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Migration and Status of Open-country Families in Oklahoma

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INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

This study of 1,032 open-country families living in 1937 in four Oklahoma counties—Cotton, Craig, Haskell, and Major (Figure 1)—analyzes certain fundamental interrelationships of migration, social mobility, and socioeconomic status. The three primary problems with which this analysis is concerned are (1) the spatial and temporal aspects of migration, (2) the principal social and economic factors associated with migration and status, and (3) the importance of migration in facilitating social mobility.

For purposes of delimiting the scope of this research, these specific questions have been posed for study:

1. How do age and socioeconomic status, as measured by farm tenure and wealth, affect migration?
2. How are the frequency, time, and direction of migration associated with farm tenure status?
3. What effects do the following factors have upon migration and farm tenure status:
   (a) State of birth?
   (b) Occupation of father?
   (c) Amount of formal education?
   (d) Age at departure from parental home and at marriage?
   (e) Beginning tenure and wealth status?
   (f) Size of family and fertility ratio?
   (g) Participation in community organizations?
   (h) Relief?
   (i) Acreage in farm?
   (j) Type of farming?
   (k) Quality of land?
4. Does migration facilitate or impede social mobility?

The foregoing questions indicate to some extent the complexity and interdependence of the phenomena under observation. Although no attempt is made to identify precisely the causal factors of migration, social mobility, and socioeconomic status, the assumption held at the outset of this study is that migration more accurately signifies a consequence than a determinant of status. This hypothesis is basic to the present research. In addition, the following corollary propositions are tested:

1. Migration tends to decrease with advancing age, subject to the effects of socioeconomic status.
2. An improvement in socioeconomic status tends to reduce migration, but a degradation of status generally increases changes in domicile.
3. Certain social background factors: state of birth, occupation of father, amount of schooling, age at leaving home, and beginning tenure and wealth status, are closely associated with migration. social mobility and socioeconomic status.

4. The size of family, effective fertility, amount of community participation, relief, acreage in farm, type of farming, and quality of land are related to migration and status.
5. Landlessness and migration are increasing among the open-country population.

Basis of Study

From 10 to 15 percent of the white families living in the open country of the designated counties were interviewed during the winter of 1937-1938. The selection of families was as nearly random as circumstances would permit.[1] As the purpose of the project was to study the social correlatives of farm tenure status, data were obtained on the composition of family assets, liabilities, income, expenditures, cultural possessions, participation in community activities, and miscellaneous subjects. Also a detailed record of moves and changes in tenure and occupation since the head of family left home to earn his own living was procured from each interviewee. This wide range of information furnished ample data for study.

FARM TENURE, WEALTH, AGE, AND MIGRATION OF HEADS OF FAMILIES

It is considered appropriate to begin the analysis by observing the general characteristics of the factors treated in this study, namely, farm tenure, wealth, age, and migration of heads of families.

Tenure Composition of Sample

In 1937, the sampled heads of families were distributed into farm tenure groups as follows:

	Number	Percent
Total heads	1032	100.0
Full owners	244	23.6
Part owners	140	13.6
Tenants	506	49.0
Cropper-laborers	69	6.7
Others	73	7.1

The sample falls into three broad tenure classes, but for analytical purposes five groups are used. Farm owners consist of two sub-groups: heads who own all the land operated, and heads who both own and lease land.

Tenants comprise the largest class of agricultural population in Oklahoma. Nearly one-half of the families in the sample are in this group.[2] Tenants rent the land they operate, paying rentals with a share of crops, in cash, or with a combination of both. The tenant supplies either all or a part of the seed, workstock, implements, fertilizer, supervision, and usually all of the labor, in return for the use of the farm including the land, house, out-buildings, and fences.

[1] The methodology of county and family selection is discussed in the Appendix. Copies of the schedule used can be obtained from the Department of Sociology and Rural Life, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College.

[2] In the original sample, the 1212 families were distributed occupationally as follows: farm owners, 36.6 percent; tenants, 47.3 percent; and, croppers, laborers, and others, 16.1 percent.

Subsequent analyses show that, in general, small differences distinguish the two farm tenure groups designated as "cropper-laborers" and "others." Croppers and farm laborers are placed in a single class for the reason that legal, social. and economic distinctions do not justify separate treatment.[3] This wage-earning agricultural class supplies its labor and possibly a minimum amount of supervision and planning in the planting, cultivating, and harvesting processes.

"Others" includes members of a relatively new social class which consists of those families subsidized by public assistance programs, e. g., W. P. A., old age assistance, aid to dependent children, aid to the blind, general relief, and other types of aid.[4] This dependent class forms a reserve labor supply for agriculture and industry, maintained largely at public expense. Bearing resemblances to the laboring classes in agriculture generally, the chief difference claimed for the dependent families lies in their basic means of subsistence. Whenever a substantial segment of the population draws the major portion of its income from public assistance programs, marked disadvantaging economic and occupational factors would seem to be operating in the economy. It may be assumed that as time goes on, these public dependents will acquire more clearcut characteristic habits of behavior, attitudes, and values. Therefore, in this research all heads of families, except farm operators, receiving more than one-half of their cash income from public assistance agencies were classed as "others."[5]

The 73 "other" heads of families in the sample include:

41 farm laborers- all of whom had received in 1937 over one-half of their cash income from public assistance agencies;

27 unskilled laborers; 9 of whom had received some public assistance; and

5 miscellaneous workers, in non-farm occupations and not on relief.[6]

This class, though occupationally heterogeneous, comprises heads of families drawing over two-thirds of their cash income from public assistance programs. The absence of farm or home ownership, small income, unemployment or underemployment, and low plane of living generally characterize these dependent families.

Altogether, tenants, cropper-laborers, and "others" make up the landless classes in the open country, accounting for 62.8 percent of all heads of families sampled.

Tenure and Occupational Histories

In presenting the historical tenure and occupational profile for the family heads interviewed in 1937, it is well to keep in mind the effects of advancing age upon status. Usually as age increases it is assumed that a person's occupational and economic status improves, at least until late in

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[3] T. Lynn Smith, "The Agricultural Population: Realism vs. Nominalism in the Census of Agriculture," *Journal of Farm Economics*, Vol. XX, August, 1938, pp. 679-689.

[4] See Dwight Sanderson, *Rural Life in the Depression*, New York: Social Science Research Council Bull. No. 34, 1937, p. 65, and J. M. Gillette, "Social-Economic Submergence in a Plains States," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. V, March, 1940, pp. 59-68.

[5] Had farm operators been classed according to the same procedure, this group would have been increased from 7.1 to 15.0 percent of the total heads. The arbitrary classification was not applied to farmers because of the traditional significance attached to farm owner and tenant statuses in American agriculture.

[6] Classified as "others" merely as a mater of statistical convenience.

life. If the occupational stratification of a population were to remain relatively stationary, the changes accruing from losses due to out-migration, retirements, and deaths would be offset by accesssions of immigrants and persons beginning their careers. But a sample of living family heads, taken as of a specific period, represents a residue and is not necessarily identical with the actual stratification existing ten, twenty, or thirty years ago. Especially is this true in a dynamic situation which is subject to changes in the number of people and their age composition, fluctuations in agricultural production and prices, availability of land, and other fundamental phenomena affecting occupational behavior.

The initial step is to compare the tenure status of farmers in the sample and in the counties at different census-taking periods. Certain precautions were taken to insure the comparability of the two sets of data. Only farm operators living in the survey counties in the censal years were included. Also, the heads of families residing in Cotton county were omitted from the sample in 1910, since that county was not organized and therefore did not appear as a separate entity in the census for that year.

The comparisons in Table 1 indicate that the sample is fairly representative of the universe surveyed in all censal periods from 1910 to 1935. The widest discrepancies can be observed among croppers who, however, account for only a small portion of all farmers in any period. This is due to heavy losses of croppers between 1935 and 1940, thereby reducing their incidence in the universe sampled. Farm owners tended to be slightly over-represented in the sample, but in general, the close similarities of figures for the sample and for the Census furnish acceptable proof of the reliability of the tenure and occupational histories.[7]

The next step is to analyze the tenure distribution of family heads surveyed since the beginning of earning life. The data as tabulated do not distinguish between residents of the open country, villages, or urban centers except as reflected by occupation. Table 2 shows the changing character of the tenure and occupational stratification as applied to the group of heads comprising this study. Farm ownership has not increased with the advancing age composition inherent in the sample. The peak of ownership was reached in the period from 1911 to 1913, inclusive, with 42.2 percent of the heads in the sample at that time owning farms. Thereafter, the proportions of farm owners decreased in each three-year period until 1929-1931, when only 33.3 percent of the heads owned their farms. Since then, the upward trend in farm ownership increased the percentage to 37.2.

The trends in farm tenancy reveal three distinct periods. During the twenty-year period between 1899 and 1919, the proportions of tenants remained practically unchanged at 37-38 percent. In the second period, extending over the long agricultural depression from 1920 to the end of 1932, tenancy increased continuously. In the later year, 51.7 percent of the heads were tenants. Since the advent of the New Deal with its manifold effects upon agriculture, tenancy has decreased slightly. It is hazardous to generalize upon this deflection in trend, because too little is known concerning the effects of the eliminated occupational histories on this con-

[7] A similar comparison was made between the ages of farm operators (for the State) and of the sampled heads. As would be expected, the heads as of 1937 were too young in 1910 to be comparable to the age composition of that year. In 1920, the proportion of sampled heads between the ages of 35 and 54 years coincided identically with those of the Census. For 1930, the age distribution of heads in the sample closely resembled that of the Census except among heads 65 years old and over. On the whole, the sample is considered fairly representative as to age in censal years, subject, of course, to natural limitations imposed by extreme age groups.

Table 1.—Tenure Distribution of Farm Operators in the Survey Counties, by the Census and the Sample, 1910-1935.

Censal year	TOTAL		OWNERS		TENANTS*		CROPPERS	
	Census	Sample	Census	Sample	Census	Sample	Census	Sample
1935								
Number	9098	837	3476	352	5254	468	368	17
Percent	100.0	100.0	38.2	42.1	57.8	55.9	4.0	2.0
1930								
Number	8575	655	3408	285	4643	353	524	17
Percent	100.0	100.0	39.8	43.5	54.1	53.9	6.1	2.6
1925								
Number	8429	477	3650	244	4390	226	389	7
Percent	100.0	100.0	43.3	51.1	52.1	47.4	4.6	1.5
1920								
Number	8206	378	4224	209	3766	163	216	6
Percent	100.0	100.0	51.5	55.3	45.8	43.1	2.6	1.6
1910**								
Number	8014	137	4142	517	3872	68	*	*
Percent	100.0	100.0	50.7	50.4	48.3	49.6	*	*

SOURCE: *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930,* Agriculture, Vol. VII, County Table II; Vol. VI, Part 2, County Table I; Vol. II, Part 2, County Table I, and *United States Census of Agriculture, 1935,* Vol. I, County Table I.

* Managers were included as tenants. Separate figures on the number of croppers were not available for 1910.

** Cotton county was not organized until 1912. To make the data comparable, the tenure distribution of farm operators in the sample for 1910 was excluded for this county. Also omitted from the sample were farm operators living outside of survey counties in each census year.

Table 2.—Tenure Distribution of Sampled Heads of Families; by Three-Year Periods, 1899-1937.

Period	Number of heads*	PERCENTAGE OF HEADS IN TENURE AND OCCUPATION SPECIFIED					
		Total	Owner	Tenant	Cropper	Laborer	Non-agriculture
1899-1901	194	100.0	33.2	38.1	1.5	11.7	15.5
1902-1904	244	100.0	35.3	37.3	3.1	8.6	15.7
1905-1907	300	100.0	37.9	37.3	3.5	8.7	12.6
1908-1910	353	100.0	39.2	38.2	4.2	6.0	12.4
1911-1913	414	100.0	42.2	38.2	2.5	6.2	10.9
1914-1916	490	100.0	40.9	38.5	2.1	6.2	12.3
1917-1919	584	100.0	39.0	38.3	2.7	4.5	15.5
1920-1922	662	100.0	37.3	40.6	2.8	5.0	14.3
1923-1925	733	100.0	36.2	42.4	2.3	5.0	14.1
1926-1928	809	100.0	33.9	44.7	2.4	5.4	13.6
1929-1931	894	100.0	33.3	47.6	2.0	7.2	9.9
1932-1934	967	100.0	33.8	51.0	1.7	7.3	6.2
1935-1937	1017	100.0	35.9	49.8	2.1	5.4	6.8

* Mean number of heads for periods covering more than one year.

figuration. Furthermore, the 1940 Census, while confirming the trends of the sample data, does not show what has happened to displace tenants and croppers. Possibly many of them have remained in the open country and villages as farm laborers; others have drifted to cities and to the western states.

The increase in tenancy following the first World War can be traced mainly to three sources. Many farmers lost their equities in land during the long agricultural depression. Not infrequently the land was acquired by the Federal Land Bank, mortgage companies, insurance companies, and individual investors not engaged primarily in agriculture. Another large group of tenants has been unable to purchase farms and move up into the farm owning class. The data in Table 2 show no increase in the amount of tenancy at the expense of croppers and farm laborers. Until recently, croppers formed a fairly constant but negligible number among all census-classed farm operators in Oklahoma. Prior to 1908, the sample contained a preponderance of young persons, many of whom started as farm laborers. Since statehood the proportions of farm laborers among the heads of families in the sample varied irregularly from 5.0 to 8.7 percent.

A third source of increase in tenancy has been the shift of non-agriculturists to agricultural occupations. Until about 1930, from one-fifth to two-fifths of the heads had worked in nonagricultural employment; but, subsequent to that date, increasing proportions were absorbed into the farming classes and particularly into the tenant class.

In summarizing, two generalizations can be drawn from the tenure and occupational histories. First, the comparative stability of the occupational profile reflects the rigid character of an enduring, institutionalized stratification in agriculture. Second, the dominance of, and increase in, the landless classes constitute a serious hazard to the welfare of the open-country population.

Wealth Status of Heads of Families

In 1937, one-half of the families studied had a net wealth of less than $1,000; one-third were worth from $1,000 to $4,999; and less than one-fifth had $5.000 and over (Table 3).

Although their economic status was generally low, sharp differences in net wealth obtained between owners and nonowners of farms. The full owners and part owners had a median net wealth in 1937 of $4300 and $4400, respectively, as against $500 reported by tenants and $100 each recorded by the two lowest farm tenure groups.

Age Composition of Male Heads of Families

The most important determinant of migration and social mobility is the age of population. In an aggregate characterized by excessive numbers of young people, migration and vertical mobility are relatively greater than for an aggregate having a disproportionately large number of persons in the middle and old age groups. Younger persons move about seeking economic opportunities to advance in occupation, wealth, income, and prestige, while older persons wish to maintain status quo, especially if their socioeconomic positions are relatively secure.

In the sample, the male heads of families ranged from 17 to 83 years of age, with a mean of 43.95±.44 years (Table 4.) With each descent in tenure status the average age decreased. The spread in the average age between the two groups of farm owners was much smaller than that among the three groups of nonowners. Obviously less time was consumed in reaching the tenant stage from a lower status than in advancing from a tenant to an ownership status.

Table 3.—Net Wealth of Heads of Families in 1937, by Farm Tenure Status.

Net wealth class	All tenures	Full owner	Part owner	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Other
Number of heads	1028	244	140	502	69	73
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under $500	35.2	2.4	8.6	43.8	89.0	94.5
$500-$999	14.8	4.9	3.6	25.5	5.8	4.1
$1000-$2499	19.4	22.6*	16.4*	22.9*	2.9	1.4
$2500-$4999	13.1	25.6	28.6	6.2	1.4	0.0
$5000-$7499	6.3	14.9	15.0	1.4	0.0	0.0
$7500-$9999	4.4	10.7	11.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
$10,000 and over	6.8	18.9	16.4	.2	0.0	0.0
Median**	$900	$4300	$4400	$500	$100	$100

* Differences from total cases are not "significant." In this and following tables based upon sample data the difference between a specific percentage of total cases and a percentage for a sub-group is considered to be statistically "significant," "reliable," or "dependable" if a critical ratio (the ratio of difference to its standard error) of 2 or over is obtained. That is, if other samples are taken under the same conditions, the chances are 21 to 1 that the difference will not disappear. The difference is a true difference and is not due to chance errors in sampling. The formula for computing the standard error of a difference is:

$$\sigma \text{ diff.} = \sqrt{\sigma p_1^2 + \sigma p_2^2},$$

or the square root of the sum of the squared standard errors of the two proportions whose difference is to be tested. The standard error is obtained by this formula:

$$\sigma p = \sqrt{\frac{pq}{n}}$$

in which p is the given percentage, q is the difference between p and 1.00, and n is the number of cases. Tests of significence of difference between percentages have ben made for the tabulated data presented in this study, and unless otherwise noted, it can be assumed that differences are significant. To simplify the calculation of critical ratios, use has been made of Harold A. Edgerton and Donald G. Paterson, "Table of Standard Errors and Probable Errors for Varying Number of Cases," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. X, 1936, pp. 378-391. For a discussion of statistical significance see Margaret Jarman Hagood, *Statistics for Sociologists*, Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941, Chap. 17.

** The median is more reliable than the mean because of the large standard deviation of the later. Net wealth was computed to the nearest one-hundred dollars.

Full owners predominated in the older age groups, 67.7 percent being 45 years old and over. Their mean age was 52.80 ± .89 years. Among owners, 55.4 percent were in the corresponding age group. The mean age of part owners was 47.59 ±1.01 years.

Although the operation of the agricultural ladder is apparent from the data in Table 4, the fact that one-third of the tenants were 45 years of age and over suggests that the functioning of the ladder is nowise complete. **The mean age of tenants, 40.60 ± .57 years, was about 5 years in excess of the average age at which farm owners acquired their farms.**

Among cropper-laborers and "others," large proportions of heads of families were under 30 years of age. Handicapped by the impinging effects of widespread depression and the scarcity of farms, this group as a whole had accumulated almost no capital with which to rise into the tenant class. Included in the older age groups were numerous heads of families who had been displaced from higher farm tenures or from employ-

Table 4.—Age Distribution of Male Heads of Families, by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Age group, years	All tenures	Full owner	Part owner	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Other
Number of male heads	1009	232	152	501	69	72
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 25	5.5	0.4	0.0	6.6	13.1	16.7
25-34	24.6	8.2	13.4	32.0	33.4	37.5
35-44	27.0	23.7	31.2	28.2	27.5	20.8
45-54	17.9	22.9	27.4	15.0	13.0	9.7
55-64	15.1	22.0	19.2	13.2	8.7	5.6
65-74	8.1	17.2	6.6	4.8	4.3	8.3
75 and over	1.8	5.6	2.2	0.2	0.0	1.4
Median Age	42.0	52.0	46.0	38.0	35.0	32.0
Mean Age	44.0	52.8	47.6	40.6	37.8	37.7
Standard error	±.44	±.89	±1.01	±.57	±1.56	±1.71

ment in nonagricultural industries. The average ages of cropper-laborers and "others." 37.81 ± 1.56 years and 37.68 ± 1.71 years, respectively, suggest the improbability of any self-initiated mass improvement in the socio-economic conditions of these classes.

The average ages of heads of farm families closely agree with those reported for Oklahoma in a preliminary 1940 Census release.[8] For all farm owners in the State the mean age was 53.3 years; for part owners, 48.6 years; and for tenants, 41.9 years. This can be claimed as further proof of the representativeness of the sample.

Frequency of Migration

The instability of the open-country population in Oklahoma is indicated by the high incidence of migration among the heads of families studied. The number of moves per head during earning life ranged from 0 to 26, with the distribution being positively skewed by the presence of frequent movers in the sample. For all heads in the sample, the mean number of moves was 5.17±.13 (Table 5). Nonowners of farms were considererably less stable residentially than owners.

The amount of migration averaged higher for farmers than that reported in other similar studies. Full owners moved an average of 4.29±.22 times in 31.04±.87 years of earning life as compared with 2.9 times in 32.0 years among 515 white owners in South Carolina, where farm-to-farm migration is comparatively high.[9] The corresponding averages for tenants were 5.60±.19 moves during an average earning life of 19.79±.57 years among sampled heads and 5.6 moves in 24.4 years among South Carolina subjects.

[8] *Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940,* Agriculture, Preliminary Release on the Age of Farmers, Washington: U. S. Department of Commerce, October, 1941.

[9] T. J. Woofter, Jr. et al, *Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation,* Washington: Works Progress Administration, Research Monograph V, 1936, p. 112. Also migration is less among samples of farmers in Kansas and Colorado than for Oklahoma farmers. Robert T. McMillan, *Farm Family Living in Seward and Haskell Counties, Kansas,* Amarillo: Farm Security Administration, Social Research Report No. 1, 1937 (Manuscript), and same writer, *Social and Economic Problems of Farm Families in Baca County, Colorado,* Amarillo: Farm Security Administration, Social Research Report No. 2, 1937, (Manuscript).

Table 5.—Distribution of Family Heads According to the Number of Moves During Earning Life, by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Number of moves	All tenures	Full owner	Part owner	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Other
Number of heads	1032	244	140	506	69	73
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No move	3.8	5.3	5.0	2.8	5.8	1.4
One	11.6	13.2	15.7	10.7	10.1	6.8
Two	12.4	17.8	14.3	10.8	5.8	8.2
Three	13.7	15.6	18.7	12.6	5.8	12.2
Four	12.3	13.2	16.4	10.5	13.1	13.9
Five	10.6	7.8	10.0	11.5	11.6	13.7
Six	8.1	5.3	7.1	8.9	8.7	12.2
Seven	6.3	7.4	3.6	6.3	10.1	4.1
Eight	4.9	3.3	2.9	6.1	5.8	5.5
Nine	3.0	2.1	2.1	3.8	2.9	2.7
Ten	3.2	2.9	1.4	3.7	1.4	4.1
Eleven	1.9	0.4	1.4	3.1	2.9	1.4
Twelve	1.8	1.6	0.0	2.0	2.9	1.4
Thirteen	2.0	2.1	0.7	2.6	2.9	1.4
Fourteen and over	4.4	2.0	0.7	4.6	10.2	11.0
Mean	5.17±.13	4.29±.22	3.84±.26	5.60±.19	6.45±.64	6.52±.61
Median	4.0	3.0	3.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Range	0-26	0-19	0-23	0-25	0-24	0-26
Mean no. of years employed	23.03	31.04	26.20	19.79	17.36	18.54
Standard error	±.43	±.87	±.96	±.57	±1.56	±.73

In general, cropper-laborers and "others," in keeping with their function of furnishing a fluid labor supply, moved more frequently than either tenants or owners. For example, 47.8 percent of the cropper-laborers had migrated six times and over in comparison with only 19.9 percent of the part-owners, the most stable tenure group.

Figure 1 shows the cumulative percentages of heads moving a specified number of times and of the number of moves reported. **Nearly two-thirds (63.3 percent) of all moves were made by slightly more than one-third (35.6 percent) of all heads of families.** Each of these migrants had moved six times and over since the beginning of earning life. **One-tenth (10.1 percent) of the heads of families, those moving over ten times each, accounted for 28.6 percent of all moves studied** (Table 6). These striking differences in the amount of migration raise the question as to the number of moves necessary in effecting a balance between population and resources. At what point does migration reach the point of diminishing returns?

