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MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT

A SOCIOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC SURVEY

A Thesis
Presented to the Faculty
of
Wesleyan University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

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by

William Walter Cooney, B.A., 1934

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PREFACE

A sociological and economic survey of a particular American city requires an analysis of the institutions and associations found there. I am indebted to Professor Norman J. Ware, under whose direction this study was conducted, and to the many citizens of Middletown without whose cooperation and information this study would have been impossible.

I am also indebted to Mr. William Thayer Rich, donor of the Rich Fellowship, whose financial assistance made possible the continuation of my studies at Wesleyan.

William W. Cooney

METHOD

Sociology, the science which deals with human association, its developments, forms, and functions is not an old science. In this country sociology did not appear until about the time of the Civil War. After the Civil War there arose a school of the so-called Philosophical Sociologists led by Giddings, Small, and Lester Ward. The approach of this school is very much that of theoretical economists, and did not satisfy certain students of the science. MeIver, Ogburn, and MacDougall are the chief proponents of a second school, the Psychological Sociologists. Their writings are, for the most part, of a general sort, but they stress more immediately practical problems than do the Philosophical Sociologists.

The opportunities for specific studies in particular fields led to the rise of a third important group. These men, concerned with the study of abnormal social groups, worked in three fields which covered virtually all of the abnormal classes, namely the defectives, the dependents, and the delinquents. As the science progressed many individuals were seeking a substitute for laboratory procedure beyond the abnormal field.

The Lynds, whose Middletown received a great deal of acclaim as a new type of work, attempted to survey a particular American community as a whole. Recent Social Trends, the reports of President Hoover's investigation, assumed a wider field and tried quantitatively to study national problems of a sociological nature. Both of these were, however, largely descriptive and general, although the workers were capable and sufficient funds were available.

The anthropologists have for a number of years been doing for primitive peoples what the sociologists are now attempting to do for contemporary civilization. There are obvious disadvantages in working with a modern situation. It is difficult to be entirely objective, and the quantity of materia is very great while not observable under conditions of control found in laboratory technique.

In the case of the Lynds' study a corps of trained social workers investigated a city of some 35,000 inhabitants for a period of two years. In that city there was no sizeable foreign population and the city was over twenty-five thousand, so that a great deal of statistical information was available. The selection of the city was carefully made to conform to these characteristics. In the case of Recent Social Trends there were ample funds available, and a very worthwhile study was made, but the result remains

descriptive and sketchy and few general conclusions are reached. Caroline Ware, whose study of Greenwich Village has just been published, has been, according to book reviews, little more successful.

This thesis may be criticized on the same grounds as the above. It is a descriptive treatment of a particular American city. It necessarily does not touch every branch of every institution, and it does not completely analyze any one of them. It has been necessary for the author to restrict his objective and to omit anything which he did not believe essential to it.

The author hoped to base this work largely upon a groundwork of theoretical sociology, applying field work to that base. For this reason an attack is made first on the "natural heritage", that is the temperature, soil, rainfall, and topography; second, the cultural background as it is found through a history of the institutions and of the national origin of the inhabitants; third, the particular institutions which these inhabitants have set up. The first of these is the institution of the family, which contains the embryo of every other institution. From it all other institutions developed as they took over some of its functions.

When this study was completed the author felt hesitant to draw general conclusions. However, there are many suggestions which arise from a descriptive study and these will be more and more apparent as similar studies are made.

In collecting the actual material used as a basis for this study it was necessary to utilize information collected through personal interviews with a great many people, visits to typical branches of each institution, and studies of any information already available, such as reports and documents, and the United States Census. It was hoped in the early weeks of the study that a great deal of valuable data which had been collected by students of sociology in past years might be used. Unfortunately most of this material was either out of date or unreliable. These reports did, however, indicate possible fields to be considered.

This study includes, in at least a general way, most of the institutions except the local government. The author does not intend to suggest that the institutions of government are less important than others, but he found them to be more complex and, in this case, peculiar to the community studied. Where the local government enters into the field of the other institutions it is considered, but the political organization itself is omitted.

It may be well at this point to say that the author has included in this thesis studies of a great many branches of institutions. It has been necessary to spend much time visiting various organizations and persons. The first difficulties were met in the absence of complete census data. It happens that the United States Bureau of the Census compiles a great many data for cities over 25,000 but very little for cities below that size. Many of the charts, readily compiled for larger cities, are indispensable for complete treatment. There was, then, no alternative except to collect every fact given in the census and, by working with these data, to construct charts of age groups, marriage groups, industrial workers, and racial groups. It was necessary to examine old town records as new town records. The local newspaper did not prove to be the mine of information hoped for even after some time was spent on it.

The problem of what to include and what to leave out was not immediately solved. For example, some hopes were held that, in connection with a study of the families, divorce records might be illuminating, but these records yielded nothing of value. It is impossible to tell from an analysis of the divorce records whether the stated (legal ground) is the real reason for disagreement.

The author visited every possible gathering which might hold some material for his thesis. He worked in the campaign headquarters of one of the local parties during the state elections. He has been to an Italian wedding feast, and a guest at an Italian neighborhood celebration. He has visited Italians and Polish homes near the river and in South Farms. He has talked with the various town officers, with representatives of banks, and other businesses, charities, manufacturing plants, schools, churches, and with laborers. It has been necessary to omit a great deal of interesting information, some because it was not applicable to this study, and some because it seems inadvisable to include anything which cannot be verified.

This information was for the most part noted in a card index file, which now contains some 1,500 fact cards besides some 450 index cards. Each card holds a particular fact which may represent a whole train of thought, each is duly filed and ready for future reference. In conclusion the author wishes to point out that the application of laboratory procedure to sociology is new and difficult.

It is hoped that this thesis will not be considered to be the final word on Middletown, but that someone else will continue with the study. It is with regret that the author leaves a subject which has been, and will be in the future, interesting and increasingly important.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY

The Value of The Study

The value of a study of the type outlined is chiefly sociological, with economic factors correlated to complete the picture and explain the motives. Unfortunately, this field of research has too often been neglected and the only well known similar treatment of this sort is found in the Lynds' MIDDLETOWN. This is a study of a North Central City (Muncie, Indiana) with a population of 35,000. The MIDDLETOWN of the Lynds was chosen to conform with certain selected standards: (1) A city of the 25,000 - 50,000 group; (2) A city as nearly self-contained as possible; (3) A small negro and foreign-born population. It was felt by the Lynds that these specifications would limit the problem, for a city of this size is small enough to be studied from many aspects; while the elimination of cities with negro or foreign-born members would greatly lessen the difficulties.

This survey of MIDDLETOWN cannot be adjusted to apply to Middletown, Connecticut. In the first place, our Middletown is a city slightly under 25,000 and for this reason much of the data compiled by the United States Bureau of the Census for cities the size of Muncie are not available. Moreover, while there is only a small negro population, we have a sizable group of foreign-born, and a larger group of children of foreign-born parents. This difficulty is common to Connecticut cities in general, and to the extent that Middletown is like the others this survey is applicable to them. Like the Lynds' this thesis will deal with a functional study of the contemporary life of this specific American community.

The City of Middletown

A sociological and economic survey of Middletown, Connecticut involves a comprehension and an analysis of the relationships which are common to the inhabitants of this city and the situations with which they find themselves confronted. In this thesis an effort is made to approach each of the factors of community organization separately, relating them to the community as a whole.

In its earliest beginnings Middletown was a primary community, characterized by intimate face-to-face contacts and direct interaction of each of its members. The social stimuli were direct, and it was a true community in the sense that it was a self-sufficing social group. As the population increased the individual families ceased performing some of the functions; economic, protective, religious, educational, and recreational, and delegated the responsibility to community associations and institutions. Police, churches, schools, and recreational centers were among the first to appear, but the families still retained some responsibility for the training.

In a study of Middletown, therefore, we must first survey the members of the dommunity, determining their origin and background, after which we may proceed to a study of the family life and the institutions and associations created by these people.

Geography and Topography

Middletown is an industrial and commercial city of 24,554 inhabitants, located in Middlesex County, Connecticut, on the west bank of the Connecticut River. It is situated on the air line between New York and Boston, one hundred miles from New York, and is half-way between the neighboring cities of New Haven and Hartford.

At Middletown, the Connecticut valley narrows and the river cuts through two cliffs to find its way to Saybrook and the Sound, the valley continuing onward to New Haven. The original township, which was 16 miles east to west and 9 miles north and south, included Chatham, Portland, Cromwell, Middlefield and some of Berlin. Today its size is reduced, roughly, to 11 by 4 miles with a total area of town and city of 42.6 square miles.

The terrain is generally rough, rising to six accessible heights the tallest of which is 940 feet above sea level, with that part of the city along the river only thirty to fifty feet above sea level. The land, which was originally wooded except directly along the banks of the river, is now generally cleared, and except in the city proper is used for dairy farming and gardening.

The center of the city is located at the north-west part of the township and expands from there with the homes becoming further separated and finally developing into farms on the outskirts of the town.

The central part of the city is along the bank of the Connecticut with that portion closest to the river, the lowest part of the town, occupied by poor dwellings in which the Italian part of the population lives. About six hundred feet from the riverfront, and parallel with, it runs Main Street where the stores and office buildings are located, and continuing from there up the hill the living conditions are entirely different from those below Main Street, for in this vicinity we find comfortable single family homes with well kept lawns which gradually become spaced farther apart until on the outskirts of the city we find the beginning of suburban housing and farm land. It is in the southerly direction that the town is expanding. Dwellings are slowly replacing farms; and schools and other facilities are being built.

Located within the boundaries of the township are three major institutions which are not generally a part of the life of the community. One of these is the State Hospital for the Insane which is situated about a mile south-east of the city proper and covers

a large tract of land. Up the hill westward and about half a mile from Main Street is the campus of Wesleyan University. South-west from the University, and a distance of half a mile from it, are the portals of the Long Lane Farm, a state institution for wayward girls.

The borders of the city proper are not sharply defined but gradually fade off in the directions indicated.

Temperature and Rainfall

The natural limitations of climate and moisture determine the culture of inhabitants to a great degree. In Middletown the average temperature for the past fifteen years has been 50 degrees (F), with the average temperature during the summer being 70 degrees and for the winter 28 degrees. It is rare, indeed, for the thermometer to rise above 100 or to fall below zero, but this range provides conditions which conform to the most efficient human power. Ellsworth Huntington, the geographer, states that human power is more efficient where the temperatures fluctuate somewhat noticeably from day to day. Uniformity of temperature provides low output of energy. He has also shown that daily variation in temperature stimulates energy output, that a fall in

temperature is rather more stimulating than a rise, if the fall amounts to as much as four degrees.[1]

The humidity is ordinarily between 70 and 76 per cent of saturation, and the rainfall over the past fifteen years has averaged 42 inches per year. A recent calculation over a 75 year period, 1859 to 1933, shows the mean annual precipitation to be 46.5 inches. In the past the rivers provided power for industry but today this harnessed energy has been largely supplanted by steam and electricity. The watershed of the Mt. Higby Reservoir contains 2.05 square miles and provides one and one-half million gallons of water every twenty-four hours for home and industrial purposes.

History of Middletown

Middletown is situated in the great central valley about twenty miles in width, which is drained by the Connecticut River as far south as Middletown where the stream, just below the city, forces an outlet between two encroaching cliffs and pursues its way to the Sound at Saybrook, while the valley extends southwest to New Haven.[2] The territory in which Middletown

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1. Ellsworth Huntington, Civilization and Climate 3rd edition, 1934, pp. 141-142.
2. Alexander Johnston, Connecticut. Cambridge, 1887, p. 2.

is situated was called by the Indians, Mattabeseck[1], which means "a carrying place, or portage". In Algonquin, Connecticut, means the "long tidal stream," or the "river with the long tide," referring to the rise and fall of the river as far up as Hartford.[2]

As early as 1639 there is a record of the action of the General Court concerning the Indians here as follows:[3]

> "The menifold insolencyes that have beene offered of late by Indians, putt the Court in mind of that w'ch hath been too long neglected, viz; the execution of justice upon the former murtherers of the English and it was uppon serious consideracon and debate thought necessary and accordingly determined, that some speedy course be taken herein, and for effecting hereof it was concluded that 100 men be levyed and sent down where severall guilty persons reside and haue been harbored by Soheage, notwithstanding all means by way of persuation haue beene formerly used to him for surrendering them upp into or hands; and it is thought fit that these counsells be imparted to or friends at Quinnipi(ocke)* that prvition may be made for the safety of the new plantacons, and upon their joynt consent to proede or desist."
>
> * New Haven

Though there were settlements above and below Mattabeseck the hostile attitude of the Indians here prevented the influx of settlers. However, it appears

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1. Variously spelled "Mattabeseck," "Mattabesett," and "Mattabesset."
2. Stephen Jenkins, The Old Boston Post Road. New York, 1913, p. 239.
3. Beers, A History of Middlesex County, Connecticut. New York, 1884, p. 63.

probable that in 1646 steps had been taken toward a settlement here.[1]

In 1650 and in 1673 purchases were made from the native owners, the Indians, who gave to Governor Haynes of Connecticut six miles on each bank of the river.[2] On the western slopes of the Great River, overlooking the Big Bend, lay the Indian village of Mattabeseck, the stronghold of Sowheag, whose tepee-castle stood on the rise beyond the present business section of Middletown. The ancient burying place of the royal family continues to be known as Indian Hill. Here graves were opened in 1808 and three bodies found.[3] One brave, a sachem, perhaps, still sat wrapped in his blanket, upon his knees two small brass bowls which, it is thought, had been filled with corn and beans for his sustenance on the long journey to the House of Kiehtan.

As has been said, Sowheag sold the land at the bend to Governor Haynes of Hartford in 1650, and further property was acquired from Sepunnemo by

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1. History of Middlesex County, p. 63.
   Clark, A History of Connecticut states, "A committee was appointed in March, 1650, to explore Mattabesset, and it reported that fifteen families might get a living there, and in November, 1653 planters from Wethersfield, Hartford, and England established the settlement of Middletown."
2. Clark, A History of Connecticut, p. 240.
3. Allis, A Connecticut Trilogy. New York, 1934, p. 197.

Samuel Wyllys[1] in 1762,[2] but a reservation was provided on the west side of the river in the neighborhood of Newfield, where the Indians had had a cemetary previous to the settlement of the English among them. The Wangunks remained for some time in Middletown and Chatham, where they lived on three separate reservations. In 1764, while the tribe still numbered between 30 and 40, only two squaws with their three children remained. One of these, Mary Cuschoy, was the wife of the last sachem of the tribe. She had been for some time supported by the town.[3]

The town of Mattabeseck was represented in the General Court in the autumn of 1652, and in 1653, "the General Court further approved that the name of the plantation commonly called Mattabeseck, should for time to come be called Middletown." This name is believed to be copied from some town in England,[4] but may be so named since it was half way between the colonies of Hartford and Saybrook.[5] Middletown, when established in 1653, was the first connecting link between the up-river towns and Saybrook down the river.[6]

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1. Allis, A Connecticut Trilogy, New York, 1934, p. 197.
2. History of Middlesex County, p. 63.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. The Old Boston Post Road, p. 240.
6. Bacon, The Connecticut River and the Valley of the Connecticut. New York, 1906, p. 80.

The first town record, bearing the date of February 1, 1652, provides for the building of a meeting-house twenty feet square located upon the green, and to be surrounded by palisades.[1] The settlement of the town was divided. Where two small streams flow into the Connecticut a cluster of dwellings sprang up which were known as The Upper Houses until incorporated as Cromwell in 1851.[2] Centered around the spot where Middletown's broad Main Street meets Washington were the Lower Houses. The earliest comers located themselves along the present Main Street, north of Washington Street and near the meeting house yard. They kept close together for mutual protection and lived within their stockade.[3]

The colonists, who came chiefly from Wethersfield and the Massachusetts colony, as well as from the previously settled towns along the river such as Hartford, were deeply religious and here, as in all Puritan settlements, the pivot of society was the church.

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1. The Old Boston Post Road, p. 241.
2. A Connecticut Trilogy, p. 197.
3. Ibid.

> "The first religious services were held beneath a great elm, and nearby a Meeting-house, surrounded by palisades, was soon erected.... The Lower Houses possessed the Meeting to the dissatisfaction of the Upper Houses which wished to do so. When in 1669 a new Meeting was voted they proposed to have it and a pretty squabble [1] resulted. Finally the matter was compromised."

But religion held no tenets, in these early days, against traffic in slaves. Soon after the settlement a lucrative trade was established with the West Indies, the chief export being agricultural products and building materials. In return rum, slaves, sugar and molasses were brought by the sea captains. By 1756 this trade had grown so rapidly and the town had become so prosperous that it had the largest population of any of the eighty-three municipalities in the state, there being five thousand inhabitants within the town's limits. This is quite astounding when we realize that Boston at this time had only five thousand citizens, and New York twenty-three thousand.

This seafaring business began in the winter of 1669-1670[2] and soon became the most important industry of the place, their being several shipyards, ropewalks, and similiar establishments of a nautical nature. Middletown was a seaport, and before the Revolution, carried on an extensive and lucrative

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1. A Connecticut Trilogy, pp. 197-198.
2. The Boston Post Road, p. 241.

trade with the West Indies. After that conflict, a coasting trade with New York and other places was established; and this lasted until the shutting down of the brown-stone quarries at Portland, on the other side of the river.

Of the twenty-two sea captains from Middletown before the Revolution, three were in the slave trade, Captains Walker, Gleason and Easton. The last named was one of the most successful slave-dealers of his time; he would take droves of negroes to New Hampshire and Vermont, when the market was dull in Connecticut, and exchange them for horses.[1]

Today the town resembles a decayed seaport, and if we take a stroll along Water Street, we may still see some of the remains of the old wharfs and shipyards.

After the Revolution Middletown began to branch out into the industrial field.[2] By the middle of the nineteenth century mills were numerous on the brooks and streams tributary to the river, producing various small wares--ingenious and very useful "Yankee notions" with machines and machinery. But so firm a reliance did the inhabitants have

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1. A History of Connecticut, p. 156.
2. For more complete treatment see section on Economic Institutions.

upon the ancient river highway that, when a railroad was planned to connect New Haven with Boston, the inhabitants opposed its building with all the power at their command on the score of its "noise, dust, and discomfort."[1] Later, however, they realized their mistake and assisted the building of the Air Line and its bridge across the river. Then followed the Civil War and the complete destruction of the maritime trade of the United States. Middletown's trade was gone, so the city has since paid attention to its manufactures, with the result that a large proportion of foreign-born entered its population.

Today, a city of 25,000 inhabitants (incorporated as a city in 1784[2]), Middletown is connected with its neighbors, New Haven, Hartford, Springfield, and New York, by improved highways.

With all her increase in manufacturing and other evidences of "modern civilization" Middletown has retained much of her original scenic beauty. Perched on land that gently rises from the great bend in the Connecticut River, the city looks eastward to a steep-walled gorge where the river cuts its way to Saybrook and the sea. The streets are lined with beautiful shade trees which, combined with spacious lawns, add rare grace and beauty to its appearance.

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1. Old Boston Post Road, p. 242.
2. History of Middlesex County.

CHAPTER II

POPULATION

Composition and Comparison

The population of Middletown is often considered by its inhabitants to be abnormally foreign in character, and in order to test the validity of this opinion it is deemed advisable to proceed at once to an analysis of the existing situation by comparing this city with other Connecticut cities, as only by such an analysis can we expect to get a true picture of the community. To compare any city with the entire state, or even with an entire county, or especially with a whole geographic division such as New England, is of no particular value inasmuch as the whole rural-urban population problem at once brings in complicating factors and it is more important for us to know that we have a typical Connecticut city than to know how it compares with New England. For this reason the cities of Norwich, Torrington, West Hartford, and West Haven were chosen and certain comparisons made with Meriden.

It will be noted at once that a negro problem is almost non-existent in all of these cities[1] the highest percentage of that race found in any during the last twenty years being 2.6% in Norwich in 1910. Middletown's native white population of 75.4%[2] is between the extremes of the selected cities, as is the foreign-born population of 23.7%.

