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# A Study of the Eighth Grade Graduates & High School Attendance of the Larue County Schools

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Borden,

Willis B.

1952

A STUDY OF THE  
EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATES AND HIGH SCHOOL  
ATTENDANCE OF THE LARUE COUNTY SCHOOLS

BY

WILLIS B. BORDEN

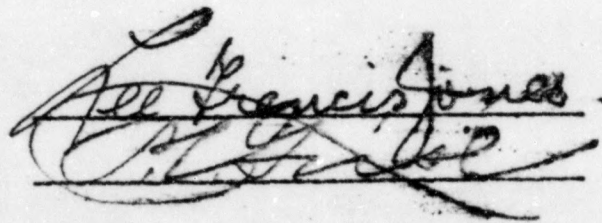
A THESIS  
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS

WESTERN KENTUCKY STATE COLLEGE

JULY, 1952

**Approveds-**

Major Professor and  
Department of Education  
Graduate Committee

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Lee Francis Jones", is written over two horizontal lines. The signature is dark and appears to be in ink.



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## PREFACE

The writer wishes to express sincere gratitude to Dr. Lee Francis Jones, of the Department of Education, Western Kentucky State College, his major professor, for his kindness, patience and guidance in writing this thesis.

The writer also desires to express his thanks to Miss Ada Lee Graham, Superintendent of LaRue County Schools, and Miss Sara Ellen Howard, attendance supervisor for their help in collecting the data from their offices.

The writer wishes to acknowledge with thanks to the principals of the other high schools in LaRue County for their assistance in furnishing information needed.

The writer is also grateful to his wife, Edwina M. Borden, for her encouragement and aid while writing this thesis.



CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

The tabulated data used in this study were selected from the files of the superintendent of LaRue County schools.

The teacher's register of attendance for Kentucky schools from 1947 to 1951 were used to determine the eighth grade graduates of that period. Other data were furnished by the high school principals concerning the failures, promotions, and eliminations in their schools.

The purpose of this thesis is to ascertain the reasons for eighth grade graduates not entering high school and the number of years the eighth grade graduates who entered high school remained in membership. The years considered are 1947 to 1951 inclusive.

"Through education young people learn the fundamentals of co-operative living. They learn to study, to acquire facts, to think for themselves, to decide issues by peaceful means and majority rule, to give and take, to be tolerant of other peoples ideals and customs, to appreciate human values and to assume responsibilities for themselves and others."<sup>1</sup>

It is important that eighth grade graduates enter high school and remain in membership as long as possible.

"It has been demonstrated by well conducted experiments that for ensuring continued growth a much wiser and more profitable procedure than non-promotion is to adapt instruction to the needs of the pupils at all times, and at the end of the year to advance him to the next grade or class

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<sup>1</sup>  
Richard, W. M., and Bliss, Isley, Our Careers as Citizens (Chicago, Beckley-Cardy Company, 1943), p. 3.

and there continue to adjust instruction to his needs."<sup>2</sup>

If this theory is practiced the classes will be made up of pupils of approximately the same chronological age.

"In the old days when only academic courses were offered, many of the boys and girls refused to go to school because they had no choice of subjects.

"The time is at hand when modern educators are demanding that the high schools must be organized to meet the needs of modern business, community needs, and modern times.

"Most of us began our careers as citizens in the republic of the United States. This republic is based upon the ideals of freedom, equality, opportunity, and co-operation. This bestows upon us rights and responsibilities. This is true in the home, in the community, in the nation, in industry, in government, and in the world. If we are to train our young people to meet these things squarely, we must organize our schools to meet these challenging problems."<sup>3</sup>

One of the weaknesses of our high schools today is holding the pupils after they enter. The schools of today need more holding power.

Thorndike compiled the following table from an examination of statistics for twenty-three large American cities, relative to the elimination of pupils from school.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Elliot, Lloyd H., Educational Forum, Vol. XIII (November, 1948), pp. 69-72.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Brown, John F., The American High School (New York, The Macmillian Co., 1923), pp. 389-390.



