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A STUDY AND ANALYSIS OF MEETINGS  
IN LAINGSBURG COMMUNITY

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.

Jay L. Prescott

1928



THESIS

Social survey  
Laingsburg Mich - Social  
conditions



Sociology



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"A Study and Analysis of Meetings of Town  
and Country People in the Village of  
Lainburg, Michigan"

Thesis for Degree of Master of Arts

Michigan State College

Jay L. Prescott

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THESIS

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## Introduction

During the past few years many surveys have been made of rural communities. These investigations have brought to light much valuable material about certain aspects of community life. The majority of these have been cross-section views tending to show what the community is. Few have revealed facts about activities in a community over a given period of time.

The present investigation is an attempt to study the activities of a community as expressed in meetings during a period of one year. Such an investigation tends to show what the community does, as well as what it is. It is believed that studies of this type will be particularly helpful in understanding communities and in furnishing a basis for constructive community organization. In as much as this investigation is an initial attempt, some difficulties that might be avoided in future studies were encountered. On the whole, though, they were satisfactorily met. It is hoped, therefore, that this study will furnish an example and stimulus for other similar studies.



## Purpose and Plan of Study

The purpose of this study is to make a record and analysis of all meetings which were held in the Laingsburg community during the period from October 1, 1925 to October 1, 1926. A meeting, for the purposes of this study, is defined as any grouping of people which has been previously planned or announced. Exceptions were made in the case of committee meetings, meetings provided for by law, and any fortuitous gatherings. These were not included.

Since so many organizations held programs or meetings at definite times some plan for collecting data had to be devised. Cooperating or "participant observers" were chosen to aid in this work. <sup>(1)</sup> These people reported at regular intervals on the attendance of the meetings, the type of program, and the talent used in the presentation of the programs. All other facts of possible importance were also kept for the final tabulations. The numbers representing attendance are in almost all cases the results of actual counts. Only in those meetings where the attendance was of unusual size and counting was impossible, were estimates used. Such methods as these tend to reduce the error to a minimum.

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(1) Lindeman: Social Discovery. Page 191-2.

The main purposes of the study were:

1. To discover how well meetings are distributed according to the month, week, day of the week, and time of day.
2. To discover which organizations through their plans and programs accomplished most in satisfying the social needs of both children and adults.
3. To ascertain what organizations served town and country.
4. To find out to what extent programs given at the meetings were fitted to the needs of children and adults.
5. To determine the type of meeting, if any, which seemed to be over-emphasized and that which received too little attention.
6. To get a record of people who participated in the programs and their place of residence.

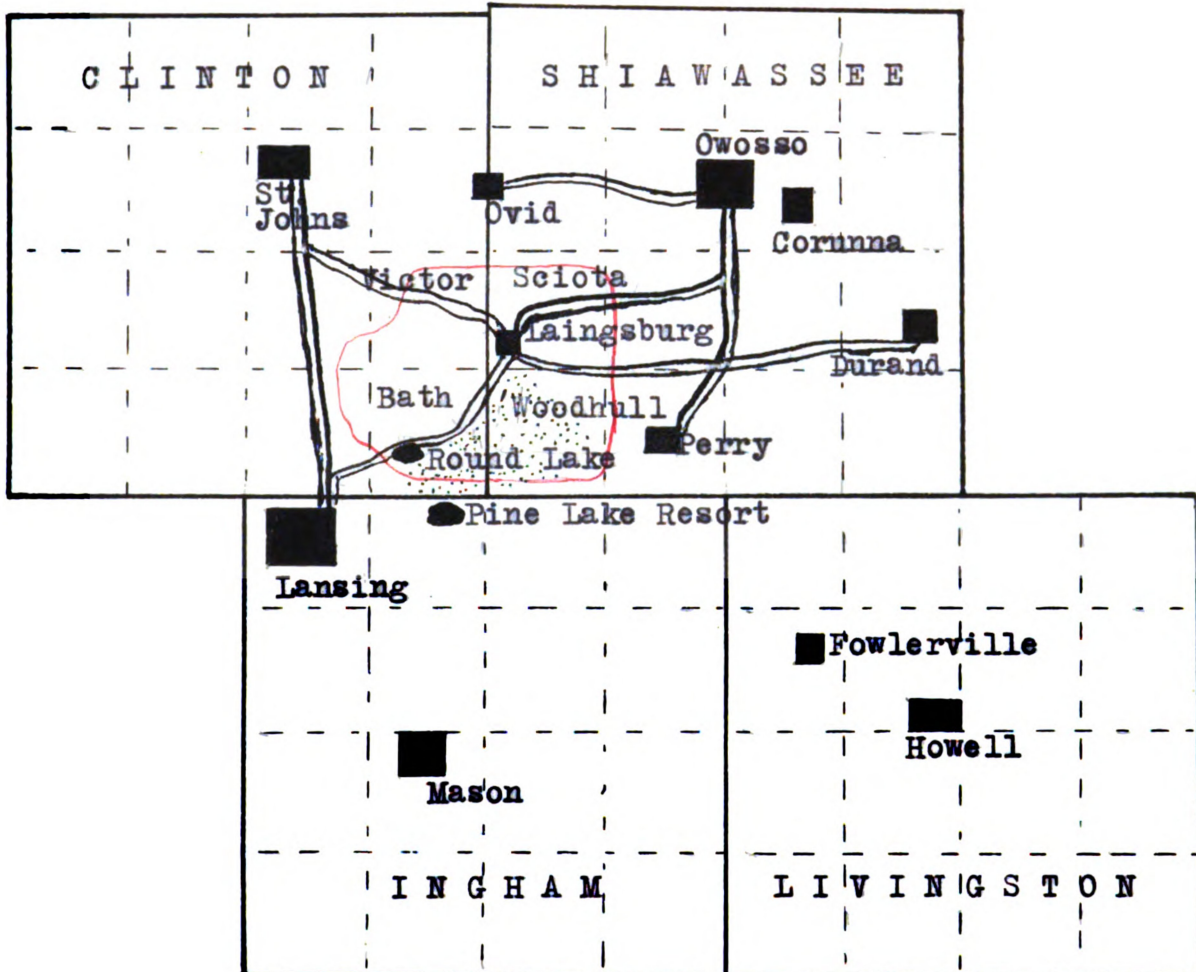


History and Existing Conditions in  
the Laingsburg Community

Laingsburg has a population of 700 and like most other villages of this size, owes its existence entirely to the agriculture of the surrounding area. It is located on a main road fourteen miles from Owosso and twenty miles from Lansing. (See Chart I) The population of the town is 700 and the population of trade area tributary to it is estimated carefully at 1700. Thus the total population of the community is approximately 2400. There are no bus lines, but the Michigan Central Railroad runs through the village. There are four trains a day for passenger service. At the time of the survey, there were four rural routes bringing mail service to the farmers. The village is a center for telephone service, the company having 450 subscribers. 200 of this number are in the village and the remaining 250 are farmers. The village was undoubtedly at its best before the automobile came into common use. Two hotels, both brick structures - one of two stories and the other three- stand as evidence of busier days. With but few exceptions, the store buildings are little changed. The same is also quite true of most of the residences. Although electrical power has been furnished the village, water or sewage systems have never been installed. Located as it is, Laingsburg has probably suffered more heavily than many villages through the widening

# Chart I

The location of Laingsburg and towns surrounding it



- County Lines
- - - - - Township Lines
- ==== Main Roads
- ..... Swamp and Poor Soil Area
- Trade Area



of the area in which farmers do their buying and market their products.

