Otsego County is a diversified region of about 1000 square miles, which has been settled 150 years. The people are largely of English and Dutch descent, and are distinctly inclined toward rural rather than industrial occupations. There has not been any large development of commercial or industrial enterprises.

The area is a part of the Alleghany Plateau. Excepting a narrow, irregular border along the northern side, the surface of the County is incised by deep and rather narrow valleys. The main divides rise five or six hundred feet above the floors of the valleys. The broad tops of these regional divides, and the crests of the local ridges form much of the total area of the County, perhaps eighty per cent of it. The details of this upland topography embrace about all the variations expressed by the terms smooth, hilly, and steep, with all intergradations.

Practically all lands, except those almost absolutely unyielding, were cleared and devoted for some time at least, to cultural purposes. There has been much reversion to forest growth on the less productive soils, although the extensive development of dairying admits of profitable utilization of much low grade grazing land. Less than five per cent of the total area of the County is annually plowed.

The entire County was pretty well occupied and the population quite evenly distributed before the middle of the last century. Up to fifty years ago there seems to have been comparatively little change in the number of inhabitants, and ninety-four per cent were still classed as rural. The census figures do not indicate the present actual distribution very well, because each of the twenty-four towns embraces both valley and upland areas, on which the number of families per square mile, respectively, is usually quite different.

The larger shift of the population as a whole, as well as the marked decline in many of the townships, has occurred in the last thirty years. In some towns consisting chiefly of upland soil types, this decrease is more than twenty-five per cent.

Three provisional groups of soil types may be made: first, the upland types consisting chiefly of soils of sandy derivation; a second group more or less alkaline; while the third embraces all types found in the valleys.

In the valleys there are few unoccupied farms, and none have been abandoned. These homesteads in the river valleys show a remarkable stability with respect to ownership, acreage, and maintenance of improvements. There have been fewer transfers by sale or otherwise than is the case in most farm communities in the midwestern states. These farms consist chiefly of soil types easy to till, and rate high those of either of the other two soil groups.

The yield per acre of all crops is considerably below the state averages for the same products. All these better classes of valley soils are rarely unoccupied, and so far as observed were abandoned. Isolated patches of these alkaline soils occur in convenient locations, but some people are there, and the land is in use. The Hominy, Adirondack, and Orlando are the principal soils of this upland group.

The limited areas of shale, chiefly Loess series, soils consist chiefly of fields graded to permanent pasture, and there is a number of unsuccessful farms.

The yield per acre of all crops is considerably below the state averages for the same products, but otherwise, however, are strongly acid, and inherently rich in organic matter, while the ready response to fertilization indicates the lack of available plant nutrients that other incidences.

As a somewhat general estimate it may be said that three fourths of the farms consisting of the Lordstown and Lakeanna silt levels are either unoccupied, abandoned, or used only for such pasturage and hay as they afford, or no cultural care. The land is not now contributing in less measure to farm abandonment.

Farms consisting wholly or in part of alkaline soils are rarely unoccupied, and, so far as observed, were abandoned. Island patches of these alkaline soils occur in convenient locations, but some people are there, and the land is in use. The Hominy, Adirondack, and Orlando are the principal soils of this upland group.

The yield per acre of all crops is considerably below the state averages for the same products, but otherwise, however, are strongly acid, and inherently rich in organic matter, while the ready response to fertilization indicates the lack of available plant nutrients that other incidences.

As a somewhat general estimate it may be said that three fourths of the farms consisting of the Lordstown and Lakeanna silt levels are either unoccupied, abandoned, or used only for such pasturage and hay as they afford, or no cultural care. The land is not now contributing in less measure to farm abandonment.

Farms consisting wholly or in part of alkaline soils are rarely unoccupied, and, so far as observed, were abandoned. Island patches of these alkaline soils occur in convenient locations, but some people are there, and the land is in use. The Hominy, Adirondack, and Orlando are the principal soils of this upland group.

The yield per acre of all crops is considerably below the state averages for the same products, but otherwise, however, are strongly acid, and inherently rich in organic matter, while the ready response to fertilization indicates the lack of available plant nutrients that other incidences.

As a somewhat general estimate it may be said that three fourths of the farms consisting of the Lordstown and Lakeanna silt levels are either unoccupied, abandoned, or used only for such pasturage and hay as they afford, or no cultural care. The land is not now contributing in less measure to farm abandonment.

Farms consisting wholly or in part of alkaline soils are rarely unoccupied, and, so far as observed, were abandoned. Island patches of these alkaline soils occur in convenient locations, but some people are there, and the land is in use. The Hominy, Adirondack, and Orlando are the principal soils of this upland group.

The yield per acre of all crops is considerably below the state averages for the same products, but otherwise, however, are strongly acid, and inherently rich in organic matter, while the ready response to fertilization indicates the lack of available plant nutrients that other incidences.

As a somewhat general estimate it may be said that three fourths of the farms consisting of the Lordstown and Lakeanna silt levels are either unoccupied, abandoned, or used only for such pasturage and hay as they afford, or no cultural care. The land is not now contributing in less measure to farm abandonment.

Farms consisting wholly or in part of alkaline soils are rarely unoccupied, and, so far as observed, were abandoned. Island patches of these alkaline soils occur in convenient locations, but some people are there, and the land is in use. The Hominy, Adirondack, and Orlando are the principal soils of this upland group.

The yield per acre of all crops is considerably below the state averages for the same products, but otherwise, however, are strongly acid, and inherently rich in organic matter, while the ready response to fertilization indicates the lack of available plant nutrients that other incidences.