

OKLAHOMA
AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE
AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA

Reading in farm homes

A Critical Study of Periodical Reading in Farm Homes

By
GRACE FERNANDES,
Associate Professor, Home Economics Research, Oklahoma
Agricultural and Mechanical College
Agricultural Experiment Station

SYLLABUS

1. Periodical reading matter presents vicarious contacts in a form acceptable to busy people and cheaply enough that the average family can avail itself of it. p. 3.
2. The periodical is a great factor in placing "population groups" on the same level. pp. 3-4.
3. Five localities in different parts of Oklahoma were studied. These localities were different in agricultural interests, types of settlers and length of time settled. Approximately the same number of people were interviewed in each locality. pp. 4-5.
4. The periodicals of general nature are of a wholesome type suited to an average reader. pp. 5-6.
5. Of the five hundred twenty-three families, 59.7% of them took no periodicals of general nature. 22% of them took one periodical of general nature. The largest number of papers of this type, viz., eight, was found in a Garfield county farm home. p. 6.
6. Nine hundred twenty-nine farm papers were subscribed to by three hundred fourteen families. One hundred nine families, slightly over one in five families interviewed, took no farm papers. pp. 6-7.
7. Over one-third of the families interviewed took no newspapers. pp. 7-8 and Table 1.
8. Five and seven-tenths of the five hundred twenty-three families took papers of religious nature. p. 8.
9. The modal average of the total number of periodicals taken was in the "three-four periodical" class. The average number of periodicals is 3.54 per family. One family subscribed to sixteen periodicals. p. 8 and Table 1.
10. In ten and three-tenths per cent of the whole number of homes, no periodicals of any kind were subscribed for. pp. 8-10 and Table 1.
11. In all the county groups predominant interest is shown by the subscriptions to farm papers. In all except two groups, newspapers are taken more frequently than papers of general nature. p. 10.
12. Of the whole number only 7.2% of them relied wholly on newspapers for their vicarious contacts, 14.5% of the families took only farm papers; in only 1.3% of the homes were only periodicals of general nature. pp. 10-11.
13. Classified on basis of frequency of publication, 218 periodicals were published daily; 44, semi-weekly; 369, weekly; 258, semi-monthly; 586, monthly. p. 11.
14. Over one-fourth of the papers of general nature cost twenty-five cents. The average cost of papers of this type is \$1.05. p. 11.
15. Over one-fourth of the farm papers cost twenty-five cents and both modal class and arithmetic average of subscription prices is \$.50. p. 11.
16. Almost one-third of the newspapers cost between \$1.00 and \$1.99. Nearly a fifth of them cost between \$10.00 and \$10.99. The average cost of newspapers is \$5.71. The farm people are not confined to the smaller weekly sheet. pp. 11-12.
17. The average amount spent per family for periodicals is as follows: newspapers, \$4.42; farm papers, \$.875; papers of general nature, \$.71; papers of religious nature, \$.08; total average amount per family, \$6.14. p. 13.
18. For every dollar spent for periodicals the owner families spent \$.57; tenants, \$.426; and day laborers, \$.004. p. 13.
19. There is a closer relation between amounts spent by owners and tenants for newspapers and farm papers than there is for papers of general nature. p. 13.
20. For every hundred papers taken 61.1 papers were taken by owner families, 37.5 papers by tenants and 1.2 papers by day laborers. pp. 13-14.
21. The figures prove only financial success and interest in periodical reading are concomitant. p. 14.
22. There is evidence that in the large sample there is a correlation between the number of papers taken with the number of years of school advancement. This is true also when the large group is divided into groups classified on basis of tenure. p. 14.
23. Forty-two and six-tenths per cent of the five hundred twenty-three families interviewed take one or more papers primarily devoted to homemaking. Forty-four and two-tenths per cent of the families in addition take periodicals which have home departments or columns particularly interesting to the homemaker. p. 15.
24. Almost one periodical in five is outstanding in interest to a woman who is maintaining a home and rearing a family. p. 15.
25. It would seem that the study of periodicals will throw light on the farm woman's standards of management. p. 15.
26. Children's magazines were found infrequently. They must depend upon the children's departments of the other periodicals taken. p. 15.
27. Conclusions. pp. 15-16.
28. Footnotes. p. 16.

**A CRITICAL STUDY OF PERIODICAL READING IN FARM
HOMES IN FIVE SELECTED LOCALITIES
IN OKLAHOMA**

**From the Viewpoint of the Part the Farm Women Play in Establishing the
Economic Status of Their Families by Their Standards of Management**

**PLACE OF THE SUBJECT IN RELATION TO THE
LARGER PROJECT**

The following is an analysis of the periodical reading matter found in farm homes in five selected districts of Oklahoma. As has been outlined in a bulletin previously published from this office, the purpose of this investigation of which this analysis of the periodical reading matter found in farm homes is a part, is to help diagnose conditions which may help in the study of the farm woman's part in establishing the economic status of her family by her standards of management.

We made a point in a former bulletin that the larger the experiences a human being can acquire, the richer is his life, the broader is his vision, usually the larger capacity he has for leadership, the greater is his tolerance, the less provincial is his outlook, the higher is his type of citizenship. If a person can get these contacts at first hand, a fine thing it is, but with the usual limitations which hedge about most of us it is impossible to acquire the real experience, so we must get that larger life vicariously. Reading the experiences of others from the printed page is our next best.

We used to look to books for the richer life and such they still give us, but nowadays long before most of the material appears in book form we have it given to us, often in small bits, in the periodicals. The average reader can find time for the reading in smaller quantities more than he can for the sustained exposition found in the book. Often too, there are valuable bits which are not large enough to put into book form which are disseminated through the paper and the magazine.