Whereas these figures would clearly indicate a preponderance of native white population in Middletown as in other Connecticut cities, the analysis might be misleading unless an account is taken of that proportion of the city's inhabitants making up the so-called "foreign element". A summary of the combined totals of first and second generation foreign-born[3] shows that Middletown's 43.6% is only slightly less than that of Norwich, Torrington, or Meriden. It would seem then that Middletown is remarkably like her sister Connecticut cities as far as racial composition is concerned since the Italians and Poles together constitute more than half of all the foreign-born here,

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1. For complete data see Appendix 1.
2. "Native white" indicates white persons born in the United States.
3. Children of foreign and mixed parents take the classification of the father except where the father is native and the mother is foreign-born, then according to the country of birth of mother.

just as they do in each of the other three cities,[1] although in two of the other three the Polish population is somewhat more numerous than is the Italian, while in Middletown the Italians outnumber the Polish population by four hundred.

Growth

The difficulty and danger involved in comparing a geographic unit with a larger geographic unit has already been noted and there is still another misleading factor in the case of this particular city. Middletown had a dual system of government until after the census of 1920, which was subsequently eliminated before the 1930 census was taken. This in turn resulted in the compilation of two separate charts of population figures, one for the city of Middletown, and another for the Town of Middletown. The Town of Middletown in most previous records contained the city as well as the outskirts, so it is with that that we are chiefly interested.

Middletown's growth over a period of the last hundred years has been remarkably constant, the rate of growth being somewhat accelerated since 1880.[2] It has grown from a city of five thousand in 1800 to a city of nearly twenty-five thousand at present.

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1. See Appendix 2.
2. See Appendix 3 for chart of population each ten years.

While no figures are available for Middletown on races at the time of the first population census, the population of the state was 90% English and the remainder almost entirely Scotch-Irish. The population of Middletown was very likely made up in much the same way.[1]

The town grew rapidly in the first century of its existence. In 1756 the population was 5,664, making it the largest town in the state. Norwich came next with 5,540, followed by New Haven with 5,085, while Hartford boasted only 3,027. By 1774 Middletown had lost its position as first in size, and its population was reduced to 4,870, although it is very possible that inaccuracies in enumeration account for some of this loss. The growth of New Haven as a seaport for the West Indies trade, and of Norwich as an early manufacturing center, account for the growth of these two cities to the first rank, while Hartford was then the equal of Middletown. It must be noted, however, that the figures until 1860 are for the "city" of Middletown and not for the city and town, and it is likely that any apparently erratic growth of the city during the earlier years is largely due to the confused form of the original figures. It is not certain

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1. A Century of Population Growth, United States Census Bureau, 1901, table 86.

that the census refers to the same unit of government at all times, and it is possible that such places as Cromwell and Middlefield, which later separated from Middletown, if dropped from the early enumerations, might make the graphs show a much more regular growth.

It is also to be noted that since 1860 the population of the town section of Middletown has grown more rapidly than has the city section.[1] The newcomers have tended to settle in the city first and to spread into the outlying regions later. In general, Middletown has grown since 1850 at a rate which seems to be about the same as the growth of Connecticut taken as a whole.

The City Dominates the County

It is interesting to compare the growth of Middletown with that of Middlesex County, in which the city is located. There is a prevalent idea that the function of the county in its relation to the people is slowly being usurped by the town government, and statistics seem to corroborate this idea. In 1900 the population of Middlesex County was 47,761 while that of the city and town of Middletown was 17,486 (about 41.3%). In 1910 there were 45,637 people in the county, of whom 20,749 lived in the Middletown unit

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1. See Appendix 3.

(about 45.4% of the total). In 1920 the percentage rose to over 46%, and in 1930 to 48.6%. This would seem to bear out the contention that the county is slowly being centralized in Middletown and will doubtless have some effect on the type of government here.

The Foreign-Born

As we have seen, the original population of Middletown was largely English and Scotch-Irish. This condition continued until about the decade 1870-1880 when the first wave of immigrants began to pour into Middletown. In 1870 the foreign-born population was mostly Irish, English, German, with a few from Switzerland and Poland.[1] The greatest influx of Italians and Poles coming immediately after 1890 and continuing until about 1910, so that we may anticipate, with the stoppage of the stream of immigration, that as time goes on the foreign-born population[2] will shift further into the old age groups and diminish in size, at the same time that the second generation foreign remains about constant and an absolute increase will be found in the percentage of American born whites. This prediction for the future is born out not only in theory, but actually began about 1910.

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1. Study of birth records.
2. At present there are more than twenty countries represented. See Appendix 4 for number in 1st and 2d generations.

Inability to read or write any language has decreased for the entire city since 1910 and the decline is chiefly in the group of foreign-born. In 1910 the illiterate, as in 1920, were chiefly among the foreign-born[1] but decreased at the later date from 11% of the whole city population over ten years to 7.9% of the same group. This constituted almost six per cent of the entire population of the city, or approximately the same percentage as for the state of Connecticut.[2] In 1930 illiteracy for the group over ten years of age decreased to 6.7% or 5.5% of the entire population.

Such a statement of population statistics and analysis as has been given above leaves out at least two very important factors in a sociological or economic survey; they are the consideration of the division of population into sex and age groups.

Sex and Age Groups

The population of the city of Middletown may be divided into its 11,860 males and 12,694 females, or a ratio of 93.4 males per 100 females, as compared to the ratio of the entire state of 99.4. The immediate interpretation of these figures and the conclusion that Middletown has a small proportion

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1. See Appendix 5.
2. Illiteracy in Connecticut (1920) was 5.8% of total population.

males among its population is misleading when considered alone as will be seen immediately upon examination of the age groups in which the sexes appear. For this purpose a graph indicating age location of the sexes is needed, and this graph is incorporated in the Appendix.[1]

It is found that the population of Middletown is abnormally constant in the age groups from twenty-five to forty-five and that whereas we would normally expect to find a decrease in numbers in progressive age groups, the population in each remains constant in all cases up to forty-five years and in some actually increases, but from forty-five years upward there is a normal curve with a larger base.[2] On the other hand, whereas one would anticipate finding the largest percentage of the population in that group under five years of age, it is found that this group is smaller than is any other group until we get to the twenty-five to twenty-nine group. If, then, the normal ravages of sickness and accident take their annual death toll, and if the population is not replenished from some outside supply, it is certain that the population of Middletown would tend to decrease rather than to grow in the next years. There is, however, some evidence to indicate that the population is

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1. See Appendixes 6, 7, 8, and 9.
2. See Appendix 7.

replenished from time to time with outsiders as there has been no sudden decline in the birth rate in the last twenty years.[1]

Moreover, it is true that the small infant population of the city is to be noticed among the native whites[2] as well as among the foreign-born.[3] This is a situation typical of cities in general.

The top-like graph of the foreign-born in Middletown shows a remarkably consistent increase in percentage of population in each group up to and including the thirty-five to forty-four group and an equally regular decrease from there upward. There are certain circumstances which could explain this and which the author believes to be the correct ones. Particularly important is the fact that the stream of immigration was cut off in about 1910 so that the youngest part of the more or less constant stream arrived here some twenty-five years ago. Since that time we have been through a period of war which would normally be non-inducive of immigration, and more recently the advantages of immigration to this country have steadily decreased. In the groups above forty-four the normal decrease by death is apparent.

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1. See Appendix 10.
2. See Appendix 8.
3. See Appendix 9.

To return for a moment to the general situation in this city it is well to consider the causes of regularity in the twenty-five to forty-four age groups. In this group wage-earners, particularly industrial wage-earners, are found and, of course, an industrial city quite naturally attracts labor in this age group. But this again neglects some important factors, for the female population in this group exhibits almost identically the same characteristics as does the male. It is therefore apparent that one explanation might be that the market for female labor is large in this city, and it will be shown in a later section that this is actually the case.

Inter-City Communities

With such a large percentage of the population in the productive industrial-workers age group the question of housing becomes an important one. This will be dealt with particularly under another section[1] but, suffice it for the present, there are a number of inter-city communities which have arisen. For the most part the Irish, German, and English inhabitants live in the one family type of house on the west side of High Street, the Italians are to be found chiefly on the east side of Main Street but in the last twenty-five years it is possible to detect a movement

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1. See Families.

in the general direction of High Street. Whereas formerly they were located in an intense district in the vicinity of Rapallo Avenue, near the Railroad Station, the Italian section now extends along the river to the north end of the town, westward to the Berlin road, and then south to Liberty Street; making an "L". Their diffusion has been slow, particularly so since they generally come from the same city in Sicily and speak the same dialect so that they do not feel the need to learn Enghlish. The Polish inhabitants are generally located in a district at the south end of Main Street and are then to be found scattered out to South Farms which vicinity is particularly available to those of the population engaged in the Russell Company factory there. It will be noticed that the Irish, German, and English inhabitants do not exhibit the same tendencies to colonize as do the Italians and Poles, who have taken over almost entirely that district south of Main Street which was fashionable in the first half of the nineteenth century and continued to be considered a good section until almost the end of the century.

There is one other community in the city which must certainly be mentioned--the community of Wesleyan University. This group consists of some six hundred students and their professors. The students

live almost entirely in one college community with little relation to the rest of the city. They are foreign, with a few exceptions, to the municipality and take very little interest in it or its inhabitants. The group is nearly self-contained, providing its own dormitories, eating places and a store, so that such forays as are made "downtown" are in search of amusement or purchases of such nature as not provided in the immediate community. The mere statement of "going downtown" is an indication of the general attitude of exploring something alien to most students, and likewise the expression "the boys on the hill" indicates the relation the community holds to them. These students are not numbered among Middletown's population and cannot be held accountable for any peculiarity in the age group distribution.

Summary

It is seen, then, that Middletown is a normal Connecticut city with a relatively large proportion of its population found in the foreign groups, but with little or no negro population, and that the city, while not growing as rapidly as some of its neighbors, has none the less continued a steady growth over the last seventy-five years. Its population has shifted from a northern to a southern European tinge and with

it we find the coming of certain districts or communities within the city. The population of Middletown is largely concentrated in the age groups of industrial workers and this characteristic is common to both sexes. Moreover, the inflowing stream of foreign population has been shut off here, while at the same time there is a large population of second-generation foreigners in the city.

CHAPTER III

THE FAMILY

Definition

The discussion in the following pages will be concerned with the families in Middletown. The term "family" as it is used in the tabulation of the results of the 1930 census is limited in the main to what might be called private families, excluding the institutions and hotel or boarding house groups. A family may, therefore, be defined in general as a group of persons related either by blood or by marriage or adoption who live together as one household, usually sharing the same table.[1]

It is interesting to notice that in Middletown one may trace the evolution of the family from its primary type toward the associative type, but this evolution has halted before reaching the extremes found in certain of the larger cities.

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1. United States Census (1930), Families, Introduction.

Middletown families are monogamous, and to some extent patriarchal groups. They always have been.

Evolution in this City

To trace the evolution of the family in this city, it is important to consider the history that has necessitated, or at least prompted, the shift in family life. It was settled by a group rather than by a single hardy pioneer[1] and for this reason it might be expected that absolute primary families, by which is meant groups in which the family provides for every function of life, would not be found here. However, in its earliest period, up until at least 1653, there were no more than fifty settlers in the whole of Mattabeseck, as it was then called, and the family performed, in at least a general way, all of the functions of procreation, food and shelter, protection, and behavior training.

This small population in an area of about one hundred fifty square miles, was certainly not crowded. Each family was in itself a productive and a consumptive community. Every family provided its own food, shelter, and protection in ordinary times, and continued to do so up until about 1655 when the first industry appeared here which was, incidentally, a flour and grain mill.

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1. Clark, A History of Connecticut, 1919, p. 23.

It would appear that we are justified in breaking the development of the family in Middletown into three periods, which we shall arbitrarily select as that from its first settler by 1650 until 1655, which is marked by the absolute independence of each family; the second period of from 1655 to about 1875 is marked by the slow development of interdependency of families without much community activity; and the third period, from 1875 to the present which has witnessed the participation of the organized community in practically all of the activities of the original family group. "Practically" is used advisedly as the family still performs certain of the primary functions here.

It is not necessary to take the time to develop the degree of independence found in the first period, as that is more or less obvious. Each family necessarily grew its own food, cut its own wood, reared its own children, and protected itself as best it could. But in the second period, from about 1655 to 1875, we notice a rapid growth of population.[1] Provision was made for the community to share with certain other surrounding towns the services of a bonesetter. Millers, blacksmiths, and a ferry-man at the river appeared in quick succession. By 1680 the first

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1. Population in 1875--11,500. See Population.

ship operation in trade was begun. It was in this period (1810) that Middletown began to branch out on her industrial career. In 1850 the industrial shops were still small with only one plant employing as many as eighty men.

It is in this second period that we find individual members of the family employed outside of the home, with the result that each family no longer provided every article of its own needs. It was still not uncommon for the woman of the household to spin and weave certain articles of apparel, and she prepared all the food herself. The first churches had appeared, but the family prayer-book remained an institution of the home. Children were given their elementary education in the home throughout most of the period, although some schooling was possible in the community grade school. Recreation on a commercial basis had hardly appeared. Barn dances and family parties to which the neighbors were invited were the order of the day.

In the immediate period, with which we are most concerned, we note that Middletown families are relying on the community more and more. Commercial entertainment of various sorts is the common thing. The family-prayer book has gone the way of the old family bucket. The churches have taken over whatever religion is formally practiced. Education has been

assumed by the community supported schools. Protection is decidedly a community activity with city police and fire departments. Employment is almost entirely outside of the home in factories or other places of business. As a result the husband is seldom home for all of the meals, and, if the wife is similarly employed, family life must necessarily be confined to evenings. It is safe to say that the family homelife common in the preceeding two periods is no longer found except among those classes where commercial entertainment is too expensive and it is interesting to note in this connection that some of the foreign families continue the practice of large family parties, which neighborhood gatherings correspond more closely than anything else to the New England barn dance groups.

Whereas this would seem to show to what an extent the family life here has changed toward that now characteristic of large cities, let us remember that in Middletown births, deaths, and marriages are still a matter of general concern. A neighborly feeling is apparent which is not found in larger cities. Residents smile and speak when they meet each other on the street and politics are very personal indeed.

In Middletown the phenomenon of depression has tended, particularly among the foreign families,[1] to result in a breakdown of the family group. The son and daughter are frequently urged to leave home and when stranded in another city it is difficult indeed to get the other members of the family to send money to bring them back. The parents apparently prefer to have them out of their care.

Family Groups

After this general introduction we now return to a more specific inspection of the family conditions in Middletown. There are 8,710 males in the city over fifteen years of age, of which number 41.6%[2] are single and 53.1% are married, on the other hand, there are 9,449 females here over fifteen years of age with 37.5% of them single and 51.1% married. Since there are 4,626 married males and 4,882 married females to be found ~~it is obvious~~ we would expect that there are about five thousand married couples in the city[3] and these on an average have two children.

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1. Miss Godwin, Family Welfare Association.
2. See Appendix 11.
3. 4,794 (see below).

The Marriage Ceremony

The method of performing the marriage ceremony varies from the commonplace legal service to the picturesque custom of the Italian and Polish marriages. Among the Italian population a marriage is the cause for much decorating of homes and automobiles and is accompanied by a great deal of riding about the city in the draped vehicles and paying visits to friends. This interesting custom is probably the result of their Sicilian heritage for in that place the trip to the bride's home is often a tedious one, and the opportunity to visit friends located in that vicinity is not to be lightly passed by. As a result, we get the custom carried over to this city with the performance just mentioned.

In an Italian home the marriage of a daughter means at least one complete day of festivities. In a typical case the engaged couple and their families attend church on the night before the ceremony and the next morning the service is performed at the church. The many relatives and other friends proceed after the ceremony on the visits about the city, and in the evening all gather at the home of the bride's parents for dancing and refreshments. The evening is a hilarious one for the guests, but often the bride's mother, and sometimes the father too, give

vent to their emotions in the form of tears. In the late evening the newly married couple depart for a wedding trip, and this move immediately marks the end of the wedding festivities.

The Dwelling

Once the marriage has been performed to the satisfaction of all concerned, the problem of moving to a home becomes the immediate one. As has been previously pointed out, if the bride and groom are English, German, Irish or American, the probability is very great that they will move into a single house on the west side of High Street. If Italian they will probably locate somewhere in the Italian section, and if Polish they will very likely find a suitable home in the proximity of South Farms. In any event, it is very likely that the home they select to live in will be owned by someone residing therein as the Tax Commissioner of Middletown estimates that 90% of the homes in Middletown are in this class. However, this does not indicate that 90% of the couples, or anywhere near that figure, own their own homes, for as a matter of fact there are 2,381 owner-of-home families and 2,413 tenant families in the city.[1] Of the group owning their own homes 1,251 are native white and 1,665 are foreign or of mixed parentage with five

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1. United States Census, 1930, Families.

negro home-owning families. Of the tenant families 716 are native white, 1,664 are foreign and 30 are negro. It is to be seen, then, that about half of the foreign part of the population do not own their own homes, while about one-third of the native white population rent shelter. Generally that part of the inhabitants renting homes do not do so out of choice, but from financial necessity, and tend to move as soon as they become better off financially.

There is only one section in the city, that near the river, in which bad housing conditions may be said to exist, and in that section tenements are to be found which are for the most part made by the remodeling of old single houses, and are now overcrowded with foreigners. The author has had an opportunity to visit some of them, but has not found slum conditions[1] and, although it is possible to find persons who tell of conditions of sleeping four in a double bed, such circumstances seem to be exceedingly rare.

The cost of the rented homes varies a great deal, depending entirely upon the type of home required. The Middletown Tax Commissioner recently arrived at the following figures which are based on a charge per room per month:[2]

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1. Relief workers say conditions are much better now than ten years ago.
2. The Welfare allows $12.00 to $16.00 per month for rent.

Apartments (With Electricity, Frigidaire, Janitor)	$20.00
Individual Homes (Residential Section)	$12.00
Individual House (City Section)	$ 8.00
Specialized Factory Worker Rents	$6.00-$ 7.00
Unskilled Factory Worker Rents	$ 5.00
Poorest	$ 3.00

The value of the house is generally in the vicinity of $5,000.00 and the rent about $30.00 a month.[1]

The actual materials used in the construction of these houses[2] is generally stone foundation with frame construction and clapboards. Often the stone foundation is of red sandstone in the form of imperfectly cut blocks which have been cast aside at the Portland quarries and which are available at low prices. This material is in some few cases used throughout the rest of the construction although framework is found in some nine-tenths of the buildings. Although clapboard exterior construction predominates, the inhabitants of Middletown are not entirely without imagination and everything from common brick to stucco and shingle siding is to be noted along the streets. In the matter of heating, the author is tempted to deviate somewhat from the statistics of the local taxing agency, as any reported improvement in the status of a building is apt to bring the wrath of God in the form of higher taxes. However some forty per cent of the Middletown houses are listed as being heated by stoves, with the remainder

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1. See Appendix 12.
2. See Appendix 13.

boasting some sort of furnace. It appears that the prevalence of furnaces is somewhat underestimated.

They are, for the most part, very modern indeed as far as lighting is concerned with more than three-fourths using electrical connections for the source of illumination as well as for power to drive the customary household aids.

Parental Control

Inside these homes, often so similar in outside appearance, we find interesting things occurring. We note, for example, that in those ruled by Italian householders the girls are trained for marriage from the time they are very young, and are given strict parental control which the boys entirely escape. This control is far from the strict methods employed by the earlier inhabitants of Middletown who had the legal right to compel obedience in any measure, a statute of Connecticut going so far as to decree death for the "stubborn and rebellious son"[1], and in some cases, particularly with the boys, is not strict enough, with the result that there is at least a minor juvenile delinquency problem which calls for very delicate handling in some cases. The matter is particularly acute in those families where the father and mother are both employed outside of the home.

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1. W. Goodsell, Problems of the Family. New York, 1928, Chapter 5.

In this section it is demonstrated that the functions of the family have been gradually assumed by the municipal government and other institutions in the fields of protection, child training and religion, that as the heads of the family work away from the home in industry there is a tendency toward less family contact and disintegration of the group, a process which is furthered as the children grow older. We shall next consider how the economic life of these people has changed the city from a productive and consumptive unit to one of specialization in production.