Admittedly, the number of moves per family head is a crude measure of migration, with no adjustments being made for age of migrants. However, this measure is useful in indicating the futility of excessive moving as a means of elevating status. For purposes of analysis, the family heads

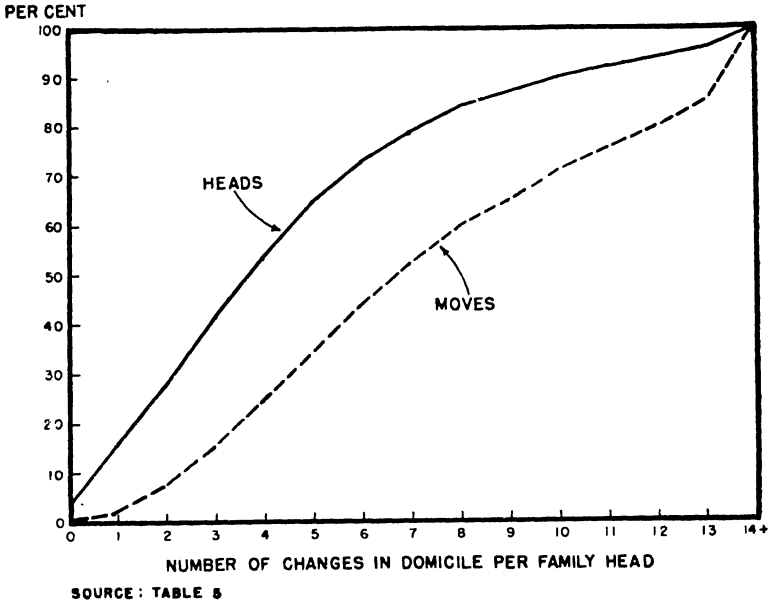

Figure 1.—Cumulative percentages of heads of families and of moves according to total number of changes in domicile.

Table 6.—Distribution of Moves Made by Heads of Families During Earning Life, by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Number of moves	All tenures	Full owners	Part owner	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Other
Number of moves	5341	1043	537	2834	451	476
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
One	2.2	3.1	4.1	1.9	1.6	1.1
Two	4.8	8.3	7.5	3.9	1.8	2.5
Three	7.9	10.9	14.5	6.7	2.7	5.7
Four	9.5	12.3	17.2	7.5	8.0	8.4
Five	10.2	9.1	13.0	10.2	8.9	10.5
Six	9.3	7.5	11.1	9.5	8.0	11.3
Seven	8.5	12.1	6.5	7.9	10.9	4.4
Eight	7.7	6.1	6.0	8.8	7.1	6.7
Nine	5.2	4.3	5.0	6.0	4.0	3.8
Ten	6.0	6.7	3.7	6.7	2.2	6.3
Eleven	4.1	1.1	0.9	6.2	4.9	2.3
Twelve	4.3	4.6	4.5	4.2	5.3	2.5
Thirteen	5.1	6.2	2.6	6.0	5.7	2.7
Fourteen and over	15.1	7.7	4.3	14.5	28.9	31.8

are divided into two groups: those moving less than six times and those moving six times and over.[10] It may be seen from the data in Table 7 that heads of families making fewer than six moves had a median net wealth and cash income per **ammain** in 1937 at least twice as large as the more frequent movers. In the least migratory group, 43.5 percent of the family heads were farm owners as against 25.9 percent in the most migratory group of heads. Also, the socioeconomic status score of the more stable group exceeded that of the less stable group, according to the scores on Sewell's status scale.[11]

All differences are statistically highly significant.

Table 7.—Median Net Wealth, Cash Income Per Ammain, and Socioeconomic Status Scores for Heads of Families Reporting Less Than Six Moves. and Six Moves and Over.

Heads classified by number of moves	Number of heads	Percent owners	Net wealth in 1937*	Gross cash income per ammain in 1937*	Socioeconomic status score
All moves	1032	37.2	$1000	$260	114
Less than six moves	665	43.5	$1400	$380	118
Six moves and over	367	25.9	$ 600	$190	105

* Net wealth is recorded to the nearest one hundred dollars and income per *ammain* to the nearest ten dollars.

In this first test of relationship between migration and socioeconomic status, the fact stands out clearly that beyond a given point moving results in little or no improvement in farm tenure status, wealth, and income. Usually a change in tenure status involved a move, but the reverse apparently did not hold true. If open-country residents do not attain farm ownership and an otherwise acceptable status by the fifth move, the chances of achieving it in subsequent moves decreases rapidly.[12]

A glance at Figure 2 shows the effects of a favorable economic situation upon migration. Farm ownership was highest among heads of families living on the parental farm, acquired in nearly all instances by inheritance or by family subsidy. Among migrants, the proportion of farm owners tended to decrease irregularly with each additional move. Over three-fourths (76.5 percent) of the family heads moving six times and over were landless.

Table 8 shows the number of moves per year at specific ages for each 100 heads of families classed by farm tenure status in 1937. All moves completed from the beginning of earning life to the end of 1937 were included. For the sample as a whole, the rate of migration decreased generally as age increased.[13]

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[10] Three-fourths of the owners and one-half of the nonowners have moved less than six times.

[11] For a discussion of this scale see William H. Sewell, *The Construction and Standardization of a Scale for the Measurement of the Socio-economic Status of Oklahoma Farm Families,* Stillwater: Oklahoma Agri. Exp. Sta. Tech. Bull. No. 9, April 1940.

[12] Available data on the net wealth in 1937 of heads of families classified by total number of moves supports this contention.

[13] The migration rate decreases about one point per year, the regression coefficient computed by the method of least squares being .835.

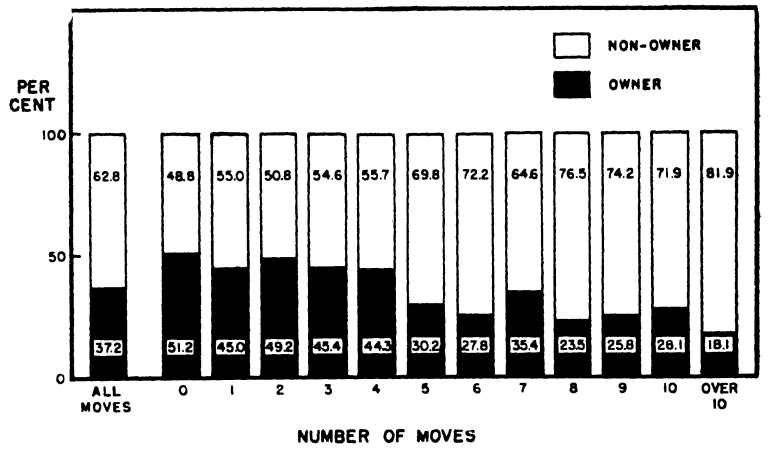

Figure 2.—The percentage of distribution of owners and non-owners of farms, classified by total number of moves.

Throughout earning life. farm owners were less migratory than tenants, and the latter moved less than cropper-laborers and "others." The total migration rate for each tenure group indicates that tenants moved twice as frequently as farm owners and that nonfarmers were about one-third more migratory than tenants. Beyond the age of 64 years the family heads in the landless classes tended to become less stable as a result of losses in tenure status, income, and wealth. Especially was this true among "other" heads, many of whom had experienced losses in status.

Table 8.—Average Number of Moves Per Year for Each 100 Heads of Families in Specified Age Groups, by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Age of heads at time of migration, years	All tenures	Full owner	Part owner	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Other
All ages	22.6	14.0	14.7	28.3	37.1	36.4
Under 20	49.3	41.3	47.0	49.7	59.7	57.7
20-24	44.1	35.3	38.0	46.6	59.9	48.6
25-29	29.3	23.8	22.0	32.4	37.3	38.9
30-34	21.8	16.1	14.4	25.3	32.2	35.1
35-39	16.9	12.0	9.1	21.0	29.7	28.0
40-44	14.3	7.3	9.3	19.8	24.3	28.1
45-49	13.1	8.2	3.8	18.5	26.4	33.7
50-54	11.7	6.1	2.7	20.1	20.3	21.5
55-59	7.9	3.0	1.7	14.9	15.6	19.6
60-64	8.5	2.7	1.0	12.9	14.3	19.6
65 and over	7.4	1.1	*	13.4	*	37.5

* Small samples are omitted.

Changes in Volume of Migration

To determine changes in the volume of migration, the number of moves per year was computed at specific ages during earning life for each 100 heads of families classified by age in 1937. The results in Table 9 show that not only had migration decreased generally with increasing age, but that older heads in 1937 had been consistently less migratory during their careers than those in the younger ages. The migration rates for all age groups except one was greater in the last age level than that experienced by heads in the next older age group at the corresponding level. The most pronounced increases in migration had occurred at the age levels from 15 to 24 years and 45 years and over. Reading horizontally, the family heads from 35 to 44 years of age in 1937 had succeeded in reducing the amount of moving as age advanced to a greater extent than those in other age groups.[14]

Table 9.—Average Number of Moves per Year for Each 100 Heads of Families at Specified Ages During Earning Life, Classified According to Age in 1937.

Age of heads in 1937, years	All ages	AGE LEVEL AT TIME OF MOVE, YEARS					
		15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over
Average number of moves	21.6*						
15-24	64.5	64.5					
25-34	33.5	37.5	29.5				
35-44	25.00	34.8	24.4	16.0			
45-54	21.6	26.7	26.8	17.1	15.0		
55-64	18.3	22.1	27.0	18.0	13.5	8.6	
65 and over	13.7	17.8	24.4	14.3	10.6	6.9	8.2

* Includes beginning or entrance moves.

If migration has increased, the explanations for it are readily apparent. The keen competition for farms and jobs accompanying population growth of the survey counties has intensified population movements. Also, the increase in migration is not incompatible with the long-time upward trend in the amount of landlessness. It is logical, too, that the incidence of migration increases would fall most heavily upon persons in the extreme age groups. Until the beginning of World War II, many persons in the sample under 25 years of age, with limited experience and capital, encountered almost insurmountable difficulties in obtaining farms or other employment. Similarly, large numbers of persons 45 years of age and over have been unwilling or unable to adopt new farming practices with which to stabilize their competitive economic position.

An Index of Migration

The construction of an index of migration should take into account the factor of age in moving. Tenure status, wealth, income, and plane of

[14] These observations must be accepted with caution because of the possibility of increasing completeness and accuracy in the reporting of moves as the survey year is approached. Another tabulation showing the age-specific migration rates calculated for three-year periods indicates that, for the sample as a whole, there was less moving recently than when the heads were younger.

living depend primarily upon this biological variable, and secondarily upon innumerable social variables. In fact, nearly all social behavior to a considerable degree is a function of age. Therefore, by standardizing its effect, the influence of other variables upon a certain pattern of behavior can be measured with greater precision.

Experimentation with several indexes of migration revealed their inadequacies for purposes of this research.[15] Generally these measures were not suited to the heterogeneous age and occupational groupings inherent in this sample. To overcome some of the objections, the heads of families were classified into migration groups according to the following procedure.

1. The coded cases were sorted into classes of five-year intervals based upon the number of years of earning life reported by heads of families.
2. The next step was to array the cases in ascending order according to the number of moves, including the beginning move, if any, since the head of family became self-supporting.
3. Each array was divided inot quartiles, the first quartile containing heads with the fewest moves and the fourth quartile consisting of those with the most moves.
4. All cases in the first quartile were designated as Migration Group I, those in the second as Migration Group II, those in the third as Migration Group III, and those in the last quartile as Migration Group IV. In forming the quartiles, it was necessary in a few instances to make the division within a group having the same number of moves. This was accomplished by placing these heads in order of duration of earning life and selecting as the more migratory those with the smallest number of years of earning life.

The Migration Groups derived from this procedure were standardized for two factors: age, and the amount of migration. As can be seen in Table 10, the age differences among male heads of families in the four groups were negligible. On the other hand, highly significant differences in the amount of moving among the four groups can be observed from the data in Table 11. In Migration Group I none of the heads had moved as many as six times, but six of every seven heads in Migration Group IV had moved six times and over. As between the intermediate groups, only one in fourteen heads in Migration Group II and nearly one of every two heads in Migration Group III had migrated six times and over. That there is a high degree of relationship between the quartiles and the actual number of moves is shown by the coefficient of contingency which is .931 (adjusted).[16] These data signify that the Migration Groups constitute a valid and reliable index of migration.

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[15] The correlation coefficient between Williams' index of migration and the actual number of moves was only .362±.027 for the sample under study. See B. O. Williams, *Occupational Mobility Among Farmers, I—Mobility Patterns, Clemson*: South Carolina Agri. Exp. Sta. Bull. No. 296, June 1934, pp. 16-17; J. L. Hypes and John F. Markey, *The Genesis to Farming Occupations in Connecticut*, Storrs: Connecticut Agri. Exp. Sta. Bull. No. 161, October, 1929, p. 488; J. L. Hypes, Victor A. Rapport, and Eileen M. Kennedy, *Connecticut Rural Youth and Farming Occupations*, Storrs: Connecticut Agri. Exp. Sta. Bull. No. 182, November, 1932, p. 28; J. T. Sanders, *The Economic and Social Aspects of Mobility of Oklahoma Farmers*, Stillwater: Okla. Agri. Exp. Sta. Bull. No. 195, August, 1929, p. 41.

[16] For discussion of method of calculating coefficient of contingency, see Thomas Carson McCormick, *Elementary Social Statistics*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1941, pp. 205-208.

Table 10.—Age Distribution of Male Heads of Families, by Migration Groups.

Age group, years	All groups	MIGRATION GROUP I	II	III	IV
Number of male heads	1009	247	251	254	257
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20	0.2	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.4
20-24	5.3	2.4	7.2	7.5	3.5
25-29	11.2	10.9	12.7	10.6	10.5
30-34	13.4	13.8	10.7	14.2	14.8
35-39	13.5	15.0	12.4	11.0	15.6
40-44	13.5	13.0	13.9	13.4	13.6
45-49	9.0	9.3	9.2	7.1	10.5
50-54	8.9	8.1	9.6	10.2	7.8
55-59	7.5	9.3	4.8	7.1	8.9
60-64	7.6	5.3	9.1	9.4	6.6
65-69	5.6	6.1	5.2	5.5	5.8
70-74	2.5	4.4	2.4	2.0	1.2
75-79	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.6	0.8
80 and over	0.4	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.0
Median age*	42.0	42.0	42.0	42.0	42.0
Mean age*	44.2 ± .44	45.7 ± .91	44.0 ± .92	44.4 ± .95	43.9 ± .81

* Differences between average ages are not significant.

As additional proof of the reliability of the index, the heads of families were distributed into migration groups by farm tenure status in Table 12. The relatively stable farm owners were concentrated heavily in Migration Groups I and II, while nonowners were most numerous in Groups III and IV. In the percentage distributions, the regularity of decreases among owners and of decreases among nonowners in proceeding from the least migratory to the most migratory groups furnishes evidence of the functional relationship between migration and tenure status. It is believed that the data contained in Tables 10, 11, and 12, provide ample justification for the use of the Migration Groups as a standardized index of moving.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH MIGRATION AND FARM TENURE STATUS

It is difficult to isolate any particular segment of social behavior and study it independently of other phenonena that precede, coincide, and follow it in time and space sequences. Social behavior occurs not in a vacuum but in a highly complex milieu conditioned by innumerable dynamic phenomena. It is by the analysis of small areas of social relationships that sociologists seek to increase understanding of the whole of social behavior. In this research certain factors have been chosen for special study, because they appear to be associated with migration and farm tenure status. Movements in geographic space and in social space not only are related to one another but to other variables as well. The purpose of this part of the study is to focus attention upon these conditioning factors that affect relationships between migration and tenure status.

Table 11.—Distribution of Family Heads Classified into Migration Groups, by Number of Moves.

Number of moves	All groups	MIGRATION GROUP I	II	III	IV
Number of male family heads	1032	258	258	258	258
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No move	3.8	15.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
One	11.6	38.0	8.9	0.0	0.0
Two	12.4	34.5	7.4	7.8	0.0
Three	13.7	8.9	37.3	5.8	2.7
Four	12.3	3.5	30.2	11.2	4.3
Five	10.6	----	8.5	27.8	5.8
Six	8.1	----	5.0	15.5	11.6
Seven	6.3	----	2.7	11.6	10.8
Eight	4.9	----	----	7.8	12.0
Nine	3.0	----	----	4.3	7.8
Ten	3.2	----	----	7.8	4.6
Eleven	1.9	----	----	0.0	7.8
Twelve	1.8	----	----	0.4	7.0
Thirteen	2.0	----	----	----	8.1
Fourteen	0.7	----	----	----	2.7
Fifteen	0.8	----	----	----	3.1
Sixteen	0.3	----	----	----	1.2
Seventeen	0.7	----	----	----	3.1
Eighteen	0.3	----	----	----	1.2
Nineteen	0.4	----	----	----	1.5
Twenty	0.1	----	----	----	0.4
Twenty-one	0.1	----	----	----	0.4
Twenty-two	0.2	----	----	----	0.8
Twenty-three	0.4	----	----	----	1.5
Twenty-four	0.2	----	----	----	0.8
Twenty-five	0.1	----	----	----	0.4
Twenty-six	0.1	----	----	----	0.4
Median move	4.0	0.8	2.9	4.9	9.3

Table 12.—Distribution of Heads of Families into Migration Groups, by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Migration group	All tenures	Full owner	Part owner	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Other
Number of heads	1032	244	140	506	69	73
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Group I	25.0	42.6	41.4	16.0	10.1	11.0
Group II	25.0	28.7	30.0	24.7*	18.9	11.0
Group III	25.0	18.0	19.3	28.5	26.1*	34.2
Group IV	25.0	10.7	9.3	20.8	44.9	43.8

*Differences are not significant (See note under Table 3).

State of Birth

The state of birth is an important reflector of type of farming, system of land tenure, and other preconditioning factors that influence the behavior of population in a new environment. Migrants carry with them their habitual behavior patterns, and in any research treating of migration and social mobility, it is essential to know something of the cultural and geographical origins of population.[1]

Among 1023 heads of families studied, 36.8 percent were born in Oklahoma (Table 13). In fairly equal proportions, another 43.5 percent migrated from each of the four adjoining states, Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, and Texas. The remainder came from other southern states, other northern states, and foreign countries. Outside Oklahoma, the southern states furnished about one-half of the heads in the sample. Only four heads were born in states west of Oklahoma, which is evidence to confirm the heavy westward movement of population.

Table 13.—Distribution of Heads of Families into Owners and Nonowners, by State or Region of Birth.

State or region of birth	ALL HEADS		PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HEADS BY FARM OWNERSHIP STATUS		
	Number	Percent	Total	Owner	Nonowner
All states	**1023**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**37.1**	**62.9**
Oklahoma	377	36.8	100.0	28.1	71.9
Arkansas	136	13.3	100.0	17.6	82.4
Texas	107	10.4	100.0	25.2	74.8
Missouri	104	10.2	100.0	43.3*	56.7
Kansas	98	9.6	100.0	67.3	32.7
Other southern states	88	8.7	100.0	42.0*	58.0
Other northern states	94	9.2	100.0	64.5	35.5
Foreign countries	19	1.8	100.0	78.9	21.1

*Differences are not significant (See note under Table 3).

Wide variations obtained in the proportions of owners and nonowners according to state of birth. Reliably larger percentages of natives from the northern states than from the southern states owned land.[2] Of the heads of families born in Kansas, 67.3 percent were farm owners in 1937, while among natives of Arkansas the corresponding percentage was only 17.3. The youthfulness of heads of families born in Oklahoma accounts in part for the low incidence of ownership among them. Foreign-born heads had the highest proportion of farm owners among all heads in the sample.

The relationship of migration to the state of birth of heads of families can be traced to certain ecological and sociological factors tending to operate in nearly all distributions of population. First, in the process of migration, new settlers seek locations on land similar to that from which

[1] See C. E. Lively, "Note on Relation of Place-of-Birth to Place-Where-Reared," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. II, March, 1937, pp. 332-333. For studies of cultural differentials, see Howard W. Odum, *Southern Regions in the United States*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936, and A. R. Mangus, *Rural Regions of the United States*, Washington: Works Progress Administration, Government Printing Office, 1940.

[2] Other data at hand show that a higher percentage of heads born in northern than in southern states reported fathers who owned farms.

they leave. Second, migrants generally locate at the point of economic opportunity nearest their point of departure.[3] Third, within each cultural area social selction tends to distribute population on the land in such a way as to bring about a fair correlation betwen the qualities of human and land resources.

From the data in Table 14, it appears that, in general, the natives of Arkansas and Texas in the sample were highly migratory. Other southern-born heads of families, excepting those from Oklahoma, also tended to be concentrated in Migration Groups III and IV. In contrast, migrants originating in the southern states fell largely in Migration Groups I and II. There are several explanations for this situation.

Table 14.—Distribution of Heads of Families into Migration Groups, by State of Birth.

State of birth	Number of heads	PERCENTAGE OF HEADS IN MIGRATION GROUPS		
		Total	I and II	III and IV
All states	1023	100.0	49.9	50.1
Oklahoma	377	100.0	53.7*	46.3*
Arkansas	136	100.0	27.7	72.3
Texas	107	100.0	36.1	63.9
Missouri	104	100.0	50.0*	50.0*
Kansas	98	100.0	64.3	35.7
Other southern states	88	100.0	46.3*	53.7*
Other northern states	94	100.0	65.9	34.1
Foreign countries	19	100.0	78.9	21.1

* Differences are not significant.

The poorer lands of the State are in eastern Oklahoma where large proportions of southerners settled. Then, to, landlessness has been aggravated by small farms and a type of agriculture centered in the raising of cotton.[4] These factors account for much of the instability attributed to southern-born heads of families. Large proportions of natives from states outside the South reside in the western half of Oklahoma and along the northern border counties. These areas generally have better soils, larger farms, less specialized types of farming, and more farm ownership, which account in part for the greater stability of the population.

The land ownership pattern is responsible for some of the difference in the migration of southerners and northerners living in Oklahoma. Until 1907, the land in Indian Territory, covering approximately the eastern half of the State, was inaccessible to white settlers except through leasing from or intermarriage with Indian landholders. In the western half of the State, large areas were opened for homesteading as early as 1889 and 1893, which gave many of the older heads of families an opportunity to become farm owners at an early age. The homesteaders sampled migrated to Oklahoma principally from northern states.

[3] An analysis of the factor of distance in migration can be found in Robert T. McMillan, *The Interrelation of Migration and Socioeconomic Status of Open-Country Families*, Ph. D. thesis, Louisiana State University Library. Over one-half of all moves studied were for distances of less than ten miles, and two-thirds of the changes in dwelling involved distances of less than 25 miles.

[4] Rupert B. Vance, "Cotton Culture and Social Life and Institutions of the South," *Publications of the American Sociological Society*, Vol. XXIII, 1928, p. 52.

Within the limits of the universe studied and assuming unbiased sampling, three conclusions can be drawn from the foregoing analysis. In general, migration was relatively greater among southern-born heads than among those originating elsewhere. Also, heads from the southern states usually fell short of matching the natives of other states in the attainment of farm ownership. Lastly, migrants from southern states were drawn disproportionately from landless families while those from the northern states descended largely from the farm-owning class.

Occupation of Father

The occupation of the father is one of the most fundamental factors in determining the socioeconomic status and in molding the behavior of children. It has been found that sons of farmers enter agriculture in larger proportions than the sons of persons engaged in other occupations.[5] Also, there are accumulating evidences of regressive tendencies in farm tenure status from the preceding to present generations. Do these characteristics hold true for the sample under observation, and if so, what is the extent of these relationships? Are sons of landless families more or less migratory than those of farm-owning families Answers to these questions are sought in this analysis.

