

South Dakota State University  
**Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional  
Repository and Information Exchange**

---

Bulletins

South Dakota State University Agricultural  
Experiment Station

---

4-1-1933

## The Growth and Decline of South Dakota Trade Centers: 1901-1933

P.H. Landis

Follow this and additional works at: [http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/agexperimentsta\\_bulletins](http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/agexperimentsta_bulletins)

---

### Recommended Citation

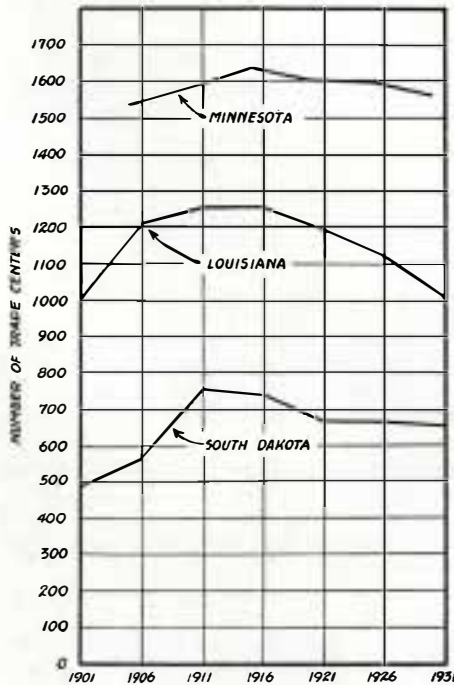
Landis, P.H., "The Growth and Decline of South Dakota Trade Centers: 1901-1933" (1933). *Bulletins*. Paper 279.  
[http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/agexperimentsta\\_bulletins/279](http://openprairie.sdstate.edu/agexperimentsta_bulletins/279)

This Bulletin is brought to you for free and open access by the South Dakota State University Agricultural Experiment Station at Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Bulletins by an authorized administrator of Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. For more information, please contact [michael.biondo@sdstate.edu](mailto:michael.biondo@sdstate.edu).

# The Growth and Decline of South Dakota Trade Centers

1901-1933

Paul H. Landis



The Trend in Growth and Decline of Trade Centers in Three States, 1901-1931

Department of Rural Sociology  
Agricultural Experiment Station  
South Dakota State College of Agriculture  
And Mechanic Arts  
Brookings, South Dakota

---

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>I. Introduction</b> .....	3
The Problem .....	3
Method of Study .....	4
<b>II. The Number and Distribution of Population, 1880-1930</b> .....	5
Definition of Terms .....	5
Natural Factors in Relation to Population Trends 1890-1932...	5
The Growth and Territorial Distribution of Population, 1880-1930 .....	8
<b>III. The Appearance and Disappearance of Trade Centers, 1901-1933</b> 10	
The Number and Location of Appearing and Disappearing Trade Centers .....	10
Ratio of Disappearing Trade Centers to Appearing Trade Centers .....	12
The Size of Disappearing Trade Centers .....	12
The Mortality Rate of Appearing Trade Centers .....	13
The Growth of Successful Appearing Trade Centers, 1901-1931 .....	13
Summary of Appearing and Disappearing Trade Centers .....	14
<b>IV. Growth and Decline of Trade Centers</b> .....	14
Growth and Decline for the Period, 1901-1931 .....	14
Areas of Growth and Decline, 1901-1931 .....	15
Growth and Decline for the Period, October, 1926 to March, 1933 .....	16
Growth and Decline by Counties .....	17
<b>V. General Factors Related to the Appearance and Disappearance, Growth and Decline of Trade Centers</b> .....	20
Distances Between the 670 South Dakota Trade Centers, 1931 .....	20
The Development of Means of Transportation and Communication .....	21
<b>VI. An Analysis of the Appearance and Disappearance, Growth and Decline of Trade Centers</b> .....	24
The Location of Appearing and Disappearing Trade Centers With Reference to Selected Communication and Transportation Devices, 1901-1931 .....	24
Critical Periods for Appearing and Disappearing Trade Centers .....	25
The Location of Growing and Declining Trade Centers with Reference to Selected Communication and Transportation Devices, 1901 to 1931 .....	26
The Effect of Natural and Historical Factors on Trade Center Development .....	30
The Consolidation of Business Enterprises .....	31
Miscellaneous Factors .....	32
Possession of the County Seat .....	32
Possession of Special Institutions .....	32
Location with Reference to Certain Unique Advantages .....	32
<b>VII. Summary and Conclusions</b> .....	33
Modern Means of Communication and Transportation .....	33
National and Local Social Trends .....	34
The Prospect for the Small Trade Center .....	35

# The Growth and Decline Of South Dakota Trade Centers 1901-1933

Paul H. Landis  
South Dakota State College

## I. INTRODUCTION

### The Problem

Considerable interest has been shown in recent years in the future prospect for the small farm trade center. This interest has grown out of the threat of modern means of communication and transportation as well as that of the growing prosperity of the larger city to the welfare of the small town.