Per cent of those in a given grade not continuing to next grade.

In fourth grade not continuing to fifth, 10 per cent.

In fifth grade not continuing to sixth, 16 per cent.

In sixth grade not continuing to seventh, 20.8 per cent.

In seventh grade not continuing to last grammar grade, 26 per cent.

In last grammar grade not continuing to high school 32.5 per cent.

In first high school year not continuing to second year of high school, 37. per cent.

In second high school year not continuing to third year of high school, 29.4 per cent.

In third high school year not continuing to fourth year of high school, 33.3 per cent.

This table indicates a tremendous loss in attendance, especially at the high school level.

"The causes that contribute to this elimination of pupils should be more carefully studied than they have yet been. With our present information they seem to be mainly the economic necessity of going to work; the natural desire of the adolescent to engage in some independent activity; ill health; the belief of parents and pupils that the full high school course is of little or no economic value; lack of interest in the subjects required in the course, lack of ability to do the work and dissatisfaction with teachers who do not understand them."

The high school is no longer a selective institution but is rapidly becoming the "peoples school." The vast majority of boys and girls has access to high school education.

There must be a revaluation of the high school program. Is the program which was suitable for a select group of pupils suited for a group which is unselected?

A Major Education Problem

The farm size and farm status has a great deal of influence on the boys and girls attending school who live on farms. The educational plans of rural youth attending school in grade seven through twelve in four Minnesota counties were studied to answer these questions.

It was found that a larger share of the renter's children planned to stop school on completing the eighth grade. Of the seventh and eighth grade boys twenty per cent of the renters and twelve per cent of the owner's sons said they would stop school on completing the eighth grade. Sixteen per cent of the renter's daughters and three per cent of the owner's daughters said they would drop out after completing the eighth grade.

There are many things that may determine whether a boy or girl may continue their education. Selecting their vocation is the main factor. If a boy plans on being a doctor or entering some other profession, he must prepare himself for college. Other vocations such as woodworking or mechanics may be followed with very little academic training.

The committee came to this conclusion, "Out of 1,750,000 students who enter high school in the ninth grade only about one-half will remain to graduate four years from now."

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6  
Dillon, Harold J., School Review, January, 1950, p. 1.



How Many Children Drop Out of School

"Kentucky Children enrolled in the first grade in 1932 numbered 1114,123 but Kentucky children enrolled in the twelfth grade twelve years later numbered only 14,884. Will the nearly 100,000 children who dropped out of this one class some day decide the vote on issues of taxation?"<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Report of Committee for Kentucky (1943-1950), p. 7.

## CHAPTER II

## STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND SOURCE OF DATA

This study was done for the purpose of ascertaining the percentage of eighth grade graduates of the LaRue County school during the years from 1947 to 1951 inclusive, who entered, attended one or more years, or graduated from high school. It is the desire of the writer to find the reasons given by individual pupils from various parts of the county for failure to attend high school.

## Statement of Problem

1. To find the number of eighth grade graduates of the LaRue County schools over a four-year period.
  - a. That entered high school.
  - b. That failed to enter high school.
  - c. That finished, one, two, or three years of high school.
  - d. That married before entering or completing high school.
  - e. That died before entering or completing high school.
  - f. The average age of graduation from the eighth grade.
2. To compare the percentage of eighth grade graduates from non-consolidated schools who failed to enter high school with those who graduated from the eighth grade in the consolidated high schools.
3. To find some causes for failure to enter high school through a study of individual cases from various parts of the county.

The data have been collected from the Teachers Register of Attendance for Kentucky and reports on file in the office of the County Superintendent of LaRue County schools. Additional data have been obtained through conferences with the principals and information on file in their offices.



Data were obtained from individual conferences with pupils from various parts of the county.