Over nine of every ten (93.0 percent) heads of families studied were sons of farmers, but their position on the agricultural ladder was definitely lower than that of their fathers (Table 15). The father's tenure was recorded as of the year of the son's marriage, and the tenure of the

Table 15.—Farm Tenure Distribution of Male Heads of Families and Their Fathers.

Farm tenure	Male heads	All male heads 45 years of age and over	Fathers of male heads
Number of heads	1009	375	916
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
Owner	37.2	53.2	60.9
Tenant	49.1	39.8	31.1
Cropper-laborer	6.7	3.5*	0.6
Nonagriculturist	7.0	3.5*	7.4*

* Differences are not significant.

propositi was that reported in 1937. Heads of families had worked for themselves for about 23 years on the average, which probably did not differ greatly from the age of the father at the time of the son's marriage. Among the fathers of male heads, 60.9 percent were farm owners; for the propositi the corresponding percentage was only 37.2. Among heads of families 45 years old and over, the loss in tenure status was less noticeable, the percentage of farm owners being 57.2. However, the sharp decrease in farm tenure status in two generations is evidence of the rapid loss of property rights in the land by tillers of the soil.[6]

[5] W. A. Anderson, "The Transmission of Farming As An Occupation," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. IV, December, 1939, p. 434, and Pitirim Sorokin, *Social Mobility*, p. 418.

[6] *Cf.* Roy Hinman Holmes, *Rural Sociology*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1932, pp. 73-75.

When the tenure status of fathers and sons are compared as in Table 16, some interesting relationships can be observed. Among the male heads in the sample, 40.9 percent held a lower tenure status than their fathers, 48.0 percent possessed a similar status, and 11.1 percent occupied a higher status. The heaviest losses in status were experienced by sons of farm owners, over one-half of whom were landless in 1937. However, the sons of tenants definitely were handicapped, as compared with sons of farm owners, in achieving ownership of land. Only 17.5 percent of the tenants' sons became owners as against 45.9 percent of owners' sons. A majority of sons of tenants, 82.5 percent, had not risen above a landless status, and from data in Table 16, it can be seen that they were much more likely to fall into the cropper-laborer and "other" groups than were the sons of farm owners and nonagriculturists. Generally, the sons of nonagriculturists advanced to a higher tenure status than the sons of tenants but not up to that of farm owners' sons.

By computing the expected tenure distribution of male heads based upon the tenure of their fathers and comparing this with the observed or actual distribution, several facts become apparent (Table 17). The sons of farm owners and those of tenants tended to occupy the same tenure status as their fathers. The sons of nonagriculturists were more numerous than expected in the owner, cropper-laborer, and "other" groups, from which it may be inferred that in some cases, heads of families preferred agricultural over nonagricultural occupations and in others, marginal heads of families gravitated into the residual laborer classes of agriculture. The degree of similarity between the tenure status of fathers and sons was somewhat lower than might be expected because of the regressive tendencies among owners' and tenants' sons. The adjusted coefficient of contingency is .358.

By reversing the approach, the tenure of the father can be compared with that of the son. The data in Table 18 show that farm owners were twice as likely to be sons of owners as were cropper-laborers and "others." Tenants, more often than not, were sons of farm owners. It was much easier for a son of a farm owner to fall into a lower tenure class than for a son of a landless father to climb into the farm-owner class.

A supplementary tabulation shows that the amount of migration among male heads of families definitely is associated with the tenure status of fathers. The sons of farm-owning families tended to be concentrated in the low migration groups and those of landless families in the high migration groups.

Table 16.—Farm Tenure Status of Male Heads of Families, by Tenure of Father.

Tenure of father	Number of male heads	PERCENTAGE OF HEADS IN FARM TENURE STATUS SPECIFIED				
		Total	Owner	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Other
All tenures	916	100.0	36.9	50.3	6.1	6.7
Farm owner	588	100.0	45.5*	46.4*	3.6*	4.1*
Farm tenant	285	100.0	17.5	61.4	10.6*	10.5*
Cropper-laborer	5	100.0	**	**	**	**
Nonagriculturist	68	100.0	42.7*	41.2*	7.3	8.8*

* Differences are not significant.
** Inadequate sample.

Table 17.—The Expected and Observed Tenure Distribution of Male Heads of Families, by Tenure of Father.

Tenure of father	FARM TENURE STATUS OF MALE HEADS*				
	Owner	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Other	Total
Nonagriculturist	(25) 29(+)	(34) 28(−)	(4) 5(+)	(5) 6(+)	68
Cropper-laborer	(18) 0(−)	(25) 3(−)	(0.3) 0(−)	(0.3) 2(+)	5
Tenant	(105) 50(−)	(144) 175(+)	(17) 30(+)	(19) 30(+)	285
Owner	(206) 259(±)	(281) 256(−)	(34) 20(−)	(37) 23(−)	558
Total	338	462	55	61	916

* Expected numbers are bracketed; observed numbers are unbracketed. Plus and minus signs indicate the direction of difference of the observed from the expected numbers.

To summarize, landlessness is passed from one generation to another to a greater extent than is farm ownership. While there is a fairly high degree of occupational transmission from one generation to the next, the similarity of tenure status between the fathers and the propositi has been reduced by the shift downward from land proprietorship to tenancy. It is not unlikely that the sons of family heads under study may have considerable difficulty in achieving and maintaining the status of farm tenant. That is, increased proportions of tenants' sons will find opportunities in agriculture only as farm laborers.

Formal Education

In appraising the influence of formal education upon socioeconomic status and migratory behavior, it should be remembered that schooling cannot be isolated easily from numerous other complicating factors. Persons with inferior schooling usually are handicapped by inadequacies in home training, extra-home environment, and financial support at the

Table 18.—Farm Tenure Status of Fathers, by Farm Tenure Status of Male Heads of Families.

Farm status of male head	Number of fathers	PERCENTAGE OF FATHERS IN TENURES SPECIFIED				
		Total	Owner	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Non-agriculture
All tenures	916	100.0	60.9	31.1	0.6	7.4
Owner	338	100.0	76.6	14.8	0.0	8.6*
Tenant	462	100.0	55.9	37.9	0.0	6.2*
Cropper-laborer	55	100.0	36.4	54.5	0.0	9.1
Other	61	100.0	37.7	49.2	3.3	9.8

* Differences are not significant.

beginning of earning life. The socioeconomic status of the parental family also is of major importance in determning not only the education of children but their ultimate success or failure. Differences in age, personal traits, location, period in history, and other factors likewise tend to obscure the relationships between education and other variables. However, the emphasis upon education in our society justifies an appraisal of its significance here. First of all, it may be stated that approximately three-fifths of the male heads whose fathers were landless received less than eighth grades of schooling as against two-fifths of those heads coming from homes of farm owners and nonagriculturists.[7]

In Table 19, the male heads are distributed according to the highest grade completed in school by farm tenure status. Four-fifths reported completion of eight grades or less of schooling. Nearly one-fourth had not gone to school beyond the fourth grade. The mean grade completed for all heads was $6.8 \pm .25$.

The amount of schooling of owners and tenants was practically the same, but it was considerably greater among farmers than nonfarmers. When these data are standardized for age, as in Table 20, sharp differences can be noted. As the ages of heads decreased, the amount of schooling increased significantly. This holds true for every tenure group, except among those heads classed as "others." Larger proportions of heads 35 to 54 years of age had completed the eighth grade than of heads 55 years old and older. It was among the youngest family heads, those under 35 years old, that the opportunities for high school training had been exploited most.

Although the gains in education had been extended to all tenure classes, when allowances are made for age, farm owners had more schooling than tenants, and tenants more than cropper-laborers and "others." This fact confirms the findings of a study of Oklahoma cotton farmers made in 1926 in which 77.4 percent of the full owners, and 85.7 percent of the tenants had an eighth-grade schooling or less.[8] In a later study based upon Oklahoma wheat farmers interviewed in 1933, it was found that 86.0 percent of the owners and 72.8 percent of the tenants had eight grades or less of schooling.[9] For the sample under observation, 81.4 percent of the full owners and 79.9 percent of the tenants had an elementary schooling or less. Although sufficient time had not elapsed between the taking of the three samples to reveal a uniform increase in education, there are evidences in each sample of a generally improved educational status among younger heads of families as compared with older heads.

The failure of large proportions of heads of families in the younger ages to go beyond the eighth grade suggests that school problems are far from solution. The lack of adequate educational facilities, the economic burden of education at the high school level, and the traditional disinclination to take advantage of greater educational opportunities frequently retard advancement in the educational attainments of the open-country population.

In Table 21 it may be seen that male heads with less than an eighth-grade schooling are concentrated in Migration Groups III and IV. However, those heads possessing high-school training did not migrate less frequently than those with an eighth-grade education. Therefore, only heads with less than an elementary schooling were prevented by this and other factors from achieving a greater degree of stability.

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[7] Data were taken from supplementary tabulation.

[8] O. D. Duncan and J. T. Sanders, *A Study of Certain Economic Factors in Relation to Social Life of Oklahoma Cotton Farmers,* Stillwater: Oklahoma Agri. Exp. Sta. Bull. No. 211, April, 1933, p. 23.

[9] Otis Durant Duncan, *An Analysis of Farm Family Organization in Oklahoma,* Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Louisiana State University Library, 1941, p. 197.

Table 19.—Amount of Formal Education of Male Heads of Families, by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Highest grade completed in school	All tenures	Full owner	Part owner	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Other
Number of male heads	922	221	134	496	69	72
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
0	4.6	4.1*	3.7*	5.1*	2.9*	6.9*
1-4	18.5	22.6*	8.2	17.9*	29.0	19.4*
5-7	25.6	20.8*	33.6	24.6*	24.6*	34.7*
8	32.1	33.9*	34.4*	32.3*	24.6*	29.2*
9-11	10.7	9.5*	12.7*	10.9*	11.6*	4.2
12	5.4	5.9*	2.2	6.2*	5.8*	4.2*
13 and over	3.1	3.2*	5.2*	3.0*	1.5*	1.4*
Mean grade	6.8	6.9	7.4	7.0	6.4	6.3
Standard error	±.25	±.21	±.24	±.14	±.37	±.35

* Differences are not significant.

Table 20.—Formal Education of Male Heads, by Farm Tenure Status and Age Group.

Farm tenure status and age group, years	Number of male heads	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED IN SCHOOL			
		Total	0-7	8	9 and over
All heads	922	100.0	48.7	32.1	19.2
Under 35	303	100.0	32.0	37.6	30.4
35-54	448	100.0	51.4	34.5	14.1
55 and over	241	100.0	65.1	21.2	13.7
Full owners	221	100.0	47.5*	33.9*	18.6*
Under 35	20	100.0	10.0	45.0	45.0
35-54	106	100.0	45.3*	39.6*	15.1*
55 and over	95	100.0	57.9*	25.3*	16.8*
Part owners	134	100.0	45.5*	34.3*	20.2*
Under 35	18	100.0	16.7	50.0	33.3*
35-54	78	100.0	44.9*	34.6*	20.5*
55 and over	38	100.0	60.5*	26.3*	13.2*
Tenants	496	100.0	47.6*	32.3*	20.1*
Under 35	194	100.0	30.4*	36.6*	33.0*
35-54	213	100.0	52.6*	34.7*	12.7*
55 and over	89	100.0	73.0*	16.9*	10.1*
Cropper-laborers	69	100.0	55.9*	25.0*	19.1*
Under 35	32	100.0	31.2*	30.6*	28.2*
35-54	29	100.0	82.1	10.7	7.2*
55 and over	8	**	**	**	**
Others	72	100.0	61.1	29.2*	9.7
Under 35	39	100.0	58.9	30.8*	10.3
35-54	22	100.0	54.5*	36.4*	19.1*
55 and over	11	100.0	81.8	9.1	9.1*

* Differences are not significant.
** Inadequate sample.

Table 21.—Formal Education of Male Heads of Families, by Migration Groups.

Highest grade completed in school	Number of heads	PERCENTAGE OF HEADS IN MIGRATION GROUPS		
		Total	I and II	III and IV
All grades	992	100.0	49.1	50.9
0-7	485	100.0	41.7	58.3
8	319	100.0	56.7	43.3
9 and over	188	100.0	55.9	44.1

Age at Leaving Home and at Marriage

The age at which children depart from their parental home to assume responsibility for self-support varies among different tenure and migration groups. Basically, the family's socioeconomic status and the opportunities for employment away from home determine the age at departure. If the parental farm is of sufficient size to absorb the family labor, children tend to remain longer at home. If the farm cannot support the family unit at an acceptable level of living, such conditions as overcrowded homes, disagreement among family members, shortage of funds for the purchase of clothing and amusement, a dreary home life, desire for marriage, search for adventure, yearning fo rfurther education, and sundry psycho-social factors furnish adequate incentives for leaving home. Furthermore, the relative abundance or scarcity of farming and nonfarming opportunities is a factor which determines the age at leaving home. In many instances both push and pull factors operate simultaneously to bring about the separation of children from their parents. Regardless of the reason assigned for departure from home, the event itself is of considerable social significance.[10]

With reference to the sampled heads. there was a direct relationship between the age at leaving home and farm tenure status. The average age at departure decreased by tenure in the following order: farm owners, tenants, "others," and cropper-laborers (Table 22). Nearly one-third of the family heads in the latter group had left home by the age of 18 years, inclusive; among part owners, the corresponding proportion was only one-seventh. The relatively favorable conditions in the parental home delayed the departure of one-fourth of the full owners until they were 25 years old and over. Slightly over one-tenth of the cropper-laborers remained at home until that age. The modal age of departure from home in each tenure group was the legal age of 21 years.

From the foregoing data it may be concluded that economic motives dominate in precipitating separation from the parental home and that the push factors seem to exert relatively greater influence than the pull factors in the initial migration.

As migration is largely a function of tenure status, it follows that early departure from the parental home tends to be associated with frequent migration. In a supplementary tabulation, 62.0 percent of the male heads who left home before the age of 21 years were in Migration Groups III and IV, whereas a similar proportion in Migration Groups I and II started working for themselves at the age of 25 and over. The mean age at leaving

[10] C. Horace Hamilton, "The Annual Rate of Departure of Rural Youths From Their Parental Home," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. I, June, 1936, pp. 164-179.

Table 22.—Age at Leaving Home, by Farm Tenure Status of Male Heads of Families in 1937.

Age group, years	All tenures	Full owner	Part owner	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Other
Number of male heads	1008	235	134	499	68	72
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 15	2.0	2.1*	0.7*	2.2*	0.0	4.2*
15-16	4.5	5.6*	2.9*	3.2*	11.8*	5.6*
17-18	13.0	12.7*	11.2*	12.4*	20.6*	13.9*
19-20	17.5	11.5	15.0*	20.8*	17.7*	19.4*
21-22	30.9	29.4*	35.9*	31.8*	22.0*	30.5*
23-24	12.3	12.3*	12.7*	12.2*	16.2*	8.3*
25-26	9.1	10.2*	14.2*	8.6*	4.4*	4.2
27-28	4.9	6.8*	2.3*	4.4*	0.0	8.3*
29-30	2.4	4.7*	0.7*	1.8*	2.9*	4.2*
30 and over	3.4	4.7*	4.4*	2.6*	4.4*	1.4*
Mean age	21.4	22.3	22.1*	21.5*	20.7*	21.0*
Standard error	±.14	±.30	±.37	±.18	±.45	±.46

* Differences are not significant.

home for each Migration Group was: Group I, 24.0±.31 years; Group II, 22.5±.31 years; Group III, 22.0±.25 years, and, Group IV, 21.3±.24 years.

From other available data, it appears that the age of departure from the parental home is decreasing. The average age at leaving home for heads under 35 years of age was 20.7±.18 years as compared with 22.8±.36 years for heads 55 years of age and over. What the ultimate effect of this trend will be in terms of socioeconomic status and migratory behavior cannot be predicted, but certainly the youthful migrants, handicapped by immaturity, mediocre schooling, and inadequate financial resources aggravate unemployment and underemployment by their early entrance into a fiercely competitive economy.[11] Without assistance in the purchase of land, livestock, and machinery, and without access to regular employment except on public works, young adults living in the open country can hardly expect to earn more than barely enough to supply their minimum physical needs.

Another tendency closely related to early departure from home is the decreasing age at marriage. The mean age at marriage for male heads was 23.7 years, but those heads under 35 years of age were 4.1 years younger on the average at the time of marriage than those 55 years old and over (Table 23).

In his studies of Oklahoma farmers, Duncan also found that the age at marriage in Oklahoma has been decreasing for thirty years.[12] He arrived at this conclusion by comparing the ages at marriage of heads of families and of their children and also by the method used above.

There are several reasons for the foregoing trends. During the prestatehood or frontier period, men greatly outnumbered women, thereby causing a lag in the age at marriage of males.[13] As the disparity between sexes

[11] Low educational status was not traceable to early age at departure from the parental home. Usually the family heads had remained with their parents long enough to take advantage of elementry and high-school training.

[12] Otis Durant Duncan, *op. cit.*, pp. 309-310.

[13] Otis Durant Duncan, *Population Trend in Oklahoma*, Stillwater: Oklahoma Agri. Exp. Sta. Bull. No. 224, March, 1935, pp. 17, 19-21.

Table 23.—Age at Marriage of Male Heads of Families, by Age Groups in 1937.

Age at marriage, years	All ages	AGE OF HEADS IN 1937		
		15-34	35-54	55 and over
Number of male heads	969	292	437	240
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
15-16	0.5	1.4*	0.0	0.4*
17-18	5.3	9.9	3.9*	2.1
19-20	14.8	24.3	13.5*	5.4
21-22	28.2	33.6*	29.1*	20.0
23-24	17.0	13.0*	16.9*	22.1*
25-26	13.8	12.0*	14.4*	15.0*
27-28	8.0	4.1	8.5*	11.7*
29-30	4.6	1.4	4.6*	8.7
Over 30	7.8	0.3	9.1*	14.6
Mean age	23.7	21.6	24.0*	25.7
Standard error	±.14	±.17	±.21	±.34

* Differences are not significant.

decreased, the involuntary postponement of marriage among males became less imperative. Also, the older settlers in Oklahoma were long-distance migrants who characteristically were single. The younger men, on the other hand, have grown up in the communities in which they now live, thus facilitating earlier marital unions. Agriculture is essentially a family economy, and the diminution of employment in nonagricultural industries has forced young men to accept one of two alternatives: continued residence on the home farm, or marriage and the establishment of a new family. Under the New Deal, marriage has become, for practical purposes, a requirement for eligibility on public works in many open-country communities.[14] Therefore, it is not surprising to learn that many youth leaving home at an early age enter immediately into an expedient, if not exactly economically desirable, marriage. Actually, early marriage among the under-privileged classes may afford compensation for thwarted psychosocial needs.[15]

Because the fertility of women is higher in the late teens and early twenties, and because early marriages have their highest incidence in the nonlandowning classes, it seems highly probable that the property'ess class will continue to expand in numbers even without additional recruits from the landowning class.[16]

[14] *Cf.* James H. Bossard, "Depression and Pre-Depression Marriage Rates: A Philadelphia Study," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. II, October, 1937, p. 694.

[15] C. Horace Hamilton has shown, however, that the incidence of marriage was lower among the relief than the non-relief population of a North Carolina sample in the years 1932 to 1934, inclusive. "The Trend of the Marriage Rate in Rural North Carolina," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. I, December, 1936, p. 455. Also see Robert T. McMillan, *A Social and Economic Study of Relief Families in Otawa County, Oklahoma, 1934*, Stillwater: Oklahoma Agri. Exp. Sta. Tech. Bull. No. 2, July, 1938, p. 33.

[16] *Cf.* Bernard K. Karpinos and Clyde V. Kiser, "The Differential Fertility and Potential Rates of Growth of Various Income and Educational Classes of Urban Population in the United States," *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, Vol. XVII, October, 1939, pp. 367-391, and O. E. Baker, "Significance of Population Trends to American Agriculture," *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, Vol. XV, April, 1937, pp. 129 *et passim*.

Beginning Occupation

A comparison of the farm tenure status of the heads of families in 1937 with the beginning status reveals the relative constancy of the social strata. Although an average of 23.0±.44 years had elapsed between the first employment and that held in 1937, the heads reporting farm ownership had increased only from 12.0 to 37.2 percent.[17] The amount of tenancy had remained practically unchanged, but there had been a decrease during the interim among cropper-farm laborers and those engaged in nonagricultural occupations.

A detailed comparison between the initial tenure and the one held in 1937 is given in Table 24. Three-fourths of the 124 heads in the sample beginning as farm owners still retained this status at the time of survey. Most of the remainder had become tenants. This group of heads had been working 27 years on the average.

Table 24.—Farm Tenure Status of Heads of Families in 1937, Classified by Beginning Status.

Farm tenure status in 1937	All tenures	BEGINNING TENURE STATUS			
		Owner	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Other
Number of heads	1029	124	499	242	164
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full owner	23.4	52.4	17.5	17.8	28.1
Part owner	13.6	23.7	14.6	6.2	14.0
Tenant	49.2	21.8	58.5	48.8	42.1
Cropper-laborer	6.7	0.8	4.2	17.3	3.0
Other	7.1	1.6	5.2	9.9	12.8

By far the largest number of heads, 499, began as tenants upon leaving home. Nearly three-fifths of them still occupied this status at the time of interview. About three and one-half times as many of the remaining tenants had climbed to farm ownership as had fallen into the wage-earning and dependent classes during an earning life which averaged 21 years. **But, it is significant that only one in three heads starting as tenants had moved up the agricultural ladder.**

The wage earners have even fewer possibilities of attaining farm ownership than do tenants. Scarcity of land and deficiencies in capital, knowledge of agriculture, and initiative force many farm youth to start earning life as a cropper or farm laborer. Among 242 heads launching their careers at this level, only one-fourth had become farm owners by 1937. Nearly one-half of these heads had advanced to the tenant stage. Larger proportions had fallen into the dependent class than was the case among heads commencing as farm owners and tenants (Table 24). This group averaged 24 years of employment.

Among the 164 heads whose initial employment was in nonagricultural occupations, over four-fifths were distributed equally between farm owner and tenant classes. The group as a whole, with an average earning life of 23 years, ranked above starting tenants but below farm owners in the position achieved on the agricultural ladder by 1937.

[17] Data were taken from supplementary tabulation.

Table 25.—Proportions of Heads of Families Reporting a Higher, a Lower, or the Same Tenure Status in 1937 in Comparison with the Beginning Status.

Tenure status in 1937 compared with first status	All tenures	Owner	NON-LANDOWNERS IN 1937			
			Total non-owners	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Other
Number of heads	1029	381	648	506	69	73
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Higher status	44.2	71.9	27.9	35.8	0.0	0.0
Same status	44.1	26.5	54.5	58.3	60.9	21.9
Lower status	11.7	1.6	17.6	5.9	39.1	78.1**

** Heads receiving 50 percent and over of their cash income from relief were classed as having a lower status.

Table 26.—Beginning Farm Tenure Status of Male Heads of Families, by Status in 1937.

Beginning occupational status	All ages	AGE GROUP IN 1937, YEARS		
		15-34	35-54	55 and over
Number of male heads	1008	308	450	250
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Owner	11.7	4.2	10.7*	22.8
Tenant	48.4	50.6*	52.2*	38.8
Cropper-laborer	23.6	27.3*	21.8*	22.4*
Other	16.3	17.9*	15.3*	16.0*

* Differences are not significant.

By reversing the approach to those data, the beginning tenure can be compared with that held in 1937 to ascertain what progress, if any, had occurred. This has been done in Table 25.