Sociologists have approached the problem with a view to learning what is happening in various sections of the country, and on the basis of the knowledge acquired, being able to predict what the immediate future holds for the small town as a trade center and market for the farm family.

Studies dealing with various angles of the problem of changing town-country relations covering widely different areas throughout the United States have been made.<sup>1</sup> Among these is a study entitled **South Dakota Town-Country Trade Relations, 1901-1931**,<sup>2</sup> which summarizes the influences of such factors as changes in merchandising methods, the growth of cities, the rising standard of rural living, the growth of new types of chain stores, and other factors, all of which have greatly modified in recent years, the small trade center in South Dakota and the farmer's relationship with it.

In carrying out the previous study it was discovered that existing trade centers in South Dakota represent a select group, for during a period of approximately thirty years, several hundred new centers have appeared and several hundred others have disappeared. The discovery of this fact led to the present study which is concerned with learning the reasons why one trade center disappears while another nearby trade center succeeds, why a new trade center appears within a few miles distance to take the place of an older but unsuccessful one. Closely allied with this problem is that of why certain centers have grown beyond expectation while others have remained stationary, and still others have declined.

In this study an attempt is made to answer these questions in at least

1. Lively, C. E., *Growth and Decline of Farm Trade Centers, 1905-1930*, Minn. Ag. Exp. Stat. Bul. No. 287, 1932; Smith, L. T., *Farm Trade Centers in Louisiana, 1901-1931*, La. Ag. Exp. Stat. Bul. No. 234, 1933; Zimmerman, C. C., *Farm Trade Centers in Minnesota, 1905-1929*, Minn. Ag. Exp. Stat. Bul. No. 269, 1930. See also Brunner and Kolb, *Recent Social Trends, 1933*; Page, J. F., *Relations of Town and Country Interests in Garfield County Oklahoma*, Oklahoma Ag. Exp. Stat. Bul. No. 194, 1930; Kolb, J. H., *Service Relations of Town and Country*, Wis. Ag. Exp. Stat. Bul. No. 58, 1923; Price and Hoffer, *Services of Rural Trade Centers in the Distribution of Farm Supplies*, Minn. Ag. Exp. Stat. Bul. No. 249, 1928; Hoffer, C. R., *A Study of Town Country Relationships*, Mich. Ag. Exp. Stat. Spec. Bul. No. 181.

2. Landis, Paul H., S. D. Ag. Exp. Stat. Bul. No. 274, 1932.

a general way. It would be impractical to treat all trade centers in the state individually, but directing attention to general tendencies may have some predictive value for the individual trade center as well as for the individual mercantile enterprise.

The ability to anticipate trends is a dollar and cents matter with the merchant, for out of the past he is able to construct a tentative picture for the immediate future. He can then locate and adapt his business accordingly. The chain store has been able to effect suitable location because it has at its disposal some research facilities which have not been available to the independent merchant.

The future of the local trade center is, in a real sense, an economic and social problem for the farmer. Will the home town remain a shipping point and market, if it ceases to be a merchandising center? In many cases it probably will not, in which case, the distance necessarily traveled to dispose of farm produce adds to marketing expense. The decline of the small center may also place recreational, religious, fraternal, and higher educational institutions beyond the farmer's reach, or at least at such a distance that contact with these institutions will incur further expense. Moreover, it is generally conceded that the city develops a sophisticated type of personality, which is not found in the rural district or small town.<sup>3</sup> It may also be true that the rural child who is to follow his parent's vocation may be disqualified for normal and happy participation in rural family and community life by the acquisition of urban culture.<sup>4</sup>

These immediate and practical considerations make an understanding of past, present and possible future consequences of modern inventions and customs upon the farmer and his local town, of outstanding importance.

### Method of Study

Those who deal with human relations and social conditions find that the present is always rooted in the past, and consequently believe that the future is rooted in the present.<sup>5</sup> This established fact suggests that in order to understand the problem at hand one must probe into the past. Since the automobile and surfaced road have come into extensive use within the last twenty years, as well as the telephone, radio and rural postal route, to go back approximately thirty years seems a sufficiently long period. This span of time permits one to view conditions as they existed under the railroad economy, and then to note the changes that have come with the introduction of the newer devices. Fortunately, most of the newer devices were used by large numbers ten years ago, so one can see with considerable clarity what conditions are likely to be until some new and revolutionary invention or social change is introduced to reorient apparently stabilized relations. The period covered by most of the data extends from 1900 to 1930. However, population data are presented for periods going back to 1880, and trade center data are presented in some connections for as late as March, 1933.

Trade center growth and decline can be investigated by using population figures, or the number of stores at different time intervals. For most

3. Sorokin and Zimmerman, *Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology*, pp. 178 ff.

4. Zimmerman, C. C. suggests this problem in *Farm Trade Centers in Minnesota, 1905-1929*, pp. 39-42.

5. Barnes, H. E., in Davis, Barnes and Others, *Introduction to Sociology*, Ch. I.

of the purposes of this study the later method was used. This seemed the better alternative since the primary concern was with the town as a group of mercantile establishments and not as a place of residence. The disadvantage in this method lies in the fact that business enterprises may vary in size (stock of goods, amount of capital, size of plant) from town to town or from period to period. However, the method of comparison in terms of population has an equal disadvantage in that figures available for unincorporated centers are estimates<sup>6</sup> rather than census tabulations.

