

Ouachita Baptist University

Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

Honors Theses

Carl Goodson Honors Program

1968

Mitchellville Personal Observation and Experiences

Cloene Biggs Jr.

Ouachita Baptist University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/honors_theses



Part of the [Rural Sociology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Biggs, Cloene Jr., "Mitchellville Personal Observation and Experiences" (1968). *Honors Theses*. 286.
https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/honors_theses/286

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Carl Goodson Honors Program at Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. For more information, please contact mortensona@obu.edu.

MITCHELLVILLE
PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

Presented to
Dr. Bob Riley, Chairman
Division of Social Sciences
Ouachita Baptist University

In Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for Honors Special Studies
H491 Community Development

by
Cloene Biggs
May, 1968

Jr.

MITCHELLVILLE

PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

December 2, 1967—I walked through the rural community of Mitchellville for the first time, and for the first time I became aware of the meaning of poverty. Here is a community of 150 displaced non-white farm families in Desha County near Dumas, Arkansas. It is an example of the tragedy caused by our receding agricultural economy. The plight of these people is a direct result of an economic system where little value was placed on education and the "niggers" (48.1% of the population in Desha County) were subhuman; deserving neither a cultural or economic opportunity. Dying farm systems such as sharecroppers, left their marks on Mitchellville because the unskilled cotton choppers and pickers now have no source of income.

Perhaps neglect is the key word in discussing Mitchellville whether one is speaking of education, cultural enrichment, recreation, health, housing, or job opportunities. One century ago Abraham Lincoln said, "No nation can long endure half-slave and half-free." Today this could be rephrased: "No nation can long endure half-affluent and half-deprived." Considering the internal strife prevalent in the United States today, this statement gains validity.

The students of Ouachita Baptist University first became aware of the Mitchellville project through Mrs. Daisy Bates of the OEO Rural Training Program, who had been looking for a means to survey the town. Mrs. Bates discussed the problem with Dr. Bob Riley, and Dr. Riley immediately suggested that students would be interested in participating. He had had the conviction for some time that students had a sincere desire to become involved in the problems facing the troubled world today. All students need, he felt, is a proper channel of service, an opportunity to demonstrate their constructive feeling and efforts. This conviction was borne out December, 1967.

When we (twenty-one students) arrived in Mitchellville, a heavy rain had given way to a cutting cold wind. We had left that morning at 8:00 in order to make the 125 mile trip and arrive by approximately 10:00. I can honestly say that we were all shocked, and this was merely our reaction on driving into town on the horrible, gutted dirt roads.

As we began conducting the survey, the realization of the actual conditions became even more appalling. The first house my survey team entered had two rooms, a leaky ceiling, cracks in the walls, no sewer system, rotten floors, and a few pieces of furniture. In this lived a young husband, wife and four small children. This was one of the nicer homes we entered.

However, I suppose the most heartbreaking cases I

saw were the elderly. One man, 78 years old, had no source of income other than \$35 of welfare a month. He paid \$10 per month rent for a deplorable shack whose owner lived in Michigan. When asked what he felt his greatest immediate need was, he hesitated for a moment and finally said, "A doctor. Yes, m'am. I really needs me a doctor. I don't got any family so I needs me a good doctor."

An elderly woman about 72 was outside in the cold at the woodpile getting wood for her stove. Her income was \$10 per month plus a little extra from her son, and he paid her \$10 per month rent. When asked what her most immediate need was she replied quickly, "Nothin'. I don't need nothing." She was obviously frightened. Both these elderly people begged us not to write their landlords because they were afraid that if they thought their tenants were complaining the landlords would evict them.

After the survey we had our first mass meeting in the one-room, woodstove heated Town Meeting Hall. I have seldom seen college students so indignant and eager to try to accomplish something. I felt the same way, but I wondered how much staying-power we possessed.

Mrs. Bates and Dr. Riley were caught up in our enthusiasm to help this little town, so they decided to attempt to develop an in-service experimental program very flexible, informal, and unstructured to see how the citizens of Mitchellville would respond to a student effort to provide what ever assistance they could to

make Mitchellville a better place to live. A conscious effort was made to permit the citizens to tell us, the students, what they wanted and needed so that the resulting program would be tailored for the stated needs with no effort on the part of students to formulate something which might only not be beneficial but might be in conflict with their desires.

A number of students began making the trip to Mitchellville every Saturday morning. The enthusiasm, instead of diminishing, seemed to grow. We organized different committees for working on different aspects of the problems of the town. (See attached photocopied committee reports). Dr. Riley and Mrs. Bates took over the task of adult leadership training which was desperately needed. The citizens had been taken advantage of due to their ignorance of contracts, bonds, and government operations and procedures. This had to be corrected before they could hope to greatly improve their town.

Up until the time I became involved with the people of Mitchellville, I had perhaps led a rather sheltered life. It is one thing to know that some people have to live like pigs and quite another thing to meet, talk and see people live under these conditions. Also I grew up in an all-white, small, southern town. I had believed that I was not prejudiced but now I was faced with a test that would tell one way or the other. I found I was prejudiced—against forced ignorance, poverty, and maltreatment of other human beings, regardless of color.

The third week we went to Mitchellville I began talking with a group of the young people. I found, to my amazement, that these kids were smart and vitally interested in the problems of the United States and the world. There were so eager to ask questions, and after I had to simply say I didn't have an answer. I found out rather quickly that they could spot a phony so the only thing to do was be yourself. The conversation was exciting for myself and for them. After this I became increasingly interested in the youth. We seemed to be able to communicate and a rapport was developed over the weeks.

