B750: Community Services in Randolph, Vassalboro, and Rome, Maine

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COMMUNITY SERVICES IN RANDOLPH, VASSELBORO, AND ROME, MAINE
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Louis A. Ploch
Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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COMMUNITY SERVICES IN RANDOLPH, VASSALBORO, AND ROME, MAINE.

A Contribution to Northeast Regional Project NE-77

NORTHEAST REGIONAL RESEARCH PUBLICATION
Project NE-77: Community Services for Nonmetropolitan People of the Northeast

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# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .................................................. 1
THE REGIONAL SITES ........................................ 1
REGIONAL RESULTS ........................................... 3
THE MAINE AND REGIONAL SITES ......................... 4
  Randolph .................................................... 6
    Household Characteristics ............................. 7
    Community Services .................................. 10
    Education ............................................. 11
    Housing ............................................... 12
    Health ................................................ 13
    Legal Services ....................................... 14
  Vassalboro ............................................... 15
    Household Characteristics .......................... 15
    Community Services ................................ 19
    Education ............................................ 20
    Housing .............................................. 22
    Service Availability ................................ 24
    Legal Services ....................................... 25
  Rome ..................................................... 26
    Household Characteristics .......................... 26
    Community Services ................................ 28
    Education ............................................ 29
    Housing .............................................. 30
    Legal Services ....................................... 33
    Health ................................................ 33
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS .............................. 35
SOURCES CITED ............................................. 41
INTRODUCTION

Whatever else the term "community" may mean, to most people the concept includes a place in which there is the provision of at least a minimum of services in the commercial, governmental, educational, and health spheres, (Warren, 1971), (Larson, 1977). For most people the New England community meets this image. In reality, great numbers of small, generally rural, communities in New England, as elsewhere, provide only a few of the service needs of their inhabitants. Yet, thousands upon thousands of persons continue to live in these service deficient community units. Perhaps even more remarkably, the early 1970's has been a period of increasing population growth for the smaller, rural-like communities.

Significant numbers of persons, primarily from urban areas, are migrating into rural areas, including those in New England and Maine, (Beale, 1975), (Ploch, 1976).

It will probably be some time before the full reasons accounting for the so-called turnaround migration of the 1970's are established. It is, however, well known that residents of small communities tend to be relatively well satisfied with the quality and availability of services. To document the degree of satisfaction with community services in small-town Maine in the 1970's research data collected from three Kennebec County towns are provided. In this section of the report the rationale and the methodology of the study are presented. A second section presents detailed data for each of the three towns relative to the availability of services and the respondents' degree of satisfaction with them. The final section consists of a summary and analysis of the data as well as some of their implications and shortcomings.

THE REGIONAL SITES

This study of three Kennebec County towns — Randolph, Vassalboro, and Rome — is a part of the Northeast cooperative project titled "Community Services for Nonmetropolitan People in the Northeast," (Kuehn, 1977). In 1974 and 1975, researchers from nine university-related agricultural experiment stations, functioning as Northeast Regional Committee NE-77 conducted studies to determine variations in community services and reactions of residents to them.

It was hypothesized by the NE-77 researchers that the larger setting in which nonmetropolitan people live would be a major

1All reference citations enclosed in parentheses are listed in the Sources Cited section at the end of the monograph.
factor in determining both the availability of services and the residents’ reactions to them. Counties were chosen as the basic unit for analysis. Because it was recognized that many counties, which are officially termed by the Bureau of the Census as being metropolitan, (containing at least one city or coterminus cities having a total population of 50,000 persons or more) also contain relatively large numbers of essentially rural persons, an operating definition of nonmetropolitan was developed as a sampling criterion. For the purposes of NE-77, nonmetropolitan people were defined as residents of counties in which 30 percent or more of the population lived outside of the urbanized area of the county. In total, 245 northeastern counties were identified which in 1970 contained a minimum of 30 percent nonurbanized population.

The universe of 245 counties was divided into categories representing three different degrees of change in population and median family income for the 1960-1970 period. By constructing two separate arrays (one for change in population, one for change in median family income) and dividing the arrays into quintiles (fifths) 43 counties were identified which were in either the first, third or fifth quintile for both of the two variables.

Designated as “more developing” were those counties whose rate of change (increase) for both variables during the decade was in the first quintile (highest 20 percent) of the distribution. “Average” counties were identified as those which were average (third quintile) in both population and median family income increase for the 1960-1970 period. Counties which were in the lowest 20 percent (fifth quintile) of population and income gain for the decade were termed "less developing". Some counties in this latter group experienced loss rather than gain in population and/or median family income for the study period.

From the universe of 43 counties which met the population and income criteria, 13 were selected as study sites. In four states (Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia) entire counties constituted the sampling units. In Massachusetts and New Jersey the sample was drawn from a single minor civil division within a designated county. In Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, the sample was drawn from groupings of towns. In those cases in which a town (s) was the sampling unit, the minor civil division was in the same quintile as its respective county for both the population and income distributions.

The questionnaire used in the study was developed by the regional committee. It was designed to provide data on the demographic composition and living conditions of the sample families and family use and evaluation (by one adult family member)
of available community services. The major sections of the questionnaire were:

I. Household Information (family composition, age structure, labor force status);

II. Health (family use of and satisfaction with a wide variety of health facilities and personnel);

III. Education (family use of and satisfaction with educational services);

IV. Legal Services (use of and satisfaction with legal services);

V. Housing (housing characteristics and satisfaction with housing per se and the relationship of housing and other community characteristics);

VI. Community Services (degree of satisfaction with private and publically provided community services).

Before presenting the details on the Maine sites, a brief summary of the data for the total regional project is presented.

**REGIONAL RESULTS**

For details of the rationale, methodology, and results of several components of the regional study as well as for related state reports, consult Kuehn (1977) and other publications listed in the Sources Cited section of this monograph. As abstracted from the final NE-77 project report (Crawford, 1977) some of the major findings of the regional study are:

- Less developing areas or communities are characterized by having higher proportions of elderly and retired persons than do average or more developing areas.

- More developing areas have larger proportions of persons in the work force and more families in the younger stages of the family cycle than do average or less developing areas.

- Statistically significant differences "exist among the three types of areas in terms of a number of household characteristics."

- Much greater use was made of private water-sewer facilities by households in the more developing areas as compared to the average and less developing areas. This fact may have important consequences for rural development and the environment.

- It was documented that when the data for persons 60 years of age and over are analyzed by three age subgroups (60-64, 65-74, 75 and over) significant differences exist for the distribution of a number of demographic and social factors (LeRay, et al., 1977).

- Satisfaction with services was found to be generally high. On a scale of 1 (low) to 6 (high) most of the 15 services studied were ranked at the 5.0 - 5.5 level. Services receiving the lowest
satisfaction ratings were public transportation (3.41), local road maintenance (4.15), and information about local events on television (4.84). The highest rated services were local fire department (5.57), "your neighborhood" (5.45), and local ambulance service (5.42).

- As the age of household head increased and the length of residence increased there was a general tendency for satisfaction with community services to increase.

In Maine, two counties were included in the 43 designated within the Northeast as potential NE-77 study sites. Both Maine counties, Cumberland and Kennebec, were in the average category. It was decided that the Maine contribution to NE-77 would be confined to the study of those rural towns (a town with less than 2,500 persons living in an urban-like cluster) in Kennebec County which met the NE-77 criteria of being average in population and income growth for the 1960-1970 period. Randolph, Vassalboro, and Rome met both the size and stability criteria.2 In June and July 1974, by use of a random cluster sampling technique, trained interviewers conducted interviews with an adult in each of the selected households in Randolph, Vassalboro, and Rome.

**THE MAINE AND REGIONAL SITES**

The three Maine sites included in the NE-77 project were average (third quintile) in their rates of population and income growth for the 1960-1970 period. If "average" can be translated as being the midpoint of a distribution, Kennebec County tends to occupy an average position among Maine counties. If one eliminates Aroostook County from consideration, then Kennebec County occupies approximately the midpoint of the organized (occupied) area of Maine. It is also near the midpoint in population numbers for the 16 counties in 1975. Its largest city, Augusta, is also approximately at the midpoint (1975) in population for Maine’s cities of 10,000 or more population. Soil, topography, and climatic characteristics are also more or less average for the state, again excluding Aroostook County. Thus, although it would be unlikely that data related to either the availability of services or the perceptions of their adequacy by a sample of small town Kennebec County respondents would represent the average situation for the state, it is likely that data for no other county would be more representative statewide.

2Vassalboro did, in 1974, have a total population greater than 2,500, the usual differentiating point between urban and rural. However, in keeping with Bureau of the Census practice for New England towns, Vassalboro is considered rural because less than 2,500 people live in any one definable community setting.
It is likely that the data for three small towns (ranging in population size from 418 to 3,035, 1975) are not representative for Maine towns with much larger populations. It is quite possible, however, from the facts stated above relative to Kennebec County and from other evidence, that the data for Randolph, Vassalboro, and Rome at least approximate those existing for Maine towns in their size classification. The data, however, are not presented with the assumption that they constitute proxies for other towns; rather, the data for each town are presented as a case study. For each town there is an enumeration of the degree of services availability and an analysis of the responses expressed by a randomly stratified group of respondents relative to their satisfactions with a series of services which have become a part of the American standard of living, rural or urban.

A further note of caution should be stated with respect to interpreting the results of the study. Although we are confident that our sample of households is reasonably representative of the populations in the respective towns, no claim is made that the sample matches the total of households in a one-to-one fashion. For ease of presentation, however, in some instances the sample of households in a town is used editorially as a proxy for the universe of households within that town.

Although the results of the study are presented in such a way that they should be of value specifically to residents of the respective communities and those with a special interest in small towns, other readers with an interest in service provision can gain insight from their own interpretations of the data.