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS

Economic History of Middletown

Middletown's industrial growth has been greatly influenced by physical conditions. The land surface is rough and frequently broken up by hills, which for a long time discouraged settlement, and cut it off from communication with other sections except by the river route. The earliest industry, if it may be so called, was a flour and grain mill.[1] This was begun in 1655, and was the result of an agreement between the miller and the town which granted him certain privileges if he would settle here. Likewise, a grant of land was soon made an inducement for a shoemaker to settle and in a short time we find the coming of a ferry and a blacksmith. Some shipbuilding probably took place during this period. It was a natural industry in a

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1. History of Middlesex County, p. 65.

section having large wooded areas adjacent to the water. As evidence of this we find the town granting to one, Adams, the privilege of cutting lumber from the common land to build a ship (1669).[1] In 1666 there were definite efforts to encourage shipbuilding by not taxing the vessels on the stocks.[2] In 1680 but one vessel of seventy tons was owned in this town[3] and fifty years later but two, with a gross tonnage of only 105 tons. Later these and other ships were engaged in carrying on trade with the West Indies and with London so that from 1730 to the Revolution the town became more prosperous, particularly through the West Indies trade which consisted chiefly in shipping mules and grain products in exchange for sugar, rum and negroes. Its prosperity at this period came not from industry but from trade and commerce. In 1810[4], however, a woolen mill was established and in 1847 an industry closely connected with sailing, The Wilcox, Crittenden & Co. was started manufacturing marine hardware.

Middletown's population had grown to five thousand by 1776 of which two hundred were black, and at this point the population remained almost stationary for some time.

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1. History of Middlesex County, p. 67.
2. History of Middletown Shipping (A speech--see Middletown Press, January 19, 1933.)
3. Ibid.
4. History of Middlesex County, p. 96.

Middletown is today lacking in deposits of natural ores rich enough for exploitation, but in 1775 its lead mine was important in supplying material for the revolutionary armies.[1] This mine is the one of a few examples of this line of endeavor in Middletown, but in 1852 it was abandoned altogether after having been run in the later years as a silver mine.

After the Revolution Middletown suffered, as did other New England towns, due to the slackening of trade, but continued in the same line of economic endeavor. In 1790 there were two slave-dealers, several merchants, several shipmasters, two shoe-makers and several joiners located on Main Street.[2] Several of these merchants, particularly Richard Alsop had made much money in the West Indian trade.

It was not until 1810 that Middletown began to branch out on her industrial career. Transportation facilities had been increased by the installation of turnpikes. The embargo against England had caused a shortage of goods, particularly textiles. The scarcity of cloth in the United States is shown by the fact that our Government was forced, in 1812, to buy woolen cloth from England to equip our soldiers for the war.[3] Taking

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1. History of Middlesex County, p. 76.
2. Ibid, map facing p. 85.
3. The New England States, p. 208. (Article by S. N. D. North).

advantage of this the Middletown Manufacturing Company established a mill on Washington Street in 1810, with Alexander Wolcott and Arthur Mazill in charge. This mill was one of the first in the United States to use steam power.[1] The building was an old sugar warehouse, five stories high, with an extension which was used as a dye house. About sixty people were employed, with a maximum capacity of one hundred workers. The engine generated twenty-five horsepower with wood as the only fuel. Only forty yards of fine woolen goods were produced per day with a value of about $70,000.00 per year. The company probably was very successful at first, if we may accept the fact that they built new buildings as evidence for this. However, at the close of the War of 1812, and the consequent removal of the protection given to the industry, and the inflow of cheaper English cloth, the company, like many another in New England, soon went to the wall.

Another venture into the woolen industry fared better.[2] In 1814 a mill was started employing about forty hands and using four thousand pounds of Merino wool annually in the production of a blue broadcloth. The business continued successfully until 1836.

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1. History of Middlesex County, p. 96.
2. Ibid.

At the same time that the woolen factories were starting, another branch of industry got under way in Middletown. This was the manufacture of arms and accoutrements, stimulated by the impending war. In 1810 Oliver Bidwell received a government contract for making guns and established a factory,[1] in which everything was hand-made. At about the same time Colonel North started a pistol factory as he too had a government contract and received his financial support from Samuel Russell after being refused it at the bank. For many years he turned out about ten thousand pistols annually for the government.

In 1812 Colonel Starr received a government contract for swords. These he made in a small factory at the outskirts of the town. His annual production was about five thousand swords reputed to be equal in quality and temper to the best imported swords. Later on muskets and rifles were made in the plant and when the government arsenals were founded at Springfield, Massachusetts, the government incorporated the ideas used in Colonel Starr's establishment.

Other arms factories were started producing rifles and powder, and other more peaceful products were begun. Combs were produced after 1817 and the manufacture of machinery was carried on in 1823 by Sanseer

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1. History of Middlesex County, p. 97.

Manufacturing Company, which was incorporated with a capital of $20,000.00. It is said that this company was the first in the country to put out a back geared lathe.

In 1850, when Middletown celebrated her two-hundredth anniversary, it is noted that Middletown had decidedly changed its character over the previous fifty years.[1] Its main line of activity was now industrial, rather than agricultural or commercial. An examination of the list of industries here at that time shows that the average establishment in 1850 was small. Only one plant employed more than eighty men. The establishments were mainly of three kinds, those that produced textile products, those that produced metal products, and those that produced patented articles of various sorts. The largest establishment produced textile products, but by far the majority of the plants turned out metal products. Many of these establishments exploited some patent or invention. The Russell Manufacturing Company was the first to invent power machinery for weaving elastic webbing; the Douglas Pump Company invented some twelve hundred varieties of pumps; Penfield manufactured patent grumpets for sails; Cooley and Danforth turned out patent trousers and supporters ("aside from the fanciful necessity of wearing them--it would seem almost a pleasure to be braced in so highly finished and beautifully wrought instruments"); and Penfield and Camp made Judd's medicated liquid cuticle.

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1. The New England States (see above).

In 1890[1] several things are noticeable. First, there were a smaller number of establishments (twenty-seven in all). Secondly, these establishments were as a rule much larger. Thirdly, the rubber industries have grown up and were becoming relatively important.

The Russell Manufacturing Company at the end of this period employed one thousand workers, or five times the number employed in 1850. The Goodyear Rubber Company employed six hundred; the Douglas Pump Works employed three hundred; the Middletown Plate Company two hundred; and the Wilcox Crittenden Company one hundred and fifty.

The average wages at this period, if the Russell Manufacturing Company may be taken as representative, varied from one to three dollars per day, and the average time worked was about sixty hours per week.

From 1890 to the present time Middletown's industry has grown rather slowly. The size of the establishments has continued to increase, the physical product per employee has also continued to increase so that it is estimated each worker today turns out four times as much as a similar worker in 1890.[2]

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1. History of Middlesex County, pp. 100-105.
2. Russel Company.

Middletown Railroads[1]

The fact that Middletown has only two railroad branch lines with occasional freight trains serving the community today should not be mistaken to mean that railroads have not played their full share in affecting this city's industrial and economic history, for this city, like some others in New England has a long sad story.

It all began with the building of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad which did not pass through Middletown, but which would certainly have been directed to include this city had it not been for the opposition demonstrated by certain of the influential citizens at that time against the shrieking, puffing engines of transportation which threatened to disturb their sleep at night, break the tranquillity of a town then adequately served by river traffic, and, worst of all, follow a track which would lead directly across a cemetary. With the rerouting of the road through the neighboring city of Meriden the citizens of Middletown saw the inevitable growth of that city and were ready to give more than moral support to a line between New Haven, Middletown, and Willimantic connecting with the Boston and New York routes and providing a decided cutoff for traffic between New York and Boston.

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1. Information from the personal papers of Professor K. M. Harrington.

Although the proposed railroad was incorporated in 1846, a great deal of opposition was found among the neighboring Connecticut cities, notably Hartford, which would be cut off the main route of traffic if this railroad became a successful reality, so that the political matter of charters was held up until 1868 when the Legislative difficulties were met. In the meantime a branch railroad had been built from Berlin to Middletown connecting with the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad at that city, privately subscribed but later merged with the main trunk line; and in the same year that the charter rights of the proposed "Air Line" were granted, another line was incorporated known as the Connecticut Valley Railroad, which connected cities and towns from Saybrook to Hartford (including Middletown) with the main line at Hartford so that Middletown had at least two outlets to the trunk line--one being the route to Berlin and the second being the route to Hartford.

The Air Line Railroad, having received its charter and the right to build a substantial bridge across the Connecticut at Middletown in 1868, was immediately organized and construction begun so that the road from New Haven to Middletown was completed in 1870, to East Hampton in 1872, and to Willimantic (the objective) in 1873. This railroad had cost six million dollars to construct, and since it promised to do

inestimable good to the towns situated along what promised to be so popular a railroad, the communities were not adverse to contributing something toward its cost. Middletown gave $897,000.00 and purchased common stock in the amount of $1,137,000.00 for which long term city bonds were floated.

Unfortunately, however, the budding promises of success were never to be realized and Middletown was to find herself saddled with debt for a very poor investment, as with the foreclosure of the mortgagees in 1875 and the subsequent lease of the road to the N. Y. N. H. & H. R. R. Co. the entire value of the donations and the common stock of the city of Middletown were wiped out at one blow. Now, if the railroad had continued to function and to bring indirect benefits to the city, this loss would not have been so serious, but this is the most unfortunate part of the story.

In due time the railroad passed into the hands of the great railroad system of Southern New England, the N. Y. N. H. & Hfd. R. R. Co., first by lease, as already indicated, and later by purchase, the latter railroad thus assuming all obligations to the public for its maintenance and administration. At that time it was a "going concern" recognized as the shortest through route between the termini, New York and Boston. It was well patronized and trains were running daily, but the railroad system soon found itself in possession of four

routes between New York and Boston, in whole or in part, the one via Springfield belonging beyond that point to the New York Central. Before the New Haven road became actually possessed of the Air Line there had been raised, by an issue of bonds explicitly stated to be for the purpose of improving the Air Line Road through improving grades, curves, double trackage and otherwise, an amount of money/which $3,623,250.00 actually came into the possession of the New Haven road. Comparatively few improvements have been carried out since that time (1907), the expense of which falls far short of the sum raised for the road, so that there still remains some two million dollars unexpended and pledged to the road. When inquiry was made concerning the matter in 1912 the President of the New Haven stated that this money was "pledged to the uses for which the same was raised", and that the appropriation was in his hands to be expended for those purposes, but that its expenditure had been delayed by other matters.

In the meantime, contrary to the natural expectation, the five-hour train was withdrawn.from the Air Line in 1903, for the publicly stated reason that the train was so popular that it was deemed advisable to reroute it over another line. Efforts were made by the Middletown Twentieth Century Club and others to get a return to the original traffic but in spite of Middletown's opposition the service was discontinued

entirely in 1928 leaving Middletown, once so hopeful of its railroad venture, marooned except for a single freight train each day to Berlin and occasional trains to Hartford over the old Connecticut Valley line--and leaving it still struggling to pay $20,000 each year until 1953 on an outstanding bonded indebtedness of $370,000 as an aftermath of railroad history.

Industry Today

Today Middletown is chiefly an industrial city, composed almost entirely of workers dependent directly or indirectly on the productivities of its manufactures but with a sizeable retail trade. As the business of the factories is affected by favorable or unfavorable circumstances, so are the members of the population in turn given a more or less satisfactory recompense for their part in the industrial mechanism of the community. This statement is made more strikingly true when we fully understand that Middletown is a decidedly middle-class city. It is a middle-class city in the sense that the majority of its population are neither of the severely oppressed and exploited groups, although it is true as will be later pointed out, that such groups may be found here to a limited extent, nor is Middletown primarily a residential city serving as a suburb for larger cities.

Middletown is, then, composed of a population engaged in productive effort. Comparatively few of its twenty-five thousand population are so independently wealthy that they are able to sit back in comfortable ease enjoying the fruits of unearned incomes.

In Middletown the family income is very often augmented by both the husband and wife of the family. In some instances it is completed by the younger members of the family. Far from being uncommon for the women of this city to work, approximately one-third of the industrial workers of the city are women.[1] This fact is largely explained by the type of industry found here.

In the first place, Middletown is not a one industry town. On the contrary, whereas there are three companies which are considerably larger than any of the others, there is a total of some sixty concerns[2] of various sorts employing labor at the present time, so that far the largest proportion of the five thousand workers employed as laborers in factories are workers for these smaller organizations.[3] When we add to these five thousand factory workers the number

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1. Factory Inspection Department--List of Connecticut Factories Corrected to June 1934, pp. 72-73
   2,879 males, 1,868 females.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid
   3 factories employing 500 or over
   4 factories employing 100-500
   3 factories employing 50-100
   48 factories employing 0-50

employed in associated trades, such as clerical workers and truckmen, we find that any other occupation is insignificant as compared to the dependency of Middletown on its industries. In order to explain the employment of women in industry, we must examine the type of labor in demand which could be the cause of the situation.

Of the three largest plants one is concerned with textile work almost entirely,[1] a second is engaged in manufacturing light weight parts in mass production for typewriters[2] and the third, which makes rubber boots and shoes,[3] finds considerable demand for female labor, as do the others, chiefly because female wages are generally lower than those paid males for the same type of work.[4] It is obvious, of course, that this demand for female employees would be lessened to a considerable extent if state legislative enactments concerning labor and school attendance did not prevent child labor. However, child labor is a problem that is practically non-existent in Middletown at the present time no attempt is made to discuss it here.

Other industrial concerns turn out a variety of products ranging from rubber boots and shoes,

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1. The Russell Manufacturing Company.
2. The Remington Noiseless Typewriter Company.
3. The Goodyear Rubber Company.
4. Student Report (1929)

	Male	Female
High:	70¢ per hour	50¢ per hour
Low:	45¢ per hour	25¢ per hour

elastic webbing, silk, knickers, and typewriters, to marine hardware, bathroom fixtures, monuments, candy, soda water, gasoline engines, toys, and silver-plated ware. As has already been shown, most of these products are produced in small factories. The largest seven are alone large enough to attempt great division of labor or mechanization. These seven, however, which employ approximately half of the industrial workers of the city, are in every way modern industrial plants.

Most of the industries now operating in this city have been established since 1900, although one of the "big three", the Russell Company, was established in 1834, and Wilcox Crittenden in 1847. These range in date of establishment from that date to 1926 when the Middletown Knicker Company started its factory here.

Only three major plants were established before 1890. All the others are new. The loss of some of the old plants has been quite recent. In one case, that of the Douglas Pump Works, the loss of the industry may be ascribed to the management, which refused to turn out power pumps rather than the old hand pumps when the obvious trend was in that direction. In the case of the Goodyear Rubber Company mismanagement was the cause of a temporary shutdown which was relieved only after going through bankruptcy and started up again after a long local campaign for capital. The majority of

these companies are solvent corporations with stockholders varying in number from four hundred to only three and it is particularly interesting to note that corporation laws have effected industrial organization so that there are at present only two partnerships and one concern which is owned and controlled by one man.[1]

With such a wide range of products, the problem of a market is an important one. A comprehensive survey[2] made in the last four years indicates that most of the corporations find that their market is not seasonal, but fairly constant the year round, being for the most part located at New York, whence the middle-men sell them chiefly to the domestic market, while two report a foreign market. Inasmuch as the products of Middletown's industry are for the most part staple goods we would be led to expect exactly what has happened. Practically every one of the companies reports a steady growth in size since its organization. One company started with ten employees but now has forty, another has progressed from three to fifty, another from fifty to one hundred seventy-three, and still another from twenty-five to two hundred fifty. These companies rely practically entirely on power[3] purchased from outside sources to operate their machinery which varies in individual plants from

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1. Student Report (1929).
2. Ibid.
3. Total electric consumption about 10 million kilowatt per year. See Appendix 14.

eight horse power to fifteen hundred horse power in the largest. Two concerns do produce a small part of the electrical energy which they consume.[1]

Just as these industrial plants rely on outside sources for their electrical energy, so do they rely on outside sources for their transportation facilities. The author knows of no company which operates its own fleet of trucks in taking the products to market. The practice is for the concerns to remain independent of integration into the trucking industry, just as they do not integrate into purchasing industries, and to hire independent trucking concerns to perform their service for them.

Practically all the products of the companies are shipped out by truck. Although Middletown is situated on the banks of a navigable river,[2] the products of its labors are not bulky products.[3] This means that the companies have relied, until recently, chiefly upon the railroad branch line facilities[4] which have been discontinued almost entirely within the last few years, until at present there are only two branch railroad lines available with few trains. The town is ideally situated for trucking facilities, being only about one

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1. One plant purchases 50% of its power, the other purchases 95%. (See Appendix for gas and electric consumption).
2. The Connecticut is navigable for a ten to eleven foot draft at present, and is expected to be navigable to fourteen feet in the near future. Middletown Chamber of Commerce.
3. Marine Hardware is the single exception.
4. Formerly three branch lines.

hundred miles from New York, the largest market, and on excellent highways. Coal and oil still arrive in Middletown on boats and barges pulled singly up the river by tugs, but these cumbersome conveyances are all that is left of the maritime glory that was once Middletown's.

Information about the racial distribution of the employees in the factories is obviously extremely difficult to get but fortunately one of the larger companies took the trouble to investigate the matter a few years ago with interesting results. It was found that the largest number were Italians,[1] with Polish workers second, and Germans third. This is closely correlated with the population percentages given in a previous section.

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1. The Russell Manufacturing Company:

Nationality	Males	Females	Total
English	100	75	175
French	50	5	55
German	113	100	213
Italian	400	300	700
Polish	150	75	225
Irish	100	25	125
Hebrew	0	0	0
Swedish	50	7	57
Negro	0	0	0

Financial Institutions

Whereas it is undoubtedly true, as has herein been repeatedly stated, that Middletown is chiefly an industrial city, that statement must be modified. We may not say that Middletown is by any means without the accompanying institutions. The city boasts of six banks (3 commercial and 3 savings) and three small loan companies and one industrial loan company so it is possible to borrow on all sorts of securities, ranging from personal notes to mortgages and assignments of wages. The banks of Middletown are institutions functioning chiefly to receive and to lend out the deposits of working people. Seventy per cent of the total of the twenty-six million dollars total savings deposit accounts in Middletown savings banks are not over one thousand dollars in amount, thirteen per cent more are between that figure and two thousand dollars, while only seventeen per cent of all deposit accounts are over the two thousand dollar mark. It is surprising, too, that the amount of savings deposits in the three largest Middletown banks has not varied appreciably in the last three years.[1]

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1. Savings deposits (3 banks)

December 1932	December 1933	December 1934
$26,102,864.00	$27,008,432.00	$26,797,601.00

See Appendix 15 for complete tables by months.

Labor Associations

The industries in Middletown require skilled or semi-skilled labor almost entirely and do not present a serious cheap labor problem. The President of the local Central Labor Union, which is an organization bringing together the representatives of Middletown's twelve Labor Unions, states that in his opinion the average weekly wage of a Middletown laborer is in the vicinity of twenty-four dollars. Three companies reported in 1930 that they employed practically one hundred per cent of their workers from the skilled labor class, while practically all of the thirty-seven companies investigated at that time reported at least fifty per cent skilled labor.[1] It is always dangerous to estimate a weekly wage, and particularly to estimate an average wage, but it would appear that this is a fairly accurate estimate. It discounts, of course, the extreme variation of high and low wages from eight to twelve dollars per week. Where low wages are to be found it is pretty generally among a minority of the foreign workers and it is felt that they, accustomed to low rates of pay, and fearing loss of position of employment, as well as failing to realize the advantages of organization and collective bargaining, are the most difficult to organize into labor groups. For this reason the unskilled

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1. Previously cited Student Report.

labor has not been successfully organized until very recently, when a union known as the Federal Labor Union was started which now encompasses most of the unskilled labor in one plant[1] and is duly represented in the Central Labor Unions.

It is difficult to determine exactly what the labor unions have accomplished. It is certainly true that strikes in Middletown are very rare indeed.[2] It is likewise true that the mere presence of a means for combined action has in some cases, such as a recent typewriter workmen's strike, been an important force. It is true, of course, that occasionally the function of the union is misunderstood as in a recent case where the workers went on a strike to register dissatisfaction with the company for firing one of their members only to be driven back to work by their national officers, inasmuch as their complaint was not a well founded one. It is likewise true that attempts to form labor unions in all factories are not successful even when not vigorously opposed by the company itself. A recent attempt of that sort in a local rubber working plant[3] met with failure since the laborers were confronted with the fact that they were better paid than in similar industries in other parts of the country.[4] It is moreover true that

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1. Remmington Company.
2. Not over 25 strikes in the last 18 years.
3. The Goodyear Company.
4. Chiefly Pawtucket.

the local unions do not have the strength that they would possess in a one-industry town. It may be due in part to the industrial history of Middletown, for in some of the factories a family tradition has grown up as one after another of the members of the family find occupation there.