Contrary to a widely accepted opinion, **a majority (72.1 percent) of the landless heads of families reported their tenure status in 1937 either on the same or a lower level than their beginning employment.** Most farm owners were in a higher status in 1937 than at the beginning of their gainful employment, but with each downward step in tenure, increasing proportions of heads occupied a lower status than the first one reported. It should be pointed out that farm owners had been working longer than other tenure groups.[18]

The next step is to compare the beginning tenure status by age of heads of families in 1937. Nearly one in four of the heads 55 years old and older had owned their farms at the beginning of earning life as against one in twenty-five heads under 35 years of age (Table 26).[19] The prin-

[18] The mean number of years of gainful employment for each tenure group was: farm owners, 29; tenants, 20; cropper-farm laborers, 17; and others, 19.

[19] *Cf.* John D. Black and R. H. Allen, "The Growth of Farm Tenancy in the United States," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. LI, May, 1937, p. 420.

cipal reason for the decrease in the percentage of farm owners at the beginning of earning life can be traced to the cessation of homesteading and of land grants to persons in the State having Indian blood. Fifty of the sixty-one heads in the sample having an Indian allotment or homestead on which to begin farming received it prior to 1920. Inheritances had increased in number since 1919 but not sufficiently to offset the reduction in homesteads and Indian allotments.

Beginning Wealth

During the last two decades the tendency toward greater mechanization of farms has increased the capital requirements in agriculture. At the same time the problems of acquiring capital have become more numerous. Most of the free land has been occupied, and, with the increase in population and internal development of the State, land values have risen. The decrease in the effective demand for many agricultural products and acompanying low prices have reduced the profitableness of farming. To offset losses during periods of drouth low prices, and to acquire new machinery, farmers have burdened themselves with debt. In doing this they have increased their debt service costs. Savings have been reduced as a result. All these factors have impinged most heavily upon youth seeking a foothold in agriculture. The relative scarcity of employment in cities also has aggravated their plight. Possibly, too, the practice of farmers assisting their sons and daughters financially at the beginning of earning life tended to disappear during the depression.

The problem here is to study the wealth of family heads at the beginning of earning life and to establish its relationship, if any, to subsequent migration and socioeconomic status.

The sharp reduction in the proportion of heads starting their careers as farm owners in recent years has been noted previously. A similar reduction probably has ocurred in the amount of initial wealth. Data from a supplemental tabulation show that about four-fifths of the family heads began their careers with less than $500 gross wealth. No reliable differences were noted from one period to another, but the difficulty encountered in procuring estimated values of homesteads and Indian allotments resulted in an undervaluation of the wealth of some of the older heads. Furthermore, the purchasing power of the dollar for all Oklahoma farm commodities wah higher during the pre-war period than in the post-war period.[20] Granting these facts, the conclusion seems warranted that since the first World War, new heads of families have begun their careers with less capital than those commencing prior to that time.

According to data not shown here in tabular form, the amount of capital at the beginning of earning life varied inversely with the degree of subsequent migration. Heads of families with less than $500 initial capital were four times as numerous in Migration Groups III and IV as heads with $2500 and over.

The value of government or family financial assistance to persons beginning earning life should not be under-estimated. The practice of establishing dowries, long considered essential to the foundation and perpetuation of family life in Europe,[21] has not been used to any great extent in the United States because of accessibility to free lands and ready employment in expanding industries. With the closing of the frontier and

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[20] Trimble Hedges and K. D. Blood, *Oklahoma Farm Price Statistics, 1910-1938*, Stillwater: Oklahoma Agri. Exp. Sta. Bull. No. 238, December, 1939, p. 114.

[21] Carle C. Zimmerman and Merle E. Frampton, *Family and Society*, New York: Van Nostrand Company, 1935, pp. 531 and 564.

the changing character of economic development, other direct means of establishing families upon a self-sustaining basis may become necessary.

Among 1032 heads studied, 12.0 percent had received a homestead, Indian allotment, or gifts and inheritances at the beginning of earning life (Table 27). Over one-fourth of the full owners were recipients of capital assistance. With each descent in tenure status, the proportions of heads starting their careers with some form of direct subsidy decreased. The incidence of gifts and inheritances was twice as great as that of homesteads and allotments combined.

Table 27.—Incidence of Government and Family Financial Assistance at the Beginning of Earning Life, by Farm Tenure Status of Heads in 1937.

Classification	All tenures	Full owner	Part owner	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Other
Number of heads	1032	244	140	506	69	73
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Heads receiving homestead, allotment, of inheritance	12.0	27.5	9.3	8.1	4.3	2.7
Homestead	2.6	7.0	3.6	1.0	0.0	0.0
Allotment	3.1	6.6	5.7	1.6	0.0	2.7
Inheritance or gift	6.3	13.9	0.0	5.5	4.3	0.0
Heads related to landlord	17.4	12.7	12.9	21.3	30.5	13.7
Heads reporting no government or family assistance	70.6	59.8	77.8	70.6	65.2	83.6

If an individual is related to the landlord, the fact usually signifies a supervisory or pecuniary form of assistance. The heads reporting relationship to the landlord in the first employment fell into two distinct groups: first, sons of well-to-do landlords who expected to inherit the home farm at retirement or death of the latter, and, second, sons who, by reason of lack of initiative or lack of capital, exhibited more than average dependency upon relatives. At the beginning of earning life, about one-sixth of all heads were related to the landlord, the proportions increasing generally with each descent in tenure status.

Type of Family and Size of Households

The most common type of family represented in this study consisted of husband, wife, and children, 83.2 percent of the units falling in this category (Table 28).[22] Childless couples constituted only 6.3 percent of the sample. Families in which either the husband or wife was dead or not living at home accounted for another 5.0 percent of the families. Non-family groups, consisting of single persons, siblings, or other combinations,

[22] *Cf.* Charles P. Loomis, *The Growth of the Farm Family in Relation to Its Activities*, Raleigh: North Carolina Agri. Exp. Sta. Bull. No. 298, June, 1934; E. L. Kirkpatrick, Rosalind Tough, and May L. Cowles, *The Life Cycle of the Farm Family*, Madison: Wisconsin Agri. Exp. Sta. Res. Bull. No. 121, September, 1934: and, Otis Durant Duncan, *An Analysis of Farm Family Organization in Oklahoma*, Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Louisiana State University Library, 1941.

Table 28.—Distribution of Families into Types, by Farm Tenure Status and Migration Groups.

Farm tenure status and migration groups	Number of families	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILIES BY TYPE						
				Families with Children				
		Total	Childless families	15-35 years of age	0-14 years of age	35 years of age and over	Broken	Unclassified
All heads	1032	100.0	6.3	36.6	36.8	10.2	5.0	5.4
Farm tenure status								
Full owner	244	100.0	2.9	17.6	41.4*	18.8	8.2*	11.1
Part owner	140	100.0	4.3*	20.0	50.0	10.7*	7.1*	7.9*
Tenant	506	100.0	7.5*	46.2	34.1*	6.8	3.2*	2.2
Cropper-laborer	69	-00.0	11.6*	42.0*	29.0*	5.8*	5.8*	5.8*
Other	73	100.0	8.2*	56.2	21.9	8.2*	1.4	4.1*
Migration Group								
I	258	100.0	6.2*	34.5*	38.0*	9.3*	6.2*	5.8*
II	258	100.0	8.9*	32.2*	35.2*	10.1*	6.6*	7.0*
III	258	100.0	7.4*	37.6*	33.7*	10.5*	3.1*	7.7*
IV	258	100.0	2.7	41.0*	40.3*	10.9*	3.9*	1.2

* Differences are not significant.

made up the remaining 5.4 percent. These figures indicate a greater incidence of normal families in the sample than is characteristic of other open-country areas.[23] The homogeneity of population with reference to nativity, occupational background, and religious and educational indoctrination partially explains this persistence of familism. Furthermore, the high degree of rurality of the counties surveyed tends to accentuate the characteristics noted.

The types of families were differentiated more clearly by farm tenure status than by migration groups, principally because the latter reflected adjustments for age. Relatively more landowning families were completed, broken, or unclassified in comparison with younger landless families, many of whom had no children, or no children under 15 years of age. Though no reliable differences in types of families between migration groups are noted, slightly more of the migratory families had children under 15 years of age.

In adjusting to changes in size of family, one of several alternatives can be followed. To meet the needs of increasing numbers, the family may seek a larger farm or more remunerative employment. Additional consumption requirements may be supplied by increasing the income from the farm or employment already held. Better management of existing income offers another alternative but lack of knowledge stands as a formidable limitation. Too frequently perhaps the last course is pursued either voluntarily or involuntarily: that of allowing the burden of increasing numbers to lower the per capita consumption. The choice of alternatives is limited by the number of accessible opportunities and the initiative of the family involved.

[23] *Cf.* Thomas C. McCormick, *Comparative Study of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households.* Washington: Works Progress Administration Research Monograph II, Government Printing Office, 1935, p. 86.

Table 29.—Mean Number of Persons in Sampled Families, by Farm Tenure Status and Migration Groups.

Farm tenure status and migration group	Number of persons per family	Standard error	Standard deviation
All families	4.4	.07	2.17
Farm tenure status			
Full owner	3.8	.14	2.16
Part owner	4.2	.17	2.04
Tenant	4.7	.10	2.14
Cropper-laborer	4.6	.27	2.33
Other	4.5	.24	2.03
Migration group			
I	4.2	.14	2.25
II	4.2	.13	2.17
III	4.3	.13	2.07
IV	4.8	.13	2.14

The families surveyed, including parents, children, and others living in the home, contained an average of 4.4±.07 persons (Table 29). Variations in size of family by farm tenure status reflect differences in the duration of marital unions. Usually the landowning families were more nearly completed than those of landless families. Other data at hand show that among families of owners and nonowners, the average number of surviving children was 3.3, but the mean number living at home in 1937 was 1.8 and 2.5 persons. respectively. Stated in another way, less than one-half (46 percent) of the children of farm-owning families were living at home as compared with three-fourths of the children of landless families. Considering the duration of the marital union, the landless families tended to be larger than landowning families.

Fertility

The general relationship of higher fertility in the lower socio-economic classes and lower fertility in the upper classes is reflected in several ways, in the migration of families studied, and it is the purpose of this section to indicate some of them.

In Figure 3 and Table 30, the fertility ratios are presented for the sampled families classified by tenure, net wealth, migration groups, quality of land occupied, and county of survey. Generally, the number of children under 5 for each 100 women 15 to 44 years of age, inclusive, varied inversely with farm tenure and wealth status and directly with the amount of migration and regression in land quality as judged by the survey enumerators. The two sample counties in eastern Oklahoma had higher fertility ratios than the two in western Oklahoma.

Several reasons can be offered for the differences in fertility ratios between families in eastern and western Oklahoma. The resistance or the lack of exposure of the open-country population to urbanizing influences in the eastern half of the State has helped to maintain high rates of fertility among the population. The social effects of the automobile, tractor, radio, household conveniences, and birth control, to mention but a few creations of the urban culture, have not penetrated extensively into these rural areas. The poorer people seem to have clung tenaciously to early

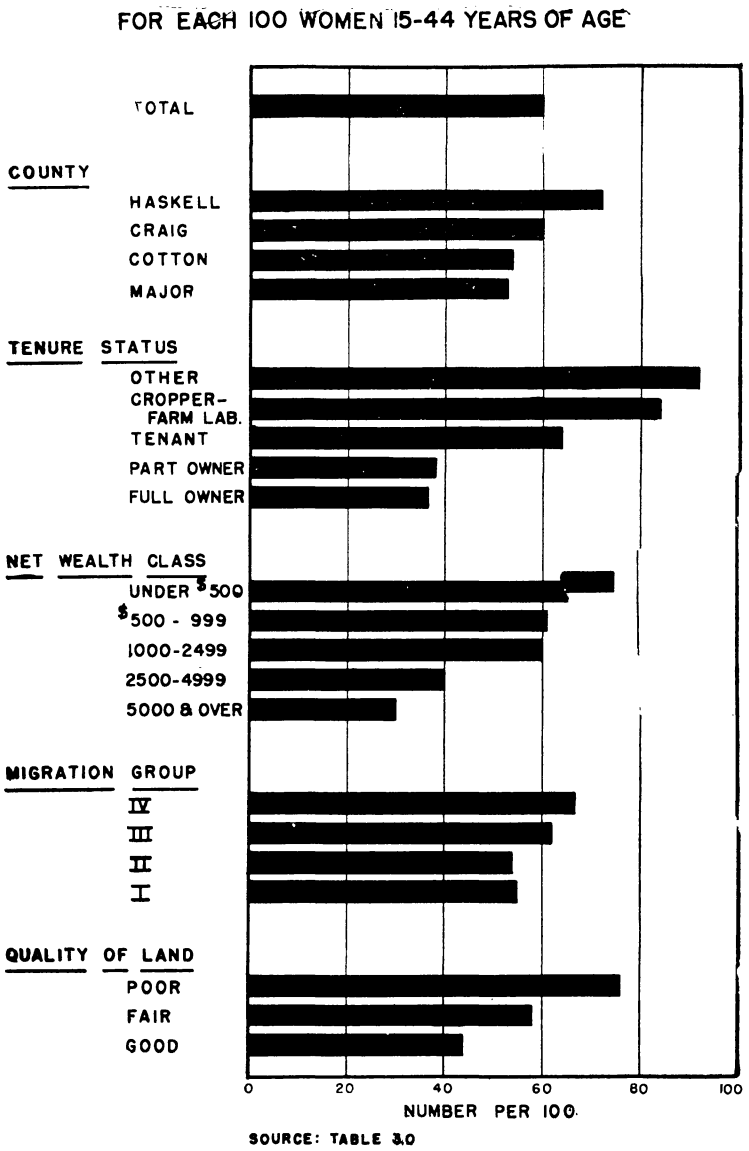

Figure 3.—Number of children 0 to 4 years of age, inclusive, for each 100 women 15 to 44 years of age.

Table 30.—Number of Children Under 5 for Each 100 Women 15 to 44 Years of Age, Inclusive, by County, Farm Tenure Status, Net Wealth Class, Migration Group, and Quality of Land.

Classification	Number of children under 5 (1)	Number of women 15 to 44 years (2)	Fertility ratio* (1) ÷ (2)
Total	550	922	59.65
County			
Major	112	213	52.58
Cotton	124	232	53.45
Craig	139	233	59.66
Haskell	175	244	71.72
Farm tenure status			
Full owner	56	153	36.60
Part owner	48	126	38.10
Tenant	324	505	64.16
Cropper-laborer	52	62	83.87
Other	70	76	92.11
Net wealth class			
Under $500	283	378	74.87
$500-$999	89	146	60.96
$1000-$2499	94	156	60.26
$2500-$4999	46	114	40.35
$5000 and over	38	128	29.69
Migration group			
I	125	227	55.07
II	114	212	53.77
III	142	229	62.01
IV	169	254	66.54
Quality of land			
Good	99	224	44.20
Fair	233	400	58.25
Poor	197	259	76.06

* The ratio is based upon 100 rather than 1000 women due to the small size of sample in sub-groups.

religious beliefs concerning large families. Generally, too, high rates of reproduction obtain among low-income families, of which there is a disproportionately large number in the eastern counties.

In western Oklahoma the emphasis upon improved material standards of living, greater mechanization and commercialization of agriculture, and the probable tendency toward secularization of religious beliefs may be the chief reasons for the lower fertility ratios as compared with the eastern portion of the State.

The fertility ratio of landless families was nearly twice as high as that of landowning families, the figures being 69.36 and 37.27, respectively. A part of this difference is traceable to the age composition of the women in the owner and nonowner population. The continuation of this differential over a period of a generation would enlarge greatly the numbers in the landless classes, even without additions accruing from the net ex-

change in the social mobility of persons between landowning and landless classes. It can be observed also that as the grade of land decreased, fertility increased, which means that in the future the population of this State and Nation will be drawn disproportionately from the poor land areas.[24]

Although families having under $500 net wealth in 1937 accounted for only 35.2 percent of all families sampled, this group contained 52.4 percent of all children under 5 years of age. The high fertility of this group was offset by the failure of families in the group having net wealth of $5,000 and over to reproduce their numbers.

According to the data in Figure 3, migration seems to be less important than factors of location, status, and land quality in differentiating the fertility of families.

Where low-income families are concentrated on small and tenanted farms of poor quality, the problem of migration tends to be aggravated by high fertility rates.[25] The pressure of the highly reproductive population on land resources is readily apparent; and farm-to-farm migration, as well as movements from these farms during periods of prosperity, affords one means by which this segment of the population can assert its limited freedom if not improve its well-being.

It may be true that high rates of human reproduction intensify and perpetuate poverty. Certainly, the landless classes are increasing. High fertility seems to be the biological, and ultimately the social, means of survival for the disadvantaged classes.

Relief

Widespread human need in recent years has given rise to numerous forms of public assistance. Probably no other characteristic of American families has afforded a more objective basis for indicating class distinction than the acceptanace of relief. To receive public assistance is to be accorded a definite socioeconomic status. This status usually denotes economic and social dependency on the part of the individual or family, and the application of strict rules of eligibility has gone far toward eliminating those not actually in need. In any event "relief" and "non-relief" statuses are commonly recognized in every community.

The state of Oklahoma has had a heavy relief burden since the inauguration of the various federal assistance programs.[26] The same general factors that have been associated with landlessness and migration also have been responsible for high relief rates.[27] Therefore, it would be expected that these three variables are closely interrelated.

The heavy incidence of relief among families whose heads form the basis of this study strongly indicates the prevalence of poverty in the open-country areas of Oklahoma. **Nearly forty-five percent of the sampled families received income from W. P. A., C. C. C., N. Y. A., F. S. A., subsistence payments, state and county relief work, old-age assistance,**

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[24] According to O. E. Baker, about 370 children per 1000 women were necessary to maintain the population stationary in 1930. "The Effect of Recent Public Policies on the Future Population," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. II, June, 937, p. 129.

[25] Homer L. Hitt and Reed H. Bradford, in a study of Louisiana population, found a strongly positive association between residential instability and fertility. "The Relation of Residential Instability to Fertility," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. V, March, 1940, pp. 88-92.

[26] Francis D. Cronin and Howard W. Beers, *Areas of Intense Drought Distress 1930-1836*, Washington: Works Progress Administration Research Bulletin Series V, No. 1, January, 1937, p. 27.

[27] Nearly all studies of relief families are in agreement on this point.

Table 31.—Number and Percent of Heads of Families Receiving Relief in 1937, by Farm Tenure Status and Migration Groups.

Farm tenure status in 1937 and migration group	Number of heads	Number receiving relief	Percentage receiving relief
All heads	1026	458	44.6
Farm tenure status			
Full owner	243	58	23.8
Part owner	140	26	18.6
Tenant	503	273	54.3
Cropper-laborer	68	45	66.2
Other	72	54	75.1
Migration group			
I	258	62	24.0
II	256	102	39.8
III	256	127	49.6
IV	256	167	65.2

aid to the blind, aid to dependent children, or some form of general relief, including F. S. R. C. commodities in 1937 (Table 31). The proportions receiving assistance varied inversely with tenure status but directly with the degree of migration.

Other tabulated data show that the average relief family received about one-fourth of its cash income from assistance programs in 1937. The median income from public sources amounted to $115. Although the typical relief head was 40 years old, or four years younger than the median non-relief head, his family was slightly larger.

The period in which heads of families began earning life seems to have been a selective factor in the incidence of public assistance and the low net wealth status in 1937. It is apparent from the wide fluctuations in percentages shown in Table 32 that the special conditions encountered at the inception of a career may affect the economic situation of the family many years later.

The low relief burden in 1937 for heads of families who started on their own in the period before 1901 was traced to the preponderance of northern-born persons in that particular group. In contrast, a majority of the heads who began their careers between 1902-1907 reported their birthplace in southern states, which proved to be a selective factor in the intensity of public assistance in 1937.

The spawning of new careers during the first World War doubtless drew many marginal persons who suffered losses in status in the long depression that followed. From 1926 to 1934, high proportions of new heads of families, because of their relatively short careers and limited economic opportunities, were unable to secure a sufficiently strong economic foothold to avert the need of public assistance in 1937.

The period from 1908 to 1910, following the organization of the State, was favorable to heads leaving home for the first time, as was the rising War boom from 1914 to 1916 and the post-war recovery period from 1923 through 1925. Fewer heads who started for themselves in the period

Table 32.—Incidence of Relief and of Low Net Wealth Among Heads of Families in 1937, by Period of Beginning of Earning Life.

Period of beginning of earning life	Number of heads	Percentage receiving assistance in 1937	Percentage with net wealth under $500 in 1937
All periods	1029	44.9	35.1
Before 1899	158	41.1*	26.2
1899-1901	52	26.9	27.3
1902-1904	51	53.3	37.3*
1905-1907	54	50.0*	33.3*
1908-1910	52	28.8	17.0
1911-1913	62	41.9*	32.3*
1914-1916	79	37.9	20.6
1917-1919	100	47.0*	28.0
1920-1922	79	48.1*	37.2*
1923-1925	75	38.7	36.0*
1926-1928	79	63.3	49.3
1929-1931	85	50.6	57.8
1932-1934	64	54.7	54.7
1935-1937	39	41.0*	61.6

* Differences are not significant.

1935-1937 received assistance than those who started in the periods immediately preceding, principally because of the small number of persons per family and recent improvements in economic conditions.

Community Participation

The family is an integral part of the neighborhood and community in which it resides. Its role in these locality groups can be measured by the amount of participation in organized activities. Ordinarily, community participation is a correlative of the family's occupational, economic, and socio-political status, if not a contributing factor.[28]

Frequent migration tends to weaken the community ties of the family. Mutual losses are experienced by local schools, churches, government, trade, and service institutions on the one hand, and the population on the other, through the disruption of social relationships occasioned by moving. It is desirable to know to what degree community participation is dependent upon the migration and farm tenure status of the families studied.

One-half of the families in the sample were represented in community organizations by either one or both of the male and female heads. Church membership was omitted from the tabulation, being the subject of separate analysis. Among tenure groups, part owners belonged to organizations in twice the proportion of cropper-laborers (Table 33). In general, the farm owners exceeded tenants, and the latter surpassed the two lowest tenure classes in the proportions reporting membership. Similar differences held with respect to the mean number of memberships in organizations, although the differences were negligible. The average

[28] In William H. Sewell's Socio-economic Status Scale, participation in organized groups was one of the four elements used in its construction. *The Construction and Standardization of a Scale for the Measurement of the Socio-Economic Status of Oklahoma Farm Families,* Stillwater: Oklahoma Agri. Exp. Sta. Tech. Bull. No. 9, April, 1940, p. 20.

Table 33.—Extent of Particiption in Community Organizations, by Farm Tenure Status and Migration Groups.

Farm tenure status and migration group	Number of families	Percent reporting membership in organizations	Mean number of memberships in organizations of those reporting**
All families	1028	49.9	2.4
Farm tenure status			
Full owner	243	58.4	2.4
Part owner	140	62.9	2.8
Tenant	504	45.8	2.3
Cropper-laborer	69	30.4	2.1
Other	72	40.3*	1.9
Migration group			
I	258	58.2	2.4
II	257	52.1*	2.4
III	257	48.2*	2.4
IV	256	40.2	2.3

* Differences are not significant.
** Membership in organizations are reported for both male and female heads of families; when only one reported, the number of memberships were doubled. Church memberships are omitted.

number of organizations, aside from the church, with which the male and female heads reported affiliation was 2.4.