Throughout the analysis of the data for the three Maine towns, reference is made to the 13 NE-77 county sites and the eight NE-77 New England sites. The 13 county sites selected in the manner previously explained, are located in West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. The West Virginia counties are Harrison (LD), Marion (LD), and Monongalia (A). Frederick (MD) was the only Maryland county included in the study. The two Pennsylvania

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3To help insure representativeness, the smaller the number of households in the respective town, the larger the number which were sampled. Assuming that the number of households enumerated by the Bureau of the Census in 1970 continued to exist in 1974 the proportions of sampled households were: Rome, 21.1 percent (23 out of 108); Randolph, 12.9 (57 out of 440); Vassalboro, 10.0 percent (72 out of 722.)

4See Kuehn (1977, pp. 5 - 8) for demographic details for all the NE-77 sites.

5The initials in parentheses designate county classifications on change in both population and income distribution for the 1960-1970 period as follows: MD = more developing; A = average; LD = less developing.
counties are Cameron (LD) and Clearfield (LD). New Jersey is represented by Sussex County (MD). The New York county is Cayuga (A). Berkshire (A) is the Massachusetts county. Vermont is represented by two counties, Essex (LD), and Chittenden (MD). New Hampshire is represented by Coos County, (LD). In Maine the selected county is Kennebec (A).

In a number of places in the analysis of data for the Maine NE-77 sites reference is made to the "eight New England NE-77 sites". Technically instead of the data for these areas being identified by use of the term "New England", it would be more correct if they were identified as "Northern New England sites". Two are located in Vermont, three in New Hampshire, and two in Maine. To help assure reasonable analytical comparability among sites the other NE-77 New England site from the southern portion of the region (Adams, Massachusetts) was not included in the analysis.

Vermont Site One is an example of a less developing area. The data are comprised of the composite responses of samples from the Essex County towns of Brighton, Canaan, and Lunenburg. Vermont Site Two is an example of a more developing area. The data are composed of the composite responses of samples from Chittenden County — the city of Burlington and the towns of Underhill and Williston, and a few cases (17 out of 158) from the town of South Hero in Grand Isle County. Chittenden County and Grand Isle County are contiguous.

The three New Hampshire sites are all located in Coos County, a less developing county and the most northern in New Hampshire. It is contiguous with Essex County, Vermont. The three sites represent three separate ecological/economic situations. The data for New Hampshire Site One consist of a sample from the industrial city of Berlin. Site Two is designated as recreational. The data consist of the composite responses from samples obtained in the towns of Carroll, Gorham, Jefferson, and Whitefield. Site Three is designated as agricultural. The data consist of the composite responses from samples obtained in the towns of Clarksville, Colebrook, Dalton, Lancaster, Northumberland, Pittsburg, and Stratford.

The Maine sites, as previously mentioned, are the Kennebec County towns of Randolph, Rome, and Vassalboro, all of which are included in the average category for changes in population and household income for the 1960-1970 period.

**RANDOLPH**

Randolph (1975 population, 1,879) is a residential town on the east bank of the Kennebec River, opposite the city of Gardiner (1975
population, 6,723) and some 6 miles south of Augusta (1975 population, 21,029). Several relatively new suburban-like clusters of single-family, detached houses are perched on the low hills above the Kennebec. Except for two very small manufacturers who employ a total of 39 persons (1974), it is devoid of industry. There is only a semblance of a shopping center. No commercial farms exist within Randolph's 2.2 square miles. The great majority of Randolph's residents, like most suburbanites, find their occupations outside of the community. Except for fire protection, elementary schooling, religious participation for some, minimal police protection, automobile service stations, and staple groceries, the bulk of services — commercial, professional, personal — are obtained outside of the community. Gardiner and Augusta are the two main sources of such services. Waterville, Lewiston-Auburn, Brunswick, Portland, and even Bangor (some 80 miles away, on occasion for a few specialized medical services) are utilized with less frequency.

**Household Characteristics.** Like most suburban-like communities, Randolph is characterized by small families. Of the sample households in Randolph, 60 percent were composed of no more than three persons. Unlike the typical suburban community, Randolph had a relatively high percentage (14 percent) of one-person households. Many of the one-person families were related to widowhood, a situation more typical of rural residential communities than of the typical metropolitan suburb. Randolph, with its tree shaded streets and views of the Kennebec River and its generally small town atmosphere, is a pleasant place in which to live. It probably serves widows and widowers well. The most common size of household in the sample was two persons (39 percent). Four person, one person, and five person households were the next most common. There were seven or more persons in nine percent of the households.

The relatively small size of Randolph households means that, in general, needs for educational and related services are relatively less than they are in some communities. In addition, smaller homes are in greatest demand and social and economic services need to be generally tailored for small consumption units.

The age distribution of household heads in the Randolph sample was more or less normal. It conformed quite closely with the comparable distribution for the NE-77 sites in both New England and the total Northeast. Randolph did have, relatively, a somewhat greater number of younger household heads in keeping with its suburban like character. Somewhat more in the urban mold, Randolph had a lower proportion of male household heads (79 percent) than existed for the NE-77 New England sites (86 percent) or
for all the NE-77 sites (87 percent). The apparent, relatively high proportion of widowhood could be a contributing factor in this situation.

Despite having a relatively high proportion of younger household heads, the proportion of persons in Randolph having college experience was quite low. Of the eight NE-77 sites in New England, in only one (Rome, Maine) was there a smaller proportion of household heads with at least some education beyond high school. Conversely, Randolph had the highest proportion (42 percent) of household heads who terminated their education with high school graduation.

As compared to the other New England NE-77 sites, more household heads in Randolph were single, divorced, and widowed. On the other hand, proportionately fewer Randolph household heads were married or separated. The differences, however, were not great. The variations in Randolph from the NE-77 New England norm in the distribution of household heads by marital status did not appear to be great enough to affect either the magnitude or the composition of community services in any major way.

In the summer of 1974, although Maine’s unemployment rate was approximately nine percent, unemployment was not a problem for the sample of Randolph household heads. No one was unemployed. Of the eleven labor force status categories utilized in the study, the two most frequent for Randolph (and for all of the NE-77 sites) were full-time, non-farm employment (63 percent) and retirement (21 percent). Thus more than four of every five household heads were either employed or retired. The only other category which applied to more than four percent of the household heads was “keeping house” (9 percent). For all of the labor force status characteristics Randolph varied very little from the averages for all of the NE-77 sites, except that while six percent of the household heads in the NE-77 New England sites were full or part-time farmers, none of the Randolph household heads were engaged in farming.

Employed Randolph heads of households were more likely to be engaged in white collar positions than was the case for either of the other two Maine NE-77 sites or for NE-77 sites generally. In only two of the NE-77 sites (Chittenden County, Vermont, and Sussex County, New Jersey) were there higher proportions of household heads employed in white collar occupations. The major difference between Randolph and the other communities was in the managerial, official, proprietor category. The average for the 13 NE-77 sites was 15 percent. Twenty-four percent of the Randolph sample household heads were employed as managers, officials, or proprietors. No doubt this fact was closely related to Randolph’s proximity to the state
capital, Augusta, with its many white collar occupational opportunities.

As in all the NE-77 sites, the major source of household income in Randolph was from wages/salary. Proportionately fewer households, however, had income from this source in Randolph than for any other NE-77 site. This fact may seem surprising when Randolph's "middle classness", as indicated by its white collar occupational distribution and the general appearance of its dwellings, is compared with like indicators for comparable communities. Not only did Randolph lag behind in the wages/salary classification, but it was below the NE-77 average for proportion of households receiving income from the following sources: self employment, rent, interest, dividends, royalties, private pensions, alimony, scholarships, and unemployment compensation. On the other hand, a higher proportion of households in Randolph, as compared to all NE-77 sites, received income from social security, veterans' payments, general assistance, food stamps, and "other" sources. These distributions can lead to the conclusion that Randolph is stratified into two segments — those who are relatively well off and those who are relatively poor. The levels of household income, to be discussed below, tend to lend validity to this assumption.

There was a higher proportion of very low income households (less than $3,000 annual income) in Randolph than in any of the other seven individually identified NE-77 sites in New England or for any of the 13 NE-77 communities. A total of 18 percent of Randolph's households was in the under $3,000 income bracket. The average for the New England sites was 11 percent and for the 13 county sites, eight percent. Part of this situation can probably be attributed to the relatively high proportion of Randolph household heads who were "keeping house": nine percent in Randolph; an average of four percent for the eight New England sites; an average of four percent for the 13 NE-77 counties.

For the NE-77 sites — the combined 13 counties and the combined eight New England areas — the greatest proportion of households was included in the $5,000-$7,999 income category. There was considerable variation from site to site. For example, although the proportion of household incomes in the $5,000-$7,999 category for the 13 county sites was 17 percent, the range was from 10

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6The household income classifications, with the average percentages for the NE-77 county sites in parentheses are: under $3,000 (8%); $3,000-$4,999 (10%); $5,000-$7,999 (17%); $8,000-$9,999 (12%); $10,000-$11,999 (16%); $12,000-$14,999 (14%); $15,000-$19,999 (13%); $20,000 and over (11%).
percent in Chittenden, Vermont to 25 percent for Kennebec County, Maine. The corresponding figure for Randolph was 31 percent. Over half (53 percent) of the households in Randolph reported incomes of less than $8,000. The only other NE-77 site which had this much concentration of households below the $8,000 figure was Vassalboro, Maine (52 percent). The irregularity of Randolph's income distribution can be noted from the fact that it had a higher proportion of households (16 percent) in the $15,000-$19,000 income bracket than any of the other NE-77 sites except for Chittenden County (Burlington), Vermont (18 percent) and Vassalboro, Maine (16 percent). But $19,000 appeared to be about the upper limit for household incomes in Randolph. While 11 percent of the total households in the NE-77 sites had incomes in the $20,000 and over range just two percent of Randolph households were included in this category.