Commerce

Another large part of Middletown's population is engaged in merchandizing.[1] Middletown is in a very peculiar position in this respect as it is the largest city of Middlesex County and is situated in an available spot to attract trade from the surrounding rural districts. This it does with the result that Saturday afternoons finds the stores crowded with people in from the country to do their weekly shopping. At the same time, however, its proximity to Hartford means that many of its inhabitants prefer to make the short journey to Hartford, either by bus or private automobile, where larger stores are found. Middletown is necessarily given over to small stores but includes all of the types usually found in larger cities, the chief distinction

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1. Census Abstract, 1930, p. 886:

Number of stores	320
Proprietors and firm members not on payroll.....	284
Employees (full time).....	1060
	1344

being in the variety of merchandise displayed. An attempt to conduct small department stores here is only partly successful, competition being keen among the stores and the larger stores possessing no particular advantages. Chain stores are reaping their harvest with chain grocery, clothing, drug, and hardware stores. There are also a number of the semi-chain types in which the store located in Middletown is one of a chain of three or four stores, but is operated by a local person responsible for its management. For the most part, however, the larger stores are located along the Main Street in far from commodious quarters, and are operated by persons who have lived in this city for a number of years and draw much of their trade from individual contacts. Individually owned and personally operated small stores are located virtually all over the town.[1] There are three hundred twenty of them in all, of which about half are food stores of one sort or another. Their combined annual sales total $11,234,000.00 of which $2,893,000[2] may be instantly accounted for in direct purchases of food. If these figures be accurate, and there is every reason to believe that they are reasonably so, the average person in Middletown spends $116.00 per year for food. This is about $2.25 per person each week, but does not include any amounts other than those passing through the food stores.

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1. United States Census--Distribution, Vol. I, pp. 284-285. 1930.
2. Ibid.

Summary

The economic and industrial history of Middletown begins before the American Revolution and progresses from small industries engaged in the manufacture of locally consumed products and the existence of an active commercial shipping trade to a present day situation of a highly industrialized and organized community with no shipping trade and a large retail store business.

The evolution from shipping to industry came about through the boycott of English goods during and after the wars with England. The industries were small and produced textiles, metal products, and patented articles of various sorts. With the coming of railroads Middletown was at first reluctant to give up its historical river transportation, but upon a belated appraisal attempted to remedy the situation by encouraging the building of rail facilities. These were financially unsuccessful and the cost is still a burden to the community.

At present the inhabitants are occupied in manufactures of various sorts and in retail trade with the entire county using its facilities as a shopping headquarters. Since the sales of the stores fluctuate with the salaries of the industrial workers, the prosperity of the entire community fluctuates with industrial output. For this reason the citizens of the town were

willing to give financial support to one of the largest plants which was recently threatened with disaster.

The industrial workers are one-third women and two-thirds men, a fact explained by the type of occupation available. Half of them are skilled laborers and the rate of pay averages about $24.00 per week. They are not easily incited to strike but feel that the presence of skilled workers' unions makes their conditions better and avoids the necessity of such action.

CHAPTER V

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The system of public education in Middletown is marked by unnecessary complication and lack of unification. The city is divided into two school districts, known as that of the Town Schools, and that of the City Schools. Each of these has a Superintendent and is in itself a unified system, purchasing supplies, reporting to the state officials, and employing teachers. Each makes out its own annual budget which is assessed on the district involved. Each is an independent unit with no more visible cooperation between them than would be the case were they separate towns. The report of the Town School district (which includes those schools not located in the heart of the city) may be found in the Annual Report of the City of Middletown, while the annual report of the Board of Education of the Middletown City School district is a separate volume and gives no hint as to the activities in the other (town) schools.

A History of Education

The situation is an outgrowth of the school history of the town. Prior to 1839 all the districts in the town limits, except the four Westfield districts, were incorporated into the First School Society, but of the time and manner of this there is no record.[1] The city proper was divided into four districts, and they were a part of this First School Society.[2]

In 1839 these four city districts, upon their own petition were incorporated into "The Middletown City School Society". Each district, however, retained its old organization, limits, and school. In 1857 the four districts became consolidated, and the "Middletown City School Society" became "The Middletown City School District".[3] The City School District is almost identical to the First Taxing District, and so money spent for the maintenance of these schools is raised by taxation on that district, supplemented by aid from the State, and a small private fund. This privately incorporated school district is the only one of its kind left in the State of Connecticut[4] and appears to have outlived its usefulness.

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1. History of Middlesex County, p. 129.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Mr. Moody, Superintendent of Middletown Town School District.

In the outlying districts of the township there were eight separate school districts, each with its own district committee, cooperating only to the extent of using the same Superintendent of Schools. As the moneys for the support of each school district were raised from the families using the school, the training was proportionate to the prosperity of the particular section in which the schoolhouse was located, and varied greatly from section to section.[1] In 1922 these eight separate school districts were consolidated into one organization under the supervision of the town school committee. There remained, however, a second district which includes the city schools.

School Facilities

Today there are eight elementary schools and one high school in the Town School District, and four elementary and one high school in the City School District. The cost of supporting the first mentioned group is assessed to the residents of the second taxing district, while money for the City schools is obtained from the first taxing district. In all, then, the twenty-five thousand inhabitants are served by twelve elementary and two high schools, in addition to which there are two parochial schools, a State Trade School, and a privately endowed University.[2]

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1. Mr. Moody, Superintendent of Middletown Town School District.
2. Not included in this section, nor is the Middletown Business College.

The City School District

In the Middletown City School District there are 3,244 persons over 4 and under 16 years, and of these 2,247 are attending public schools while 738 are attending private schools and institutions. Of the remaining 259 children only 86 are of compulsory school age and of these half are legally employed.[1]

The total enrollment of the grade schools in the City district is 3,044,[2] of which number 1,050 are students in the High School and 1,994 (or nearly twice the number in High School) are enrolled in the elementary department. However, in the elementary grade schools we find that there are but two tuition pupils, whereas in the High School there are 383, leaving only 667 of the High School students residents of the City School District. It appears, then, that in this part of the city one student in three goes on for higher education.

Of the 137 pupils who graduated from High School in the class of 1933 the following is known:[3]

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1. Annual Report of the Board of Education, Middletown City School District, p. 40.
2. Includes tuition pupils.
3. Report of Board of Education, Middletown City School District, p. 44.

	Boys	Girls	Total
Attending college	16	5	21
Attending normal schools and teachers' college	--	3	3
Post graduates in High School	8	7	15
Post graduates in other college preparatory schools	1	-	1
Attending other schools, such as Nursery, Business Colleges, etc. .	1	11	12
Employed	15	21	36
Unknown	18	31	49

Of the pupils entering High School four years ago 49.8% remained for four years and 44.6% graduated in the regular time.

It is found that of those attending school in Middletown more than half are of foreign extraction.[1] A comparison of the grand totals of the nationality figures is interesting, but because of High School students coming from other towns and schools, there is no accurate basis for comparison. From 1928 to 1932 the percentage of the total enrollment coming from English-speaking homes has steadily decreased, a phenomenon which continues to be true in 1935.[2] The lowest percentage of children from non-English-speaking homes is 58% in 1928 increasing to approximately 62% for this year. Of these far the greatest proportion (about 46% of the grand total) come from Italian homes, and the proportion from this group increases at the same time that the percentage from other groups tends to remain constant or decrease.

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1. Data for 1932, as this is most recent available. (See below).
2. Office of the Superintendent of Schools.

Comparison of Grand Totals[1]

		English Speaking		Non-English Speaking							
	Totals	U.S.	British	Italy	Norway Sweden	Russia	Poland	Germany	Austria	Greece	Others
1931-32	2593	823	182	1175	86	103	134	26	11	17	36
Percent		38.8		45.3	3.3	3.9	5.2	1.	.4	.7	1.4
1930-31	2772	910	222	1146	92	103	166	58	15	18	42
Percent		40.9		41.3	3.4	3.8	5.9	2.1	.5	.6	1.5
1929-30	2705	895	225	1097	102	100	166	49	14	17	40
Percent		41.4		40.5	3.8	3.7	6.1	1.8	.6	.7	1.4
1928-29	2690	896	236	1076	93	106	167	53	21	16	26
Percent		42.1		40.0	3.5	3.8	6.3	1.9	.8	.6	.1

It may be that this is because the percentage of Italian population (that is second generation Italian) is steadily increasing, or it may be that the percentage of children of Italian origin is increasing which seems more likely. We might be inclined to discredit these figures on the ground that a new High School, the Woodrow Wilson School, was opened in 1931 in the second district and assume that since that time the children of English-speaking families have been transported there for their education. However, the actual number of non-English-speaking pupils has increased each year and officials of the Wilson school state that they do not get many city pupils.

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1. Report of City Schools, 1932.

In comparison with the group of Middletown students attending the City High Schools the thirty-six who attended the State Trade School in the 1933-34 terms seem comparatively unimportant. Those who do attend are allowed to take certain courses at that institution and carry on a few subjects at the High School at the same time, and, upon satisfactory completion of this combined course in manual arts and general subjects, are awarded High School diplomas.

The conditions of education in the Parochial Schools are not readily ascertained. They are privately supervised and privately owned, supported by the churches without city contribution.[1]

In the past a summer school has been maintained by the city primarily for slow pupils, but a limited school budget resulted in its temporary closing, an expedient which seems to be economically unsound as slow pupils now must remain in school a full extra year.

The report of the Evening School, which is primarily an Americanization class, states that "Many were forced to leave school because of the opportunity to work presented through the C. W. A. and the operation of extra shifts by the textile and rubber

1. St. Mary's (Polish Catholic), St. Johns (Irish Catholic).

industries."[1] It is interesting to note that those who attended the Americanization classes were the parents of ninety-four children in the city schools, and it is hoped that through this opportunity they may develop a spirit of cooperation with the school system. Some idea of the value of Americanization classes to Middletown may be noted if we keep in mind the fact that one out of every four of our people are foreign-born and that about twenty per cent of these are illiterate.[2]

Of the 66 enrolled pupils 28 were citizens while 38 were aliens, and classified by nationality we find 16 native born as against 50 foreign born (of which last number 38 are Italian).

Among these foreign groups we find an interesting reaction concerning the value of education. The Italians and Poles favor their sons at the expense of their daughters. Generally the education of the daughters is considered an unnecessary expense and they are removed from school as soon as the age limit will permit them to go to work, exception being made only in the case of remarkable progress. The sons, however, are usually allowed and encouraged to go to school, stopping only of their own volition or

1. Report of the Director of the Evening School, 1934.
2. ibid.

because of unusual economic circumstances at home.[1] It is moreover interesting to note that the Johnson Grammar School, located in the heart of the Italian district has the best attendance record of any school in the city. The Principal of that school recently remarked that his pupils are the best behaved in the city, that they take a real pride in the school, and that they really enjoy it--particularly since the home conditions of the pupils are in many cases unpleasant.[2] However, teachers in the High School would not agree with this statement and, on the contrary, maintain that the Italian children are particularly hard to handle. It leads one to wonder whether a feeling of inferiority is engendered within the Italian pupils when they are in contact with a group of native born pupils. Does this perhaps explain a discipline problem in our schools? It would be encouraging if such were the case, but let us bear in mind that the Curate of the Italian church finds difficulty in handling the young Italian children at their play in his recreational center, where none but Italian children gather. Perhaps the correlation is that of age.

1. Mr. Shearer, Superintendent of Schools City District.
2. Ryley Student Report, 1932.

Fortunately, the partial solution of a difficult teaching problem is found in the caliber of the instructors. The skillful teacher is one of the most important parts of a good school. There are in the City School District 89 teachers with an average number of 31.9 pupils per teacher. The total salaries of these 89 amounted to $159,669.00 in the 1933-1934 year, an average of $1800.00 per year, enough to attract capable persons. Until the unusual cost of depression, and the consequent rise of the tax rate necessitated its curtailment, a plan of regular increase in salary with the period of teaching in Middletown schools was in force. In the grammar school a minimum salary of $1100.00 was paid to women teachers which was increased $100.00 each year, with a bonus of $50.00 for summer school attendance, until the maximum of $1800.00 was reached. The men in the elementary school were paid a minimum of $1400.00 with a maximum of $2200.00 arrived at in the same manner. In the High School the salaries varied from a minimum of $1500.00 for women and $1800.00 for men to a maximum of $2200.00 and $2700.00 respectively. In 1931 it was necessary to discontinue these periodic advances in wages and instead to institute a cut, so that at present an increase is awarded only in unusual cases. This does not appear to have demoralized the staff in any respect, although the Superintendent hopes for a

return to the former system in the near future.

The Town School District

In the Middletown Town School District are located eight grammar schools, caring for students through the sixth grade, and one combined High and Junior High School continuing the education through the twelfth grade. Previous to the erection of the Woodrow Wilson High School in 1931 education through the eighth grade was carried on in town schools. It was necessary for students in the town school district to get their high school education at the Middletown High School and the district paid tuition to the City School District. Tuition costs mounted rapidly after 1926, when the tuition bill was $18,609.42[1] and in 1930 the cost was $37,320.50, an increase of over 100% in a five year period. The time came when the Town Board of Education believed the district could own and maintain a high school as economically as to pay tuition, and at the same time provide an educational program better adapted to the needs of the district; it being born in mind that an immediate expansion of the grade schools, involving an expenditure of some $75,000.00[2], was necessary had no alternate plan been devised.

1. Annual Report of Town Board of Education, 1931-1932, p. 11.
2. Superintendent of Town Schools.

The building of the Wilson School made it possible to relieve the pressure in the elementary schools by including only grades one to six in the first educational unit. Grades seven and eight are included as an integral part of a six year high school. Many teachers have stated that an entirely different atmosphere is apparent in the several elementary schools with the transference of the upper grades.

In 1935 there are 1,034 pupils in the first six grades of this district and 688 in the splendidly equipped Junior-Senior High School.[1] If we reduce the students in the schools to grades we will find that there are 1,384 in the first eight grades, and 297 in the grades commonly known as "high school", so that we find one student in 4.6 going on for this training. These figures alone are misleading, for the schools of this part of the city are growing rapidly, with a resultant increase in the size of the earlier grades. Corrected for this, as nearly as is possible, it would seem that one student in 3.5 (about the same ratio as is found in the City District) goes on beyond the eighth grade.

1. Office of the Superintendent, May, 1935.

In last year's graduating class 16 out of 65 went to college which is proportionately higher than the City District.

The number of tuition pupils attending this school is negligible[1], so that a survey of the student body is an accurate indication of the homes served. Unfortunately no compiled data is avilable, but the estimate of the Superintendent is that well over 75% are American children, the majority of the others being of Polish extraction. In an effort to get a rough check-up on this statement visits were made to the class rooms and observations made in the corridors. It would appear that in the Wilson School, which is representative of the district, the percentage of children from non-English speaking homes is considerably less than this estimate with 10% foreign being a nearer figure.

The physical equipment of the High School is excellent, surpassing that of the City School District in almost every particular. The building is new, as are the fittings, and provision has been made for every reasonable need.

The teaching staff is likewise good. The salaries range from $1000.00 to $1800.00 but the distribution at present shows the average salary of grade

1. Total receipts from other towns in 1933-1934 was $466.40;

teachers to be $1600.00,[1] and about $1800.00 for those in high school. No definite salary schedule has been set for teachers but increases are awarded on a basis of judgment. The instructors are much younger in the Woodrow Wilson High School than they are in the City High District, but have an average teaching experience of four years. The great majority of these came to Middletown for the same salary or less than they had been receiving in other institutions since city living conditions and a new building proved to be more of an inducement than financial gain.[2]

Complications

A comparison of the schools in the first and second district leads the author to believe that the private corporation of the first district has no advantages to offer. It is true that education in this larger district is performed at slightly less cost per pupil ($97.10 as contrasted with $104.40 in the Town District)[3]--but it is not apparent that this is due to separation, being, rather in spite of it. The educational program has no advantage over that of the other district. As concerns the respective high schools, the modern equipment of the Woodrow Wilson

1. Computed from Annual Report, Financial Statement, 1933-1934.
2. Mr. Moody.
3. Figures include all expense directly connected with schools including Maintenance and Payment on Debt.

School is superior in most respects to that of the Middletown High School. The children at the first mentioned institution have recreational opportunities immediately available which can never be met by a school located in the center of the city. Student interest in school life is apparently encouraged to a greater degree in the outlying school, and the plan of a six year high school seems to be working admirably.

There would appear to be no sound reason why all the schools of this city should not be combined under one management, giving them standardization and increased advantages in purchasing. It is, however, unlikely that this shift will occur in the near future as it would require the dissolution of the incorporated district.

In the meantime, the teachers in both districts continue to find their life in Middletown pleasant. They are able to command the respect of the community, and are willing supporters of civic enterprises.

In conclusion, it would seem that Middletown has a difficult educational problem, complicated from an administrative viewpoint by the unnecessary device of separate school districts. The high percentage of foreign children, particularly in the city schools, creates a discipline and instruction problem which taxes the ingenuity of the teachers but is being met in a fairly satisfactory manner.

CHAPTER VI

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

The Function of the Church

Religion has long had intimate connections with other features of community life, but the modern church has also become an important sponsor of various community organizations. In moral control, especially, and in education, the church has long played a dominant role. More recently it has developed recreational and social service features.

In Middletown the church still plays an important part in neighborhood and community life. The churches are small enough so that there is a feeling of personal interest among the parishoners, which is encouraged by church societies and charitable organizations. The sewing clubs for the Hospital Aid Society, which provides linens for the Middlesex nospital, and the donation of Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners to the impoverished members are examples of this feeling.

Immigration and the Church

The foreigners who arrive in this city bring with them certain religious traditions which they wish to carry on. They find, however, that the church is as highly institutionalized along nationalistic lines as any other element in the community life. They tend, therefore, to establish churches of their own. There are three racial branches of the Catholic church in Middletown; the Roman or Irish Catholic, the Polish Catholic, and the Italian Catholic. Each has its own church building, two have their own parochial schools, and each is financed by the members of its own congregation. The Italians, who until two years ago were members of the Irish Church, as they call it, found that all the priests were Irish or American, and that no masses were said in Italian. Consequently they did not support the church very well and left the financial burden on the Irish group, causing considerable friction. The difficulty has been solved by the erection of a beautiful Italian Catholic church at the corner of Broad and Washington Streets, where Italian priests say Italian mass.

There are three Lutheran churches, also organized along national lines. The Germans have the Deutsche Lutheran Kirche, while the Swedes and other Scandinavians have the Swedish Lutheran Church, and in addition there is an English speaking branch.

There have been various unsuccessful attempts on the part of the Protestant churches to convert the Poles and Italians. The Methodist, Baptist, and Episcopal churches carried on this experiment for a short time and then gave up after having converted very few indeed!

Church Organization

Whereas the Catholic population of the city outnumbers the Protestant population, most Catholics attend one of three churches. On the other hand, the Protestants refuse to combine but prefer their individual types of worship.

Many religions are represented here, including the Catholic branches, Episcopalian, Methodist, Baptist, and Congregational churches, as well as separate edifices for the Christian Scientists and Jews. The colored Protestants have a small church of their own.

The Catholic Church of San Sebastian

One of the most interesting and important religious groups is that of the Catholic church of San Sebastian. This recently organized church has a parish of some 6,000 people distributed in 900 families, all Italian. In designing the building it was planned to make this church a community center for the parishioners as well as a religious institution, and so facilities for recreation are located in the gymnasium which is below the church, in a basement. Among games for the youngsters are basketball, volley-ball, handball, and wrestling, while the athletic club for older men has pool tables and chess clubs. Saturday night dances attract the young members of the families, and provide almost the only means of such recreation for the girls. This is true because it is against Italian principles to allow their daughters to go to public places, or out at night, without chaperones; severity which is reversed to laxity in the case of boys.