Fairly fertile land extends to the north, west, and east of town. South of the town is the Looking Glass River with much low marsh land and higher land of poorer quality. There are few improved roads in this territory, so many of them are almost impassable at certain times of the year. This condition of soil and roads has had much to do with the economic and social condition of the community.

Two elevators, several grocery stores, two hardware stores, a bank, drug store, garages, lumber yard, two chain stores, a furniture store, clothing and general merchandizing stores, tend to furnish such commodities as people choose to buy at home. Attempts have been made to start moving picture shows but people seem to prefer to attend the more elaborate theaters in Lansing and Owosso. A scarcity of public buildings of any sort has undoubtedly prevented many gatherings which might have been held. There is no auditorium that will hold more than 225 people and this number under crowded conditions. The church is the only possible place where more than 225 can meet and the churches are not suited for meetings of many types. There are lodge halls but these are not convenient. They cannot be readily arranged for meetings other than those for which the halls were originally planned.

There are four active churches in Laingsburg, the Congregational, Methodist, Catholic and Baptist and the usual number

of fraternal organizations. The membership of these various organizations and the proportion of it in town and country are as follows:

Type of organization	Total membership	Membership Living in Town	Membership Living in Country	Members Elsewhere
<b>Church</b>				
Congregational	80	45	35	0
Methodist	150	90	60	0
Catholic	222	45	177	0
Baptist	70	50	20	0
<b>Lodges</b>				
Mason	133	40	44	49
Odd Fellow	140	62	44	34
Eastern Star	130	45	52	33
Rebekah	123	59	43	21
Gleaner	100	25	75	

The Baptist Church was only partially active during the course of the survey. A change of priests at the Catholic Church also tended to disturb the activity of this organization. In addition to the churches, there are the usual fraternal societies, Boy Scouts, Junior and Senior Girl Reserves, a women's civic club, several card clubs, the usual religious organizations allied with the churches and the groups working under the supervision of the school. The community is especially free of foreign population. Only two such families are living in the village and few seem to be on the farms. Sugar beet raising has never been carried on to any extent in this area and this probably accounts for the fact that few of these people have been drawn to the community.

### Number and Distribution of Meetings

The distribution, according to months, of the 989 meetings that were held during the time the records were kept is given in Table I. This table shows that the three months with the greatest number of meetings are November, 120; March, 101; and April, 94. These months represent 10.3 per cent, 10.2 per cent, and 9.4 per cent, respectively, of the total number of meetings held during the year. In these three most active months, 29.9 per cent of all meetings were held.

There were 52 meetings held during August, 63 in June, and 71 in July. These are the months in which the smallest number of meetings were held. They are shown to be 5.2 per cent, 6.3 per cent, and 7.1 per cent of the total 989 for the year. All other months, except October which has 72 meetings, show numbers ranging from 80 to 92.

**Table I**

**Number of Meetings and Attendance by Months**

Month	Meetings		Attendance			
	Number	Pct. of Total	Total	Pct.	Adult	Children
October	72	7.3	2,672	5.4	2,060	612
November	102	10.3	4,545	9.0	3,589	956
December	86	8.7	4,289	8.6	3,300	989
January	92	9.3	3,957	8.0	3,019	938
February	84	8.5	3,445	6.9	2,786	659
March	101	10.2	4,094	8.3	3,305	789
April	94	9.5	5,777	11.7	4,702	1075
May	91	9.2	5,221	10.5	4,118	1103
June	63	6.4	4,428	8.9	3,222	1206
July	71	7.2	3,526	7.1	2,512	1014
August	52	5.2	2,323	4.7	1,609	719
September	81	8.2	5,404	10.9	4,238	1166
Total	989	100.0	49,686	100.0	38,460	11,226

Ranking the months according to the number of meetings held places them in the following order: November, March, April, January, May, December, February, September, October, July, June, August. This is only partly in agreement with Hawthorn who finds that in Iowa interest in social activities is lowest in the winter and spring when roads are bad and in mid-summer when hot weather and work interfere. (2) The disagreement may be due, however, to the fact that the year of the Laingsburg survey may not have been a typical one.

In Table II is shown the distribution of meetings according to the day of the week. Most meetings for any day, 587, were held on Sunday. This number is so much higher than for any other day because of the activities of the four churches and the organizations allied with them. On many Sundays 12 to 14 meetings were held at the churches. Other days which are fairly high in comparison are Monday, 119 meetings, Thursday, 94, and Tuesday, 87. It will be noted that the remaining days show few meetings. On Wednesday 49 meetings were held, 32 on Friday, and 21 on Saturday. The average number of meetings held on each day are, Sunday 9, Monday  $2 \frac{1}{3}$ , Tuesday  $2 \frac{2}{3}$ , Wednesday 1, Thursday less than 2, and Friday and Saturday each one gathering in two weeks.

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(2) Hawthorn, H. B., Sociology of Rural Life, page 165.



**Table II** Distribution of Meetings According to the Day of the Week

Day of Week	Meetings		Attendance					
	Number	Pct.	Total	Pct.	Adult	Pct.	Children	pct.
Sunday	587	59.4	25,223	50.8	19,043	49.5	6,180	55.1
Monday	119	12.0	3,303	6.6	2,940	7.6	363	3.2
Tuesday	87	8.8	3,509	7.1	3,100	8.1	409	3.6
Wednesday	49	5.0	2,847	5.7	2,179	5.3	668	6.0
Thursday	94	9.5	4,264	8.6	3,476	9.0	788	7.0
Friday	32	3.2	3,567	7.2	2,856	7.4	711	6.3
Saturday	21	2.1	6,973	14.0	4,866	12.7	2,107	18.8
Total	989	100.0	49,686	100.0	38,460	100.0	11,226	100.0

### Time of Day Meetings Are Held

In Table III is shown the distribution of the various types of meetings according to the time of day they were held. Four hundred and fourteen meetings were held in the forenoon. Except in three instances these were church and Sunday School meetings.

