THE AMERICAN COUNTRY LIFE ASSOCIATION

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Chapter I.

The Development of the Country Life Movement in the United States

Agriculture is more than an occupation; it is a mode of living. The economic prosperity of agriculture has been controlled to some extent by the happiness, the education, and the efficiency of the farmer—the human factor of agricultural economy. Inadequate educational opportunities and a low standard of living for the farmer produced social problems, the seriousness of which has been revealed, since 1900, through the sociological study of the American farm.

The Industrial Revolution introducing new machinery, new sources of power, transformed agriculture as well as other phases of industry. The agrarian revolution was expressed in scientific efficiency, mechanical power, and crop specialization. A world market evolved. The standard of living on the farm became conditioned by market prices for farm products.

Sharp differences developed between rural and urban classes. Severe competition of the market forced the agricultural interests to center attention upon economic improvement to the neglect of necessary social changes. Land prices rose with the disappearance of the frontier in 1880. Necessary machinery for the required cut in the
cost of production demanded capital for operation. At the same time the factories of the cities required new laborers. Here no capital was necessary and wages were open to the youth of the nation. The living conditions of the city were more easily controlled and new improvements more easily adopted than in the country because of the concentrated population and the greater wealth. Improved transportation made this social and economic contrast between the city and the farm more conspicuous than before.

These conditions, the severe competition of the agricultural market, the necessity for capital for farming and the improved social and economic status of urban America, resulted in a decided drift to the city. In the twenty years from 1910 to 1930, twelve million people left the farm. From 1870 to 1910, 175,000 of the farm youth from eighteen to twenty-five years of age annually went to the city. From 1910 to 1930, this movement increased to 250,000 annually left the farm.

Due to the improved living conveniences, the better educational opportunities for the children, and the recreational and the social advantages of the town, the country was further drained of its resources. From 1870 to 1910 annually, five thousand of the unusually prosperous
farmers retired to the cities with their families. The total annual withdrawal of this group has been estimated to be twenty-five thousand. From 1910 to 1930, this movement decreased to three thousand farmers. With their families, this was about fifteen thousand a year. Where this withdrawal of the unusually prosperous farmer has increased tenantry, the cost of losing the natural leaders of the country is great. From figures of the Census Bureau it has been found that out of six and one-third million farmers, 1,737,473 tenant farmers had been on the land they tilled four years or less, and 1,123,722 but one year or less. Nearly one-half of the farmers were transients. This phase of tenantry growing out of the withdrawal of the prosperous farmer aggravated the existing social problems. Dr. Paul L. Vogt in his article on "The Land Problem and Rural Welfare" stated: "The transient tenant has less interest in community affairs and is not to be depended upon to assume leadership nor to become an active factor in stimulating community social life." A movement of the money of the country to the city followed the drift to the city of the rural population. The children who left the farm for the city from 1870 to 1930 inherited annually from ten to fifty million dollars.
The prosperous retired farmer brought the city approximately one hundred and fifty million dollars a year. This amount represented practically all the economic surplus of the land. "The better the farm prices and the surer the yield, the faster this transfer (of wealth from the farm to the city) takes place."

National notice of the importance of the solution of the country life problem was emphasized by the appointment on August 10, 1908 by President Roosevelt of the Commission on Country Life. The purpose of that commission was the investigation of and the report on the social conditions of rural life pointing to the probable causes of the lack of organization and to suggest methods of improvement. This was summarized by President Roosevelt in his message to the House of Representatives on February 9, 1909 as "Better business, better farming, and better living." Professor L. H. Bailey of the New York State Agricultural College was appointed chairman of a committee consisting of Mr. Henry Wallace, editor of "The Wallace Farmer"; President Kenyon L. Butterfield of the Massachusetts Agricultural College; Mr. Gifford Pinchot, United States Forestry Service; Mr. Walter H. Page, editor of "World's Work"; Mr. G. S. Barret, President of "The Farmers' Union of Georgia"; Mr. W. H. Beard, editor of "The Great Western Magazine", Sacramento,
California. The study of the deficiencies of country life followed five lines: surveys, redirected education, cooperation, the country church, and personal ideals and leadership. The report was made on January 23, 1909, and was published in the Senate Documents of that year. In 1911 the Spokane Chamber of Commerce reprinted the report of the Commission on Country Life in book form with an introduction by ex-President Roosevelt and an explanation by Professor L. H. Bailey.

"The most notable feature of the work of President Roosevelt's Commission consisted in its forcing the attention of the American public to the supreme importance of the social problems of the open country." The interest created was expressed by commissions and conferences for the study of rural life, by country life clubs, by the rapid development of rural sociology, and by books discussing the country life problem.

A number of conferences devoted attention to the rural social problem. In February, 1911, a four day Rural Life Conference was held in connection with the National Corn Exposition at Columbus, Ohio. On September 25th and 26th of the same year the third National Conservation Congress at Kansas City, Missouri, stressed the conservation of the soil and the country life movement. State meetings in the interest of country life
were held in Wisconsin, Vermont and New Jersey in 1911, and state country life commissions were organized in California and Montana. In July, 1911, a Country Church Conference was held at Ohio State University. In 1911, a National Country Life Conference met at Spokane, Washington, and appointed a temporary committee of rural-life leaders to meet and to organize a national association of country life commissions.

On March 14th to 16th, 1912, the first meeting of the Pennsylvania Rural Life Conference was held in Philadelphia. On August the 1st and 2nd, the Illinois State Conference met at De Kalb. Also in 1912, a training conference for rural leaders was organized at the Cornell College of Agriculture. This training was designed for secretaries of the Young Men's Christian Association, secretaries of the Young Women's Christian Association, rural ministers, rural teachers and principals, rural editors, and institute lecturers. The New England Conference on Rural Progress founded in 1907 under the leadership of the Massachusetts Agricultural College of which Dr. Kenyon L. Butterfield was President, held its tenth annual conference on country life in 1916.

Under the leadership of the Young Men's Christian Association, a national organization of Collegiate Country Life Clubs for Rural Leadership was effected in
1913. The purpose of this organization was the direction of the attention of college men to problems of rural life and the winning of college men and women to the farm. It was hoped that it would be possible to interest them in the life the farm affords, and in the possibility of leadership in rural affairs.

The most permanent development of the new interest in country life was in the rapid growth of rural sociology from 1910 to 1915. By 1915, four hundred twenty-five institutions offered one or more courses in rural sociology. Of these institutions, 34 were state universities and colleges; 19 were state agricultural colleges not held in connection with the universities; 201 were private universities and colleges; 134 were state normal and industrial schools; 39 were theological seminaries; 76 were country normal training schools. In summary, most of the state schools, thirty per cent of the private colleges and universities, and thirty-six per cent of the teachers' colleges and normals had by 1915 some course or courses in rural sociology.

The growth of rural sociology was followed by the increased publication of books dealing with different phases of the country life movement. In 1908, the two outstanding leaders of the movement published books.


It remained, however, for the World War, under the driving necessities of the time, to reveal country life conditions as they were and to work out a practical method of establishing whole-hearted cooperation for raising the standards and the efficiency of country community life. "The interest of the federal government in this work grew out of the request of the War Department Commission on Training Camp Activities to the Playground and Recreation Association of America" to be responsible for the stimulating and aiding of communities in the neighborhoods of the training camps to develop
and organize their social and recreational resources in such a way as to be of the greatest possible value to the officers and soldiers of the camp. In response to this request War Camp Community Service was organized. Among the agencies that met as a part of the War Camp Council were the Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association, the American Red Cross, Knights of Columbus, Jewish Welfare Board, Salvation Army, Chamber of Commerce, and local clubs and churches. This Service became an experiment in community organization.

