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*Study of Certain Economic Factors in Relation to Social Life Among Oklahoma Cotton Farmers*

**A Study of Certain Economic  
Factors in Relation to Social  
Life Among Oklahoma  
Cotton Farmers**



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	4
Purpose of the Study .....	4
Basis for Classification .....	4
Collection of Data .....	5
Farm Family Living Expenditures .....	6
Standard of Living Defined .....	6
What Family Living Standard Includes .....	6
General Tendencies Relating to Expenditures .....	6
Engel's Laws .....	8
Detailed Expenditures on the Basis of Tenure of Farmers .....	8
General Tendencies Regarding Expenditures on the Basis of Net Wealth .....	10
Disagreements with Engel's Laws .....	10
Cultural Factors May Exert Indirect Influences upon the Farmer's Economic Status .....	10
General Tendencies Regarding Expenditures on the Basis of Schooling of Farmers .....	12
Factors Affecting the Composition of Families .....	12
Importance of Size of Families .....	12
Size of Families on the Basis of Tenure Status of Farmers .....	13
Principle of Differential Increase of Population Groups .....	13
Influence of Length of Married Life upon Size of Family .....	15
Theory of Over-population by Lower Tenure Groups not Wholly Confirmed .....	15
Relation of Sex Composition of Children to Tenure Status of Farmers .....	16
Explanation of Predominance of Male Children in Lower Tenure Group not Known Exactly .....	17
Relation of Sex Composition of Children to Net Wealth Status of Farmers .....	18
Church Membership and Education of Farmers .....	18
Social Importance of Church Membership .....	18
Tenure Status and Church Membership .....	19
Economic Status and Church Membership .....	21
Tenure Status and Education of Farmers .....	22
Educational and Economic Status of Farmers .....	25
Education of Parents as Related to Education of Children .....	27
Factors Affecting the Choice of Occupations by Children of Oklahoma Cotton Farmers .....	28
Choice of Occupations Regarded as a Means of Personal Advancement .....	28
Majority of Oklahoma Farm Children Remain on Farms .....	28
Influence of Geographical Factors in Rural Emigration Is Minor .....	29
The Professions Draw Most Heavily upon the More Well-to-do Farm Families for Recruits .....	31
Efforts Toward Cultural Advancement Stimulate Urbanward Migration .....	32
Occupational Preferment is Often Based on Educational Attainment .....	34

## SUMMARY

In general, the following conclusions appear to follow from the study which has been made:

1. Cotton farming in Oklahoma, as in other cotton states, is closely related to a high percentage of non-owner farmers. Rural social problems in Oklahoma are intimately tied up in the cotton situation.

2. There seems to be no tangible positive correlation between the size of families and their economic status after an adult equivalent of four persons per family is reached.

3. Generally, with increases in the economic, cultural and social status of farm families, greater relative and absolute amounts of the spendable income go for each factor in the living budget. Increased consumption of material goods is usually accompanied by greater utilization of the non-material.

4. The greatest single obstacle to an improved standard of living among farmers is the high cost of running the farm itself in proportion to the total gross income received from the farm.

5. As to vital processes in the farm family, the general law of over-population by the lower classes is not verified except for a very small proportion of the population most of whom are the inert and chronically low tenure groups. This is due largely to the economic mobility of farmers in passing from low tenure levels to higher status.

6. The figures indicate that, for the cotton region of Oklahoma, croppers and tenants have a larger proportion of male children than owners and part owners. This is contrary to popular expectations.

7. In general, whatever factors tend to raise the standard of living for the farm family probably also tend to delay marriages within the family. However, the age at marriage of males seems to be more affected by economic and cultural factors than that of females.

8. The percentage of farmers who are church members varies directly with tenure and economic status.

9. A positive correlation exists between the amount of education a farmer received and his economic and social status. Both the average grade reached and the proportion of children reaching higher grades increased with greater educational accomplishment of parents.

10. Shifts from farming to urban occupations are closely related to economic or cultural conditions, with the shifting probably made easier by increases in economic status and increased education.

# A STUDY OF CERTAIN ECONOMIC FACTORS IN RELATION TO SOCIAL LIFE AMONG OKLAHOMA COTTON FARMERS

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## INTRODUCTION

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this investigation is to inquire into the question of how the economic status of various classes of cotton farmers in Oklahoma is related to their social behavior. To this end two broad and general economic classifications have been adopted for the farm families included in the study—**tenure status** and **net wealth status**.

### Basis for Classification

Certain tenure classifications are closely associated with economic status of farmers, and these classifications as well as economic classifications will be frequently employed in this study. The classes of tenure used are as follows: (1) full owners, (2) part owners, (3) share and cash tenants and (4) croppers.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to the representativeness of the sample of farmers interviewed for this study, a comparison of the tenure of interviewed farmers with the tenure given by the census shows the discrepancies in percentages for the various tenure groups in the sample and in the counties surveyed as shown by the census, are very small and the differences are no greater than are to be expected in a random statistical sample. The 1925 tenure composition of Oklahoma cotton farmers as shown by the census for the counties surveyed was: full owners, 26.4 per cent; part owners, 7.5 per cent; share and cash tenants, including farm managers, 57.7 per cent; and croppers, 8.4 per cent. For the farmers surveyed, the distribution was: full owners, 29.7 per cent; part owners, 7.4 per cent; share and cash tenants, 54.0 per cent; croppers, 8.9 per cent. (See Table I.)

**TABLE I.—Tenure of Farmers in Eleven Cotton Counties of Oklahoma as Shown by the Sample Taken for This Survey and by the Census of 1925.\***

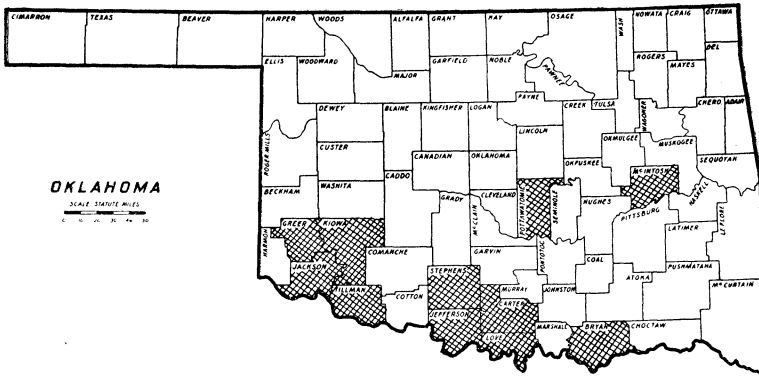
Tenure groups	SAMPLE		CENSUS	
	Number surveyed (total)	Per cent of sample	Total for 11 counties**	Per cent of total
Total - - - - -	1,362	100.0	31,390	100.0
Full owners -----	405	29.7	8,306	26.4
Part owners -----	101	7.4	2,352	7.5
Share and cash tenants ..	735	54.0	18,099	57.7
Croppers -----	121	8.9	2,633	8.4

\*Source: *United States Census of Agriculture, Part II, 1925, County Table I, for Oklahoma.*

\*\*Counties: Carter, Greer, Jefferson, Kiowa, Love, McIntosh, Stephens, Tillman, Jackson, Bryan, and Pottawatomie.

<sup>1</sup>See *United States Department of Agriculture Yearbook, 1923, pp. 506-600, for a general discussion of the various forms of tenure in the United States.*

In the Southwest, the terms of the contracts commonly state that the payment to the landlord shall consist of 33.3 per cent of the grain crops produced and 25 per cent of the cotton. This is usually spoken of as renting on the "third and fourth" basis.



The shaded counties in the map comprise the area included in this study.

The second general basis of classification for the purpose of this study was net wealth. This figure was derived for each farmer by deducting all outstanding indebtedness against him from the sum total of all assets which he owned. From this figure also was deducted any amount of wealth the farmer had received from gifts, marriage or inheritance. The final result obtained was an approximation to the amount of net wealth accumulated by the personal efforts of the farmer and his family. This procedure was meant in no wise to discount the value of gratuitous wealth, but to afford an approximate index of the success, thrift, and managerial ability of the individual farmer himself.

### Collection of Data

The data from which the following study is made were collected in a survey of the marketing attitudes of Oklahoma cotton farmers, and from a study of tenancy and ownership among cotton farmers made by the Department of Agricultural Economics of the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College in 1926.<sup>2</sup> Schedules were taken from a total of 1362 cotton farmers.<sup>3</sup> As a whole, the sample is believed to be quite representative of the areas from which it was taken; and, considering the geographical distribution of the counties included in the survey, it should be typical of the Oklahoma Cotton Belt.

<sup>2</sup>The results of this study of living conditions among Oklahoma farmers in 1926 are presented for what they were worth at that time only. The writers are fully aware that the economic changes which have occurred since then may have obliterated any series of relationships which these data may indicate.

<sup>3</sup>The marketing portion of this survey was made under the personal direction of Professors W. W. Fetrow, now with the Federal Farm Board, and L. D. Howell, now of the United States Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Division of Cotton Marketing, and to them full acknowledgement is hereby made. Professor Fetrow's bulletin, *Attitudes of Oklahoma Farmers Toward the Oklahoma Cotton Growers' Association*, had been published as Bulletin 178 of the Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station.

There were several schedules on which complete data for use in the present study were not obtained. It is also true that these defects were not consistent. A particular schedule, being incomplete for one classification, would often be complete for others, so that the number of cases included frequently varied from one tabulation to another. Owing, however, to the representativeness of the sample as a whole, these variations should not be considered vicious when comparisons between different tables are made.

## FARM FAMILY LIVING EXPENDITURES

### Standard of Living Defined

The concept of "standard of living" is at best difficult to define and is one on which agreement is not universal. Ely defines standard of living as "the number and character of wants which a man considers more important than marriage and a family."<sup>4</sup> Kirkpatrick uses the term to include "The economic goods contributing to the maintenance of health, transportation, education, recreation, and social relationships of the family, as well as the more material needs of food, clothing, and housing."<sup>5</sup> Davenport describes it as "a level of consumption so fixed in habit that any falling short is felt as a privation."<sup>6</sup> The number of such definitions may be multiplied indefinitely. As the term is used here it is meant to include all material and non-material goods and services used for non-business purposes.

### What Family Living Standard Includes

The values used in Tables III, IV, and V were estimated in the following way: Groceries that were used for home consumption were figured at estimated purchase prices. In the case of eggs, butter, meat, poultry and other commodities which were produced on the farm, the operator's estimate of the farm value of these items was taken as the cost of these foods to him. Certain technical objections to this method may be raised but these are not as great as objections that can be legitimately raised against use of town prices for farm raised and consumed foods. The clothing items are to be interpreted to mean all wearing apparel, shoes, hats, overcoats and dry goods, whether ready-made or materials bought to be made at home. Household operation includes expenditures for bedding, furniture, pictures, rugs, fuel oils used in cooking and lighting, paints, repairs on dwelling, hired household help, all additions and betterments, et cetera. Health expense includes the costs of doctors and dental services, nurses, hospitals, drugs and medicines, and other expenses arising out of health maintenance. Advancement takes in what is spent for reading matter, education, religion, charity, travel and recreation. Investment includes personal insurance and investments of any other nature not connected with payments on the farm mortgage or farm improvements. The automobile expense is primarily that made for family use in pleasure and other ordinary uses not connected with the farm business. Personal expenditures are those for gifts, jewelry, tobacco, cosmetics, and miscellaneous items. Farm and business expenses are those connected directly with the production of the family income; they represent the prime and supplementary costs of production, and include payments on mortgages and interest.