Books are expensive; rural people, especially in Oklahoma, rarely have access to the public libraries. Few books other than text-books are found in the average homes. In one section of the state covered by the survey only one bookcase was noticed and it contained only a few books and those of the text-book variety.

But there are magazines and newspapers, so a picture of the periodical reading in the home gives us a view of the families' mental progress, their alertness to the affairs of the outside world, to some extent at least, of what one may expect of them in the solving of their everyday problems. Looking at this last remark from another angle one may be able to account for the standards of management to a certain extent by the type of reading matter in the home. For example, what may a woman, particularly a farm woman, get from the perusal of a home magazine which may influence her standards in the clothing of her family? Let us hold in mind that the farm woman sees relatively few people. The following is a short list of what the periodical offers her:

1. The mode.
2. Ideas of good design which include the disposal of lines, masses and colors.
3. Ideas of fabrics.
4. Fabrics suited to the design and the occasion.

5. Good taste in choice of design.
6. Cost.
7. Garments suited to each other.
8. Garments suited to the occasion.
9. Where these garments or fabrics may be purchased to the best advantage. (Here advertising is a very important factor.)
10. Patterns.
11. Technical features of garment construction.
12. Relative value of the ready made and the garments made in the home.
13. The place of clothing in the family budget.
14. The aesthetic and economic value of a well-dressed family.

An analysis of other interests of a home-maker may show as many different aspects about which the woman may receive light from periodical reading.

Each year it is becoming more difficult to detect farm women as a class to themselves. Some time ago the leader of this project was present at a meeting of a Federation of Farm Women's Clubs in a prosperous district where about five hundred farm women were assembled. As they were seating themselves at luncheon one woman remarked as she pulled off her gloves, "Here is where we show ourselves as farm women—by our hands." The remark arrested the leader's attention and that afternoon as she looked over the assembly she recognized that from a casual glance there was little to distinguish them from any other group of women. A closer inspection may have revealed a skin somewhat more weathered from sun and wind, which is inevitable from the fact that a farm woman's duties take her much more into the open than do those of a town woman.

Those, of course, represented a high type of farm women. There are many factors entering in to explain such a condition—but I am sure that periodical reading matter is not an unimportant factor.

LOCATION OF SECTIONS SURVEYED AND PLAN OF STUDY

This study at this time embraces a survey made in selected localities in five counties in three parts of the state, rather far removed from each other geographically, different in agricultural interests, topography, in sources of population and in time of settlement. One part of the survey was made in Garfield county, which is located in the prairie region; it is an outstanding county in wheat production; one part of the county is a center of large oil enterprise; its population came very largely from northern states, viz., Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, and Iowa, which have furnished the largest number; many of the inhabitants came at the time of the opening of the Cherokee Strip in 1893, of which this county is a part; the county seat is one of the largest towns in the state, viz., Enid, with a population of 16,546⁽¹⁾ which at the time of the survey enjoyed an enviable reputation as a trade center.

Three of the counties, viz., Kiowa, Tillman and Jackson, furnish three of the other groups. These counties are all located in the southwestern part of the state. They were chosen for a more intensive study to be published later. Although they are contiguous, and were settled largely by people of the same sections of the country, Kiowa county with the largest number having lived in Texas, Missouri and Arkansas; Tillman county, Texas, Alabama and Arkansas; Jackson county, Texas, Alabama and Tennessee; although cotton is their conspicuous crop, and the dates of settlement were not far apart, nevertheless, a student of the conditions finds an intangible difference which more intensive study may reveal more clearly. No large towns are found in the group, although their county seats, Hobart, Frederick and Altus, with populations of 2,936, 3,822 and 4,522, respectively⁽¹⁾, are thriving towns.

The fifth group was taken from Carter county. Here the population is made up of people a large per cent of whom have lived in Texas, Arkansas

and Tennessee. The area formerly was part of the old Chickasaw Nation and white people have lived there longer than in the other sections. The topography of the county is broken—in places it assumes the mountainous. In one part of the county the interest is in oil enterprises rather than in agriculture. Cotton is the main staple, but gardening and fruit raising is engaged in by the individual farmers more in this group than in the other sections studied. Ardmore, a town with a population of 14,181⁽¹⁾ is the county seat and a good business town.

Approximately the same number of people were interviewed in each group. The principle of random sampling was employed.

PERIODICALS OF GENERAL NATURE

The above term "Periodicals of General Nature" is hard to define, since the newspapers and farm papers have enlarged their scope to such an extent that they are becoming more and more of general family interest. It may be defined more clearly by saying what the papers are not, rather than what they are. They make no pretensions at giving news, although topics of recent news are often commented upon. They are not professional in the strictest sense. They contain material of relatively greater literary value than other papers and usually embrace a larger scope of interest.

Whatever may be our definition, from which may be inferred that there is no sharp line of demarcation, a list of the papers taken is given for the reason that many readers may find it interesting and significant.

Reports from five hundred twenty-three homes were studied. In these homes, fifty-one different periodicals of this type were found.