Quite as we would expect, the incorporation of such activities in the church met with a wave of protest from certain of the church members, but the plan was carried on to the present satisfaction of the majority, and the respect and love of the Italians for their priest is almost worship.

But in spite of this his task has not been an easy one. Not only did the parents in some cases object to the use of the church as a recreational center, but the children who use its facilities are not always easy to control. Indeed, the boys are decidedly a problem in this matter.

A Religious Strike

It recently became necessary that the Father be allowed a vacation from his strenuous work at this church, and in his place another, and well-liked priest was substituted. However, some members of the community are convinced that this is a move on the part of the higher church officials to take their beloved pastor away from them. This conviction has spread rapidly, and at this writing the members of the church are engaged in a religious strike. The most active spirits in the movement take the names of all who attend church and make it as uncomfortable as possible for them, urging that no one attend the services and by this means force a return of "their own" priest. It is one of the greatest possible tributes to the respect and adoration in which he is held.

Group Solidarity and the Church

We have considered the fact that each nationality tends to organize its own church in which a language other than English is often spoken. It will be well to consider the effect of this upon the problems of Americanization and adjustment to this country in general. The situation resolves itself almost entirely as one peculiar to the Catholic churches, since the other religious groups, while they do hold services in their own languages, do not provide as popular recreational centers and no individual church is of large size. For this particular problem it is possible to limit discussion to the Italian Catholic Church (The Church of San Sebastian).

It is not the author's purpose to discuss the religious aspect of the problem and to determine to what extent it insures the congregation against desertion to another faith, for that is certainly as much the motive in the Y.M.C.A. and the Hebrew societies as in the Italian Catholic.

Before proceeding in a consideration of this problem one must recognize the fact that the recreational center of the Church of San Sebastian filled a decided need, and one which the community generally was either not willing or unable to meet. The Italian children did not participate in the community

supported Y.M.C.A. nor was there any determined effort to organize them into teams by other means. The Italian girls, due to strict parental supervision, could not avail themselves of such recreational facilities as were offered, and the older members of the group quite naturally turned toward the church for recreation such as is found in all churches--men's clubs and women's societies.

The absorption of the Italian part of the population by the city has been doubly difficult because of the large number of that nationality, and by the fact that they all come from the same part of Italy and speak the same dialect, a thing which weakens the incentive to learn English. However, some of the second generation Italian boys did join such organizations as the Boy Scouts, and upon the establishment of the Church Scout Troop they have shifted to that group.

The use of recreational facilities where none but Italians are participating in the sports, combined with attendance at schools where almost no one but Italian children go, cannot but strengthen the feeling of group solidarity. It means that the children do not come into contact with other nationalities and retain the Italian ethos or societal character. It results in their clinging to Italian ways and Italian ideas, and in general thwarting the hallowed idea that

"America is the melting-pot of the world." This situation is true to a more limited extent in the Polish and other churches but appears particularly acute at the Church of San Sebastian.

CHAPTER VII

RECREATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Play of some sort is universal in society, but in discussing play we often use the terms recreation, amusement, and leisure. These terms have much in common, but some distinction may well be drawn. Play means primarily free or active movements of the body. Today, it is applied to any relatively pleasant form of muscular or mental action which does not concern securing a livelihood or the obligations and duties as parent, citizen, or member of the moral and religious order. Play may call for exertion and the expenditure of energy, but the aim is primarily to please oneself, to give place to diversion. Recreation means the act of recreating the mental and muscular system through some refreshing, stimulating, and diverting form of activity. In a looser sense it refers to any pleasurable diversion, mental or muscular, and for our purposes may be considered synonymous with play life. Amusement literally applies

to gazing at or seeing spectacles. Actually there are many amusements which involve active participation of every member of the group. Amusement involves joyous and pleasant activity, often associated with wit and humor.[1]

The Carnival

In Middletown the majority of people choose to find recreation mostly in those types of amusement or play which do not call for intensive outdoor exercise. A carnival comes to town twice or thrice a year occuping a site on the north end of the city, and it is very well attended during its week's stay. This carnival usually consists of three rides, about eight shows, and numerous concessions, but its limited size is not a limit to the enjoyment the populace finds in it. Everyone feels the urge of the blaring caliope which may be heard for blocks around, and a great many succumb to the call with a good natured festive spirit which makes the otherwise rather drab spectacle an interesting one. For once in their lives college students and business men rub shoulders with the most recently arrived immigrant. It is a spirit somehow peculiarly in keeping with the mood of many of the foreign population of Middletown, and it is they who return night after night so that the crowd is made up mostly of them.

1. An Introductory Sociology. Kimball Young, American Book Company, 1934. Pp. 304-305.

The Moving Pictures

But aside from these few days each year, the inhabitants of Middletown find most of their commercial entertainment through the medium of the moving pictures. The three local theaters, each of which seats in the neighborhood of a thousand persons, are subject to seasonal variations in attendance. The manager of the three local movie palaces, for all of them are owned and controlled by one group, states that the average weekly attendance, taken over the year, is about seventy-five hundred of which from five to six hundred of the paid admissions come from the university student body. In other words, then, the weekly turnover of the theaters is about one-third of the total population of the city. The physical plants of these movie houses are obviously far too large for the patronage, and this is met by the closing of at least one theater all of the time, and the closing of two of them in certain seasons of the year. This overdevelopment of facilities is largely the result of the fact that the demand was much greater in former years than it is at present. One estimate is that in 1929 the weekly average attendance at the theaters in the best seasons approached twenty-five thousand, the same figure as the population of the municipality, but while the officials of the local company assert that that is undoubtedly too high

it is likewise true that there were many more movie-goers than ~~then~~ at present. The theaters, all three of them, have installed sound equipment and have forsaken the idea of vaudeville which was for years the chief attraction at one. The pit orchestras have completely disappeared, and the appeal of the personal element has been met to some degree by the inauguration of an auction circus where the patrons of the theaters bid for unknown articles sold from the stage, and more recently by the weekly attraction of an Amateur Night when local talent is given an opportunity to exploit the stage--the winner of each week's contest appearing over the radio and thus subjecting that medium of entertainment to further questionable talent.

The movie public show certain peculiarities of taste in their selections. It is odd that they should like movies taken from well known books, but not so much from well known plays. It is illuminating that serials, now discontinued almost entirely, should be run purposely to appeal to the foreign element of the audience. It is likewise interesting to the management that HER UNBORN CHILD drew an audience of 90% women, while MEN WITHOUT WOMEN drew some 80%.men. Is there some deep seated psychology hidden therein or is it an oddity of fact?

The audiences are larger for Saturday and Sunday showings than at any other time during the week, and are larger in the summer than in the winter. Approximately 90% of the audience come from the laboring class, if the theater estimates are correct. It is certain, in any event, that far the largest proportion of the attendants come from that group, but a sizeable week-end group come from the farms of this county, coming to town for a day of shopping and a trip to the movies.

Parks and Playgrounds

Middletown has no large well organized park in which to sit on balmy summer evenings. There are, it is true, two parks with a combined area of five acres, but all plans to convert suitable land into another have dropped from sight. There are, however, good facilities for public playgrounds. There are four, in all, in the summer maintained by the Community Service Organization with the Municipal Athletic Field now in good condition, and those parts of Wesleyan Field which are open in July and August providing good facilities of this nature. There is unquestionably a large amount of outdoor exercise undertaken in these months by younger Middletown, but in the winter there is almost none. Practically everyone shows a hesitancy to skate, ski, or use toboggans which is not

readily understandable to persons coming from farther north. This is undoubtedly partially caused by the fact that there are few persons living here who come from northern Europe and the southern Europeans candidly state that winter is a thing to be endured, not to be enjoyed.

Indoor Play

A good deal of the slack in play is taken up by indoor play of various sorts. One of the most popular is that of bowling which has a long season, from September to June, and which is indulged in by everyone. The local bowling parlors, of which there are three, sponsor contests between laborers and bosses, between individual factories, between the college fraternities, between women and men, and between every other possible combination. It is safe to state that no other sport is so popularly indulged in as is bowling. Interest in commercial wrestling or boxing is slight indeed, but the same cannot be said for Middletown's basketball, but which does not include so many participants as do some of the other methods of play.

The Public Library

Reading is one of the most universally accepted pastimes, and for a large proportion of the citizens this means enjoying the books and periodicals provided by the Public Library. The Middletown libraries are controlled by the city government and are operated on a budget the income for which is provided in part by the regular tax system and in part by the income from the endowment of the Samuel Russell fund.

As early as 1797 the Middletown Library was established in this town and in 1809 another known as the Middletown Circulating Library. Each of these had about six hundred volumes and although useful were not established on permanent bases and they ceased to supply the want for of such institutions.[1]

Prior to 1875 no attempt was made to found a free public library that should meet the wants of the people, and the lack of such an institution might have been felt for some time had not Mrs. Francis A. Russell founded the Russell Library as a memorial to her husband Samuel Russell. She purchased the building in which the present Russell library is located and endowed it with $40,000.00 the income of which is used

1. History of Middlesex County, p. 94.

in the defrayment of expenses and the purchase of books.

At present the library thus founded as a memorial to the original owner of the Russell Manufacturing Company is under the control of the city and is the chief link in the chain of four local libraries. From it over 164,000 of the total city-wide 200,000 annual circulation is drawn. The complete chain consists of the main library already mentioned, a branch at South Farms, one at Westfield (the circulation of which has never been above eight thousand) and the Town Schools. Approximately 80% of the total circulation of the combined system takes place at the Main Library, but the more interesting part of the study reveals facts concerning the type of books demanded and the number demanded in terms of the entire population.

Although the library is excellently equipped to supply books of both the fiction and non-fiction type, over a period of the last several years some seventy per cent of all the books taken from the library have been fiction.[1] The physical equipment of the library includes a total of 41,150 books, the circulation of which has increased annually for a number of years and interestingly. The figures for the per capita annual circulation are given below and are arrived at by dividing the total circulation of

1. See Appendix 16.

all of the libraries by the total population of the city and town of Middletown, as the entire district is served.

	1922-23	1923-24	1924-25	1925-26	1926-27	1927-28	1928-29	1929-30	1930-31	1931-32	1932-33	1933-34
Circulation	3.9	4.2	---	4.2	4.2	4.8	5.3	5.4	5.8	7.4	8.6	8.49

It will be seen at once that the circulation of the library increased abnormally in the years 1931-1932 and 1932-1933 and has now begun to lose ground being smaller in the early months of 1935 than in comparative months of the other two years. This later statement is made with the authority of library officials, although our figures are enough to attest the fact that circulation began to fall off a year ago. It is the belief of the librarians that the explanation is found in the fact that a great many of the population of Middletown were out of work in the 1931-1932-1933 period and that they have now gone back to work and are not exercising their demands on the library. It is stated by them that unemployed men who formerly appeared at the library regularly to depart with an armful[1] of books have since taken employment with the noted result on library circulation.

1. The Library has no limit to the number of withdrawals at one time.

About 45% of the entire population of Middletown are registered borrowers at the libraries and in their composition consist of old and young, native and foreign. About half of the users of the library are estimated as being foreign with the same percentage found among the children as among adults. They are all remarkably well behaved and appear to use the library freely. But among the foreign inhabitants using the library the majority are of Polish parentage, they enjoy the library and they use it.

It has been seen, then, to what an extent the facilities for borrowing books are available in the city and to what an extent the knowledge of the system is spread, it is also noted how much it is used and I feel sure that we have found one of the major factors in the use of leisure time.

Informal Organizations

Fortunately for the mental activity of the people, and quite naturally too, all of Middletown's recreation is not of a commercial sort. A great deal of it comes ~~from~~ informally, it comes through clubs and associations, and it comes from informal groups banded together sometimes for a common purpose, and sometimes because of common interests. The Middletown Scientific Association is one such organization inaugurated and continued for the expressed purpose of

uniting those interested in scientific matters so that they may enjoy lectures by prominent men of the scientific world for pleasure, cultural reasons, or simply curiosity. Membership is open to the general public with a nominal annual charge of $2.00 but it is not necessary to belong to the organization to hear most of the lectures. About one hundred fifty attend but of these considerable number are, quite naturally, college students. However, the mere fact that the organization is patronized by the college does not in any way detract from the execution of its purpose and it supplies a very decided need for the professional workers of the city.

The Little Theatre group is another which looks toward the college for its support but is active among all of those interested in the drama. From two to four plays are produced annually with elaborate preparations both by the actors and by the stage workers. The group is entirely amateur and draws support from some two hundred persons. It provides a source of interest in the theatre which is far more lasting than is the period of production and presentation of the plays themselves and is a real joy to those connected with it.

It may be said with some justification that aside from the concerts, art exhibits, and lectures given by Wesleyan University very little is done to

afford an outlet for the desire of the people to attend such æsthetic amusements (aside from the occasional exhibits by the Middletown Branch of the New England Historical Society, and the Community Concert Association). This is due largely to the excellency of the university exhibits, making any other attempts appear meager in comparison. It is certainly true that when art exhibits are shown in this vicinity they appear at the University and not at some other suitable place. But this can be true only of passive exhibitions, and cannot be true at all of those which demand the active participation of the civic group. For example, the musical organizations must succeed or fail depending on the degree to which they attract active members. The Choral Union, which continues to function year after year, is made up of a number of persons interested in singing and they take the welcome opportunity to rehearse and to give occasional concerts purely for the pleasure it gives them. But these above mentioned associations and groups, while in most cases theoretically open to the public, are, in actuality, closed corporations in the sense that their appeal is to a definitely limited segrement of the population.

The same is likewise true of the local bands, which are the sole survivors of many musical organizations, but the distinction lies in the fact that the bands are appealing chiefly to the Italian and Polish portion of the population where the others do not.

The Y.M.C.A.

It is to some extent true of the local Y.M.C.A. but to a much more limited extent. With a large and well organized plant providing rooms as well as entertainment facilities, it exerts a pretty general appeal. Due to the absence of a local Y.M.C.A. building the group using its equipment are divided up into three departments, one for men with about 600 members, one for boys with about 400 members, and one for women and girls supported by 300 paying members making a grand total of 1300 in all.[1]

The facilities provide a variety of types of inside recreation including bowling, pool and billiards, reading rooms, lounging rooms and comfortable places for fireside talks. A great many of the latter are given by Wesleyan Professors and range from science to international peace and religion. The "Y" is certainly a popular place with the younger people and a definite and fairly successful attempt is made to convert them into groups with leaders who will be good examples for them and at the same time meet them on their own ground. To some extent this is done through the individual clubs using the building as headquarters, partially through the medium of leagues for basketball and bowling in the winter and hiking in the summer, and to some degree it is attempted by the regular weekly

1. Director of Middletown YM.C.A.

dances. Interestingly enough, however, the membership in the local branch was greatest in the ten years just before the World War and it will be noticed that the present membership of 1300 is less than the 1600 participants in 1930. It has continued, however, since its founding in 1877 and is at present housed in a building costing some $350,000.00. The eighty bed sleeping capacity of the dormitory is well filled and provides a temporary home for transient young men who might otherwise have difficulty in finding suitable quarters. It is certain that the $15,000,00 raised annually for its support is well invested.

Dancing is one of the most popular forms of amusement and is sponsored by all sorts of organizations. Not only does the Y.M.C.A. hold its dances but the Polish Club, the Italian Club, the Lions Club, and the Yacht Club all take their turns. The curate of the local Italian Catholic Church is met by opposition from some of his parishioners for holding dances in the recreational basement of his church, but receives the stouthearted support of the remainder of them.[1] It seems to be generally agreed that the young people will dance, and that unless suitable provision is made for them by these organizations they will certainly find it somewhere else.

1. See Religion.

Entertainment At Home

As for daily entertainment in the homes themselves, we may say that about 800 radios are sold in Middletown in a year,[1] some of them on a trade-in basis, of course, but they are to be found in at least 2,333[2] homes. Piano sales are about one-third of sales in former years and the market for victrolas is almost static.

Unfortunately, however, it is uncommon for families in Middletown to partake in family parties where young and old, along with their neighbors congregate for an evening of fun. It is true, as is pointed out elsewhere in this paper, that among the foreign population these celebrations of weddings, birthdays, and anniversaries do occur. But it is apparently much more according to the temper of the local southern Europeans to use every occasion for a celebration anyway, and they never let Saint Sebastian's day, the fete day of the Italian Patron Saint of Middletown, pass without the proper parades, sports and evening celebrations.

1. Estimate of Dealers.
2. United States Census, 1930, Population vol. VI, p. 233.

Clubs

It is the manner of the community to allow each member of the family to take his recreation alone or with a group of non-family associates with common interests. For this reason we find a variety of men's clubs, boys' and girls' organizations, and women's clubs. Among the men's clubs are business organizations, fraternal orders, racial orders, and benevolent associations, as well as sporting clubs. The women enjoy their church auxiliaries, charitable organizations, bridge clubs, and musical groups. The children, again, unite into everything immaginable from scout troops, to basketball teams and baseball teams, and Hi-Y and other similar organizations--not to mention the gang problem for the moment.

The tremendous interest in clubs and organizations will be indicated by the list of active organizations found on the next page.

Some of them are benefit associations, some of them are business men's luncheon clubs, and some are philanthropic in purpose. All of them have a ritual of some sort, and each of them has a definite purpose of its own. It is not at all uncommon for a single person to belong to three or four from this list at one time, but if more than one organization attracts it generally is because it serves a different purpose from the others in which membership is held. Thus a man may find fellowship in the Masons, business relationship in the Exchange Club, and at the same time belong to a benefit order, or he may prefer any other of a large number of possible combinations.

Reasons for their joining range from "It gave me a chance to aid the community in some way", to "I don't know", "A friend persuaded me", or "The desire for companionship and fellowship". But whatever the original purpose of the order, and whatever its reason for existence, almost invariably it does a certain amount of civic good. The Elks give to charity; The Exchange Club donated $1700.00 recently for bleechers at the Municipal field; the Odd Fellows run the playgrounds for one month in the summer; the Rotary Club bought a tuba for the boys' band--which to be sure was some three sizes larger than the boy who played it--; and numerous other examples to prove the point might unnecessarily be cited.

Exercise

These people find an increasingly popular sport in golf, which is the one really popular form of outdoor exercise among men--and somewhat among ladies too. Boating and yachting are too expensive for the average person so that aside from those int~~erpred~~ rapid mariners whose home port is the Middletown Yacht Club, it enjoys little popularity. The tennis courts at Wesleyan, Red Wing Gas Company at the north end of the town, and the Y.M.C.A., draw their share of the younger persons--although it might well be added that the sport does not draw as many as might be expected in a city of this size. Is it because there is no active "younger set"?

But the followers of Isaac Walton who would angle for hours on mossy brooks find the opportunity a very pleasurable one--for trout, bass, and pickeral may be found in nearby waters. A different story will be told you by the hunters who lament the scarcity of quail and rabbits but go to the shore for ducks. In this city of 25,000 there are from five to six hundred hunting and fishing licenses sold annually, of which about half are for fishing alone.

In the winter, as has already been stated, there is little outside activity and what there is is chiefly skating--which is necessarily limited by a very short season. Instead some twenty basketball teams, excluding the college and High School teams, challenge and play each other. There is a church league with

six to eight teams; there is an industrial league; there is a city league of police and business men; there are the inter-city teams of East side, West side, and Sons of Italy, to say nothing of the semi-professional girls and boys teams which draw large weekly audiences and play really excellent opponents. Needless to say, then, basketball is on the mind of most of the inhabitants during the cold weather even though most of them are not engaged in taking an active part in the sport.

Newspapers

The results of these games are adequately reported in the local newspaper THE MIDDLETOWN PRESS which is daily circulated to about ten thousand purchasers and tells them of the coming lodge meetings, what moving pictures will be offered to the 7,500 attendants, when the carnival will come to town, whether the Y.M.C.A. is offering something new, and social news. All this together with the radio programs which will determine in a large measure whether the younger members of the family stay at home or go off to some other point for their evening's entertainment.

CHAPTER VIII

SOCIAL SERVICES

Social services in Middletown are the outgrowth of the urbanization and industrialization of the community. In the earlier days of the city's history there was little need of organized charity as we know it at present. Neighbor-to-neighbor and church parish donations constituted practically all of the charitable work done in that "pioneer" stage, although some aid was given by the town to the aged and poor.

