuable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home economics</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the case of the girls, there was a definite trend that they felt mathematics of no value in their present life. Of the eighteen girls mentioning the subject, not one felt it of any value. Very much the same was true for history. Out of fifteen girls referring to history, twelve thought it of little or no value. When considering English and home economics the table indicates that the girls had
found both valuable. Out of the sixteen girls, fifteen felt English was useful, and out of the thirteen evaluating home economics, all thought it had helped them after leaving school.

When asked to offer suggestions for improving the curriculum, both boys and girls felt the four years of shop and home economics would make the school more useful to the pupils after leaving. Reference to the case histories in the appendix will indicate that in practically every case the pupils spoke in terms of "teaching them something they could use".

**Evaluation of extra-curricular activities.** It has been explained in a previous chapter that the pupils had little experience in the extra-curricular activity program of the school, so their evaluation was of little value. However, they were quick to express a desire that they would have liked to have joined a club, since those belonging "seemed to enjoy them". They suggested in almost every case that the activities be open to everyone, and felt that a full-time athletic coach teaching classes in physical education would be a great addition to the school.
IV. SUMMARY

1. When classified by reasons for withdrawal, it was noted that one year would not weight the average unduly, if the period had been considered as a whole in making the analysis.

2. Of the seventy-three pupils interviewed, chosen at random, 46.6 per cent were freshmen.

3. There was some evidence of forcing pupils through school at an early age.

4. Of the pupils interviewed, 79 per cent were making poor or failing grades.

5. Approximately one-third of the withdrawals had repeated one or more years in high school.

6. Of the seventy-three pupils interviewed, forty-four did not participate in any form of activities. They expressed the wish that they had been allowed to participate, and they seemed to recognize their value.

7. There was noted a lack of interest in the cultural aspects of life, and the parents had little education beyond the elementary school. In the majority of cases the fathers held jobs in the lower range of the employment scale, the mothers being housewives.
8. The majority of pupils interviewed were apparently in good health.

9. When estimating the after school success of those pupils interviewed, it was noted that few considered "lack of education" a handicap in getting a job. The boys had in most cases found employment and the girls remained at home. They had not developed culturally, spending most of their leisure time going to movies, dances, and "hanging around".

10. When evaluating the school curricular and extra-curricular activities, the boys were less responsive than the girls. The boys showed no significant choice of subjects that had been valuable to them since leaving. The girls indicated that they saw little or no value in mathematics or history. For the short time that the vocational subjects had been taught, those referring to them felt they had been of value. Little was said concerning the extra-curricular activities, since those withdrawing had had little experience in them, yet they did suggest the addition of classes in physical education.
CHAPTER VII

RECOMMENDATIONS

A study of the pupils who withdrew from the Oxon Hill High School, Maryland, from September 1934 to June 1939 has led the author to make the following recommendations.

1. In view of the fact that many pupils felt the work "too hard" and "uninteresting", the author would suggest an enriched curriculum, offering a differentiated program to afford the pupils maximum growth. By enriched curriculum does not necessarily mean the addition of all new subjects, but an enrichment of those subjects already offered. This would undoubtedly reduce failures, and eliminate the necessity of a child repeating a subject previously mastered and passed.

For the few that intend to further their education, the college preparatory course should be offered.

For the large number who choose to enter the industrial world, courses in salesmanship, beauty culture, consumer buying, and office training would be advantageous. Four years of home economics, including homemaking, child care, first aid, interior decorating, budgeting, buying, and personality development would better prepare the girls for home duties and marriage. Four years of industrial arts, including the practical, everyday aspects of
mechanics, metal work, housing, and construction are suggested for the boys.

An enlargement of the commercial department, offering experience in filing, card punching, and the operation of the simpler machines used in the modern offices would make it possible for the pupils to begin their training at an earlier stage than the junior year. The requirements of an office clerk and secretary from the standpoint of efficiency, character, and personality should be stressed.

The mathematics department should offer courses in business training, working in close cooperation with the commercial department. Buying, spending, banking, insurance, taxation, and other practical experiences should be emphasized.

In the field of social science the ideals of democracy and good citizenship should be of primary importance. It was noted in the study that the pupils had little interest in community life. A course in local and State government could be so organized to increase this interest, using the community organizations and community projects as a means towards developing the desire on the part of the pupil to improve local conditions.

The science department could enrich its offerings by including courses in gardening, nature study, conservation of natural resources, safety, and health.
Throughout the entire curriculum the importance of good literature and the need to speak and write correctly should be stressed. In all classes every effort should be made to increase the use of the library. The employment of a full-time librarian, trained in guiding pupils in the proper use of the library, is recommended. It was noted in the study that little reading of any type was done in the community as a whole. An increased "library consciousness" on the part of both faculty and pupils may do much to remedy this situation.