The following papers and magazines were listed: American, American Boy, American Needlewoman, American Woman, Better Home and Gardens, Children's Magazine, Comfort, Collier's Weekly, Cosmopolitan, Delineator, Designer, The Gentlewoman, Good Housekeeping, Good Stories, Hearth and Home, Holland's, Home Friend, Home Life, Household Guest, Home Magazine, House Beautiful, Household;

Illustrated Companion, Journal of Home Economics⁽²⁾, Ladies Home Journal, Liberty, Literary Digest, Modern Priscilla, Mother's Home Life, McCalls, National Geographic, Needlecraft, Outdoor Recreation, Pathfinder, People's Magazine, People's Home Journal, People's Popular, Physical Culture, Pictorial Review, Popular Monthly, Popular Mechanics;

Review of Reviews, Saturday Evening Post, True Story and True Confession, Western Stories, Woman's Friend, Woman's Home Companion, Woman's World, Young People's Popular, and the Youth's Companion.

From the standpoint of the popularity of these magazines, we find Household in the largest number of the homes, viz., 74; the next in popularity was Comfort, found in 39 homes; American, next, 27; Ladies Home Journal, 25; McCalls, 25; Hollands, 24; Woman's Home Companion, 20; Woman's World, 17. All these magazines were found in homes in each of the five sections, so we class them as the most universally popular in the homes included in the study.

Although the following were not found in every group, the Pictorial Review is found in 12 homes, the People's Home Journal in 9, and the Saturday Evening Post in 7. The Literary Digest, Modern Priscilla, Good Housekeeping and the Delineator, each, were found in five homes. The other magazines were found in less than five homes and most of them were merely represented.

The Garfield county group was represented by the largest number of magazines of this type, viz., 119 or 32.4% of the whole number of periodicals of general nature; the Jackson county group by the fewest, 49 or 13.5%; the Tillman county group shows 70 periodicals or 19.2%; the Carter county group, 65 periodicals or 17.9%; and the Kiowa county group, 62 or 17%.

LITERARY VALUE

This is ground upon which it is rather difficult to tread for one will soon get into a bog of standards, but I feel safe in saying that our literateurs would judge that there are few magazines listed which contain material of the highest literary merit. Many of these contain what is known as the best sellers, but naturally at a date so close it is impossible to tell what may live to represent our age. Much of the magazine material is largely of the inspirational type—narratives of how people living in circumstances similar to the reader's own meet their obstacles.

Furthermore, when we take into consideration that the modal average of the advancement in school, that is, the grade at which the largest number of the women of the families attained, is between the fifth and seventh grade class, and the median average, that is, the average expressed by the figure half way between the lowest and highest grade of advancement is in the eighth grade class; or when only 14.1% of the four hundred eighty-seven women have had the privileges of any high school work; when 4.5% had finished a high school and when only 2.7% had enjoyed the satisfaction of more school advantages than high school, we could hardly expect to find many of those magazines representing the highest type of literary merit. The next generation probably will look to that.

NUMBER OF PERIODICALS OF GENERAL NATURE

Five hundred twenty-three homes were visited, and in these homes three hundred sixty-five periodicals of general nature were found. It would seem, then, that there was an average of .7 magazines of this type per family. But this gives no real picture of the situation. Let us visualize three hundred twelve of the five hundred twenty-three homes with no magazines of general nature. In reality these three hundred sixty-five magazines were found in only two hundred eleven homes, that is, an average of 1.74 magazines in the homes where that particular kind of periodical was found.

The largest number found in any of these homes was eight—in one home in the Garfield county group. Six periodicals of general nature were found in two homes, viz., one in the Garfield county group and one in the Tillman county group. Five magazines of this type were found in seven homes, viz., four in the Garfield county group and one in each of the other groups except the Kiowa county group. The largest number of homes were represented in the class of one periodical of general nature with 22% of the whole number interviewed and the Garfield, Tillman, Carter, Kiowa and Jackson county groups in the following order, viz., 31.6%, 23.8%, 23.1%, 20.2%, and 12.4%.

Repeating in part but expressing the thought from the opposite viewpoint, 59.7% of the five hundred twenty-three families took no periodicals of general nature.

As we might expect from the above figures, the lowest per cent representing those taking no periodicals of this kind, viz., 35.8%, was found in the Garfield county group. The highest per cent was found in the Jackson county group where there were 73.3% taking none, followed by the Kiowa county group with 64%, the Carter county group with 62.5% and the Tillman county group by 60%.

FARM PERIODICALS⁽³⁾

Nine hundred twenty-nine farm papers were subscribed to by families in this group of five hundred twenty-three; of the whole number, 24.7% took one farm paper; 25.2% took two papers; 17.8% took three; 9.2% subscribed for four papers; 1.3% for five. Six farm papers were taken by .9%, which group was made up of five people in the Garfield county group. Here again the record of the Garfield county group shows the fewest families taking no farm papers, viz., 7.4% of that group. The Tillman county group has the largest per cent of those taking no farm papers, viz., 28.6%, with the Jackson

county group coming next with 25.7% followed by the Carter county group with 25% and the Kiowa county group with 16.7%.

Most of the papers taken could not be said to be technical or professional papers dealing wholly with the conducting of a farm enterprise. Many of them could be described as papers of very general nature but of more interest to farmers and their families than to people living in town. But granting that they are technical to the extent of analyzing the farm project, we may make the summary statement that 20.8% of the five hundred twenty-three families who gave a report on this question, or in other words, slightly over one-fifth of them, were not studying their "job" from the periodicals. They were depending on sources other than farm papers for their business success.

NUMBER OF NEWSPAPERS

Five hundred twenty-three families reported as to newspapers in the home. Altogether five hundred fourteen newspapers were taken by these families. From this report it would seem that the average newspapers per family would be only slightly less than one. However, again, we must take into consideration those families where no newspapers were found which numbered one hundred ninety-two. In other words, then, 36.7%, or over one-third of the families, took no newspapers of any kind.

