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**A STUDY OF MALE EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATES OF
CODINGTON COUNTY, SOUTH DAKOTA WHO
DROPPED OUT AND WHO DID NOT
START HIGH SCHOOL FROM
1948 THROUGH 1952**

by

Clarence R. Hall

**A problem submitted to the Faculty of South Dakota
State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of Master of Science
(Plan B)**

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

Rural pupils must make a major change from the eighth grade in the country school to the ninth grade in a city, town or consolidated school. Some of them never begin high school and some of those who do, fail to complete their work. There is seemingly a natural break between the eighth grade in a rural school and the ninth grade in high school. School through the eighth grade has been compulsory. Now, it is voluntary. They have been graduated from a rural school where there were perhaps only one or two in the class and perhaps ten or twelve in the entire school ranging in ages from six to sixteen. Upon graduation, they are confronted with the prospect of attending a school which may have an enrollment ranging from forty to five hundred or more.

The writer is a teacher of Vocational Agriculture in the largest high school in the county. This is the only Vocational Agriculture department in the county. During the course of his work, he has called at the home of nearly every male eighth grade graduate and talked with many of them personally. In case they were not at home, he left informational sheets regarding the program of Vocational Agriculture in high school along with other information regarding the school. (Appendix D). Parents were contacted whenever possible to explain the program and to encourage pupils to go to high school. In several cases, pupils were urged to attend the

nearest high school when transportation or other problems made it impossible to attend Watertown High School.

In this study, there were some pupils who did not wish to continue their education beyond the eighth grade and there were those who started high school and terminated their education before graduation from the twelfth grade. Life in a democracy demands educated citizens who have the knowledge of and the desire for better government, citizens who have self reliance and a desire for an improved standard of living. Farming requires well-trained men as well as any other occupation. The eighth grade should not terminate the education of farmers any more than it should terminate the education of the implement dealer, the elevator operator or the potential store manager.

This is a study of male rural pupils. It does not include those pupils who completed the eighth grade in the Watertown Independent School system, Immaculate Conception in Watertown, Holy Rosary in Kranzburg, Waverly Consolidated, Henry Independent, Florence Independent or South Shore Independent, all of which are located within the county. This study is limited to those boys who attended the rural county schools in Codington County, South Dakota. It is a study which includes those who are in or who have been graduated from high school, those who started high school and dropped out, and those who did not start high school at all. The main part of the problem is concerned with the last group to

see whether or not the schools can do more to serve these individuals.

SECTION II.

PURPOSE

Forty-four of the male eighth grade graduates of Codington County during the years studied did not start high school. Several of these boys had scholastic averages indicating that they could do acceptable work in high school. (Appendix E) What was keeping them from entering secondary school? Were their parents opposed to high school? Did they have to work on the farm?

The answers to these questions and others are important if our schools are to serve their purpose in society. Schools are supported by public taxes for public purposes. This study was made to find out whether or not the school was at fault in not getting these boys into high school, if something could have been done earlier that would have attracted them to furthering their education and if the school could be of service to these boys even though they are not in high school at the present time.

A second phase of the study, which overlaps the first, is a study of those boys who actually started high school and who dropped before completing their high school education. Their problems are an extension of some of those raised by the main group in the study. The question for these boys was not how to get them to come to high school, but rather, how they can be retained after they have once started. The school should try to eliminate those factors within itself that cause

students to terminate their education before completing the secondary schools.

Conclusions will be drawn from the questionnaires, from scholastic data secured from the County Superintendent of Schools concerning their final year in grade school and from personal knowledge of the writer concerning many of these boys.

SECTION III

PROCEDURE

Three steps were taken in collecting data for this problem. First, a personal visit was made to the County Superintendent of Schools in Codrington County to secure the names of the eighth grade graduates for the years studied, the scholastic achievement of the pupils in the eighth grade and the parents' names and addresses to aid in establishing a correct mailing list for the questionnaire.

Second, a copy of this list was sent to each of the Superintendents of Schools at Florence, South Shore, Henry and Wallace. (Appendix A) The Superintendents were asked to indicate by a key number those students who were now enrolled in school, those who had started and dropped out of high school, and those who had graduated from high school. Superintendents from three schools replied and the fourth school was contacted personally. Information on students who enrolled in Watertown was obtained directly from the writer's files and from the Principal's office.

The third step in obtaining information was a questionnaire sent out to those pupils about whom nothing was known and also to known drop-outs from high school. The questionnaire was aimed primarily at those pupils who never started high school even though, in a sense, all pupils who terminate their education before graduation from high school are drop-outs. However, as the term is used in this study, it refers

to those boys who began their ninth year of school and who are not now enrolled in or did not graduate from high school.

Seventy-four questionnaires were sent out. Thirty-five were returned. Several of these questionnaires were from boys who were attending high schools outside of the county. The first return was unsatisfactory in that the portion of eighth grade graduates from whom the writer wanted to hear was very small. A second questionnaire was sent out to all those from whom no answer was received. Forty-one questionnaires were sent out on the second trial. Fifteen more answers were received. It was realized at the beginning of the study that the return would be small due to the fact that boys to be dealt with were those pupils who had failed to be interested enough to continue their education and that many would still not be sufficiently interested in school to answer the questionnaire.

