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Leland H. Stott

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COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE      UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA  
AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION  
RESEARCH BULLETIN 89

# **A Study of Relief Activities in Seven Nebraska Counties, 1927—1934**

Leland H. Stott  
Department of Home Economics

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA  
FEBRUARY, 1937

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# A Study of Relief Activities in Seven Nebraska Counties, 1927—1934

LELAND H. STOTT<sup>1</sup>

It has long been customary to think of relief problems as arising especially in connection with industrial development and a high degree of urbanization. Only under unusual circumstances, such as times of flood or severe drouth, are agricultural populations thought of as needing financial or material aid. Nebraska is primarily an agricultural state. According to the 1930 census, 39 per cent of the state's gainfully employed persons were engaged in agriculture. Only 35.3 per cent of the people of the state were living in towns of 2,500 or greater population. About 22.4 per cent were living in towns smaller than 2,500 population and were not engaged in farming, while over 42.3 per cent were living on farms. Of the total of 342,999 families of Nebraska, 131,780 of them were living on farms.

In the present study, an attempt was made to investigate the relief situation in Nebraska. The aim was (1) to determine how public relief funds were administered in the various counties of the state before the beginning of federal participation in relief, and what changes, if any, had come about after the federal relief agencies began to function, and also what volunteer relief agencies were available to supplement county relief in each case; (2) to determine, so far as possible, the actual amounts that were spent and for what purposes, and also the amounts of goods distributed by each county and by these various agencies during the years 1927 to 1934; and (3) to obtain information concerning the extent to which relief was extended to families actually engaged in farming. It also seemed desirable to learn something of the general attitude and personal opinions of the county officials and relief workers concerning the problem in general and concerning the relief clients themselves. Some attempt was therefore made to determine whether the relief clients were urban, small town, or farm people, what conditions placed them on relief, and how they were regarded by officials and others.

Seven counties, considered representative of the various type-of-farming areas of the state, were selected for study. The counties were also chosen with regard to density of population, so that both the more densely and more sparsely populated counties would be represented in the surveys. Two of these counties contain good-sized cities and are railroad centers; two are in the northern portion of the state where conditions are not well adapted to cereal crop production but where cattle grazing is carried on quite extensively; and the other three are in the southern and southeastern portions of the state, where the soil is more productive, farms are smaller, and where cereal crops predominate. Certain general facts about these seven counties are summarized in Tables 1 and 2.

The data of the study were gathered in two surveys. The first one was made in the spring of 1933, when information over a period of years

<sup>1</sup> This study was planned and initiated and the data were collected by M. Ruth Clark, who was Associate Professor in the Home Economics Department of the University from 1928 to 1934.

TABLE 1.—General location, number of cities of 2,500 or greater population and the type-of-farming areas in which each of the seven counties included in the study is located.

County	General location	Type-of-farming area <sup>1</sup>	No. cities of 2,500 population
A	Northern part of state	Cattle ranching area and hay and livestock area	None
B	Northern part of state	Cattle ranching area	None
C	South-central	Central corn and livestock area	One
D	South-central	Central corn and livestock area and southern cash grain and livestock area	One
E	Northeastern	Northeastern intensive meat-producing area	One
F	Eastern	Northeastern intensive meat-producing area and southeastern general farming area	One
G	Southeastern	Southeastern general farming area	One

<sup>1</sup> Types of Farming in Nebraska, by Harold Hedges and F. F. Elliott, Nebr. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. 244, May, 1930.

TABLE 2.—The number of families and the population (classified as urban, rural-farm, and rural-non-farm) in each of the counties studied.

Classification	Counties						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Total families .....	1,439	2,549	4,460	6,686	6,327	4,745	5,011
Urban families .....	.....	.....	756	4,340	2,772	1,709	1,554
Rural-farm families .....	741	1,587	2,107	1,669	1,967	2,262	2,165
Rural-non-farm families ....	698	962	1,597	677	1,588	774	1,292
Total population .....	5,772	10,898	17,875	27,117	26,037	21,181	19,826
Urban .....	.....	.....	2,962	18,050	10,717	6,899	5,787
Rural-farm .....	3,248	7,225	9,107	6,792	9,003	11,206	9,478
Rural-non-farm .....	2,524	3,673	5,806	2,284	6,317	3,077	4,561

<sup>1</sup> 1930 Census, U. S. Bureau of Census, Department of Commerce. The term "urban" is applied to towns and cities with populations of 2,500 or greater. People who were living in towns of less than 2,500 population and who were not engaged in agriculture were classified as "rural-non-farm" population.

was sought concerning, first, amounts spent for the various sorts of relief and, second, the agencies responsible and their methods of administration. The second survey was made in the summer of 1934, to determine, if possible, what effect federal intervention in relief, which had become effective in 1933, had had in amounts spent and in methods of administration. This second survey covered the six months from July, 1933, to January, 1934. In both surveys an effort was made to determine to what extent relief moneys and goods were received by people living on farms.

## RELIEF AGENCIES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF RELIEF

Because of the lack of uniformity in the methods of relief administration and in the records kept of relief expenditures from county to county, little attempt is here made to compare counties with each other. Such data and information for each county as were available at the time the visits were made are presented. These data, of course, can be meaningful only in the light of the general situation of the county, and the nature and size of its population.

### County A

County A is located in the northern part of the state. Cattle grazing is one of the chief occupations, although it is combined with the growing

of various crops. The farms are large with farmsteads widely separated. This region is more arid than some other sections, having an average annual rainfall of 22 inches. This is sufficient for cattle grazing, but field crops are usually light and drouth relief has been necessary upon a number of occasions.

As is shown in Tables 1 and 2 there are no towns in the county with as many as 2,500 inhabitants and hence the population is classified as all rural. About 56 per cent of the total population are engaged in farming.

**Administration of county relief funds.**—As was the case in most localities prior to 1933, the administration of public relief funds was almost entirely in the hands of the county commissioners. The general policy in this county was to give relief only to the aged, to widows and orphans, and to those totally incapacitated physically. No aid was given to those who owned property of any kind. This policy, of course, could not be adhered to in the case of special need due to drouth.

By 1933 the general policy in relief administration apparently had changed somewhat. During that year the county gave regular aid to forty farm families and to twenty-one town families. This aid consisted largely of food and medical attention, given without regard to property owned. The same general method of relief administration as was used before 1933, however, seemed to prevail.

**Other relief agencies.**—In 1931-32 and also in 1932-33 special drouth relief to farmers was necessary. This was largely furnished through the Red Cross organization. In the following tabulation the farm families which received such relief in 1932-33 are classified:

Owner families .....	121
Part-owners .....	5
Tenant families .....	236
Farm laborer families.....	2
	<hr/>
Total farm families.....	364

Local church organizations were active in providing aid for the needy, but no data were obtained as to the number of families helped.

