

ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK

BUCKINGHAM COUNTY

VIRGINIA

1944

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Home Demonstration Agent

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### III. Scope of Work

#### A. Home demonstration clubs

No. 18 Membership 335

Other groups sponsored by home demonstration clubs -  
Furniture repair clinics

No. 2 (white) Membership 16 (each met 3 or 4  
times)

#### B. 4-H Clubs:

No. 8 Membership 156 girls

C. Number families reached through neighborhood and comm-  
unity leaders 1000

D. Estimate total number families reached 1000  
No. farm families in the county 1724 (white)

### IV. Organization

In 1942 the county was reorganized with a Professional Workers' Council, a County Agricultural Board and a County Home Demonstration Committee.

#### A. County Home Demonstration Committee

The Home Demonstration Committee, composed of the presidents of the fifteen clubs and the County Nutrition Chairman, met twice during the year; in May to conduct routine business, such as election of delegates to the state federation meeting and review the plan of work then being carried out in the county; and in September to hear reports and plan for the coming year. In spite of miserable weather, nine of the fifteen clubs were represented at this meeting. The Assistant Director and the District Federation President also attended.

The clubs had made a survey of the needs of their respective communities and their representatives spoke with knowledge and perspicacity when planning for 1945. In addition to the fundamental needs, especially in wartime, such as food production, conservation and preparation, better home management,

the committee saw fit to include in the program, recreation for home and community, better housing, adjustments in a post war world. They were "reaching out in service to the communities and helping unite the people."

#### B. County Agricultural Board

The county agricultural board was called together twice during the year to consider outlook crop production and nutrition needs for the county and to carry this information to each community and neighborhood. After the county meeting, community and neighborhood meetings were held and the information extended as far as possible.

#### C. Professional Workers Conference

The Professional Workers' Council is composed of the Farm Security Supervisor, Home Plan Supervisor, Agricultural Teacher, Home Economics Teacher, Welfare Chairman, Health Nurse, Soil Conservationist, Chairman of the War Board, School Superintendent, County Co-ordinator, County Agent, Home Demonstration Agent, and colored County Agent.

This group met once this year, just before the early community drive for crop production. They also discussed the new frozen locker plant project.

The home demonstration agent assisted with the garden, and family food supply. She accompanied the agent or some other professional to most of the community meetings and presented gardens and adequate food, having first presented this subject at the county agricultural board meeting.

#### V. Leadership

##### A. Adult Work

Wartime needs have increased the responsibilities of voluntary leaders immeasurably and the women of the county have assumed these responsibilities with surprising willingness and efficiency. The 15 club presidents have called regular meetings, found ways to transport members to meetings, assisted in the study of consumer problems, called on neighbors who because of small children or lack of transportation could not join the club and helped the community and neighborhood chairmen wherever possible. When they discovered

the high percentage of illiteracy in the county they planned to do as much as possible to foster the spirit of pride in an education as a means of increasing school attendance.

Sixteen training meetings were held for project leaders, one by the house furnishings specialist on mending, repairing and refinishing furniture, one by a leader who had attended a workshop on laundry, and the rest by the agent after attendance at workshops on home management and food conservation. The combined attendance at these meetings was one hundred and fifty-nine. In all twenty-nine demonstrations were given by the thirty project leaders, assistance at one hundred demonstrations was given by leaders and one hundred and fifty days of time was given.

One project leader is especially successful in making cheese. She has made and sold over thirty pounds this season. She gave the cheese making demonstration to a neighboring club as well as to her own. The meeting was well attended and the women spoke highly of her ability as a demonstrator. Moreover they went home and made cheese. This same leader reaches a number of families who do not come to club meetings. At first they scoffed at her enthusiasm, since they were not much in favor of the work. Many of them were relatives or neighbors and came to call on Sunday afternoons as folks do in the country. She showed a dress that she had altered expertly as the result of directions gotten at a club training meeting. Her sulphurized apples were in much demand so she told how they were prepared. Perhaps her successful cheese making at a time when cheese was so hard to obtain was the climax of her endeavors. Her club is composed of ten active members but she reaches thirty people beyond the club.

It is impossible to point out one leader for outstanding accomplishment. Each of the leaders did something special. One interested her club in kitchen contest - Country Gentleman. One gathered some non club members together for a re-upholstering clinic. One led her club in a school community project of repairing and slip covering furniture. One led her club in giving a "covered dish" supper from home grown projects; the proceeds to go toward buying arts and crafts supplies for the school.

There are ten community chairwomen, seven home demonstration club women and three non-club women. These women have averaged six days each devoted to community work or sixty days in the county. They were largely responsible for the garden production or family food supply. The early season was good and much canning was done. An evidence of results obtained is the increased average of canning and storing. In nineteen hundred forty-two it was an estimated one hundred jars per person. It is now one hundred twenty-five. These leaders together with forty-seven neighborhood leaders have given one hundred seventy-one days of their time to community work.