SECTION IV

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It might be well to stop and examine our policy with regard to our high school program. Is it to continue as a highly selective system with the weak falling by the wayside, or is the school going to cope with the many changes in our society and adjust its program to meet the needs of youth? Certainly too many of our youth of today do not reach their full potentialities because somewhere along the line they have not awakened to the possibilities of additional formal training and someone has failed to recognize their problems. Dillon¹ used the term "Early school leaver" to describe anyone who terminated his education before graduation from high school. According to his findings, over one-half of the students in the United States who enter the fifth grade drop out of school before graduation from high school. "We cannot...continue to sacrifice these youth to perpetuate an archaic system of educational planning."¹

The National Child Labor Committee conducted a survey of nine hundred fifty-seven youths to determine their primary reason for leaving school. (Table on next page). Thirty-six per cent of them said that they preferred work to school. Twenty-one per cent gave financial reasons for leaving school.

1. Harold J. Dillon, Early School Leavers, A Major Educational Problem, National Child Labor Committee, New York 16, N.Y.

TABLE XXIV.² FREQUENCY OF REASONS GIVEN BY 957 YOUTH AS OF FIRST IMPORTANCE IN DECISION TO LEAVE SCHOOL.

Reasons	Frequency No.	Per Cent
REASONS RELATING TO SCHOOL		
Preferred work to school	342	36
Was not interested in school work	104	11
Could not learn and was discouraged	66	7
Was failing and didn't want to re- peat grade	55	6
Disliked a certain teacher	47	5
Disliked a certain subject	30	3
Could learn more out of school than in school	16	1
FINANCIAL REASONS		
Needed money to buy clothes and help at home	144	15
Wanted spending money	55	6
PERSONAL REASONS		
Ill health	49	5
Friends had left school	29	3
Parents wanted youth to leave school	20	2

Eleven per cent said that they were not interested in school work. Ten per cent gave personal reasons for leaving school, twenty-one per cent gave financial reasons and the big majority gave reasons relating to school.

Allen³ in an Illinois study points out:

"A striking conclusion of the Illinois holding power study...is that many youths who withdraw from school are labeled as 'failures' even before they enter high school. Such finding points to the necessity for expanded and improved counseling services...

"The magnitude of this problem--the problem of

2. op. cit., p. 50.

3. Charles M. Allen, "What Have Our Drop-Outs Learned?", Educational Leadership, March, 1953, pp. 347-350.

the children not in school--is brought about by a circular of the U.S. Office of Education which reports that of every 100 children enrolled in the fifth grade in 1938-39, 20 dropped out before entering the ninth grade and 38 more withdrew before high school graduation eight years later. Forty-two of the original 100 actually graduated."

This same study pointed out that there was a great variation between schools, some having as high as seven out of ten drop out while others had as low as one in every ten.

Two conclusions that were drawn from this study were:

"First, the number of drop-outs in many schools is sufficiently large so that the needs of the pupils who have withdrawn should be taken into account in improving the school's program, and second, that the variation in proportion of drop-outs from school to school is so great that each school must study its own holding power."

Certainly when nearly seventy per cent list reasons relating to school such as, "preferred work to school," "was not interested in school work," "was failing," etc., for dropping out, a re-evaluation should be made of the program being offered for that particular group.

In this same study, it was found that eighty per cent of the boys who dropped out had an average of "D" and "E". Their projected rank in the graduating class would have placed eighty-four per cent of them in the bottom quarter of the class. At the time of dropping out, fifty per cent of them were failing in one or more subjects. Thus, we have a group of boys, a large portion of whom almost from the beginning of their high school career, were receiving notices that they

were not measuring up to the requirements of the school.

The two recommendations that came out of this study were that potential drop-outs should be discovered and provided with counseling before they announced their decision to drop-out, and second, that we must "...provide potential school leavers with learning experiences which they will accept as meeting their needs."⁴

It might be well to examine the second reason given in a nation that prides itself in having free schools. Schultz⁵ made a study in Wisconsin to determine some of the costs borne by parents in sending students to high school. He found that the average cost of sending a student through the ninth grade was over ninety-one dollars. This increased to over one hundred sixty-six dollars for Seniors. These costs included noon lunches, clothing, transportation and participation in the social life of the school in addition to the necessary supplies and equipment needed for the classroom.

This same study pointed out that while the cost of sending one student to high school amounted to an average of one hundred thirty dollars, the cost of sending two amounted to two hundred thirty dollars or nine per cent of the family income and the cost of sending three averaged two hundred ninety dollars or twelve per cent of the family income.

4. op. cit., p. 50.

5. Raymond E. Schultz, "Can Parents Afford to Send Their Children to High School?", The School Review, May, 1952, pp. 285-291.

It might be argued that some of these items should not be considered as a school expense, and yet, they are a contributing factor in leaving school and in not entering school. The student needs clothes which would normally not be purchased were the boy or girl not attending school.

Educators might well ask whether or not students drop out of school as an escape measure because they are not able to meet the financial demands of attending high school.

Another study relating more closely to the problem of rural farm youth was made by Wiseman in Janesville, Wisconsin.⁶ The part relating specifically to this problem was, "Do these rural boys and girls continue their education by enrolling in high school and how many graduate from high school?" Two specific years, 1942 and 1947, were picked for comparisons. It was found that in 1942, eighty-four per cent of the rural school graduates (both boys and girls) entered high school and in 1947, eighty-one per cent of the rural school graduates entered high school. Nine boys from each group dropped out before completing their education outnumbering the combined group of farm girls and non-farm boys and girls. The holding power of this school was good.