The number of newspapers taken by the families cannot be recorded accurately since one of the field workers accepted the report "local papers" as sufficient information. Seventy reports of that nature were given. Furthermore, as suggested by the footnote, the reports given as Dallas News are thought possibly to be slightly inaccurate since there is a Dallas Daily News and a Dallas Farm News. In the following report those given as local papers are classed as one paper and the Dallas News as the Daily Dallas News. The latter can be considered with the reservations given in the footnote. Obviously such data is by no means accurate but it is presented only for the reason that it may be significant. On this basis it may be said that 35.9% of the whole number of families took one newspaper. The difference when the Daily Dallas News is considered as the Dallas Farm News is not appreciable. Those taking two newspapers represented 21% of the whole number of families or 18.5% represent the number when the shift is made from the news to the farm paper as suggested above. Four and ninety-seven hundredths per cent of the families took three newspapers and one and three-tenths per cent took four newspapers. The difference made by the shift from news to farm papers in these classes is negligible.

It is interesting to note that the Kiowa county group shows the lowest per cent taking no newspapers, viz., 25.4%. This, however, shows slightly over one-fourth of the group with no newspapers. The Kiowa county group is followed by the Tillman county group with 30.5%, nearly one-third of the families taking no newspapers; then the Jackson county group with 31.4%, again nearly one-third; the Garfield county group with 42.1%, much over one-third; and the Carter county group with the lowest record, that of 55.8%, over one-half.

If the shift were made from the Daily Dallas News to the Dallas Farm News it would show the families without newspapers represented by the following per cents: the Kiowa county group 28.1%; the Tillman county group 31.4%; the Jackson county group 37.1%; the Garfield county group 42.1%, and the Carter county group 59.6%. This shift, although disturbing the per cents to a certain extent, does not affect the ranking.

The fact of the report given as "local papers" shows a loyalty to the home enterprise and for that reason is given here.

The difference in the number occasioned by this classification, although not presented as accurate information, is so distributed through the several classes that the percentages would be slightly changed even if the actual names of the papers were given and probably would be lost in the large sample

representing the whole. Obviously, the percentages of those taking no newspapers are not disturbed by this classification.

PAPERS OF RELIGIOUS NATURE

Papers of religious nature were not found in many of the homes included in this survey. In the five hundred twenty-three families only thirty papers of this kind were found, or we may say only 5.7% of the families were receiving the benefits afforded by papers of religious nature. One paper of this type was taken by 4.4% of the families and two papers were taken by 1.3% of the whole group. There is very little difference in the percentages of the various groups. The largest per cent was found in the Carter county group, viz., 8.7% and the smallest in Jackson county group, viz., 2.9%.

NUMBER OF PERIODICALS TAKEN

Again this group of five hundred twenty-three families was considered from the standpoint of the total number of periodicals in the home irrespective of class. A study of the table is much more interesting than a summary which can be given in a few words. (See Table 1). The range in number is the first item that attracts attention with "none" as its lower limit and "sixteen periodicals" as the upper limit. The percentages of those taking two, three, four, five periodicals, respectively, are not far apart when considering the separate groups and also the group as a whole. The mode or the number representing the largest number of families who subscribed to papers and magazines is not an especially representative average when the class interval is that of only one paper. If the class interval is composed of two periodicals, we find, without exception, both in the groups taken separately and as a whole, the largest number in the "three-four periodicals" class. Even this does not tell the story accurately. Possibly the best picture may be given by saying that of the groups Garfield, Kiowa, Tillman, Jackson and Carter, 72.5%, 87.8%, 82.8%, 76.2% and 81.7%, respectively, or 80.5% of the total number of families took less than seven periodicals. In each group there were a few families taking periodicals numbering from seven to nine, inclusive. In the Garfield county group there were 6.4% of the number of families who took more than ten periodicals. One family took sixteen papers and magazines.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF PERIODICALS

The average number when considering the arithmetic average does not give a particularly accurate picture in calculations of this type, since both the extremes—those families who took no magazines and those few who took a large number—are counted in. But since we have it portrayed in other ways also, the arithmetic average may bring into focus some additional details which may mean more than others to some readers. We find that the average number of periodicals taken for the several groups are as follows: the Garfield county group, 4.7; the Kiowa county group, 3.68; the Tillman county group, 3.39; the Jackson county group, 3.16; and the Carter county group, 2.84. For the whole number of families, the average number of periodicals is found to be 3.54.

If those families where no periodical reading matter was found were not considered but taken out of the groups, the averages would appear as Garfield, 5.02 periodicals per family; Kiowa, 4 periodicals; Tillman, 3.78 periodicals; Jackson, 3.73 periodicals; and Carter, 3.22 periodicals. The average number of periodicals in the total number of homes where there are any papers or magazines is 3.95.