The Council of National Defense, created by an act of Congress to aid in the mobilization of the resources of the nation carried this idea of community organization to the entire country side. Working at first through State and County Councils, these channels were found incomplete. Under authorization, a plan of organization was designed to form a community council. It was necessary to keep in this, the good features of federation of organization and of a community organization with open membership. The Council was, therefore, composed of the official representatives of all social and civic agencies together with citizens chosen by the people at large. This plan was found very successful partially due to war-time enthusiasm. Nevertheless, the Community
Council plan of organization was fundamentally sound and with certain variations has been tried out in both city and country. It is essentially the plan of organization used by the Massachusetts State College of Agriculture in its community work. The Community Councils of New York City have followed the same principle of community organization.

The results of these war-time organizations have been three-fold. It was clearly shown to the public and private agencies and to some extent to general public that serious problems existed in rural America. Furthermore, it was illustrated that these problems could be solved if sufficiently studied and if cooperation were secured. And last, it proved cooperation was possible and practical.

This group, enlarging from the few academic leaders to the great organizations of America, soon to be confronted with the need of reconstruction in America, became the group interested and active in the furtherance of the country life movement.
Chapter II.
The Organization of the American Country Life Association

The country life movement until 1919 was to a large degree a spontaneous movement of interested academic leaders and social welfare organizations. There was no national unity, no centralizing force. Special organizations had some interests in country life but these interests failed to cover all phases of farm life. There was a need of a general "clearing house". An example of the advantages of such an agency was illustrated by the New England Conference for Rural Progress. The interest in country life was sufficiently aroused for a similar national organization as was later evidenced. Furthermore the serious country life problems which are characteristic of post war periods demanded united thought and program.

The initial move to organize nationally all forces active and interested in the country life problem was made by Kenyon L. Butterfield, President of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, a leader of rural sociology, and a former member of President Roosevelt's Commission on Country Life. At the call of President Butterfield, a group of the leaders of the country life movement met
November 17, 1917 at the University Club in Washington, D. C. The general subject of the program was: "What Are the Chief Goals in an Adequate Program of Country Life?" At the suggestion of Dr. P. P. Claxton, Commissioner of Education, it was decided to call a conference of those interested and active in rural life. Dr. Claxton further moved that a committee be appointed to arrange for the conference. The function of this Committee on Country Life was to be the preparation of the necessary plans for such a conference as soon as deemed advisable under the existing war-time conditions and in the development of the country life movement. Such a committee was agreed to and it was further decided to have no publicity through the press.

The Committee on Country Life consisted of: President K. L. Butterfield, chairman; Professor E. C. Branson of the University of North Carolina; Mabel Carney, Professor of Education, Teachers' College, Columbia University; Dr. P. P. Claxton, United States Commissioner of Education; Dean A. H. Mann, New York State College of Agriculture at Cornell University; Dr. C. W. Thompson of the United States Department of Agriculture; Dr. George E. Vincent, President of the Rockefeller Foundation; Dr. Georgia L. White, Dean of Women, Michigan Agricultural
College, (formerly at College of Agriculture, Cornell University); Dr. Warren R. Wilson, the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions. The group contained academic leaders and employed specialists but no farmers or representative of farm organizations.

The work of the committee was the study and the discussion of social problems, the consideration of rural life with special reference to post-war reconstruction and the preparation for a conference on country life. For eighteen months the committee canvassed the situation and consulted with various leaders and agricultural interests. Two meetings of the committee were held. At the first meeting held at New York City, two sub-committees were appointed, one on Permanent Organization, and the second, on Program of the Conference. These sub-committees reported to the whole committee at Pittsburg on June 29, 1913. There it was decided to organize a series of committees, as suggested by the report of the sub-committee on Permanent Organization, to report to a national conference to be held at Baltimore.

The committees appointed to report to the national conference were:

On subject matter or objectives
1. Means of Communication
   Chairman: Dr. John A. Gillette,
   University of North Dakota.
2. Home Making
   Chairman: Dr. Georgia L. White,
   Adviser of Women, Cornell University.

3. Means of Education
   Chairman: Dr. E. M. Fogbit,
   United States Bureau of Education
   a. Rural Schools and Junior Extension Work.
   b. Agricultural Extension
   c. Adult Education

4. Rural Government
   Chairman: Dr. E. C. Branson,
   University of North Carolina
   a. Local Government
   b. Legislation
   c. Charities and Correction

5. Health and Sanitation
   Chairman: Dr. E. S. Rankin,
   Secretary State Board of Health

6. Recreation
   Chairman: E. C. Lindeman,
   War Camp Community Service
   a. Play
   b. Social Life

7. Country planning
   Chairman: Captain Frank A. Naugh,
   Sanitary Corps U. S. A.
   General Hospital No. 16
   New York City

8. Morals and Religion
   Chairman: Dr. Warren H. Wilson
   Presbyterian Board of Home Missions
   a. Cooperation of Churches
   b. Moral and Religious Education
   c. The Allies of the Church

9. Country Life Objectives
   Chairman and Secretary of the Committee on Country Life and
   the chairman of the communities.

On Organizations and Methods
1. Rural Sociology in Schools and Colleges  
   Chairman: Professor G. J. Galpin,  
   University of Wisconsin  
   a. Research  
   b. Teaching  
2. International Country Life Movement  
   Chairman: President K. L. Butterfield  
3. Leadership Training  
   Chairman: Professor W. J. Campbell,  
   Y. M. C. A. College  
4. Country Life Organization  
   Chairman: Professor E. L. Morgan,  
   Massachusetts Agricultural College  
5. Committee on Public Information  
   Chairman: Dr. L. H. Bailey, (2)  
   Cornell College, Agriculture.  

After the declaration of the armistice, reconstruction ideas commanded public attention. It was felt that the opportune time had arrived to bring together the various national organizations and agencies engaged in rural social work for the consideration of "Country Life Reconstruction". Invitations to attend the first National Country Life Conference at Baltimore, Maryland on January 7, 1919, were sent to the leaders of the country life work of the various national and state organizations and to those whom the committee believed would appreciate the need of the work it was undertaking and who would be able to assist. The point of view of the conference was set forth in the invitation:
"The economic needs of rural life are being appreciated as never before and real progress is being made by many agencies attempting to meet them. The fundamental problems of rural life are not solely economic but also involve better social organization. At present there is no means of bringing together the leaders of agencies working for better country life, to consider their common objectives and to correlate their efforts in a common program. This is the field of the Committee on Country Life. The Conference will seek to establish a better understanding of existing rural social conditions and the agencies for improving them, with a view to formulating a comprehensive statement of principles, policies, and relations which may form a basis for the programs of work, so that there may be larger correlation of effort and a more general recognition of the goals of country life."

The first conference meeting in January, 1919, lasted two days. The meeting was well attended. The one hundred and seventy-five present represented thirty states, twenty-five national organizations, and five federal bureaus. The program was the work of fifteen committees. Here the preliminary organization of the National Country Life Association of the United States of America was perfected, officers elected, and a committee on the constitution appointed by the president of the Association. Kenyon L. Butterfield was elected president; Warren E. Wilson, first vice-president; Edna N. White, second vice-president; and Dwight L. Sanderson, executive secretary and temporary chairman.
committee was elected, composed of the officers named (4) and six additional members.

The second conference met November 8 to 11, 1919 at Chicago. This was at the call of the executive committee which was empowered to set the time and the place of the conference. Here the constitution of the Association was adopted November 10, 1919, and the organization of the body completed. The name was changed to the American Country Life Association.

The Constitution stated the purpose of the Association as: "......to facilitate discussion of the problems and objectives in country life and the means of their solution and attainment; to further the efforts and increase the efficiency of persons, agencies, and institutions engaged in this field; and to disseminate information calculated to promote a better understanding of country life and to aid in rural improvement."(5)

The field of the American Country Life Association was described in the Constitution as one of rural social improvement. Among other phases of country life interest it included:

1. The Rural Home
   a. Physical, material, ethical and spiritual aspects.
   b. Child training.
   c. Economics of the home.
   d. Home and Community
   e. Housing.