There is an inverse relationship between migration and organized community participation, the proportions of male and female heads reporting memberships decreasing regularly from Migration Groups I to IV. However, the differences in the mean number of memberships of those reporting did not vary significantly.

Religion has a peculiarly strong hold on rural families. Church attendance may be slack because of the scarcity of churches or their unappealing programs, strongly competing attractions, inadequate transportation facilities, social barriers, or other reasons, but, nevertheless, religious beliefs and attitudes continue to play an important role in rural social behavior. Attitudes toward honesty, fair dealing, property ownership, labor, and sundry folkways, are molded by religious training acquired in the home and church. Therefore, affiliation with the church in rural communities at least would seem to be an essential means of acquiring status in the rural community.

With reference to the families studied, the proportions reporting church membership tended to rise with each advance in farm tenure status (Table 34). The disparities were not great, however, for 55.9 percent of the families of cropper-laborers had either one or both heads in churches as compared with 73.5 percent of the families of full owners. Nearly two-thirds (66.1 percent) of the families reported church memberships.

In another study of Oklahoma farmers, Duncan obtained similar direct relationships in comparing tenure and economic status to church membership.[20]

[20] Otis Durant Duncan, "Relation of Tenure and Economic Status of Farmers to Church Membership," *Social Forces*. Vol. XI, May, 1933, p. 542.

Table 34.—Church Membership of Male and Female Heads of Families, by Farm Tenure Status and Migration Groups.

Farm tenure status and migration group	Number of families reporting	PERCENTAGE REPORTING MEMBERSHIP				Percentage reporting no church membership
		Total	Male and female heads	Male head only	Female head only	
All heads	1014	66.1	46.4	3.4	16.3	33.9
Farm tenure status						
Full owner	238	73.5	53.3	2.1*	18.1*	26.5
Part owner	136	71.3*	57.4	0.7	13.2*	28.7*
Tenant	501	63.5*	43.1	4.0*	16.4*	36.5*
Cropper- laborer	68	55.9*	41.2*	1.5*	13.2*	44.1*
Other	71	59.2*	31.0	9.9*	18.3*	40.8*
Migration group						
I	253	71.4*	53.0*	1.5*	16.9*	28.6*
II	252	69.9*	48.7*	3.1*	18.1*	30.1*
III	255	64.7*	43.4*	3.3*	18.0*	35.3*
IV	254	57.5	40.0*	5.7*	11.8*	42.5

* Differences are not significant.

Among the heads of families studied, as migration increased, membership in churches consistently decreased. This fact furnishes additional evidence of relationship between the low socioeconomic status of families and excessive migration.

Another observation to be made from the data in Table 34 involves sex differences in church membership. Relatively more women than men were affiliated with churches.[30] In 46.4 percent of the families, both male and female heads belonged to the church, but in families represented by only one member, the female heads accounted for 16.3 percent of the total and male heads 3.4 percent.

Differences in socioeconomic status are reflected in the amount of participation in the formal activities of the community. Similarly, frequent movers are selective of families with few community ties. For the families studied, it appears that the families were not highly integrated into the organized social life of the community. The chief reason for this situation probably lies in the instability of population with reference to their means of livelihood.

Type of Farming

Men modify their environment, but perhaps not nearly as much as they are molded by it. The cotton farmer of the South, the grain farmer of the Middlewest, and the rancher of the Mountain states are products of their respective geographical and cultural milieus.[31] Obviously, the hazards of farming in the semi-arid Great Plains require an adaptable type of farmer whose technical and managerial knowledge of agriculture, amount of capital, and acreage in farm unit generally exceed those of the

[30] See Olaf Larson, "Rural Community Patterns of Social Participation," *Social Forces*, Vol. XVI, March, 1938, p. 308, and Otis Durant Duncan, *op. cit.*

[31] Rupert B. Vance, *Human Factors in Cotton Culture*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1929, p. 39. Also see Sorokin, *Social Mobility*, pp. 318-333.

Table 35.—Distribution of Farm Families into Migration Groups, by Principal Source of Farm Income.

Principal source of farm income	Number of heads of farm families	PERCENTAGE OF HEADS IN MIGRATION GROUP		
		Total	I and II	III and IV
All sources	892	100.0	53.2	46.8
Grain	382	100.0	66.2	33.8
Cotton	180	100.0	34.4	65.6
Livestock	163	100.0	52.1*	47.9*
Dairy	115	100.0	47.0	53.0
Poultry	43	100.0	44.2	55.8
Miscellaneous	11	100.0	**	**

* Differences are not significant.
** Inadequate sample.

average cotton farmer. Agriculturists usually acquire training and experience in the type of farming common to their state or region, and probably relatively few of them ever attempt to shift from one type of farming to another. Their behavior constantly reflects accommodations in terms of geographic and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, it is desirable to know to what extent migration and tenure status are associated with types of farming.

It can be seen in Table 35 that the families receiving the largest proportion of the farm's cash income from grain were reliably more stable than those depending upon cotton, poultry, or dairying for the principal source of income. Approximately two-thirds of the grain farmers fell in Migration Groups I and II, and a similar proportion of cotton farmers was classed in Migration Groups III and IV. The lack of greater stability among livestock producers can be traced to the presence in that group of many small self-sufficing farmers who received a large proportion of their cash income from the sale of a few surplus pork and beef animals.

Table 36.—Distribution of Heads of Farm Families According to the Principal Source of Farm Income, by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Principal source of farm income	All tenures	Full owners	Part owners	Tenants	Croppers
Number of heads of farm families	892	239	139	492	22
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Grain	42.8	52.3	51.8	36.2	31.8
Cotton	20.0	10.9	5.8	26.6	59.0
Other crops**	1.2	.8	1.4	1.4	0.0
Livestock	18.3	18.4*	24.5	17.3*	0.0
Dairy	12.9	11.3*	11.5*	14.4*	4.6
Poultry	4.8	6.3*	5.0*	4.1*	4.6*

* Differences are not significant.
** Includes hay, fruits, and vegetables.

Nearly two-thirds of the sampled farmers depended upon crops as a main source of cash income from the farm (Table 36). By tenure status, cash-grain farming predominated among farm owners and tenants, but especially the former. Cotton farming prevailed among tenants and croppers to a greater degree than among farm owners. A substantially large proportion of part owners were engaged in livestock production. A supplementary tabulation shows that farm owners had drawn their cash income from diversified enterprises to a greater extent than landless farmers.

These data clearly indicate that cotton farmers were the least stable and grain farmers were the most stable of all those studied. Even though wheat, oats, or corn furnished the principal source of farm income to owners, this group of farmers generally practiced more diversification of crops than landless farmers. Obviously, the economic stability of the farmer hinges largely upon the spreading of risks. The landless farmer encounters the resistance of the landlord when he attempts to engage in numerous sideline farming enterprises from which the landlord receives little or no income.

Acreage in Farm

Despite the institutionalized character of land division and occupancy, farms tend to vary in size according to the size and organization of the family.[32] As the major economic support of the family, the farm ideally should be large enough to provide the family with a prudent plane of living, defray the necessary costs of farm operation, and leave a surplus for the liquidation of capital debt or for savings. State and national policies that implement increases in the number of family-size farms should reduce materially the amounts of landlessness and migration.

Table 37.—Number and Percent of Heads of Families Moving in 1937, by Acres in Farm During Previous Year.

Acreage in farm during 1936	Number of families	Number moving	Percent moving
All acreages	1017	153	15.0
No acreage	110	50	45.5*
Under 20 acres	15	4	26.7
20-49	87	17	19.5
50-99	197	29	14.7
100-174	442	39	8.8
175 acres and over	166	14	8.4

* Differences between 45.5 and 19.5, 14.7, 8.8, and 8.4 are significant; all other differences are not significant.

According to data in Table 37, open-country families without any acreage in 1936 moved over four times as frequently during the following year as families with farms. Access to land would seem to be an essential requisite to increased immobility of the families reporting no acreage operated. Further examination of the data reveals that the size of farm was related inversely to the amount of migration of farm families. Among families living on farms with less than 20 acres in 1936, the pro-

[32] Charles P. Lomis, "The Study of the Life Cycle of Families," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. I, June, 1936, pp. 180-189; E. L. Kirkpatrick, *The Farmer's Standard of Living*, Washington: U. S. Dept. of Agriculture Bull. No. 1466, November, 1926, p. 53; and Otis Durant Duncan, *An Analysis of Farm Family Organization in Oklahoma*, pp. 139-141.

portion migrating the following years was approximately three times as great as that of families occupying acreages of 100 acres and over.[33] Migration between small farms seems to represent an almost futile search for opportunities to supplement meager incomes.

To support this thesis, the migration histories reveal that over one-half of all farm-to-farm moves during the earning life of the family heads were on tracts of less than 100 acres(Table 38).[34] In the most migratory group of families, nearly two-thirds of all moves were made on small farms. Among the least migratory families, one-fourth of the shifts were between units of less than 100 acres. The proportions of moves on small farms increased consistently from Migration Groups I to IV.

Table 38.—Distribution of All Farm Moves* During Earning Life, According to Acreage in Farms, by Migration Groups.

Acres in farm	All groups	MIGRATION GROUPS I	II	III	IV
Number of moves*	4005	391	718	1083	1813
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 100 acres	51.6	25.7	38.9	49.5*	63.4
100-174	36.3	53.2	43.5	36.8*	29.6
175 acres and over	12.1	21.1	17.6	13.7	7.0

* Differences are not significant.
** Only farm moves are included.

The high frequency of migration on small acreages implies that tracts of less than 100 acres generally do not produce incomes sufficient to satisfy the landlord, maintain livestock and machinery considered necessary for cash-crop farming, and furnish the operator's family a decent living. In further support of this statement, the relationship between acreage in farms and tenure status shown in Table 39 is important.

The proportions of farm-to-farm moves on farms containing less than 100 acres increased with each descent in tenure status. Insecurity of tenure status and inadequate acreages in farms seems to encourage migration.

Quality of Land

Assuming that grades of people and grades of land are roughly correlated,[35] it follows that land quality probably has some bearing upon the migratory behavior and socioeconomic status. The per-acre value of land measures the intensity of land use to a greater extent than its intrinsic qualities, but this adds to the utility of this index in ecological analyses. Lacking data on the value of land operated at different domiciles, the per-acre value of land and buildings reported by the 1935 Census in the county in which farm-to-farm moves occurred was used to indicate the effect of grades of land upon migration and tenure status. The results appear in Table 40.

[33] The median acres in farms surveyed as of 1937 were as follows: full owners, 156; part owners, 302; tenants, 151; croppers, 110; and all farms, 157.

[34] According to the Farm Census of 1935, 35.6 percent of all farms in the four survey counties contained less than 100 acres. Earlier censuses show that the proportion of small farms never exceeded this figure.

[35] This theory has been advanced by Henry C. Taylor, *Agricultural Economics*, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1920, Chapter XII.

Table 39.—Distribution of All Farm Moves During Earning Life, According to Acreage in Farms, by Farm Tenure Status of Heads in 1937.

Acreage in farms	All tenures	FARM TENURE STATUS IN 1937				
		Full owners	Part owners	Tenants	Cropper-laborers	Others
Number of moves	4005	801	434	2307	232	231
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than 100 acres	51.6	37.3	35.4	54.7	72.5	81.4
100-174 acres	36.3	47.3	39.7*	35.4	21.9	15.6
175 acres and over	12.1	15.5	24.9	9.9	5.6	3.0

* Differences are not significant.

Table 40.—Incidence of Moves Between Agricultural Occupations on Lands of Different Value, by Farm Tenure Status of Heads in 1937 and by Migration Groups.**

Tenure status in 1937 and migration group	Number of moves	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MOVES ON LAND VALUED AT:	
		Less than $15	$15 and over
All moves	4102	31.0	69.0
Farm tenure status			
Full owner	794	19.2	81.8
Part owner	437	15.1	84.9
Tenant	2402	37.5	62.5
Cropper-laborer	243	26.3	73.7
Other	226	42.9	57.1
Migration group			
I	392	8.9	91.1
II	735	23.3	76.7
III	1078	30.1*	69.9*
IV	1897	39.5	59.5

* Differences are not significant.

** Census value of land and buildings per acre in 1935 for counties in which moves were reported during the earning life of family heads. The mean value for the State is $22 and for each of the counties as follows: Haskell, $12; Craig, $17; Major, $20; and, Cotton, $24.

The proportion of moves in counties with a land and building value of less than $15 per acre in 1935 increased with each descent in tenure status, except for cropper-laborers, whose employers usually reside on the better lands of a region. Nonowner heads of families reported about twice as many of their moves in counties with a low land value per acre as did heads of families owning farms in 1937.

Migration appeared to be more closely associated with land values than with farm tenure status. However, the latter referred to the status held in 1937 rather than to that occupied at the time of move. Over four times as many moves of heads in Group IV as in Group I were made in counties with the low land and building value per acre, as compared with the smaller range of proportions between the highest and lowest tenure status.

Table 41.—Tenure Mobility of Heads of Families, by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Tenure mobility pattern	FARM TENURE STATUS IN 1937			
	Owner	Tenant	Cropper-laborer	Other
Number of heads	384	506	69	73
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Owner only	20.6			
Tenant to owner	27.6			
Laborer to tenant to owner**	5.7			
Laborer to owner	3.6			
Nonfarm to owner	6.5			
Nonfarm to tenant to owner	7.6			
Tenant only		37.4		
Laborer to tenant		10.5		
Nonfarm to tenant		7.9		
Cropper or laborer only			37.7	
Former owner		22.3	5.8	6.9
Former tenant			49.3	57.5
Former cropper or laborer				19.2
Other combination	28.4	21.9	7.2	16.4

** Farm laborer in this and subsequent tabulations means hired farm laborer as distinguished from unpaid laborer on the home farm.

These data suggest that strong interrelationships existed among poor land, excessive migrancy, and landlessness with reference to the sample studied.[38] Poor land tends to attract marginal people who either seek to improve their status by frequent migration, or who are forced to move because of the low income accruing to themselves and possibly their dissatisfied landlords.

FARM TENURE MOBILITY

The purpose of this part of the study is to show how certain patterns of tenure mobility are related to status and migration. Because the data with which to construct a social mobility index are lacking, no measuring instrument comparable to the migration index can be developed in this study. The channels or patterns by which family heads reach a higher or lower tenure status offer an acceptable device for partially analyzing social mobility.

Tenure Mobility Patterns

The tenure histories of the sampled family heads reveal over 100 differnt patterns or combinations of mobility. These have been condensed into 14 combinations for purposes of analysis.

Three main routes of tenure mobility were followed by farm owners. One-fifth had been owners since the beginning of earning life; over one-fourth had advanced from tenancy to ownership; and a substantially large proportion, 28.4 percent, had advanced to farm ownership by a wide variety of tenure changes (Table 41). Relatively few farm owners, less than one-tenth, had begun their earning life as farm laborers, but nearly one-third had reported experience in nonagricultural occupations before becoming

[38] *Cf.* Report of the President's Committee, *Farm Tenancy*, Washington: National Resources Committee, Government Printing Office, February, 1937, p. 52.

farm owners.[1] Farm owners had shown strong tendencies toward advancement on the agricultural ladder.

Among tenants, 37.4 percent always had occupied that status. Nearly one-fourth of them previously had owned farms. While the proportion beginning as farm laborers was about the same as that of owners, larger percentages of all tenants were employed previously as farm laborers. Approximately the same proportions of owners and tenants reported nonagricultural occupations during earning life.

The two lowest tenure classes in the open country were filled largely by those who had slipped down the agricultural ladder or had been displaced from better-paying positions in nonagricultural occupations. Over one-half of the cropper-laborers and over four-fifths of the "others" had descended from higher levels in the tenure and occupational ladders.

To summarize, 300 family heads of 1032 studied occupied the same tenure status throughout earning life; 195 climed directly from a lower to a higher tenure status without nonagricultural experience; 71 agriculturists throughout earning life advanced in tenure but not without setbacks; 121 heads formerly were owners; 76 dropped from a tenant status to lower levels; 14 heads classed as 'others" suffered a loss of their cropper-laborer status; and, 255 heads reached the status held in 1937 by numerous combinations of farming and nonfarming employments.[2]

Variations in the patterns of tenure mobility tended to be associated with the migratory behavior of the family heads. At one extreme, 97.5 percent of the farm owners who had always occupied that status were in Migration Groups I and II; at the other extreme, 99.2 percent of "other" heads of families who never had held a higher status than that of cropper or laborer were concentrated in Migration Groups III and IV (Table 42). In general, those heads of families with the least tenure mobility predominated in Migration Groups I and II. Employment in nonagricultural occupations at some time during earning life tended to result in greater tenure mobility and migration. The data in Table 42 suggest that early tenure status is much more likely to be associated with present tenure status than is the degree of migration.

To illustrate this point further, the percentage of farm owners among all heads of families was calculated at ten-year intervals during earning life as shown in Table 43.

Thirty percent of the heads in Migration Group I were farm owners at the beginning of earning life. Twenty years later, 84 percent had become owners. At the other extreme, only 4 percent of the heads in Migration Group IV started their careers as farm owners, and by the twentieth year only 18 percent had risen to farm ownership. Obviously migration played a small role in assisting heads to become farm owners, but the fact that farm ownership was achieved comparatively early in earning life had an important bearing upon the reduction in the amount of migration.

The Age Factor and the Decrease in Farm Ownership

At this point it is appropriate to present factual data to support the hypothesis that upward occupational mobility is decreasing and consequently that migration is increasing.

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[1] *Cf.* T. J. Woofter, Jr., *Landlord and Tenant On the Cotton Plantation*, Washington: Works Progress Administration, Division of Social Research, Research Monograph V, p. 120.

[2] In all, 369, or 35.7 percent, of the 1032 family heads had reported non-agricultural employment at sometime during earning life.

Table 42.—Distribution of Heads of Families into Migration Groups, by Tenure Mobility Patterns.

Tenure status in 1937 and mobility pattern	Number of heads	PERCENTAGE OF HEADS IN MIGRATION GROUP	
		I and II	III and IV
All classes	1029	50.0	50.0
Farm owner	381	71.4	28.6
Owner only	79	97.5	2.5
Farm laborer to owner	14	85.7	14.3
Tenant to owner	106	86.8	13.2
Laborer to tenant to owner	22	68.2	31.8
Nonfarm to owner	25	88.0	12.0
Nonfarm to tenant to owner	29	58.6*	41.4*
Other combination	106	34.9	65.1
Tenant	506	40.6	59.4
Tenant only	189	64.0	36.0
Farm laborer to tenant	53	45.3*	54.7*
Nonfarm to tenant	40	30.0	70.0
Former owner	113	25.7	74.3
Other combination	111	17.9	82.1
Cropper-farm laborer	69	29.0	71.0
Cropper-laborer only	26	46.1*	53.9*
Nonfarm to cropper-laborer	2	**	**
Former owner	4	**	**
Former tenant	34	17.6	82.4
Other combination	3	**	**
Other	73	22.0	78.0
Nonfarm only	13	75.0	25.0
Former owner	5	**	**
Former tenant	42	14.3	85.7
Former cropper-laborer	14	0.7	99.3

* Differences are not significant (see note under Table 3).
** Inadequate sample.

Table 43.—Percentage of Farm Owners Among All Heads of Families at Successive Ten-year Intervals Since the Beginning of Earning Life, by Migration Groups.
(Percentages rounded)

Migration group	Number of heads	PERCENTAGE OF ALL HEADS WHO WERE FARM OWNERS AT TEN-YEAR AGE INTERVALS DURING EARNING LIFE				
		0	10	20	30	40
All groups	1032	12	30	48	53	59
I	258	30	60	84	93	95
II	258	10	33	54	63	68
III	258	4	18	38	41	52
IV	258	4	10	18	14	22

The data in Figure 4 and Table 44, show a very definitely decreasing trend in farm ownership since 1915.[3] The average age of heads of families in the sample increased during the period, yet farm ownership, supposedly a function of advancing age, decreased.

Table 44.—Percentage of Farm Owners at Specified Ages Among All Heads of Families Engaged in Agriculture, 1890-1935.

Period	All ages	AGE GROUP IN YEARS					
		Under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over
1890	27.5	11.5	53.8	----	----	----	----
1895	35.6	20.0	47.7	----	----	----	----
1900	37.6	16.7	36.1	81.0	----	----	----
1905	42.7	15.2	43.7	64.3	85.7	----	----
1910	43.8	11.9	39.6	57.5	80.0	----	----
1915	46.6	15.1	36.8	58.8	77.0	100.0	----
1920	43.7	15.0	30.6	54.4	62.2	88.5	----
1925	41.2	7.8	25.5	46.8	56.8	77.8	100.0
1930	36.9	2.1	24.7	35.5	49.4	61.9	82.8
1935	37.2	1.4	14.8	35.9	50.5	55.3	76.4

In 1915, 77.0 percent of the heads in the sample who were then between the ages of 45 and 54 years old owned farms. In 1935, 50.5 percent of the heads in the corresponding age group were owners. Here was a decrease of one-third in the amount of farm ownership among a group of heads constituting 17.9 percent of the total sample in 1937. Among heads under 25 years of age, the percentage who were farm owners dropped from 15.1 in 1915 to 1.4 in 1935. This age group comprised only 5.5 percent of the total sample in 1937. From these and other data in Table 44, it appears that the largest **absolute** losses in the amount of farm ownership since 1915 was experienced among heads of families in the age group ranging from 45 years upward. The greatest **relative** losses of course occurred among those heads under 25 years old.[4]

Landlessness is increasing generally because the classes of population in this category have not the resources with which to buy high-priced land and purchase costly farm machinery, and at the same time enjoy an approved level of living. In many instances where farms are small, soils poor, and rentals excessive, tenants do not have any of these reflectors of high socioeconomic status. Again the factors underlying this situation are largely beyond the control of the individual or family.[5]

[3] Even as early as 1910 W. J. Spillman wrote that there was a noticeable increase in tenancy among men under 25 years old. W. J. Spillman and E. A. Goldenfeiser, "Farm Tenantry in the United States," Washington: U. S. Department of Agriculture *Yearbook*, Government Printing Office, 1916, p. 326. See also Howard A. Turner, *A Graphic Summary of Farm Tenure*, Washington: U. S. Department of Agriculture Misc. Pub. No. 261, Government Printing Office, December, 1936, p. 44.

[4] *Cf.* Dorothy Dickins. *Occupations of Sons and Daughters of Mississippi Cotton Farmers*, State College: Mississippi Agri. Exp. Sta. Bull. No. 318, May, 1937, p. 60.

[5] It is the theory of Troy J. Cauley that agriculture is a means of making a living and not for pecuniary gain. Whenever agriculture becomes highly commercialized, it is moving toward bankruptcy. He maintains that marginal farmers are not weeded out of the population, but only out of the business of farming. *Agrarianism*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1935.