**Relief expenditures.**—In actual relief expenditures this county is rather unusual in that its relief load fluctuated as much in years before the depression as it did with the depression. In 1931, for example, the total amount spent on relief was lower than it had been in 1929. In 1932 and 1933 there was a considerable increase, but no greater, compared with 1929, than the increase between the years 1928 and 1929. Table 3 presents a summary of the relief expenditures for the period of the study. These figures represent the regular county relief load exclusive of the special drouth relief given farmers who were ordinarily self-supporting. For a typical year (1929) before federal aid began, the total county relief expenditure amounted to \$7,220.80, or \$1.25 per capita. In 1933 the county spent \$7,816.60, or \$1.35 per capita. The federal government contributed approximately \$1,200, and the volunteer organizations contributed \$400 for relief in the county in 1933. In addition, the volunteer organizations



furnished some clothing and other goods. Figures representing amounts spent for drouth relief of farmers were not available. Table 4 summarizes the available information concerning relief activities of other agencies in the county.

TABLE 3.—*Summary of expenditures of county funds for relief purposes, county A, 1927 to 1933.*

Year	Food, clothing, fuel, rent	Medical care	Burials	Hospitalization	Feeble-minded and insane
1927	\$2,551.15	\$1,330.76	\$ 6.00	\$ 275.00	\$ 439.30
1928	1,241.21	1,053.45	171.69	294.00	313.10
1929	2,186.29	1,132.30	292.00	527.00	599.50
1930	1,689.48	1,273.35	280.00	639.00	145.03
1931	1,707.62	1,398.04	272.81	464.00	89.40
1932	2,626.33	878.34	231.46	498.00	234.15
1933	2,199.78	1,066.96	357.00	.....	783.00

  

Year	Soldiers' relief	Mothers' pensions	Other	Total	Amount per capita <sup>1</sup>
1927	\$1,058.31	\$ 990.00	\$1,755.00	\$8,405.52	\$1.46
1928	491.00	1,265.00	1,067.32	5,896.77	1.02
1929	803.35	975.00	705.36	7,220.80	1.25
1930	250.00	795.00	1,173.09	6,244.95	1.08
1931	800.00	1,210.00	935.00	6,876.87	1.19
1932	100.00	999.00	1,574.95	7,142.23	1.24
1933	500.00	953.00	1,956.86	7,816.60	1.35

TABLE 4.—*Summary of relief activities of valunteer and federal agencies in county A.*

Year	Agency	Nature of contribution	To whom given	Amount
1931-32	Red Cross	Food, supplies, and clothing	Farm families	.....
1932-33	Red Cross	Food, supplies, and clothing	364 farm families	.....
1933	Red Cross and other volunteer organizations	Supplies, clothing, mittens, etc.	.....	\$ 400.00
1933	F. E. R. A.	.....	.....	1,200.00

<sup>1</sup> Based on 1930 census, U. S. Bureau of Census.

### County B

This county lies wholly in the cattle ranching area of the state. According to a survey made in 1927 no township of the county had more than 40 per cent of its land under cultivation and for the great majority of the county less than 17 per cent of the land was reported under cultivation. For the whole area the average percentage of cultivated land is only 4.2. Much of the land is cropped to wild hay and some forage crops are raised. Cattle grazing is, of course, the important industry, and over 80 per cent of all the land is used as pasture.<sup>2</sup> Ranches are generally very large and the farmsteads are widely separated. The towns are all small. The total population was classified as rural, and over 66 per cent of it as rural-farm population.

<sup>2</sup> *Types of Farming in Nebraska*, by Harold Hedges and F. F. Elliott, Nebr. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. 244, May, 1930.

**The administration of county relief.**—The three county commissioners were in complete charge of relief as far as county funds were concerned. It was their responsibility to make all decisions as to who should receive aid and how much each should receive. This was also true at the time of the second visit in the summer of 1934. Most of the regular county relief clients were in the larger towns and these were mostly old people, widows, and children.

TABLE 5.—*Summary of expenditures<sup>1</sup> of county funds for relief purposes, county B, 1927 to 1934.*

Year	Food, clothing, fuel, rent	Medical care	Burials	Hospitalization
Aug., 1927, to Aug., 1928	\$ 3,524.92	\$ 961.18	.....	.....
Aug., 1928, to Aug., 1929	3,469.81	1,248.07	.....	.....
Aug., 1929, to Aug., 1930	5,794.92	2,456.14	\$ 692.00	.....
Aug., 1930, to Aug., 1931	10,318.53	3,230.13	950.00	.....
Aug., 1931, to Aug., 1932	5,827.00	3,972.18	250.10	\$ 207.79
Jan., 1933, to Jan., 1934	11,514.45	3,623.98	478.50	1,433.91

  

Year	Feeble-minded and insane	Soldiers' relief	Total	Amount per capita <sup>2</sup>
Aug., 1927, to Aug., 1928	.....	.....	\$ 4,486.10	\$0.41
Aug., 1928, to Aug., 1929	.....	.....	4,718.88	.43
Aug., 1929, to Aug., 1930	.....	.....	8,943.08	.82
Aug., 1930, to Aug., 1931	.....	.....	14,498.66	1.33
Aug., 1931, to Aug., 1932	\$ 817.77	.....	11,074.84	1.02
Jan., 1933, to Jan., 1934	681.17 <sup>3</sup>	\$50.00	17,782.01	1.63

<sup>1</sup> Figures to January, 1933, were secured by consulting records of county clerk; the 1933 figures are from a summary prepared by the county clerk for the Bureau of Child Welfare.

<sup>2</sup> Based on 1930 census, U. S. Bureau of Census.

<sup>3</sup> Only \$300 was expended for the current year; the balance was payment for earlier indebtedness.

**Other relief agencies.**—The Red Cross made greater contributions, as a rule, than any other volunteer organization. In 1932-33 a total of 345 families (1,102 persons) were given supplies including flour, other provisions, and clothing. One hundred thirty-nine, or about 40 per cent of these families, consisting of 621 individuals (about 56 per cent of the total number) were farm people. The American Legion Auxiliary gave some money as well as food, clothing, and Christmas boxes to the needy. The Business and Professional Women's Club during 1932-33 was assigned by the county clerk a family of seven persons to whom they gave aid. Another large family was also given some help by the same organization. The "Community Players" was organized to provide milk for needy school children. No record was kept of the actual number helped. During the last three months of 1933, however, some fifty-seven different families were helped by F. E. R. A. funds. Practically all of these were farm families.

**Relief expenditures.**—Table 5 gives a summary of relief expenditures in the county for the period covered by the study. County expenditures increased from a total of \$4,486.10, or only \$0.41 per capita for 1927-28, to \$11,074.84, or \$1.02 per capita for the years 1931-32. During the first year of that period the whole amount went for food, clothing, fuel, and rent and for medical care. During the next two years some money (\$692

and \$950) was used for burials. In 1931-32, \$207.79 was expended for burials and \$817.77 for the care of feeble-minded and insane. For the year 1933 the total of county expenditures was \$17,782.01, or \$1.63 per capita. In addition to this were the contributions of the voluntary organizations and \$533.55 of F. E. R. A. funds. Table 6 gives a summary of the relief activities of these agencies.

