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A SURVEY OF COMMERCIAL JOB
OPPORTUNITIES AND A REVISED
COMMERCIAL CURRICULUM FOR
PORT HURON, MICHIGAN

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.
MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE
Howard Richard Sommer
1941

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A SURVEY OF COMMERCIAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES
AND
A REVISED COMMERCIAL CURRICULUM
FOR
PORT HURON, MICHIGAN

by
Howard Richard Sommer

A THESIS

Submitted to the Graduate School of Michigan
State College of Agriculture and Applied
Science in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Education

1941

1951

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer is deeply appreciative for
the guidance and criticism given by

Dr. H. M. Byram, Chairman

Dr. L. J. Luker

Dr. G. P. Deyoe

of

The Department of Education

Michigan State College

The writer wishes to acknowledge his gratitude to the following for their cooperation in this study: The Port Huron Board of Education; L. A. Packard, Superintendent of Schools; E. A. Hopkins, Secretary of the Port Huron Chamber of Commerce; W. R. Cleminson, Principal of the high school; the members of the Advisory Committee; and teachers of the high-school commercial department.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

The program in commercial education in Port Huron has been limited to preparatory training for stenographic work and for those who would be employed in general, office-clerical positions. Bookkeeping was taught more as an exploratory course in preparation for entrance into the stenographic field, and no courses were offered which would prepare for employment in retail stores. It was felt that the commercial curriculum should be reorganized and enlarged to meet the needs of office and store workers on every level.

To intelligently reorganize the commercial curriculum to fit the needs of the community, it seemed wise to conduct a commercial survey. The use of such a survey is an accepted research procedure particularly applicable to commercial education and it is the most logical way to begin a study of the vocational angle of the curriculum.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine the number of positions open to high-school graduates in the commercial field in Port Huron and the immediate vicinity, and to learn the qualifications and experience required of beginners so that courses of study may be offered to help the high-school student find a position after graduation and to help the business

man find a person for the job available.

Sub-problems:

1. To ascertain the rate of turnover for each commercial position

2. To find the training desired for workers in each position

3. To determine the sex preferred by employers for each commercial position

4. To ascertain whether experience is required of a beginner in each commercial position

5. To ascertain the kinds of office machines most commonly in use

6. To determine how effective the existing commercial courses are in preparing high-school pupils for the positions open to them

7. To ascertain what positions in the business field are open to pupils who drop out of school at the age of sixteen

8. To determine what courses should be added to the commercial curriculum to make it more effective in meeting the needs of the commercial community

9. To ascertain whether employers obtain high-school records of students before hiring

10. To ascertain whether employers would cooperate with the high school in the placement of graduates if

an employment bureau were established

Hypotheses

1. That the commercial curriculum prior to 1938 in Port Huron was not broad enough to include training for office positions which are available to high-school graduates
2. That more students are preparing for stenographic positions than the number of such jobs available to them
3. That the number employed as retail and whole-sale salespeople is large enough to justify adding selling courses to the curriculum

Scope

This study included approximately 800 business firms in Port Huron and an adjacent community, Marysville, all in the county of St. Clair, Michigan.

The information in this report is susceptible to a variety of interpretations--depending upon local conditions. It is not intended to serve as a basis for determining job opportunities for the country as a whole, because Port Huron was not predetermined as a typical city; however, the tables in this study, when reduced to a percentage, may serve as a guide in other communities when statistics of employment opportunities are not available. The population of Port Huron is approximately 40,000 and the community supports 2699 commercial jobs. These

figures reduced to percentage give 6.9 percent which might be of some use for determining the number of commercial jobs in a community.

Evansville, Indiana conducted a similar survey in December of 1935. The number of commercial jobs then totaled 5,815¹ which, when based upon percentage of population, was 5.8 percent of the population. The difference of 1.1 percent might represent the difference in the percentage of firms contacted. The number of firms contacted in Port Huron was 783 and the return was 777, or a percentage of 99.2 percent, whereas, the return for Evansville was 91 percent. Based upon the findings in Port Huron and Evansville, 6.9 could be used with a certain degree of accuracy.

1 Ralph J. Irons, and others. Job Opportunity Survey. Cincinnati; Southwestern Publishing Co. Monograph No. 33. 1936. Pp. 31.

CHAPTER II

Procedure for Solution

The questionnaire was based upon the technique established by Brooks¹ in his study "A Standard Procedure for Administering Commercial Occupation Surveys."

Data secured:

1. Minimum age for employees who will be hired
2. Number of employees hired during the calendar year 1937
3. Minimum weekly salary paid
4. Preference for male or female workers
5. Number of workers currently employed in each commercial position
6. Experience required of a beginner
7. Educational requirements for employee in each selected position

Advisory committee

Realizing that the survey would be more successful if the community were represented in its planning, a group of business and professional men² was invited to attend a meeting for the purpose of discussing the

¹ E. W. Brooks, A Standard Procedure for Administering Commercial Occupational Surveys. Unpublished thesis, Library, University of Iowa, 1933.

² See Appendix.

questions involved, how to conduct the survey, and how to get publicity.

The committee suggested that the statement of salary paid each week be eliminated. It was the general opinion of the committee that a large number of business men would not give this information, and that if this item were included they might not cooperate in supplying the other information desired. They also suggested that a publicity campaign be started one week before the survey was started, that all service club members be asked to cooperate, and that releases be given to the local newspapers. The committee was unanimous in the adoption of the questionnaire in its final form. It further suggested that each interviewer be given a letter of introduction.¹

Procedure for conducting the survey

The survey was directed by the Commercial Education Department, the principal of the high school, and the secretary of the Port Huron Chamber of Commerce. It was started Monday, May 23 and was completed May 27, 1938. Survey was by questionnaire² carried by high-school seniors, trained for the task. Fifty seniors from Port Huron High School contacted all

¹ See Appendix

² Ibid.

employers of commercial workers in Port Huron and Marysville. Individual names of employers did not appear in the final report; only total figures were used. The list of firms to be contacted was made from the telephone directory. The list was gone over three times to make sure that no firms were left out.

The next problem was that of making out cards for each employer. The students in typing classes made out the cards in duplicate so that one card could be given to the worker and one card kept in file to be checked when data were returned. In this way, it was assured that data were received from every employer listed. One set of cards was grouped geographically and the other set was arranged alphabetically. The workers got the cards that were arranged geographically.

The survey was conducted according to the procedure outlined above and the time consumed was only three days, except for interviews with a few employers who had other engagements. However, appointments were made by the students and these employers were interviewed later.

CHAPTER III

Analysis of the Data

It might be interpreted from Tables I and II that the opportunities for employment after 20 years of age are somewhat limited, but this may not be the case because the ages given here are the minimum ages of employees that employers will accept. Whether job experience is required of a worker cannot be determined from these tables. An employer might say that he would hire a person 13 years of age, but that the prospective employee must have had one year of job experience.

To facilitate the interpretation of these tables the reader must keep in mind that an employer was counted anew each time that he supplied information, so the tables do not indicate the number of employers.

A person under 17 years of age has a very limited field in which to look for employment. For females this field is retail selling and for males it is in retail selling and working as delivery boys.

A total of 288 employers (Table I) reported that they would hire males under 18 years of age. A total of 363 employers would hire males at the age of 13 and 553 employers would hire males only if they were over the age of 18. Of the 1204 employers, a total of 916 stated they would hire only males aged 18 or older.