A report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction as of April 1, 1949 gave the following data: "Out of 94,018 pupils not enrolled in Kentucky schools, 6,496 finished the eighth grade and quit school while 5,123 started to high school but dropped out."<sup>1</sup>

A few studies, similar in purpose to this study have been made. One of them was "A Study of The Eighth Grade Graduates of The Barren County Schools."<sup>2</sup>

In this study the author found that the reasons given by individual pupils for non-attendance were similar to the reasons given in this study.

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<sup>1</sup>

Kentucky Educational Bulletin, Vol. XVII, No. 10, December, 1949.

<sup>2</sup>

Reece, Lenis, "A Study of the Eighth Grade Graduates of Barren County Schools," (Thesis, Western Kentucky State College, June, 1951).

CHAPTER III  
DATA AND INTERPRETATION

In 1947 at the beginning of the period included in this study, the LaRue County schools consisted of thirty-three one and two-room schools and three consolidated high schools. There were at the conclusion of this thesis in 1951 three consolidated centers, one two-room and nine one-room schools. Figure 1 shows a map of LaRue County, the location of each school, and transportation units drawn to the consolidated center where pupils attend high school. Figure 2 shows a community map of LaRue County with lines drawn from the consolidated centers to attendance areas.

The tabulated list of eighth grade graduates from the LaRue County schools during the period from 1947 to 1951 was 576. In the non-consolidated schools 168 of this number completed the eighth grade, and 408 completed the eighth grade in the consolidated high schools. In 1947 forty-nine pupils failed to enter high school. Thirty-one of this number graduated from ten of the non-consolidated schools that had no transportation furnished. The facts shown in Table VII are that 52.38 per cent of the eighth grade graduates of the non-consolidated schools failed to enter high school while 88.21 per cent of the graduates from the consolidated schools entered high school.

Table II shows that the withdrawal of pupils from high school is greater in the first and second than either the third or fourth year which agrees with a similar study on "The Higher Educational Career of Eighth Grade Graduates of Warren County Schools."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Glasscock, Thelma Maydell, "A Study of The Higher Careers of the Eighth Grade Graduates of Warren County Schools." (Thesis, Western Kentucky State College, June, 1936).



In this study the writer found that the withdrawal of pupils from high school was less in the third and fourth years than either the first or second year.

## LARUE COUNTY SCHOOLS

1947-1948

Athertonville  
 Barren Run  
 Buffalo Consolidated School  
 \* Carter  
 \* Corinth  
 \* Cross Roads  
 Edlin  
 Elkins  
 \* Farmer  
 \* Gravel Point  
 Grimes  
 \* Hibernia  
 Jericho  
 Keith  
 Kennedy  
 \* Knobs  
 Leafdale  
 \* Level Woods  
 Lincoln Springs  
 Lyons  
 Magnolia Consolidated School  
 Morning Star  
 Morrison  
 Mt. Sherman  
 Mt. Tabor  
 Nichols  
 Oak Hill  
 Orrandes  
 \* Siberia  
 Spence  
 Stone House  
 West  
 Tonieville  
 \* Wilkins  
 Woodland Hill

---

 Hodgenville Independent

\* No transportation furnished

## LARUE COUNTY SCHOOLS

1951-1952

The 36 schools in 1947-1948 now combined in 1951-1952 into 13 schools.

Buffalo Consolidated School  
Hibernia  
Kennady  
Level Woods  
Lyons  
Magnolia Consolidated School  
Morning Star  
Mt. Tabor  
Siberia  
~~Spencer~~  
West  
Wilkins  
Hodgenville Consolidated School

[no pg. 12]