Instead of emphasizing the rigidity of institutionalized patterns in agriculture. (e. g., property rights, acres in farm, tenure system, rental agreements, type of farming, and others) and attempting to alter them in order

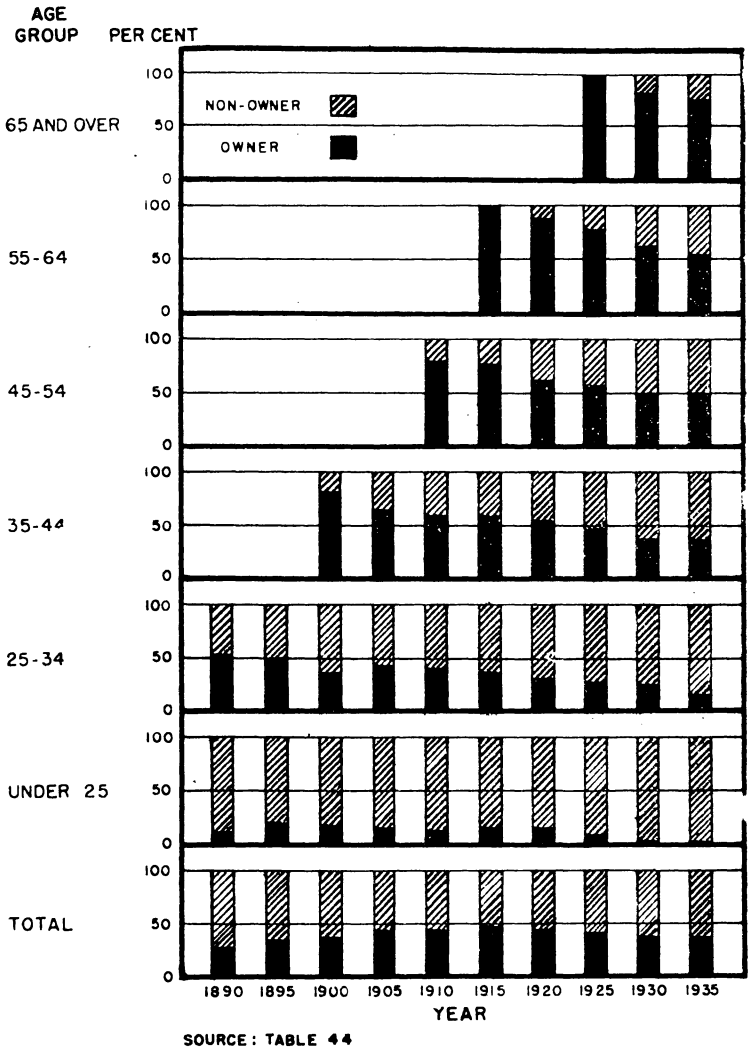

Figure 4.—Percentage distribution of owners and nonowners of farms by age of sampled heads of families engaged in agriculture, 1890 to 1935.

to facilitate vertical mobility, most authorities stress the importance of migration as a method of adjusting man-land problems. For example, Goodrich recognizes the dilemma, but he seeks to improve the socio-economic status of the population primarily in migration:

> Our final emphasis, therefore, must fall on the importance of mobility. Without great migratory movements we cannot possibly redress our sectional inequalities or use our human and material resources to the best advantage. In a world of changing opportunities, moreover, there must always be many for whom the ability to move offers greater securing than even the most favored location. It should therefore be a cardinal point of social policy to encourage mobility and to give it surer purpose and direction. But no possible placement of people could make them safe in an insecure economy, and no migration policy can itself guarantee the indispensable increases in economic opportunity.[6]

Moving from place to place in search of economic opportunity seems to be much easier and more expedient for the individual or family to effect a temporarily acceptable adjustment than to climb the agricultural ladder. Migration thus becomes a substitute for vertical mobility.[7]

Tenure Displacement

The vertical social mobility of individuals and families varies from one period to another and among different socioeconomic groupings. An examination of Table 45 shows that during the last decade a downward movement in tenure status was associated with the depression and other factors. Who were displaced and what were their characteristics?

For purposes of this analysis a displaced head of a family is defined as one reporting a lower tenure status in 1937 than the longest one held during earning life. There were in the sample 192 heads, or 18.6 percent, eligible for study under this definition.[8]

The displaced heads of families not only were disproportionately represented in the lower tenure classes in 1937, but also they had failed by a wide margin to achieve in their longest occupation a status as high as the non-displaced heads (Table 45). The losers of farm tenure status prior to 1928 were owners, but the recently displaced heads were the landless principally. Many of them were the victims of the depression, farm mechanization, crop reduction, intense competition for land, and unemployment in nonagricultural industries. It is questionable whether the recent losers in status will be able to make as satisfactory adjustments occupationally as did the heads displaced prior to 1928. Poverty and advanced age form two serious handicaps.

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[6] Carter Goodrich, *et al., Migration and Economic Opportunity*, Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1936, p. 672.

[7] C. E. Lively and Conrad Taeuber, *Rural Migration in the United States*, Washington: Works Progress Administration, Research Monograph XIX, Government Printing Office, 1939, p. 124.

[8] As a basis for comparison, Gordon W. Blackwell has stated that in certain North Carolina counties having a tenancy rate above 60 percent, 10 percent of the tenant farmers had been displaced from 1930 to 1934, inclusive. "The Displaced Tenant Farm Family in North Carolina," *Social Forces*, Vol. XIII, October, 1934, p. 66. E. A. Schuler shows upon the basis of a small sample that equal proportions of heads, 11.6 percent, had ascended and descended the agricultural ladder in Beckham County, Oklahoma, from 1932 through 1936. *Social Status and Farm Tenure—Attitudes and Social Conditions of Corn Belt and Cotton Belt Farmers*, p. 120. In their study of urban workers, Davidson and Anderson found that 13 percent of the subjects interviewed had been displaced some time during their careers. *Occupational Mobility in an American Community*. p. 140.

Table 45.—Comparison of Tenure Status of Displaced and Non-displaced Heads of Families.

Farm tenure status	FARM TENURE STATUS IN 1937			LONGEST TENURE STATUS OF HEADS DISPLACED	
	Non-displaced heads	Heads Displaced			
		Before 1928	1928 and after	Before 1928	1928 and after
Number of heads	840	32	160	32	160
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Owner	42.1	25.0	13.8	43.8*	16.2
Tenant	52.1	62.6*	30.6	6.2	2.69
Cropper-farm laborer	4.4	6.2*	18.8	0.0	16.3
Other	1.4	6.2*	36.8	50.0	40.6

* Differences are not significant.

The median net wealth in 1937 of the displaced family heads was $200 in contrast to $900 for all heads, according to data at hand. Though the median age of this group corresponded to that of the sample, over one-half of the heads below the status of farm owners were 45 years old and over. Thus, recent tenure displacement was more selective of older men than that occurring prior to 1928.

That the displaced heads never gained as high an occupational and wealth status as did the heads of the total sample generally, may help to account for the excessive migration which characterized their behavior. With over two-thirds of those displaced being concentrated in Migration Groups III and IV, it is possible that much of the moving proved to be fruitless efforts to advance in status or to avert further losses.

Loss of Status and Migration

What effect does the loss of status have upon migration? Does the failure to hold a status once achieved leave an individual or family quiescent and docile, or are efforts expended to recapture lost positions, to avoid further setbacks, or to gain substitute satisfaction? The deprivation of comforts and privileges enjoyed in the higher status is a blow to the ego as well as to the material welfare of the individual or family. This disturbing stimulus may evoke numerous forms of response, one of which can be migration. Moving can serve as a defense mechanism against the humiliating effects of lower status. It can become an expression of man's need for independence and self-respect.[9] As Nylander has observed,

> After a man has attained a certain place in society, no matter how humble this place may be, he is reluctant to step down into a lower social or economic plane. This is primarily due to fear of what the neighbors will think and to that vague motivating emotion called pride. While the strong often fail, most failures are among those who are weak. Rather than set about restoring their old status, they decide to strike out for new fields and begin again. Economic failure, the loss of a job through depression of industry, inability of the worker,

[9] For a discussion of the concepts of frustration and defense, see Gardner Murphy, Lois Barclay Murphy, and Theodore M. Newcomb, *Experimental Social Psychology*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1937, pp. 213-214.

or the betrayal of a trust, is more common than usual among the unskilled workers of the Nation.[10]

To test the hypothesis that increased migration results from loss of status, rates of migration for heads following the loss of their tenure or occupational status are compared with the rates of all heads at different ages with tenure held constant. This technique possesses no obvious defects, and the results are considered valid.

Almost without exception the moves per year for each 100 heads of families who were in a lower tenure status in 1937 than the highest one held exceeded the corresponding rates for all heads in similar tenure and age groups (Table 46). Further testing will be necessary to verify this finding, but the logic underlying it seems irrefutable. If migration is a substitute for upward social mobility among the landless classes, the displaced groups probably would resort to an even greater amount of moving in attempting to regain lost prestige.

Table 46.—Comparison of Migration of Heads Reporting Loss of Occupational Status and of All Heads, by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Age of head at time of move	TENANT		CROPPER-FARM LABORER		OTHER	
	(1)*	(2)**	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
15-19	49.7	†	59.7	†	57.7	†
20-24	46.6	42.9	59.9	78.9	48.6	65.5
25-29	32.4	46.3	37.3	42.3	38.9	43.5
30-34	25.3	32.4	32.2	33.3	35.1	38.0
35-39	21.0	29.8	29.7	†	28.0	†
40-44	19.8	28.9	24.3	†	28.1	29.6
45-49	18.5	29.7	26.4	†	33.7	†
50-54	20.1	24.6	20.3	†	21.5	†
55-59	14.9	16.7	15.6	†	19.6	†
60-64	12.0	12.5	14.3	†	19.6	†
65 and over	13.4	22.2	†	†	37.5	†

*(1) Number of moves per year each 100 heads.
**(2) Number of moves per year for each 100 heads, by tenure status in 1937, following the loss of a higher tenure status.
†Inadequate sample.

The landward migration of heads of families displaced from nonagricultural occupations may be largely involuntary. Therefore, the subsequent migratory behavior may have been motiviated by an intense desire to retrieve some of the physical comforts and psycho-social satisfactions experienced outside the open country. The sample data substantiate this thesis, for the rates of migration per year for each 100 heads of families engaged in agriculture in 1937 reporting previous experience in nonagricultural occupations exceeded those for all heads in every age group with tenure held constant (Table 47).

[10] Towne Nylander, "The Migratory Population of the United States," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol XXX, September, 1934, p. 137.

Table 47.—Comparison of Migration of Heads Reporting Employment in Nonagricultural Occupations and of All Heads, by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Age group at time of move	TOTAL		OWNER		TENANT		CROPPER-FARM LABORER	
	(1) *	(2) **	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
All ages	22.6	24.9	14.0	17.0	28.3	30.4	37.1	40.9
15-19	48.0	†	41.3	†	49.7	†	59.7	†
20-24	44.1	63.4	35.3	54.3	46.6	64.6	59.9	71.4
25-29	29.3	46.1	23.8	40.2	32.4	47.7	37.3	62.9
30-34	21.8	33.4	16.1	29.3	25.3	35.0	32.2	46.2
35-39	16.9	24.8	12.0	18.6	21.0	27.3	29.7	43.1
40-44	14.3	20.1	7.3	15.5	19.8	23.0	24.3	30.8
45-49	13.1	16.8	8.2	12.1	18.5	20.4	26.4	†
50-54	11.7	16.3	6.1	11.2	20.1	23.6	20.3	†
55-59	7.9	11.5	3.0	5.8	14.9	18.7	15.6	†
60-64	6.5	8.3	2.7	5.1	12.0	14.0	14.3	†
65 and over	7.4	10.7	1.1	†	13.4	17.6	†	†

*(1) Number of moves per year for each 100 heads in the sample, exclusive of "other" heads.
**(2) Number of moves per year for each 100 heads after working in nonagricultural occupations.
†Inadequate sample.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MIGRATION AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

One of the principal hypotheses in this study is that social mobility is a correlative of migration. With several relevant factors already considered, the main emphasis in this section will be to determine the response of one variable to change in the other.

Correlation of Migration and Tenure Mobility

The first test of the hypothesis is to correlate the number of changes in tenure and occupational status with the number of shifts in domicile.[1] A change in status includes any alteration of tenure in agriculture, any shift from agricultural to nonagricultural pursuits and vice versa, and any movement upward or downward in occupations outside of agriculture. Briefly, it embraces any movement involving ascent or descent between tenure or occupational classes.

Using the Pearson product-moment formula, coefficients of correlation between the number of moves and number of changes in status were calculated for each tenure group as of 1937 (Table 48). For all groups the resulting coefficient was $.72 \pm .01$. The coefficients decreased in size with each descent in farm tenure status, except for the "others" group. All coefficients indicate a highly positive degree of correlation between the two variables, but they do not warrant the generalization that for every move a change in occupation is highly probable. As will be shown later, a major-

[1] The migration histories contain a record of 5455 changes in domicile, but in many instances the data are too incomplete for use in tabulations. This figure includes 933 entrance moves, *i. e.*, the change of domicile involved when the migrant left his parental home. Thirty-nine heads of families made no move, having resided continuously at the parental domicile Most of the moves resulted in changes in landlord or employer if not in the occupational level. The changes in occupational or tenure status without corresponding changes in domicile amount to 132. To avoid endless complications in tabulation, only the occupations or tenures reported at the time of territorial moves are used throughout this study.

Table 48.—Coefficients of Correlation Between Number of Moves and Number of Changes in Tenure or Occupation, by Farm Tenure Status of Heads of Families in 1937.

Farm tenure status in 1937	Number of heads	Coefficient of correlation (r)	Coefficient of determination (r^2)
All tenures	1032	.72±.01	.5184
Full owner	244	.83±.02	.6889
Part owner	140	.75±.04	.5625
Tenant	506	.71±.02	.5041
Cropper-laborer	69	.68±.06	.4624
Other	73	.81±.04	.6561

ity of moves analyzed produced no change in tenure or occupational status. The decrease in the amount of association between migration and tenure or occupational mobility can be interpreted to mean that mobility is more frequently a concomitant of migration among higher than among lower tenure groups. Of the "other" heads, it may be stated that their mobility generally was nominal, having occurred primarily in the lower levels of the occupational hierarchy.

By squaring "r," a coefficient of determination can be obtained, as in Table 48. This measure of relationship indicates that 51.84 percent of the variation in occupational mobility is accounted for by variation in migration, while 48.16 percent is unexplained. This is a "statistical explanation" and needs to be interpreted carefully. It means simply this: that heads who became farm owners moved to improve tenure status primarily, whereas landless heads moved without advancing in tenure status.

Table 49 shows data on the change or lack of changes in farm tenure status in agriculture as a result of migration. In 71.2 percent of all moves, exclusive of entrance moves, heads of families remained on the same tenure level of the agricultural ladder. In 18.9 percent of the moves, the heads advanced in status, and in 9.9 percent of the shifts, a lower status was reported. These data indicate definitely that migrations of individuals and families engaged in agriculture do not as a rule lead to advances in tenure status. Among cropper-laborers and "others," as many moves

Table 49.—Distribution of Moves in Agriculture Resulting in a Higher, a Lower, or No Change in Tenure Status of Heads of Families Classified by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Farm tenure status in 1937	Number of moves**	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MOVES RESULTING IN:			
		Total	Higher tenure	Lower tenure	No change in tenure
All tenures	3631	100.0	18.9	9.9	71.2
Full owners	652	100.0	30.4	8.3*	61.3
Part owners	328	100.0	30.5	4.6	64.9
Tenants	2004	100.0	15.0	9.2*	75.8
Cropper-laborers	338	100.0	16.9*	19.8	63.3
Others	309	100.0	12.0	12.3*	75.7*

* Differences are not significant (see note under Table 3).
** Entrance moves and moves to and from agricultural occupations are omitted.

ended in a loss of status as in an improvement of status, but among the higher tenure groups, the ratio of gains over losses was reliably greater.

Next, the moves of heads engaged in agriculture were analyzed by period of occurrence on the assumption that economic depressions, wars, land openings, and other factors should produce differences in the advances and declines in tenure status. The data in Table 50 tend to verify this assumption.

Table 50.—Distribution of Moves in Agriculture Resulting in a Higher, a Lower, or No Change in Tenure Status of Heads of Families, by Three-Year Periods, 1878-1937.

Period of move	Number of moves*	PERCENTAGE OF MOVES RESULTING IN:**			
		Total	Higher tenure	Lower tenure	No change in tenure
All periods	3630	100.0	18.9	9.9	71.2
Before 1899	152	100.0	28.9	8.6	62.5
1899-1901	111	100.0	28.8	9.9	61.3
1902-1904	138	100.0	23.9	10.2	65.9
1905-1907	167	100.0	26.3	9.0	64.7
1908-1910	160	100.0	18.8	13.7	67.5
1911-1913	195	100.0	28.2	8.7	63.1
1914-1916	217	100.0	18.4	9.7	71.9
1917-1919	283	100.0	22.3	11.3	66.4
1920-1922	292	100.0	19.2	7.2	73.6
1923-1925	296	100.0	14.2	12.2	73.6
1926-1928	351	100.0	14.0	10.5	75.5
1929-1931	401	100.0	15.0	9.5	75.5
1932-1934	403	100.0	15.1	11.4	73.5
1935-1937	464	100.0	17.0	7.5	75.5

* Entrance moves and moves to and from agricultural occupations omitted.
** Differences between percentages have not been tested for significance.

Since the first World War a high proportion of moves resulted in no change of tenure status. This finding coincides with the increase in the amount of tenancy following the war.[2] Tenancy constitutes an increasingly impenetrable barrier, and the increase in migration is regarded as symptomatic of widespread failure of agriculture to acquire a higher status than they now occupy.

During the early history of land settlement in Oklahoma a comparatively large number of moves resulted in an advancement of tenure status. Land was relatively abundant and low-priced, and farmers were not handicapped seriously by unfavorable price relationships or other adverse factors.

When tenure changes are distributed by migration groups, as in Table 51, it can be seen that as migration increased, the proportions of moves resulting in a higher tenure tended to decrease. Relatively more moves of heads in Groups I and II than of those in Groups III and IV culmi-

[2] For a description of simlar changes in the labor situation on plantations see C. O. Brannen, *Relation of Land Tenure to Plantation Organization*, Washington: U. S. Department of Agriculture Bull. No. 1269, October, 1924, pp. 38 and 45.

nated in advances on the agricultural ladder. These data clearly show that moving **per se** is a highly unsatisfactory method of improving tenure status.

Table 51.—Distribution of Moves in Agriculture Resulting in a Higher, a Lower, or No Change in Tenure Status of Heads of Families Classed into Migration Groups.

Migration group	Number of moves**	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MOVES RESULTING IN:			
		Total	Higher tenure	Lower tenure	No change in tenure
All groups	3628	100.0	18.9	9.9	71.2
I	168	100.0	39.3	5.3	55.4
II	547	100.0	24.9	10.0*	65.1
III	992	100.0	17.2*	8.8	74.0
IV	1921	100.0	16.3	10.8	72.9

* Differences are not significant (see note under Table 3).
** Entrance moves and moves to and from agricultural occupations are omitted.

Correlation of Migration and Changes in Wealth

The next step is to ascertain the degree of association between migration and economic changes. In taking the records, the estimated value of assets and the amount of liabilities were recorded as of the beginning of each move. In tabulating these data, a change in net wealth was defined as any gain or loss amounting to $100 and over from the beginning of residence at one dwelling to the commencement of residence at the next. A larger amount of change would have been preferable, but the extremely low economic status of the subjects necessitated use of a relatively small figure. Of course, small changes in net wealth were more numerous than large ones, but there is the possibility that among upper wealth groups many of the $100 changes may have been missed. However, a $100 increase in wealth of a person worth $2500 is relatively less important than a similar increase in the wealth of a person worth only $200.

A coefficient of correlation amounting to $.80 \pm .01$ obtained between number of moves and number of changes in net wealth of heads of families (Table 52). That is, in 64 percent of the cases the variables fluctuated

Table 52.—Coefficients of Correlation Between Number of Moves and Number of Changes in Net Wealth per Head of Family, by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Tenure status in 1937	Number of heads	Coefficient of correlation (r)	Coefficient of determination (r^2)
All tenures	775	$.80 \pm .01$	.6400
Full owner	157	$.83 \pm .02$	.6889
Part owner	95	$.89 \pm .02$	.7921
Tenant	403	$.85 \pm .01$	.7225
Cropper-laborer	56	$.78 \pm .05$	.6084
Other	64	$.71 \pm .06$	.5041

Table 53.—Coefficients of Correlation Between the Number of Moves and the Number of Gains in Net Wealth per Head of Family, by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Tenure status in 1937	Number of heads	Coefficient of of correlation(r)	Coefficient of determination(r^2)
All tenures	775	.66±.02	.4356
Full owner	157	.76±.03	.5776
Part owner	95	.77±.04	.5929
Tenant	403	.76±.02	.5776
Cropper-laborer	56	.63±.08	.3969
Other	64	.65±.07	.4225

together. Sometimes, changes in either variable occurred independently of the other, because migration forms a discrete series and economic mobility a continuous series. The correlations were somewhat lower for nonfarmers than for farmers, principally for the reason that there was less likelihood of $100 changes when the net wealth was small.

To carry this analysis a step further, **gains** in net wealth at the time of migration were correlated with number of moves. This relationship yielded a correlation coefficient of .66±.02. That migration will be accompanied by gains in net wealth was considerably less certain than that either "no changes" or losses would ensue. Of greatest significance in Table 53 are differences in the coefficients of determination between tenure groups. In the case of part owners, 59.29 percent of the variation in migration was accompanied by variation in the gains in wealth. At the other extreme, among cropper-laborers, only 39.69 percent of the changes in net wealth was accounted for by changes in migration.

Of all the moves made by heads of families since leaving their parental home, 41.1 percent were accompanied by increases in net wealth of $100 or over (Table 54). Losses were reported in 20.9 percent of the moves, and no change in net wealth occurred in 38.0 percent of the changes in

Table 54.—Distribution of Moves Resulting in a Higher, a Lower, or No Change in Net Wealth of Heads of Families, by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Farm tenure status in 1937	Number of moves**	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MOVES RESULTING IN:			
		Total	Higher net wealth	Lower net wealth	No change in net wealth
All tenures	4132	100.0	41.1	20.9	38.0
Full owner	705	100.0	58.6	16.7	24.7
Part owner	365	100.0	59.7	17.5	22.7
Tenant	2283	100.0	39.0*	23.3*	37.7*
Cropper-laborer	381	100.0	24.7	21.0*	54.3
Other	398	100.0	20.8	17.1	62.1

* Differences are not significant.
** Entrance moves excluded.

domicile. Changes in wealth were about twice as frequent as the changes in tenure.

Among farm owners, nearly three-fifths of all moves proved profitable, but with each downward step in tenure the proportions of moves showing gains decreased sharply. The trend in the proportion of losses was much less irregular than that relating to gains. One explanation for this difference is that losses resulting from migration are largely unexpected and accidental, whereas gains are calculated on the basis of judgment and planning, especially among the the landowning classes. Requests from the landlord to move, and losses due to foreclosure, crop failure, drouth, and other factors, reduce the proportions of voluntary migrations and, consequently, the calculable opportunities for gains by moving among the landless classes.

The relationship between migration and economic changes as shown in Table 55 supports the thesis just stated. As migration increased, the proportions of moves showing gains in net wealth decreased consistently, while those accompanied by "no changes" in net wealth increased regularly. But the interesting point is that the proportions of gain did not decrease nearly as rapidly as the proportions of "no changes" increased from Migration Groups I through IV. This situation suggests that a large amount of migration is involuntary and unproductive. Under circumstances in which migration generally lacks the elements of compulsion, moving has been infrequent but profitable. In instances of this sort, migration performs its traditional function of placing the migrant in a location of enlarged economic opportunity. On the other hand, when individuals and families have little choice but to move, the chances of migrations proving profitable are minimized greatly.

Table 55.—Distribution of Moves Resulting in a Higher, a Lower, or No Change in Net Wealth of Heads of Families Classed into Migration Groups.

