DUSON

A Sociological Survey of Community Life
made by
Social Research Class
Southwestern Louisiana Institute
Table of Contents

Chapter                                  Page
I  The Community of Duson                1
   Introduction                          1
   Acknowledgements                      3
II A Historical Sketch of Duson          4
   Nona Nel Mouton                       9
III A Survey of the High School Youth    9
IV A Survey of Duson Community           16
V  A Survey of Farm Life Around          22
   Duson                                 22
VI Conclusion                            27
The Community of Duson
Chapter I
Introduction

This survey was made by students of Southwestern Louisiana Institute who are advanced students in the Department of Sociology and this work represents a part of their fieldwork in the making of surveys. The project was headed by Dr. R. H. Bolyard, Professor of Sociology and head of the Department of Sociology at Southwestern. The entire work of the project was carried on under his supervision and guidance. When the project was begun, the primary purpose of its making was not just for the students to gain experience in the techniques of the Sociological research but rather in the hope that its findings, which are available to the use of any interested person or group, will prompt improvements in Duson where they are needed, and also redound the many good characteristics of the community.

The method used for the gathering of the data herein was the Self-Survey. Each interviewee filled out the schedule on his own and without the aid of the members of the class or Dr. Bolyard. For reference purposes a copy of this schedule will be found in Appendix A of the survey. The questions were so designed as to enable the interviewees to answer quickly and accurately the questions. But it must be understood that this method had its shortcomings. It is possible for one to mis-interpret questions, and to leave them blank. On the other side of the ledger, however, it is thought that in the self-survey many personal questions are more accurately answered than if the answers were given to an interviewer in a face-to-face relationship.
The survey has been divided into three parts in order to gain a better overall picture of the community and its life. Three groups were approached first, the high school students, second the residents of the town itself, and third, the rural families living in the trade area of Duson and its environs. The schedule for the high school youth was answered by eight students. There is no high school in Duson, making it necessary for the high school students to travel to Scott, a neighboring village to go to school. This fact must be considered in the evaluation of this phase of the survey. The farm schedule was completed by forty-two families, and the town survey by thirty-seven families.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dr. Russel H. Bolyard, Head of the Department of Sociology at Southwestern Louisiana Institute is the maison d'etre of this survey. Had it not been for his planning, his guidance, his leadership and constant supervision it could never have been accomplished.

The High School Students of the Duson Community helped with the actual compilation. They deserve a tip of the proverbial hat, for it was they who contacted the individuals who replied to the questionnaires. Their names follow: Miss Shirley Nickel, Miss Edna Mae Cradeur, Miss Irene Leger, Mr. Dalfred Alleman.

Mr. Alvin Hoffpauir, Science teacher at the Duson School, Secretary-Treasurer of the Duson Lions Club and Scout Master for Boy Scout Troop 112 was instrumental in making this survey of the community of Duson a success. He gave of his time and energy in direct supervision of the interviewers.

Mr. Ben Kaplan, Associate Professor of Sociology at Southwestern Louisiana Institute did a magnificent job in supervising the writing of the study of the community of Duson by Miss Louise Bourne, Mr. Frank Wallace and Miss Velma Wise, all students in the Department of Sociology.

We desire to pay particular tribute to Miss Mona Mel Mouton who wrote the History of the Community of Duson, and furnished the pictures found in this master copy.
Chapter II
A Historical Sketch of Duson
Mona Mel Neutron

Duson was named after W. W. and C. C. Duson. Willie was born in 1853 and Curley in 1846 along the Mermentau River. Their father was of Scotch-Irish stock, born in Canada and migrated to Louisiana when the French Canadians rose against the English in 1837. Curley Duson became sheriff of St. Landry Parish, later U. S. marshall and state senator. W. W. worked first at herding cattle, carrying mail, working in a sawmill or clerking in country trading posts to save a little nest egg during his boyhood. In 1870, he took this fund and entered Blackman's school in New Orleans where he remained seven months. Later, he was a merchant until 1884, when he began operating a small real estate business in Rayne where he finally acquired the Rayne Signal. Then he became obsessed with the idea of developing the land of his birth and became general manager of the Southwest Land Company and used his paper as his first medium of advertising. Thus he bought the many acres of land which now constitute Duson and the surrounding country. And to this day the village of Duson has retained the name of the Scotch-Irish pioneers who blazed the trail through the section which now constitutes much of Acadia Parish. (The town of Duson is in Lafayette Parish.) There is no record in the Lafayette Parish court house when Duson was incorporated into a village.