2. Rural Education
   a. The rural school
   b. Agricultural schools and colleges
   c. Educational extension: public libraries, continuation schools, agricultural and home economics extension, junior extension, Americanization.
3. Morals and Religion
   a. Ideals of personal and community life.
   b. The country church, allied religious organizations and societies promoting moral welfare.

4. Rural Government
   a. Local government: efficiency, honesty, enlargement of function.
   b. Legislation, state and national, as affecting rural affairs.

5. Communication, including such sociological problems as rural isolation.

6. Rural Health and Sanitation
   a. Personal hygiene
   b. Public hygiene

7. Rural Recreation
   a. Play life of the young
   b. Social life of the adults

8. Rural Charities and Corrections

9. Country planning; planning roads, buildings, parks and other public areas.

Membership to the association was opened to any person interested in the program of country life improvement, especially to executives and other representatives of national, state, and local organizations working in this field. Such organizations could affiliate by the vote of the association on the recommendation of the Executive Committee.

The officers of the organization were the president, first vice-president, second vice-president, treasurer and executive secretary. President Kenyon L. Butterfield
served as president of the organization until 1929. From 1929 to 1931, Frank O. Lowder, former Governor of Illinois, was President. In 1931, Liberty Hyde Bailey, Dean of the College of Agriculture at Cornell University, was chosen for this office. In addition to the officers, a state director was chosen for each state and territory. Where the state was organized as a country life association and such an association was affiliated with the American Country Life Association, the state director was to be chosen by the executive committee of the state organization. If there were no state organization, the state director was to be chosen by the conference upon nomination by the executive committee or the petition of seven delegates from the state in question. The state director was in reality a corresponding secretary but in addition it was the aim of the Association to choose a country life leader for this post who would encourage the development of the movement in his state.

The executive committee was to be composed of the president, the vice-presidents, and six additional members elected by the Association, two each year, each serving for a three year period. The secretary and the treasurer met with the executive committee.
is given full power to act between conferences and to set the time and the place of meeting of the annual conference.

The work of the Association was carried out through standing committees. These were appointed by the President. The committees were:

1. Committee on the Rural Home
2. Committee on Rural Education
3. Committee on Morals and Religion
4. Committee on Rural Government
5. Committee on Communication
6. Committee on Rural Health and Sanitation
7. Committee on Rural Recreation
8. Committee on Rural Charities and Corrections
9. Committee on Country Planning
10. Committee on the teaching of Rural Sociology in the Schools and Colleges.
13. Committee on Public Instruction
14. Committee on International Relations of the Country Life Movement

The system of standing committees was the permanent, functioning factor of the Association. As stated in the Proceedings, "It is the aim of the Association to have specialists appointed to these various committees who will devote attention and study to the subject-matter with which each respective committee is concerned. The reports of these committees constitute a continuous critique of the social phases of American country life."(7)

The Constitution provided for annual meetings of the American Country Life Association. There had been
by 1931 fourteen conferences held. Each conference thoroughly discussed a single topic and attempted to gather information, discussion, and opinion on the problem of country life in question. Each committee report approached the topic from the viewpoint of their special interest.

The attendance at the conferences, the membership of the association, and the increased number of full-time officers showed the steady growth of the organization. At the first conference in 1919, one hundred and seventy-five academic leaders and specialists were present. By the second conference, the number present had increased to 420. After a decade the organization had increased in membership to 650 members representing 165 organizations. The organization still failed to attract the attention of the farmer sufficiently to secure his attendance. It was in protest against this situation that President Butterfield spoke in the presidential address to the third conference in 1920.

He warned the conference, "In all these efforts we must get the country life movement backed by the farmers themselves. This is still another problem. It is easy for us to get together and make plans. But in some way, to use the popular and perhaps much worked plans, 'we must sell the idea' ......... the country life movement must not be left to employed specialists."(8)
The Ames, Iowa Conference in 1929 answered President Butterfield's plea. Editorially speaking "Rural America", the official monthly publication of the American Country Life Association, gave a number of reasons for the great importance of this meeting. The total attendance was three thousand. Ninety per cent of those present were from Iowa with seventy-five per cent of this group residents of farms. In commenting, the "Rural America" said, "There were old timers who rubbed their eyes—they could hardly realize that they were at an A. C. L. A. conference." The conference demonstrated the great possibilities of cooperation between the agricultural extension service and the American Country Life Association. The information and the ideas of the Iowa conference on "Rural Organization" were made a part of the study program of the Iowa extension work the following year while, through the efforts of the extension force, the American Country Life Association received the support of the farmer himself. The conference marked the successful operation of forums enabling the farmers and the professional leaders to discuss the problems confronting them. Open discussion, introduced in 1923, provided for the consideration of the problem of the conference by the delegates prepared
by study from selected bibliographies. This conference system presented many difficulties. The 1929 conference was the culmination of the improvements made. The delegates were divided into ten groups for the discussion of their special interests. A report was made by each forum or group before the conference, each report representing the best ideas and conclusions made by the group particularly interested in the phase considered.

The advantages of the 1929 conference were maintained the following year in the meeting at Madison, Wisconsin. There were 2,000 people in attendance at this conference of whom 1,500 were registered delegates. One-third of the registered delegation was from states other than Wisconsin. The entire Minnesota extension service was present. A national hook-up of radio-broadcasting gave part of these two conferences to the American farmer generally.

The conference at Cornell University, Ithica, New York in 1931 was unable to equal the two previous conferences. Eight hundred people were in attendance representing forty states. Farmers were but a small percent of the group although the problem, "Rural Government", was vital. The attendance and the support of the farmer has not been surely won and it has been
impossible to determine whether the 1929 and 1930 conferences were to be typical of the Association in future meetings or whether the Association would resume the academic character shown in 1931. Minneapolis, Minnesota was chosen as the place of meeting for the 1932 conference and Richmond, Virginia, for the 1933 meeting.

The American Country Life Association had maintained since 1922 a full time executive secretary with offices at 105 East 22nd Street, New York City. The functions of the executive secretary were to edit the Proceedings of the conferences and "Rural America", the official monthly magazine; to review the financial resources of the Association; to supervise the New York offices; and to maintain contacts with the social work organizations and the rural interests having headquarters in the East.

Since February 15, 1930, the Association has maintained in addition to the executive secretary, a full time field secretary, W. R. Stacy, with offices at Morrill Hall, Ames, Iowa. The functions of the field secretary were to maintain contacts with agricultural interests and social work organizations with headquarters in the mid-West; to cooperate with all farm organizations where possible; to ascertain from the farm population and farm organizations their ideas for following conferences of
the Association; and to prepare such articles as requested by publications interested in the country life movement.

The Association, as it has developed, has been less an organization for actual social reform than a force for social education. For the purpose of social education it was well qualified because of its non-partisan nature, because its membership included both lay and professional leaders, and because it has as active members representatives of both governmental and voluntary agencies.
Chapter III.
The Objectives and the Work of the Association

The American Country Life Association has been termed "the human factor in American agriculture". The eventual approach of the Association to the agricultural problem was forecast by Dr. Kenyon L. Butterfield. He wrote:

"What we need is a true balance of forces, motives, and methods. Ideals alone produce visionaries; work for gain alone brings barreness of real life. We need both. We need emphasis in rural affairs both upon the economic issue and the social problem. They should have equal attention for they are at least of equal importance. One cannot go ahead at full speed without the other. They must be driven double and not tandem. Let us give full measure of effort to the making of American agriculture more prosperous for the average farmer; but let us also cherish with equal endeavor and intelligence his highest, truest welfare. Let us learn that there is a place for the work of experts in farm life as in farm practice or farm business. Let us develop the agencies of country life, such as school and church, with as much zeal and earnestness as we devote to increasing production and securing better prices."(1)

The Association stated in the first conference the view of the organization on the agricultural problem. The importance of the economic issue was pointed out as was its close relation to social improvement. The statement of the Association was:
"The economic motive is a worthy and dominant one, and a great rural civilization must be founded upon reasonable economic prosperity. But the end of all effort for economic efficiency is human welfare and not merely the possibilities of still more profit; not merely ease and comfort, but the values of the higher life. One of the most effective methods for attaining agricultural prosperity is to set in motion those great spiritual forces - education, moral ideals - which give incentive for economic effort." (2)

It was to clearly present the less emphasized phrase of the American agricultural situation, country life, that this organization was formed.