TABLE 6.—*Summary of relief activities of volunteer and federal agencies in county B.*

Agency	Nature of contribution	To whom given	Amount
1932-33			
Red Cross	Flour and other provisions, clothing	345 families, or 1,102 persons (139 of families or 56 per cent of persons were farm people)	.....
American Legion Auxiliary	Milk, food, toys, clothing, and Christmas boxes	.....	\$ 55.00
Business and Professional Women's Club	Supplies	Two families	40.00
"Community Players"	Milk and graham crackers	Needy school children	60.00
1933			
F. E. R. A.	.....	Fifty-seven farm families	533.55

### County C

County C is located just south of the center of the state in the central corn and livestock area. In this area about 48 per cent of the land is under cultivation and roughly one-third of it is used for pasture. The average annual rainfall is approximately 23 inches. There is, however, some irrigation, and portions of the land are subirrigated. The soil is fertile and productive. Corn is the principal crop. Some sugar beets and considerable alfalfa and other forage crops are also raised. Hogs, sheep, and cattle are important livestock products. Most of the farms of this region are from 100 to 500 acres in size—much smaller, on the average, than those of the two counties previously described.

This county contains one town of more than 2,500 population. About 17 per cent of the total population of the county were classified in the census as urban, about 32 per cent as rural-non-farm, and the remaining 51 per cent as rural-farm population.

**Administration of county relief.**—Although this county, apparently, had escaped the most intense effects of the depression, certain factors had contributed to the extent of necessary relief in the county. One of these was the fact that the farmers, being unable to employ the usual amount of labor in caring for their beets, hay, and other crops, had cared for them by exchange of work. Many people who usually depended upon such labor had not, therefore, had work and were living in town on relief. Hence, the bulk of the relief was in the larger towns. In 1935 for the

first time came a demand for relief from the rural districts. Even then it was estimated that not more than ten such demands were received.

The county was found to be divided into three districts for the administration of county relief funds. Each commissioner was in complete charge in his own district and hence handled the problem as he saw fit. In one district, county relief was largely confined to occasional gifts of \$50 or \$100 to town volunteer relief organizations, which handled entirely the relief work of the district. In another district the relief work had been well organized under a trained social worker who was hired by the commissioner of the district in cooperation with all the volunteer organizations. This relief worker maintained an office, visited the homes of all relief applicants, and attempted to extend her work to the preventive side of the problem. The cooperation of the various church and civic groups of the district was good. In the third district claims for help were made directly and verbally to the commissioner.

Food supplies paid for by the county, in all districts, were obtained on weekly grocery orders filled at the local stores. The people receiving relief were permitted to make up their own grocery lists. These lists were checked by the social worker in the one district and by volunteer workers in the other districts.

No one in this county was eligible to receive county relief so long as he had any property. This, of course, automatically ruled out farmers and tenant farmers and farm laborers who had any livestock or chickens or other types of property.

Late in 1933, at the end of the term of office of the only social worker of the county, a county committee for the administration of relief was formed at the request of the state director of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. This, of course, brought about a more coordinated and centralized system of relief administration.

**Other relief agencies.**—Mention has already been made of the volunteer organizations in the county. Besides cooperating with the county officials in the distribution of public funds, the Red Cross also contributed and distributed considerable flour and other food staples, and clothing.

**Relief Expenditures.**—Expenditures of county funds for relief purposes are summarized in Table 7. Total expenditures were available back only as far as 1930. In that year the total amount spent by the county was \$27,509.10. This amounts to \$1.54 per capita. The following year brought a decrease (\$1.31 per capita) but in 1932 the total increased again to \$26,195.22, or \$1.47 per capita. The largest single item of expense during those three years was mothers' pensions, the amounts being \$9,701.60, \$6,882.51, and \$9,255.40. During 1931 some fifty-five mothers received pensions amounting to \$600 each. For three months in 1933 the mothers' pension fund was exhausted and the clients were helped from the general fund. For this reason that item was considerably reduced. New items, however, were added and amounts spent for food, rent, fuel, clothing, and others were increased. The total for 1933 was \$32,587.23, or \$1.82 per capita. Medical care and hospitalization were the heaviest single items for that year.

The volunteer relief organizations of the county contributed a total of \$825. These contributions are itemized in Table 8. No data were obtained concerning the extent of federal participation in relief in the county.

TABLE 7.—*Summary of expenditure of county funds for relief purposes, county C, 1927 to 1933.*

Year	Food, clothing, rent, fuel	Medical care	Burial	Hospitalization	Feeble-minded and insane
1927	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1928	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1929	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1930	.....	\$14,062.80 <sup>1</sup>	.....	.....	.....
1931	\$ 5,920.51	2,381.55	\$486.00	\$3,961.30	.....
1932	5,592.98	3,244.59	660.00	4,895.03	.....
1933	11,368.06	4,727.90	791.00	6,531.86	\$565.98

  

Year	Soldiers' relief	Mothers' pensions	Blind pensions	County farm	Total	Per capita
1927	.....	\$4,798.60	.....	.....	.....	.....
1928	.....	6,545.33	.....	.....	.....	.....
1929	.....	7,095.00	.....	.....	.....	.....
1930	\$ 988.00	9,701.60	.....	\$2,756.70	\$27,509.10	\$1.54
1931	667.64	6,882.51 <sup>2</sup>	.....	3,065.80	23,365.31	1.31
1932	686.14	9,255.40	.....	1,861.08	26,195.22	1.47
1933	1,711.00	4,319.94	\$800.00	1,771.49	32,587.23	1.82

<sup>1</sup> This includes food, clothing, rent, fuel, medical care, burials, and hospitalization.

<sup>2</sup> Fifty-five women were given mothers' pensions. The amount was \$600 each per year.

TABLE 8.—*Summary of relief activities of volunteer agencies in county C.*

Agency	Purpose of expenditure	To whom given	Amount
1933			
Red Cross	One-half of relief worker's salary (Nov. 1, 1932, to May 31, 1933)	.....	\$365.00
	Drayage on Red Cross supplies	.....	15.00
Community fund	Relief supplies	Regular town relief clients	295.00
Chamber of Commerce	For salary of relief worker	.....	50.00
Kiwanis	.....	.....	100.00

### County D

County D is located in the south-central part of the state. It lies on the border between the central corn and livestock area and the southern cash grain and livestock area (Table 1). Roughly, two-thirds of its total area is under cultivation and the remainder is used for pasture or wild hay. The average annual rainfall is about 26 inches. Corn and wheat are the principal cereal crops and alfalfa and other forage crops are quite extensively raised. This county is an important producer of cattle of both beef and dairy types. Hogs, sheep, and other livestock are also raised. The majority of the farms range from 100 to 300 acres in size.

The total population of the county is about 27,117, which is greater than that of any other county included in the study. It also has a greater proportion of urban population. Nearly 67 per cent of the total population live in the county's single large town. Of the remaining 33 per cent, 25 per cent are farm people and 8 per cent are rural-non-farm.