### General Tendencies Relating to Expenditures

The sociological value of wealth does not rest in the total amount consumed but more especially in how it is consumed.<sup>7</sup> The farmer, like the

<sup>4</sup>R. T. Ely, *Outlines of Economics*, 3rd Rev. Ed., Macmillan Co., 1922, p. 438.

<sup>5</sup>E. L. Kirkpatrick, *The Farmer's Standard of Living*, United States Department of Agriculture Bulletin Number 1466, Nov., 1926, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup>H. J. Davenport, *Economics of Enterprise*, Macmillan Co., 1916, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup>H. B. Hawthorne (*The Sociology of Rural Life*, Century Co., 1926, pp. 213 ff.) points out four subjective ways in which wealth is of sociological importance. First, he says, "wealth tends to liberate suppressed wants; second, the struggle for wealth is motivated by the pressure of unsatisfied cultural and social wants; third, social status tends to make an adaptation to wealth; and fourth, wealth is a guarantee of leisure time for the activities of culture and socialization." Unfortunately, it is rather difficult to demonstrate these points by the relation of cause and effect which can be substantiated only by deductions and broad generalizations. However, common observation tends to support Hawthorne in his argument, provided the tastes and desires of individuals can be controlled. It is obvious that misers may possess great amounts of material wealth, without any inclination to gain the advantages from it which Hawthorne points out. On the other hand, tramps and other indigent persons may have leisure, unsatisfied cultural wants, comparative freedom from suppression, and yet not be constrained to exert a struggle to acquire material wealth.

urban wage earner, usually has an annual income which must be wisely handled if all of his obligations are met. For the farmer there are two important classes of expenditures which must be met before other expenses can be paid. These are the costs of operating his business, and the family and personal expense of physiological necessities, food, clothing, and housing. Satisfaction of his cultural and social wants must be postponed until after all other expenses are paid, if the farm business is to keep going.

To simplify the analysis of the data, a careful check was made of the total expenditures and total spendable incomes of all farmers so that spendable incomes and expenditures in most cases approximately were balanced. However, in some cases, the farm incomes in 1925 did not offset all expenditures of farmers for that year. The costs of farming and living in 1925 were met to some extent from resources saved in other years, or from some form of credit; and therefore the farm income did not represent the total net spendable income for that year. This analysis will be confined, however, entirely to expenditures.

In keeping with the general conditions relating to income and wealth, the total family expenditures run lower, on the average, for tenants and croppers than for full owners and part owners, with croppers ranking lower than any other tenure group. (See Table II.) Considering the average 1925 expenditures of all families (\$2,299) as 100 per cent, the amount spent

**TABLE II.—Total and Average Expenditures of Farmers for Family Living as Shown in Amounts Spent per Family and per Adult Unit.**

Tenure group	FAMILIES		EXPENDITURES				
	Total families	Average adult units per family	Total expenditures	Average per family	Per cent of average	Average per adult unit	Per cent of average
Total and average	1,329	3.3	\$3,055,744	\$2,299	100.0	\$693	100.0
Full owners	392	3.5	1,156,174	2,949	128.8	840	121.2
Part owners	102	3.9	297,875	2,920	129.1	757	109.2
Share and cash tenants	717	3.6	1,439,763	2,008	87.3	557	80.4
Croppers	118	3.0	161,932	1,372	58.4	452	65.2

by full owners was 128.8 per cent; part owners, 129.1 per cent; share and cash tenants, 87.3 per cent; and croppers 58.4 per cent of that of the average farm family.<sup>8</sup> It will be noted that there is no significant difference between expenditures of owners and part owners, but that there is an appreciable difference between the expenditures of both and that of tenants and

<sup>8</sup>See Carle C. Zimmerman, Minnesota Experiment Station Bulletins 234, 255, et cetera. Also, C. V. Noble, Cornell Experiment Station Bulletin 431.

SCALE FOR ADULT EQUIVALENTS			SCALE FOR CHILDREN OF BOTH SEXES	
Age	Units for males	Units for females	Age	Adult units
Above 60	.9	.7	13-15	1.0
19-60	1.0	.8	11-12	.8
16-18	.9	.9	9-10	.7
			6- 8	.5
			4- 5	.4
			1- 3	.3

especially between them and croppers. A high percentage of full owners are well up into the old age groups, which tends to cut down their consumption indices so far as physiological necessities are concerned.

Taking the same groups of farmers, it is found by comparing expenditures on the basis of what is spent per adult unit, the average of all being considered as 100 per cent, full owners spent 121.1 per cent; part owners, 109.2 per cent; share and cash tenants, 80.4 per cent; and croppers, 65.2 per cent. The full owner families spent more per adult unit than part owners, and the explanation in all probability is found in the fact that full owners spend more both absolutely and relatively for the satisfaction of cultural and other non-physiological wants than do the other tenures. The index of expenditures by croppers rises somewhat when transferred to the adult unit basis, while that of other tenants, and even part owners, drops slightly. These differences are due largely to the fact that croppers are for the most part in the extreme age groups; their children are either very young, or, in the case of old croppers, their children are older and have left home. When considered as a family unit, therefore, average expenditures are very low for croppers, but with their small families there is relatively more to spend per adult unit than per family unit. This same influence would tend to operate in the reverse direction with part owners and other types of tenants, because these operators are nearer the prime of life and have on the average older children per family than either the cropper or the full owner families.

#### Engel's Laws

In 1857, Dr. Ernst Engel published his famous "laws of consumption of wealth" from the data he had gathered among the workingmen's families in Belgium.<sup>9</sup> It is true that the families studied by Engel were all wage earners and their spendable incomes were both limited and fairly uniform in going from family to family. It is not possible to apply his laws literally to the budgets of American farm families of the present time, but roughly they do serve as a convenient place to begin.<sup>10</sup>

Engel, in comparing low income classes progressively with higher income groups, found:

1. The **relative amounts** spent for food tend to decrease.
2. The **relative amounts** spent for clothing tend to remain approximately the same.
3. The **relative amounts** spent for housing, rent, light, fuel, et cetera, remain the same.
4. The **relative amounts** spent for cultural wants tend to increase.

#### Detailed Expenditures on the Basis of Tenure of Farmers

The tenure status of farmers and their total average expenditures generally rise together or vice versa, so that whatever conclusions apply to differences in total family expenditures in general are applicable to tenure as well. (See Table III.)

From these data it may be observed that as tenure status and total family expense rise:

1. The relative costs of food decline, but the absolute amount rises.

<sup>9</sup>Engel's studies were compiled and published under the title of *Die Lebenskosten des Belgischer Arbeiter-Familien, Früher, und Jetzt*. (Costs of Living among Belgian Workingmen's Families, Past and Present.)

<sup>10</sup>For a critical discussion of Engel's Laws, see P. Sorokin and C. C. Zimmerman, *Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology*, pp. 76 ff. Further criticisms may be found in Zimmerman's studies, Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletins Numbers 240, 246, 253 and 255.



TABLE III.—Percentage Distribution of Oklahoma Farm Family Expenditures Among Different Items, by Tenure Groups.

Tenure groups	Number cases	Average expenditure per family	PER CENT SPENT PER FAMILY FOR								
			Food	Household operation	Clothing	Health	Advancement*	Investment	Auto	Personal	Farm business**
Average -----	1,329	\$2,299	20.7	5.5	8.1	2.4	2.5	1.4	1.7	1.5	56.2
Owners -----	392	2,949	18.0	5.8	7.3	1.9	3.1	1.0	1.8	1.9	59.2
Part owners -----	102	2,920	20.5	7.0	7.4	2.3	2.8	1.2	2.4	1.6	54.8
Share and cash tenants -----	717	2,008	22.3	5.0	8.7	2.8	2.0	1.8	1.6	1.4	54.4
Croppers -----	118	1,372	25.1	5.3	8.9	2.5	2.2	.7	.9	.5	53.9

\*This figure seems to be rather low. E. L. Kirkpatrick found the average expenditure for advancement made by 2886 families in 11 states included 6.6 per cent of the total costs for living. See United States Department of Agriculture Bulletin Number 1466, November, 1926. However, by deducting the farm and business expense from the total expenditure, the percentage accounted for by advancement is more than doubled. The differences in methods of enumeration may account for the discrepancy as shown in the comparison of these figures with those used by Kirkpatrick.

\*\*The writers may be criticized for putting this item into an analytical table showing family living expenditures on the ground that this huge overhead is not income in the economic sense, and that only when this item is deducted does any real spendable income exist. Admittedly so, but it is this one group of primary and supplementary farm costs that keeps the spendable income small in most cases. It is, therefore, an important factor in determining what the spendable income is.

2. The costs of household operation tend to rise both absolutely and relatively.
3. The relative costs of clothing decrease, although the absolute costs increase.
4. The relative costs of health maintenance remain approximately the same, being slightly higher for the lower tenure and expenditure groups, while the absolute costs rise sharply.
5. The costs of advancement rise both relatively and absolutely.
6. Investment expenditures show a slight rise relatively and a distinct absolute rise.
7. Expenditures for automobiles tend to rise both relatively and absolutely.
8. Personal and miscellaneous expenditures show an upward relative and absolute trend.
9. Farm business expenditures, accounting for about one-half of all costs, rise both relatively and absolutely.

A general observation which seems to be justified is that those expenditures which are most governed by definite laws are those connected with physiological needs, food, housing, and clothing, and those related to the farm business. Automobile, personal, investment, and advancement expenditures show a tendency to rise with tenure and economic status, but their rise is somewhat erratic in most cases. These phenomena are too closely related to such subjective influences as personal tastes and desires, customs, and other factors to be determined entirely by economic conditions of the family.

#### **General Tendencies Regarding Expenditures on the Basis of Net Wealth**

Considering expenditures in terms of the average wealth of families (See Table IV), similar tendencies as in the case of tenure have been found. However, the data were less complete and there are not only fewer cases but the averages and totals are lower. This calculation in general bears out the same conclusions drawn from those when operators were classed by tenures. It may be said that whether tenure status, wealth status, or incomes are being studied, there is definite evidence that, on the whole, living standards, as indicated by both absolute and relative amounts expended, tend to rise with improvement in economic and social status.