Another question in this study that should be noted here was, "Do the rural students in Janesville High School

6. J. Wesley Wiseman, Adjustment of Rural School Graduates to High School in Janesville High School Area, submitted to the Department of Agricultural Education, University of Wisconsin, 1952.

assume leadership responsibilities of their school?" It was found that nine of the eighty rural students or eleven per cent were elected to the National Honor Society or to some class office. It was further determined that only four of the eighty studied did not participate in some extra-curricular activity which proves that they were readily assimilated by the high school. Twenty of the eighty continued their education beyond high school. Rural boys and girls do become leaders.

Meinicke⁷ found that in the five years 1946-1951, six per cent of the total enrollment of three thousand four hundred fourteen students dropped out of Watertown High School, Watertown, South Dakota before completing the twelfth grade. Seven per cent of the total boys enrolled dropped out before completing the twelfth grade. He found that fifty per cent of the drop-outs were retarded one or more grades indicating that over-age is a symptom of leaving school.

He found that sixty per cent of the drop-outs had an average of "D" and thirty per cent had an average of "C". Twenty-three per cent had an I.Q. of ninety or less.

The reasons listed by advisers on the school records for drop-outs leaving school showed that fifty-six per cent were listed under "dislike for school," eleven per cent

7. Merton L. Meinicke, A Study of the Drop-Outs from the Watertown High School, Grades IX Through XII During the Five Years 1946 to 1951. Problem submitted to S. Dak. State College, 1952.

under "economic reasons," and ten per cent under "failing in school work." On the student questionnaire, which was sent out to sixty drop-outs, "didn't get along with the teachers," and "family problems" accounted for twenty-three per cent each, and "failing in my subjects" and "didn't like the subjects I was taking" accounted for seventeen per cent each.

About fifty per cent of those answering thought that a lack of a high school education hindered them in their work, about fifty per cent would like to come back and finish high school and seventy-five per cent thought that they had done the wrong thing by leaving school.

Meinicke's recommendation regarding drop-outs was summarized by this statement:

"The guidance personnel of the school must learn to recognize the common symptoms of these pupils who may be potential drop-outs and make every effort to help the pupils understand their problems."⁸

8. op. cit., p. 47.

SECTION V

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Distribution of Eighth Grade Graduates

In Codrington County from 1948 through 1952 there were one hundred sixty boys who graduated from the eighth grade. These names were secured from the County Superintendent of Schools by a personal visit. It was necessary to find out which boys were now enrolled in and were attending school, those who had graduated from high school and those who had started high school and then dropped out in order to reach that group of boys concerned in the main portion of this problem. Table I shows the distribution of the boys, where they started high school, how many dropped out, how many did not start high school and how many returned questionnaires.

The number of boys graduating varied from a low of twenty-four in 1951 to a high of thirty-nine in 1952. Of the one hundred sixty boys, one hundred sixteen of them are known to have started high school somewhere. Twelve of them attended schools outside of the county and the remainder attended high schools within the county: Henry, Florence, South Shore, Wallace and Watertown. There is one rural consolidated high school in the county, Waverly Independent, but these pupils, although rural, were not included because they were not directly under the supervision of the County Superintendent of Schools.

**TABLE I. DISTRIBUTION OF MALE EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATES,
CODINGTON COUNTY, SOUTH DAKOTA 1948-1952.**

	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	Totals
Graduated	32	31	34	24	39	160
Started high school	26	20	23	20	27	116
Watertown	(10)	(11)	(13)	(9)	(11)	(54)
Other high schools within the county	(11)	(9)	(8)	(8)	(14)	(50)
High schools outside the county	(5)	(0)	(2)	(3)	(2)	(12)
Per cent starting high school	81	65	68	83	69	73
Drop-outs	6	5	6	4	0	21
Per cent dropping out	23	25	26	20	--	18
Did not start high school	6	11	11	4	12	44
Per cent who did not start high school	19	35	32	17	31	27
In high school or graduated	20	15	17	16	27	95
Questionnaires returned by drop-outs	6	3	4	3	--	16
Questionnaires returned by those not attending	2	4	2	2	7	17

Forty-four of the boys graduating did not start high school. This amounts to twenty-seven per cent of those graduating who did not start school on a secondary level. Drop-outs totaled twenty-one or a percentage of eighteen which is three times as high as the percentage of drop-outs for the entire school as determined by Meinicke during an overlapping five year period in the Watertown High School.

Seventy-three per cent of the boys who graduated from the eighth grade from 1948 through 1952 started high school.

The percentages in any one year varied greatly from the other years. The eighth grade graduates of 1950 had the lowest scholastic average among the boys starting high school and they had the highest drop-out percentage. Over one-fourth of the boys who started high school that year dropped out before their Junior year was completed in 1953. The percentage starting high school that year was next to the lowest of any of the five years studied.

The eighth grade graduates of 1951 had the highest percentage of boys starting high school. The class was the smallest of the five classes studied. Twenty-four graduated and twenty started high school. They had the least number of drop-outs excluding 1952 when none were known to have dropped out.

One unusual observation shows that the eighth grade graduating class with the highest scholastic average, 1949, had the lowest percentage of boys starting high school. (Table I and Figure 1).

