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FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF THE NEW SALEM
ACADEMY AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT
THREE YEAR STUDENTS AND GRADUATES



CARY, Jr. - 1956



FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF THE NEW SALEM ACADEMY AGRICULTURE
DEPARTMENT THREE YEAR STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

BY

WILLIAM M. CARY JR.

A problem presented in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
Master of Science Degree

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1956

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the Towns From Which the Academy Has Drawn Its Students... Orange, Athol, New Salem, Wendell, Leverett, Warwick, Erving, Shutesbury, Farley, Montague, and Pelham together represent an area roughly twenty miles by twenty miles with New Salem situated toward the south-east corner closely linked by main highway with the two largest towns of Orange and Athol seven miles away.

These towns have experienced limited growth or change during the past twenty-five years. With the exception of Orange, Athol, and Erving, they are mainly rural with populations from three hundred to one thousand. They appear to be scattered with farms; yet, though their folk have been close to the soil for generations, few residents now derive their entire incomes from farming. Today the several small factories throughout the area attract the majority of workers. Home gardens are quite common and many families keep one or two cows and a few chickens to supply their own tables.

New Salem borders on the northern end of Quabbin Reservoir and much of the land now owned by the Metropolitan Water District belonged to New Salem. It has about four hundred and thirty-five residents. No industry is located there. The majority of wage-earners are employed in either Orange or Athol. It has two small poultry farms, two small

dairy farms, and a few apple orchards.

Shutesbury and Wendell are similar in nature to New Salem. They are small, rural, residential towns with populations close to three hundred and fifty. Neither town has any industry. Wendell has two small lumbering operations and two small dairy farms.

Leverett has one small charcoal kiln, one small box shop, and one small lumber mill in operation. Some full-time farming is carried on, but the farms are relatively small. The population numbers about one thousand.

Warwick, between Orange and Erving, has close to twelve hundred residents including several who own summer homes there. Some lumbering operations are carried on.

Erving has three manufacturing plants although it is the smallest of the towns in the area: a paper mill, a heel factory, and a tool factory. It has a population of approximately one thousand.

Orange is an industrial town situated between Erving and Athol on the Millers River. It is perhaps best known as the home of minute tapioca which is processed in a plant owned by General Foods. Among its several small manufacturing concerns are a shoe shop, a needle factory, a textile and water power machinery plant, a tool manufacturing concern, a box shop, and two foundrys. Orange has about six dairy farms and six poultry farms. The present population numbers close to six thousand five hundred.

Athol, with a population of approximately fifteen thousand, has two large tool concerns, two large shoe shops, foundrys, a toy factory, a leather processing plant, and several smaller concerns which supply special parts and equipment. Athol has five dairy farms under common ownership.

The topography holds rather consistent throughout the area. These towns are in the foothills of the Berkshires, small, forested, clustered, separated one from the other by narrow valleys. The only level terrain of any extent lies south of Orange, acres of which have been converted into the Orange Airport.

The Background and Development of the Vocational Agriculture Course at New Salem Academy... A special course in agriculture was instituted at New Salem Academy back in 1915. Conducted by one instructor, it was, for the most part, a question and answer reading course offering no shop work with the emphasis divided about evenly between agriculture and academics.

By 1922 the enrollment in this four-year agriculture course had dwindled to five students. But, in the fall of 1923, Mr. R. A. Lundgren was carrying on as full-time instructor with twelve students including five of his former students from the Orange High School vocational training course which had been discontinued.

Mr. Lundgren managed to shape the course into a more practical, learning-by-doing arrangement. As the years

went by, auto mechanics and carpentry were offered; and the boys were given actual jobs such as repairing hen-houses and repairing sheds and barns. Through Mr. Lundgren's efforts, students were attracted from nearby Dana and Greenwich thereby raising the total enrollment of the Academy to above eighty-five where it has remained. After being shuttled from one location to another, the Agriculture Department finally grew itself into the present Stowell Building which was purchased and converted into classrooms with some shop facilities below. The enrollment in vocational agriculture had climbed from twenty to thirty pupils with Mr. Lundgren the only instructor.

A second full-time instructor was added in 1942. In most respects the course was similar then to the course offered today; about one-fourth shop training, one-fourth general agriculture, and one-half academics. A well-equipped machine shop was added in 1946. A third instructor was hired in 1947, but Mr. Lundgren retired in February of that year.

The Vocational Agriculture Department is headed now by Mr. Charles Smith. The course includes: instruction in the fundamentals of scientific farming, home projects, placement on nearby farms, field trips, affiliation with the Future Farmers of America program, some on-the-job training, and farm mechanics. A vocational agricultural student spends one half of each school day in the main Academy building pursuing such academics as: general mathematics, general science, English, and history.

