

THE ECONOMICS OF A SMALL SOUTHERN TOWN

by

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A DISSERTATION

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PREFACE

This work is concerned with the social and economic problems of the small West Tennessee town of Dresden and the rural area it serves as county seat. The economic blight threatening the area is not unique, for many of the rural communities of the South and in other sections of the nation are beset with problems caused by chronic long-run unemployment and under employment among its people. The steady erosion of social capital caused partially by the sharp rate of out-migration of the more selective people is also a common problem.

Why has this work been undertaken? There are three classifications of readers who may have some interest in this study. Professional economists and sociologists, local and state authorities interested in the welfare of rural counties and towns, and students interested in one of the current economic problems in our society--the inflexibilities inherent in a one-industry economy, and particularly with the painful adjustments accompanying dynamic change in the character of the principal industry. This

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study does not explain how to cope with these inherent inflexibilities. Neither are painless readjustment procedures spelled out. The objective of the study is to present the material simply and logically and let the reader decide whether the gravity of the problems confronting rural towns and counties warrent changes in public policy.

II

In the course of writing a dissertation one becomes indebted to many persons who have assisted immeasurably in the intellectual development of the writer. Appreciation is especially due to Doctors Paul W. Paustian and Paul M. Gregory, each a professor of economics at the University of Alabama. During the years in which this work was in the making, each gave unstintingly of his time and energy in assisting whenever called upon and in encouraging the writer when he began to lag in the performance of his duties.

The valuable assistance rendered by Mrs. Karen Muse in typing numerous manuscripts over a long time period is indeed appreciated. Finally, the gratitude of the writer is expressed to members of the family for enduring patiently the sacrifices associated with the successful completion of this project.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Theoretically, in a free society the choice of where to live and earn a living exists, but forces other than an affinity for the home area often dictate where the living will be earned. The quest for a better standard of living has traditionally served as an incentive for man to surrender many things he may cherish. The likelihood of obtaining a job, of becoming an owner of material goods, and advancing in economic and social status have frequently, but painfully, been exchanged for the pleasures associated with living in familiar surroundings. Disadvantageous to the deserted area is the unpleasant circumstances that the more able people, intellectually or physically, are the first to seek opportunity in an alien environment.

In an unbalanced society characterized by a surplus of labor and shortages of capital and other resources, migration of a portion of the people to more prosperous areas is the only short-run solution. If heavy out migration is temporary in nature, it merely serves as an adjust-

ment factor and drops appreciably as the supply of labor and other resources become more balanced. But an increasing rate of migration over long periods of time seems indicative of serious economic maladjustments in the area being deserted. When a substantial portion of the migrants change from the unskilled category to young, literate, educable people, repercussions are certain to occur in the abandoned areas. Once substantial efforts to achieve a semblance of balance in capital and labor are made, a serious shortage is likely to arise, particularly in the human capital sector and in social capital assets. In periods of rapid change in technology this imbalance becomes most acute as the presence of numbers of unskilled workers lose the attraction once held.

Extreme difficulty in financing and supporting public services, good public schools, adequate roads, streets, and sanitary facilities appears characteristic of areas incurring severe long run out migration and substantial underemployment and unemployment among the remaining people. Heavy social costs are incident to doing without, but heavy money costs must be absorbed by a declining population when replacing depreciated assets or constructing new ones becomes essential.

Since the county of Weakley was formed, the inhabitants of the little county seat town of Dresden, Tennessee, have been conservative, agrarian minded people. They were not prosperous during the nineteenth and early years of the twentieth century, but their needs were simple. The strenuous life of hard-working rural people had been the only experience of most of the adults of the town and county. However, their sons and daughters, propertyless, possessing a minimum of formal education, but owners of a priceless asset, youth, began a search for a more rewarding life. Migration away from the county began during the first decade of the twentieth century, gained momentum during the second and third decades and increased in intensity immediately after the depression years of the thirties. After World War II, older, more mature adults joined the stream of restless young people deserting the farms. A few were absorbed in the small towns, but a majority were forced out of the county and the state.

The awakening was slow but the effect of economic stagnation stirred a few local leaders in commerce and government into action. Diversification in agriculture in Weakley County was tried but this effort failed to provide jobs and income sufficient to solve the downward trend in

employment and income. In the early nineteen twenties supplementary industry was sought as an outlet for a large underemployed group of willing, unskilled Dresden area workers, but success was not achieved until the waning years of the nineteen forties. Resistance of a hard core of the upper strata of Dresden society together with a shortage of capital were factors in the failures that ensued.

Public education beyond a bare minimum was unknown in the county until the second decade of the twentieth century. Few of the rural people of the area had experienced any need for formal training. Farming was hard, back-breaking work, and a man's capacity to do a large amount of physical labor tended to place him in a highly respected position in this rural society. When the typical citizen came into contact with an "educated man" an atmosphere of suspicion rather than envy prevailed.

Slowly, the value of secondary and advanced formal education began to influence comparatively affluent rural parents into training their children for more rewarding careers. In the early years, little local capital was available for schools and little was expended prior to the beginning of a small inflow from state government sources. Capital needed to finance the construction of streets,

health and sanitary facilities, public library, recreational facilities, and fire and police protection was not available. For years the people of Dresden did without these public conveniences. Finally, with the assistance of state and federal funds, a minimum supply of social capital assets became available.

Although the youth of the area had access to better educational facilities by the beginning of the fourth decade of the current century, jobs continued in short supply. With better training, they were unwilling to return to the drudgery of following a mule-drawn plough. The strenuous effort involved in setting, cultivating, cutting, and storing tobacco had lost its appeal, and long months virtually without income became unbearable. Regardless of reluctance to break family ties, to learn a new vocation, and to move into a new environment, thousands left to seek a better life.

The previous paragraphs serve as background material for an introduction of the purpose and scope of this work. The principal thesis in the study centers around the hypothesis that the after effects of the social costs incurred as a result of shortages in social capital assets and under maintenance and utilization of existing assets throughout

the twentieth century history of Weakley County and the county-seat town of Dresden have been extremely serious. Furthermore, these costs have occurred as a result of losses of ordinary labor and especially in human capital over a long time period.¹ The principal reason for the drain in numbers of better trained youth and mature adults was an underappreciation of the subsequent severity of these losses on the part of a substantial portion of the upper strata of a rural society. When younger, more progressive leadership became interested in an industrially diversified economy, primary emphasis was laid on securing repetitive, virtually unskilled jobs for the mass of semi-literate labor then existing in the county. Although shortages of capital and lack of mineral resources were a hindrance, practically no attention was given the need of jobs for the ambitious, more literate element of the population. The inevitable

¹Colberg distinguished between classes of labor, referring specifically to the capital invested in educating the highly trained. People possessing special skills attained through the educative process were classified as human capital. The author thought mainly in terms of skills attained through the acquisition of a college degree. In this study a distinction is made between people having at least a secondary education and those with less.

Marshall A. Colberg, "Human Capital as a Southern Resource," The Southern Economic Journal (January, 1963), pp. 157-166.

result was emigration of a major portion of the people possessing attributes vital to the future viability of the local economy. The loss has been reflected in shortages and virtual decay in the social assets needed to afford residents of the county a mode of living comparable to the customary way of life in more fortunate areas and has hindered economic development of outlying areas of the country, in Dresden, and in each of the four remaining incorporated towns. The possibility of attrition in human and social capital assets in rural areas resulting from a high rate of out migration of the more selective people was recognized by Nicholls in the following statement.

The persistence of the South's position as a low income region has made absolutely clear that moving people out will rarely solve the local economic problems unless, at the same time, sufficient capital and managerial assistance also move in. In southern rural areas which fail to attract industry, even large-scale out migration may lead to social disorganization and selective deterioration of the residual population.²

The agricultural revolution began in full force in the county during the latter part of the decade of the forties. It gained full momentum during the succeeding decade with almost mass migration the end result.

²William H. Nicholls, Southern Tradition and Regional Progress (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960), p. 12.

Apparently, the factors of production, labor and capital, approximated a balance near the turn of the century. Since that time, deficiencies in capital and natural resources in respect to ordinary labor have resulted in a surplus of the latter resource with subsequent large scale flight from the area. The social cost involved in the movement of people away from the area has indeed been heavy, and it is questionable that the small increase in the real income of the families remaining in the county has fully compensated for these costs. Beveridge was of the opinion that

It is easier for men and women to change their occupation and it is much easier for boys and girls to choose their first occupations, with reference to the demand in particular industries, than it is for workpeople of any age to move their place of residence. For some people age and family ties make movement almost impracticable. Leaving home in pursuit of new occupations is often a tonic in individual cases, but it is poison if taken in large quantities, involving destruction of communities.³

Relevant source material concerning the economic and social problems of the people living in or near the county-seat town of Dresden during the early nineteenth century was somewhat sparse. For a substantial portion of the thirty-eight year interval between the founding of the

³William H. Beveridge, Full Employment in a Free Society (W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1945), p. 25.

county and town and the beginning of the Civil War, the problem of wresting a living from a modestly productive soil was the most pressing one. In Chapter II a brief reference is offered relative to the beginning of the county and county-seat town; of the early settlers, and of a growing native population supplemented by a constant stream of immigration from the Appalachian area of North Carolina and Tennessee. The effect on the economy of Dresden resulting from the military defeat of the South is also discussed in this chapter.

The struggle for agricultural diversification, for more extensive markets and higher prices for farm products is considered in Chapter III.

Primitive living conditions were characteristic of the Dresden area for many years. The people were habitually accustomed to a penurious life of toil and self denial. Indeed, they awakened slowly to the need for adequate rural roads, paved streets, schools, and other facilities. The slow, agonizing, often unfruitful experience of a small number of community leaders as they endeavored to procure these facilities is discussed in Chapter IV.

The economic shock accompanying an unexpected crash of a respected financial institution, followed a few years

later by a general depression and additional eroding of the meagre capital base of the little community is considered in Chapter V. In Chapter VI a brief examination of the economic activities of a number of small agriculturally-oriented firms existing in the town during the first half of the current century is made along with a discussion of the failures encountered in efforts to entice a comparatively large labor-oriented firm to the town.

Chapters VII and VIII are concerned with the establishment of two manufacturing plants in Dresden during the waning years of the 1940's. The role of the labor union in a rural environment is discussed in Chapter IX. In Chapter X, an image of a small-town entrepreneur is pictured, along with the quantitative size of the income per worker in non farm employment in the Dresden area and the comparative gross income in 1960 of firms engaged in the retail and wholesale segment of the economy of the town.

The inanimate resources of Weakley County are considered in Chapter XI. The characteristics of the population of the county and town are also discussed along with an analysis of expected short-run changes in the labor force during the decade of the sixties.

In view of the limited economic opportunities in

the area, where do the young high school and college graduates settle after leaving school? How do they earn a living? What is the comparative individual and family income of young people leaving the area in comparison to the income of the group remaining behind? Does the economic and educational background of the parent have any influence of where the child may choose to live? These are among the questions discussed in Chapter XII.

In Chapter XIII the economy of Weakley County during the decade of the 1950's is examined. A comparison with the state and nation of the number of workers employed in various types of economic activity is offered together with an evaluation of the effect of a declining population base on the aggregate consumption of consumer goods offered for sale by Weakley County entrepreneurs.

Included in the final chapter are a rather extensive summary of the preceding chapters together with several concluding remarks.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF WEAKLEY COUNTY AND DRESDEN, TENNESSEE

Weakley County

Weakley County, Tennessee, is situated on the western slope of the Plateau of West Tennessee, and is bounded on the east and north by Kentucky. It has an area of 700 square miles and is drained by the middle, north and south forks of the Obion River.

The county of Weakley was created by an act of the Legislature on October 21, 1823. The act provided that a new county by that name should be established within the following bounds: Beginning at the northwest corner of Henry County, Tennessee, running west with the state line to a point four miles west of the northwest corner of range two, fractional section 10, in the thirteenth district; then south to the fourth sectional line in the same district running parallel with the range line. The line to run east with the fourth sectional line to the second range line in

the twelfth surveyor's district.¹

The county, established from lands ceded by the Chickasaw Indians, was named for Colonel Robert Weakley, who was at that time speaker of the state Senate. Colonel Weakley had been a member of the North Carolina Convention that ratified the United States Constitution. After migrating to Tennessee, he was in 1796 elected to the Tennessee Legislature as a representative. Weakley served as a colonel during the Indian wars in Middle Tennessee after which he was elected to the national House of Representatives, serving from 1809 to 1811. From 1823 to 1825, he served in the state Senate and was a member of the State Constitutional Convention in 1834.²

The first settlers in Weakley County were Reuben Edmonston and John Bradshaw. They located in 1819 on Mud Creek and built the first log cabin in the county. The next settlers in the Bradshaw neighborhood were Isaac H. Ward and William Miles, who came in 1822 and 1823, respectively. The families of Dudley Glass, Sr., Levi Clark and Israel Jones followed soon after.³

²Weston A. Goodspeed, History of Tennessee (West Tennessee Edition; Nashville: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1887), p. 832.

³Ibid., p. 834.

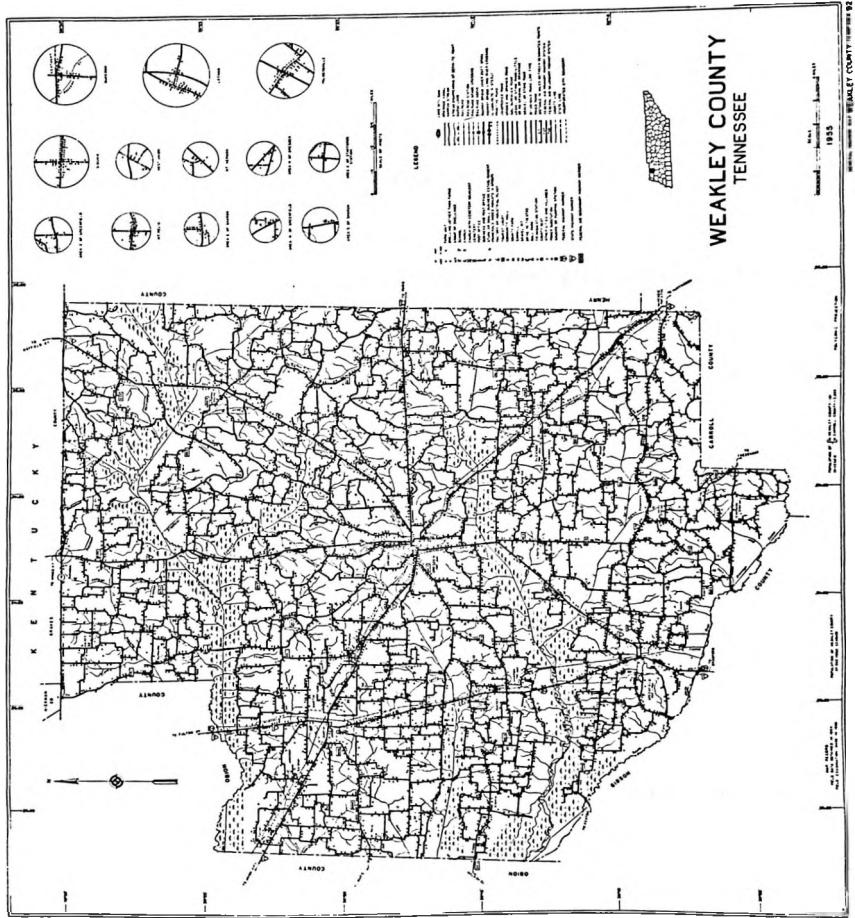


Figure 1--Map of Weakley County, Tennessee

Source: Department of Conservation, Division of Geology,
State of Tennessee.

Dresden, Tennessee, 1824-1890

Dresden, the county seat of Weakley County, lies almost in the center of the county. In 1824, John Terrell donated thirty-nine acres of land for the site of Dresden. The only consideration expressed in the deed was a stipulation that the lands thus conveyed should be the site of the county seat.

The organization of the county was completed early in 1825, and the town of Dresden was surveyed and plotted so as to contain a public square and ninety lots. A public sale of the lots took place in April of that year, and the entire amount of revenue derived from the sale was \$5,742. This money was applied to the construction of public buildings.

The first settlers in and around Dresden were John Terrell, Perry Vincent, Dr. Jubilee Rogers, Benjamin Bon-durant, Richard Porter, Jepetha and Alfred Gardner, Robert Powell, Nelson Nailing, Vincent Rust, Thomas Parham, John Reavis, and Samuel Warner. The town was named Dresden in honor of the father of Samuel Warner, who was born in Dresden, Germany.

During the formative years of the little community, merchants began to establish stores in order to serve the

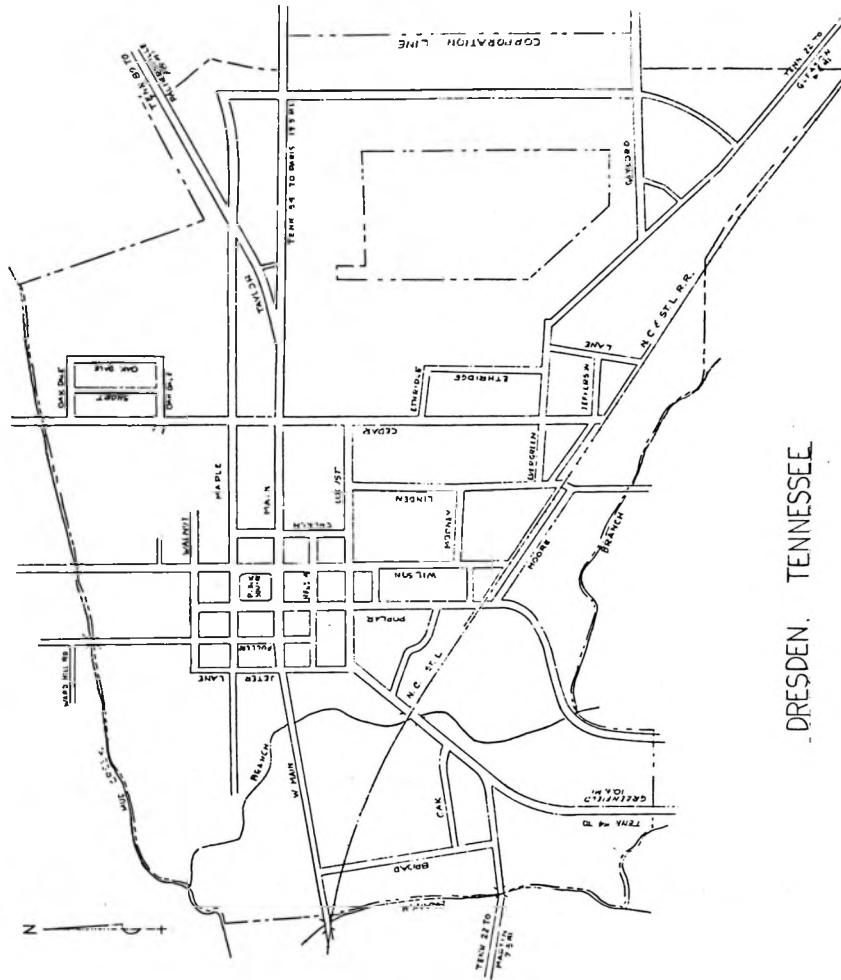


Figure 2--Map of Dresden, Tennessee

Source: City of Dresden, Tennessee.

needs of the small number of people remaining in the town.⁴

After the war only three of the fifteen firms operating prior to the conflict reopened under the same management. Several of the former entrepreneurs began business again with new partners, and a few names unfamiliar in Dresden's commercial history were placed over the doors of business houses. For example, J. J. Epstein, Henry Dreyfuss, J. A. Gilchrest, J. A. Lumpkin, L. B. Cochran, J. M. Meadows, and E. E. Tansil began careers in the business field during the immediate post-war years. A total of nineteen retail firms existed in Dresden within a few years after the close of hostilities, but business conditions were not conducive to profit making, and by 1887 only ten of the nineteen remained.

During the early commercial history of the town, Benjamin Bondurant, Roger Powell, and Benjamin Barham pioneered the inn-keeping business. By the year 1887, two hotels were advertised in the town newspaper as up-to-date, modern hostels. The Scott Hotel and the Hampton House, however, were destined to be rather short lived.

The early banking history of the town is rather

⁴Ibid., p. 838.

sparse. The Bank of America did business in the community for about three years during the decade of the fifties. It was not until 1886 that branches of the Bank of Henry and Bank of Martin were formed. In 1887, the Weakley County Bank was chartered, and in 1890 the Bank of Dresden was organized. In the meantime, the two branch banks were closed.

In 1838, the first newspaper in Dresden and Weakley County was formed. Jesse Leigh edited The Tennessee Patriot throughout the decade of the forties. Somers and Guinn rechristened the paper, calling it the Dresden Spy, and operated throughout the remaining pre-war years. The Spy closed during the war and in 1867 was replaced by the Gossiper. The name of the latter paper was changed to the Dresden Democrat by a new set of owners in 1876. New management took over the paper in 1882, and the Dresden Enterprise, later called the Dresden Enterprise and Sharon Tribune began distributing an uninterrupted flow of sheets to subscribers throughout the county. One owner published the paper for approximately a half century, divesting himself of ownership only when advancing years dictated a change.

Dresden was incorporated in 1827. It was reincorporated in 1845, and again in 1869. Its charter was finally repealed in 1885 due to the efforts of its zealous

prohibitionists who, determined to rid the town of alcohol, took advantage of the four-mile law which permitted any non-incorporated community lying within four miles of a school house to abolish the sale of intoxicating beverages. Until 1901, when the present charter of incorporation was granted to the city of Dresden, the town was without street maintenance, police protection, or a local government of any kind.⁵

Table 1 shows the population of Weakley County, of the county-seat town, and the per cent change between census dates for the years 1830 through 1860. Paradoxically, the number of inhabitants of Dresden in 1860 exceeded the population of the town 60 years later, and the population of the county in 1880 was larger than the number residing in the county eight decades later.

During the civil war years and for several years thereafter, the population of the town dwindled. For example, in 1870 the number of inhabitants residing in the town was less than one-half the 1860 figure and by 1880 had declined an additional 11.5 per cent.

The county population doubled during the decade of

⁵ Ibid., p. 839.

TABLE 1.--Population of Dresden and Weakley County with Per Cent Change by Decade--Census Periods 1830-1860, Inclusive

Year	Population Dresden	Per Cent Change	Population Weakley County	Per Cent Change
1830	N.A.*	.....	4,797	+105.8
1840	N.A.*	.....	9,870	+ 48.0
1850	633	+19.1	14,608	+ 24.7
1860	754	-52.9	18,216	+ 13.7
1870	355	-11.5	20,719	+ 18.4
1880	314	+33.8	24,538	+ 18.0
1890	420	+26.2	28,955	+ 12.4
1900	530	+33.6	32,546	- 1.9
1910	708	+47.9	31,929	- 2.7
1920	1,047	00.0	31,053	- 5.8
1930	1,047	+ 6.5	29,262	+ .8
1940	1,175	+35.3	29,498	- 5.3
1950	1,509	+ .06	27,962	- 13.4
1960	1,510		24,227	

*N.A. Not Available

Source: United States Department of Commerce,
 Bureau of the Census, Censuses of the United States, 1840-
 1960, Population Statistics.

the eighteen thirties as settlers poured into the new lands ceded by the Chickasaw Indians. In the forties, however, the growth rate increased at a decreasing rate and continued in this manner until the decade of the seventies.

Particularly noteworthy was the population trend during the war years. At the approach of the Civil War a majority of the people were opposed to secession but, after the war became an actuality, the majority sympathized with the Southern cause. A minority, however, remained steadfast to the Union. The number of Weakley County fighting men furnished the Confederate Army was approximately 1,100, or eleven companies of troops. Four companies, of some 100 men each, participated actively on the side of the North. After the war terminated, many of the natives who donned the blue failed to return to the county, and numerous families moved away from the county into the adjoining states of Kentucky, Missouri, and Illinois.⁶

The effect of the war on the little town of Dresden was deadening. As noted previously, with the exception of one firm, all merchants in the town closed during the war years. Although several reopened at the end of the conflict, the stagnant condition of commerce in the area

⁶Ibid., pp. 837-838.

resulted in numerous firms going out of business, and by 1887 the number of merchants had declined by nearly one-half.

Approximately sixty years elapsed before the number of residents in Dresden equaled the pre-civil-war year of 1860; however, the number of inhabitants in the county continued to increase until the turn of the century. Apparently, the growth in the county population reached a peak near the year 1900 and, with the exception of the static decade of the thirties, declined steadily throughout the twentieth century.

In Chapter X a more comprehensive discussion of the human resources in the county and town of Dresden is offered, along with an analysis of the population complex by age groups for the thirty year period ending in 1960.

CHAPTER III

AGRICULTURE AND TIMBER INDUSTRIES

Tobacco

Tobacco was the principal cash crop in Weakley County for many decades. As a result, merchants of Dresden and other county towns depended upon tobacco as the major source of customer income. Dresden possessed two tobacco buying houses where tobacco was priced and graded. At the height of the dark fired tobacco marketing season, which generally lasted from three to five months, a total of 75 to 100 people were employed by the two houses.¹

The prevailing buying method at the turn of the century was to send representatives of the two local houses to the individual farmer where the deal was consummated, with delivery to be made at a later date. Most of the tobacco purchased by the Dresden firms was sold to Italian buyers with very little of the Weakley County tobacco being

¹The Dresden Enterprise, April 29, 1904, and March 10, 1916.

used for domestic purposes during this period.²

Dresden was the focal point for Weakley County growers of the weed. Several marketing cooperative movements had their origin in the city. In 1903, the Weakley County Tobacco Growers Association was organized in Dresden with the express purpose of prevailing on growers to market their tobacco through the association. Marketing of the weed was in such a chaotic state at this time that many crops were unsold when planting season for a new crop occurred.³

The early years of World War I. were particularly difficult ones for the growers in the Dresden area and throughout the entire black patch. Deliveries to markets in Europe had practically come to a standstill and the domestic market was not prepared to absorb the large crop.⁴

With the entry of the United States into the war and the subsequent opening of the sea lanes, the demand for dark fired tobacco was at an all time peak in 1918. The Weakley County crop was small due to the low prevailing

² Ibid., March 18, 1904.

³ Ibid., April 6, 1903.

⁴ Ibid., February 11, 1916.

prices of eight cents per pound average in 1916 and the following year. As a result, growers were offered and many declined an average of fifteen cents per pound in 1918.⁵

There were many efforts made to unionize the growers into selling associations from the end of the nineteenth century until the parity program of the U. S. Agricultural Department was functioning in the early 1940's. The Weakley County Growers Association floundered and died as a result of a lack of operating funds and interest on the part of the growers. In 1916, The Voluntary Tobacco Growers Association was formed. By the end of the second year of its existence it held over 2,000,000 pounds of tobacco and was demanding a price in excess of fifteen cents per pound. As a prerequisite to the formation of this association, two-thirds of the Weakley County farmers had to pledge their crops to the association.

High tobacco prices in 1919 resulted in an over-production of the weed in 1920. Growers in the Dresden area bulked down their tobacco and refused to sell at the prevailing price of ten cents per pound. Many farmers were

⁵ Ibid., March 1, 1918.

forced to seek loans of the Dresden banks in order to meet part of their current accounts at the stores. Merchants were hard hit and business was at a virtual standstill. Several merchants and businessmen ran advertisements in the local newspaper urging their farmer friends to settle their accounts. Some of the merchants resorted to sending statements to debtors, a procedure rarely used by rural merchants.

The low prices resulted in the demise of The Voluntary Tobacco Association. Tobacco held by the association was sold at the market price after which the organization became defunct. Efforts, however, were made to revive the Weakley County Growers Association in the summer of 1920. A vigorous campaign was waged with meeting after meeting called in Dresden with the result that 2,791 acres were pledged to the association during the 1921-22 years. The new association, however, met with little success, as part of the 1920 crop was still unsold when the 1921 crop was ready for the market. Even with low prices and still unsold tobacco in the hands of farmers and the association, a bumper crop was planted in the Dresden area in 1922. Farmers frantically sought any new method of marketing their tobacco which might bring relief. Few of them

realized that demand and supply were unbalanced. Instead the "tobacco trust" was blamed for the woeful condition of the market.

In 1922 the Dark Tobacco Cooperative Marketing Association was formed in Louisville, Kentucky. This organization, formed by Judge R. W. Bingham of Louisville was set up principally to market all of the dark fired tobacco grown in Kentucky and Tennessee. J. L. Holbrook, editor of the Dresden newspaper, was made a member of the organization committee.⁶

The new association employed Aaron Sapiro, a national marketing expert, to introduce to the farmers of the "black patch" the new marketing association. On Wednesday, October 4, 1922, Sapiro came to Dresden where he reportedly captivated and conquered his audience of tobacco growers. The marketing plan, as explained by Sapiro, required two-thirds of the growers to pledge their crops to the association for five years. The association was to arrange warehouse facilities--the Ezell house in Dresden was later purchased by the association--and the growers were to be notified when to deliver their crops. After Sapiro's visit

⁶ Ibid., April 28, 1922.

to Dresden, the businessmen arranged a banquet on the Thursday evening preceding the day of the big drive to obtain pledges to the association of farmers in the Dresden area. All places of business in Dresden closed on Friday, October 13, 1922, and the merchants and their employees went forth into the farming area of Dresden to obtain pledges to the association.⁷

The new association, which was launched with much fanfare and hope, failed to stabilize the dark tobacco market, and in 1925 the association released its members from their contracts to permit the association to handle their tobacco. This marked the beginning of the demise of the association.⁸

In 1926 the end of the association became final when seventy-one Weakley Countians brought suit against the association charging that payment for their 1922, 1923, and 1924 crops had been withheld. The suit further alleged that the association owed approximately \$1,000,000 on its warehouse properties and that it had already deducted three-fifths of a cent per pound of tobacco to apply on the pur-

⁷ Ibid., April 28, 1922.

⁸ Ibid., October 16, 1925.

chase of warehouses, many of which were idle. It was also charged that the association had an accumulation of 57,000,000 pounds of tobacco on hand which was a menace to the market and price of dark tobacco.⁹

After the death of the Dark Tobacco Cooperative Marketing Association the quantity of tobacco grown in Weakley County declined appreciably. The weed which, even in poor years, brought as much as \$1,500,000 annually into the pockets of growers, became a secondary crop by the end of the 1920's. In 1919 there were 14,367 acres of tobacco raised in the county yielding 11,822,160 pounds of tobacco or approximately 800 pounds per acre. In 1924 there were 9,529 acres raised with a yield of 7,281,095 pounds, or 764 pounds per acre. By 1929, only 3,603 acres were raised, yielding 3,449,642 pounds, or approximately 960 pounds per acre.¹⁰

During the depressed thirties, farmers of the Dresden area sold tobacco domestically and abroad by mail. Truck loads of pouches filled with tobacco left the post office daily. As a result of this activity, the Dresden

⁹ Ibid., March 19, 1926.

¹⁰ Ibid., January 15, 1932.

Post Office showed an increased volume of business in 1931 compared to 1930. Farmers in the area received an average of 25 cents per pound for tobacco delivered by mail during this period compared to the price of five cents in the market place.¹¹

Tobacco did not recover its status as a major crop in the county after price support was declared by the various governmental laws controlling acreage planted. The soil of Weakley County was not the type needed to grow quality tobacco. As a result, dairying and animal enterprises gradually became the chief source of farm cash income.

Strawberries

County and Dresden area farmers first began the growing of strawberries as a commercial crop at the turn of the century. In 1913 the Dresden Berry Grower's Association was organized in the county-seat, the first organization of its kind in the county. Tobacco, for years the chief commercial crop in the county, had hit upon lean, low-price years during this period. As a result, newspaper editorial writers and civic clubs in Dresden constantly worked toward a more balanced agricultural economy in the

¹¹Ibid., February 12, 1932.

area with income available more than one season of the
¹²
year.

The season of 1916 was the most bountiful in strawber-
ries experienced in the county. In the Dresden area
alone, twenty-five railroad cars of strawberries were shipped
to markets in the midwest. A total of 192 cars were shipped
in the county averaging \$1.32 per crate for a twenty-four
quart crate. The sum brought into the county as a result
of this activity amounted to \$177,000.¹³

Farmers were inclined to grow strawberries only
after failures with the three principal cash crops, tobacco,
cotton and sweet potatoes. As a result, the berry growers'
organization flourished for a year or so and then became in-
active as cotton, potato and tobacco prices improved.¹⁴

The Agricultural Committee of the Dresden Chamber
of Commerce sponsored a strawberry movement for Dresden and
vicinity periodically as interest in the crop waned. The
Dresden merchants were alert to the sales possibilities
during May and June as cash flowed into the hands of pickers

¹² Ibid., March 14, 1913

¹³ Ibid., May 26, 1916.

¹⁴ Ibid., February 20, 1931.

and growers.

Shipment of the berries was a problem to the Dresden grower. Before the advent of commercial trucks it was difficult to secure refrigerated cars from the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway. As a result, the berries were often in a spoiled condition upon reaching their destination. In May 1933, the growers of the Dresden community took a forward step, forming a Shipper's Association. This decision meant that the ten-mile haul to Sharon, Tennessee, where refrigerator cars were made available by the Illinois Central Railroad, could be dispensed with. Shortly thereafter a survey by the Agricultural Committee of the Chamber of Commerce showed 175 acres of strawberries in cultivation within a radius of four miles of Dresden.¹⁵

By the spring of 1935 the strawberry crop was bringing in to growers in Weakley County the sum of \$500,000 annually. In that year, 24,000 crates were shipped from Dresden by rail and truck, averaging two dollars per crate. Sharon, the largest shipping point in the county, forwarded 100,000 crates to the market, bringing into that community approximately \$200,000.¹⁶

¹⁵Ibid., May 5, 1933.

¹⁶Ibid., May 24, 1935.

Good growing seasons, however, were rare. Heavy rains and cold springs often retarded the crop and led to poor quantity and quality yields. Growers easily became discouraged. For example, the 1939 yield was poor and the price high. As a result, in the spring of 1940 the Dresden Chamber of Commerce put on a drive for 500 acres of strawberries in the Dresden vicinity. The drive failed as only 100 acres were planted.¹⁷ During World War II few strawberries were raised as most of the land in the county was devoted to food and feed crops, and interest in strawberries continued to wane after the war years.

Sweet Potatoes

For several years the sweet potato industry was quite profitable. Gleason, lying nine miles to the north of Dresden, was the principal growing area in the county for years. The market for the Gleason Nancy Halls was extensive in the north and northwestern part of the United States.¹⁸ In 1919, 5,957 acres of potatoes were grown in Weakley County, yielding a total of 727,766

¹⁷ Ibid., February 16, 1940.

¹⁸ Ibid., February 9, 1917.

bushels. Ten years later approximately 11,998 acres were harvested, yielding a total of 1,266,310 bushels, and by 1933 Weakley County ranked second in sweet potatoes with only Accomac County of Virginia exceeding the county in the production of sweet potatoes.¹⁹

In September, 1937, the first Sweet Potato Festival was held in Dresden, the first of its kind held in the nation. Political dignataries from middle and western Tennessee attended the event. The festival continued for two years but lack of interest together with a deteriorating potato market resulted in the festival being cancelled.²⁰

The potato growers in the area failed to maintain a high quality product. As a result, the Nancy Hall sweet potato grown in the county deteriorated to such an extent that there was scarcely a market for it. Efforts were made to revive interest in the growing of the crop through county wide meetings and demonstrations. However, the potato industry failed to recover after World War II to the degree experienced in the latter part of the 1920's and the succeeding decade.

¹⁹Ibid., November 10, 1933.

²⁰Ibid., August 27, 1937.

Green-Wrap Tomatoes

Farm prices of cotton, sweet potatoes and tobacco were so depressed in the middle part of the 1920's that the businessmen of Dresden, ever alert to the possibilities of a new cash crop for the area, developed the idea of growing green tomatoes for the market. The success of the neighboring county of Gibson with tomatoes was the spark that set off the drive.

Members of the Exchange Club of Dresden met on the night of January 27, 1926, and went on record as unanimously approving the suggestion that the club and the businessmen of Dresden guarantee the salary of an experienced tomato grower to come to Dresden and superintend the growing of the crop. Farmers were asked to set at least eighty acres in the Dresden vicinity and to allow five cents on each crate toward the salary of the supervisor. In the event of a crop failure, the Exchange Club and other businessmen were to pay that portion of the supervisor's salary not accounted for by the five cent tax.²¹

The proposal was approved by the farmers of the area and pledges to plant 100 acres were obtained. The

²¹ Ibid., January 29, 1926.

superintendent took charge immediately, visiting farms and holding meetings in the vicinity of Dresden, but adverse weather conditions and a depressed market led to failure of the enterprise. Many farmers failed to receive in return the amount invested in plant beds and labor.

An effort was made to revive interest in the crop in 1929. Members of the new Dresden Commercial Club, which succeeded the defunct Exchange Club, canvassed the farmers in the Dresden area. The committee members pointed out that farmers in neighboring Gibson County had earned a gross of \$2,000,000 from the tomato crop in 1928, but advice to continue in the tomato business fell on deaf ears. Invariably the committee heard the remark, "We tried tomatoes three years ago and lost our very socks. No more tomatoes for us."

The Dresden area farmers were easily discouraged. Truck farming had proven a success in other sections of the county and in neighboring counties. One disaster, however, was all that was necessary to discourage the Dresden area growers as a third attempt to revive interest in the growing of tomatoes failed in 1936.²²

²² Ibid., November 22, 1936.

Cotton

Although the Eighth Census of the United States showed a total of 4,213 Negro slaves in Weakley County in 1860, commercial cotton farming, an enterprise normally associated with large numbers of workers, was not practiced extensively during the nineteenth century. For example, only forty-two bales of cotton, average weight 400 pounds, were marketed in 1860. In comparison, approximately six million pounds of tobacco were sold in the same year.²³

In the twentieth century the peak acre load occurred in 1920 when 22,621 acres were planted to cotton. Five years later only 9,720 acres were planted, with a mean yield of 200 pounds per acre. Low yields per acre were characteristic, primarily because of low quality soil and little use of soil nutrients.²⁴

Before the advent of agricultural subsidy payments by the Federal Government, marketing of cotton at a price above the cost of production posed an immense problem.

²³U. S. Bureau of the Census, United States Census of Agriculture (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1864), pp. 137-239.

²⁴The Dresden Enterprise, August 14, 1925.

Inadequate marketing outlets were blamed for the low prices, and in 1922 the cotton growers joined together in the Cotton Growers Cooperative Marketing Association, an organization set up along the same principles as the Dark Tobacco Cooperative Marketing Association. In fact, Aaron Sapiro, the leader of the tobacco cooperative movement, drew the contract for the cotton growers association.²⁵

In February 1923, a representative of the cotton association arrived in Dresden spending two months traveling throughout the county enlisting pledges to join the organization. Weakley County farmers subscribed to a quota of 4,000 acres and the new marketing association began handling cotton in the fall of 1923, but the organization failed to increase the price of cotton and ceased to exist within a year.

Dresden was at one time an important center for the ginning of cotton. In 1902 the Fuller Gin purchased the interest of the Boyd Brothers and was still in operation in 1922 when the Dresden businessmen enabled a new firm to move into the town through the process of furnishing the needed capital. In 1924 approximately twelve rail-

²⁵ Ibid., December 15, 1922.

road cars of cotton and ten cars of cotton seed were shipped from the Dresden depot, but after the peak 1929 season, the number of cars shipped declined steadily. After World War II, cotton production continued to decline with the result that one of the gins ceased operations.²⁶

Livestock

The livestock industry, particularly hog production, was insignificant in the county until World War I when the President and Congress made an especial appeal to farmers to raise more livestock. At a meeting at the courthouse in Dresden on January 25, 1918, the following resolution was firmly adopted.²⁷

We the citizens of Weakley County, Tennessee, in meeting assembled for the purpose of devising plans for promoting the welfare of our country and our allies in our great struggle for democratic supremacy, do therefore

Resolve, that we fully indorse the policy of our United States and State Food Administration and will do all in our power to conserve our present food supply and produce greater supply during the coming year.

Resolved, that we indorse the policy of Governor Rye in his efforts to promote the hog industry in our state and county and will give our united efforts to promote this cause.

²⁶ Ibid., November 8, 1929.

²⁷ Ibid., February 1, 1918.

Resolved, that we lend our assistance in taking a survey of the breeding stock of the county that is for sale and lend assistance to those desiring to buy same.

Resolved, that we accept the offer of our bankers to give encouragement along this line and further aid this move by lending money at a reasonable rate to those who should desire assistance in this matter.

Resolved, that we urge upon every man in town and county who does not own a hog, to secure and grow a few pigs (for home supply) and if possible, a brood sow.

The beef cattle industry was also stimulated to a degree by the war. In 1920, there were 22,268 swine on the 5,050 farms in Weakley County and 1,661 beef cattle. By 1925, there were 40,703 swine and 2,928 beef cattle. By 1930, there were 40,703 swine and 2,928 beef cattle. The number of swine on the 4,978 farms in Weakley County in 1930 had declined to 18,173, while the number of beef cattle had risen to 7,520.²⁸

By 1937, the livestock industry had become second to the dairy industry in the county. In that year over \$1,500,000 was paid for livestock by the three dealers in the county. The Dresden dealer alone averaged loading eight freight cars weekly for the five-month length of the selling season.

The livestock industry continues to be an important

²⁸ Ibid., August 14, 1925.

source of cash income to the farmers of Weakley County.

Grain

Corn has traditionally been a staple food crop in Weakley County. The soil, however, is not adapted to commercial cropping of the product. In 1919, there were 66,253 acres of corn planted in Weakley County yielding 1,572,180 bushels for an average of approximately twenty-four bushels per acre. In 1929, there were 56,211 acres planted yielding 1,476,094 bushels for an average of twenty-six bushels per acre. Since 1929 corn yields in Weakley County have increased but not sufficiently to enable the county to export corn.²⁹

The production of wheat has been of little significance except during and immediately after World War I. In 1918 the Federal Food Administration requested that Weakley County seed 5,880 acres more wheat than was seeded in 1917. In an editorial in The Dresden Enterprise and Sharon Tribune of September 19, 1918, the editor wrote:

The slogan in Weakley County for the next sixty days should be, "Sow a little wheat," or a little more wheat.

With the price of wheat products soaring and the

²⁹ Ibid., January 21, 1930.

price of tobacco going down, Weakley County farmers certainly cannot afford to grow tobacco and buy their flour. A merchant cannot buy plows at \$6 each and sell them for \$4 and long continue in business. Neither can a farmer produce tobacco at prevailing prices and buy flour at today's quotations.

Weakley County did not meet its quota in 1918 but in the succeeding year 5,414 acres of wheat were sown with a production of 50,448 bushels, but by 1929 the acreage seeded had declined to 312, with only 3,573 bushels produced. The soil of the county was deficient in phosphate and lime and without fertilizer, which the farmers of the period were loath to use, production of the grain crops remained woefully low.³⁰

Dairying

Rather than going into the dairy industry, Weakley County grew into it. Dairying began on a rather small scale. In 1920 there were only 6,060 milk cows on 5,050 farms, or slightly more than one per farm. The number had not grown appreciably five years later as there were only 6,889 head of milk stock on 4,937 farms. By 1930 the number had increased to 8,521 cows on 4,978 farms. In 1940, there were 9,873 cows milked on 3,986 farms and in

³⁰ Ibid.

1945, 11,486 milk cows on 3,708 farms.³¹

Dresden first took note of the dairy industry in 1927 when the first cream buying station was erected in the city. Within two months a second station began operating in the town. Two years later four cream stations in the city purchased 34,162 pounds of butterfat, paying the sum of \$13,941.52 to the farmers patronizing the Dresden stations. In 1929, 386,308 pounds of butterfat were purchased in the entire county, worth a sum of \$169,309.04 to the farmers of the area. Of the nineteen cream stations in the county, Dresden ranked fourth in the number of pounds purchased. The Martin station led all other purchasers, buying 190,243 pounds of butterfat and paying farmers the sum of \$81,617.70.

The Dresden Exchange Club went on record in August of 1927 favoring the establishment of a milk factory in Weakley County. The resolution stated:³²

. . . timber is practically all gone in the county, the growing of wheat entirely abandoned; the trusts have reduced the price of tobacco below the cost of

³¹U. S. Bureau of the Census, United States Census of Agriculture, Vol. 1: Tennessee, Statistics by Counties (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Agriculture, 1945), p. 123.

³²The Dresden Enterprise, September 9, 1927.

production and its cultivation has almost been abandoned by the farmers, so Weakley County must turn its attention to new industries to provide means of subsistence for its people. The dairy industry now seems the best thing in sight.

A representative of the Carnation Milk Company was induced to visit Dresden with the express purpose of considering the town as a location site for a Carnation plant. There were many factors conducive to a profitable location of the plant in Dresden--plenty of good cows, interest, enthusiasm, and practically an all-season pasturage climate. The one necessity lacking, however, was good rural roads. The plant was lost as a result of this deficiency.

The civic clubs of the county were successful in obtaining their objective of a milk factory in the county. In 1928, the Pet Milk Company was located in Martin. In the first year of operation, the firm purchased 714,362 gallons of whole milk and 190,243 pounds of butterfat, paying the sum of \$101,806.70 to the farmers of the area.

Several years elapsed before the milk companies began visiting farm homes to pick up milk. The bad condition of the rural roads did not permit this service to be instituted county wide until the mid-thirties. It was not uncommon to see farmers in Dresden on Saturdays with wagons loaded with pails of milk. It was reported that more tin

buckets were in evidence than during the saloon days when tin pails were used to carry beer from the back door of the saloon to the workshop, home, or place of business.³³

The importance of dairying in the county is emphasized by the statistics for 1942. In that year the farmers of the county received \$413,300 for whole milk. In addition, 250,000 pounds of butterfat, averaging thirty-eight cents per pound, brought the sum of \$95,000. This afforded Weakley County a cash income from dairying of \$508,300, for an average of \$101.66 for each farm. No other income of this amount was divided among so many farmers in the county.³⁴

Lumber Industry

The Shannon Stave Mill, established in 1880, and the T. M. Little Spoke Company, established in 1886, purchased annually a considerable amount of timber from the farmers in Weakley. The Dresden Wood Manufacturing Company and the Howell Manufacturing Company, each established in 1927, furnished a market for dogwood and persimmon timber.