Scholastic Achievement

A graph was made to compare the scholastic achievement in the eighth grade of the boys in four groups: Average for all graduates, average for drop-outs, average for non-attendance and the average for those who started high school. (Figure 1). The scholastic average of those pupils who started high school was higher than the class averages for

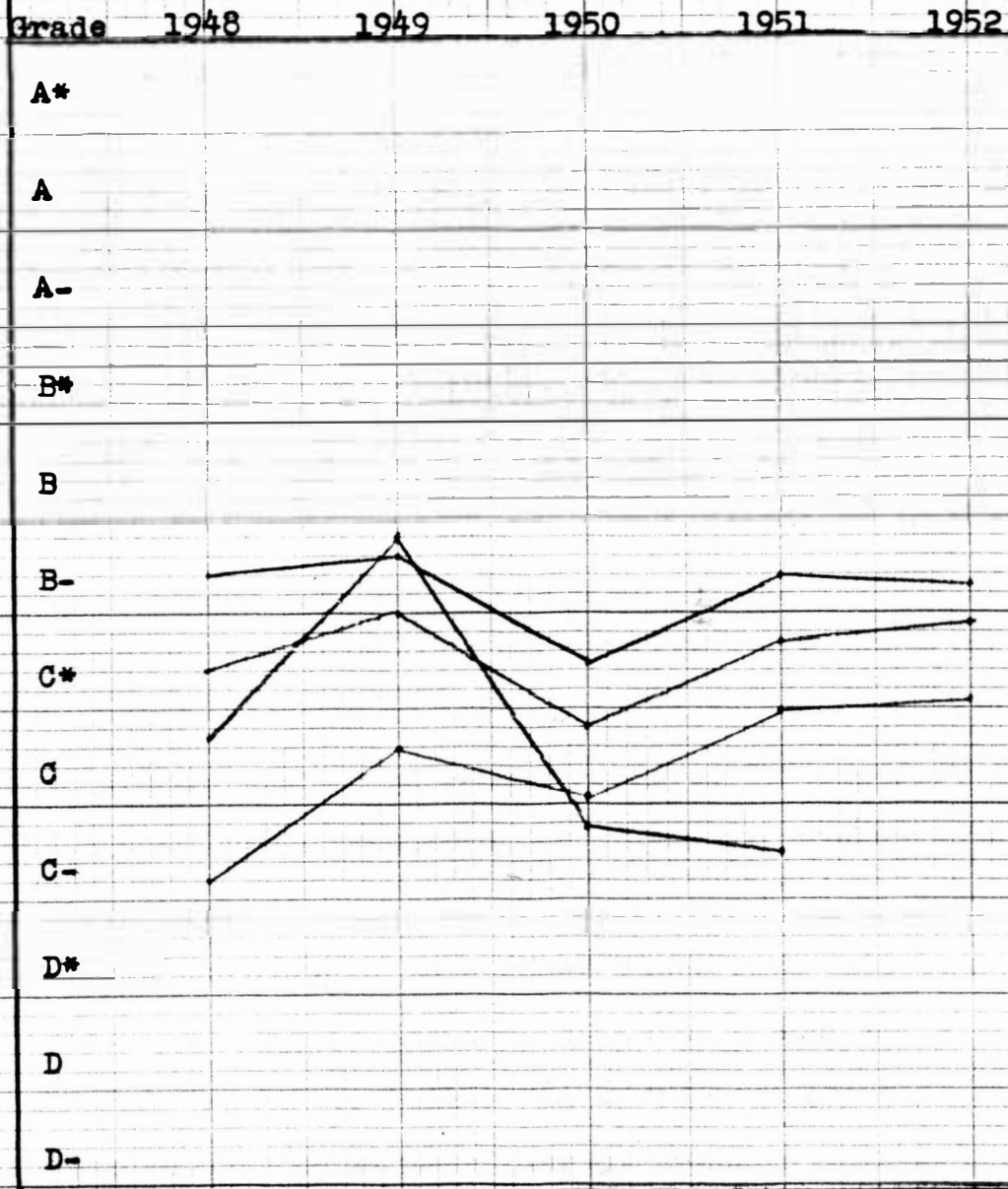


Figure No. 1. GRAPH OF AVERAGE SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT OF EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATES CODINGTON COUNTY, SOUTH DAKOTA, 1948-1952.

KEY: Average for all graduates
Average for drop-outs
Average for non-attenders
Average for those in high school

for each year. This might be expected. The average of the group not attending high school was below the average of the group as a whole. This also, might be expected. The average of the drop-outs followed no specific pattern. In 1949, the drop-outs had a higher average than the boys who remained in high school. In 1950 and 1951, their average was below all of the other groups.

Of the twenty-one drop-outs, ten of them had a scholastic average in the eighth grade of a "C" or better and three had a grade of "B" or better. Of the forty-four who did not start high school, twenty-six had a grade of "C" or better and three had a grade of "B" or better. Of the ninety-five in high school or who had graduated from high school, seventy-nine had an average of "C" or better, thirty-five had a grade of "B" or better and four had an average of "A-". However, two with a grade of "D-" and seven with a grade of "D" remained in school either until graduation or up to the present time. (See appendix E).

The second part of this study deals with drop-outs. When fifty per cent of the boys dropping school had a scholastic standing of "C" or better, it would indicate that there must be something other than lack of ability in school work keeping these boys from continuing their education. If some of these reasons can be determined, it may help to find out why other boys did not start high school.