Special methods of dealing with specific data are described in the sections where data are presented.

**Sources of Data.**—Bradstreet's commercial ratings were used for determining the trade centers and their merchandising units in all cases. The following volumes were employed: the October volume for years 1901, 1906, 1911, 1916, 1926; the January volume for 1931, and the March volume for 1933. State and federal census reports were used for population of incorporated places. Bradstreet's population estimates were used for all unincorporated trade centers.

### Definitions of Terms

**Trade Center.**—A trade center is any hamlet, village, town or city, incorporated or unincorporated, which has one or more business units.

**Trade Unit.**—A trade unit or business unit is a mercantile enterprise, whether a branch of a chain store, or an individually owned and locally managed store.

**East and West River.**—The state is divided into east and west sections of about equal size by the Missouri River. The terms "east" and "west" refer to this division.

## II. THE NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION, 1880-1930

### Natural Factors in Relation to Population Trends, 1890-1932

In order to understand the population trends in South Dakota which have a definite bearing on trade center growth and decline, one should be familiar with certain natural factors which condition to a considerable degree these social phenomena.

The state of South Dakota has two quite distinct natural divisions marked off by the Missouri River which runs in a general north and south direction across the entire state.<sup>1</sup> These two divisions represent two rather distinct types of farming areas.<sup>2</sup> The western part is a dry farming and grazing area, generally, though the Black Hills area in the southwestern section is quite extensively a mining district. The eastern half of the state has more rainfall, and is primarily an agricultural area. A

6. Made by the Bradstreet Company.

1. 35,130 sq. mi. east, 41,738 sq. mi. west. The area west of the river is 8.6 per cent greater.

2. This division agrees fairly well with Visher, *The Geography of South Dakota*, Bul. 8, S. D. Geological Survey, p. 31. Rogers and Elliot divide South Dakota into thirteen distinct types of farming areas, however this classification is too detailed for the purposes of this investigation. *Types of Farming in South Dakota*, S. D. Ag. Exp. Stat. Bul. No. 238, 1929.

part of the territory bordering the Missouri River on the east is similar to that west of the river, but the two divisions are, on the whole, quite distinct from each other. Proceeding on the assumption that these basic economic differences, caused by differences in rainfall and soil, have a definite bearing on sociological conditions, a corresponding division of population and trade center data has been made in presenting a considerable portion of the data which follows.

Another factor of great importance, especially in understanding population trends, is the matter of rainfall. Even in average years the state has a relatively small degree of precipitation compared to many other agricultural regions. Moreover, rainfall fluctuates markedly from year to year, resulting in consecutive periods of drought or plentiful rainfall that have a vital bearing upon agricultural conditions and consequently upon the prosperity of the farm trade center. Any satisfactory analysis of South Dakota trade centers must be projected against this general background.<sup>3</sup>

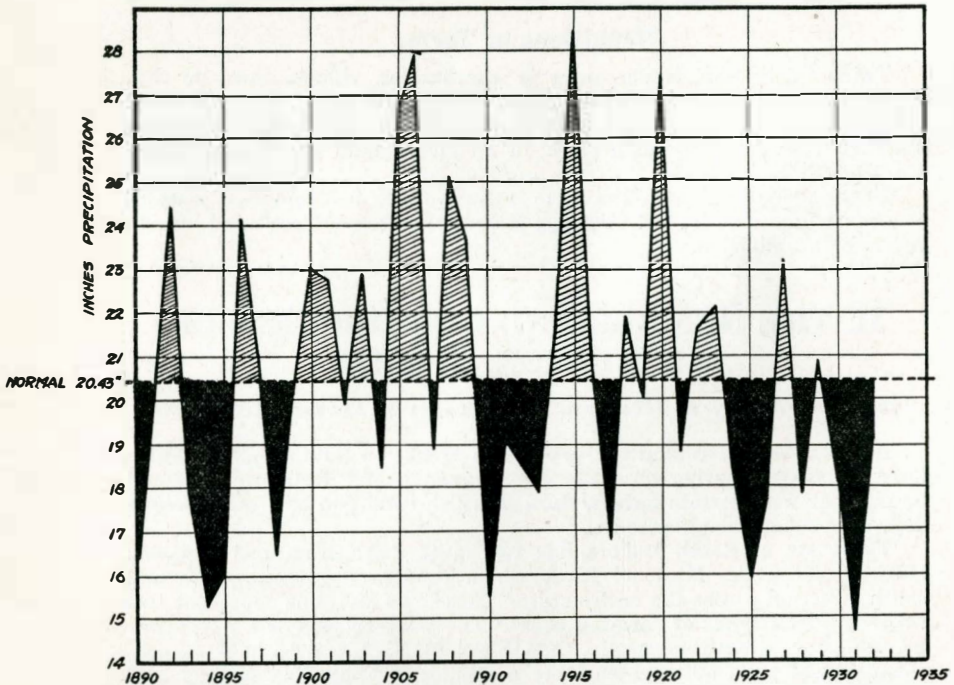


Fig. 1.—Annual Precipitation for South Dakota, 1890-1932 (Based on Climatological Data, U. S. Dept. of Ag., Weather Bureau, Vol XXXVII No. 13.)