NO PERIODICALS IN THE HOME

Fifty-four families or 10.3% of the whole number interviewed took no periodicals of any kind. The fewest number of families was found in the Garfield county group where 6.3% of the group was without periodical read-

TABLE 1
 Number of Newspapers and Magazines Taken By Farm Families in Selected
 Localities in Five Counties in Oklahoma, viz., Garfield, Kiowa,
 Tillman, Jackson and Carter

NUMBER OF MAGAZINES	FARM FAMILIES											
	ALL		GROUP G		GROUP K		GROUP T		GROUP J		GROUP C	
	Actual Number	Per Cent	Actual Number	Per Cent	Actual Number	Per Cent	Actual Number	Per Cent	Actual Number	Per Cent	Actual Number	Per Cent
All	523	100.0	95	100.0	114	100.0	105	100.0	105	100.0	104	100.0
One	57	10.9	4	4.2	12	10.5	8	7.6	15	14.3	18	17.3
Two	75	14.3	10	10.5	8	7.0	19	18.1	14	13.3	24	23.1
Three	91	17.4	14	14.7	27	23.7	17	16.2	17	16.2	16	15.4
Four	77	14.7	16	16.8	15	13.2	20	19.0	13	12.4	13	12.5
Five	70	13.4	15	15.8	19	16.7	16	15.2	13	12.4	7	6.7
Six	51	9.8	10	10.5	19	16.7	7	6.7	8	7.6	7	6.7
Seven	19	3.6	9	9.5	1	0.9	2	1.9	4	3.8	3	2.9
Eight	14	2.7	3	3.2	2	1.8	3	2.9	3	2.9	3	2.9
Nine	7	1.3	2	2.1	1	0.9	2	1.9	1	1.0	1	1.0
Ten	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Eleven	3	0.6	2	2.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.0	0	0.0
Twelve	1	0.2	1	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Thirteen	2	0.4	2	2.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sixteen	1	0.2	1	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
None	54	10.3	6	6.3	9	7.9	11	10.5	16	15.2	12	11.5

ing. The Kiowa county group came next with 7.9%, followed by the Tillman, Carter and Jackson county groups with 10.5%, 11.5% and 15.2% of the families respectively, who received no contact with the outside world through periodical reading matter.

DISTRIBUTION OF PERIODICALS ON BASIS OF PREDOMINANT INTEREST AS SHOWN BY SUBSCRIPTIONS

A study of predominant interests of the families represented by these samples was made to see more definitely what type of periodical was found more frequently in the farm homes. Holding in mind that 54 of the families visited were without periodicals of any kind we are considering, then, only 469 families of the group of 523 families. It was found that 1849 periodicals were taken, distributed as follows: News, 514; Farm, 929; Periodicals of General Nature, 365; Religious, 37; and those, the classification of which is doubtful, 4. In terms of per cents then we may list them as: News, 27.8%; Farm, 50.2%; Periodicals of General Nature, 19.7%; and Miscellaneous, .2%. In all the county groups, farm papers were predominant and in all but the Garfield county and Carter county groups newspapers were taken more frequently than papers of general nature, and even in the Carter county group the numbers are very close together. If the Dallas News were considered the Dallas Farm News the difference in favor of papers of general nature would be slightly increased. If the changes demanded by this interpretation were made the ranking of the types of papers would not be disturbed. Referring to a former statement (p. 7) as to "Local Papers" we may say that even the most favorable interpretation would not make it possible for the newspapers to exceed the farm papers in number.

Furthermore, a study was made to discover whether one type of periodical was taken to the exclusion of another type. To do this only those families were considered who took periodicals of some kind. Those who took "none" were discarded. As a result, the size of the samples were somewhat reduced so that the groups studied were made up of the following numbers of families: the Garfield county group, 89 families; the Kiowa county group, 105 families; the Tillman county group, 94 families; the Jackson county group, 89 families; and the Carter county group, 92 families. In all, 469 families were considered; this number determined the base of the following percentages.

ONLY NEWSPAPERS

Only 7.2% of this whole number of 469 families relied wholly upon newspapers for their vicarious contacts. The Garfield county group was conspicuous for the fact that not a single family confined its interests solely to newspapers. The families of the Jackson county group had the highest per cent of only newspaper readers, that of 11.3%, followed closely by the Carter and Tillman county groups with 9.8% and 9.6%, respectively.

The Kiowa county group fell somewhat below the average for only 5.7% of the families took only newspapers.

If the Dallas News were considered Dallas Farm News there would be a slight difference in the number in Tillman, Jackson and Carter county groups, as well as in the whole number, making the per cent of those taking only newspapers 8.5%, 9%, 7.6% and 2.6%, respectively.

ONLY FARM PAPERS

Of the whole number, 14.5%, about one family in seven, took only farm papers. The Tillman county group is represented by the smallest per cent, viz., 9.6%, while the Carter county group shows the largest per cent, viz., 26.1%, who took only farm papers.

ONLY PAPERS OF GENERAL NATURE

Of the Jackson county group no family took only papers of general nature. Furthermore, the number of families depending upon only that one type

of paper for their periodical reading contacts was quite small, since the per cent of the whole group who relied on these papers is only 1.3%.

We have presented figures which classify the papers found in the farm homes, the number of each type found and the distribution showing predominant interest.

FREQUENCY OF PUBLICATION

The frequency of publication may give us another view of the situation regarding periodical reading in the home. Referring once more to the statement regarding "Local Papers" (p. 7) we are casting out altogether in this study of frequency of publication the reports for the Tillman county group since in that county local papers may have been either daily or weekly publications. In the two other counties where any reports "local papers" are given, those papers are published only weekly.⁽⁴⁾

By this elimination we are confining our report to four hundred eighteen schedules given by that many families. These 418 families took 1494 periodicals which are published in the following frequency: daily, 218 periodicals; semi-weekly, 44; weekly, 369; semi-monthly, 258; monthly, 586; unknown, 19⁽⁵⁾. In terms of per cents the result will read: daily, 14.6%; semi-weekly, 2.9%; weekly, 24.7%; semi-monthly, 17.3%; monthly, 39.3%; unknown, 1.3%.

The daily papers are entirely newspapers; the semi-weekly papers are largely news and farm papers; the weekly, too, news and farm, as, also, are most of the religious papers; the semi-monthly, entirely farm papers; the monthly papers, largely farm papers and periodicals of general nature.

