

THE SEQUATCHIE VALLEY, TENNESSEE A STUDY IN LAND UTILIZATION

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ABSTRACT

The Sequatchie Valley, formed by the erosion of an anticlinal fold, is located in the Cumberland Plateau. It is from three to five miles wide and is hemmed in on both sides by escarpments approximately a thousand feet high.

As a result of favorable climatic and soil conditions, general agriculture and livestock farming are the dominant activities in the valley. Corn is the most important crop while hay and forage rank second in acreage. The beef cattle industry is much more important than the dairy industry.

Coal and limestone are the only mineral resources produced to any degree within the Valley at the present time. Most of the coal is shipped out, but the limestone is used at Richard City in the manufacture of cement.

The simple transportation pattern has been largely determined by the surface configuration as indicated by the longitudinal extent of the principal highways and the railroads. These routes serve the largest towns, which are all located within the Valley bottom. The two most important of these are South Pittsburg, an industrial town located on the Tennessee River, and Whitwell, a coal-mining town, in the northern part of Marion County. The next largest group includes the county-seat towns, Dunlap, Jasper, and Pikeville.

Considering its restricted areal extent and resources, the Sequatchie Valley will probably continue much as it has in the past with agriculture as the leading industry, since the prospect for increased industrialization is not very bright. The outlook is, therefore, only moderately promising.