Figure 1 shows the average annual precipitation for the state for the years 1890 to 1932 inclusive. The average rainfall for this entire period has been 20.43 inches, ranging from 28.54 inches in 1915 to 14.66

3. See p. 31 for a statement of difficulties encountered in making sociological generalizations on the basis of rainfall.

inches in 1931. The greatest consecutive droughts came in the years 1910 to 1913 inclusive. During these four years moisture was consistently below normal. The year 1910 approached the extreme minimum of rainfall for the entire 43-year period. From 1900 to 1909 moisture was consistently high; for only three years during this span did it fall below the average; for the remaining years it was considerably above normal, the years 1905 and 1906 approaching the maximum amount of moisture.

We shall have occasion to refer to these facts later in making an analysis of the growth and decline of trade centers.<sup>4</sup>

There has been a natural trend toward urbanization in the United States and also in the state of South Dakota.<sup>5</sup> Ten and two-tenths per cent of South Dakota's population lived in urban centers in 1900, whereas 18.9 per cent lived in urban centers in 1930.<sup>6</sup> In the tabulations which follow, the rural-urban classification has been disregarded and an attempt has been made to learn the relative proportion of population living in and outside of trade centers. This tabulation (table 1) shows that a greater proportion of South Dakota's population is living in trade centers at the present time than at any period covered in this study.

**Table 1.—Proportion of State Population and of East and West River Population Living in Trade Centers and Living in Open Country, 1900-1930**

Year	Living in Trade Centers		Living in Open Country*	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
<b>Entire State</b>				
1900 -----	125,906	32.7	259,603	67.3
1910 -----	218,518	37.9	357,572	62.1
1920 -----	265,372	41.7	371,175	58.3
1930 -----	293,003	42.3	399,846	57.7
<b>East River</b>				
1900 -----	104,416	30.6	237,319	69.4
1910 -----	175,018	39.5	268,254	60.5
1920 -----	218,180	43.8	280,336	56.2
1930 -----	235,007	44.8	289,762	55.2
<b>West River</b>				
1900 -----	21,490	49.1	22,284	50.9
1910 -----	43,500	32.8	89,318	67.2
1920 -----	47,192	34.2	90,839	65.8
1930 -----	57,996	34.5	110,084	65.5

\* Open Country means outside any trade center, incorporated, or unincorporated.

In 1900, 32.7 per cent of the state's population was living in trade centers, and 67.3 per cent in the open country. In 1930, 42.3 per cent of the population was living in trade centers, and 57.7 per cent in the open country. The trend has been consistently in the direction of a declining open country population for each period covered. When the state is divided into east and west river sections, quite a different trend is indicated. The east river population shows a trend consistent with the state as a whole though even more marked. Thirty and six-tenths per cent of the population of the eastern part of the state was living in trade centers in

4. See part VI.

5. That is, there has been a tendency for a greater proportion of people to live in cities of above 2,500 or more population.

6. Landis, Paul H., *South Dakota Town-Country Trade Relations, 1901-1931*, S. D. Ag. Exp. Stat. Bul. No. 274, 1932, p. 22.



1900, and 44.8 per cent in 1930. West of the river the reverse trend is seen; 49.1 per cent of the population was living in trade centers in 1900, but only 34.5 per cent in 1930. The highest per cent living in the open country in the west river section was in 1910 when 67.2 per cent of the total population lived there. It is apparent from this tabulation that the trade centers in the western part of the state depend to a much greater degree upon open country trade than those located in the eastern section.

### The Growth and Territorial Distribution of Population, 1880-1930

The growth in the total population for South Dakota since 1880 and the distribution of the population east and west of the Missouri river are shown in figure 2. Table 2 presents a tabulation of the actual increase for these areas by periods since 1900.

It will be noted that there have been two periods of very rapid growth during the last 50 years, the first from 1880 to 1885 when population increased by over 160,000, the second between 1905 and 1910 when population increased approximately 140,000. The two periods of stationary population came between the years 1890 to 1895 and 1910 to 1915. During each of these periods population increased only a little more than a thousand.

The relative proportion of population living east and west of the Missouri river is also shown. The percentage increase in population west of the river has been much greater than that east of the river for the last three census periods, 1920, 1925, and 1930. There was a greater relative proportion of the population west of the river in 1930 than at any previous time; at that date 24.3 per cent of the population was thus located. The greatest proportion east of the river was in 1885 when 93.4 per cent of the population was located there.

In all of these comparisons it should be kept in mind that the amount of territory east and west of the river is approximately the same.<sup>7</sup> The basic difference is found in the type of soil, and consequently in the method of agriculture. Finally it is interesting to note that the period 1910 to 1915 led to a more rapid state migration among the people west of the river than among those east of the river. In fact the west river population decreased 14,728, while east river population increased 16,070. The period 1925 to 1930 shows the reverse. West river population increased 13,395, while east river population decreased 1,806.