Old land marks in Duson are the depot location which was bought by L. & W. Railroad Company in 1892 (the present depot building was built in 1915.) Mr. Felix Campbell has been the agent since 1913. De Jean's store, now Mr. Isaac Domingue's warehouse; and the city hall which was used for the first school house building in the early 1900's. Today, it is used as a courtroom where the mayor
holds sessions for local misdemeanors, as a voting place and as the Branch Library of the Lafayette Parish Library. The library was installed in 1946 with Mrs. Emma Fatureau Mouton as Branch librarian. The library is open every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 2 to 5.

Back of the city hall is the jail. At the present time the old two-cell wooden jail, which had been in use for about 40 years, has been torn down and a new, cement block, two-cell jail has been built.

With the raising of the old jail, many anecdotes have been recalled by elder Duson citizens. There is the one told of the two fellows who had to be taken to the "doc" for a little patching up after their night in jail. They were tossed into opposite sides of the little jail and during the night managed to break down the separating partition where they fought it out the remainder of the night. Somehow the Duson jail withstood the battering.

Escape came easy for one little colored chap who was incarcerated in the Duson jailhouse for some reason now long forgotten. During the night, the lad pried up some loose planks of the outdoor toilet attached to the back and in the morning when the jailer came to see about him, he was long gone. With the new cement jail, however, escape will not be possible, not even by a conniving Tom Sawyer.

Due to the majority of Roman Catholics in the village, there is one church, the St. Theresa of the Child Jesus Catholic Church built in the center of town in 1927 and enlarged twice. Until the first resident priest came, a year or so later, it was placed under Father Hubert Lerchen, pastor of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Rayne. Father Mirat, a French speaking priest, was the first resident priest from 1928 to June, 1932. The second was Father Gerbeau from June, 1932 to September, 1932. After that Rev. Louis Bertrand, a French-speaking Canadian, was appointed resident pastor by Bishop J. Jeanmard.
In 1949 the St. Theresa Hall was built in the lot next to the church. It is used for all church organization meetings, i.e., Ladies Altar Society, Holy Name Society and it is rented for big social affairs such as wedding receptions or military funerals. In the summer it is used for bingo games given by the Ladies Altar Society.

The first stores in Duson were the De Jean store and the Jack Davis store. Later Judge Breaux's store was established in 1912. The old De Jean store building is still standing and is used as a warehouse by Isaac Domingue. (It is opposite the Isaac Domingue store.) Judge Breaux's son, Gabriel, operates a store in Duson today. There are seven stores operating in Duson at present: Isaac Domingue, who bought his present store from Leo Judice in 1940; Lucas Domingue store, built in 1940; Eli Champagne store, built in 1924; Laverne Fish Market bought from Walter Stelly in 1951; Gabriel Breaux store, who became a partner with his father in 1920 and went into business of his own in 1924; August Soileau store built in 1947 and the Dupuis store in 1947.

There have only been two resident doctors in Duson. The present doctor, Dr. Sydeny Hernandez, a native of Southwest Louisiana, came to practice in Duson twenty years ago, shortly after Dr. R. J. Arretig left. Dr. R. J. Arretig had a hospital in Duson but in 1932 a fire, caused by a faulty electric wire completely destroyed both the hospital and the house. After this disaster, Dr. Arretig moved to Church Point and built a hospital there. He is now deceased, but the hospital is run by his daughter and her husband, Dr. and Mrs. John Williams.

The present school building is of cement and has eight classrooms and an auditorium. In 1951 a modern dining room was attached to the school building by means of an arcade. Before this present school building, there was a brown
wooden schoolhouse with five class rooms. The present building was first built in 1929 and housed only three grades and the auditorium. They were added to in 1938. Previous to the old brown building was a square, white house, which is still standing to the right of the present school site and is used as a residence. And the very first school building was the small one room building now used as the city hall.