It is recommended that courses in music and art be added. These courses might be used as a means of teaching pupils to evaluate the programs heard on the radio.

2. Since many pupils felt they were neglected and lost when freshmen, in addition to this enriched curriculum the writer would suggest a program of guidance, whereby pupils might be studied as individuals, and watched carefully when failing or "lagging behind". This would result in more purposeful learning on the part of the child. This instructor would advise the pupils in the selection of courses, and have information regarding the home background of the pupils. Especially would this be helpful to the incoming freshman, who have trouble bridging the gap between elementary and high school.
3. In view of the fact that extra-curricular activities were not enjoyed by the majority of those included in this study, it is recommended that an activity program democratically operated, giving all pupils an opportunity to contribute, be organized. This should enrich the cultural background of the pupils and care for their varying interests. These activities, whenever possible, should grow out of the classroom, thereby unifying the school program.

4. It is thought that a health program would increase retention. Instruction in the care of the eyes, ears, proper diet, and the correction of minor ailments would cause pupils to do better work in their courses, ultimately reducing the number of failures.

5. Since children gave "economic conditions" as a reason for withdrawing, it is suggested that the school solicit the cooperation of the various business firms in the community and in nearby Washington, finding part-time jobs for pupils who otherwise would find it necessary to leave school. Through the facilities of the National Youth Administration and other welfare agencies, much financial assistance can be rendered those needing it. The organization of a placement bureau would make it possible for pupils to work during the summer months. The school should
make an agreement with the local firms that the child is to return to school in the fall.

6. In order that such proposed changes might offer the maximum benefit, a new school building would be advantageous. This would mean the classroom and auditorium facilities would be more nearly adequate to meet the needs of the pupils.

7. That this program might function smoothly, it would necessitate an increased professional attitude among the faculty leading to better teaching and planning based upon the needs and experiences of the pupils.
APPENDIX
SAMPLE OF CASE HISTORIES OF
PUPILS INTERVIEWED
CASE HISTORY


Withdrawal: November 1936. Reason: Record, to remain at home; interview, was failing and did not like books.

School history: Retarded one year. Failed all subjects.

Course taken: General. Average grades, English, E; History, E; Science, E; Mathematics, E.

Extra-curricular activities: None.

Health: Good.

Economic status of the family: Poor.

Family background: Poor. Mother, housewife; father, U.S. Government. Four in family.

Education of parents: Mother, elementary; father, elementary.

Employment status: Works on farm at home. Has had no other jobs since leaving school.

Evaluation of the school curriculum: Most valuable, none; least valuable, none.

Evaluation of the school activities: No comments.

Recommendations: A course in agriculture.

Interview: The home was small, dirty, and too full of what might be termed "junk". He worked on the farm and helped neighbors pick strawberries. There was no literature around, and few appearances of culture. Stated that he never could get "book learning". Showed no resentment towards the school or teachers. Spent his leisure time "just hanging around".
CASE 2. MALE. AGE 14. FRESHMAN. I. Q. 83

Withdrawal: February 8, 1937. Reason: Record, to remain at home; Interview, to help work.

School history: Retarded - none.

Course taken: General. Average grades, E. English, E; History, E; Mathematics, E; Science, E.

Extra curricular activities: None.

Health: Good.

Economic status of the family: Poor.

Family background: Fair. Mother, housewife; father, farmer. Seven in family.

Employment status: Works for father on farm; has done so ever since leaving school.

Evaluation of the school curriculum: Had no comment upon any choice of subjects taught or any special likes or dislikes.

Evaluation of the school activities: No comments.

Recommendations: Four years of shop and full-time athletic instructor.

Interview: The home and family showed that they were exceedingly poor. There was little doubt left in the mind after viewing the family life that he withdrew to work on the farm. Everything was typical of the "old time farmer" with no modern conveniences of any type. There was no reaction when the school was mentioned, except that "if the children got an elementary education they were doing all that was expected of them". There was little leisure for they went to bed early, and arose early in the morning to work. There were a few farm magazines lying around.

Withdrawal: September 20, 1934. Reason: record, to remain at home; interview, economic.

School history: Retarded - none.

Course taken: General. Did not remain in high school long enough to get grades, but when he left it was estimated that his average grades would be E. Was taking English, science, history, and algebra.

Extra curricular activities: Athletics.

Health: Good.

Economic status of family: Good.

Family background: Good. Mother, housewife; father, store-keeper. Right in family.

Education of parents: Mother, high school; father, elementary.

Employment status: Works in father's store. Has been there ever since withdrawing.

Evaluation of the school curriculum: Did not stay long enough to know anything about the subjects taught.

Evaluation of the school activities: Most valuable, athletics. Knew nothing of the rest of the activities.

Recommendations: Thinks if he had been let stay in school he would have liked all the things they offered. Did say a full-time athletic coach would be nice.