Comparatively few meetings were held in the afternoon. The greater part of these were such organizations as Women's Religious Organizations and meetings of parties and clubs. There were 50 meetings held during the afternoon.

Every type of organization held meetings during the evening some time during the year. The ranking of organizations according to number of evening meetings held is as follows: church, lodge, Young People's Religious Organizations, Girl Reserves, Boy Scouts, school, shows, parties, and clubs. All other organizations show from one to three evening meetings.

Such distribution of meetings is for the greatest good of the people of the community and has probably been worked out on this basis. Comparatively few people can attend gatherings except Sundays and evenings. The fact that 95 per cent of all programs are presented Sunday forenoons and evenings allows every person an opportunity to attend such meetings as he may choose.

Table III Time of Day Meetings of Various Types are Held

Type and Number of Meetings Held													
Time	Chur- ch	Sun. School	Women: Relig Org.	Young Peop- le's	Boy Scouts	Girl: Reser- ves	Lodge	Part- ies & Club	Com. Club	Sho- ws	School	Misc.	Total
Fore- noon	270	140	3	1									414
After- noon	2	3	29			1		9			4	2	50
Even- ing	175	3	1	100	25	31	123	18	3	19	25	2	525
Total	447	146	33	101	25	32	123	27	3	19	29	4	989

### Attendance and Time Meetings Are Held

The attendance at all meetings during the year, as shown in Table I was 49,688. According to this table, three months - April, May, and September - show much higher attendance than any other months. These months represent 11.7 per cent, 10.5 per cent, and 10.9 per cent respectively, of the total attendance for all months. Likewise, those months which have an outstandingly low attendance are October with 5.4 per cent, January, 3 per cent, and August 7 per cent of the total attendance for the year.

The fact that there is generally no correlation between the number of meetings held each month and the attendance for the month is due chiefly to the variation in the types of meetings. Certain types of meetings interest and appeal to larger numbers of people than do meetings of other types.

### Attendance of Adults

During the course of the survey, attendance was (3)  
divided in so far as possible according to age groups  
and according to those attending from town and country.  
Table I shows the attendance of adults and children by  
months. In the course of the year, adult attendance  
amounted to 38,640. The attendance of adults varies  
greatly from month to month. The highest month is April,  
4,702, while the lowest is August, 1,609.

### Attendance of Children

Total attendance of children for the year is 11,226.  
Ranked according to children attendance, the months are  
June, September, May, April, July, December, November,  
January, March, August, February, and October. These months  
show numbers of children ranging from 1,206 to 612.

Of the 49,686 total attendance for the year, 25,223  
attended Sunday meetings. (Table II) This represents 50.8  
per cent of the attendance for all days. Saturday meetings  
are second with an attendance of 6,973. This is 14 per cent  
of the total attendance.

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(3) The people who had attained high school age were classified as adults. Difficulties as to age, which arose in taking counts of meetings, made this division necessary.



Attendance on the remaining days of the week is fairly uniform as reference to the table will show.

The attendance of both adults and children is highest on Sunday. 19,043 adults and 6,180 children attended Sunday meetings. Adult attendance is lowest on Wednesday, 2,179. Fewest children, 363, attend meetings on Monday.

### Town and Country Attendance

In Table IV is given the attendance by months according to the groups from town and country. (30,574) 61.5 per cent of the people who attended meetings during the year were from town. The table shows that this attendance is unevenly distributed throughout the months and that some are conspicuous because of high attendance. April has the highest number attending from town, that is, 3,332. Others also relatively high are May, September, January, December, and November. Three months noticeably lower are August 1,259, October 1,881, and July 1,901.

The total attendance from the country during the year was 19,112. This attendance varies by months, from 2,416 to 791. Three months having the highest country attendance are September, April, and May. Extremely low months are August, January, and October.

Town and country attendance is shown in Table V according to the days of the week. The days ranked from the standpoint of numbers attending from town are: Sunday, Saturday, Thursday, Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Wednesday. The number attending varies from 17,327 for Sunday to 1,870 for Wednesday.

Table IV

Attendance from Town and Country by Months

Month	Meetings		Attendance			
	Number	Pct.	Total	Pct.	Town	Country
October	72	7.3	2,672	5.8	1,881	791
November	102	10.3	4,545	9.0	2,861	1,684
December	86	8.7	4,289	8.6	2,901	1,388
January	92	9.3	3,957	8.0	2,932	1,025
February	84	8.5	3,445	6.9	2,287	1,158
March	101	10.2	4,094	8.3	2,699	1,395
April	94	9.5	5,777	11.7	3,382	2,395
May	91	9.2	5,221	10.5	2,989	2,232
June	63	6.4	4,428	8.9	2,494	1,934
July	71	7.2	3,526	7.1	1,901	1,625
August	52	5.2	2,328	4.7	1,259	1,069
September	81	8.2	5,404	10.9	2,938	2,416
Total	989	100.0	49,686	100.0	30,574	19,112

**Table V**

Attendance from Town and Country by Day of the Week

Day of Week	Meetings		Attendance					
	Number	Pct.	Total	Pct.	Town	Pct.	Country	Pct.
Sunday	587	59.4	25,223	50.8	17,327	56.8	7,896	41.3
Monday	119	12.0	3,303	6.6	2,202	7.2	1,101	5.7
Tuesday	87	8.8	3,509	7.1	2,164	7.1	1,345	7.0
Wednesday	49	5.0	2,847	5.7	1,870	6.1	977	5.1
Thursday	94	9.5	4,264	8.6	2,400	7.8	1,864	9.8
Friday	32	3.2	3,567	7.2	1,971	6.4	1,596	8.4
Saturday	21	2.1	6,973	14.0	2,640	8.6	4,333	22.7
Total	989	100.0	49,686	100.0	30,574	100.0	19,112	100.0

As before shown, country attendance while much smaller than town attendance, shows some difference by days of the week. A rating of the days of the week according to numbers of people attending from the country is as follows: Sunday, Saturday, Thursday, Friday, Tuesday, Monday, Wednesday. Attendance for these days ranges from 7,886 to 977. Wednesday is lowest because stores always remained open in the evening of that day and so few meetings of any kind were encouraged. While it is still the custom for many farmers to go to town on Saturday, many of them attended no organized group meeting. Since Saturday shows were held only during the summer, the greater portion of the farmers who go to town on Saturday during other seasons of the year were not included in these records.