#### B. 4-H Club Work

For four years an effort has been made to increase the number and interest of adult 4-H leaders. They have grown from two in 1940 to eleven in 1944 or more than one for each of the eight organized clubs. These leaders are both organization and project leaders. They have helped the girls in sewing and in keeping their records. They have also sponsored canning exhibits in each club and encouraged participation in the county exhibit.

They have sponsored parties and other recreation, organized a book club and helped with monthly meetings. In all they have given sixty-five days of time to the work.

The twenty-four junior leader officers did very good work this year. They conducted seventy-two regular monthly meetings and six summer meetings. They collected waste paper, milkweed pods, and walnuts. All proceeds from paper and pods was used for the club or for the school. They assisted at fifty-one demonstrations to nineteen hundred-eleven people. A delegate to the State Short Course returned to be a project leader in the coming year.

### VI. Results

#### A. Home Demonstration Clubs

Home demonstration clubs continued to carry "Health and Better Living in Wartime" as their "major project"; each club selecting the phases of such a broad subject, best suited to their needs.

1. Project

a. Food

Fifteen clubs and three groups reaching 335 people directly and 900 indirectly studied nutrition needs and ways of supplying them through greater variety in home produced foods, more and better conservation of food and preparation of nutritious substitute dishes.

Eighty-five days of the agents time was distributed - 50 days to food production, 11 days to food preservation and 24 days to food selection and preparation. This time was spent in giving demonstrations to clubs and to small groups, in distributing bulletins and circular letters, and in home visits.

Thirty-one voluntary leaders assisted with this work in sixteen communities and gave more than two hundred days of their time. Ten demonstrations on year round garden and poultry and fourteen on fall gardens were given to 200 people. Fourteen demonstrations on substitute dishes reached 145 people directly. Demonstrations on school lunches reached 100 people and the recipe sheet for lunches was sent to 300. Fifteen clubs with an attendance of 150 learned to store butter and eggs or make cheese. Other special groups met for cheese making demonstrations, bringing the number eached to 196.

A community cannery under "Course 15" was set up in the county this year. Home demonstration women cooperated by carrying the news to all parts of the county and by coming there to can. 281 families canned 31,763 No. 3 (qt.) cans and 9,888 No. 2 (pt.) cans of fruits, vegetables and meats. The meat to date was largely chicken. A great many canned fried chicken to send to boys in the armed forces overseas. Beef and pork canning season is just beginning.

More pressure cookers were bought this year and old ones were tested. 800 quarts were canned in the two pressure cookers loaned by the home agent during canning season.

Six people experimented with the new electric dehydrator.

b. Clothing

Last year a great deal of attention was given to clothing construction - new patterns, altering patterns. This year the project was continued with a study of selection of materials available, care of such materials, use of materials on hand. Forty families were assisted with construction problems. They brought the problem to club meetings regardless of planned demonstration for that time and a few minutes were devoted to the problems. In the same manner up to date information was given from time to time on selection of textiles to 200 families.

One leader attended a workshop on laundry and returned to demonstrate laundering to a group of 20 women. The sewing machine clinics of last year are also showing continued results. Many new club members having learned of these clinics have come to members and to the home agent with machine problems.

c. House Furnishings

The house furnishings specialist gave two days of her time in the county; one to the agent planning 4-H work especially the girls room, its furnishing, arrangement, and care; and one to a leader training meeting on furniture and furnishings, repair and care - gluing, repairing spring cushions, cleaning old finishes and refinishing woods, mending wire screen etc.

Fifteen clubs had two demonstrations each on this work, reaching 350 directly and at least 100 more indirectly. One group (non-club members) held three meetings on repairing springs and slip covering. A leader had told them that if a number of women in the community would meet together for a clinic she and the agent would assist them. The women in this group were in a sparsely settled area and were without means of transportation other than walking. One belonged to that group of illiterates before mentioned.

200 women reported mended shades, remodeled draperies and curtains, new curtains from feed bags, bed spreads, old print dresses combined with other material on hand. One woman was most ingenious. An oil cloth table cover having a fruit design and worn at the edges was used for cut outs, these were used as a border around the kitchen window.

d. Home Management

The first demonstrations of the year had to do with time management problems. Home makers calendar, ways of "streamlining" routine tasks, feasible shortcuts in house-keeping were considered at ten club meetings with an attendance of 120.