As early as 1761 we find a bill presented to the town as follows:[1]

"To keeping a child of Davis from the 6th of October 1760 to 9th March, 1761 per order of Selectmen

21 weeks at 2/1 per week.....	L2--2--0
to pair shoes cost 3/6 to gown 1/6	0--5--0
to stockings.....	0--1--0
	L2--8--0

The care of the poor and aged as well as the orphaned was assigned to the first Selectman of the town, and remained under his jurisdiction until 1924 when a slight change was made so that, with the change of city government, a Department of Public Charities was formed to take over the work under the control of

1. Early records of the Town of Middletown.

the first Selectman and the mayor (ex-officio), with three members of the Common Council in the department. The duties have remained the same except for the obvious changes caused by an increased demand for the aid, and the Board of Charities still remains the representative of the town's obligation to the unfortunate sick, indigent, and unemployed.

Public Relief

Perhaps the most interesting phase of this relationship lies in the attitude taken by the Board toward those forced to seek its services. In 1929 the officer in charge remarked to an investigator that:

> "It (city relief) is not a loan, it is a gift, and it is given only when the wolf gets just outside the door."[1]

In April, 1935, when the burden of relief has increased far beyond the amount that officers could then have foreseen and when the persons assisting in the office of the city welfare department has changed from two untrained workers to a corps of over a dozen including case workers, the attitude was much more sympathetic as is well expressed in the change in name from "town poor" to "welfare cases".

The rise in cost has been tremendous in the last five years. In 1927 the total cost to the city for public relief was $35,000.00[2] and it continued at

1. Coffin and Jones, Social Service in Middletown, 1930.
2. Report of the Superintendent of Charities, Middletown, 1927.

approximately this figure through 1929. Since that time the Board has found itself subjected to appeal not only from the ill and aged, for whom it is normally intended, but also from a great many unemployed but otherwise normal heads of families. The expenditure has increased to $200,000.00[1] in 1933-1934 but it can no longer be said, as it was in 1927, that this amount is "conducted so that our citizens have been able to care for the unfortunate well within the amount set aside for this purpose", indeed the same amount of money[2] this year has been scarcely adequate, not because of leniency or laxity in the handling and distribution of the funds, but rather because of the number of applicants.

It is this situation, peculiar to most of the cities in the United States which the Federal government anticipated and has attempted to alleviate by the distribution of Federal Funds. The figures quoted above ($200,000.00) include both local and Federal contributions, and of it $42,000.00 is correctly listed as F. E. R. A.[3] money and approximately the same amount is received by the city as reimbursement from other cities,[4]

1. Report of the Superintendent of Charities, Middletown, 1934. Total Expenditures..$181,420.03.
2. Estimated by Department of Charities, April 20, 1935 for fiscal year ending June 1, 1935.
3. Federal Emergency Relief Administration.
4. Report of the Superintendent of Charities, Middletown, 1924.

Total Expenses for the year.....		$181,420.03
Appropriation.....	$91,175.00	
E. R. A. Receipts.....	$42,354.45	
Receipts from State of Conn. and other towns....	$41,622.67	
		$175,152.12
Deficit to appear in 1934-1935 appropriation.....		$ 6,378.91

towns, and the state for the support of non-resident families. We see, then, that the actual amount of money which must be included in the tax raising budget of this city for relief is in the vicinity of $100,000.00, a three-fold increase since 1927.

Previously it was mentioned that this has not come about through a tendency to be generous in the distribution of funds. The system which is used is a stringent one based upon a minimum budget by which the relief granted varies with the size of the family involved. This schedule is used by the city for its own and government money and allows a definite amount for food and clothing per person in any family. There is no need to explain its operation in detail except to state that it allows $7.60 for food in a family of four consisting of parents and two children[1] an amount so small that a local nutrition worker[2] states: "Adequate diet can be maintained only if very wise purchasing is done and careful planning of meals is used." The rent allowed varies from the $12.00 per month for each family on direct city relief to $16.00 per month for those households where the head of the family works for the F. E. R. A., and in this connection it is pointed out in the chapter dealing with

1. The average person in Middletown spends $2.25 for food each week. See section on Economic Institutions.
2. Miss Lockwood of the Day Nursery Association.

families that only a few cheap rentals are available at this price. We would expect, therefore, that some difficulty would be found in providing shelter at this rate, and as a matter of fact local welfare officers state this to be one of their major problems.

The number of persons demanding relief from the city itself varies as employment through the Federal funds fluctuates, but the number receiving aid through the combined resources remains fairly constant, not changing greatly from the one thousand families being assisted on April 20, 1935. On that date this group contained a membership of something over four thousand persons (a sixth of the entire population of the city) and of these thousand families 266 were headed by persons working for the F. E. R. A., 154 were engaged in work for the city, and the balance, or 580, were on direct unproductive relief.

In the opinion of those engaged in the municipal office, which cares for all the local public relief and distributes food occasionally donated by the Federal government, the largest part of the aid goes to the foreign population of the first or second generations living on the east side of Main Street. This they explain in two ways, first, because the proportion of the inhabitants of the municipality is decidedly foreign, and, second, the foreign investigator reports an interesting psychological reaction. It is

his belief that the Italian temperament is such that the existence of a neighbor receiving aid from charity prompts others in the vicinity to set out to get similar doles. The relative need of that neighbor may have no part in the logical process by which others decide that it is their duty to collect from the city also. The problem then becomes a difficult one for the investigator who is responsible for about one hundred families and cannot possibly spend adequate time investigating each, but I would hesitate to assert that the difficulties are limited to one part of the population.

The attitude of the general public toward relief has changed tremendously. The case workers find that the applicants for city help no longer feel the stigma attached to the words "city charge". These workers, most of whom have been trained in private charitable organizations and have been employed by the city in the emergency, maintain that in the past people hesitated to go to the city for relief and that the problem of private charity was therefore more acute. At present the hesitancy is overcome by the fact that the head of the family goes first to the Federal Re-employment Office seeking work, and when it is not forthcoming applies to the city Board of Charities for a job on the city projects. Having made this first step it is not nearly so hard for him to apply for direct aid, which is too often combined with the cool

assertion, "I must and I intend to have work or money." In practically every case the person would greatly prefer work, but whether or not it is available funds must come from one of the two sources, federal or local, if the investigators are convinced of the sincerity of the need.

In the meantime the Town Farm continues to operate with thirty people there at present costing the city between $6.00 and $7.00 per week for each. This institution is located in an old farm house taken over fifty years ago to be used for its present purpose. It formerly seems to have been used as a catch-all for the town including insane (insane who would now be sent to state asylums as are the fifty mentally diseased for which Middletown annually pays $10,000.00) which is evidenced by remarks in the old records such as, "Had the Jim-Jams very bad", after the names of certain of the inmates. The house and equipment have been added to since it was taken over, so that it now has room for thirty persons which could be extended to care for fifty people.

In addition to those supported through the city and Federal funds, and the aged supported at the Town Farm, there are a few persons in Middletown receiving aid through the Connecticut Widows Aid and Soldiers' Relief. In all the part of the population receiving some sort of public relief is about 25% of all residents.

Private Relief

But in addition to this publicly supported relief there are a variety of private services, which for the most part consist of the "human" or non-economic charities. They are supported by public voluntary subscription or private donation and while they do try to give financial assistance in some cases, the greater part of their efforts are directed toward other goals.

One obvious fact has hampered their work. They failed to cooperate: For that reason an attempt was made to organize a Community Chest in Middletown during 1922 which failed dismally due to a number of factors. In the first place the drive was managed entirely by local persons whose suggestions were subjected to more criticism than would have been those of a paid organizer, and, secondly, certain organizations were included in the chest budget which did not meet with general approval. For this reason the vested interests in each particular charity continued to go its own way regardless of the others. There was duplication of service and poor organization generally.

In 1930 the Chamber of Commerce attempted to do something about the situation by organizing a Council of Social Agencies with an eye to eventually developing it into a centralized Community Chest bureau. This Council included most of the larger organizations and established a central bureau, located in the offices

of the Family Welfare Association, where every case aided by any of the members of the Council was catalogued, and filed for reference by other groups. Its success was limited by the fact that only the most important, that is the largest, charities participated. In the meantime, and up until 1935, each of the twelve larger agencies continued to run special drives for raising funds from the public.

In the spring of 1935 another, and this time very successful attempt, was made at a joint Community Chest from which each of eleven[1] charitable groups may in the future draw their funds, allocated according to budgetary needs to supplement endowment and other funds available. The eleven included the Family Welfare Association, the District Nurse Association, St. Lukes Home, the Day Nursery, the Y.M.C.A., the Hospital Aid Society, the Boy Scouts, the County Y.M.C.A., the Girl Scouts, the Salvation Army, and the Diocesan Bureau of Social Service.

The goal of $51,954.18 was slightly over-subscribed so that to all appearances the condition of twelve separate drives has been overcome for the future, but until April of this year the charities were run on individually donated funds.

1. Special conditions prevented the Middlesex Hospital from joining.

It is regretable that no successful attempt has been made to combine the many other charitable organizations including churches and the Female Charitable Society but at the present it seems too much to expect.

In one group, now included in the chest, The Four Allied Charities, cooperation has been unusually successful. This combined organization consists of the Family Welfare Association, the District Nurse Association, the Day Nursery Association, and the Hospital Aid Auxiliary.

The Family Welfare Association

The organization which has the most impressive record, and which operates with obvious sincerity and success is the Family Welfare Association which may be termed the leader of headquarters for this group of four charities. Most of the actual work of the Family Welfare is of an advisory nature in the settlement of problems other than economic need such as estrangement of the family, maladjustment, and providing counsel and advice. It cooperates, as do all of the four in this group, with the municipal charities and is, therefore, the beneficiary of a municipal appropriation. All cases of need and unemployment coming to the attention of the other members of the Allied Charities are turned over to this organization which then proceeds to send trained investigators who make a personal study of the

family, which they can do more adequately than can the municipal investigators since each Family Welfare worker has thirty-five homes while the municipal case-workers have one hundred. If a condition of need is found, of a financial sort, the association assumes the obligation to help over financial emergencies, but if the situation is such as to demand longer attention the case is reported to the city officials who assume the burden of the expense. In this period of great need until definite signs of readjustment are visible, the Family Welfare Association attempts to outline and encourage the family in the art of living and saving, as well as straightening family differences.

> "Much of the work done by the Family Welfare Association is service. It takes the form of counsel and advice, getting work for people, adjusting people to their work, adjusting debts, compensation insurance, seeing that the widow, the deserted mother and the orphan are taken care of, and helping them to adjust themselves to life, helping all our families...and in general to foster the development of wholesome family life...and to coordinate the work of all agencies in various phases of family work in the community."[1]

The source or income for this work is divided in three ways; $500.00 from municipal appropriation, a varying small amount from the store which sells second hand clothes given by persons interested in the organization, and chiefly by individual donations. In all the budget of $10,000.00 is very limited

1. Report of the Superintendent of the Family Welfare Association, 1931 (Miss Godwin).

indeed, but does provide assistance in some cases where the city may not go (where some property is owned) and at the same time cooperates with city charity by investigation of the worst city cases.

The District Nurse Association

The second, and very important, member of The Four Allied Charities is the District Nurse Association. The staff of six trained nurses and one clerk, one student nurse, and eighty-nine volunteer workers finds its service in demand by all classes of people in the community. The purpose of the organization is to provide part-time nursing service to the community for the assistance of persons requiring skilled treatment but whose condition is not critical enough to demand a full-time nurse. The nurses always make one visit to any family about which they are notified, whether the notification comes from the physician, neighbors, or the family itself. After this first visit subsequent visits are made as conditions demand, and for each of these a charge of $1.00 is made which covers a part of the cost of the nurse, and for which no surgical supplies are provided. The Association makes an effort to collect their charge whenever it is at all possible, but in cases where the cost cannot be met by the family the service is nonetheless continued and partial payments or no pay at all is considered as settling the bill. Even if all the calls were paid for the cost

of the service would still be greater than the income since $1.00 per call is not sufficient to pay the expense.

The deficit is met by an endowment income of $2,000.00 each year, receipts of $2,780.00 from two insurance companies which pay for visits to their policyholders, $1,000.00 donated by the city, $1,200.00 from the sale of Christmas Seals, and $4,000.00 from a canvas made by the nurses themselves or (in the future) from the Community Chest; making a total budget, including $800.00 received from pay patients, of $12,500.00[1] for a service which gives 1800 free visits each year besides those for which a charge is made, as well as the advice of a physician whose services are paid for in part by this society and in part by the individuals and employers.

The Day Nursery Association

In the same building, the upkeep of which is endowed for the District Nurse Association, and where ample space is available, is located the office of the Day Nursery Association. Originally this organization was intended to provide a home for children whose parents were at work and for which a moderate charge was made. However, the demand for this grew smaller until at last, in 1931, there were only eight children

1. The budget for 1935 is $12,439.79 (Miss Gilbert).

and the work was discontinued. The committee in charge of this private organization proceeded to sell the home which they owned for the work, and to apply the proceeds toward the hire of a specialized and qualified nutrition worker, paying for her services through the income from the fund, supplementing it by individual contributions (in the future to be provided by the Community Chest).

At the present time the chief expenses are confined to the salary of the worker and some small amount for supplies, but for this a great deal of very interesting work is being done. The organization is particularly interested in the welfare of children, and with this in mind seventy of the most undernourished children in Middletown's schools were selected. It is now the duty of the worker to get in touch with the parents of these children and to assist and direct them in proper diet, as well as to recommend to other agencies that certain necessities such as milk are needed but the funds lacking. The worker also gives advice to any cases pointed out by the District Nurse Association or other interested parties.

The racial and economic location of the children found to be the most undernourished in Middletown's schools is illuminating for our study. Practically unanimously they come of Italian parentage, and from families which have been or are at present objects of public charity. It is moreover true that whereas the

average family size in the city is slightly less than four, the average of these families where particularly bad nutrition is found is seven, which provides an interesting comment in itself.

The Hospital Aid Society

The fourth member of this interesting quartet of private social services is the Hospital Aid Society. This is not strictly a city organization, but its scope is the whole of Middlesex County. The object of this group of women is to furnish the hospital with bandages, linen, baby clothes, and other hospital accessories. The material for this is bought at a discount by funds privately raised, and made into the necessary articles at semi-social gatherings and by the various Middlesex County church societies. In addition to this the group attempts to maintain the Hospital Library for the comfort and pleasure of the sick. In all the work done by this society is estimated as being worth about $5,000.00 each year and for it $2,200.00 will be provided by the Community Chest next year.

The American Red Cross

The local branch of the American Red Cross does not ordinarily attempt a wide field of social service locally, but is limited almost entirely to helping war veterans. Aid is given them in a small way financially, but for the most part they are aided in acquiring entrance to veterans homes and in receiving hostpial attention when necessary.

The Salvation Army

In passing I will note that the Salvation Army in Middletown is chiefly valuable for its specialized type of reclamation work, with services performed in a little building which would be inadequate for a large demand. It does, however, perform a valuable function for a particular group and is, therefore, important in a balanced chain of social services.

The Female Charitable Society

One particularly interesting, but unfortunately obscure, branch of relief is given by the oldest charitable organization in Middletown,[1] The Female Charitable Society. The work of this organization is frequently done secretely by a group of about a dozen women who give aid to the old women of the town, particularly widows whose circumstances have formerly been much more fortunate, and who find themselves in financial difficulties. The money received from theincome of an endowment fund is so distributed that it does not completely care for the needs of any of those assisted but supplements aid received from other sources.

1. Miss Briscoe (Community Chest Secretary).

Other Agencies

Space does not permit a detailed study of the other societies for social service in Middletown, but one at least deserves mention. Saint Luke's home is one of the few church organizations which is non-sectarian and provides a home for aged and indigent women. It is under the control of the Episcopal Church but being non-sectarian in service is included in the budget for the Community Chest as is the Diocesan Bureau of Social Service, an organization basicly Catholic but attending particularly to the problem of unwed mothers.

The work of the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts is well known and that of the Y.M.C.A. is treated in the chapter on Recreation.

The Middlesex Hospital

There is one prominent organization of social service which we have not treated thus far but the neglect of which would make this study incomplete. It is the Middlesex Hospital. It is a complete unit in itself with separate heating plant, laundry, plumbing, nurses' homes, and carpenter shop. The interior equipment includes 150 beds in wards, semi-wards, and private rooms, as well as operating and X-ray rooms, and one of the best laboratories in the state of Connecticut. This institution, like so many similar organizations, is not self-supporting and is financed by its endowed income supplemented by yearly

contributions obtained through a county-wide drive for funds, and an offer from the Hazen Foundation to match two for one every dollar given by subscription. To date this organization has not entered the Community Chest as it had a large deficit which could be met only by a determined individual drive, but it is expected that it will be included in future years.

Changed Position of Private Charity

In a recent "startling exposure" in the city of New York considerable comment was aroused over the fact that most of the higher salaried positions in the public charities department were held by trained social workers. This situation is likewise true in Middletown, and it is moreover true that most of these workers have had no experience in public charitable work. They have been trained by private organizations in the methodology and procedure of case work but were drawn into the public charities office in the belief that only trained and competent workers could attack the problem intelligently.

Unfortunately each of these workers for the city of Middletown is required to handle so many cases that an intelligent examination of each is impossible, so that the best that can be expected is a more or less inadequate report on the economic status of the family neglecting other problems.

It is at this point that private organization steps in to fill the gap, for there are other problems besides the economic ones. Mr. Linton B. Swift[1] points out that "Private agencies are freed from the 'physical needs' of those in distress and are turning toward what we might term the 'human' aspects of the program", he goes on to say, "We realize that a rounded family welfare and relief program requires both public and private agencies, each supplementing the other, with cooperation and an inflow of services between them. Each type of agency has its opportunity and its challenge for the future."

This challenge cannot be met in Middletown unless each organization is willing to cooperate more readily than has been true in the past. Great efforts must be made to induce the church organizations and the benevolent fraternal groups to use the facilities of a central board. It is likewise true that with the burden of monetary relief shifted to public charities the private charities must work particularly in the fields already selected by the Family Welfare Association.

1. Address at Middletown, November 6, 1934. Copy at Family Welfare Association Office.

CHAPTER IX

PROBLEMS AND CONCLUSIONS

Middletown is typical of Connecticut cities in the same population group. Not only is it chiefly an industrial community, but its composition is not greatly different from that found in the neighboring cities in the State. It has a foreign-born population which represents roughly one-quarter of the number of its total inhabitants, and a total foreign "element", made up of the foreign-born and the children of foreign-born parents, which is approximately one-half of the entire number of people living within the bounds of the township. These people have come to Middletown from the southern and eastern European countries, chiefly Italy and Poland, in search of industrial employment and have created problems of assimilation and adjustment which are not as yet completely solved.

Since the stream of immigration began shortly after the Civil War, when Middletown definitely turned away from shipping as her chief business and entered the field of industry, and because the inflow of

foreigners was practically stopped about 1910, through quota limitations and other factors, there are relatively few first generation foreigners in the younger age groups. Of the total of 5,810 foreign-born, at least 5,493 are 25 or more years of age.

It is noticeably true that the population of the city, taken as a whole, shows a smaller number of children than are found in some of the older age groups. This is common to industrial cities generally, and should not be assumed to indicate that the population of the city is in the process of decreasing. The birth and death records in this city do not indicate any such explanation, for while the birth rate has declined in the last decade, it has been accompanied by a falling death rate which leaves an almost constant net gain of births over deaths, and in this decade the city has been growing.

It appears rather that the population is regularly augmented from outside sources by men and women of the age for industrial work. This is common of both sexes, and this is explained by the fact that the chief industries of the city are able to utilize female labor to good advantage, it being generally cheaper to hire women than men for the same work, while women in some cases are more efficient.

Another sizeable part of the population is engaged in retail merchandizing. In Middletown's 320 stores there are 284 proprietors and firm members who are not on the payroll besides 1,060 full-time employees. Middletown's total retail sales of twelve million dollars represents a large proportion of the entire annual sales of the country, which uses this largest city within its borders as a shopping center.