### Types of Meetings and Attendance

All of the meetings recorded during the course of the survey were grouped according to types. These types include the following organizations:

Church Service:

Baptist, Catholic, Congregational, Methodist.

Prayer Meeting:

Baptist, Congregational, Methodist.

Sunday School:

Baptist, Congregational, Methodist.

Ladies' Religious Organizations:

Congregational, Baptist, Methodist, Women's Christian Temperance Union.

Young People's Religious Organizations:

Baptist, Catholic, Congregational, Methodist.

Lodges:

Knexon, Gleaner, Rebekah, Eastern Star, Odd Fellow.

Parties and Clubs:

Women's Civic Club, parties, and card clubs.

In all there were 30 more or less active organizations in the village grouped under the 10 types. The total attendance during the year at all of the functions was 49,666. (Table VI.) The church is by far the most significant of all types of meetings from the standpoint of attendance. Attendance at such services represents 39.1 per cent of the total attendance of all meetings. Each of the four churches

Table VI

Types of Meetings and Attendance According to Age Groups

Types of Meetings	Attendance					
	Total	Pet. of Total	Adult		Children	
			Number	Pct.	Number	Pct.
Church Services	19,420	39.1	15,603	80.3	3,817	19.7
Prayer Meeting	492	1.0	475	96.5	17*	3.5
Sunday School	6,524	13.1	3,786	56.0	2,738	44.0
Ladies' Rel. Or.	1,480	3.0	1,278	86.2	202	13.8
Young People's Relig. Or.	1,813	3.6	1,572	86.7	241	13.3
Boy Scout	647	1.3	558	86.1	89	13.9
Senior G. Res.	193	.4	185	96.3	8	3.7
Junior G. Res.	231	.5	16	6.6	215	93.4
Lodges	3,699	7.4	3,599	97.3	100*	2.7
Parties & Clubs	638	1.3	604	94.6	34	5.4
Com. Club	84	.2	84	100.0	0	0
Shows	10,738	21.6	7,970	74.2	2,768	25.8
School Athletic	923	1.9	530	57.4	393	42.6
School Parties	300	.6	278	92.7	22	7.3
School Inter.	2,315	4.7	1,753	75.6	562	24.4
Miscel.	189	.3	169	89.0	20	11.0
Total	49,686	100.0	38,460	77.4	11,226	22.6

\* This includes small children who came with their parents.

in the village hold two services every Sunday. These are often supplemented with other services during the week. This is especially true of the Catholic church. The high percentage of attendance at church services in this community seems to support the statement of Hawthorn that there are few social agencies that touch as many people as does the church. (4) Many people in the village seem to depend largely upon the church for their social contacts. These factors tend to produce the high ranking for churches. The opportunity offered for many people to participate as church officials and directors also encourages people to go to church. The program offered tends to appeal to all groups - young and old, married and single, etc. The church and organizations affiliated with it attracted 59.5 per cent of the total attendance at all meetings in the community during the year.

The attendance at shows is 21.6 per cent of the total for all meetings. This is partly because shows were presented at a time of the year when other activities were beginning to lag. (Table VII). Nineteen tent shows and free moving picture shows (the community has no commercial movie theater) were put on during the months April to September. Two tent shows were held in April, one in May, and

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(4) Hawthorn, H.B., Sociology of Rural Life, page 260.

three in September. Attendance at these shows is much higher than at the moving picture shows or meetings of any other type. The fact that the tent shows had their headquarters in Laingsburg and that the manager was a local man probably has much to do with such high attendance. The moving picture shows always had fairly high attendance because they were free and were highly advertised. These shows were sponsored by the Commercial Club. It will be noted that even in gatherings of this type, the attendance during August is affected, apparently by the hot weather. The attendance at these nineteen shows represents 21.6 per cent of the total attendance for the year. (Table VI)

Next to shows in importance are the Sunday Schools. 13.1 per cent of the total attendance comes through these. Following the Sunday Schools are the lodges, 7.4 per cent; school entertainments, 4.6 per cent; young People's Religious Organizations, 3.6 per cent; Ladies' Religious Organizations, 2.9 per cent; school athletics, 1.8 per cent; parties and clubs, 1.4 per cent; and Boy Scouts, 1.3 per cent. All other types each furnish less than 1 per cent of the total attendance.

Table VII

## Attendance at Shows

Month	No. of shows	Attendance				
		Adult	Children	Town	Country	Total
April	2	1,750	285	775	1,260	2035
May	1	920	180	450	650	1100
June	3	965	575	520	1,020	1540
July	6	1,248	611	634	1,225	1859
August	4	612	427	370	669	1039
September	3	2,475	690	1,445	1,720	3165
Total	19	7,970	2,768	4,194	6,544	10738

### Uniformity of Attendance at Meetings of the Various Types

In Table VIII is shown uniformity of attendance at the various types of meetings which were represented. These meetings are distributed according to the number attending using 15 as the class interval. It will be noted that the attendance at church services is most commonly found to be between 31 and 45. Many church services are also found having attendance between 61 and 75. In most cases this is at the Catholic service. Special services have higher attendance. Eleven meetings of this type show the number attending to be over 120. Since prayer meetings interest only a relatively small group, the 80 meetings of this type all have attendance below 15. The Sunday Schools show some variation, although all but seven of these have an attendance below 75. 31 to 45 is the number most often found at Sunday School. Sunday School gatherings with extremely high attendance were Christmas exercises. Ladies' Religious Organizations are usually found to have less than 45 in attendance. The exceptions to this are the annual church fairs. The most of the meetings of the Young People's Religious Organizations show attendance to be below 15. Plays, conventions, and banquets all produce increased interest in this activity and bring the attendance up as shown in six meetings, above seventy-five in attendance.



Table VIII

Uniformity of Attendance at the Various Types  
of Meetings

Number in Attendance	Church Services	Prayer Meeting	Sunday School	Ladies Relig. Or.	Young People's Religious Organ.	Boy Scout	Senior Girl Res.	Junior Girl Res.	Lodges	Parties and Clubs	Commercial Club	Shows	School Athletics	School Parties	School Entertain.	Miscellaneous	Total
301									1			12			1		14
196-																	
300			2	1	1							6	3		4		17
181-																	
195															1		1
166-																	
180	2					1							1		2		6
151-																	
165	2														1		3
136-																	
150	2		1	1											1		5
121-																	
135	5				2	1			1							1	10
106-																	
120	5								2								7
91-																	
105	14				2					1							17
76-																	
90	40		4						3				1				48
61-																	
75	70		10		1				2			1	1	1	1		87
46-																	
60	59		36	2					2	1				1	1		102
31-																	
45	87		57	16	2	1	1		15	2	1			1			183
16-																	
30	62		31	12	13	9	1	10	80	18	2			6		2	242
0-																	
15	19	80	5	1	80	13	14	6	17	5				2		1	247

The Boy Scouts are a selected group hence the attendance at Boy Scout meetings is usually below 15. Plays put on by this group had attendance between 121 and 180. The membership in the Girl Reserves is also small. Both Junior and Senior Girl Reserves most commonly have attendance below 15. Lodges show a great deal of variation, although from 16 to 30 is the number most often found at the regular meetings of these organizations. Installation of officers and conventions tend to increase this number as is shown in those meetings with attendance between 120 and 135. A musical comedy presented by the Eastern Star attracted over 301 people. Since parties and clubs are usually found in the homes, attendance at each meeting is fairly low. A musical memory contest held by the Women's Civic Club had an attendance between 91 and 105.