Interview: He had worked for his father ever since leaving and was restless to get away into Washington to make more money. They had nice surroundings and did not seem poor, yet he said that things were right bad at the time he left. Spent leisure time going to dances and movies.

Withdrawal: May 1935. Reason: record, work at home; interview, failing grades.


Course taken: General. Average grades, E. English, E; History, E; Science, E; Mathematics, E.

Extra curricular activities: None.

Health: Good.

Economic status of the family: Poor.

Family background: Poor. Mother, practical nurse; father, farmer. Ten in family.

Education of parents: Mother, elementary; father, elementary.

Employment status: Works on the road. Mostly odd jobs. Has not tried to get steady employment. Thinks of joining army.

Evaluation of the school curriculum: Most valuable, Science; least valuable, English.

Evaluation of the school activities: Did not enter any. Thought they were too much on the side of the "chosen few take part".

Recommendations: Should have a good four-year shop course. Thought a nature club would be nice.

Interview: There was a large family, and the living conditions were none too good. The attitude towards the school was good. They felt, as a family, that the school "did well by them", when they completed elementary. Many in the family had withdrawn and one graduated. This case seems to think he might have passed English had he had time to do his lessons, but he was kept busy around home. Spent his leisure time helping at home when he was not on a job, listening to the radio, and hanging around.
CASE 5. MALE. AGE 15. FRESHMAN. I. Q. 87.


School history: Retarded - none.

Course taken: General. Average, low D. English, E; History, E; Science, D; Mathematics, E; Music, C (no credit).

Extra curricular activities: None.

Health: Good.

Economic status of the family: Fair.

Family background: Fair. Mother, housewife; father, contractor. Ten in family.

Education of parents: Mother, elementary; father, elementary.

Employment status: Works on father's farm. Never been employed anywhere else.

Evaluation of the school curriculum: Most valuable, civics; least valuable, English.

Evaluation of the school activities: Most valuable, athletics; least valuable, none. Knew nothing of the clubs since he did not belong.

Recommendations: Art classes with a regular, paid teacher. Classes in physical education.

Interview: Lived with the family, and had very few modern conveniences. Was a "true farmer". Had gone into Washington, D. C., to take art classes. Spent leisure time in drawing. Did not think he would have made anything by staying in school longer.
CASE 6. MALE. AGE 15. FRESHMAN. I. Q. 83.

Withdrawal: October 4, 1934. Reason: record, to remain at home; interview, to work at home.

School history: Retarded - none.

Course taken: General. Average grades, E. English, E; History, E; Science, E; Mathematics, E.

Extra curricular activities: None.

Health: Good.

Economic status of the family: Fair.


Education of parents: Mother, high school; father, elementary.

Employment status: Has job at market in town. Works nights. Has had several jobs doing unskilled labor, but has not made good. Had one in grocery store, but did not like to work late on Saturday.

Evaluation of the school: Did not stay long enough in high school to have anything to say about the subjects.

Evaluation of the school activities: Knew nothing of any of them.

Recommendations: A fellow just felt lost when coming to high school. The teachers went so fast and if you weren't bright or quick to catch on they did not give you much attention. He thought that if they went slower a person would not get disgusted and leave.

Interview: The home was nice and there were modern conveniences. He was the indifferent type of person as far as the school was concerned. Felt a little as if the school gave him "a raw deal". Just in what definite way he did not state. Spent his leisure time in going to movies and hanging around with the gang at the small country store.
CASE 7. MALE. AGE 15. FRESHMAN. I. Q. 100.

Withdrawal: November 1, 1938. Reason: record, employed at home; interview, father needed help on the farm.

School history: Years retarded - one. Failed all courses.

Course taken: General. Average grades, E; English, E; History, E; Science, E; Mathematics, E; Shop, D.

Extra curricular activities: Athletics (some).

Economic status of the family: Poor.

Health: Good.

Family background: Poor. Mother, housewife; father, farmer. Three in family.

Education of parents: Mother, elementary; father, elementary.

Employment status: Works on the farm at home where he has been ever since withdrawing.

Evaluation of the school curriculum: Most valuable, shop; least valuable, algebra.

Evaluation of the school activities: Most valuable, athletics. Could not say anything about the others since he never got the grades to join any clubs.

Recommendations: Agriculture; athletic coach.

Interview: His home was very plain, but clean. Thought if he had been passing, his father would have let him stay in school. Believed he could have passed if he had wanted to, but all the classes "were so dry". "All you did was read a lot of stuff that you just forgot and never needed." Spent his leisure time reading farm magazines, and seemed intensely interested in modern farming. Had no desire to leave the farm.
CASE 8. MALE. AGE 15. FRESHMAN. I. Q. 94.

Withdrawal: March 1936. Reason: record, to remain at home; interview, economic reasons.

School history: Retarded - none.