**Administration of county relief.**—Two groups of people contributed heavily to the relief load in this county. The first of these consisted of former railroad employees. The largest town in the county is a railroad center and many men who were laid off the pay rolls of the railroad companies had exhausted their resources and were on relief. The other group resulted from seasonal work. Sugar-beet factories and sales barns had attracted workers for a time. They remained after the work ceased and were eventually on relief. Practically all relief clients lived in the larger towns.

The relief situation was found to be somewhat different in county D, in that all of the relief work of the county was strongly organized in the hands of a county investigator, who was also head of the county Red Cross organization.

In August, 1931, a county commissary was organized with a storehouse and distributing center in the basement of the courthouse. For a time only staple foods were given. These were distributed once a week. Later canned tomatoes were added. Seven quarts of milk were given to each family and bread tickets on one of the local bakeries were issued.

There was a county doctor who received a small salary from the county and anyone was free to call on him. He gave services to farm tenant families and others regardless of whether or not they possessed small amounts of property. Applicants for medical aid were not required to deed property to the county before becoming eligible, as was the case in some other localities. There was a school nurse but no county nurse.

According to the records of the county clerk, the numbers of families given regular relief from county funds during the years 1927 to 1932 were as follows: 1927, 154 families; 1928, 152 families; 1929, 131 families and 17 single persons; 1930, 181 families; 1931, 241 families; 1932, 320 families. These families were practically all town families.

The situation had changed somewhat by the time of the second visit in the spring of 1934. After federal aid was begun in 1933, the administration of the relief in the county was placed in the hands of a committee appointed by the commissioners. This committee worked through a county investigator of cases. Approximately 250 families, with an average of four individuals to the family, were given aid. In addition there were forty-five to fifty single individuals who were taken care of by the county.

**Other relief agencies.**—Prior to 1933 the Red Cross was the chief active volunteer relief organization. Considerable quantities of Red Cross goods were distributed and some cash expended for relief. Much of the sewing of Red Cross materials was done in the schools. For a time the Red Cross organization fed transients through meal tickets issued by the chairman but after feeding some 1,000 in this way officers decided that the money must be saved for local relief purposes. In the winter, transients were allowed to sleep in the jail and were given a light meal. Occasionally those with cars were given a little gasoline on which to leave town.

Some garden seed was distributed by the American Legion to a few families who wished to raise garden products for their partial support.

With the reorganization of the county relief set-up in 1933, other volunteer organizations began to function. Among these were the railroad "Family League", the Salvation Army, and a "Self-Help Unit" organization. The Family League was an organization of railroad employees who contributed 10 cents each per month to a fund to help care for former employees out of work from some physical disability. The "Self-Help" groups were under the supervision of a local preacher. Wood was cut and sold to buy seed for "Self-Help" gardens, milk, and other supplies.

**Relief expenditures.**—In general the relief expenditures of the county increased steadily after 1927. During that year the total was \$19,181.73, or only \$0.71 per capita. In 1931 when the effects of the depression were

TABLE 9.—*Summary of expenditures of county funds for relief purposes, county D, 1927 to 1933.*

Year	Food, clothing, rent, fuel	Soldiers' relief	Medical care	Burials	Hospitalization	Feeble-minded and insane
1927	\$11,823.00	.....	\$ 838.39	\$100.00	\$1,789.00	\$102.66
1928	12,595.11	.....	704.90	75.00	2,314.73	130.50
1929 <sup>2</sup>	13,587.89	.....	1,007.77	94.90	2,976.25	79.90
1930 <sup>2</sup>	11,874.60	.....	1,938.35	464.35	1,511.30	147.16
1931	24,733.13	.....	2,020.24	637.78	2,044.45	.....
1932	29,079.22	.....	2,748.23	354.50	3,100.00	.....
1933	32,440.80	\$1,516.19	3,126.27	782.00	1,913.85	234.23

  

Year	Mothers' pensions	Blind pensions	Other <sup>1</sup>	Total	Per capita
1927	\$1,780.00	\$480.00	\$2,268.68	\$19,181.73	\$0.71
1928	1,410.00	480.00	1,619.40	19,329.64	0.71
1929 <sup>2</sup>	2,487.20	480.00	1,566.35	22,280.28	0.82
1930 <sup>2</sup>	4,245.25	380.00	460.99	21,022.00	0.78
1931	5,433.17	520.00	1,358.80	36,747.57	1.36
1932	8,151.50	720.00	1,000.00	45,152.45	1.67
1933	7,627.00	930.00	2,664.25	49,718.48 <sup>3</sup>	1.83

<sup>1</sup> "Other" includes general care, cloth and shirts for county prisoners, transportation, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Two sets of differing figures without a statement as to which is correct are available for 1929 and 1930.

<sup>3</sup> This total does not include the \$1,516.19 spent for soldiers' relief. This item was not included by the county clerk with the items headed "Support for Dependents". When it is added in the total becomes \$51,234.60.

being felt more keenly, the total was \$36,747.57, or \$1.36 per capita. In 1933, with federal intervention, the total rose to \$49,718.48, or \$1.83 per capita. Of this amount \$11,939.03 was used to pay the rent of single individuals and transients. Table 9 gives an itemized summary of county expenditures over the period covered by the study.

In Table 10 are summarized the activities of other relief agencies in the county. As has already been stated, prior to 1933 the county Red Cross organization was about the only active volunteer agency, and it continued to be the biggest single contributor outside the federal relief agencies in 1933.

TABLE 10.—*Summary of relief activities of volunteer and federal agencies in county D.*

Agency	Nature of contribution	To whom given	Amount
	1931-32		
Red Cross	Food	Some 1,000 transients } Local relief families }	\$ 1,000.00
	Clothing, shoes, and coal	Local relief families	.....
	Flour and cotton materials	Local relief families	.....
	1933		
Red Cross	.....	Local relief families	4,000.00
City relief organization	.....	Local relief families	664.80
Railroad "Family League"	.....	Families of former railroad employees	3,272.21
Soldiers' relief fund	.....	Ex-soldiers	734.19
Salvation Army	.....	Local relief families	107.63
Self-help units	.....	Local relief families	3,552.50
	JULY TO DECEMBER, 1933		
Federal relief agencies	.....	Local relief families	15,300.00

### County E

This county represents the northeastern intensive meat-producing area of the state (Table 1). Over 62 per cent of the land is under cultivation and about 33 per cent is used for wild hay and pasture. The average annual rainfall is approximately 28 inches, with a seasonal distribution which is favorable to corn production. Furthermore, the soil is of a character especially suitable, and the summer temperature is favorable for corn. Because of these factors the corn yields are higher in this area than in any other part of the state. This crop also occupies a greater proportion of the farm area than any other crop. Oats is the second cereal crop in importance for the area. Some barley and a little wheat are also raised. Much red clover, sweet clover, and alfalfa are grown for hay. This combination of crops is especially favorable to hog raising and beef cattle production. The prevailing size of the farms of this area is 120 to 160 acres.

County E contains but one town whose population was classed as urban. In it live 40 per cent of the 26,037 people of the county. About 35 per cent were classed as rural-farm population and the remaining 24 per cent as rural-non-farm population.