TABLE I

MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENTS FOR 1204 MALE EMPLOYEES AS REPORTED BY EMPLOYERS

Job Classification	Minimum Age Required for New Employees											26 & over	Total
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25			
Accountants	0	0	11	3	3	0	1	2	0	4	2	26	
Bill Clerks	0	0	8	0	3	1	0	0	4	1	0	17	
Bookkeepers	0	2	13	0	1	4	0	3	0	2	0	25	
Bookkeeper-Stenographers	0	1	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	9	
Cashiers	0	1	5	0	0	5	0	15	0	1	0	27	
Collectors	0	0	4	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	6	
Delivery Boys	6	1	16	3	65	11	12	0	0	7	1	122	
Dictaphone or Ediphone Operators	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Entry Clerks	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	
File Clerks	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
General Office Clerks	0	79	38	1	7	4	0	1	0	6	0	136	
Mall Clerks	0	0	3	2	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	9	
Managers	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	5	15	27	
Order Clerks	0	0	0	7	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	12	
Retail Salespeople	109	84	135	11	77	39	25	0	0	27	35	542	
Secretaries	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Shipping Clerks	0	0	5	0	9	1	0	0	0	1	0	16	
Shorthand Stenographers	0	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	
Solicitors	0	0	12	0	6	6	0	0	0	2	0	26	
Stock Clerks	0	3	11	2	6	5	0	0	0	4	0	31	
Telephone Operators	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	
Tellers	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	
Time Clerks	0	0	39	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	41	
Traffic Clerks	0	0	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	
Typists	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
Wholesale Salespeople	0	0	11	0	36	2	4	3	0	7	1	66	
Others	0	0	26	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	2	31	
Totals	115	173	363	32	220	90	51	25	6	73	56	1204	

TABLE II

MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENTS FOR 1495 FEMALE EMPLOYEES AS REPORTED BY EMPLOYERS

Job Classification	Minimum Age Required for New Employees											26 & over	Total
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25			
Accountants	0	0	5	1	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	12
Bill Clerks	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
Bookkeepers	0	0	80	4	20	5	2	1	1	3	5	0	121
Bookkeeper-Stenographers	0	0	29	1	22	5	0	0	0	5	0	0	62
Cashiers	0	0	39	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	47
Collectors	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Dictaphone or Ediphone Operators	0	0	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28
Entry Clerks	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
File Clerks	0	4	17	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	26
General Office Clerks	0	20	173	11	20	27	2	1	2	10	6	0	272
Mail Clerks	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Order Clerks	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Retail Salespeople	92	76	394	6	7	5	0	0	2	7	8	0	597
Secretaries	0	2	33	3	8	6	0	0	2	5	2	0	61
Shipping Clerks	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Shorthand Stenographers	0	3	73	0	10	7	1	0	0	4	0	0	98
Solicitors	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	4
Stock Clerks	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Telephone Operators	0	0	75	2	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	81
Time Clerks	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Typists	0	0	24	5	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	36
Others	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	10
Total	92	109	1021	34	100	64	5	3	7	38	22		1495

A total of 201 employers (Table II) reported that they would hire females under 18 years of age. A total of 1021 employers would hire females at the age of 18 and 273 employers would hire females only if they were over the age of 18. Of the 1495 employers a total of 1294 stated they would hire only females aged 18 or over.

No attempt was made, in this study, to establish the maximum age of employees that the employer would hire.

Number of Employees in 1938

Table III shows that there were 2699 persons employed in commercial jobs in Port Huron in 1938. Of this number 1204 were males and 1495 were females. Of the total number, 2699, which were employed, 1205, or 44.6 percent, were employed in the retail and wholesale selling fields.

There were 184 persons employed as accountants, bookkeepers, and bookkeeper-stenographers whose jobs involved bookkeeping skill. There were 639 persons employed as secretaries, shorthand stenographers, general office clerks, Dictaphone or Ediphone operators, and typists whose jobs involved shorthand and typing skill. The total of the above two groups account for 823, or 30.4 percent, of the commercial jobs. There were 671 persons employed in jobs which

did not require selling, bookkeeping, shorthand or typing skill.

TABLE III
NUMBER OF MALES AND FEMALES EMPLOYED IN VARIOUS COMMERCIAL
JOBS IN PORT HURON DURING 1938

Job Classification	Number of Employees in 1938		
	Male	Female	Total
Accountants	26	12	38
Bill Clerks	17	16	33
Bookkeepers	25	121	146
Bookkeeper-Stenographers	9	62	71
Cashiers	27	47	74
Collectors	6	0	6
Delivery Boys	122	0	122
Dictaphone or Ediphone Operators	0	28	28
Entry Clerks	2	1	3
File Clerks	2	26	28
General Office Clerks	136	272	408
Mail Clerks	9	8	17
Managers	27	0	27
Order Clerks	12	1	13
Retail Salespeople	542	597	1139
Secretaries	1	61	62
Shipping Clerks	16	6	22
Shorthand Stenographers	5	98	103
Solicitors	26	4	30
Stock Clerks	31	3	34
Telephone Operators	2	81	83
Tellers	15	0	15
Time Clerks	41	5	46
Traffic Clerks	6	0	6
Typists	2	36	38
Wholesale Salespeople	66	0	66
Others	31	10	41
Total	1204	1495	2699

Figure 1 shows in graphic form the percentage of employees in the several commercial jobs. These percentages were computed from Table III. The field of retailing employed about one-half, 45.0 percent, of all of the male commercial workers now employed. The next classification of importance for male employees is general office clerks, with 11.8 percent.

Males employed as accountants, bookkeepers, and bookkeeper-stenographers account for 5.0 percent of the male employees. Males employed in jobs involving typing and shorthand skill such as; general office clerks, shorthand-stenographers, and typists accounted for 11.9 percent.

Figure 2 lists the percentage of female workers now employed. This graph shows that retail salespeople were employed in greatest numbers, with 39.9 percent of all female workers in this field. The next largest classification according to percentage distribution is that of general office clerks with 18.2 percent.

Females employed as accountants, bookkeepers, and bookkeeper-stenographers, accounted for 13.1 percent of the female commercial workers. Females employed as general office clerks, shorthand stenographers, secretaries, typists and Dictaphone or Ediphone operators accounted for 33.2 percent of the female commercial workers.