CHAPTER II

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND OUTLINE OF PROCEDURE

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STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND OUTLINE OF PROCEDURE

Statement of Problem...The writer, by following up the former three or four year students of vocational agriculture at New Salem Academy, sought to determine what have been their adult occupational experiences, what parts of the program benefited them most in their opinions, and what suggestions, criticisms, or comments they wished to make.

Procedure...(1) The existing cumulative record cards for those students who have attended New Salem Academy since 1920 were examined carefully in order to obtain the names of those students who completed three or four years of the vocational agricultural course, their graduation dates or the dates they left school, and their home addresses while attending the Academy.

(2) Present addresses were obtained from Mrs. Clarence Mackie of New Salem, who, fortunately has pursued the practical hobby of keeping track of Academy graduates.

(3) The phone numbers of many subjects residing in the Orange-Athol area were obtained from the local directory.

(4) An inquiry form and letter of transmittal were prepared and duplicated.

(5) These inquiry forms and letters of

transmittal were sent to those subjects whom it was impractical to contact by phone or direct personal interview.

(6) Many subjects were contacted by phone and asked the questions set forth on the inquiry form. Their replies were recorded on inquiry forms immediately.

(7) Some personal interviews were held.

(8) Each inquiry form was keyed for easier tabulation of the data therein contained.

(9) After information had been received from as many subjects as possible, the data was tabulated.

(10) Summaries, charts, and tables were made from the assembled data.

(11) Certain conclusions were drawn.

Scope of Survey -- According to the records on file at New Salem Academy, from 1921 through 1954 there have been 144 students who have taken three or four years of the vocational agricultural course.

For one reason or another such as death or unknown address it was not possible to contact in any way fifteen of the former students. Information was obtained in one form or another from one hundred of the one hundred and twenty-nine with whom contact was possible. Fortunately, a high percentage of the subjects have not strayed from the local area. This lightened the task considerably.

Conclusion -- This study, therefore, presents the information obtained on 100 former vocational agricultural students at New Salem Academy during the years 1921-1954 and the conclusions drawn therefrom.

CHAPTER III

SIMILAR PREVIOUS RESEARCH

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SIMILAR PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Available publications provided summaries of nine similar follow-up studies previously conducted in other sections of the country. In contrast or comparison to the findings of this study, they offer invaluable perspective. Each locality stands unique in itself. Occupational opportunities are never the same even from town to town in the same county. However, assuming that vocational agricultural courses are designed to offer preparation for adult agricultural pursuits, it is interesting to note to what degrees the various schools have served their objectives.

Summaries of Nine Studies Conducted Elsewhere -- Eight states are represented by these studies. They are arranged in chronological order according to the years in which they were completed.

1. Minnesota (St. Louis County Rural High School, 1940)¹

Subjects: 644 vocational agricultural students in school 9/31 to 7/39

Findings: 56.5% .. Farming

1.1% .. Related fields

1.7% .. Agricultural college

27.0% .. Non-agricultural pursuits

(1) Summaries of Studies in Agricultural Education, Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Bulletin No. 237, p. 79.

2. Central New York (1941)¹

Subjects: 181 vocational-agricultural graduates prior to 1931

Findings: 28.7% .. Full-time farming

14.4% .. Part-time farming

16.0% .. Related fields

40.0% .. Non-agricultural pursuits

3. Virginia (1942)²

Subjects: Ex-vocational-agricultural students who had left school between 1937 and 1941. Reports came from 156 white and 32 negro schools and individual records of 781 white students

Findings: 28.0% .. Farming (white)

37.0% .. Farming (negro)

4. Virginia (1942)³

Subjects: 7,784 white and 1,365 negro vocational-agricultural students from schools established prior to 1932

Findings: 50.0% .. Farming and related fields (white)

43.0% .. Farming and related fields (negro)

(1) Summaries of Studies in Agricultural Education, Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Bulletin No. 237, p. 27.

(2) Ibid., p. 68.

(3) Ibid., p. 56.

5. Michigan (Mason, 1942)¹

Subjects: 208 boys enrolled in vocational agriculture from 1920-1939

Findings: 35.1% .. Farming

11.2% .. Related fields

53.7% .. Non-agricultural pursuits

6. Louisiana (1944)²

Subjects: 199 former part-time students

Findings: 73.0% .. Farming

1.5% .. Related fields

25.5% .. Non-agricultural pursuits

7. Mississippi (1947)³

Subjects: 556 former students of 28 schools
7/35 to 7/40

Findings: 49.2% .. Farming

7.3% .. Related fields

43.5% .. Non-agricultural pursuits

(1) Ibid., p. 7.

(2) Summaries of Studies in Agricultural Educ. Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Bulletin No. 237, p. 51.

(3) Ibid., p. 103.