**Administration of county relief funds.**—The county as a whole contains a rather large proportion of prosperous farmers and relatively few farm families had asked for aid. For the most part the relief applicants were manual laborers, semi-skilled workmen, and a few mechanics and tradesmen.

The county was divided into three districts for purposes of relief administration, one commissioner having jurisdiction over each district. A welfare worker hired by the county had direct charge of the county relief work in the central district of the county in which is located the largest town. She was also in charge of the Red Cross activities of that district. She had made some attempt to coordinate the work in the entire county but otherwise she had no part whatever in the relief work of the



other two districts. She was unable, because of the pressure of other duties, to visit the homes of the relief clients.

The relief clients submitted, to either the welfare worker or the commissioner, lists of needed groceries and supplies. If these lists were approved they were sent to the various local grocery stores and the supplies were delivered the next day. Some milk was provided. Each family received one or two small cans of condensed milk a week. If, however, there was a small baby in the family, fresh milk was provided. For a time separated milk was furnished through the aid of one of the dairies.

In one of the other districts a volunteer welfare worker was in charge of the relief work. Most of the funds with which she worked were contributed locally, but she had some responsibility, in conjunction with the commissioner, in the use of county relief funds.

During the years 1932-33 a county woodpile was maintained, on which all dependent, able-bodied men were expected to work two days per week, for which they were paid in orders on grocery stores. Some of the wood was then sold and the remainder was distributed to dependent families.

There was a regularly appointed county physician but the medical relief work was divided as much as possible among the various doctors of the county. No definite scale of charges for such work had been agreed upon.

For the years previous to 1933 no information was obtained concerning the relief clients. From January 1 to April 30, 1933, however, the county gave help to 349 town families consisting of 1,529 persons and 28 farm families consisting of 140 persons. Of the 28 farm families, five (24 persons) were tenants. The remaining were farm laborers. Some attempt was made to give aid to transients. They were given one meal and asked to leave town. During the winter they were allowed to sleep in the jail.

**Other agencies.**—The Red Cross organization was the most important of the volunteer agencies of relief in the county. Red Cross funds and goods were distributed through the office of the welfare worker.

In the summer of 1932 the various church groups cooperated in canning tomatoes for the needy. These were turned over to the welfare worker for distribution. Usually one quart was given each week to each family. By June 1 the supply was exhausted.

There was no "community chest" fund in the county. There were, however, a few voluntary contributions. The American Legion, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, and other organizations also raised small funds which they themselves administered. The schools of one of the towns maintained a milk fund throughout the winter of 1932-33, through which children of dependent families were given milk for lunch.

In the spring of 1933 the American Legion and the Chamber of Commerce cooperated in arranging for vacant lots on which dependent families might plant gardens. They also furnished seed. Every dependent family was urged to take advantage of this chance to help themselves.

The records of relief activities for 1933 in the county are much more complete than for previous years. However, no record was obtained of

the federal (F. E. R. A.) funds distributed up to November 1, 1933. During November, however, 138 town families (454 individuals) received work relief through the F. E. R. A. office. The numbers receiving federal aid during the month of December were as follows: 206 families (371 persons) received direct relief, two families (seven persons) and 28 single persons received work relief. All these were town people.

According to their records the Red Cross handled 1,500 relief "cases" during 1933. Many of these were transients. The railroad "Women's League" gave help to 25 families. Other local volunteer organizations which contributed cash and supplies were the Business and Professional Women's Club, the American Legion Auxiliary, Catholic Daughters, and the Altar Society.

TABLE 11.—*Summary of expenditures of county funds for relief purposes in county E, 1924 to 1933.*

Year	Groceries, etc.	Medical care Hospitalization	Burials	Feeble- minded	Insanity commission	Soldiers' relief
1924	.....	\$ 750.00	.....	.....	.....	.....
1930	\$ 5,656.38	3,524.83	.....	.....	.....	\$1,000.00
1931	9,388.83	5,771.95	.....	\$ 326.94	\$672.50	1,300.00
1932	16,924.96	5,619.10	.....	1,500.00	.....	.....
1933	19,003.07	8,167.61	\$431.50	589.30	248.80	1,500.00

  

Year	Mothers' pensions	Care of poor	Poor farm	Woodpile	Red Cross	Total	Per capita
1924	\$ 3,420.00	\$2,422.40	\$ 500.00	.....	.....	\$ 7,092.90	\$0.27
1930	10,573.00	.....	5,986.85	.....	.....	26,741.06	1.03
1931	10,924.00	.....	4,321.47	.....	.....	32,704.69	1.26
1932	10,040.50	.....	4,368.33	.....	.....	38,452.89	1.48
1933	7,544.00	.....	2,506.71	\$2,292.94	\$105.82	42,389.75	1.63

**Relief expenditures.**—Table 11 shows the purposes for which county relief money in County E was spent and the amounts spent in 1924, and for the years 1930 to 1933. In 1924 the total amount spent for relief was \$7,092.90, which is only \$0.27 per capita for the county. By 1930 the total had reached \$26,741.06, or \$1.03 per capita. The next three years brought a steady increase and by 1933 \$42,389.75 was spent on relief in the county. This amounts to \$1.63 per capita. The heaviest items of expense were usually mothers' pensions and groceries and supplies for the dependent.

Up to the time of the beginning of federal aid the Red Cross organization was the biggest single contributor, other than the county itself, to the support of the dependent. No data were obtained as to the actual cash value of their contributions before 1933. This is also true of the other volunteer organizations. Such information as was available is summarized in Table 12.

In 1933 the federal government allotted \$13,100 to this county for direct, and also for work relief. The Red Cross spent about \$1,355.77 in cash for the relief worker's salary and expenses, and for food and clothing for local relief clients and transients. Besides this cash expenditure, 250 sacks of flour, 1,200 yards of cotton goods, 375 blankets, and 34 quilts were distributed by the Red Cross. The other volunteer organizations con-

tributed a total of \$775 in cash and supplies. An itemized list of these agencies and their contributions is given in Table 12.

### County F

This county lies on the border between the northeastern intensive meat-producing area and the southeastern general farming area, and extends south to the northern edge of the southeastern cash grain and livestock area. It lies immediately south of county E and of course the soil, rainfall, and other climatic conditions for the two counties are much the same. Corn is the principal cereal crop. Much oats and some barley and wheat are also raised. Alfalfa and clover are the principal forage crops. Although

TABLE 12.—*Summary of relief activities of volunteer and federal relief agencies in county E.*

Agency	Nature of contribution	To whom given	Amount
1932			
Red Cross	Clothing, supplies, and food	Local relief families Transients	.....
Local church groups	Canned tomatoes	Local relief families	.....
Town schools	Milk fund	School children of dependent families	.....
Community	Fund administered by welfare worker	Local relief families	\$ 800.00
1933			
Red Cross	Cash	Relief worker (salary) Office expense Transients Local relief families	1,000.00 172.41 65.05 118.31
	250 48-lb. sacks of flour 1,200 yards of dry goods 375 blankets, 34 quilts	Local relief families	.....
Railroad Women's League	Food Clothing, fuel	Former railroad employees Former railroad employees	225.00 56.00
Business and Professional Women's Club	Shoe fund	Local relief families	83.00
American Legion Auxilliary	Supplies for canning Clothing	Local relief families Local relief families	12.00 9.00
Catholic Daughters	Food and Christmas baskets	Local relief families	20.00
Catholic Altar Society	Food Clothing and fuel	Local relief families Local relief families	335.00 135.00
American Legion	500 bushels of potatoes	Local relief families	.....
F. E. R. A.	Cash for direct and work relief	Local relief families	13,100.00

hogs and beef cattle are important products of the county, they are not so intensively raised as in county E. However, more dairy cows and consequently more dairy products are produced here than in county E. The most frequent size of the farms is from 120 to 160 acres.