The post office was established in 1889.

There are three cotton gins in the town close to the railroad tracks: the Cotton Products Company of Opelousas, the Peoples' Gin of Lafayette and the Southern Cotton Oil Company of Eunice. During the summer they operate both night and day due to the many cotton growing farmers around Duson.

There are two service stations in Duson located on Highway 90. The Duson Service Station owned by Buford Benoit and Wilson Trahan was bought from Elfesh Lagneaux in 1946, and the Labbe Brothers Service Station east of it on Highway 90 was established in 1946.

There are three night clubs in Duson. Leon's Lounge, a combination of lounge and bar is owned by Leon Trahan and formerly owned by his father, Joe Trahan. Just east of the Labbe Brothers Service Station is the Four Roses Club built in 1938. The Live Oak Club situated at the west intersection of town on Highway 90 was built by Walter Trahan in 1938 and bought by Whitfield Lacy and Effry Babineaux in 1947. Other businesses along Highway 90 are a small blacksmith shop operated by Etienne Allemann built in 1946 and the Hutchingson Lumber Company, built in 1947, which employs more men than any business in town.

Along the railroad tracks is another lumber yard owned by Richard Lagneaux and Son. They bought it in 1930 from Krause and Managan.
The first Cleaning and Pressing Shop was established in Duson in 1947 by Mr. and Mrs. Joe Gautreaux.

The present barber shop is run by Clay Martin, who came to Duson in 1950.

The moving picture theatre which is on School Street, was built in 1947 and is owned and operated by Camille Guidry and Dominic Guidry. It is the first talking picture show in town as the one previously owned by Joe Trahan (since converted into a bar) showed silent films and charged 25 cents per family. As one says in the vernacular, "Those were the good old days."

After World War II, when material again became available, small lots of land east of Duson were bought from Earl States (who bought the land from R. J. Arretig) and small houses with brick-siding paper went up one after the other. People began to refer to the new addition as Paper Town and although many of the houses have been recovered since then with white asbestos shingling, the name Paper Town has stuck.

It was this new addition which gave Duson its jump in population. It now has a higher population figure than its neighbor Scott. The population as recorded in the last census report by the Clerk of Court in Lafayette is 702.

In 1949 natural gas was piped to houses in Duson at a low cost.

There are three community organizations in the village: Ladies Altar Society begun in 1928, Holy Name Society organized and re-organized since 1928; and a Boy Scout Troop in 1949 by Alvin Hoffpauir.

The government of the village consists of a mayor, three councilmen and a peace officer.
Duson has no high schools. The eight high school students interviewed must ride a school bus to Scott to attend the Scott High School. Six girls and two boys were interviewed. One girl lives on a farm, as do both of the boys. The remaining five girls live in Duson. The three students whose homes were on farms lived an average of 2.5 miles from the nearest town, the farthest being the girl, who lived four miles from town, and the nearest lived 1 mile from a town.

The boys were a little older than the girls, one being 19, the other, 18. Only one girl was 18, the remainder 17. Both boys were in the twelfth grade, and all of the girls, except one seventeen year-old, who was in the eleventh grade, were also in the twelfth.

The courses of study of the eight individuals were very similar. Two of the girls listed Home Economics, one Home Economics and Commerce, three Commerce, one boy listed Commerce, and one "English, American History, Agriculture, Typing."