8. Pennsylvania (Bellefonte, 1949)¹

Subjects: 109 former students

Findings: 23.8% .. Farming

12.9% .. Related fields

54.3% .. Non-agricultural pursuits

9. Massachusetts (Agawam, 1952)²

Subjects: 136 former students between 1910 and 1933

Findings: 30.14% .. Farming

63.24% .. Non-agricultural pursuits

Combining these nine studies we have follow-ups of 10,598 students and 1,365 negro ex-students in Virginia and ex-vocational-agricultural students of 32 negro schools in Virginia. All but two of the studies followed up those who were students prior to World War II. The disruptive influence of the war years is not reflected by these studies. The Louisiana study showed the highest percentage of former students in farming and related fields: 73.0%. One of the Virginia studies found only 28.0% of the white students were farming; and the Agawam, Massachusetts study found only 30.14% of the former students in farming. Agawam is

(1) Summaries of Studies in Agricultural Educ., Federal Security Agency, Office of Education, Bulletin No. 242, p. 7.

(2) Follow-up Study of the Agawam High School Agriculture Dept. Graduates and Drop-outs, Skolnick, David, University of Massachusetts, 1952, pp. 28.

approximately fifty miles south of New Salem. Combining percentages, we find that 51.4% of the former vocational-agricultural students followed up by these studies were in farming or related fields and 48.6% were in non-agricultural pursuits.

Summary of a Previous Follow-up Study of New Salem Academy Vocational-Agricultural Students -- Also available ¹ is a report on the study completed in 1950 by Mr. Deane Lee while serving as a vocational-agricultural instructor at the Academy. He has reported on the occupational activities of fifty-five former students. His tabulations should be interesting in comparison with those of this study. Basing his statistics on time, Mr. Lee has found that 46.5% of the 55 graduates spent their time in work on which their agricultural and shop training had a direct bearing. Yet only one-half of this time was spent in some type of farming. 53.5% of their time was spent in pursuits unrelated to the agricultural and shop training at the Academy.

(1) Lee, Deane, Follow-up of New Salem Vocational-Agricultural Students, The Agricultural Education Magazine, Oct. 1951, p. 94.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FACTS
OBTAINED FROM INQUIRY FORMS

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PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FACTS

OBTAINED FROM INQUIRY FORMS AND SCHOOL RECORDS

This chapter will deal with the specific findings of this study and interpretations of these findings.

The Number of Three and Four Year Students From Each Town -- Table I below shows the distribution of the total possible subjects according to their home towns while attending the Academy. The percentages for each town are of particular interest when compared with the percentages of actual subjects working in the various towns.

TABLE I

The Number of Three and Four Year Students
Who Attended from Each Town

<u>Towns</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
1. Orange	39	27.1
2. New Salem	25	17.3
3. Wendell	17	11.8
4. Athol	15	10.4
5. Leverett	14	9.6
6. Warwick	11	7.7
7. Erving	9	6.3
8. Dana	6	4.2
9. Shutesbury	5	3.5
10. Montague	<u>2</u>	<u>1.4</u>
	144	100.0

It must be understood that these figures in Table I are based on 144 students. Some of these are deceased; some did not return their inquiry forms; and the present whereabouts of some are unknown. A subsequent table shows similar information for the one hundred subjects about whom information was obtained.

More than five times as many three or four year students attended from towns outside New Salem as from New Salem with the greatest number coming from Orange.

The Number of Subjects Attending From Each Town --
The distribution by home towns of the one hundred subjects about whom information was obtained is very close percentage-wise to those included in Table I.

TABLE II

The Number of Subjects Attending From
Each Town Reported in this Study

<u>Towns</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
1. Orange	26	26
2. New Salem	17	17
3. Wendell	14	14
4. Athol	11	11
5. Erving	9	9
6. Leverett	8	8
7. Warwick	8	8
8. Shutesbury	4	4
9. Dana	2	2
10. Montague	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
	100	100

When the Subjects Left School -- In Table III below, if a subject left school after three years he was included in the year during which he left. Of the 100 subjects, 84 were graduated and 16 completed three years.

TABLE III

The Number Who Left School Each Year

<u>Year</u>	<u>3 yrs.</u>	<u>Number</u> <u>4 yrs.</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>3 yrs.</u>	<u>Number</u> <u>4 yrs.</u>	<u>Total</u>
1954	0	9	9	1940	1	2	3
1953	0	4	4	1939	1	3	4
1952	0	5	5	1937	1	0	1
1951	2	5	7	1936	1	1	2
1950	1	4	5	1935	1	1	2
1949	0	8	8	1934	0	4	4
1948	1	7	8	1933	0	0	0
1947	2	2	4	1932	0	2	2
1946	1	2	3	1931	0	1	1
1945	0	5	5	1929	0	0	0
1944	2	5	7	1928	0	1	1
1943	2	3	5	1927	0	2	2
1942	0	2	2	1924	0	0	0
1941	0	6	6	1921	0	0	0

Table III shows certain distribution statistics worthy of note. According to available records, no vocational-agricultural students left New Salem Academy after three

or four years of schooling in the years: 1922, 1923, 1925, 1926, 1930, and 1938; and, furthermore, as Table III indicates, no subjects are included in the study for the years: 1921, 1924, 1929, and 1933. The course was being reactivated under Mr. R.A. Lundgren during the early twenties. This fact together with the fact that school populations fluctuate account for the highs, lows, and blanks.