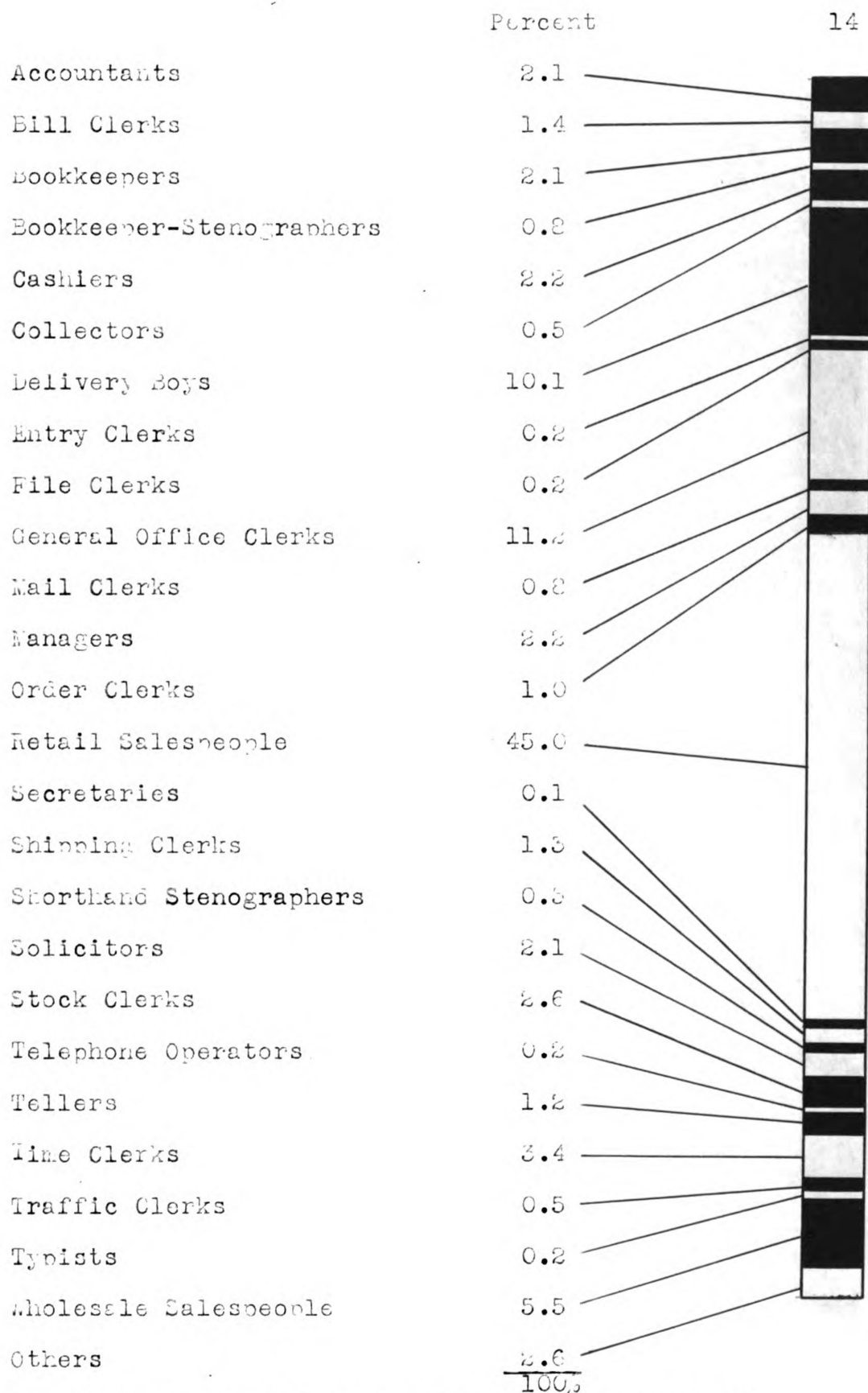


Figure 1. -- Distribution of 1204 Males Employed
in Port Huron in 1938

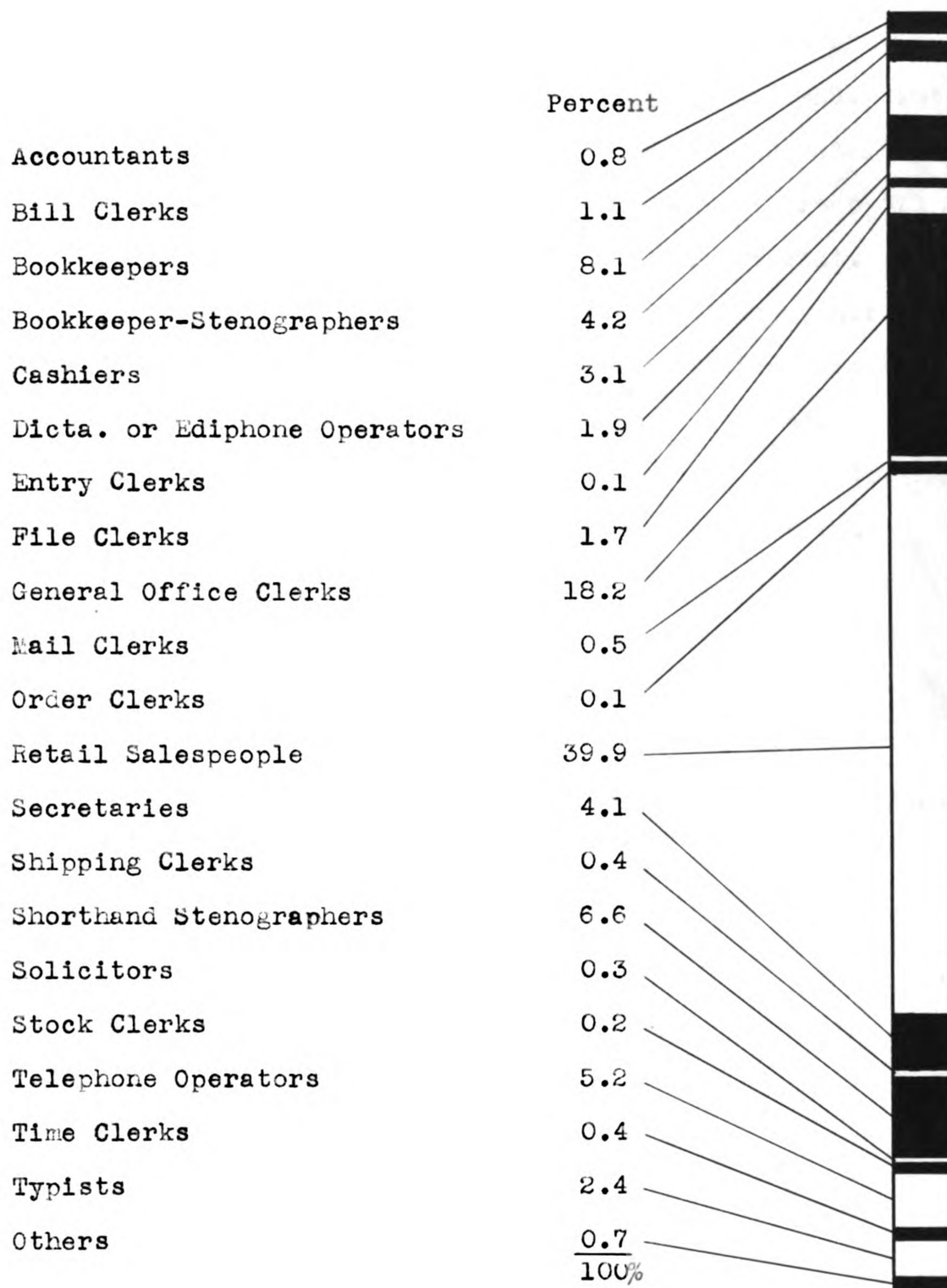


Figure 2. -- Distribution of 1495 Females Employed
in Port Huron in 1938.

Figure 3 shows the percentage distribution of male and female workers employed in Port Huron in 1933. The largest percentage of workers was employed as retail salespeople, 45.2 percent. The next largest group of employees was general office clerks, 15.1 percent. Of the persons employed whose job involved a knowledge of bookkeeping, such as accountants, bookkeepers, bookkeeper-stenographers, accounted for 9.3 percent. Persons employed in jobs involving shorthand and typing skill, such as general office clerks, secretaries, shorthand stenographers, Dictaphone or Telephone operators, and typists accounted for 23.7 percent of all commercial workers. The three classifications, bookkeeping knowledge, typing and shorthand skill, and selling, account for 73.4 percent of all commercial employees. It must also be remembered that general office clerks need to keep records but they could not be counted twice so they were put into the stenographic class because this skill is used more than that of keeping records.

Number of New Employees Hired During 1937

Table IV shows the number of new employees hired during 1937 in each job classification. This table should serve to guide the students when selecting a course of study leading to a commercial vocation, since it reveals the number of new employees that were hired

