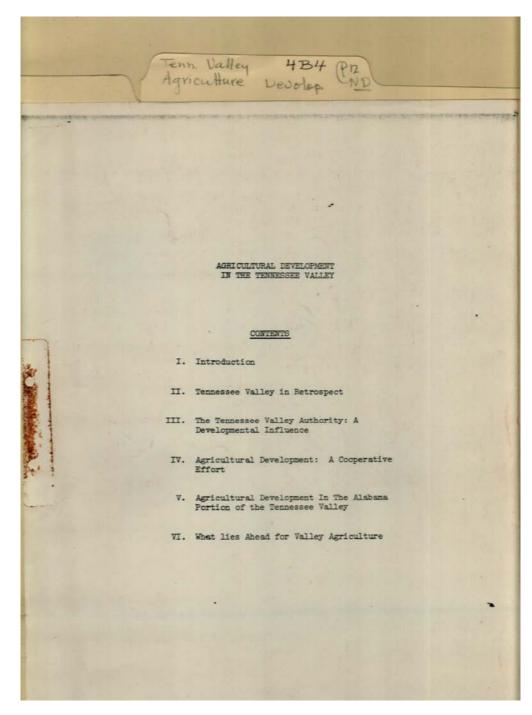
Image 1 r04b04-12-000-0050 Contents Index About



#### Names:

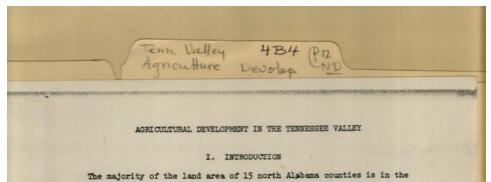
Agricultural Development

#### **Places:**

Tennessee Valley, AL

#### **Types:**

Image 2 r04b04-12-000-0051 <u>Contents</u> <u>Index</u> <u>About</u>



The majority of the land area of 15 north Alabama counties is in the Tennessee Valley and is part of a larger geographic area which has come to be known as the Tennessee Valley region. The region includes the land area of Kentucky, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia lying in the watershed of the River and its tributaries, (Figure 1).

Any assessment of the agricultural development of the Alabama portion of the Valley must be viewed in the context of the larger region of which it is an integral part and to which it has economic, social, and cultural ties. Consequently, a major portion of this paper will be devoted to an historical perspective of the Tennessee Valley region and the development of its agricultural potential.

A section will be devoted specifically to the agricultural economy of the 15 Alabama counties located in the Valley region.

#### II. TENNESSEE VALLEY IN RETROSPECT

The southern part of the United States, in which the Tennessee River is found, has an interesting and distinct history. It was settled relatively early by the white man, and soon became a major agricultural region of our Nation. It spawned its own unique institutions, including slavery and the overdocumented "plantation life," and rapidly developed essentially a cotton-tobacco economy. (These crops accounted for two-thirds of cash income in 1938.) In much of the South, cotton stood alone as a major cash crop.

Among the distinctive traits of southern agriculture was the fact that it persisted almost unchanged for so long. The South remained thoroughly agricultural while the industrial revolution of the 19th century first crept into and then swept through the northern United States.

#### Names:

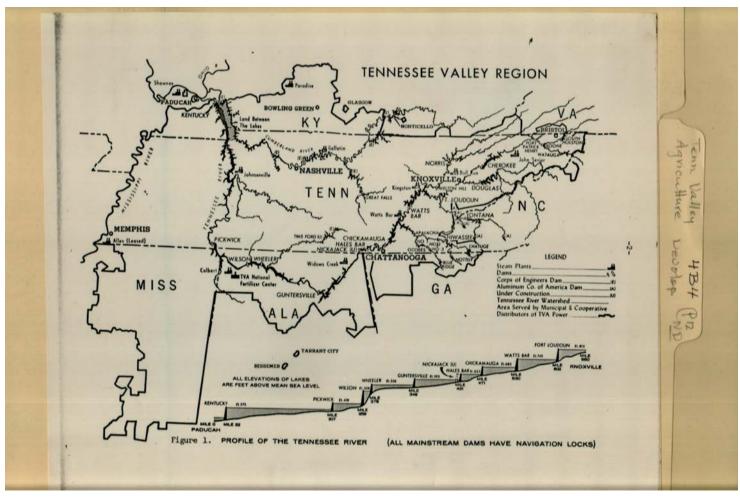
Valley in Retrospect

#### Places:

Tennessee Valley, AL

#### **Types:**

Image 3 r04b04-12-000-0052 <u>Contents Index About</u>



Names:

Tennessee River Profile Tennessee Valley Region

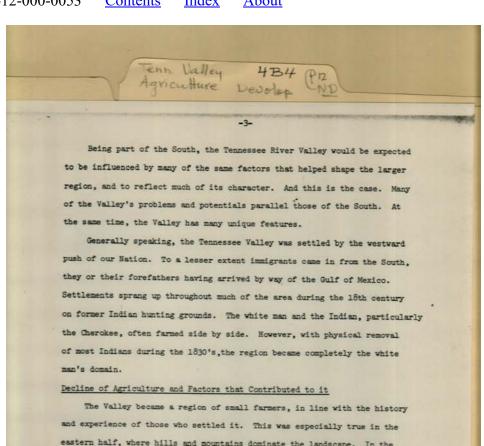
**Places:** 

Tennessee Valley, AL

**Types:** 

map

Image 4 r04b04-12-000-0053 <u>Contents</u> <u>Index</u> <u>About</u>



The Valley became a region of small farmers, in line with the history and experience of those who settled it. This was especially true in the eastern half, where hills and mountains dominate the landscape. In the more mountainous sections, agriculture was of the self-contained, self-sufficient, or subsistence type, with corn in small acreages being the dominant crop. Elsewhere, tobacco, dairying, fruits, and truck crops assumed major importance in certain localities. The western portion of the Valley, where more of the land was level or gently rolling, exhibited the intensive one-crop farming of the Cotton Belt. All types of gradations existed between the extremes in farming systems.

During the Valley's first century under relatively complete subjection to the plow, conservation of resources was scarcely discussed and even more rarely practiced on any substantial scale. Virgin forests gave way to

Names:

Cherokee Indians

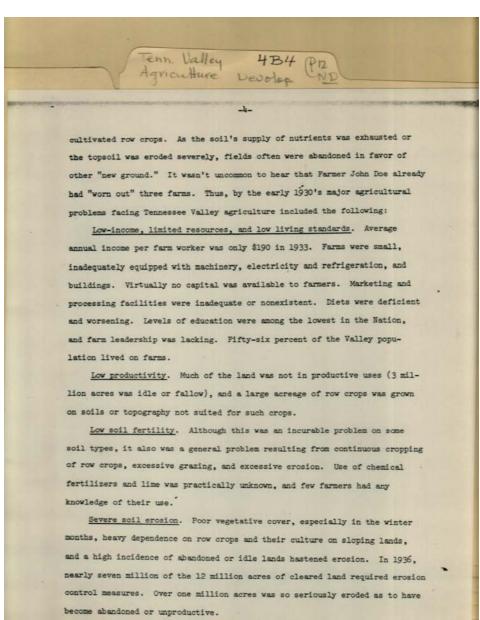
Decline of Agriculture

Places:

Tennessee Valley, AL

**Types:** 

Image 5 r04b04-12-000-0054 <u>Contents</u> <u>Index</u> <u>About</u>



#### Names:

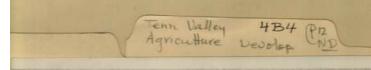
Productivity and Fertility

#### Places:

Tennessee Valley, AL

#### **Types:**

Image 6 r04b04-12-000-0055 <u>Contents</u> <u>Index</u> <u>About</u>



The very nature of the terrain impeded agricultural progress. The hills, the small farms, and the smaller fields were not adaptable to extensive mechanization of farming.

#### State of Industrial Development

Tennessee Valley manufacturing employment in 1933 made up only 12 percent of the labor force, as compared with almost 22 percent for the Nation as a whole. Many of the manufacturing jobs were in low-paying industries.

A major restraint on manufacturing in the Tennessee Valley region was
the railroad freight rate structure. Rates on goods manufactured in the
South were about 40 percent higher than the rates on similar goods manufactured
north of the Ohio River, although railroad unit costs were about the same.
Conversely, freight rates on raw materials were favorable. Discriminatory
freight rates meant that:

Industry in the South would be restricted, Low-wage industries would predominate,

Raw materials would be exported to be processed elsewhere,

The opportunity for developing skills would be limited,

A "colonial" economic system would prevail.

In short, freight differentials tended to keep regions like the Tennessee Valley agricultural, and retard the southward spread of manufacturing.

The character of the Tennessee River Valley was greatly conditioned by the most predominant natural resource—the River. This resource was neglected by the people of the region, and in turn, it abused them. In its uncontrolled state, the Tennessee River was subject of flooding and to contributing to floods on the lower Ohio and lower Mississippi Rivers.

In summary, it can be concluded that the conditions existing in the Tennessee Valley in the early 1930's were the result of low productivity of natural and human resources.