Migration group	Number of moves**	PERCENTAGE OF MOVES RESULTING IN:			
		Total	Higher net wealth	Lower net wealth	No change net wealth
All groups	4132	100.0	41.1	20.9	38.0
I	166	100.0	75.9	12.0	12.0
II	609	100.0	57.9	17.7	24.3
III	1151	100.0	44.4*	22.7*	32.9
IV	2206	100.0	32.1	21.4*	46.5

* Differences are not significant.
** Entrance moves excluded; data were not ascertainable on 300 moves.

Over one-half (51.3 percent) of all moves among heads engaged in agriculture were not productive of gains in either tenure or net wealth (Table 56). This finding is based upon a tabulation of 3,410 moves studied. About one-eighth of all moves yielded gains in both wealth and tenure. Data from a supplementary table show that as tenure status of family heads as of 1937 decreased, increasing proportions of moves failed to show gains either in wealth or tenure status.

The reasoning applicable to these findings is as follows. Migration **per se** is not responsible generally for low socioeconomic status. It may

Table 56.—Distribution of Moves in Agriculture Resulting in a Higher, a Lower, or No Change in Tenure and Net Wealth Status.

Change in net wealth following migration	CHANGE OR LACK OF CHANGE IN TENURE FOLLOWING MIGRATION			
	Total*	Higher tenure	Lower tenure	No change
Total	100.0	18.9	9.9	71.2
Higher wealth	42.3	12.5	1.8	28.0
Lower wealth	19.9	1.5	4.9	13.5
No change in wealth	37.8	4.9	3.2	29.7

* Entrance moves and moves to and from agriculture are excluded.

be voluntary or involuntary in character. If it is voluntary the migrant doubtless is seeking more favorable economic opportunities; if it is involuntary, as is often the case among the poorer classes, the migrant presumably has to use this means of maintaining the status already possessed. If it is assumed that a considerable proportion of migration is compulsory, then moving forms the chief means that the poorer classes have at their disposal for attempting to improve their socioeconomic status.

Relationship of Migration and Soicoeconomic Status to Other Factors

What effect does age have upon migration and economic status? It has been established already that as age increases, migration tends to decrease. But this generalization must be qualified by the influences of socioeconomic status upon migration. The loss of status or the failure to attain a reasonable degree of security in early life may necessitate frequent moving in old age. As will be shown by the following analysis, migration and mobility are functions of age. Operating together, both tend to lessen as age advances.

By standardizing data on migration and vertical mobility according to age groups, it can be seen that the greatest proportion of advances occurred during the year of heaviest migration, or before the heads reached 35 years of age (Table 57). Generally, as age increased, improvements in socioeconomic status by migration decreased.[3] Economic oportunities were more readily seized and exploited by heads of families during the years of greatest physical and mental energies.[4]

The data in Table 58 show a direct relationship between low economic status and migration. The frequency of migration proved to be about seven times as great among family heads having less than $500 in net wealth in 1937 as among those whose net wealth was $2500 and over. As net wealth increased, migration tended to decrease. The family's residential stability obviously rests largely upon its economic foundation. Without wealth and without the means of access to earning a living, families have little chance of improving their economic status. When migration fails to assist migrants in enhancing tenure or wealth status, the question can be raised whether it is migration or the channels of vertical mobility which are functioning inadequately.

[3] The same general tendencies applied to changes in net wealth as age increased.

[4] *Cf.* Stanley Whitson Warren, *An Economic Study of Agriculture in Northern Livingston County*, New York, Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Agri. Exp. Sta. Bull. No. 539, May, 1932, pp. 171-172.

Table 57.—Distribution of Moves in Agriculture Resulting in a Higher, a Lower, or No Change in Tenure, by Age of Heads of Families at Time of Move.

Age group of heads at time of move, years	Number of moves	PERCENTAGE OF MOVES RESULTING IN: Total	Higher tenure	Lower tenure	No change
All ages	3410	100.0	18.9	9.9	71.2
15-24	732	100.0	22.4*	7.9*	69.7*
25-34	1464	100.0	19.9*	8.5*	71.6*
35-44	715	100.0	16.6*	11.6*	71.8*
45-54	353	100.0	13.0	13.0*	74.0*
55-64	108	100.0	12.0	8.3*	79.7
65 and over	38	100.0	5.3	15.8*	78.9*

* Differences are not significant.

Table 58.—Number and Percent of Migrant Heads of Familes in 1937, by Net Wealth Class.

Net wealth class	Number of heads**	Number moving in 1937*	Percent	Ratio
All classes	1019	163	16.0	100
Under $500	356	98	27.5	175
$500-$999	151	27	17.8*	112
$1000-$2499	200	25	12.5*	80
$2500 and over	312	13	4.2	25

* Difference between 17.8 and 12.5 is not significant, but the trend is reliable.
** Heads of families beginning earning life in 1937 are excluded.

Table 59.—Number and Percent of Moves During Earning Life in Which Heads Reported Less than $500 Gross Wealth, by Farm Tenure Status in 1937.

Farm tenure status	Number of heads	Number of moves reported*	MOVES BY HEADS WITH LESS THAN 500 GROSS WEALTH: Number	Percent
All tenures	1032	3880	2431	62.0
Full owner	244	772	329	42.6
Part owner	140	391	147	37.6
Tenant	506	1926	1227	63.7
Cropper-laborer	69	388	366	93.4
Other	73	403	362	89.8

* Entrance moves are excluded.

The proportions of all moves during earning life in which family heads had less than $500 in gross wealth varied widely among the various tenure classes. In approximately two-fifths of all moves by farm owners as of 1937, the gross wealth was less than $500; in nine-tenths of all moves of cropper-laborers and "others" a comparable amount of wealth was reported. From these data (Table 59) it is plain that migration alone will not bring about an enhancement in tenure and wealth status. More logically, frequent migrations are the expected outcome of low status.

Table 60 shows the combined effect of tenure and wealth status upon migration. As would be expected, the heads with less than $1000 in net

Table 60.—Distribution of Heads of Families into Migration Groups, by Farm Tenure Status and Net Wealth Classes in 1937.

Tenure status and net wealth in 1937	Number of heads	PERCENTAGE OF HEADS IN EACH MIGRATION GROUP				
		Total	I	II	III	IV
All tenures	1027	100.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0
Under $500	362	100.0	9.9	19.1	27.6	43.4
$500-$999	152	100.0	14.5	24.3	32.2	29.0
$1000-$2499	201	100.0	25.9	31.8	27.9	14.4
$2500-$4999	133	100.0	39.0	29.3	20.3	11.4
$5000 and over	179	100.0	53.1	26.8	13.4	6.7
Full owner	243	100.0	42.6	28.7	18.0	10.7
Under $500	6	*	*	*	*	*
$500-$999	12	100.0	16.7	33.3	25.0	25.0
$1000-$2499	56	100.0	32.1	25.0	30.4	12.5
$2500-$4999	62	100.0	40.3	35.5	11.3	12.9
$5000 and over	107	100.0	53.3	25.2	15.0	6.5
Part owner	140	100.0	41.4	30.0	19.3	9.3
Under $500	6	*	*	*	*	*
$500-$999	4	*	*	*	*	*
$1000-$2499	26	100.0	23.1	42.3	23.1	11.5
$2500-$4999	40	100.0	35.0	30.0	25.0	10.0
$5000 and over	64	100.0	54.7	28.1	10.9	6.3
Tenant	502	100.0	16.0	24.7	28.5	30.8
Under $500	220	100.0	10.0	20.9	26.4	42.7
$500-$999	123	100.0	14.1	25.0	31.2	29.7
$1000-$2499	115	100.0	20.9	33.9	28.7	16.5
$2500-$4999	31	100.0	41.9	16.1	32.3	9.7
$5000 and over	8	100.0	37.5	37.5	12.5	12.5
Cropper-laborer	69	100.0	10.1	18.8	26.1	45.0
Under $500	61	100.0	6.6	21.3	24.6	47.5
$500-$999	5	*	*	*	*	*
$100-$2499	3	*	*	*	*	*
Other	73	100.0	11.0	11.0	34.2	43.8
Under $500	69	100.0	10.1	10.1	34.8	44.9
$500-$999	3	*	*	*	*	*
$1000-$2499	1	*	*	*	*	*

* Inadequate sample.

Table 61.—Distribution of Socioeconomic Status Scores, by Migration Groups.

Socioeconomic status score	Number of heads	PERCENTAGE IN EACH MIGRATION GROUP				
		Total	I	II	III	IV
All scores	1030	100.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0
80-89	131	100.0	5.3	22.1	22.9*	49.7
90-99	161	100.0	16.8	13.7	34.8	34.8
100-109	166	100.0	16.3	24.7*	28.9*	30.1*
110-119	164	100.0	25.0*	32.9	20.8*	21.3*
120-129	161	100.0	36.6	20.5*	23.6*	19.3
130-139	106	100.0	35.0	35.8	21.7*	7.5
140-149	76	100.0	34.2	28.9*	27.7*	9.2
150-159	47	100.0	48.9	27.7*	14.9*	8.5
160 and over	18	100.0	61.1	33.3	5.6	0.0
Median score	113		125	114	108	100

* Differences are not significant.

wealth in 1937 were concentrated in Migration Groups III and IV, and those with more wealth predominated in Groups I and II. Consistently as wealth increased, the proportions of heads in the stable groups increased.

Differences in the amount of migration were not traceable to tenure status alone but to tenure **and** net wealth. **In other words, tenants did not appear to be reliably more migratory than farm owners when wealth was held constant.** More of the farm owners had larger amounts of wealth than tenants, and, consequently, were less migratory. Instability of residence signifies low tenure and economic status, which, in turn, may be traceable partly to imperfections of the tenure system and partly to the deficiencies of individuals and families themselves. If socioeconomic status is largely acquired by inheritance, or if an individual is predisposed to the acquisition of status by favorable background factors, migration probaly will be low. But, if an individual has a poor heritage socially and econmically, migration probaly will be frequent and of little avail in elevating socioeconomic status.

Still another relationship between migration and socioeconomic status can be ascertained by using Sewell's Socioeconomic Status Scale. This scale was constructed from data pertaining to the material and cultural possessions, effective income, and community participation of the same families which form the basis of this study.[5] An examination of the components of the scale indicate that Sewell has chosen items which reflect the cumulative behavior of the family with respect to status. It is not the purpose of the scale to measure changes but the relatively permanent features in the family's economic status. The scores of the families in the sample, arrayed into class intervals, are distributed by migration groups in the accompanying table.

Reading the data in Table 61 horizontally, the percentages of family heads with scioeconomic status scores under 110 increase regularly from Migration Group I to IV, and similarly they decrease consistently in the

[5] William H. Sewell, *The Construction and Standardization of a Scale for the Measurement of the Socio-Economic Status of Oklahoma Farm Families*, p. 20.

distribution of scores of 130 and over. By reading the data vertically, the consistency of inverse relationship between socioeconomic status and migration is clearly indicated in the extreme migration groups. These data strongly confirm the thesis repeatedly advanced in this study, namely, that socioeconomic status tends to determine the relative frequency of migration. Within limits, as socioeconomic status improves, migration tends to decrease.

The median socioeconomic status scores ranged downward from 125 among families in Migration Group I to 100 among those in Migration Group IV. The median score for all families was 113. The data in Table 61 furnish proof of the validity and reliability of the standardized measure of migration in terms of a standardized measure of socioeconomic status.

It is just as essential to know the degree of association as it is to know that a relationship exists between two variables. Therefore, the average number of moves per year for each family head was correlated with the socioeconomic status scores in 1937, following the classification of heads into intervals according to number of years of earning life. These coefficients of correlation are given in Table 62.

Table 62—Coefficients of Correlation Between the Average Number of Moves per Year for Each Head and the Socioeconomic Status Score in 1937, by Groups of Heads of Families Classified According to Specified Number of Years of Earning Life.

Number of years of earning life	Number of heads	Coefficients of correlation (r)	Coefficients of Determination (r^2)
All years	1030	$-.33 \pm .03$	.1089
0-9	215	$-.17 \pm .07$	.0289
10-19	267	$-.45 \pm .05$	.2025
20-29	235	$-.30 \pm .06$	.0900
30-39	165	$-.55 \pm .05$	.3025
40-49	114	$-.56 \pm .06$	.3136
50-59*	34	$-.17 \pm .17$	.0289

* Includes 2 cases reporting 60 years of earning life and over.

A substantially positive inverse relationship held between the relative amount of migration during the earning life of the head and the socioeconomic status scores of the family in 1937. The coefficient of correlation was $-.33 \pm .03$ for all cases, but wide variations obtained among the several age groups. Interpreted in another way, only 10.89 percent of the variation in socioeconomic status was associated with variation in migration. In the extreme age groups, the mutual influence of the two variables was practically negligible.

The fairly low degree of relationship between these two rigidly standardized variables can be explained rather easily. Sewell's Socioeconomic Status Scale is constructed from items the possession of which has little or no direct bearing upon migratory behavior.[6] The scale is a more stable measure of status than tenure and wealth, which influence migration directly. Open-country residents are highly responsive to actual or impending changes in tenure and wealth, but they are less consciously

[6] Sewell obtained a coefficient of correlation of .55 between the status scores and net wealth. *Op. cit.*, p. 48.

aware of possible changes in other reflectors of status that Sewell's scale measures. Socioeconomic status is a product of interaction between migration and vertical social mobility, but as the low degree of correlation indicates, migration plays a less important role than vertical social mobility in determining status.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The primary purpose of this study was to describe and explain certain fundamental interrelationships of migration, social mobility, and socioeconomic status of 1,032 heads of families living in the open country of Haskell, Cotton, Major, and Craig counties in Oklahoma.

The chronological history of changes in dwelling, occupation, and wealth from the beginning of earning life of the head of family until the year of survey, 1937, furnished most of the basic data for the study. Supplementary data were taken from other parts of the schedule used in interviews.

Objective definitions of the terms "migration," "social mobility," and "socioeconomic status" were used to facilitate clarity and understanding of the research problem. Migration was defined as any change in domicile. Vertical social mobility referred to the shifting from one occupation or tenure status to another, or from one wealth class to another. Two criteria, occupation and wealth, were utilized as indexes of socioeconomic status, which in essence is the composite evaluation of the functions of an individual by members of his groups.

The farm tenure status in 1937 of heads of families in the sample was as follows:

	Number	Percent
All tenures	1032	100.0
Full owners	244	23.6
Part owners	140	13.6
Tenants	506	49.0
Croppers-laborers	69	6.7
Others	73	7.1

An historical analysis of the occupational hierarchy during the earning life of the heads revealed these characteristics: (1) a definite trend toward increasing landlessness dating from the first World War and, (2) a decrease in the proportions of all heads engaged in nonagricultural occupations which accompanied the movement of a part of the sampled population from village and urban centers to the open country.

In 1937, the median net wealth of the sampled heads of families recorded to the nearest one hundred dollars was $900. Wide variations characterized the net worth of farm owners and nonowners, the median figures being as follows: full owners, $4400; part owners, $4300; tenants, $500; and cropper-laborers and "others," $100 each.

The mean age of male family heads in 1937 was $44.0 \pm .44$ years. With each advance in tenure status from "others" to full owners, the average age increased, indicating that tenure status is generally a function of age.

The instability of the open-country population was indicated by the high incidence of migration among the heads of families studied. The mean number of moves for all heads was 5.17±.13. One of the most important findings in this study was that nearly two-thirds (65.3 percent) of all moves were made by slightly more than one-third (35.6 percent) of all heads. These heads, moving six-times or more each, rated low with respect to the amount of farm ownership. net wealth, gross cash income per ammain, and socioeconomic status score.

By using the number of moves per 100 heads of families for each year during earning life as a measure of migration, the average annual rate for all heads was 22.6 moves. The annual migration rate decreased consistently from 49.3 moves per 100 heads under 20 years old to 6.5 for heads 60 to 64 years of age, inclusive. There was a tendency for migration to increase slightly among heads 65 years old and over. Throughout earning life farm owners had been less migratory than tenants, and the latter had moved less than cropper-laborers and "others."

In applying this same measure to heads classified according to age in 1937, it was found that migration generally had increased among heads under 35 years and over 44 years of age. However, because of the increase in the age composition of the sample, the total migration rate had decreased rather steadily from 1887 through 1937. The migration rates, calculated by tenure status at time of moving, had declined among owners and tenants during the same period, but those for cropper-laborers and "others" had risen.

In proceeding from the least migratory to the most migratory quartile of families, there was a consistent decrease in the proportions of owners among the total heads in each group. In each of the landless tenure classes the proportions of heads increased regularly from Migration Groups I to IV.* There were roughly four times as many owners in Group I as in Group IV. Reversely, four times as many cropper-laborers appeared in Group IV as in Group I. Approximately twice as many tenants were in the most migratory group as in the least migratory of family heads.

Over one-third (36.7 percent) of the heads of families were born in Oklahoma, and another 43.5 percent reported their birth in an adjoining state. Also, about equal proportions, 8.7 and 9.2 percent, respectively, originated in other southern and other northern states. The remaining 1.9 percent came from foreign countries.

The incidence of farm ownership among family heads tended to be related to state of birth. High proportions of the natives from northern states and foreign countries were farm owners, but relatively few of those born in the southern states owned land.

The natives of Arkansas and Texas were highly migratory, whereas greater stability marked northern-born heads. No reliable differences in migration were noted for natives of other states.

Over nine of every ten male heads studied were sons of farmers. Three-fifths of their fathers were farm owners as compared with nearly two-ffiths of the propositi. It is significant that only one in ten heads held a higher tenure status than their fathers, whereas four in ten held a lower status, and nearly one of every two possessed the same status as that of the father.

While losses in tenure status between the two generations fell most heavily upon heads whose fathers were farm owners, it is noteworthy

* For an explanation of these groupings, see page 18.

that 17.5 percent of the sons of tenants were owners in 1937 as against 45.9 percent of the sons of owners. The sons of nonagriculturists owned farms in 42.7 percent of the cases.

By comparing the tenure status of fathers to that of their sons, it was found that 76.6 percent of the owner's fathers were themselves owners. Among tenants' fathers, 55.9 percent were owners. The fathers of cropper-laborers and "others" owned farms in 36.4 and 37.4 percent of the cases, respectively.

The heads whose fathers did not own farms tended to be more migratory than those whose fathers owned farms.

The schooling of heads descending from landless families was considarably less than that of those originating in landowning families. Cropper-laborers and "others" received less schooling than farm owners and tenants. Though younger on the average than farm operators, they had not taken advantage generally of the increased oportunities for education. For all male heads of families, the average number of grades completed in school was $6.8 \pm .25$, with fewer than one-fifth going to school beyond the eighth grade. The heads possessing less than an eighth-grade education migrated more frequently than the heads with an elementary schooling or better.

Low tenure status and excessive residential instability were related to early departure from the parental home. Also, a high proportion of southern-born heads left home before the age of 21 years. Over four times as many marriages had been consummated before the age of 21 years among heads 15 to 34 years of age in 1937 as among heads 55 years old and over. The higher incidence of early marriage, coupled with a high fertility rate among the lower tenure classes, can lead to a disproportionately large expansion of the landless population.

The tenure status acquired at the beginning of earning life was associated closely with subsequent socioeconomic status and migratory behavior. Three-fourths of the farm owners and three-fifths of the tenants at the beginning of earning life still retained their respective statuses in 1937. Only one-third of the beginning tenants and one-fourth of starting cropper-laborers had risen to and held a farm owning status as of 1937. Of the heads beginning in "other" occupations, two-fifths had become farm owners by 1937.

Perhaps the most significant finding in the whole study is the fact that 72.1 percent of the landless heads of families occupied the same or a lower tenure status in 1937 as at the beginning of earning life. For an average duration of earning life of $23 \pm .43$ years, this lack of progress is amazing. The gains in tenure status had been made largely by farm owners.

Wide variations in the relative amount of migration were traceable to the first employment reported. Eight of every ten farm owners beginning earning life in that status were in Migration Groups I and II. At the other extreme, nearly seven of every ten heads starting in the landless classes were in Migration Groups III and IV.

The trend toward increasing landlessness can be observed by comparing changes in the first employment reported. Nearly one in four heads of families 55 years and over commenced working for themselves on their own farms as against one in twenty-five heads under 35 years of age. The cessation of homesteading and the granting of allotments to Indians had been chiefly responsible for the reduction in the proportions of farm owners at the beginning of earning life.

From the data presented, it appears that since the first World War new heads of families began their careers with less capital than those commencing in earlier years. For 82.5 percent of the sampled heads, the gross wealth at the beginning of earning life had been under $500, according to the estimates reported. Over one-fourth of the full owners had received a homestead, Indian allotment, inheritance, or gift upon leaving home to start for themselves. This ratio was twice that of the sample as a whole.

Typical families in the surveyed areas of Oklahoma consisted of a husband, wife, and children under 15 years of age. Family units of parents and children persisted to a high degree, 83.2 percent of the sampled falling in this category. The remainder was distributed into about equal proportions of childless couples, broken families, and nonfamily units. No reliable differences were noted in types of families of the four migration groups, but families of owners had older children than the landless families.

For the year 1937, the migrant households did not contain a significantly larger or smaller number of persons than the nonmigrant households, but the former had large proportions of children under 15 years old. However, the size of households in Migration Group IV exceeded by a reliable margin the average number of the more stable groups. The mean number of persons per household was $4.4 \pm .07$.

The number of children under 5 for each 100 women 15 to 44 years of age in 1937 increased regularly as tenure and net wealth status decreased. Generally, a direct relationship held between the size of the fertility ratio and the amount of migration. The fertility ratios were higher in the self-sufficing and small-scale cotton farming areas of eastern Oklahoma than in the large-scale, commercialized agricultural areas of western Oklahoma. High fertility ratios also predominated on farms with poor soils. The fertility ratio of 59.65 for the sample exceeded by a wide margin the number of children necessary to furnish replacements for the population.

Among the heads of families studied, 44.6 percent received some form of public assistance during 1937. With each descent in tenure status and with each increase in the itensity of migration, reliably larger proportions frequented the assistance agencies. The median recipient of assistance drew $115, or approximately one-fourth of his total cash income, from public subsidies. The typical family receiving assistance was slightly larger than the median nonrelief family, but its head was 40 years old, or four years younger than the head of the corresponding nonrelief unit.

Instability of residence and landlessness were not conducive to participation in community organizations. One-half of the families reported membership of heads or homemakers in community organizations, inclusive of churches. Migratory and landless families not only were less frequently members in organizations, but also those reporting were affiliated with a smaller average number of groups than the stable, landowning families. Two-thirds of the families contained heads or homemakers who were church members, but it is noteworthy that differences between landowning and landless families were less pronounced than those for other community organizations. As migration increased, church membership decreased consistently.

The farmers whose income was derived principally from small grains—wheat, oats, and corn were reliably more stable than the average. In contrast, nearly two-thirds of the farmers engaged primarily in cotton production were in the two highest migration groups. Tenants were more numerous relatively on cotton farms than on small-grain farms.

In 1937, the heads of families reporting no acreage in the previous year migrated in about four times the volume of heads living on farms. Generally, as the acres per farm increased, migration decreased. Over one-half of all farm-to-farm moves during the earning life of heads had been on tracts of less than 100 acres. The migration of landless heads had been confined largely to smaller farms, whereas landowning heads had moved more frequently between farms containing 100 acres and over. The occupants of small farms were characterized by a high turnover in residence and a landless tenure status.

Using, as a rough measure of land quality, the Census value of land and buildings per acre in 1935 for the county in which moves between agricultural occupations occurred during the earning life of the migrant, it was found that about twice as many moves of nonowners as of owners were in counties with a value of less than $15 per acre. Also, from the least to the most migratory groups of heads, the proportions of moves in the low-value counties increased sharply. From these data there appears to be a three-way relationship between poor land, heavy migration, and landlessness.