The T. M. Little Spoke Company primarily used

³³ Ibid., June 21, 1929.

³⁴ Ibid., April 30, 1943.

hickory timber in the manufacture of wagon and buggy spokes during the late nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth centuries. In 1916 the company secured a contract to supply the market in Lansing, Michigan, with wooden spokes for automobiles. Actually, there was much discussion of the possibility of erecting an automobile factory in Dresden but the project fell through before it gained too much momentum. In 1918 the spoke factory was successful in obtaining a contract from the War Department to furnish spokes for army cannon. Fifty men, the largest force employed by the plant in its history, were employed during the life of the contract. A few years later, with its war contracts gone and also shorn of its market for automobile wooden spokes, the Little Spoke Company closed.

The Shannon plant, with a capacity of three car loads of staves monthly, was a source of employment for ten men. The Wood and Howell firms each employed six to eight men during the peak of the seasonal shipping activity.³⁵

Shipping records of the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad showed that Dresden was an important shipping point for lumber in the decade of the twenties. For example, in 1923, 143 car loads of logs, 86 cars of

³⁵ Ibid., November 9, 1923.

finished lumber and 13 cars of railroad cross ties were shipped from the Dresden station. In 1929, shipments had declined to 20 car loads of logs, 22 of ties and 47 of finished lumber.³⁶

The lumber industry continued to decline in the thirties and forties as the bulk of the timber was cut from Weakley County farms. In recent years extensive plantings have occurred throughout the county and currently large stands of young timber are noticeable throughout the area.

³⁶ Ibid., January 30, 1930.

CHAPTER IV

EDUCATION, SANITATION AND ROADS

Education

The Cobb and Nichols Training School was erected in Dresden in 1900. One of the principal objectives of the school was to prepare young people for the best colleges and universities. A few leading citizens of Dresden underwrote the school by buying stock in the corporation formed by Cobb, Nichols and Company.¹

Dresden did not have a public school from its birth in 1827 until 1900 when the county began paying the tuition of students enrolled in the private school. Not a single public high school existed in the county at this time, but agitation for such an institution began when Dresden's most famous political citizen, Finis J. Garrett, representative to the House of Congress from the Ninth Congressional District, publically called upon the citizens of Dresden and Weakley County to build a high school.

¹Ibid., August 19, 1904.

A high school in Dresden became an actuality in 1912 when the county took over the Cobb and Nichols Training School. The school was in a run-down condition, without running water, lights and sanitary facilities, but the dilapidated school building was used for several years. In 1922, however, Dresden became a special school district and the citizens of the town authorized a bond issue of \$25 000 to build a combined high school and elementary school building.² In 1925, an additional \$17,000 bond issue was necessary to finish the classrooms, install a heating system and provide inside sanitary facilities.

The Dresden Special School District constantly found itself in desperate financial circumstances, although the average salary paid teachers in the district during the depression years of the thirties was only \$354 annually. The tax rate in the district remained comparatively high. In 1937 the rate was raised from fifty-five cents per one hundred dollars assessed valuation to eighty-five cents. This move was made necessary to meet the heavy indebtedness inherited and incurred by the Board of Education of the district. The Board of Education owed

²Ibid., January 6, 1922.

\$18,962.11 in 1938 and had assets of only \$1,835.98. A bond issue of \$16,000 and the tax increase mentioned above were used to partially clear the indebtedness of the special school district.

A provision providing for a two per cent sales tax in the state ultimately resulted in the demise of the special school district in Dresden. This provision prohibited the use of sales tax funds in the construction of school facilities in such districts. As a result, the special school district was turned over to the county on July 1, 1947. Currently, each of the seven high schools in Weakley are operated by the county and state without supplements from either of the five incorporated towns in the county.

Sanitation and Customs

Dresden, with its wide streets and public square was planned to be an attractive town but the practice followed by the merchants and general citizenry precluded the town being kept in an orderly manner. It had long been a custom in Dresden to sweep paper, trash and rubbish from stores, law offices, and shops into the street. Merchants threw cinders and ashes into the public square and

cleaned their produce in the city streets. It had been a sort of heritage, handed down from generation to generation, each person following this practice because the other fellow did, all without giving a thought to how the town looked to the visitor and potential customer.³

Periodically the ladies of the community rose up in arms and demanded that the city officials do something about cleaning up the business section of the town and the residential area where citizens were, in the summer season, inclined to let weeds grow at will. The town was also beset with leaking septic tanks and a generous supply of open privies which lent a stench to the town, unwelcome to local residents, travelers and traders.

An ordinance was passed by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen in 1921 prohibiting the practice of blighting the business district with refuse but no one heeded the ordinance and little was done by the officials to enforce it.

The Sanitary Commission, which was created by city ordinance in 1912, functioned sporadically but only when the ire of some of the citizens was aroused. In 1944 a more rigid ordinance was passed by the city officials. It

³ Ibid., May 13, 1921.

provided that a city policeman be directed to inspect all places, and where unwholesome, unsightly, filthy conditions were found to exist, give the owner or occupant notice that such conditions must be eradicated. If such conditions were not alleviated, the policeman was to arrest the offender who was to be fined, and in addition forced to bear the expense of cleaning up the place.⁴

As a result of this ordinance the town was kept in a better state for a short period, but the vigilance of the city officials waned and as late as 1947, the city left the responsibility of the cleanliness of the town to the individual citizen and provided no means for garbage disposal.

Customs

Historically, it had been the custom of farmers to flock to Dresden on the first Monday in each month to socialize and trade produce and animals. This practice continued throughout the years, and as late as the first Monday in March of 1947, huge throngs gathered in the city. The "boneyard," a trading center in the town, was the scene of bargaining for shot guns, cows and calves, hogs and pigs

⁴ Ibid., March 24, 1944.

and peanuts and fruits. Trading and talking occupied the attention of the farmers throughout the day but some found time to turn their attention to the wares extensively advertised by the town merchants who took advantage of this custom to run "sales" of various kinds.⁵

Roads

The problems created by poor country roads were immense. For weeks, during the winter season, farmers could neither haul their produce to market or go to the county seat to trade with the merchants of the town. Road laws were passed by the state legislature in the interest of Weakley County but invariably they were weak and unenforceable. Many meetings were held in Dresden in the interest of better roads. In 1912, D. Ward King of Dyer County and inventor of the Split-Log-Drag was invited to lecture in Dresden on "How to Secure Good Roads Without Money." The Split-Log-Drag, a simple device to make, proved of inestimable value to the rural people in making roads passable. The condition of the roads leading into Dresden continued to trouble the merchants and city officials of

⁵Ibid., March 13, 1903.

the town, and in the fall of 1913, Mayor R. L. Suddath called a meeting of the citizens of Dresden interested in improving the roads leading into the town from a distance of four miles out and putting them into condition to receive the Split-Log-Drag. At this meeting it was agreed that the business and professional men of Dresden would don overalls, shoulder pick and shovel, with lunch pail on the arm, and spend two days working the public roads.⁶

Citizens of Dresden were constantly striving for a better road law for the county. In 1914, at a meeting called in Dresden by the Mayor, the group went on record as favoring the creation of a State Highway Department. At that time Tennessee was one of the five states in the Union without such an organization. At this same meeting a County Good Roads Association was formed. The resolutions adopted at this meeting were:⁷

We the citizens of the State of Tennessee, County of Weakley, in order to bring about the establishment of good roads all over said County and thereby promote the general welfare of her citizenship, both materially and socially, do organize this Good Roads Association for the said County of Weakley.

The association shall be known as the Central Good Roads Association and shall be perpetual.

⁶ Ibid., September 20, 1913.

⁷ Ibid., October 16, 1914.

The officers of said association shall consist of a President, Vice-President, and a Secretary-Treasurer, who shall be elected on the first Monday in October of each year for a term of one year or until their successors are elected.

Said association shall meet bi-annually, on the first Mondays in April and October, respectively, but the President may call any necessary number of special meetings. All citizens of said County are eligible to membership therein, but to be eligible for office, one must be twenty-one years of age.

On Wednesday after the first month in October of each year shall be good roads day for said County, and each citizen shall be requested to work at least one day on the roads, but said work shall be directed toward ditching, putting in culverts and draining the roads.

. . . no fee shall be charged members of said association and all contributions shall be voluntary.

The association did not solve the road problem. As a matter of fact, the rural roads of the county constituted a problem for many years; but the association did let the politicians in the county know that the people were dissatisfied with the road law then in effect and that a new one was needed.

A new road law went into effect in 1915. This law provided that a road commission for each of the twenty-five civil districts be appointed by the county court. Each commissioner was to be held responsible for all bridges and culverts in his district. The law required that roads be classified into first class, 40 feet wide; second class, 30 feet wide; third class, 20 feet wide; and fourth class,

15 feet wide. Individual citizens were required to work the roads six days per year without pay, and commissioners were to receive \$1.50 per day for all work in excess of the number of days charged an individual worker.⁸

The county was spending in 1921 the sum of \$100,000 annually on the public roads, levees and bridges. Most of this sum was sheer waste, however, as little work of a permanent nature was accomplished. There were no metal bridges in the county; levees were built just wide enough for one-way travel; and in general the roads were built without previous plan and foresight. During the winter months wooden bridges and culverts would wash away and replacements delayed for weeks. Periodically, indignation meetings, sponsored by the merchants of Dresden, would be held in an effort to spur the road commissioners to action. But the road laws were drawn so loosely that direct responsibility could not be cast upon any one individual. As a result the roads remained in a chaotic state during the winter months.⁹

The County Court, consisting of magistrates from

⁸ Ibid., April 16, 1913.

⁹ Ibid., March 11, 1921.

twenty-five widely scattered civil districts, could seldom agree on where county money was to be spent. Time and again the Court refused to authorize a bond issue to help defray the cost of roads. Magistrates living in areas of the county not directly benefiting refused to vote in favor of bond issues. Finally in 1926, the state proceeded to build one section of the highway linking Dresden with the Obion County line and through the courts forced the county to pay its part of the cost. At this time there was not a single surfaced road although there were 2,600 cars registered in the county.¹⁰

The condition of the roads frequently paralyzed business activity in Dresden for weeks. The first Monday in each month, historically a day for the farmers to come to town, found the city virtually deserted in January and February. Very frequently Christmas shopping was severely curtailed due to the bad conditions of the roads.

In 1927 a new road law was instituted for the county. This act provided for a commission of seven men appointed by the County Court. It empowered the Commission to make contracts necessary for working roads, build-

¹⁰ Ibid., April 22, 1926.

ing bridges and levees, to assign road hands to work the respective roads and appoint foremen to look after the labor and construction activity. The Commission was authorized to make all plans and specifications necessary for maintenance and/or construction and to make any necessary surveys. The act also provided that all physically able men from the ages of twenty-one to fifty be required to work the roads six days per year without compensation.¹¹

Despite the road laws, public highways were not kept in good condition. In 1927, the local merchants of Dresden decided to finance the dragging and general repair of all roads leading out of the town. Although the condition of the roads improved slowly as a portion of the state gasoline tax enabled the county to spend more funds for road building and maintenance, as late as 1935 the Dresden Chamber of Commerce called a county-wide meeting having for its purpose the graveling of the rural roads of the area. Such pressures exerted by the citizens of the county resulted in an additional ten cents road tax being passed by the county court.¹² This tax together with contributions by land

¹¹ Ibid., May 20, 1927.

¹² Ibid., May 31, 1935.

owners and the help of the Works Progress Administration resulted in 356 miles of graveled farm-to-market roads in the county in 1941.¹³ The rural road problem had at last been solved, but only with the assistance of the Federal Government.

CHAPTER V

FINANCE

Banking

After the closing of the Bank of America, which operated in Dresden for a period of three years in the 1850's, two branch banks, the Banks of Henry and of Martin, were opened. In 1890, the Branch Bank of Henry was closed, and in the same year the Branch of Martin became The Dresden Bank. Organized with a capital stock of \$50,000, the Bank of Dresden was the oldest in the city when it closed its doors in 1927.

The Weakley County Bank, established in 1887 with a capital stock of \$25,000, is currently one of the oldest banking houses in the area.² This bank, however, did not escape unscathed during the depression of the thirties, having closed for a short period in 1930 and again in 1931.

In 1920, a branch bank of The Tipton County Farmers

¹ Ibid., June 30, 1890.

² Ibid., July 7, 1887.

Union Bank of Covington, Tennessee, was established in Dresden. This bank, affiliated with a strong parental institution successfully weathered the financial crisis of the early thirties.³

The financial statements of The Bank of Dresden and The Weakley County Bank were available with little interruption from 1904 until the former bank closed and were available for the latter bank throughout this period to the present time.

Neither of the two independent banks of Dresden invested a significant amount of funds in government bonds until 1918, the second year of the participation of the United States in World War I. The ratio of cash with correspondent banks to total deposits of the Dresden bank from 1904, the first year in which statements were available, until 1927, ranged from a low of six per cent in 1921 to a high of fifty per cent in 1919. With this one exception the bank maintained its cash balance with correspondent banks either within or above the 7 to 14 per cent of deposits. Although not a member of the Federal Reserve System, the bank generally maintained its percentage of deposits on reserve within the limits required of all country

³Ibid., April 10, 1920.

banks holding membership in the system.

The ratio of liquid assets to deposits for the Dresden bank ranged from a low of 6.3 per cent in 1921 to a high of 58 per cent in 1918. From 1921 until 1927, the year the bank closed, the ratio of cash and cash with correspondent banks to deposits varied from a low of 6 per cent in 1920 to a high of 15.5 per cent in 1926. The June 30, 1927 balance sheet of the bank showed a ratio of 9.7 per cent.

One of the most commonly used measures of bank liquidity is the ratio of loans to total deposits.⁴ The Dresden bank incurred a high ratio of loans and discounts to deposits from 1904 to the closing date in July 1927. The ratio ranged from a low of 53 per cent in 1919 to a high of 165 per cent in 1904. The ratios, from 1920, the first year of the post-war recession, until 1927, are shown in Table 2.

On Tuesday morning, July 19, 1927, a notice appeared on the door of the Dresden Bank as follows: "Awaiting the action of the State Banking Department."⁵ The immediate cause of the financial disaster was a run on the bank by the citizens of Palmersville, Tennessee, a small community

⁴"Commercial Bank Liquidity," The Monthly Review, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Vol. 42, No. 8, August, 1960, p. 9.

⁵The Dresden Enterprise, July 22, 1927.

Table 2.--Ratios of Loans and Discounts to Deposits of the Dresden Bank from December 30, 1920 to July 1, 1927

Date	Ratio in Per Cent
December 30, 1920	111
December 30, 1921	111
December 30, 1922	103
December 30, 1923	103
December 30, 1924	99
December 30, 1925	96
December 30, 1926	92
June 30, 1927	98

Source: Financial statements of the Dresden bank.

lying ten miles north of Dresden. In 1924, the one bank in Palmersville became insolvent and, as a result, the natives of the community were easily disturbed. The Dresden Bank Directors, having a surplus and retained earnings of \$13,382.82 in 1919, followed a policy of paying large dividends to stockholders until 1926, when the combined surplus and retained earnings declined to a low of \$2,938. At this time it was decided that the payment of dividends should be ceased until the bank's surplus was increased. As a result, no dividends were paid in 1926 or the first half of 1927. A few stockholders became disgruntled and spread the rumor

that the bank was unsafe and badly managed because no dividends had been declared in eighteen months. As a result of this rumor a run on the bank by citizens of Palmersville occurred on Monday, July 18, 1927. The bank closed after the vault cash and funds with correspondent banks were dissipated.⁶

A few months later the defunct Bank of Dresden merged with the Weakley County Bank. The agreement was that the Weakley County Bank assume all liabilities of the closed Dresden bank and accept the responsibility of paying deposits amounting to more than \$10 singly, with one-fifth payable immediately after the agreement was signed by the depositors of The Dresden Bank. An additional one-fifth was to be paid in twelve months, and the third 20 per cent in eighteen months. The remaining 40 per cent due depositors of The Dresden Bank was pledged to the Weakley County Bank as security against loss. Depositors having less than \$10 to their credit were to be paid in full.⁷

In November 1930, the closing of a large financial institution, Caldwell and Company, Bond Bankers of Nashville,

⁶ Interview with James M. Moran, former President of the Dresden Bank, June 10, 1960.

⁷ The Dresden Enterprise, September 9, 1927.

Tennessee, and the closing of the Bank of Tennessee, then holding \$3,000,000 of state road funds, resulted in a run on three banks in Weakley County. Included in this group was the Weakley County Bank of Dresden.

Prior to closing, the Weakley County Bank had deposits of \$306,559.97 and other liabilities of \$74,698.70. The ratio of cash on hand and with correspondent banks to total liabilities was 24 per cent. The ratio of liquid assets to total liabilities was 27 per cent, and loans and discounts amounted to 80 per cent of the total liabilities.

From April 24, 1928, the first financial statement issued by the Weakley County Bank after the merger with the Dresden Bank, the ratios of loans and discounts to total liabilities for the four statements issued by the bank in the interval between the merger and the closing of the Weakley County Bank were as follows: 83, 82, 93 and 80 per cent, respectively. Obviously, the management of the Weakley County Bank repeated the mistake made by the management of the Dresden Bank in permitting loans and discounts to approach the total amount of liabilities. The bank, however, maintained a satisfactory liquidity ratio of 12, 17, 27, and 27 per cent, respectively, for the four statements issued during the same interval of time.

Shortly after the bank was closed, the bank examiners and directors of the Weakley County Bank agreed upon a plan to reopen the institution. The agreement, signed by the depositors, specified that the Weakley County Bank was to pay the depositors in the following installments: 5 per cent of the deposits on the day the bank reopened; 5 per cent monthly thereafter for twelve months, at which time the remaining amount of deposits could be withdrawn. In entering into this agreement the directors agreed not to pay any dividends to its stockholders during the life of this contract.⁸

The Weakley County Bank reopened on December 5, 1930, but was forced to close a second time on October 7, 1931. Prior to closing, the bank statement showed deposits of \$228,900.96 and other liabilities of \$99,565.90 for a total of \$328,446.86. Liquid assets, including cash, cash with correspondent banks, and U. S. Government Bonds totaled \$69,310.71. Thus, the ratio of liquid assets to total liabilities was 21 per cent. The bank called upon all of its resources to combat this second run on the bank, but to no avail.

⁸ Ibid., December 5, 1930.

After the closing, representatives of the State Banking Department audited the records and stated that the bank was in a perfectly solvent condition and recommended that the bank be reopened. A plan was drawn up and the business and professional men of Dresden immediately began contacting depositors throughout the country in an effort to secure signatures to the proposed plan. Many signatures came in through the mails. Under the agreement signed by the depositors, funds were to remain in the bank for a period of thirty months drawing interest at 3 per cent per annum. The bank was not to lend any money during this period, but would receive deposits, which were subject to check, and collect on all outstanding paper.⁹ The bank re-opened on December 5, 1931.

On April 7, 1933, the bank announced a payment of 20 per cent to depositors, this being the fourth payment since November, 1931, when the bank entered into an agreement with its depositors and the State Banking Department. The four payments constituted a total of 50 per cent of the deposits impounded when the bank closed. By December of the same year the bank made known to all depositors that their

⁹ Ibid., October 30, 1931.

accounts were subject to check. The bank had weathered the financial storm, and though slightly crippled soon began operating on a normal basis. The bank prospered immensely during the war years, and at the close of the war held deposits of \$1,291,672.92. The loans and discounts at this time were only \$77,468.93, or 5.9 per cent of deposits. Liquid assets, including vault cash, cash with correspondent banks and U. S. Government Bonds totaled \$1,205,849 and presented a ratio to deposits of 88 per cent.

City

The bonded indebtedness of Dresden was only \$6,000 in 1914 when the voters of the town voted favorably for a \$27,000 bond issue to finance the construction of a system of water works and an electric lighting plant. Dresden was years behind the other towns in the area in providing these conveniences for its citizens. Extreme conservatism coupled with the view that "anything good enough for my father is good enough for me" resulted in marking Dresden as a backward community.¹⁰

The condition of the local school deteriorated to the point that holding classes in the building constituted

¹⁰ Ibid., October 23, 1914.

a hazard to the lives of students and faculty before the natives of the town were finally willing in 1922 to vote a bond issue of \$25,000 for a new building. School authorities had insisted that a minimum of \$35,000 was needed, but a few influential voters in Dresden had the amount dropped by \$10,000 because they insisted that they would not vote for the measure unless the amount of the bond issue was decreased substantially. The primary argument against the bond issue was that a depression existed in the farm regions and that the assessed value of all property in Dresden decreased by \$117,000 over the previous year. The opposition stressed that, although the city tax rate had been increased from one dollar to \$1.25 per hundred dollars of assessed valuation, only six dollars additonal revenue would be forthcoming with the new tax increase.

The first biennial report of the receipts and disbursements of the city was made public in 1925. For the two years beginning May 1, 1923 and ending May 5, 1925, the receipts from property taxes amounted to \$12,970.83; from privilege and ad valorem taxes, \$2,632.87. Revenue from water and electricity collections amounted to \$14,544.09.

¹¹ Ibid., March 17, 1922.

Included in the revenue was the amount of \$13,500 realized when the city sold the public power plant in 1924 to the Kentucky-Tennessee Power Company of Hopkinsville, Kentucky. The total revenue from all sources in the two years amounted to \$60,910.34. The chief expenditures were for street construction and maintenance; \$18,879.23 being expended for this purpose. Interest on bonded indebtedness amounted to \$7,914.12 and plant maintenance \$12,141.23. Operating expenses for the fire and city departments amounted to only \$2,973.43, which indicated that services to citizens were kept at a minimum. At this time city officials, including the Mayor and Board of Aldermen were unpaid, and members of the fire department served on a voluntary basis. The only paid officials were the town marshal and the City Recorder.¹²

During the depression years the financial plight of the city became so desperate that no buyers appeared to purchase the \$40,000 bond issue voted by the citizens of Dresden for street improvement. A number of inquiries had been made by bonding houses in Cincinnati, New York and other centers about the issue, but evidently the 6 per cent, twenty-year bonds did not appeal to them. The fact that

¹² Ibid., June 5, 1925.

Dresden taxpayers were in arrears in the amount of \$5,000 in city taxes also dampened the enthusiasm of any prospective buyers of the bonds. Resigning themselves to the fact that the bonds would not find a buyer, the city officials passed an auto tax ordinance, the revenue to be used for street improvement. Automobiles were taxed \$5 and trucks \$7.50. An ordinance was also passed requiring freight-hauling trucks operating into and through Dresden to pay a privilege tax of \$7.50.¹³

The financial condition of the city continued to deteriorate. In the fall of 1932 the city was unable to pay its portion of the cost of curbing and guttering the short distance of State Highway 54 which passed through the city. At this time the Federal Government, through the Public Works Administration, was engaged in paving the highway from five miles west of Paris, Tennessee, to Highway 22 in Dresden. The city, however, was unable to meet an expense of \$2,000 and the project was temporarily abandoned.

In July, 1936, a mass meeting was called by the Mayor and Aldermen to discuss the financial situation of

¹³Ibid., October 9, 1931.

the city. At that time it was revealed to the citizens of Dresden that the city was unable to meet the interest on the total bonded indebtedness of \$95,000. All taxes receivable and in arrears amounted to \$10,643. Accrued bond interest payable amounted to \$6,557.49, and the city was completely without funds and unable to meet the salaries of the few paid city officials.

Citizens attending the mass meeting agreed to an increase in the city tax rate for \$1.90 per hundred dollars of assessed property valuation to \$2.15 and an increase in the minimum water rate of twenty-five cents. This cooperative effort was voluntarily agreed upon by all attending the meeting in an effort to assist the city in extricating itself from an embarrassing financial position.¹⁴

The situation worsened, however, to the extent that in the spring of 1937 Senate Bill No. 603 was introduced in the State Legislature by Senator Moore, representing the City of Dresden. This bill authorized the town of Dresden, Tennessee, through its governing body, to issue bonds for the purpose of funding, or refunding, all or any part of the outstanding indebtedness of the municipality and conferred

¹⁴ Ibid., July 24, 1936.

upon the governing body of the city full and complete authority to make provision for such refinancing. The bill also gave the city officials freedom to lay and collect a special tax upon all taxable property in Dresden sufficient to pay the interest on any bonds issued and to create a sinking fund for the redemption of the bonds. The proceeds of this special tax levy were not to be mingled with any other funds and were not to be used for any purpose other than to pay principal and interest of bonds issued pursuant to the terms of the act authorizing the bonds. It was further enacted that for the purpose of securing the payment of the principal and interest of the bonds issued pursuant to the provisions of the act, a lien was created upon the water works and distribution system owned by the town of Dresden, with the lien remaining in full force until all bonds and interest accruing thereon had been fully paid and discharged.¹⁵

After the passage of the above mentioned bill the city officials were able to contract with the Tennessee Security Company of Memphis, Tennessee, to refinance Dresden's outstanding indebtedness amounting to \$115,000.

¹⁵ Ibid., March 26, 1937.

seventeen thousand dollars of which were floating obligations, that is, past-due interest, cost of refinancing and operating expense.

The refinancing of the city's bonded indebtedness was successful. By the fall of 1939, the city tax rate was dropped from \$2.15 to \$2.00 per hundred and the automobile license fee ordinance was abolished. Three years later the city officials were able to refinance \$83,000 of the city's \$96,500 callable bonds at the low interest rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

The city had fully recovered financially. By May 31, 1943, the ending period of a biennial report made public by the City Recorder, total receipts for the two-year period amounted to \$39,195.57 with taxes and licenses constituting \$22,769.41 of this amount. Water collections amounted to \$13,144.17. Receipts added to the balance on hand of \$19,745.99 gave a total of \$39,195.57 to be accounted for.

The chief expenditures were for salaries and labor, \$6,989.02; bonds retired, \$8500; and bond interest of \$8,546.37. Total expenditures amounted to \$36,887.28 leaving a balance on hand at the end of the biennium of \$13,054.28.

Dresden citizens, in particular the younger ones

who had finally overcome the lethargy and conservatism of the older established residents of the town, finally decided to provide a building for any prospective industry desiring to come to Dresden at the end of the war. For this purpose the voters in 1945 increased the bonded indebtedness of the town in the amount of \$75,000 in order to have available a municipal building for the industrialist expressing an interest in Dresden as a location site at that time.¹⁶

¹⁶ Ibid., April 20, 1945.

CHAPTER VI

INDUSTRIALIZATION--1876-1946

Civic Organizations

The first civic club in Dresden was organized in 1915. The functions of this organization, known as the Business and Professional Men's Club, were to aid in developing the farming interests of the area and to work toward the improvement of roads, school facilities, and streets. The organization did not consider the acquisition of industry as one of its functions. Prophetically, it was stated at the organizational meeting of the club that Dresden could not hope to attract large industry for many decades, if ever, and that the primary responsibility of the club was to look after the interests of the town and community in general.¹

In 1920, the Dresden Civic League was organized, replacing the defunct Business and Professional Men's Club. This organization did not include industry-seeking

¹Ibid., April 23, 1915.

as an objective. The purposes of the league were to obtain better school facilities, street improvements, entertainment for the children, and more retail trade for Dresden merchants.² The Civic League failed to function in 1922, and for two years Dresden was without a civic club of any kind. In 1924, the Dresden Business Men's Commercial Club was formed. This was the first club in Dresden specifically to include among its objectives the seeking of industry for the town. The club also formed active committees on education, agriculture and roads. The Business Men's Club operated for only one year. Lack of interest on the part of the members was the primary reason for its failure.

From 1925 to 1927 no civic club existed in Dresden. In the latter year the Chamber of Commerce was organized. This organization functioned sporadically throughout the years until its demise in 1950. The Chamber of Commerce, however, was of some value to Dresden and the surrounding community. On several occasions, prior to the end of World War II, the organization almost attained a manufacturing firm for the town of Dresden, but capital needed to construct a building was unavailable and the firms located elsewhere.

²Ibid., May 15, 1925.

Manufacturing and Processing

In discussing the lumber industry in Chapter Three reference was made to the Shannon Stave Mill and the T. M. Little Spoke Company. These organizations were established in 1880 and 1886, respectively. In 1927, the Dresden Wood Manufacturing and the Howell Manufacturing plants were established. Neither of these firms was in business in 1930, as a combination of depressed economic conditions and declining timber resources drove them from active operation.

Dresden was also a cotton processing center of some importance. Two gins, the Fuller Gin and the Costen Corporation operated in Dresden for many years. The Fuller Gin, established in 1902, was closed in 1927 but the Costen Corporation still exists in Dresden. Other Weakley County towns, principally Martin and Greenfield, gradually captured the bulk of the farmer's cotton business inasmuch as they were more centrally located in the cotton producing section of the country. A second important factor in the decline of the ginning business in Dresden was the trend toward dairying in the county.

A combination cold storage and ice manufacturing plant was erected in Dresden in 1926, but the town was not

large enough to furnish sufficient business for profit making and in 1927 the firm closed.³ The Jackson Candy Factory suffered a similar fate.

Paradoxically, the year 1930 was an excellent one in respect to new plants being formed in Dresden. New ones were being established at the same time others were becoming insolvent. The Dresden Candy Company replaced the defunct Jackson Candy Factory, and the Dr. Pepper Bottling Company was organized in May 1930. A third firm, the Merry Maid Dress Shoppe, was established in 1930. The management of the shop, all members of the same family, manufactured ladies' and children's dresses for wholesale delivery. Employing but five workers at maximum periods of production, the plant found operation extremely difficult during the depth of the depression in 1932 and went out of business.

It is interesting to note that all of the manufacturing firms established in Dresden prior to 1930 were obtained without the assistance of the civic clubs in the town. As a matter of fact, the Chamber of Commerce had temporarily ceased to function in 1930 when the Jackson Candy

³Ibid., March 26, 1926.

Factory, the Dr. Pepper Bottling Works and the Merry Maid Dress Shoppe were founded.

In 1934, the Bell Clay Company, with headquarters in St. Louis, leased a farm four miles east of Dresden and proceeded to develop the deposit there. Mammoth storage sheds were built in the town. The company followed the policy of working two shifts during the spring and summer months and storing a sufficient amount of the clay in Dresden to fill all orders during the winter months.⁴

The better quality clay deposits in the county were in the extreme northeastern area of the county. In 1939, the United Clay Mines Corporation sent a representative into the county for the purpose of making a survey of the clay deposits of the area. After the survey was completed the company leased two farms near Gleason and mining operations commenced. Concomitantly, the Bell Clay Company failed to expand mining of clay in the Dresden area and by 1945 had completely exploited all of its holdings. The concern ceased operating near Dresden and removed all of its storage sheds from the town in the same year.

The Tennessee Cigar Company, a partnership, began operating in Dresden in April, 1945. The products of the firm were well received and in a short time new quarters

were needed. The partnership, however, was without sufficient working capital to expand its administrative and sales forces and no effort was made to change the organizational structure of the company. As a result, financial disaster overtook the firm within three years and in 1949 the Tennessee Cigar Company became insolvent.⁵

Power

In 1938 the Kentucky-Tennessee Light and Power Company agreed to sell all of its equipment in Weakley County to the Tennessee Valley Authority. Each of the five incorporated towns voted in favor of TVA power, and the citizens of the county voted favorably on a bond issue of \$400,000, the proceeds to be used to install lines in the rural areas.⁶

As the towns in the county were too small for each to have a distribution plant, it was decided to place the center in Martin, the largest town in Weakley County. As a result of this decision, the Weakley County Municipal Electric System was established as an agency to purchase and distribute power, generated by the Tennessee Valley Authority, to the town and rural areas of the county.

⁵ Ibid., July 6, 1949.

⁶ Ibid., July 15, 1938.

With TVA electricity a reality, and with the promise of a reduction in electrical rates ranging between 30 and 40 per cent below the previous prices, it appeared that Dresden was ready to set in motion a program designed to bring the city a substantial payroll. For many years the hue and cry had been that the high rates charged in Dresden had motivated against securing a factory furnishing employment to the surplus labor in the community. Much to the chagrin of a small group of industry seekers in the town, cheap electrical energy did not result in the immediate acquisition of industry.

Abortive Attempts to Secure Manufacturing Enterprises

Citizens of Dresden first made a concerted drive to obtain a manufacturing payroll for the town in 1933. At that time farm prices were extremely low and many unemployed men and women lived in the town and rural areas of the county. Also, several former residents of the county had returned from the depressed areas of the north and midwest and were without employment.

The Salant and Salant Company, manufacturers of men's apparel, considered Dresden as a location site in 1933. At a mass meeting of the citizens of the town it was unani-

mously agreed that the people would go on record in favor of the shirt factory and that those present would do individually everything possible to induce the plant to come to Dresden. If anyone in the town was opposed to the enterprise, no concerted action was taken against it at the meeting. Some of the town's most conservative citizens expressed an interest in the project. Everyone appeared enthusiastic as long as it was believed that the cost, labor and energy exerted in obtaining the firm would be borne by someone else. The blame for the failure to obtain the firm was not immediately cast on the shoulders of any single individual or group. Instead, the poor condition of the streets and general appearance of the town and the local high power rate were the reasons given for losing the apparel firm.⁷

In 1935 the local citizenry became extremely excited about the possibility of acquiring a branch of the Henry I. Siegel Company, manufacturers of mens' and boys' apparel. The firm promised an annual payroll of \$200,000 for Dresden if a building and a suitable quantity of labor could be provided. A guarantee of freedom from unionized

⁷ Ibid., November 3, 1933.

labor was an added stipulation in the offer made by the company.

Financing the building for the firm posed an immense problem. The town of Dresden was in desperate financial straits and could not sell an additional bond issue. The solution to the problem appeared to lie in letting the workers in the plant pay for the building. As a result of this decision, the following advertisement was run in the local newspaper.⁸

Application For Employment

I, _____ the undersigned, hereby make application for employment at the garment factory erected by the town of Dresden, Tennessee, and agree with said town of Dresden, Tennessee, that in the event I am given employment at the said factory, that for and in consideration of the said town of Dresden, Tennessee, securing employment for me with the operator of said factory, that I will pay to the town of Dresden, Tennessee, six per cent of my weekly salary or wage, to be paid as directed by the aforesaid town.

My age is _____ married or single _____ Male or female _____
Experience _____
I live at _____ County _____
This _____ day of _____ 193_____

Three hundred fifty people signed the above contract on the first day of its publication. For an entire week men

⁸Ibid., September 27, 1935.

and women continued to trek to Dresden to sign. Within seven days over 1,000 prospective employees had signed a contract to pay 6 per cent of their wages to the town of Dresden if a job of any type were available in the new firm. The proposed plant promised to begin operating with 250 employees, and an additional 150 were to be hired within a year. Applications continued to pour in and within ten days over 1,500 applications were made.⁹ Locally, enthusiasm was at a fever heat, evidenced by the offer of the donation of a large lot adjacent to the public square as a site for the factory building. The entire town and community appeared on the surface to be solidly behind the drive to obtain the new plant but funds sufficient to construct the factory building were not available. The Siegel officials immediately took advantage of an opportunity to move to a neighboring county. Dresden had again lost an opportunity to obtain employment for the surplus labor in the vicinity.

On October 6, 1937, a citizen's mass meeting was held at the courthouse, with practically every business and professional interest in Dresden represented. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the inquiry a manufacturer of

⁹ Ibid., October 18, 1935.

clay products had directed to the owner of a local mine. The chairman emphasized that employees were to be local men and women, and all within a short time would be earning skilled labor wages. The chairman also emphasized that pottery plants in the east earnestly desired to move away from the union infested section of the country. Any area where labor was plentiful, conservative and energetic was to receive attention.

At the close of the mass meeting a motion was made and seconded requesting the chairman to assist in locating a pottery in Dresden. The motion also provided that the people of Dresden would do everything possible to discourage attempts to organize a labor union.

All the necessary prerequisites for securing the pottery plant seemed to have been met and for weeks the citizens were all agog about the possibility of a large male-labor oriented plant locating in the town. Unfortunately, none of the officials of the firm visited the area. Shortly after the enthusiasm of the people began to wane, it was announced that the pottery was not moving to Dresden because natural gas, a product essential to the

¹⁰ Ibid., October 8, 1937.

processing of raw materials used in the clay products, was not available.

Nearly two years passed before the town again became excited about the possibility of securing a large payroll. Failure had been the only reward of those seeking a plant for Dresden throughout the decade of the thirties, but a few zealous citizens of the town continued to work toward such an objective. By August 1939, three civic organizations were at work--the Lions Club, the Rotary and the Chamber of Commerce. On August 25, 1939, a mass meeting of the three civic clubs, together with all other "progressive" citizens of the town was called, the meeting to be held in the courthouse. The meeting was scheduled as an outcome of a conference of business and professional men of Dresden held the previous week. The questions raised at this conference were: Does Dresden want a manufacturing plant, and if so, what steps should be taken toward locating one or two industries seeking a location in the town?

The County Judge presided at the mass meeting and was made permanent Chairman of the Committee of Citizens seeking industry for Dresden. He stated in his introductory remarks that it had been his privilege to discuss the factory proposition with gentlemen doing business in towns

where factories were located and that he was convinced that such a factory as was seeking location in Dresden would prove a valuable asset to the town. It appeared that the speaker was attempting to sell the ultra conservative element of Dresden's population on the proposition and that some animosity had developed toward a factory locating in the quiet, sedate county seat town.¹¹

Despite the eloquence of the speakers at the mass meeting little was done afterwards to secure either of the two firms apparently interested in the possibility of locating in Dresden. It is also noteworthy that neither plant was mentioned by name at the meeting. This might indicate that the civic organizations of Dresden had become prematurely excited and had fomented the enthusiasm of the general citizenry without actually having any outstanding manufacturing prospects.

At any rate the mass meeting resulted in nothing but temporary excitement. The town of Dresden was still unable to finance a building and no apparel manufacturers were willing to move to the town until a building was provided. The general citizenry of the town were reluctant at this

¹¹ Ibid., September 1, 1939.

time to subscribe to stock in a corporation for the purpose of providing capital for the construction of a building.

As a matter of fact no constructive effort was made to form a development corporation. Several years were to elapse before the citizens of the town were ready to resort to this method of providing capital for industrial building purposes.

That many influential citizens of the town wished to keep Dresden free of the factory element was also a factor contributing to the failure of the groups seeking industry for the town throughout the decade of the thirties. In an editorial in the local paper, the forthright editor referred to this class of citizens as "human leaches." These people, he declared, live on the community but never turn a hand toward any move calculated to advance the interests of the city. He further stated that

Not so many months ago we had an opportunity to land a factory with a substantial payroll. Half a dozen patriotic citizens devoted considerable time and spent some money in a fruitless endeavor to arouse interest in placing in Dresden a factory that would give steady employment to some three hundred men and women. But this effort was a complete flop and we lost a firm after it was literally laid in our lap. All because of the human leaches in Dresden. ¹²

¹² Ibid., November 1, 1940.

Near the end of World War II pressure from the civic clubs resulted in the passage by the State Legislature of an enabling act granting Dresden the privilege of floating bonds for a factory building. This action was timed to coincide with the offer of a manufacturer of sportswear to locate a firm in Dresden if a building was made available. A rental equivalent to the rate of interest on bonds issued for erection of a factory building was proposed.

The issue went before the Dresden voters on April 20, 1945. The total vote was extremely light as only 173 votes were cast; however, 168 voters favored the motion to float a \$75,000 bond issue to construct a factory building. At this time Dresden's outstanding bonded indebtedness had decreased to \$82,750. The assessed valuation of all property in the town was \$432,598.¹³

City officials rejected offers by bond buyers for the \$75,000 municipal building bonds primarily because of the excessive interest rates charged. Instead a canvass of the town was made by the mayor and aldermen offering the securities to businessmen. The drive to sell the 3 per cent

¹³ Ibid., April 20, 1945.

bonds to citizens of Dresden was extremely successful as subscriptions to \$67,000 of the \$75,000 were obtained in three days.

Unfortunately the city was unable to procure sufficient materials to construct the building within a reasonable time and the contract with the Claggett organization was annulled.

Since 1933, certain citizens of Dresden had made periodic attempts to acquire a comparatively large payroll for the town. These attempts had resulted in failure. There were several reasons for this failure. With one exception all of the firms expressing an interest in locating in Dresden were manufacturers of apparel. The demands placed on the city of Dresden invariably included a building constructed at the expense of the city and its citizens and freedom from the demands of organized labor. In each instance the citizens of the town agreed to assist in keeping the town free of labor strife but during this period a shortage of funds in the city treasury precluded the expense of constructing a building. Neither were the citizens willing to form a development corporation to finance this type of venture. A second important factor was the prevailing attitude toward manufacturing of a hard core of influential

Dresden families. Many direct descendants of the founders of Dresden resided in the town. Most of them were antagonistic toward change, particularly the social and economic change associated with the factory system. As a result they quietly but vigorously fought each attempt to industrialize the town.

CHAPTER VII

THE BAY-BEE SHOE COMPANY

General Background

Since the year 1933 several citizens of Dresden had worked to secure a manufacturing plant with a payroll of some significance. During the decade of the thirties the Salant and Salant and Henry I. Siegal Companies, both manufacturers of apparel, had considered Dresden as a location site. In addition, a manufacturer of clay products had allegedly expressed some interest in Dresden as a location site.

Immediately after the termination of World War II, Wynn and Claggett, manufacturers of sportswear, appeared interested in locating a factory in Dresden. The offer of the company hinged primarily upon the willingness of the citizens of the town to provide a suitable building. The voters of Dresden were agreeable, but the shortage of construction materials precluded the immediate erection of a plant. As a result, the offer to locate in the town was withdrawn.

The lethargy characteristic of the leaders and citizens of Dresden in making plant sites and buildings available to prospective manufacturers was a factor in the unsuccessful attempts to secure a factory during the decade of the thirties. The desperate financial condition of the town at that time also dictated extreme caution in assuming additional financial burdens. In reply to the question, why did the Salant and Salant Company decide against locating in Dresden during this period, M. H. Gold, Vice-President of the company stated:

I believe that it was more the fact that other towns in West Tennessee were more aggressive in their efforts to induce plant location that decided our Mr. Arthur Lipshie in making his choices, and the fact that in their desire to secure employment they were willing to put up the necessary buildings on an attractive lease basis that made the final determination.

Dresden was not at any disadvantage as far as high power rates were concerned at that time because a similar condition existed in the neighboring towns, and I would hesitate to say that the backward appearance of the town militated against our entry there because we located in towns such as Parsons and Lexington around the same time, namely, 1933, and they were of the same general appearance as Dresden. Neither was the question of a trained labor force a factor inasmuch as the labor force in each town had to be trained by us.¹

¹Letter from Mr. M. H. Gold, Vice-President of Salant & Salant, Incorporated, 330 Fifth Avenue, New York 1, New York; May 27, 1961.

By the end of World War II it was apparent that the officials of Dresden would be unsuccessful in enticing manufacturers to the town unless broad concessions were made. Accordingly, a bond issue amounting to \$75,000 was voted by the citizens, the proceeds to be used to construct a factory building. A year later, negotiations were still being carried on with contractors to construct the building. Since there was little certainty as to prices or availability of materials, contractors were reluctant to enter into any binding contract with the officials of the city. In desperation, the construction of the building was placed under the supervision of a local builder, who was to take such actions as were necessary to construct the building in the absence of a contract. Excellent progress was made as a result of this rather unorthodox arrangement, and in February, 1948, the building was ready for occupancy.

Organization of the
Bay-Bee Shoe Company

The originator of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company, Mr. A. L. Drerup, was born and reared in West Tennessee. His knowledge of the shoe manufacturing business was acquired through experience as an employee and later as an executive of the Brown Shoe Company. The Drerup firm, a family controlled

corporation, began operating in Union City, Tennessee, in competition with the larger, well established Brown Shoe Company. The facilities of the Drerup family, particularly the building in which the firm was housed, were inadequate. Drerup requested assistance from the officials of Union City, but failed to secure an agreement with the city administration to provide adequate quarters. Undaunted by this rebuff, Drerup began to search for a new location in a community not far removed from Union City. He located a small building in Sharon, which was available immediately for temporary quarters. In the meantime, negotiations for a permanent site were being carried on with officials of other small towns. The town of Dresden, then in the process of constructing a factory building, appeared to be the logical choice as a permanent site. Acting as the principal negotiator, the elder Drerup was successful in obtaining a contract with the officials of Dresden in May, 1947. An annual rental payment of \$2,250, which represented a return of only 3 per cent on the city's \$75,000 investment, was agreed upon by the two parties. Holders of the bonds were guaranteed a 3 per cent return by the city. As a result of the contract with the shoe firm, no provision to amortize

the principal of the debt through rent collections was made by the Dresden officials.²

Paradoxically, the President of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company was the aggressor in negotiating for a plant site in Dresden; however, a candidate for mayor of the town at the time, acting in an unofficial capacity, aided materially in convincing the city administration that the shoe firm was the only plant available at the time and that a contract attractive to the manufacturer should be signed.

The management of the plant promised to begin production with 100 employees; however, few Dresden area people found the firm to be an immediate source of employment. Employees of the Sharon plant had been promised transfer rights and most of them took advantage of the opportunity to commute to Dresden, a distance of only eight miles.

The firm prospered in its new location and began suffering growing pains within a short time. The original building, consisting of 15,000 square feet, was inadequate within a year, and in April 1950 an addition of 3,200 square feet was completed at a cost of \$6,400. In 1952, a second addition was added to the plant, and three years

²Interview with W. E. Drerup, Vice-President of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company, July 27, 1961.

later a third addition was constructed. The cost of the three expansions was financed by the shoe firm. The town of Dresden financed a new wing to the plant in 1956, and again in 1959 an additional 22,000 square feet was added by the city. The combined investment in the plant, including the original cost, amounted to \$215,170 after the last addition was completed. The three additions financed by the Bay-Bee Shoe Company were turned over to the city of Dresden in return for prepaid rent. An amortization schedule for the expense of the city's outlay of \$92,000 for the 1956 and 1959 additions was set up by the shoe firm, the 1956 expenditure to be amortized at the rate of 4 per cent over a sixteen year period and the 1959 addition over a seventeen year span at the same rate of interest.