#### Names:

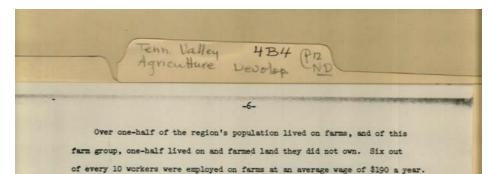
Industrial Development

#### Places:

Tennessee Valley, AL

#### **Types:**

Image 7 r04b04-12-000-0056 Contents Index About



Land was eroded. Of a total of 14 million acres of open land, one million acres were abandoned, two million acres were marginal, and four million acres were severely damaged. Productivity was very low, corn yielded 19 bushels to the acre, and cottom produced only 260 pounds to the

The amenities were few. Only three farms in 100 had electricity. Rural roads and schools were poor. Marketing and processing facilities were inadequate. Diets were deficient. Pellagra and TB were scourges. Capital available to farmers was limited.

This situation reflected a basic under-development of native skill, lack of capital, poor transportation facilities, and lack of economic leadership. It also reflected a severe lack of insight on the part of those most closely associated with the soil. Sharecropping had become the accepted way to provide non-landowners a degree of responsibility. They cultivated someone else's land and shared in what it produced. The pitfall was that too often neither landlord nor tenant made any effort to maintain or improve the soil's productivity.

III. THE TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY: A DEVELOPMENTAL INFLUENCE

The plight of people in the Tennessee Valley became a matter of public concern, and the Tennessee Valley Authority was created by an act of Congress in 1933. The establishment of the TVA in the form of a Federal Corporation established a new public policy direction in resource development. The Act was a response to conditions—idleness of investment, exploitation, neglect, inefficiency, and waste. However, the Act was conceived as more than a

#### Names:

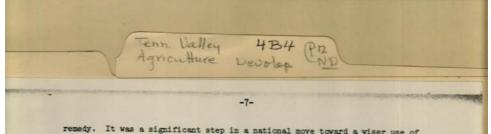
TVA's Developmental Influence

#### **Places:**

Tennessee Valley, AL

#### **Types:**

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remedy. It was a significant step in a national move toward a wiser use of resources. The Act is evidence of the determination—in the national interest—to help a region to discover its potential and to begin to realize it.

The creation of TVA and the programs that followed brought the Tennessee River system under substantial control through a system of dams on the main stream and its tributaries. A major by-product of river control was an abundant supply of economical electric power. Part of the TVA program focused on the overall development of the Valley's agricultural potential. Farmers of the region reaped direct benefits from the TVA experimental fertilizer development center which was established at Muscle Shoals, Alabama. It is the nation's only large-scale plant of this kind.

Reclaiming the productivity of the region's soils was aided through the development of new fertilizer materials which were introduced to farmers through the close cooperation of State Extension Services, Land-Grant Universities and private industry.

IV. AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: A COOPERATIVE EFFORT

The progress experienced in developing the agricultural resources of
the Tennessee Valley has largely been an outgrowth of cooperation among
public and private groups and organizations.

Congress in the TVA Act envisaged a broad spectrum of cooperation with the states and local agencies in the region, and the authority it provided in this regard has been used to foster strong relationships with states, municipalities, counties, cooperative associations, and private interests in carrying out development programs. The desire to use this approach resulted in a strong cooperative relationship between TVA, the Extension Service, and Land-Grant Universities of the Valley states.

#### Names:

Agricultural Development

Places:

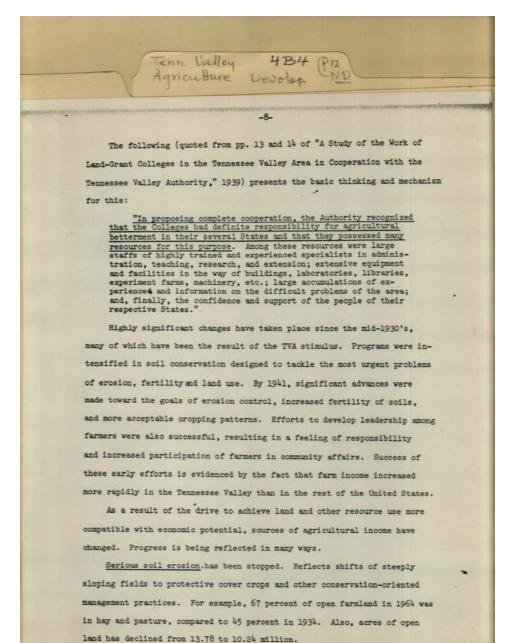
Tennessee Valley, AL

**Types:** 

essay

Cooperative Effort

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Names:

**Land-Grant Colleges** 

Places:

Tennessee Valley, AL

**Types:** 

essay

Serious Soil Erosion

# Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection: Series 4, Subseries B, Box 4, Folder 12 Tennessee Valley Area Agricultural Development Paper - Madison County Buildings Image 10 r04b04-12-000-0059 Contents Index About

enn. Valley Agriculture Devolop Farming is much more diversified; and; better balanced. This shows up in relative decrease in importance of row crops--corn from over three million to less than one million acres -- and increasing importance of livestock, plus introduction of additional crops such as soybeans. Livestock farming is important part of Valley farming today. In 1964 livestock accounted for 61 percent of all farm products sold compared with 45 percent in 1934. Rapid gains are still being made in livestock farming. Broiler production is a big and growing enterprise in some parts of the Valley. In cattle and swine, the effort is being helped by soundly based programs of market development and quality improvement. Soil fertility has been substantially restored and cintinues to be improved with regular applications of fertilizers and liming materials, although there still is a lot of room for improvement. The improvement is reflected by average crop yields, which are shown below in comparison with the early TVA days: 1934 1964 / 1.18 bales/ac. 0.52 bales/ac. Cotton 19.5 bu./ac. 46.0 bu./ac. 852.0 lbs./ac. 1914.0 lbs./ac Annual use of plant nutrients in Tennessee, which contains about half of the Valley, is about 275,000 tons, or nearly 20 times as much as in 1934. Farms are getting larger as a large share of the farm youth finds employment off the farm and as older operators retire. Average size had reached 106 acres by 1964, compared to about 70 acres 30 years earlier. Mechanization is being realized. However, the opportunities for further mechanization of Valley agriculture holds much promise.

Names:

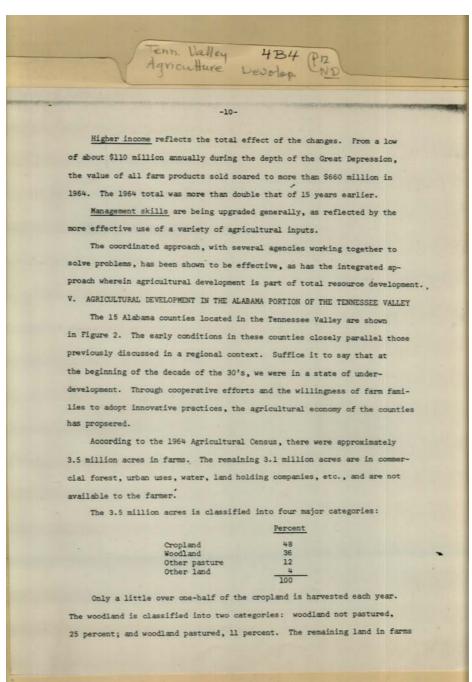
**Diversified Farming** 

Places:

Tennessee Valley, AL

**Types:** 

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#### Names:

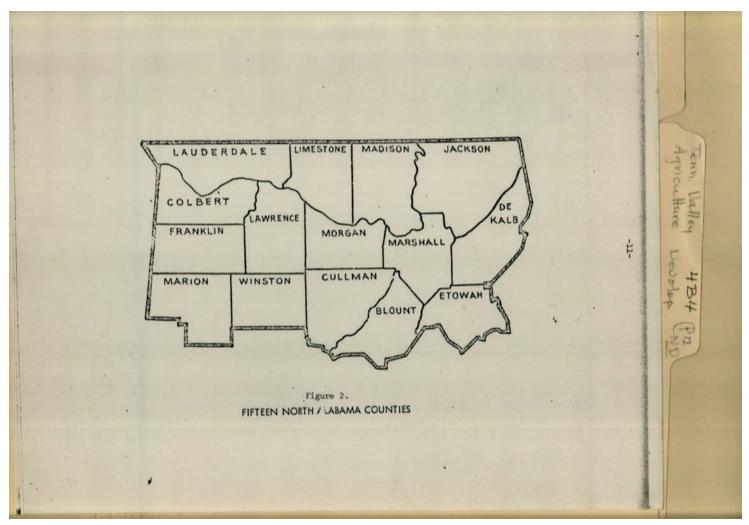
Alabama Development

#### **Places:**

Tennessee Valley, AL

#### **Types:**

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#### Names:

North Alabama Counties

#### **Places:**

Tennessee Valley, AL

#### **Types:**

map

Image 13 r04b04-12-000-0062 <u>Contents</u> <u>Index</u> <u>About</u>

Tenn. Valley 4B4 Prz Agriculture Devolop. ND

is in house lots, barn lots, lanes, roads, ditches, land area of ponds and wasteland. See Figure 3.

The land classified as cropland not harvested or pastured is mostly idle land and could be brought into production. Much of the cropland used only for pasture could be used for row crops.