The Commercial Club and shows are both discussed elsewhere in the paper.

Some variation is found in the number attending school athletic contests. This usually depends on the place the games are held. Out door games show attendance to be above 166. Indoor games, because of crowded conditions, tend to prevent such attendance as is shown in the table. School parties are usually small group or class affairs. This tends to keep the attendance in all cases below 75. School entertainments are well attended. All but two of these show an attendance above 150. Graduation exercises have greater numbers of people than do any other types of school programs.

Totals of all meetings during the year show that 489 or nearly one half of the gatherings, have an attendance below 51. While the greater part of the meetings have an attendance below 75, many types show meetings with high attendance at some time during the year. These are usually entertainments and functions for raising money. The greatest interest is always shown by the people of the community in meetings of this type.

### Adult Attendance by Types of Meetings

33,460 (77.4 per cent of the total attendance) adults attended the meetings of the various types during the year. The remaining 11,226 (22.6 per cent) represents those people who were below high school age. (Table VI) The types of meetings drawing the greatest number of adults, named in order of importance are, church services, shows, Sunday Schools, lodges, school entertainments, Young People's Religious Organizations, parties and clubs, Boy Scouts, and school athletics. The other types are grouped closely below these. Boy Scouts are mentioned as being high in adult attendance because this organization was composed mainly of high school boys. Many people of high school age are found attending the meetings of the religious organizations, shows, school entertainments and athletic events.

### Attendance of Children by Types of Meetings

The attendance of children at the various types of meetings is grouped much the same as is that of adults. Church services also receive the heaviest attendance of children. This type is followed by shows and Sunday School. The fact that the church precedes the Sunday School in the attendance of children is due to the influence of the Catholic Church. Necessarily, numbers of Catholic children who would ordinarily

attend Sunday School in the Protestant Churches, go to regular services of the Catholic Church. The reverse of this is, of course true of a large group of Protestant children. Other types of meetings, according to attendance, are school entertainments, school athletics, Young People's Religious Organizations, lodges, <sup>(5)</sup> and Boy Scouts. Attendance at all other types of meetings is very small.

Comparison of adult and children attendance shows that in every type except the Junior Girl Reserve, adult attendance exceeds that of children. This may be expected, however, in such a community where the adult population is so much greater than that of children. <sup>(6)</sup> The types of meetings which seem to be most significant in bringing up the percentage of children attending are the Junior Girl Reserves, Sunday School, school athletics, shows, school entertainments, and church services. The Junior Girl Reserves was the only organization which presented programs for children only. Since the membership of this group was 16, these programs could only attract a few. The attention given to children through group meetings scarcely seems to be adequate. At the time of the survey, as before

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(5) These are children who attend with their parents.

(6) At the time of the survey, there were 130 children of school age below the high school in the village.

mentioned, the Girl Reserves was the only organization which would appeal especially to girls of school age. Neither were the Boy Scouts hardly adequate since 86.1 per cent of their attendance was of high school boys. The results of such inattention to this age group becomes noticeable in the social problems presented by boys and girls of the seventh and eighth grades. Many of these children do not and cannot receive adequate contacts in their homes, hence the need for some socializing agency to care for this group is apparent. The improvement of the associations of such children seems to be imperative if the future welfare of the village is to be safeguarded. The school may do much in contributing to the socialization process but the task is too great for anyone agency or institution.

Town and Country Attendance at various  
Types of Meetings

Table IX gives the attendance from town and country at the different types of meetings. 30,574 people from town attended the meetings held during the year. 12,721 of this number attended church services. Second to the church services in numbers attending is the Sunday School. This type is followed in order of attendance by shows, lodges, school entertainments, Young People's Religious Organizations, Ladies Religious Organizations, school athletics, parties and clubs,

**Table IX**

The Attendance of Town and Country People  
at Meetings of the Various Types

Types of Meetings	Attendance					
	Total	Pct. of Total	Town		Country	
			Number	Pct.	Number	Pct.
Church Service	19,420	39.1	12,721	65.5	6,699	34.5
Prayer Meeting	492	1.0	433	88.0	59	12.0
Sunday School	6,524	13.1	4,922	75.4	1,602	24.6
Ladies' Relig. Or.	1,480	3.0	1,135	76.0	345	24.0
Young People's Relig. Org.	1,813	3.6	1,179	65.0	634	35.0
Boy Scout	647	1.3	470	77.6	177	22.4
Senior Girl Res.	193	.4	142	73.5	51	26.5
Junior Girl Res.	231	.5	208	90.0	23	10.0
Lodges	3,699	7.4	2,098	56.7	1,601	43.3
Parties & Clubs	638	1.3	592	92.8	46	7.2
Com. Club	84	.2	84	100.0	0	0.0
Shows	10,738	21.6	4,194	39.0	6,544	61.0
School Athletics	923	1.8	658	71.2	265	28.8
School Parties	300	.6	175	58.3	125	41.7
School Enter.	2,315	4.7	1,460	63.7	855	36.3
Miscel.	189	.3	103	54.5	86	45.5
Total	49,686		30,574	61.0	19,112	39.0

Boy Scouts, prayer meetings, and Junior Girl Reserves. The attendance of other types falls between 100 and 175.

The total country attendance for the year was 19,112. As in the attendance of other groups, the church services receives the greatest number. This is nearly equaled, however, by shows. Shows reach out beyond the ordinary boundaries of the community and draw many other people. This fact probably explains the unusual numbers from the country attending shows. The Sunday School and lodges are attended by practically an equal number of people from the country. The types of meetings next in order attended by country people are school entertainments, Young People's Religious Organizations, Ladies' Religious Organizations, school athletics, Boy Scouts, and school parties. The other types all show attendance from the country to be below 100. Since the meetings of both Junior and Senior Girl Reserves were held in the evening, it is rather to be expected that the attendance of girls from the country would be small. No type of meeting was attended entirely, however, by town people. There were no meetings held exclusively for country people.