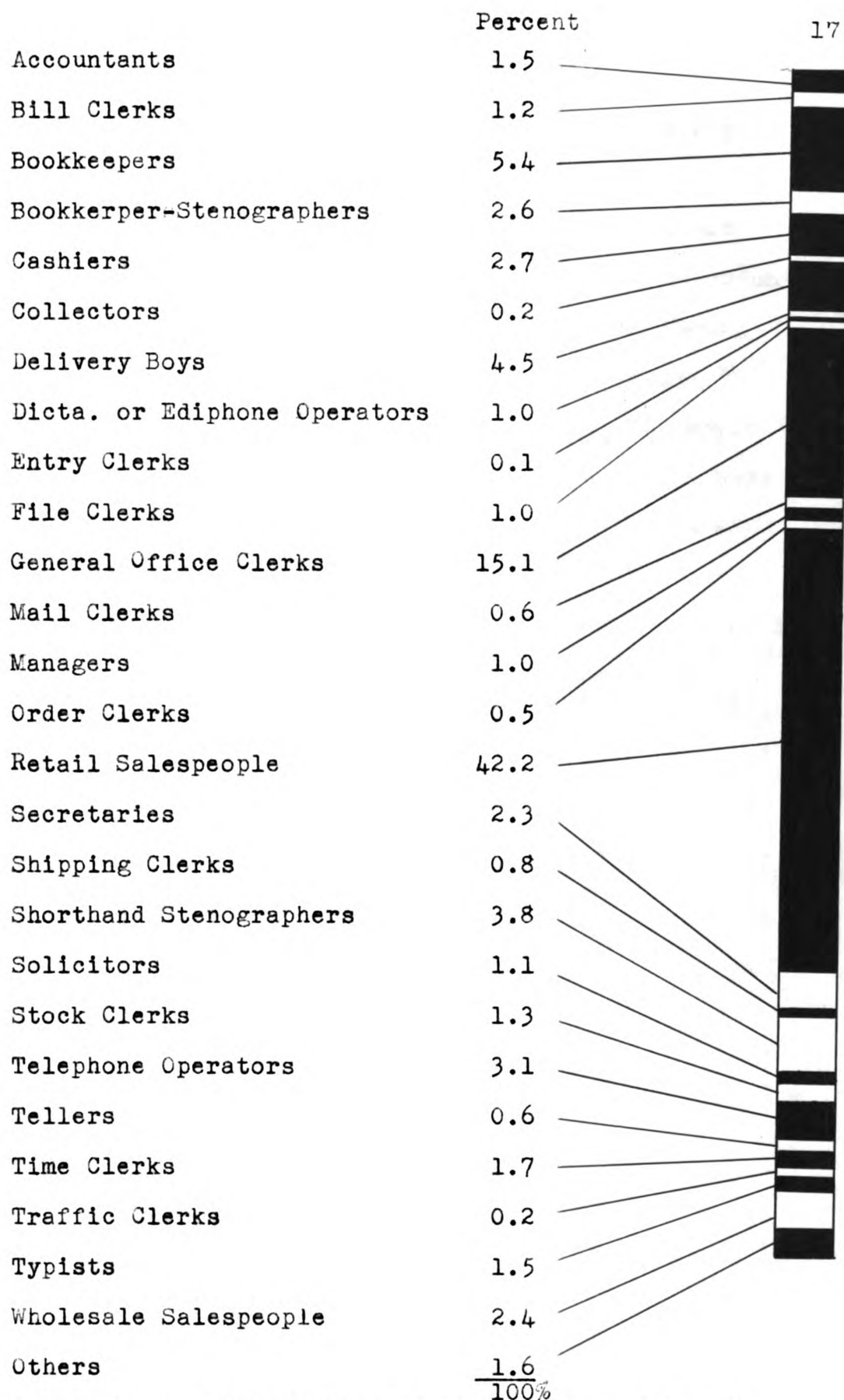


Figure 3. -- Distribution of 2699 Males and Females
Employed in Port Huron in 1938

during a recent year, and this is probably a fairly accurate index of employment since that time.

In selecting a commercial vocation, the student should look for the fields where the greatest opportunity lies for employment. Table IV shows that during 1937, 378 people were hired as retail salespeople, 72 people were hired as general office clerks, 30 people were hired as bookkeeper-stenographers, 23 people were hired as wholesale salespeople, and 18 were hired as

TABLE IV

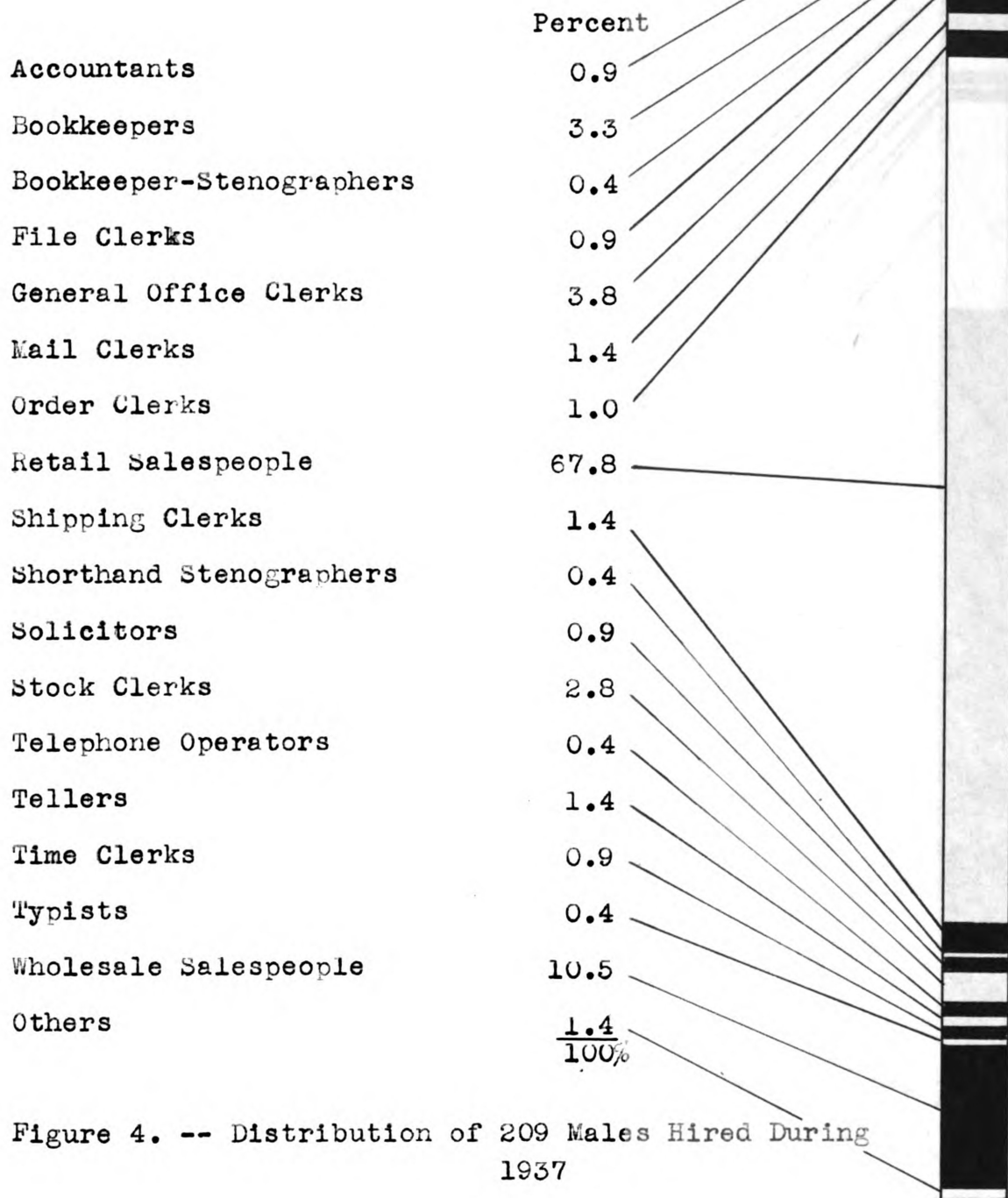
THE NUMBER OF NEW EMPLOYEES HIRED DURING 1937 IN PORT HURON

- Job Classification	Number of Employees Hired in 1937		
	Male	Female	Total
Accountants	2	0	2
Bill Clerks	0	9	9
Bookkeepers	7	11	18
Bookkeeper-Stenographers	1	29	30
Cashiers	0	8	8
Entry Clerks	0	1	1
File Clerks	2	4	6
General Office Clerks	8	64	72
Mail Clerks	3	0	3
Order Clerks	4	0	4
Retail Salespeople	140	238	378
Secretaries	0	7	7
Shipping Clerks	3	0	3
Shorthand Stenographers	1	22	23
Solicitors	2	1	3
Stock Clerks	6	2	8
Telephone Operators	1	2	3
Tellers	3	0	3
Time Clerks	2	1	3
Typists	1	5	6
Wholesale Salespeople	22	0	22
Others	1	0	1
Total	209	404	613

bookkeepers. These classifications made up 521 jobs, or 84.9 percent, of all new people hired during 1937. Again, it must be remembered that no attempt was made to separate the jobs in which the employer required experience from those in which no experience was required.

Of the 209 male employees hired during 1937, (see Figure 4) 78.3 percent were in the field of selling (retail and wholesale). Accountants, bookkeepers and bookkeeper-stenographers, whose job involved a knowledge of bookkeeping, accounted for 4.6 percent of the new male employees hired during 1937. General office clerks, secretaries, shorthand-stenographers, and typists, whose job involved typing and shorthand skill accounted for 4.6 percent of the new male employees hired during 1937. The total of the above classifications account for 87.5 percent of all new male employees hired during 1937.