This county also contains one town whose population was classed as urban. In this town reside 33 per cent of the county's total population. About 11,026 persons, or 53 per cent of the population, live on farms. The remaining 15 per cent live in small towns and are not directly engaged in farming (rural-non-farm).

**Administration of county relief funds.**—The entire county relief program was in the hands of a county welfare worker. All relief expenditures, including medical relief, in all districts of the county were handled through this single office. The large majority of the relief clients were living in the largest town.

Once each week grocery lists were brought to the welfare worker, who gave orders on the local stores. The clients then went to the stores and obtained their groceries within the limits of the order. The stores sent to the office a list of what was actually ordered by each family. Actual numbers of families on relief, or individuals helped during the years previous to 1933, were not obtained.

Transients were usually given one meal and, when absolutely essential, medical attention. During a portion of the winter of 1932-33 they were lodged in the basement of the court house. About thirty cots were provided for them and an attendant was kept in the room at all times to clean and take care of it. Sometimes as many as thirty transients in one day were taken care of. This was discontinued late in the winter because of lack of funds, and the lodging of transients was turned over to the police.

Road work in the county in the spring of 1933 furnished work for a number of the dependent. The work was limited to 30 hours per week at 30 cents per hour, and grocery orders were discontinued when the men were at work. The welfare worker visited the road work occasionally to make sure that county men were obtaining the work, and not transients or people coming in from other counties, or even people in the county who had not been on "relief".

During March and April of the year 1933 there were 83 urban families and 39 rural families receiving county aid. In August the total number of families was 128 and by September it had increased to 196. In October 83 families (538 persons) were receiving direct relief, 29 families (132 persons) were on work relief, and 59 families (354 persons) and nine single persons were receiving both direct and work relief. Data are not available as to the proportion of rural to urban families in these totals but the suggestion was that there probably was a higher proportion of rural families than during March and April. Sixteen ex-soldiers received soldiers' relief, and six individuals received blind pensions. A number of families were aided through the mothers' pension fund.

In the summer of 1934 the welfare worker was still on the job investigating relief cases and administering the relief. Until July 9, 1934, she was in charge of the F. E. R. A. At that time another woman was made F. E. R. A. director. All employable relief was about to be taken over by this director, leaving the welfare worker in charge of only the unemployable relief.

**Other relief agencies.**—A number of volunteer organizations contributed to the support of the county's dependent. The county Red Cross and church organizations were among the important ones in 1932-33. A shoe fund was raised by a leading newspaper, and the schools, through the sale of stamps, raised a milk fund for children of dependent families.

During 1933 the county Red Cross gave relief to some 197 families with an average of five persons to the family, and about 50 transients. The members of the railroad "Family League" created an emergency fund by contributing one per cent of their salaries for the support of former employees' families. Some 33 families were helped from this fund. The

TABLE 13.—*Summary of expenditures of county funds for relief purposes, county F, 1929 to 1933.*

Year	Food, clothing, rent, fuel	Medical care	Burials	Hospitalization	Soldiers' relief
1929	\$ 5,992.84	\$3,683.70	\$720.00	\$6,779.49	\$ 949.47
1930	5,723.54	3,534.72	377.00	6,448.80	907.26
1931	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,116.00
1932	9,685.78	3,432.98	692.50	5,962.37	.....
1933	11,742.18	8,953.16	.....	.....	1,299.73

  

Year	Mothers' pensions	Blind pensions	Other	Total	Per capita
1929	\$6,130.00	\$1,050.00	.....	\$25,305.50	\$1.19
1930	6,100.00 <sup>1</sup>	1,050.00	\$ 238.68	24,380.00	1.15
1931	6,109.00	2,000.00	.....	.....	.....
1932	.....	.....	795.92	.....	.....
1933	3,633.00 <sup>2</sup>	1,185.00	11,305.63	38,118.70	1.80

<sup>1</sup> Thirty-six families aided.<sup>2</sup> Fund exhausted July 1 and further payments made from general funds.TABLE 14.—*Summary of relief activities and expenditures of volunteer relief agencies in county F.*

Agency	Nature of contribution	To whom given	Amount
1932-33			
Red Cross	Flour and other supplies	Local relief families	.....
City newspaper	Cash shoe fund	Local relief families	\$1,000.00
City schools	Milk fund	Children designated as needing milk by welfare worker	.....
Church organizations	Old clothes and other supplies	Local relief families	.....
1933			
City (merchants, etc.)	Cash	Local relief families	\$ 300.00
Newspaper shoe fund	Cash	Local relief families	1,000.00
County Red Cross	Food	Local relief families	150.00
	Clothing	Local relief families	520.00
	Drugs	Local relief families	50.00
	Office expenses	Local relief families	180.00
Railroad Family League	Emergency cash fund	Families of former railroad employees	550.95
	From regular relief fund	Families of former railroad employees	.....
	Food	.....	93.63
	Clothing	.....	3.98
American Legion Auxiliary	Light, water, fuel	.....	15.85
	Medical attention	.....	104.10
	Milk	Local relief families	200.00
	Clothing	Local relief families	60.00
	Medical attention	Local relief families	32.00
American Red Cross	Sixty-three pairs of mittens	Children of local relief families	.....
	Eighty toys	.....	.....
	1,000 48-lb. sacks of flour	Local relief families	.....
	3,213 garments, 75 blankets	Local relief families	.....

American Legion Auxiliary gave aid to 18 families (78 people). In addition this organization furnished milk for 20 children. The Elks Club and Boy Scouts also made contributions.

**Relief expenditures.**—Records of relief expenditures for this county were available only as far back as 1929. An itemized summary of expenditures of county relief funds from 1929 to 1933 is presented in Table 13. The figures are not complete enough for any very adequate comparative statement of county relief expenditures from year to year. The total amount for 1933 (\$38,118.70, or about \$1.80 per capita), however, as well

as most of the individual items listed in the table, are larger than for previous years. In 1929 the total expenditures amounted to about \$1.19 per capita.

Table 14 shows, in summary form, the relief activities and expenditures of the volunteer organizations of the county. No figures were obtained as to the actual amounts contributed by the federal government toward relief. The total amount of volunteer contributions for 1933 was \$3,702.43. In addition considerable help was given in the form of articles of clothing, bedding, and food not evaluated in terms of money.