In spite of the fact that the shoe firm spent \$48,170 for expansion purposes and set up an amortization schedule for the cost of the city's expenditures for the two later additions, there was no agreement in effect between the two parties for the Bay-Bee Shoe Company eventually to own the building. The Vice-President of the Company indicated that the firm was utterly disinterested in assuming ownership of the plant. Eventually, amortizing the cost of the city's expenditures and then reverting back

to the original \$2,250 annual rental program appeared a far more convenient arrangement for the firm. The prospect of not having to pay city taxes on the property was also a factor in the management's desire to finance the expansion of the plant in this manner.³

Characteristics of the Shoe Firm

The stitch-down process is used by the Bay-Bee Shoe Company in manufacturing the low and medium-priced products at the Dresden plant. The firm specializes in producing footwear for infants and children through the age of approximately fourteen years.

In 1960, a separate corporation was chartered to manufacture shoes through the use of the vulcanizing process. This family controlled corporation included three members of the Drerup family and four non-members. The latter were not stockholders in the Dresden firm. The factory building, located twenty miles from Dresden in Paris, Tennessee, was to be constructed by the City of Paris at an approximate cost of \$299,000.⁴

³Ibid.

⁴The Commercial Appeal, Memphis, Tennessee, December 19, 1960.

Reasons for establishing a new corporation not associated directly with the Bay-Bee Shoe Company were of a technical nature. The stitch-down and vulcanizing processes differ in that machinery used in one process cannot be employed in the other. Separate shipping problems arise and the production time used in manufacturing the two types of shoes varies considerably. It was also pointed out that two separate markets for the shoes exists and that marketing policies, particularly in the use of sales personnel, were not identical.

Marketing procedure of the Dresden plant includes a policy of limiting the percentage of output sold to any one buyer to approximately 5 per cent. The Vice-President of the company indicated that pursuing such a policy helped to stabilize sales over the long run inasmuch as the effect on production of the loss of one customer tended to be rather insignificant. Layoffs due to seasonal fluctuation in orders from a few large buyers have been avoided as a result. The management of the firm was particularly pleased with the production and sales records of the plant since 1954. During the 1955-1959 period, the plant ceased production only nine days due to a lack of orders.

The Dresden firm has not pursued a policy of adver-

tising its products in any form other than shipping samples to large and small chain stores and to large independent stores located in the north, the south, and on the west coast. For a number of years, more than 50 per cent of the output has been shipped to buyers in the north. The management did not define "the north," neither was any mention made of the states receiving these shipments. The continental market is covered by a sales force consisting of two full-time men and one part-time man. Most of the orders received by the company are of a repeat nature and do not require frequent selling efforts by the sales force. A limited market has existed in Cuba, Puerto Rico and Hawaii. In recent years, however, the Cuban market has disappeared and sales in Puerto Rico and Hawaii have declined. The company has followed the policy of marketing overseas shipments through the office of brokers located in New Orleans.

A Decade of Growth

The employment and production record of the shoe firm has been a source of pride to the management of the firm and to the citizens of Dresden in general. Table 3 shows the output and employment history of the plant since the year of organization.

TABLE 3.--Output and Employment of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company
for the Years 1949-1960, Inclusive

Year	Production in Pairs	Per Cent Change in Output Compared to Previous Year	Average Annual Employ- ment	Per Cent Change in Employment Compared to Preceding Year
1949	399,385	+90.2	146	+41.8
1950	759,598	- 5.0	207	- 9.2
1951	718,158	+20.0	188	+ 7.8
1952	862,454	+15.1	203	+16.7
1953	992,631	-13.1	237	- 3.4
1954	860,702	+31.3	229	+ 4.4
1955	1,129,965	+ 5.0	239	0.0
1956	1,186,869	+26.7	239	+20.5
1957	1,503,668	+14.8	288	+10.4
1958	1,726,643	+14.0	318	+11.0
1959	1,968,896	-14.7	353	- 2.6
1960	1,678,680		342	

^aSource: Production and Employment Records of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company

The increase in production in 1950 of 90.2 per cent was influenced by several factors. New workers had been employed and trained by an experienced force transferred

from the Sharon plant. The first full calendar year of operations had been experienced, and general business conditions had improved considerably in 1950 compared to the previous year. The small addition to the plant constructed in the latter year was also an important factor.

Production increased measurably as the plant expanded in size. Output increased in 1952 by 20 per cent over the preceding year and again in 1953 by 15.1 per cent. Expansion of the plant in 1952 accounted partially for this increase although the aggressiveness of the sales department, headed by J. W. Drerup, Vice-President in charge of sales, was instrumental in promoting this remarkable growth of the company.

The recession beginning in the fourth quarter of 1953 was reflected by a significant decline in production, but recovery was rapid in 1955. Additional plant capacity constructed in the latter year helped make the 31.3 per cent increase in production possible.

A sharp spurt in output was again experienced in 1957, partially as a result of the expansion of the plant in 1956. Changes in the pricing policies of the firm were instrumental in increasing production and sales during the recession year of 1958. In the extremely competitive shoe

industry, price lines exist for unbranded, medium and low-priced children's footwear. Even though costs rise, prices are not easily adjusted upward because of the willingness of more efficient sellers to retain a stable price and absorb increases in cost. It is possible, however, in this industry of numerous sellers to lower price within reasonable limits with some assurance that all competitors will not follow with identical price concessions.

In 1959, the per cent of increase in output remained relatively stable compared to the preceding year despite an expansion in the productive capacity of the plant. It appeared that the dynamic growth of the company had leveled off inasmuch as in previous years each increase in capacity was followed by a significant gain in production.

The management of the firm has attempted to avoid commitments which serve to establish impediments to mobility. Both space and machines are leased whenever possible and large inventories of raw materials and finished goods avoided. The policy of maintaining small quantities of finished goods on hand also provides a hedge against losses due to changes in fashion. Gregory pointed out that

By necessitating highly specialized equipment, changes in dies and patterns, etc., fashion obstructs diversified production and reduces the mobility of

investment . . . and by requiring hand to mouth buying of materials, small-lot production, excessive inventories, mark-downs of unfashionable goods and by intensifying the seasonality of production and creating excess plant capacity, fashion results in great waste and inefficiency, which keeps prices high in most cases and wages and profits too low in many cases.⁵

In early November, 1960, the workers at the plant voted to unionize. The management of the firm, somewhat inexperienced in solving a problem of such magnitude, "laid-off" several of the leaders of the union movement. Unskilled replacements were employed to fill the jobs of the many skilled workers who were terminated. As a result, production for the year decreased 14.7 per cent.

The Labor Force, Characteristics and Remuneration

Few job opportunities exist for men in the Dresden area. Industrial diversification is not characteristic of the town inasmuch as the only remaining employer of any size is a plant producing women's outerwear. Female employees

⁵ Paul M. Gregory, "Fashion and Monopolistic Competition," The Journal of Political Economy, LVI, No. 1 (February 1948), 73-74. Also see the same author's "A Theory of Purposeful Obsolescence," The Southern Economic Journal, XIV, No. 1 (July 1947), 39-41; "The Deformed Thief," The Antioch Review, (Winter, 1947-48), p. 531; and "An Economic Interpretation of Women's Fashions," The Southern Economic Journal, XIV, No. 2 (October 1947), 156.

are used almost exclusively in the apparel plant.

Sobel and Wilcock, in studying the labor force of shoe firms located in four Illinois communities, found that 70 per cent of the workers were female.⁶

In contrast, 47 per cent of the work force of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company in 1960 were men. This seemingly large disparity in the number of men employed in the shoe firms in the two rural areas may be partially accounted for by the fact that apparel plants, employing women almost exclusively, are quite numerous in the area. Because of an imbalance in the composition of the labor force, a quite serious labor problem exists in the apparel business. Executives of the apparel firms in Dresden and Martin indicated that the number of female applicants for jobs has been declining steadily since 1957. The Martin manager was inclined toward the opinion that the situation would grow progressively worse. Newspaper advertising no longer brought a response from the women of the area, and government contracts filled at the Martin plant were being transferred for com-

⁶ Irvin Sobel and Richard C. Wilcock, "Labor Market Behavior in Small Towns," Industrial and Labor Relations Review, IX, No. 1 (October 1955), p. 54.

pletion to other plants owned by the company.⁷

Husbands of the currently employed women, however, have less to occupy them on the farm. Four hundred ninety-three farms in Weakley County were under contract with the Soil Bank Conservation Reserve Program in 1960. Of this number, 466 owners had all of their land under contract. These farms constitute over 50 per cent of the predominantly grain producing farms in the county. The Feed-Grain Program, the purpose of which is to divert corn and grain-sorghum acreage to grasses and legumes, has claimed 1,581 farms or 54 per cent of all farms in the county.⁸ More farm men are thus available for full or part-time factory employment. An incident may be used to illustrate the changing composition of the labor force in the area. During the first two weeks of the labor-management dispute occurring in November 1960 at the Bay-Bee Shoe Company, over 1,500 applications for jobs were received. Of this number approximately 200 were females over fifty years of age. The remainder were

⁷ Interview with Dave Wechsler, Manager, Martin Manufacturing Company, August 13, 1961; interview with Frank Prins, President, Dresden and Greenfield Manufacturing Companies, July 20, 1961.

⁸ Interview with George B. Fowler, County Office Manager, Agricultural Stabilization Conservation Service, Dresden, Tennessee, August 14, 1961.

men, most of whom were approaching middle age. As of 1960 the average age of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company employees was approximately 40 years. This was somewhat older than the management would like but appeared to be the best that could be done in an area characterized by a population older in comparison to the age composition of the people in the urban areas of the state. A full discussion of this problem will be presented in Chapter X.

The comparatively stable employment record of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company over the years and the fact that the company has offered extensive overtime work to its employees are also important reasons for the firm being able to attract a large number of male workers. Other factors include the lack of alternative job opportunities and the marked preference of the plant management for male employees for the most highly skilled jobs.⁹

As shown in Table 2, employment at the Bay-Bee Shoe Company fluctuated over the eleven year period of the firm's existence, but the trend was upward over this span of time. Average annual employment advanced from a low of 146 in the initial year of production to a peak of 353 in 1959.

⁹ Interview with vice-president in charge of manufacturing.

Included in these figures were all personnel drawing a commission, wage, or salary.

Increases in the work force did not follow a set pattern. Production increased by 20 per cent after the expansion of the plant in 1950; employment, however, advanced by a slower rate of 7.8 per cent. In contrast, production jumped 15.1 per cent in 1953 after the expansion of the preceding year while employment rose at a slightly higher rate of 16.7 per cent. New office space was the principal addition to the plant in 1955. No increase in personnel was required although increased sales resulted in a 5 per cent increase in production. In 1957, however, both production and employment increased substantially following the completion of a new wing to the plant in the preceding year. Production increased more in proportion than employment in 1958 and 1959 but declined more rapidly in 1960 due to the loss of experienced personnel and the hiring of new people without previous factory experience.

Additional machinery was added after each increase in productive capacity. The company rented all of its equipment prior to the decision of the Supreme Court in 1954 approving a ruling of the lower court which, among other things, ordered the United Shoe Machinery Corporation

to offer for sale all types of equipment formerly leased.¹⁰

In 1960, the company owned all of its fitting equipment but continued to rent the more expensive stitching, heeling, cutting, and eyelet machines.

It is possible for a new manufacturer of shoes to enter into business with very little capital. While the classical concept of pure competition does not exist in a perfect state, the unbranded shoe industry closely approximates this type of market structure. Very little advertising is required and the investment is usually small. This is particularly true when building space is furnished by the municipality and equipment rented. Technology changes slowly and plants are numerous and decentralized in location.

For example, in 1958 there were 1,115 manufacturers of footwear, excluding house slippers, and rubber shoes and boots, in the United States. The New England states led the nation with 31.2 per cent of all producers. The Middle Atlantic states were second with 28.8 per cent, and the South was third with 12.1 per cent. The East North Central, West North Central, and far Western states followed in

¹⁰ United Shoe Machinery Corporation v. U. S., 347 U. S. 521 (1954).

that order.¹¹

The availability of machinery on a rented basis and the ease with which concessions could be obtained from industry-starved rural towns encouraged the elder Drerup to terminate his employment with the Brown Shoe Company and start on his own. Short of capital, he was forced to maneuver boldly, yet discreetly, in negotiations with industry seekers in the area and to bargain for the best offer available. In remarking on the reason for locating in a small rural town, the vice president was emphatic in his opinion that cheaper labor was the deciding factor. Concessions received from the town appeared a minor reason. He did not, however, consider the possibility that firms in other areas of the country might be compelled to furnish their own plant facilities which could result in the tax-free, low rental producer in the small southern town having a distinct cost advantage. The lower average wage paid by the Bay-Bee Shoe Company in comparison to the national average was a visible cost advantage and one which the management stressed. The enthusiasm of the rural

¹¹U. S. Bureau of the Census, Tanning, Shoes, Industrial Leather Goods; 1958 Census of Manufacturers, (U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., 1960), p. 6.

people for providing employers a full day's work was also cited as an advantage small rural producers have over competitors in other areas of the country. While the management stressed the outstanding quality of the products of the company and the capabilities of the sales force as primary reasons for the high sales and production record of the firm in recent years, in all probability the cost advantages of the firm permitted price reductions sufficient to increase the market share of the shoe company and permit the plant to operate at full capacity during twelve months of the year.¹²

The average wage paid by the Bay-Bee Shoe Company in 1960 was \$1.40 per hour in comparison to a national average of \$1.59 in the same year.¹³ The average annual wage of all employees of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company in 1958 was \$3,226.10 compared to a national average of \$3,110.00. Using a one-tail test of the means and a level of significance of 5 per cent, the hypothesis of no significant difference in the national mean wage of all employees working

¹² The firm operated six days per week during peak business activity from 1957 through 1959.

¹³ National Shoe Manufacturer's Association, Facts and Figures on Footwear, 13th edition (342 Madison Avenue, New York 17, New York, 1960), p. 6.

in the shoe industry as compared to the average wage earned by the employees of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company was accepted; however, the average wage paid the employees of the Dresden firm was significantly higher, at the same level of significance, in comparison to the average wage paid employees of all firms in the South in 1958.¹⁴

Table 4 compares the average annual wages and salaries of all employees in the shoe industry in six geographic areas of the United States in 1958 with wages and salaries paid by the Bay-Bee Shoe Company in the same year. Table 5 compares the average annual wages of the production workers in all shoe plants in 1958 with the average annual wage of production workers at the Dresden firm. The definition of production workers is similar to that used by the 1958 Census of Manufacturers. Table 6 shows the number of employees of the Dresden plant for the years 1954 through 1960, the total wages paid to production workers separated from salaried employees, and the average annual wage or salary of each class of employees.

The degree of fluctuation in production in the shoe industry depends to a degree on the type of shoe manufactured

¹⁴U. S. Bureau of the Census, loc. cit.

TABLE 4.--Number of Employees; Total Wages and Average Annual Wage of All Employees in the Shoe Industry in Six Geographic Areas in 1958, Compared to the 1958 Statistics of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company

Area	Number of All Employees	Total Wages and Salaries Paid	Average Annual Wage or Salary
New England States	76,158	\$247,146,000	\$3,245.17
Middle Atlantic States	44,503	138,404,000	3,109.99
East North Central States	33,929	110,377,000	3,253.18
West North Central States	29,387	81,847,000	2,785.14
Western States	2,965	10,458,000	3,536.26
Southern States	28,369	74,189,000	2,615.14
Bay-Bee Shoe Company	318	1,025,900	3,226.10

^aCalculated from: U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Manufactures: 1958; Tanning, Shoes, Industrial Leather Goods (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office), p. 9.

^bObtained from the records of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company.

Makers of children's shoes usually have less idleness than, for example, manufacturers of ladies footwear. A more stable market results in a longer average workweek. In 1956 the average workweek in the entire industry was 37.2 hours, but had fallen to an average of 36.3 in 1960.¹⁵ No specific figures were released by the management of the Dresden firm,

¹⁵National Shoe Manufacturer's Association, op. cit., p. 7.

TABLE 5.--Number, Total Income, and Average Income of All Production Workers in the Shoe Industry in 1958 Compared to the Bay-Bee Shoe Company

Area	Number of Production Workers	Total Wages	Average Annual Wage
New England States. . .	68,279	\$197,577,000	\$2,893.67
Middle Atlantic States.	40,373	116,569,000	2,887.30
East North Central States.	30,199	87,659,000	2,902.71
West North Central States.	26,776	68,254,000	2,558.63
Southern States	26,066	63,254,000	2,445.60
Western States. . . .	2,621	8,373,000	3,194.58
Bay-Bee Shoe Company. .	272	690,122	2,537.21

^aCalculated from: U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Manufactures: 1958; Tanning, Shoes, Industrial Leather Goods (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office), p. 9.

^bObtained from the records of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company.

but it was stated that much overtime work had been necessary to enable the filling of orders in recent years. A longer workweek may account for the slight difference in the average annual wage of the workers at the Bay-Bee Shoe Company and the average for the entire South.

The average annual wage of all production workers in the shoe industry in 1958 was \$2,774.43. Using the comparison of means test and a level of significance of

TABLE 6.--Wages, Commissions and Salaries Paid to Production Workers, Salesmen, Executives and Other Non-Production Employees of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company for the Years of 1954-1960, Inclusive

Year	Wages Production Workers	Per Cent Change	Salaries and Commissions Sales Force	Per Cent Change	Salaries Executive and Other	Per Cent Change
1954	\$365,711	+24.0	\$36,429	+27.3	\$113,623	+26.2
1955	453,319	+ 9.5	46,386	+ 7.4	143,378	+ 7.2
1956	547,613	+25.6	49,826	+33.6	153,736	+21.1
1957	574,798	+20.1	66,563	+17.7	186,107	+13.0
1958	690,122	+17.8	78,296	+ 4.1	210,369	+ 4.0
1959	813,265	- 3.0	81,537	- 9.5	218,796	- 4.7
1960	788,576		73,795		208,600	

^aCalculated from the employment records of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company.

5 per cent, an hypothesis of no significant difference in the population mean annual wage and the mean annual wage of the production workers was rejected. The Dresden production workers received a significantly lower wage than the average for all production workers in the shoe industry. The same test was used in comparing the mean annual wage of all southern production workers with the mean wage on the Bay-Bee Shoe Company. No significant difference existed between the two means at the 5 per cent level.¹⁶

It may be assumed therefore that the highly significant difference in the average wage of all shoe workers in the South in 1958 compared to the average wage of all employees of the Dresden firm was due primarily to large commissions paid to the sales force and to higher salaries paid to executives and other non-production workers at the Dresden plant.

Referring to Tables 3 and 7, it is noted that as output increased additional production workers were employed. No specific pattern seemed to exist, although in

¹⁶ Although the Bay-Bee Shoe Company was not drawn at random from a population consisting of all manufacturers of children's unbranded shoes, the firm was considered a component part of the universe. The writer readily acknowledges that, had a firm been chosen in a completely random manner, the observation selected could have been located in any state within the nation.

only one year, 1956, was production increased without a corresponding increase in production workers. In more recent years, production workers were added as output increased but not in the same ratio. For example, production increased 31.3 per cent in 1955 compared to the preceding year. In comparison, only a 4.8 per cent increase in production workers was necessary. In contrast, the production work force was increased 24.6 per cent in 1957 compared to the preceding year. During the same time period, production increased only 26.7 per cent. Indications are that the efficiency of the production workers varied considerably during this time period.

The sales force, paid a minimum salary plus commissions, showed a marked increase in efficiency during this six year period. Salaries and commissions increased by 123.8 per cent from 1954 through 1959. In the meantime, production, as shown in Table 3, jumped from 860,702 pairs of shoes in 1954 to 1,968,896 pairs in 1959, an increase of 129 per cent. As shown in Table 6, the number of non-production workers, other than sales personnel, advanced from 40 to 44, or 9.3 per cent, during this same time period. The fact that the management was able to increase production 129 per cent over a six-year span without adding any sales personnel was remarkable. On the other hand,

TABLE 7.--Number of Production, Non-Production and Sales Employees of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company for the Years 1954-1960, Inclusive, and the Per Cent Change in Each Year Compared to the Preceding One.^a

Year	Number of Production Workers	Per Cent Change	Number of Non-Production Workers	Per Cent Change	Number of Sales Personnel	Per Cent Change	Total Number of Employees
1954	186	+ 4.8	40	+ 2.5	3	0.0	229
1955	195	0.0	41	0.0	3	0.0	239
1956	195	+24.6	41	+ 2.4	3	0.0	239
1957	243	+11.9	42	+ 2.4	3	0.0	288
1958	272	+12.5	43	+ 2.3	3	0.0	318
1959	306	- 3.4	44	0.0	3	0.0	353
1960	205		44		3		342

^aCalculated from the production records of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company

the slight increase in other non-production employees during this period indicates that the firm was not utilizing fully the talents of these employees during the years prior to the late fifties.

Table 8 shows the total number of employees, the number of non-production workers, the mean income, and the percentage of the labor force engaged in non-production work in six geographical regions of the United States in 1958. For comparative purposes, the same information is included for the Bay-Bee Shoe Company.

The mean salary of non-production workers at the Dresden plant in 1958 was not significantly higher than the average income of \$5,578.48 of all non-production employees of shoe firms throughout the nation. The means test and a level of significance of 5 per cent was used in making this comparison; however, the difference of \$1,740.91 between the mean income of all southern employees in this category compared to the Dresden mean was significantly lower. It seems, therefore, that the sales, managerial and other non-production workers received a much larger proportionate share of the wages and salaries paid by the Bay-Bee Shoe Company during the prosperous period from 1954 through 1959. As shown in Table 8, only 7.8 per cent of all southern workers in the shoe industry were non-production workers.

TABLE 8.—Number of Employees, Number of Production Workers, Mean Income and the Per Cent of All Employees Engaged in Non-Production Work in the Shoe Industry in Six Geographical Regions of the U. S. in 1958 Compared to Like Data of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company

Area	All Employees	Number Workers	Income Non-Production Workers	Mean Income Non-Production Workers	Per Cent Column 3 of Column 2
	All Employees	Non-Production Workers	Income Non-Production Workers	Mean Income Non-Production Workers	Per Cent
New England States	76,158	7,879	\$49,569,000	\$6,291.13	10.3
Middle Atlantic States.	44,503	4,130	21,835,000	5,287.92	9.3
East North Central States. .	33,929	3,730	22,718,000	6,090.62	9.1
West North Central States. .	29,387	2,611	13,593,000	5,206.05	8.9
Southern States. .	28,369	2,303	10,442,000	4,534.09	7.8
Western States. .	2,965	344	2,085,000	6,061.05	11.6
Bay-Bee Shoe Company	353	46	288,665	6,275.00	12.4

^aCalculated from the production records of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company.

For the nation as a whole, 9.5 per cent were in this category. The Bay-Bee Shoe Company, with 12.4 per cent of the entire work force engaged in pursuits other than production, appeared to be rather unbalanced in comparison to the South and other areas, with the exception of the West.

The management of the firm did not release total sales and total cost figures; however, a few significant ratios were revealed. For example, the labor cost was 35 per cent of total cost in 1960.¹⁷ Raw materials constituted 55 per cent, and all other costs including transportation of raw materials amounted to only 10 per cent of total cost. Raw materials were acquired from four principal locations in Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Ohio, and Missouri. Railroad transportation facilities were not used by the company primarily due to motor transportation being more economical and delivery much faster.

The labor turnover rate at the plant has remained low throughout the years, averaging less than one-half of one per cent per month prior to the labor trouble in late 1960. The large number of male workers in the plant may account partially for the low turnover rate. A large por-

¹⁷ Sobel and Wilcock in their study of four small shoe manufacturing firms in Illinois indicated that the labor cost varied between 20 and 25 per cent of total cost.

tion of the female workers hired by the firm over the years were new entrants into the labor force, but comparatively few quit work for reasons other than pregnancy. Of the 342 workers at the Bay-Bee Shoe Company in 1960, one hundred thirty, or 38 per cent, had been with the company in excess of five years.

Women workers at the plant do such jobs as stitching, cementing, inspecting, dressing or inking, lacing, and packing shoes. The stitching process is considered a highly skilled operation any time two parts are sewn together with the human eye the only guide. Men perform such duties as cutting, thread lasting, placing midsole to upper, rough rounding, trimming midsole and outsole to a uniform width, goodyear stitching, stitching outsole to midsole and upper, and doing the complicated job of trimming midsole, outsole, and upper to a smooth finish. All of these jobs are considered skilled and operators are paid a piece wage commensurate with the quality and quantity of output produced.

Unskilled workers usually receive the legal minimum wage. Such jobs as heelng, polishing, tacking midsoles, intra-plant transporting of finished goods and raw materials, and placing lasts on racks to be combined with shoes are considered unskilled.

Of the 1960 labor force, 28 per cent resided within the city limits of Dresden, and 62.6 per cent, including those residing in the town, lived within a radius of approximately six miles.¹⁸ Employees having a Dresden, Route, address are serviced by rural mail carriers traveling west from Dresden to the Adamsville community. The route then turns south crossing Sharon highway 89. It continues across the Greenfield highway 54 and turns east to within three miles of Gleason. The route threads its way north to within a short distance of Latham and then turns back toward Dresden, thus completing a circle around the town of approximately six miles radius.¹⁹

Slightly more than 10 per cent of the workers came from Martin, or the rural area near Martin, a distance of some 10 miles. The Greenfield area, 11 miles away, provided 8.1 per cent of the labor force, and an identical per cent of the workers came from the Sharon area, 8 miles from Dresden. The remainder commuted from Palmersville, a distance of 10 miles; from Gleason, a distance of 9 miles, and from Union City in Obion County, a distance of approximately

¹⁸Calculated from the 1960 payroll records of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company.

¹⁹This information provided by the Dresden Postmaster.

22 miles. Of the total number of employees in 1960, 53 per cent resided in the rural areas of three counties, with Weakley the home of 96 per cent of the work force.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DRESDEN MANUFACTURING COMPANY

Organization in Dresden

In January 1948, a representative of the Western Garment Company appeared before the Board of Aldermen of Dresden and expressed a desire to locate one of a chain of factories in Dresden provided sufficient labor was available and a suitable building provided. Initially, the civic clubs of the community did not take seriously the overtures of the representative of a firm then operating plants in St. Louis and Salisbury, Missouri, and Greenfield, Tennessee.¹

At that time an additional bond issue for a municipal structure was impossible, but several business leaders in the community believed that, with a concentrated effort made toward creating enthusiasm among the people, the citizens of the community would underwrite the required funds needed to construct a building.

¹The Dresden Enterprise, January 9, 1948.

On March 5, 1948, citizens of the town met at the Masonic Hall and mapped out plans to erect an \$85,000 building. Procedures to organize the Dresden Development Company were formalized at that time, and pledges to purchase shares were received almost immediately. At the meeting, officials of the Western Garment Company made the proposition that if Dresden would erect a building they would lease the structure for a period of ten years with the annual rental price equal to 6 per cent of the outlay of funds required to erect the building. The company also promised to purchase \$10,000 in stock of the Development Corporation, and, in addition, officials stated that if the plant became a reality, the manager of the firm would erect a \$20,000 home in the community. Within a week after the meeting, attorneys had filed an application for a charter for the Dresden Manufacturing Company, makers of Jean Harper Coats for women. Within ten days, the amount of stock subscribed in the Dresden Development Company amounted to \$91,000.²

The management of the Western Garment Company insisted that the Dresden Development Company lend assistance

² Ibid., March 5 and March 12, 1948.

in surveying the area in order to determine the depth of the prospective labor force within the environs of the town. This request was acted upon immediately.

The following full-page advertisement was placed in the local paper of March 19, 1948.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR HELP--NEW GARMENT WORKERS

IMPORTANT NOTICE
TO ALL WOMEN WANTING STEADY EMPLOYMENT

Through the concentrated efforts of the business men of Dresden, ample funds have been raised to build a new modern factory building in Dresden for the manufacture of women's coats and suits. This factory will be operated by the same company that recently opened the new factory in Greenfield and is now operating so successfully.

ALL WOMEN INTERESTED IN SECURING STEADY EMPLOYMENT AND PAY WHILE LEARNING WILL REPORT TO THE

MASONIC HALL IN DRESDEN
NORTH SIDE SQUARE
SATURDAY, MARCH 27, 1948

Between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Both experienced and inexperienced women will be used. Training classes will be started while the building is under construction, and you will be paid a satisfactory wage while learning.

DON'T FAIL TO REGISTER
ON SATURDAY, MARCH 27, 1948
IF YOU WANT EMPLOYMENT

DRESDEN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
A. W. Gaylord O. W. Beard G. A. Harper Raymond Pritchett
Tommie Loyd³

³ Ibid., April 2, 1948.

The registration of March 27 was unsatisfactory to the management of the Western Garment Company who stated that, even though the officials of Dresden had acceded to their request for a building to house the plant, the firm positively would not operate unless sufficient labor was available. Although contemplating a maximum labor force of three hundred or less, the management was insistent that at least 1,000 registrations for employment be obtained. As a result of this ultimatum the officials of the Dresden Development Company placed the following advertisement in the local paper.

ATTENTION
TO ALL WOMEN WHO WANT STEADY EMPLOYMENT

THE PROPOSED FACTORY IN DRESDEN WHICH WILL
MANUFACTURE LADIES' COATS WILL NOT BE LOCATED
IN DRESDEN

UNLESS A REGISTRATION OF THE AVAILABLE LABOR
TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, APRIL 3 AND MONDAY,
APRIL 5, SHOWS THAT THERE IS SUFFICIENT LABOR
TO SUPPORT SUCH A FACTORY

No white women will be employed by this factory except those who register on the above date, or except those who previously registered on March 27.

BOTH EXPERIENCED AND INEXPERIENCED WOMEN WILL BE USED

Training classes will be started while the building is under construction, and you will be paid a satisfactory wage while learning. 50¢ per hour is the least wage that will be paid any machinery operator.

AGAIN LET US STRESS THE FACT THAT THIS FACTORY WILL NOT COME TO DRESDEN UNLESS THERE IS SUFFICIENT LABOR TO SUPPORT IT.

SO IF YOU WANT TO WORK, AND YOU WANT THIS
FACTORY IN DRESDEN
YOU MUST REGISTER!⁴

The fact that some difficulty was experienced in obtaining the desired number of registrants was significant in view of the effect an editorial, written by the editor of the Enterprise, had on the people of the area. The newspaper editor urged all women between the ages of 18 and 90 to hurry to Dresden and register for employment. Approximately 1,000 women responded, but the number of over age and physically unfit registrants was not announced. It was revealed, however, that women registered from all sections of Weakley County and from portions of neighboring Henry and Obion counties.

On March 26, 1949, the formal opening of the Dresden

⁴ Ibid., April 9, 1949.

Garment Company occurred. People from widely scattered sections of the state accepted the invitation of the garment manufacturer to attend the gala ceremony. Entertainment was provided by a well-known band and refreshments were served throughout the day. A banquet was served by the American Legion Auxiliary in the evening with prominent politicians the guests of honor. Representative Albert Gore, later to become United States Senator from Tennessee, was the principal speaker.⁵ This was indeed an auspicious occasion; nothing similar had occurred in the modern history of the town.

No such fanfare accompanied the opening of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company, Dresden's first large manufacturer and one destined to be the most important cog in the economy of the town. The garment plant's importance as a source of employment for Dresden area women need not be minimized; however, the plant has never approached the exaggerated employment figure of 300 which was widely publicized by the vendors of stock in the Dresden Development Company. Only 125 women were initially employed, several of whom commuted from the Greenfield plant in the capacity of instructors. In 1960 the firm employed only 163 people, a very modest increase in

⁵ Ibid., April 1, 1949.

comparison to the employment record of the shoe company.

General Background of the Company

The representative of the Western Garment Company, Frank Prins, Sr., in charge of negotiating with officials of Dresden for a location site, was a native of Indiana. His formal training consisted of a high-school diploma and a business course taken in 1908 at the Eastman Business College in Poughkeepsie, New York. Mr. Prins learned the garment-making business through experience, having been employed by and later becoming sole proprietor of a plant in Kansas City, Missouri.

After spending over two decades in the garment business, the elder Prins decided to enter into a field utterly foreign to him. As a result of this decision he sold his plant in Kansas City and began a new career as a farmer in his native state of Indiana. The depression era of the thirties was not a propitious time for an inexperienced man to enter the chaotic agriculture industry. Quickly realizing the folly of his decision, Prins sold his farm holdings and salvaged the necessary capital needed to purchase an interest in the Western Garment Company, then headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri, and operating plants

in the latter city and in Salisbury, Missouri.

Having married a native of Greenfield, a small town in Weakley County, Tennessee, Prins was familiar with the area and its potential as a location site for a firm in the needle industry. In 1946, he prevailed upon the Board of Directors of the Western Garment Company to support his suggestion that negotiations should begin immediately with officials of the town of Greenfield. The board agreed and Mr. Prins was dispatched to Greenfield to discuss the possibility of a manufacturer entering the agricultural oriented community. His efforts were crowned with almost instantaneous success, and in December, 1947, the Greenfield Manufacturing Company, chartered by the Western Garment Company as an independent corporation, began production of female outerwear in a new building constructed from the proceeds of a municipal bond issue.

Stimulated by the success of the Greenfield plant during the first few months of its operation, the Board of Directors of the St. Louis organization decided that a second plant in Weakley County would be profitable. This decision resulted in the organization of the Dresden Manufacturing Company in 1949 as a distinct entity in itself, separated from the Western Garment Company and the Green-

field Manufacturing Company.

A few months later, the intermediary of the Western Garment Company, Frank Prins, Sr., was successful in obtaining a contract with the officials of a third Weakley County town. This agreement resulted in the Westmar Manufacturing Company, also chartered as a separate corporation, beginning operations in 1951 in a building provided by the town of Martin.

In 1951, the elder Prins and his Harvard-trained son, Frank Prins, Jr., severed the relationship of the Prins interests with the Western Garment Company. As a result of the agreement, the Prins family took over complete ownership of the three Weakley County plants and in turn gave up all stock in the St. Louis firm.

Believing that a consolidation of their Weakley County holdings would be more profitable, the Prins family in 1955 moved the equipment in the Martin plant to Greenfield and dissolved the Westmar Manufacturing Company. The corporate charters in the two other Weakley County towns were also dissolved. Simultaneously a new charter for the Greenfield Manufacturing Company and subsidiary, the Dresden Manufacturing Company, was obtained. Operations in

Martin ceased entirely.⁶

Marketing, Financial, and
Labor Policies

Prior to 1951, the sales force of the Western Garment Company, operating out of the St. Louis headquarters, marketed the products of the Greenfield and Dresden plants throughout the country in direct competition with all other manufacturers of ladies' and misses' outerwear. This method of distribution was followed for some time by the Prins family after they acquired full control of the Weakley County operations. In 1955, however, the younger Prins was successful in negotiating a contract with officials of Sears, Roebuck and Company. As a result of the agreement between the two parties, the entire output of ladies' dress coats produced in Greenfield and all of the misses' and ladies' car coats manufactured in Dresden have been marketed through the giant Sears organization.

Since 1950, scores of manufacturers of apparel throughout the state changed from marketing through the medium of expensive sales organizations to the direct, more economical method of selling to only one distributor. For

⁶Interview with Frank Prins, Jr., Vice-President of the Greenfield Manufacturing Company, July 20, 1961.

example, in 1958 Sears, Roebuck and Company purchased \$155,238,000 worth of merchandise from 160 different producers in 59 cities throughout Tennessee.⁷ The possibility that the two Weakley County apparel plants might over-produce and subsequently accumulate large inventories during periods of lagging sales and stagnant financial conditions was discounted by the management. It was pointed out that production had not ceased entirely in the years intervening between the signing of the contract. The fact that the large chain, through its Research and Production Department, worked closely with all suppliers mitigated against abrupt production stoppages due to changes in style or manufacturing methods. The close association between the producers and the one buyer nullified in some degree the inherent weakness associated with a restricted sales outlet. The Sears organization also enhanced its position of monopsony through the medium of acquainting each producer with all managerial and production innovations developed by their research staff. This policy made it highly unlikely that any one producer could become more efficient

⁷ The Commercial Appeal, Memphis, Tennessee,
October 29, 1959.

than its competitors.⁸

The merger of the Dresden and Greenfield plants in 1955 and the adoption of a new marketing method in the same year perhaps saved the fledgling Prins firm from financial disaster. Employment in the Dresden plant, however, did not increase materially after the new marketing pact was signed. As a matter of fact, the only expansion in the history of the plant occurred in 1956 when the city of Dresden financed, from the proceeds of a bond issue, a \$41,000 wing to the building.

A second merger occurred in December 1961, when the Prins firm together with fourteen additional manufacturers merged into the Kellwood Corporation. In 1962, the fifteen firms operated 23 plants in 10 states and marketed approximately 90 per cent of the Kellwood products to the firm of Sears Roebuck and Company.

The Western Garment Company, through Frank Prins, Sr., located plants in Weakley County during the decade of the forties and early fifties primarily because of the presence of a large reservoir of inexperienced female labor and the ease with which concessions of an economic nature could be

⁸ Interview with Frank Prins, July 20, 1961.

obtained from officials of small towns in the area. The fact that there were no unionized plants in the county at that time was not a principal motivating factor. The "business climate" in the area was of far more significance. In defining this term, the younger member of the Prins team listed the following characteristics: (1) An alert administration in each town willing to leave no stones unturned in promoting manufacturing and providing for the needs of existing plants; (2) An administration willing to do everything within the letter of the law to insure industrial peace; (3) A well-informed citizenry eager to make sacrifices, financial if necessary, to acquire manufacturing plants; and (4) A labor force willing to give a full day's work for the pay received.

When the three Western Garment plants were established in the county, the market for the finished product was not concentrated in any section of the United States, and most of the woolen raw material came from distant Maine. Obviously, the principal location policy of the firm was to locate in rural areas where unskilled female labor was plentiful and capital, in the form of space and building, was easy to obtain at a minimum cost.

In more recent years the Prins family has acquired

practially all raw materials in the South. Finding a source of supply in North Carolina has proven very economical inasmuch as motor transportation costs declined from an average of 7½ to 2½ cents per yard. Since Sears, Roebuck and Company became the sole buyer of the firm's products, finished goods have been shipped by motor transportation to the principal Sears distribution points in Atlanta, Dallas, and Chicago. Occasionally, coats have been shipped direct to retail stores throughout the nation; however, over 50 per cent of the output of the two Weakley plants has gone to Atlanta. Shipping costs of finished goods have traditionally been absorbed by the buyer.

The average age of all production workers at the two Prins' plants was thirty-five years in 1960, in comparison to an average of forty years at the Bay-Bee Shoe Company. Ninety per cent of the workers in the two garment plants were female while only 53 per cent of the shoe production employees were women. The management of the shoe company and the garment plants in Dresden and Greenfield had no policy concerning the minimum educational level required of applicants for production jobs. Officials of the garment plants indicated that practically all jobs were of a semi-skilled nature and were learned rather

quickly. The company followed a policy of placing all new employees on a six-month probationary period. Discharge occurred if an employee failed to reach a pre-determined level of efficiency within the twenty-six week period. Individual company benefits, including group insurance and paid vacations, were not initiated until after the probationary period expired.

Characteristics of the
Outerwear Industry

In 1958, there were only 1,099 manufacturers of women's and misses' outerwear in the United States. Of this number, 129 failed to reveal sufficient statistical data to be included in the analysis of the industry by the Department of Commerce. Of the 970 reporting, 566, or 58 per cent, of these plants were located in the Middle Atlantic States with New York State alone having 496 producers, or 51 per cent of the entire industry. Table 9 shows the location, number of employees, total payroll, and average annual income of workers in each geographic area.

The mean income of all workers in the industry was \$3,993.88 in 1958. Excluding the South, the mean for the remaining five geographic regions was \$4,081.36. Using the test of equality of means, the hypothesis of no

TABLE 9.—Geographic Location, Number of Employees, and Average Annual Income of All Workers Engaged in Manufacturing Ladies' and Misses' Outerwear in 1958

Area	Number of Establishments	All Employees Number Payroll	Average Income Per Worker
Middle Atlantic States. . . .			
Pacific Coast and Mountain States	566	13,750	\$ 58,664,000
East North Central States.	177	5,185	19,844,000
New England States.	71	3,238	14,083,000
Southern States.	57	2,106	8,126,000
West North Central States.	56	2,334	6,884,000
Totals	43	3,475	12,567,000
	970	30,088	\$120,168,000
			\$ 3,993.88*

^aCalculated from: U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Manufactures: 1958: Women's and Misses' Outerwear, U. S. Government Printing Office), p. 23 B-9.

* The sum of column 4 divided by the sum of column 3, (the population arithmetic mean).

significant difference in the mean annual income of all employees outside the South engaged in producing ladies' and misses' outerwear compared to the mean income of all southern workers in the industry was rejected. The income of the southern employees was significantly lower than the income of similar workers in all other areas of the United States in 1958. Table 10 shows the number, total payroll, and mean annual income of production workers in the entire industry in 1958.

The mean annual income of all production workers was \$3,563.69. Excluding the South, the mean was \$3,653.17. The hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean annual wage of production workers in the South and the mean wage of similar workers throughout the rest of the nation was rejected at the 5 per cent level of significance. Southern workers received a significantly lower wage in 1958. Southern manufacturers of ladies' and misses' outerwear had an average cost advantage of \$1,091.57 per worker over competitors in the other areas of the country.

The ladies' and misses' outerwear industry consisted in 1958 of 1,099 plants. The 970 plants reporting data sufficient to be included in the analysis of the

TABLE 10.--Number of Production Workers, Payroll, and Mean Annual Income of Employees Engaged in Producing Ladies' and Misses' Outerwear in 1958

Area	Production Workers Number	Payroll	Mean Annual Income
Middle Atlantic States	10,758	\$42,298,000	\$3,932.77
East North Central States	2,764	10,773,000	3,897.61
Pacific Coast and Mountain States	4,472	15,369,000	3,436.72
New England States	1,700	5,459,000	3,211.18
West North Central States	2,937	8,776,000	2,988.08
Southern States	2,021	5,177,000	2,561.60
Totals	24,652	\$87,852,000	\$3,563.69*

^aCalculated from: U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Manufactures: 1958; Women's and Misses' Outerwear (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office), p. 23 B-9.

*The sum of column 3 divided by the sum of column 2.

industry by the U. S. Department of Commerce, varied in size from one to four employees up to a maximum of 500. Table 11 below shows the number of establishments by size of work force.

None of the manufacturers was sufficiently large to exercise any influence on price. As shown in Table 11,

TABLE 11.--Number of Reporting Establishments Manufacturing
Ladies' and Misses' Outerwear in 1958
by Size of Labor Force

Number of Establishments	Size of Labor Force	Cumulative Per Cent
12	250-499	100.0
44	100-249	98.8
114	50-99	94.2
260	20-49	82.5
157	10-19	55.7
178	5-9	39.5
205	1-4	21.1

^aCalculated from: U. S. Department of Commerce,
Bureau of the Census, Census of Manufactures: 1958;
Women's and Misses' Outerwear (Washington: U. S. Government
Printing Office), p. 23 B-10.

82.5 per cent of the reporting firms had less than 50 employees. Advertising by these small firms was virtually non-existent and a comparatively small capital outlay was required to enter the industry. Young Frank Prins, Jr. indicated that competition grew keener year by year and that rising costs had to be absorbed by the individual firm.⁹ His statement was substantiated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics which showed that the wholesale price of ladies' and misses' outerwear remained at 110.2 (1947-49=100)

⁹Interview, Frank Prins, Jr., July 10, 1961.

during the month of April for three consecutive years.¹⁰

The number of people employed in the 970 reporting firms in the industry declined from 44,158 in 1954 to 30,088 in 1958, a 26.9 per cent decrease. The unadjusted value of production of these firms also declined from \$509,390,000 in 1954 to \$490,079,000 in 1958. Table 12 shows a comparison of the number of employees, total value added and value added per employee in the industry in the years 1954 and 1958.

The unadjusted value added per employee increased slightly in each area in 1958 compared to 1954 (see Table 12). During the same period employment in the industry decreased markedly, with the largest, a 56.7 per cent decline, occurring in the South. Changes in technology occurred slowly between these two recession years despite the assistance rendered by outside organizations.

The entire industry averaged paying 60.1 per cent of the unadjusted value added per employee in wages and salaries in 1958. The Middle Atlantic States with the largest value added per employee and the second largest average annual wage, paid the lowest per cent, 54.02, of

¹⁰U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Wholesale Prices and Price Indexes, April 1959-1961, p. 8.

TABLE 12.--A Comparison of the Number of Employees, Total Value Added, and Value Added Per Employee in the Years 1954 and 1958 for the 970 Reporting Firms Engaged in Manufacturing Ladies and Misses' Outerwear

Area	1958			1954		
	All Employees	Value Added	Value Added Per Employee	All Employees	Value Added	Value Added Per Employee
Middle Atlantic States	13,750	\$108,589,000	\$7,897.38	18,734	\$128,987,000	\$6,881.88
Pacific Coast & Mountain	5,185	32,313,000	6,232.01	6,695	38,637,000	5,771.02
East North Central States	3,238	21,670,000	6,692.40	3,926	21,329,000	5,432.76
West North Central States	3,475	20,472,000	5,891.22	3,842	20,483,000	5,331.34
New England	2,106	14,907,000	7,078.35	2,553	15,793,000	6,186.06
Southern States	2,334	10,410,000	4,460.15	5,397	21,661,000	4,013.53

^aCalculated from: U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census of Manufactures: 1958; Women's and Misses' Outerwear (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office), p. 23 B-10.

the value added per employee in wage payments. The largest amount of value added per employee distributed in wage payments was 66.1 per cent in the South. Southern area manufacturers paid the smallest average annual wage to all employees and received the smallest value added per employee in comparison to manufacturers in the rest of the nation. Apparently, the southern producers were the least efficient in the entire industry in 1958 despite the average labor cost advantage of over \$1,000 per production employee accruing to them.