#### **Disagreements with Engel's Laws**

The principal disagreements here found with Engel are (1) that the percentage of the total expenditure that goes for clothing declines and (2) the percentage for household operation rises in passing from the low to the high economic and social groups. The rise in housing and household operation in contrast to the opposite as stated in Engel's law is due, no doubt, to the fact that no rent allowance was made in our calculations. Since only repair and upkeep expenditures were included and since owners are largely in the wealthier class, and further since owners naturally expend more for repairs on houses than do tenants and landlords, it is reasonable to assume that a larger proportion of total expenditures would be shown in the table for the wealthier group.

#### **Cultural Factors May Exert Indirect Influences Upon the Farmer's Economic Status**

In addition to the powerful influence of economic and social status in determining the nature of expenditures made, the degree of cultural advancement attained by the heads of families is also influential, but to what actual extent it is difficult to ascertain. An adequate measure of cultural achievement is quite difficult to get. At best it is largely subjective, and whatever relation there may be between cultural and economic phenomena may be due as much to indirect as to direct influences.

**TABLE IV.—Percentage Distribution of Oklahoma Farm Family Expenditures Among Different Items According to Net Wealth of Farmers**

Net wealth groups	Number cases	Average expenditure per family	PER CENT OF ALL FAMILY EXPENDITURES SPENT FOR								
			Food	Household operation	Clothing	Health	Advance-ment*	Invest-ment	Personal	Auto	Farm business**
Average -----	1,226	\$2,419	21.5	8.3	8.3	2.4	2.5	.7	1.6	.6	54.1
0-\$999 -----	484	1,444	31.0	3.7	10.4	3.3	2.0	.5	.7	1.4	47.0
\$1000-\$4999 -----	465	2,321	23.3	5.7	9.1	2.6	2.1	.6	.8	1.6	54.2
\$5000 and over ----	277	4,266	14.1	13.3	6.1	1.5	3.2	.8	.5	1.7	58.8

\*See Note \* following Table III, page 9.

\*\*See Note \*\* following Table III, page 9.

**TABLE V.—Percentage Distribution of Living Expenditures per Family by Oklahoma Farm Families, According to Average Schooling of Husband and Wife**

Average schooling of husband and wife	Number of cases	Average expenditure per family	PER CENT OF ALL FAMILY EXPENDITURES SPENT FOR								
			Food	Household operation	Clothing	Health	Advance-ment*	Invest-ment	Personal	Auto	Farm business**
Average -----	1,206	\$2,310	23.3	6.0	8.7	2.5	1.9	.8	.7	1.7	54.4
0-6 years -----	649	2,104	25.1	5.3	8.9	2.8	1.6	.7	1.4	.5	53.7
7-9 years -----	436	2,445	22.3	6.5	8.7	2.6	2.1	.8	.8	1.8	54.4
10 and over -----	121	2,922	19.1	7.4	8.2	1.9	2.1	1.3	.9	2.3	56.8

\*See Note \* following Table III, page 9.

\*\*See Note \*\* following Table III, page 9.

The best, or at least most conventional, measure of cultural attainment is that of the highest grade or year reached in school. Whatever may be the faults of academic education in the preparation for life, there are social influences exerted in the school room that are vitally connected with life. Even if training in geography may not add to the earning power of the farmer, such subject matter exercises a widening influence upon his mental horizon; and this may, in an indirect way, stimulate his social, cultural, and spiritual wants so as to be reflected in his choices, the things for which he will pay his hard-earned cash.

### **General Tendencies Regarding Expenditures on the Basis of Schooling of Farmers**

Because of the seeming importance of the cultural advancement of both husband and wife, the average of the total number of years that both have spent in school has been taken as a rough measure of the educational status of each family. Since the schooling of most farmers of the passing generation was limited, it was necessary to divide these into only three groups: those who spent six years or less in school, those with a complete grammar school education, and those who had the advantage of at least some high school training. (See Table V.)

On the whole, as the average combined education of husbands and wives rises, the average total expenditure per family, and therefore, average income, rises. This is also true but even in a more pronounced degree for each adult unit. This leads one to believe that not only is a higher demand for economic goods associated with an increase in education, but also greater earning and greater purchasing power. In detail, the data indicate that as the average education of family heads and average total expenditures of families rise:

1. The amount spent for food declines relatively, but shows no definite trend absolutely.
2. The amount spent for housing and household operation rises both absolutely and relatively.
3. The amount spent for clothing declines somewhat relatively but rises absolutely.
4. The amount spent for health declines relatively but rises absolutely.
5. The advancement expenditures rise both absolutely and relatively.
6. Investment expenditures rise both absolutely and relatively.
7. Automobile expense increases in both absolute and relative amounts.
8. Personal and miscellaneous expenditures increase both absolutely and relatively.
9. Farm business expenditures rise both absolutely and relatively.

## **FACTORS AFFECTING THE COMPOSITION OF FAMILIES**

### **Importance of Size of Families**

The composition of families is an important consideration in social investigation. It is indicative of where our population in the future will come from; it gives us an idea as to the economic productivity of the family itself—whether a family is mostly a producing or mostly a consuming family.

It frequently has been claimed that the farmer rears a larger number of children than most other social groups in order to have the advantage of a cheap supply of farm labor. Another prevalent belief is that croppers, and even other tenants, rear larger families than owner farmers. These two beliefs contradict each other in their logic. It would seem that if the hypothesis that a large family means cheap labor and greater earning power be tenable and if it were true that lower grades of tenants raise the largest

number of children, it might be expected that the position of different tenure classes on the agricultural ladder would vary directly with the number of children they have reared, provided there are no offsetting factors.

#### **Size of Families on the Basis of Tenure Status of Farmers**

The data used in this study include slightly more than 1200 Oklahoma farmers. For the purpose of making a special inquiry into the influence of the size of families as a phase of rural social life, married operators, regardless of how long they had been married, were considered by tenure groups. Full owners who constituted 29.9 per cent of all farmers surveyed, had 30.1 per cent of all children; part owners, who numbered 7.5 per cent of all farmers, had 9.1 per cent of all children; share and cash tenants numbering 54.1 per cent of all operators were the parents of 54.2 per cent, almost exactly the same percentage, of all children; and croppers who were 8.5 per cent of all farmers had only 6.6 per cent of the total children. It will be seen that for owners the percentage of children exceeds the percentage of parents by 0.2 per cent. For part owners the percentage of children exceeds that of parents by 1.6 per cent. The percentage of share and cash tenant parents is 0.1 per cent less than that of their children which is almost exactly equal to the percentage of children in this class. In the case of croppers there were 1.2 per cent fewer children than that of parents.

The figures given in the preceding paragraph have not been corrected for the differences in length of married life of the operators. When shown this way, they indicate differences in average sizes of families in the various tenure groups which are too small to justify any positive conclusions, one way or another, on the tendency for one tenure to be more prolific than the other. If there were any definite significant tendency it would doubtless show up even in this crude presentation of the data. This belief is justified by the fact that no differences appear in the case of the share and cash tenants, where both the absolute and the relative sizes of the sample are large. Although the sample taken in this study is almost a perfectly proportionate representation of all the different tenure classes of the State as shown by the census, the only classes in which there is anything like a significant excess in the normal expectancy of children are those which are numerically very small. A correction so as to show the effect of the ages of families upon the total number of children born per family will confirm more forcefully the contention made later in this discussion that those farmers of the lower tenure classes who are inclined to over-populate themselves are those who never show any successful tendency of rise toward farm ownership. The unfortunate, the inert, the chronic tenant or cropper farmer may reproduce more of his kind than the farmer who rises toward ownership. However, the proportion of these low grade tenants who spend their lives without any show of improving their social or economic status is so small in comparison with the total farm population that they do not constitute a problem of large proportion even though it may be a grave problem for the student of farm population. This correction for ages of families was made by the writers, but it has been omitted from the text of the bulletin for the sake of brevity, inasmuch as it is not really essential because the tables presented contain in essence all that could be shown by the more detailed table.

#### **Principle of Differential Increase of Population Groups**

As a general rule, the social classes which have high birth rates have high death rates. Although farmers have high birth rates, the death rates among them are relatively low, making their net increase high. One of the general principles of population growth is that the birth rates of the lower are higher than those of the upper social classes. If division according to tenure status may be taken as representing a degree of social differentiation among farmers, the data of Table VI indicate that there is tendency

for the fertility of farmers to rise with social status, which is contrary to the general law of differential population increase.<sup>11</sup>

**TABLE VI.—Average Number of Births and Deaths of Children per 100 Oklahoma Farmers Who Have Been Married 20 Years or More, by Tenure of Operator.**

Tenure classes	Total families existing for 20 years or more	Average number of births per 100 families	Average number of deaths of children per 100 families	Average number of living children per 100 families
All farmers ---	581	563.8	6.0	529.9
All owners ---	275	538.9	6.3	505.1
All tenants ---	306	586.3	5.8	552.3
Full owners --	219	522.4	5.2	495.5
Part owners -	56	603.6	10.1	542.9
Share and cash tenants -	272	593.0	5.6	559.6
Croppers ----	34	532.3	7.2	494.1

Taking all tenants as a class in comparison with all owners as a class, it will be found that tenants had a gross increase of 586.3 births per 100 marriages against 538.9 births per 100 marriages for owners. By deducting the deaths of children in each case, the result is a net fertility of 552 children per 100 marriages for tenants against 505.1 per 100 marriages for owners. In this connection it should be emphasized that in Table VI only those families which have been in existence 20 years or more are considered, which should take out the influence on the number of children of greater age of owners or lesser age of tenants. This means that the total size of these families may be expected to change very little in the future. Furthermore, this table also shows that the croppers not only have lower birth rates than any other tenure class except full owners but also that their death rates are lower than that of part owner families, and that their actual net increase is relatively lower than any other tenure group. However, the number of old cropper families is rather small to admit of any broad generalizations. The group designated as part owners have both birth rates and death rates which are abnormally high. No matter what corrections are made, the part owner is usually erratic in comparison with all other tenure classes.

The data in Table VI do not give adequate support to the popular theory that the large family affords a cheap labor supply and thus facilitates the advance of farmers from lower tenure classes toward ownership. However, as has been previously shown, tenure status and economic status are not necessarily equivalent to one and the same thing. Such a conclusion is therefore not wholly justified when all the facts are taken into consideration. Also, these data fail to give sufficient support to the idea that the lower grades of tenants are over-populating themselves to justify any fear that they are exerting any untoward influence upon the farm population of Oklahoma.<sup>12</sup>

The writers believe that, taking only completed families as was done, the picture is representative of those portions of agricultural society which will admit of comparatively little change in the future; and if tenants are producing more than their share of the farm population, this does not necessarily mean an overpopulation of people since many of these tenants are

<sup>11</sup>For numerous proofs of this statement, see P. Sorokin, *Social Mobility*, New York, Harpers, 1927, pp. 345-355.

<sup>12</sup>See Edgar Sydenstricker and Frank W. Notestein, "Differential Fertility According to Social Class," *Jour. Amer. Stat. Assn.*, Vol. XXV, New Series, No. 169, Mar. 1930, Table VIII, p. 25.

capable of rising and will rise to ownership. It is also believed by the writers that much of the popular fear of the so-called superfecundity of the tenant classes is based more upon the real and supposed economic and social evils of farm tenancy than upon an open manifestation of an incorrigible tendency on their part toward biological increase.