The numbers and percentages of increase and decrease in state and in east and west river population are shown in table 2.

<sup>7</sup>. See footnote 1, p. 5.

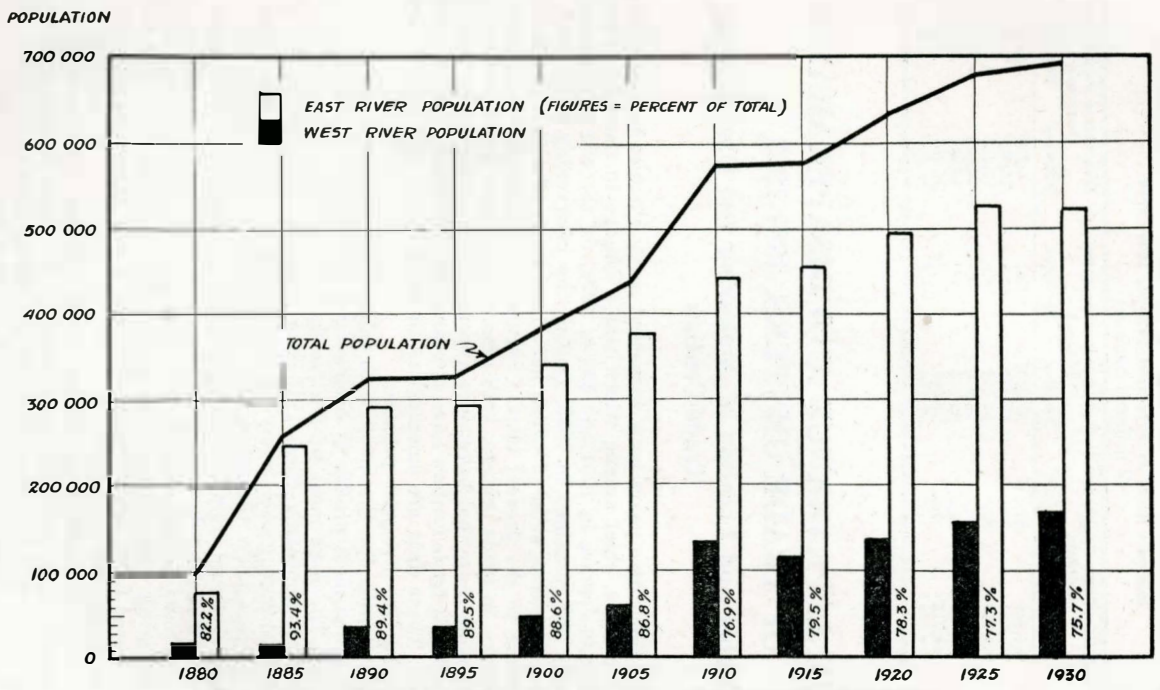


Fig. 2.—The Growth of Population in South Dakota, with Percentage Distribution East and West of the Missouri River, 1880-1930.

TABLE 2.—Increase in State Population and in Population East and West of the Missouri River by Five-Year Periods, 1900 - 1930  
(- indicates decrease)

Year	Entire State Population Increase		East River Population Increase		West River Population Increase	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
1900*	56,846	17.3	47,559	16.1	9,287	26.9
1905	51,134	13.3	37,333	10.9	13,801	31.5
1910	139,457	31.9	64,204	16.9	75,243	130.7
1915	1,342	0.2	16,070	3.6	-14,728	-11.1
1920	59,115	10.2	39,174	8.5	19,941	16.9
1925	44,713	7.0	28,059	5.6	16,654	12.1
1930	11,589	1.7	-1,806	-0.3	13,395	8.6

\* Increases are over 1895.

### III. THE APPEARANCE AND DISAPPEARANCE OF TRADE CENTERS, 1901-1933<sup>1</sup>

#### The Number and Location of Appearing and Disappearing Trade Centers

The last thirty-two years have witnessed many changes in South Dakota trade centers, chief among which was a change in numbers; there were 490 trade centers in 1901 and 658 in 1933. Of the 490 that existed in 1901, only 363 remained in 1933. During the intervening years many new centers appeared, some of which have been successful in maintaining their existence to the present time. Concurrently there have been numerous fatalities in trade centers, both among those that were present in 1901, and among those that have since appeared. During the entire period, 1901 to 1933, 573 trade centers have appeared and 398 trade centers have disappeared. These data are summarized in table 3, not only for the entire period but for five-year periods.

Giving attention for the moment to table 3, we note that the period 1906 to 1911 was most prolific in producing trade centers, 267 appearing at that time. The next most productive period was from 1901 to 1906, with 118 centers appearing. Since 1916 approximately thirty trade centers have originated during each five-year period. Similar data on disappearing trade centers show that the years of greatest casualty were those from 1911 to 1916 and from 1916 to 1921, when 102 and 101 trade centers respectively, disappeared. During the last two years, 1931 to 1933, 19 trade centers have disappeared. At the rate at which trade centers have been disappearing during these two years, between forty and fifty will have disappeared between 1931 and 1936, which is a higher number than at any time since 1921.