The replies to the question regarding "after-school-work" were rather surprising. Only one girl did outside work. Her job was housekeeping and it netted her $125.00 a year. Both boys, and the remaining five girls listed no gainful employment after school. Work at home was done by five of the students, four girls listing general housework, and one boy listing work on the farm. This question unanswered by one girl, and one boy said that he did no work at home. It is interesting to note that although this boy lived on a farm with an income of $3,000 a year he did nothing toward the earning of that money, or toward increasing it. None of the students who answered the question regarding their part-time work leading to full time work after school felt that his work was of this nature.
The high school students come from homes with an average of 4.5 persons living in them, the largest being 10, the smallest, 3. The mean parental age was 52.0 for the fathers, and 48.62 for the mothers. One girl listed six brothers and sisters living at home, but made no mention of parents, or of being orphaned. It is therefore assumed that the parents were not included in the list. The homes of seven of the students were owned. One girl lived on a rented farm. Seven replied to the question regarding the length of time lived in their present location; the mean length being 17 years, with the longest listed as 36 years, and the shortest as 3 years. One girl failed to fill in this question. The students from farm homes lived on farms from 50 acres to 130 acres, the average being 75.5 acres. The ones who lived in town lived in homes situated on from 1 to 6 lots. Five homes were equipped with central heat, and three were not. Seven had electricity and one did not. Since Duson is on the edge of a petroleum producing area, petroleum gases were in all of the homes. Two of the homes had no running water, and six had water piped into their homes, the bathroom facilities in general were good, with six having baths, and two homes not being so equipped. This is a very good average for a predominantly rural and small town group. Even more surprising is the number of telephones in the homes; five homes were provided with the instruments, three were not. The homes were, as far as space is concerned small, when one considers the fact that the average number of persons living at home was 4.5, for the average number of rooms in the houses was 5.55, the smallest number was four, the largest, seven. One student did not reply to the question.

Since Duson is a very small town and shopping facilities are limited, all of the families found it necessary to go to another town for their heavier shopping needs. They chose Rayne and Lafayette for this shopping, largely for furniture
and clothes. Many also bought all or part of their groceries in Rayne and Lafayette. There being no hospital in Rayne, all had to come to Lafayette for this service. The medical needs of three families were partially cared for in Duson, with the remainder going either to Lafayette or Rayne. In addition to going to the other two centers for their basic needs, they also were used for entertainment, the movies being the most popular listing.

All of the students belonged to some club in the high school, but none were officers. This might be because they attend the Scott High School, and are a minority group in the school. All eight were members of the Teen Age Literary Club of the school, seven were in the Library Club, five in the Business Club, four in the Home Economics Club, one in the Senior Club, and one was a member of the Catholic Holy Name Society, which is not connected with the school.

Two of the questions regarding recreational activities were not properly filled out, making it impossible to determine what were the favorite recreational pastimes of these two students. The ones that filled out their schedules properly listed their recreational preference in this order:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recreation</th>
<th>Preference</th>
<th>Listed by number of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ball games</td>
<td>3, 1, 10, 1, 3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cards</td>
<td>4, 11, 11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>3, 1, 1, 2; 1, 2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movies</td>
<td>2, 2, 1, 3, 4, 3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>4, 4, 2, 7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>3, 7, 4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>2, 8, 3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>1, 2, 9, 9, 9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>5, 6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skating</td>
<td>6, 5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows</td>
<td>8, 10</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In reply to the question regarding participation in sports, the two boys listed basketball, football, boxing and track. Two of the girls listed basketball. The remainder answered "none". It is interesting to note that one of the two girls that replied to the question lived on a farm, and that the other lived in the community of Duson.

All eight of the students questioned felt that there were not enough sports and recreational facilities available to them in their community. All but two girls said that Duson has "no recreational facilities." The two girls felt that there was not enough interest manifested by the older members of the community, and that there was "no dancing place for stags." All felt that the community needed to add more facilities for recreation. The following are the suggested additions:

1. Better movies
2. More places of amusement
3. A swimming pool
4. Park and play ground
5. Teen-age canteen
6. A confectionary establishment
7. A community center

The entire list is repeated here in order that one may gain not only a grasp of what Duson needs in the way of new amusement, but also to depict its present serious lack of commonplace amusements, such as a candy store or movie house that shows good films.

For their best times the students were about evenly divided between Duson and other places, four staying in Duson, three going away from the village, and one listing "Duson and Lafayette." All listed that they had their best times in night clubs and dancing. It is assumed that the two go hand in hand. They travel from ten miles to one block for their entertainment, the farthest being the 10 mile trip to Lafayette.
Two of the interviewees felt that they received enough aid and cooperation from older people and youth leaders in their search for entertainment and amusement. Six felt that they did not receive enough cooperation or aid from this group. The interviewees felt that they received the most aid in their recreational activities from their parents and teachers.