#### Influence of Length of Married Life Upon Size of Family

The length of time for which a family has been in existence, as would be expected, is a major factor in determining the gross fertility of families, since the passing of time is necessary for the physical growth of a family. Therefore, the importance of Table VII lies in the fact that during a definite period of time the fertility of different classes of farmers shows at least some variation. If only biological conditions were operative in determining the rate of increase in size, no significant variations in this respect among the different classes of farmers should be expected.

**TABLE VII.—Average Number of Living Children per 100 Families Among 1249 Oklahoma Farm Families of Different Periods of Married Life, According to Tenure of Operators.**

Tenure status of head of family	All families	FAMILIES GROUPED ON THE BASIS OF DURATION OF MARRIED LIFE IN 10-YEAR PERIODS			
		Up to 9	10 to 19	20 to 29	30 or more
All families	409.8	167.7	354.7	505.9	637.0
All owners	431.2	175.4	327.2	439.6	640.4
All tenants	397.1	165.4	368.0	555.7	633.1
Full owners	418.8	181.8	316.0	425.2	622.2
Part owners	478.4	140.0	361.3	496.4	710.7
Share and cash tenants	407.8	173.5	369.4	563.5	640.0
Croppers	326.2	130.0	355.2	483.3	587.5

#### Theory of Over-population by Lower Tenure Groups Not Wholly Confirmed

As will be observed from facts in Table VII, in most groups croppers have the lowest fertility per 100 marriages found for any tenure class. However, this may be due to the fact that croppers as a class usually have younger families than higher tenure groups. This table shows that it is the older tenants and part owners that are inclined toward disproportionately high reproductive rates. During the first 10 years of married life, croppers have the lowest fertility rate, while other tenants have rates second to that of full owners. On the other hand, croppers who have been married 30 years or more show rates of generation that are lower than any other class, but their percentage of total farmers at that period of life is very small.

From these figures one is led to believe that farm tenancy in itself does not constitute a real menace to the quality of the farm population: first, because many of the young tenants will rise to ownership; and, second, because probably not half of all tenant farmers remain in the lower grades of tenancy for more than from 10 to 20 years. In other words, the data do not lend adequate support to the theory that chronic or low grade croppers and tenants over-populate themselves. A few of them may, but their absolute number is too small to create any serious economic or social problem. On the other hand, as has been indicated, these data do not provide sufficient ground for believing that large families are an asset and promote rising on the tenure ladder in cotton farming areas or that on the other hand large families tend to keep farmers and their families in the lower tenure ranks.

**Relation of Sex Composition of Children to Tenure Status of Farmers**

In the parts of this bulletin concerned with the family budget, the necessity of standardizing the data so as to eliminate variations due to the sex and age composition of different families was recognized. Similarly a study of the sex composition of the families with a standardization to eliminate the major portion of the variations arising out of age is needed. Accordingly, Table VIII presents facts on those cases for which the enumeration of both the sex of children and the age of the family was complete. It is based on families that have been in existence 20 years or more, which in the main eliminates the influence of years of marital life.

**TABLE VIII.—Percentage of all Children Who Were Males in Families of Oklahoma Cotton Farmers Which Have Existed 20 Years or More, by Tenure Status.**

Groups of counties and tenure classes	Total children	Per cent of all children who were males	Percentage of males expressed as a percentage of males in all tenure classes combined
Total for all counties	3,336	51.0	100.0
Full owners	1,174	49.1	96.3
Part owners	347	49.0	96.1
Share and cash tenants	1,624	52.5	102.9
Croppers	191	53.4	104.7
Southwestern counties	1,089	52.3	100.0
Full owners	487	48.5	92.7
Part owners	85	55.2	105.5
Share and cash tenants	479	56.0	107.1
Croppers	38	52.6	100.6
South central counties	723	50.6	100.0
Full owners	314	51.3	101.4
Part owners	114	50.0	98.8
Share and cash tenants	280	50.0	98.8
Croppers	15	53.3	105.3
Southeastern counties	1,524	50.2	100.0
Full owners	373	48.5	96.6
Part owners	148	44.6	88.8
Share and cash tenants	865	51.3	102.2
Croppers	138	53.6	106.8

Traditionally, male children have always been more desired than females. The reasons for this are numerous and complex. Military, economic, political, religious, and other influences have in a large measure been responsible for this. Within recent times women have gained economic and political rights which may have a tendency to uproot this age old prejudice.

One significant fact is shown by the data in Table VIII. The percentage of all children who are males tends to be lowest in the upper tenure class, that is, among full owners and part owners, and highest among the lower tenure classes. The variations in sex composition of families in different sections of Oklahoma may be observed by comparing the different groups of counties shown in the table. The greatest differences between croppers and full owners occur in the southeastern group of counties, while the greatest variation between share tenants and croppers and full owners occurs in the southwestern counties. In the central counties there is no



great majority of male children, yet the tendency toward a predominance of males in the lower tenure groups is consistent through all groups of counties.

Table VIII contains a most challenging set of data since they show that the lower tenure classes consistently show a higher ratio of males than that of the higher tenures. By way of explanation of this, it may be claimed that a high percentage of boys tends to retard advancement from the lower to the higher tenure classes. Since all the families included here may be considered as complete, the farmers have had the advantage of at least most of the labor of their children. Whether these data would find support in other parts of the country is not known. Taking them as they stand, several speculative comments are suggested.

#### Explanation of Predominance of Male Children in Lower Tenure Group Not Known Exactly.

As has been shown elsewhere in this study, at least some correlation exists between tenancy and other socio-economic factors of family life. These data show that although slightly more than 50 per cent of the entire group of children are males, lower standard of living groups are influenced in some way that causes them to have a disproportionately greater number of male children. Just what causes the inequality in the sex distribution of children coming from different economic and social classes is not known. The most plausible assumption is that, if the sex composition of children has any bearing on tenure advancement, boys probably involve an expense in their rearing which is out of proportion to their productivity. Frequently, it may happen that boys and girls work alike in the crop, the boys receiving a definite portion to themselves while the product of girls' labor more often goes into the general family treasury.

Boys, more frequently than girls, either have their own automobiles or have greater personal access to the family car. At any rate, their personal and individual expenditures are not so carefully supervised as are those of

**TABLE IX.—Percentage of All Children Who Are Males in Families of Oklahoma Cotton Farmers Which Have Existed 20 Years or More, by Net Wealth Status.**

Groups of counties and and net wealth classes	Total children	Per cent of all children who were males	Percentage of males expressed as a percent- age of males in lowest net wealth group
Total for all counties .....	3,065	50.2	99.6
Up to \$999 .....	872	50.4	100.0
\$1000-\$4999 .....	1,121	50.8	100.8
\$5000 and over .....	1,072	49.5	98.2
Southwestern counties .....	957	50.9	89.8
Up to \$999 .....	149	56.7	100.0
\$1000-\$4999 .....	292	53.1	93.7
\$5000 and over .....	516	48.1	84.8
South central counties .....	675	49.8	110.4
Up to \$999 .....	226	45.1	100.0
\$1000-\$4999 .....	204	51.5	114.2
\$5000 and over .....	245	52.6	116.6
Southeastern counties .....	1,433	50.0	98.0
Up to \$999 .....	497	51.0	100.0
\$1000-\$4999 .....	625	49.4	96.9
\$5000 and over .....	311	49.5	97.1

girls, whereas families in which girls outnumber boys, receive in general a larger portion of the expense of the services of automobile or other expenditures of young people from neighboring families who have young boys. Traditions of the past favored the education of boys at the expense of girls, but it is doubtful if this is the case with present day farm families. Possibly more is done to give boys a start in material things than is done for girls. In all probability the family sacrifices made for boys have exceeded those made for girls in the traditional farming community. If this be true, there would be a smaller portion of the spendable income available each year to be applied on the farm mortgage in a large family of adolescent boys than in a family composed more largely of girls.

#### **Relation of Sex Composition of Children to Net Wealth Status of Farmers**

In Table IX an effort has been made to explore a little further into the same idea as was suggested in Table VIII. The difference between these two tables is that in the latter the net wealth status of the families that have been in existence for 20 years or more forms the basis for sex comparison of the children.<sup>13</sup> There is some discrepancy between the trends noted in these two tables, especially for the south central group of counties. But, on the whole, the tendencies are much the same. For the great majority of children concerned, rises in net wealth accumulation are coincidental with disproportionately low percentages of boys among the total number of children a given wealth group has reared. The exception to this, is, of course, the south central group of counties, where there was found a progressively increasing proportion of boys among the higher wealth groups. This exception may be due in part to the fact that south central Oklahoma has for a long time been a prominent ranching area of the State, and this is a type of agriculture in which the labor of men and boys is less interchangeable with that of women and girls than is true of practically any other type of farming.

The sex distribution of the children of south central Oklahoma farmers tended to follow the general rule of an inverse proportion of boys as rises in tenure status were noted. However, it must again be recalled that tenure and economic status are not altogether co-extensive. Hence, the exception noted above does not mean a contradiction within the data themselves. One of the chief contributions of these two analyses, from a scientific viewpoint, is that they suggest a principle of population growth in relation to social and economic conditions which requires more study than has been given it in the past. With the same limitations as were noted regarding sex distribution of children on the basis of the tenure status of their families, it would seem that, on the whole, much the same generalizations and interpretations would apply to the distribution based on the net wealth status of the farmers. But, in the case of net wealth, exceptions to the general rule are more likely to occur than in that applied to tenure.

### **CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AND EDUCATION OF FARMERS**

#### **Social Importance of Church Membership**

From the standpoint of social science, membership in this or that church or religious denomination is entirely a personal matter. What is scientifically important is that active membership in any church indicates a desire on the part of a person to cultivate the finer interests of life, to find peace of mind and surcease from the drudgery of being incessantly driven by the

<sup>13</sup>The numbers of children in Tables VIII and IX are not identical because of the greater difficulty in ascertaining the net wealth than the tenure of families. Only families whose net wealth status could be determined with some degree of certainty were used. However, this should not invalidate the comparisons.

material problems connected with earning a living. For the most part, church membership, whether active or passive, indicates that one has at some time or other given thought to matters pertaining to the spiritual side of life.

In a similar manner, educational advancement is an index which shows that an individual has attempted to cultivate the esthetic and cultural phases of life as well as to fit himself better for the struggle for existence. Education and membership in a religious body both are evidences of susceptibility to the socializing influences of the culture which has been accumulated by the human race. Ethics, morality, the arts and scientific knowledge are disseminated through such social institutions as organized education and religion. The functions performed by these agencies to a large extent supplement and enlarge upon the early training of the family.