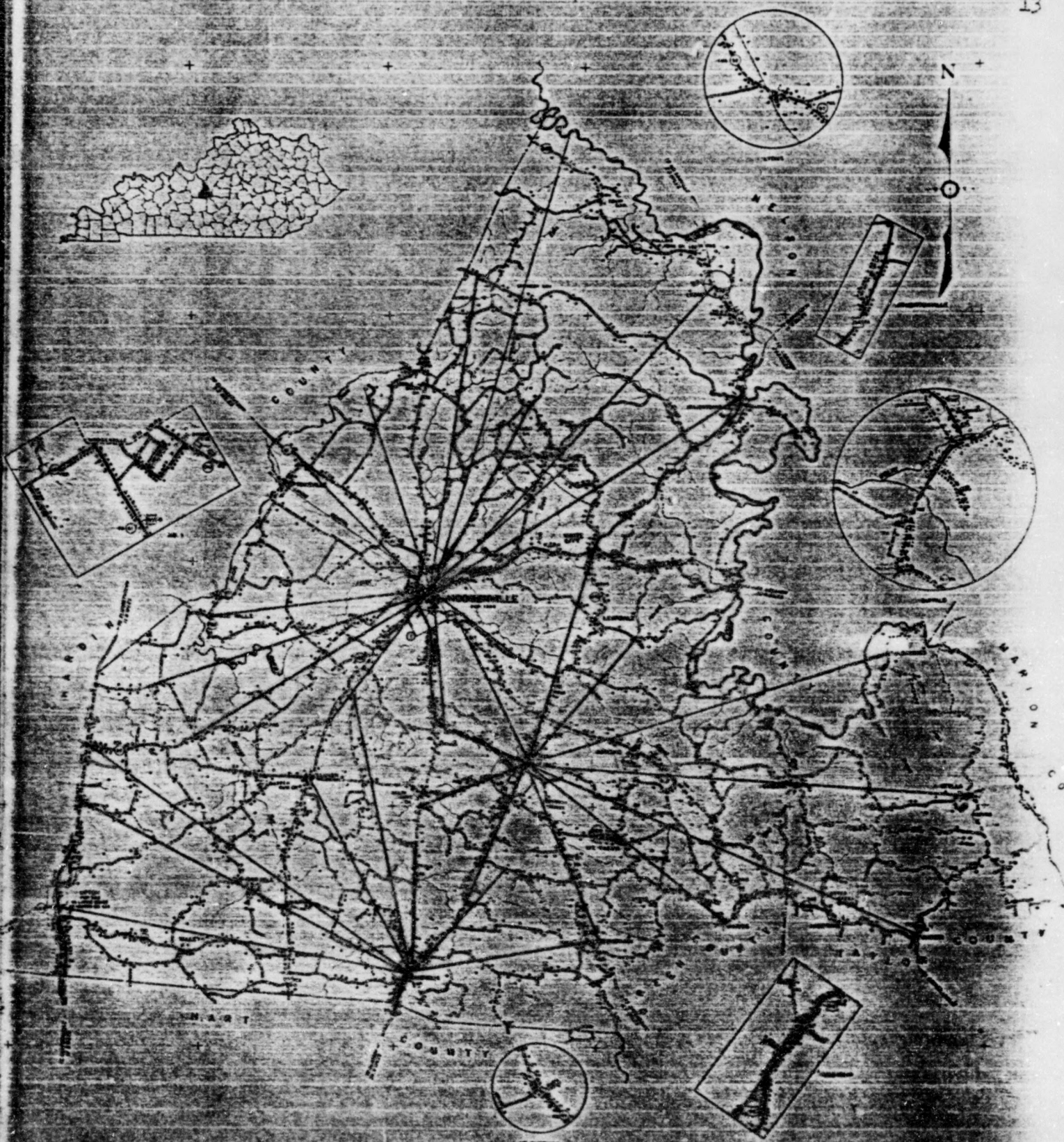
Copies

May Not

Film

Well!