The American Country Life Association has held, from its organization in 1919 to 1932, fourteen conferences. The first conference made a general survey of the country life organization and the objectives of the Association. Following conferences studied only one problem at each annual meeting. Two conferences were devoted to "Rural Organization", one in 1920 and the second in 1929. Two conferences considered "Town and Country Relations", the first in 1921 and the second in 1923. Other problems discussed by the annual conferences were: "Rural Health", "Country Community Education", "Rural Homes", "Religion in Country Life", "Needed Adjustments in Rural Life", "Rural Youth", "Farm Incomes and Farm Life", "Standards of Living", and "Rural Government".
The Association in the course of the first conference set forth the goal of country life organization as:

"...such an understanding of the persons, the forces and agencies, in a given area whether community, county, state or nation, as will accomplish for that unit the most systematic and progressive correlation of those forces and agencies that make for the sound development of a satisfying life for rural people, and for the adjustment of their highest welfare to the common good. This involves:

1. The cooperation of country life forces and agencies both in community, county, state and nation.
2. A progressive program of work for each unit, involving a well correlated division of labor among the available agencies.
3. Recognition of the community as the natural local unit of state action.
4. National, state, county, and community conferences for securing the cooperation of agencies engaged in rural social work, and for creating public opinion concerning the social organization of country life."

The scope of country life organization was considered broader than the nation. International organization was deemed necessary for the problems of one country conditioned the problems of all. The Association declared the necessity of the consideration of common country life problems by all the civilized countries of the world.

In addition to the preparation of a goal for all country life organizations, the first conference of the
Association held January 6th and 7th, 1919, in Baltimore, Maryland, set forth the objectives of the American Country Life Association. The objectives worked out were the basic statements of the fundamental needs for a successful country life. Specialists spoke for every phase of country life mentioned. The essential objective of the Association was "the welfare of men and women, of boys and girls, in respect to their education, their health, their neighborliness, and their moral and religious life."

More specifically outlining the phases of country life considered, they were: the family, rural health, rural education, rural social service, rural government and legislation, rural recreation, social life, rural leadership, morals and religion, and means of communication. The fundamental needs of these phases were stated as:

"The life of the family in the home is a distinctive value of rural life. All efforts for better social conditions in rural communities should seek to correlate the family with the community; the family should be recognized as the basic social institution; and all plans should be scrutinized as to their possible effect on family life.

The health of the individual and sanitary conditions in the community limit all rural welfare. To secure such physical well-being the rural community requires:"
1. Employed medical officers who shall inspect the health of all school children and the sanitary conditions of all public and private buildings and premises; country and local health boards with adequately paid physicians as executives.

2. Public health visiting nurses or school nurses.

3. Local hospitals

4. Itinerant health clinics; particularly for infants.

5. The education of public opinion to the economy of preventative measures; through the co-operation of the school, the church, women's and civic clubs, and all organizations devoted to better country; the maintenance of health as a profitable financial investment as well as a moral responsibility.

Rural education requires:

1. A re-organization of the course of study which will adapt to our changing rural conditions;

2. An adequate supply of properly prepared rural teachers, this involving special agencies and courses of training for rural teachers;

3. A school plant suitable for this new type of education;

4. The provision of high school opportunities for all rural school children without their leaving home;

5. The establishment of an effective system of professional supervision for rural schools;
6. A business-like administration of school affairs in state and local units; and,

7. adequate financial support, involving an equalization of the burden of taxation and state and federal aid.

Consolidated schools and adult education are further needs.

Rural communities need an adequate organization of public and private agencies and volunteer workers for the promotion of health, for the care of the sick, and for the care of the unadjusted, the destitute, the defectives, the delinquents.

Although organized social services must function through the homes and along the lines of the community, it should be affiliated with some larger unit to stimulate and to direct its work.

Rural social work should be promoted through (1) socialized rural teachers, (2) socialized public health nurses, (3) developing programs of social work in country churches, (4) trained probation officers assisting the courts in handling delinquents, and (5) through trained social agents.

Better rural government depends upon an aroused and informed public opinion. Needed legislation to secure efficient and adequate rural government involves:

1. Unified organization and responsible leadership in country government.

2. State manuals of instruction for county officials;

3. Uniform county accounting and reporting;

4. A state system of auditing county finances;
5. The salary plan of compensating county officials;


Rural people must be brought to understand and appreciate the function of play for the young, particularly the educational value of organized play.

The value and importance of sociability should be appreciated by all rural organizations, each of which should provide for a certain amount of sociable life, and every gathering should be made a sociable opportunity.

Progress in every phase of country life depends upon the discovery and development of efficient resident leadership.

The religious life of the rural community is best promoted by strong churches, having a membership sufficient to support aggressive and competent leadership and inspire a social purpose. Such organizations as the Young Men's Christian Association are allies of the church and furnish agencies for week day activities which give training in the moral and religious life and develop leadership.

Adequate and efficient means of communication condition progress in all phases of country life; they are a limiting factor in the process of rural socialization. The primary need is for good roads radiating from the community centers and to shipping points, laid out according to carefully considered plans based on the economic and social needs of the community rather than being determined by tradition or personal advantage.  

The steps declared to be necessary for the fulfillment of the program of the American Country Life
Association were:

"1. Outline and define the field - state the problem clearly.

2. List agencies now at work to improve country life.

3. Stimulate investigation and teaching in this field.

4. Bring about a propaganda concerning country life as such - including those things that have to with country living.

5. Develop more real conferences, mass meetings, etc., that deal specifically with country life interests.

6. Definitely organize to promote country life affairs."(6)

The second annual conference met in Chicago, Illinois, from November 8th to 11th, 1919. The subject discussed was "Rural Health". The problem was considered in its three phases, public health, personal hygiene, and body building. Doctor George E. Vincent, President of the Rockefeller Foundation, presented startling figures showing the physical disabilities of the rural region far greater than that of urban America. He also gave a survey of those agencies working for better rural health, discussed the necessary conditions for correction, and considered the problem of finance and rural health.

Dr. W. S. Rankin, secretary of the North Carolina State
Board of Health, and at that time President of the American Public Health Association, reported for committee on rural health the best methods of organization of public health service for rural communities. Descriptions of the effectiveness of school nurses in Renville County, Minnesota, and of rural nurses in Cook County, Illinois, gave suggestions and illustrated the necessity of public health organization. The report of the committee on rural recreation by Professor E. C. Lindeman presented a new view on the relation of farm work to the physique of country boys and girls and the type of recreation adapted to their needs. It was shown that although farm work developed the major muscles, the finer muscles were undeveloped therefore the farm boy was exceeded in play by the city youth. The report was reprinted by the United States Bureau of Education, Washington, D. C., for free distribution.

The third conference, in October, 1920, was held in joint session with the American Civic Association at Amherst, Massachusetts. The topic was "Rural Planning". The conference was continued at Springfield, Massachusetts, with a discussion on "Rural Organization". Rural planning, the physical plan of rural villages, roads, public buildings, and the beautifying of public and private grounds
were discussed. Dr. Albert Shaw spoke of the need of "Organizing the country to compete with City Life."
He advocated federal aid for rural education, redirection of the rural school system, and showed the possibilities for improved community life under such conditions as are developed by the farm communities established by the California Land Settlement Board. Lorado Taft of Chicago, Illinois, spoke on "A Rural Art Movement". He told of Illinois and the development of art appreciation through traveling exhibits of pictures, competition among school children in photography, and illustrated lectures. Further discussion of rural organization was centered on methods of organizing all rural forces to support community enterprises and on the needs of rural government.