In 1964 there were 31,000 farms with an average size of 111 acres,
Table 1. There were almost 19,000 operators who owned their farms. The
remaining 11,000 operators were about equally divided between part-owners
and tenants.

Size of farm is an indicator of sales volume. More than 70 percent of all farms are less than 100 acres. Only three percent were above 500 acres in size. Average size of farm in 1968 was estimated at 116 acres. The number of farms was estimated at 27,330.

Non-farm income of 25,400 farm households was almost one-half as much as farm sales, Table 2. It was \$91 million in 1964. The major portion \$66 million) came from wages and salaries.

The number of large farms is gowing while the number of small farms is decreasing, Table 3. Farms selling over \$20,000 in farm products increased 133 percent from 1959 to 1968. The low-income group of farmers are those most dependent on agriculture for a livelihood. They decreased in number.

Farm product sales have continued to increase. Farm sales in 1959 were \$165 million and increased to an estimated \$260 million in 1968.

Now we will look at sources of farm income. Cattle and calves on farms showed a steady increase from 1964 through 1969. Milk cows declined slightly. Hogs and pigs on farms in January of each year have increased from about 200,000 in 1964 to 300,000 in 1969.

Poultry on farms (broilers not included) continued to increase each year through 1969.

#### Names:

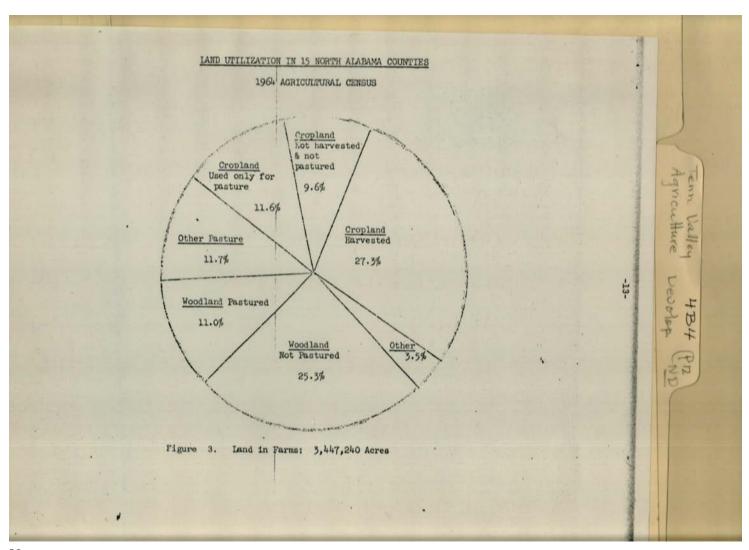
Large vs Small Farms

#### Places:

Tennessee Valley, AL

#### **Types:**

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#### Names:

Land Utilization in North Alabama

#### **Places:**

Tennessee Valley, AL

#### **Types:**

chart

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						and the first	1	
							1	
		TABLE 1.						1
	SELECTED INFORMA	TION, 15 NO	ORTH ALABAMA	COUNTIES	5		1	
								Agriculture
				%			1	gric gric
		1959	1964	Change	1968	1973		1 5 5
	Total farms	38, 341	31,072	- 19.0	27,300	21,890	1	Vallen
	Acres in farms	3,811,223	3,447,240	- 9.6			1	6 6
	Average size of farm	99.4	110.9	11.6			÷	
	By tenure and color:		1				1	4B4
	Full owners	20,567	18,747	- 8.8			1	100
1	White	19,928	18,276	- 8.3			1	Uplap.
	Nonwhite	639	471	- 26.3		40	. 1	D +
	Part owners	8,113	6,830	- 15.8		٠.	1	0
	White	7,644	6,466	- 15.4				127
	Nonwhite	469	364	- 22.4				10
	Managers	111	47	- 57.7				
	Tenants	9,550	5,448	- 43.0				
	White	8,223	4,792	- 42.5			1	
	Nonwhite	1,327	719	- 45.8			1	
	Proportion of tenancy .	24.9	17.5	- 29.7			-	
				,	,			

Names:

North Alabama Information

Places:

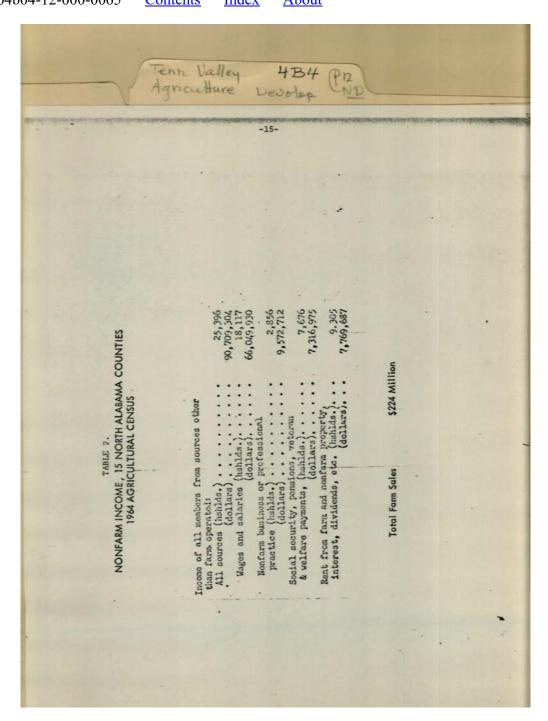
Tennessee Valley, AL

**Types:** 

list

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Tennessee Valley Area Agricultural Development Paper - Madison County Buildings
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#### Names:

North Alabama Information

#### **Places:**

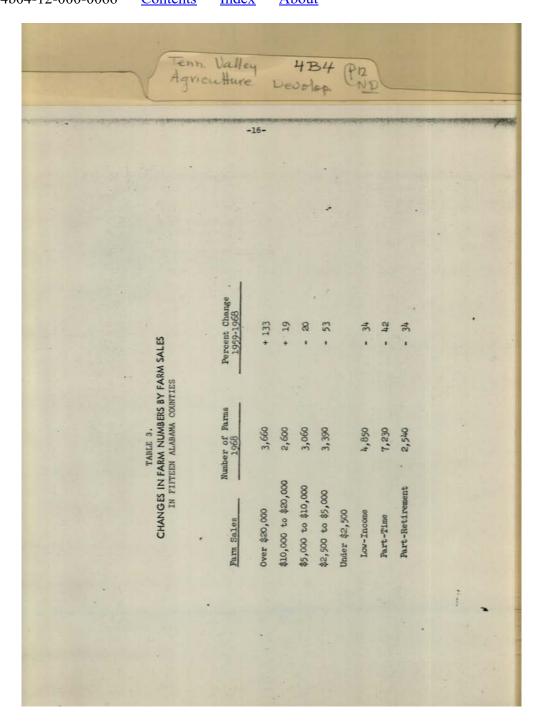
Tennessee Valley, AL

#### **Types:**

list

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#### Names:

Farm Sales

#### **Places:**

Tennessee Valley, AL

#### **Types:**

list

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enn. Valley P12 Agriculture -17-Acres of corn harvested for grain have declined rapidly. In 1959 there were more than 600,000 acres harvested, decreasing to about 200,000 in 1969. Yields increased from a low of 28 in 1959 to a high of 40 in 1968. Cotton farmers have been hit by bad weather in recent years resulting in low yields. However, in good years yields of two bales per acre are a common occurance. This compares to slightly over one bale per acre average for the State as a whole. Over 65 percent of Alabama's cotton acreage is located in the 15 Alabama Valley counties. Soybean acreage has increased from 22,000 in 1959 to 172,000 in 1969. Many acres formerly devoted to cotton have been planted in soybeans. With the rapid increase in acres, yields have continued to show an increase from 19 bushels per acre in 1959 to 24 bushels in 1969. It is important to realize that farm production has atremendous effect on the total economy. An example from one study given showed that for each \$1 million increase of farm sales there was a \$3.8 million increase in total business, 100 new farm jobs, and 200 non-farm jobs, Figure 4. When farm sales are changed, a whole series of changes take place in the economy of an area. It is something like dropping a stone into a pond. At first a big splash takes place, then waves radiate over a wide area. Based on a number of studies, we have estimated the impact of dollar farm sales to north Alabama. Now we will look at details of what the farm-dependent business of north Alabama is like. This information comes from a survey of firms in these counties that did more than one-half of their business with farmers in 1967. The study included 772 firms that employed 18,000 people, did \$416 million of business, and required a \$282 million investment, Figure 5. A closer look at these firms shows supply firms had an investment of \$131 million while marketing and processing investments amounted to \$151 million.

Names:

Farm Sales

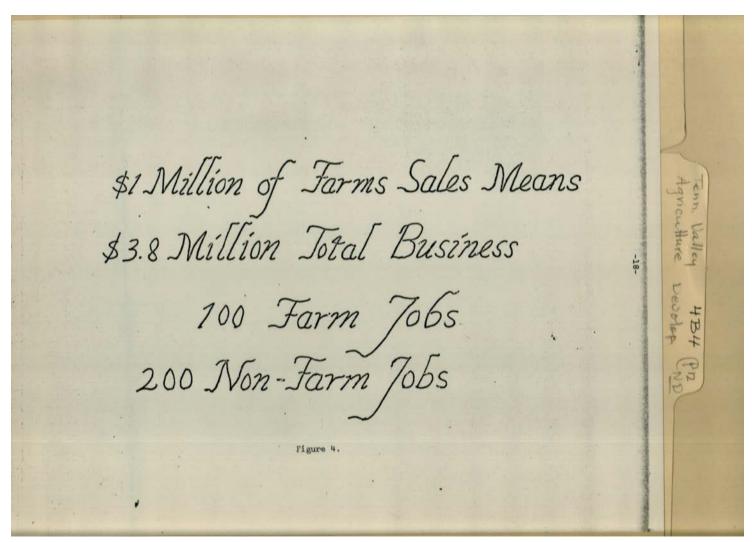
Places:

Tennessee Valley, AL

**Types:** 

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Names:

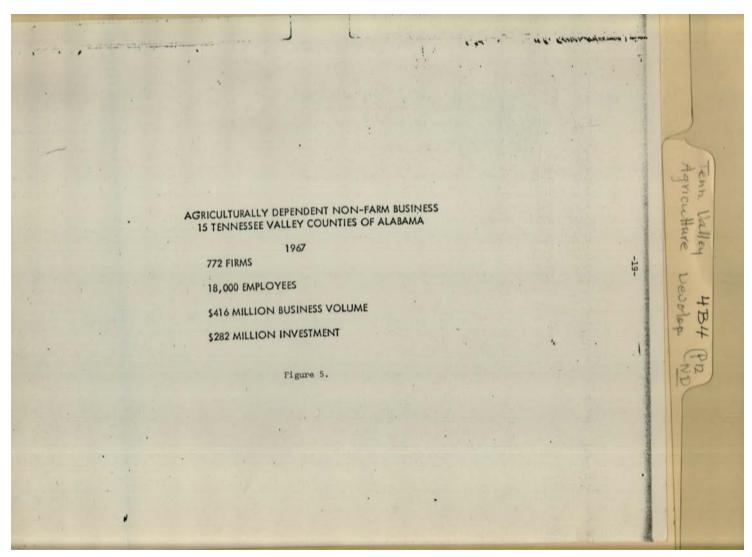
Farm Business

Places:

Tennessee Valley, AL

**Types:** 

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Names:

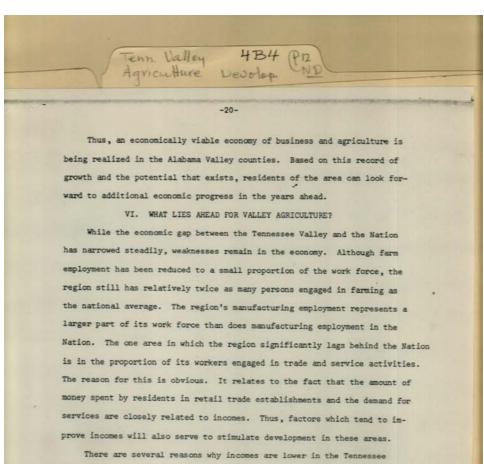
Non-Farm Business

**Places:** 

Tennessee Valley, AL

**Types:** 

Image 21 r04b04-12-000-0070 Contents Index About



There are several reasons why incomes are lower in the Tennessee Valley region than in the Nation. Among the more important are:

- A heavier dependence upon low-income agriculture as a source of income (twelve percent of our work force is so employed compared with six percent in the Nation as a whole.)
- Among residents of the region are large numbers of rural and untrained people with low earning capacity.
- The bulk of the region's industrial jobs are in low-wage, labororiented industries.

#### Names:

Agricultural Future

#### Places:

Tennessee Valley, AL

#### **Types:**

Image 22 r04b04-12-000-0071 <u>Contents</u> <u>Index</u> <u>About</u>

Enn. Valley 4B4 Agriculture Devolop -21-If incomes in the region are to be raised to national levels, additional action along several lines is needed: 1. Improve and upgrade the education and skills of the labor force. 2. Create a climate of economic opportunity for all entrants into the labor force. 3. Improve the industrial base by attracting more high-wage industries. 4. Increase the productivity of farms and affiliated agri-business firms in order for this section to share proportionately in the prosperity of the region. 5. Improve public services in the smaller as well as the larger population centers of the region to give added stimulus to private in-6. Provide recreation facilities and an environmental quality at least equal, and preferably superior, to those found in areas which have

least equal, and preferably superior, to those found in areas which have attracted much of the recent economic expansion.

These steps will improve incomes. The complete removal of the dif-

ferential between national and regional incomes will also require a general increase in wage rates to amounts more nearly approaching national averages for comparable work.