Community Services. When queried about their level of satisfaction, a higher proportion of Randolph respondents volunteered the "very satisfactory" response to 12 of the 15 community services or dimensions studied than did the combined New England respondents. Only on ambulance service (available from a nearby community), road maintenance, and neighborhood was the Randolph proportion of "very satisfactory" responses lower than it was for the other NE-77 New England sites. In comparison with the responses for the 13 NE-77 county sites, the Randolph respondents more often volunteered "very satisfactory" to all but two of the 15 items — ambulance service and road maintenance.

It would appear that Randolph residents were more satisfied with community services and dimensions than were other respondents in the study. This conclusion appears to be particularly true when one notes the proportion of respondents expressing "very satisfied" to questions about the adequacy of dental services (80 percent), fire department (88 percent), telephone services (93 percent), and local news on radio (90 percent). Although a relatively high proportion of the Randolph respondents tended to express a high degree of satisfaction with community services, there was not complete agreement among them. Perhaps, surprisingly, when compared to their New England counterparts, a higher proportion of Randolph residents chose the "very dissatisfied" rankings for five of the community services included in the study. It should be noted that

7 Ambulance service, housing, road maintenance, medical services, dental services, local schools, neighborhood, fire department, police department, recreation program, telephone service, public transportation, local information in newspapers, on television stations, and on radio stations.
in every case the proportion of Randolph respondents who were "very dissatisfied" was much lower than the proportion who were "very satisfied." The items about which the Randolph respondents voice a higher "very dissatisfied" rate than did the New England respondents generally (with the percentage of "very dissatisfied" respondents in parentheses) were ambulance service (11 percent), road maintenance (11 percent), local schools (nine percent), fire department (four percent).

A higher proportion of Randolph respondents than of the residents of the 13 NE-77 counties ranked the following items (with the Randolph percentages in parentheses) as being "very unsatisfactory"; ambulance service (12%), housing (15%), road maintenance (18%), local schools (seven percent), neighborhood (nine percent), fire department (four percent), recreation programs (15%), and public transportation (41%). Ambulance service, housing, road maintenance, and public transportation were the four community services categories with which Randolph residents voiced their greatest degree of dissatisfaction.

**Education.** Randolph is one of four towns which comprise School Administrative District No. 11. Randolph children attend elementary school in Randolph and Pittston. Junior and senior high school students attend school in Gardiner. Publicly supported education for Randolph students begins with the first grade. Among the sample of 57 households in Randolph, only two had children attending preschool classes. In contrast, 17 families had children in elementary schools. Parents were generally well satisfied with the education which their elementary children were receiving. In respect to satisfaction with teachers in the elementary schools, of the 17 families one was "very dissatisfied" and one was "little satisfied". Of the remaining 15, two were "moderately satisfied" and 13 were "very satisfied." From the standpoint of parents, Randolph elementary teachers were doing their jobs well. Satisfaction with the elementary school program was at approximately the same level. Three families expressed dissatisfaction and 14 families expressed satisfaction with the elementary school program. Twelve of the 14 expressions of satisfaction were at the "very satisfied" level.

Parent's level of satisfaction with teachers was considerably less at the high school level than for the elementary or junior high school level. Three of the eight sample families having high school students voiced "moderate dissatisfaction" with teachers. Two expressed "moderate satisfaction" and three were "very satisfied".

The level of satisfaction with the high school program was higher than was satisfaction with teachers. Two families were
"moderately satisfied" and six were "very satisfied" with the high school program. None of the high school students were attending vocational technical school. At the time of the study the nearest vocational high school was in Augusta.

Of the 22 families in the Randolph sample who had children in school, 13 reported having no problems with the schools. Two families identified one problem and two families reported two problems. Five families did not respond to the question. The four complaints were each related to a different problem. Thus it would appear that problems with schools were not a major issue in Randolph.

One possible reason that educational complaints were at a minimum in Randolph was that the schools provided a variety of services in addition to the normal teaching functions. Among the special programs offered in the schools were behavior help, speech correction, reading help, and dental, eye, and health examinations and programs. Of these various special school services, the most used was the dental program at the elementary level.

**Housing.** Residents in Randolph tend not to be highly physically mobile. Approximately 80 percent of the respondents had lived in Kennebec County for 10 or more years. A total of 70 percent of them had lived in Randolph for 10 or more years and 50 percent had lived in the same house for the same time span. Yet, surprisingly, 61 percent of the respondents reported having lived outside of Maine. Once the respondents either returned or migrated to Kennebec County and/or Randolph they tended to become permanent residents. The relatively great degree of satisfaction which Randolph residents expressed for their housing and related facilities appeared to be highly interrelated with their long term of residence.

Like the great majority of rural residents, the respondents in the Randolph sample are homeowners; 90 percent owned their own home. The majority, 73 percent, lived in single, conventional housing. Just 20 percent lived in some form of multiple housing. Seven percent of the families lived in mobile homes, primarily on their own lots.

The housing of the Randolph respondents was well supplied with the basic amenities: all were serviced by a public water supply; two thirds of them had municipal sewage service; 95 percent had hot and cold piped water; 100 percent had a flush toilet; and 98 percent had a bathtub or shower. Housing is also relatively adequate in terms of number of rooms per unit. Nearly three-fourths, 74 percent, of the respondents’ houses had at least five rooms; better than a majority, 54 percent, had six or more rooms.
Generally speaking, the Randolph respondents were satisfied with their housing and its related aspects. When asked to state their degree of satisfaction with their house, just four percent of the respondents chose one of the three "dissatisfied" categories. Conversely, 70 percent replied that they were "very satisfied" with their house, and 21 percent replied "moderately satisfied" and five percent replied "little satisfied". The respondents' degree of satisfaction with the number of rooms in their house approached their overall housing satisfaction. Ninety-three percent of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their room size and the condition of their housing. The Randolph respondents were just a little more positive in their attitude toward their housing than was the total sample of New England and NE-77 county-site respondents.

Despite the fact that Randolph is almost entirely a residential community and that taxes are relatively high, the rate of dissatisfaction with local housing costs was just about half (11 percent compared to 20 percent) of what it was for the sample respondents in the other New England NE-77 sites.

Health. Health personnel and practitioners were utilized by a great majority of the Randolph respondents even though no medical services were located within the community. During the two-year period preceding the survey, the service of a family-type physician was utilized in 84 percent of the Randolph sample households.\(^8\) Of the various types of family doctors, the most often utilized was the traditional general practitioner. Eighty-eight percent of the families using family doctors had been seen by general practitioners. In order of frequency the other types of physicians which were utilized by those using family doctors were: obstetrician-gynecologists (29 percent); pediatricians (21 percent); and internists (12 percent).\(^9\) The use of these types of physicians was higher in Randolph than among the total sample of NE-77 Northeast households.

None of the Randolph respondents reported being seen by an osteopath or a chiropractor. Practitioners in these latter two fields were located in all but one of the communities where Randolph residents normally obtained medical services.

Of the respondent households utilizing the services of family type physicians, 71 percent consulted them for examinations and/or checkups. In 69 percent of the households these types of physicians

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\(^8\)For the purposes of the study, the following types of medical personnel were categorized as general family doctors: general practitioners, internists, osteopaths, pediatricians, obstetricians, gynecologists, chiropractors.

\(^9\)Percentages do not add to 100 because many families utilized the services of more than one type of family doctor as defined in the study.
were used for medical treatment. Obtaining the services of a family-type physician was not deemed to be a problem by 74 percent of the Randolph residents. The only barrier in obtaining general type medical services was the problem of making appointments, which was a problem for 10 percent of the Randolph sample households.

Respondents were also asked about the use of medical specialists. In the two years before the survey, medical specialists were utilized in two-thirds of the respondent households. This is approximately the same proportion of use of specialists by the respondent households in the 13 NE-77 county sites in the Northeast. For the families using specialists, the most frequent types were: surgeons (29 percent), ophthalmologists (13 percent), allergists (10 percent), urologists (10 percent) and psychiatrists and neurologists (each eight percent).

Less frequently used medical specialists were cardiologists and dermatologists. Additionally, optometrists were utilized by members of 37 percent of the households. Among those households who used specialists, seeing them for treatment (76 percent) was considerably more common than their use for examinations or checkups (42 percent). Just two of the fifty-five respondents indicated that obtaining the services of medical specialists presented any real problems to them or to members of their households.

Although the regular use of a dentist was not a universal practice among Randolph sample households, it was higher there than it was for the other two Maine study sites or the 13 NE-77 county sites. Seventy-four percent of the respondents reported use of a general dentist by members of their households during the two years preceding the study. Just four percent of the respondents indicated that use had been made of a dental specialist during the two-year period. This rate was considerably lower than that for the NE-77 households generally. Perhaps the more regular use of general dentists decreased the need for the services of dental specialists.

**Legal Services.** The need of sample household members for legal services was less in Randolph than it was in the other Maine communities or in the total of NE-77 sites included in the study. Thirty percent of the households reported need for legal services in the two years prior to the study. Of those households needing legal services, 88 percent obtained them. Eighty percent of the respondents were satisfied with the legal services which they were able to obtain.

There are no lawyers in Randolph. All legal services obtained by the Randolph households were located in nonadjacent communities. Seventy four percent of legal services were handled by private lawyers; the balance was divided evenly between legal aid organizations and other types of sources.
VASSALBORO

Vassalboro (1975 population, 3,035) is a level to gently rolling area of 45 square miles located on the east bank of the Kennebec River. Vassalboro's boundaries range from approximately six to fifteen miles from the city of Augusta and the state governmental complex. Waterville (1975 population, 17,372), home of Colby College and several medium sized industries is across the Kennebec from the northwest corner of Vassalboro. Winslow (1975 population, 8,243), largely a pulp and paper mill town, is adjacent to Vassalboro on the north.

With its proximity to urban/industrial areas one might surmise that, like Randolph, Vassalboro would be suburban-like in its ecological characteristics. On the contrary, although there are a few very small concentrations of suburban-like homes, the community maintains its rural-like character. Occupationally, however, Vassalboro is somewhat suburban-like. The great majority of employed persons must commute to their jobs in one of the surrounding urban centers. The three population concentrations in Vassalboro remain small, largely separate both socially and functionally; they continue to be characterized by a bare minimum of services, and by older homes, many of which have been refurbished.