GENERAL HIGHWAY MAP  
**LARUE COUNTY**  
 KENTUCKY

PREPARED BY THE  
 KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS  
 IN COOPERATION WITH THE  
 PUBLIC ROADS ADMINISTRATION  
 FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY

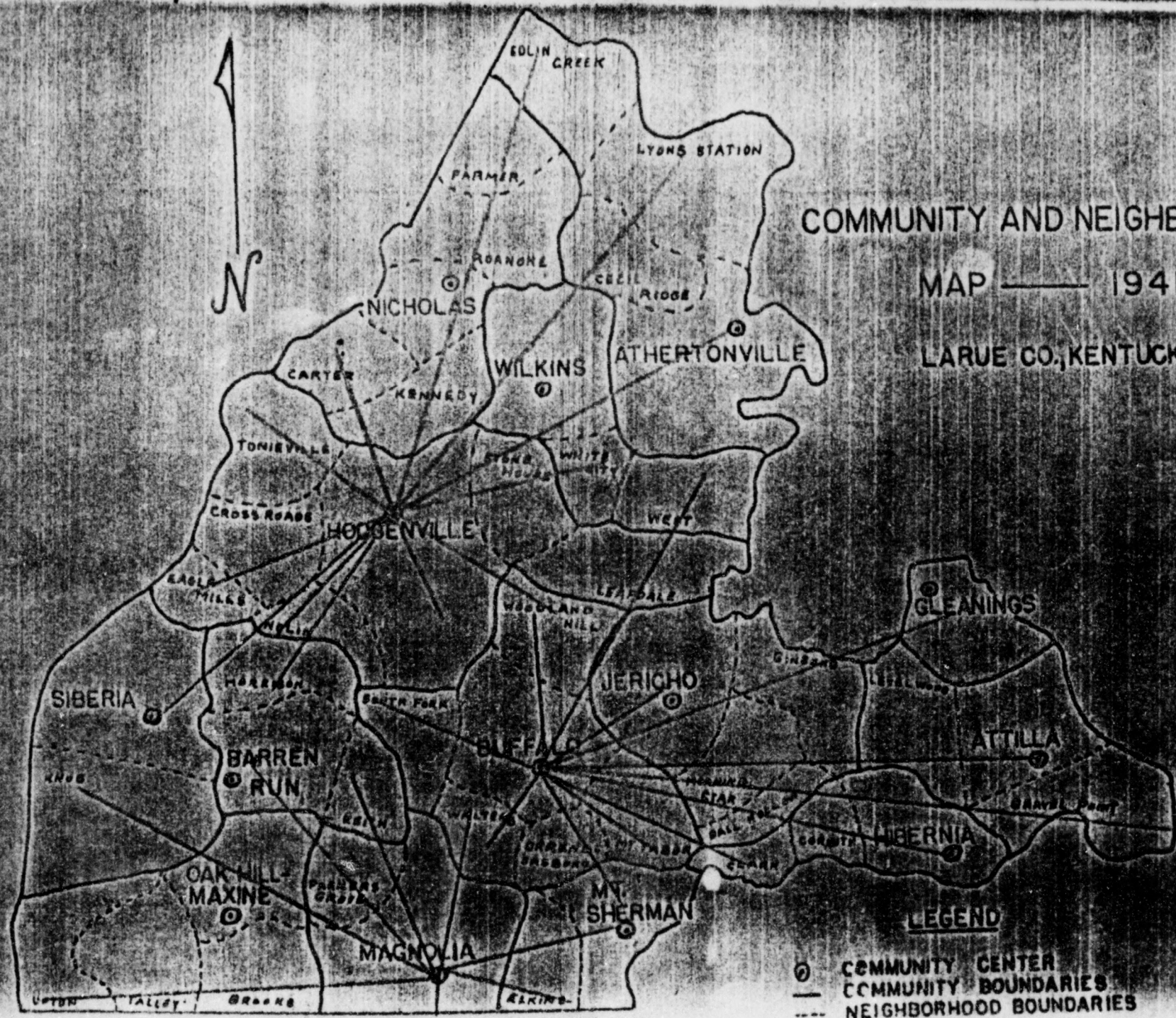
STATE-WIDE HIGHWAY PLANNING SURVEY

Symbol	Description
(Symbol)	Interstate Highway
(Symbol)	U.S. Highway
(Symbol)	State Highway
(Symbol)	County Road
(Symbol)	Local Road
(Symbol)	Unimproved Road
(Symbol)	Proposed Road
(Symbol)	Waterway
(Symbol)	Railroad
(Symbol)	City
(Symbol)	Town
(Symbol)	Village
(Symbol)	Unincorporated Community
(Symbol)	Section Line
(Symbol)	Range Line
(Symbol)	County Line
(Symbol)	State Line
(Symbol)	Water
(Symbol)	Swamp
(Symbol)	Marsh
(Symbol)	Grassland
(Symbol)	Woodland
(Symbol)	Barren Land
(Symbol)	Other

SCALE 1:50,000  
 1" = 1 MILE  
 1" = 1 KILOMETER



COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD  
 MAP — 1941  
 LARUE CO., KENTUCKY



**LEGEND**  
 ○ COMMUNITY CENTER  
 — COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES  
 - - - NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES

TABLE I  
EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATES BY AGE GROUPS\*

Age	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total
1947-48	2	16	68	56	25	10	4	0	181
1948-49	2	15	30	21	12	7	0	0	87
1949-50	3	22	68	35	19	9	2	1	159
1950-51	2	15	66	39	24	1	2	0	149
TOTAL	9	68	232	151	80	27	8	1	576

This table includes the eighth grade graduates of the Hodgenville City School.

By analyzing Table I the writer finds a range of ages of eighth grade graduates between eleven and eighteen years with the greatest frequency being thirteen.

The data presented in Table I may be more clearly understood by considering the fact that promotions to high school was left to the individual teachers. Of the eleven and twelve-year old pupils graduating from the eighth grade a small number probably were doubly promoted in schools using a combination of grades such as the fifth with the sixth and seventh with the eighth on alternating school years. This practice tends to lower individual ages at the time of eighth grade graduation. This would partially explain why such a large group graduated at the age of twelve. The lower age of a few eighth grade graduates may be explained by the requirements that age be recorded in such a manner that birthdays occurring after September 1, of the current school year, are disregarded and the lower is officially recorded.