In agriculture the programs of the future must look beyond production technology and beyond marketing associations to get at some of the deeper roots of problems facing Tennessee Valley farmers. For example, basic human and cultural barriers that impede progress in development must be recognized and adequately dealt with.

Much of the farm population is elderly (one-fifth 65 or older), poorly educated (three-fifths have 8 years or less formal schooling) and lacking in labor skills and financial resources needed to make the adjustments that would significantly alter their economic condition. Much

#### Names:

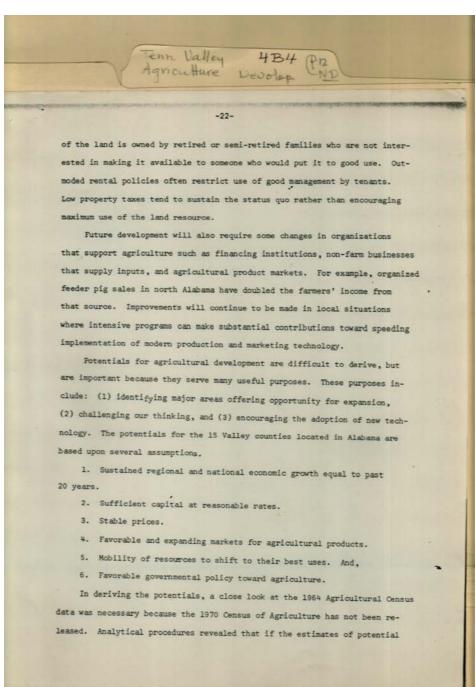
Agricultural Future

#### Places:

Tennessee Valley, AL

#### **Types:**

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#### Names:

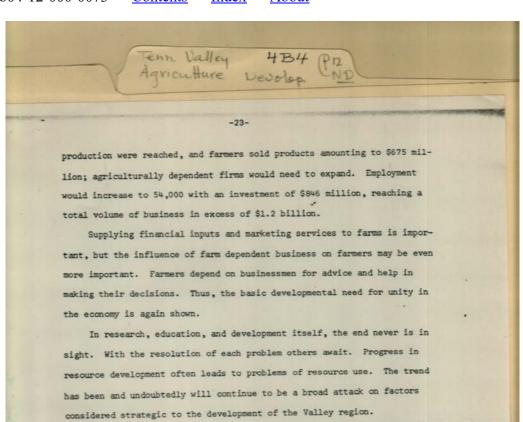
Agricultural Future

#### Places:

Tennessee Valley, AL

#### **Types:**

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Thus, the unified approach, tested by long experience, is more vital today than ever before. Past efforts in multiple-purpose river development, in electric power generation and distribution, in fertilizer development and all other resource related fields have established the framework for planned economic growth. It remains to create the kind of high quality regional environment that will promote fullest development of the human resource in an emerging industrial society.

Names:

Agricultural Future

Places:

Tennessee Valley, AL

**Types:** 

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	Tenn Valley	4B4	Pn	one and
	T.V. Courtis	4 50	20.20	
		10		
	Real Estate and Non-Real E Outstanding on Far Alabama, January 1, 1947	ms		
	Farm Mortgage Loans	Jan 1 1947	Jan 1 1970	
	Amount of outstanding loans held by principal lenders:	1,000 dollars	1,000 dollars	
4	Federal land banks Farmers Home Admn. Life insurance companies All operating banks Other farm mortgage debt Total	16,294 12,478 1,600 39,883* 70,255	126,857 24,820 47,500 83,478 79,179 361,834	
-	Non-Real Estate Loans	Jan 1 1947	Jan 1 1970	
	Amount outstanding as reported by principal lending institutions:	1,000 dollars	1,000 dollars	
	All operating banks Farmers Home Administration Production credit associations Total	19,001 13,486 3,219 35,706	79,175 11,200 52,937 143,312	
	* Includes "Other farm mortgage del primarily by individuals.	bt" which is	debt held	
	Source: Agricultural Finance Revie Supplement December, 1970 1947	ew, ERS, USDa and Vol. 10	A, Vol. 31 November,	

Names:

Farm Loans

Places:

Tennessee Valley, AL

**Types:** 

financials

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<u>Image 5</u> (r04b04-12-000-0054)	<u>Image 12</u> (r04b04-12-000-0061)	<u>Image 19</u> (r04b04-12-000-0068)	<b>Table of Contents</b>
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### **Frances Cabaniss Roberts Collection**

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**Collection Scope and Content:** The Collection of 114 Linear ft. includes a total of 156 Archival Boxes. The Frances Cabaniss Roberts collection covers the historical records of the Cabaniss Roberts family. This collection contains extensive correspondence records of the Cabaniss Roberts family circa 1830 to 1930.

Archives/Special Collections Access Restrictions: None

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