Enrollments increased from 1940 averaging about six subjects each year compared with an average of less than two subjects for the years from 1921 to 1940. For the fourteen years after 1940 there are 78 subjects and only 22 from 1940 back to 1921.

Of the 16 subjects who completed three years 11 left school during the nine years from 1943 to 1951.

Subjects Now Farming Full-time -- Table IV lists those subjects who are now farming full-time. For the purposes of this study, farming full-time was defined as: the production of crops and/or livestock (or the like) primarily for sale to the extent that more than one-half of the annual income of the individual is earned therefrom. Table IV also shows the type of farming in which the particular subjects are engaged, where they are engaged in their farming, and the number of years they have farmed.

Table IV shows that there are eleven subjects now farming full-time representing eleven per cent of the total. All but one are self-employed as owner-operators, while one is working as a laborer on a dairy farm. Six subjects are connected with dairying and five with poultry.

TABLE IV

Subjects Who Are Now Farming Full-time

<u>Position</u>	<u>Years Farming</u>	<u>Type of Farm</u>	<u>Location</u>
Owner	14	Dairy	Orange
Owner	3	Dairy	Orange
Owner	9	Dairy	Orange
Owner	12	Dairy	Orange
Owner	14	Dairy	Dexter, Me.
Owner	22	Poultry	New Salem
Owner	16	Poultry	Furnace
Owner	20	Poultry	So. Athol
Owner	6	Broilers	Erving
Owner	3	Orchards	New Salem
Laborer	6	Dairy	Farley

Almost any other type of farming is not feasible in the area. None of these subjects are farming on what would be regarded as a large scale. Six of the eleven have been farming for twelve years or more. Since most of these farmers probably came into ownership through inheritance, it follows that nine of these eleven farmers are located in the Orange-Erving-New Salem area.

Subjects Now Farming Part-time -- Table V lists those subjects who are now earning less than one-half of their annual income from farming as defined for this study, the type of farming in which they are engaged, where, and the number of years they have farmed.

These six subjects shown in Table V represent six per

TABLE V

Subjects Who Are Now Farming Part-time

<u>Position</u>	<u>Years Farming</u>	<u>Type of Farm</u>	<u>Location</u>
Owner	2	Strawberries	Phillipston
Owner	25	Dairy	Leverett
Owner	1/2	Dairy	Shutesbury
Owner	3	Orchard	Warwick
Owner	2	Poultry	Warwick
Laborer	10	Odd Jobs	New Salem

cent of the subjects included in this study. As would be expected, their part-time farming is small-scale farming engaged in to supplement regular income. All but one are part-time farming for themselves. Of these only one subject has been part-time farming for more than three years. He has a small dairy herd.

Subjects Now Employed Full-time in Related Fields --

Listed below in Table VI are the three subjects who are employed in related fields on a full-time basis. They represent three per cent of the subjects of this study. A related field as defined for this study is: "Any business or occupation directly connected with farming and requiring some knowledge of farming."

It goes without saying that the opportunities for employment in related fields as defined are quite limited in the area. The fact that only three subjects are so employed bears this out. Only one of the three, the subject employed in Warwick, is working in the Athol-Orange-

Erving general area.

TABLE VI

Subjects Now Employed Full-time in Related Fields

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Years Employed</u>	<u>Related Field</u>	<u>Location</u>
Laborer	1	Lumbering	Warwick
Technician	6	Poultry disease eradication	Amherst
Teacher	1	Vocational- Agricultural Education	Templeton

Other Full-time Occupations in Which Subjects Are Employed -- Fourteen of the subjects are working at farming or in a related field. Table VII completes the picture of occupational status by showing the variety of employments pursued by the remaining eighty-six subjects including those in the armed services.

As one would expect for this area, almost one-half of the subjects are working in the various factories. Many are machine-operators. However, it is almost impossible to categorize their exact factory duties for graphic presentation. A few have attained the rank of foreman.