Like many I had been guilty of thinking that people were poor because they were lazy, or they felt that the government owed them a living. I soon found this to be another myth just as is the idea that Blacks are inherently inferior. Most of these people were clean, enthusiastic, eager to learn, and eager to receive any instruction we could give them. However, it became obvious they did not want charity but sincerely wished they could make a better life for themselves and their children. Parents were well aware that some form of higher education is necessary for their children to have a better life. Education is strongly encouraged.

A number of Ouachita students became members of my committee which was "Committee for Social Education of Youth." It was my observation that the college students

profited as much or more from the experience that the Mitchellville kids. In my committee report (see attached committee reports) the members are listed and the objectives outlined and discussed in some detail.

After we had been going to Mitchellville for a few weeks, Dr. Riley and Mrs. Bates decides to try to have our program funded from the Washington Office of Economic Opportunity. A program was drawn up, and Mrs. Bates went to Washington to present it. I was chosen by she and Dr. Riley to accompany her. We saw many people including each representative of the Arkansas delegation, and there seemed to be much enthusiasm for the program; interest being particularly centered around the student aspect. However, I, for the first time, encountered the entangled government bureaucracy. It became obvious how something could become embroiled in personalities and red tape. Even a program with merit might be turned aside, not always having the good of the people considered.

During this time period when the program was up for approval, I was still actively working with the young people in Mitchellville. A group of twenty-five students were brought to Ouachita for two days in hope that a taste of college live would be inducement for them to try harder. During their talks while on campus they let it be known for the first time that they had had great reservations when we began the program. They had feared we intended to come into their town, boss them around for

a few weeks and leave when our consciences were salved. We were white folks and they did not trust us. However, as they continued talking it came out how their feelings had changed in comments such as these: "Those white kids, their okay." "Maybe all whites ain't bad." "We've really had a good time, and I actually like them." "They didn't let us down, not once."

The next weekend a dance band of Ouachita students, "The Remains," went to Mitchellville, free of charge, to play for a dance. On the way back to Ouachita the band members made such comments as: "Man, that's poverty. I'm glad we went down. That's the lease we could do." "What do you do to help people like that? They've got it really bad."

The most drastic change I saw in attitude was when a professed "white bigot" and "nigger hater" agreed to accompany us on a trip to Mitchellville. After being in the community fifteen minutes and visiting one home, the young man looked at me and said, "No one should have to live like this. But what can we do to help?" The only answer I could give was that we simply have to try and care and keep on trying. Since then he has volunteered to help in any way he can. He simply didn't understand poverty or that poor people are still people.

I placed these comments in this paper to try to show that individual interaction between white and black and white and white can have profound effects in reducing prejudice and tension between the races. The young

people of Mitchellville have been touched by white man's kindness and concern in a way they never knew before. The college students have developed a clearer conception of the meaning of poverty and Negro. Neither group will ever again be so quick to judge a man because of his color. If a program has accomplished this much on even such a small scale as this, the time, money and effort which went into that program were worth it.

Much of the success incurred in Mitchellville was due to the foresightedness of Dr. Bob Riley. We students wanted him to give specific assignments and tell us what to do every minute. Instead he insisted we keep the program flexible and informal. He told us to talk to the people, find out their needs and build our efforts around their requests. Much against our will, we began doing just this, and we soon found that we were capable of thinking without a teacher at our elbow. Though there was some criticism because of our lack of organization, I personally feel that this was the cause of the success we had in communicating with the people so freely. Dr. Riley made sure that the program was built for the people instead of trying to tailor the people to the program—correction of a disastrous bureaucratic mistake made in most poverty program attempts.

Dr. Riley and Mrs. Bates both spent a great deal of time attempting to avoid disillusionment by warning against the expectation of immediate results or solutions. Poverty is a long-term illness and economic and social

injustice seems to be chronic. As college students we perhaps lost some of our naivety, and we learned to face facts without letting it destroy our will— even the hardest fact of all when news came that our program had been rejected in Washington due to conflicting personalities and the cutback in domestic spending. But what of the disillusionment of the citizens of Mitchellville? To them this is merely one more in a long list of failures and disappointments. How can they have faith in white man's institutions? Even though they now are sure that some whites are concerned, it may well make them all the surer that the concerned ones are so in the minority that they can not change the corrupt establishment.

I believe that a great deal of injustice occurs simply because people are unaware and complacent. Perhaps the Blacks were right in believing that only through violence could they call enough attention to their situation so that people would become aware. We did not advocate to the citizens of Mitchellville that they resort to violence; only that they demand their lawful rights. But most of the students I worked with from Ouachita agreed that if they were a young Black anywhere in this country, they would be angry. Perhaps if you awoke tomorrow suddenly black, with kinky hair and thick lips, you would be angry too. How far would you be pushed?

In all probability our program in Mitchellville has been called to a permanent halt. However, some of the results are evident such as eight graduating seniors are planning on entering an Arkansas college next fall. An empty field behind the tiny jailhouse has been turned into a recreation center complete with swings, slides, basketball goals, balls, gloves, bats, etc. The town is now actively concerned about their elderly, incompetent mayor and may well elect a young man this fall. The bookmobile now has Mitchellville on its route. Thirty-five to forty-five young people meet each evening to discuss problems they have and solutions; also as a means to have constructive recreation.

We are well aware that Mitchellville is not unique. There are hundreds of other Mitchellvilles just in Arkansas and thousands in the cities of the north. Hopefully, for all the people in all the Mitchellvilles regardless of color the strongest, richest nation on earth will soon face up to the problem of its own internal injustices. It would be my suggestion that we solve our own problems before we attempt to solve the injustices of the world.