TABLE II  
ATTENDANCE IN HIGH SCHOOL OF EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATES, 1947 TO 1951\*

Years	Entered High School	Years Completed				Did Not Enter	No Data Available	Total
		(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)			
1947-48	121	68	10	20	33	49	11	181
1948-49	70	--	46	10	14	11	6	87
1949-50	120	--	--	98	22	36	3	159
1950-51	126	--	--	--	126	23	0	149
TOTAL	437	68	56	128	196	119	20	576

\*

Includes the eighth grade graduates of the Hodgenville Independent District.

The promotion of pupils has been and still is a subject extensively discussed. In this study the responsibility for the promotion of eighth grade graduates to high school is left entirely to the teacher, however, this method is not practical in all schools.

By studying Table II in the school year of 1947-48 we see that forty-nine eighth grade graduates failed to enter high school. Thirty-one of these graduates were from ten non-consolidated schools from which no transportation was provided to high school.

TABLE III  
 CASES WHO DID NOT ENTER HIGH SCHOOL  
 CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL

Age	Sex	Name of School	Occupation of Parent	Year Graduated
15	Female	Magnolia	Farmer	1947-48
15	Male	Magnolia	Farmer	1947-48
16	Male	Buffalo	Farmer	1947-48
15	Female	Buffalo	Laborer	1947-48
13	Female	Hodgenville	Laborer	1947-48
13	Male	Hodgenville	Farmer	1947-48
14	Male	Magnolia	Truck Operator	1948-49
15	Male	Buffalo	Farmer	1948-49
16	Male	Hodgenville	Farmer	1948-49
16	Male	Magnolia	Farmer	1949-50
15	Female	Buffalo	Fort Knox	1949-50
16	Female	Hodgenville	Tenant Farmer	1949-50
15	Female	Magnolia	Farmer	1950-51
17	Female	Buffalo	Laborer	1950-51
14	Female	Hodgenville	Farmer	1950-51



In Table III is given the personal data on fifteen eighth grade graduates from the consolidated schools of LaRue County as to occupation of parents and age of pupils.