### County G

County G represents, in this study, the southeastern general farming area of the state. Corn and oats in this area occupy a somewhat smaller proportion of the land while wheat is a little more extensively raised than in the northeastern part of the state. Beef cattle and hogs are the most important livestock enterprises of this area and this particular county produces a somewhat greater number of both cattle and hogs per unit of area than the remainder of the region. The average annual rainfall of the county is over 32 inches, the highest in the state. The most dominant size of farm is 120 to 160 acres.

There is one town in the county whose population is sufficiently large to be classed as urban. About 29 per cent of the people of the county live in this town. Forty-eight per cent of the population are engaged in farming and the remaining 23 per cent are rural-non-farm. The total population of the county in 1930 was 19,826.

**Administration of county relief.**—Relief activities of this county were very largely confined to the urban, and to some extent to the small-town, population. Along the river the relief problem had been particularly acute, though this portion of the indigent population existed before the depression in much the same state as at the time of this investigation. There had been very little tendency among the farmers to ask for aid.

During a portion of the years 1932 and 1933 the county had employed a man and wife to investigate claims for relief. Otherwise the administration of funds was in the hands of the commissioners.

The county maintained a commissary in the basement of the court house which was open on Saturdays. Food was distributed at that time by the court house janitor on orders from the commissioners. During the months of May and June, 1933, 149 families were given groceries from the commissary. Of these families 40 were living in rural districts but were not farmers.

Some relief work had also been given during the year from August 1, 1932, to July 30, 1933. One hundred and eighty-two men were given "extra" work on roads and were paid in grocery orders. The county wood-piles furnished help to 134 families who had some member working on them. Grocery orders were given as pay and wood was distributed to 34 needy families. A "poor farm" was maintained that was partially self-supporting.

Medical attention was given dependents when necessary. This work had been distributed among the doctors of the county, who made con-

siderable reductions in their regular fees on such cases. Farmers, it was reported, seldom asked for medical aid.

At the time of the second visit in the summer of 1934 it appeared that the F. E. R. A. office had largely taken over the job of relief administration in the county. During November, 1933, two transient families (11 individuals) and 207 local families (911 individuals) had been given aid. In 194 of these cases work had been provided. During December only 108 men were on the F. E. R. A. rolls, 90 of them receiving work. This decrease was due to the fact that 37 were transferred to C. W. A. projects, 38 were given work on the river, 24 were given work husking corn, and 17 more got other steady work. The county clerk's record showed that during 1933 some 38 mothers had received pensions which benefited 115 individuals. In July, 1934, the commissioners estimated that there were about 100 families on relief.

**Other relief agencies.**—As was the case in the other counties, the Red Cross did much in the way of relief. During the year from August, 1932, to July, 1933, flour was distributed to 680 families in this county. The "community chest" was one of the most important relief agencies here but no data were obtained as to the number of families helped.

Another volunteer organization was formed in the largest town of the county to furnish clothing, shoes, and food to needy children. Their fund was administered by a druggist on a purely volunteer basis. Teachers and physicians reported the needy cases to him. No record was kept of the number helped in this manner.

A women's club collected a milk fund for undernourished school children. During 1933 they aided approximately 175 different children. They furnished milk for children on the "free roll" and "pay roll". It was found that past efforts had educated some parents to the value of milk, so that some who were formerly on relief but who had work at that time paid for milk for their children. The "pay roll" was composed of children of financially able parents who wanted their children to have the benefits of mid-morning milk at school.

Again in 1933, considerable quantities of Red Cross goods, both local and national, were administered but no records for the year were available. The flour was in charge of the commissioners and the clothing was distributed by the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce. No Red Cross money was used for relief except a junior fund under the supervision of the school authorities. This was administered through the teachers of the school. Other active organizations were the Business and Professional Women's Club and the American Legion Auxiliary.

**Relief expenditures.**—The available figures representing yearly expenditures of county relief funds are presented in Table 15. The amounts spent for soldiers' relief and for blind pensions decreased considerably after 1930, while the total expenditures greatly increased (\$9,505.03, or about \$0.48 per capita in 1930, compared with \$22,218.82, or \$1.12 per capita in 1923). This was due, of course, to the great increase in the unemployment relief load. During the months of November and December, 1933, the F. E. R. A. office distributed a total of \$2,552.53. Of this total \$1,973.32 were local funds and the remaining \$479.01 were federal funds.

The relief expenditures of the volunteer and federal agencies in the county are summarized in Table 16.

TABLE 15.—*Summary of expenditures of county funds for relief purposes in county G, 1928 to 1933.*

Year	Food, clothing, rent, fuel	Medical care	Burials	Hospitalization	Feeble-minded and insane	Soldiers' relief
1928	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1930	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	\$2,400.00
1931	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,126.45
1932	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	600.00
1933	\$9,124.32	\$2,194.33	\$916.25	\$1,415.35	\$423.93	800.00

  

Year	Mothers' pensions	Blind pensions	Other	Total	Per capita	
	No.					
1928	11	\$ 2,064.00	\$ 619.00	\$ 4,456.76	\$0.22	
1930	20	3,577.50	1,425.00	9,505.03	0.48	
1931	22	3,031.50	1,471.00	13,583.83	0.69	
1932	27	2,894.00	904.00	13,139.10	0.66	
1933	38	3,035.00	785.00	\$3,524.64	22,218.82	1.12

TABLE 16.—*Summary of relief activities and expenditures of volunteer and federal relief agencies in county G.*

Agency	Nature of contribution	To whom given	Amount
	1932-33		
Red Cross	7,000 48-lb. sacks of flour, clothing and material	680 local relief families	.....
	1933		
Red Cross	Flour and clothing	Local relief families	.....
	Junior fund (supervision of school authorities)	Needy school children	\$ 256.30
Community Chest	Food	Local relief families	638.00
	Clothing	Local relief families	320.00
"City Fund"	Food	Local relief families	704.00
City relief organization	Shoes, clothing, medical care, and a little food for children (administered by volunteer worker-druggist)	Local relief families	1,132.00
Business and Professional Club	Shoes and clothes	.....	99.05
American Legion Auxiliary	Health work in schools	School children	71.50
F. E. R. A. and C. W. A.	Cash of direct and work relief	Local relief families	4,900.00

## RELIEF IN RELATION TO CHARACTER OF POPULATION ALL COUNTIES, 1932 AND 1933

The available figures representing expenditures for relief, exclusive of volunteer contributions, during the years 1932 and 1933 for each of the seven counties of the study are summarized in Table 17. The total population, the percentages of farm and urban population, and the relief expense per capita for each county as well as the percentage which the relief expenditures were of the total county expense for 1933 are also shown in the table. Some significant facts may be observed in these data:

(1) The percentages of urban population in these counties range from 0.0 to 66.6. For all seven counties 34.5 per cent of the total population is urban. The percentages of farm population range from 25 to 66 and for all counties together, 43.6. The percentages of urban and farm population



for the entire state are 35.3 and 42.3 respectively. These figures indicate, then, that the sampling of counties used when taken together was fairly representative of the state as a whole so far as the character of the population is concerned.