To the question "Are the churches in your community doing all that they can to help young people?" four answered yes, four no. The question "Which church is doing the most?" is rather out of place for this situation since the Roman Catholic is the only church in Duson, so whatever this church was doing for the youth was the "most". One individual, a girl, felt that the church was doing nothing for young people, but made no explanation of her remark. The students who felt that their church, the Catholic Church, was doing the most for them realized that it was the only faith represented, as we have shown. One felt that its activities were hampered because it asks for "too much money." It is interesting to note that even though this schedule were answered by seven high school seniors, and one junior, two of them, 25% of the group, could not spell the word "Catholic" correctly.

The following are activities that five of the students feel that the church could engage in to improve its program for high school youth:

1. Using the church hall for small gatherings or parties
2. By having a music box in the new club house they have.
3. More teen-age activities
4. Getting together several girls and speaking to the pastor.
5. Having a new priest. (It is of interest to note that this reply is made by the boy who felt that the church asked for too much money.)

Seven felt that the school that they attended, the Scott High School was well run. In answer to the question "What do you like most about school?" the students answered "sports, activities, Business studies, parties, home ec., the
way things are carried on, and boxing." It is important to note that only one listed as liking academic endeavor best about the school. They seemed to believe that their school was a greater success as a social institution rather than a place for academic endeavor.

Five of the eight felt they were receiving sufficient help in school to aid them in their prospective jobs. Three did not feel that school was helping them prepare for their future work. In general the former felt the curriculum of the school offered them courses that would be of value to them in later life. The latter felt a lack in the offerings of the mathematics department and the need for a mechanical shop.

One felt that there was no need for industrial and commercial expansion in Duson itself in order to make jobs nearer home. Five felt that such growth was needed, and the question was left unanswered by two of the students. Suggestions for this expansion included a cannery, a potato plant, offices, and cloth stores. The one who did not see a need for expansion because of what he termed a lack of "importation" facilities. This, if he meant transportation is not true, for both the Southern Pacific Rail Road and the U. S. Highway 90 pass through the very center of the community and both afford excellent means of transportation.

In reply to the question "Do you feel as if you are part of the community?" all of the students felt that they were a part of their community, and had a role to play in it.

They liked their community's quietness, its people, its church, and its roominess. They did not like the proverbial gossipping of a small town, the old people, the abundance of taverns, and the scarcity of jobs. Two wanted to continue living in their home community, one did not fill in the question properly, and the remainder wanted to live elsewhere. The lack of jobs and the
gossip of the inhabitants were the reasons given for wanting to leave Duson. They would like to live in Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Houston, the outskirts of a medium-sized city, in a large city, on a large farm, in any town, and one has not decided where he wanted to live. All chose these places because of jobs and fewer employment problems and the conveniences afforded by each as applied to his particular vocational choice.

In reflecting on the questions as answered by this group of eight high school students from Duson, they seem pretty normal, well adjusted Americans. They want good jobs. They are not afraid of leaving home to find them, they are interested in marriage. They are following the modern trend of society to move from rural to urban areas. For a group of high school seniors they seem to know pretty well what line of work they intend to follow upon finishing school, and have evidently done at least some research in determining what the job requires.

In general the long-hand of all was poor. Their grammar was not at all up to the standards of high school seniors, nor was their spelling ability. The blame for this must rest heavily on the school that they attended, as well as on their own failure to apply themselves diligently to the task of learning to use the basic tools of face-to-face existence. Many questions were left blank and filled in improperly. If one will turn to the appendix of this survey and look at the schedule answered by the group, one will see that it is not complicated, nor difficult to understand. But the fact that it was a self-survey must be kept in mind in passing judgment on this failure. Perhaps questions that seem simple to the trained surveyor are found difficult to understand by the layman.
Chapter IV  
A Survey of Duson Community

Within the corporate area of the town of Duson thirty-seven families were interviewed. The questionnaire consisted of questions concerning general family information—housing, public utilities, shopping places, organizations participated, and its social intercourse of the community. For purposes of information and reference a copy of the questions is found in Appendix II of this survey.

Perhaps the most important phase of the survey is the section devoted to evaluation by the interviewee of his community—what he liked about it, what he disliked, its needs, and possible changes. From this section the answers to many of the problems that confront the small community can be found.