Most significant among those types of meetings showing small attendance from the country are the parties and clubs, and the Commercial Club. Since the parties and clubs were composed entirely of people living within the village, it was



unusual to find country people attending them. Table IX shows that there were only 7.2 per cent of the people attending this type of meeting during the year from the country. It is doubtful how much encouragement has been given to increase such attendance. The most of the functions of this type were of a private nature. Although the Commercial Club was open to any one who paid the dues of the Club, farmers were not particularly urged to join it. Neither were the programs throughout the three years of its existence previous to the time the records were taken of a nature to attract them. Promotion of better business within the village and the formation and upkeep of an athletic club were the main reasons for its existence. It is interesting to note that while the problems of advertising, better business methods, and how to get the farmers to buy in this particular town were being discussed at banquets, few seemed to realize that the real opportunity to promote better feeling was being lost. The line between farmers and merchants seems to be rather marked. The Commercial Club was probably the organization which could have done most in affecting a change in these conditions.

Totals for the year show that 61 per cent of the total attendance is from town and 39 per cent is from the country. The lodges and churches are the most significant in the comparison of town and country attendance. While the attendance

of country people at church services is greater than the number attending lodges, the church can scarcely be said to be farther reaching. It has been observed that most of the country people attending church services are as regular in attendance as weather conditions and roads will permit. Each church has a certain number of rural families that attend services regularly and these make up the greater portion of the country attendance. It seems that fairly few people from the country are occasional church goers. This is not true of the lodges. While there are many farmers who attend lodge meetings regularly, there are many more who go only a few times a year. In other words, there seems to be a greater variety of individuals from the country drawn into lodge meetings than into the churches.

#### Regularity of Programs Given

There is much variation in the number of programs of the various organizations. Only four types of meetings were found which presented regular programs throughout the year. These were the church, Sunday School, Young People's Religious Organizations, and the lodges. (Table X) All other organizations present programs more or less intermittently. The summer season seems to be the time when many kinds of meetings are discontinued.

**Table X**

Types of Meetings by Months

	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Tot.	Ave.
Church	32	43	38	36	37	46	42	36	27	36	28	46	447.	37.2
Sunday School	10	17	15	12	12	12	13	17	8	12	7	11	146	12.2
Ladies'	5	3	4	4	5	2	3	1	2		1	3	33	2.7
Relig. Or.														
Young People's	7	9	6	9	8	15	10	10	10	10	2	5	101	8.4
Rel. Or.														
Boy Scout		5	2	2	2	5	3	6					25	2.0
Girl														
Reserve	3	7	1	2	3	4	5	5	2				32	2.6
Loccos	9	12	10	10	11	14	11	11	8	7	10	10	123	10.2
Parties & Clubs	2	3	5	7	3	1	2	2				2	27	2.3
Com.														
Club	1		2										3	.3
Shows														
School	3	3	3	7	3	2	2	1	3	6	4	3	19	1.6
Miscel.				3			1	2	3			1	29	2.5
Total	72	102	86	92	84	101	94	91	63	71	52	81	989	82.4

In Table X is shown the number of the various types of meetings held each month throughout the year. It will be noted that the four types of meetings previously mentioned, the church, Sunday School, Young People's Religious Organizations, and the lodges, are outstanding in the total number of meetings held. Four hundred and forty-seven of the meetings recorded pertain directly to church services. Meetings of this type are found to be most numerous during March, April, September, and November. They are not numerous during June, August, and October. This difference is due chiefly to the irregularity of the organizations themselves. There were 146 meetings pertaining to the Sunday School for the year. Activity in the Sunday School does not always coincide with that of the church. Months in which the the greatest number of Sunday School meetings are held are November, December and May. The Young People's Religious organizations with a total of 101 meetings are fairly regular in number except during August and September. These groups which are most active during March when 15 meetings were held continue with 10 each month until August.

The programs of the lodges are definitely arranged. There is less variation from month to month in this type of meeting than in any other type. One hundred twenty-three meetings of fraternal organizations are distributed over the entire year. The highest months are November and March with twelve

and fourteen meetings respectively. Seven months show 10 or 11 meetings of this type. The lowest months are June and July. None of the other types of meetings exceed thirty-three in number. All types are most numerous during the winter than at any other season of the year. Since the shows were held out of doors, they were most numerous in the summer season. The Commercial Club has the smallest number of meetings, only three of this type being recorded. This club which had been fairly active, died soon after the present study was started. These three meetings were the last held by the club. Ladies' Religious organizations held 33 meetings. Only a few of these are held each month, although they are regular in distribution and extend throughout the year, except during July. 25 Boy Scout meetings were held from November until May. A change in leadership was responsible for the decrease in meetings when this activity should have been at its best. Although this loss was felt keenly, Boy Scout work has not been started again. During the months, October to June, inclusive, the Girl Reserves held 32 meetings. The leadership of this organization was in the school. Consequently no meetings were held during the summer when they might have been the most successful. Functions such as parties and club meetings are held in all months of the year except June, July, and August. Twenty-seven meetings of this type were distributed fairly evenly over the other nine

months. Parties and club meetings are most numerous in December and January. Nineteen shows were held from April to September, inclusive. The school programs were distributed evenly throughout the nine months when school was in session. One meeting of this type was held in September. All other months have from two to three school programs except January which has seven.

The four miscellaneous types of meetings included two meetings of sportsmen, a cemetery association, and a shipping association.

#### Places Where Meetings Are Held

It was found that the meetings of the year were held in seven different types of places. (Table XI) 696 or 70.3 per cent of the total number, were held in churches. The types of meetings other than religious meetings held in the churches were the school entertainments, Boy Scouts, and clubs.

Few meetings other than lodge meetings were held in lodge halls during the year. However, church organizations, parties and clubs, school meetings, and miscellaneous types used the lodge halls to some degree during the year.

Almost 10 per cent of the meetings were held in homes. This is probably due to the influence of certain types of organizations which tend to break up the attendance into smaller

**Table XI**

Places Where Meetings of Various Types are Held

Number and Type of Meeting														
Place of Meeting	Church	Sun. School	Women's Relig. Orgn.	Young People's Orgn.	Boy Scout	Girl Reserves	Lodge	Parties	Com. Club	Shows	School	Misc.	Total	Pct.
Church	446	145		95	1			1			8		696	70.4
Lodge Halls	1		2	4			122	3			1	1	134	13.6
Homes		1	30	1		31		23			10	2	98	9.9
Scout Hall					24								24	2.4
Out of Doors			1	1		1				19	1		23	2.3
School Bldg.											9		9	.9
Misc.							1		3			1	5	.5
Total	447	146	33	101	25	32	123	27	3	19	29	4	989	100.0

interest groups. The Ladies' Religious Organizations and parties are especially apt to meet in homes. These groups are small, so consequently the home is quite satisfactory as a meeting place. Other types of organizations that meet in homes are Girl Reserves and school parties.