The only sources of local employment, other than the few small retail businesses, the private school and the public school system, are small manufacturing plants, primarily lumber mills. In 1974 there were 69 persons employed in manufacturing in Vassalboro, not all of whom lived in the town. Although in the mid 1800's Vassalboro was one of the leading agricultural areas in Maine, in the 1970's there are just a few farms left. They are primarily poultry and/or dairy farms; they are widely scattered throughout the town. Today Vassalboro is primarily a rural nonfarm community with the majority of its population dispersed on the many roads which crisscross the town in all directions.

Only the most minimum of daily needed services are available in the three population concentrations in Vassalboro. In 1974 each of them had general stores which carried a variety of food and household necessities and some light hardware and recreational items. There were three post offices in the town, one in each population concentration, and two fire stations. There were also three elementary schools. Surprisingly, there were ten places of worship, all of them small, in Vassalboro.

Household Characteristics. Despite the general rural-like ecological characteristics of the town, families in Vassalboro tended to be small. Of the sample of households, 51 percent consisted of no
more than three persons. The two most common household sizes were those consisting of two-persons (25 percent) and those comprising three-persons (21 percent). The next most common household size was four persons (18 percent). Large families are not, however, absent in Vassalboro. The traditional ruralness of the community is in part reflected by the relatively large proportion of the sample households (11 percent) which were composed of seven or more persons. Eight percent of the families in the NE-77 New England sites and six percent of the families in the 13 NE-77 county sites consisted of seven or more persons.

Although Vassalboro lacks a typical suburban-like appearance or residential configuration, the average age of the sample household heads was relatively low, a situation more characteristic of suburban than traditional rural communities. Fifty-four percent of the household heads were under 45 years of age; 14 percent were 65 and over. By comparison 42 percent of the household heads in the eight New England NE-77 sites were under 45 and 22 percent were 65 and over. Oddly enough, even though the proportion of Vassalboro household heads over 65 was relatively low, the proportion of female household heads (17 percent) was slightly higher than was the case for the NE-77 New England sites (14 percent) or the NE-77 county sites (13 percent).

The proportion of Vassalboro household heads who were married (83 percent) did not vary greatly from the comparable figure for the NE-77 New England sites (81 percent) nor from the NE-77 county sites (82 percent). There was considerable variation, however, between Vassalboro and the averages for the other NE-77 sites in respect to the proportion of household heads who were divorced or widowed. For example, nine percent of the Vassalboro heads were divorced as compared to four percent for the NE-77 New England sites. While four percent of the Vassalboro household heads were widowed the comparable percentage for the NE-77 New England sites was 12 percent.

These differences in marital status between the Vassalboro household heads and those in the other NE-77 sites are, in part, a reflection of the differences in age composition. It is logical to expect that relatively few household heads in Vassalboro would be widowed because of the relatively low proportion of persons 65 years of age and over. On the other hand, the relatively high proportion of divorced household heads is probably a function of social factors other than age per se.

Although the household heads in Vassalboro were, on the average, younger than their peers in the other NE-77 sites, their educational attainment was lower than for the respondents in the
other communities. Vassalboro household heads had a higher than average tendency to end their formal schooling between the eighth and eleventh year of education (43 percent) as compared to the other New England NE-77 respondents (35 percent). On the other hand, while 27 percent of the New England NE-77 household heads continued their education beyond high school just 10 percent of the Vassalboro household heads did. This lower level of post high school educational attainment is consistent with the rural, non-suburban character of the community.

When one speaks of Vassalboro as being "rural", the connotation is more related to a dispersed pattern of residential settlement than it is to the predominance of agriculture or any other specifically rural-oriented occupation. Just 16 percent of the employed heads of households work within Vassalboro. Similarly, when asked why they live in Vassalboro, 15 percent of the respondents replied "employment". Although most employed persons' jobs were located out of town, 79 percent of the respondents indicated that the household head's employment was located either "moderately" or "very" conveniently.

A somewhat smaller proportion (eight percent) of Vassalboro household heads was employed in agriculture as either farm owners, managers or laborers than was true for the NE-77 New England sample of household heads (10 percent). Conversely, as compared with the New England sample, a somewhat larger proportion of the Vassalboro household heads was employed in full-time nonfarm occupations: 67 percent as compared to 62 percent. Fifteen percent of the Vassalboro household heads are retired. The comparable figure for the New England sample is 18 percent.

Unemployment was not a major problem in Vassalboro in 1974 for the sample of household heads. Just one percent reported being unemployed. An additional three percent indicated that they were unable to work, and another three percent who were not currently in the labor force (defined as being employed or recently unemployed) were looking for jobs.

Household heads in Vassalboro were primarily employed in blue collar rather than in white collar jobs. Five white collar occupational classifications were utilized in the research: professional, technical and kindred; managers, officials, proprietors; clerical and kindred; salesworkers; and service workers. As compared to the total sample of NE-77 household heads, there was a lower proportion of Vassalboro household heads employed in each of the white collar occupational fields except for those in the clerical category. Ten percent of the Vassalboro household heads were employed as clerical workers as
compared to five percent for the total NE-77 New England sample. Vassalboro's proximity to Augusta, the state capital, the site of many clerical positions, probably accounts for much of this situation.

Of the ten types of occupational categories employed in the study a majority of the sample of Vassalboro household heads was employed in three — craftsmen, foreman, kindred (19 percent); laborers, other than farm (17 percent); professional, technical, kindred (15 percent). The wide diversity of the three most common occupations — ranging from the professions, through the crafts, to laborers — quite accurately reflects the lack of occupational centrality in the town. There is no major, dominating village; there is no single, large source of employment within its borders. Vassalboro is, however, the home of many people who, although they are employed in urban oriented occupations, prefer to live dispersed from each other in a more or less rural setting.

Household income distribution in Vassalboro, like occupational composition, reflects the diversity of its population. Noting first the low side of income distribution for the 1973 calendar year, 34 percent of the households existed on less than $8,000 annual income from all sources. It should be noted, however, that except for the Chittenden County, Vermont sample (which includes the city of Burlington, site of the University of Vermont), Vassalboro had the lowest percentage of households (six percent) in the lowest income category — less than $3,000. Vassalboro contained a relatively high proportion (42 percent) of households with 1973 incomes of $12,000 and over — an income level considered to be "comfortable" in rural Maine. Among the eight New England NE-77 sites only in Chittenden County, Vermont (52 percent) was there a higher proportion of households with incomes above $12,000 or more.

As in the Northeast NE-77 sites generally, the major source of household income in Vassalboro was from wages and salary. A total of 79 percent of the households received income from this source. Less than one-fifth (18 percent) of the households reported income from self-employment. Other sources of household income were (with the appropriate proportion of households in parentheses): interest, dividends, royalties (24 percent); pensions, alimony, scholarships (12 percent); rents (two percent); social security (19 percent); veterans'  

10In addition to these three occupational categories, the others utilized in the study were (with relevant percentages for Vassalboro in parentheses): managers, officials, proprietors (10%); clerical and kindred (10%); salesworkers (zero percent); operatives and kindred (12%); service (10%); farmers, farm managers (four percent); farm labor, foremen (four percent).
payments (15 percent); unemployment compensation (four percent); general assistance (nine percent); food stamps (seven percent).

In respect to sources of household income, Vassalboro differed greatly from the other NE-77 Northeast sites in respect to the proportion of households with income derived from interest, dividends, royalties — 24 percent for Vassalboro, an average of 38 percent for all the NE-77 Northeast sites, and 61 percent for Chittenden County, the other site, along with Vassalboro, which had a relatively high proportion of persons in the $12,000 and over income brackets. To compound its inconsistent position related to sources of income, and despite its relative lack of very low income households and its relatively high proportion of higher income households, Vassalboro compared to the other NE-77 New England sites had higher proportions of households who derive income from a variety of welfare and/or public sources: unemployment compensation, veterans’ payments, general assistance, and food stamps. A factor contributing to this situation may be that although Vassalboro is essentially rural in terms of population distribution and environmental relations, it is contiguous to two of Maine’s more urban centers. Migration from these centers and the more “sophisticated” knowledge of use of welfare programs usually attributed to urbanism may be contributing causes.

Community Services. The essential complexity of Vassalboro as a community is illustrated by the degrees of satisfaction — dissatisfaction which the sample respondents voice toward community services. As compared to respondents in the other NE-77 New England sites, the Vassalboro respondents tended to express higher levels of dissatisfaction and lower levels of satisfaction with community services. In contrast with their relatively high level of dissatisfaction with specific community services, to be detailed below, the Vassalboro respondents expressed a relatively high level of satisfaction with their particular neighborhood.

The data do not provide direct clues as to why this apparently anomalous situation exists. It would appear, however, that the generalized desire to live in an essentially rural setting, but to be in close proximity to urban centers and their services, is at least a partial explanation. In a general way, they enjoy Vassalboro’s rurality along with its relative closeness to urban areas. The lack, however, of immediate access to a variety of services which are readily available to urban residents tends to highlight the inconvenience and spartan-like aspects of rural living. As will be further commented upon in the summary, apparently a version of the relative deprivation hypothesis
tends to color the perceptions of many Vassalboro residents in terms of the availability and quality of local services.\footnote{Briefly stated, the relative deprivation hypothesis implies that the better off one is in a given situation the more he tends to feel that he is deprived. Thus in studies of the military services, those units with the most liberal "pass" (leave) policy tended to feel the most deprived. See Stouffer, et al., (1949).}

The community type services with which the Vassalboro respondents were the most dissatisfied were ambulance service (none was locally available), housing, roads, medical services, dental services, local schools (only the elementary grades are provided locally by direct public support), local police services (limited to local deputy sheriffs), local public transportation (limited to taxi service from surrounding towns), local information in newspapers, and local news on television.