Figure 5 illustrates the percentage distribution of female employees hired during 1937. As is the case with men, this figure shows that selling (retail salespeople) accounts for the largest percentage of new employees hired, 58.8 percent. Accountants, bookkeepers, and bookkeeper-stenographers, whose job involved bookkeeping knowledge accounted for 9.4 percent of the new employees (female) hired during 1937. General office clerks, secretaries,



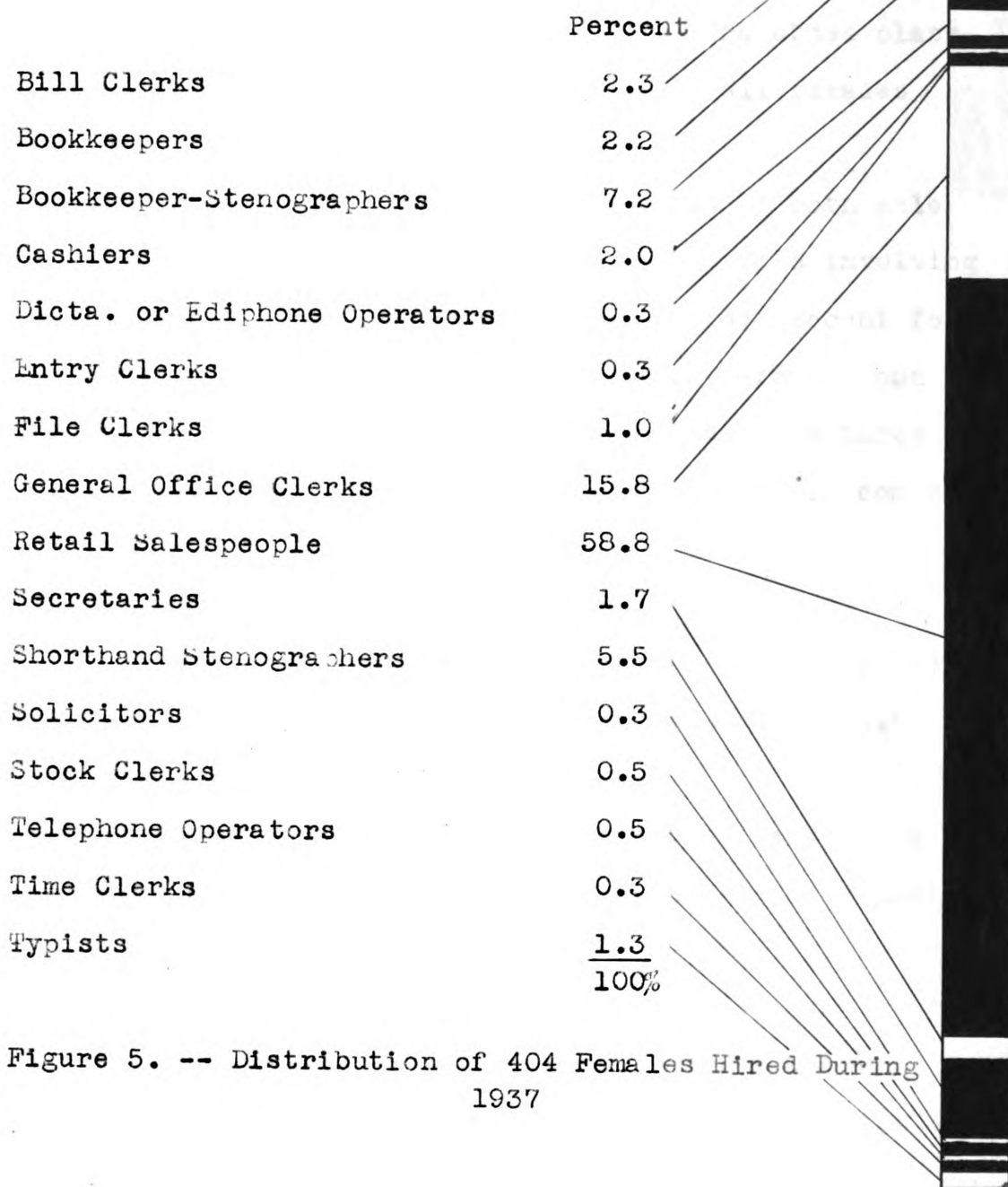


Figure 5. -- Distribution of 404 Females Hired During 1937

shorthand stenographers, Dictaphone and Ediphone operators, and typists, whose job involved typing and shorthand skill, accounted for 24.6 percent of the new employees (female) hired during 1937. The above classification accounted for 92.8 percent of all females employed in 1937.

Figure 6 illustrates the percentages of both male and female employees hired during 1937. Jobs involving selling (retail and wholesale salespeople) account for 65.1 percent, bookkeeping knowledge 8.1 percent, and shorthand and typing skill, 17.7 percent. The three classifications account for 90.9 percent of all commercial employees hired during 1937.

Sex Preference

Of the 1004 employers surveyed, (See Table V) 667, or 66.4 percent, preferred females and 337, or 33.6 percent, preferred male employees.

For accountants, employers preferred males at a ratio of three to one, but for bookkeepers, they preferred females two to one. These two classifications are very similar, with accounting involving a higher degree of skill. For bookkeeper-stenographers, the employers preferred females at a ratio of six to one. For general office clerks, the preference was four to one for females. In the field of selling, females were preferred two to one in retailing, but females are not wanted for jobs in

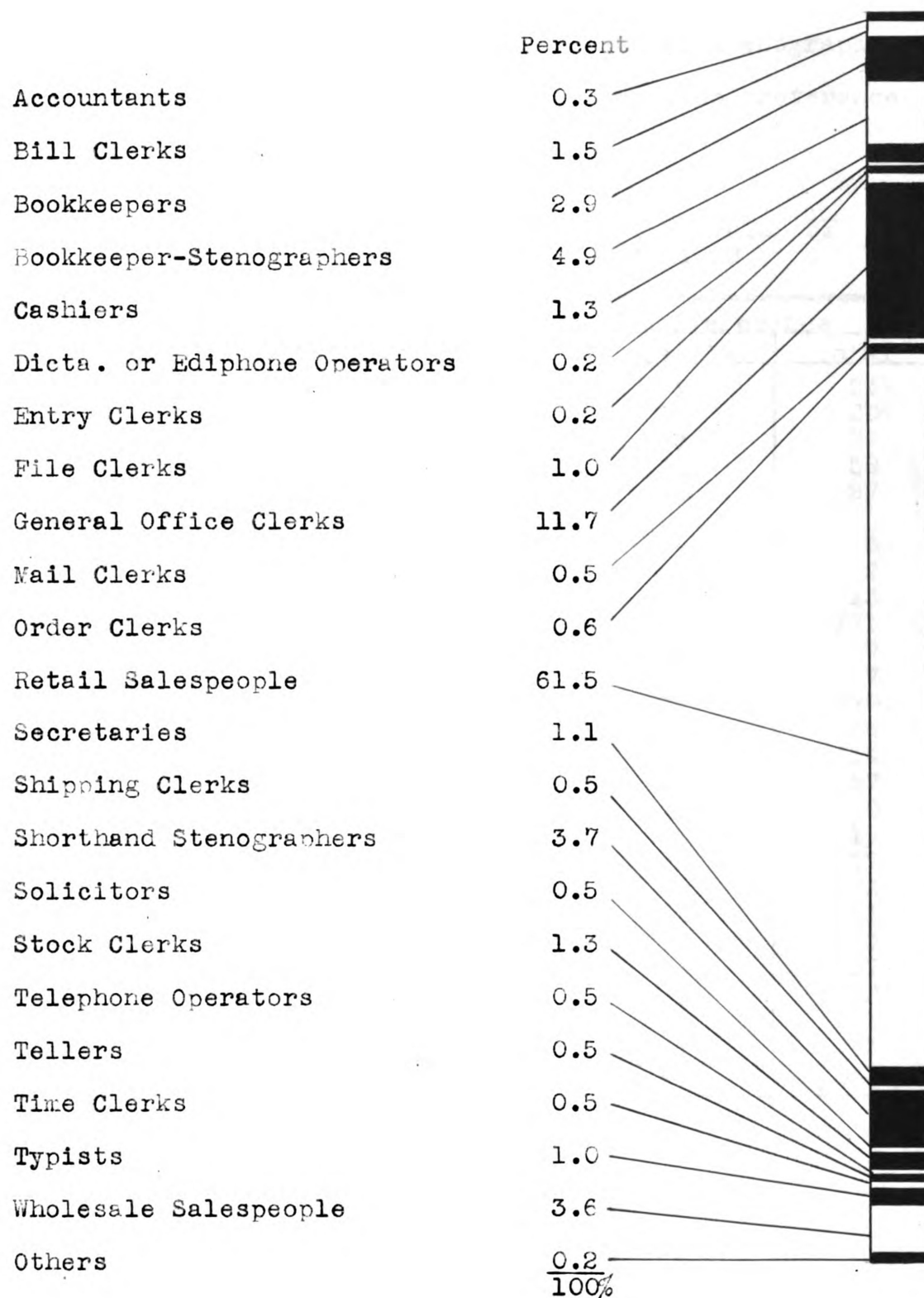


Figure 6. -- Distribution of 613 Males and Females Hired
During 1937

wholesaling. For secretaries and shorthand stenographers females have a high preference with almost no preference for males