CHAPTER IX

LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS IN A RURAL SOCIETY

Introduction

Characteristically citizens of completely agricultural-oriented communities have distrusted and to some degree feared industrial unions. Having never experienced working stated time periods for wages, nor being directly supervised by management, it is understandable that some antagonism toward unions existed among Weakley County rural workers prior to and during the period of transition from an almost exclusive agricultural economy to a somewhat more diversified one. Elected town officials, business and professional men, and prominent farmers formed the nucleus of civic club membership in the rural town. Bias and antagonism toward labor unions was and is characteristic of this group. This attitude has on occasion been nurtured by direct or implied threats of potential, and at times established, manufacturers to locate elsewhere if union sentiment emerged and developed into a strong institution.

Firms characterized by small capital structures, almost atomistic competition, low product value added per employee, and semi-homogeneous products are generally low-wage, female-labor oriented plants. More frequently, manufacturers in this category are the only ones available to industry hunters representing small, resource-poor towns similar to Dresden.

None of the employees of the small firms operating in Dresden prior to 1948 had ever walked off the job for any reason. Since labor trouble had been non-existent in the history of the town, it was with horror and indignation that town folk greeted the walkout of twenty employees of the new Bay-Bee Shoe Company on May 30, 1948. The plant had been in operation only slightly more than thirty days and a strike occurred. The shocked management and local civic leaders were relieved to learn that unionism was not an issue. The strikers, consisting principally of women, merely wanted time-and-a-half pay for the legal holiday. As the strike was of a spontaneous nature and lacking in leadership and support from the remaining eighty workers, the result was inevitable. Seventy of the strikers were fired, and the threat to industrial peace subsided.¹

¹The Dresden Enterprise, June 4, 1948.

The Union Issue

By 1951, the Weakley County Municipal Electric System, a corporation created by action of the Weakley County Court and subsequently the State of Tennessee, had matured and was distributing efficiently purchased Tennessee Valley Authority current to all areas of the county. Each incorporated town and the county contributed funds to organize the corporation under Chapter 32, Senate Bill No. 113, of the Public Acts of Tennessee. Offices and installations were placed in each of the towns with the principal headquarters finally resting in Martin after a prolonged period of legal and verbal wrangling between the people of the county-seat town and Martin residents.²

On Monday, December 10, 1951, the first organized effort to secure a union in the county was made by the maintenance employees who, having allied themselves with the Jackson, Tennessee, Local 835 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, walked off the job and announced that a strike was in progress. The County Power Board refused to agree with this ultimatum and the union-sought contract was not signed. Almost immediately resi-

²Ibid., December 13, 1950.

dents of the small towns witnessed the first picketing to occur in the history of the area as the pickets began their silent vigil of marching in pairs in front of each office in the county.³

The first semblance of violence occurred when an unemployed workers applied for a job at the Martin office. On emerging from the building, he was confronted by pickets who allegedly assaulted him and by a union agent from Nashville, who reportedly threatened him with a deadly weapon. The agent was immediately indicted by the Weakley County Grand Jury on two counts of intimidation and assault. Subsequently, the County Court issued an injunction restraining strikers from trespassing on the property of the System. The first sabotage action occurred when an object was thrown over a 13,000 volt power line, which disrupted transmission of power throughout the south end of the county. The business agent of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers denied that members cut the power line because, as he stated, "The union did not operate that way."⁴

³ Ibid., December 14, 1951.

⁴ Ibid., December 21, 1951.

Immediately after the strike began, new employees were hired to replace the striking workers. This action perhaps stimulated the severe violence which continued throughout the ensuing months. Doubtless, the most serious acts occurred in early March, 1952, when the car of the manager of the power system was dynamited and destroyed. Early the same morning the automobile belonging to the new maintenance foreman was severely damaged. When the violence occurred the two men and their families had retired for the evening. Damage to personal property, other than the automobiles, was negligible, and no one was injured. Apparently, the acts were committed in an effort to intimidate the men rather than harm them physically. During the same week holes were shot through sub-station transformers, draining the oil out of the units and effectively curtailing service throughout the county. A reward of \$1,500 was posted by the County Sheriff for information leading to the arrest and conviction of persons responsible for the vandalism, and an additional \$1,000 reward was tendered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of persons guilty of dynamiting the automobiles belonging to the manager and foreman. The presence of rewards did not curtail violence, however, as vandals continued to harrass the

normal operations of the system through such acts as placing sugar in the engines of the firm's trucks, cutting ignition wires, and breaking headlights.⁵

Within a few weeks after the dynamiting of the automobiles, power poles were blasted from the earth throughout the county. A substation located near the city limits of Dresden was blown to pieces resulting in service being completely disrupted. Wires tumbled across railroad tracks and stopped all traffic for hours.⁶

The Memphis Commercial Appeal in an impassioned editorial condemned the violence taking place in Weakley County and charged that anarchy had developed to such an extent that only action by state authorities could prevent additional property damage and perhaps bloodshed.⁷ Almost immediately town officials from all over the county met at Dresden to discuss the possibility of imposing an 11:00 P.M. curfew in all incorporated towns and, subsequently, the Tennessee Bureau of Criminal Identification dispatched agents to assist local officers in combatting the wave of

⁵ Ibid., March 14, 1952.

⁶ Ibid., May 9 and May 23, 1952.

⁷ The Commercial Appeal, (Memphis) June 17, 1952.

sabotage taking place in the county. Local and state officers were unable to solve the series of crimes and no arrests were made. The presence of state authorities, however, was sufficient to stop temporarily the violence, and comparative calm prevailed for several months.

In October, 1952, almost eleven months after the strike began, power poles were blasted throughout the county. A terrific explosion occurred near Dresden, causing business buildings and homes to wobble and windows shake. Power was off for hours in the eastern end of the county. T.B.C.I. and local officers began an investigation at once but again no arrests were made. This episode, however, marked an end to the violence, although the union maintained pickets in each town for several years after this incident occurred.⁸

In the meantime, attorneys representing the Weakley County Municipal Electric System had petitioned the Chancery Court of Weakley County to hear the plea of the embattled Power Board that the strike was unlawful and therefore illegal. The case, fought furiously by attorneys for the union, languished in court for years before a decision

⁸The Dresden Enterprise, op. cit., October 10, 1952.

was rendered in 1955 supporting the plea of the attorneys representing the Power Board. Immediately, the attorneys for the union appealed the decision. Finally, in 1957, the Court of Appeals in Jackson, Tennessee, rendered a verdict in support of the decision of the lower court. The union attorneys countered with a Writ of Certiorari, which was denied by the U. S. Supreme Court in February 1958. The pickets were subsequently removed from all towns in the county and the matter was settled after almost seven years of litigation and violence. In discussing the decisions of the courts, the principal attorney for the Weakley County Municipal Electric System stated:

The ruling in this case was a finding by the Courts of Tennessee of what is known as the common law. The court simply ruled that it was against public policy for any branch of government to enter into a labor union contract. The case was the first in Tennessee to reach the Appellate Courts. It made new law in Tennessee, but there were cases in several other states in which the Appellate Courts came to the same conclusion as did the Courts of Tennessee.⁹

⁹ Letter from Allen J. Strawbridge, Attorney of Dresden, Tennessee, Chief Counsel of Weakley County Power Board in the case of Weakley County Municipal Electric System versus Vick. Full particulars of the decisions are given in Volume 309, Southwest Reporter (2nd.): 792, 43, Tennessee Appeals, 524.

Unionism at the Dresden
Manufacturing Company

Before the Western Garment Company established plants in Weakley County, all production was centered in Salisbury and St. Louis, Missouri. These two plants had become unionized several years before the Weakley County venture primarily due to the economic strength of the International Ladies' Garment Worker's Union. The sales force of the firm sold in direct competition with all other manufacturers of ladies' and misses' outerwear. As a result of the aggressive tactics of the union, it was virtually impossible to find a market for the products of the company without a union functioning in the two plants and a union label attached to the garments. The officials of the company, therefore, encouraged, within the letter of the law, the formation of a union in the Greenfield, Dresden, and Martin plants.

The union was established at the Dresden plant with much fanfare on September 7, 1950. A national representative of the International Ladies' Garment Worker's Union came from Kansas City, Missouri, to assist in the installation ceremony. The president of the company and a prominent Dresden attorney were the principal speakers at the

meeting held in the Dresden Masonic Hall. Approximately 75 per cent of the labor force of the Dresden plant joined the union; however, the organization was destined to operate only a few years.¹⁰

After the Prins family was successful in negotiating a marketing contract with Sears, Roebuck and Company, the union ceased to be an aid to management and had outlived its purpose. The management of the giant Sears organization, having never negotiated a union contract with any of its employees, preferred to purchase merchandise from non-union plants. In the intervening years between the signing of the Sears contract in 1955 and the demise of the union in 1958, the leadership of the garment union was unable to secure by bargaining any substantial benefits for the employees of the firm. The management, perhaps anticipating union demands, instigated pay increases, improved working conditions, and broadened fringe benefits in each instance before the union could act. Interest in the union waned and membership dropped. During this three year period the management was, and has since remained, very solicitous of the welfare of the employees. Employment

¹⁰ The Dresden Enterprise, October 6, 1950.

remained steady, and individual workers were granted access to the office of management any time a conference was desired. All officers of the defunct union were retained after it was officially voted out in 1958 on the anniversary of the original installation of the organization at the Greenfield plant ten years before.¹¹

No effort has been made to unionize the Prins' plants a second time since the union was voted out in 1958. The employees feel fairly treated and regard their employers as benevolent men having the welfare of employees constantly in mind. The national leadership of the International Ladies' Garment Worker's Union has been regarded with suspicion by former officers of the locals at Dresden and Greenfield. In reply to the question, what do you think of unions today, the former business agent of the Greenfield and Dresden locals replied that

It makes me sick to the pit of my stomach to even think of the union. If they (the unions) were run right they could be of benefit to the workers, but too often the national officers are men who put the advancement of the union first and the welfare of the members second. Personally, I have never been more happy in my job than I am now, and all the other women

¹¹ Interview with Mrs. Myrtle Dunn, initial Financial Secretary of Local 461, The Dresden Manufacturing Company, August 2, 1961.

seem perfectly content. We never discuss the union, and to tell you the truth, I don't want to discuss it with you.¹²

Unionism at the Bay-Bee Shoe Company

The employees of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company first voted to unionize in December 1952. The election, conducted under the auspices of the National Labor Relations Board, was won by the margin of a single vote. Due to the closeness of the election, the union and management remained approximately equal in strength. As a result, the union was unable to obtain any tangible benefits for the workers. In December 1954, the union was voted out.¹³

For approximately six years the plant operated free of organized labor. On November 23, 1960, however, the employees voted in favor of affiliating with the AFL-CIO Boot and Shoe Worker's Union. Local 749 was established and officers duly elected. Contract negotiations began immediately, but the year came to an end without an agreement being reached by the two parties. Union officials insisted

¹² Interview with Mrs. Louise Posten, Greenfield, Tennessee, Business Agent of the Dresden and Greenfield Locals, August 6, 1961.

¹³ Interview with Bill Rainey, Business Agent of Local 749 of the Boot and Shoe Worker's Union, The Bay-Bee Shoe Company, Dresden, Tennessee, August 3, 1961.

on (1) the right to use the services of an independent, unbiased arbiter in any dispute not settled amicably between management and a representative of the local; (2) a dues checkoff; (3) the leaders of the union to be guaranteed employment; (4) broaden the program of fringe benefits; and (5) to grant bidding rights for jobs according to seniority and a wage of \$1.00 per hour be guaranteed employees transferred from accustomed jobs to less familiar ones. The management refused to sign a contract calling for these provisions and a strike was called on March 6, 1961.¹⁴

The business agent asserted that the quest for job security was the principal reason for the union being organized. He asserted that the majority of workers discharged by the company over the years were not fired due to a lack of quality or quantity of work produced but primarily because of personal reasons. Additional pay was never an issue, but dissatisfaction with employee-employer relations was of primary importance. The practice of intimidation and force on the part of management was alleged by the union representative. He cited the case of his wife who was discharged four months prior to the union election "without

¹⁴Interview, Bill Rainey, August 3, 1961.

reason" and was not given an opportunity to present her side of the issue. The agent further charged that the officials threatened the workers on frequent occasions with "you do a certain amount of work or you are fired; we have hundreds of applications for jobs." It was also alleged that during the strike the company hired unskilled workers in large numbers to replace the strikers. Many of these unskilled laborers were placed in common labor positions, and the ex-common laborers placed in skilled jobs. After the strike was finally settled on April 20, 1961, the company maintained this force and failed to call a large number of strikers, whom the company labeled "trouble makers," back to work. As a result, the union lodged a complaint of discrimination with the National Labor Relations Board. The business agent, having been an employee of the company since 1952, asserted that the plant was originally a "fine place to work." At that time unskilled labor was not so plentiful in the area due primarily to the proximity of the Milan Arsenal, then employing some 8,000 people. As the arsenal declined as a source of job opportunities, relations gradually changed from friendly, paternalistic treatment on the part of management to a more critical,

demanding attitude.¹⁵

An employee of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company, who, after five years of employment with the company, voluntarily resigned a few months before the union was voted favorably upon in November, 1960, was questioned concerning the manner in which managerial authority was exercised in the plant during her tenure with the firm. She contended that management-employee relations were excellent during her five years of service, thereby completely contradicting the opinion of the business agent of the union. She indicated that at the time of her resignation she held the management in high regard. Her reason for quitting was of a personal nature, as a job was secured nearer her home.¹⁶

Company officials refused to reveal any information concerning the labor trouble. The vice-president in charge of manufacturing indicated that he did not know why the strike occurred and suggested that the interviewer quiz the union leaders in an attempt to determine reasons for the strike and the subsequent charge lodged by the union

¹⁵ Interview, Bill Rainey, August 3, 1961.

¹⁶ Interview with Mrs. Ruth Pentecost, Martin, Tennessee, August 24, 1961.

with the National Labor Relations Board.¹⁷ The only information reported by management during the process of the strike was the terse announcement on April 20, 1961 to the effect that

The strike was settled under terms of the contract worked out some weeks ago with the workers receiving the same fringe benefits as they have had for the past five years.¹⁸

The strike did not occur without violence. Fifteen strikers were tried in Circuit Court, found guilty, and fined on charges of disorderly conduct and intimidation brought by a non-striker who alleged that he was attacked in his home. On another occasion, several union members were tried in Sessions Court on charges of destruction of property and assault and battery. These charges grew out of an alleged interference by strikers with a truck when it entered the factory grounds.¹⁹

The hearing by the National Labor Relations Board of the charge of discrimination lodged by the union against the company did not materialize. A "compromise"²⁰

¹⁷ Interview with W. E. Drerup, July 27, 1961.

¹⁸ The Weakley County Press, (Martin) Tennessee, April 20, 1961.

¹⁹ Ibid., March 24 and 31, 1961.

²⁰ In a brief interview with the counsel for the Bay-Bee Shoe Company, the attorney referred to the decision of the NLRB as a compromise. August 24, 1961.

was agreed upon between the union and company which affected materially the strength of the Local. After the strike was settled on April 20, 1961, a total of 76 employees were not called back to work; however, during the course of several weeks, 14 of the 76 were rehired. As a result of the "compromise" the company was relieved of any responsibility for the remaining 60 unemployed workers. The union remained in effect at the plant but was leaderless and without authority. The demise of the union was predicted on the anniversary of the signing of the contract.²¹

²¹ Interview with Tommy Thompson, Chief Accountant of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company, Dresden, Tennessee, August 29, 1961.

CHAPTER X

COMMERCE, EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

Historical Background

Prior to the construction of hard-surfaced roads in the county, Dresden merchants were in a position to take advantage of the custom of farm folk of paying frequent visits to the county-seat town. Without any tangible means of amusement and recreation the rural people, particularly the male members of the family, enjoyed the court sessions and horse trading jousts which occurred at least once monthly. Sales of merchants in the town fluctuated violently as nation-wide depressions and local recessions erupted from time to time, but "court days" and "first Mondays" were eagerly awaited in expectation of expanding sales and handsome profits.

The merchants expected hard times when severe drouth or excessive rains occurred. The dismal period following the intensive drouth of 1900 remained in the memories of several Dresden business men when the terrific floods of 1928 inundated crops throughout the Dresden trade

area. Corn that was knee high disappeared under an avalanche of water as rain continued to pour day after day, and land, once rich in plant nutrients, washed "clean to the hardpan."¹

The depressing drouth of 1930 cost the merchants thousands of dollars in sales and extensive delay in collecting accounts as the sun beat down day after day, month after month, drying grain and vegetable gardens to a crisp. Farmers sold their stock at any price and sought frantically to salvage anything of an edible nature to dry and can for the long winter months ahead. The worst drouth since 1874 combined with tumbling prices for the meagre farm products wrested from the parched soil left farmers and merchants in the clutches of an inexorable chain of debt, the farmers dependent upon the latter to sustain them and the merchants dependent upon creditors and crumbling financial institutions for surcease from an intolerable situation.²

Depressions hit the little country merchants severe blows. By September 1914, only a month after World War I erupted, markets for cotton and corn had virtually

¹The Dresden Enterprise, July 6, 1928.

²Ibid., August 15, 1930.

disappeared. Merchants were soon accepting bales of cotton in exchange for groceries and clothing. The depression was sharp but short in length, and prosperity was abundant during the middle and final phases of the conflict, only to decay again within a few short months after peace was declared. Farm prices tumbled in 1921, with some crops, particularly tobacco, remaining in the barns without buyers months after the crops were harvested. Town and country residents alike became downcast, pessimistic and indifferent.³ Business depression was destined to be the lot of citizens of the area for months and years to come. Incentive, however, did not long remain dormant. Civic clubs and local political leaders were always ready to assist the farmers with suggestions as to what to plant, when to plant, and how to prepare farm products for market. The survival of all merchants in the town hinged on the income of the farmer from the time Dresden was founded until the first large employer of hourly workers began operating in the town 123 years from the date of the first charter granted the little community in 1825. The fact that the merchants were able to survive with comparatively few liquidations

³Ibid., June 17, 1921.

during this long period and particularly during the tarnished decade of the twenties and the seemingly hopeless era of the thirties was indicative of the spirit and determination characteristic of the rural merchant.

Throughout the long period when roads were being slowly improved and state and federally financed projects were formulated and placed under construction, questions concerning the economic future of the small town were discussed in local civic and group meetings, and editorial after editorial on the subject flowed from the hand of the energetic editor of the local newspaper. In one of his passionate appeals to the business men of the community, the editor asked a question of grave concern to all of them; a question which has remained inadequately answered and unsolved thirty years later when again the spectre of economic decay seemed as imminent as it appeared then the following editorial was written.

Will the coming of automobiles and good roads mean the decay of the small country towns? Will trade dry up and move to larger cities? It will if the merchants and business and professional men do not work together. There must be a concert of action, throwing to the discard littleness, spite, envy, hate, things that are eating at the very heart strings of Dresden. It will require modern, sane, careful merchandising to do it.

The Enterprise has never been pessimistic. Rather,

we have been optimistic. But the fact is that, if we do not wake up and take on new life, the time is not far away when the decay of Dresden will set in.⁴

The bleak decade of the thirties was weathered by most of the merchants of Dresden. A few liquidations occurred, the most newsworthy being the demise of the Dresden Candy Company, a business which was considered a permanent institution in the town a few short weeks before the public auction took place. Property valuations fell precipitously and delinquent taxes became commonplace. In 1931 cotton prices declined to a low of 3½ cents per pound and harrassed farmers were forced to appeal for emergency relief. Over \$10,000 in delinquent taxes were on the records of the City Recorder as the year 1935 came to a close. As a result, threats to raise the city tax rate, unless delinquents paid taxes in arrears, were voiced repeatedly by the administration. During this depressed period a severe shock was sustained by the citizens when by mere chance a deficit in city funds was shown to be the result of malfeasance in office on the part of a city official. Almost immediately, the plight of the city became desperate as interest on the bonded indebtedness of

⁴ Ibid., June 15, 1929.

the town could not be met. The frantic city officials sought relief through the medium of the State Legislature. Senate Bill No. 603, introduced by Senator Moore in 1935, permitted the administration power to refund the city's debt provided suitable arrangements could be made.⁵

The beginning of World War II heralded a new era of prosperity for the community. As the agricultural industry flourished, business became brisk and profits stimulated merchants into spending for long deferred property improvements. The advent of rationing and shortages was endured without noticeable clamor. A few firms opened in Dresden for the first time during this period, and some closed for the duration as patriotic merchants answered a call to the colors.⁶

The first years of the post-war period were prosperous, but by late 1950 questions concerning the status of business conditions in Dresden were being raised. The city administration expressed an intent to introduce parking meters in the town in the same year, a move opposed violently by the merchants, who proceeded to file a com-

⁵ Ibid., March 31, 1931; August 12, 1932; and December 20, 1935.

⁶ Ibid., October 22, 1943.

plaint in Chancery Court against the city government. An injunction prohibiting the city from erecting the devices was granted by the Court.⁷

A few months later the injunction was overruled, and the angry businessmen threatened an appeal to the State Supreme Court, an act which was not prosecuted due to the failure of a committee of merchants to raise sufficient funds.

Business conditions continued to deteriorate throughout the fifties. From time to time worried citizens wrote letters to the editor of the local newspaper deplored the semi-deserted condition of the town on days formerly teeming with shoppers. Farm people blamed the parking meters, the lack of shade trees in the courthouse yard, the hot, steaming stores, and "no place to pass the time of day with neighbors and friends." Merchants responded with sharp criticism of the parking meters and defense of their merchandising policies and condition of the business houses in the town.⁸

No one blamed comparatively low farm prices and

⁷ Ibid., November 10, 1950.

⁸ Ibid., June 18, 25, 1954; and July 2, 9, 18, 1954.

changing technology in agriculture for the depressed business conditions in Dresden; neither were such factors cited as, for example, the constant migration of people from the county to more progressive areas and the tendency for people interested in purchasing shopping goods to drive to larger cities where a variety of goods were available. The cure for Dresden's economic ills seemed a simple remedy, merely getting rid of the hated parking meters. The device was a nuisance to farmers unused to such contraptions, and to the business men of Dresden the meter spelled financial ruin. The furor was too much to combat by the city officials, and in an ensuing referendum the parking meters were abolished.⁹ The economic result of the referendum, however, was a considerable loss in revenue to the city without a corresponding gain in sales by the merchants.

Business Practices, Income
and Employment in Retail Firms

Traditionally the merchants of Dresden have followed the practice of charging the accounts of farmers for necessities purchased during the interim between planting and selling cash crops. For decades the primary cash crop was

⁹ Ibid., July 2, 1955.

tobacco, and accounts were paid once annually if the crops were of good quality and markets adequate. During the nineteenth century it was common practice to "carry" customers for long periods of time. For example, the firm of J. W. White charged the account of George W. Raulstone for merchandise purchased throughout the year 1862. Raulstone's account, shown in Figure 3, listed a total of \$206.47 in purchases in 1862 with only \$5.00 paid on account. Apparently, the general store proprietor closed his business at the end of 1862 with the intention of reopening in 1864. Raulstone's account was carried forward to the latter date. Paradoxically, the long credit terms existing in Dresden in 1862 indicated that the supply of merchandise in the town exceed the supply of media during the first two years of the war.

Also a tradition followed by Dresden merchants for many decades was the practice of visiting the homes of debtors each month for the express purpose of collecting accounts receivable. In a personal interview with each merchant (See Appendix A) the question was asked: "Do you offer credit terms to your customers and, if so, what type of collection plan do you have?" Of the 44 retail firms operating in Dresden in 1960, four continued to

Figure 3. George W. Raulston in account with J. W. White & Co., October 1861 through December 18, 1862.

Source: Collection of Fayne G. Taylor, Dresden, Tennessee

pursue the time-worn custom of visiting the homes of customers once monthly to collect current accounts. Eight of the firms did not grant terms of any nature, and two owners stated brusquely that collections were made "when the crops were in." Five firms offered credit on conventional terms of thirty days, or accepted notes in exchange for longer terms. The remaining twenty-seven businesses offered credit, but none had any preconceived plan of collection.

One businessman stated:

I have never had a plan to follow in collecting what people owe me or ever owed me. In my five years in business, I have lost less than \$700.

The single proprietorship form of business organization prevailed in the retail segment of the economy in Dresden during the year 1960. Of the forty-four firms in the town, thirty-one were operated by single proprietors and thirteen were operated as partnerships. The need of modern managerial tools was expressed by a minority of the owners. In reply to the inquiry: "Do you maintain accounting records and, if so, do you employ a bookkeeper and an annual independent audit?" it was revealed that only fourteen firms employed either full or part-time bookkeepers. Of this group only five used the services of an independent certified or public accountant at the end of

the fiscal year. Of the remaining thirty firms, twenty-eight entrepreneurs did their own accounting or used the non-paid services of their wives. Two owners did not keep records of any kind.

If longevity is a criterion of success, the Dresden retail businesses have achieved a noteworthy record. The median number of years the forty-four firms had been in existence under the same family management was 10.5 years at the end of 1960. Nine of the firms had been in business in excess of twenty-one years and ten less than three years. Of the remainder, five had been operating three to six years, five from six to nine, four from nine to twelve, five from twelve to fifteen years, five from fifteen to eighteen, and one from eighteen to twenty-one years.¹⁰

The hypothesis that small-town retail business owners are comparatively immobile and indigenous to the area in which they locate was supported by this study. The owners of forty-one of the forty-four firms in Dresden

¹⁰ In a recent survey of business practices of small firms, the Small Business Administration investigators considered only non-manufacturing firms with net worth between \$20,000 and \$200,000. It was shown that 90 per cent of these firms survived at least five years even though a large majority of the owners totally disregarded the use of modern managerial tools. "Small Business Pays Penalty of Ignorance," (Business Week, August 5, 1961, pp. 107-108).

were natives of Weakley County. Entrepreneurs in thirty-one of the businesses were born and raised in Dresden, attended school in the town, and knew most of their customers by their first names. Only two firms were operated by natives of states other than Tennessee, and one owner was born in a nearby county.

That retail merchants in rural areas neglect to employ locational and financial analyses of their businesses prior to engaging actively in the trade was a second hypothesis supported by this study. Following are typical replies to the question, "What were your reasons for going into business in this town?"

"My husband became ill and died. I had to do something."

"I was a farmer, but bad health caught me. I had to go into something else."

"I purchased this business for my son so that he would have something to do, but here I am taking care of it."

"My husband had a heart attack and wanted to return home."

"For years I was a customer of the owner of this place. It looked like a good business, so when I got a chance, I bought it."

"Just to have something to do."

"To be at home."

"I started working in this type of business while a boy, so when I could afford it, I bought a place. I know nothing else."

"I've been working for myself all my life, first in the restaurant business, next the trucking business, and now this. I just figured that a man could never do anything working for somebody else."

"I wanted to quit farming, and this gave me a chance to get out."

"A Dresden girl is my wife. She wanted to live at home, so I went into business."

"There was no particular reason for me going into this particular business. I just drifted into it after I was discharged from service."

"I wanted out of that dead-end job I was in, and I thought this place had possibilities if a man ran it right."

"I have been in this place since 1912, but to tell you the truth, I don't know why I started this business."

"This business has been in the family over 80 years. I am just continuing a tradition."

"This business is just a side line with me. I make my living trading horses, cows, or anything else with farmers or anybody that has something to swap."

The retail merchants in Dresden varied from aged, poorly trained, physically ill men and women to a few vigorous, young and middle-aged entrepreneurs, highly skilled and experienced in the trade and keenly aware of regional and local trends in their respective fields. The median age of the retailers was 47.5 years and the median educational background of the group was 9.2 years.

The facilities of seventeen of the firms were owned by the operators and the remainder leased. For all firms, expenditures for improvements and expansions averaged only \$11,000 per year for the five-year period ended December 31, 1960. The amount spent for the reconstruction of two buildings damaged by fire in 1956 was not included in the total investment of \$55,000.

Only sixteen of the owners had previous experience in the fields in which they were engaged. The remaining twenty-eight firms were managed by people with varied backgrounds. The following replies were given to the question, "What type of work did you do previous to that in which you are now engaged?

"I was a long-distance truck driver."

"Electrical and construction worker at Oak Ridge."

"Cleaned and polished cars."

"Worked in a machine shop in Chicago."

"Worked in a war plant in Detroit."

"I was a night watchman."

"Worked in the Bay-Bee Shoe factory."

"Operated a pool room."

"Was a truck driver."

"I was in the theater business here until I closed the place due to a lack of business."

"Did common labor work in Memphis."

"Worked for the government as a clerk."

"I was in the restaurant business prior to buying this place."

"Was an inspector for the State Highway Department."

"Housewife."

"I was a farmer."

"For years I was in the auto dealer business. This business looked better."

"Was in the grocery business first, then went into this."

"I worked for Western Union and the American Telegraph Company before I opened this business."

"My first business was a restaurant. I sold out to try this."

"I tried the restaurant and meat market business before trying this one."

"For years I worked for the Du Pont Company but quit to come home. I didn't learn anything at the Du Pont place of help to me here."

"My last job was walking the picket line here in Dresden during the Weakley County Municipal Electric System strike. I would have gone into anything to get away from that."

"I began as a salesman but resigned in order to run this family business."

The Commercial District

A duplicate of the original Sanborne Map of the business district of Dresden is shown in Figure 4. When this drawing was completed in 1910, there were twenty-two retail businesses located on the four sides and in the immediate rear of the west side of courthouse square. The design of the business section, with the courthouse the focal point, was a commonly used plan duplicated by many towns in West Tennessee. In 1910, the courthouse and commercial buildings were without electric lighting and central heating systems. Kerosene lamps were used almost exclusively for lighting purposes and wood-burning stoves the most commonly used method of heating. The plank sidewalks around the public square were in perpetual darkness at night, and the unpaved streets alternated between the two extremes of thick coats of dust in the summer months and ankle-deep mud combined with animal waste during the winter season. A public water system was non-existent, as most of the water used by man and beast was drawn from unsanitary cisterns often located near outdoor privies. At that time, many of the prominent Dresden citizens were opposed to civic improvements as excerpts from the following editorial

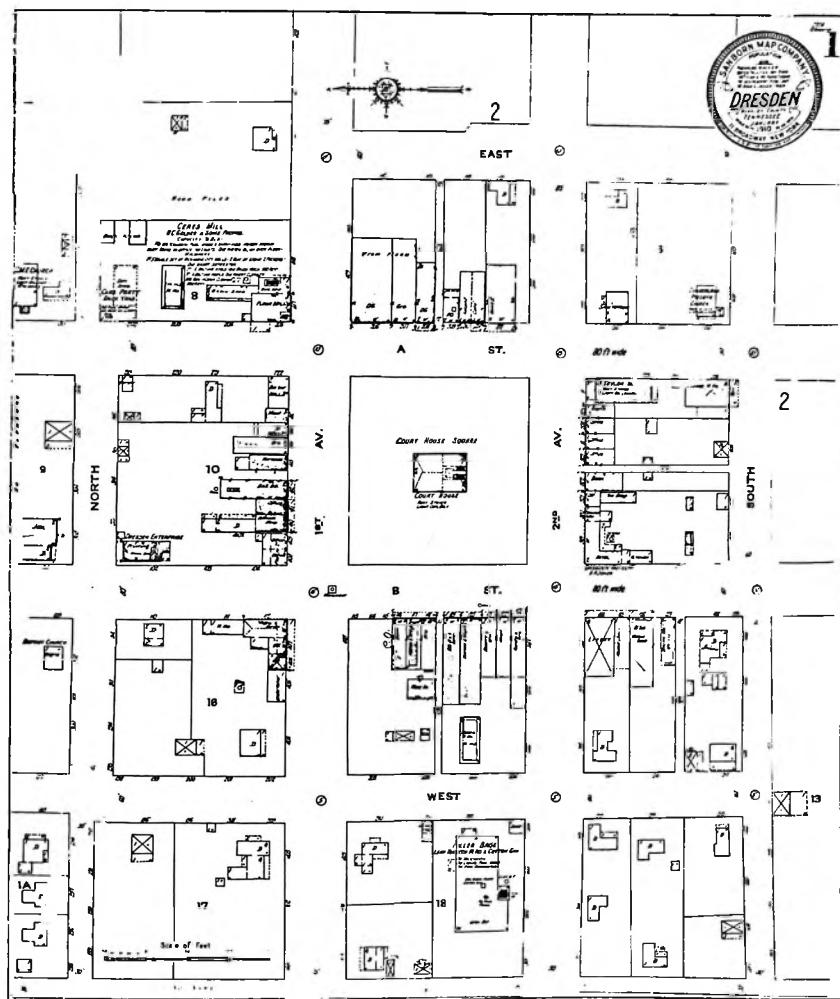


Figure 4. Map of Dresden, Tennessee, 1910.

Source: Collection of Carmon C. Bowlin, Dresden, Tennessee.

will attest.

Talk about electric lights, waterworks, sewerage, paved streets, etc., for Dresden! It's all foolishness! Didn't your daddy and granddaddy live and die right here in Dresden, and go to heaven at last, without any of those new-fangled notions? And are you better than they were? How did you get such foolish notions in your head anyway? What if other towns do have these things? Is there any reason why Dresden should have them? Do such things--all these modern new-fangled things--do either of these places any good at all? . . .¹¹

Twenty-three buildings housed all of the business firms located on or near the public square in 1910. Fifteen of the buildings were constructed of brick and eight were frame. Barrels of water were placed in each building for use in fighting fire as there was no organized fire-fighting system. Neither did the town own any of the modern fire-fighting equipment in general use during that particular era. It was tersely stated on the upper right corner of the Sanborne Map that

Water facilities not good
No steam and no hand engine
No independent hose cart
No hook and ladder truck

In the intervening years since the map was made and the editorial decrying civic progress was written, some of the brick and all of the frame buildings have been replaced.

¹¹ The Dresden Enterprise, September 20, 1910.

Wide, well illuminated streets surround the ornate \$817,392¹² brick and marble courthouse, which was dedicated in 1950 as a replacement for the eighty year-old brick and frame building destroyed by fire two years before. As of late 1960, many of the commercial houses were in need of modernization and repair and merchandising techniques were in need of improvement. The operators of some of the stores used outmoded methods of display, with building-length counters piled with merchandise without regard to arrangement. The interior structures of several buildings were badly in need of remodeling, and centrally located air-conditioning systems were rare. As in 1910, when several vacant buildings existed, one entire building, obviously in need of repair, was void of tenants.

Table 13 shows the type and number of retail establishments in Dresden in 1910. In contrast, Table 12 shows the types of businesses and low, high, median, and total sales of retail firms operating in the town in 1960.

No furniture stores or specialty shops existed in Dresden in 1910. Commercial limes and fertilizers were not in general use, and trucks and cars had not roared into the

¹² Ibid., March 3, 1950.

TABLE 13.--Retail Business in Dresden--Year 1910^a

Type of Business	Number
Book Store	1
Building Supplies (Lumber)	1
Drug Stores.	3
Drugs and Paint, Combined.	2
Groceries.	3
Groceries and Hardware, Combined	2
General Stores	1
General Dry Goods Store	1
Harness Shops.	3
Hardware Stores.	1
Hardware and Implements, Combined.	1
Meat Markets	2
Restaurants.	1

^aSource: Map of Dresden, Tennessee, made by the Sanborne Map Company in 1910.

county to upset the tranquil and sedentary lives of the farm and town residents. Dealers in fuel and ice were not in demand as residents used deep excavations under their homes to maintain cool meats and fluids during the summer season. The harness shop owner, a combined retail and service business, catered to the needs of wagon and buggy drivers, when new harness for mules and horses was purchased or old paraphernalia repaired.

The medicinal needs of the residents of the town and country were well supplied by the three stores devoted

exclusively to drugs and two others combining the rather unorthodox lines of paints and drugs. A book store supplied the books for children enrolled in the privately owned Dresden Training School and also attended to the cultural needs of the reading public. One may only ascertain by conjecture the type of merchandise stocked by the one general store in the town; however, the single general dry goods store apparently restricted inventory to wearing apparel for adults and children.

As in 1910, firms selling products related to the transportation industry were numerous in the little community fifty years later. The harness and wagon shops of a half century ago had given way to the gasoline service station. The number of drug stores had declined and the general store had ceased to exist. The coming of electric power resulted in appliance and home furnishing establishments appearing on the scene, and hardware and farm equipment dealers supplanted the combined hardware, grocery, and implement stores. Specialty shops replaced the general store, but the general dry goods store, classified as Apparel and Accessory stores in Table 14, still remained, and the independent grocer continued to operate.

TABLE 14.--Classification of Retail Firms in Dresden, Tennessee, Showing Types of Stores and Low, High, Median, and Total Gross Sales for the Year 1960^a

Classification	Number	Gross Sales in Dollars			
		Low	High	Median	Total**
Gasoline Service Stations	7	\$15,000	\$ 76,000	\$ 35,000	\$275,400
Auto Dealers--New and Used	1	.....	650,000	.....	650,000
Used Cars Only	1	.....	11,000	.....	11,000
Grocery Stores	9	2,250	175,000	30,000	525,750
Eating and Drinking Places	5	10,000	22,600	17,450	80,550
Apparel and Accessories	2	22,500	50,000	.....	72,500
Men's and Boys' Clothing and Furnishings Stores	2	42,500	50,000	.....	92,500
Children's and Infants' Wear Stores	1	.....	60,000	.....	60,000
Lumber and Other Building Materials Dealer	1	.....	200,000	.....	200,000
Fuel and Ice Dealer	1	.....	40,000	.....	40,000
Furnishings, Home Furniture and Equipment	2	35,000	125,000	.....	160,000
Household Appliances and Radio Stores	2	23,634	52,500	.....	76,134
Hardware and Farm Equipment	3	52,000	300,000	100,000	452,000
Miscellaneous Retail Stores	7	11,500	160,000	52,500	<u>384,424</u>
Total Gross Sales					\$3,080,258

^aSource: Personal Interview.

*The classification of retail enterprises in Dresden followed the procedures used by the U. S. Department of Commerce, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, County Business Patterns, First Quarter, 1956, Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, Part 7, pp. 244-45.

**Rounded off to the nearest dollar.

The range in gross sales of \$172,750 in 1960 was largest in the grocery business. No chain grocery stores were in operation in the town; however, the store doing the largest volume of business was easily accessible, had adequate parking facilities, modern building and equipment, and had affiliated with a strong, voluntary wholesale chain. A second had organized on a co-operative basis, modernized the building and equipment and was moderately successful. A third was housed in cramped quarters, but the energetic management awarded liberal credit terms and concentrated on rural deliveries. The result was a gross volume of \$100,000 in 1960. In several of the remaining grocery stores, the pot-bellied stoves still roared and gave off stifling heat during cold winter days while town and country residents continued to use the premises for meeting places to discuss politics and other pertinent topics of the day. The cracker barrel and large slabs of unsliced cheese were extinct, but basically the management had not changed materially over the last half century.

Eating and drinking establishments appeared the most mobile type of business in the small community. At the end of 1960, the median number of years these stores had been in business was only one-half of one year.

Closely following were the seven filling stations with a median life of two years, and the nine grocery stores with a median of five years. The sixty years of continuous existence of one of the two apparel and accessories stores established a longevity record closely followed by the fifty-seven years of operation established by the dealer in lumber and building materials. The three hardware and farm equipment stores and the seven stores classified as miscellaneous each had a median life of fifteen years. Each of the two drug stores had been in operation fifteen years and of the two stores dealing in men's and boy's clothing, one had been in business seventeen years and the other three. The retail firms in Dresden having a long period of existence were in general those requiring more capital than possessed by the operators of eating and drinking establishments, service stations and small grocery stores. Characteristic of these latter firms was the practice of leasing both building and equipment. With very little capital required, the operators were more prone to leave their businesses when a crisis occurred.

As shown in Table 15, one hundred two persons were employed in 1960 by the retail firms in Dresden. Of this number, twenty-nine were female and seventy-three male.

TABLE 15.--Number of Employees, Classified by Sex, Color, Employment Status, Residence, and Total Wages Paid by Retail Firms in Dresden, Tennessee, 1960^a

Classification	No. of Firms	Number of Employees						Number Living Inside City Limits	Total Wages
		White F	White M	Negro F	Negro M	Full Time	Part Time		
Gasoline Service Stations	7	0	10	0	2	9	3	12	\$23,296.00
Auto Dealers-- New & Used	1	0	11	0	1	12	0	12	36,000.00
Used cars only*	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	.....
Grocery Stores	9	0	13	0	1	12	2	13	28,230.00
Eating & Drinking Places	5	10	2	2	1	13	2	15	18,680.00
Apparel and Accessories	2	3	0	0	1	2	2	4	5,300.00
Men's and Boys' Clothing and furnishings	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.....
Children's and Infants' Wear	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	2,340.00
Lumber & Other Building Materials	1	0	5	0	0	5	0	5	20,000.00
Fuel & Ice Dealers	1	0	1	0	1	2	0	2	6,600.00
Furnishings, Home Furniture & Equipment	2	1	3	0	0	4	0	4	7,800.00
Household Appliances & Radio Stores	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	2	3,790.00
Hardware & Farm Equipment	3	0	13	0	1	14	0	14	38,480.00
Miscellaneous									
Retail Stores	7	12 <u>44</u>	3 <u>27</u>	0 <u>64</u>	1 <u>2</u>	8 <u>83</u>	8 <u>19</u>	16 <u>102</u>	24,022.17 <u>\$217,538.17</u>
Totals									

^aSource: Based on questionnaire used in a personal interview.

*Employee paid on commission basis; total commissions not revealed.

Of the eleven Negroes, seven were employed in a janitorial capacity and worked on a part-time basis only. The remainder were employed as cooks in the various eating establishments. It was interesting to note that thirty-seven, or 34 per cent of the workers, lived outside the city limits and commuted an average of two miles daily to and from work.

Nineteen of the forty-four firms employed people on a full-time basis only. The total wages paid by these firms amounted to \$162,320 in 1960 with an annual mean wage of \$2,459.39 for the sixty-six employees involved. The total income of all retail employees, including both part and full-time workers was \$217,538.17. No effort to obtain the personal income of the owners was made.

Wholesale Trade, Miscellaneous
Manufacturing and Extraction Firms

In 1960 there were six wholesale firms in Dresden. Two were distributors of petroleum products, two sold fertilizers and other soil-building plant foods, a fifth processed milk used in the manufacture of cheese and other dairy products and a sixth was engaged in the sale of automobile parts. The mean number of years these firms had been in existence was 28.4; however, the median was only

five years. The range in longevity was twenty-seven years with the oldest firm established in 1931 and the youngest in 1958.

Four of the six wholesale businesses were operated by single proprietors, one was operated by two partners, and the sixth was organized as a corporation with seven stockholders. Four of the six firms were operated by natives of Weakley County, another was owned by a native of Texas but with marriage ties in Dresden. The stockholders of the corporation were not natives of the area.

Business procedures and practices varied among the six firms. None employed a full-time bookkeeper, but all kept records of sorts. The owners of two firms "kept the records," a third owner used the unpaid services of his wife, and the remaining two engaged the services of bookkeepers on a part-time basis. Only one of the firms employed a pre-location analysis of the potential in the area. The plant manager of this firm indicated that an analysis of the area was conducted in an effort to determine if a business of that nature was needed and to ascertain whether a sufficient amount of raw material was available. The results of the survey were satisfactory and temporary quarters were leased. Within a few months executives

of the young corporation began negotiations with the town administration which resulted in new quarters being constructed by the town and leased to the fledgling corporation. By the end of 1960, the two year-old firm had increased its volume by 15 per cent and provided a payroll of \$21,000 to six full-time and one part-time employees.

Eleven full-time and five part-time people were employed by the six firms in 1960. The total payroll amounted to \$35,889. Two firms employed full-time workers only. The mean annual wage of the three employees of these two businesses was \$3,293.33. The gross sales of the six wholesale units amounted to \$419,800; however, one accounted for \$260,000, or 61.9 per cent of the gross volume of all firms.

Six small manufacturing plants, other than the Bay-Bee Shoe Company and the Dresden Manufacturing Company, have operated in Dresden over a span of two to twenty years. The mean life of the firms was 10.8, and the median was fourteen years. Two were in the milling business, one was engaged in tire recapping, a fourth in the manufacturing of hulls for pleasure craft and miscellaneous metal fabricating work, a fifth manufactured a novelty product, and a sixth engaged in the process of separating seed from

raw cotton. The local newspaper was not included, as the printing plant had been moved to a town located in an adjoining county. Only a news receiving and advertising sales office was maintained in Dresden in 1960.

The business practices of the manufacturing firms followed the pattern set by the retail and wholesale groups. Four of the small plants were operated by single proprietors, and two were partnerships, each consisting of two individuals. Only one firm engaged the services of a full-time bookkeeper. The remaining five maintained accounting and financial control through the use of the services of the operators. Three sold on cash terms only. Three offered credit terms, but none had specific collection plans. One entrepreneur stated that his terms were "based on the personality of the individual."

The gross sales of the six firms in 1960 were \$548,500. The range was from a low of \$3,500 to a high of \$195,000. The total payroll amounted to \$45,741.23 for the eleven permanent and thirteen temporary employees. Two of the firms hired full-time employees only. The mean annual wage paid the four full-time employees of the two firms was \$3,315. The twenty-four employees engaged in manufacturing consisted of sixteen white males, four white

females, and four Negro males. All of the Negro employees and three of the four women were part-time workers only.