A higher proportion of the Vassalboro sample voiced some degree of dissatisfaction with each of the cited services than did the total sample of respondents in the NE-77 New England sites. Correspondingly, for each of these services, a smaller proportion of the Vassalboro respondents chose the "very satisfied" response category than was true for the total sample of respondents. A smaller proportion of Vassalboro respondents was dissatisfied with local recreation programs than was true for the total sample of respondents. On the other hand proportionately fewer of the Vassalboro respondents as compared to all the NE-77 respondents chose the "very satisfied" category for this service. The situation for satisfaction with local information on the radio was just the reverse.

Although the Vassalboro respondents were, with two minor exceptions, more negative toward the community services included in the research than was the total sample of northeastern respondents, the degree of negativity was not overwhelming. In no instance, for the 14 indices included in the research, did a majority of the Vassalboro residents choose the negative position over the positive. Thus while their feeling toward community services (but not their neighborhood as a neighborhood) is relatively negative it is not so negative that the community is in danger of suffering major social maladjustments.

**Education.** Although the system for the provision of educational services in Vassalboro is not unique for Maine nor New England, it is different from the norm. Through grade eight, education is provided by three schools, each located in separate sections of the town. The schools had a total enrollment of 547 in 1975. Administratively, for elementary students, Vassalboro is in School Union 52 which is comprised of Vassalboro and the contiguous town of China.
Vassalboro does not have its own high school. Neither is it, for secondary educational purposes, a member of a school union, community school district, nor school administrative district, the three state mandated organizational structures through which Maine towns interrelate with each other to provide educational services. In Vassalboro, high school students have the opportunity to attend the secondary school of their choice, wherever it may be. The town pays tuition fees but does not pay for transportation. In 1974, less than a majority of students chose to attend the private academy which is located in Vassalboro. The four other secondary schools attended by significant numbers of local students were located in towns or cities contiguous to Vassalboro — Augusta, China, Winslow, Waterville.

Vassalboro respondents with children attending school expressed a relatively high degree of satisfaction with educational services at the elementary, junior high and high school level. A higher proportion of Vassalboro residents was "moderately" or "very" satisfied with both teachers and programs at each of the three educational levels than was the total sample of NE-77 New England respondents. The degree of satisfaction with both teachers and programs was highest at the elementary level, but there was little real difference in degree of satisfaction level by level:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Percentage &quot;Moderately&quot;, or &quot;very&quot; Satisfied with:</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
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<td>Elementary</td>
<td>93</td>
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<tr>
<td>Junior High School</td>
<td>82</td>
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<tr>
<td>High School</td>
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Such a high level of satisfaction with both teachers and the program would suggest that the parents of school children saw little need for changes in the structure and functioning of education available to their children.

When asked if they perceived any problems with schools, 60 percent of the Vassalboro parent-respondents replied that they were aware of none. The comparable figure for the NE-77 New England respondents was 56 percent. Twenty-nine percent of the Vassalboro parent-respondents identified the existence of one school problem. Again this was a slightly higher proportion than for the NE-77 New England respondents as a group. On the other hand, just ten percent of the Vassalboro respondents as compared to 18 percent of the New England respondents reported the existence of two or more school problems.
From the perspective of the 39 Vassalboro parent-respondents the three greatest school associated problems were the lack of help with behavior problems (six respondents), transportation problems (five respondents), problems of parent-teacher relationships (two respondents). While these particular problems were no doubt of real significance to those parents who identified them, the relatively low rate of school problem identification is a corroboration of the high level of satisfaction which the Vassalboro parents have for the education which their children receive.

A series of questions were asked of the parent-respondents pertaining to their children’s use, within two years of the interview, of special services provided by the schools. The only special service for which more than a majority of the 39 parent-respondents reported use by their children was the periodic health examination. These examinations are mandatory during the elementary school years. Other than the general health examinations, the only other special services reported were reading help (reported by 7 parents) and speech help (reported by six parents). For these two services as well as for other special services (dental, eye, hearing, behavior help programs) the great majority of use was at the elementary school level.

Several questions pertaining to education were asked of all the respondents. Among them were questions about experience with adult education programs. Thirty-one percent replied that at least one adult in each family had been a part-time student at a school, institute, or college within two years of the time of interview. The comparable figure for all the respondents in the New England NE-77 sample was 24 percent. Of those families in which there was use of adult education courses, there was contact with only one source for 82 percent of the households. In only one family was there contact with more than two adult education programs. For 90 percent of the cases, the degree of satisfaction with adult education courses was recorded as "moderately" or "very" satisfied.

Thirteen percent of the respondents indicated that some member of their family would have liked to take adult education courses which were not available to them. No adult education was available within the town of Vassalboro. Just one respondent reported use of a correspondence school course. Four families reported receipt of an educational grant or scholarship but only one family had borrowed money for educational purposes during the two years prior to the interview.

**Housing.** Two types of questions which were housing related were asked of the respondents. One series of questions related to mobility — how long the respondent families had lived in the county
and town and whether or not they had lived out of state. Questions were also asked which were directly related to the respondent families’ present housing situation — their tenure arrangement, size, and condition of dwelling and the extent and source or provision of housing services such as water, electricity, sewage, etc.

While the Vassalboro respondent families were somewhat more mobile than were the respondents in the other two Kennebec county towns or the NE-77 New England respondents generally, they could not be classified as chronic movers. For example, only 14 percent had lived at their present address a year or less as compared to 43 percent who had lived at their present address for ten or more years. Similarly, only ten percent had lived in the town for a year or less, but 57 percent had lived there for ten or more years. A total of 75 percent of the Vassalboro respondent families had lived in Kennebec county for 15 or more years. When asked whether or not they intended to stay in the community or move, 85 percent of the respondents replied, “stay”. That some degree of mobility does exist among the families is indicated by the fact that at some time two-thirds of the families had lived outside Kennebec county. Ninety-nine percent of the families lived in the county the year round.

The Vassalboro respondent families were, overwhelmingly, homeowners. A total of 92 percent of them owned their own homes, a higher percentage than for any of the other NE-77 New England sites, and higher than for all but one of the 13 NE-77 county sites. If they were to move from their present residence, 97 percent of the respondents would prefer owning to other forms of tenure.

The high degree of home ownership was at least partly related to the community’s highly rural-like nature and the fact that there are no major restrictive clauses against ownership of house trailers on individual lots. None of the respondents lived in a mobile park but 15 percent of them lived in trailers on their own lots. The most common type of housing, 82 percent, was the conventional single-house type. The preference for single, conventional housing was further evidenced in that 88 percent of the respondents indicated that if they moved they would prefer this style of housing. The hypothesized moving situation produced a preference of seven percent for mobile housing not in a park.

Despite the relative ruralness of Vassalboro, characterized in part by the majority of houses being located in a dispersed pattern, modern household services are widely and almost fully available. At least 90 percent of the respondent-households were supplied with hot and cold water, sewage, flush toilets, and showers or bathtubs. All of the water systems and all but a few of the sewage systems are privately supplied. Not only were household services nearly universally
available, but also there was a high degree of satisfaction with them. At least 90 percent of the respondents reported satisfaction with their plumbing, sewage, water, and electrical systems.

There was also quite a high degree of satisfaction voiced by the respondents in relationship to other features of their housing. Of the 72 respondents, 93 percent expressed general satisfaction with their housing, 92 percent were satisfied with the number of rooms they had and 98 percent were satisfied with room sizes. About half (51 percent) of the respondents indicated that if they moved they would still prefer the same size house; about one-quarter (26 percent) would prefer more room and about one-fifth (22 percent) would prefer less room. Ninety-seven percent were satisfied with the type of structure in which they lived. There was some dissatisfaction, in a general sense, with the condition of housing. Seventeen percent of the respondents reported that this type of dissatisfaction was with outside appearance (23 percent) and with inside appearance (13 percent). The respondents were also asked if they were satisfied with the costs (rent, taxes, upkeep, etc.) associated with their housing. Twenty percent of the respondents answered negatively, but only four were "very dissatisfied".

Finding a place in which to live in Vassalboro was not a major problem for the respondents. Just eight of the 72 respondents reported any house locating problems. Similarly just eleven respondents reported problems with getting help with maintenance problems in their housing. The major reported problem was the inability to get specifically needed repairs done.

Service Availability. Vassalboro shares a characteristic with the other two Kennebec county NE-77 sites, Rome and Randolph. In none of them is there a full complement of commercial and professional services. Availability of services within Vassalboro is further complicated by the existence of three small village-like clusters, each socially and physically separated from the others. Despite the fact that most common household services are either entirely unavailable locally or at best only minimally, the respondents voiced high levels of satisfaction when asked how convenient it was for them to obtain services. For example, although 99 percent of the respondents reported doing the majority of their food shopping in an adjacent community, 86 percent replied that their degree of satisfaction with the convenience of food shopping was "moderate" or "very" satisfied. A similar situation existed in regard to shopping for items other than food.

Although health related services in Vassalboro were restricted to the presence of one physician, a pediatrician, there was a generally
high level of satisfaction expressed toward the availability of health-related needs. Eighty-four percent reported that they were "moderately" or "very" satisfied with the convenience of going to their family doctor. Availability to a hospital was deemed to be either "moderately" or "very" convenient by 75 percent of the sample. Hospitals are located in two adjacent communities. Eighty-four percent of the respondents indicated that a drug store (located in adjacent towns) was "moderately" to "very" convenient.

Two other vital community services, schools and places of worship, were also looked upon as being conveniently available. Eighty-seven percent of the respondents reported that access to schools was either "moderately" or "very" convenient. Elementary schools are located in the community. High school students attended the school of their choice including a local, private academy. Ninety-four percent of the respondents believed that access to places of worship was "moderately" or "very" convenient. There were ten places of worship in Vassalboro.