One club decided to enter the kitchen contest promoted by the Country Gentleman. The club met at one home, the kitchen of which had been chosen for renovating. They measured spaces and discussed equipment, they studied the great quantity of materials, brochures on paints, stoves, counters. Even though the hostess was unable to carry the project to completion, because of illness, the efforts were well worth while and resulted in renewed interest in club work, wider knowledge in consumer buying, better judgement in selection of materials and equipment. This club is now busy helping a young bride furnish her kitchen and decorate her house.

The farm and home unit demonstrator is finishing the fifth year of work. Accounts show that the farm is paid for and yielding dividends. The net income has steadily increased to nearly two thousand dollars this year. The family has purchased more than \$4000 worth of bonds with money earned on the farm. Here is one farm at least, which is a self supporting and profitable business without the assistance of off the farm employment and without tobacco or "low ground".

During the five years a profitable flock of chickens has been raised by the homemaker and a good herd of cattle has been developed by the farmer. Home improvements include water in the house, electricity, repainting and furnishing dining room, paint for the outside, a pressure cooker, refrigerator, washing machine.

The grocery bill never runs beyond \$10.00 a month for six people. A beef is butchered and canned, chickens are canned; a large garden produces vegetables of all kinds. Wood is cut in slack season and stored for later use.

The home maker takes an active part in club work, attends every meeting, takes part in discussions, has been major project leader, is now poultry leader. She has carried a result demonstration in poultry with marked success.

e. Consumer Problems

Several years ago outlook material, presented to club women was received without much interest. Now if a part of every meeting is not devoted to consumer problems someone is sure to call for information. The agent is expected to be informed on rationing, availability of materials and equipment of all kinds, prevailing prices and trends, good substitutes in foods or textiles, shortages or surpluses, what house furnishings and equipment are good and available, new methods in food conservation or preparation. This year a frozen food locker plant is being built in the county. When outlook material is presented it is heard with attention and discussed by the women. Perhaps by careful planning and forethought that inevitable depression can be delayed and made harmless when and if it comes.

2. Home Demonstration Club Activities

a. Federation goal

The federation goal of Better Housing was presented in two ways. Discussions on safety in the home were conducted in each club and bulletins on safety, obtained from Farm Security, distributed as one phase on better building from materials available are being conducted as the second method of presentation.

Housing needs were acute in the village of Buckingham, so one man bought a prefabricated house, second hand from a defense project no longer in operation. The house is twenty-five by thirty feet, has four rooms, bath, electricity, partial basement at a cost of about twenty-five hundred dollars. It took two weeks to get the house ready for occupancy and as many as ten visitors came in a day to see it.

As a second demonstration, the home agent bought a house situated on land near the hunt club and had it moved to Buckingham. This house was in good condition, built thirty years ago, of good materials - eight inch oak sills, slate roof, interior clear pine ceiling. The main part of the house is twenty-four by sixteen feet, two story with a kitchen wing twelve by sixteen; in all three rooms, two halls and room for a bath. Later a wing can be added to balance

the kitchen wing without detracting from the appearance. There is a full sized basement (twenty-four by sixteen), a two flu chimney with fireplace in the living room, and electricity. This house will cost between fifteen and eighteen hundred dollars. It will take longer to rebuild it of course, since it was taken apart entirely before being moved. Every club woman knows of the demonstration and about one hundred have visited it and are watching it go up. There is some interest in the workmen too. The man who took down the house is pasty seventy years of age and built the house thirty years ago. The man who is supervising the rebuilding is past eighty years of age.

Both of these houses were built from available materials. As defense housing needs shift, the first type of house can be bought. In the neighborhood from which the second house came there are several more to be had if the purchaser will move them.

Closely related to better housing is the improvement of the grounds and the remodeling of homes already on location. The landscape gardening specialist gave two demonstrations to twenty-six people. The first on the location of a new house, to be erected after the war, on a ten acre lot, together with the location of trees and longtime planting which can be started now. The second demonstration on the remodeling of a very old house in the country, and the appropriate planting of the grounds.

To summarize - 2 dwellings were constructed, 3 were remodeled, 10 installed water systems, 10 provided needed storage space, 26 improved home grounds and the work has just begun. This goal will be continued into the coming year. Plans are already under way to put into effect some of the remodeling and planting suggestions made by the landscape gardening specialist. The assistance of a specialist has been asked on the planting and care of a family orchard.

#### b. Campaign - Health thru better nutrition

The clubs emphasized school lunches as a means of more adequate nutrition - not so much hot lunches as well planned nutritious box lunches to be carried. Of

course, the major club work done this year was along lines of better nutrition so that this campaign goal was closely correlated with the chief work of the clubs.

**c. Other activities**

Club members are reaching out into the communities more and more and considering needs from a larger view. Clubs have sponsored better community recreation, done over furniture for schools, raised funds for improving schools.