The largest number of daily papers were found in groups in counties where daily papers are published. In the counties where there were no daily newspapers were found fewer families subscribing to daily papers but those who did were taking the large state papers. Here, the cost may have been an influential factor but this will be discussed at greater length at a later time.

The fact that only slightly over one-seventh of the groups were receiving the intimate daily contacts with the world at large through the daily newspaper is rather significant.

It has been suggested earlier in the paper that the farm papers are rarely distinctly technical. Many of them serve to a certain extent both as newspapers and papers of general nature.

THE ECONOMIC FACTOR

This paper would be incomplete without a study of the economic factor.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICES

Papers of General Nature.

Prices⁽⁶⁾ were obtained for 355 of the 364 periodicals of general nature taken by farm families composing the several groups. It is interesting to note that 46.7% or nearly half of them cost less than one dollar; that 29%, something over one-fourth of them, cost one dollar and the remaining 24.2%, almost one-fourth of them, cost over one dollar. It seems significant that 26.5%, or over one-fourth of the periodicals, more than the number costing over one dollar, cost only twenty-five cents per year and that 18.9%, almost one-fifth of them, cost fifty cents.

Farm Papers.

When considering the 904 farm papers it was found that only 14% of them cost one dollar or more. Fifty cents was the price most frequently found, the price of 44.7% of all the farm papers. Over one-fourth of the papers, 27.6%, cost twenty-five cents. These percentages will be slightly changed if the Dallas News shall be considered Dallas Farm News.

Newspapers.

As to the cost of the newspapers⁽⁷⁾ we may say that the price at which the most newspapers were classed was between \$1.00 and \$1.99. Almost a third of the newspapers were in that class. In this class were most of the weekly

sheets. The next largest class was the one represented by \$10.00-\$10.99, which embraced 18.1% or nearly a fifth of the number of newspapers. This class represents a number of the higher priced state papers. The classes between \$5.00 and \$9.99 are represented by 39.4% taken by families who subscribed to daily papers published in their own counties.

We have discussed cost as to the number of papers in the several price classes which were taken by the families studied but the arithmetic average may serve as a check as to the accuracy of the modal average. This average as explained above takes into consideration the extreme items, both high and low. The average cost of newspapers taken is \$5.71; of farm papers, \$.50; and papers of general nature, \$1.05. From a comparison of the two averages one will see that the differences are very slight; either average is very representative.

From the records, the following questions are suggested, viz., (1) Is ability to pay any influential factor? (2) Does the pressure of advertising methods, perhaps, enter into the situation? (3) Is there special loyalty to the home newspapers regardless of the frequency of publication? (4) Is there desire for daily news when their own county does not publish same?

FAMILY INVESTMENT FOR PERIODICALS

For Newspapers.

In this study of the family investment for newspapers, three hundred sixty-six families were considered since a number were cast out due to the inadequate report "local papers." Of this group 43.7% made no investment for newspapers; 12.3% (about an eighth) spent between \$0.00 and \$3.99; 18.9% (nearly one-fifth) between \$4.00 and \$7.99; 15.4% (nearly one-sixth) between \$8.00 and \$11.99; and 7.6% between \$12.00 and \$15.99. Seven people, or 2.2%, spent more than \$16.00 a year on newspapers. Here again, the type of paper published in the county determines the size of the family investment in newspapers.

For Farm Papers.

Of the five hundred seventeen families considered in this study, 21.1%, something over one-fifth of them, spent nothing at all for farm papers. The groups varied from 7.6% in the Garfield county group to 28.6% in the Tillman county group. The other groups departed only slightly from the average. 37.5% of the total number spent less than one dollar for farm papers and 31.5% of the families spent an amount which falls in the class from \$1.00 to \$1.99. Those who spent \$2.00 or more for farm papers embraced 10% of the whole number but no family went beyond the class, "\$4.00-\$4.99."

For Papers of General Nature.

Because of the fact that the cost of some of the papers of general nature could not be ascertained due to some inadequacy of reporting, five hundred thirteen families were considered. Of this number, 312 families or 60.8% or about 3 families out of 5, spent nothing on this type of paper while four families spent an amount between \$11.00 to \$12.99. The largest number of the entire group, viz., 83, spent less than \$1.00 for papers of general nature followed by fifty-six families who spent between \$1.00 and \$1.99. Sixty-two families, fewer families than those who spent under \$1.00 for papers of this kind, spent \$2.00 or more.

TOTAL AMOUNT SPENT FOR PERIODICALS

Complete information regarding all the periodicals taken by the families was limited so that only a group of 355 families is here considered, but of this number 43 families, or 12.1%, about one family in eight, spent nothing for periodicals; 133 families, 37.5%, or about three families in eight, spent less than four dollars; 46 families, 13.0%, or something over one in eight, spent between \$4.00 and \$7.99; 71 families, or 20%, one family out of five, spent from \$8.00 to \$11.99; 41 families, 11.5%, a little less than one out of eight,

spent from \$12.00 to \$15.99; 16 families, 14.5%, almost one family out of twenty, spent between \$16.00 and \$19.99, while 5 families spent over \$20 for periodical reading matter.

Considering the family investment in periodicals as to the arithmetic average where once more the extremely high and low expenditures figure in the calculation, the average family investment of the 206 families who took newspapers of which the prices of all are known, for that particular type of paper is \$7.85; of the 408 families who took farm papers, the average family expenditure is \$1.10; for the 201 families who took papers of general nature the average family investment was \$1.82 and for the few taking papers of religious nature, \$1.90.