The fourth annual conference, held at the same time as the conference of the association of American Land Grant Colleges, met at New Orleans, Louisiana, in November, 1921. The central theme was "Town and Country Relations". Professor W.L. Bailey of Northwestern University spoke of the importance of the American village in which centers country life through consolidated schools, trading, cooperative-marketing, and community churches. He declared that the American village should
be studied as an important part of agricultural life. Professor Frederic H. Guild, Professor of Political Science at the University of Indiana told of the necessity and the possibilities of special municipal corporations for the development of community enterprises. Professor Carl C. Taylor of the North Carolina State College gave a review of the country weekly newspaper as a town and country agency. He pointed out that only twenty per cent of the news in a typical country weekly dealt with matters of interest to country people although sixty-five per cent of the subscribers were rural inhabitants. The real function of the small town weekly was the distribution of community news and the unification of community interests and ideals. The conference discussed the importance of rural schools, improved transportation, the church, and recreation in the establishment of harmonious town and country relations.

The fifth conference of the Association meeting in November, 1922 at the Teacher's College, Columbia University in New York City, discussed "Country Community Education". President Kenyon L. Butterfield in his message to the conference gave the dominant thought of the conference. He stated that, in a democratic nation, rural youth had received and was receiving unequal educational opportunities attributed largely to the unequal
distribution of wealth. The education of its citizens was a problem for the state and for the nation and must be provided for by the whole wealth of the state and of the nation. Other topics discussed were: rural education of the child and the adult; the ethical and religious resources of the country community; and efficient rural government in relation to rural education. The problems of the rural school and its finances were considered. The possibilities of adult education through the agricultural press, the church, and farmers' organizations were stressed. Programs for rural education were presented by various agencies now at work in rural communities, such as, the Young Women's Christian Association, the National Catholic Welfare Council, and the Council of Jewish Women.

"The Rural Home" was the chief topic of conference in November, 1923. At Saint Louis, Missouri, in the presidential address, Professor K. L. Butterfield stressed the importance of the farm home in the farm movement and the necessity for as thorough organization of farm women as of farm men. Ruby Green Smith of the New York State Agricultural College reviewed the country home at its worst and at its best. The phases of farm life discussed were: the development and the training of the new generation of the farm home; the influences and the institutions
affecting home life on the farm, as the church, the
school, and the press; country women as members of nation-
al agencies as, League of Women Voters, Council of Jewish
Women, the Farm Bureau, the Young Women's Christian As-
sociation, and Parent Teachers' Association; and the
viewpoint of the rural home. The objective of the country
life movement for the rural home was said to be:

"To have every home—
Economically sound
Mechanically convenient
Physically healthful
Morally wholesome
Artistically satisfying
Mentally stimulating
Socially responsible
Spiritually inspiring
Founded upon mutual affection and respect."

The seventh conference met in November, 1924. The
problem considered was "Religion in Country Life". "A
Challenge to the Christian Farmer" was President Butter-
field's opening address. He outlined these challenges
as three: "First, to try to make agriculture and country
life Christian; second, to help make all parts of our
American life Christian; and third, to organize an ag-
gressive campaign of activity and education for the purpose
of forwarding these two main ends." A new conference
system was tried. Replacing the formal addresses, dis-
cussion was to be used, each member having prepared him-
self by study outlined by a selected bibliography. Dis-
cussion was led by Professor Harrison Elliot on the most
important aspect of religious life in the country. The three problems of most vital concern were decided to be: first, the correct conception by the community of the real function of the church and religion and the relation of the Gospel message to economics and agriculture; second, the unskilled minister cannot meet the demands of the community; third, the problem of getting religion into conduct required the acquainting of religion with current thought, with child psychology, and with normal groupings of people. Further discussion took up proposals to meet the religious situation of denominational strife by community realization of its needs, and by the organization of the varying groups of people to work on actual problems. Suggested changes in the religious program in the country were made.

The subject for the discussion of the eighth conference of the Association, October, 1925 in Richmond, Virginia was "Needed Readjustments in Rural Life Today". Discussion took up the problems of farm income, standards of living, education, community consciousness, religion and community co-operation. It was agreed that the farm income was too small, that the farmer received too little of the ultimate price of his products, that the farmer's standard of living was therefore too low and that standard of living deprived the farm family materially, spiritually,
and intellectually. Rural education was declared insufficient, community consciousness undeveloped, religious efforts ineffective, and community co-operation the greatest need to improve and to rectify the farmer's dilemma.

The ninth conference, studying "The Rural Youth", met in November, 1926, at Washington. William M. Jardine, at that time the Secretary of Agriculture, spoke on "The Special Needs of Farm Youth" emphasizing the necessity of training the rural youth to meet with better business the severe economic problem confronting them. The discussion considered the situation of agriculture today which must be faced by the young people of the farm; the special problems of the farm youth as vocational developments and preparation, moral and religious development; and cultural and social development; and the solution of these difficulties through participation in community affairs, through a more inclusive grouping of young people, or through the encouraging of association with more limited groups with a specific purpose. Professor E. C. Lindeman, New York School of Social Work, expressed the view of a number of delegates in his statement:

"If I were to answer the question of what rural youth's place would be in a rural community, I should say their place will be found when rural youths become sufficiently militant, sufficiently overcome their present timidity to talk for themselves, to
open up in rural communities the essence of the conflict which exists between the new and the older generation.”

The greatest need of rural youth was decided to be stimulation through education and through actual participation in community efforts.

At the suggestion of a committee appointed in 1923, composed of members of the American Country Life Association and the American Farm Economics Association, the 1927 conference at East Lansing, Michigan, considered the problem of “Farm Income and Farm Life”. The chief questions were raised by President Butterfield.

“...How can a body of farmers be retained on American soil who are economically efficient and free? How can the quality of the people on the land be kept upon a par with urban civilization? How can character building be advanced in a world dominated by enormous activity of an economic sort?”

William M. Jardine, at the time Secretary of Agriculture, speaking on “Some Aspects of the Agricultural Situation”, stated that, according to the Department of Agriculture survey, eighty-four per cent of the farmers moving to town owned their farms. Of this group, 37.8 per cent gave economical reasons for leaving the farm; 25.2 per cent gave old age and disability as the reason; 10.9 per cent moved to town to afford their children educational opportunities. He continued: “The problem is not to reduce the number of farmers moving to cities as long as
we have a sufficient production but to keep in the country those who are best fitted for country life."(11) Pointing out that the loss of the surplus wealth of the country to the city accounted largely for the barrenness of country life and culture, he said: "A plan to equip the country with institutions of health and culture and facilities for education and entertainment desires real attention. We must make the country sufficiently attractive that the farmer with his surplus wealth will desire to remain there."(12)

The importance of co-operatives to limit competition and the recognition by farmers that any class of producers will get only what it may consume were stressed. "Urban and Rural Relations" was the subject of the 1923 conference at Urbana, Illinois. The importance of the city assuming its responsibility toward improving country life by helping provide for health organizations of the county, improved rural schools, more convenient rural home life, and effective church organization and the importance of tax revision on a more equitable basis were the most important topics discussed.

The twelfth American Country Life Conference was held in October, 1929 at Ames, Iowa. "Rural Organization" was the topic of the meeting. The conference called the attention of the public to the immediate need and advantages of the organization of farm men and women for
progress in country life. In discussion, it was declared that improved country life depended upon the assembling of facts, the setting up of a program, and the fulfilment of the program set up. The necessity of organization to carry out programs of adult education, religious instruction, rural school improvement and every phase of country life was shown. Frank O. Lowden, the president of the Association, in the opening speech, stated: "Organization is the most powerful factor in human progress and through organization only does progress come."

Iowa delegates reviewed their system of organizing farm men and women. At the conference the American Country Life Memorial to Henry Cantwell Wallace, former editor of the Wallace Farmer and Secretary of Agriculture, 1921-24, was dedicated. This was a gift of the Association to the Iowa State College.