TABLE VII

Other Full-time Occupations in which Subjects are Employed

<u>Type of Occupation</u>	<u>Number</u>
1. Factory Work (skilled and unskilled)	40
2. Armed Services	15
3. Construction	8
4. Plumbing and/or Heating Installation	5
5. Truck Driver	3
6. Odd Jobs	3
7. Auto Mechanics	3
8. Fireman	2
9. Radio and TV Repair	2
10. Lumber Yard Foreman	1
11. Chef	1
12. Furniture Store Employee	1
13. Lumber Marker	1
14. (Not employed due to handicap)	<u>1</u>
Total	86

Factories in Which Subjects Are or Have Been Employed--

Of the several manufacturing concerns between Athol and Erving the five listed in Table VIII are among the largest. It is interesting to note the number of subjects working in these five factories alone. Certainly they offer a large percentage of the employment opportunities in the area. Presumably they shall continue to do so; and, presumably, future New Salem Academy will find employment in them.

TABLE VIII

Factories in Which Subjects Are or Have Been Employed

	<u>Factory</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Are</u>	<u>Have Been</u>
1.	Rodney Hunt	Orange	5	1
2.	Starrett	Athol	1	
3.	Union Twist Drill	Athol	2	2
4.	Erving Paper	Erving	6	2
5.	Millers Falls Tool	Erving	<u>6</u>	<u>—</u>
		Total	20	5

We can note from the above table that twenty-five per cent of the subjects included in this study are or have been employed in these five major manufacturing concerns of the area. Twelve of the twenty subjects are employed in two mills located in the town of Erving on the Millers River. These twenty subjects represent one-half of the total number in this study now working in factories.

Former-Full-time Farmers -- Table IX lists those subjects who at some time in the past earned more than one-half of their annual income from farming as defined for this study, the type of farming in which they engaged, where, and the number of years that they farmed.

These fourteen subjects represent fourteen per cent of the total number of subjects. Table IX shows that all but one of the fourteen spent their years in farming as laborers. Their average length of employment was 2.16 years; and no subject labored for more than five years.

TABLE IX

Subjects Who Formerly Engaged in Full-time Farming

	<u>Position</u>	<u>Years Farming</u>	<u>Type of Farm</u>	<u>Location</u>
1.	Laborer	1	Dairy	Petersham
2.	Laborer	4	Dairy	Warwick
3.	Laborer	3 1/2	Dairy	Syracuse, N.Y.
4.	Laborer	4	Dairy	Shelburne
5.	Laborer	1/2	Dairy	Winchester
6.	Laborer	2	Dairy	Ashley Falls, N.Y.
7.	Laborer	2	Dairy	Leverett
8.	Laborer	1	Dairy	Walpole
9.	Laborer	1/2	Dairy	Greenfield
10.	Laborer	1/2	Dairy	Athol
11.	Laborer	2	Cattle	Petersham
12.	Laborer	5	Poultry	Orange
13.	Laborer	2	Poultry	New Salem
14.	Tenant	11	Poultry	Orange

Ten of these thirteen laborers were employed on dairy farms, eight of them outside the area from which the Academy drew its students. Apparently, in order to obtain the farm experience some of the subjects desired, they had to take employment away from their home towns. This condition might well be one contributing factor not only to the short terms of employment but also to the relatively low percentage of subjects who have held to farming for a permanent occupation.

Former Part-time Farmers -- As would be expected in a semi-rural area, some subjects have supplemented their incomes by farming on a part-time basis. Table X lists those subjects who at one time or another since leaving school earned less than one-half of their annual income from farming as defined for this study, the type of farming in which they engaged, where, and the number of years they farmed.

TABLE X

Subjects Who Formerly Engaged in Part-time Farming

	<u>Position</u>	<u>Years Farming</u>	<u>Type of Farm</u>	<u>Location</u>
1.	Owner	3	Dairy & Eggs	Phillipston
2.	Owner	1	Turkey	Erving
3.	Owner	2	Poultry-Dairy	Orange
4.	Laborer Owner	1	Job Cattle	Wendell
5.	Laborer	3	Produce	Wendell
6.	Laborer	4	Dairy & Eggs	Orange
7.	Laborer	3	Dairy	Orange
8.	Laborer	2	Cattle	Petersham

These eight subjects represent eight per cent of the one hundred subjects included in this study. All were engaged in small-scale farming, half as owners and half as laborers. Only one subject farmed part-time for as long as four years. The others farmed part-time for three years or less. Six of the eight worked in the area from which

the Academy drew its students. Two subjects labored on family farms, while four of the others were owners. Since Table V shows five of the six subjects now farming part-time to be owners, it would appear that few men care to farm for hire on a part-time basis.

Subjects Formerly Employed Full-time in Related Fields--

Listed in Table XI are the eight subjects who were formerly employed as laborers in various related fields.

TABLE XI

Subjects Formerly Employed Full-time in Related Fields

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Years Employed</u>	<u>Related Field</u>	<u>Location</u>
1. Laborer	5	Lumbering	Orange
2. Laborer	2	Floriculture	Amherst
3. Laborer	3	Grain Store	Orange
4. Laborer	1	Floriculture	Billerica
5. Laborer	1/2	Floriculture	Amherst
6. Laborer	1/2	Lumbering	Franklin Cty.
7. Laborer	1 1/2	Grain Store	Orange
8. Laborer	2	Landscaping	Westchester Cty., N.Y.