**3. Brief Account of One Outstanding Club**

One of the outstanding clubs had a 95 percent attendance during the year, conducted three meetings without the agent, assisted with the demonstrations by taking part in discussions or bringing part of the materials, came twenty miles to the Court House to the home demonstration committee meeting, packed boxes for the Russians as part of war work, gave a children's picnic and home made ice cream party for the children of the community; kept themselves and their club informed on consumer problems.

**4. Composite picture of a club member who has adjusted to war conditions.**

It can no longer be said that the war has not touched the homes in the county; it has reached every home. The very fact that appearances of normal living have been maintained gives praise to the home makers who have adjusted themselves efficiently and cheerfully to war conditions.

This home maker took rationing "in her stride", learned to use syrup and sorghum and honey to supplement her sugar supply; learned to make cheese at home and pack more nutritious lunches for her children. She studied style trends and materials, then took inventory of materials on hand and remade or remodeled as many as possible. She repaired furniture, made slip covers from feed bags, mended curtains and draperies, cut old oilcloth tablecovers into place mats, kept her home comfortable and cheerful, joked about difficulties and found time to make a few cookies for the children.

She often helped with outside work in addition to her housework. The poultry flock became her responsibility. She

did more gardening, sometimes helped with milking. Sometimes she took special war work, in a defense plant or teaching school to release a younger woman for war work. She has bought bonds, cooperated with her neighbors, helped with Red Cross work, attended home demonstration club meetings.

When her son was called to service overseas, she received his wife and children into her home and made the necessary adjustments. When a son returned wounded in body or shocked in mind she quietly "picked up the pieces" and worked to put them together again. She is just a good Homemaker.

#### B. Agricultural Boards

The agricultural board sponsored the crop production drive, scrap or salvage drive and assisted with the sale of bonds. Garden and poultry were turned over to the women since they would prepare and conserve the products from the garden and since they are usually the buyers for the family. The home agent presented the needs and goals for good production and conservation at the board meeting and accompanied the agent or some other professional worker to ten community meetings to present the same subjects.

#### C. 4-H Clubs

##### Project Work

156 girls were enrolled in 178 projects, completing 119. Eighteen of the 28 gardeners produced 12 acres of vegetables valued at \$800.00. Two girls raised calves, 5 milked regularly. Three girls raised pigs. Thirteen girls completed the canning project with 1350 quarts canned; but 23 took the canning project and assisted their families with the canning of 4000 quarts of fruit, 3050 quarts of vegetables, 475 quarts of meats. 26 girls made 52 garments and remodeled 72 garments. 24 made bread and biscuits. 10 girls raised chickens successfully. Forty-four girls prepared meals at home. Six girls improved their rooms.

##### 2. Community activities of the club

4-H clubs held several parties and picnics by way

of recreation. Nine girls attended Holiday Lake camp and two delegates were sent to Blacksburg for the short course. The main event of the year was the exhibit sponsored by the Ruritan Club and entered by 4-H boys and girls, F.F.A., home economics girls, men and women. This served as 4-H Achievement day.. One leader collected the exhibits at school for her club and sent them to the exhibit. A nine year old girl won first prize on the dress she had made for herself and fourth ribbon on a dress she had made for a neighbor (adult). On the day of the exhibit, this club filled a school bus and came to the High School to study the exhibits and to learn about judging the various entries.

It is difficult to point out the work of one club. Several clubs excelled in different fields. One club conducted meetings especially well, prepared programs and turned in 90% of the record books. A member of this club won most ribbons on her canning exhibit and won the trip to camp.

Another club carried a club project of scrap collection and used the proceeds for the club. This club did not turn in such a high percent of completed records but they did excell in some of the individual projects. This club had a state prize winner and several county winners.

#### D. Other Work Done by Home Demonstration Agent

Since the nutrition chairwoman is a home demonstration club member it was natural that she should cooperate closely with the home demonstration agent. All of the nutrition educational work in the county was done in the house demonstration clubs, the 4-H clubs or in the home economics class.

Home demonstration clubs are the only organized clubs found in all parts of the county. For this reason they are the ones to carry information to the people in the county. The home agent attends meetings of organizations related to the war effort and then contacts the club women and community neighborhood women leaders. Cooperation with "Course 15" has already been described.

The home agents' chief contribution to the war effort in the county seems to be getting the correct information concerning war measures and post war planning to the county. The people of the county are most patriotic and cooperative. They are anxious to do their share and they rely greatly upon the home agent for the latest information.

VII. Appraisal of most significant contribution to the County in meeting war needs which was made by the home demonstration program.

The continued effort to bring about better nutrition through the home production and conservation of food; the preparation of food and the conservation of other scarce materials is the chief contribution toward meeting war needs in the county. For three years the women have striven toward better health for more people. In the coming year they hope to decrease illiteracy and plan for better living in a post war world.