MITCHELLVILLE COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

COMMITTEE

Economics
Housing and Planning
Health, Medi-Care, Social Sec.
Co-Op
Recreation
Ombudsman *and Acquisitions*
Adult Education
Teenagers
Pre-School and Grade School
Beautification
Rehabilitation
Laubach Reading
~~Acquisitions~~

CHAIRMEN

Patti Stipek
Gary Cheatham
James Freeman
Walter Butler
William Meeks
~~James Stark~~ *Jerome Bork*
Bobby Bulloch
Cloene Biggs
Virginia La Cook
Michael Meeks
Bill Massey
Jamil Shami
~~Jerry Bork~~

Mitchellville

Members

Patti Stipek
Gary Cheatham
Jim Freeman
Jerome Bork
Walter Butler
Virgil Wilson
Robert Cornelius
Mike Meeks
Bill Meeks
Jim Stark
Bobby Bulloch
Cloene Biggs
Virginia La Cook
Bill Massey
Jamil Shami
Richard Lindley
Mac Sisson
Jerry Forehand
Jeannie Mason
Mitchell Chun
Mike O'Cain
Pat Moss
Cliff King
Ken Parker
Tommy Ward
Jon Jennings
Dennis Snider
Drew Bacon
Nancy Smith
Maxwell Kelly
Sandy Ross
Mary Williams
Arlyss Friddle
Charles Taylor
Karen Sidwell
Gerald Morgan
Beverly Graffis

Home Town

Hot Springs
Little Rock
Arkadelphia
New York
Helena
Prescott
Camden
El Dorado
El Dorado
Heber Springs
McGhee
Booneville
Perry
Malvern
Jordan
Russellville
Crossett
Memphis
Pickens
Dallas, Texas
Little Rock
Morrilton
Atlanta, Georgia
Little Rock
Little Rock
Milwaukee
Norphlet
Newton, Texas
St. Louis
El Dorado
Dewitt
Texarkana
Little Rock
Pine Bluff
Pine Bluff
Shreveport, La.
Baltimore, Maryland

REPORT OF COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL EDUCATION OF YOUTH

Cloene Biggs - Coordinator

I. Members of the Committee

- A. Cloene Biggs - Booneville, Arkansas
- B. Mary Williams - Texarkana, Arkansas
- C. Arlyss Friddle - Little Rock, Arkansas
- D. Nancy Smith - St. Louis, Missouri
- E. Beverly Graffis - Baltimore, Maryland
- F. Karen Sidwell - Pine Bluff, Arkansas
- G. Sandy Ross - Morrilton, Arkansas
- H. Jerry Beth Jamison - Nashville, Arkansas
- I. Richard Lindley - Russellville, Arkansas
- J. Gary Cheathem - Little Rock, Arkansas
- K. Jerry Bork - New York, New York

The primary objective of this committee is to prepare lessons in areas in which the youth of Mitchellville have shown a specified interest. The age of this group is from 14 to approximately 25, so we have a variety of classes designed to be of interest to the group as a whole or to specific divisions. At the beginning of each weekly session, males and females participate in the discussion of one of the following:

- I. Privileges and Responsibilities of Citizenship
 - A. Federal Constitutional Rights
 - B. Voting Procedure and Its Implications
 - C. Operations of State and Local Governments
- II. Sex Education
- III. Dating Manners
- IV. Basic Art

At the conclusion of these discussion sessions, the young men are free to participate in recreational activities. The young women then participate in the discussion groups or activities specified for them for that week.

The following is a list of the subjects dealt with in the young women's discussion and activities groups:

1. Physical Fitness
2. Etiquette
3. Child Psychology
4. Infant Care
5. Practical Mathematics
6. Sanitation
7. Health
8. Clothing
9. Makeup and Hair Styling

We have a number of future projects which we hope will encourage the young people to complete their high school education and go on to college. On March 2, Mr. M. W. Williams, a representative from the Arkansas Office of Economic Opportunity and a former college dean, will speak to all the young people interested in a college education. He will attempt to show how these youngsters can obtain the necessary funds for college, and he will continue to come to Mitchellville occasionally and assist in the actual process of applying for funds. Another representative of the Arkansas OEO will speak about the possibility of the interested youth obtaining jobs through the work study program during the summers. These jobs will provide them with a means of saving for college.

We also hope to be able to bring all of the interested youth who are high school seniors to our campus at Ouachita University. Members of the committee will then take them to classes being held that day in the specific fields in which they are most interested. It is our hope that this small taste of college life will make them anxious to return for more. We will then have a college workshop at Mitchellville held by the committee.

During this workshop we will try to help the young people apply to the college of their choice or decide which college they are interested in attending.

The people at Mitchellville have shown a remarkable eagerness to learn and to improve themselves. A Ouachita senior majoring in speech therapy is now working with one girl who has a speech defect. She is also planning to organize speech improvement classes for the children and the young people. Along this same line of self improvement, we hope to be able to get Mitchellville placed on the Bookmobile route from the regional library in Monticello. Since we are working primarily with the youth, it is our hope that we can encourage as many as possible to better themselves through higher education.

EXPENSES

- I. Five trips Arkadelphia to Mitchellville and return - 250 miles per round trip - 1250 total miles
- II. Two trips Arkadelphia to Little Rock and return - 300 miles per round trip - 300 total miles
- III. Anticipate eight additional trips Arkadelphia to Mitchellville and return - 2000 total miles

Mitchellville

Pre-School and Head-Start

Committee Chairman Virginia La Cook, Perry, Arkansas

Committee Members

Mary Williams
Patti Stipek
Nancy Smith
Cloene Biggs
Sandy Ross
Jeannie Mason

Home Towns
Texarkana
Hot Springs
St. Louis
Booneville
Dewitt
Pickens

The purpose of the Pre-School and Head-Start committee is to acquaint the children of this community with some things that could help them when they start to school and to help the school age children with some of their problems. We also serve as a baby setting group while the mothers are attending adult classes.