The eight subjects shown in Table XI represent eight per cent of the subjects included in this study. Two facts stand out: (1) all eight were employed as laborers, and (2) the average length of employment in a related field was two years, approximately, with only one subject remaining

as long as five years.

Other Full-time Occupations in Which Subjects Have Been Employed -- Naturally, many subjects have shifted from one type of occupation to another. Table XII shows the various full-time occupations different from present occupations and other than farming or related fields in which some subjects have been engaged. Also shown in Table XII are the number of subjects who have been so occupied.

TABLE XII

Other Full-time Occupations in Which Subjects
Have Been Employed

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Number So Employed</u>
1. Factory Work	9
2. Carpentry	4
3. Truck Driver	4
4. Construction	3
5. Auto Mechanics	3
6. Gas Station Work	2
7. Laboratory Assistant	1
8. Store Clerk	1
9. Ice Company Work	1
10. Bus Driver	1
11. Highway Maintenance	1
12. Lumber Yard Work	1
13. Auto Salesman	1
14. Odd Jobs	1

Armed Services Affiliations -- Table XIII shows the number of subjects who have served or are serving in the Armed Forces of the United States and the years those now serving left school.

TABLE XIII

Armed Services Affiliations

1. Have been in military service: 45
 2. Are now in military service: 15*

<u>Left School In</u>	<u>Number</u>
1939	1
1941	1
1944	1
1951	4
1952	2
1953	2
1954	4

*Includes three subjects who are making service careers

Table XIII shows that sixty per cent of the subjects have been or are in the military service of their country. Forty-five per cent have served for the usual two to four years. Three subjects or three per cent of the total have established careers for themselves in military service. The other twelve subjects now in military service left school during the years 1951 to 1954 which means that they have not had opportunities to determine their occupational niches should they plan to do so.

Summary of Occupational Experiences -- Table XIV

lists the percentages of subjects who are or have been engaged in the various categories of employment thus serving as a summary of their occupational experiences.

TABLE XIV

Summary of Occupational Experiences

<u>Category</u>	<u>Per Cent of Total</u>
Now Farming Full-time	11%
Now Farming Part-time	6%
Now in Military Service	15%
Now in Related Fields	3%
Now in Other Occupations	71%
Have Farmed Full-time	14%
Have Farmed Part-time	8%
Have Been in Related Fields	8%
Have Been in Military Service	45%

Education Beyond the Academy -- Formal education is becoming increasingly essential for occupational advancement. Table XV shows those subjects who have continued their educations beyond the Academy.

It is rather surprising to note that only six subjects have taken two or more years of formal education beyond their training at the Academy. Judging from the fact that forty-five per cent of the subjects have been in military

TABLE XV

Education Beyond the Academy

<u>Education</u>	<u>Number of Years</u>
1. University of Massachusetts (BVA degree)	4
2. University of Massachusetts (BS degree)	4
3. University of Massachusetts (did not graduate)	3
4. Stockbridge School of Agriculture	2
5. Stockbridge School of Agriculture	2
6. Bristol County Agricultural School Day Courses at the Wentworth Institute	2 2
7. Radio and Television School	1/2

service, it would seem that more subjects would have taken advantage of the G. I. Bill which offered education to veterans at government expense. Of the six who have had at least two years of advanced education three attended the University of Massachusetts and two attended the Stockbridge School of Agriculture; both schools are located in Amherst not far from New Salem.

Communities in Which Subjects Are Working -- Table XVI shows the several places in which the subjects of this study are employed. It does not include those subjects who are in the service.

Fifty-seven subjects representing sixty-seven per cent of those subjects included in Table XVI are working in Orange, Erving, or Athol. All but three of these subjects

TABLE XVI

Communities in Which Subjects are Working

<u>Place</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Number</u>
1. Orange	31	11. Warwick	1
2. Erving	16	12. Amherst	1
3. Athol	10	13. Templeton	1
4. West. Mass.	5	14. Northfield	1
5. Greenfield	4	15. Hatfield	1
6. New Salem	4	16. Clearwater, Fla.	1
7. Millers Falls	2	17. Springfield	1
8. Leverett	1	18. Momsey, N. Y.	1
9. Petersham	1	19. W. Brookfield	1
10. Shutesbury	1	20. Dexter, Me.	1

are working in Western Massachusetts. Only four are working in New Salem, the town in which they attended high school.

Most Helpful Phases of the Vocational-Agricultural Training -- The subjects were asked to check or state those phases of their vocational-agricultural training which they found later were most helpful in their occupational experiences. Several made no choices; some added certain phases not shown on the inquiry form. The various phases found most helpful are listed in Table XVI together with the number of times each was checked or stated.