Reasons Given by Drop-outs for Dropping School

In sending out the questionnaires, it was felt that a better response would be received if there was a minimum amount of writing on the part of the person to whom it was directed. It may affect the validity of the questionnaire in that suggestions were made to the individual. Some of these may tend to be excuses rather than reasons. However, it is necessary to discover the excuses and reasons given for not continuing their high school education so that something can be done to get more of these people into high school and hold them there. Space was left for answers to be written in on the questionnaire and several of the students took advantage of this space to write in answers.

The reason for dropping school that was given the most number of times was that the boy had to "work on the home farm." (Table II). Almost forty-three per cent of the boys checked this reason. Thirty-five per cent of the boys checked that they "didn't like the teachers." This is one that is more serious and one of which teachers should be aware. Four said that they didn't like school work and three said that they had failed in one or more subjects. There were other reasons which contributed to students terminating their formal education. Two said that they had brothers in the Armed Services and that they were needed at home, two stated that poor road conditions made it hard for them to attend

TABLE II. REASONS GIVEN FOR DROPPING OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL.

Reason	Frequency	Per cent
Had to work on the farm	6	42.8
Didn't like the teachers	5	35.7
Disliked school work	4	28.6
Failed in several subjects	3	21.4
Brothers in Armed Services, needed on farm .	2	14.3
Poor road conditions	2	14.3
Costs too much to go to school	2	14.3
School was too hard for me	1	7.1
Poor health	1	7.1
Didn't have the subjects I wanted	1	7.1
Couldn't keep my mind on school work	1	7.1
Mother and Dad were sick	1	7.1
Would sooner break broncs	1	7.1

school and two said that school costs too much.

Sixteen boys out of twenty-one drop-outs answered the questionnaire for a seventy-six per cent return.

Reasons Given for not Starting High School

Seventeen of the forty-four eighth grade graduates who did not start high school returned their questionnaire or about thirty-nine per cent. It was realized that the group at which this questionnaire was directed was not interested

in school and that the return would be low.

The writer wanted to determine why forty-four of the one hundred sixty male eighth grade graduates did not start high school. This part of the questionnaire was longer than that for the drop-outs. (Appendix C). The first question was asked to determine the reason given by the boy to explain why he did not start high school. Of the seventeen who answered, twelve boys said that they had to "work on the farm." This was also the most common reason given to the writer when he called on these boys in person. The father sometimes explained that he needed the boy at home to help with the farming program.

Four of the respondents, or twenty-three per cent, said that they didn't like school and the same number stated that they had a brother in the Armed Services and that they had to stay at home to help their fathers. It might be pointed out here that boys were encouraged to check more than one reason if it applied to them.

"High school was too far away," and "poor road conditions," drew three responses each. Some of these boys do live out where the roads are not developed to the point where they can be kept open during the winter. There is a lake area where many section lines have no roads and others that have blind roads which serve one or two farms.

Two said that school was too difficult, two others said that they wanted to go into farming for themselves and two said that school was too expensive. One wrote that his

TABLE III. REASONS CHECKED FOR NOT STARTING HIGH SCHOOL.

Reason	Frequency	Per cent
I had to work on the farm	12	70.6
I didn't like school	4	23.5
My brothers are in the Armed Services, I . . .	4	23.5
had to work on the farm		
High school was too far away	3	17.6
Poor road conditions	3	17.6
School was too hard for me	2	11.8
I wanted to start farming for myself . . .	2	11.8
Costs too much to go to high school . . .	2	11.8
My health is poor.	1	5.9

health was very poor and that he was unable to continue his education.

Occupation of Eighth Grade Graduates not Attending High School.

It was desired to learn what these forty-four boys who did not start high school were doing now. The question was asked, "What kind of work are you doing now?" Table IV lists the answers checked. Only one boy out of those answering stated that he was farming for himself. He had rented a five hundred acre farm. All others were either working for their fathers, farming with someone else or were working for wages either full or part-time. No answers were received from boys who had left the farm nor were any received from

boys who had entered the Armed Services.

TABLE IV. KIND OF WORK BEING DONE AT THE PRESENT TIME.

Kind of work	Frequency	Per cent
Farming with Dad	13	75.2
Work for wages part-time on a farm	3	17.6
Farming with someone else other than Dad	2	11.8
I rent 500 acres for myself	1	5.9

Attitude Toward High School

People who did not have the opportunity to go to high school quite often say that they wish that they had gone. These boys who have been out of school from one to five years were asked to check two questions relating to their attitude toward high school at the present time. The first question was, "Do you think that high school could have helped you in any kinds of work that you have done?" Eleven boys answered "yes", three checked "no" and three failed to answer. (Table V).

TABLE V. DO YOU THINK HIGH SCHOOL COULD HAVE HELPED YOU?

Answer	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	11	64.7
No	3	17.6
No answer	3	17.6

This is a high percentage and is probably reflected by those who would have liked to have gone to high school and who had to stay home to help with the home farm.

The second question relating to their attitude toward school at the present time read, "Do you wish now that you would have gone to high school?" The answers corresponded closely to those of the previous question. Eleven stated that they wished that they would have attended high school, one checked "no" and five failed to answer. These five could be interpreted as negative in that they were not enough interested to check the "yes" answer. (Table VI).

TABLE VI. DO YOU WISH NOW THAT YOU WOULD HAVE GONE TO HIGH SCHOOL?