Of the 25 meetings of Boy Scouts, 24 were held in the Boy Scout hall and the other one in a church. If the activities of this organization had continued during the spring and summer, the program of meetings would probably have shown a variation from this practice.

There were 19 shows held out of doors during the year. These, as previously discussed, were all free moving pictures and tent shows. Four other types of organizations also held gatherings out of doors. The number held by the school would have been much greater except for the fact that it was necessary to play most of the ball games out of town. The school held nine meetings in the school building. Many meetings under the auspices of the school had to be held at places other than the school because space in the school house was not available.

There were five meetings held in various miscellaneous places. These places included stores, town hall, and restaurants. Many meetings were held in place poorly fitted to their needs. This fact discourages attendance and tends to decrease



the number of meetings actually held. Many types of programs, especially school programs, often seemed to lose much of their importance because they could not be held in the school house. This is also true of many types not held in appropriate places.

These facts necessarily suggest the need for a community center building in Laingsburg. The need was definitely recognized and steps were taken to secure a building during the year of the survey. The Women's Civic Club first suggested the idea. Then it was taken up by the Commercial Club. The township already owned a lot in the main part of town and plans were made to build a community center on this ground. \$30,000 were to be raised through bonding the township. However, little effort was made to help people outside the village realize that such a plan could benefit them and when the bond issue was brought up at the spring election it was badly defeated. If the matter had been handled more systematically and with greater diplomacy, undoubtedly the plan would have carried. It is evident that the village and community needs leaders who can understand such needs and who can make other persons realize them.

### Participation in the Programs

During the year 612 people took part in the presentation of the programs. (7) 408 of these were residents of the community and 204 came from other places. 186 people took part in presenting music, 237 spoke at different occasions, and 209 took part in plays, pageants, and entertainments of this nature.

Forty-three local people took part in Sunday School programs. These were for the most part children acting in dialogues and short plays. The Women's Religious Organizations had 83 people from the community in their programs. 24 of these helped with music and 59 spoke at the various gatherings. 101 acted as leaders at the meetings of the Young People's Religious Organizations. 100 took part in the school programs. These were pupils who gave musical numbers or took part in debates, and plays. These four groups of organizations are the most significant of all, from the standpoint of numbers of local people participating in the programs.

There was necessarily perhaps, a great deal of repetition in the use of those people who were talented enough to take part in the programs. An intimate knowledge of the village

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(7) Parts regularly taken by ministers, choir leaders, lodge officials, etc. are not included. Participation here is limited to speaking, taking part in plays and giving musical numbers of some kind.

Table XII

## Participants in the Programs

Organi- zation	Place of Residence of Participants	Type of Activity			Totals	
		Music	Speaking	Plays	444	444
Church	Laingsburg	5	5	31	10	44
	Elsewhere		13		43	
Sunday School	Laingsburg	24	3	43	43	3
	Elsewhere		59		83	7
Women's Rel.Org.	Laingsburg	2	5	101	101	69
	Elsewhere		12		20	2
Young People's Rel.Org.	Laingsburg	37	5	17	22	2
	Elsewhere		2		28	
Boy Scout	Laingsburg	10	2	8	15	3
	Elsewhere		7		6	1
Girl Reserve	Laingsburg	3	6	60	60	60
	Elsewhere		1		100	13
Lodges	Laingsburg	78	12	10	100	13
	Elsewhere		4		2	
Parties & Clubs	Laingsburg	7	12	2	100	13
	Elsewhere		4		2	
Com. Club	Laingsburg	7	12	2	100	13
	Elsewhere		4		2	
Shows	Laingsburg	7	12	2	100	13
	Elsewhere		4		2	
School	Laingsburg	7	12	2	100	13
	Elsewhere		4		2	
All Types		166	237	209	408	204

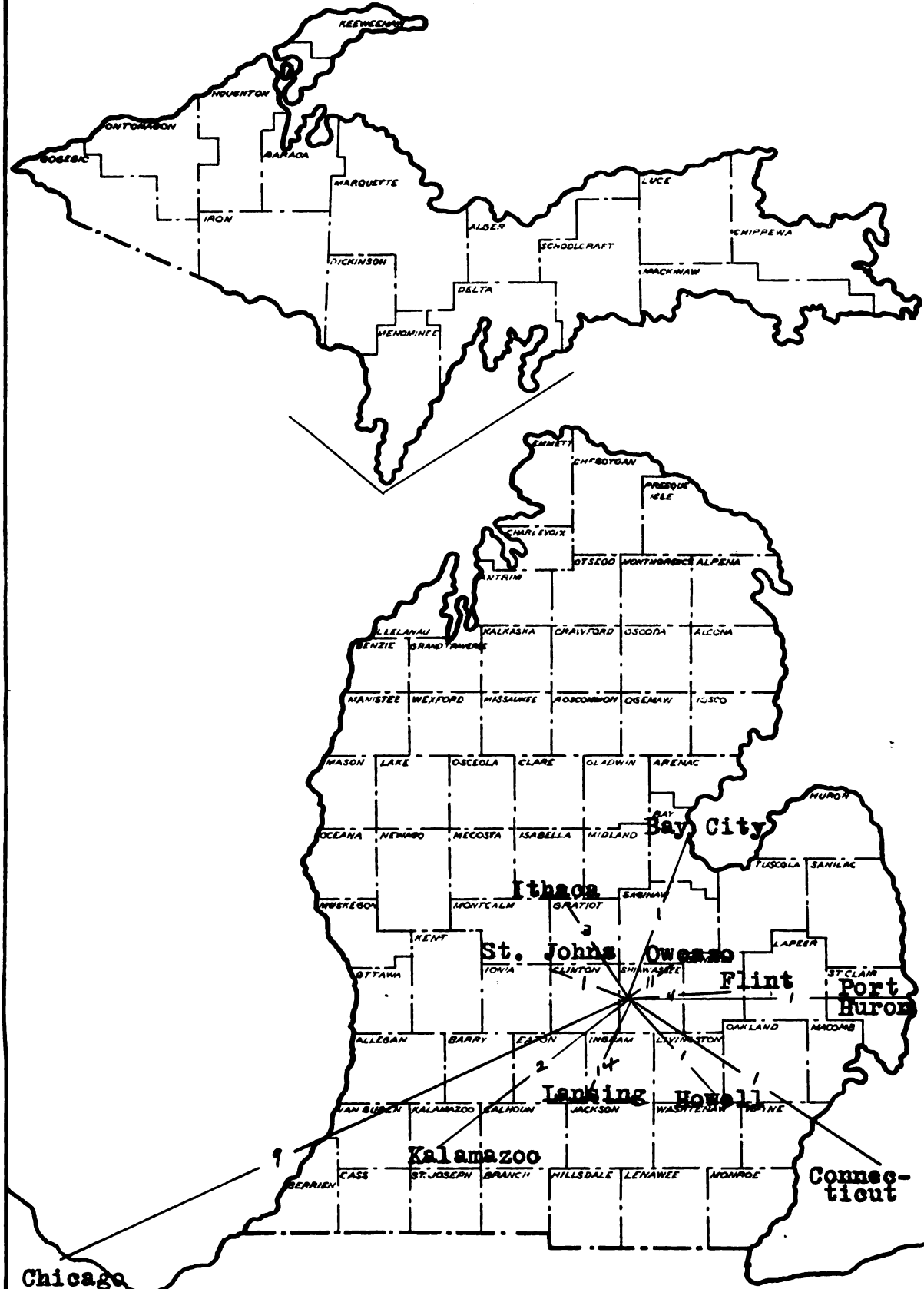
justifies the assertion that there are too few capable people for the number of organizations. People who have any ability are usually found to be active in several organizations. With but few exceptions, the same people are found to be the vital elements in lodges, churches and their adult organizations as well as in parties and clubs. Observation and records have shown that among young people the school, Young People's Religious Organizations, and Boy Scouts, all are too apt to use the same individuals in the presentation of programs.