The reasons given by the eighth grade graduates to the writer for not attending high school were as follows:

1. Needed at home.
2. Not interested in school work.
3. Had too much work on farm.
4. Married.
5. Parent was sick, must keep house
6. Did not like school.
7. Made low grades in elementary school and afraid they would fail.
8. Needed to go to work to earn money.
9. Were financially unable to attend high school.
10. Received no encouragement from parents.
11. Did not like the teachers in high school.
12. Would be too old when on high school graduation.
13. Earnings were greater when farming than attending school.
14. Intended to do farm work and did not see that any vocational benefits could be derived.
15. Did not like mathematics and English.
16. Teachers were not fair.
17. Going to the army.

Through conferences with the students who did not enter high school, the writer found that most of the pupils were convinced that the schools could not provide additional benefits.



TABLE IV  
 CASES WHO DID NOT ENTER HIGH SCHOOL  
 NON-CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS

Age	Sex	Name of School	Occupation of Parent	Year Graduated
16	Male	Parkers Grove	Farmer	1947-48
16	Male	Tonniesville	Farmer	1947-48
15	Female	Wilkins	Tenant Farmer	1947-48
14	Female	Mt. Tabor	Farmer	1947-48
16	Male	Keith	Farmer	1948-49
13	Female	Morning Star	Farmer	1948-49
16	Female	Woodland Hill	Farmer	1949-50
14	Male	Keith	Tenant Farmer	1949-50
15	Female	Lyons	Laborer	1950-51
14	Male	Morning Star	Farmer	1950-51

In Table IV is given some personal data on ten pupils, who did not enter high school, from the non-consolidated schools of LaRue County, as to occupation of parents, age and sex of pupils.

The reasons given by these pupils for not attending high school were similar to those given from the consolidated schools.

Similar findings resulted from a study of 440 high school drop-outs in Louisville, Kentucky, made in 1947 by the U.S. Department of Labor. In every age group, dissatisfaction with school topped the list.

TABLE V  
 TABULATED DATA CONCERNING 166 EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATES WHO FAILED TO ENTER  
 OR DROPPED OUT BEFORE COMPLETING HIGH SCHOOL, AND REASONS FOR DROPPING OUT

Reasons	1947-48	1948-49	1949-50	1950-51	Total
Married	10	4	5	2	21
Died	3	1	2	0	6
Public Work	2	1	2	3	8
Farm Work	11	5	10	7	33
Low Grades	2	3	6	2	13
Dislike for School	3	3	4	5	15
In Service	1	1	3	3	8
Moved Out of Dist.	5	5	6	2	18
*Transportation	31	0	0	0	31
Other Causes	8	2	2	1	13

\*No transportation furnished for these thirty-one pupils.

Table V gives tabulated data concerning 166 cases taken from the 576 eighth grade graduates considered in this study. Of this group of graduates there were thirty-three who went to work on the farm and twenty-one who married before entering or completing high school. There were eighteen pupils who moved out of the district for whom there is no data available.



TABLE VI  
EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATES OF 1947-48 WHO FAILED TO COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL,  
AND REASONS FOR NOT COMPLETING

Years Completed						
1 Year		2 Years		3 Years		Total
Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
17	20	10	5	7	4	63

Reasons:	Boys	Girls
Farming	17	0
Failed	3	1
Moved out of District	4	6
Married	1	10
Dislike for School	3	6
Armed Services	3	0
Deceased	1	0
Public Work	2	0
Illness		2
No Data		2
Other Reasons		2
TOTAL	34	29



Table VI gives the data on the sixty-three eighth grade graduates who entered high school in 1948 but dropped out before graduation. Seventeen boys dropped out of high school to enter farming. Ten girls married and dropped out before completing high school. There were ten pupils who moved out of the district for whom there is no data available.