In October, 1930, the thirteenth conference of the Association met at Madison, Wisconsin. The topic of the meeting was "Standards of Living". The conclusions of the conference were that the deterioration of farm standards of living endangered national standards as well; that marginal lands tended to develop marginal institutions and people; that an adequate standard of living was impossible without an adequate farm income; that an increase in farm income was useless if it should
lead to more land or to more labor for the ultimate aim is leisure; that farm and home extension workers should measure their tasks and their progress on the basis of a standard of adequacy in the standard of living; and that there is no way of escaping the competition between the standards of living of the production of all the world.

The fourteenth conference of the Association met in August, 1931, at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. Frank O. Lowden, former Governor of Illinois and President of the Association, opened the discussion on "Rural Government" by sketching the modernizing movement of state and city governments and questioning the possibility of the application of the principles involved to county government. The inefficiency of rural government and the inadequacy of the township was called to the attention of the conference. The six forums discussed country organization and management, village and township government, taxation, public education, public health and welfare, and rural planning. The conclusions were: that the township had outlived its usefulness and was an admitted failure; that the country government should be more highly centralized preferably under an appointed head or manager; that inter-county co-operation or the consolidation of smaller or more sparsely populated
counties would make possible the maintenance of public health service and other like public service; that our taxation system should be revised to spread the burden more equitably among the various sources of income, earning power, and socially created values; and that local government should retain the basic values of the smaller unit, the neighborhood or the community.

The Association, during the fourteen conferences, brought together the leaders in the country life movement, presented actual problems and received the suggestions of the leading members of each field of the movement for their solution. It provided a general clearing house for the organizations and the persons interested in improving country life.
Chapter IV

The Activities of the American Country Life Association

From the date of its organization, the American Country Life Association gave its influence and its aid for the furtherance of the activities, the organization, and the efforts for the improvement of the country life movement. The Association created the National Council of Agencies Engaged in Rural Social Work; organized Collegiate Country Life Clubs and a student section of the annual conference; published the proceedings of its annual conferences, a monthly periodical, and several books on country life problems; provided on request articles for publication; and took part in the international country life movement.

The creation of the National Council of Agencies Engaged in Rural Social Work met an immediate and urgent need. At the close of the World War, the nation was confronted with the necessity of reconstructing the life of the rural people for peace time purposes. The various agencies taking an active part in this work were the American Red Cross, the Federated Council of Churches of Christ in America, the National Catholic War Council and the Young Men's Christian Association and other similar organizations. There was a great and immediate
need for a central council of such agencies to coordinate the reconstruction program in order that duplication of effort might be avoided.

The first conference of the Association in January, 1919, created a committee to call a conference of the national rural social agencies "for the purposes of coordinating the program of the various agencies". The chairman of the committee was Dr. C. W. Thompson, of the United States Department of Agriculture.

In April 1919, the various national agencies met in Washington, District of Columbia. The private organizations represented were: the American Red Cross, the American Library Association, the Federated Council of Churches, the Boy Scouts of America, the National Catholic War Council, the War Camp Community Service, the Young Women's Christian Association, and the Young Men's Christian Association. The governmental departments represented were: the Council for National Defense, the Bureau of Markets of the Department of Agriculture, the office of Farm Management of the States Relation Service, the Bureau of Education of the Department of Interior, the Children's Bureau of the Department of Labor, and the Commission on Living Conditions. The results of this conference were given to the American Country Life Association in the report of "The National
Organizations Engaged in Rural Social Work" at the second conference of the Association held in November, 1919. The report was divided into three parts.

The first part of the report gave the conclusions of the conference. The aim of the conference was the preparation of a tentative program of immediate needs in rural reconstruction. The needs of education, health and sanitation, recreation and social life, the development of normal family life, moral and religious life, and for a better understanding of the problems of rural social life were listed and the necessary means to attain the aims were discussed. It was the opinion of the conference that all social changes were dependent on:

"(1) Adequate roads and transportation.
(2) Adequate facilities for marketing and purchasing.
(3) Adequate credit facilities.
(4) Up-to-date information on Agriculture and Home Economics.
(5) An adequate labor supply.
(6) Adequate legal provision to safeguard farm tenancy."

The second part of the report gave the outlines of the program of the work of national organizations engaged in rural social work. Part three of the report outlined a proposed manual of suggestions for rural social work for education and health. The conference of social agencies passed a resolution requesting the American Country Life Association to call together representatives
of the agencies at such time as the Association should feel such a meeting necessary. It was, however, at the request of the agencies themselves that Dr. K. L. Butterfield, President of the Association, called a second meeting for March 30, 1920 to formulate a Council of National Agencies Engaged in Rural Social Work. The representatives at this meeting in New York City, passed a motion requesting the executive committee of the Association "to organize the council as an integral part of the American Country Life Association."

On the instruction of this motion, President Butterfield called the representatives of the agencies to meet December 20, 1930 at Washington, District of Columbia. The agencies present were:

- The American Red Cross
- The American Library Association
- The Federal Council of Churches of Christ of America
- The Boy Scouts of America - Department of Rural Scouting
- National Catholic War Council
- War Camp Community Service
- Young Men's Christian Association
- Young Women's Christian Association
- American Child Health Association
- American Farm Bureau Federation
- American Home Economics Association
- Board of Home Missions of the Reformed Churches of the United States- the Department of Country Life
- Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Department of Rural Work
- Board of National Missions, Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, Town and Country Department.
At this conference a permanent organization was perfected.

The purpose of the council was stated as:

"To enable the associating agencies to discuss their programs and policies with other agencies of the council.

To prevent overlapping and duplication of rural social work; to enable the associating agencies to coordinate their programs and to act jointly in investigating and promoting needed rural social work." (3)

The council was named the National Council of Agencies Engaged in Rural Social Work and was organized as an integral part of the American Country Life Association. The executive committee of the Association was empowered to designate the chairman of the Council. The Association was bound to provide either officials or financial assistance adequate to provide for special officers. The Council was to consist of "national, public, or private organizations and agencies engaged in rural social work represented by one voting delegate and not to exceed two additional non-voting delegates chosen by such organization or agency of the Council." (4) The Council was to be purely advisory in nature. The initial meeting
was called by the executive committee of the Association but subsequent meetings were held as frequently and at such times and places as the Council determined.

Because of the very limited budget, the meetings of the Council were limited to discussion. Some of the questions considered were:

"What is an advanced rural social work program?

By what means can the results of the efforts of the social agencies serving rural communities be made available to rural dwellers?

How to correlate local studies of communities with the studies made by specialist's groups?

How to enrich local thinking and local attitudes?

What is the content of a cooperative policy of national agencies in assisting local communities to make their own program?"(5)

The National Council of Agencies Engaged in Rural Social Work provided for the agencies at work in the country life field the service the Association provided for the individuals at work for country life improvement; a clearing house for the discussion of the problems to be faced. It served to acquaint each agency with the program of the other agencies and to formulate a definite unified program for work in the country life field. By 1929, however, the Council ceased to meet and although
its revival has been discussed it has not been effected.

The Association was also active in the organization
of Collegiate Country Life Clubs and in 1925 created a
student section for its annual conferences. The growth
of the student movement in the annual conferences and
the interest shown by the student delegates has led
many members to believe that work of the Association
to be the most successful.