An analysis of the tenure histories of 1,032 heads of families revealed a wide diversity of patterns or combinations of tenures and occupations used to gain the farm tenure status held in 1937. Among farm owners, 20.6 percent always had occupied that status; 27.6 percent had risen from tenancy; 9.3 percent had begun as farm laborers; and the remainder had reached the ownership status by numerous combinations of farming and nonfarming employments.

The largest proportions of tenants, 37.7 percent, had been in that status continuously since the beginning of earning life; 22.3 percent formerly had owned farms; 10.5 percent had advanced from the farm laborer class; and the remainder had become tenants by various combinations of mobility.

In the cropper-laborer class, 55.1 percent of the family heads were former tenants or owners; 37.7 percent had been in the cropper-laborer status throughout earning life, and the remaining few had reached this status by other combinations of occupational mobility. Among "other" heads, 83.6 percent had descended from higher levels on the tenure ladder, the remainder being recruited from occupations outside agriculture.

Extensive tenure mobility and employment in nonagricultural occupations characterized the heads in Migration Groups III and IV. Rapid advancement on the agricultural ladder led to early residential stability. At the start of earning life 30 percent of all heads in Migration Group I were farm owners, and by the twentieth year 84 percent had become owners of farms. Correspondingly, in Migration Group IV, 5 percent began as owners and two decades later only 18 percent had achieved land ownership.

In the sample studied, the proportions of farm owners had been decreasing since 1915, with the largest absolute losses occurring not among younger heads of families but among those 45 years old and over. Coincident with increases in landlessness, the family heads were spending larger proportions of their earning life in the landless classes, which of course tended to maintain high rates of migration. Three-fifths of the owners in the sample had acquired their farms before the age of 35 years, but in 1937 a slightly larger proportion of tenants (61.4 percent) already was 35 years old and over.

As evidence of occupational displacement, 192 family heads, or 18.6 percent of the total sample, reported a lower tenure or occupational status in 1937 than the longest one held during earning life. Over four-fifths of the losses were recorded in the decade ending in 1937. It appears that

relatively more of the recent displacements involved landless families, whereas farm owners experienced heavier losses prior to 1928.

The median net wealth of displaced family heads in 1937 was $200 as compared with $900 for all heads in the sample. At the same time, over one-half of the demoted heads were 45 years of age and over. Nearly 70 percent of these heads were concentrated in Migration Groups II and IV.

Assuming as a change in occupation any shift from one tenure status to another or from one occupational level to another in nonagricultural employment, a correlation coeffiicent of .72±.01 (by the Pearson product-moment formula) was obtained between the number of changes in occupation and the number of changes in domicile of family heads. The coefficients consistently decreased in size with each descent in tenure status, excepting for "other" heads.

Among all moves exclusive of entrance moves, by heads engaged in agriculture, 71.2 percent produced no change in tenure status; in 18.9 percent, gains were reported; and in 9.9 percent, losses resulted. Reliably fewer advances in tenure status were reported as concomitants of moves by landless than by landowning heads of families. Furthermore, since 1919, the proportions of "no changes" and losses of status accompanying migrations had been higher than prior to that date. Two inferences may be drawn from these data: first, that migration had not been an important means of improving tenure status; and, second, that migration increasingly seemed to represent a substitute for an upward movement in social space.

In correlating the number of changes of $100 or over in net wealth (a change being the difference of $100 or more in net worth from beginning of residence at one domicile to the beginning of residence at the next place of abode) with the number of moves, a correlation of .80±.01 was obtained. For practical purposes about all this high degree of association shows is that as the number of moves per head increased, changes in net wealth tended to increase correspondingly. A correlation between the gains in net wealth and number of moves yielded a coefficient of .66±.02. In both sets of correlations, the coefficients for cropper-laborers and "others" were less than for farmers. Obviously changes of $100 and over in net wealth would occur more frequently among those heads with higher wealth.

Changes in net wealth occurred more frequently than changes in tenure status as a concomitant of migration, with 41.1 percent of the moves showing gains; 20.9 percent, losses; and, 38.0 percent, no changes of $100 and over. With each descent in tenure status and with each increase in the intensity of migration, as shown by the migration groups, the proportions of moves resulting in gains in net wealth decreased.

Of all moves in agriculture, 51.3 percent resulted either in losses or no change in both tenure and net wealth. With each downward step in tenure status, as of 1937, increasing proportions of moves failed to show gains either in tenure or net wealth.

The net wealth in 1937 was generally higher for older than for younger heads, but migrations of heads 45 years old and older proved to be less profitable occupationally and economically.

An inverse relationship existed in 1937, between net wealth and migration, with 27.5 percent of the heads with less than $500 in net wealth reporting a change in domicile as against 4.2 percent of the heads with $2500 and over. Throughout earning life, landlessness and low wealth were closely associated with migration. Not tenure alone, but wealth and tenure together, influenced migration.

The relationship of Sewell's socioeconomic status scores to migration tends to confirm the thesis that instability of domiciles is associated with low status. The proportions of family heads having scores under 110 (median 113) increased sharply from Migration Group I through Migration Group IV. For the heads with scores of 130 and over, the proportions decreased consistently from Migration Group I through Migration Group IV. By correlating the average number of moves per year for each head and the socioeconomic status scores, a coefficient of $.33 \pm .03$ was obtained. Wide variations were noted in the correlation coefficients between these two variables among heads of families grouped by age. Apparently socioeconomic status, especially as measured by Sewell's scale, is not as dependent upon age as is migration. This explanation does not nullify the assumption that low socioeconomic status aggravates migration, but it stresses the importance of other factors than age in the determination of status.

Conclusions

The findings of this research furnish a basis for several generalizations concerning the interrelationship of migration, social mobility, and socioeconomic status of the heads of families in the sample.

Among the population studied, there is an inverse relationship between the height of socioeconomic status and the amount of migration. Movements in geographic space and in social space tend to be complementary. An improvement in tenure or wealth status generally reduces the amount of moving, but losses of status increase the migration rates sharply.

Migration tends to decrease with increasing age, but throughout earning life landowning heads of families had lower rates of moving than landless heads.

Landlessness and more than average migration are characteristics of heads of families born in the South.

Regardless of the tenure status held, the sons of farm owners tend to be less migratory than the sons of landless parents.

Heads of families living in the open country almost invariably are sons of farmers. There has been a sharp decrease in tenure status from the past to the present generation of agriculturists.

The amount of formal education possessed by heads of families tends to vary directly with tenure status if age is held constant.

Landlessness and heavy migration characterize large proportions of family heads leaving home before the age of 21 years.

The age at marriage has been decreasing among the population studied, and the period elapsing between age at departure from home and marriage has been shortened.

Farm ownership is attainable chiefly among those possessing special economic advantages in the form of inheritances, homesteads, allotments, or other capital subsidies.

The data available indicate that since the first World War new heads of families probably have begun earning life with less capital on the average than those commencing prior to that period.

Landless and highly migratory families not only are larger on the average, but also they usually have younger children than landowning and less migratory families. From the observations in this study, it appears that the fertility ratios are related inversely in size with farm tenure status, net wealth class, and quality of land occupied. Large families, landlessness, small farms, and poor land are closely interrelated factors.

The incidence of public assistance is highly associated with landlessness and excessive migratoriness.

Membership in the church and other community organizations, as reported for both male and female heads of families, tends to decrease with each descent in tenure status, and to decrease with the intensity of migration.

Based upon the principal source of cash income from the farm, the data warrant the conclusion that small-grain farming predominates among farm owners and the least migratory tenants, whereas cotton farming is practiced widely among most of the landless and excessively migratory heads of families.

In the processes of migration and social mobility, the poorer farmers gravitate to the smaller acreages, which also are characterized by tenancy and inferior land.

The deplorably low net wealth of most landless families provides ample basis for the conclusion that only a relatively small proportion of this group will acquire sufficient funds to purchase farms.

The data in this study do not point conclusively to a decrease in the amount of vertical tenure mobility, but they reveal shifts in the direction of mobility. Instead of climbing the agricultural ladder to farm ownership, increasing proportions of family heads circulate within the landless classes, unable to advance beyond the tenancy stage. A second major characteristic is the relatively large reduction in farm tenure status, not only between generations but also within the generation of family heads under observation. The laborer classes in agriculture, rather than being primarily a point from which to launch a career seem destined to become a "catch-all" for those who have been displaced from farming and industrial employment. Similarly, a part of the increase in the size of the tenant class is attributable to the displacement of farm owners.

The loss of farm tenure status definitely leads to an increase in the amount of migration. Furthermore, the heads of families who report experience in nonagricultural employment tend to be more migratory than those who remain in agriculture constantly.

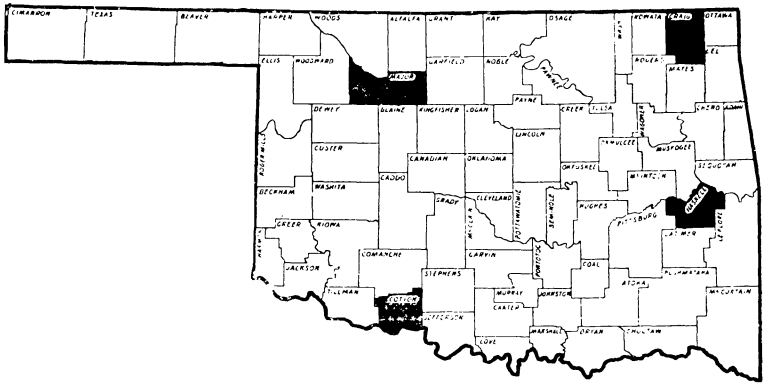
In appraising the relative significance of migration and social mobility in the detemination of status, it can be concluded that migation has not failed in its function to place the population at points of available opportunities, but that the means by which one may climb the tenure or occupational ladders have been limited to those holding a highly favorable socioeconomic position. Public lands suitable for commercial agriculture no longer are available. Losses in the fertility of the soils, decreases in the general effective demand for agricultural commodities, low selling prices, high buying prices, competition from non-farm investors in the purchase of land, expensive farm machinery, restricted crop production, and the commercialization of agriculture probably have operated to debase the economic foundation of family-size farms. In general, only large-scale farm owners are now in a position to help their children organize their farm and family upon a basis that will permit advancement from a status of landlessness to one of landownership.

APPENDIX: SCOPE AND METHOD

In planning the proposed survey, the project supervisors had to consider limitations in time, funds, and personnel. To comply with certain objectives of the Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station, the following requirements were tentatively adopted. First, the survey would be conducted in four counties. Second, the counties selected were to be representative of the State in as many socioeconomic characteristics as possible. Third, the universe of sampling within each county would be the total white population living outside of villages and cities. Fourth, to be adequate, the sample should include from 10 to 15 percent of the families living in the open country.

Selection of Counties

The choice of counties to be surveyed was governed primarily by the type of farming and the amount of farm tenancy. Other factors entering into the selection of counties were the number and size of farm units, degree of rurality, general character of the nonagricultural industries, proximity of large cities, age composition of the rural-farm population, the duration of farm occupancy, and general plane of living. Data from



Appendix Figure 1.—Map of Oklahoma, showing survey counties.

Federal Censuses were indispensable to the project supervisors in determining the four counties finally chosen, namely, Haskell, Cotton, Major and Craig. The major tests of representativeness will now be described.

Type of Farming

Haskell county, located midway in the second tier of counties along the eastern border of the State, is fairly representative of the small-scale cotton and subsistence farming area of eastern Oklahoma (Map 1). Most of the families originated in Arkansas, northeast Texas, Tennessee, and other southern states where this type of agriculture generally prevails. A rough to hilly topography limits cultivation to small patches. Some corn is raised for meal and for the maintenance of livestock and poultry. The main cash crop is cotton, upon which the farmer depends for the payment of rental, taxes, merchants, banks, and doctor. Credit forms the chief financial means by which the farm and the family operate from one year to another. Wood-cutting, hunting, and the sale of small

amounts of livestock, poultry, and poultry products yield some cash income. The small farm units and the rough topography discourage use of the tractor.

The northeastern part of the State is well adapted to a general type of farming. In Craig county, corn, some row crops, livestock and dairying provide the principal sources of farm income. Meadow and woodland pastures furnish ample hay and grass for livestock. Numerous ranches are located on the rolling prairies in the western part of the county, and self-sufficing agriculture is practiced widely in the eastern portion. The early white settlers migrated principally from Kansas, Missouri, and Arkansas into the county to lease lands owned by the Indians, traded with them, and also worked as laborers on railroad construction crews. Many of the open-country families continue to engage in part-time farming with substantial proportions of their total income being gained from mining.

Cotton county typifies the emerging large-scale commercial farming area of southwestern Oklahoma. Its location along the Red River between the ninety-eighth and ninety-ninth meridians places it in a zone level topography through the use of tractors and motor-drawn equipment.[1] The farms are larger than those in eastern Oklahoma, and livestock, dairying, and poultry form profitable complementary enterprises in the agricultural organization.

The region Cotton county represents in this study is semi-arid, and the hazards incident to farming require a type of farmer adaptable to extreme conditions of prosperity and depression. Many of the farmers migrated to southwestern Oklahoma from the bordering states of Texas, Kansas, and Arkansas during the first two decades of this country.

Oldest among the four counties from the standpoint of white settlement, Major county possesses a better integrated, more permanent type of agriculture. Cash-grain and general farming predominate, but livestock constitutes an important backlog in sustaining agriculture in drouth years. of transition including both prairies and plains. Wheat has made inroads upon cotton as the main cash crop, and in recent years about equal acreages have been planted to each. Farmers exploit their advantage of Wide variations exist in the soils of the county, much of the poorer grade lands being covered by scrub oak. In the northwestern part of the county the high plains are cut by steep canyons. Along the Cimarron and North Canadian Rivers, blowing, sandy soils form a refuge to marginal farmers, many of whom are on relief. Some of the best farms in Oklahoma are located in a relatively small area, covering two townships in the northeastern part of the county. Fertile land, adequate-size units, and industrious Mennonite families form a combination of circumstances responsible for this situation. The early homesteaders in the region came from Kansas and other midwestern states in which similar agricultural practices are followed.

These four counties are fairly typical of the principal type of farming areas in the State: cotton-self-sufficing; general farming-dairy; cotton-wheat-livestock; and wheat-livestock-general combinations. Wide variations in soils, size of farm, agricultural organization, and farming practices exist within each of the counties, but this makes the counties all the more representative of their respective type of farming regions.[2]

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[1] In 1939, there were 619 tractors registered with the Oklahoma Tax Commission, a gain of 60 percent over 1930.

[2] Peter Nelson, "Geographical Variability in Types of Farming in Oklahoma," *Current rent Farm Economics*, Vol. IX, February 1936, p. 4. Also see P. H. Stephens and Emil Rauchenstein, *Systems of Farming in Oklahoma*. Stillwater: Oklahoma Agri. Exp. Sta. Bull. No. 199, April 1931.

Tenancy

The proportions of farmers in Oklahoma operating land as tenants and croppers have been high since early settlement. In 1935, 61.6 percent of the white farm operators in the State did not own any of the land operated. In selecting the survey areas, efforts were made to include counties having high, low, and medium tenancy ratios, with the total universe corresponding closely to the State as a whole. Comparisons in the tenure distribution in 1935 for the white farmers in the State, survey counties, and the sample are presented in Appendix Table 1.

Of all white farm operators in the survey counties, 62.4 percent were tenants, croppers and managers (Appendix Table 1). Haskell county had the highest proportion of nonowning white farm operators in the State, 79.7 percent. In the low tenancy county, Major, the corresponding ratio was 49.6 percent, while in Craig and Cotton the percentages were 51.5 and 67.0, respectively. The variations in tenure distribution between the State and survey areas being small and relatively unimportant, it can be concluded that the four counties as a whole conform closely with the State with respect to the proportion of farm tenancy.

Farm Income

Because income is associated closely with socioeconomic status, a test of representativeness on this item is desirable. Using the Census data of 1929 on the gross value of farm products sold, traded or consumed at home as the basis for comparison, the distribution of incomes between the State and the four counties taken as a whole closely coincide (Appendix Table 2). Individual counties display wide variations, but a cross-section of all income classes is wanted in the sampling universe. The outstanding characteristic revealed in Appendix Table 2 is the preponderance of low incomes. One-half of the farms reported gross incomes of less than $1000 in 1929, a year of relative prosperity. With respect to the State, the

Appendix Table 1.—Tenure Distribution of White Farm Opertors in the State of Oklahoma, in the Survey Counties, 1935, and in the Sample, 1937.

Census tenure class	FARM CENSUS, 1935		SURVEY SAMPLE, 1937	
	State	Survey counties	Total farm families	Farm families in study**
Number of operators	195,501	8,838	1,047	914
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full owners	27.2	23.3	27.9	26.7
Part owners	11.2	14.3	14.5	15.3
Tenants*	56.0	58.3	54.7	55.4
Croppers	5.6	4.1	2.9	2.6

SOURCE: *United States Census of Agriculture, 1935*, Vol. I, Statistics by Counties, County Table 1, pp. 716-722.

* Farm managers are included as tenants.

** The total sample contained 1212 families, of which 1032 are used in the present study. The families excluded from this tabulation are classed as farm laborers, relief recipients, miners, and others residing in the open country and designated as "nonfarm" population in the Census. A more detailed tenure-occupational classification of families is presented on pages 6 and 7.

Appendix Table 2.—Distribution of Farms According to Gross Farm Income in the State of Oklahoma and the Survey Counties, 1929.

Gross farm income	State	SURVEY COUNTIES				
		Total	Haskell	Craig	Cotton	Major
Number of farms	190,148	7729	1869	1833	2025	2002
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under $600	28.0	27.2	39.4	39.4	13.4	18.7
$600-$999	21.6	23.5	32.7	25.8	17.7	18.4
$1000-$2499	34.6	37.3	24.7	27.9	51.3	43.8
$2500 and over	15.8	12.0	3.2	6.9	17.6	19.1

SOURCE: *Fifteenth Census of the United States, Agriculture, 1930,* Vol. III, Table VI. Gross income refers to the value of products sold, traded, or used by the operator's family.

proportional distributions among the several income classes show a concentration of the farms of the four counties in the intermediate levels. The slight under-representation of the upper income class in the sample counties does not vitiate the general agreement with the State in this important characteristic.[3]

[3] The Rural-Farm Plane of Living Index as compared from U. S. Census data for each county and the State, according to the method employed by Lively and Almack, give the following indexes: State, 100.0, and four-county total, 95.7. See C. E. Lively and R. B. Almack, *A Method of Determining Social Sub-Areas With Application to Ohio,* Columbus: Ohio State University, Department of Rural Economics, Mimeograph Bull. No. 106, 1938.

Duration of Farm Occupancy

Farmers are asked by Census enumerators to report the year in which they moved to the farm occupied. These data, when tabulated separately for farm owners and tenants, furnish a fairly suitable index of migration. In Appendix Table 3, it may be seen that the proportions of families living on farms for specified numbers of years are similar for the State and for the survey counties. Therefore, it can be claimed that the four counties taken as a whole are representative of the State with reference to the duration of occupancy.

Appendix Table 3.—Number of Years on Present Farm Reported by Owner and Tenant Operators in the State and in the Survey Counties, 1935.

Number of years on farm	FULL OWNERS		TENANTS	
	State	Survey counties	State	Survey counties
Number of operators	56,795	2,113	127,060	5,496
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 1 year	10.0	8.5	43.0	40.0
1	4.7	4.4	11.9	12.7
2	5.1	5.4	9.4	9.4
3	4.2	4.1	7.0	7.1
4	5.5	4.0	6.8	6.8
5-9	17.4	16.1	12.4**	24.0**
10-14	13.5	13.3	----	----
15 and over	39.6	44.2	----	----

SOURCE: *United States Census of Agriculture. 1935,* Vol. I, County Table IV.
** Five years and over.

General Representativeness of Survey Counties

As measured by the criteria of type of farming, farm tenancy, gross farm income, and duration of farm occupancy, the four survey counties taken together conform rather closely to the State. Although the Census data are limited to farm families, it may be assumed logically that the nonfarm families living in the open country of the four counties also are representative of the State. It can be assumed further that if the counties are similar to the state in the characteristics observed, the chances are that they will bear close resemblances in others.

Sampling Procedure

An attempt was made to get a random sample by proceeding in such a manner that every white family living in the open country had, as nearly as possible, an equal opportunity of being interviewed. Families of farm laborers, relief workers, and others, as well as farm families were contacted. The enumerators, who were graduates from the School of Agriculture at Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College or had experience in government agricultural work, visited homes in every township of the four counties during the period from December, 1937 to April, 1938. Efforts were taken to reach families living in sections of the counties inaccessible by automobile. The supervisors sought to insure a chance selection of all families by scattering enumerators over a sufficient territory to avoid "bunching" of interviews. Despite these precautions, a scatter map of the homes visited indicates some tendency toward concentration along improved highways. This may account for the slight over-representation in the sample of farm owners who probably reside on better roads than families of the landless classes.

The total sample of 1,212 family schedules was taken in approximately equal proportions among the four counties. By eliminating the schedules with incomplete and fragmentary migration histories, the sample used in the present study was reduced to 1,032 cases. The poorest records were obtained from farm laborers, W. P. A. workers, and other nonfarm families, 28.5 percent of these schedules being removed from the sample because of incompleteness. For similar reasons, the following percentages of schedules among other tenure groups were rejected: croppers 20.0; tenants, 13.3; and farm owners, 13.5. These reductions in the sample account for a few of the discrepancies appearing in Appendix Table 4. It is estimated that the sample comprises about 10 percent of the white families living in the open country of the four counties.[4]

The accompanying table contains a detailed comparison of farm tenure between the four counties, as of 1935, and of the sample of families in 1937. Many of the differences reflect changes in the tenure situation occurring between the date of Census taking, April 1, 1935, and the period of survey, December-April, 1937-1938. The discrepancies appearing in the Major County figures may be explained by the fact that the "universe" is less homogeneous with reference to tenure than for the other counties surveyed. Because of the small number of croppers in all counties, large errors in sampling would be expected with respect to this group. The consistent underrepresentation of croppers in the county samples can be easily explained by the 1940 Census figures in which a loss of 75 percent in croppers is reported.

In general, the proportions of the sample families are in close conformity with the farm families of the four counties. A comparison between the tenure distribution of the State in Appendix Table 1, and the

[4] The 914 sampled families operating farms represent 10.4 percent of the total enumerated in the 1935 Farm Census.

sample of families in Appendix Table 4, shows even closer similarity than that between the farm families of the survey counties and sampled families. On the basis of tenure, it seems safe to conclude that the families studied form a highly satisfactory sample of the survey counties and of the State.

Appendix Table 4.—Tenure Distribution of White Farm Operators in the Survey Counties, 1935, and in the Sample, 1937.

Census tenure class	HASKELL		CRAIG		COTTON		MAJOR	
	Census	Sample	Census	Sample	Census	Sample	Census	Sample
Number of operators	2353	208	2364	233	1999	231	2122	242
Total, percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full owners	13.2	14.9	25.5	25.3	22.4	22.9	33.0	41.7
Part owners	7.1	5.3	22.0	24.0	10.6	12.6	17.4	18.2
Tenants*	74.1	76.0	49.8	49.9	60.3	59.3	47.1	39.3
Croppers	5.6	3.8	1.7	.8	6.7	5.2	2.5	.8

SOURCE: *United States Census of Agriculture, 1935,* Vol. I, County Table I.
* Farm managers are included as tenants.