ALL PAPERS

It was found in making the tabulations that although, for example, the cost of the newspapers was known, the cost of possibly one paper of general nature could not be ascertained. In that case that family's record was not considered in the calculation of the total family investment. The number of families considered in this record, then, was reduced to the number of 313 who spent \$2181.68 per year for periodicals, from which the average amount spent for all periodicals is seen to be \$6.97. It was generally found that if a family spent anything for periodicals, it spent money for several papers. If the Dallas News were considered the Dallas Farm News the amount spent per family appeared as follows: newspapers, \$7.32; farm papers, \$1.17; and total, \$6.47. The average amount spent per family for periodicals when the number who took none are included in the sample is as follows: viz., newspapers, \$4.42; farm papers, \$.875; papers of general nature, \$.71; papers of religious nature, \$.08; total, \$6.14. If the Dallas News were counted as Dallas Farm News, there would be the corresponding difference in this case as was found when those who took no periodicals were not counted in: viz., newspapers, \$3.38; farm papers, \$.935; total, \$5.70.

AMOUNT SPENT FOR PERIODICALS IN RELATION TO TENURE

As might be expected, the owner families spent more for every type of periodical reading than the tenants. Let us think of the distribution on the basis of the part of the dollar used for periodicals of the several kinds by the families of the several types of tenure. For every dollar spent for newspapers, \$.566 were spent by owners, \$.432 by tenants, and \$.002 by laborers; for farm papers, \$.59 were spent by owners, \$.38 by tenants, and \$.03 by laborers; for papers of general nature, \$.70 were spent by owners, \$.29 by renters, and \$.01 by laborers; for the total number of all types of papers, \$.57 by owners, \$.426 by renters, and \$.004 by laborers.

From this record it seems that there is a great difference in the amount spent between the several types of tenure.

There is a closer relation between the amounts spent by owners and tenants for newspapers and farm papers than there is for papers of general nature. As might be expected, the tenants have less to spend for recreation but seem to be doing what they can to keep abreast with the world as to its news and to what particularly pertains to their business.

NUMBER OF PERIODICALS IN RELATION TO TENURE

Five hundred thirteen families reported upon number of papers in the home and also upon what type of tenure they were holding their land. Fifty-one families or 9.94% took no periodicals. Ten of these families or 1.9% of the whole group were owners of their farms; 32 families or 6.2% were renting; 9 families or 1.8% of the families were represented by the male head of the house, who was a day laborer. Putting this in another way, of five people who took no periodical reading matter, one was an owner, and four tenants or day laborers.

As previously stated, the modal average is in the "three-four periodical" group. Those in the owner group taking less than three papers (including

those taking none) represent slightly under 10% of the whole group; the tenant group (those renting their land) 22.6%; the laborer group, 3.3%. When considering those above the average, the owners make a showing of 22%; the tenants, 10.1%; laborers, 0.0%. In the group containing the modal average, there are: owners, 17.7%; renters, 15.2%; laborers, 6%.

Again repeating a statement previously made, the arithmetic average of periodicals per family is 3.5 periodicals. The owner families show an average of 4.3 periodicals; the renter families, 2.8 periodicals; and the laborers, 1.3 periodicals.

There were 1816 periodicals taken by families where the tenure was known. Of this number 1110 periodicals or 61.1% were taken by owner families; 688 periodicals or 37.5% by renter families; 18 periodicals or 1.2% by families of laborers.

These figures are interesting also from the standpoint of the smaller groups where the same general relationship of owner to tenant families obtain.

The question may arise, what is the real relation between the financial status of a family and the periodicals found in the home? Do people from their reading receive benefits which enable them to acquire more of this world's goods? Are those people who are interested in reading of a mental type who "get ahead" financially? Or does the fact that they have acquired give them money to invest in or leisure to enjoy reading? These figures do not prove anything except that financial success and the possession of periodical reading are concomitant.

NUMBER OF PERIODICALS IN RELATION TO SCHOOL ADVANCEMENT OF THE HOME MAKERS AND LAND TENURE

The material was tabulated to see if there was any relationship between the number of papers taken, the tenure and advancement in school of the home-makers. The years spent in school were evaluated as nearly as possible on basis of achievement by school grade. The average school years attained by the entire group of 447 home-makers whose report on the three questions under consideration was sufficiently definite is 7.5 years ranging from 8 years by the Garfield county group to 6.4 years by the Carter county group. The school advancement of the home-makers of owner families is 7.8 years; of renter families, 7.2 years; and of the relatively few laborer families, 6.8 years. With each additional periodical taken there is an increasing advancement in school years up to and including six periodicals—for the whole group with 6.2 years for those in whose homes no periodicals are taken to 8.6 years where six periodicals are found. Increase in the number of school years of home-makers of owner families is noted also, the range extending from 5.3 years for those women whose homes were not provided with any periodical reading matter to 8.4 years for those women in whose homes six periodicals were taken. Again, the renter families make the showing of 6.3 years of school advancement for those home-makers whose families had no periodical reading material to 9.1 years of those women whose homes were provided with six periodicals.

Regular increase of years of school advancement might be equally evident when more than six periodicals were taken if the sample were larger. Obviously such a distribution would show relatively few items towards the upper limits—too few to make any generalization.

It would seem that one would be safe in saying that considering a large group, the greater the school advancement of the home-makers, the larger number of periodicals one could expect to find in the homes.