The headquarters of a firm engaged in mining and quarrying was in Dresden during the calendar year of 1960. This organization, a single proprietorship, did a gross business of \$750,000 and paid a total of \$100,000 in wages and salaries to twenty-three white men, one Negro, and one white female office employee.

Finance, Insurance, Personal,
Professional, and Other Services

The privately owned financial institutions in the small community consisted of two commercial banks and one credit corporation specializing in loans to farmers and acting as a depository for its three hundred members. One of the state-chartered commercial banks was a subsidiary of a parent institution located in a neighboring county. The credit corporation was a component part of an association with headquarters in Dyersburg, Tennessee.

During the calendar year 1960, the three institutions loaned a total of \$3,464,985.94, with the \$2,000,000 advanced by the credit corporation to farming interests constituting 57.7 per cent of the total. The one commercial bank owned by local residents was in excellent finan-

cial condition at the close of business on December 31, 1960. The loan policy of the management was conservative compared to the month prior to the closing of the bank in 1930. At that time, loans and discounts constituted 80 per cent of the total liabilities of the bank.¹³ At the end of 1960, loans and discounts were only 30.7 per cent of total liabilities. The total assets amounted to \$3,139,787.22 and were divided as follows: Loans and Discounts, 30.7 per cent; Bonds, 51.4 per cent; Cash and Due from banks, 15.9 per cent, and other assets, 2 per cent. Of the \$1,615,124.77 invested in bonds, federal government securities amounted to \$949,667.34, or 51 per cent of the total. Statements of the branch bank were not available; however, the cashier revealed that the bank held \$1,500,000 in deposits and \$500,000 in loans at the close of 1960. The independent bank had loans outstanding of 44.1 per cent of total deposits compared to 33 1/3 per cent for the branch bank.¹⁴

The three financial institutions employed eleven full-time and one part-time employees in 1960. The six

¹³ See Chapter V, p. 65, supra.

¹⁴ Interview with Mr. Carl W. Parks, Cashier, The Peoples Bank, Dresden, Tennessee, July 30, 1961.

male and six female workers were paid a total of \$37,357 in wages and salaries. The two commercial banks did not employ part-time workers and paid a mean annual wage of \$3,178.55 to their nine regular employees. The salaries of officers above the rank of cashier were not included in this total.

Table 16 shows the number of businesses engaged in the marketing of personal and miscellaneous services in Dresden in 1960 classified according to procedures used by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

The total wages paid employees of service businesses amounted to \$69,356.00, excluding the commissions earned by the six employees of the eight barber and beauty shops. Three entrepreneurs engaged the services of full-time employees only. The blacksmith shop was, however, a marginal business and barely paid the one elderly worker a subsistence wage. The hotel, built in 1905, had been operated by one family since its construction. The one employee of the hotel, a Negro maid, worked full-time cleaning and cooking in return for an annual wage of \$728. The cleaning and dyeing plant provided full-time employment for three white and two Negro men with a mean annual wage of \$2,000 paid by the management. The total revenue of the

TABLE 16.--Personal and Miscellaneous Service Businesses, Dresden, Tennessee, 1960^a

Type of Business	Number	White	F	M	Negro	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Total Wages*	Number Living In City	Total Revenue**
Barber and Beauty Shops.	8	4	2	0	0	6	0	6	\$10,000.00	2	• • • •
Funeral Services & Crematories	1	0	3	0	1	3	1	4	728.00	1	\$40,000.00 4,000.00
Hotels.	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1			
Cleaning & Dyeing Plants	1	0	3	0	2	5	0	5	10,000.00	3	38,000.00
Well Drilling & Plumbing.	1	1	19	0	0	10	10	20	37,524.00	6	• • • •
Amusement & Recreation.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	3,000.00
Shoe Repair.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	4,000.00
Blacksmith Shop	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	804.00	1	2,000.00
Miscellaneous . . .	8	4	1	0	0	4	1	5	10,300.00	3	• • • •
Totals	23	9	29	1	3	30	12	42	\$69,356.00	19	\$91,000.00

^aSource: Personal interview with owners and operators.

*The total wages of workers in Barber and Beauty Shops paid on a commission basis not revealed.

**The total revenue of Barber and Beauty Shops, Well-Drilling & Plumbing, and eight small Miscellaneous service businesses not revealed.

service businesses, excluding the barber and beauty shops and the eight small miscellaneous service firms, amounted to \$91,000 for the year.

Five attorneys constituted the personnel of three legal firms in the town. In addition, two medical doctors, one optometrist and one dentist practiced their professions in Dresden in 1960. These offices employed seven white female and one part-time male Negro, paying a total of \$18,100 in wages during the year. The male custodian was paid \$900, and the seven office employees and assistants a total of \$17,200. The mean annual wage of the seven women was \$2,457.15 annually.

Nine white males, two white females and one Negro man were employed by the three firms engaged in the transportation, communication, and public utility service business. Eleven of the twelve employees worked on a full-time basis and were paid \$41,803.49, for a mean annual wage of \$3,800.31. The one part-time employee received \$1,400 annually.

Income of Government Workers

Table 17 shows the total number of people employed by the various governmental agencies in Dresden classified

TABLE 17.--Government Employees in Dresden, Tennessee, Classified by Sex, Color, and Income, Year 1960^a

Governmental Unit	Number of Employees				Part-time	Total	Total Wages	Number Living in City
	White	Negro	F	M				
County	40	89	2	3	68	66	134	\$283,292.39
Federal.	14	117	0	0	39	92	131	191,395.23
Combined County,								15
State & Federal.	4	14	0	0	18	0	18	60,600.00
State.	2	13	0	0	7	8	15	53,300.00
City	1	11	0	0	12	0	12	24,062.00
Totals	61	244	2	3	144	166	310	\$612,649.62
								47

^a Source: Personal interview.

* Funds supporting the Department of Public Health are derived as follows: 37 per cent from the State; 33 per cent from the Federal Government; and 30 per cent from Weakley County. Administrative funds supporting the Department of Public Welfare are derived from the Federal, State, and County Governments on a formula basis, with the sum contributed by each governmental unit varying according to the different programs pursued.

by color and sex. The wages of these workers did not include the salaries of all elected county officials.

The county government was the largest single employer of governmental workers in the small community in 1960 and paid the largest sum in wages and salaries. All county highway employees were included in the total primarily because of the difficulty involved in isolating the workers to one particular area. No such problem arose in connection with the school teachers employed in the Dresden public schools.

The city government and the two departments financed through the combined efforts of the state, county, and federal governments employed full-time workers only. The mean annual wage paid the employees of the city amounted to \$2,005.17, and the mean annual wage of the eighteen employees of the Departments of Health and Welfare was \$3,366.66 annually.

Table 18 shows the total income and number of employees of all manufacturing, mining and quarrying, retailing, wholesaling, financial, personal service, and governmental units in Dresden in 1960. Excluded are incomes of owners of business establishments, professional

people, and elected county officials.

The importance of manufacturing to the little town was significant. Employment was more stable as the income payments received by Dresden employees of the manufacturing firms constituted 57.2 per cent of the total payroll in the community, with the exclusions noted above.

Governmental units paid the second largest income to Dresden employees, with \$612,649.62, or 23.0 per cent of the total wage payments coming from this source. Retail firms paid 8.3 per cent of the wages received by the non-farm employees in the community, followed by mining and quarrying with 3.8 per cent; personal and miscellaneous services, 3.2 per cent; transportation, communication, and public utilities, 1.7 per cent; finance, insurance, and real estate firms, 1.6 per cent; wholesale trade, 1.4 per cent; and professional service employers, .7 per cent.

Employment opportunities for the 131 Negroes living inside the city limits in 1960 were limited. At that time, there were 1,163 people between the ages of 15 and 65 years living in the town. This figure was 77 per cent of the total population.¹⁵ Assuming the same percentage of Negroes

¹⁵U. S. Bureau of the Census, United States Census of Population, Tennessee, 1960, pp. 44-62.

TABLE 18.--Number of Employees of All Private Enterprise and Governmental Agencies in Dresden, Tennessee, 1960, Classified by Income, Sex, Race, and Nature of Employment

Function	Number of Employees				Full-time	Part-time	Total	Wages	Number Living In City
	White		Negro						
	F	M	F	M					
Manufacturing	332	193	0	4	525	4	529	\$1,524,212.23	150
Government	61	244	2	3	144	166	310	612,649.62	47
Retail Trade	27	64	2	9	82	20	102	219,538.17	67
Personal & Miscellaneous Services	12	29	0	3	37	7	44	77,436.00	19
Mining & Quarrying	1	23	0	1	25	0	25	100,000.00	6
Wholesale Trade	2	11	0	3	11	5	16	35,889.00	7
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate.	7	4	2	0	12	1	13	39,357.00	9
Transportation, Communication, & Public Utilities.	2	9	0	1	11	1	12	43,203.49	7
Professional Services.	451	577	7	24	853	6	206	1,059	6
Totals								\$2,670,285.51	318

^aSource: Personal interview.

in this age group, there were approximately 101 people available for either full or part-time employment below the age of 65. Excluding part-time domestic and agricultural employment, only 24 Negroes were employed in all business and governmental units in the community. Sixteen of these workers were only employed part-time.

Of the 1,059 employees working in Dresden, only 318 resided within the city limits. No effort was made to determine the number of part-time workers residing in the city, but approximately 21 per cent of Dresden's population of 1,510 people were receivers of wages and salaries earned as employees of the business and governmental agencies located inside the city limits. Manufacturing firms were the largest employers of Dresden residents, with 47.2 per cent of the 318 workers earning at least part of their total income from this source. An additional 114 natives of the town were employed by the retail stores and governmental agencies.

The number of secondary and college students engaged in temporary employment in the town was not ascertained, but opportunities for such employment are characteristically rare in the small rural towns in the area.

Assuming that few students were so employed, it is apparent

that a substantial amount of hidden unemployment existed in 1960, or 19.5 per cent of the total number of workers were partially employed.

Table 19 shows the number of business firms and governmental units employing full-time workers only, and the mean annual wage paid these employees.

The one firm engaged in mining and quarrying paid the largest mean annual wage of all units in Dresden employing full-time workers only. The manufacturing industry, the largest employer, ranked sixth with a mean annual wage of \$2,982.80. The retail segment of Dresden's business community, the second largest employer of full-time workers, ranked seventh, with a mean annual wage of \$2,459.39.

Of the 1,059 persons employed either full or part time by Dresden business firms and governmental agencies in the year observed, 461, or 42.6 per cent were female. In comparison, women comprised 32.9 per cent of the civilian labor force of the United States in 1960.¹⁶ The lack of job opportunities for men, the need for both husband and wife to work in order to raise standards of living, and the avail-

¹⁶Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1960, p. 205.

TABLE 19.--Mean Annual Wage Paid by Private Enterprise, and
Governmental Agencies Hiring Full-time Employees Only,
Dresden, Tennessee, 1960^a

Function	Number of Units	Number of Full-time Employees	Mean Annual Wage	Rank
Mining & Quarrying. . . 1	25		\$4,000.00	1
Transportation, Com- munication &				
Public Utilities. . . 3	11		3,800.31	2
Departments of Health & Welfare 2	18		3,366.66	3
Wholesale Trades. . . . 2	3		3,293.33	4
Finance 2	9		3,178.55	5
Manufacturing 6	485		2,982.80	6
Retail Trade. 10	39		2,459.39	7
Professional Service. . 6	7		2,457.15	8
City Government 1	12		2,005.17	9
Personal Service. . . . 1	5		2,000.00	10

^aSource: Personal interview.

ability of many electrical devices in the farm homes freeing women for additional duties in the factories, stores, and offices are factors resulting in the large percentage of women holding jobs in the small town.

CHAPTER XI

RESOURCES OF WEAKLEY COUNTY, TENNESSEE, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THE DRESDEN AREA

Minerals

Weakley County is one of the sources of what is commonly referred to in trade-name parlance as ball, wad, and sagger clays. All of the clays found in the area were probably deposited under lagoonal conditions behind barrier beaches or sand flats. In the waters of these lagoons, muds accumulated and the ball clay, perhaps the finest of the pure clay substance, remained longer in suspension before settling to the bottom of the basins. Ball clays sold commercially are identified by white to ivory-fired colors. This clay is used chiefly in the manufacture of dinnerware, floor and wall tile, and electrical porcelain. Wad clay, however, possesses characteristics of extreme plasticity and toughness. This clay is used principally for cementing joints of the containers in which the more delicate pottery wares are placed for protection from dirt and kiln gasses during the firing process. The sagger clays are

very resistant to frequent heating and cooling. These clays are used in the manufacture of containers used in protecting delicate pottery wares undergoing the process of development. The sagger clay has sufficient plasticity, however, to enable the use of the product in the manufacture of lower-grade pottery and fire brick.¹

Most of the clay mined in Weakley County, and in ten other centrally located counties in the area, is of the ball clay variety. Tennessee, with the West Tennessee counties of Weakley, Henry, Gibson, Carroll, Haywood, Madison, Henderson, Chester, Fayette, Hardeman, and McNairy producing the major portion, accounted for 64 per cent of the total tonnage mined in the United States in 1960. The pottery industry consumed 56 per cent of the ball clay produced in that year; floor and wall tile manufacturers used 22 per cent; refractories used 15 per cent; and miscellaneous users the remainder. The total domestic consumption of ball clay increased from an average of 338,073 tons during the 1951-55 period to 436,279 tons during the five-year period ending in 1960. In the latter year, 444,369 tons

¹George I. Whitlatch, The Clays of West Tennessee, State of Tennessee, Department of Conservation, Division of Geology (Nashville: 1940), pp. 11-13.

were sold with Tennessee, principally the eleven counties mentioned previously, accounting for 284,396 tons at an average price of \$13.45 per ton.²

As shown in Figure 6, the clay deposits in Weakley County are located mainly in the southeastern part of the county near the towns of Dresden and Gleason. Geologically, the deposits are classified in the Wilcox group as shown on page 209 opposite the letter "G", and are chiefly of the Grenada formation. This formation consists of sands with interbedded clays and lignites and are normally finer grained than the Holly Springs variety. Although the Grenada sands are not as varied in color as the Holly Springs, they are more uniform with gray tones predominating. The color of the Grenada clay lenses, which are distinctly bedded clays varying in thickness from a few inches to several feet, may range from light gray to light brown. These lenses may also range from the plastic and gritless types suitable for commercial ball clays to dark, sandier types, less useful for commercial purposes.³

²Bureau of Mines, "Mineral Market Report No. 3283," (United States Department of Interior, Washington 25, D.C., 1960).

³Whitlatch, loc. cit.

CLAY RESOURCES MAP of WEAKLEY COUNTY

SCALE

MILES

1940

•LEGEND•

- ▲ = Outcrop or prospect
 - ☒ = Active pit
 - ✗ = Inactive pit
 - = Heavy ware plant
 - = Pottery
 - 22 = County serial number

			Recent	Pleistocene	Quaternary
A	=	Alluvium			
B	=	Terrace deposits			
L	=	Loess			
J	=	Jackson formation			
G	=		Granada formation		
H	=	Wilcox group	Holly Springs formation		
M	=		Porters Creek formation		
K	=	Midway Group			
C	=		Clayton formation		
O	=	Ridley formation	Owl Creek tongue		
R	=	Ridley formation	McNary sand & Coon Creek members		
S	=	Seima formation			
E	=	Eutaw formation			
	=	Turcioson formation	Upper Cretaceous		

Figure 5. Legend associated with map shown in Figure 6.

Source: George L. Whitlatch, The Clays of West Tennessee.

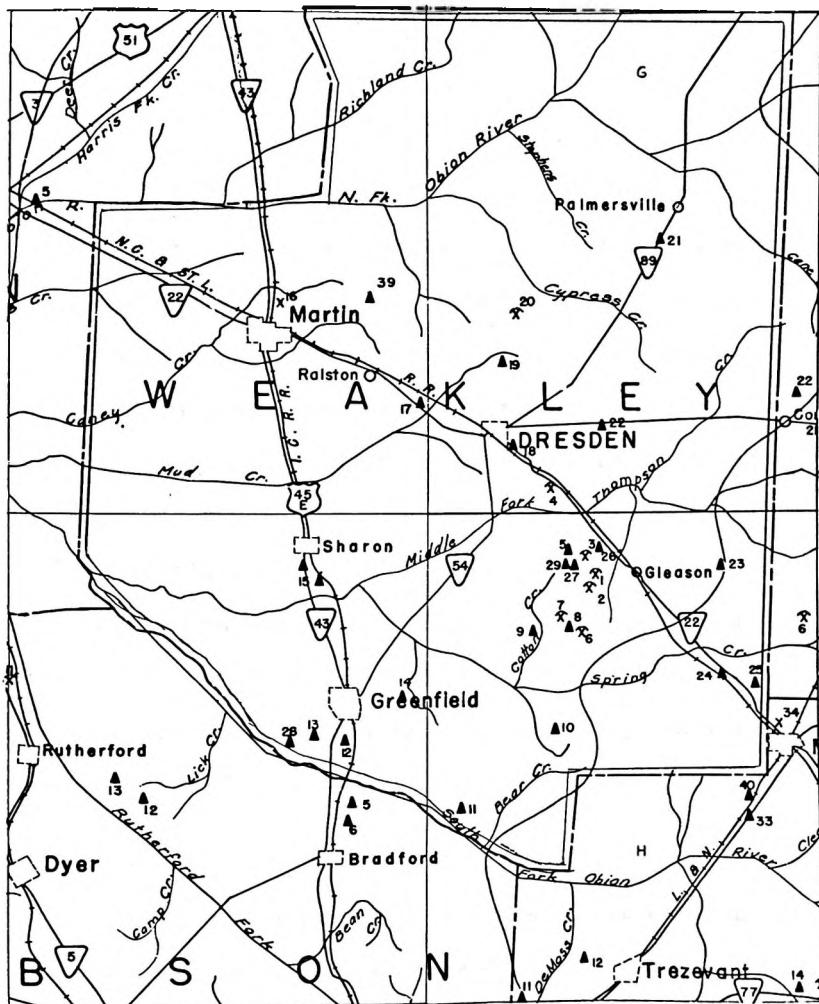


Figure 6. Map of Weakley County showing location of clay deposits.

Source: George L. Whitlatch, The Clays of West Tennessee.

In 1960 there were four firms in Weakley County engaged in the mining of clay. The number of persons employed in the industry, however, amounted to only ninety, including executives and office workers. Although there are an abundance of clays, both as to quality and quantity, in Weakley and surrounding counties the spread of the ceramic manufacturing industry to the area has occurred slowly. It was not until 1959 that a firm engaged in the manufacture of clay products was organized in the county. This company, with a total labor force of thirty-five persons in its second year of operation, was engaged in the manufacture of brick. A small foundry was organized in the area of 1940 with the express purpose of producing clay processing machinery. The growth of this firm has been modest, however, as only fourteen persons were employed twenty years after it was founded.⁴

Ground Water

Ground water may be defined as either water in underground streams or that which goes downward into dead storage. Most ground water, however, possesses dynamic rather than

⁴Tennessee Department of Conservation and Commerce, Directory of Tennessee Industries, 1959-60 edition. (Tennessee Industrial and Agricultural Development Commission, Nashville, Tennessee), p. 56.

static characteristics and flows constantly toward depositories in the form of rivers and creeks.⁵

All of Tennessee lying west of the Tennessee River is located in the Gulf Coastal Plain. The three principal water-bearing beds in this area are the Wilcox sand formations of thickness up to 1,900 feet; the McNairy, up to 400 feet thick; and the Eutaw, ranging up to a thickness of 250 feet. The physical properties of these sands are such that large quantities of water are available in the twenty-one counties comprising that part of the Gulf Coastal Plain lying in the state of Tennessee. Although blessed with an abundance of ground water supplies, the inland counties of West Tennessee, i.e., those not bounded by the surface waters of the Mississippi and Tennessee rivers, are among the least industrialized in the state. As shown on page 213, ground water supplies in the middle and eastern parts of the state range from modest to poor compared to the plentiful supply in the western area.⁶

The quality of the ground water in Weakley County

⁵ Public Water Policy in Tennessee, (Public Administration Service, 1313 East Sixtieth Street, Chicago 37, Illinois), p. 3.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 74-77.

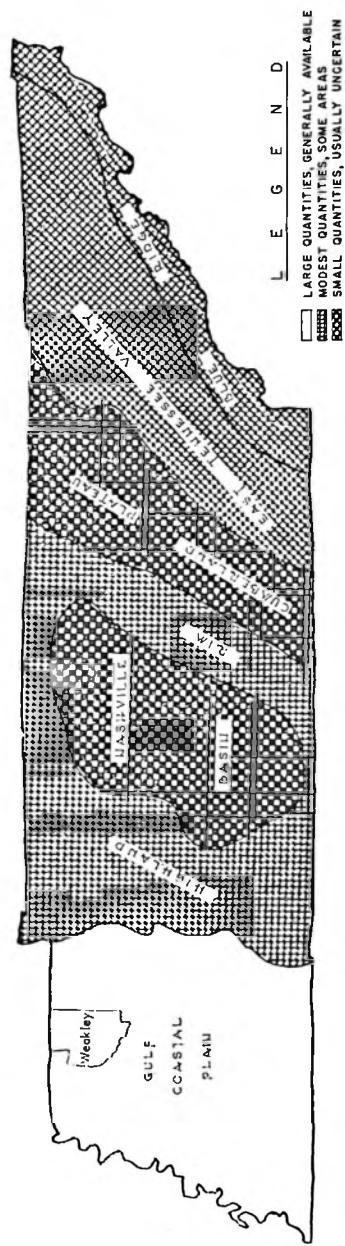


Figure 7. Availability of ground water in Tennessee.

Source: Tennessee Valley Authority, Knoxville, Tennessee.

is considered excellent. Wells and Foster used ten widely dispersed sources throughout the county as a sample in performing a chemical analysis of the mineral content of the water. Although the authors expressed the minerals present in the water in parts per million; for example, one millions pounds of water may possess one pound of given mineral, the writer converted to grains per gallon by multiplying the figure given by the constant (.058). This was done under the assumption that readers, unfamiliar with chemical terms, might be better able to understand how experts in this field go about the process of testing the quality of water. An analysis of the water in Weakley County is shown in Table 20 below.

Calcium and magnesium sulphate are the chief causes of hardness in water, and sodium in quantities in excess of 5.8 grains per gallon may be harmful to industrial machinery and crops. Hardness may also be expressed as the quantity of calcium carbonate equivalent to the calcium and magnesium present. Water having a hardness of less than 2.9 grains per gallon is considered soft and requires no treatment; however, water containing hardness between 2.9 and 8.7 grains per gallon is usable for industrial purposes and for human consumption, although it does make necessary an

TABLE 20.--Chemical Analysis of the Ground Water Supplies
of Weakley County^a

Mineral	Average Number of Grains Per Gallon of Water (58,000 grains = 1 gallon)
Silica	1.070
Iron	.036
Calcium	.610
Magnesium	.280
Sodium	1.141
Potassium	.176
Bicarbonate	3.710
Sulphate	.493
Chloride	1.077
Nitrate	.661
Total dissolved solids	7.18
Total hardness	2.83

^aSource: Wells and Foster, Ground Water Resources of Western Tennessee.

increased use of soap and detergents. The hardness of the Weakley County water averaged arithmetically 2.83 grains per gallon; however, the ten wells used in the sample ranged from a low of .75 grains per gallon to a high of 9.05.⁷

A significant amount of sodium chloride is contained in sewage, and any appreciable pollution of water is

⁷ Francis G. Wells and Margaret D. Foster, Ground Water Resources of Western Tennessee, (United States Department of the Interior, 1933), pp. 47-267.

accompanied by a large amount of chloride. This element also gives a salty taste to water if present in quantities greater than 17.4 grains per gallon. Nitrate in water may come from such sources as rocks and soils heavily laden with fertilizers. Usually, the quantities of nitrate found in water may have no harmful effect unless combined with a significant amount of chloride. Also present in all water are iron, aluminum, and silica. These elements when combined with water diffuse slowly and usually remain in the colloidal state as oxides.⁸

Ground water is the source of public water supplies in all incorporated towns in Weakley County. As of June 30, 1955, the county-seat town of Dresden pumped an average of 380,000 gallons of water per day. The remaining four incorporated towns of Gleason, Greenfield, Martin, and Sharon used from 88,000 gallons daily in the latter town, and the smallest in the county, to 408,000 gallons per day in Martin, the largest town in Weakley County.⁹

As a general rule, the chemical characteristics of a well do not vary significantly. As a result, a single

⁸ Ibid., pp. 40-46.

⁹ Public Water Policy in Tennessee, op. cit., pp. 171-73.

sample may be representative of the dissolved minerals in the water for a long period of time. Shallow wells, however, offer an exception as the concentration of chemicals in the water may change as variations in rainfall occur. Although it is unnecessary to drill deeply into the soils of Weakley County in order to reach water, there is a significant relationship between depth on the one hand and temperature and quality on the other.¹⁰

It has been observed that treated water fluctuates in quality. As a result, periodic analyses are needed in order to ascertain the range of chemical constituents in such water. Sharon is the only one of the five incorporated towns in the county in which treatment of the public water supply is considered unnecessary. Dresden, for example, installed a chlorinator in early 1953. The town of Gleason employed identical treatment procedures, while Martin and Greenfield practiced aeration in order to remove objectionable carbon dioxide gasses from the water.

The manufacturing firms operating in Dresden and the

¹⁰C. R. Lamphere, Geologic Source and Chemical Quality of Public Ground-Water Supplies in Western Tennessee, State of Tennessee, Department of Conservation, Division of Geology (Nashville, 1955), pp. 13-14.

four other incorporated towns in the county are not large consumers of water. For example, the Bay-Bee Shoe Company of Dresden averaged consuming approximately 8,400 gallons per day in 1961. Generally, manufacturers employed in processing farm products are comparatively heavy users of water; however, at the time this study was conducted the two dairy firms in the county were receivers of milk and not processors. The water consumption of the Weakley County Dairy of Dresden was approximately 28,000 gallons per day in 1961, and the Pet Dairy Company of Martin consumed an average of 60,000 gallons daily during the same period.¹¹ The Dresden firm depended upon the public water system for its supply. The Martin firm, however, used a privately-owned system. The modest water requirements of the two milk-receiving firms in the county may be compared to the average of 85,000 gallons needed daily by processors of dairy products, as reported to the Tennessee Public Health Service in 1955.¹²

As indicated in the preceding paragraph, the plentiful supply of ground water in Weakley and neighboring rural

¹¹ Interviews with the managers of the three firms, August 4, 1962.

¹² Lamphere, loc. cit.

counties has not attracted manufacturing firms into the area; however, it is anticipated by the year 1975 that the withdrawal of water by manufacturer's private systems in this nation will double. As water shortages in certain areas of the country become more acute, it is conceivable that the Gulf Coastal Plain Area of Tennessee, of which Weakley County is a part, may become more attractive as a location site for heavy industrial users of water. As a matter of record, the President's Materials Policy Commission has stated that about two-thirds of the water supply that can be developed at reasonable cost lies in the southeastern part of the United States.¹³

Surface Water

Weakley County has a plentiful supply of springs which form the headwaters of numerous creeks. These waters empty into the North, Middle, and South Forks of the Obion River. As shown in Figure 6, page 210, the Middle Fork of the Obion River flows through the south central part of the county and is fed by the Thompson, Cotton, and Spring Creeks. Stephens, Cypress, and Cane Creeks empty into the North Fork,

¹³ Public Water Policy in Tennessee, op. cit., pp. 80-97.

which borders Obion and Weakley Counties. Mud, Caney, and Bear Creeks empty into the South Fork as the stream meanders along the western and southern boundaries of the county.

One of the most important aspects of surface water is the ability to receive and dispose of wastes. Inasmuch as streams transport matter away from the source of pollution, large concentrations of such wastes are eliminated. Prior to being carried away by streams, it is necessary to treat wastes in order to facilitate the natural action of the stream in converting sewage and organic matter into harmless water, carbon dioxide, sulphates, and nitrates. This is essential if wild life is protected. The creeks in the county do not have sufficient flow to insure sanitary disposal of wastes; however, the flow of the North and South Forks of the Obion is considered satisfactory. Stream gaging data on the South Fork indicates an average flow of 571 cubic feet per second. The North Fork empties at an average rate of 629 cubic feet per second. No gaging station exists on the Middle Fork; however, the stream is very sluggish during dry seasons.¹⁴

¹⁴Public Water Policy in Tennessee, loc. cit.

The disposal system under construction in Dresden at the time this study was conducted was located in an eleven-acre lagoon on Mud Creek. According to the local health authorities, a thorough treatment of the waste matter prior to disposal in the lagoon should insure against any harmful effects during dry weather, and overflows during wet seasons should be carried easily down Mud Creek into the Obion River and ultimately into the Mississippi.¹⁵

Soils

The United States Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with various agencies in the state, has conducted surveys of the soils of numerous counties in Tennessee. Weakley County, however, had not been surveyed by the U.S.D.A. at the time this study was conducted.

The counties of West Tennessee are covered with a layer of silty, wind-deposited, material called loess, which is rather thick near the bluffs of the Mississippi River and thins to the east. Under this loess lie deposits of coastal plains material which are characteristically gravelly, sandy, and clayey in nature. Most of the region, including

¹⁵ Interview with Dr. R. M. Beyer, Chief Medical Officer of the Weakley County Health Department.

Weakley County, has a fairly level topography. There are, however, sections in which heavy erosion has occurred.¹⁶

Four physiographic positions are used as a foundation for separating and typing the major groups of soils. These types are bottom, terrace, upland, and colluvial soils. Although there may be a significant amount of each type in a county, usually one or two types prevail.

Numerous creeks flow throughout Weakley County. As a result, a significant number of acres of young, fertile, soil in the form of bottom land exists. Terrace land may also be comparatively level, inasmuch as it is often referred to as second bottom or bench land. Characteristic of terrace soils is the fact that overflows of water, once frequent, do not occur due to natural changes in the flow of streams or to man-made retrenchments. An insignificant amount of Weakley County land is of this type. The upland contour predominates in the county. Upland soils have not been affected by stream activity within the present geographic cycle, and generally such soils are subject to heavy erosion if not handled properly. The fourth physiographic

¹⁶Department of Agricultural Education, College of Education, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee, Land Use Planning, January, 1950, pp. 2-20.

position, colluvial soils, are conspicuously absent in the county. Geologically, these soils are defined as recent deposits located at the base of slopes and result from gravity, including slides and wash.¹⁷

A soil profile refers to a cross section of soil beginning at the surface and extending downward to a depth of three or more feet. Included in a soil profile are three major horizons. Briefly, they are the original surface, the subsoil, and the parent material from which the first two horizons were formed. An original surface varies in thickness in inverse relationship to the amount of erosion which has taken place. Characteristically, the original surface, more often called "horizon A," is darkened by organic matter and contains less clay than present in subsoil. Soils are further classified according to the texture of the original surface. These soil series may carry names of counties, or regions, of geologic formations, or any name considered suitable by the scientists conducting soil surveys. For example, the Henry Series is a type of surface soil found in abundance in Henry County, Tennessee. Comparable soils found in nearby or distant geographical

¹⁷United States Department of Agriculture, Soils and Men, Yearbook of Agriculture, 1938 (U. S. Printing Office, Washington), pp. 1163-1165.

locations are labeled the Henry Series because of the similarity of the organic matter in the surface soils of the areas sampled.¹⁸

Surface soils may be either single grain, granular, or cloddy. The single grain is characteristic of sand and silts. Generally, this soil has low water-holding capacity, is low in organic matter, and is highly susceptible to erosion. Granular service soils have high water-holding capacity; the texture particles are difficult to separate, and is resistant to erosion. Cloddy soils are characteristic of clay and clay loams. Water penetrates into this soil slowly. Usually, cloddy soils are resistant to root penetration. The color of surface soils is directly related to the amount of organic material contained in them. For example, black soils contain a large amount of organic material, and drain rather slowly. Brown and drab soils have a medium quantity of organic material, with the former having adequate drainage and the latter slow drainage. Gray, white, red, and yellow surface soils are low to very low in organic matter and range in drainage capacity from very slow for the white and gray soils to adequate for the red and yellow.

¹⁸ Land Use Planning, op. cit.

These soils, particularly the red and yellow, are highly infertile, and in many cases are so shallow that subsoils are exposed.¹⁹

The soils of Weakley County are primarily deep loess with the Collins and Falaya Series predominant in the bottom areas. The color of these soils range from brown to mottled gray. They range in drainage capacity from poor to moderate and are predominantly silty with little sand. These series are better adapted to the raising of corn and small grain. This is not top quality cotton land, but a limited amount can be raised in these soils.

Deep loess upland land predominates in the county. The Memphis, Grenada, Loring, Calloway, and Henry series all lie within the environs of the county; however, the first two are more frequently found. The Grenada series ranges in slope from 2 to 7 per cent and is light grayish to yellowish-brown in color. The soil has moderate drainage and is best adapted to small grain. Where the slope is only moderately steep, the Grenada series is fairly well adapted to such crops as cotton, tobacco, and soybeans.

¹⁹Department of Agricultural Education, College of Education, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee, Land Use Planning, Revised, 1956, pp. 5-27.

Hardpans have developed on many sandy and silt-loam soils as a result of erosion, management systems that destroy the organic matter, and moving equipment over wet ground. The compacted zone resists water and root penetration. Plants then suffer from too much surface water in rainy weather and from lack of water when conditions are normal and dry. In the Grenada soil, hardpans are usually found at a depth of 20 to 24 inches. Practically all deep loessial soils are acid in nature; however, the Memphis series found in the uplands appears less acid than the Grenada or the Collins and Falaya series found in the bottom areas. The color of the Memphis series varies from brown to brownish gray. Drainage of this soil is adequate, much superior to its counterpart--the Grenada, and qualities exist in this surface soil which make it resistant to the formation of hardpans. The Memphis series is best adapted to alfalfa and small grains, but where the slope of the land is fairly level it is moderately adaptable to corn, cotton, tobacco, and soybeans.²⁰

The productivity of the bottom and upland land,

²⁰ Soil, The Yearbook of Agriculture, 1957, United States Department of Agriculture (U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.), pp. 524-531.

which predominates in Weakley County, could in all probability be improved through a more extensive use of commercial fertilizers and lime. The yield of acid soils improves markedly when liberal portions of lime are applied. The topography of the county seems far better suited to certain agricultural enterprises, particularly row crops, in comparison to the mountainous topography of the eastern part of the state and the steep upland areas of Middle Tennessee. The productivity of the farms in Weakley County, however, has not been impressive.

Land practices and farming methods used by the farmers of the county have improved in recent years. Comparative yields in 1959 compared to 1954, as shown in Table 21, substantiate this statement; however, the county farm operators have apparently failed to appreciate fully the value of increasing productivity through an extensive use of artificial stimulants.

In 1954 the average number of pounds of commercial fertilizer applied per acre throughout the state was 329 compared to 225 pounds in Weakley County. In the same year an average of 1.6 tons of lime per acre was applied in the state compared to 1.1 tons in Weakley County. In 1959 this disparity spread rather than narrowed as farmers throughout

TABLE 21.--Mean Yields Per Acre of Selected Crops in Weakley County Compared to State Averages, Years 1954 and 1959^a

Crops	Average Yield Per Acre		
	1954 Weakley County	State	1959 Weakley County
Row Crops			
Corn.	15.6 bu.	19.4 bu.	35.4 bu.
Cotton.	.8 bales	.7 bales	1.2 bales
Dark-fired Tobacco.	1,118.0 lbs.	1,247.0 lbs.	1,630.0 lbs.
Sweet Potatoes.	102.9 bu.	142.9 bu.	165.1 bu.
Hay Crops			
Alfalfa	2.0 tons	1.7 tons	2.5 tons
Clover.	1.0 tons	1.0 tons	1.5 tons
Lespedeza	.9 tons	.8 tons	1.5 tons
Soybeans.	10.0 bu.	13.5 bu.	24.1 bu.
Small Grains			
Wheat	20.3 bu.	18.7 bu.	18.1 bu.
Oats.	30.9 bu.	30.2 bu.	26.2 bu.
Barley.	18.4 bu.	20.2 bu.	21.7 bu.
Rye.	9.4 bu.	11.7 bu.	11.1 bu.

^aCalculated from: The United States Census of Agriculture, 1959, vol. I, Counties, Part 31, Tennessee, 226-251.

the state averaged applying 358 pounds of fertilizer and 1.9 tons of lime compared to 262 pounds of fertilizer and 1.1 tons of lime per acre used in Weakley County. Farm operators in the remaining twenty counties comprising West Tennessee averaged using 300 pounds of fertilizer per acre in 1954 and 331 pounds in 1959; an amount considerably in excess of the average poundage per acre used in the county. The farmers in the twenty counties also applied more liberal portions of lime to the characteristically acid soil of the area as an average of 1.4 tons per acre was used in 1954 and 1.8 tons in 1959.²¹

As stated previously, the Memphis and Grenada series predominate in the upland soils of the county, and the Collins and Falaya series are common in the bottom areas. These soils are better adapted to the production of corn, small grains, hay, and legumes, and are moderately adapted to such row crops as tobacco, cotton, and sweet potatoes. Table 21 shows comparative yields per acre of these crops in Weakley County and the state in the years 1954 and 1959.

The production record of Weakley County farms was

²¹Bureau of the Census, United States Census of Agriculture, 1959, Vol. I, Counties, Part 31, Tennessee (U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1961), 219-251.

not impressive in comparison to state average yields in 1954 and 1959. The yield per acre of forage crops in the county was slightly above the state average in each year; however, the difference did not appear significant. Row crops in the county approximately equaled the yield of all areas in which dark-fired tobacco and cotton were grown, but corn and sweet potato production was below average. County wheat and oat yields in 1954 exceeded the state averages but fell below in 1959, and the county failed to equal the rye and barley output per acre of the state in either period.

Weakley County farmers planted 58,747 acres of corn in 1954 and increased this acreage to 60,590 in 1959. In each year the acreage planted in the county exceeded that of any single county in West Tennessee. Between the two periods, production increased both county and state wide. As shown in Table 21, the yield in Weakley County increased from 15.6 bushels per acre in 1954 to 35.4 bushels five years later, a change of 126.9 per cent. This increase compares favorably with the state growth in output of 18.8 bushels per acre, for an increase of 96.9 per cent. The modern practice of growing soybeans for marketing as well

as for forage purposes has resulted in more attention being devoted to this crop throughout the area. Production has risen markedly throughout West Tennessee in recent years as the number of acres planted in this labor-saving crop increased 74.9 per cent in 1959 compared to 1954. In Weakley County the mean yield per acre increased 141 per cent during this period compared to an increase of 62.9 per cent for all farms in the state from which soybean crop statistics were reported.

Table 22 compares the output per acre of selected crops grown in Weakley County with the average yield per acre of identical crops grown in the twenty other counties comprising the region of West Tennessee. In 1949, Weakley exceeded the average yield per acre of the remaining counties in the production of corn, dark-fired tobacco, clover, lespedeza, and barley, but lagged behind the output per acre of the eight other crops shown in this table. In 1954, the county exceeded the area mean yield per acre in tobacco, alfalfa, lespedeza, and oats, but again fell behind the average for eight other crops indigenous to the county. Again in 1959, the county farms produced an output per acre less than the area average for eight of the twelve crops considered in this discussion.

TABLE 22.—Average Yield of Selected Crops in Weakley County Compared to the Remaining Twenty Counties in West Tennessee, Years 1949, 1954, and 1959^a

Crops	1949			1954			Average Yield Per Acre			1959	Other Counties
	Weakley	Other Counties	Weakley	Weakley	Other Counties	Weakley	Weakley	Weakley	Weakley		
Row Crops											
Corn	24.3 bu.	22.9 bu.	15.6 bu.	16.6 bu.	35.4 bu.*	38.0 bu.*					
Cotton	.7 bales	.7 bales	.7 bales	.8 bales	1.2 bales	1.2 bales					
Dark-fired tobacco	1,067.0 lbs.*	1,057.0 lbs.	1,180.0 lbs.	1,103.0 lbs.	1,603.0 lbs.	1,422.9 lbs.					
Sweet Potatoes	94.5 bu.	101.2 bu.	102.9 bu.	104.3 bu.	165.1 bu.	173.8 bu.					
Hay Crops											
Alfalfa	1.8 tons	2.0 tons	2.0 tons	1.8 tons	2.5 tons	2.4 tons					
Clover	1.3 tons	1.2 tons	1.0 tons	1.0 tons	1.5 tons	1.6 tons					
Lespedeza	1.3 tons	1.2 tons	.9 tons	.8 tons	1.5 tons	1.4 tons					
Soybeans	17.3 bu.	20.7 bu.	10.0 bu.	13.9 bu.	24.1 bu.	22.6 bu.					
Small Grain											
Wheat	12.9 bu.	13.8 bu.*	20.3 bu.	21.8 bu.	18.1 bu.	24.9 bu.					
Oats	18.8 bu.	23.1 bu.	30.9 bu.	30.4 bu.	26.2 bu.	27.8 bu.					
Barley	16.4 bu.	13.0 bu.	18.4 bu.	22.1 bu.	21.7 bu.	22.3 bu.					
Rye	10.2 bu.	15.6 bu.	9.4 bu.	15.1 bu.	11.1 bu.	18.1 bu.					

^aCalculated from: The United States Census of Agriculture, 1959, Vol. I, Counties, Part 31, Tennessee, 226-251 and U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1944, Vol. II, Counties and State Economic Areas, Part 20, 62-177.

The West Tennessee area, including Weakley County, was considered a universe and the average yield per acre for each of the twelve crops obtained for individual counties. Arrays containing the averages for each crop by county were assembled and the arithmetic means, variances, and standard deviations computed. Separate hypotheses of no significant difference in the output per acre in Weakley County as compared to each universe mean were established. No significant difference in average yield per acre was found for any of the twelve crops at the 5 per cent level in either of the years 1949, 1954, or 1959.

Although no significance can be attached to the differences in area and county yields per acre for the crops considered here, the percentile rank of the latter in relationship to the former may be of interest. Table 20 shows this relationship for the years 1954 and 1959.

In 1954, as shown in Table 23, the percentile rank of .36 indicates that the output per acre of corn grown in Weakley County was larger than the average yields of 36 per cent of the counties in West Tennessee, but lower than the remaining 64 per cent of the counties. Five years later the 38 percentile ranking of the county in yield per acre of corn showed that 62 per cent of the remaining counties

TABLE 23.--Percentile Rank of Weakley County in Mean Yield Per Acre of Selected Crops in Comparison to the Remaining Twenty Counties in West Tennessee, Years 1954 and 1959

Crops	Weakley County Percentile Rank Year 1954	Weakley County Percentile Rank Year 1959
Row Crops		
Corn . . . . .	.36	.38
Cotton . . . . .	.23	.50
Dark-fired Tobacco* . . .	• • •	• • •
Sweet Potatoes	.25	.31
Hay Crops		
Alfalfa. . . . .	.83	.55
Clover . . . . .	.61	.62
Lespedeza. . . . .	.74	.81
Soybeans . . . . .	.21	.83
Small Grains		
Wheat. . . . .	.47	.24
Oats . . . . .	.62	.50
Barley . . . . .	.50	.22
Rye. . . . .	.13	.20

* Only three of the twenty-one West Tennessee counties reported acreage planted to tobacco in 1954 and 1959.

surpassed Weakley and 38 per cent were below.

The productive position of the county advanced markedly in the yield of soybeans per acre as the percentile ranking jumped from P₂₁ in 1954 to P₈₃ in 1959, and the overall comparative position of the county advanced upward in the latter year in soybeans, corn, cotton, sweet potatoes,

clover, lespedeza, and rye. A decline in position was experienced in alfalfa, wheat, oats, and barley, as productivity slumped in 1959 for each of these crops in comparison to the output of the twenty other area counties.

Human Resources

The age-group complex of the people in the area changed materially during the 1950-60 decade as both county and town experienced a somewhat revolutionary upheaval in population age mix. Apparently, large families were becoming an exception in the rural areas primarily because of the lack of need of unskilled farm workers, the comparatively slow pace of diversification, and the subsequent migration of young women to places offering better economic opportunities. A second observation is that Weakley County and the small town of Dresden lying in the center of it, are rapidly becoming havens for the retired and the aged.

As a result of heavy migration from the rural areas of the younger, potentially higher income groups, problems of both social and economic significance arise; problems which differ markedly from those confronting government and civic leaders in densely populated areas. A serious problem is that of financing services demanded by the people choosing

to remain in a low income rural environment. Replacing the chronic urban dilemma of how to cope with overcrowded public school facilities is the burden of financing schools characterized by constantly declining enrollments. Concomitant with low per capita income and educational levels, is usually an attitude among the citizens of extreme opposition to commonly used methods of raising revenue needed to finance services in education, law enforcement, and recreation. As a result, such services are frequently minimal in scope. A definite trend toward an unbalanced population mix in favor of middle aged and elderly groups may also be inducive to a complacent, less interested attitude toward all facets of community progress. Younger, medium well educated people are perhaps more progressively minded and forward looking in comparison to the retired and those performing in the twilight of their productive careers.