Answer	Frequency	Per cent
Yes	11	67.7
No	1	5.9
No answer	5	29.4

The last question on the questionnaire was related to the previous two. It read, "Which subjects do you feel that you would like to have learned more about?" Schools are often criticised by students because they feel that they are not able to take the subjects that they want. Eleven of the boys checked Agriculture which might be expected because all of those answering are engaged in farming. Nine checked Mechanics and seven checked Shop. Both of these subjects are

very important in a practical way in the farming operation. Two checked Arithmetic and there was one check each for Bookkeeping, Art, Typing, Spelling and History. (Table VII).

All of these subjects are offered in Watertown High School and so these boys could have studied the subjects in which they were interested if they would have enrolled in this high school.

TABLE VII. WHICH SUBJECTS DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE LEARNED MORE ABOUT?

Subject	Frequency	Per cent
Agriculture	11 . . .	64.7
Mechanics	9 . . .	52.9
Shop	7 . . .	41.2
Arithmetic	2 . . .	11.8
Art	1 . . .	5.9
Bookkeeping	1 . . .	5.9
Typing	1 . . .	5.9
Spelling	1 . . .	5.9
History	1 . . .	5.9

SECTION VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The writer obtained the names and scholastic record of one hundred sixty male graduates of Codington County for the period 1948-1952. It was determined that forty-four of these boys did not start high school and that twenty-one of those who did start high school dropped out of school before completing their secondary education making a total of sixty-five.

These sixty-five boys are of major concern in this study. Their scholastic record in elementary school would indicate that forty-eight of them should be able to do passing work in high school. They had a scholastic average of "C-" or above. The other seventeen will be expected to select an occupation and earn a living too, and they are certainly going to find that they have need of much more basic knowledge than they have acquired.

Over seventy per cent of the boys who did not go to high school said that they were needed on the farm. Seventy-five per cent are farming with their fathers. Sixty-five per cent thought that high school would have helped them and the same number wished that they could have gone to high school. This would indicate that these boys feel a need of further education beyond that which they have attained.

A smaller percentage of the boys dropping school said that they were needed on the farm. Forty-three per cent gave this as a reason or a contributing factor. Their reasons were much more varied which is understandable. Lack of interest and

poor school work might cause them to seek other excuses for having left school. Several, however, added notes of their own to the questionnaire to the effect that they wished that they had made up their work and continued their education. One boy is coming back after having been unable to attend school for one year due to a family illness.

The rate of boys dropping out of high school from among the male rural population is three times the drop-out rate of other high school students. This is much higher than it should be. Scholastically, many of these boys should have been able to carry on the work required. It is true that demand for help on the farm by parents gives a much greater excuse to farm boys for not continuing with school, but it is felt that in some of these cases, it is merely an excuse and that the real reason lies within the adjustment of the boy to the secondary school.

The rate of attendance compared to Janesville, Wisconsin was slightly lower. The drop-out rate was slightly higher. There is a definite need to increase the holding power of the schools for rural boys. Many more of them should take advantage of educational opportunities beyond the elementary level.

SECTION VII

RECOMMENDATIONS

These young men who have terminated their formal education still have need of much knowledge. The school has a function to perform in meeting their needs. These boys will be expected to take their place in society along with the rest of the people. We must make it possible for these young men to develop themselves to the highest level of their ability. The writer would like to make these recommendations:

1. Many high schools throughout the country are holding Young Farmer Classes in the evening for these and also for boys who have graduated from high school so that they may continue their training while farming. The writer held Young Farmer Classes for two years in which several of these young men came in to school. These classes were held once a week in the evening so that it would not compete with time spent working on the farm. In that way, they were able to get together with others who had problems similar to their own and they were able to study and hear about practices that might be usable on their own farms. They were able to gain skills more quickly in the high school shop. These classes help to meet the need in Agriculture for those who want more information and yet, who cannot enroll in the regular all-day classes.

2. Adult Education Classes can meet the needs in other subjects where these boys wish to continue their education. Several boys indicated interest in mechanics and shop. They can come to a high school with an adult program and can continue to take training. Many of these boys have now seen practical applications of knowledge in which they have found themselves deficient. They are now ready to learn in a much greater sense than they were when they graduated from the eighth grade. Considerable help can be obtained if they are willing to take the time and effort to become a part of an adult study group.

3. Recruiting should be broadened and intensified. The writer, who is a Vocational Agriculture teacher, has made at least one call to each farm in the county where there was an eighth grade graduate. Many times a personal visit has helped a boy to decide to attend high school. The fact that he has met one of the teachers is enough to help take away some of

the strangeness of the high school. Many of these boys need a little encouragement from someone outside of their own family to get them started. To know that a teacher is interested enough so that he would come out and explain something about high school helps some of these boys take a new interest in continuing their education. The program of secondary education can be explained to both parents and boys and problems can be discussed very easily at this time which may help to make the adjustment from the rural school to the secondary school easier.

4. Another method of helping these boys to make the adjustment from rural school to high school is through those boys already in high school. Often a high school student will know one or more of these graduates and he can help to make high school seem less strange. Many times he can actually bring the boy in for a visit to see what is going on. The boy can observe the supervised farming program of a high school student enrolled in Vocational Agriculture. He will find out that school work has many different phases.