Course taken: General. Average grades, E. English, E; History, D; Science, D; Mathematics, E; Shop, E.

Extra curricular activities: Athletics (some).

Health: Good.

Economic status of family: Fair.

Family background: Fair. Mother, housewife; father, government employee. Fourteen in family.

Education of parents: Mother, elementary; father, elementary (perhaps never completed).

Employment status: Works part time in a florist shop.

Has had an innumerable number of jobs, but lack of training and drinking have caused him to lose them.

Evaluation of the school curriculum: Most valuable, shop; least valuable, English.

Evaluation of the school activities: Most valuable, athletics; least valuable, "all the literary stuff they offered".

Recommendations: Had no idea upon the subject matter line, but did suggest an athletic coach.

Interview: He lived at home with a large family. Had had job after job, but they "just fire him". Was working for his uncle, so "guessed he would have to walk the chalk line". Did not think it was the school's fault that he left, but his "own hardheadness". Hung around with a gang and they spent their leisure time going to cheap shows and giving rather rough parties.
CASE 9. MALE. AGE 15. FRESHMAN. I. Q. 76.

Withdrawal: September 1937. Reason: record, work at home; interview, was not interested.

School history: Retarded one year. Failed English.

Course taken: General. Average grades, E. English, E; History, D; Science, E; Mathematics, D.

Extra curricular activities: None.

Health: Good.

Economic status of the family: Fair.

Family background: Good. Mother, housewife; father, truck driver. Four in family.

Education of parents: Mother, elementary; father, elementary.

Employment status: Works in garage selling cars. Has had two jobs since withdrawing. The other was selling cars for another company, but left when this one paid a higher salary. Got both jobs through friends.

Evaluation of the school curriculum: Most valuable, Mathematics, least valuable, English.

Evaluation of the school activities: Most valuable, athletics; least valuable, none. Did not belong to any of the other clubs.

Recommendations: A course in salesmanship; four years of shop; full-time athletic instructor.

Interview: Lived with parents in a small house which was clean, but not modern. Thought the school was full of "hard subjects" that "did not lead to anything". "Just a waste of time". Thought we might have made classes more interesting and not so hard that one had a hard time passing. Claimed that the teachers gave too much home work. Seemed happy in his job, and spent his leisure time "just hanging around" with a crowd from Washington. Often went to a movie or went dancing.
CASE 10. MALE. AGE 15. FRESHMAN. I. Q. 104.

Withdrawal: December 1, 1936. Reason: record, to remain at home; Interview, work at home.

School history: Retarded one year. Failed all subjects.

Course taken: General. Average grades, E. English, E; History, E; Science, E; Mathematics, E.

Extra curricular activities: None (some athletics).

Health: Good.

Economic status of family: Poor.

Family background: Poor. Mother, housewife; father, carpenter. Six in family.

Education of parents: Mother, elementary; father, elementary.

Employment status: Works on the farm at home. Has never had any other job.

Evaluation of the school curriculum: Most valuable, Mathematics; least valuable, Civics.

Evaluation of the school activities: Most valuable, athletics; least valuable, none. (Would express no opinion since he belonged to none of the clubs.)

Recommendations: More shop, metal work, and athletic coach, so we had regular classes and everyone could play.

Interview: The home was very small, but clean. There were no conveniences. The family seemed happy. The income came from the father's jobs as carpenter and a small truck farm. This was run almost entirely by the individual in question. The conditions looked rather prosperous--radio, car, etc. He stated that he did withdraw "to work", but if he had been passing he knew his father would have let him stay in school. When questioned concerning the school, he said that the school "did all it could for him but he hated to study". Said it was hard for him to memorize things. Leisure time was spent reading farm magazines. He seemed perfectly content to be a farmer the rest of his life.
SUMMARY OF CASE HISTORIES
# CASE HISTORIES

## MALES - FRESHMAN CLASS

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## CASE HISTORIES
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<td>Over 16 Failing</td>
<td>Housekeeper 3</td>
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<td>64</td>
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<td>E 76</td>
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<td>65</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>C 102</td>
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<td>Fair Fair</td>
<td>Stay home</td>
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<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>D 111</td>
<td>1 yr.</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good Fair</td>
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<td>Not interested</td>
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<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>E 98</td>
<td>2 yrs.</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Poor Fair</td>
<td>Failed</td>
<td>Failing</td>
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### CASE HISTORIES

#### FEMALES—JUNIOR AND SENIOR CLASSES

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BIBLIOGRAPHY
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Sanford, C. M. "Yesterday's Schools For Today?" Industrial Education Magazine, 37 (January, 1935), pp. 9, 10.


VITA.

Name - Evelyn Lindsey Berry

Born- State of Maryland, August 88, 1910.

Degree- B.S. College of William and Mary, 1931.

Position- Teacher at Oxon Hill High School.