TABLE V

PREFERENCE FOR MALE OR FEMALE WORKERS AS REPORTED BY
1004 PORT HURON EMPLOYERS IN 1938

Job Classification	Employer's Sex Preference		
	Male	Female	Total
Accountants	18	6	24
Bill Clerks	10	10	20
Bookkeepers	26	53	79
Bookkeeper-Stenographers	8	51	59
Cashiers	7	20	27
Dicta. or Ediphone Operators	1	4	5
Entry Clerks	0	2	2
File Clerks	2	11	13
General Office Clerks	34	137	171
Mail Clerks	5	4	9
Order Clerks	6	1	7
Retail Salespeople	140	238	378
Secretaries	0	36	36
Shipping Clerks	12	2	14
Shorthand Stenographers	3	54	57
Solicitors	6	2	8
Stock Clerks	17	2	19
Telephone Operators	2	15	17
Tellers	2	0	2
Time Clerks	8	3	11
Traffic Clerks	3	0	3
Typists	2	15	17
Wholesale Salespeople	22	0	22
Wrappers	1	0	1
Others	2	1	3
Total	337	667	1004

Job Experience Required of New Employees

From the data in Table VI it can be seen that 737 employers expressed experience requirements for each job classification. Table VI also shows that 351, or 47.6 percent, required job experience before they would hire,

and 386 or 52.4 percent said that experience was not required.

TABLE VI
EXPERIENCE REQUIRED OF EMPLOYEES FOR EACH JOB CLASSIFICATION, AS REPORTED BY PORT HURON EMPLOYERS IN 1938.

Job Classification	Experience Necessary		
	Yes	No	Total
Accountants	14	3	17
Bill Clerks	6	11	17
Bookkeepers	44	34	78
Bookkeeper-Stenographers	43	18	61
Cashiers	10	14	24
Dicta. or Ediphone Operators	1	3	4
Entry Clerks	0	2	2
File Clerks	2	11	13
General Office Clerks	69	95	164
Mail Clerks	1	5	6
Order Clerks	3	4	7
Retail Salespeople	60	78	138
Secretaries	25	13	38
Shipping Clerks	6	8	14
Shorthand Stenographers	28	27	55
Solicitors	2	5	7
Stock Clerks	5	14	19
Telephone Operators	7	8	15
Tellers	0	2	2
Time Clerks	2	8	10
Traffic Clerks	2	1	3
Typists	7	10	17
Wholesale Salespeople	12	10	22
Wrappers	0	1	1
Others	2	1	3
Total	351	386	737

When hiring accountants, 14 out of 17 employers reported that they preferred the applicant who had had job experience. When hiring bookkeepers, 44 employers reported they would like the workers to have had some job experience, and 34 reported that no experience was required. As bookkeeper-stenographers, 43 employers reported that they would like the workers to have

had some job experience and 18 reported that no job experience was required.

Educational Requirements

Table VII shows that Port Huron employers consider a high school education essential, that these employers are willing to take high school graduates, that there is

TABLE VII

AMOUNT OF EDUCATION THE APPLICANT MUST HAVE FOR EACH JOB CLASSIFICATION AS REPORTED BY PORT HURON EMPLOYERS IN 1938

Job Classification	Educational Requirements				Total
	Grade School	High School	Business College	College	
Accountants	0	11	6	3	20
Bill Clerks	1	15	1	0	17
Bookkeepers	0	59	18	1	78
Bookkeeper-Stenographers	0	44	14	2	60
Cashiers	1	22	3	0	26
Dictaphone or Ediphone Operators	0	4	0	0	4
Entry Clerks	0	2	0	0	2
File Clerks	0	10	2	0	12
General Office Clerks	0	140	23	1	164
Mail Clerks	1	6	0	0	7
Order Clerks	1	7	0	0	8
Retail Salespeople	31	197	2	5	235
Secretaries	0	23	6	3	37
Shipping Clerks	4	10	0	0	14
Shorthand Stenographers	0	47	8	0	55
Solicitors	1	6	0	0	7
Stock Clerks	4	13	0	0	17
Telephone Operators	1	14	0	0	15
Tellers	0	2	0	0	2
Time Clerks	0	10	0	0	10
Traffic Clerks	0	3	0	0	3
Typists	0	14	4	0	18
Wholesale Salespeople	1	19	1	2	23
Wrappers	1	0	0	0	1
Others	0	2	0	0	2
Total	47	685	88	17	837
Percentage of Totals	5.61	81.83	10.51	2.03	100

little opportunity for a person with only a grade school education to get into a commercial job except the field of retailing, and that only 5.6 percent of the employers will accept persons with a grade-school education.

Kinds of Office Machines Employers Use

The figures represented in Table VIII indicate the kinds of machines the employers use, i.e. 201 employers use Royal typewriters, 100 use Remington typewriters, and so on. This table should serve as a basis for determining what makes of machines to purchase for use in commercial classes, and the ratio in which they should be purchased.

There are more typewriters in use than any other kind of machine, but the number of adding machines, calculators, and duplicating machines shows that enough employers are using such machines to justify the teaching of business-machine skills in the high school.

Agencies Used in Securing Employees

Table IX shows that 271 employers use personal application to secure employees, 34 employers examine want advertisements, 22 employers secure employees from the business college, 11 employers secure employees from the high school, and 7 employers secure employees from employment agencies. Three hundred fifteen employers expressed interest in a high-school employment bureau. Three hundred eight of the employers

did not obtain scholastic records of prospective workers.

TABLE VIII

KINDS OF OFFICE MACHINES IN USE IN PORT HURON ACCORDING TO
REPORTS OF EMPLOYERS IN 1938

Type and Make of Machines	Number of Employers Using These Machines
Typewriters	
Royal	201
Underwood	100
Remington	85
L. C. Smith	39
Corona	13
Others	12
Adding Machines	
Burroughs	165
Sundstrand	42
Victor	31
Allen-Wales	21
Dalton	11
Others	19
Bookkeeping Machines	
Underwood Elliott Fisher	2
Burroughs	11
Calculators	
Monroe	18
Burroughs	12
Comptometer	5
Marchant	4
Addressing Machines	
Addressograph	15
Dictaphone or Ediphone	
Dictaphone	15
Ediphone	3
Duplicating Machines	
Mimeograph	23
Ditto	8
Others	3

TABLE IX

AGENCIES USED BY EMPLOYERS, EMPLOYEE INTEREST IN HIGH-SCHOOL
EMPLOYMENT BUREAU, AND USE OF SCHOLASTIC RECORDS

Item	Number of Employ- ers Reporting	Per- cent
Agencies Used in Securing Employees:		
Personal Application	271	78.5
Want Advertisement	34	9.8
Business College	22	6.4
High School	11	3.2
Employment Agency	7	2.0
Total	<u>345</u>	
Employer Interest in High School		
Employment Bureau:		
Interested	315	75.5
Not Interested	102	24.5
Total	<u>417</u>	
Scholastic Record Before Hiring:		
Do not Obtain Records	308	80.6
Obtain Records	75	19.4
Total	<u>383</u>	

Percentage of Job Turnover

Table X shows the rate of turnover per year for each job classification. The average turnover for all positions is 22.7 percent.