#### Tenure Status and Church Membership

Table X gives figures showing the comparative extent of church membership for farmers and their wives. It will be seen that there is an excess of church members over non-church members among the wives in all tenure classes. However, there is a minority of church members among the husbands in all classes. But taking husbands and wives together there is an excess of church members over non-church members in all tenure classes with the proportion of members becoming smaller in the lower tenure ranks. This indicates that possibly as a general rule membership in churches advances with rises in tenure status. Hamilton's recent study in Virginia supports this finding.<sup>34</sup> It is not claimed that either occurrence is the cause of the other, but it does seem that the economic and social conditions that facilitate rise toward ownership also tend to associate themselves with personal inclination toward formal profession of religious convictions.

**TABLE X.—Percentage of Operators and Wives Who Are Church Members, by Tenure of Operator**  
(Based on total number of operators and wives)

Tenure classes	Total operators and wives	Per cent of both operators and wives who were church members	OPERATORS		WIVES	
			Per cent of total sample	Per cent of all church members who were operators	Per cent of total sample	Per cent of all church members who were wives
Total -----	1,572	62.3	51.5	41.9	48.5	58.1
Full owners -----	442	70.8	51.4	44.1	48.6	55.9
Part owners -----	155	74.2	51.0	41.7	49.0	58.3
Share and cash tenants -----	851	57.3	51.5	40.6	48.5	59.4
Croppers -----	124	50.8	54.0	41.3	46.0	58.7

From Table X it will be observed that the male operators themselves did not furnish a proportion of the total church members that was equal to their percentage of the entire sample. The difference between these two figures was 9.6 per cent, which means that the male operators fell that far short of the proportion of all church members which their numerical strength in the sample would have afforded had they joined churches in the same proportions as did their wives. It is significant that church membership increases

<sup>34</sup>See C. H. Hamilton, *The Role of the Church in Rural Community Life in Virginia, Va.* Agri. Exp. Sta. Bulletin Number 267, 1929, pp. 24-25. He found a negative coefficient, partial correlation with the negro per cent of the population held constant of  $-.27$  between white farm tenancy and white church membership.

proportionately with the higher tenures. This, however, does not necessarily mean that with tenure rise an individual increases the probability of his joining the church. It means only that the type of men who successfully climb the tenure ladder are also the type who join the church in larger proportions, and the reverse of this with the lower tenures.

On the other hand, the greatest disproportionate church membership for women is among the cropper class of wives. In other words, these data seem to show that the sex distribution of churches comes nearest to approximating equality among the full owner class. The inequality becomes greater as the families are further removed from the status of full owners.

The matter of sex distribution of church members will be treated more in detail at another point in this section of the bulletin.

In any study of religious life, consideration must be given to the sex factor. J. L. Hypes found that "Women everywhere show a more active interest in religion than men of the same age."<sup>15</sup> This appears to be typical of most rural communities and of the nation as a whole. Among Oklahoma cotton farmers, there is a higher proportion of female than of male church members in all tenure classes of operators. However, the female excess over male operators is least for the owner groups, and is greatest for croppers.

**TABLE XI.—Sex Distribution of Church Members, by Tenure of Operators.**  
(Based on total church membership)

Tenure classes	Total church members among 1572 persons of both sexes	NUMBER OF CHURCH MEMBERS OUT OF EACH 100		Excess female church members over males out of each 100	Excess expressed as a per cent of that of full owners
		Male	Female		
Total -----	979	41.9	58.1	16.2	137.3
Full owners -----	313	44.1	55.9	11.8	100.0
Part owners -----	115	41.7	58.3	16.6	140.7
Share and cash tenants -----	288	40.6	59.4	18.8	159.3
Croppers -----	63	41.3	58.7	17.4	147.5

In Table XI the distribution of the sexes is shown in relation to the total numbers of operators and wives who are church members rather than in relation to the total number of operators and wives as given in Table X. In this way the importance of the sex factor is brought out more clearly than in the preceding table. Although there is a male excess of 3.0 per cent in the total number of operators and wives, there is a female excess in total church membership of 16.2 per cent, but the spread between these two figures throughout the different tenure classes shows no general tendency. It is least among full owners and croppers and is greatest among part owners and the share and cash tenants. Evidently sex composition is associated as closely with membership in religious bodies as is tenure status, if not more closely, as it shows up here.

The cause of the predominance of church membership among women in each division of the data is not definitely known. Possibly women are forced to combine their recreational and emotional life with religious activity to a greater extent than men owing to the nature of the respective tasks performed by each in the ordinary routine of daily life.

<sup>15</sup>See J. L. Hypes, *A Study of Social Participation in a Rural New England Town*, Columbia University Contributions to Education. No. 258, 1927.

### Economic Status and Church Membership

Net wealth bears a relationship to church membership similar to that of tenure status. The differences which occur are largely due to the nature of the definition of wealth used, which is the sum of all assets from which is deducted all indebtedness and all inheritance. The inheritance was subtracted in order to get as accurate a picture as possible of the actual accumulations from earnings. When this is done, it is often the case that some tenants possess more actual wealth clear of indebtedness than some owners, so that wealth and tenure status are not always coincidental.

The data shown in Table XII show a definite positive relation between increases in wealth and in the percentage of the adult population who were church members. In the wealth group below \$1000, 52.2 per cent of the operators and their wives were church members. The proportion of church members increased to 63.5 per cent in the middle, or \$1000 to \$4999 wealth class, and to 81.4 per cent in the highest, or \$5000 and over, wealth group. The significance of this tendency is increased by the fact that the lower wealth group comprises 42.1 per cent of the entire sample, the middle group 29.7 per cent, and the upper group only 28.2 per cent. In other words, since the poorer group far outnumbers either of the other two groups its proportion of membership has much more weight on the average.

**TABLE XII.—Percentage of Church Members Among Operators and Wives, by Net Wealth of Operators\***  
(Economic status)

Net wealth less inherited wealth	Total operators and wives	Per cent of total who were church members	OPERATORS		WIVES	
			Per cent in sample	Per cent of all church members who were operators	Per cent in sample	Per cent of all church members who were wives
All classes	1,451	61.8	51.3	41.5	48.7	58.5
Up to \$999	569	52.2	52.0	41.8	48.0	58.2
\$1000-\$4999	501	63.5	50.9	39.3	49.1	60.7
\$5000 and over	381	81.4	50.9	43.6	49.1	56.4

\*Because of refusal of informants in some cases to give facts pertaining to the amount of wealth they possessed, the basal number of persons is smaller in this than in the tenure tables. However, this has not produced any significant differences in the mean values, and should not be considered as a major obstacle.

The excess of female over male church members is again brought out in Table XIII where the division is made on the basis of the sex composition of each 100 church members. Despite the fact that there are approximately 103 males for 100 female heads of families, females far exceed males in church membership in all wealth groups. It is noticeable that in the wealthiest group the excess of church members among the women is not as great as in the intermediate or poorest wealth group. In connection with Tables XI, XII, and XIII, it was suggested that the sex composition of the population probably bears as close relationship to church membership as does tenure. The same may be said concerning wealth. There are doubtless more single men among the lower tenure and wealth groups in proportion to the total number of males than in the upper groups. The presence and influence of women in the upper classes causes a part of their excess of church membership over the lower classes.

If there is any interdependence between either wealth status, or tenure, and church membership, it is probable that the ability to maintain membership in religious organizations is more dependent upon economic pros-

perity than the other way around. Farmers along with other social classes often say that they do not take a part in church life because they cannot afford clothing suitable to wear to church, or cannot contribute to the running expenses of the church to the extent they should like to and therefore prefer not to go. At any rate, conclusions as to which is cause and which is effect in such cases should be drawn with the greatest of caution.<sup>16</sup>

**TABLE XIII.—Sex Distribution of Church Members Among Operators and Wives, by Net Wealth of Operators.\***

Net wealth (economic status)	Total church members among 1451 persons of both sexes	NUMBER OF CHURCH MEM- BERS OUT OF EACH 100		Excess of females over males among church members (Percentages)
		Males	Females	
All classes ---	897	41.5	58.5	17.0
Up to \$999 ----	297	41.8	58.2	16.4
\$1000-\$4999 --	318	39.3	60.7	21.4
\$5000 and over	282	43.6	56.4	12.8

\*See note following Table XII.

#### Tenure Status and Education of Farmers

Since ownership of a farm represents a higher tenure accomplishment, it is logical that higher educational accomplishments would characterize ownerships over that of lower tenure forms. A distribution of farmers by tenure and educational classes is shown in Table XIV. The general tendencies which these data suggest are: First, in the lower (0 to 5 years) educational group, there is an inverse relation to tenure status; that is, higher proportions of farmers are in each tenure class as we step down the agricultural ladder. Second, in the middle (6 to 8 years) educational group the relation of education to tenure status is indefinite. This is probably due to the inability of many high grade farmers to finish more than the grade school, because of lack of opportunity, while low grade farmers with better chances in their youth received an equal grade of education. In other words, this represents the meeting place of all grades of farmers, from which point they are sifted out, some rising and some going down on the tenure ladder. Third, in the group of farmers who reached or went beyond high school, the tendency is for the grade of education to vary inversely with tenure status. There is some irregularity in this group of farmers because of the obvious fact that higher education and better judgment and managerial ability on the farm are not always, or necessarily, closely associated. However, the full owner group of farmers have a higher percentage of high school students and graduates than any other tenure class, and the irregularity is confined to the lower tenure classes. Perhaps this is due to the presence of many young farmers among the tenants and croppers who simply lack capital or reserves, but who will later become full owners.

The southwestern counties have a much smaller percentage of full and part owner operators in the low educational class than either of the other groups of counties. The farmers in the sample from the south central group of counties is too small for the percentage distribution to have any distinctly positive value. In the southeastern group the percentage of full owner operators in the lower educational rank is the smallest found for any group, but the percentages of all other tenure classes in the lowest rank are the largest. This means that in the middle and higher educational ranks, the

<sup>16</sup>The portion of this part of the study relating to church membership serves as the basis of a forthcoming article by O. D. Duncan, "Relation of Tenure and Economic Status of Farmers to Church Membership," which is to appear in *Social Forces*; May 1933.

tenure classes in this group of counties are split up by wide variations; but, with the exceptions noted, the general principle of an increase in education being accompanied by a decrease in the percentage of farmers in the lower tenure classes holds true.