Our committee is now set up in the church at Mitchellville where two more of the committees also meet.

We have a wide range of children in our group. At our last meeting we had an attendance of 3 (three) pre-school children and 10 (ten) school age children ranging from ages 6 to 12. During our last meeting we did an experiment with the children provided for us by our Educational Psychology teacher using some ideas on the center of gravity. From this study we prepared a report which was given to an Educational Psychology class.

We are now in the process of setting up a program with a speech therapy student who will be working with the children on their speech problems. We hope through this program we will be able to help some of the children to overcome their problems in communicating with their playmates.

Every week we have a story time for the children where they can become involved with some type of reading and speaking situations. We encourage them to become a part of this group activity.

After our reading and speech therapy periods are over we take the children to the playground area where we play the games they enjoy.

Our group has made on the average 4 (four) trips each to Mitchellville. This covering over 1,000 miles.

RECREATION COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

William M. Meeks III

Virgil Wilson

Robert Cornelius

HOMETOWNS

El Dorado, Arkansas

Prescott, Arkansas

Camden, Arkansas

The purpose of the RECREATION COMMITTEE is to organize a Community wide effort to provide recreational facilities for the children and young people of Mitchellville, Arkansas.

We have made on the average of four trips to conduct surveys and obtain the use of privately owned lands.

Several rough drawings have been made and local effort has been secured toward the establishment of several area playgrounds. Some equipment has been secured from the Henderson State College Physical Education Department and from Ouachita University and from private donations.

William M. Meeks III
Chairman, Recreation Committee

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

for

MITCHELLVILLE, ARKANSAS

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. Patricia Stipek, Chairman
2. Drew Bacon
3. Bobby Bulloch
4. Jon Jennings
5. Clifford King
6. Richard Lindley
7. Michael Meeks
8. Kenneth Parker
9. James Stark
10. Dennis Snider
11. Thomas S. Ward

HOMETOWNS

Hot Springs, Arkansas
Newton, Texas
McGehee, Arkansas
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Atlanta, Georgia
Russellville, Arkansas
El Dorado, Arkansas
Little Rock, Arkansas
Heber Springs, Arkansas
Morphlet, Arkansas
Little Rock, Arkansas

The objective of the ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
is to promote the interest of industry into this rural area.

We have recognized the overall importance of using the local industry and resources to the utmost ability. However, the obvious conclusions reached emphasize the need for further investment by outside interests.

The citizens of Mitchellville are more than ready to learn a skill or trade in preparation for advanced incomes and community betterment. The greatest resource to any business is the prospect of employment. And, this is easily made available.

In the early part of February Mr. William P. Rogers visited on the campus of Ouachita University with Dr. Bob Riley and several students of this committee. Mr. Rogers suggested that we explore specific means of getting and using the local industries and resources. At this time the possibility of planting the crops of okra and summer squash was suggested. Also, an industry of the "home-grown" variety was posed as a possibility. Such a business might be the building of birdhouses or even simple sewing. The question of available markets was discussed.

A brief study into the crop venture revealed a land shortage. The citizens had previously grown crops for the BIRD'S EYE CORPORATION, which we later learned was the one suggested by Mr. Rogers, and found their arrangements to be unsatisfactory.

The Committee has met with approximately 35 of the ladies of Mitchellville who have expressed some slight knowledge of sewing. Enthusiasm has been raised in the possibility of

the sewing of pillow cases, laundry bags, ironing board covers, and other simple mass production items.

The training of these workers could be aided by the installment at this time of three or four machines for practice sessions. There is one suitable building on the land owned by the city which could be used and in which the machines could be stored.

The needs in the area of Mitchellville for an industry are great. Additional structures and factories would have to be constructed before any actual manufacturing could begin. Phone conversations with Mr. Rogers have revealed the hope that he has the interest of some needlecraft industry.

The ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE has, either as an entire group or in semi-groups thereof, visited the area on four different occasions, covering over 1,000 miles.

February 27, 1968

Laubach Literacy Committee

Objectives:

Based on Laubach method of "each one teach one", and in order to make it a community project, we planned our work on two stages:

Stage 1. A Literacy Workshop

We are conducting a Literacy Workshop in Michelville where we are preparing six literacy teachers. In doing so, the prospective teachers are oriented on the literacy situation and work in and outside America. Besides that, the prospective teachers are taught how to use the literacy kits, including the charts and stories, writing books, streamlined English, and wall charts. Along with that, a Teacher's Guide to Charts has been handed to the teachers. The literacy material used in the Workshop and given to the teachers was paid for by Laubach State Committee.

Stage 2. A Literacy Campaign

March 9th will be the kick-off for our literacy campaign in Michelville. With six teachers from the community, reinforced later on with the "each one teach one" approach, we believe that we can lift every illiterate in Michelville to adequate literacy and participating role in the community development within one year.

Committee Needs

We need to place a literacy kit in the hands of each student at the cost of \$2.34 each. We need six wall charts at the cost of \$1.60 each. So, assuming that we will be dealing with fifty illiterates (reasonable guess in the absence of literacy statistics), that would bring our literacy material cost to \$126.00.

Jamil M. Shami

Jamil M. Shami

Laubach Literacy Committee

REPORT BY THE A C Q U I S I T I O N S OFFICER

JEROME BORK - NEW YORK

GATHERING OF INFORMATIONAL BROCHURES FROM

- 1- Social Security
- 2- Arkansas OEO
- 3- Farmers Home Administration
- 4- Arkansas State Department of Welfare
- 5- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- 6- Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
- 7- Cooperative League
- 8- Department of Agriculture
- 9- Department of Commerce (EDA)
- 10- Arkansas Municipalities
- 11- Arkansas Planning Commission

PROGRAMS

- 1- Representative from Social Security (next few weeks)
- 2- Public Information Officer, Mr. Bob L. Kemp, State Department of Welfare. To be followed by case workers on an individual interview basis

EXPENSES

Phone calls (long distance to Little Rock and Mitchellville)

Subject: Mitchellville Adult Education

The adult education classes have not been started due to the fact that Dr. Bob Riley is presently teaching basic parliamentary procedure classes. As soon as these are completed, the adult education classes will begin.