No attempt was made in this study to determine the cause of turnover.

The greatest percentage of turnover in jobs is for bookkeeper-stenographers, it being 42.2 percent. The highly skilled workers, such as accountants, bookkeepers, and secretaries have less than the average rate of turnover; and the jobs in which a person is most apt to find his first employment such as in bookkeeping, stenography,

TABLE X

PERCENTAGE OF TURNOVER FOR EACH JOB CLASSIFICATION IN
PORT HURON AS COMPUTED FROM TABLES III AND IV.

Job Classification	Employed 1938	Newly Hired 1937	Total	Percent Turnover
Accountants	38	2	40	5.2
Bill Clerks	33	9	42	27.3
Bookkeepers	146	18	164	12.3
Bookkeeper- Stenographers	71	30	101	42.2
Cashiers	74	8	82	10.2
Collectors	6	0	6	0.0
Delivery Boys	122	0	122	0.0
Dictaphone or Ediphone Operators	28	1	29	3.6
Entry Clerks	3	1	4	33.3
File Clerks	28	6	34	21.4
General Office Clerks	488	72	480	17.6
Mail Clerks	17	3	20	17.6
Managers	27	0	27	0.0
Order Clerks	13	4	17	30.7
Retail Salespeople	1139	378	1517	33.2
Secretaries	62	7	69	11.2
Shipping Clerks	22	3	25	13.6
Shorthand Stenographers	103	23	126	22.3
Solicitors	30	3	33	10.0
Stock Clerks	34	8	42	23.5
Telephone Operators	83	3	86	3.6
Tellers	15	3	18	2.0
Time Clerks	46	3	49	6.5
Traffic Clerks	6	0	6	0.0
Typists	38	6	44	15.8
Wholesale Salespeople	66	22	88	33.3
Others	41	1	42	2.4
Total	2699	614	3313	22.7

shorthand-stenography, retail sales, wholesale sales, and general office clerking are above the average rate of turnover. Whether this means anything or not could only be an inference to be proved by a further study of the cause of turnover.

In this study, no attempt was made to separate employees who were hired on their first job from those employees who moved from one position to another. The employer was asked to give only the number of people he hired during 1937.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In Port Huron there were 2699 commercial employees in 1938. Of this number 1204, or 44.6 percent, were male workers and 1495, or 55.4 percent, were female workers.

Out of the 2699 commercial jobs, 2259 could be filled by persons age 20 or under. However, no attempt was made in this study to establish the maximum age of applicants whom employers will hire.

The most promising age for obtaining employment seems to be 18 years.

A very limited field for employment is open to people under 17 years.

Of the 2699 commercial jobs in Port Huron, 1495 were for females and 1204 were for males. Jobs involving bookkeeping skill accounted for 184, bookkeeping and stenographic skill 71, stenographic skill alone 231, general office routine, and stenography and bookkeeping 408. These total 894. Selling both wholesale and retail, involved the employment of 1205 people. Six hundred jobs could be filled by people not having special training.

During 1937, in Port Huron, 614 new employees were hired; 209 were males and 405 were females. Retail salespeople had the greatest opportunity

for securing employment, followed in order by general office clerks, bookkeeper-stenographers, shorthand stenographers, and bookkeepers.

Of the 1004 employers surveyed, 667 preferred females and 337 preferred males, the ratio being about two to one.

Over half the employers of Port Huron indicated that they would hire high-school graduates who had had no experience. Seven hundred thirty-seven employers expressed requirements for new employees in each job classification. Three hundred fifty-one required experience and 386 reported that experience was not required.

Six hundred eighty-five employers required high-school graduates, 88 required business college graduates, 47 required a grade school education, and 17 required college graduates.

The following types of office machines were used in Port Huron offices: Typewriters, adding machines, bookkeeping machines, calculators, addressing machines, dictating machines, and duplicating machines.

The following agencies were used by Port Huron employers when looking for applicants: Personal application, business college, high school, want advertisements, and employment agency.

Three hundred fifteen employers reported they would

be interested in a high-school employment agency.

Scholastic records of applicants are seldom obtained by Port Huron employers. Only 75 employers stated they obtained scholastic records of applicants before hiring.

The average rate of job turnover in Port Huron was in the bookkeeper-stenographer classification, it being 48.2 percent.

The rate of turnover among retail salespeople was 53.2 percent, for general office clerks 17.6 percent, and for shorthand-stenographers it was 22.5 percent.

CHAPTER V

SUGGESTED CURRICULUM FOR MAKING COMMERCIAL
EDUCATION MORE EFFECTIVE IN PORT HURONBases for Constructing the Curriculum

The construction of the commercial curriculum is one of the problems in the field of curriculum making. The needs of business change rapidly; therefore, the modern commercial curriculum should be based on the present day needs regardless of whether subjects included on that basis were the first or the last to be recognized by school authorities. In constructing the commercial curriculum it would be a rather easy task to include only subjects which have a business background. However, the student not only must be prepared to fit into certain types of commercial employment but he should also be prepared to take his place in society. Then, the first step in preparing this curriculum is to start with the core subjects required by the high school for graduation. Port Huron High School has a very lenient requirement for graduation. However, it does include those subjects which help to make the graduate a well-informed person.

High-School Requirements for Graduation

For graduation from high school, the student must have fulfilled the following requirements; three years of English, one year of American history, and one semester of government. This is the core around which to work.

Flexible Curriculum

Most students, upon entering high school, do not know what kind of employment they wish to pursue; therefore, the curriculum should start with courses which are designed for exploration and guidance. By having a curriculum constructed so as to be flexible, and in which there is a general starting point for all commercial students with branchings into accounting, general office training, and distributive occupations (selling), the student has his choice of three fields of vocational training. The teacher can play a very important part in guiding the training course for which he seems best suited.

Commercial Curriculum Prior to 1938

Prior to making this survey, the commercial course in the high school has a one-way curriculum starting in the ninth year and continuing through the twelfth year. At the end of the eighth year, the student made his selection of curriculum to follow. Thus, if the student decided on a commercial curriculum, there was a one-way curriculum for him to pursue. The finished product was a stenographer, because bookkeeping instruction had stopped at the end of the tenth year, and no student can retain as much knowledge of bookkeeping as is needed to keep an accurate set of books with a two-year lay-off period. Typing and shorthand came in the eleventh and twelfth years; consequently, these

subjects were the only ones in which the student had any competence at the time of graduation.

The Commercial Course as Proposed and in Partial Operation

It might be well at this point to contrast the old commercial course with the new course. The new course is a flexible one and not all carried to completion, as yet, but which will be in the next couple of years.

THE COMMERCIAL COURSE REPORT 1938

Ninth Year

First Semester

General Business Training
English
Commercial Arithmetic
Civics

Second Semester

Bookkeeping
English
Commercial Geography
Civics

Tenth Year

First Semester

Bookkeeping
English
Elective
Elective

Second Semester

Bookkeeping
English
Elective
Elective

Eleventh Year

First Semester

Shorthand
Typing
United States History
Elective

Second Semester

Shorthand
Typing and Trans-
cription
United States History
Elective

Twelfth Year

First Semester

Shorthand
 Typing and Transcription
 Government
 Elective

Second Semester

Shorthand
 Transcription and
 Typing
 English
 Elective

Elective Subjects

Tenth Year

Biology--One year
 French--One year
 European History--One year

Clothing--One year
 Cooking--One year

Eleventh Year

English--One year
 Clothing--One year
 Cooking--One year

Physiology--One semester
 Sociology--One semester

Twelfth Year

Chemistry--One year
 Economics--One semester

Commercial law--One semester

THE COMMERCIAL COURSE AS PROPOSED AND IN
 PARTIAL OPERATION

Ninth Year

(Recommended but not required course)

First Semester

Junior Business Training
 Commercial Geography
 English
 Civics

Second Semester

Junior Business Training
 Commercial Arithmetic
 English
 Civics

Tenth Year

(For all commercial students)

First Semester

English
 Bookkeeping
 Typing
 Shorthand

Second Semester

English
 Bookkeeping
 Typing
 Shorthand

After this first year, the student has an opportunity to make his choice of three curricula.