Duson's citizens, as is usual in rural communities, for the most part own their homes. Twenty-eight of the thirty-seven interviewed were home owners, eight rented their homes, and one didn't reply to the question.

Only two of the thirty-seven homes had central heating systems. Many, however, left this question blank, which makes its validity questionable. But since Duson is a rural community, and has few very well-to-do residents, it can be assumed that few of the homes have central heating. On the other hand, all but one of the thirty-seven have electricity in their homes, and two did not have gas, so it is evident that the preponderance of the homes had heating means available, as well as light and other convenient features of electricity.

More than half of the homes questioned have piped-in water, the actual figures being 23 with water, 14 without, but all have a source of water. All that had running water had bathrooms, giving a total of 23 bathrooms.
Of the 37 families interviewed only thirteen, or less than half, had telephones. In a primary community like Duson the need for a telephone is much less than in the larger secondary communities, and this must not be overlooked in the evaluation of this question. For in Duson a face-to-face relationship seems to prevail, and the few telephones is documentary evidence of that social fact.

The Duson families interviewed live in a total of 171 rooms, which break down as shown in Table II of this chapter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rooms in house</th>
<th>Number Having house this size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In reply to the question regarding improvement of public utilities and services all but three felt that the water supply should be improved. Sewage disposal was listed by 31 of the interviewees, only one felt that the gas and electricity supplies could be improved, and all but four wanted improved trash collection. Seven were in favor of improved telephone service. Only five felt that the mail service could be improved. The following were designated under "Others": 3 said roads, 2 lights, 1 roads and lights. Two did not answer at all.

Shopping by the Duson residence is done principally in Lafayette, Rayne, and Duson. The everyday items of groceries and other necessities were purchased in Duson, but for clothes and heavy purchases, the stores in Rayne and Lafayette were used, mainly because such articles were not available to them in Duson. For medical care (doctors) the people went to Duson or Rayne, but used the Lafayette hospitals. One listed that they bought clothes also from mail order houses, for the sake of convenience. For entertainment Duson was listed for convenience.
The Catholic Church and its organizations were the most popular listings under the question regarding organizations belonged to. This again bears out the face-to-face nature of the community. The next most popular listings were the Home Demonstration Clubs and the 4-H Clubs, which, too, are primary groups. There are very few social organizations outside the ones mentioned. The American Legion being the only other listing, and it appeared only once. This leads one to believe that the family and the Catholic Church are the sole basis for social structure of the community, with the exception of the children in school, who listed the various school clubs and organizations treated in Chapter III.

For the reply to the question regarding favorite activities and pastimes a list was given, and the interviewee was asked to number the list according to his preferences. Table III shows the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number of times listed as first choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ball games</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cards</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pool</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skating</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others*</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The listings here were boxing and church

The entire group question felt that there were not sufficient recreational and social activities available in their community. Suggested improvements were for parks, playgrounds, community-wide parties not only for the youth but also for the adults. This is significant, for usually youth wants to disassociate itself from adult groups to assert its independence of the authority of the oldsters. The individuals questioned felt that the greatest lack in
their social system was on the teen-age level, and suggested a teen-age club, community club, and Parent-Teacher Association to better this relationship. Several spoke against the practice of selling alcohol to teen-agers across the local bars.

The group, according to the replies in the questionnaire were in a dilemma in choosing community leaders, and leaders for the youth group in particular. It is not in the scope of this survey to determine leaders. Perhaps leadership cannot be found with a survey, for the old saying, "leaders are born, not made" is not without truth. But it seems hard to realize that in a community the size of Duson there is no one to head such a movement. If those who are interested will give more than lip service to their needs, and make a diligent search for individuals to head community improvement movements there is no doubt but what a leader for the project will swim to the surface if he is given sufficient backing and cooperation by the citizens of his community.

The last page of the questionnaire, from which this group of questions is taken, was not filled in as completely as might be desired. This may be a manifestation of a lack of interest in community problems, or the inability to cope with them. It is indeed hoped that the latter, which is, unfortunately the lesser of two evils, is the case. Thirteen of the ones who answered the question regarding the proximity of taverns and road-houses in the environs of the village felt that there were none too close to the town, and had no complaint to make. Two complained about the presence of Negro taverns in the town limits. It is unfortunate that the Negroes, who, too, are citizens of Duson have to move their places of amusement out of the city limits! Sixteen
of the interviewees felt that road-houses were too prevalent and too close to Duson, and complained, as stated above, that they sold alcoholic beverages to minors. The most complained against were the "Club 90" and "Live Oak".