In view of the types of occupations in which the subjects are engaged, it is not at all surprising that the

TABLE XVII

Most Helpful Phases of the
Vocational-Agricultural Training

<u>Phase of the Training</u>	<u>Times Mentioned</u>
Farm shop	28
Auto Mechanics	3
Carpentry	3
Judging	2
Gardening	2
Productive Projects	2
Poultry	2
Dairying	2
Supervision of instruction	2
Machinist training	1
On-the-job training	1
Fruit growing	1

farm shop phase was checked or stated the most number of times. Many subjects are directly or indirectly concerned with the operation of machinery in the factories. Seven of the phases listed in Table XVII are not directly associated with the production of crops or the raising of livestock. Neither is this statistic surprising in view of the fact that only fourteen per cent of the subjects are farming full-time or working in a related field.

Many subjects stated over the telephone or in personal interviews that they enjoyed the entire course; and some

went further to say that they had only themselves to blame for not receiving the benefits the course offered. The majority of the subjects had contact with Mr. R. A. Lundgren during his long service at the Academy. The number of subjects who, without being queried, expressed their esteem for Mr. Lundgren bears testimony to his enriching influence. Sound and subtle guidance might well be one of the most important, if the least recognized, in secondary education.

Training Subjects Did Not Receive But Would Have Liked to Have Had -- Table XVIII is significant to the extent that it shows needs and interests. Since the vocational-agricultural training at the Academy has varied considerably through the years, training mentioned by some of the subjects, particularly those who took the course during its first twenty years, was included in the curriculum at another time.

It is apparent that many subjects have recognized deficiencies in their training from their occupational experiences which have for the most part been associated with industry. Training directly related to agriculture was mentioned only three times. Many subjects stated that, although they understood that the emphasis of the course was on agriculture, they believed that more intense training in shop skills would have proved most helpful. Those subjects who left school prior to 1946 did not have the benefit of the well-equipped machine shop. They would be expected to have wanted more shop...even if only farm shop

TABLE XVIII

Kinds of Training Subjects Would Have Like to Have Had

<u>Training</u>	<u>Number of Times Mentioned</u>
More shop	12
More auto mechanics	5
More mathematics	5
More woodworking	1
More poultry	1
More field trips	1
More detail on some phases	1
More sheet metal work	1
More plumbing	1
More butchering	1
More farm economics	1
More welding	1
More mechanical drawing	1
More actual jobs	1
More science	1

as now offered.

Comments About the Course -- The subjects were quite sparing of comments, criticisms, or suggestions as Table XIX shows.

The writer recalls no subject saying he disliked the course. He does recall many who said that they enjoyed their years at the Academy and thought the vocational-

TABLE XIX

Comments Some Subjects Made About the Course

<u>Comments</u>	<u>Times Mentioned</u>
"Liked the course."	18
"Stress one phase each year.. no jumping around."	1
"Work closer with the University of Massachusetts."	1

agricultural course offered worthwhile training. The two suggestions shown in Table XIX were the only concrete statements made. The years had clouded over most memories; and many subjects realized that the course which they experienced was in many respects different from that given today.

CHAPTER V

RESTATEMENT OF PROBLEM, SUMMARY OF FINDINGS,
AND CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER V

RESTATEMENT OF PROBLEM, SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Restatement of Problem -- The writer, by following-up the former three- or four-year students of vocational agriculture at New Salem Academy, sought to determine what have been their adult occupational experiences, what parts of the program benefited them most in their opinions, and what suggestions, criticisms, or comments they wished to make.

Summary of Findings -- Attempts were made by mail, phone, or personal interview to contact one hundred and twenty-nine of the one hundred and forty-four former students at New Salem Academy who had taken three or four years of the vocational agriculture course during the period from 1921 to 1954.

It was possible to accumulate information on one hundred of these former students. Eighty-four had taken four years of vocational agriculture; and sixteen subjects had taken three years. Since there has been some increase in the enrollment during the thirty-three years, 1921 to 1954, school records showed that seventy-eight per cent of the subjects left the academy between 1941 and 1954; only twenty-two per cent left during the first half of the period: 1921 to 1940. The one hundred subjects attended the Academy from eleven towns. However, sixty-eight per

cent attended from the four towns: Orange, New Salem, Wendell, and Athol. It was interesting and educational to learn of their adult occupational experiences.

One of the significant findings of the study is that only eleven per cent of the subjects are now farming on a full-time basis..are earning, according to the definitions established for this study, more than one-half of their annual income by farming. They are either dairy farming or raising poultry except one subject who has an apple orchard. All are owners of their farms except one subject who is laboring on a dairy farm; and all but one of these owners are farming in the Orange-Erving-New Salem area.