The University of Illinois had organized about 1920
a successful country life club and had attempted to
nationalize the mode of organization for institutions
interested in country life work. Believing the idea
worthwhile, at the 1922 conference, W. J. Campbell of
the Young Men's Christian Association College at Spring-
field, Massachusetts, chairman of the Committee on Rural
Leadership spoke on the possibilities of training for
rural leadership through collegiate country life clubs
and presented an outline for the organization of such
clubs to be affiliated with the American Country Life
Association. The plan was adopted by the Association
and through the leadership of the professors of sociology
and related departments such organizations were formed.
The object of the organization of such a club was "to
state the problems of country life, to promote sociability
among its members, and to increase the fitness of its members for rural service." It was suggested that membership to the country life club be limited to those students who reached the junior year, who had studied the social sciences, and who were definitely interested in some field of rural social service. It was further suggested that if some other clubs as the Four H Club or the Grange existed in the college it would not be advisable to organize a Country Life Club unless the emphasis of the existing club was purely economic. A carefully prepared constitution, program for meeting, and suggestions for programs were printed in pamphlet form to be sent by the executive secretary on request. Organization of the Collegiate Country Life Clubs was begun in 1923 and by 1924, fifteen regularly organized chapters of Collegiate Country Life Clubs were enrolled with the Association. The Association pledged itself to suggest speakers, to furnish program suggestions, to send to the Clubs once a year an officer of the Association, and to issue study leaflets on country life topics.

At Columbus, Ohio, in 1924, a student movement appeared at the conference. The spontaneous student movement held meetings discussing country life problems and giving a worthwhile contribution to the Association. Recognizing the possibilities and importance of this
movement, the Association provided for a student section at the 1925 conference held at Richmond, Virginia. The student section was led by Mrs. W. J. Ketcham of the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association.

The 1926 conference at Washington, District of Columbia, perfected the organization of the student conference section. It was decided the section would be held under the supervision of a conference committee composed of members of the American Country Life Association and student delegates. Three regional committees were created to stimulate interest in the student country life movement and in attendance to the student section of the Association conferences. These were located at Chicago, Illinois, Washington, District of Columbia, and New York City. The officers of the student section were elected from the student delegates. The forty delegates present represented Collegiate Country Life Clubs, Four H. Clubs, Student Oranges, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, and theological seminaries. The students met with the conference but separated for special group meetings.

The 1927 and 1928 conferences showed little additional interest or growth in the movement but the conference of 1929 at Ames, Iowa, was more enthusiastic. The sixty registered delegates at the student conference represented
Iowa, West Virginia, Michigan, Illinois, Georgia, and Mississippi. The student section discussed organizations which furthered rural life interests in colleges and universities and means of interesting more educational institutions in the organization of country life clubs.

The 1930 conference at Madison, Wisconsin had eighty student delegates representing eighteen colleges and universities. Discussion centered on the problems of rural communities, the part played in their solution by individuals as leaders, and collegiate rural life clubs as they influenced standards of living. The student conference chose an editor for the student section of "Rural America", the Association's monthly periodical.

This was a new recognition by the Association of student activities in the country life field.

The student section of the 1931 conference continued of the growth movement. Approximately one hundred student delegates attended the conference for the discussion of "Good Citizenship". Professor E. G. Branson of the University of North Carolina gave an address on "The Four Essentials of Good Citizenship".

The student country life section of the Association has been one of the important developments of the organization. The fact that the delegates to the conference represented groups of students who were to enter rural
service and who studied country life problems gave hope for better trained rural leaders for the future.

In addition to the creation of the National Council of Agencies Engaged in Rural Social Work and the development of student interest in the country life program, the Association, through the publication of the proceedings of its annual conferences, added to the country life literature the information and the conclusions on problems of country life compiled by the specialists who were the members of the Association. The Association has published thirteen volumes. Because of limited funds, the proceedings of the conferences in 1927 and 1928 were published in one volume entitled "A Decade of Rural Progress". The volumes published by the Association were:

Volume I  Rural Objectives
Volume II  Rural Health
Volume III  Rural Organization
Volume IV  Town and Country Relations
Volume V  Country Community Education
Volume VI  Rural Homes
Volume VII  Religion in Country Life
Volume VIII  Needed Adjustments in Rural Life
Volume IX  Rural Youth
Volume X and XI  A Decade in Rural Progress
Volume XII  Rural Organization
Volume XIII  Standards of Living
Volume XIV  Rural Government

The proceedings, edited by the executive secretary of the Association, included the addresses, the discussion,
the committee reports, and the business proceedings of the conference. They averaged about 225 pages in length. These volumes made the valuable presentations of rural problems accessible to the general public and to the members of the Association for future study. The Association prepared study leaflets for the Collegiate Country Clubs from the material presented in the proceedings.

The Association in April, 1923 began the publication of a periodical, "The Country Life Bulletin". This bulletin, consisting of four pages, was published monthly, except July and August, and had a circulation of one thousand copies a month. In September, 1924, "The Country Life Bulletin" was consolidated with another periodical, "Home Landa", under the title "The Country Life Bulletin". The periodical was increased from four to sixteen pages and the circulation increased from one to three thousand copies per month. Following this improvement, the "Bulletin" was used for reference work and for study by classes in rural sociology. After December, 1924, "The Country Life Bulletin" was renamed "Rural America".

"Rural America" gave comment on state and national legislation improving country life, articles on vital rural questions, and a bibliography of the new publications on country life. The executive secretary of the Association
edited this publication. The editorial policy as stated in a report to the 1930 conference was to disseminate information on country life and to call attention to this information; to promote the discussion of current issues in a judicial fashion; to give attention to the various interests at work for rural improvement; and to chronicle the ideas of people on agricultural improvement.

In 1906, the American Country Life Association and the Department of Research and Education of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America collaborated in the planning of a reference work of the rural social resources for the use of rural social workers. Henry Israel and Benson Y. Landis edited this volume entitled "A Handbook of Rural Social Resources, 1926". The Handbook was divided in two parts. Part I consisted of interpretations of developments in rural life for approximately the five years preceding by specialists who specialized in the particular interests of which they wrote. Part II gave a history and the program of the American Country Life Association and the National Council of Agencies Engaged in Rural Social Work and a statement of the programs and services of the national agencies affiliated with the Council. The Handbook was revised in 1923 with Benson Y. Landis
editing the revised copy, "The Handbook of Rural Social Resources, 1928". The Handbook gave a good and brief summary of rural resources especially valuable for those active in rural social work.

Another volume published under the auspices of the American Country Life Association was "Farm Income and Farm Life". At the annual conferences in 1924, the Association and the American Farm Economics Association authorized their presidents to appoint a joint committee for the preparation of a report on the relation of the social and economic factors in the improvement of rural life. The joint committee consisted of Andrew Ros, University of Minnesota, O. G. Lloyd, Purdue University, F. D. Farrell, Kansas State Agricultural College, for the American Farm Economics Association and M. L. Wilson, Montana Agricultural College, J. H. Kolb, University of Wisconsin, and Dwight L. Sanderson, Cornell University, for the American Country Life Association. The problem of the committee was the determination of the answer to President Butterfield's query:

"...whether rural progress is not as much due to the desire for better things in life as it is the result of the improvement of the farmer's economic status."(9)

The Committee, handicapped by lack of funds, held only one meeting therefore most of the work was done by
correspondence. The problem was divided into sub-topics which were assigned to various authorities for discussion. The problems thus discussed were: "The Measure of Rural Progress", "The Fundamental Values of Farm Life", "The Goal of Economic Efficiency in Agriculture", "The Farmer's Standard of Living", "Living Standards and Farm Income", and "The Competition of Lower Standards of Living". The papers on these subjects were edited and the results embodied in the conclusion which stated:

"Better farm income will not of itself create higher social values and these are essential to economic advancement."(10)

The Association published from time to time pamphlets on country life problems; bibliographies for the study of those problems and authorized the field secretary to provide articles for publication in various magazines. A bulletin on "Recreation" was furnished in 1920 for the rural service of the American Red Cross and study pamphlets based on the Proceedings were sent on request to country life clubs. In 1930, eight thousand copies of the conference source book "Standards of Living" were published through a cooperative arrangement with the University of Wisconsin. Articles were provided for such publications as the National Grange Monthly, The American Farm Bureau Federation News Letter, the

The Association took part in the meetings of the National Conference of Social Work, the National Association for Public-Health Nursing, the National Emergency Educational Conference in 1923 and the Committee on Co-ordinating Social Agencies.