Comparative educational data by age groups for the area were not available. In general, however, the educational level of the younger people in rural areas is somewhat superior to that of the middle and elderly aged groups. Census data for the years 1950 and 1960 show only the median number of years of education of adults 25 years of age and older. In the former year the median educational level of

white Weakley Countians was 8.2 years. Ten years later the median was only 8.5 years; a very modest increase indeed. The educational pattern of the county Negro population was similar, as the median remained fairly stable at 6.1 years in 1960 compared to 5.9 years in 1950. In comparison, the median educational level of all white adults of the state was 8.6 years in 1950 and had advanced to a median of 9.0 years in 1960. Perhaps a better record was established by the Negro adults in the state over the age of 25, as the median increased from 6.5 years in 1950 to 7.5 years in 1960.²²

The goods and services demanded by an aging population differs from the demand of younger people. New housing, furniture, and furnishings are in comparatively low demand in an area populated by a larger than normal percentage of elderly people. Rural merchants, unlike their urban counterparts, do not experience an increased demand for goods and services associated with the pre-adult age of thirteen to

²²U. S. Bureau of the Census, U. S. Census of Population: 1950. Vol. II, Characteristics of the Population, Part 42, Tennessee; pp. 16-95; U. S. Census of Population: 1960, General Population Characteristics, Tennessee, Final Report PC (1)-44B; pp. 15-146, (U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1961).

twenty. Counties and small towns undergoing net population losses and changes in population mix by age, sex, and race, may not attract replacements for the retired and deceased professionals formerly engaged in rendering medical and legal services, although the demand for medical services may increase as the population ages. For example, in 1940 there were fourteen medical doctors in the county. In 1950 there were thirteen, and in 1960 only ten. The decrease in the number of lawyers during the decade of the forties was slight; however, during the succeeding decade, sixteen either died or moved away. In 1940, there were twenty-three attorneys in the county, and in 1950, twenty-one. By 1960, however, only eleven were practicing in the county.²³

With the exception of the decade of the depressed thirties, the population of Weakley County has fallen steadily since the turn of the century. The decade of the fifties, however, was the period in which migration was the heaviest as the population declined by 13.4 per cent. The preceding decade had witnessed the uprooting of the younger element by war, and, after the conflict terminated,

²³This information resulted from several interviews with men engaged in the practice of medicine and law in Weakley County, June 15-20, 1963.

many did not return to the county in a permanent capacity. Table 24 shows the population of the county classified by age groups for four census periods.

In the decade of the thirties the population of the county remained relatively static as an increase of only .8 per cent was experienced. On the surface, this tends to refute the frequently heard comment of the layman that people with a rural background tend to return to the farm when layoffs occur in industrial areas. This assumption could be partially valid for Weakley County inasmuch as the birth rate followed the trend in urban areas by dipping precipitously during the depression years. As shown in Table 24, the number of children in the county up to 15 years of age fell 15.9 per cent during the thirties. In the meantime, the remaining four age groups experienced an increase in numbers.

During the decade of the forties, the younger element began leaving the county in increasing numbers as the 15-34 age group declined by 19.4 per cent. The global war in the first half of the decade, along with prosperity in the latter half, were the primary factors resulting in this sharp decrease. The number of people in the 35 to 65 age groups remained static during this period as the impact of

TABLE 24.--Population Changes by Age, Weakley County, Tennessee, Years 1930, 1940, 1950, and 1960^a

Age Groups	Number			Per Cent Change			
	1930	1940	1950	1960	1930 to 1940	1940 to 1950	1950 to 1960
0-14 Years	9,104	7,658	7,325	6,026	-15.9	-4.3	-17.7
15-34 Years	9,236	9,554	7,704	5,720	+ 3.4	-19.4	-25.8
35-44 Years	3,552	3,635	3,657	2,931	+ 2.3	+ .6	-20.3
45-64 Years	5,476	6,059	6,041	5,815	+10.6	- .3	- 3.7
Over 65 Years	1,894	2,592	3,235	3,735	+36.9	+24.8	+15.5
Totals	<u>29,262</u>	<u>29,498</u>	<u>27,962</u>	<u>24,224</u>	<u>+ .8</u>	<u>- 5.2</u>	<u>-13.4</u>

^aCalculated from the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth Census of the United States.

dynamic changes in agricultural techniques had not reached the county at that time.

In the depressed thirties and prosperous forties, ownership of homes and farm properties was largely concentrated in the possession of people in their early middle years and older. Younger people, with little more than their labor to sell, were quickly attracted to urban areas where the return to labor was higher. Often the family head, with increased responsibilities, reluctantly accepts the risks involved in changing occupations. Also, deep-rooted friendships and family ties may result in a certain degree of immobility among people past the age of 35. Partially for these reasons, the mobility pattern of people in their early middle years was comparatively static until the decade of the fifties.

Technological changes in agriculture swept the county during the past decade. Horse drawn vehicles virtually disappeared; acreage devoted to row crops decreased, emphasis on dairying and other animal enterprises increased, and the number of acres in the average farm expanded. As a result, the number of farms in the county declined by 38 per cent as many landholders sold their

small, inefficient, farms. Economic pressures swept those unable to obtain employment in the small county towns away from the area entirely. The younger element continued to leave the county at an increasing rate during the fifties, and at the beginning of the new decade the number of young people in the 15 to 34 age group had declined an additional 26 per cent. The exodus of young adults from the county also resulted in a sharp percentage decline; a decrease larger than that occurring during the depression years, in the number of children up to 15 years of age.

Figure 8 shows a comparison of the percentage of the population in each of the five age groups for Weakley County and the state in the years 1950 and 1960. In general, this comparison emphasizes the trend in Weakley County toward an unbalanced age mix, i.e., a below average per cent of very young and an above-average per cent of people 65 years of age and above. In 1950, the per cent of children in the county population up to age 15 was only 3.9 per cent below the per cent of the state population in this age group. By 1960, however, the gap had widened to 6.8 per cent. In the 65 and over age bracket a somewhat similar gap existed, as 11.6 per cent of the Weakley County population was 65 years of age or more in 1950 compared to 7.2 per cent for

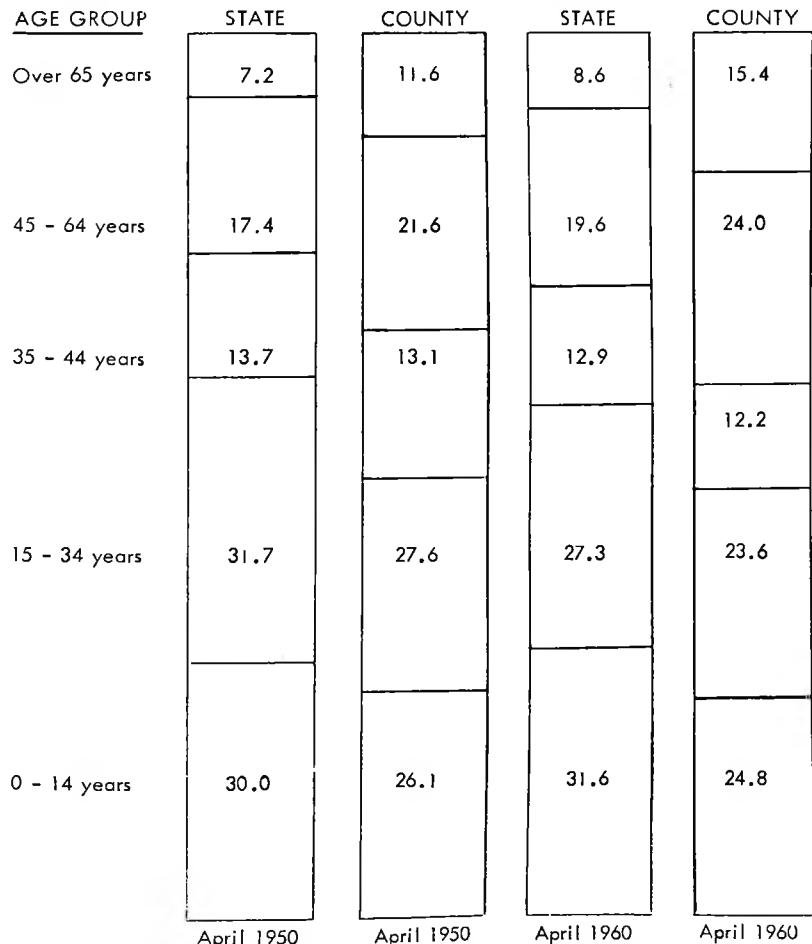


Figure 8. Population changes by age groups, state of Tennessee and Weakley County Tennessee compared years 1950-1960 (in per cent).

Source: Seventeenth and Eighteenth Censuses of the United States.

the state as a whole. By 1960, this difference had increased to 6.8 per cent. The county had a smaller percentage of its population in the 15 to 45 age groups compared to the state in each of the two census years, but the difference was comparatively stable. In comparison to the state, Weakley County had 4.1 per cent less of its population in the 15 to 35 age group in 1950, and 3.7 per cent less in 1960. The county population consisted of 4.2 per cent more than the state in the 45 to 65 age group in 1950. Ten years later the county population had 4.4 per cent more people in this age bracket than the state as a whole.²⁴

In the ten-year period ending April, 1960, the population of the county seat town of Dresden increased by only one person, despite an extension of the city limits on five separate occasions. Table 25 compares the age distribution of the inhabitants of Dresden with the county for two census periods.

Perhaps the most obvious departure of Dresden from

²⁴The increase in population in Tennessee of 8.4 per cent between the census dates of 1950 and 1960 was considerably below the 18.4 per cent increase in the nation as a whole. Tennessee, however, experienced a per cent gain larger than that of either of her sister East South Central States of Kentucky, Mississippi, and Alabama.

TABLE 25.--Population Change, by Age Groups, Dresden Compared with Weakley County,
Tennessee, Years 1950 and 1960^a

Age Group	Number 1950	Dresden		Weakley County	
		Number 1960	Per Cent Change	Number 1950	Number 1960
0-14 Years	337	350	- 2.1	7,325	6,026
15-34 Years	407	327	-19.7	7,704	5,720
35-44 Years	227	178	-21.6	3,657	2,931
45-64 Years	339	390	+15.0	6,041	5,815
Over 65 Years	199	285	+43.2	3,235	3,735
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,509	1,510	+ .06	27,962	24,227
					-13.4

^aCalculated from the seventeenth and eighteenth Census of the United States.

the county pattern was the static manner in which the population of the very young behaved along with the large increase in the number of older people. Also of interest was the reversal of the downward county-wide trend in the number of people aged 45 to 65. Partially accounting for the 15 per cent increase in numbers of this latter group was the definite trend among farmers of moving from country to town and commuting daily to and from the farm for management operations.

In the twentieth century large cotton plantations have not been characteristic of Weakley County. Perhaps for this reason alone, the proportion of the Negro race in the population has remained small.²⁵ Table 26 compares the per cent change in the age composition of nonwhite and the white population of Weakley County between the two most recent census dates.

Perhaps the most interesting comparisons in Table 26

²⁵ Census data showed that 62.9 per cent of the 1,757 Negroes living in the county in 1960 were residing in the towns of Martin, Dresden, and Greenfield. Although census population figures by race were not available for incorporated towns of less than 1,000 people, it may be assumed that a large proportion of the remaining 641 Negroes resided in the small towns of Gleason and Sharon. This assumption was supported by agricultural census data of 1959, which showed only 58 nonwhite farm operators in the whole of Weakley County.

are in the 0 to 15 and 15 to 45 age groups. The number of Negro youngsters up to age 15 increased slightly, while the number 15 to 45 years of age decreased significantly. This perhaps indicates a tendency of the Negro female to bear a larger number of children in comparison to her white counterpart despite the extremely low economic status of the Negroes in the small towns of Weakley County. Such an assumption is indicated by the negative changes in the number of white children up to age 15 and in the number of white adults between the ages of 15 and 45. These changes may be compared to the inverse trend existing between the number of very young Negroes and the number of adults in the 15 to 45 age group.

Although the per cent decline in the number of Negro and white people living in the county in 1960 in comparison to 1950 was almost equal--a 13.3 per cent decrease in the number of white people and a 13.9 per cent decrease in the number of Negroes--it is obvious that the younger Negroes left at a more rapid rate than their white counterparts. For example, the number of Negroes in the 15 to 35 age group, the most restless age, declined 36 per cent during the decade compared to a 24.9 per cent decrease in the number of white people. Approximately the same per cent

TABLE 26.--Population Changes by Age and Race, Weakley County, Tennessee, Years 1950 and 1960 Compared^a

Age Group	White Population			Nonwhite Population			Per Cent Change	Per Cent Change
	1950	1960	Change	1950	1960	Change		
0-14 Years	6,751	5,436	-1,315	-19.5	574	590	+ 16	+ 2.8
15-34 Years	7,099	5,333	-1,766	-24.9	605	387	-218	-36.0
35-44 Years	3,407	2,732	- 675	-19.8	250	199	- 51	-20.4
45-64 Years	5,664	5,453	- 211	- 3.7	377	362	- 15	- 4.0
Over 65 Years	3,001	3,516	+ 515	+17.2	234	219	- 15	- 6.4
Totals	25,922	22,470	-3,452	-13.3	2,040	1,757	-283	-13.9

^aCalculated from the seventeenth and eighteenth Census of the United States.

of whites and Negroes in the 35 to 45 and 45 to 65 age groups migrated from the county, but the trend reversed itself after the age 65 was reached.

The number of white people in this age group increased considerably, but the number of elderly Negroes continued to decline. Inasmuch as the apparel and shoe factories in the county employ very few Negroes, and the type of employment engaged in by Negro females being generally of the domestic variety, it is difficult for members of this race to build up social security credits sufficient to maintain the necessities of life after the retirement age of 65 has been reached. As a result, many of the elderly Negroes are forced to live with children working in industrial centers located mainly in the North Central States of Michigan and Illinois.²⁶

Despite the overall 13.4 per cent decline in population of Weakley County during the decade of the fifties and the more significant decline of 23.9 per cent in the 15 to 45 age group, the number of people included in the county

²⁶Census data by age and race was not available for towns having less than 2,500 population in 1960. The town of Dresden, however, lost 29.2 per cent of its Negro population between the two most recent census dates. In 1950 there were 185 Negroes living in Dresden; in 1960 there were only 131.

labor force changed very little. Census figures for 1950 showed 9,948 people in the labor force compared to 9,333 in 1960, a decline of only 6.2 per cent. But quite interesting was the change in the sex composition of the labor force between the two periods. For example, the number of men in the labor force decreased from 7,229 to 6,169, a 22.2 per cent decline. On the other hand, the number of women working or unemployed but looking for work jumped 56.7 per cent, from 2,019 to 3,164.²⁷ The occupations of the labor force also changed markedly during the decade, as the number of workers engaged in agricultural pursuits declined by 52 per cent, from 4,339 to 2,053. Table 27 shows the number and per cent of the labor force engaged in each of several occupational categories for the years 1950 and 1960.

As shown in Table 27, some 2,286 jobs were lost in agriculture in Weakley County within the ten-year period; however, additional jobs created through the expansion of existing manufacturing plants and the addition of nine new ones increased the number employed in manufacturing by

²⁷In 1950, the sex ratio of the county population was 50.2 per cent female; 49.8 per cent male. Ten years later, 50.6 per cent was female and 49.4 per cent male.

TABLE 27.--Occupations of Weakley Countians, Number and Per Cent of Labor Force So Engaged--Years 1950 and 1960^a

Occupation	1950		1960	
	Number	Per Cent of Total Labor Force	Number	Per Cent of Total Labor Force
Agriculture. . . .	4,339	43.6	2,053	22.0
Manufacturing. . . .	1,245	12.5	2,260	24.2
Retail Trade	1,024	10.3	1,217	13.0
Services, Other				
Than Finance . . .	823	8.3	988	10.6
Government, (including teaching). . . .	604	6.1	712	7.6
Construction	550	5.5	608	6.5
Transportation				
Communication & Public Utilities	438	4.4	417	4.5
Wholesale Trade. . .	182	1.8	229	2.5
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate.	84	.8	152	1.6
Mining, Forestry, and Fishing. . . .	67	.7	67	.7
Not Reported	308	3.1	166	1.8
Unemployed	284	2.9	464	5.0
Totals	9,948	100.0	9,333	100.0

^aCalculated from the seventeenth and eighteenth
Census of the United States.

1,015 persons.²⁸ Over 600 additional jobs were created in

²⁸Nine new manufacturing firms employing from 5 to 334 persons each were added during the decade of the fifties in the towns of Gleason, Sharon, Greenfield, and Martin. One firm moved from the latter town during this period. The net increase in new jobs in manufacturing created by the nine new firms was approximately 800.

retail and wholesale trade, services, government, and construction.

Although nearly 1,600 new jobs were created in Weakley County during the decade of the fifties, a net loss was sustained because of the large decline in the number employed in agriculture. As a result, the decade was a period of transition for many people. The women, in particular, traded the job of homemaker for factory worker by the hundreds. Men, but not in comparable numbers, found new jobs to replace those obliterated by the force of dynamic change.

But for hundreds of men and women unable to make the transition from farm work to other occupations in the county, it meant giving up the pleasures associated with living in an area of few inhabitants per square mile and moving to congested areas in cities within and outside the state. For those able to weather the storm and remain in the county, a slightly better standard of living was in the offing.

Several factors accounted for the significant increase in family purchasing power of Weakley Countians between the years 1949 and 1959.²⁹ The exodus from the county

²⁹The censuses of 1950 and 1960 reported median family income data as of the prior year.

of the unemployed, which resulted in a 13.1 per cent decline in the number of families in the county, meant that there were fewer families to share the income of the area. The loss of 2,286 jobs in agriculture was a blessing to the group able to secure better jobs in the county. Farm income increased, not as a result of increased prices, but because of more efficient use of the land and increased government subsidies. And perhaps more important was the creation of hundreds of new jobs in the county during the era.

In 1949, the median family income in Weakley County was \$1,411; ten years later it had risen to \$2,758. With the years 1947-49 as a base, the median of \$2,758 was converted to the purchasing power of the 1949 dollar. After this adjustment was completed, the real family income of Weakley Countians in 1959, but expressed in the purchasing power of the 1949 dollar, amounted to \$2,209.93; an increase of 56.6 per cent over the ten year period.³⁰

³⁰ Ibid., U. S. Census of Population, 1960: General Social and Economic Characteristics, Tennessee, pp. 44-245; and U. S. Census of Population, 1950: Characteristics of the Population, Tennessee, pp. 42-118.

A Short-Run Forecast

Table 1 of Chapter II shows the population of Weakley County from 1830 through 1960. A simple scatter diagram of the data by census years, Figure 9, assumed the general shape of a parabola. From 1830 through 1900, the number of people in the county increased, but after the latter year the trend was consistently downward.

Fitting an appropriate regression line to the original data and extrapolating beyond the date of the last census offers an empirical statement of the nature of changes which have occurred in the past. That is, however, all that it offers. No law of population growth is determined; neither are unforeseen events forecast. It must also be observed that the regression equation expresses an average relationship, not an exact relationship. Actual population may be expected to fluctuate above and below the line of average relationship as shown in Figure 9.

Obviously, the scatter diagram (the hyphenated line in Figure 9) suggested that a straight line, fitted by observation or through use of the least-squares technique, was not a good fit. Neither did the Gompertz or logistic curves fit the data very well. The former curve, equation $y = ab^cx$, is an appropriate measure of a trend which is

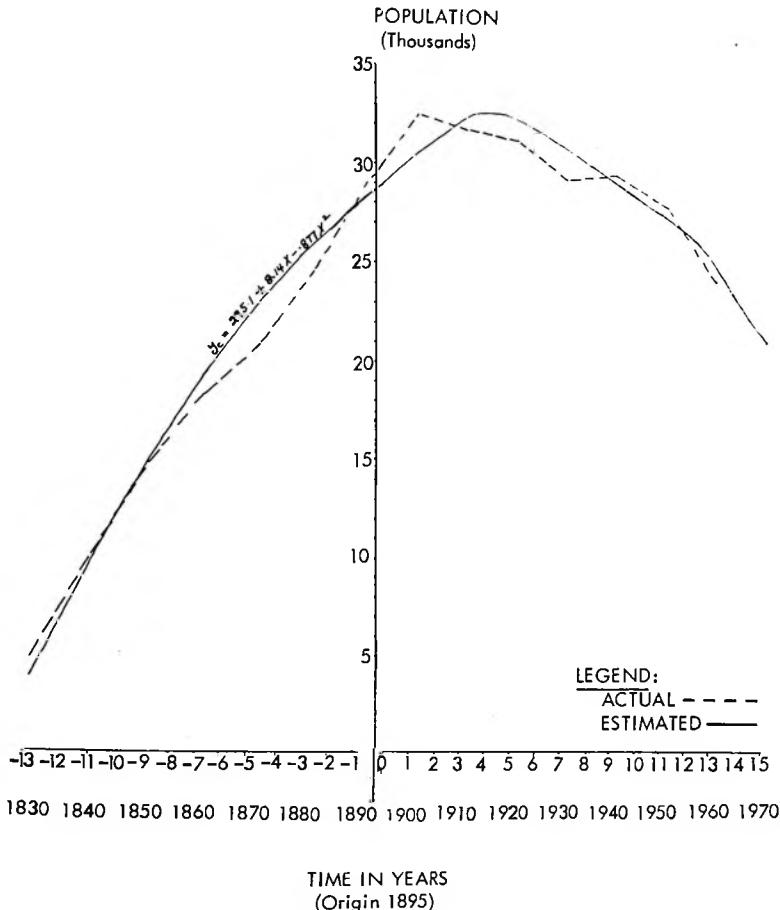


Figure 9. Population of Weakley County, trend curve superimposed.

Source: U. S. Census of Population, 1830-1960.

expanding by decreasing amounts in the latter stages of the period covered, and the value C must lie between zero and unity. The logistic curve, equation $\frac{1}{Y} = a + bc^x$, is also usable for measuring the trend of a series that is growing by decreasing increments. As shown in Table 28, however, the population of Weakley County began a sustained period of decline after the turn of the century.

After some experimentation with the curves mentioned previously, a simple polynomial of the second degree appeared to be the line of best fit. The equation of the line $y_c = 295.1 + 8.14 x - .877 x^2$ was obtained through the use of the least-squares technique.

In Figure 9, the relationship between the actual and estimated population from 1830 through 1970 is shown, with a forecast of approximately 21,600 people in the county in 1970. This forecast represents a 10.8 per cent decline in 1970 compared to 1960. This decrease, however, is less than the 13.4 per cent decline experienced during the decade of the fifties.

Table 28 shows, with population figures rounded to the nearest 100, census years (X), the actual population (Y), the estimated population (y_c), the difference ($y - y_c$), and the difference squared. The variance of the estimate was

TABLE 28.--Actual and Estimated Population of Weakley County, Tennessee, Census Years 1830-1970, Inclusive. (Population Figures Rounded to Nearest 100)

Year X	Actual Population (in hundreds) Y	Estimated Population (in hundreds) Y_c	Difference Actual Minus Estimated (in hundreds) $(Y - Y_c)$	Difference Squared (in hundreds) $(Y - Y_c)^2$
1830	48	38	10	100
1840	99	96	3	9
1850	146	147	-1	1
1860	182	192	-10	100
1870	207	229	-22	484
1880	245	259	-14	196
1890	290	282	8	64
1900	326	301	25	625
1910	319	324	-5	25
1920	311	310	1	1
1930	293	306	-13	169
1940	295	289	6	36
1950	280	275	5	25
1960	242	249	-7	49
1970	...	216	...	...

Source: Actual population data obtained from the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Censuses of the United States, 1840-1960, Population Statistics.

obtained by squaring the sum of the column headed $(Y - Y_c)$, dividing by the number of census periods and subtracting the quotient from the sum of the column headed $(Y - Y_c)^2$. This difference was then divided by the number of census periods less the number of constants in the regression equation, in this case three. Finally, the square root of the variance was taken. This root, frequently called the standard error of the estimate, has often been employed in establishing confidence interval estimates.

The standard error of the estimate was found to equal 1,300. Employing the area under the normal curve as a basis for establishing confidence interval estimates, it was implied that a probability of .68 existed in estimating the 1970 population within a range of 21,600 plus one standard error, and 21,600 minus one standard error. The upper limit was therefore 22,900 and the lower limit 20,300, with 68 per cent confidence. A 95 per cent confidence interval estimate placed the upper limit at 24,200 and the lower limit at 19,000 people.

The per cent of the population included in the Weakley County labor force in 1950 was 35.6. By 1960, this figure had risen to 38.5 per cent. Assuming a population in 1970 of 21,600, the labor force in that year should

approximate 9,000 persons. This estimate was based upon the assumption that the per cent of the population in the labor force in 1970 would increase at a rate approximating the 2.9 per cent increase during the decade of the fifties.

Assuming the number of people in the county engaged in tertiary employment, e.g., in government, trade, finance, communication, etc., and in the basic industries other than agriculture, remains constant throughout the decade of the sixties, and further assuming that the level of economic activity throughout the nation remains sufficiently buoyant to absorb the number of migrants needed to equal the estimated 10.8 per cent decline in population in 1970 compared to 1960, a minimum of approximately 500 new jobs must be created in the county during the decade in order to hold the 1970 unemployment rate at the comparatively high level of 5 per cent. In 1960, the labor force consisted of 9,333 workers with 5 per cent, or approximately 467 people, unemployed. Of the 8,866 people employed, 6,813 were engaged in work other than in primary agriculture. In 1970, an estimated 7,319 jobs of a non agricultural nature together with some 1,231 jobs in primary agriculture will be needed in order to provide the minimum amount of employment necessary to maintain a 95 per cent employment rate for the county

labor force. This statement is predicated upon the assumption that a minimum of 40 per cent of the 2,053 jobs in agriculture in 1960 will disappear by the end of the decade. Forty per cent may indeed be a conservative estimate in view of the 52.7 per cent decline in the number of jobs in agriculture incurred during the decade of the fifties.³¹

The estimated Weakley County civilian labor force in 1970 of 9,000 will of necessity consist of many workers older than 45 years. Table 29 compares the estimated population by age groups in 1970 with the actual population by age for the census years 1950 and 1960. The 1970 estimates were predicated upon the assumptions that the total population would approximate the forecast of 21,600 made previously and that the rate of change in the population complex between 1960 and 1970 would equal the rate of change in each age bracket existing between the 1950 and 1960 census dates.

In 1950, for example, the number of children less than one year old through the age of fourteen constituted 26.2 per cent of the total county population. In 1960, this

³¹Committee for Economic Development, An Adaptive Program for Agriculture, A Statement on National Policy by the Research and Policy Committee (New York: Committee for Economic Development, 1962), pp. 1-20.

same age group made up 24.9 per cent of the total 1960 population. Assuming the same rate of change during the decade of the sixties, the per cent of the estimated 1970 population in the zero through fourteen years of age category should decline to 23.6 per cent. People in the age group fifteen through thirty-four made up 27.6 per cent of the 1950 population; had declined to 23.6 per cent of the 1960 population, and again assuming the same rate of change during the period of the sixties, an additional decline to 19.6 per cent of the total population is predicted.

The per cent of the population in the forty-five and older age bracket is expected to increase. Assuming the same percentage change in the sixties compared to the fifties, a total of 9,870, or 45.7 per cent, of the 21,600 estimated population in 1970 will be at least 45 years of age. Only 6,632, or 30.7 per cent, of the total population is expected to range between the ages of fifteen and forty-five years. This suggests that, although the county may have approximately 9,000 people in the total labor force at the end of the decade of the sixties, a large proportion will be beyond the prime hiring ages of eighteen through forty-four. This also suggests that labor intensive firms may not find the county an attractive place in which to locate, and

TABLE 29.--Actual Weakley County Population by Age Groups in 1950 and 1960 Compared to Estimated Population by Age Groups in 1970

Age Groups	1950		1960		1970	
	Actual Number	Per Cent	Actual Number	Per Cent	Estimated Number	Per Cent
0-14	7,325	26.2	6,026	24.9	5,098	23.6
15-34	7,704	27.6	5,720	23.6	4,234	19.6
35-44	3,657	13.1	2,931	12.1	2,398	11.1
45-64	6,041	21.6	5,815	24.0	5,702	26.4
Over 65	3,235	11.5	3,735	15.4	4,168	19.3
Total	27,962	100.0	24,227	100.0	21,600	100.0

Source: Actual population data obtained from the seventeenth and eighteenth Census of the United States.

those that are established may, if an expansion of the labor force is justified, find additional labor in the most sought after age groups in extremely short supply unless lack of job opportunities elsewhere prevent young people from leaving the county.

CHAPTER XII

CURRENT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF RURAL HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

The Problem

Vocational courses in Weakley County are conspicuous by their absence as neither of the seven high schools offer training in such skills as machine shop, data processing techniques, carpentry, graphics, or electronics. In spite of declining opportunities in agriculture and home economics, vocational subjects in these areas continue to be emphasized. Courses in subjects related to office skills have characteristically been limited because of the scarcity of employment opportunities.

As a result of this lack of opportunity, the non-college bound high school graduate has few alternatives. Young women may seek low-paying clerical jobs in retail stores, or in the limited number of government, professional, and business offices in the county. Failing in this quest, employment of a lower social order may be sought in the few apparel and unbranded shoe plants in the area. The non-

college bound male high school graduate has perhaps fewer opportunities than his female counterpart. There is little demand for men in the female labor-oriented apparel and shoe firms in the county, and a comparatively small number of young men, completing a study of vocational agriculture in the secondary schools, pursue careers in the basic agricultural industry. Failing to find employment in the rural environment to which they are accustomed, the only alternative for the inexperienced graduate is to emigrate to areas offering untrained, partially-educated, young people an opportunity to learn a skill.

The economic opportunities available to college trained people in the rural environment of Weakley and surrounding counties are even more limited in scope. During the decade of the fifties there was little demand in the rural areas for the services of graduate engineers, accountants, scientists, lawyers, management trainees, agricultural technicians, home economists, and other specialized personnel. Teacher demand for the secondary and elementary schools in the area was fairly substantial, not as a result of expanding enrollment, however, but because of the retirement of the elderly and the flight of the young teachers to urban areas of the state and to adjoining states, where

salaries were substantially higher than those paid in counties characterized by an electorate choosing candidates for important local offices with little interest in offering possible solutions to existing social and economic problems.

The controversial question of whether men should migrate to areas where economic opportunities are brighter, or whether such opportunities should be made available to them in the neighborhood of their birth, either by action of government or private industry, has been discussed thoroughly. Proponents of diversification contend that depressed areas and ghost towns are economically undesirable. Beveridge presented the attitude of this group in asserting that:

Where through decline of industry in a particular place, a third or two-thirds of its working population becomes simultaneously unemployed, to say that they must move in order to find employment is equivalent to destroying the community and wasting the social capital that it represents.¹

Advocates of diversification deplore what opponents of such views consider inevitable for localities in which changing technology has so violently altered the traditional

¹Beveridge, op. cit., p. 169.

pattern of the economy. Diversificationists believe that a serious, irreparable injury to rural regions is incurred when young people, trained at the expense of the taxpayer, are impelled to seek employment elsewhere. The loss of profits in trade and commerce incurred as a result of such population shifts is cited as a serious economic loss. The threat to the social welfare of the people resulting from moral decay associated with densely settled urban areas is also frequently voiced. Indeed, much concern has been expressed concerning the possibility that the small, quiet, rural towns may grow quieter as prosperity and dynamic progress pass them by.

The economic and social problems of the rural towns and counties have received some attention by members of the United States Senate. Senate Bill No. 1869, authored by Senators Karl Mundt and the late Francis Case, both from the state of South Dakota, provided for the establishment of a bi-partisan commission, consisting of twenty members, empowered specifically to make a full and complete study of the policies and programs of the federal government relating to the needs and problems of the nation's small towns and

rural county areas.²

This bill was introduced during the session of the 86th Congress and passed by the Senate. No further action was taken after the act was forwarded to the Committee on Government Operations of the House of Representatives. During the first session of the 87th Congress, the bill was introduced again and passed a second time by members of the Senate only to suffer a similar fate in the House of Representatives.³

Social rather than economic factors were stressed in Report No. 282 prepared for background material in creating a case for the proposed piece of legislation. For Example, the social desirability of maintaining the type of community living typical of the small towns and rural communities was emphasized. The provincial atmosphere found in such areas was mentioned as a factor conducive to the spiritual development of our citizens and of importance in maintaining an economic, social, and political equilibrium in the nation. The report also emphasized that dynamic

²S. 1869, In the House of Representatives, Committee on Government Operations, May 29, 1961, pp. 3-5.

³Letter from Senator Karl E. Mundt of October 12, 1962.

changes in our economy threatened the economic survival of the small towns and counties unable to adjust to such phenomena due to lack of facilities needed to investigate the "causes and cares of their problems."⁴

The thesis that migration from rural areas is more heavily concentrated among the young, better-educated citizens has been proposed by civic and political leaders advocating a more diversified economy in the rural areas. In addition, it has been contended by those interested in the problems of the rural element of our society that low per capita incomes in the agricultural industry, lack of opportunity for the better educated young, and the collective dragging of feet on the part of the satisfied haves among a majority of have-nots, were factors contributing to the comparatively low level of prosperity in the rural communities.

In order to investigate the validity of the theses mentioned in the previous paragraph, an effort was made to locate the place of residence in 1962 of the graduates of the all-white Dresden High School and of the Negro natives of the Dresden area graduating from the Weakley County

⁴See Appendix E.

Training School during the eleven-year period beginning with the graduating classes of 1950 and ending with the classes of 1960.

Not only was the current residence of these young people sought, but questions pertaining to the social and economic background of these former high-school students and their parents were asked in order to determine levels of income, of education, and occupational status of each. These inquiries were made in an effort to ascertain, first: whether the level of parental income and education had any influence in determining the mobility pattern of the young; and second: whether income of the employed graduates was significantly higher in other areas of the state and out-of-state in comparison to the income of those choosing to remain in Dresden or in other areas of Weakley County. Of additional interest was the comparative advanced educational level attained by those leaving the area and those choosing to remain in the small town of Dresden or in Weakley County.

Inexperienced industry seekers have been known to comment that, "get the industry and the displaced natives will return home." Unfortunately, such optimistic people fail to realize that management of progressive firms contemplating moving into, or beginning a new business in a

rural area, conduct a rather exhaustive survey of the resources available to them before consummating any proposed agreement between the parties concerned. Also some validity may be attached to the view of experienced industry hunters that management of the typical firm considering rural areas as a location site may be apprehensive lest returnees from heavily industrialized areas were exposed to the doctrines of unionism; a condition which conceivably could quickly contaminate the ideal "industrial climate" often associated with the small country towns.

Evaluating the comments of individuals is indeed a rather complex task. Nevertheless, the Dresden area graduates of the two schools, now residing outside the environs of Weakley County, were queried relative to whether they would voluntarily return to their native environment provided economic opportunities were at least equal to those available in their current place of residence. Those still in college, or in the armed forces, were also queried relative to their plans after graduation or discharge.

Methods of Procedure

The names of the graduates of the 1950 through 1960 classes of Dresden High School and the names of the Negro

natives of Dresden graduating from the Weakley County Training School in Martin, were obtained with the cooperation of the Weakley County Superintendent of Schools and the principals of the two secondary schools.

Three methods were employed in obtaining the current addresses of the graduates. Principals of the two schools were able to furnish some addresses in addition to many clues relative to how others might be obtained. The postmaster at Dresden, a man of some thirty years experience in the local office, was also able to supply names of numerous married female graduates and many leads pertaining to how complete addresses could be located.

Families, friends, and relatives possessing telephones were contacted and numerous addresses obtained in this manner, and, on occasion, leads were obtained pertaining to the names of individuals who perhaps might know the locality in which one or more graduates resided. These people, particularly ones without telephones, were visited and usually success in finding addresses was achieved. Occasionally, only the name of the city in which a graduate resided was obtained, and frequently it was determined that not only the graduate but all close relatives as well

had left the area, leaving absolutely no trace of their new place of residence.

The Flight of the Young

In the eleven year period used in this study, the total number of students receiving diplomas from Dresden High School numbered 432. During this same period, only 33 Negro natives of Dresden were graduated at the Weakley County Training School in Martin. Characteristically, more females receive high school diplomas from rural secondary schools, primarily because male students drop out in larger numbers in order to bolster the family income by helping on the farm or seeking jobs elsewhere. Of the 432 graduates of the Dresden school, 252, or 58.3 per cent were female. A slightly smaller per cent of the 33 Negro graduates were female.

Table 30 shows the number of Negro graduates by year and sex and the current location of each. Only seven, or 21.2 per cent, were still residing in the area, and six of the seven were women.

None of the 33 graduates migrated to other areas of the state, primarily because of the lack of opportunity for people of this race in the urban centers of Nashville and

TABLE 30.—Location in 1962 of Negro Natives of Dresden, Tennessee, Graduating from the Weakley County Training School During the Decade of the Fifties

Year Graduated	In Tennessee				Out-of-State				Number		
	Dresden or Weakley County		Other Areas		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female							
1950	0	0	0	0			2	1	2	1	3
1951	0	0	0	0			1	1	1	1	2
1952	0	0	0	0			1	1	1	1	2
1953	0	0	0	0			0	3	0	3	3
1954	0	0	0	0			2	1	2	1	3
1955	0	0	0	0			1	2	1	2	3
1956	0	2	0	0			1	1	1	3	4
1957	0	2	0	0			2	1	2	3	5
1958	0	0	0	0			1	0	1	0	1
1959	0	2	0	0			1	1	1	3	4
1960	1	0	0	0			2	0	3	0	2
Totals	1	6	0	0			14	12	15	18	33

Source: Records of the Weakley County Training School and subsequent interviews with parents, relatives, and friends.

Memphis. It is not unusual, therefore, that fourteen of the fifteen male graduates left the state. Five of the fourteen were in the armed forces, however. The per cent of young women leaving the state was not as large, although two-thirds of the eighteen graduates were living outside the South. Fourteen of the twenty-one graduates, not in the armed forces, but living in other areas of the country, chose Michigan as their new home. Eight emigrated to Detroit and six to Lansing. Four of the remaining seven were in Chicago and one each in the cities of New York, Camden, New Jersey, and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The tendency of young Negro high school graduates to leave the area immediately upon receiving their diplomas may have serious repercussions in the future, particularly in regard to leadership among members of this race. The climb up the economic ladder to a higher standard of living for the Negro in the area has characteristically been slow. Assuming that a significant correlation exists between education and higher living standards regardless of race, it would appear that, if the present trend continues, the Negroes remaining in the area will continue to be an underprivileged, low income, sparsely educated class.

Significantly, thirty-one of the thirty-three gradu-

ates had parents or close relatives living in the corporate limits of Dresden. Few indeed are the Negroes owning a farm or operating as a tenant farmer. As a matter of record, during the ten-year period ending in 1959, the number of tenant farmers in the county declined from 968 to 355, a decrease of 63.3 per cent from the 1950 base year.⁵

Little opportunity, therefore, exists for the untrained, unskilled Negro either as a tenant or as an employee of the few manufacturing and mining firms in the county. Virtually no opportunity exists for the better educated young Negro, as the only jobs available are in unskilled categories such as janitorial, domestic, and occasional part-time farm work. Little wonder therefore that the young better-trained Negro seeks a livelihood elsewhere as quickly as he possibly can. In so doing, however, he leaves those remaining behind comparatively leaderless and often relegated to a problem status with no immediate solution in view.

The mobility pattern of the graduates of Dresden High School was somewhat less easily defined. As noted previously, 75 per cent of the 21 Negro graduates, not in

⁵ United States Census of Agriculture, 1959, Tennessee, p. 167, and 1954 Census of Agriculture, Tennessee, p. 77.

the armed forces and living outside the state in the summer of 1962, elected to emigrate to Michigan. Although the graduates of the all-white Dresden High School emigrated to the mid-western states of Michigan and Illinois in substantial numbers, it was nevertheless determined that an additional seventeen states and two foreign countries had at least one of these young people residing there.

As shown in Table 31, 66 male and 79 female graduates were located outside the state of Tennessee. Of this number, 8 were either in the armed forces or married to armed forces personnel. Of the remaining 137 graduates, 34, or 24.8 per cent, were in the state of Michigan. The state of Illinois was the place of residence of 31, or 22.6 per cent of the 137 graduates located outside the state. Sixteen of the 34 living in Michigan were in Lansing, traditionally a popular city for emigrants from Weakley County seeking employment in the industrialized areas of the Midwest. Paradoxically, of the remaining 18, none were in the large city of Detroit, but instead were residing in seven smaller cities throughout the state. Of the 31 former students of Dresden High School living in Illinois, 18 were in Chicago, with the remainder residing in 7 smaller cities in the state. Chicago, approximately 450 miles from

TABLE 31.--Residence in 1962 of Students Graduating from Dresden High School During the Years 1950-1960, Inclusive

Year of Gradua- tion	Dresden or Weakley County	Located in						Totals					
		Other Areas of State		Out-of-State		Not Located		Male		Female		Male	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1950	3	8	2	6	12	12	2	4	19	30	49		
1951	2	4	2	1	4	7	0	1	8	13	21		
1952	3	4	4	4	13	10	3	3	23	21	44*		
1953	6	10	3	5	6	10	1	2	16	27	43**		
1954	1	14	4	2	4	5	2	2	11	23	34		
1955	8	4	8	5	3	8	1	1	20	18	38		
1956	5	7	3	7	3	8	2	3	13	25	38		
1957	6	12	7	7	7	5	0	3	20	27	47		
1958	6	7	0	1	7	6	3	4	16	18	34		
1959	8	11	5	5	2	6	2	6	17	28	45		
1960	8	12	1	5	5	2	3	3	17	22	39		
Total	56	93	39	48	66	79	19	32	180	252	432		

Source: Records of Dresden High School and subsequent interviews with parents, other relatives, and friends.

*46 students in this class, two females deceased.
**44 students in this class, one female deceased.

Weakley County, has also traditionally been attractive to emigrants from the county.

Ten cities and towns in the state of Kentucky were the places of residence of 15, and it appeared that the lure of the far West was irresistible to some, as an additional 15 of the former students of Dresden High School were residing in the state of California. Texas was the new home of 9 of the former natives of the county; Mississippi beckoned 7 to its borders, and Georgia 7. Altogether, 188, or 86.1 per cent of the 137 graduates located, were residing in the seven states of Michigan, Illinois, Kentucky, California, Texas, Mississippi, and Georgia. Only two of the four located in the state of Missouri were living in the St. Louis area. This may indicate that St. Louis, only 225 miles from the Weakley County border, has yet to become a city of opportunity for Weakley Countians seeking employment outside the state.

Again referring to Table 31, it is noted that 51 of the graduates were not located. It cannot be inferred, of course, that all of them left the state. Nevertheless, the entire families of these graduates had left the county, leaving no forwarding addresses for postal officials. Altogether, 381, or 88.2 per cent of the people graduating

from Dresden High School during the eleven year period were located. Complete city and street or rural route addresses were obtained for 330, or 86.6 per cent of those located.

Still residing in Weakley County were 149, or 39.1 per cent, of the total number found. Of this group, 13 were more recent graduates of Dresden High School and were still enrolled in a college located in the small Weakley County town of Martin. Significantly, neither of the 13 indicated that they expected to reside in Dresden or any place in the county after completing their college work.

Perhaps no obvious migratory pattern was established for the 87 young people still residing in Tennessee, but outside the environs of Weakley County. Despite the fact that 33, or 37.9 per cent, of this group were located in urban center of Memphis, only 14 were residing in the three other large cities of the state; namely, Knoxville, Nashville, and Chattanooga. Since slightly over 46 per cent were living in smaller Tennessee communities, it cannot be assumed that these young people showed a decided preference for the large urban areas. The deciding factor it appears was the prospect of job opportunities regardless of the size of the community. Of additional interest perhaps was

the fact that the 40 people, not choosing the large urban centers as a place of residence, were living in fifteen different communities in the state.

Table 26, Chapter XI, shows that there were 24.9 per cent less white and 36.0 per cent fewer Negro people in the 15 through 34 age group residing in the county in April, 1960 than there were ten years previously. For comparative purposes, the numbers in the 1960 graduating classes were deleted from the totals in Tables 30 and 31, thus giving a total of 30 Negro and 393 white graduates of the two schools during the census period. During this decade, 67.2 per cent of the white and 80 per cent of the Negroes left the county. Assuming that these people were in the 15 through 34 age bracket when graduated from high school, it is apparent that the younger, better trained, and perhaps more productive citizens constituted a disproportionate percentage of the 1,984 net loss in this age group experienced in the county between the 1950 and 1960 census years.

In summary, the findings stated here serve to substantiate, at least partially, the thesis that migration from rural counties and small country towns is highly selective. Indeed, there seems to be little doubt that the better educated citizen is much more mobile than his lesser

trained counterpart. Paradoxically, only 97 of the 232 white graduates living outside the confines of Weakley County were residing in cities having in excess of 100,000 population. In comparison, practically all of the Negro graduates leaving the county migrated to the large urban centers of the Midwest and East. This perhaps reflects the nostalgic preference of the young whites, born and reared in the provincial atmosphere of a small southern town dominated by his race. Conversely, the tendency for the Negro to select the large urban areas might conceivably reflect his innate sense of dissatisfaction with the type of life afforded him in the smaller communities regardless of where they may be located.

The Contact

In order to determine certain social and economic characteristics of the graduates and their parents, and to measure the influence of these parental characteristics on the migratory pattern of the young people claiming the Dresden area as a place of residence during their formative years, a questionnaire and cover letter (see Appendices F & G) were mailed to graduates for whom addresses were found.

Three hundred sixty-three complete addresses, or 87.7 per cent, of the number located were obtained. One hundred seventy-six, or 48.5 per cent, of the questionnaires mailed to this group were returned. Of the returns, 40.3 per cent were received from respondents residing in Dresden or other areas of Weakley County; 35.8 per cent were received from respondents living outside the state, and 23.9 per cent of the returns came from individuals living in the state but outside the county of Weakley. There appeared to be little disparity between the return of the two sexes as 49.3 per cent of the females and 47.3 per cent of the males responded. No set pattern was established from the standpoint of per cent return by class, inasmuch as 64.7 per cent return was received from the class of 1951 compared to a 60 per cent return from the more recent class of 1960. Deleting the middle year 1955, a 47.7 per cent return was obtained from the members of the graduating classes of 1950 through 1954, compared to a 49.4 per cent return from the classes of 1956 through 1960.

A total of 414 of the 432 Dresden High School graduates and 33 Dresden area Negro graduates of the Weakley County Training School were located. These people constituted the classes of 1950 through 1960, exclusively. Of

the 414 people located, 41.3 per cent were residing in Weakley County; 37.7 per cent were living out of the state; and 21 per cent were residing in other areas of the state.