**TABLE XIV.—The Percentage of 1233 Oklahoma Cotton Farmers Who Spent Various Numbers of Years in School, Classified by Tenure of Farmers.**

Tenure classes	Number of operators	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FARMERS BY NUMBER OF YEARS SPENT OR GRADE FINISHED IN SCHOOL		
		0-5 years	6-8 years	9 and over
All counties -----	1233	32.4	53.7	13.9
Full owners -----	360	23.6	53.8	22.5
Part owners -----	96	34.6	49.0	16.6
Share and cash tenants -----	674	35.0	55.7	9.3
Croppers -----	103	43.7	44.7	11.6
Southwestern counties ---	405	24.0	57.5	18.5
Full owners -----	136	24.3	51.4	24.3
Part owners -----	31	19.4	48.3	32.3
Share and cash tenants -----	204	22.1	65.2	12.7
Croppers -----	34	38.2	44.2	17.6
South central counties ----	187	31.6	57.2	11.2
Full owners -----	59	30.5	52.6	16.9
Part owners -----	22	31.8	63.7	4.5
Share and cash tenants -----	99	32.4	58.5	9.1
Croppers -----	7	28.6	57.1	14.3
Southeastern counties ---	641	37.9	50.2	11.9
Full owners -----	165	20.6	56.4	23.0
Part owners -----	43	46.5	41.9	11.6
Share and cash tenants -----	371	42.9	49.6	7.5
Croppers -----	62	48.4	43.5	8.1

Sorting farmers on the basis of education is to some extent a selective process in social or economic climbing. It tends to eliminate the dull, the slow, and unenterprising boys and girls, and often others who may be the victims of misfortune of one kind or another. On the other hand, as such children drop out of school, they begin working and may often be several steps ahead, economically, of those who remain in school longer when the latter actually assume personal responsibility for their own welfare. It is not known to what extent intellectuality as reflected in achievement in the present educational system is a determinant of economic accomplishment, and it is not known to what extent financial success on the farm is caused by the training in school and the ability required to achieve high scholastic attainment in the present educational system. In all probability, by the age of 40 years the high school graduate will be ahead of the man who otherwise is equal but who stopped his education short of high school, but this advantage does not show up in the earlier years of adult life. For this reason, many potential owners who are high school graduates will be found among the tenant and cropper classes of farmers in early adult life.

**TABLE XV.—Percentage Distribution of 1549 Farm Children Who Have Ended School Life, by Educational Groups According to Tenure Status of Parents.**

Tenure status	Total number of children	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN BY YEARS SPENT IN SCHOOL OR GRADE FINISHED		
		0-8 years	9-12 years	13 and over
All counties -----	1549	67.6	27.0	5.4
Full owners -----	621	57.2	33.2	9.6
Part owners -----	338	67.2	29.0	3.8
Share and cash tenants -----	516	78.7	19.6	1.7
Croppers -----	74	79.7	18.9	1.4
Southwestern counties --	558	59.9	32.3	7.8
Full owners -----	288	49.3	37.2	13.5
Part owners -----	222	72.1	26.1	1.8
Share and cash tenants -----	38	57.9	39.5	2.6
Croppers -----	10	100.0		
South central counties ---	391	68.8	26.8	4.4
Full owners -----	162	66.1	29.6	4.3
Part owners -----	67	50.8	38.8	10.4
Share and cash tenants -----	146	82.2	16.4	1.4
Croppers -----	16	50.0	43.8	6.2
Southeastern counties ---	600	74.0	22.3	3.7
Full owners -----	171	62.0	29.8	8.2
Part owners -----	49	67.3	28.6	4.1
Share and cash tenants -----	332	79.5	18.7	1.8
Croppers -----	48	85.4	14.6	

From Table XV it is apparent that there is a tendency for lower farm tenure to be associated with lower educational achievement and for ownership to be related to higher educational accomplishments. Carrying the analysis further than is shown in this table, it was found that, of the cropper class of children, 79.7 per cent received an average of 5.6 years of schooling and only 1.4 per cent received as much as one year of college education. In the full owner class, 57.2 per cent of the children received an average of 7.3 years of schooling, and 9.6 per cent an average of three years or more of college education. In other words, in both the lower and the upper educational groups, the lower tenure classes are not able to give their children as much schooling or the children are not able or inclined to get as much as is the case with full owner children or even the part owner's child. Furthermore, larger numbers of children have to be satisfied with the minimum educational achievement in these lower tenure groups. It is another case where those in the greatest need are either the least able financially or intellectually to have what they need or are not inclined to get what they need.

In different geographical sections of the cotton growing areas of the State the same tendency holds true. Everywhere the cropper's and the tenant farmer's children are unable financially or otherwise to get their respective shares of the educational opportunities which the State offers to



its people. Some teachers have claimed that the discrimination in education is between rural and urban areas and not between social classes. This may be true so far as there exists no closed caste system in this country which deprives a child of his right to education because of birth, but it does not operate that way when getting an education is an economic matter pure and simple. In the case of discrimination between the city and rural child, the State may be held accountable, but if there is discrimination between the children of different tenure classes, the State is not directly accountable. Here are in the same rural areas discriminations between different economic classes of farmers whose political rights may be equal. This simply goes to show that the rights and liberties guaranteed by the State are but empty formalities when the economic status of individuals or difference in inherent ability do not enable them to enjoy those rights.

#### Educational and Economic Status of Farmers

There is a significant trend upward in educational achievement as measured by years spent and grades reached in school in passing from the past generation of farmers to the oncoming generation. More than four times as great a percentage of children as of parents entered into and went beyond high school. Also, as great a percentage of cropper children now go into high school as went among all types of operators in the preceding generation. However, the relative proportions of different classes of farm children who have passed any one grade or year in school have changed comparatively little during the last two or three decades. The greatest change has been in the actual height of the educational pyramid. High school and college education have been prolonged so that the gap between the illiterate and those who have gone the farthest in school is much greater than it was a generation ago.

**TABLE XVI.—Amount of Schooling Received by Oklahoma Cotton Farmers, by Net Wealth Status of Operators.**

Net Wealth and county groups	Total farmers	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF OPERATORS INTO GROUPS BY YEARS OF SCHOOLING RECEIVED OR GRADE FINISHED		
		0-5 years	6-8 years	9 years and over
All groups .....	1195	37.4	49.4	13.2
Up to \$999 .....	443	44.9	45.6	9.5
\$1000-\$4999 .....	459	36.8	48.8	14.4
\$5000 and over .....	293	27.0	55.9	17.1
Southwestern counties ...	369	23.7	60.1	16.2
Up to \$999 .....	72	24.3	65.7	10.0
\$1000-\$4999 .....	153	25.2	56.3	18.5
\$5000 and over .....	144	21.9	61.3	16.8
South central counties ...	199	38.0	53.4	8.6
Up to \$999 .....	81	44.2	48.0	7.8
\$1000-\$4999 .....	64	41.7	51.6	6.7
\$5000 and over .....	54	24.0	64.0	12.0
Southeastern counties ...	627	45.2	41.8	13.0
Up to \$999 .....	290	50.2	39.9	9.9
\$1000-\$4999 .....	242	42.9	43.3	13.8
\$5000 and over .....	95	36.2	43.6	20.2

Table XVI indicates that more than four-fifths, 86.8 per cent to be exact, of the operators included in the survey did not go beyond the elementary school. By dividing the farmers into three educational classes, it was possible to discover definite tendencies in each class. The percentage of all farmers who stopped school at or below the fifth grade generally declines as the amount of net wealth, or the economic status, rises. In the group with 6 to 8 years of schooling the general tendency is for an increase in the percentage of farmers in each wealth class as we go from the lower to the higher economic levels, only one exception having been found, and that was for the southwestern group of counties. In the third educational class, those with 9 years or more schooling, the percentage of farmers increases rapidly with the upward movement of economic status. While absolute variations in different parts of the State occur, the same relative laws hold good. The economic status of a farmer may be improved by education; also educational achievement may be augmented by economic advancement. Both may be caused by a third factor, superior native ability.

A noticeable feature of Table XVI is that the extreme upper and lower educational classes are those which are the most sensitive to changes in economic status. Economic status is a factor in holding those who would go on through high school back in the middle group or in lifting those from the bottom a little higher up. Fully half of those in the highest educational class are there in spite of economic handicaps as an examination of the data shows; and perhaps a significant part of those at the bottom of the educational ladder would be there no matter how great their economic advantages were. The lack of money as a barrier to advanced education probably can be overcome where personal equipment, health, talent, determination, and persistence are combined in the individual.

**TABLE XVII.—Percentage Distribution of Farmers' Children Past School Life, in Groups of Years Spent in School, by Economic Status of Parents.**

Net Wealth and county groups	Total children	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN IN GROUPS OF YEARS SPENT OR GRADE FINISHED IN SCHOOL		
		0-8 years	9-12 years	13 years and over
All groups .....	1522	66.7	28.1	5.2
Up to \$999 .....	404	86.4	12.4	1.2
\$1000-\$4999 .....	535	72.0	26.5	1.5
\$5000 and over .....	583	48.2	40.5	11.3
Southwestern counties ...	521	57.0	34.9	8.1
Up to \$999 .....	72	76.4	22.2	1.4
\$1000-\$4999 .....	136	72.8	25.7	1.5
\$5000 and over .....	313	45.7	41.9	12.4
South central counties ...	387	70.1	25.8	4.1
Up to \$999 .....	111	85.6	10.8	3.6
\$1000-\$4999 .....	122	76.2	22.2	1.6
\$5000 and over .....	154	53.9	39.6	6.5
Southeastern counties ...	614	72.8	23.8	3.4
Up to \$999 .....	221	90.0	10.0	0.0
\$1000-\$4999 .....	277	69.7	28.9	1.4
\$5000 and over .....	116	47.4	37.9	14.7

Table XVII shows the relation of economic status of families to the educational advancement of children. The same general principles are brought out here as in the preceding table. The percentage of children in each educational class varies directly with increases in wealth in the upper economical groups, but inversely in the lower economic groups. The outstanding differences between the two generations are (1) that the education of the children is spread over a longer period in school than the parents spent, (2) that the correlation between low economic status and low educational advancement is greater for children than for parents.

#### Education of Parents as Related to Education of Children

The first of these differences is explained by the fact that in recent years schools have been improved and have both widened and lengthened their range of educational activities. The second difference is partly explained by the tendency of some of the parents to succeed economically in

**TABLE XVIII.—Percentage Distribution of Farmers' Children Out of School, in Groups of Years Spent in School, According to Average Education of Both Parents.**

County groups and average years spent or grade finished in school by both parents	Total children out of school	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN IN GROUPS OF YEARS SPENT OR GRADE FINISHED IN SCHOOL		
		0-8 years	9-12 years	13 years and over
All counties -----	1522	67.4	27.7	4.9
0-6 years -----	1109	73.3	23.1	3.6
7-9 years -----	353	55.3	36.8	7.9
10 years and over ----	60	36.2	53.5	10.3
Southwestern counties ---	521	58.8	34.6	6.6
0-6 years -----	310	65.8	30.3	3.9
7-9 years -----	175	50.3	38.3	11.4
10 years and over ----	30	36.7	56.7	6.6
South central counties ---	387	89.9	26.2	3.9
0-6 years -----	300	71.9	23.4	4.7
7-9 years -----	80	65.0	35.0	---
10 years and over ----	7	40.0	40.0	20.0
Southeastern counties ---	614	73.6	22.4	4.0
0-6 years -----	493	79.3	18.1	2.6
7-9 years -----	98	56.1	35.7	8.2
10 years and over ----	23	34.8	52.2	13.0

spite of their educational handicaps, while those parents who are poor cannot or will not send their children to school as long as the more well-to-do families.