The organizations that bring the most people into the programs from outside the community are the church, Young People's Religious Organizations, shows, and the school. Both the church and the Young People's Religious Organizations are rated high here chiefly through the activities of the Congregational minister who was greatly interested in young people. His activities drew many programs and conventions from outside the village. This accounts for the fact that these two groups of organizations have 115 people from other places participating in their programs. The most of these people took part as members of orchestras, pageants and plays. The sixty people producing shows before described were all from outside the village. The school brought thirteen people into its programs from other places.

In Chart II is shown the place of residence of persons not in Laingsburg participating in the programs. Since many of these people came in groups, it was difficult to discover places of

## Chart II

Number of Persons from Various Towns and Cities  
Participating in Programs at Laingsburg during the Year  
October, 1925 - October, 1926



residence in all cases. This was especially true of those people taking part in conventions and pageants. However, the residence of forty-eight of the participants from other places is shown in this chart. It is believed, that this number is fairly representative of the total number taking part in the programs from other places.

The nine people from Chicago were brought by the school from the Redpath Lyceum Bureau. A regular lyceum course was not put on but three separate numbers were secured at different times during the winter. The programs presented by these people were all musical entertainments. Of the two people from Kalamazoo one represented the church and one the Christian Endeavor. One person coming from Lansing represented the Anti-Saloon League; two from East Lansing were from religious organizations; a speaker represented the Lansing Credit Association before the Commercial Club; three from the Lansing Conservatory of Music took part in a program sponsored by the Women's Civic Club; two were from the Lansing Churches, two from the Christian Endeavor, and one from a Lansing Sunday School association. Two came from the board in control of Boy Scouts in Lansing. One speaker coming from St. Johns represented the church. Three from Ithaca were from the school and were brought to Leingsburg by the local school. A judge who formerly lived in Leingsburg was also brought by the school from Bay City as commencement speaker. The eleven people

From Owosso represented the church, Sunday School, Women's Christian Temperance Union, Christian Endeavor, and the Eastern Star. Those from Flint and Port Huron all came from churches and Christian Endeavor organizations. One person from Howell was from the Masonic lodge of that place. A minister was brought from New Haven, Connecticut because his early home had been in Laingsburg.

The people who have participated in the programs from outside the community have gone far in supplementing the talent already there. For the most part the types of activity entered into by them have made up certain short-comings which existed. This is true of all three types of activities, music, speaking, and plays. Since much repetition of the home talent seems to be unavoidable, such a practice is commendable and promotes the welfare of the community.

### Summary

The variation in the number of meetings each month indicates that as far as regularity is concerned, the meetings are not evenly distributed through the year. However, this irregularity seems to be in keeping with the needs of the people of the community. The greatest number of meetings are held during those months when farmers have some leisure time. Those church and fraternal organizations tend, more than others, to make the number of meetings held uniform from month to month throughout the entire year. While other organizations vary some in the number of meetings each month, they do not continue throughout the year. The show is the only type which is more active in summer than during the fall and winter months. Meetings do not appear to be evenly distributed according to the day of the week or the time of day though duplications of meetings were generally avoided if two meetings involved the same group of people.

This arrangement of meetings suggests that some attention has been given to the existing needs. The fact that most meetings are held evenings and Sundays permits this conclusion. Leaders of the various organizations tended to arrange the activities of their organization so there would be as little conflict as possible, with other programs. Although there has been no concerted and conscious planning beyond this, results



seem to be effective. The only exception is found in the churches. Each church necessarily has its services on the same day hence there is a great deal of over-lapping that cannot be avoided. Owing to the fact that meetings of the churches are held simultaneously the numbers of church meetings exceed all others. No remedy, it seems, can be suggested for this as long as there are three Protestant churches in the community. If differences between sects were erased, more effective and acceptable work could be done.

The church, Sunday School, shows, and school gatherings attract the greatest numbers of adults and children. Since the church programs continue throughout all the year and the school programs through ten months, these organizations accomplish most in meeting the needs of both groups. According to attendance, lodges play a more important part in the social life of adults than does the school.

The church, Sunday School, lodges, shows, and school are the organizations which bring the most people from town and country together at the same meetings. The influence of the shows, though great, is felt here during only a part of the year. Lodge meetings draw a wider group of people from town and country than do other types of meetings. While there are more organizations with programs especially fitted to the needs of adults, i.e., lodges, parties, and clubs, Ladies' Religious Organizations, and Commercial Club, there is but one organi-

zation, Junior Girl Reserves, with programs designed to meet the needs of children. The Boy Scout organization comes close to being in this class but is composed mostly of high school boys. The scarcity of amusements and the lack of definite work outside of school creates a problem of providing suitable meetings and contacts for the young folks. There is certainly no other phase of social life in the community which is slighted more than this.

Local people take part to a marked degree in helping with the programs which are presented. While there is some repetition these programs are varied and are supplemented by talent from outside the community. All three types of activities, music, speaking, plays and entertainments, are added to in this way during the year. Though these various groups are not perfectly balanced, it is believed that occasional attempts are made to help them become more so.

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