SECRETARIAL AND GENERAL OFFICE TRAINING

Eleventh Year

First Semester

History
Shorthand
Typing and Transcription
Public Speaking

Second Semester

History
Shorthand
Typing and Transcription
Salesmanship***

Twelfth Year

First Semester

Office Practice***
Economics*
Business English*
Transcription

Second Semester

Office Practice***
Civics
Business English*
English Grammar

ACCOUNTING

Eleventh Year

First Semester

Bookkeeping
History
Public Speaking
Economic Geography*

Second Semester

Bookkeeping*
History
Business English
Salesmanship**

Twelfth Year

Business Arithmetic*
Machines***
English Grammar
Civics

Cost Accounting**
Machines***
Commercial Law*
Economics*

DISTRIBUTIVE OCCUPATIONS

Eleventh Year

First Semester

Bookkeeping
History
Economic Geography*

Second Semester

Salesmanship*
History
Civics

Public Speaking

Business English*

Twelfth Year

First Semester

Elementary Retail Selling*
 Merchandise Knowledge*
 Store English and Spelling*
 Store Work*

Second Semester

Advanced Retail Selling*
 Merchandise Knowledge*
 Miscellaneous Retail-
 ing*:
 a. Advertising
 b. Records
 c. Arithmetic
 Store Work*

Thirteenth Year

Merchandising and Marketing
 Problems*
 Store Work*

Merchandising and
 Marketing Problems*
 Store Work*

The course in accounting has been in operation since 1938. Bookkeeping has been take out of the Junior High Schools, leaving only junior business training as a two-semester course instead of one semester. This course, greatly expanded, serves as an exploratory course. Before this change went into effect, the basic course in book-keeping was taught in the ninth grade and the student who decided, after leaving junior high school, that he would like to enter the commercial training course, had to go back to the junior high school for this subject. This was unsatisfactory.

*Courses added to commercial curriculum

**Courses to be added the second year.

***Courses held up because of lack of finances.

The bookkeeping course has been increased from three semesters, to four semesters and finishes at the end of the eleventh year. Soon to be added will be cost accounting in the twelfth year. When this has been carried to completion, the accounting course will be complete except for instruction in direct operation of machines. This will probably be held up for some time. The initial cost of putting in the machines necessitates this delay.

The other course which has been added is in the field of distributive occupations (retail selling). This course is organized on the co-operative plan under the Federal George-Dean Act of 1936. It conforms with all of the requirements of the Michigan State Plan. The student is to supplement his school instruction with employment in a retail store over a two-year period. This necessitates a thirteenth year.

The program of distributive education started with a few students and with very little instructional material. A promotional program was started, with personal contacts with merchants to get their suggestions upon subjects which could be included in the course of study and to ask their aid in employing the trainee.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. The diversity of the commercial jobs was such as to show that the curriculum prior to 1938 did not provide workers for all of these jobs.

2. More students are preparing for stenographic positions than the number of such jobs available to them.

3. The number of males and females employed in Port Huron in retail selling, 1139, was large enough to justify adding selling courses (distributive education) to the curriculum.

4. Students who leave school at the age of 16, without graduating, are eligible for employment as retail salespeople or delivery boys only. However, applicants of this age would be acceptable to only a small proportion of the employers.

5. The number of jobs in specialized fields of stenographic and secretarial training, accounting and bookkeeping, and selling shows a need for strong, skill-building courses along these lines.

6. Four popular makes of typewriters should be considered by the board of education in the exchange of equipment.

7. There are enough other types of machines in commercial use to justify the addition of a machine course, using adding machines, calculating machines, Ediphone and Dictaphone, and duplicating machines.

Suggestions for Further Study

1. There is a need for the same kind of survey in other communities with the view of establishing percentage of population engaged in commercial occupations, percentages of male and female employees, and the distribution of male and female employees in each job classification.

2. There is a need for a study to establish the maximum age at which commercial employees will be hired in each job classification.

3. A need also exists for a study to determine the causes of turnover in commercial employment.

4. In order to make a commercial curriculum fit the needs of the community, a job analysis should be made of each classification.

5. There is a need for studying the number of persons per year securing jobs for the first time.

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APPENDIX

PORT HURON HIGH SCHOOL
PORT HURON, MICHIGAN
W. R. CLEMINSON, Principal

Dear Mr.

You have been selected as a representative for your line of business to attend a round table discussion at the Port Huron High School, Friday, May 6, at 12 o'clock noon.

The high school with the cooperation of the Chamber of Commerce is planning a commercial survey of Port Huron and we need your suggestions in outlining our procedure.

The reasons for this survey are:

1. Data are lacking both locally and on a national basis on the employment opportunities for the various types of office work and sales positions. In particular, we wish to know the number employed in the Port Huron area in these various positions and the turnover.
2. We wish to know from employers' experience with beginning workers in the various types of commercial employment, the particular qualifications, and training which these people should have. In particular, we wish to know such things as the types of machines used and the difficulties which beginners have due to the lack of training or personal traits.

From the results of this survey, the Port Huron High School will be in a better position to recommend the proper students to the various types of commercial work. We will also be better prepared to adapt our course of training, subject material, machine practice, office practice, study of salesmanship and such allied work to meet the actual needs of employers of commercial workers in Port Huron.

We want to talk over with you the above points and get your reaction to them. The discussion is going to be most helpful to us because of your experience and your helpful interest in the students who are going out into the business world.

We are enclosing a copy of a tentative questionnaire which we have drawn up for use in conducting the survey. Please be so good as to study it and recommend changes, if any, at our luncheon.

Unless we hear from you to the contrary, we will be expecting you on Friday, May 6, 12:00 noon at the high school for luncheon.

Sincerely,

H. R. Sommer
Chairman of Committee

H. A. Hopkins, Secretary
Port Huron Chamber of Commerce

W. R. Cleminson, Principal

P. S. Enclosed is also a list of people whom we are inviting to participate in this discussion.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr. Dan Hayes	Detroit Edison Co.
Mr. C. E. Collins	Chrysler Corp.
Mr. E. W. Fitzgerald	Mueller Brass Co.
Mr. Howard M. Thomas	First National Bank
Mrs. Mercia Beaubien	J. B. Sperry Co.
Mrs. Vale Henson	Woman's Benefit Association
Mr. C. S. Conley	S. S. Kresge Co.
Mr. Walter Wright	Moore & Wright Insurance Co.
Mr. Gordon Tappan	Watson & Tappan, Attorneys
Miss. Mary Kruetziger	The H. A. Smith Warehouse Store
Mr. Geo. H. Hunter	Port Huron Times Herald
Mr. L. A. Packard	Supt. of Port Huron Schools
Mr. M. J. Korn	Cunningham Drug Co.
Mrs. Viola Montgomery	A. A. A. Garage
Mr. Charles Babcock	Babcock Dairy
Mr. Jesse F. Wilson	Star Oil Co.
Mr. A. G. Thernstrom	Grand Trunk Railway
Mr. George Higgins	Higgins Coal Co.
Mr. P. E. Lehman	J. C. Penny Co.
Mr. Frank Kerr	Kerr Lumber Co.

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

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PORT HURON HIGH SCHOOL
PORT HURON, MICHIGAN

W. R. CLEMINSON, *Principal*

To the Employers of Port Huron:

This will introduce _____, who is cooperating with the Chamber of Commerce and the Port Huron High School in conducting an occupational survey of all the commercial positions in Port Huron.

The purpose of this survey is to learn the number and kinds of positions for which Port Huron High School students should be trained. When this information has been found, the High School will outline courses in the subjects that graduates must know in order to give satisfactory service to the businessmen of this city.

This survey is of value to you because it will produce the kind of people you want in the right proportion of your needs.

If you will permit this student to talk with you or another member of your firm for five or ten minutes to secure the needed information, it will be greatly appreciated and very beneficial to the schools, and we believe to Port Huron business and industry.

Very truly yours,

H. R. Sommer
Chairman of Committee

H. A. Hopkins, Secretary
Port Huron Chamber of
Commerce

W. R. Cleminson, Principal

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