Education, Income, and
Occupational Status of Parents

It perhaps appears logical to assume that parents of more advanced educational attainments and income are better able financially to afford formal training for their offspring. Thus, being more literate and conscious of the value of such training, the parents may rather willingly recommend to their children that they aspire to perhaps a higher level than the parents were able to obtain. It further follows that if such an assumption is true, the parents should be more able to expedite the paving of a path leading to attractive economic opportunities for their offspring in the county of their birth. As a valid conclusion, this might suggest that the educational background and family income, as well as occupational status, of the parents, particularly the breadwinners of the family, might have influence on the migratory pattern of their young.

The influence of the parental level of education, particularly the level of the fathers of the graduates, was

investigated through the process of computing parameters from the data received from the 176 respondents. Paradoxically, all respondents indicated the educational level of their parents. Statistics were computed for each category, consisting of the educational level of parents of graduates remaining in the county, the educational level of parents of graduates residing in the state but outside the environs of the county, and the educational level of parents of graduates residing outside the state.

The widely used Student's T-test was applied to test the null hypotheses of (a), no significant difference in the educational level of the fathers of high school graduates remaining in Weakley County as compared to the educational level of fathers of graduates residing elsewhere in the state; and (b), no significant difference in the educational level of the fathers of high school graduates remaining in Weakley County as compared to the educational level of fathers of graduates migrating outside the state.

Each of the two hypotheses was accepted at both the 1 and 5 per cent levels of significance (the level of

significance, alpha, is defined as the probability of rejecting a true hypothesis). As a general rule, it may be stated that the result of a statistical test is considered significant if the hypothesis is rejected with alpha equal to 5 per cent and highly significant if rejected at the level of 1 per cent.⁶

The acceptance of these two null hypotheses suggests that there was no significant relationship between the level of education of the breadwinners of the families and the migratory pattern of their offspring graduating from high school during the eleven year period ending in the spring of 1960.

Identical statistical tests were used in comparing the educational level of mothers of offspring remaining in the county with the educational level of mothers of children living in other areas of the state and out of state. No

⁶Wilfred J. Dixon and Frank J. Massey, Jr., Introduction to Statistical Analysis, 2nd edition (McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1957), p. 91.

significant relationship was found at either the 5 or 1 per cent levels of significance.

In comparing the educational level of fathers of all graduates with the educational background of the mothers of the young people, the null hypothesis of no significant difference was rejected at the 5 per cent level. This rejection suggests that the mean educational level of 8.9 years of the mothers was significantly higher than the mean of 7.8 years determined for the fathers of the graduates. While this observation has no bearing whatsoever on the migratory pattern of the high school graduates of the area, it does lend credence to the supposition, made elsewhere in this study, that rural women tend to obtain more formal education during their youth than their male counterparts acquire.

The mean family income of parents of graduates remaining in the county was \$4,313.40 compared to \$3,900 for parents of graduates living in other areas of the state, and \$3,612.90 for parents with sons and daughters living outside the state. The mean income of 169 families of the respondents--only seven people refused to answer this question--was \$3,958.58, with a standard deviation of \$2,107.13.

Despite the \$413.40 dollar gap existing between the family incomes of graduates who chose to remain in the county, compared to the income of the families of those who left for other areas of the state, it was determined that this difference was not significant.

Neither was the larger difference of \$700.50, existing between the family incomes of graduates remaining in the county and those leaving the state, found to be significant when the two-tailed, 5 per cent level test was used. This difference was significant, however, at the 5 per cent level using a one-tailed test. In the latter test, a Z value of 1.88 was obtained (the Z value is defined as the quantitative size of the standard error of the mean existing to the right or left of the mean). In this case, any Z value larger than 1.645 would result in the rejection of the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the family income of parents of graduates remaining in the county as compared to the family income of parents of the offspring migrating away from the state. Inasmuch as the computed Z value of 1.88 was larger than 1.645, the hypothesis was rejected.⁷

⁷Ibid., pp. 112-124, and p. 383.

In summary, there were no significant differences in the educational level of parents of the young people, regardless of where these offspring chose to reside. Therefore, the educational level of the parents was of no consequence in determining migratory patterns of their young. Neither was there any significant difference in the family income of parents of Weakley County high school graduates who chose to remain in the county compared to the income of parents of the graduates living in other areas of the state.

The difference between the family income of parents of graduates remaining in the county, compared to the family income of parents of graduates leaving the state, was significant at the 5 per cent level, using a right-tailed test, and at any higher level of significance, as for example, either the 10, 20, etc., per cent levels. The difference was not significant at the 5 per cent level, using a two-tailed test, or at the 1 per cent level using either a one or two-tailed test. A detailed discussion of the power of a given test is beyond the scope of this study as is a descriptive defense of the selection of alpha at either the 1, 5, or 10 per cent levels of significance. It was observed; however, that a much less definitive

relationship existed between the size of the parental family income of Weakley County high school graduates and the tendency for their offspring to either remain in the county or migrate to areas other than in Tennessee. In rural counties where the per cent of the population is more heavily concentrated in the Negro race, the relationship may perhaps be far more conclusive than shown here.

In the year 1950, only 7.3 per cent of the Weakley County population was Negro. Ten years later an identical ratio existed. Paradoxically, the 26 Negroes to whom questionnaires were mailed, constituted 7.2 per cent of the 363 people contacted in this phase of the study. No planned effort was made to keep the per cent of Negroes contacted approximately equal to the per cent this race was of the total county population. Through chance, only 26 complete addresses were obtained from the total of 33 Dresden area Negroes receiving high school diplomas during the 1950-60 period.

Inasmuch as the race of the respondent was not sought in the questionnaire, no exact method of ascertaining the number of replies received from the 26 Negroes was available. Assuming, however, that the same per cent of Negro and white people responded, an estimated thirteen returns

were received from members of the Negro race; however, some of these returns may have been from Negro graduates of the Weakley County Training School still residing in the county.

In the final analysis, it is observed that the income status of the parental families of graduates migrating to other areas of the state was not materially lower than the income level of families of graduates who chose to remain in the county. All respondents, constituting the sample of students still residing in other areas of Tennessee, were members of the white race and were, of course, graduates of Dresden High School. Conclusive proof that the income level of the parental family was lower for those graduates later leaving the state, in comparison to the income level of the parents of those remaining in the county was not obtained. There exists, however, a strong likelihood that a positive relationship exists between the level of parental family income and the tendency for the high school graduate son or daughter to seek employment outside the state.

The principal occupations of the fathers of the 176 respondents, at the time these people graduated from high school, were classified into fourteen categories.

Fifty-eight, or 33 per cent, were farmers, and 15, or 8.5 per cent were business operators. It may be observed

from Table 32 that none of the young people living out of state, at the time this study was conducted, were sons or daughters of business operators; however, 10, or 14.1 per cent, of the young people remaining in the county claimed to be offspring of entrepreneurs. Only 19, or 26.8 per cent, of the graduates remaining in the county were children of farmers, either owners or tenants. In comparison, 38.1 per cent of the young people moving out of the state were sons or daughters of farmers.

The columnar headings in Table 32 show the place of residence of the respondents at the time this study was conducted and the number in each area stating the occupation of the paternal parent at the time of high school graduation. The title, miscellaneous, was used in instances in which one occupation only was indicated for the entire group of respondents. Also included in the table is the number, listed by place of residence, stating that the father was deceased at the time they finished school.

Table 32 was used as a basis for establishing a two variable, analysis of variance problem. An analysis of the rows, or occupations, was made in an effort to determine if there was a significant difference in the occupations of the fathers of the graduates, and secondly, an

analysis of the columns was made in order to ascertain if significant differences in occupations of the fathers existed in direct relationship to the geographical location of their offspring at the time this study was conducted.

Established were null hypotheses of (a), no significant difference in row means; and (b), no significant difference in column means. Three tests were made of each of the two hypotheses, using the level of significance (alpha) at the 1, 5, and 10 per cent levels, respectively.

The F test was used to test the two hypotheses. This test is valid only if the investigator is reasonably certain that the observations were selected from a normal population with a homogeneous variance and that the row and column effects were additive. If the variables are additive, the residual variance actually measures the variance not explained by differences in row and column means.

The assumption that the observations used in this study were representative of all high school graduates in the county during the 1950-1960 period may be substantiated by the fact that no special school districts exist. Five of the six white high schools are located in the incorporated towns in the county, but each school accommodates students living on rural routes flowing from the incorporated

TABLE 32.--Occupational Status of Father at the Time Respondents Completed High School

Occupation	County	State	Out-of-State		Total
			State	Total	
Farmer	19	15	24	58	
Business Operator	10	5	0	15	
Laborer	7	2	6	15	
Truck Driver	8	2	4	14	
Government Employee (including teaching)	3	4	5	12	
Factory Worker	2	3	6	11	
Mechanic	4	1	3	8	
Salesman	2	4	2	8	
Carpenter	2	3	2	7	
Professional	2	1	1	4	
Mining	2	0	0	2	
Deceased	3	1	4	8	
Unemployed	2	0	1	3	
Miscellaneous	5	1	5	11	
<hr/>		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Totals	71	42	63	176	

Source: Questionnaire (See Appendix F).

communities. The one Negro high school accommodates all students of that race residing within the environs of the county. A second assumption follows that the 48.5 per cent return of questionnaires was adequate in size and was reasonably distributed between the three areas in which the graduates were residing at the time this investigation was made. Assuming the acceptance of these two assumptions by

the reader, it follows that the migratory practices of all graduates of the county high schools during the 1950-1960 era did not differ one from another in a significant manner. Although a random sample of each school was not selected, but a census of the graduates of Dresden High School and the Dresden area Negro graduates of the Weakley County Training School used instead, it would follow that the group selected was representative of a normal population in respect to graduates of all county high schools during the period used in this study.

Hypothesis (a) was rejected at each of the three levels of significance. The rejection of this hypothesis served to indicate that there was a significant difference in the occupations chosen by the fathers of the graduates. The rejection of this hypothesis was not startling, as it, unlike hypothesis (b), had less significance in regard to the question of whether the occupational status of the parental parent had any influence on the migratory practice of his offspring.

Hypothesis (b), of no significant difference in column means, or more explicitly, no significant difference in the occupational status of the fathers of the graduates in relationship to the migratory pattern of their young,

was accepted at the 1 per cent level, and rejected at the 10 per cent level of significance. The quantitative size of the upper rejection level, at 5 per cent, was identical to the computed F value of 3.4. In other words, the ratio of the variances of the column values to the residual variances was exactly equal to the arithmetic value of the rejection level. In conclusion, it may simply be stated that the relationship was significant at the higher level of 10 per cent; inconclusive at the 5 per cent level, and definitely not significant at the 1 per cent level of significance.

As noted previously, 58, or 33 per cent, of the respondents were children of fathers engaged principally in the occupation of farming at the time the youngsters graduated from high school. The remaining job titles, describing the vocational activities of the male parents, were rather unimpressive. Using this evidence as a basis, one might suspect that the type of job and longevity record of the male parent in the vocation engaged in at the time the child graduated from high school had little effect on the migratory practices of the young. If a large percentage of the parents had been engaged in professional, semi-professional, and government work with a similar proportion

of the male parents engaged in farming, factory work, and other comparatively low income occupations, this supposition may have been reversed. As shown in Chapter XI, however, the number of jobs in the county classified in the former category was comparatively small.

Of the 176 respondents, 156 answered the question relative to the number of years the male parent had been engaged in his occupation at the time the child graduated from high school. Of the 20 respondents not indicating a specific vocation for the male parent, three stated that the father was unemployed, and the fathers of eight were deceased. The mean number of years fathers of all respondents had been engaged in the same vocation at the time the children graduated from high school was 16.1, with a standard deviation of 10.8 years.

Comparisons were made between the job longevity of the fathers of graduates remaining in the county with, separately, the mean job longevity in years of the parents of graduates living in other areas of the state and out-of-state. No significant differences were found at either the 1, 5, or 10 per cent levels. This indicated that the stability of the parents in reference to vocation had little bearing on the migratory practices of the young high school

graduates. It was observed that the mean job longevity of the male parents of graduates remaining in the county was 15.7 years with a standard deviation of 10.4 years compared to 17.7 years and a standard deviation of 11.7 years for the male parent of the respondents living in other areas of the state. The fathers of those leaving the state had been engaged in the same vocation 15.7 years with a standard deviation of 10.4 years.

Income and Occupations of Rural High School Graduates

In Chapter XI, the observation was made that the real family income of all Weakley Countians, able to weather the economic storm of the fifties, rose from a median of \$1,411 in 1949 to \$2,758 ten years later. The 1959 median family income of Weakley Countians adjusted for changes in purchasing power amounted to \$2,209.93 in 1949 dollars. This increase in real family income of 56.6 per cent appeared impressive but was still slightly below the increase for the state as a whole. For example, the state median income was \$1,984 in 1949 and in 1959 had risen to \$3,949. After adjustment, this latter figure amounted to \$3,169.34, an increase of 59.7 per cent over 1949. The dollar gap in the median income of all state families

compared to Weakley County families in 1959 was \$1,191, and the difference in real family income between the two was \$959.41.⁸

So, apparently a large dollar difference did exist in 1959 between the family income of all Weakley Countians compared to the state as a whole. The question of whether significant differences existed in family and individual incomes of groups with comparable educational backgrounds was, however, not answered by census takers.

In this study an opportunity to compare the mean family and individual incomes of graduates of Weakley County high schools, years 1950-1960, was available. Assumptions similar to those used on pages 292 and 293 were established, and null hypotheses expressed of (a), no significant difference between the mean family income of graduates remaining in the county as compared, separately, to the mean family incomes of those living in other areas of the state and out of state; and (b), similar hypotheses were made relative to significant differences in mean individual incomes of graduates. Once again the respondents used in this study were considered representative of all Weakley County high school graduates of the 1950-1960 classes.

Prior to testing the hypotheses of equality of means of family and individual incomes of the graduates remaining in the county with, on the one hand, those residing in other areas of the state and, on the other, with the graduates migrating out of state; tests for significant differences in the variability of family and individual incomes of graduates residing in the three areas were made. No significant differences in variability of either family or individual incomes were found to exist. As a result, the variances were pooled in applying T-tests of the hypotheses relative to the equality of the 1961 mean family and individual incomes of the graduates residing in the three areas, Weakley County, other parts of the state, and out of state.⁹

The 1961 mean family income of the 21 graduates reporting both husband and wife working in Weakley County was \$4,928.55, with a standard deviation of \$2,666.45. In comparison, the mean income of both husband and wife, as reported by 34 respondents living outside the state was \$6,444, with a standard deviation of \$2,705. The hypothesis of no significant difference in the family income of

⁹Dixon and Massey, op. cit., pp. 244-261.

graduates remaining in the county as compared to the family income of those working outside the state was rejected at the 5 and 10 per cent levels of significance and accepted at the 1 per cent level.

In contrast, the hypothesis of no significant difference in the family income of graduates remaining in the county as compared to the family income of those working in other areas of the state was accepted at the 1 and 5 per cent levels of significance and rejected at the 10 per cent level. The mean family income of the 22 respondents living outside the county, but in the state, was \$6,273, with a standard deviation of \$2,509.98.

In summary, there appeared to be evidence that the combined mean income of the graduate and spouse employed outside the state was significantly higher than the mean family income of those remaining in the county. Evidence did not exist, however, that the difference in the mean family income of graduates residing in Weakley County and the mean family income of those residing in other areas of the state was highly significant. Significant yes, but not highly significant.

A separate test was made of the hypothesis of no significant difference in the 1961 mean family income of

graduates remaining in Tennessee, but living outside Weakley County, in comparison to the mean family income of those employed outside the state. This hypothesis was accepted and the conclusion drawn that no significant difference existed.

Married graduates with non-working wives or husbands and single graduates of the schools used in this study were asked to record the range of individual incomes for the year 1961 (see Appendix F). Procedures identical to those employed in testing for significant differences in mean family incomes were used in testing for significant differences in mean individual incomes.

The 1961 mean individual income of the respondents still residing in Weakley County, and answering the income question, was \$2,809.53, with a standard deviation of \$1,865.48. In comparison, the 1961 mean individual income of respondents residing in other areas of the state was \$4,285.71, with a standard deviation of \$2,209.07. The out-of-state respondents had a 1961 mean individual income of \$4,513.52, with a standard deviation of \$1,939.00. The income of members of the armed forces and of college students employed part time were not included in either the individual or family income analyses.

The hypothesis of no significant difference in the 1961 mean individual income of graduates of Weakley County high schools, years 1950-1960, inclusive, remaining in the county as compared to the mean income of those employed in other areas of the state was rejected. The difference appeared highly significant, inasmuch as the hypothesis was rejected at both 1 and 5 per cent levels of significance.

When alpha, the level of significance, is increased, the rejection limits are forced in closer to the hypothetical population mean. As a result, the probability of accepting a hypothesis becomes smaller as alpha is increased. This implies that the above hypothesis would be rejected at any level of significance.

A similar test was made of the hypothesis of no significant difference in the 1961 mean individual income of graduates remaining in the county as compared to the mean income of those employed outside the state. This hypothesis was rejected and the difference considered highly significant.

As a result of the income tests, both family and individual, made in this part of the study, it appears that the family income gap of graduates remaining in the county had narrowed in comparison to the family income of those

residing in other areas of the state. It did appear, however, that the individual income of graduates remaining in the county lagged appreciably behind the individual incomes of the graduates leaving the county and taking up residence in other parts of the state and out of state. Less significant, however, was the difference between the mean family income of graduates remaining in the county compared to those leaving the state. The indecisiveness of the test for equality of mean family incomes between the in-county and out-of-state groups may indicate to some degree that the family income of the graduates residing in the two areas may be closing. This by no means infers that the family income level is approaching equality in Weakley County compared to out of state for all families regardless of level of formal training.

Not measured in the above tests was the effect on income of academic and non-academic training received beyond the high school years. A statistical test for significance between income and educational level was not feasible with the data available; however, a descriptive comparison of the training received beyond high school of respondents classified by area of residence may be indicative of some relationship between the two.

Neither state supported nor privately-owned vocational schools, other than one business school, existed in the county; however, all white graduates of county high schools, during the 1950-60 period, were in commuting distance of one state supported and one church supported college. The former was in a state of transition from junior college to senior college status during this period and did not offer varied or extensive curricula. The state supported institution did not open its doors to members of the Negro race until all classes used in this study had graduated from high school. The church supported institution accepted Negro applicants interested in the ministry as a career. No others were accommodated. With the exception of the 1960 class, Negro high school graduates in the county had available to them neither vocational or higher educational opportunities during this period.

All respondents answered the inquiry relative to the quantity of training received beyond high school. Seventy-three, or 41.5 per cent, stated that they had attended college. Of this number, 27, or 37.0 per cent, had received the bachelor's degree, and 10, or 13.7 per cent, had advanced beyond this level. Sixteen, or 21.9 per cent

of the 73, were still pursuing a college career at the time this investigation was conducted.

The distribution of the respondents reporting bachelor degrees only was as follows: one was in Weakley County; three were in other areas of the state, and 23 were residing out of state. Of the 10 reporting academic achievement beyond the bachelor level, 4 were in other parts of Tennessee, and the remaining 6 had left the state.

Fifty-five, or 31.3 per cent, of the respondents had not received training of any nature after graduating from high school. The distribution of this group showed that 52.7 per cent were still in Weakley County, 27.3 per cent were outside the state, and 20.0 per cent were residing in other areas of the state.

The vocations followed by the respondents differed markedly by area. In Weakley County, for example, 16.9 per cent of the 71 respondents were engaged in factory employment. Only 2.4 and 1.6 per cent of the respondents residing in other areas of the state and out of state, respectively, were so engaged. Paradoxically, 18.3 per cent of the group remaining in rural Weakley County reported vocations closely allied to the white-collar office, clerical, and banking field, compared to 16.7 per cent of the respond-

ents living in other areas of the state, and 14.3 per cent of those living outside Tennessee.

Of the women respondents remaining in the county, 76.2 per cent were married compared to 78.9 per cent of the women graduates residing elsewhere in the state. Eighty per cent of the female respondents living outside the state reported this particular status. Only 15.5 per cent of the married respondents still residing in the county reported the vocation of "housewife." In comparison, 28.6 per cent of the state and 30.2 per cent of the female out-of-state respondents were occupied solely in homemaking activities. It appeared, therefore, that the female married respondents, still residing in the county, more readily accepted the responsibility of supplementing the family income through the medium of seeking employment outside the home. No doubt, the comparatively low individual income in the county was a factor in inducing a larger portion of the married female respondents into income producing work.

Twenty-six, or 14.8 per cent, of the respondents reported such vocations as the ministry, medicine, law, nursing, engineering, and the like. Of the 26, only 3 were still in Weakley County at the time this investigation was made. Ten were in other areas of the state, and 15 were

outside the state. In contrast, the three respondents reporting a status of unemployed were in Weakley County, and of the 16 still in college, 13 were attending the two area institutions of higher learning. Surprisingly, only one respondent was engaged in farming in the county.

In summary, it appeared that high school graduates remaining in the county in a permanent capacity were not strongly motivated toward seeking additional training beyond the high school years. For example, the vocations of factory worker and "housewife" appeared less stimulating in the county as 83.9 per cent of the respondents listed in these two career categories had received no additional training of any nature after completing high school. In contrast, only 25 per cent of the female married respondents living in other areas of the state, and 26.3 per cent of those living outside the state reported no additional training.

As a large majority of the respondents completing at least four years of college were residing outside the county, it is conceivable that the incomes of this group exerted a powerful leverage on the mean income of both in-state but out-of-county, and out-of-state respondents. It was observed that more married female respondents from

outside the county could afford the luxury of homemaking as a full-time activity, which may indicate that the individual income of the spouse was sufficient to meet family financial responsibilities. In this study, the income of respondents, regardless of family status, was considered individual if only one person in the family was working. Inasmuch as the spread was less between the mean family income of graduates remaining in the county and the family income of those living outside the county compared to the mean individual income of the three groups, it is strongly suspected that a disproportionate percentage of the lower income groups living outside the county reported family income data.

The Views of Respondents

Of the 105 individuals living outside Weakley County, 56.2 per cent indicated that they would return to the Dresden area if equal economic opportunities were available. Several of the respondents expressed concern about the lagging economic, social, and cultural conditions in the county, while others considered only the scarcity of jobs in their fields as a hindrance to the actual fulfillment of their desire to return. Some recalled with a bit of emotion the scene of their childhood and adolescent years and some-

what pathetically penned wistful, nostalgic, comments about the hopelessness they felt concerning the possibility of returning home. Facetious replies were expressed by a few, who apparently questioned the propriety of an inquiry which vaguely intimated the possibility of an improved diversified economy in the county.

The following comments were typical of those from respondents indicating a nostalgic affection for the area.

Weakley County is my home, and I would enjoy living and working there. Both my parents and my husband's still reside in Weakley County.

I was born in Dresden and lived there all my life. I would move back immediately if a suitable job was available. I wouldn't be interested in making as much money as I do now if I could live in Dresden and make a decent living. I think it is a real shame that the situation is like it is in Weakley.

I had just rather live in Tennessee.

Would much prefer to live in or around Dresden if jobs were available at comparable salary and chance for advancement. Small towns are much more to my liking than cities.

If jobs were available in or around Dresden to equal my present salary or even less, I would return home.

Because Dresden is my home, I should return if I could find a job paying enough to live on.

I would like to move back home but I am married with 3 children, & to have a home with some of the better things of life you can't do it sacking groceries or pumping gas on \$60 a week.

I had rather live in Weakley County than any where else because all my friend and relative there.

A majority of the respondents having bachelor and more advanced college degrees, or married to a person with such training, expressed an interest in returning permanently to the Dresden area. Each respondent in this category, however, assumed a rather dubious attitude as to the likelihood of this return physically taking place. A medical doctor stated:

Yes, I would return, but there is more than one reason why this is not likely to happen; however, the inadequate hospital situation in Weakley County is a prime consideration.

An electrical engineer wrote:

There are no job opportunities in that area for which I am qualified. Should this type job be available, I would be more than happy to return to the area.

A teacher expressed dissatisfaction with salaries.

If I could earn a salary nearly equal to my present one, I would be most happy about the prospect of accepting a position in my home county.

The wife of a chemist wrote:

The only reason we left was because my husband could make more here in We didn't want to leave and would like to come back home to live, but seems we have no choice. Employment for a chemist is not to be found there as we searched most of the state for a job before coming out here.

A minister stated:

Yes, I believe I would return, but would have to consider the opportunities for ministerial work since I have this calling.

An agricultural economist expressed this opinion:

Yes, I would return, or at least I would be willing to consider a job in the local area if the "job opportunities and income" were comparable with other areas. But I consider the if clause so unlikely that the question is of no significance to me.

The following statement was made by an aeronautical engineer:

I would come back to Weakley County for a considerable reduction in salary; however, it appears highly unlikely that I will ever be able to do this because of the nature of my profession.

Another professional engineer stated:

Yes, I would return. It would be a definite advantage and pleasure to work in the Dresden area if only there was a wider choice of jobs available with a greater potential for advancement in these jobs.

The following remarks were written by some of the 46 respondents who preferred not to reside permanently in Dresden or anywhere in Weakley County.

A "special agent" for an insurance company wrote:

I have been with my company 10 years and could not consider other employment. I have no desire to return.

A "plant protection officer" criticized the hiring practices of employers in the county.

No I do not care to live in Weakley County. What needs to be done there is to take politics out of employment within the county. Unless it has changed since I left there, it was almost impossible to get employment with the State or Federal Government unless you were of the right political party, also private employers were reluctant to hire a person unless there was some one on the inside to pull strings for him, so to speak.

The following remark came from a housewife:

No, not interested. My husband's income is adequate. We have responsibilities of home and children here.

The following comment from a respondent indicated a complete adjustment to his current environment.

A few years ago, I would have returned to Weakley County but I haven't been back except for visits since 1954. I have been on this job for seven years, am buying a home, have made many friends, am active in church here and now feel that this is home.

A respondent, giving his vocation as a scientist, stated:

If the area offered a creative environment for scientific work along with social and recreational facilities equal to other areas, I would return. On the other hand, equal income alone would not interest me. Had there been job opportunities at the time I left; however, I probably would have remained.

A "beauty operator" stated:

No I don't think I would because there are advantages that the large cities have that the small cities don't have. Another reason you come to know lot more people in a bigger city.

The following remark came from a housewife:

No, we would never return permanently. The educational standards for children are lower there, and there are fewer opportunities for cultural enlightenment, music, art, theatre, etc.

Only one of the respondents reporting the status of full-time student expected to return or remain in the county after completing college, and a second was undecided. Two of the eight respondents reporting a branch of the armed forces as an employer expected to live permanently in Weakley County. Typical of the comments from this group were the following:

I am a senior in college, majoring in education. It would be foolish to stay in Weakley County because of the low salary scale.

No, I do not expect to remain here. Teacher income in the county does not compare with income in other states.

The Dresden area is hardly a place for an ambitious young lawyer.

Future husband is from out-of-state. We do not expect to remain in Tennessee after our graduation.

No, I'll have to leave. Job opportunities are limited here. The only jobs available are those that don't really require any more education than a high school diploma, and most don't even require that.

I plan to live in Dresden with my work being in West Tennessee.

Anticipating graduating from college this term, I have accepted a job in another state. Some day I hope

to be able to return to Dresden permanently; if not before retirement, then after.

This fall, I will be teaching in another state. The salary I will receive will be almost double that of Weakley County. I wouldn't except a job in Dresden unless school system improved because it is now way below that of . . . where I will be teaching.

Forty-five of the 71 respondents living in Weakley County expressed either a positive or negative answer to the question: "Do you consider job opportunities and income available to you at least equal to what you could find elsewhere?" Two were undecided, and the remainder were either housewives or full-time college students. Many were openly critical of the area; others were not hesitant in defending their decision to make the county a permanent home. Complaints, rather than satisfaction, were expressed more often, however.

A factory worker complained that:

Haven't got enough job openings for the type of work I went to business college to learn.

This terse comment came from a bookkeeper:

Anyone can find a job if he or she looks hard enough.

A businessman remarked:

I am in business for myself. Therefore, I think I am now making as much here as I would earn elsewhere, but opportunities for something else are not as great here as they would be in others areas.

Another county respondent remarked:

I believe I am very lucky to have the job I now have.

A factory employee stated:

I believe the job opportunities and income available to me in Weakley County are equal to what they are in other parts of Tennessee at least. I have since graduating from high school worked in other counties and my income was approximately the same.

The female answered for a husband and wife team.

With the chosen work we do, there is an available income for us.

A self-employed respondent remarked:

If I were to be relocated in a larger economic area, of course the potential would be greater. However, as this is my home I feel that I should try to be of some benefit to this county.

Dissatisfaction with wage rates, working conditions, and opportunities for promotion were expressed by respondents critical of the county and what it had to offer. The following were typical of the comments of this group.

The job I do and the money I earn is all right at this time, but opportunities for advancement are very few. The company isn't large enough to promote nearly all those that are qualified and therefore it is quite dissatisfying to see yourself doing the same thing twenty years from now that you are doing today.

In other states around us the wages are better and the working conditions are better. I think that all factories should provide more benefits to the working class of people, such as holiday pay & some retirement plan.

Weakley County is very low in teacher's salaries. Some of the adjoining counties have recently raised their teacher's salaries. I think Weakley County should get busy or more of its teachers may leave for better pay.

I have had 3 years experience in secretarial work. For 1½ years we lived in the state of . . . and we easily found employment there because of our abilities. Yet, since moving back here 6 months ago neither my husband or myself have found steady employment. We both have our abilities yet no chance to use them . . .

There is not enough jobs open for the young adults in this community.

There are too few year-around jobs other than factory work & most factories employ mostly women. The wages are too low for the type of work.

I couldn't truthfully say for I haven't had a job outside of Weakley County.

Despite the complaints of the county respondents in regard to low wage rates, bad working conditions, and few opportunities for advancement, a majority expressed the view that they were engaged in the vocation more nearly matched with the training received during their formative years. Of the 47 respondents working in Weakley County at the time this study was conducted, 61.7 per cent indicated that their jobs and pre-job training were closely related. A larger per cent of the respondents residing out of state and in other areas of Tennessee stated that pre-job training and current vocation were well balanced. Of the out-of-

state respondents holding full-time jobs, other than as members of the armed forces, 74.3 per cent stated that they were doing the type work prepared for through various types of training. Respondents employed in areas of the state, other than in Weakley County, were more confident that vocation and training coincided, as 85.7 per cent of this group replied affirmatively to the question, "Do you regard the job you are now doing (other than housewife) as being the one for which you were better prepared?"

CHAPTER XIII

THE CURRENT ECONOMY OF WEAKLEY COUNTY

Employment and Income

The status of the economy of Dresden is so closely interlocked with that of the entire county and, to a lesser extent, of surrounding counties, particularly Obion, Henry, and Gibson, that a separate analysis cannot be made. The exact number of people living in Dresden and other areas of the county but earning a livelihood in nearby communities located outside Weakley County is unknown, but the number is perhaps substantial. The scope of this chapter, however, is limited to Weakley County and does not consider the effect on employment and consumption of Weakley Countians resulting from the organization of new export firms or the expansion of existing ones in nearby counties.

Firms engaged in manufacturing, e.g., the apparel and shoe plants located in Dresden, are export firms inasmuch as the finished goods are shipped out of the area and the associated employment is considered of a basic nature. The case is not as clearly defined in regard to farm enter-

prises, although agriculture may be generally regarded as an export industry. The value of farm products raised locally and sold on the local market each season is no doubt considerable. The products of retailers and suppliers of personal services are more often consumed locally. The employment associated with such enterprises therefore may be considered non-basic and the firms classified in the import category.

In view of the national, geographic, and local trends in agriculture, hundreds of thousands of people are expected to move out of the industry during the decade of the sixties. Most of them will continue to migrate away from the rural areas through necessity and not by choice. The small country towns will be able to absorb a portion of these migrants only if the number of jobs created in export industries, other than in labor surplus primary agriculture, increases substantially. With the creation of additional jobs in the export or basic employment industries, it may be assumed that employment in tertiary economic activities, such as retailing, personal service, and finance will increase. Subsequent improvements and additions to the community's supply of social capital stock should increase employment in local government. It appears therefore that

in the long run non-basic employment is a function of and is directly dependent upon employment in the export industries.

Tiebout stated:

The simplest assumption is that over the long run the proportion of basic and non-basic jobs will remain about the same. Hence, an increase in the number of basic jobs will eventually produce a proportionate increase in non-basic jobs. For example, in a community with total employment of 100,000, suppose that 40,000 is basic and 60,000 non-basic employment. What happens to total employment if a new plant opens in the community and increases basic employment by 400 jobs? In the long run non-basic employment will also rise to supply the new demands of the additional work force.¹

Labor production costs have traditionally been low in Weakley County. The few export firms organized in the county have been attracted by unskilled human resources. In areas where non-human resources abound, in the form of oil, gas, sulphur, salt, surface water, timber, etc., industries seek the more highly skilled employees. The value added per employee to the products of such firms is greater and wages higher. The rural areas appear to have a comparative advantage in attracting the labor intensive industries primarily because these firms are neither raw material or market oriented. The raw materials used by the manufacturers of consumer soft goods, particularly foot,

¹Charles M. Tiebout, The Community Economic Base Study (New York Committee for Economic Development, Supplementary Paper No. 16, December, 1962), p. 13.

apparel, and shoes, is not exceedingly bulky and can be transported long distances at a comparatively low cost. Truck transportation, for example, has been used almost exclusively in bringing in raw materials and moving out finished goods produced by the two manufacturers of consumer soft goods located in Dresden.

In 1950, only 12.5 per cent of the employed civilian labor force of Weakley County was in manufacturing, compared to 24.2 per cent in 1960. This increase of 11.7 per cent as compared to the 1.1 per cent increase in manufacturing employment in the nation during the decade of the fifties appears most significant. The per cent of the total labor force in Weakley County engaged in manufacturing apparel and other fabricated products (shown in the upper parenthesis in Table 33) was much larger, however, compared to the per cent similarly employed in the state and the United States. The per cent of the employed labor force working in manufacturing and engaged in producing apparel and related products is shown in the lower parentheses in the body of Table 33.

Nationwide, the industry appeared to be declining employment-wise as only 6.6 per cent of the employed labor force working in manufacturing in 1960 was engaged in pro-

ducing apparel and related products. In 1950, the figure was 7.3 per cent. In comparison, 13.5 per cent of the manufacturing employment in the state in 1960 was in the apparel industry, an increase of 5 per cent in the ten-year period. By contrast, 56.3 per cent of the manufacturing labor force in Weakley County was employed in the industry in 1960 compared to 49.3 per cent in 1950.

In agriculture, the county experienced a 21.8 per cent decline in employment, or partial employment, compared to a decrease of 11.1 per cent in the state and 5.6 per cent in the United States. Although the number employed in the mining of clay in Weakley County remained static (see Table 27, page 251) the per cent of the labor force employed in mining declined slightly but not as precipitously as compared to the employment in all of the extractive industries in the state and union.

The per cent of the labor force employed in non-basic jobs in the county during the decade of the fifties increased in all areas with the exception of public administration and transportation, communication and utilities. In contrast, the per cent of the labor force in the United States employed in all activities related to retailing, wholesaling, and construction declined slightly. The state

incurred a slight decline in the per cent of the labor force engaged in construction but registered gains in all other non-basic employment areas other than in transportation, communication, and utilities. Although the number of new jobs in non-basic employment created in the county during the decade was only 55.8 per cent of the jobs created by new export firms and the expansion of existing ones, the increase was significant in view of the decrease in employment in agriculture and the migration of hundreds of potential customers out of the county.

Despite the decrease in employment in the labor surplus agricultural industry; the heavy migration out of the county during the decade of the fifties, and the increase in the number of jobs in basic and non-basic employment industries, the relative money income position of the families remaining in the county did not improve substantially. For example, in 1949 the median family income of Weakley Countians was 71.2 per cent of the state median family income but had declined to 69.8 per cent in 1959. Paradoxically, the median income of Tennessee families in 1960 was 69.8 per cent of the nation and the median Weakley County family income was 69.8 of the state. In comparison to the aggregate increase in median family income, however,

TABLE 33.—Comparative Per Cent of the Civilian Labor Force Employed in Selected Major and Minor Industry Groups in the United States, in Tennessee, and in Weakley County, Years 1950 and 1960

Industry Group	Per Cent United States		Per Cent Tennessee		Per Cent Weakley County	
	1950	1960	1950	1960	1950	1960
Agriculture	12.2	6.6	21.8	10.7	44.9	23.1
Manufacturing	26.0	27.1	21.2	26.0	12.9	25.5
Apparel and related fabricated products.	(1.9)	(1.8)	(1.8)	(3.4)	(6.4)	(14.3)
2 Manufacturing employment in apparel and related products.	(7.3)	(6.6)	(8.5)	(13.5)	(49.3)	(56.3)
All services, including education, health & welfare.	17.9	20.9	17.4	21.2	11.2	16.0
All retail.	15.2	14.8	13.8	14.4	10.5	13.7
Transportation, communication & utilities	7.9	6.8	6.8	6.4	4.6	4.4
Construction.	6.1	5.9	7.0	6.7	5.7	6.9
Public administration	4.5	5.0	3.3	3.7	2.6	2.6
Wholesale trade	3.5	3.4	3.1	3.4	1.9	2.6
Finance, insurance & real estate.	3.4	4.2	2.3	3.3	.9	1.7
Mining.	1.6	1.0	1.3	.7	.7	.6
All other	1.7	4.3	2.0	3.5	4.1	2.9

¹Per Cent of employed labor force engaged in the industry.

²Per Cent of the labor force employed in manufacturing engaged in the industry.

^aCalculated using the seventeenth and eighteenth Census of the United States and the Directory of Tennessee Industries, Publication No. 10, July 1960.

Weakley Countians fared a little better. In 1949 the median family income in the county was only 45.9 per cent of the national figure but had risen to 48.7 per cent ten years later.²

The rate of out-migration from the county during the fifties would have been sharper and the impact on trade and commerce more severe had new jobs in export firms failed to absorb some of the excess male and female farm labor. Admittedly, the rate of efficiency in farm operations increases as capital is added and excess labor drained off. However, the resulting increase in money income is held by fewer people. Even though money income increases, percentage changes in expenditures for consumption goods, particularly food and other necessities, may increase negligibly or not at all because of the inelasticity of demand for such products.

Measured in money income, the status of the farmers of the county improved markedly during the decade ending in 1959. Measured in real income, however, the position was

²Computed from U. S. Census of Population, 1950: Characteristics of the Population, pp. 1-104; U. S. Bureau of the Census, County and City Data Book, 1962, (a statistical abstract supplement; U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., 1962), pp. 3, 333-343.

almost static. For example, money income from farm operations increased approximately \$1.8 millions, but real income, adjusted to the purchasing power of the 1947-49 dollar, increased only 2.6 per cent during the ten year period.³

Changing Income Patterns

The per cent of the total gross income of Weakley Countians derived from wages and salaries increased from 38.6 to 52.1 per cent in 1958 compared to 1950. The change in farm proprietorship income as a per cent of the total income payments to residents of the county reflected the decreasing importance of agriculture in the economy. This decline from 15.3 to 11.1 per cent was not offset by an increase in farm subsidies and other transfer payments to recipients of aid from county, state, and local governments. Transfer payments as a per cent of the aggregate county income decreased from 13 per cent in 1950 to 11.4 per cent in 1958. Income from property holdings, compared to the gross income flow, remained comparatively static during the period. A relative decline in proprietorship non-farm

³Farm income data taken from the United States Censuses of Agriculture, Tennessee, for the years 1949 and 1959.

income was also experienced. As the population thinned among the younger aged groups several businesses closed, particularly those devoted to providing entertainment, and shifts occurred in the nature of products and services rendered by other firms.

Table 34 shows the total income of residents by types in Weakley County and the state and the proportion of total income flow represented by each type.

Compared to the per cent changes in wage and salary payments as a proportionate share of the gross state income, the increase in respect to total county income was quite impressive, reflecting in a positive way the growing importance of payrolls in the county economy. The relative decline in farm proprietorship income was also quite sharp in comparison to the state decrease of 2.6 per cent; however, such income constituted almost one-fifth of the county total in 1958. Only 6.1 per cent of the income payments made to persons in the state in the same year were of this type.

Interest on capital investments, as a per cent of gross county income, was quite modest in both years compared to the figures for the state. No estimate was available of the amount of dividends, interest on money proper-

ties, royalties on withdrawn mineral deposits, or the value of leases held by landlords in the county. Taken singly, however, the latter was perhaps largest in dollar figures.

TABLE 34.--Per Cent of Total Income Payments by Type of Residents of Weakley County and the State of Tennessee, Years 1950 and 1958^a

Gross Income by Type ^b	1950		1958	
	State	County	State	County
Wages and salaries	61.9	38.6	67.1	52.1
Proprietorship				
Farm	8.7	27.6	6.1	19.4
Non-farm	10.3	15.3	9.1	11.1
Property holdings.	10.4	5.5	10.0	6.0
Transfer payments.	8.7	13.0	7.7	11.4
Totals	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^aCalculated from Ormond C. Corry and Staff, Estimates of Personal Income in Tennessee: 1950-1958 (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Bureau of Business and Economic Research, July, 1960).

^bSocial security tax payments added back to personal income on a pro rata basis in order to obtain an estimate of gross income.

A substantial amount of the commercial property, particularly in the form of buildings located in the business districts of the incorporated towns of the county, remains of ancient vintage. Absentee ownership has been characteris-

tic and, as a result, attention to the upkeep and proper maintenance of the property has lagged. Entrepreneurs apparently received greater satisfaction from lower lease payments and have minimized the pressure placed on the landlords for better quality housing facilities. Consumer lease housing has characteristically been of low quality and in scarce supply in all of the incorporated towns. The combined shortage of investment funds and effective demand, the former resulting from more profitable alternative investment opportunities of scarce capital resources and the latter from the lack of any significant influx of medium income in-migrants, has resulted in little investment being channeled into this type of consumer housing construction.

Close correlation no doubt exists between the quantity and quality of social capital assets and the economic welfare of the business community. A relative decline in proprietorship income and inadequate commercial housing indicates a low community tax base with subsequent shortages in funds needed for additons and improvements in educational, cultural, and recreational facilities. A severe shortage in each of these three important facets of progressive community life exists in the small towns of Weakley County.

Spending Habits of Weakley Countians

Assuming a minimum of tourist and out-of-area trade, the level of spending for goods and services in a given community may be considered as directly dependent upon the income of residents of the area. To put it another way, if local spending for goods and services and local personal income are the only two variables considered, then $X = f(Y)$, where X represents aggregate local spending and Y equals aggregate personal income.

Changes in gross income of the residents of an area are pertinent to analysts surveying the economy, but to local sellers and buyers of consumer goods the relevant figure is the residual income of the public remaining after deductions for property and income taxes along with payments flowing out of the community in the form of principal and interest on housing and miscellaneous installment purchases.

Area statistics relative to the estimated dollar volume of retail sales and receipts of firms rendering personal services are obtained periodically by the Bureau of the Census. During the decade of the fifties two national surveys were conducted by this governmental agency. Inasmuch as county estimates resulting from these two surveys were compiled for only two of the nine years in which

estimated personal income data for Weakley Countians were available, the retail sales for the years 1950-58, estimated from sales tax payments, were used in computing the average propensities to consume of Weakley Countians. These sales data were obtained indirectly from the Department of Revenue of the State of Tennessee and directly from the Bureau of Business Research of the University of Tennessee.⁴

The sales tax in Tennessee has, since the incidence of its acceptance as a revenue measure by the General Assembly, been applicable to the sale of all consumer soft and durable goods with the exception of tobacco, gasoline, and hard alcoholic beverages. The receipts of service businesses were not taxed during the 1950-58 time period.

The county has traditionally remained free of giant food and other consumer good chain stores, and due to the absence of attractions in the form of special climate, abundance of surface water, state or national parks, etc., tourist trade has not been a factor. It may be assumed, therefore, that sales to out-of-county residents were immaterial in dollar volume during the period considered in this study.

Figure 10 shows the relationship between estimated county income and estimated retail sales for the years

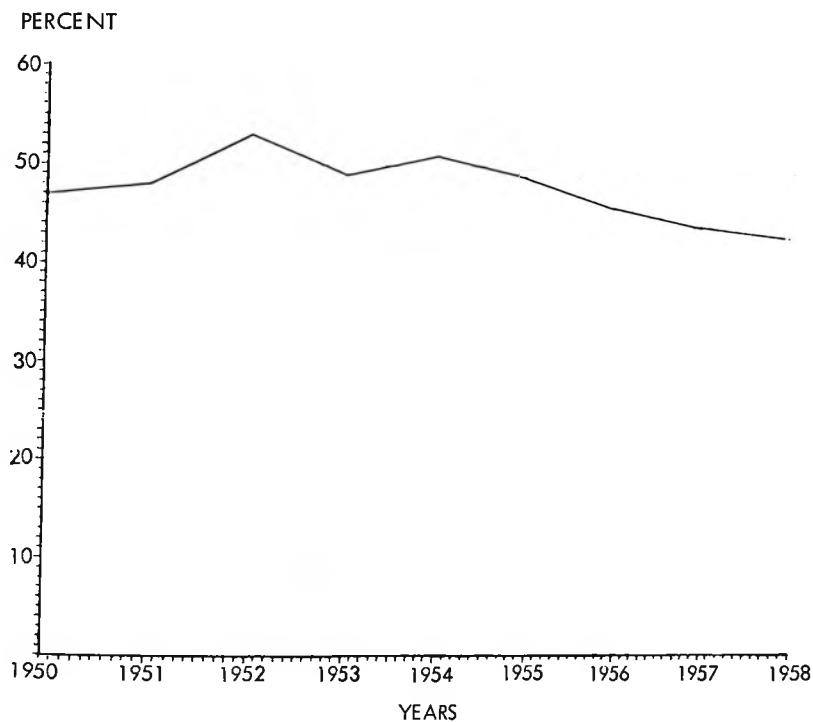


Figure 10. Retail sales as a per cent of personal income.