5. Many schools hold an Eighth Grade Day in which all eighth grade students of the county are invited to the high school as guests of the student body. Home Economics classes and Future Farmer members can act as hosts in introducing both boys and girls to high school. Many of these eighth graders are timid and afraid of making the big change required of them and this will help them to get acquainted with the high school and students in high school.

6. Written information should be made available and sent to the prospective students. An informational letter such as the writer leaves with the student can be of help to explain the program in high school. (Appendix D). Newsletters, school papers and letters from the school or a faculty member can arouse interest in what is going on at school and a desire to come along in September as a part of the group. School activities published in the local newspaper or over the radio will mention names of people that they know. Student originated programs will let them hear friends talk about and describe the activities of the school. This all has a part in getting the rural pupils to continue their education making better farmers, business men or scientists, whatever their interests and abilities may be.

7. Getting these pupils into school is not enough. They must be made to feel that they are a part of the group and a part of the school. Teachers can help a great deal by realizing something of the big change that these boys must make. Their instruction has been varied and under many dif-

ferent types of teachers. It is important that they do not get a feeling of defeat and inferiority soon after they come to school. They must have a chance to prove themselves. Many of these pupils may not be up to what we might call the "accepted standard" scholastically, but they should have a chance to prove their ability.

The trend is toward a better educated people. About thirty-four per cent of the adult population in 1950 had completed four years of high school as compared to twenty-four in 1940. The highest level of education is found in urban areas and the lowest in rural farm areas. The average for the urban area is ten years and for the rural farm area is eight and four-tenths.

Rural youth has the ability to do good work. Many have leadership qualities which are very necessary today. These young people must all be encouraged to make the most of their abilities. They must be encouraged to get as much education as they possibly can and to make use of what they have learned. The needs of those who cannot attend high school should be met. Those who have dropped out of high school and those who did not start high school can benefit from a good all-around educational program. We must see that they make the most of their opportunities.

SECTION VIII

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SECTION IX

APPENDIX A

Watertown High School,
Watertown, South Dakota,
December 1, 1952.

Mr. A. A. Markve,
Superintendent of Schools,
Florence, South Dakota.

Dear Sir:

Enclosed is a list of all male eighth grade graduates for the years 1948 through 1952 from Codington County. I am making a study to determine how many of these boys attended high school and how many dropped out. Would you indicate on the attached list what you know about any of these boys using the key number as indicated?

1. Those now enrolled and attending your high school.
2. Those who started in your high school and dropped out before completing the course. Please indicate the year that they dropped, e.g., 2-Sophomore.
3. Those who have graduated from your high school.

There is a self-addressed stamped envelope for your reply. Your help will be appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

C. R. Hall
Vo-Ag. Instructor

APPENDIX B

420 Second Street, N. W.,
Watertown, South Dakota.

Dear Lawrence,

I teach Agriculture in Watertown High School. Perhaps I talked with you when I visited your farm. I would like to have your help on a problem. I am making a study to try to find out how high schools can be of greater help to the boys of Codington County. I am sending all of the students who graduated from the eighth grade between May 1948 and May 1952 who are not in high school this same letter. Will you please check the answers to the questions on the attached sheets and make any further comments that you think may be of help to me in making this study? If you do not understand a question, you may ask someone to help you.

There is a self-addressed stamped envelope for your answer. Please answer soon. You do not need to sign your name to the sheet. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

C. R. Hall
Ag. Instructor

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Did you start high school? Yes____ No____. If your answer is "yes", what high school did you, or are you, attending? _____ If your answer is "yes", circle the year that you have completed: 1 2 3 4

DIRECTIONS:

If you graduated from high school or are now attending high school, you need not answer any more of the questions found below. However, please return these sheets.

If you started high school and dropped out, please answer question Number 2 below.

If you did not start high school, skip question Number 2 and answer question Number 3.

2. If you started high school and have dropped out, would you please check the reason or reasons why you stopped? You may check more than one reason.

- a. Had to work on the farm _____
- b. Disliked school work _____
- c. Didn't like the teachers _____
- d. Didn't like the other students _____
- e. School was too hard for me _____
- f. Failed in several subjects _____
- g. My brothers are in the Armed Services and I had to help at home _____
- h. Poor health _____
- i. Poor road conditions _____
- j. Costs too much to go to school _____
- k. Other reasons _____ Please name them: _____

3. If you did not start high school, would you check the answers that apply in your case? You may check more than one.

- A. I didn't go to high school because:
- a. My parents didn't want me to go _____
 - b. I didn't like school _____
 - c. I had to work on the farm _____
 - d. I didn't think that it would do me any good _____
 - e. School was too hard for me _____
 - f. I wanted to start farming for myself _____

- g. High school was too far away _____
- h. No one asked me to go _____
- i. My brothers are in the Armed Forces and I had to stay home and work _____
- j. My health is poor _____
- k. Poor road conditions _____
- l. Costs too much _____
- m. Other reasons _____ Please state what these other reasons are: _____

- B. What kind of work are you doing now?
- a. Farming with Dad _____
 - b. Farming with someone else _____
 - c. I rent a farm for myself _____ Number of acres rented _____
 - d. I own a farm _____ Number of acres owned _____
 - e. I work out for wages on a farm _____
 - f. Truck driving _____
 - g. Salesman _____
 - h. Unemployed _____
 - i. Armed Services _____ Please tell what kind of work you are doing in the Services: _____
 - j. Other kind of work _____ Please tell what kind: _____
- C. What other kinds of work have you done other than those listed above under B? _____
- D. Do you think that high school could have helped you in any kinds of work that you have done? Yes ___ No ___
- E. Do you wish now that you would have gone to high school? Yes ___ No ___
- F. Which subjects do you feel that you would like to have learned more about:

Agriculture _____
 Arithmetic _____
 Art _____
 Bookkeeping _____
 English _____
 Foreign languages _____
 Mechanics _____

Chemistry _____
 Physics _____
 Physiology _____
 Shop _____
 Shorthand _____
 Typing _____

Any others? Please name them _____

APPENDIX D

Watertown High School,
Watertown, South Dakota,
July 1, 1953.