The instruction will be aimed toward the state and local government levels. This course will include election procedures and duties of elected officials. The role of the individual in county and state elections and general political behavior will also be discussed.

The Adult Education Committee

Chairman - Bobby Bulloch, McGehee, Ark.
Jean Mason, Arkadelphia, Ark.
Cliff King, Atlanta, Ga.
Mitchell Chun, Dallas, Texas

Mitchellville

Health, Medicare and Social Security Committee

Committee Chairman Jim Freeman, Arkadelphia, Arkansas

Committee Members

Home Towns

Clifford King

Atlanta, Georgia

Nancy Smith

St. Louis, Missouri

Gerald Morgan

Shreveport, La.

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND PLANNING

I. Members

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Gary R. Cheatham, Chairman | Little Rock |
| 2. Richard Lindley | Russelville |
| 3. Mac Sisson | McGee |
| 4. Jerry Forhand | Memphis |

At the present we are conducting research on all of the programs now available for housing in Mitchelville. We are planning to make a detailed survey into the conditions of housing in the town and in what specific areas help is needed.

We are also analyzing the various skills of the people in order to find out who is capable of furnishing skills necessary to build the homes.

We hope to either help the people of Mitchelville to improve their homes to much higher standards or in some cases to provide assistance in building new homes.

Gary R. Cheatham
Chairman

GRC

PROPOSED MITCHELLVILLE POVERTY PROGRAM

The following are photocopied pages which made up a part of the proposed program which was submitted to the Washington Office of Economic Opportunity. The purpose, beneficiaries, work program and proposed budget are included as well as graphs and charts giving pertinent information concerning Desha County including population breakdown, school enrollment, family income, employment census, farm--non-farm residence, and rural farm population by age. All of these are important as Mitchellville is located in Desha and these facts help explain some of the conditions in Mitchellville. Finally is enclosed a table showing the turn-back money for the city of Mitchellville paid from the state and county in 1967. Examining these pages would give one a more comprehensive idea of the actual program as it was finally developed. Ouachita Baptist University was the proposed sponsor, and Dr. Ralph Phelps, Jr. gave his full approval to the program as presented here.

BENEFICIARIES OF THE PROGRAM

The primary beneficiaries of the Mitchellville "Bootstrap" demonstration project will be the 150 displaced farm families of the area. There are some 250 children in this group and there are a number of adults. The population pattern from a standpoint of age is impressive with its composition of the very young and the very old. The Headstart Project, literacy program, recreational activities, and vocational counseling will be of particular benefit to the young. They will also share benefits along with the older persons in the areas of improved health facilities, housing, sewers, and streets.

Secondary beneficiaries of the project will include institutions of higher learning who take part. It is vital to functional education that students be exposed to practical problems in our society if their education is to have purpose and meaning. Other agencies will benefit from their participation in the program also.

It is hoped that other communities like Mitchellville will be benefited by the example which this community will provide.

PURPOSE

The general purpose of the Mitchellville (Boot-Strap) Demonstration Project is to help the residents of the area gain economic self-sufficiency and to provide an example for other similar communities to improve their economic well-being.

Objectives

1. To make an assessment of the problems and needs of a community.
2. Develop meaningful programs and processes to improve the economic conditions of the community.
3. To motivate and to convey a sense of hope and aspiration to members of the local community toward economic self-sufficiency.
4. To arouse and enlist local, state, and national agencies and institutions with the view of making the combined resources of these entities available to Mitchellville for its economic development.
5. To improve educational opportunities, health, housing, recreation, and the general cultural conditions of the area.
6. To demonstrate the potential of local, state, and national agencies in giving practical help to deprived communities.
7. To provide an opportunity for involving institutions of higher learning on real problem situations as a means of having education related to the problems and needs of society.
8. To encourage development of local enterprises and industry as a means of providing employment for the area.

WORK PROGRAM

The work program will be predicated on the needs and problems of the community. The program will consist of four months. It will embrace the following:

1. An assessment of the needs and problems of the community.
2. Providing education and training consistent with the needs of the community. (See on-going programs developed)
3. Providing for recreation, physical fitness, and health.
4. Providing information on the practical every day problems of the members of the community both young and old. (Information on health, on family planning, on use of social service agencies, etc.)
5. Improvement of housing, sewage, streets, and sanitation.
6. Cultural enrichment locally as well as through field trips to the Art Center, and other relevant places.
7. Encouragement in developing local enterprises and industry as a means of employment.
8. Development of vocational skills through referrals if not practical to develop locally.