Although there were no banks in Vassalboro, 86 percent of the respondents thought that banking services were conveniently located. Two additional services receiving relatively high marks for convenient availability were outdoor recreation and commercial entertainment. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents reported that they thought that outdoor recreational opportunities were either "moderately" or "very" convenient in Vassalboro. There is a lake on one border of the town which offers boating, swimming, and warm water fishing. There are also opportunities for stream fishing, hunting, hiking and snow sledding. A golf course is located near the lake. A relatively full range of commercial entertainment facilities (movies, bowling, restaurants, fraternal organizations and clubs) are available in the two cities adjacent to Vassalboro. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents indicated that entertainment facilities were "moderately" or "very" convenient.

Legal Services. Legal services are not available in Vassalboro, but they are readily available in the two adjacent cities. In the two years prior to the survey, legal services were needed in 43 percent of the respondent households. In only one case was a respondent unable to obtain the needed legal services. In 98 percent of the cases, a private lawyer was employed. In three percent of the cases, respondents resorted to the services of a legal aid organization and three percent of the cases were handled by other means. In only seven percent of the cases was money borrowed to pay for legal services. Eighty percent of legal services were obtained in adjacent cities, Augusta, Waterville. Eighty-three percent of respondents were either "moderately" or "very" satisfied with the legal services which they received.
ROME

Rome is a completely rural town located on the periphery of the Belgrade Lakes' recreational area of central Maine. The majority of Rome's population (418, 1975) is dispersed throughout its 24 square miles of gently rolling to pronouncedly hilly countryside. There are two very small neighborhood/hamlet-like population concentrations in Rome. Rome Corner is located at the major road intersection in town. At the intersection there is a combination grocery/hardware store, an auxiliary fire house, the Town Hall, and the Grange Hall. The Rome elementary school is located about one-quarter mile from the intersection. Rome Center is about 2.5 miles east of Rome Corner. It contains a general store/gas station, a small church, and the main fire station.

Farming was once important in Rome but it has all but disappeared. There are a few part-time farms and only one or two commercial-sized operations.

Rome has become almost entirely a rural residential community. Employed persons commute to shoe factories in Norridgewock (13 miles) and to Skowhegan (18 miles), to textile and other small plants in Oakland (10 miles) and to a variety of jobs in Augusta (20 miles) and Waterville (14 miles).\(^\text{12}\)

**Household Characteristics.** Demographically (age, sex, family composition) the Rome respondent families tended to differ from the total NE-77 sample (667 cases) of New England households. The very rural, semi-isolated nature of the town is no doubt a major contributing factor. There is a pronounced "normal" family composition — no sample households consisted of just one person or two or more unmarried adults. In addition, the proportion of households headed by elderly or widowed persons was less than for the larger study. In contrast, the divorce rate for the heads of the Rome respondent households was higher than for the total New England sample.

The size distribution of the Rome sample families was trimodal: 22 percent consisted of two persons; 44 percent consisted of four persons; 26 percent consisted of seven or more persons. As compared to the total NE-77 New England sample, over twice as many Rome families contained just two persons, and three times as many Rome families had seven or more members. Nor did the sample of Rome household heads conform to the rural stereotype of elderliness.

Fifty-four percent of the Rome household heads were less than 45 years of age. Forty-three percent of the total NE-77 sample of New

\(^{12}\text{All distances approximate and based from the largest population concentration in Rome to the "downtown" area of the other communities.}\)
England household heads were less than 45 years old. Contrastingly, nine percent of the Rome household heads were 65 years of age or older as compared to 22 percent for the New England sample. One factor which might account for the deviation in the age structure of the Rome household heads is that although Rome is highly rural in terms of residential distribution and life style, it is no longer agricultural. Consequently there was no reservoir of older, retired farm families. The relatively young age composition of the Rome respondent families was reflected in the high proportion (91 percent) of the households which were headed by a male.

Despite the fact that relatively few of the Rome sample of household heads were 65 or over, their educational attainment was considerably lower than for the total NE-77 sample of New England respondents. Seventy-eight percent of the Rome household heads had not completed high school; the comparable figure for the New England sample was 43 percent. Just 13 percent of the Rome household heads had schooling beyond high school graduation. More than double this proportion of the total sample of New England household heads had attained education beyond high school graduation.

Illustrative of the relatively young age of the Rome household heads was the somewhat larger proportion of them (81 percent to 71 percent) who were in the active work force as compared to the total New England sample of household heads. At the time of the interview no Rome household head in the sample reported being unemployed or being unable to work. Thirteen percent were retired; 18 percent of the total New England sample were retired.

Rome household heads were primarily blue collar workers. Fifty-eight percent were employed as craftsmen, foremen, or operatives (machine and transportation equipment operators). An additional 21 percent were classified as laborers. While 38 percent of the total NE-77 sample of New England respondents were employed in white collar occupations (as professionals, technicians, managers, administrators, officials, proprietors, salespersons) just 21 percent of the sample of Rome household heads were so employed.

Although there was no source of employment in Rome hiring more than a very few persons, 32 percent of the respondent heads of households worked within the town. Over half (53 percent) of the employed household heads worked in a nonadjacent community. Despite the obvious distances which must be traveled to reach their jobs, 79 percent of the respondents indicated that the household heads’ place of employment was conveniently located. Just four percent of the respondents indicated that they lived in Rome primarily for employment considerations.
Income levels in Rome are relatively low. Fifty-three percent of the respondent families reported 1973 incomes, before taxes, of less than $8,000. The comparable figure for the total sample of NE-77 New England households is 39 percent. On the other end of the scale, 14 percent and 33 percent, respectively, of the Rome and New England sample households reported income of $12,000 or more in 1973. The majority (65 percent) of the Rome households had income from wages or salary.

Thirty-four percent of the Rome household heads as compared to 22 percent of the New England household heads were self-employed. The sources of income of Rome families varied. Of the total sample of Rome households, income was received during some part of the year from the following sources: interest, dividends, royalties, 26 percent; pensions, alimony, scholarships, 17 percent; social security, 26 percent; unemployment compensation, four percent; veterans' payments, eight percent; general (town) assistance, 17 percent; food stamps, four percent.

**Community Services.** The respondents were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with their neighborhood and with a variety of services which are generally available in "complete" communities. For each service the respondents were given the opportunity to select one of six levels of satisfaction: very dissatisfied, moderately dissatisfied, little dissatisfied, little satisfied, moderately satisfied, very satisfied. Of the 14 services toward which reaction was sought the following were not available directly in Rome: ambulance service, medical service, dental service, local police (except sheriff's deputies), and public transportation. The Rome respondents selected a higher proportion of the "dissatisfied" categories than did the total sample of NE-77 New England respondents for all of the above mentioned services except medical and dental services. Apparently the Rome respondents recognize the difficulty of providing medical and dental services in small isolated communities.

Other services with which the Rome respondents were less satisfied than were the NE-77 New England respondents generally were: availability and quality of housing, local road maintenance, local schools, local fire department, telephone service, and sports and recreation programs. The greatest degree of dissatisfaction was voiced toward public transportation (78 percent dissatisfied) and local road maintenance (70 percent dissatisfied). There was no local transportation available in Rome except for taxi service based in the

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13For a detailed analysis of satisfaction with community services by the total NE-77 sample see Kuehn (1977) in Sources Cited. For an example of the provision of medical and dental services see Willis, et al., (1977) and Ploch and Black (1974).
nearest city. For most Rome residents the trip to the largest of the urban areas in Kennebec county, Augusta, would average about 20 miles one way. Maintenance of roads in rural Maine is a combined state and town function. In Rome, because of the sparse population (15 persons per square mile) the ratio of road mileage per resident is high and consequently expensive.

Except for the two services discussed above, less than one-half of the respondents reported dissatisfaction with any of the other community services which were enumerated in the survey. At least a majority of the respondents were "very" satisfied with medical and dental services, the local fire department, and the coverage of local (Rome) news on area radio stations.

Perhaps the most significant of the responses to questions about degree of satisfaction with community services is that related to the degree of satisfaction the respondents have with "your neighborhood". Seventeen percent of the respondents chose one of the three "dissatisfied" categories; in contrast, 52 percent chose the "very satisfied" category. While this degree of satisfaction would seem to be well within tolerance levels, it was considerably less favorable than the reaction to the same question by the total New England NE-77 sample. Just five percent of the New England sample chose one of the three "dissatisfied" categories and 77 percent chose the "very satisfied" alternative.

Education. As noted above, the Rome respondents, when asked their degree of satisfaction/dissatisfaction toward a series of community services, reported a higher than average proportion of dissatisfaction toward "local schools". However, when the parents of school children were asked questions about their degree of satisfaction with specific aspects of the educational system their responses, while more negative than the average for the total sample of NE-77 respondents, did not vary greatly from the average. A part of the disagreement between the responses of the Rome respondent/parents and the other NE-77 respondents may be related to the small number of Rome respondents with children in school. Of the 23 Rome respondents, 12 had children in elementary school and eight had children in high school. None had children in junior high school. It should be noted that Rome elementary students go to school within their own community. For administrative purposes, the Rome elementary school is a member of a union school district with four other towns. Each town has its own school board, but they jointly hire a superintendent. Rome secondary students attend the high school in Oakland (10 miles from Rome Corner). The high school is a unit in a school administrative district which does not include Rome. Rome citizens have no voice in school operations.
Rome respondents expressed relatively high satisfaction with teaching and the educational program at both the elementary and high school levels. Ninety percent of those responding indicated that they were either "moderately satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the educational program at the elementary level; the corresponding figure at the high school level was 67 percent.

The degree of dissatisfaction with school, while probably real, appears not to be very strong. When asked if there were any problems with the schools their children attended, only three of the respondent parents could identify any; two of them identified just one problem.

The Rome respondents were generally aware of the special services in the health and remedial areas which were available to school children. Children in their families, however, made little use of them. The lone exception to this generalization was student health examinations which are mandatory at certain grade levels. Except for the health examinations, the most commonly utilized special services were in speech therapy and reading help in the elementary grades. Programs in behavior correction and in eye, hearing, and dental problems were used by children in no more than two of the respondent families.