Six per cent of the subjects are doing some part-time farming at the present time. All are doing this farming for themselves except one. All are located in the area from which students have been drawn except one who raises strawberries near his home in Phillipston.

Three subjects, representing three per cent of the subjects, are employed in related fields on a full-time basis. Only one, working as a woodsman, is located in the local area.

The remaining eighty-six subjects, representing eighty-six per cent of the total, are in other occupations including the fifteen who are in the armed services. Almost half, forty per cent, are working in factories performing a variety of tasks including those requiring special skills as well as those of a general unskilled nature. Fifty per

cent of these subjects now working in factories are employed in five concerns, two in Athol, two in Erving, and one in Orange.

Fourteen per cent of the subjects have engaged in full-time farming, three per cent more than the percentage now farming full-time. All were laborers except one. Eight of them worked outside of the local area. They labored for an average of 2.16 years. Ten of these thirteen former farm laborers worked on dairy farms.

Eight of the one hundred subjects have done some part-time farming on a relatively small scale. Six of the eight worked in the local area. None farmed part-time for more than four years. Four worked for others; three worked for themselves; and one did both.

While three subjects are now in related fields, eight others have been so employed in the past, all as laborers for an average of approximately two years.

All but three subjects are working in twenty different towns or cities in Western Massachusetts. Only four subjects are working in New Salem.

Farm shop was checked as most helpful more times than all other features of the course combined, although the subjects for the most part did not respond to this question; nor did all subjects experience the same course. Farm shop was also mentioned as the type of training the subjects would have liked more of.

There were almost no important comments, suggestions,

or criticisms of the course other than: "I enjoyed it." - as several subjects told the writer over the phone or during personal interviews.

Conclusions -- Assuming that the primary purpose of the New Salem Academy vocational agriculture course has been to provide training for agriculture as a vocation, this study shows that the course has not achieved this purpose. Too small a percentage of the former students have earned or are earning all or part of their incomes from agriculture.

Yet this is quite understandable and to be expected. Farms today are fewer and larger. They demand operators with advanced training in agriculture and management. A student whose education is limited to the secondary level would in all probability attain a higher economic status in a shorter period of time if he were to choose industry in preference to agriculture--especially is this true for the Athol-Orange-New Salem area.

It is interesting to note that few former students have strayed from their home areas. Possibly they have not felt themselves to be capable of adjusting to new environments, for there certainly are higher-income-level areas elsewhere--even in New England. Nevertheless, it remains that the benefits from the course have been derived by the area served by the Academy and its vocational agriculture department.

The subjects of this study have the distinction of

having completed three or four years of secondary school. Although none can claim any outstanding achievements or notable distinctions, they are gainfully employed in respectable occupations.

It is of some significance, too, that so many of the subjects commented favorably on their years at the Academy.

APPENDICES

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

INQUIRY FORM

APPENDIX I

New Salem, Mass.
February, 1956

To former New Salem Academy students:

If you will be so kind, you can help me complete a FOLLOW-UP STUDY of those students who took three or four years of the Vo-Ag Course at New Salem Academy.

NO NAMES ARE INVOLVED. Please be as frank and accurate as possible.

.....BEFORE ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS....it is important that you read these four definitions:

1. 'FARMING': The production of crops and/or livestock (or the like) primarily for sale.

(Includes products from farm wood-lots, maples, kennels, trout farms etc.)

2. 'RELATED FIELD': Any business or occupation directly connected with farming and requiring some knowledge of farming.

(Includes farm machinery sales, floral designing, milk-hauling etc.)

3. 'FULL-TIME': If more than 1/2 of the annual income is earned therefrom.

4. 'PART-TIME': If less than 1/2 of the annual income is earned therefrom.

(For your information, the main findings may be published in the Springfield Union and the Greenfield Recorder in May.

Let me thank you now for the assistance I know you will give me.

Sincerely,

William Cary
New Salem, Mass.

APPENDIX II

<u>Are you NOW in:</u>	<u>What Kind?</u>	<u>What Position?</u>	<u>Where?</u>
farming full-time?			
farming part-time?			
a related field?			
another occupation?			

<u>HAVE YOU EVER BEEN:</u>	<u>Full time</u>	<u>Part time</u>	<u># of years</u>	<u>Where?</u>	<u>Type of farm or work</u>
a <u>farm laborer</u>?	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
a <u>farm owner</u>?	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
operator of the <u>family farm</u>?	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
employed as a <u>farm manager</u>?	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
engaged in a RELATED FIELD?	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
engaged in ANOTHER OCCUPATION:	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

EDUCATION beyond the Academy.....

Dates of MILITARY SERVICE: Entered.....Discharged.....Highest rank held.....

What phases of your Vo-AG training have proved most helpful?

 Farm shop...F.F.A.Program...Supervision of instruction...

 Productive projects...Summer placement...

What training did you NOT receive that you would have liked?

.....

.....

Comments:

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