The position of Middletown in the county is one of increasing importance, for the percentage of the inhabitants of the county located in Middletown has been increasing over a number of years, until at present 48% of the county's population is located in this city. This in itself may be an indication of the changing role of county government, for certainly the centralization eleminates to some degree the necessity of the larger governmental unit. It appears that Middletown is itself growing slowly but steadily and more rapidly than the county, so that this particular situation will be aggravated rather than relieved in the future.

The housing problem which was particularly acute at the turn of the century, and which resulted in the appearance of a cheap tenament district below Main Street, is gradually clearing itself up. The foreign part of the population for whom conditions

were particularly bad have improved their homes and are buying and expanding in other sections of the town, slowly but noticeably.

In all cases the family groups are patriarchial and monogomous, with the strength of the family group declining with the industrialization of the city. Many functions of the home have been assumed by the city and other institutions, while the occupation of the husband, and in some cases the wife, often demands that they be absent from home a large part of each day. The only chance for family gatherings comes in the evening and centers around the radio. However, the members of this community partake extensively in the opportunities for enjoyment at clubs and other organized groups. This is quite true of both the native and foreign inhabitants, but the foreign dwellers continue to celebrate festive days together with the result that neighborhood gatherings are more common among them than among the "Yankee stock".

The foreign-born, moreover, hesitate to mix with the native members of the community in other activities and are not encouraged. Each particular foreign group has its own church and the absence of a religious institution in which a particular language is spoken is cause for long and loud lamentation. The Italians, most of them natives of

Sicily, have given formal expression to racial unity more thoroughly than any other group. The church provides recreation facilities as well as religious ones. The result is that the Italians live together in their own district, the children go to schools in which most of the pupils are of the same race, and all look to their own church for clubs and other organizations. This complicates the problem of assimilation and may do much to keep them a compact and separate group for many years.

At least two Middletown institutions must be structurally changed if they are to function efficiently. The school system in Middletown is unduly complicated by the existence of two separate and individual school departments within the city limits. One of these operates within the most densely populated part of the city and is a privately incorporated system supported by the residents of that particular section. The other includes all of the area of the city not included in the first district. Its eight elementary schools and one High School are maintained and supported by the citizens of that district. At present these districts do not cooperate in any way, but are marked by a perturbing sense of rivalry which is unwholesome and uneconomical. The solution of this problem will involve the dissolution of the first school district and the absorption of it by the city.

Until that time the advantages of uniformity of educational opportunities, and economy in purchasing and transference of teaching ability cannot be obtained.

The second institutional problem in Middletown is that of social services. Until 1930 the needy were cared for through the system of Municipal Charity, for which an annual budget of $35,000.00 was considered sufficient, and the balance of charity, often consisting of financial aid, was performed by privately supported and organized social service groups. After that date, however, unemployment necessitated the entrance of the Federal government into this field through the P. W. A. and the F. E. R. A. at the same time that the municipal government was compelled to increase its expenditures considerably, the total cost to the two public charities being $200,000.00 each year. Previously the twelve largest private organizations had attempted unsuccessfully to organize a Community Chest, a miserable failure, and later to avail themselves of each other's information through a Council of Social Agencies. However, only the largest of a multitude of private organizations expressed interest and even among them some duplication of services is found.

The successful organization of a Community Chest this year will at least stop eleven annual drives for money, but unless the various churches, and other organizations now attempting social services, are willing to share and use information in common with the other groups it is probable that duplication and lack of cooperation will continue.

The function of these private agencies has changed and must change more. The physical or monetary part of the relief problem is best attended to through public agencies, while the private agencies need to assume responsibility for the other services. Health, the adjustment of family difficulties, and adequate investigation are rightly within their province. If they are to meet the existing and common demands, changes must be instituted at once.

The author feels that one group of apparently conflicting economic evidence demands some explanation. It has been shown that library officials report a decrease in the circulation of reading material, a fact which they choose to attribute to the disappearance of unemployed workmen among their borrowers. The employment situation seems somewhat better than a year ago, and the savings banks do not show a decrease of deposits. At the same time the relief bill for public agencies is as great as or greater than that of the preceding years of depression, and tremendously greater than in the period up until 1930.

It may be that there need be no correlation between book circulation and the number of unemployed, in spite of the opinion of library officials to the contrary. It is generally accepted that unemployed workers tend to do most of their reading in the first year they are out of work. A part of the explanation is undoubtedly due to the reemployment of some workers through Federal relief, which while taking them from the ranks of the unemployed, puts them into the figures for public relief. Although a large per cent of the bank depositors have small accounts, this does not indicate that most of the total deposits in dollars is controlled by that group, and as figures for the total number of individual bank depositors are not available, it appears unjustified to consider such deposits an indication of city-wide prosperity.

There has appeared in Middletown a new social group, that of the unemployed, which is at present not united and organized. It is a potential power which, if properly stirred, might present more than a social problem. There are present in it uncalculable dynamic forces, some of which are the result of lack of assimilation of foreign parts of the population.

The keynote of these conclusions may well be that in this Connecticut city, which has sought and found cheap foreign labor, there has arisen with the influx of natives of other countries a staggering problem of assimilation which has not been met. The attitude of the native population is patronizing and unsympathetic. The opportunity for inter-marriage does not come until at least the second generation and even then is discouraged by the parents. Inter-city racial districts, racial churches, racial parochial schools, and last of all racial recreation! Each of these is a problem which demands the serious consideration of all concerned with the future of Middletown. The only solution up until this time has been the accidental one of the gradual expansion, and consequent reduction in intensity, of the foreign inter-city districts. It may be that with the disappearance of the first generation foreign-born the difficulties will be alleviated.

It is not the purpose of this essay, a survey and study, to suggest measures to the inhabitants of Middletown. The author hopes that they appear more or less obvious after a consideration of this thesis. It is regrettable that the city does not take advantage of available Federal money to improve the river-front, possibly building a fine highway along

it while leaving the historic traces of maritime activity, and at the same time clear up the most unsightly part of the city by removing the dilapidated houses, which would, incidentally, force the residents from this congested foreign district.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF RACIAL GROUPS

Among the inhabitants of Middletown there are individuals who originate from one or another of many countries. It will be of interest in this study to determine something of the social and economic relationship of these different groups, and to find whether one particular foreign group has progressed up the social and economic ladder at a greater rate than the other groups. We are, moreover, interested to know whether the progress of one of these groups has been at the expense of the others.

There are at least two approaches to this problem: first, we might compare the total representative from each national group in particular economic stages; or second, we might compare the representatives of each racial group in particular economic stages in proportion to the total number of population in that national group. It is believed to be more important to follow the latter procedure, and for that reason graphs have been prepared to illustrate the changes, using the years 1880 and 1934 for comparison.

The data for the accompanying charts and graphs depend primarily on two factors. It is necessary to know the total number of persons of a given national origin in any one economic group, and it is necessary to know the total number of persons in each national group.

The first problem is attacked through the use of the directory of the City of Middletown for the years 1880 and 1934 with particular use of the classified directory where possible. The brackets into which the nationalities will be classified are arbitrarily selected as: (1) Capitalists; (2) Small manufacturers and others requiring similar capital; (3) Professional workers such as doctors, dentists, and lawyers; (4) Farmers and dairy-workers; (5) Small business owners. In the first bracket, which consists of capitalists and owners of large industries, it is necessary to rely chiefly upon a list of those who are or were, in the author's judgment, the most influential and correctly come under this class.

In the United States Census for the years 1880 and 1890 there are no figures available which may be translated directly into the country of origin of Middletown's population. Data are given, however, for the total population of the city and of the county,

that of the city being 11,732 in 1880 while that of the county was 35,589. In other words, approximately one-third of the inhabitants of the county lived in the city of Middletown.

For Middlesex County there are listed 29,610 native white inhabitants and 5,979 foreign-born, classified according to the country of birth. There is no data for the city or county as to the number of second generation foreign. At that date the second generation foreign represented approximately the same number as the first generation, in the population of the entire state,[1] and this fact is used as a basis for Middletown statistics.

It is assumed to be true that the second generation foreign born was about equal to the number of first generation foreign born in Middlesex County and in Middletown at that date. If so, we may arrive at the figure for the total foreign "element" (first plus second generations) in the county and city by simply doubling the numbers of the first generation. If we make a second assumption, that the foreign part of the population of the county is distributed proportionately,

1. United States Census (1880)

Total Population of Connecticut	622,700
Foreign-born Population of Connecticut	129,992
Second-generation Foreign-Born Population of Connecticut	147,154

then we may find statistics for Middletown in 1880. Such figures are the basis of this work.[1]

It is obvious that this chart is based on two assumptions, either of which may be mistaken. In the opinion of the author they are probably near enough the truth to justify continuation with the problem, since no other approach is available. It is important to observe, in the light of the population in Middletown today, that there are no persons of Polish origin represented (there are likewise no Polish names in the directory), and there were only 15 persons of Italian origin. The number of Irish, however, has remained about constant up until today and the Scandinavians have increased only from 450 to 500.

The problem of determining the number of persons of each nationality in any given economic group is not based on such questionable assumptions, although it is assumed that it is possible to tell from the names of the inhabitants whether they are Irish, Italian, English or other stock. The classified directory for Middletown in 1880 lists most of the economic groups with which the author chooses to deal, although in order to get the figures for the farmers it is necessary to check through the entire directory. This has been done and the result is found in Table 2, Appendix 17.

1. See Appendix 17, Table 1.

When this information has been compiled in the form of a graph we are able to get, in addition to the picture of the actual numbers of various racial or national groups in each occupation, some conception of the extent to which the natives of various countries were to be found in the particular economic groups in proportion to the numbers of persons from those countries.

In 1880 all of the comparatively few capitalists were of native stock. The owners of the smaller manufacturing plants, a larger group than the capitalists, were likewise completely from the Anglo-American group. In the professional class there are two nationalities represented, the Irish and the Anglo-American, with relatively greater numbers of Americans as well as a greater actual number. In the highly skilled workers class, which includes tradesmen whose vocation demands a period of apprenticeship, (chiefly undertakers, blacksmiths, and carpenters), we find that a new group of the inhabitants is represented. The Germans who are found in this group have not been found in the two previous classes. In proportion to the Irish and the Americans they have a larger block, a fact which must be discounted to some extent by the fact that there was a total of only one German in this group, the large percentage being the result of the small size of the German population.

In 1880 a larger part of the population was engaged in small business than in any other one of the arbitrarily selected groups. There were boot and shoe makers, meat and grocery dealers, and many other types of small privately owned businesses. Although Anglo-Americans, in absolute numbers, controlled most of these small businesses the Germans had entered that field to such an extent that proportionately they represent the largest group, ranking ahead of the Americans who were followed by the Irish. The fourth group of people represented are the Scandinavians, of whom only few were in business, but who represented a small part of the population.

In the light of what will follow, it will be well to consider the composition of those inhabitants engaged in farming. It is found that in 1880 not only were the majority of the farms owned by native Americans, but in proportion to the number of inhabitants in this group the Anglo-Americans represent a block which is more than twice the size of either of the other two. The Irish, who were also found in the professional and highly skilled brackets, have a greater number of farmers than the combined number of professional and highly skilled workers. The Scandinavians, a race which has not hitherto appeared except as small business men, had likewise turned to farming to some extent.

It will be of particular value to study the situation at present and to compare it with the 1880 survey.

The distribution of the population in 1934 is seen in Appendix 4 of this thesis, and the figures for the combined first and second generation will be used in every case. In the process of determining the number of persons engaged in each of the selected economic groups and allocating them according to country of origin the 1934 Classified Directory of the City of Middletown has been used. The results of the analysis of this are to be found in Table I, Appendix 18.

In the Capitalist class, for 1934, the author has chosen to include the obviously wealthy members of the community and the bank officers. Using this for a basis it is found that there are today some 26 Americans, 2 Irish, and 3 Italian members of this group.[1] It is noticeable that there are no Polish persons in this group in spite of the large number of Polish inhabitants of the city. The Americans are larger in absolute and proportionate numbers in the Capitalist class, with the next largest percentage found among the Irish, followed by the Italians.

1. See Appendix 18, Table 1.

It will not be necessary to analyze each of these particular economic groupings, but some attention should be given to the farmers. The Polish and the Scandinavians have a sizeable block of their members in agriculture and dairy-farming.[1] In all, the total numbers of farmers are drawn about half from native groups and half from the foreign, a situation which is in sharp contrast to the almost complete ownership of farms by Americans in 1880. The result has been that in proportion to the numbers represented the Americans have been replaced by Scandinavians and Polish on the farms.

In conclusion we may note that there has arisen in Middletown a sizeable group in the class which was called "Small Manufacturers" in 1880. This class now contains a number of garage-owners and contractors, businesses which require considerable quantities of capital, and the numbers in it have increased considerably. Likewise the number of persons in the Capitalist class has increased since the 1880 period, and now contains representatives of foreign origin.

Since 1880 Middletown has received a Polish population which is now largely centered in the farm and lower economic brackets. The extension of these people into the professional and small manufacturing classes is almost negligible.

1. See Appendices 19 and 20.

The progress of the Italians has been slightly more rapid, they being elevated chiefly to the extent of owning small businesses (chiefly stores and barber shops), and entering the professions, but of their number only three are particularly influential.

The Irish part of the population has advanced steadily into the higher brackets, continuing its way into the capitalist classes. They have a noticeable number in professional work.

The Germans are located in the skilled and professional classes but do not continue into the capitalist bracket as the Irish do. A large number of them are small store owners.

The Scandinavians are, in proportion to their numbers, mostly farmers, continue into the small manufacturing class, but have not sent any members into the capitalist class.

The Americans have been superseded on the farms by the Scandinavians, the Germans and Poles. The monopoly which the Americans held in the capitalist and small manufacturer groups in 1880 has been broken down. The largest group of capitalists and small manufacturers is still American, but it would appear that with the passage of time, other factors remaining constant, there will be a greater appearance of foreigners in that group.

It may be said in general that more than any other single foreign group the Irish have gone steadily up the economic ladder. The proportion of the native born in each of the groups has continued to be about constant[1] with some increase in the upper two groups. The Germans have a good percentage on the intermediate rungs of the economic ladder, but have not reached the top as have some of the Italians and some of the Irish.

1. Tables 5 and 6.

A P P E N D I X

APPENDIX 1

POPULATION OF MIDDLETOWN

1930	Mid'town	Norwich	Torrington	W. Hfd.	W. Haven	Meriden
Native White	75.4%	76.2%	71.5%	79.8%	82.8%	76.6%
Foreign Born	23.7%	21.8%	27.9%	19.6%	16.6%	23.1%
Negro	.9%	1.8%	.6%	.5%	.6%	.3%
1920						
Native White	72.6%	71.9%	65.9%	78.2%		73.0%
Foreign Born	26.9%	25.6%	33.6%	21.0%		26.5%
Negro	.4%	2.4%	.5%	.8%		0.5%
1910						
Native White	67.3%	68.7%	62.1%			70.0%
Foreign Born	32.1%	28.6%	37.3%			29.5%
Negro	.6%	2.6%	.5%			.5%

APPENDIX 2

	Middletown Town		Middletown City		Norwich		Torrington		Meriden	
Population 1890			9,013	Increase	16,156	Increase	4,283	Increase	21,652	Increase
" 1900			9,589	6.4%	17,251	6.8%	8,360	95.2%	24,296	12.2%
" 1910	20,749		11,851	23.6%	20,367	18.1%	15,483	85.2%	27,265	12.2%
" 1920	22,129	7.1%	13,638	15.1%	22,304	9.5%	20,623	33.2%	29,867	9.5%
" 1930	24,554	10.9%	24,554	80.0%	23,021	3.2%	26,040	26.3%	38,481	28.8%
1930				% [illegible]		% [illegible]		% [illegible]		% [illegible]
Native White			18,509	75.4	17,550	76.2	18,617	71.5	29,483	76.6
Foreign born			5,810	23.7	5,028	21.8	7,256	27.9	8,871	23.1
Negro			227	0.9	421	1.8	167	0.6	125	0.3
Foreign Parents			8,603		8,063		9,537		13,705	
Males			11,860		11,192		13,329		19,137	
Females			12,694		11,829		12,711		19,344	
Males over 16			8,710		7,707		9,491		13,884	
Females " "			9,559		8,505		8,953		14,208	
Foreign										
Italian			1,754		659		2,620		1,641	
Polish			1,300		1,639		721		2,005	
Mixed Parents			2,091		2,237		2,246		4,222	
Total Foreign and Mixed parentage				43.0		44.7		45.2		46.3

APPENDIX 3

Population Growth
I City and Town of Middletown
II City of Middletown
1756
1774
1790
1800
1810
1820
1830
1840
1850
1860
1870
1880
1890
1900
1910
1920
1930
2,000
4,000
6,000
8,000
10,000
12,000
14,000
16,000
18,000
20,000
22,000
24,000
26,000
I
II

APPENDIX 4

POPULATION

RACIAL DISTRIBUTION (1930)

COUNTRY	FOREIGH BORN	FOREIGN BORN AND/~~OR~~ MIXED PARENTAGE
England	282	603
Scotland	85	210
North Ireland	81	258
Irish Free State	472	1613
Norway	8	6
Sweden	373	494
Denmark	28	28
Switzerland	7	26
France	29	68
Germany	360	759
Poland	1300	2406
Czechoslavakia	103	
Austria	84	100
Hungary	56	15
Russia	250	268
Lithuania	56	32
Greece	51	34
Italy	1754	3034
Portugal	6	7
Canada French	132	306
Canadian	199	217
All Others	94	210
	5810	10,694

% of Total Population..23.3% of population.. 43.5% of population

APPENDIX 5

ILLITERACY

(Middletown City)

	1910	1920
Total Population	11,851	13,638
Total Population over 10	9,547	10,374
Illiterates	1,073	822
Native White Population	5,797	6,684
Illiterate	11	22
Foreign Born	3,682	3,632
Illiterate	1,052	799
Negroes	65	53
Illiterate	9	1

See: United States Census Reports, 1910 and 1920.
(Area of city changed between 1920 and 1930 so no comparative figures available for 1930.)