Adults in Rome made relatively little use of educational opportunities. Just 23 percent of the sample of household heads had taken adult education courses in the two years prior to the interview. No one had taken a correspondence course. One family had borrowed money for educational purposes and in two families, at least one family member had received a scholarship or educational grant.

Housing. The housing section of the study included questions about mobility and length of residence in the community. These will be dealt with before housing as such is discussed.

Despite Rome's obvious ruralness, the population is somewhat more mobile than might be expected. For example, a greater proportion of the Rome households than of the total NE-77 sample of New England households had lived at their present address less than one year and, conversely, a smaller proportion of the Rome than of the New England respondents had lived at their present address 15 or more years. A similar but even stronger relationship existed between the two groups in respect to both length of time in their present community and length of time of residence in their respective counties.

As was true in all the NE-77 research sites, the majority of Rome families owned their own homes. Just four percent were renters which is approximately one-third the proportion of renters among the total NE-77 sample of respondents.
The great majority (87 percent) of the Rome respondents lived in single detached houses. Those who were exceptions to this norm lived in mobile homes, no one of which was located in a trailer park. If they were to move, all of the respondents indicated they would prefer to own rather than rent. Nine percent of the respondents were at least a "little dissatisfied" with their present tenure arrangement. All of the respondents were either "moderately satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the type of house in which they lived.

There are neither public water nor sewer systems in Rome. Each respondent household did have its own privately maintained water and sewage facilities.

Homes of the Rome respondents were less often equipped with standard household amenities than were the homes of respondents in the other NE-77 sample sites. For example, of the Rome respondent households, 74 percent had hot and cold piped water, flush toilets, and tub or shower. Comparable percentages for these three conveniences for the total sample of NE-77 New England households was, respectively, 96 percent, 98 percent, 97 percent.

The degree of satisfaction with their housing is high among the Rome respondents. No one expressed dissatisfaction and 61 percent said that they were "very satisfied". This high degree of general satisfaction with housing appears to be related to housing size as well as the number and size of rooms. The majority of houses in Rome are old and built in the large, north-country style. Sixty percent of them have seven or more rooms. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents replied that they were satisfied with their house size, but if they moved 17 percent would want a smaller house and 35 percent would want a larger house. Eighty-three percent of the respondents were satisfied with the size of rooms in their house and with its general condition.

Although most of the houses in Rome are located on large lots, often away from public view, a higher proportion of the respondents were dissatisfied with the outside appearance of their house (22 percent) than were dissatisfied with the inside appearance (13 percent). Some of the respondents did express dissatisfaction with specific aspects of their houses. Fourteen percent were, to some degree, dissatisfied with their plumbing and their sewage system and 17 percent were dissatisfied with their water supply.

Even though there is little new housing in Rome, 86 percent of the respondents indicated they had no problem in finding a house. Similarly, 88 percent replied that they had no problem — legal, financial, or otherwise — in actually obtaining housing. Neither does house maintenance appear to be a major problem. Just 17 percent of
the respondents indicated that their houses presented maintenance problems to them.

In addition to a house providing the actual place in which to live, another important aspect of housing is its physical location in relation to the obtaining of both necessary and discretionary services. Rome's small size and isolated location define it as an area in which few professional and commercial services are located. One might assume that because there is no single major source of employment located in Rome, and because residence in the United States is a personal and voluntary choice, that the residents would be relatively satisfied with their access to professional and commercial services. This is the case in the other two NE-77 Maine study sites — Vassalboro and Randolph. Like Rome, they too lack most of the common professional services. Unlike the other two, however, Rome is not adjacent to small cities. Thus it is not surprising that the Rome respondents were somewhat more dissatisfied with access to services than were the respondents in the other two towns. The nearest source of services is Oakland, 10 miles distant (1975 population-4,060). Services in Oakland are limited. For a full complement of household goods and professional services, Rome residents must travel to Waterville (14 miles) or to Augusta (20 miles).

With one minor exception, a smaller proportion of Rome household heads did either their food and non-food shopping in their own community or in an adjacent town than did the respondents in Randolph and Vassalboro and the composite of New England NE-77 locations. Again with just one exception a smaller proportion of the Rome respondent residents took their "most regular trip" within their own or an adjacent town.

This necessity of leaving the community for services resulted in a higher proportion of the Rome respondents than those in Randolph, Vassalboro and the composite NE-77 New England sites reporting that the obtaining of services was less than fully convenient. When convenience is conceptualized as "moderately convenient" or "very convenient" smaller proportions of the Rome respondents than other Maine and New England respondents thought that obtaining the following services was convenient: food shopping, commercial shopping, hospital services, physician services, schools, place of worship, places of entertainment, public transportation, banking services, and pharmacy services.

With the exception of the categories of minimal food services, elementary school and church, none is located within Rome. Yet despite the need to go out of town for these essentials, and although a sizeable proportion find their obtaining to be inconvenient, more than a majority of the respondents believed that it was possible to
obtain them at either the "moderately convenient" or "very convenient" level. Two exceptions to this generalization were entertainment and public transportation. That the Rome respondents, as physically isolated and as lacking in services as they are, did not feel too inconvenience is illustrated by the fact that when they were asked: "If you had your choice, would you live in this community or somewhere else?" 91 percent chose the "stay here" response.

**Legal Services.** A higher proportion (56 percent) of the Rome respondent families had utilized the services of lawyers in the two years preceding the interview than was true of the families in any of the other NE-77 New England sites. Eighty-five percent of the lawyers employed were in private practice; eight percent were employed by legal aid groups. The offices of all the lawyers were located in towns which were not adjacent to Rome. Only two respondents reported difficulty in obtaining legal services; in one case the difficulty was related to finances. No respondent, however, reported needing to borrow money to obtain legal services. On the other hand, when the respondents were asked about possible problems in obtaining legal services the only barrier mentioned was that of cost. In only one case were the legal services obtained by the respondent households thought to be unsatisfactory.

**Health.** The respondent families in Rome used professional health services at a relatively high level during the two-year period preceding the study. No medical practitioners have their offices within the town. All visits to medical personnel involve a trip, almost always by private vehicle, of a minimum of 10 miles. For hospital and other specialized health services the average distance would be at least 15 miles and often 20 miles, one way.

For the purpose of the study "general medical services" were defined to include the services of general practitioners, internists, osteopaths, pediatricians, obstetrician-gynecologists, and chiropractors. All of the Rome respondent families had made use of general practitioners during the two-year period preceding the study. Each of the other type of general medical services had also been used by some of the families during the study period: internists (15 percent); pediatricians (25 percent); obstetricians-gynecologists (20 percent); osteopaths (15 percent); chiropractors (5 percent).

There were no family doctor contacts in 18 percent of the Rome respondent households. The comparable figure for the respondent families in the total of eight New England NE-77 sites was seven percent. On the other end of the scale, 30 percent of the Rome families had used a family doctor six or more times in a two-year period. The comparable figure for the total sample of New England families was 25 percent.
The Rome respondents appear to use general medical services frequently for both preventative and curative purposes. Eighty percent of the families used a general medical practitioner for examinations or check-ups, but just five percent sought information. Ninety percent of the families used general practitioners for treatment. Approximately one-quarter of the respondent families reported having difficulty obtaining general medical services. The only problem specifically identified as being of any magnitude was obtaining an appointment when it was desired.

In addition to the medical personnel defined above, 70 percent of the Rome respondent families had contact with medical specialists in the two years prior to the study. The type of and frequency of use of medical specialists were: surgeons (31 percent); urologists (12 percent); optometrists (18 percent); dermatologists (six percent); orthopedic surgeons (19 percent); cardiologists (six percent). The use of specialists by the Rome respondents paralleled that of the total universe of respondents in the 13 Northeast NE-77 sites. Practitioners in all of the specialties enumerated above are available in Augusta and/or Waterville.

Thirty percent of the Rome respondent families as compared to 37 percent of the NE-77 sample of New England families did not have contact with a medical specialist in the two years prior to the study. In general, the Rome families had more contacts with medical specialists than did either the Randolph and Vassalboro respondents or the total sample of New England respondents.

The major reasons the Rome families sought the services of medical specialists were: examinations or check-ups (69 percent), and treatment (75 percent). A much higher proportion of the Rome families utilized medical specialists for examinations or check-ups (60 percent) than was the case for the total sample of Northeast families (40 percent). This may be related to the lack of general practitioners in the immediate Rome area.

In general, the Rome respondents were more likely to use the service of a physician than that of a dentist. While 17 percent of the Rome families had not used a family physician in the two years preceding the interview, 56 percent of the families did not have contact with a general dentist during the same period.

Relatively low levels of use of health professionals by small town and rural persons is often considered to be related to a variety of reasons, finances being the major one. This does not seem to be the case for the Rome respondents.

Seventy-four percent of the Rome respondents reported no barriers in obtaining the services of a general practitioner. The only significant specific reason given as a barrier was the inability to get
an appointment. Ninety-one percent of the respondents reported no barriers in obtaining the services of medical specialists. A similarly high proportion of the Rome respondents reported no barriers in obtaining general dental services (96 percent) or specialized dental services (100 percent).

Obtaining the services of medical practitioners is one thing; being satisfied with the service is often a different matter. In Rome, however, the respondents expressed a very high degree of satisfaction with the medical services which they received. No less than 90 percent of the Rome respondents reported being at least moderately satisfied with each type of family physician which they had used. Medical specialists, with a slight exception in the case of surgeons, were also held in high repute. For example, all the respondents whose families had utilized the services of optometrists, orthopedic surgeons and cardiologists reported that they were "very satisfied" with the services which they received. The services of dentists were also held in high regard. Ninety-two percent of the respondents were "very satisfied" with their general dentists. With one exception this was the highest proportion of "very satisfied" responses about general dentists in all the NE-77 New England study sites. Dental specialists were used by only a few Rome families, but in each case their services were judged to be "very satisfactory".