(2) The table shows that in general the greater the proportion of urban population in a county the heavier is the relief load per capita for the county; and the greater the proportion of farm population, the lighter is the relief load per capita. These relationships were observed from time to time in our study of the separate counties. Perhaps the most important cause is the fact that farm owners under the present law cannot qualify for relief. Farmer-owners, however, seldom needed relief except in times of drouth. Hence, in most cases the relief problem was centered in the towns and especially in the larger towns.

The most notable exceptions to this relationship between proportions of urban and farm populations and relief load are counties F and G. County F has about 53 per cent farm and only 33 per cent urban population, yet the county relief load is among the highest (\$1.80 per capita in 1933), and over 22 per cent of the total expense of the county was relief expense. This county, it will be recalled, was the only one of the seven in which the "county welfare" system of relief administration was in operation. Under this system a trained welfare worker was in charge of all public relief for the county. The needy were more adequately taken care of, at of course greater expense. In county G the percentage of farm and urban population are not greatly different from those of county E (48 and 29 per cent respectively), but the relief load of this county in 1933 was the lowest of all (\$1.12 per capita). Furthermore, the relief expense of the county was only 13.3 per cent of the total expense—the smallest percentage of any of the counties studied. The fact that this county is bounded on the east by the Missouri river, which furnishes many opportunities for employment not enjoyed by the other counties of the study, undoubtedly is an important factor in reducing its relief load in comparison with the others.

(3) In every county on which comparative figures were obtained there was a marked increase in relief expenditures in 1933 over 1932. Part of this increase probably was in response to greater actual need due to the tightening effects of the depression; part of it undoubtedly represents federal participation in relief which began in 1933.

The lack of uniformity in public relief administration from county to county and the incompleteness of relief records were mentioned in the beginning. Until August, 1933, relief was almost entirely a local problem and naturally there would be little uniformity in the way the situation was met by the various counties. When the federal agencies began to function in 1933 more adequate and uniform records were kept, since all federal relief must clear through the state office. For the most part, however, each county continued to administer its relief funds in much the same manner as before and, with the exception of one or two counties, little change was observed in the county relief set-up at the time of the second visit in 1934.

### THE ATTITUDES OF COUNTY OFFICIALS AND RELIEF WORKERS<sup>3</sup>

During the visits to the various county seats, an effort was made to gather the opinions and attitudes of the people actually engaged in the job of administering public relief funds, concerning the problem in general and also concerning the recipients. As we have seen, in the most common relief set-up the board of county commissioners was carrying the whole responsibility for relief in their county, and in most cases the commissioners were personally administering the relief funds. They, of course, did not pretend to be trained public welfare workers. They were simply citizens and taxpayers of the county, usually with a very practical and matter-of-fact turn of mind and with a keen sense of responsibility concerning the use of public funds. Relief clients would naturally be looked upon by them as a public burden, and, in some instances, with a certain amount of resentment. Preventive and curative measures, if considered at all, were regarded as expensive—and the problem of raising the extra money was a very real one to them.

On occasions, individuals would apply for relief when perhaps they could have got along without it—the attitude being, "Others get it. I might as well get my share." On the whole the task was a trying one for the commissioner and it is not surprising that he should express himself occasionally in rather strong language. Some of the expressions of feeling and attitudes gathered, therefore, may not fairly represent the characteristic attitudes of these men toward the problem or the people whom they were trying to help. The following expressions are examples of this sort: One commissioner apparently felt rather strongly when he said that "the only way to handle the paupers" was to "shoot the whole lot." At another county seat the feeling was expressed that they should "kill off" all who were not taking care of themselves and end the problem. It was felt that the dependents, and especially the transients, were trying to "chisel" something out of the rest of the community and that it was "up to us to see that they don't." The feeling in certain counties was particularly strong against transients. It was felt that if transients were fed or given clean sleeping quarters "all the bums in the country would flock here."

Complaints from dependents concerning the service they received or the quality of the products they were given naturally were not received with favor by the relief workers. In one instance when complaints were received that bread given out from a local bakery was mouldy, the complainers were told that "beggars" must not criticize but take what was given them and be thankful for it. One person felt that the complainers should have been forced to go to the bakery and make public apology for their complaints.

In some localities the general attitude of the officials was not favorable toward the "county welfare" system of relief administration, where trained social workers investigate cases and try more adequately to meet the real

<sup>3</sup> No attempt was made to quantify these attitudes by means of attitude scales or questionnaires. During the interviews of the investigator with the county officials chance remarks reflecting the attitudes of the latter were noted.

needs of the clients. This was especially true at the time of the first visit. It was felt that such "expensive" investigations were unnecessary. "If a kid needs a pair of stockings, he needs a pair of stockings. That's all there is to it. Give them to him and be done with it," was the way one commissioner expressed himself. They saw no need for all the "sentimental record keeping, investigating sort of thing" women would want to do. The practical, matter-of-fact attitude of the county officials and citizens

TABLE 17.—Comparison of seven Nebraska counties as to total relief expenditures in relation to population for 1932 and 1933.

County	Population			
	Total	Urban	Rural-non-farm	Rural-farm
	No.	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent
A.....	5,772	00.0	43.7	56.3
B.....	10,898	00.0	33.7	66.3
C.....	17,875	16.6	32.5	50.9
D.....	27,117	66.6	8.4	25.0
E.....	26,037	41.2	24.3	34.5
F.....	21,181	32.6	14.5	52.9
G.....	19,826	29.2	23.0	47.8
All counties combined.....	128,706	34.5	21.9	43.6

  

County	Expenditures of county relief funds				
	Total 1932	Per capita 1932	Total 1933	Per capita 1933	Portion of county expense
A.....	\$ 7,142.23	\$1.24	\$ 7,817.49	\$1.35	Per cent 16.5
B.....	11,074.84 <sup>1</sup>	1.02	17,782.01	1.63	14.6
C.....	24,195.22	1.47	32,587.23	1.82	14.7
D.....	45,152.45	1.67	49,788.53	1.83	18.4
E.....	38,452.89	1.48	42,389.75	1.63	18.1
F.....	.....	.....	38,118.70	1.80	22.2
G.....	13,139.10	0.66	22,218.82	1.12	13.3
All counties combined.....	139,156.73	1.29	210,702.53	1.64	17.0

<sup>1</sup> Includes the period beginning August, 1931, and ending August, 1932.

in general of one county seat was reflected in the words of a relief worker when she said, "It's all very well to talk about welfare work, but this is a time when we can't even think of that. All we can do is to keep the people fed."

Perhaps the most important change which could be brought about by federal assistance in the relief problems of rural Nebraska would be a change in the attitude of the public officers toward relief and toward the people on relief, and an acknowledgment that there is involved in the general problem of relief, one of prevention and rehabilitation. Although the time covered by this study after federal intervention in relief began was too short to determine whether or not any such changes were to be brought about, or whether federal assistance was to consist only in putting more money into the hands of the relief agencies, it was nevertheless possible to see, even in the short space of six months, some indication of a new point of view in the counties concerned. Employment of social workers was considered where it had never been considered before; there were considerations of trained versus untrained social workers; there was consideration of the problems involved beyond the immediate granting of relief.