PROPOSED BUDGET
OPERATION BOOT STRAP

FROM: May 1, 1968 to August 31, 1968

A. PERSONNEL:

Director	\$3,200.00	
Assistant Director	2,800.00	
Student Coordinator	2,000.00	
Advance College Students (3)	5,400.00	
Secretary-Bookkeeper (5 months)	2,500.00	
Chief Consultant 2 days x 16 weeks x \$100.00	3,200.00	
Consultant fees 2 days x 4 months x \$100.00	800.00	
Fringe Benefits @ 10%	<u>1,590.00</u>	
TOTAL		\$21,490.00

B. TRAINEES:

(1) Subsistence	\$ 320.00	
(2) Travel		
Volunteers (25)	<u>1,500.00</u>	
TOTAL		<u>\$ 1,820.00</u>

C. PERMANENT EQUIPMENT:

Typewriter (1)	\$ 500.00	
Executive desks (2) @ \$150.00	300.00	
Executive chairs (2) @ \$50.00	100.00	
Office chairs (6) @ \$15.00	90.00	
Classroom chairs (30) @ \$11.00	330.00	
Secretarial Desk (1)	225.00	
Secretarial Chair	30.00	
Adding Machine	325.00	
Hall trees (2) @ 27.00	54.00	
Four-drawer file cabinet (1) @ \$90.00	90.00	
Two-drawer file cabinet (1) @ \$45.00	45.00	
Tables (2) (oak) @ \$145.00	<u>290.00</u>	
TOTAL		\$ 2,379.00

D. CONSUMABLE SUPPLIES:

Instructional Supplies	\$1,800.00	
Office Supplies	415.00	
Postage	250.00	
Telephone	<u>600.00</u>	
TOTAL		\$ 3,065.00

E. TRAVEL STAFF:

Director:

In-State Travel	
1,250 Miles per month x 4 mths x .10	\$ 500.00
Out-of-State Travel	
Washington, D. C.	304.00
Per Diem: \$16.00 x 3 x 2	96.00
Austin, Texas (1 trip) @ \$102.00	102.00
Per Diem: \$16.00 x 3 x 1	48.00
	<u>1,050.00</u>

Assistant Director:

In-State Travel	
1,000 Miles per month x 4 mths. x .10	400.00

Student Coordinator:

In-State Travel	
1,000 Miles per month x 4 mths. x .10	400.00
Out-of State Travel	
Washington, D. C. (2 Trips) @ \$152.00	304.00
Per Diem: \$16.00 x 3 x 2	96.00

Advance College Students (3)

In-State Travel	
1,000 Miles per month x 4 mths. x .10	400.00

Consultants:

1,000.00

TOTAL

\$3,650.00

F. MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES:

Bonding Fees	75.00
Auditing of Books	375.00
	<u>450.00</u>
SUBTOTAL	<u>\$32,854.00</u>