Source: Corry and Staff, Estimates of Personal Income in Tennessee.

1950-58, inclusive. In 1950, the residents of Weakley County spent an estimated 47 per cent of their personal income for goods sold by the local merchants. Interpreted in another way, 47 cents of each personal income dollar was spent for goods sold at retail. As shown in the figure, the average propensity to consume in the retail goods sector of the local economy peaked in 1952 at 53 per cent and fluctuated thereafter to a low of 43 per cent in 1958.

Relative changes in the two variables over the nine-year period show more clearly the fluctuation in consumer goods sales compared to income. For example, estimated income increased by 4.8 per cent in 1951 over the preceding year; consumption increased 6.6 per cent. In 1952, percentage changes in sales lagged behind changes in income. For example, in 1953, sales decreased 4.7 per cent, reflecting the decrease in income of the previous year.

The 1954 recession could have been partially responsible for the 8.5 per cent drop in income over the preceding year and the second sharp decline of 5.3 per cent in retail sales. After 1954, both income and retail sales showed positive percentage changes. But a 5.4 per cent increase in income in 1955 compared to the previous year was accompanied by a change of only 2.5 per cent in sales.

In 1956, income advanced 8.6 per cent compared to a mere 1.1 per cent change in sales. An additional positive change of 8.2 per cent in income in 1957 over the preceding year was accompanied by a 3.8 per cent change in consumption. Again in 1958, income increased over the previous year by 9.1 per cent, with sales of consumer goods lagging behind with a 5.4 per cent increase.

Assuming that a linear relationship existed between the independent variable Y (per cent change in income) and the dependent variable X (per cent change in sales), the coefficient of correlation, coefficient of regression and equation of the regression line were computed by the use of the least-squares method. Deviation units were employed, i.e., the arithmetic mean of each variable was subtracted from each observation. As a result, the regression line was rotated through the origin, and the constant (a), defined as the intercept of the axis of the dependent variable, was equated to zero. The value of the coefficient of regression (b), more frequently referred to as the slope of the regression line, was found to equal .5, and the coefficient of correlation equal to a positive .39.

The equation of the regression line was $X = .5Y$, with (X) equaling the percentage change in the dependent

variable, retail sales, and (Y) the percentage change in the independent variable, personal income.

The coefficient of correlation may range between plus or minus one. A perfect positive relationship is indicated if a coefficient of plus 1 is computed. A perfect inverse relationship between two variables is indicated if the coefficient is equal to minus 1. No linear relationship exists if the coefficient is equal to zero. In the latter case, the slope of the line (b) is also equal to zero.

Although either a positive or negative coefficient of correlation and coefficient of regression may be computed from a given set of data, a probability exists that there actually is no significant positive or inverse relationship existing between the variables.

In order to test the relationship between the changes in retail sales compared to the fluctuations in personal income of Weakley Countians during the 1950-58 period, a hypothesis that no significant relationship existed between the changes in the two variables was established. Stated differently, a substitute hypothesis may indicate that the coefficient of correlation was equal to zero. The F-test was used to examine the credibility of

the hypothesis. The formula used in this test is merely the ratio of the variation in the dependent variable explained by regression and the variation in the dependent variable remaining unexplained. If the quotient is larger than expected, i.e., larger than expected through mere chance, the hypothesis is rejected. Computed F in this instance was less than the rejection limit at the 1, 5, and 10 per cent levels of significance. As a result, the hypothesis of no significant relationship between the two variables was accepted.

The hypothesis that the slope of the regression line was equal to zero, or $b_p = 0$, was also accepted at the 1, 5, and 10 per cent levels of significance. The T-test was used to examine the credibility of this hypothesis. As a result of the acceptance of the hypothesis, any supposition to the effect that a 1 per cent change in personal income would result in a $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent change in retail sales would be erroneous.

If the computed value of the coefficient of regression (.5) had been significant, it would have been equal to the marginal propensity to consume. More frequently this concept is referred to as the MPC and is defined as the per cent of each additional dollar of income spent on consumer

goods and services. In this particular instance had the two above hypotheses been rejected, one might have stated that with each increase of one dollar in personal income of county residents, the amount of additional spending for consumer goods at retail would equal 50 cents. The MPC may also be computed by dividing the change in consumption expenditures between two time periods by the change in income. Using 1950 and 1958 income and sales data, the MPC was computed by this method and found to equal only 27.5 cents, not 50 cents.

The preceding analysis of the relationship between estimated personal income and estimated consumption of goods in Weakley County may be considered somewhat short run, inasmuch as data for only nine years was available. Tiebout, however, referred to a time period for an analysis of this type to be short run if periods from a few months up to approximately two years were used, and long run if the time consisted of five, ten, or longer number of years.⁵

As a result of this analysis, it seems apparent that Weakley Countians tended to change in spending habits as the number of families decreased and the income per family increased. Indeed, it is possible that as income increased

⁵Tiebout, op. cit., p. 57.

more families found it expedient to shop in areas where individual choice had a much wider range and where facilities and other customer benefits were of more selective quality.

CHAPTER XIV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The community of Dresden, Tennessee, became the county seat of Weakley County in 1825, only two years after the county was formed from lands ceded to the United States by the Chickasaw Indians. The population of the county, and to a lesser degree of Dresden, grew rapidly until the war and immediate post-war years of the sixties. During the Civil War, however, the population of the town declined rapidly, and sixty years were destined to pass before the number of residents in Dresden exceeded the 1860 figure.

Practically all of the commercial firms in the town closed during the war years, but three of the former retail businesses opened after the war along with sixteen new firms. Although the county population increased each decade after the cessation of hostilities until the beginning of the new century, profits from farm operations were not sufficient to support nineteen retail firms in the little community. Within twelve years after the end of the Civil War, only ten

of the nineteen firms had survived.

Agriculture was the only industry of any significance in the area from the time Dresden was chartered until the end of the fifth decade of the twentieth century. Throughout the nineteenth and almost thirty years of the current century income from sales of dark-fired tobacco was practically the sole support of the farming and business communities. During this era, a large portion of the crop was marketed abroad. As a result, international tensions, intermittent domestic and foreign economic recessions, and frequent adverse weather conditions kept the economic welfare of the people in almost constant jeopardy. In an effort to stimulate price and find additional outlets for the crop, marketing associations were formed before and after World War I. But export and domestic demand continued to deteriorate, and within thirty years after the turn of the century, tobacco became a secondary crop. Dairying and commercial animal enterprises became the primary source of income.

At the turn of the century there was little diversification of crops and practically no income from alternative sources within the area. Out-migration became the only solution for many of the poverty stricken county residents, as the rural towns offered little opportunity for earning a

living. In the year 1900, the population of the county reached a peak of 32,546. But with the exception of the static decade of the thirties the number of county residents declined steadily throughout the current century. Paradoxically, the number of people living in the county in 1880 exceeded by 311 the population in 1960.

In an almost total rural society capital accumulates slowly. The primary reason for this is the comparatively low income elasticity of farm products in comparison to the income elasticity of demand for durable consumer and consumer soft goods other than food products. As a result, farm profits may be modest or even declining while an upward trend is occurring in many other phases of the national economy. Also, the tendency for farm prices to be established in the market place, assuming no interference from outside sources, by the forces of supply and demand predicates a level of operating efficiency seldom attained in a county where farms are numerous but small in size. Subsistence farming with a subsequent lack of savings becomes commonplace, with the result that capital needed for the creation of social assets in the form of an adequate system of roads, schools, and other public improvements is almost nonexistent.

The lack of an efficient system of transportation hampered the effective marketing of crops throughout the nineteenth and first four decades of the twentieth century. The poor condition of the roads resulted in little commercial trade during the rainy seasons. For several months each year dirt roads became impassable for horse and wagon despite earnest but futile efforts to improve the road system. Actually, little progress was made until capital designated for road construction began flowing into the county from the state treasury.

Expenditures in Dresden for streets and sanitary facilities were practically nonexistent for more than eighty years after the town was first chartered. For years strong opposition was exerted against proposals to install power and water plants. This attitude persisted for some time after citizens of neighboring communities had accepted these social responsibilities. It appeared that extreme conservatism together with the popular belief that "what was good enough for father is good enough for me" prevailed among the leading citizens of the town. Younger, more progressive leadership finally prevailed, and a minimum amount of social capital assets in the form of power, public water, and paved streets became available to citizens of the community.

The agrarian minded, independent attitude of the people, coupled with poor systems of transportation and communication, retarded the economic development of the county and county-seat town. Contacts with people living in urban areas of the state were intermittent in nature and of short duration. Indeed, a large majority of the people cared for little other than the simple life. Few sought an educational status exceeding the level needed to stumble over the words contained in the New Testament. A progressive minded minority, however, established a private "secondary" school in the town in 1900, but it was not until 1912 that public education beyond the fifth grade was made available to the young residents of the town. Almost twenty-five additional years elapsed before public transportation facilities were available for use of youth living on the farms in the county.

Declining farm income resulting from recessions and poor crop years stimulated members of the Dresden business community into sporadic efforts to upgrade the economic level of the town. Invariably, the mayor and aldermen were chosen from the ranks of the business leaders. The latter also formed the nucleus of the several civic clubs organized and left to wither away over a period of approximately 45 years

in the history of the town. Poor business conditions resulting from inadequate roads, inclement weather, inadequate crop diversification, or nationwide reverses in economic activity stimulated corrective ideas in the minds of a few political and civic leaders. Mass meetings of the citizens of the town were called regardless of whether the new idea was related to improving the quality of sweet potatoes, introduction of a new crop, or the possibility of acquiring a garment manufacturing firm.

Over a period of more than twenty years, town meetings were called from time to time for the purpose of discussing publicly the possibility of acquiring some type of manufacturing establishment. It seemed that anything would do just as long as a few jobs were made available. Indeed, the employment picture was so bleak that in the depression year of 1935 over 1,000 people in the Dresden area agreed to purchase a job. Each person signing a contract agreed to pay to the city 6 per cent of his wages in order to finance the construction of a plant needed to house the equipment of a manufacturer of wearing apparel. This desperate bid for industry floundered, however, because a competing town had facilities immediately available. At this time a majority of the producers interested in Dresden

as a location site were seeking a combination of cheap capital and a plentiful supply of unskilled, union untainted, female labor. Dresden was able to afford an ample supply of the latter but very little indeed of the former.

Ten years passed, years of failure to attract any type of firm hiring more than fifty people. Finally, in 1945, help of the State Legislature was sought, and legislation was passed permitting a municipal bond issue subject to the approval of the people. As fleeting prosperity came to the area during World War II, capital was available in sufficient quantities to enable the local purchase of a \$75,000 bond issue voted by the people. Ten years earlier when an opportunity to acquire a manufacturer occurred, the town treasury was bereft of funds and the city was faced with the prospect of complete insolvency. Actually, the little community had scarcely recovered from the startling crash of an apparently strong local bank in the year 1927 when the depression spread a curtain of despair over the town. Additional bank failures occurred in the early thirties and for years loans were not available for any purpose. Regardless of the opposition of a few of the respected citizens of the town in regard to the expected social costs involved in obtaining a factory, the chief

cause of failure was lack of capital. Once buildings were available, tenants were not so difficult to find.

An unbranded shoe manufacturer began operating in the city-owned structure in the last quarter of 1948. From the time the building was constructed through the year 1960, an additional investment of \$140,170 in the new plant was financed by the city and firm combined. Ultimately, the city absorbed the entire cost of the capital outlay. The average, or arithmetic mean, cost of the plant per employee in 1960 was approximately \$629.45.

The Dresden Development Company was organized in 1948 for the express purpose of raising capital needed to finance the construction of a building for a manufacturer of wearing apparel. Capital stock in the amount of \$91,000 was rather quickly subscribed. A few years later the city purchased all of the capital stock of the company and added a wing to the original building at a cost of \$41,000. The total investment in the plant was approximately equal to \$809.81 per employee in 1960 when a peak employment of 163 people was reached. The combined investment in the two plants amounted to approximately \$347,170 in 1960. In that year, approximately 505 full and part-time employees were paid an estimated \$1,505,900 in wages and salaries.

Weakley Countians' 1958 propensity to consume goods sold at retail was 43 cents out of each dollar of income. Assuming little material change in the APC in 1960, approximately \$648,000 of the payroll of the two firms was spent for consumer goods sold by county merchants. Inasmuch as a large majority of the employees of the two manufacturing firms lived within a radius of six miles of Dresden, it seems reasonable to assume that a major portion of the \$648,000 was spent in the town; however, this figure was only 21 per cent of the total estimated retail sales of \$3,080,258 experienced by the retail segment of Dresden's economy in 1960.

The estimated income of Dresden workers in 1960, excluding income of entrepreneurs, professional men, and elected county officials, was \$2,668,385. Assuming an average propensity to consume of 43 cents out of each dollar of income, approximately \$1,474,060 of this amount was spent for goods sold at retail. Assuming that a major portion of this sum was spent in Dresden, the amount was slightly less than half of the total estimated retail sales of \$3,080,258. This implied that the diversification in economic activity within the thirteen-year period ending in 1960 had a profound effect on the economy of the town.

The income of the workers in the two manufacturing plants doubtless resulted in an increase in the number of jobs in tertiary industries with a subsequent addition of thousands of dollars in local income. Although the amount of farm income still figured heavily in the overall economy of Dresden, the business community of the town no longer depended on the level of farm income to the degree it once did.

During the initial years of the current century the farmers of the county attempted unsuccessfully to manipulate price through the medium of marketing associations consisting of growers of a common product. Paradoxically, the pressures applied on wage rates by urban workers during this era were extolled and commended in editorials written for the Dresden Enterprise. This favorable attitude toward unions of workers in urban areas was short-lived, however, and had completely disappeared before the first comparatively large manufacturer began operating in the town. As long as it appeared that the farmer and urban worker were fighting a common enemy, the hated "trusts," a bond of brotherhood sprang up. After governmental authorities solved partially the immediate marketing problems of the farmer, the alliance between the struggling farmer and city worker dissipated and came to an end.

Weakley County firms using female labor almost exclusively have undergone very little labor unrest. Although unions have been formed in the apparel manufacturing plants, they have not been able to exert direct pressure on wage rates or working conditions. But undoubtedly the probability, although remote, of concerted employee action has resulted in a semi-paternalistic attitude of management toward the work force and has improved working conditions, particularly in the apparel plant at Dresden.

The female worker in the county has characteristically been rather easily managed, willing to work, and quite happy just to hold a job. But these traits have not been characteristic of male workers in plants other than apparel. Men with talents in or approaching the skilled category have on occasion attempted to obtain the agreement of management to various demands through concerted action, which at times approached extreme militancy. That the initial labor unrest in the county occurred in a firm employing men with above average skills for the area was not therefore wholly unexpected. It may also be observed that the less serious labor-management dispute occurring at the Bay-Bee Shoe Company a few years later did not involve

management and female workers only. Approximately 47 per cent of the production workers employed at the time were male.

Clay of excellent quality and an abundance of underground water are the two principal non-human resources of Weakley County. For more than thirty years, Weakley County clay has been mined, processed, and shipped to manufacturers of ceramics and other products made of clay, but with the exception of one small plant manufacturing brick, users of this mineral have not located near the source of this raw material.

The plentiful supply of underground water has not alone been attractive enough to lure large users of water to the county. As population becomes more dense and water less plentiful in the heavily industrialized areas of the nation, water may in future years constitute the most important natural resource in the county.

In recent years county crop production records have compared favorably with several other predominantly rural West Tennessee counties; however, a more intensive use of conservation and other soil fertility practices could conceivably increase the yields per acre of crops indigenous to the county.

The human resource of the county changed markedly in age composition and in vocation between the census periods of 1950 and 1960. The population declined 13.4 per cent in this ten-year period; however, the loss was much more severe among the most employable age group. The number of white people aged 15 through 44 years declined 23.3 per cent compared to a 31.5 per cent decrease in the number of Negroes in the same age span.

Agriculture, the principal industry and the chief employer of the people since the county was founded in 1823, declined during the decade of the fifties to the second largest employer as manufacturing surged into the land.

Characteristics of the manufacturing firms in the county were: (1) female labor was more frequently utilized, and, as a result, the per cent this sex represented of the county labor force in 1960 had increased by 16.4 per cent over the 1950 figure. The number of males in the civilian labor force declined 22.2 per cent during the same period; (2) with few exceptions the goods produced by county manufacturers were of the consumer soft goods classification; and (3) the manufacturers were in general firms of low value-added per employee. This was due primarily to a

lower capital base compared to manufacturers of durable consumer and producer's goods; and (4) despite the use of predominantly hand-machine female labor and a comparatively small capital base, several producers expanded operations during the decade of the fifties and nine new firms were organized or moved to the county. As a result, the additional jobs created by the new and established firms helped cushion the economic shock brought about by the elimination of more than 2,000 jobs in agriculture during the decade of the fifties.

The number of people included in the Weakley County labor force dropped from 9,948 in 1950 to 9,333 in 1960; a decline of only 6.2 per cent compared to an overall population decline of 13.4 per cent. During the decade the number of men included in the labor force dropped from 7,229 to 6,169, but the number of women increased from 2,019 to 3,164. By the year 1970, the labor force is expected to drop to approximately 9,000 people, assuming the forecast of 21,600 people in Weakley County at the time holds. This population forecast represents a 10.8 per cent decline during the decade of the sixties compared to a decline of 13.4 per cent during the preceding decade; however, it is expected by 1970 that approximately 45.7 per

cent of the county population will be at least 45 years of age.

People with at least twelve years of formal education left the county at a rate exceeding that of the total number departing from the area during the 1950-60 period. Four hundred fourteen of the 465 graduates of Dresden High School and the Weakley County Training School were located. These individuals constituted the senior classes of the Dresden school for the years 1950 through 1960. The 33 graduates of the Weakley County Training School were of the Negro race and constituted all of the members of that race both living in the Dresden area and graduating from high school during the eleven year period used in this study. Of the 414 individuals located, 66.5 per cent had emigrated to other areas of the state or out of state.

Slightly over half of the 176 respondents, representing 347 graduates of the classes of 1950 through 1960 at Dresden High School and 26 of the Dresden area Negro natives graduating from the Weakley County Training School during the same period, indicated a willingness to return to the county if economic, recreational, educational, and cultural opportunities were upgraded. The lack of job opportunities was the most frequently mentioned criticism,

but the paucity of recreational and cultural activities was emphasized. Also, a lack of quality in public educational facilities and curricula was stressed.

The effect of selected parental social and economic characteristics upon the migratory pattern of their offspring was explored. No significant relationship was found to exist between the educational level of the parents of the graduates and the locality selected by their offspring as a home and place to earn a living. The income level of the parents was not a factor in promoting emigration or restraining the young from leaving the county for other parts of the state. A definitive relationship between the vocations of the male parents and the migratory pattern of their offspring was not established, although a significant relationship did exist at levels of significance than the commonly used 5 and 1 per cent levels. The number of years male parents had spent in the same vocation at the time their young graduated from high school had no significance in determining the migratory pattern of their sons and daughters.

A larger per cent of the female married high school graduates remaining in the county held income producing jobs, and the mean individual income of graduates leaving

the area appeared significantly larger compared to the mean individual income of those remaining in the county. It appeared, however, that the mean family income of graduates remaining in the county was not significantly lower than the mean family income of those moving to other areas within the state.

The effect post high school training had on the migratory practices of the young was not tested.

However, only 5.6 per cent of the respondents holding at least the bachelor's degree remained in the county. Of the respondents not obtaining training of any nature beyond the high school level, 52.7 per cent remained in the county. Also, a comparatively large percentage of the Weakley County respondents were engaged in an occupation directly associated with basic agriculture.

Despite the fact that thousands of Weakley Countians migrated to other areas between 1950 and 1960, a sufficient supply of unskilled labor was available for use by labor intensive firms. Locating in the county during the decades of the forties and fifties seemed to afford manufacturers of consumer soft goods a comparative advantage over the more congested, unionized, urban areas of the state and nation. This advantage accrued principally because of the plentiful

supply of labor flowing from the farms to the small towns in search of jobs. Skilled labor has been and, until mature training programs are available in the area, will continue to be in short supply. Neither raw materials nor market-oriented industries have moved to, or originated in, the county mainly because inanimate resources, with the exception of underground water supplies, are either non-existent, low in quality, or in scarce supply, and trained human resources have traditionally been scarce. The proportion of the population in the unskilled category, however, has been declining steadily, although changes in technology and the resultant upgrading of job-holding qualifications may slow somewhat the future rate of migration of such people from the area.

The payments in the county to the factor of production, labor, changed markedly in quantity during the period 1950-58. Income received by workers earning salaries and wages constituted 52.1 per cent of the gross income of county residents in the latter year compared to 38.6 per cent in 1950. The return to entrepreneurs in the form of profits, both farm and non-farm, incurred a relative decline, while the return on capital investments remained comparatively static during the period.

Although personal income increased during the 1949-59 period, the income position of Weakley County families deteriorated in respect to the state. Despite significant progress in diversifying the economy during this period, the county was simply unable to keep pace. It may be observed, however, that the position of the median family income of county residents moved slightly upward during this period in respect to the aggregate median family income of the nation as a whole.

The tendency of Weakley Countians to spend a smaller percentage of increasing personal income for goods sold by local merchants was pronounced. As income increased, sales of consumer goods increased in money terms, but the per cent of total personal income spent in the county declined markedly. As a result of the use of generally accepted statistical procedures, no significant relationship was found to exist between per cent changes in income and per cent changes in purchases of goods sold by county merchants.

Conclusions

Despite the unpleasant fact that employment in manufacturing has not been growing in recent years, communities, both rural and urban, have been making desperate attempts

to attract this type of industry. Certainly all cannot be successful. Communities incurring deterioration in social capital such as public schools, health facilities, streets, and recreational and cultural facilities will perhaps be the least successful. Also, a decline in the quality of human capital is generally associated with the degeneracy of social capital. Indeed, heavy out-migration can decay the foundation upon which progressive community living is based.

It does not necessarily follow that the economic and social welfare of an area is enhanced simply because of the presence of a fewer number of people sharing in the distribution of limited income. In areas where the population is growing older at a rate far in excess of the national average an under-utilization of recreational, cultural, and public school facilities occurs. The inevitable result is under-maintenance of existing assets.

As the people of an area grow older, and this appears particularly true if the median educational level of the population is comparatively low, the progressive drive to obtain a better standard of living tends to wane. Often, the leadership in rural communities is entrusted to people with little understanding of the basic nature of

the economic and social problems of the area, and methods employed in the hope of upgrading the economic and social opportunities in the counties and towns are grossly inadequate. Even when progressive leadership is exerted by a few dedicated men, enthusiastic, sound-thinking follower-ship is lacking.

The comparatively small group of young people living in rural areas bears the brunt of the intangible costs associated with a deterioration of social capital. The eroding of the social capital base in small communities can conceivably cast an aura of distaste for living in a provincial, backward community. The movement of the younger element out may be accelerated because a lack of recreational and cultural facilities exists. When new enterprise originates in the small towns, the movement of people into them may be impeded because of such deficiencies. Civic organizations and church groups are generally unable to provide funds needed for the construction of playgrounds and parks and supervision of recreational programs for all young people. Community governments could accomplish much more than independent, poorly-financed organizations, but for an indefinite period the racial issue precludes the expenditure of city and county government funds for recreational and

other entertainment facilities.

Within the current decade it is conceivable that government authorities will adopt policies designed to reduce by one-third the number of people engaged in primary agricultural pursuits. Barriers against entry of young workers into the industry are likely, with the result that the migration of people, particularly the young, may be indirectly encouraged by government action.

Currently only a small percentage of the non-college bound youth of the county can find employment in the area. By and large, a majority have traditionally left the county immediately after graduating from high school. Yet the rate of migration of this group may accelerate during the 1960's. But changes in technology in industry, occurring with increasing intensity each year, may in the immediate future result in the young people being seriously disadvantaged in competing for industrial jobs because of deficiencies in the secondary school curricula. Vocational education, other than in agriculture and home economics, has not been available in Weakley County schools primarily because of inadequate assessment of the need for such training and a shortage of capital needed to construct and equip plant and employ highly skilled personnel. The youth, in-

cluding high school and college drop outs, need vocational training in mechanics, graphics, services, shop, data processing, and other skills useful in making the transition from agrarian to industrial jobs easier for rural men and women. Although the 1963 General Assembly of the State of Tennessee voted to appropriate funds needed to build six vocational schools in the state within the biennium ending in 1965, there is no guarantee that the training will be available to Weakley Countians. Political expediency rather than actual need may influence the location of these schools.

Time alone will degenerate the quality of physical facilities. Practically all of the secondary school buildings used by county white students need to be replaced. Relocation is also essential in order to meet the needs of a widely dispersed school-age population. It is unlikely that the attitude of the majority race toward the small number of Negro citizens in the county will change voluntarily; however, the economic costs connected with operating the one high school for Negro students are excessive, not only in relationship to the money costs involved but also in regard to the wastes associated with inferior curricula and equipment.

Capital needed to finance spending programs for the improvement of health, recreational, cultural, and educational facilities should be derived from a combination of taxation and borrowing. A realistic assessment of existing county properties could easily be the source of a large sum of revenue. If increasing the debt structure and concomitantly the tax rate is the procedure considered, the incidence of the debt will fall most heavily on citizens least able to pay, because any new taxes are likely to be regressive in nature.

Unless barriers in the form of the lack of job skills or frequent fluctuations in our national economy occur, approximately 40 per cent of the Weakley Countians fully or partially employed in primary agriculture in 1960 will either retire or learn a new skill during the current decade. Hundreds will leave the county. Included among the migrants will be a significant number of comparatively young and very young people. Most of this group will emerge from a farm environment and will possess secondary and, in some instances, college training. Because of the unlikelihood of industry in need of a substantial quantity of such personnel moving into the area, the future employment prospects for the better academically trained is indeed

bleak. A second factor precluding the placement of local academically trained labor in rural plants is the practice of newly located firms of importing managerial and technically trained personnel from established industrial centers. A third impediment confronting the college trained job aspirant is the non-competitive salary scale and lack of opportunity for advancement in the small family-owned firms most likely to settle in rural areas. As a result, the individual must choose living in an environment in which the quality of social capital assets is inferior and income smaller in comparison to what the more prosperous areas have to offer.

Due to the heavy incidence of selective out-migration during the decades of the forties and fifties, the labor force of Weakley County has grown older. The enlightened management of industrial firms will not often move into an area virtually bereft of a reservoir of young labor. A significant amount of labor beyond the age of forty-five years has been in ample supply and will continue to be available during the decade of the sixties. In fact, the number of people entering the local labor market is expected to increase markedly as displaced operators of farms seek employment in the small towns of the county.

In rapid population growth areas the volume of economic activity in trade, finance, government, and the services expands rapidly, but this does not necessarily follow in areas of declining numbers characterized by a population growing older at an accelerating rate. The changes in the population complex may imply that the business community of Dresden and throughout the county should make adjustments in the type of products offered for sale, in business techniques, and in investment designed to upgrade the quality of commercial housing, if in future years a larger per cent of local income is spent with local commercial establishments.

The economic welfare of the people of the county is dependent upon a more diversified economy. Some progress toward achieving a more balanced economy was made during the late nineteen forties and in the fifties, but in view of the limited resources in the county it is doubtful if this rate of progress can be accelerated appreciably during the decade of the sixties. In addition to a paucity of natural and human resources, a shortage of capital is expected to continue. As a limit exists on the quantity of debt the county and small towns can reasonably assume, it is conceivable that the general citizenry may rebel at the

magnitude of the money costs involved in building new schools, recreational facilities and expanding services financed by the tax dollar. Historically, firms moving into the county have expected the people to assume heavy financial risks, thus relieving the management of the responsibilities connected with the ownership of property. As this attitude is not expected to change during the decade of the sixties, the county or town having the most to offer will be the most successful.

In this study questions relative to the employment and income of the people of Weakley County and the county-seat town of Dresden have been considered. A discussion of the historic changes in the labor force and a short-run forecast by age, size, and sex has been offered. A brief review of the customs and manners of a rural society has provided some insight into the influence these mores have had upon the economic and social welfare of the people. Also the impact on the area of technological changes in agriculture was stressed along with the decay in social capital assets coincident with the heavy out-migration of the more selective people.

Admittedly, this study has not offered any panacea for the economic and social problems existing in rural areas.

But perhaps it may serve to emphasize the complexity of these problems, thereby providing an incentive for the people to strive for a more efficient utilization of the scarce resources available to them. This attitude is essential if the future standard of living of the people remaining in the area even closely approximates the median level of the region in which the county is located.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Used as a basis for personal interview with owners of retail, wholesale, and small manufacturing firms in Dresden, Tennessee

1. Name of business _____
2. Products sold _____
3. Type of business organization _____
 - (a) If partnership, number of partners _____
 - (b) If corporation, number of stockholders _____
 1. Family owned? Yes _____ No _____
 2. Open? Yes _____ No _____
4. (a) What is the native state of the owner or owners? _____
(b) Native town of owner or owners _____
(c) Number of years operating present business in Dresden _____
(d) Age of owner or owners _____
(e) How many years of formal education did each owner or owners have? _____ years
(f) What were your reasons for going into business in this town?

5. (a) What type of work did you do previous to that in which you are currently engaged?

- (b) Where was this business located? _____
6. (a) Do you own this property? Yes _____ No _____. If not, who does? _____
- (b) Have you spent any money on this property within the past five years? Yes _____ No _____. If yes, what did you do to the place and what was the cost? _____

7. (a) Do you maintain bookkeeping records? Yes _____ No _____
- (b) If yes, do you employ a bookkeeper? Yes _____ No _____
- (c) If yes, full time? _____, or part time _____
- (d) Do you have your records audited by an independent accounting firm on occasion? Yes _____ No _____. If yes, how frequently? _____
8. (a) Do you offer credit terms to your customers? Yes _____
No _____
- (b) If yes, what type of collection plan do you have? _____

9. What were your gross sales during the 1960 calendar year?
\$ _____
10. (a) How many white employees did you have throughout 1960? No. _____

Women _____ Men _____ How many of
these were part-time employees? _____

(b) Of your total number of employees, how many are Negro? No. _____

_____ Men _____ Women _____

(c) How many of your employees live inside the city limits of Dresden? _____ How far from Dresden do your commuting employees live? _____ miles

(d) How much money did you pay in wages to your employees during 1960? \$ _____

11. In your opinion, what does the future have in store for the businessmen of Dresden from the standpoints of sales and profits? _____

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

Submitted to Professional Men, Personal Service Firms and Government Agencies (Basis for personal interview)

1. Name of profession, service business or government agency _____

2. For personal service firm owners and professional men only.
 - (a) Type of business organization _____
 - (b) Native state and birthplace of owner, operator, or professional man _____
 - (c) Do you own this property? Yes _____ No _____
 - (d) Has any money been expended on this property for other than maintenance during the past five years? Yes _____ No _____
 1. If yes, what was the nature of these improvements? _____

2. How much money was expended for these improvements?
\$ _____
3. (a) How many white employees do you have? No. _____ No. women _____ No. men _____
(b) How many Negro employees do you have? No. _____ No. women _____ No. men _____
(c) What was your total payroll for the year 1960? \$ _____

4. Asked of service firm owners only.

(a) What was your total sales revenue in 1960? \$ _____

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

The Bay-Bee Shoe Company, Dresden, Tennessee (Basis for a personal interview with the management)

1. What were the primary reasons for moving your plant from Union City, Tennessee, to Sharon and then to Dresden in 1949? _____

2. Are the members of the Drerup family natives of Tennessee? Yes ____
No _____ *

3. From what source did the originator of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company acquire knowledge of the shoe business? _____

4. Is your corporation one in which all stock is controlled by the family? Yes _____ No _____

5. Does your corporation own plants in other cities? Yes ____ No ____

6. (a) In 1952, the Dresden Enterprise stated that you were producing 4,200 pairs of shoes daily and employed 189 people. The paper further stated that your company paid \$375,616 in wages and salaries in 1951. Was this statement accurate? Yes ____ No ____

- (b) What were the total salaries and wages paid for each of the following years?

1949 \$ _____	1953 \$ _____	1957 \$ _____
1950 \$ _____	1954 \$ _____	1958 \$ _____
1951 \$ _____	1955 \$ _____	1959 \$ _____
1952 \$ _____	1956 \$ _____	1960 \$ _____

- (c) What were the total wages paid production workers only during the following years?

1949 \$ _____	1953 \$ _____	1957 \$ _____
1950 \$ _____	1954 \$ _____	1958 \$ _____
1951 \$ _____	1955 \$ _____	1959 \$ _____
1952 \$ _____	1956 \$ _____	1960 \$ _____

- (d) What was your average annual employment figure for each of the following years.

1949 _____	1953 _____	1957 _____
1950 _____	1954 _____	1958 _____
1951 _____	1955 _____	1959 _____
1952 _____	1956 _____	1960 _____

- (e) What was your average employment figure for production workers only for each of the following years.

1949 _____	1953 _____	1957 _____
1950 _____	1954 _____	1958 _____
1951 _____	1955 _____	1959 _____
1952 _____	1956 _____	1960 _____

(f) What were your production records for each of the following years?

1949	_____	1953	_____	1957	_____
1950	_____	1954	_____	1958	_____
1951	_____	1955	_____	1959	_____
1952	_____	1956	_____	1960	_____

7. According to reports in the local paper during the past decade, your plant has been expanded five times.

(a) What was the cost of each expansion? _____

(b) How was each financed? _____

8. (a) Where are the markets for your footwear? _____

(b) Do you have any buyers purchasing large quantities of your footwear? _____

9. What method or methods did you use in acquiring a market for your product? _____

10. (a) Where are your suppliers of raw materials located? _____

- (b) Are transportation costs on raw materials a substantial percentage of your production cost? Yes _____ No _____
11. What are the styles and grades of shoes manufactured in your plant? _____

12. Do you own your equipment? Yes _____ No _____. If no, please comment. _____

13. (a) What type of jobs do women pursue in this plant? _____

- (b) What type of work do men concern themselves with? _____

- (c) How many of your employees live inside the city limits of Dresden? _____
- (d) Women constitute what per cent of your labor force? _____
14. Are your payroll records available for review? Yes _____ No _____
15. (a) What per cent of your workers are first-job employees? _____
(b) What is the average age of your employees? _____
16. (a) When hiring new workers, do you expect them to become permanent employees? Yes _____ No _____
(b) What per cent of your employees have been with you five years or more? _____

(c) Are most jobs learned quickly by employees, i. e; are they semi-skilled jobs? Yes _____ No _____.

17. Do you have a large reservoir of applications for employment?

Yes _____ No _____.

18. Assuming this business to be seasonal in some respects, how frequently are you forced to cut production and release employees?

19. How competitive is the unbranded shoe industry? That is, are you able to cut or raise price slightly without running the risk of losing revenue? _____

20. What do you consider the principal motivating factor resulting in a firm engaged in the manufacture of footwear beginning operations in the rural areas of the south? _____

21. How have labor-management relations progressed in your plant since its initial start in Dresden? _____

22. Comments _____

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE

The Dresden Manufacturing Company (Basis for personal interview with the management)

1. Several issues of the Dresden Enterprise in the decade of the late 40's referred to your company as one owning plants in St. Louis and Salisbury, Missouri, as well as in Greenfield and Dresden, Tenn. The paper also referred to your concern as the Western Garment Company.

(a) Do you still own plants in Salisbury and St. Louis? Yes _____

No _____

(b) Why was the name, Western Garment Company discarded? _____

(c) Is this a family-owned corporation? Yes _____ No _____

(d) What was the native state of the Prins family? _____

(e) Where was Frank Prins, Sr., engaged in manufacturing prior to coming to West Tennessee? _____

(f) What was the formal educational background of Mr. Prins, Sr.? _____

2. The January 27, 1950, issue of the Dresden Enterprise attributed the following statement to Mr. Frank Prins, Sr. ". . . the company has encountered the greatest success here of any territory entered so far with agreeable labor and other factors pertaining to the operation of the factory . . ." Mr. Prins further stated that the plant paid \$115,000 in wages during the first six months of operation.

(a) Is the above statement substantially true? Yes _____ No _____

(b) What was your payroll at the Dresden plant for the following years?

1950	\$ _____	1954	\$ _____	1958	\$ _____
1951	\$ _____	1955	\$ _____	1959	\$ _____
1952	\$ _____	1956	\$ _____	1960	\$ _____
1953	\$ _____	1957	\$ _____		

3. How many expansions have been made at the Dresden plant since it was established? _____ Were these expansions financed by the city? Yes _____ No _____

4. What was the average employment figure for the Dresden plant in each of the following years?

1950	_____	1953	_____	1956	_____
1951	_____	1954	_____	1957	_____
1952	_____	1955	_____	1958	_____
		1959	_____	1960	_____

5. What were the original methods used in marketing the garments manufactured at the Dresden plant? _____

How are the garments marketed now? _____

6. What was your production record in each of the following years?

1950	_____	1953	_____	1956	_____
1951	_____	1954	_____	1957	_____
1952	_____	1955	_____	1958	_____
	1959	_____	1960	_____	

7. (a) Where do you obtain your raw material? _____

(b) Are transportation costs on raw material a significant percentage of your production cost? Yes _____ No _____

8. (a) How many of your employees live inside the Dresden city limits? _____

(b) Women constitute what per cent of your labor force? _____

(c) Do you employ a substantial number of secondary workers in your plant? Yes _____ No _____

(d) What per cent of your employees have been with you more than five years? _____

(e) What is the average age of your employees? _____

(f) Do you maintain a large reservoir of applications for jobs?

Yes _____ No _____

9. Assuming that this business is seasonal, how frequently do you cut production? _____

Do laid-off workers come back when full production resumes? Yes _____
No _____

10. (a) Are jobs learned quickly by your employees? Yes _____
No _____

(b) How long does an employee remain on probation before being considered permanent? _____

11. According to the October 6, 1950, issue of the Dresden Enterprise, Local 461 of the International Ladies Garment Worker's Union was officially installed at the Dresden plant during that particular week.

(a) How have labor-management relations been in your company throughout the years? _____

(b) Inasmuch as Dresden was almost 100 per cent agricultural in nature prior to the establishment of the Bay-Bee Shoe Company and the Dresden Manufacturing Company, was this unionization effort a complete surprise to the executives of your firm?

Yes _____ No _____*

12. What is the competitive position of the garment industry at the present time, i. e; do you set the price for your products or is the price determined by other methods? _____

13. Does your firm own all of the equipment in the plants? Yes _____

No _____

(a) If yes, what method or methods are used to finance net investment in equipment? _____

14. Comments _____

Calendar No. 253

87TH CONGRESS
1st Session

SENATE

REPORT
No. 282

PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMISSION ON PROBLEMS OF SMALL TOWNS AND RURAL COUNTIES

MAY 22, 1961.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. MUNDT, from the Committee on Government Operations,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany S. 1869]

The Committee on Government Operations, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1869) to provide for the establishment of a Commission on Problems of Small Towns and Rural Counties, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE

S. 1869 provides for the establishment of a Commission on Problems of Small Towns and Rural Counties. This bipartisan Commission shall be composed of 20 members.

In the 86th Congress, an identical bill, S. 3140, was favorably reported by the Government Operations Committee of the Senate (S. Rept. 1392) and the legislation was approved by the Senate.

Under the provisions of the bill, this Commission shall make a full and complete investigation and study of Federal policies and programs relating to the needs and problems of the Nation's small town and rural county areas. It shall study such problems as the needs, present and future, related to highways, public services, water resources, schools, recreation, financing, law enforcement, and business and industrial development.

The Commission shall attempt to determine the capabilities of State, county, and local governments to meet such needs and seek means of improving coordination of Federal, State, county, and local policies. It shall investigate the possibilities of Federal Government encouraging wider dispersal of Government procurement operations and in the location of Federal facilities, as well as other matters which may be of assistance in solving the various problems of, and promoting the

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social and economic well-being of, the Nation's small town and rural county areas.

The Commission shall report to the President and the Congress on or before February 1, 1963, its findings and recommendations; and the Commission may also make such interim reports as the President may request or as the Commission deems appropriate.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The small towns and rural counties of America have made significant and lasting contributions to the development of our way of life. The complex of rural counties and small towns, which is a unique form of community living not found in other parts of the world, is highly desirable and essential and should be continued.

These small communities provide for wholesome family life. They give opportunities for spiritual development as well as adequate economic, social, and political balance to our country.

The survival and economic well-being of rural towns and counties have been threatened by the technical and industrial development of our country. This development has brought changes in transportation facilities and patterns of economic activity which have resulted in shifts in population as well as other modern phenomena, creating challenges and problems with which small towns and rural counties are unable to cope, primarily because of lack of research facilities or economic means to instigate studies into the exact causes and cures of their problems.

In the past, many commissions have been created or proposed to study the problems involved in big government; the problems of our metropolitan areas; farm problems; labor problems; educational problems; and other social and economic problems.

There is no agency in Government responsible for handling problems of small towns. No Cabinet member is charged with the task of assembling data about our rural counties and small towns. No research department, no commission, no committee in Congress, has been directed to find solutions to the hardship posed by the economic or social problems threatening the existence of small towns.

ENDORSEMENT OF LEGISLATION

In the 86th Congress an identical bill was endorsed by a number of nongovernment groups which are concerned with rural problems and the problems of small towns. Those who have indicated their support are: The American Municipal Association; National Association of County Officials; the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod; American Baptist Home Mission Societies; Methodist Rural Fellowship; Southern Baptist Convention; the National Catholic Rural Life Conference; and the Colorado Baptist General Convention.



APPENDIX F

QUESTIONNAIRE

To Individuals from the Dresden Area Who Graduated from High School During the 1950-1960 Period

Instructions

Please answer questions one and two fully. Questions three through eleven may in general be answered by simply placing a check (✓) opposite questions in which a yes or no reply is appropriate, or to indicate an answer to questions containing more than one choice. Only one of the questions numbered twelve through fourteen may apply to you. Please comment freely on this question.

1. Year of high school graduation _____.

Sex: Male _____; Female _____.

Current marital status. Single ____, Married ____, Separated ____
Divorced ____.

2. What was your father's occupation at the time you graduated from high school? _____. How long had he been engaged in this occupation at that time? _____ years.

3. What was the educational background of your father? (Please place a (✓) in the appropriate box.)

No schooling at all

Elementary school (grade)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<input type="checkbox"/>							

High school (year)

1	2	3	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

College (year)

5	6	7
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What was the educational background of your mother? (Please place a (✓) in the appropriate box.)

No schooling at all

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Elementary school (grade)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

High school (year)

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

College (year)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

4. What would be an estimate of your total family income at the time of your graduation from high school?

Less than \$2,000 per year _____ \$6,000 to \$8,000 per year _____

\$2,000 to \$4,000 per year _____ \$8,000 to \$10,000 per year _____

\$4,000 to \$6,000 per year _____ More than \$10,000 per year _____

5. Are you now living in Dresden or Weakley County? Yes _____ No _____

If you are not living in Weakley County are you still residing in Tennessee? Yes _____ No _____

6. Are you now employed in Dresden or Weakley County? Yes _____ No _____

If not employed in Weakley County, are you working in a town of more than 2,500 population located in the state of Tennessee?

Yes _____ No _____. If you have left the state, are you employed in a town of more than 2,500 population? Yes _____ No _____

7. What is your current occupation? _____

Do you regard the job you are now doing (other than housewife) as being the one for which you are best prepared? Yes _____ No _____

8. If married, what is the occupation of your husband or wife? _____

9. Have you received any additional educational training since graduating from high school? Yes ____ No _____. If yes, please check one of the educational levels listed below which best describes the type training received.

Some college _____ Vocational schools _____
College degree _____ Correspondence courses _____
Graduate college work _____ Night classes _____
Professional degree
(M. D., LL.B. etc.) _____ Military vocational training _____
Apprenticeship programs _____ Other, please specify _____

10. If gainfully employed, which of the income brackets below more nearly approximates your individual earnings from wages, salaries, commissions, or fees in the year 1961?

Less than \$2,000 _____ \$6,000 to \$8,000 _____
\$2,000 to \$4,000 _____ \$8,000 to \$10,000 _____
\$4,000 to \$6,000 _____ More than \$10,000 _____

11. If your husband or wife was gainfully employed, which of the income brackets below more nearly approximates your combined earnings from wages, salaries, commissions, or fees in the year 1961?

Less than \$3,000 _____ \$9,000 to \$12,000 _____
\$3,000 to \$6,000 _____ \$12,000 to \$15,000 _____
\$6,000 to \$9,000 _____ Over \$15,000 _____

12. If you are now employed or residing outside Weakley County, would you accept a job in the Dresden area, or elsewhere in the county, if job opportunities and income were approximately equal to what

is currently available in the community in which you are earning a living? Yes _____ No _____ (Please comment in the space below.) _____

13. If you are still in college, the armed forces, or any school other than a college, do you expect to return to Dresden, or other areas of Weakley County, in a permanent capacity? Yes _____ No _____ (Please comment in the space below.) _____

14. If you are employed or residing in Dresden, or other areas of Weakley County, do you consider the job opportunities and income available to you at least equal to what you could find elsewhere? Yes _____ No _____ (Please comment in the space below.) _____

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APPENDIX G

As you perhaps know, for many years people have been leaving the farms and small towns of this area in an effort to improve themselves economically. The period beginning in 1950 and ending in 1960, however, was one in which a significantly large number of persons of all ages left Weakley County. For example, in 1960 this county had 13.4 per cent fewer people compared to the year 1950.

The purpose of this study is to determine the per cent of Dresden area high school graduates, for the years 1950 through 1960, still remaining in this rural area; the per cent which left and probably will never return in a permanent capacity, and some pertinent social and economic data concerning each of the individuals used in this study.

You will note that your name is not required on the questionnaire. Generally, people are inclined more toward frankness if they are assured that names are unknown and cannot be used in any way.

A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Please complete the questionnaire and place it in the mail as quickly as you possibly can. Your immediate attention to this matter will indeed be appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

William H. Baker, Head
Department of Business Administration

WHB/klm

Enclosures