In Table VI we find that the elimination of pupils from high school is greater in the first and second years. This conforms to the findings of similar study made of the Eighth Grade Graduates of Barren County by Lenis Reece in 1951. Upon the basis of this study the author made this statement: "The elimination of pupils from high school was less in third year high school than either the first or the second year, which might indicate that the problem of elimination affects the first and second year of high school more than the third and fourth."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>  
Reece, Lenis, "A Study of the Eighth Grade Graduates of the Barren County Schools." (Thesis, Western Kentucky State College, July, 1951).

TABLE VII  
EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATES AND HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Year	From Consolidated Schools		From Non-Consolidated Schools		Total
	Entered	Did Not Enter	Entered	Did Not Enter	
1947-48	96	14	25	46	181
1948-49	61	5	9	12	87
1949-50	95	15	25	24	159
TOTAL	252	34	59	82	427
PER CENT	88.21	11.79	47.62	52.38	100.00

As shown in Table VII more pupils completing the eighth grade in the non-consolidated schools failed to enter high school than failed to enter from the eighth grade in the consolidated high schools.

The per cent of the total number of pupils failing to enter high school that completed the eighth grade in the non-consolidated schools was 52.38 and from consolidated schools was 11.79 per cent.

In the collecting of this data the writer was amazed to find the large number of pupils who completed the eighth grade and did not enter high school from the non-consolidated schools.

The figures in Table VII support the theory that more pupils are eliminated from the non-consolidated schools than from the consolidated schools.



## CHAPTER IV

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## SUMMARY

The facts presented in this study relative to the 576 eighth grade graduates of the LaRue County schools during the period from 1947 to 1951 may be summarized as follows:

There were 437 or 75.86 per cent that entered high school.

Of the 168 eighth grade graduates from the non-consolidated school only 79 or 47.62 per cent entered high school.

Of the 408 graduates from the consolidated centers 358 or 88.21 per cent entered high school.

One hundred and nineteen or 25 per cent failed to enter high school.

There were no data available for 20 or 3.47 per cent of the 576 pupils.

The ages of the eighth grade graduates ranged from eleven to eighteen years with the age of thirteen recurring most frequently.

Twenty-one of the eighth grade graduates married and thirty-three went to work on a farm before entering or completing high school.

The reasons given by sixteen eighth grade graduates from various sections of LaRue County for not entering high school were:

1. Married.
2. Did not like school.
3. Received no encouragement from parents.
4. Would be too old upon high school graduation.
5. Made low grades in elementary school and afraid they would fail.



6. Not interested in school work.
7. Intended to do farm work and did not see that any vocational benefits could be derived.
8. Going to the army.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study reveals that a large number of boys and girls are not attending high school and a large number of those entering high school are eliminated before completing four years of training. It is the writer's opinion that the consideration given to the problem of non-attendance in high school has not been adequate.

The writer thinks that under the consolidation plans of LaRue County the attendance problem will be partially eliminated. It is also the writer's opinion that the conditions brought out in this study prevail over the state as a whole.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

As an outgrowth of this study the writer wishes to submit the following recommendations:

1. That more time be given by grade teachers in the building up of proper attitudes toward elementary and high school attendance.
2. That more time be given toward guidance of the elementary pupils.
3. That parents through adult education should acquire a deeper concern for high school attendance.
4. That better relations be promoted between the homes and the schools.
5. That each school employ cumulative records of each child from the first through the twelfth grades.
6. That an adequate program of supervision be established in the county in order that each principal would be able to supervise the pupils in the non-consolidated schools who will enter high school the following year.
7. That more attention be given by administrators and teachers to the causes of non-attendance in high school.

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