Of the thirty-seven interviewed, 20 felt that the youth (15-24) had a fit place to meet—anywhere from Leons Lounge to the Live to the Church Hall. The group on the whole felt that a community center with a well-rounded recreational program were in great need in the community. It seems that there is no where to go except to the taverns and road houses when the youth is seeking entertainment.

Except for the two that did not answer, thirty-one of the persons interviewed felt that the church (Roman Catholic) was doing all that it could to help the Duson Youth. Two of the four who did not feel the church was doing its maximum did not amplify their statements, the remainder said "It should be more enforced on the students" and "more strict in its teachings."

The trait most-liked about the community was the fact that it is rural, small and friendly, but many did not want to rear their children in the home community because of the prevalence of lower type and unclean establishment, the conventional bug-a-boo of the small community gossip, and because of the lack of opportunity that it afforded.

All that answered the question seemed to be of the opinion that renewed economic interest in the form of a rice mill or a factory of some description would be of benefit to the community, and felt that better education and more money were really the acute needs of the community. This is rather astute observation, for with better education and more money they would be able to solve the other problems, particularly those of the youth, that the community is faced with.
There is little that one can say in way of summary. The town citizens of Duson live pretty well up to the norms of the average small American town. They are plagued with the same problem—insufficient public utilities and insufficient recreational and educational opportunities for youth. And the answer is just as hard to find, for the town is strictly limited financially. If the group will come together and make an effort to bring new life and money into the community, they will be well along the road to the solution of their problems. Whatever is done they themselves will have to do. It cannot be done for them. But where there is a will there is a way, and these people, at least the ones answering the questionnaires, seem to recognize this, and are willing to work for improvements that they recognize they need.
Chapter V
A Survey of Farm Life Around Duson

This survey is the largest of the three in the Duson group of surveys, questionnaires being answered by forty-two families. This survey lends itself particularly well to tabular and graphic forms of presentation, and these media show the results with greater clarity than the "editorial" form used in the preceding chapters. The questionnaire used was broken down into eight parts: General Information, Land Use, Sources of Family Income, Family (at home), Family Living and Housing, Membership in Organizations, and the Community. These eight categories give a peculiar insight into the farm family and its problems, because of the scope of its concern. From the survey one can determine agricultural problems, especially acreage and the general condition of the farm, as well as problems of a sociological nature. Most of the persons interviewed had lived on the farm for the greater part of their lives, but a group of about one-fifth of the 42 interviewed had been farm dwellers for ten years or less. The preponderance lived on gravel roads.

The incomes of the families, according to the questionnaire ranged from $800 to $12,000. One interviewee listed income as $100, but this must have been an error, for it is inconceivable that on $100 a year that a family could own a car, have electricity, central heat, a number of chickens, hogs and other farm animals, for this sum is insufficient to keep body and soul together, and since the age of the oldest member of the family was 50, they are not eligible for old-age pension, and do not mention welfare aid. The mean income for the 42 interviewed is between $3,000 and $3,500. Two received 60% of their income from carpenter work, and one listed 100% of their income from the Louisiana
State Highway Department. The principle crops grown were cotton, rice, potatoes, corn, and a few listed cattle. In general, the outbuildings were considered in "fair" condition, while the houses were listed, in general, as average to good.

The fourth section of the questionnaire, which deals with the family living at home, the mean age for the men being 45 years, and for the women 43 years. The general level of education is very low, according to the findings of the questionnaire. Many of the adults had no schooling whatsoever; they were illiterate. The mean grade reached by the adults of the farm community around the village of Dason is less than the sixth grade, which is very low. But, too, it must be realized that this is a rural community in an area that has been slow in educational progress, for even in Lafayette, the nearest large town, public schools were not ordained until just before the turn of the century.