Comparisons are also made between east and west river sections in table 3. Between 1901 and 1906 approximately an equal number of trade centers appeared east and west. During the period 1906 to 1911 the situation was far different as 77.5 per cent of the appearing centers were

1. A total of twenty-one trade centers disappeared and reappeared in the same location and with the same name. These were treated throughout the study as though they were new centers.

TABLE 3.—A Summary of Appearing and Disappearing Trade Centers by Five-Year Periods Showing Their Percentage Distribution East and West of River, 1901-1933

Period	Total		Appearing Tr. Centers		Disappearing Tr. Centers	
	Appearing Tr. Centers	Disappearing Tr. Centers	Pct. East	Pct. West	Pct. East	Pct. West
1901-1906	118	42	49.2	50.8	69.1	30.9
1906-1911	267	69	22.5	77.5	65.2	34.8
1911-1916	84	102	32.1	67.9	26.5	73.5
1916-1921	31	101	51.6	38.4	29.7	70.3
1921-1926	36	37	38.9	61.1	37.8	62.2
1926-1931	29	28	44.8	55.2	39.3	60.7
1931-1933	8	19	25.0	75.0	63.2	36.8
<b>1901-1933</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>33.2</b>	<b>66.8</b>	<b>42.2</b>	<b>57.8</b>

located west of the river. Between 1911 and 1916 only 84 centers appeared in the state, but the majority of these, 67.9 per cent in fact, were west of the river. During the next period, 1916 to 1921, only thirty-one centers appeared. They were distributed about equally in the two areas. For the succeeding three periods comparatively few trade centers appeared, the larger proportion of which appeared in the western section. For the entire period 1901 to 1933, 573 trade centers appeared. One hundred ninety or 33.2 per cent were east of the river and 383 or 66.8 per cent were west of the river.

This table also gives comparable data for disappearing centers. During the years 1901 to 1906 more than twice as many centers disappeared in the eastern section as in the western section. The situation was about the same for the period 1906 to 1911 with 65.2 per cent of centers disappearing in the eastern section. The next two periods, 1911 to 1916 and 1916 to 1921 saw the situation reversed: more than 70 per cent of the disappearing centers were west of the river. The same general trend persisted from 1921 to 1931 with slightly over 60 per cent of the disappearing centers in the western part. Since 1931 the situation has changed with 63.2 per cent of the disappearing centers in the east. For the entire period covered, 398 trade centers have disappeared. Of these, 230 or 57.8 per cent were located west of the river and 168 or 42.2 per cent east of the river.

A more specific location of appearing and disappearing centers is given in figure 3 which shows the location of all appearing and disappearing trade centers by periods and by counties. The more apparent facts are: First, a large proportion of appearing and disappearing trade centers are located in the western section of the state. Second, the first period (1901 to 1906), and the last two periods (1921 to 1926 and 1926 to 1931) show very few appearing or disappearing trade centers. Third, most counties having a large number of appearing trade centers have had a correspondingly large number of disappearing trade centers. Fourth, in practically every county the era of appearing centers ceased with the close of the second period (1906 to 1911), and the era of numerous disappearing centers began with the third period (1911 to 1916). Fifth, the area of least growth and least decline is found in the southeastern fourth of the state. A second area of relatively few growing and few declining trade centers is found in Washington, Washabaugh, Mellette, Shannon, Bennett, and Todd counties; this is largely due to late settlement in these areas.

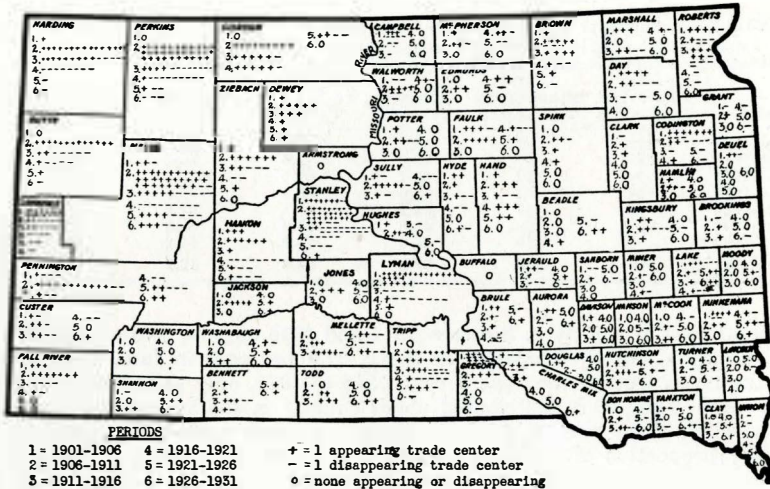


Fig. 3.—The Location by Counties of the 565 Appearing and the 379 Disappearing Trade Centers During the Six Five-Year Periods, 1901-1931.