Table XVIII gives a rough idea of relationship of educational training of parents upon the degree of educational advancement of children. These data show that both the average grade reached by children and the proportion of children reaching higher grades increase as the educational accomplishments of the parents were increased. Table XVIII shows that 73.3 per cent of the children of parents whose education stopped at the sixth year or below did not go beyond the elementary school, while only 36.2 per cent of the children whose parents' education averaged 10 years or more quit school at the eighth grade or below. About three times as high a percentage, 10.3 per cent against 3.6 per cent, of the children of parents in the highest edu-

ditional ranks received one or more years in college as did the children of parents in the lowest educational class. Much the same, but a less extreme, condition prevails among the children whose education ended in high school; children whose parents went furthest in school remained in school longer and in greater proportions than did those whose parents had the least amounts of schooling.

In other words, there is a positive correlation between economic and educational advancement among parents, and this relationship is carried over to the educational advancement of children. Parents are generally desirous to have their children better prepared for the problems of life when they start for themselves than they (the parents) were at the same age. The more advanced the parents are, educationally and culturally, the greater this desire (or the ability of both parent and child to satisfy it) is as a general rule.

## **FACTORS AFFECTING THE CHOICE OF OCCUPATIONS BY CHILDREN OF OKLAHOMA COTTON FARMERS**

### **Choice of Occupations Regarded as a Means of Personal Advancement**

The selection of occupations is one of the primary means of social climbing in Western societies. This is one of the ways in which society becomes differentiated into different layers or strata. Sorokin says that the basis of social stratification consists in an unequal distribution of rights, privileges, duties, and responsibilities, social privations, social power, and influences among the members of a society.<sup>17</sup> Thus it is that the children of farmers in choosing occupations outside of agriculture may pass from one social plane into another that is different. This social climbing up or down as the case may be is an attempt on the part of those leaving the farm to find new spheres of activity, new economic opportunities that look more attractive than agriculture, new fields that seem to fit the ability or inclinations of the individual, or new liberties which are not to be had in agriculture.

The history of American society has been colored largely by the attempts of various types of people employed in agriculture to escape to occupations offering more agreeable and remunerative employment. The extent to which this is true is well indicated by popular acclaim and our unquestioningly conceding that a young man has made good if he leaves the farm and finds a good salary in the trades, in commerce, or in the professions. Complete emancipation from the plow and the hoe is often in itself regarded as evidence that the farm youth has made his mark in the world. This popular acclaim accorded the one who makes good in the city has come down to the present time from the medieval notion that agricultural labor was equivalent to servitude.

### **Majority of Oklahoma Farm Children Remain on Farms**

For the purpose of this study facts are given to show the relative attraction exerted by urbanized occupations upon farmers' children in comparison with the urge to remain on the farm. In Table XIX the occupational differentiation has been made so as to divide the children into three groups: those who stay in agriculture; those who enter commercial and industrial pursuits of all kinds; and those who go into professions, like law, medicine, dentistry, and teaching.

The data show that the majority of all children either entered farming or married farmers. This is without reference to sex, because it was desired to show where the bulk of the farm children go. In the light of numerous other studies, it is to be expected that the majority of those leaving

<sup>17</sup>P. Sorokin, *Social Mobility*, Harpers, 1927, p. 11.

**TABLE XIX.—Percentage Distribution of Oklahoma Farmers' Children Who Have Chosen Occupations in Various Occupational Groups, According to Tenure Status of Parents.\***

Tenure class	Total children	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN IN OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS		
		Agriculture	Trades and industries	Professions
All counties -----	1157	57.6	34.0	8.4
Full owners -----	496	54.6	33.3	12.1
Part owners -----	117	45.3	42.7	12.0
Share and cash tenants	490	63.3	32.4	4.3
Croppers -----	54	59.2	35.2	5.6
Southwestern counties ---	397	60.0	31.7	8.3
Full owners -----	229	60.7	28.8	10.5
Part owners -----	22	50.0	40.9	9.1
Share and cash tenants	138	60.1	34.8	5.1
Croppers -----	8	62.5	37.5	---
South central counties ----	289	47.4	42.9	9.7
Full owners -----	134	46.3	41.0	12.7
Part owners -----	45	20.0	66.7	13.3
Share and cash tenants	106	62.3	35.8	1.9
Croppers -----	4	---	**	***
Southeastern counties ---	471	61.8	30.3	7.9
Full owners -----	133	52.6	33.1	14.3
Part owners -----	50	66.0	22.0	12.0
Share and cash tenants	246	65.4	29.7	4.9
Croppers -----	42	64.3	35.7	---

\*The basis for selecting children who have chosen occupations in this and tables following was that of including children who had left the farm home and were engaged in earning their own livelihood.

\*\*One farmer.

\*\*\*Three farmers.

the farm are females. The introduction of the sex factor would necessitate a detailed study of the selectivity of rural migration which we do not wish to discuss as a distinct unit of this investigation. It is significant to note that the children of tenants and croppers remain on the farm in greater proportions than the children of owners. Also, of those children who leave the farm, greater proportions of the children of owners than of tenants and croppers enter the professional classes. This can be explained in a large measure by the fact that owners' children attain higher achievements in education for the most part than the children of tenants and croppers. In trade and industry the proportions of all classes of farm children are about equal, except that the part owner children exhibit the greatest tendencies to enter these ranks.

#### **Influence of Geographical Factors in Rural Emigration Is Minor**

Different sections of the State show variable tendencies toward emigration from the farm. Children from the southeast counties show the lowest and those from the south central areas the greatest frequency in leaving agriculture. In the eastern counties, where the greatest migration away from the farm might be expected, there was actually the least, up to 1925 at any rate. The difference between the eastern and the southwestern counties in the matter of the emigration from agriculture is too small to be of significance, although it is to be expected that the children in the ex-

treme southwestern counties would show the greatest attachment to agriculture because of this being normally one of the most prosperous cotton sections of the State. The southwestern section is an area where yields are usually high, where the boll weevil has done relatively little damage, where mechanized farming is practicable, and where labor costs are relatively low.

This analysis shows, probably, that economic conditions of individual families and perhaps personal tastes are much more important than geographical factors in determining whether children will leave the farm or stay on it, or, if they do leave, into what occupational class they will go.

The data given in Table XX in a large measure support those of Table XIX, and tend to substantiate the idea that the choice of rural or urban employment is more closely related to the socio-economic status of the family itself than to geographical location of the farm from which the children originate. There is some basis for saying that the children of the more successful farmers go into occupations outside of agriculture in larger proportions than those of less successful farmers.<sup>18</sup> This finding, however, is just the reverse of what was found in a series of studies conducted in Minnesota.<sup>19</sup> As in the case of tenure classes, the more wealthy farmers contribute larger proportions of their children to the business and professional people than the less wealthy with this tendency more noticeable in the percentage of children who go into the various professions. This is probably attributable largely to the nature of the economic needs necessary to getting a start outside of agriculture, especially in business and in the professions.

In certain sections, as represented by the different groupings of counties, the tendencies mentioned above are more clearly defined than in other sections. In south central Oklahoma, the greatest emigration from agriculture, up to 1925, was taking place. In the extreme southwestern counties there was the least emigration, on the basis of wealth; but on the basis of tenure this group of counties occupied second place. This goes to prove that any adequate explanation of rural emigration must be bound up in concrete objective factual data, such as the amount of wealth possessed and other facts on economic, educational and social status. Tenure and certain geographical influences are more subjective, and therefore, less tangible and direct. Under one and the same set of subjective conditions, we may find variations in the same phenomenon taking place in opposite directions at the same time. That is why the financial condition of a family gives us a better index of its social climbing than its location on the map.

The fact that all the farmers included in this survey are cotton farmers gives them a closer similarity than would be the case with different commodity growers combined in the same study. Yet no positive assurance can be had that the behavior of all cotton farmers would be the same even if minor climatic and physiographic factors were eliminated. Their conduct is possibly determined more than anything else by where they stand financially in comparison with other farmers of their same class. Also their relative position probably is more important than their absolute status. Regardless of climate, types of soil, insect pests, and the like, the well-to-do

<sup>18</sup>W. A. Anderson (*Migration of Sons and Daughters of White Farmers in Wake County, North Carolina*, North Carolina Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. No. 275, June 1930) found that 45.7 per cent of the sons of both owners and tenants remained in agriculture, and a slightly higher percentage of owners' sons than of owners' daughters moved into the city, while the tendency for tenants' sons and daughters was the reverse. But his study shows that male children of owners fill up the professions and skilled trades more rapidly than those of tenants who go into government positions, general business, and clerical positions in greater proportions than the sons of owners.

<sup>19</sup>See C. C. Zimmerman, "The Migration to Towns and Cities," *Amer. Jour. Sociol.* Vol. XXXII, No. 3, Nov. 1926; Vol. XXX, No. 1, June 1927; Vol. XXXIII, No. 2, Sept. 1927; also article by C. C. Zimmerman and O. D. Duncan, "The Migration to Towns and Cities," *Jour. Farm Econ.*, Vol. X, No. 4, Oct. 1928, pp. 506-515. These studies indicate that urban occupations attract the extremes of the farm population while the means, or children of middle class farmers, tend to stay on the farm.

farmers' children have greater freedom of choice as to occupations than the children of poorer farmers.

**TABLE XX.—Percentage Distribution of Oklahoma Farmers' Children Who Have Chosen Their Own Occupations Among Various Occupational Groups, According to Net Wealth of Their Parents.\***

Net wealth classes	Total children	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION IN OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS		
		Agriculture	Trade and industry	Professions
All counties -----	1220	58.9	33.2	7.9
\$0-\$999 -----	315	65.6	30.5	3.9
\$1000-\$4999 -----	433	56.7	33.5	9.8
\$5000 and over -----	472	56.5	34.7	8.8
Southwestern counties ----	390	65.2	29.1	5.7
\$0-\$999 -----	64	65.2	23.9	10.9
\$1000-\$4999 -----	86	66.3	31.2	2.5
\$5000 and over -----	240	64.7	29.5	5.8
South central counties ----	312	47.0	42.6	10.4
\$0-\$999 -----	86	58.5	35.4	6.1
\$1000-\$4999 -----	99	42.3	44.4	13.3
\$5000 and over -----	127	42.1	46.7	11.2
Southeastern counties ----	518	61.6	30.4	8.0
\$0-\$999 -----	165	69.5	29.8	.7
\$1000-\$4999 -----	248	59.3	29.7	11.0
\$5000 and over -----	105	53.4	33.3	13.3

\*See Footnote \*, Table XVIII.

### The Professions Draw Most Heavily Upon the More Well-to-do Farm Families for Recruits

The data shown in Table XXI are similar to those of Table XX except that in Table XXI an attempt has been made to correct to some extent the differences in the size of families. The potential inheritance of each child represents the total wealth of the family divided by the number of children, which is equivalent to the average wealth per child. Based on present financial status of parents this gives a rough index of what each child may expect to receive ultimately in the form of parental assistance.