G. INDIRECT COSTS (20%)

6,570.00

TOTAL

\$39,424.00

DESHA COUNTY - ARKANSAS

Non White - 48.1%

Total - 9,990

Total Population 20,770

Percent of population living in rural areas 62% - 38% Urban

Total number of families 4,819

Total number of families with income less than 3,000 2,726 Percent 56.56%

Families with income less than 1,000 1,081 22.4%

Families with income from 1,000-1,999 1,090 22.6%

Families with income from 2,000-2,999 555 11.5%

Males 14 and over in civilian labor force 4,606

Percent of such males who are unemployed 6.0%

Females 14 and over in civilian labor force 1,658

Percent of such females who are unemployed 8.1%

Persons under 21 9,868

Percent of persons under 21 receiving A.F.D.C. payments 4.4%

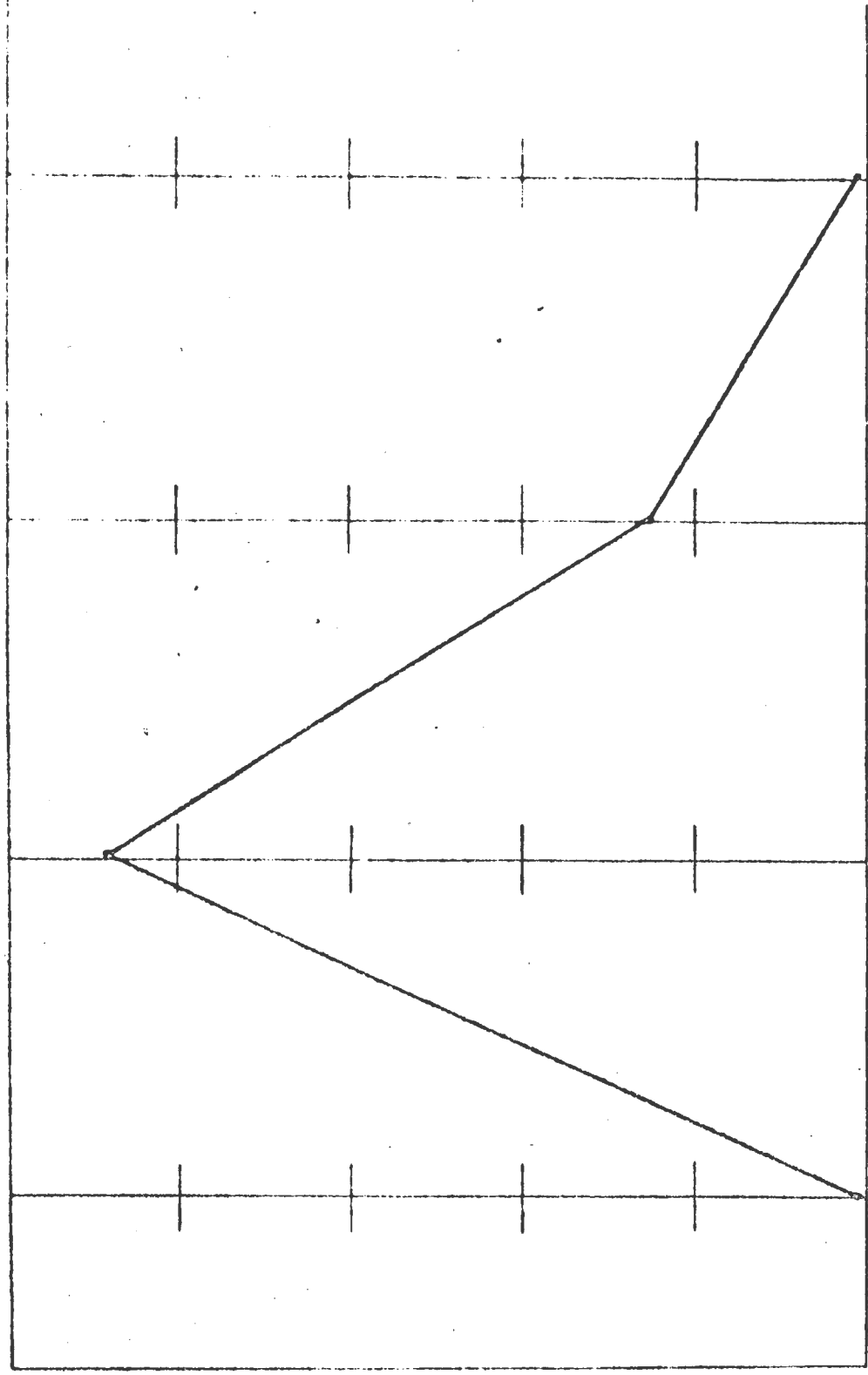
Persons aged 65 and over 2,041

Percent of persons 65 and over receiving old-age assistance 35.7

Percent of persons enrolled in school (14 and 15 years old)	89.7
Percent of persons enrolled in school (16 and 17 years old)	82.3
Total number of persons 25 years old and over	10,163
Persons 25 and over with less than 8 years of education	5,139
Percent of persons 25 and over with less than 8 years of education	50.6
Births per year	511
Deaths per year of infants under 12 months	13
Infant deaths as a percent of births per year	2.54
All housing units	6,484
Number of housing units which are substandard	4,544
Percent of all housing units which are substandard	70.08%

KINDERGARTEN ELEMENTARY HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGE

5000
4000
3000
2000
1000
0



DESHA COUNTY
ARKANSAS
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT
AGE 5-34
1960 FNS