### Ratio of Disappearing Trade Centers to Appearing Trade Centers

The ratio of disappearing centers to appearing trade centers for each five-year period between 1901 and 1931, as well as for the years 1931 to 1933, is shown in table 4, which lists the number of disappearing centers per 100 appearing centers. During the first two periods presented, the ratio of disappearing centers to appearing centers was very low, 35.5 disappearing per 100 appearing for 1901 to 1906, and 25.8 disappearing per 100 appearing for 1906 to 1911. During the next decade the situation was reversed. There were 121.4 disappearing centers for every 100 appearing centers between 1911 and 1916, between 1916 and 1921 there were 325.8 disappearing centers per 100 appearing centers. During the next two five-year periods, the number of disappearing and appearing centers was practically equal, there having been 102.8 disappearing centers for every 100 appearing centers between 1921 and 1926, and 96.5 disappearing centers for every 100 appearing centers between 1926 and 1931. The years 1931 to 1933 show a ratio of 237.5 disappearing centers for every 100 appearing centers. For the entire period there were 69.6 disappearing centers for each 100 appearing centers.

### The Size of Disappearing Trade Centers

Since a large number of trade centers had disappeared, it is important to know their size. Accordingly tabulations of the number of business units in disappearing trade centers were made at five-year intervals. Each trade center was classified according to the highest number of business units it possessed at any of these periods. Thus, it was found that only two of the disappearing trade centers ever surpassed 10 business

TABLE 4.—Number of Disappearing Trade Centers Per 100 Appearing Trade Centers

Period	Number
1901-1906	35.5
1906-1911	25.8
1911-1916	121.4
1916-1921	325.8
1921-1926	102.8
1926-1931	96.5
1931-1933	237.5
1901-1933	69.6

units, only 8 reached the class of 5-9 business units; the remainder, 388, never exceeded four business units. It is significant that most of the casualties in South Dakota trade centers have been in those trade centers with few business units.

### The Mortality Rate of Appearing Trade Centers

There has been a very high mortality rate among the newer trade centers in South Dakota. Two hundred and fifty-nine, or 45.8 per cent of the 565 trade centers which appeared between 1901 and 1931 had disappeared by 1931. (Table 5.) The mortality rate was approximately 50 per cent for all years previous to 1916, for the years 1916 to 1926 approximately 30 per cent, for the last period, 1926 to 1931, 10 per cent. When one considers the time element, the survival rate for trade centers established between 1901 and 1906 is very high compared to subsequent periods. It is difficult to make comparisons on this point however, for it may be that those centers which are destined to disappear do so very soon after their origin.

### The Growth of Successful Appearing Trade Centers, 1901-1931

In the preceding paragraph we have found that a little more than 50 per cent of the appearing trade centers have survived during the last 30 years. The number remaining, then, represents a select group. In table 6 all the successful centers (those that have survived until 1931), which have originated since 1901, are tabulated by periods of origin indicating the class to which they have grown. Twenty-four, or 40 per cent of the centers that appeared between 1901 and 1906 still remain under five business units; at the opposite extreme, eight or 13.5 per cent had reached 25 or more business units by 1931. Throughout all successive periods there has been a tendency for a larger percentage of trade centers to remain

TABLE 5.—The Mortality of Trade Centers that Appeared Since 1901, Classified According to Period of Origin, 1901-1931

Period of Appearance	Total Number Appearing	Disappearing by 1931	
		Number	Per Cent
1901-1906	118	59	50.0
1906-1911	267	133	49.8
1911-1916	84	43	51.2
1916-1921	31	10	32.3
1921-1926	36	11	30.6
1926-1931	29	3	10.3
1901-1931	565	259	45.8

under the five-unit limit, and relatively fewer to reach the larger classifications; this is no doubt due in part to their shorter period of existence. Two, or 7.7 per cent of those centers which appeared between 1926 and 1931 have already exceeded five business units. Taking the entire period as a whole and treating new centers without reference to their age, 61.4 per cent have remained under five business units; 13.1 per cent have reached the classification, 5 to 9; 8.8 per cent, 10 to 14; 5.6 per cent, 15 to 19; 4.6 per cent, 20 to 24; and 6.5 per cent have exceeded 25 business units.

TABLE 6.—Trade Centers Originating Between 1901 and 1931 Which Are Still in Existence, Classified by Periods, and Showing the Highest Class Reached

Class (Business Units)	1901-06		1906-11		1911-16		1916-21		1921-26		1926-31		1901-31	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Under	24	40.7	74	55.2	25	60.9	17	80.9	24	96.0	24	92.3	188	61.4
5- 9	10	16.9	17	12.7	7	17.1	3	14.3	1	4.0	2	7.7	40	13.1
10-14	5	8.5	19	14.2	2	4.9	1	4.8					27	8.8
15-19	7	11.9	7	5.2	3	7.3							17	5.6
20-24	5	8.5	7	5.2	2	4.9							14	4.6
25 and above	8	13.5	10	7.5	2	4.9							20	6.5

### Summary of Appearing and Disappearing Trade Centers

The preceding pages indicate very clearly that the appearing and disappearing trade centers in South Dakota have been largely those which had a very small number of business units, most of them never having had more than four business units. There have also been more appearing centers than disappearing centers, showing a net gain rather than a decline in the number of shopping centers. The movement has been more a matter of trade shifting from one center to another than a net decline in trade centers during most periods. The one exception is found during the period 1916 to 1921, when there was a marked decline in the number of trade centers. This seems to have been a rather abnormal phenomenon introduced by the appearance of the automobile and by the reaction following an abnormal population growth during the settlement period from 1905 to 1911 west of the river. During the years 1931 to 1933 there has been an increase in disappearing trade centers. Moreover, during this period appearing trade centers have not half replaced disappearing ones. The numbers however are small due to the brief time involved, and, therefore do not furnish conclusive evidence.