APPENDIX 6

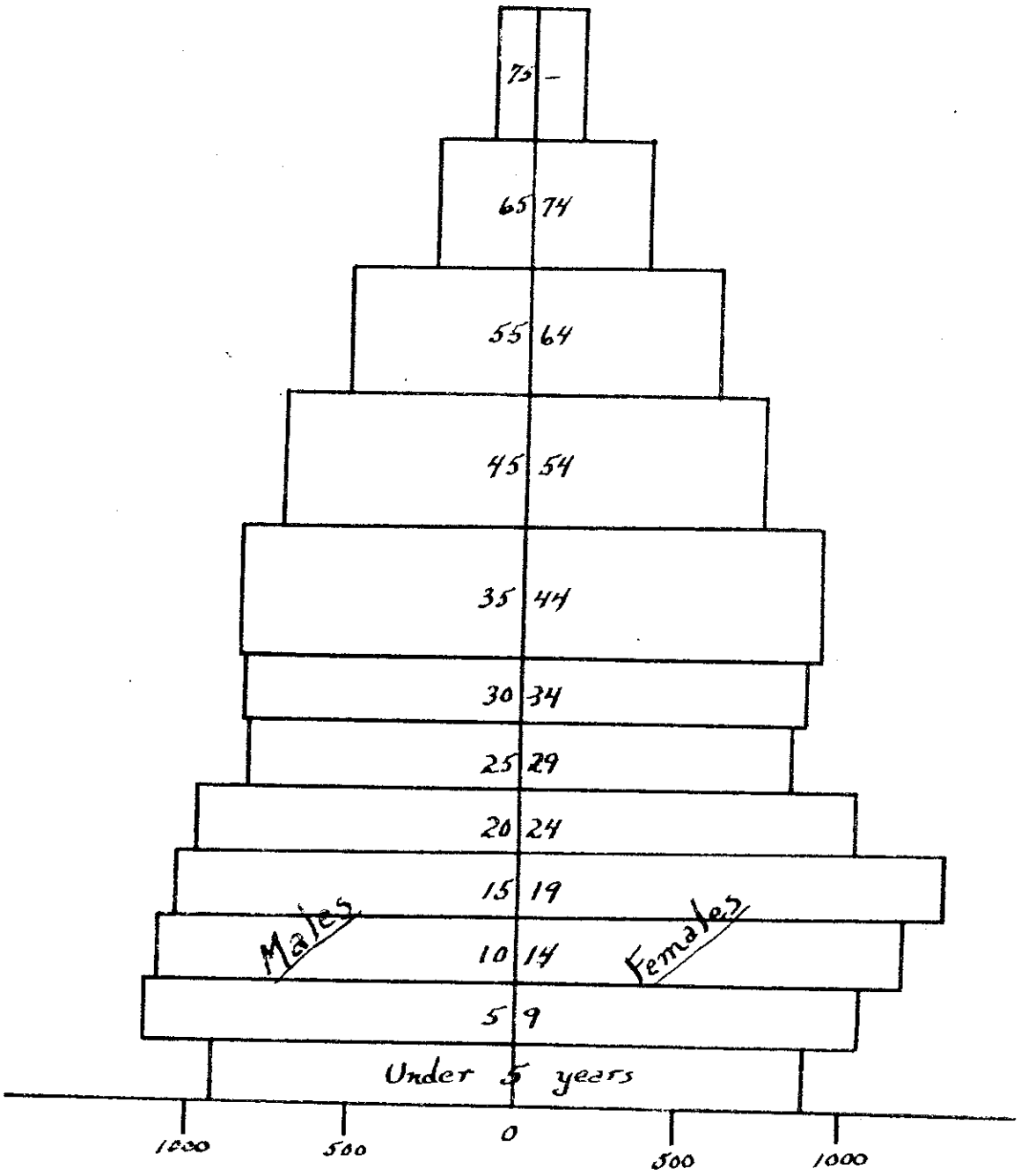
AGE COMPOSITION

Middletown 1930

	All Classes			Native White		Foreign-Born	
	Total	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0---	24,554	11,860	12,694	8,890	9,619	2,873	2,937
0-4	1,818	928	890	919	879	4	4
5-9	2,181	1,122	1,059	1,107	1,041	7	10
10-14	2,286	1,100	1,186	1,075	1,155	22	13
15-19	2,358	1,058	1,300	1,022	1,227	33	43
20-24	2,002	977	1,025	882	916	82	99
25-29	1,647	817	830	658	658	149	165
30-34	1,724	838	886	564	600	261	280
35-44	3,528	1,680	1,848	884	1,064	785	764
45-54	2,916	1,479	1,437	769	788	694	637
55-64	2,273	1,076	1,197	572	650	494	534
65-74	1,287	570	717	300	427	268	285
75-over	529	211	318	134	213	74	103

United States Bureau of the Census. Census Reports, 1930.

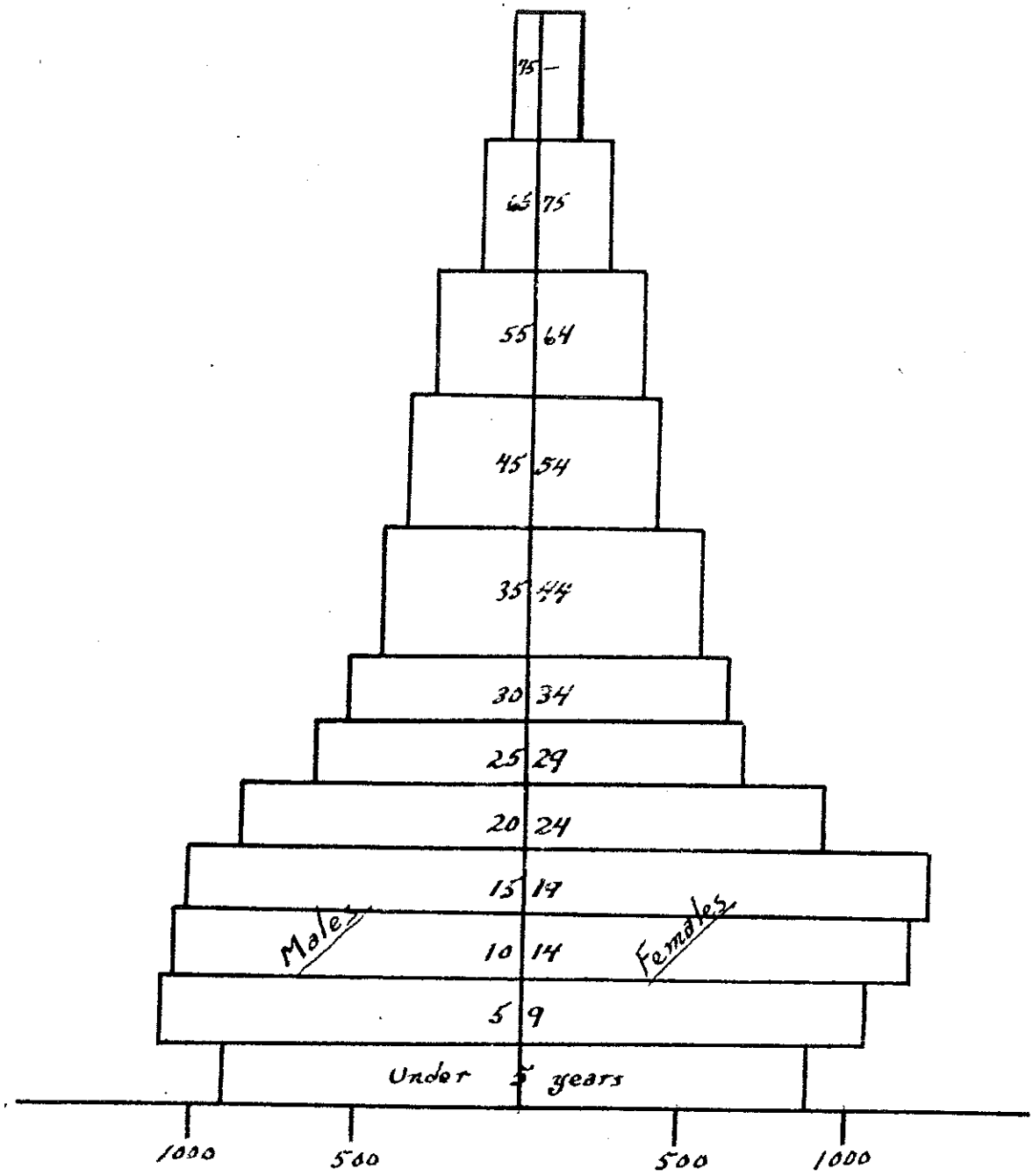
APPENDIX 7



Age Distribution

Entire Population

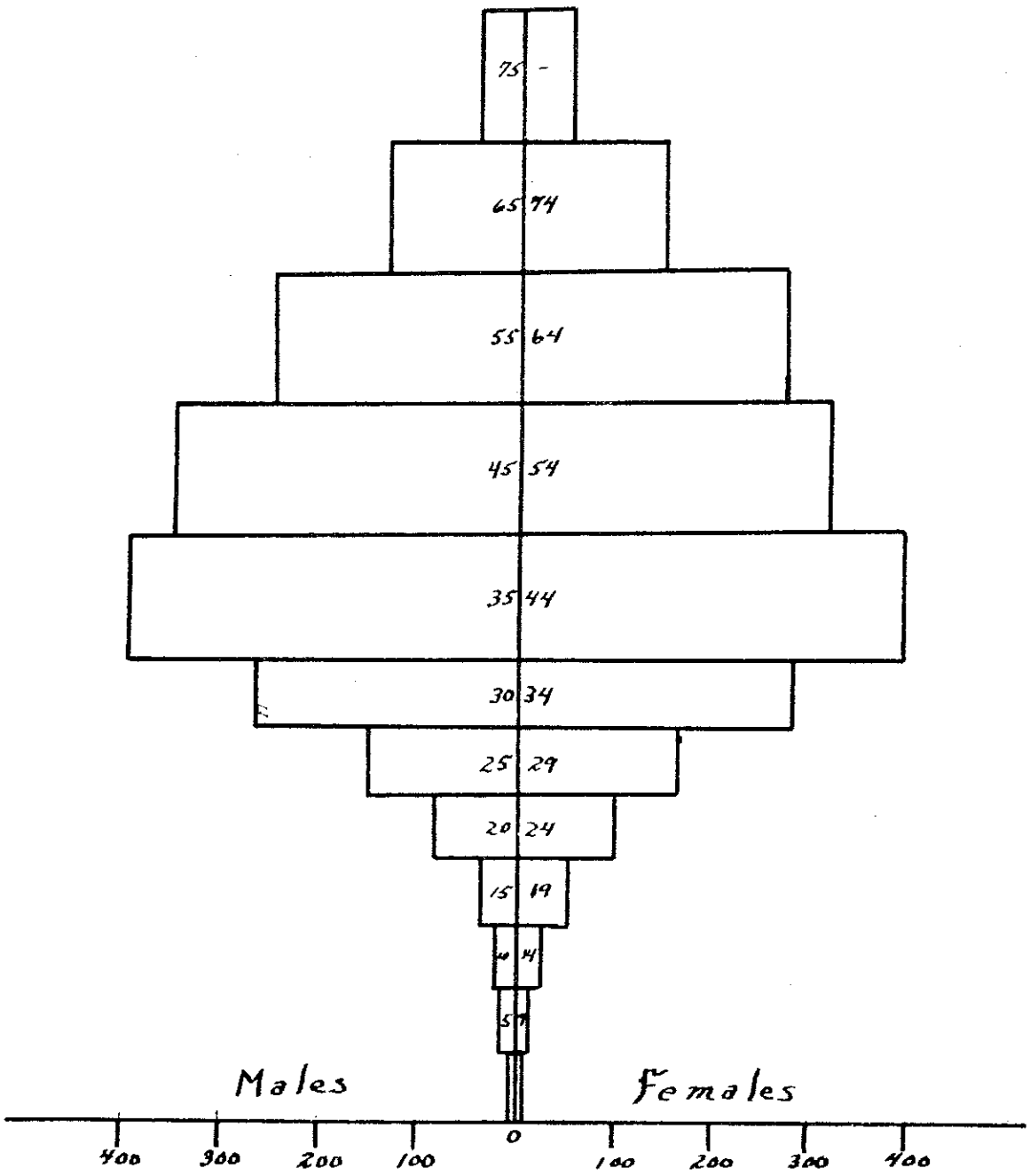
APPENDIX 8



Age Distribution

Native White

APPENDIX 9



Age Distribution — Foreign White

APPENDIX 10

YEAR	POPULATION	BIRTHS	Per 1000 BIRTHS	Per 1000 DEATHS	DEATHS
1915	22,468	587	26.1	21.3	
1916	22,799	578	25.4	24.9	
1917	23,130	652	28.2	27.4	633
1918		623			756
1919		607			495
1920	22,201	650	29.3	23.9	531
1921	22,343	657	29.4	21.0	470
1922	22,485	605	26.9	20.1	453
1923	22,627	598	26.4	22.4	506
1924	22,769	599	26.3	22.2	506
1925	22,900	570	25.2	24.0	550
1926	23,100	575	24.9	23.0	531
1927		616			459
1928		558	23.1	20.3	491
1929	24,376	562	23.1	22.0	536
1930	24,600	608	24.7	22.2	546
1931	24,800	569	22.9	20.5	509

Compiled from annual year book of birth statistics--
United States Government.

APPENDIX 11

MARITAL CONDITIONS
(Middletown 1930)

Males 15 years and over	8,710		
Males single (15 and over)		3,620	41.6%
Males married (15 and over)		4,626	53.1%
Males widowed (15 and over)		389	
Males divorced (15 and over)		69	
Females 15 years and over	9,559		
Females single (15 and over)		3,580	37.5%
Females married (15 and over)		4,882	51.1%
Females widowed (15 and over)		989	
Females divorced (15 and over)		105	

See: United States Census Reports, 1930.

APPENDIX 12

FAMILIES

Value or Rental	
Owned non-farm homes	2,210
Value under $1,500.00	36
$1,500.00 - $2,999.00	139
$3,000.00 - $4,999.00	498
$5,000.00 - $7,499.00	736
$7,500.00 - $9,999.00	328
$10,000.00 - over	458
Not reported	15
Median Value (Dollars)	
All owners	6,442
Native white owners	6,857
Foreign-born white owners	6,055
Rented Non-Farm Homes	2,399
Rents under $15.00	235
$15.00 - $29.00	1,200
$30.00 - $49.00	763
$50.00 - $99.00	159
$100.00 - over	15
Not reported	27
Median Family Size	
All families	3.67
Native white	3.23
Foreign-born white	4.08
Dwellings	
Total	3841
1 family	3123
2 families	567
3 or more families	151

See: 15th Census of the United States. Population, Vol. VI--Families. P. 233.

APPENDIX 13

FAMILIES

Lighting

Gas and Electricity	69.3%
Oil	15.0%
Electricity	9.0%
Gas	6.7%
	100.0%

Heating

Stoves	38.6%
Hot Air	25.3%
Hot Water	17.9%
Steam	14.9%
Oil	2.3%
	100.0%

Exterior Construction

Clapboard	76.6%
Common brick	10.0%
Shingles	7.9%
Stucco	4.3%
Siding	.6%
Stone	.3%
Other	.3%
	100.0%

Framework

Frame	88.8%
Brick	10.3%
Blocks	..3%
Reinforced concrete	.3%
Mill	.3%
	100.0%

Foundation

Stone	42.9%
Concrete	27.8%
Brick	26.4%
Pile	2.9%
	100.0%

Single homes	69.3%
Tenement	25.9%
Bungalo	3.3%
Double tenement	1.4%
Apartments	.1%
	100.0%

Based on 700 sample dwellings, selected as typical by Commissioner of Taxation Ross in 1931.

APPENDIX 14

ELECTRIC CONSUMPTION (KWH)

Year	K.W.H.
1928	10,019,825
1929	12,427,978
1930	10,704,995
1931	10,879,035
1932	8,741,819
1933	10,164,982
1934	10,087,997 (11 months)

Figures available through Chamber of Commerce.

APPENDIX 15

SAVINGS DEPOSITS

(Three Banks)

Month	1932	1933	1934
January	$27,078,230	$26,262,747	$26,644,158
February	$26,871,781	$26,286,118	$26,357,811
March	$26,831,265	$26,279,493	$26,352,418
April	$26,801,172	$26,223,123	$26,459,418
May	$26,547,437	$26,164,878	$26,504,533
June	$26,447,421	$26,172,928	$26,473,413
July	$26,411,214	$26,208,530	$26,608,340
August	$26,293,522	$26,238,272	$26,803,565
September	$26,199,135	$26,158,928	$26,838,000
October	$26,144,693	$26,163,632	$27,135,949
November	----------	----------	----------
December	$26,102,864	$27,008,432	$26,797,601

Compiled by the author from figures available at the Chamber of Commerce.

APPENDIX 16

TOTAL PUBLIC LIBRARY CIRCULATION

1930-1931	Adults	Juvenile	Total
Non-fiction	23,893	19,808	43,701
Fiction	70,126	21,423	91,549
	94,019	41,231	135,250
1931-1932			
Non-fiction	28,073	27,808	55,881
Fiction	90,240	33,565	123,805
	118,313	61,373	179,686
1932-1933			
Non-fiction	32,650	28,503	61,153
Fiction	103,521	37,982	141,503
	136,171	66,485	202,656
1933-1934			
Non-fiction	32,838	75,544	108,382
Fiction	100,180		100,180
	133,018	75,544	208,562

APPENDIX 17

Table 1

	Total Population	Native Population	Foreign-Born	Italian	Irish	German	Scandinavian	English
Middlesex County	*35,589	*29,610	*5,979	*23	3,401	*493	*683	*931
Middletown	*11,732	7,000	4,000	15	2,000	333	454	620

*Actual figures taken from United States Census 1880. Other data estimated.

Table 2 -- 1800

	Italian	Irish	German	Scandinavian	American
Captialists Big Businessmen	0	0	0	0	6
Small Manufacturers	0	0	0	0	12
Professional	0	2	0	0	26
Highly Skilled	0	3	1	0	15
Farmers	0	9	0	3	100
Small Businessmen	1	24	25	4	224

APPENDIX 18

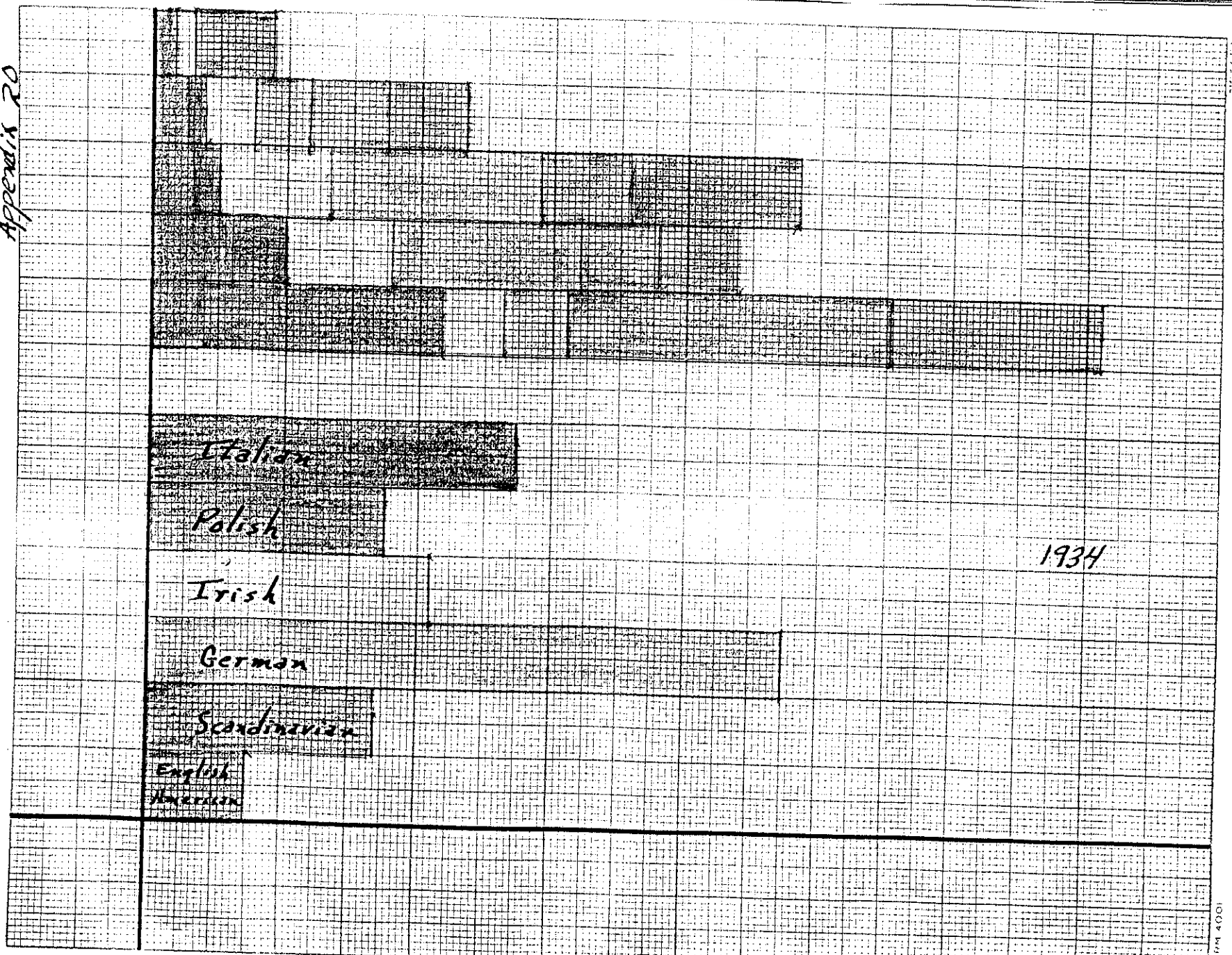
Table 1

	Italian	Polish	Irish	German	Scandinavian	American
Capitalists	3	0	2	0	0	26
Contractors Garage Owners Small Manufacturers	6	1	4	2	2	26
Professional	7	1	9	8	2	55
Highly Skilled	2	6	9	7	2	26
Farmers	8	28	5	13	8	69
Small Business Owners	108	33	43	47	11	119

Appendix 19

Capitalists
Small Manufacturers
Professional
Petite Bourgeoisie
Farmers
Irish
Small Business Owners
1880

Appendix 20


Italian
Polish
Irish
German
Scandinavian
English
American
1934

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