NUMBER OF FAMILIES

INCOME

1400

1200

1000

800

600

400

200

0

UNDER \$1000

1000 - 1999

2000 - 2999

3000 - 3999

4000 - 4999

5000 - 5999

6000 - 6999

7000 - 7999

8000 - 8999

9000 - 9999

10,000 - 14,999

15,000 - 24,999

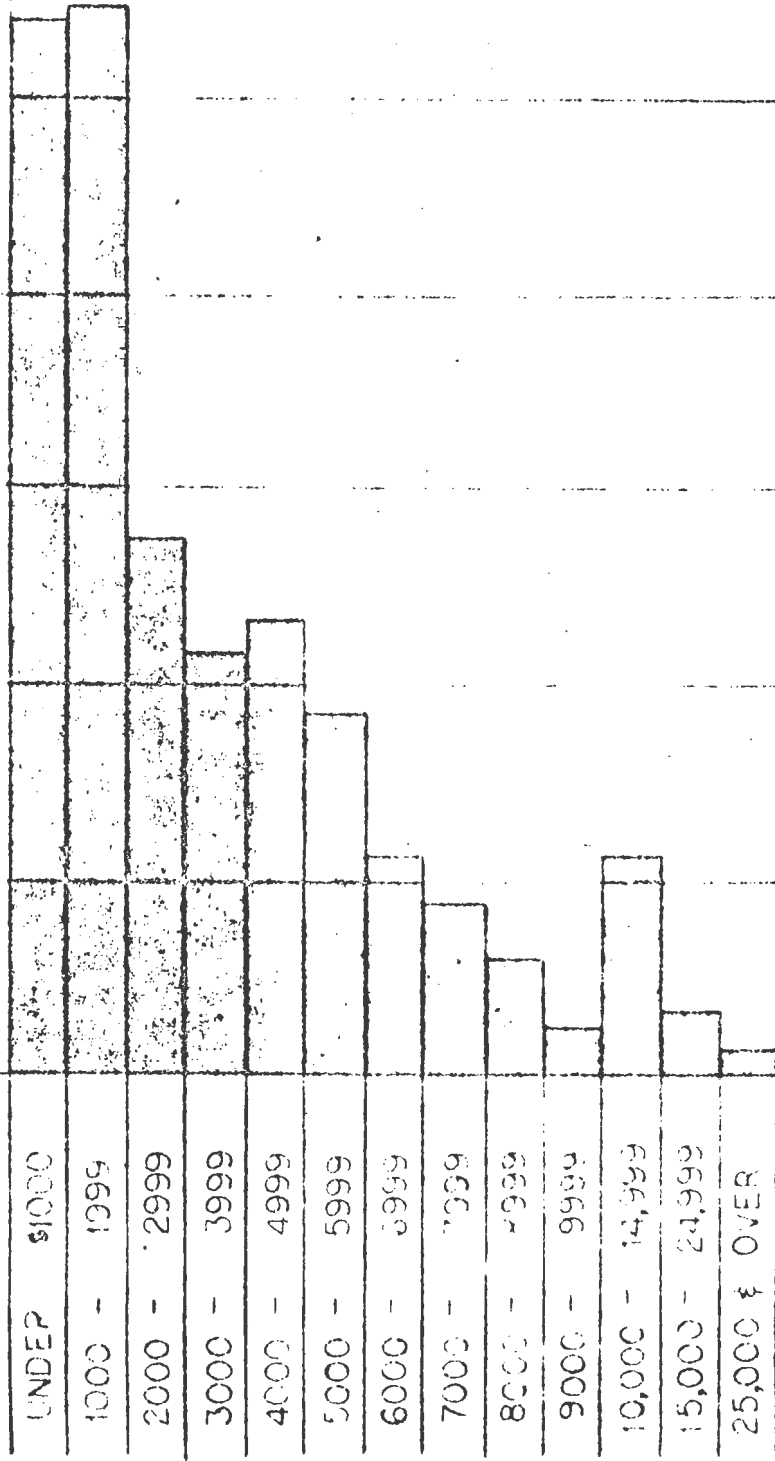
25,000 & OVER

DESHA COUNTY

ARKANSAS

FAMILY INCOME 1960 CENSUS

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME 2,430



NUMBER EMPLOYED

AGE GROUP

0

250

500

750

1000

1250

1500

1750

2000

14 - 17

18 - 24

25 - 34

35 - 44

45 - 64

65 & OVER

KEY

MALE



FEMALE



DESHA COUNTY

ARKANSAS

EMPLOYMENT 1960 CENSUS

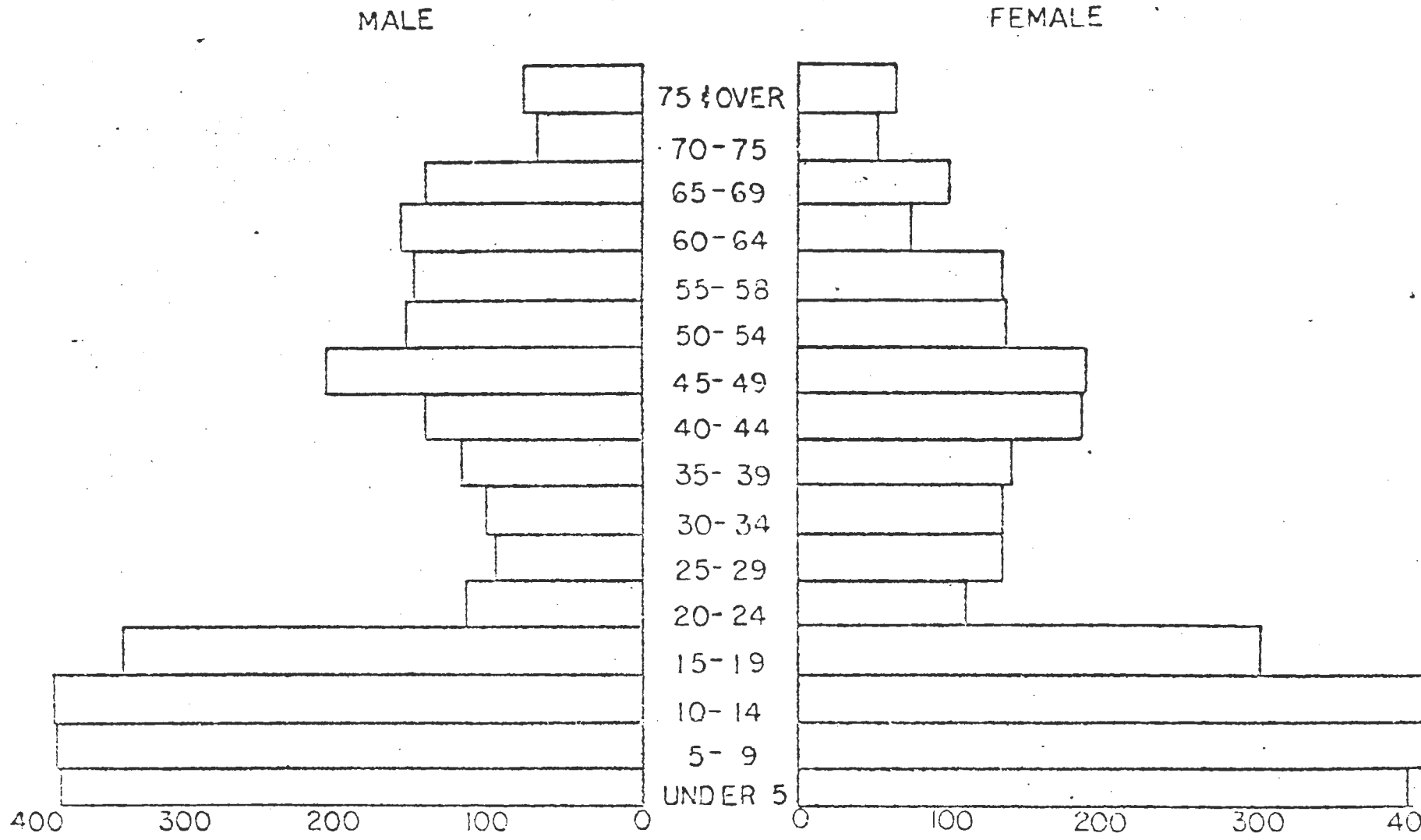
0 250 500 750 1000 1250 1500 1750



DESHA COUNTY
ARKANSAS

FARM - NON-FARM RESIDENCE 1960 CENSUS
 TOTAL RURAL POPULATION 12782
 TOTAL FARM POPULATION 6009
 TOTAL NON-FARM POPULATION 6773

☐ MALE
☐ FEMALE



DESHA COUNTY
 ARKANSAS
 RURAL - FARM POPULATION BY AGE - 1960

TOTAL 6009
 MALE 3003
 FEMALE 3006

Turn-Back Money for the City of Mitchellville
Paid from the State and County

(1967)

STREET FUNDS

GENERAL FUNDS

\$1,317.50	1-12-67	\$ 455.13	1-12-67
1,317.50	4-14-67	452.33	4-14-67
395.73	5-8-67	442.16	7-12-67
348.34	6-9-67	149.93	9-5-67
430.78	7-12-67	162.23	9-12-67
726.76	9-8-67	161.56	10-12-67
668.53	9-12-67	151.02	11-13-67
398.24	10-12-67	373.98 County Tax Municipal	12-19-67
398.24	11-3-67		
325.16	11-13-67	112.25 County Tax (road)	12-19-67
393.42	12-12-67		
<hr/>		<hr/>	
\$6,680.20		\$2,450.69	