The fifth section of the survey shows that the majority of the families own and operate a "usable" car, and it is with this machine that they get to and from town for shopping, though a few listed both car and truck as agents for transportation. The mean size of house occupied by those questioned was six rooms. Most did not list having central heat, but all had heat of some sort. The majority of the homes were equipped with running water and electricity, but very few had telephones. The writer of the survey knows little about telephone service in the area, and it is entirely possible that the reason there are so few phones is that the telephone company has not erected lines in the area. The homes were almost 100% equipped with radio, which was for them a contact not only for national news and happenings, but also local news and entertainment.
Table IV of this chapter shows the organizations in which the persons interviewed maintain membership.

**TABLE IV**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Number of Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marietta Truck Growers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grange</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Bureau</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Demonstration Club</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodge</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table clearly shows the interest of the group questioned, which is very typical, it seems, of a rural, farm community. The church and Farm Bureau lead in the number of members lead by far. It is surprising to note the very few members of the Home Demonstration Club. From the survey it is impossible to tell if the reason it is not listed is because there is no club available, or because of a lack of interest on the part of the farm women in such organizations. Listed among "others" were: R.E.A., Ladies Altar Society, Holy Name Society, Knights of Columbus (spelled in the survey as "nights of columbus") P.T.A., and the American Legion. Five were either not members of any organization or did not fill out their questionnaire properly.

The second part of the division VI of the survey was so poorly and incompletely filled out that a true picture of the membership of the children living at home in various organizations cannot be properly shown. This, no doubt, is due to the fact that the questionnaires were filled out by the adult member of the household, and they were not sufficiently familiar with the organizational and school activities of the children to adequately furnish the necessary information. However, these survey forms are kept on file in the
The eighth and last section of the survey deals with the community as a whole. The first question "where are farm products usually sold", was answered in the main by the three names of" the three neighboring towns, Lafayette, Rayne, and Crowley. Most of the livestock is sold in Lafayette, however. The three towns are also where most of the farm implements, clothes, hardware and household furnishings are bought. Rayne, being the most accessible, is where most of the lighter articles are bought, and what heavy equipment is there available.

For movies and entertainment, Lafayette, Rayne and Crowley were also listed. They go to either Lafayette or Crowley for ball games and programs, though few listed programs as a form of entertainment. Most of the children go to Judice to grammar, and as the earlier part of the survey has shown, to Scott for high school, though some, as the farm group of questionnaires show, go to Judice to high school. Southwestern Louisiana Institute was the college that the group attended, if the family had a member in college.

The majority of the group, as is to be expected in Southwest Louisiana Institute, listed their religion as Catholic, though there were several who listed either Protestant or Methodist. The former group went to Duson for church services, the latter to Indian Bayou.
In general, the group questioned felt their home town (Duson) was only fair, and many listed it as poor. They seemed to feel that there was a need for the town to buy more of the farm products, and for the farmers to buy more in town, thereby each helping the other to grow and improve the community.

This farm survey has, along with the other parts of the Duson survey, shown that Duson suffers the disease of small towns of insufficient funds to operate. It cannot afford a water system, or the building of a market for farm produce. Its citizens realize their towns shortcomings, and seem ready and willing to follow a leader who can show them a method that they can afford to solve their problems. The farm group are willing to help the town, if the town is willing to help them, which is fair enough. Both need each other, and by working together perhaps they will be able to find a solution to their dilemma.
Chapter VI
Conclusion

In conclusion it can be stated that the survey of Duson presents a picture typical in many respects of the general small rural community. Its interests are those of the population of any small town and its needs are the usual needs of a small town.

The outstanding need expressed by the high school student was recreational facilities. In their analysis of the contributions which their church could make to their welfare the emphasis was again on recreation and its various implications.

The Duson community interviewees made their feeling clear about the need of industries which would keep their workers in their own communities. Most of the working population of this town actually work away from it. The other need expressed was more public utilities.

The survey of the farming population around Duson indicates that these individuals do not feel as much a part of Duson as one might expect. There is a slight current of animosity expressed against the town itself.

However, in the other hand all groups expressed a wholesome interest in their church, in their school and in their families. There is little indication that the individuals interviewed understand the nature of their problems to the point where they might find solutions. It might be suspected that all are searching for leadership to help them understand their problems and to help them solve them.