TO: Eighth Grade Graduates.

PLEASE, don't throw this away until you have read it. It contains information about YOU and YOUR FUTURE. Do you know that from here on, your education depends upon you? Up to now many boys have gone to school because they "had to". Many boys heave a big sigh of relief when they receive that little slip saying they have graduated from the eighth grade. But now what? Have you thought of what you would like to be doing five, ten or even fifteen years from now? How much money would you like to be earning? What kind of a job would you like to be doing? Where do you want to be living? Your main consideration now is how you can prepare yourself for that job so that you can do a better piece of work and get to the top quicker.

Vocational training in high school is set up so that you can "earn and learn" at the same time. I teach Vocational Agriculture in Watertown High School. I am interested in you because you have lived on a farm and are now ready for high school. Many of our best boys and girls in high school come from farms. Six years ago, Watertown High School started a course in Vocational Agriculture for farm boys so that they could get practical training in an occupation while going to school. This vocational training is for boys living on farms who plan to farm or who plan to go into something related to farming. It is to help you to make a start in farming while still in high school. It will help you to earn and learn at the same time. Many farm boys have earned hundreds of dollars while going to school. You can do it too.

Watertown has a four year course in Vocational Agriculture. A boy taking Vocational Agriculture would probably take the following subjects while in high school:

- Freshman: English I, History, Agriculture I, and Algebra or General Mathematics depending on whether or not he plans to go to college.
- Sophomore: English II, Biology, Agriculture II, and either General Mathematics or Geometry.
- Junior: Public Speaking and Literature, U. S. History, Agriculture III, and a choice of subjects from the following: Chemistry, Physics, Typing, Book-keeping, General Metal, Commercial Law, Psychology,

Physiology, Art.

Senior: English IV, American Government and Social Relations, Agriculture IV and another subject of your own choosing from the subjects listed.

Agriculture I is a study of Crops and Soils. We study the various kinds of weeds growing on the farm and how best to kill them, we study adapted varieties of crops, soil conservation practices, pastures and legumes and small grain production to mention a few. Along with this, boys spend two days a week in the Agriculture shop.

Agriculture II is a study of Livestock and Livestock production with shop classes meeting twice a week. Boys will study livestock feeding, livestock production, marketing, and selection and breeding practices in connection with livestock improvement.

Agriculture III is Farm Management and Farm Mechanics with two to four hours in the shop a week.

Agriculture IV deals with Agricultural Economics and Farm living. This is the year when we stress training in leadership, conduct of meetings and in getting ready to expand the boy's farming program.

During the summer months, boys taking Vocational Agriculture will work on the farm putting into practice some of the things that they have learned in school. Each boy will make a start in farming by taking one or more projects and carrying it to completion. Last year, boys taking Vocational Agriculture netted over \$11,000. on their supervised farming programs.

The farm boys have their own organization called, "The Future Farmers of America." This is the largest farm-boy organization in the world. The boys in Watertown went on several trips last year--judging, basketball, field trips, packing plants, district and state meetings and the Juniors and Seniors on a fishing trip in June. Several boys have gone to Kansas City in connection with their work in F.F.A. There are many things to work toward. The main idea, however, is to help you to become a better farmer.

Watertown has a complete program. Plan to enroll this fall and join the group of boys who are learning to farm by studying, learning, working and earning. If you are in Watertown before school starts, come to the high school and look around. Look for me in room 10 or 30. If I am not

there, ask anyone to show you around. If you have questions, phone me at 3742 at noon or evenings and I will be glad to help you.

Sincerely yours,
C. R. Hall

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF GRADES OF MALE EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATES 1948-1952

Grade:	Class Average					In high school					Drop-outs					None-attendance				
	48	49	50	51	52	48	49	50	51	52	48	49	50	51	52	48	49	50	51	52
A*																				
A																				
A-	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1											
B*	1	3		1	3	1	2		1	3		1								
B	6	9	6	4	4	6	6	4	4	4		2					1	2		
B-	5		2	2	7	4		1	1	5	1							1	1	2
C*	4	4	3	4	12	2	1	2	3	9	1		1			1	3		1	3
C	6	8	6	5	6	3	3	4	4	2	2	1	1			1	4	1	1	4
C-	2	1	6	4	2			2	1		1	1	2	3		1		2		2
D*			1		4					4			1							
D	3	4	6	3		2	2	2	1					1		1	2	4	1	
D-	4	1	3		1	1		1			1		1			2	1	1		1
Mean	7.6		8.2		7.1	6.6	6.4		6.6	6.7	8.3	6.2	9.2		---	9.8	8.4		8.0	7.9
Med.	7.0		8.0		7.0	6.0	5.0		7.0	7.0	8.0	5.0	9.0		---	10.	8.0		7.5	8.0