The international country life movement received the support of the American Country Life Association and the Association was represented at most of the important international conferences. The International Institute of Agriculture and the World Agricultural Society were the outstanding organizations with which the Association cooperated.

The American Country Life Association had as its purpose the promotion of country life interests and, in so far as a limited budget permitted, gave its support and active cooperation to all efforts to improve rural life.
Chapter V.

Conclusions

The American Country Life Association has been organized from 1919 to 1932 or approximately thirteen years. To what extent the goal of the country life movement has been achieved and what part the American Country Life Association has played in this accomplishment is difficult to ascertain.

An estimate of the influence, the importance, and the success of the Association has been made practically impossible by the very nature of the organization. The fact that the Association has been purely an organization for the discussion of country life affairs has meant that any lasting good from its work must be received indirectly by the farmer in whose interest the Association met; and, because its influence was felt only indirectly, an estimate of it has been made the more difficult. There can be no doubt that discussion is a necessary preliminary to the actual solution of a problem but the study of the country life movement shows that in this field there has been too much discussion and too little action. The explanation of this fact probably lies in the inability of the movement to acquire and to hold the active interest of the farmer. The country life movement has
been an "uplift movement" and the Association, until it should command the attention and the active support of the farmer, must be called an "uplift organization".

The Association has, however, formed a centralizing agency for the country life movement, summarized the studies of farm problems, and offered valuable suggestions for their remedy. The success of their work has been recognized by the approval and cooperation of farm organizations such as the National Grange and the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Farm life has improved in the period of the organization of the Association partially because of improved transportation and communication, consolidated schools, traveling libraries, the organization of farm women and radio, and, partially because of active rural leaders. The influence of the Association in the training of rural leaders would be its greatest accomplishment but again the question arises "To what extent does this influence exist?" The development of rural sociology, which was well under way before the Association was formed, must be given much credit for the training of these rural social workers.

Because of the strict adherence of the Association to its policy of avoiding agricultural political problems, it has not received the attention of the press. The gist
of such criticism it has received was that the Association discussed many important topics in a learned fashion but that discussion was not translated into the needed action.

Bearing these points in mind, perhaps the fairest way to judge the success of the American Country Life Association in the building of sound American country life conditions was in the ascertaining of the extent the Association has fulfilled its own statement of the steps necessary for solution of the country life problem.

The first step the Association assigned to itself was to outline and to define the country life field. This was the work of the entire first conference and amounted to a complete summary of the achievements of the study of the country life movement. The Association gave to the movement a complete and brief statement of these results.

The second step was the listing of the agencies then at work in the country life field. This was partially fulfilled by the organization of the National Council of Agencies Engaged in Rural Social Work. The additional agencies not members of the Association were listed in committee reports classifying agricultural organizations. "The Handbook of Rural Social Agencies" gave a convenient
review of the agencies affiliated with the Council. In this work, the Association went further than their program in attempting to establish the Council as a means of securing the cooperation of the rural social forces. This was successful during the period of its existence which was approximately ten years, 1920 to 1930. The Association was then successful in completing this step.

The third task undertaken by the Association was the stimulation of the investigation and the teaching of rural sociology. Each conference received the report of the Committee on Rural Sociology which investigated the extent of the teaching of the subject, the material to be included in the courses offered, and the benefits for the training of rural social leaders. Any influence the Association may have had in promoting the teaching of rural sociology could only be indirectly estimated; and, since the study of rural sociology was begun before the Association was formed, the success of the Association in fulfilling this step has been impossible to determine.

The fourth step was the development of a propaganda for the improvement of country life. The Association endeavored to develop this propaganda through the articles on country life it has authorized, through the stimulation of student interest in rural life, through its various
publications, and through the cooperation of the country agents and the American Farm Bureau Federation. The articles have been limited in number, however, and many of them have not been published in magazines with a wide rural circulation. The same fault may be found with the Association magazine, "Rural America", for its publication has been largely confined to the members of the Association who have been convinced of the seriousness of country life conditions. Through the stimulation of student interest, the Association, aided country life of the future for the training of the rural leaders to recognize the importance of the social phase of the farm problem was the fundamental need. Present conditions of country life have been improved by the Association only in so far as it has received the support of the Department of Agriculture through the American Farm Bureau Federation and the support of other farm organizations as the National Grange. With its present form of organization, the Association, therefore, has developed a propaganda for the solution of country life problems only through existing farm organizations and through the education of future rural leaders.

The development of a real mass feeling, the fifth step in the Association's program, has not been achieved. This has been partially attributable to the economic
conditions during the period of the Association's existence. Until the farmer solves, at least partially, the economic problems with which he is confronted, his great interest cannot be the improvement of existing country life problems which require a further outlay of expense.

The Association, with its present form of organization, can influence country life only through the existing organizations of farmers and may be described, therefore, as an advisory body to these organizations. The support of the farmer, himself, would require the establishment of regional and state conferences for the average farmer would find it impossible to attend the annual conference perhaps several thousand miles from his home. The necessity of the regional and state conferences has been discussed by the Association especially in the 1928 conference but no action has been taken. The Association has maintained its function as a general "clearing house" of country life problems, the results of which must be applied by other organizations and, in this field it has found a real need for the work it accomplishes, an advisory body for country life problems.
Notes.

Chapter I.


2. Ibid.


Chapter II.

1. The following leaders were present at the conference of country life leaders:
   - Dr. Kenyon L. Butterfield, President Massachusetts Agricultural College.
   - Mrs. Kenyon L. Butterfield.
   - Miss Mabel Garney, State Board of Education, St. Paul, Minnesota.
   - Dr. A. R. Mann, College of Agriculture, Cornell University.
   - Mr. Edward L. Burchard, National Community Center Association, Washington, D. C.
   - Mr. C. W. Thompson, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.
   - Prof. T. A. Waugh, Massachusetts Agricultural College.
   - Prof. E. L. Morgan, Massachusetts Agricultural College.
   - Prof. J. H. Montgomery, Co-operative Education Association, Richmond, Va.
   - Dr. E. C. Branson, University of North Carolina.
   - Prof. Paul L. Vogt, Department of Rural Work, Board of Church Extension, Methodist Episcopal Church.
Prof. John Phelan, Massachusetts Agricultural College.  
Dean Georgia L. White, Michigan Agricultural College. 
Dr. A. C. True, United States Department of Agriculture. 
Miss Marie Lownes, Teacher's College, New York City. 
Dr. P. P. Claxton, United States Commissioner of Education.  
Dr. Warren H. Wilson, Department of Church and Country Life, Board of Home Missions, Presbyterian Church. 
Mr. Hobbes, University of North Carolina.

2. Proceedings of the National Country Life Conference,  
I, pp. 7-14.

3. Ibid., p. 2.

4. The six additional members of the executive committee were:  
   E. C. Branson, Professor of Rural Economics and Sociology, University of North Carolina.  
P. P. Claxton, United States Commissioner of Education. 
A. H. Mann, Dean, College of Agriculture, Cornell University. 
C. W. Thompson, Office of Rural Organization, United States Department of Agriculture.  
Mabel Head, National Board of Young Women's Christian Association. 
Virginia C. Meredith.

5. Proceedings of the National Country Life Conference,  
II, p. 220.

6. Ibid.

7. Proceedings of the National Country Life Conference,  
III, p. 232.

8. Ibid., p. 7.

Chapter III.

4. Ibid., p. 15.
5. Ibid., pp. 15-23.
6. Ibid., pp. 175-74.
7. Ibid., VI, title page.
8. Ibid., VII, p. 3.
9. Ibid., IX, p. 135.
11. Ibid., X-XI, p. 15.
12. Ibid., X-XI, p. 17.
13. Ibid., XII, p. 1.

Chapter IV.

2. Ibid., p. 155.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p. 168.
7. Ibid., pp. 153-159.
10. Ibid., p. 517.
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