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It was originally hypothesized by the NE-77 researchers that in a study of the availability, use of, and satisfaction with services in the Northeast, counties would serve as the most useful unit of analysis. The utility of this approach is demonstrated in Kuehn (1977). In this report, however, the analysis is at the level of the town rather than the county. This course has been taken for two reasons. First, the county data for the region are well analyzed in Kuehn (1977) and it was our objective to provide data — in effect, case studies — for those with a particular interest in small New England communities. Secondly, as recognized by community scholars and the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the town is the effective legal, political, and social unit in New England; therefore, it was deemed appropriate to provide the data at the town level.

At the regional level the major criterion for consideration as a study site was that in 1970 it contained at least 30 percent nonmetropolitan population. Of the 245 counties in the Northeast which met this requirement, 43 were identified which met the additional criteria that during the 1960-1970 decade the magnitude of their changes in both population size and median family income fell
into either the first, third or fifth quintile, when all 245 counties were arrayed on the two variables. For purposes of analysis the counties were identified as either more developing (first quintile on the arrays), or average (third quintile), or less developing (fifth quintile).

Of the 43 Northeast counties eligible for inclusion in the project, 13 were chosen for study. The Maine county was Kennebec; the specific towns chosen were Randolph, Vassalboro and Rome. As was true for Kennebec County, the three towns were selected for study on the basis of their being in the third quintile (average) for changes in population size and median family income for the 1960-1970 period. Households were selected for sampling by the utilization of a random cluster sampling technique. By the use of a standardized interview schedule developed by the NE-77 committee, personal interviews were held with an adult in a total of 152 households in the three towns.14

In general, in all three towns, satisfaction with community services was high.15 Of a list of 15 services (see footnote 7) for only one, public transportation, was a majority of the respondents dissatisfied. The degree of dissatisfaction with this particular service was: Randolph, 50 percent; Vassalboro, 63 percent; and Rome, 78 percent. It should not be surprising that dissatisfaction with public transportation was relatively high. In a practical sense no public transportation exists in the three communities. The nearest approximation to public transportation for them are limited, costly taxi services located outside the respective communities.

Perhaps it should not be surprising, either, that the second highest level of dissatisfaction with services voiced by the respondents was dissatisfaction with local road maintenance. The proportions of respondents who indicated dissatisfaction with this service were: Randolph, 32 percent; Vassalboro, 42 percent; Rome, 70 percent. In the evaluations of the respondents there appears to be interrelatedness between the lack of public transportation and the conditions of roads.

14To insure representativeness higher proportions of households were selected in the smaller towns. In Randolph (1975 population, 1,879) 57 or 12.9 percent of the households were sampled; in Vassalboro (1975 population, 3,035) 72 or 10 percent of the households were sampled; in Rome (1975 population, 418) 23 or 21.1 percent of the households were sampled.

15For example on a 6-point scale with 6 being defined as very satisfied and 1 being defined as very dissatisfied, the weighted average score for satisfaction with 15 community services for the Maine respondents was 4.87. This score approximates the moderately satisfied (scale score 5) level. Although this is a relatively high rate of satisfaction with community services, the weighted average scale score for the Maine respondents was next to the lowest for the respondents in the nine states participating in the study. The range of weighted average satisfaction scores was from 5.28 in Maryland (Frederick County) to 3.74 in New Jersey (Vernon Township, Sussex County). See Kuehn (1977, p. 4).
Few consumer services are located within any of the communities. For each of the towns, to obtain more than the most basic necessities, residents must make trips outside of their communities. Transportation and accessibility by road are important components in service accessibility. This conclusion assumes added creditability when one notes that the proportion of dissatisfaction for the two services is correlated with the distance respondents must travel to obtain services. For both public transportation and local road maintenance the degree of dissatisfaction is lowest for Randolph respondents, intermediate for the Vassalboro respondents, and greatest for the Rome respondents. Of the three communities Randolph is the closest to service centers, Vassalboro is intermediate, and Rome is the least close to services.

For an additional eight services,\(^{16}\) the degree of dissatisfaction also correlates with relative isolation from services by the community. For each service, Randolph respondents voice the least dissatisfaction, the proportion of dissatisfaction by the Vassalboro respondents is intermediate, and the dissatisfaction of the Rome respondents is the greatest. Based on the data of the survey, however, it is questionable whether complete causality for dissatisfaction with community services should be assumed to be the relative geographical isolation of a community.

Of the total of ten services with which degree of dissatisfaction increases with geographic isolation of the town (from Randolph, least isolated, to Rome, most isolated) only ambulance services and public transportation must be obtained directly from another community. Three services, telephone, information in newspapers, and information on television, are "brought into" the respective communities with no direct expenditure of time or energy on the part of the consumer residents. It is possible, however, that the physical remoteness and the sparseness of population of the communities would affect the quality and quantity of the services which they receive. The other four services (housing, local schools, fire department, and local recreation program) which appear to be related to the geographical isolation hypothesis are provided at the local level. Thus, based on the present data, it is not possible to either accept or reject the isolation hypothesis.

If the assumption that geographical isolation is a major component in degree of satisfaction with community services has any validity, it is not, apparently, "the" explanation for the level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with community services. For example,

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\(^{16}\)Ambulance, housing, local schools, fire department, recreation programs, telephone service, local information in the newspaper, local information on television.
for the three Maine towns the degree of satisfaction with medical services, dental services, neighborhood, local police, and local news on radio is not directly related to the degree of their isolation from the source of the services. What is probably the most important aspect of this situation is the high level of satisfaction which the respondents in all three towns indicated for both medical and dental services. Although, with exception of a pediatrician in Vassalboro, no medical or dental services were available to the respondents in their town of residence the great majority of them expressed some degree of satisfaction, rather than dissatisfaction, with the two services. The combined "satisfied" percentages for respondents for the three towns for the two services were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Medical Services</th>
<th>Dental Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Randolph</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vassalboro</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is interesting to note, also, that while the Rome respondents had to travel the farthest for medical and dental services they were the most satisfied. What, if any, alternative explanations are there for this nonconformity to the geographical isolation hypothesis? One might be the application of the relative deprivation hypothesis.

In the sense utilized here (Stouffer, et al., 1949) relative deprivation is operationalized to signify the tendency for those persons who are more advantaged in a social situation to be less satisfied with their position than those who are, objectively, more disadvantaged. Thus, in the NE-77 project generally and among the Maine sample, although there are exceptions, there is a tendency for the lower income, less educated, and older respondents to be more satisfied with community services. It would seem from this set of circumstances that simply making a service physically available or increasing an individual's accessibility to a service through an increase in affluence will not necessarily increase satisfaction with services.

Willis Goudy (1977) has documented, perhaps better than anyone else to date, the need to relate satisfaction with community services with other attributes of community living. From his studies of

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17 Among the researchers who have commented on the incongruities of the relationship between levels of satisfaction with services and economic and/or social status are Rojek, et al. (1975), Campbell, et al. (1976), Goudy (1977).
communities in Iowa he concludes, among other things, the following (Goudy, p. 380):

Social dimensions assume greater importance than previous studies acknowledged, suggesting that residents find most satisfying those communities in which they think they have strong primary group relationships, where local people participate and take pride in civic affairs, where decision making is shared, where residents are heterogeneous, and where people are committed to the community and its upkeep. Communities where these variables are highly rated correspond most closely to American values concerning small-town life. Thus, it is not surprising that higher levels of community satisfaction are reported when the community of residence is held in high esteem on the social dimensions.

Goudy's work in Iowa may well contain a clue for understanding the Maine data presented in this report. The level of satisfaction for all the Maine (Kennebec County) respondents collectively with the variable "your neighborhood" (the dimension in the NE-77 study that appears to best include the social dimensions identified by Goudy) is relatively high — a mean of 5.40 out of a possible 6.00. As revealed in the table below, however, Maine is next to New Jersey (Sussex County) in having the lowest mean score for this variable. Also, New Jersey is the only other state which has a lower weighted mean score than Maine for all of the 15 satisfaction items. Thus, although the distribution among the nine states for the two items falls just short of significance at the .05 level there is considerable correlation between the two arrays particularly at the lower end of each distribution. While the NE-77 data do not provide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Degree of Satisfaction with &quot;Your Neighborhood&quot;</th>
<th>Weighted Mean Scores for Satisfaction with 15 Community Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>1 (Rank)</td>
<td>3 (Rank)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>2 (Rank)</td>
<td>5 (Rank)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>3 (Rank)</td>
<td>6 (Rank)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>4 (Rank)</td>
<td>2 (Rank)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>5 (Rank)</td>
<td>1 (Rank)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>6 (Rank)</td>
<td>7 (Rank)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>7 (Rank)</td>
<td>4 (Rank)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>8 (Rank)</td>
<td>8 (Rank)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>9 (Rank)</td>
<td>9 (Rank)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Rho equal 0.57. A Rho of .60 is needed for nine pairs to be significant at the .05 level.
solid evidence that satisfaction with community services is related to the kind of social/structural variables as hypothesized by Goudy, the evidence is weighted in that direction.

In conclusion, this report has presented data on the services available in three small Kennebec County towns in 1974 and the level of satisfaction with these services based on stratified random samples of adult respondents. In general, the less educated, older, longer time respondents were the most satisfied with service availability and quality. With significant exceptions, (satisfaction with medical services for example) there was a tendency for the most isolated respondents to be least satisfied with service availability. The respondents voiced the greatest degree of dissatisfaction with the availability of public transportation and the maintenance of roads. The degree of dissatisfaction with both of these items increased as distance from larger, service-rich centers increased.

It is also concluded that any further research on the availability of and satisfaction with services in Maine communities should test the assumptions developed in Iowa by Goudy (1977). He asserts, based upon his data, that satisfaction with community services "... is a concept of such breadth and depth that it encompasses evaluations of local services and social variables, but is not fully accounted for by these items" (Goudy, 1977, p. 381). We agree with Goudy that future studies should be designed to include a meaningful range of variables including community social structure and "... respondents' evaluations of the variables that are of the greatest salience to their reported satisfaction levels" (Goudy, 1977, p. 381).
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