PERIODICALS DEVOTED TO WOMEN'S HOME INTERESTS

Many of the magazines classed as those of general nature may be said to be primarily devoted to women's home interest. One farm paper found in the list may be classed as such also. Most of the farm papers taken have "Home Departments." Many of the newspapers, too, have departments where the technique of homemaking is discussed.

Two hundred twenty-three families or 42.6% of the five hundred twenty-three families interviewed took one or more papers (six is the largest number taken) primarily devoted to homemaking. Almost without exception these periodicals were supplemented by newspapers or farm papers with home departments. Aside from these papers two hundred thirty-one families in addition or 44.2% of the whole number, took periodicals in which some consideration is given to homemaking problems. Sixty-nine or 13.2%, slightly over one in eight families, had no periodical reading which gives especial help to the homemaker.

Of the whole number of papers taken, viz., 1849, 19% or almost one paper in five is primarily of interest to the homemaker, dealing with those things pertaining to efficient accomplishment of her particular "job." Some groups do not make as good a showing in this respect as others but the interests of the women are by no means neglected in the budget set aside for periodical reading in the farm homes in the localities studied. As may be noticed the per cent of those families where no periodicals of any kind and that of those taking none that have any material dealing with the affairs of the home are not far apart.

CHILDREN'S MAGAZINES

Here again, many of the newspapers and farm papers as well as those periodicals of general nature have children's departments. No mention of Sunday School papers was made throughout all the interviews although the children who went to Sunday Schools in towns, especially, undoubtedly received them. The fact that they were not obviously an item of cost to the family they were not considered. Only six families subscribed to periodicals that may be classed as children's magazines.

CONCLUSIONS

Certain conditions are quite noticeable in this survey.

1. Rural people are not at all without periodical reading which they are willing to pay for.
2. The whole group may be divided into two groups: those who subscribe and those who do not. If a family takes any periodical reading matter at all it is likely to subscribe to several papers or magazines.
3. Price is an important factor. Those papers which are cheap are taken more often.
4. Families are loyal to their county organs. However, in county groups where no daily newspapers are published there is a relatively large subscription to the larger state papers.
5. A study of the papers shows that the reading matter is wholesome. If there was any material of vicious or ultra cheap character it was not reported. However, from the appearance of the homes it would hardly seem in keeping. The homes where that might be suspected fell in the "no periodical" class.
6. The list from the literary standpoint may seem somewhat weak but considering the school advancement of the homemakers the type of reading seemed consistent. In a sample of five hundred twenty-three families taken at random one would not expect a large number of those with marked literary appreciation.

7. The reading matter seems rather well distributed according to the interests of the several members of the families.

8. Since the reading matter is so well distributed as to interest we will expect it to have influence on the activities of the homemakers which may show later in this study of the part the farm woman plays in the establishment of the economic status of her family by her standards of management.

9. The larger number of periodicals and the greater amount of money invested is parallel with a greater accumulation of wealth as indicated by land tenure but does not necessarily prove that one condition is the cause of the other.

10. There seems to be a relation between educational achievement and interest in periodical reading as shown by the periodicals taken by farm families.

11. There are many factors which enter in to such a question as the amount of periodical reading other than educational achievement, accumulation of wealth or even personal appreciation, which last has been hinted at. Although no figures can be cited yet, the impressions of a field worker are worth something. One family who took thirteen papers was renting their farm and the homemaker had reached the sixth grade. This is not enough data for generalization but such conditions are found frequently enough to give them some consideration. One sees the influence of the public school on the children of the family. In some instances worth considering one is sure that the subscription comes from pressure of the school—that the paper may be used as reference. One sees also the possible desire of the parents, who may have achieved little either of education or wealth, to give their children opportunity which they themselves did not have accorded to them.

12. In comparison with other surveys in rural districts it compares very favorably. When making the comparisons the method of compiling the samples should be considered. This survey was made from a sample which seemed to take in all types of homes.

13. A similar survey of groups in adjacent small towns and cities would make the figures presented in this paper of greater worth to a student of social conditions.

FOOT NOTES

(¹)Gazetteer of Oklahoma, census of 1920.

(²)This is a professional magazine and yet its contents are records of experimental and research work on subjects relating to the home, so that it is listed here.

(³)The following number of families said they took the Dallas News: Kiowa county group, 5; Jackson county group, 13; Tillman county group, 7; and the Carter county group, 7. It is suspected in some cases they referred to the Dallas Farm News rather than the Daily Dallas News. The latter construction has been put upon the data given. With that in mind the true figure may rest between that given in the context and the modification suggested in this foot-note, viz., 24.1% of the whole took one farm paper; 18.7% took three papers; 9.4% took four papers; 1.7% took five; 1.1% took six. Of the Kiowa county group, 16.7%; of the Tillman county group, 27.6%; of the Jackson county group, 23.8%, and of the Carter county group, 22.1%, took no farm papers. Of the whole 523 families interviewed 19.3% took none.

(⁴)N. W. Ayer and Sons—"American Newspaper Annual and Directory, 1927."

(⁵)Inaccurate statements as to the names of publications account for this class.

(⁶)These prices were taken from N. W. Ayer and Sons "American Newspaper Annual and Directory, 1927." These are single subscription prices; they do not include club rates which in some instances reduce the prices, or any reduction in prices for any particular period.

(⁷)Papers listed as "local papers" are cast aside in these calculations. Again the percentages will be slightly changed if the Dallas News were counted as the Dallas Farm News. However, we may be stressing this point too much since this paper records general news as well as looks to the farm interests, but even so the numbers in the \$1.00-\$1.99 class and the one of \$8.00-\$8.99 will be slightly changed.