The tendencies indicated here are not uniform, but for the most part the extreme upper and lower inheritance classes seem to contribute smaller proportions of children to trade and industry than the intermediate groups, which leaves larger proportions in them to be divided between agriculture and the professions. This is more pronounced in some sections of the State than in others. In the southwestern counties and in the eastern counties decidedly larger proportions of the children in the extreme groups remain in agriculture than in the south central counties.

Although these data indicate that migration from farming as an occupation is not uniform as between the different economic groups, there is no ground indicated here for the assertion frequently made that all the better farm boys and girls are leaving the farm and that those remaining are less able and less intelligent. On the other hand, these data indicate that probably the average ability and intelligence of farm population is not being lowered by movement of farm children out of farming.

Those in the lower extreme are possibly held out of other occupations because of lack of means and personal equipment, while those in the upper

**TABLE XXI.—Occupations Selected by Farmers' Children, Classified on the Basis of Potential Inheritance of Child as Determined by Average Wealth of Parents per Child.\***

Potential inheritance groups	Total children	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN IN OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS		
		Agriculture	Trade and industry	Professional
All counties -----	1029	59.3	33.2	7.5
Up to \$249 -----	372	66.7	29.3	4.0
\$250 to \$1249 -----	332	50.3	39.2	10.5
\$1250 to \$2249 -----	114	50.0	42.1	7.9
\$2250 and up -----	211	65.4	26.1	8.5
Southwestern counties ---	313	65.8	29.4	4.8
Up to \$249 -----	53	69.8	22.6	7.6
\$250 to \$1249 -----	76	63.2	32.9	3.9
\$1250 to \$2249 -----	42	45.2	45.2	9.6
\$2250 and up -----	142	71.8	25.4	2.8
South central counties ---	283	48.1	42.4	9.5
Up to \$249 -----	112	59.8	33.0	7.2
\$250 to \$1249 -----	123	38.2	50.4	11.4
\$1250 to \$2249 -----	30	50.0	46.7	3.3
\$2250 and up -----	18	38.9	38.9	22.2
Southeastern counties ---	433	61.9	30.0	8.1
Up to \$249 -----	207	69.6	29.0	1.4
\$250 to \$1249 -----	133	54.2	32.3	13.5
\$1250 to \$2249 -----	42	54.8	35.7	9.5
\$2250 and up -----	51	56.9	23.5	19.6

\*See Footnote \*, Table XIX.

extreme are probably attracted to the farm because, having freedom of choice and means of getting a reasonably good start, they find better opportunities on the farm. The middle classes find agricultural and urban employment about equally attractive. This, too, is contradictory to previous studies which have been made.<sup>20</sup> Zimmerman and his co-workers found that both extremes migrate from the farm, leaving the intermediate classes, some of whom rise while others go downward on the agricultural ladder, with the result that the general character of rural society is little changed.<sup>21</sup>

#### Efforts Toward Cultural Advancement Stimulate Urbanward Migration

No data were available showing the expenditure on the education of children who had left home and presumably had chosen their life's occupation. However, on the basis of present day expenditures on children who are yet at home an effort was made to place the children into groups which to some extent represent a cultural assortment. Rough as it is, Table XXII

<sup>20</sup>This finding, however, is supported in some measure by a recent study of Wilson Gee and Dewees Runk, "Selection in Cityward Migration," *Amer. Jour. Sociology*, XXXVII, No. 2, Sept. 1931, pp. 254-265, in which they found that the greatest loss to agriculture was suffered by the upper classes and the next greatest by the middle classes. This study was based on data taken from Albemarle County, Virginia, which represents one of the oldest and most settled agricultural communities in America, which certainly would be expected to show some contrast to the agricultural communities of the newer middle west. These writers agree largely with the theories of E. A. Ross and many others who contend that the rural exodus tends to deplete the rural population of its best people.

<sup>21</sup>See C. C. Zimmerman, *Op. Cit.*



shows that as the amount spent for advancement (including travel, reading, recreation, religion, charity, and the like) increases, the percentage of children who remain in agriculture declines. Increased expenditures for advancement tend to be associated closely with increased shift of farm boys to city occupations. Those farmers spending an average of \$49 or less per family on advancement had 63.1 per cent of their children who had left the farm home continue in agricultural pursuits, while those with advancement

**TABLE XXII.—Occupational Distribution of Oklahoma Cotton Farmers' Children Who Had Selected Occupations\*, According to the Average Amount Spent by the Parents for Advancement.\*\***

Expenditure per family for advancement in 1925	Total number of children who have entered occupations	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN IN OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS		
		Agriculture	Trade and industry	Professional
All classes ----	777	60.1	31.8	8.1
Up to \$49 ----	493	63.1	30.2	6.7
\$50 to \$99 ----	137	58.4	34.3	7.3
\$100 and up --	147	51.7	34.7	13.6

\*See Footnote \*, Table XIX.

\*\*The data here shown include all those for whom advancement expenditures could be obtained with certainty. Since the total number is small in comparison with the entire sample, the different sections represented are not divided. The expenditures for advancement were those of 1925, consequently they are not to be considered as the cultural expenditures on the children involved in the table. In general, however, the difference in expenditure for advancement prevailing today between the various families is possibly roughly indicative of past differences when the children now away from home were at home.

expenditures averaging over \$100 had 51.7 per cent of their children in agricultural pursuits. In going from the lower to the higher advancement groups the percentage of children entering the professions doubles. From this crude analysis conclusions must necessarily be drawn with great caution. But, if this gives us a picture of family policies of long duration, it seems that increased expenditure for advancement has been of such a nature that it has tended to take children away from the farm. Or else it indicates that those children who desire to leave the farm come from families who see the need of greater expenditures for advancement, possibly to fit their children for non-agricultural occupations. There is no ground for assuming that these facts indicate that education is draining the farm of its best blood. A most unwarranted conclusion from these facts would be that rural emigration is destructive of the quality of farm people. It simply takes those whose environmental and educational influences have made them dissatisfied with farming as an occupation out of the occupation.

Table XXIII shows the relation between the number of years which children remain in school and the occupational classes in which they have become identified. The majority of all children studied here became attached to agriculture, but there is a pronounced tendency for those with high school and college training to go into business or industry and into the professions. This certainly shows an inverse relation between the amount of education received and the proportion of children who stayed on farms. In both the business and professional groups the relation is direct. As the amount of education increases, the percentage of children going into the urban occupations increases; but the proportions entering the professions increase more rapidly than those going into trade and industry. In different sections of the State the percentages of the children who stay on the farms vary somewhat, but this occurs without destroying the general

tendency of an inverse relation between educational advancement and the occupational stability of farming.<sup>22</sup>

**TABLE XXIII.—Occupational Distribution of Farm Children Who Have Chosen Occupations, According to the Amount of Education They Received.\***

Periods of education (years or grade finished) in school	Total number of children	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN BY OCCUPATIONAL CLASSES		
		Agriculture	Trade and industry	Professions
<b>All counties</b> -----	1,057	57.5	34.6	6.9
0-8 years -----	699	64.1	32.0	3.9
9-12 years -----	302	48.3	39.4	12.3
13 and up -----	56	25.0	41.1	33.9
<b>Southwestern counties</b> ----	305	60.3	33.8	5.9
0-8 years -----	161	63.4	34.2	2.4
9-12 years -----	126	60.3	32.5	7.2
13 and up -----	18	33.3	38.9	27.8
<b>South central counties</b> ---	291	48.1	42.3	9.6
0-8 years -----	202	55.0	39.1	5.9
9-12 years -----	73	37.0	49.3	13.7
13 and up -----	16	12.5	50.0	37.5
<b>Southeastern counties</b> ----	461	61.6	30.4	8.0
0-8 years -----	336	69.9	26.8	3.3
9-12 years -----	103	41.7	40.8	17.5
13 and up -----	22	27.2	36.4	36.4

\*See Footnote \*, Table XIX.

#### Occupational Preferment Is Often Based on Educational Attainment

The tendency toward a disproportionate emigration of farmers' children of the more highly educated classes is in all probability a resultant of many interdependent factors. In the first place, if the economic conditions underlying the agricultural situation are unsatisfactory to farm boys or girls at large, it seems obvious that those whose education has reached high school or beyond will be among the first to find openings for employment outside of agriculture on their own initiative. Furthermore, there can be little doubt that opportunities in business and the professions will be offered to the high school graduate, or the boy or girl with college training, before they would be offered those with only grammar school education or less. In other words, occupational preferment, other things being equal, goes to young people who have had superior fundamental training. These statements correctly imply that the belief of the writers is that educational advancement is not only a means whereby boys and girls can leave the farm if they so desire, but also it is a mark of children who inherently are equipped to go into non-agricultural occupations.

On the other hand, there seems to exist a high degree of probability that mass psychology, even among farmers themselves, has voiced emphatic approval when a farm boy or girl has demonstrated an ambition to find a

<sup>22</sup>C. E. Lively and P. G. Beck (*Movement of Open Country Population in Ohio*, Ohio Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. No. 489, Sept. 1931) discuss the effects of schooling upon the migratory behavior of the farm population of Ohio. They show that the greatest percentage of farmers come from groups with eighth grade educations or less. However, they state definitely that they have made no attempt to pass upon the mental quality of these persons. Evidently these writers base their interpretations mostly upon environmental factors and conditions.

career outside of agriculture, and this tendency has, without doubt, encouraged farmers' children to enter the professions and business. The one profession which has absorbed an unusually high proportion of farm boys and girls has been that of teaching. This vocation comes closest into the range of the ordinary experiences of the farm youth, and in many cases does not actually take them off the farm and entirely out of the atmosphere of farm life, so that it requires relatively little actual readjustment in the habits and thought of those who enter it, beyond what actually takes place in the process of education itself. The social advantages, and the independent, if modest, income that it affords, makes teaching especially attractive to farm girls.

Because of the fact that school text books and programs of study are written mostly by urban-minded people who may consciously or unconsciously place undue weight upon urban values and qualities of success, it is quite possible that the educational system itself tends to draw young people away from the farm. Added to this is the further fact that most of the better high schools and colleges are located in towns and cities. In order to pursue an advanced education, therefore, the farm youth must be transported bodily as well as mentally into an urban environment, after which, however hard he may try, the county boy can never feel exactly the same and be his former self again on the farm. The effects of urban influences upon the adolescent and young adult mind of the high school and college student tend to become more firmly entrenched than would be the case if the process were reversed and the later training rather than the earlier were received in the country. These statements are not meant as propaganda for or against the present educational system, but simply as statements of apparent facts based on the experiences of a large portion of the rural population.

This same disproportionate emigration of farm children with high school training or beyond may be taken as evidence of a degree of selectivity in the urbanward migration of the farm population. However, it does not necessarily exert a qualitative influence upon that part of the farm population who remain on the farm. It more likely means that farm children, who may be brought up under rather exceptional social, educational and cultural, or economic, and in some cases geographical advantages measured in terms of distance to schools and educational centers, are the first and most frequent ones to find avenues of entry into urban employment.

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