## IV. THE GROWTH AND DECLINE OF TRADE CENTERS

### Growth and Decline for the Period, 1901-1931

Growth and decay characterize all enterprises conducted by man. The normal thing to expect is change or movement. Every town is shifting in its internal structure and organization—people come and go, mercantile organizations appear and disappear, new institutions and group organizations are created while old ones disintegrate.

Although the growth and decline of trade centers is probably a normal

social phenomenon, certain situations may greatly hasten or retard the process. Also, different types of trade centers may vary greatly in their trend of growth or decline during various periods. An attempt is made in this section to trace the development of some of the factors, which procedure may help explain trends of growth or decline among those trade centers that have maintained a consecutive existence.

All trade centers appearing or disappearing between 1901 and 1931 were excluded from this part of the study. This left a group of 367 trade centers that may be designated permanent centers. A center was said to be growing if it increased 10 per cent or more in the number of its business units, and to be declining if it decreased 10 per cent or more in the number of its business units, between 1901 and 1931. If it failed to increase or decrease more than 10 per cent, it was said to be stationary.

The selection of the two periods for comparison was purely arbitrary. However, these periods seem to be as exemplary for comparison as any that could have been found during the period covered. The year 1901 presents trade centers before the artificial growth of the boom period, and the year 1931 presents their numerical status in the state as it existed quite consistently since 1921. As there has been a consistent decline in the number of business units in the state since 1926, the year 1931 may not be entirely representative, although it is more so than the year 1933.<sup>1</sup> Trade centers rather than population were taken as the index of growth, for in this study the interest is in the town as a shopping center and not as a dwelling place. The trend of growth in business units is closely correlated with that of resident population,<sup>2</sup> either index throws considerable light on both problems.

### Areas of Growth and Decline, 1901-1931

Attention was directed in Section II to the rather distinct types of farming areas in the eastern and western divisions of the state, also to certain basic differences in density of population and in number of trade centers. The comparison is carried further here where the proportion of growing, declining and stationary trade centers east and west of the river is shown, with a view to learning whether the trend of growth and decline corresponds with these sectional differences. Data for 1901 and 1931 are presented in table 7. This table shows that 53.1 per cent of all permanent trade centers east of the river grew, 24.6 per cent declined, and 22.3 per cent remained stationary; whereas west of the river 41.9 per cent grew, 32.3 per cent declined and 25.8 per cent were stationary. The most important difference is in the number of growing and declining centers. Approximately 12 per cent more centers grew in the eastern part of the state than in the western part, and approximately eight per cent more declined west of the river than did east of the river. For the state as a whole, 51.2 per cent of the trade centers grew, 25.9 per cent declined, and 22.9 per cent remained stationary.

1. There was a marked decline in business enterprises in South Dakota between January 1, 1931 and March 1, 1933.

2. The trend of growth and decline of business units and population in all permanent centers in S. D. was in the same direction in over 80 per cent of cases, that is, if population was increasing, trade units were also increasing. Lively, dealing with Minnesota data, found that a correlation of plus 0.9 existed between growth in business units and growth in population, *op. cit.* p. 4.



### Growth and Decline for the Period, October 1926 to March 1933

In the preceding pages the long-time trend in growth and decline of trade centers in the state has been presented in detail using for comparisons the years 1901 and 1931. These comparisons show that a larger proportion of trade centers grew than declined or remained stationary.

It is of considerable importance to know both the recent trend and the long-time trend in the growth and decline of business enterprises. The immediate situation may indicate either the beginning of a permanent trend, or simply a temporary condition. In either case the contemporary situation is of interest. With this in mind, comparisons were made between the years 1926 and 1933. The year 1926 may be taken as representative of what was normal in South Dakota trade centers for a five to ten year period.<sup>3</sup> Trade centers in October of that year were compared

TABLE 7.—Distribution of Growing, Declining and Stationary Trade Centers East and West of the Missouri River, 1901-1931

	East River		West River		Entire State	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Growing Centers	162	53.1	26	41.9	188	51.2
Declining Centers	75	24.6	20	32.3	95	25.9
Stationary Centers	68	22.3	16	25.8	84	22.9
<b>Total Permanent Centers</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>100.0</b>

to those in March, 1933.<sup>4</sup> Growing, declining and stationary centers were given the same definition as in the study of the period from 1901 to 1931 (see page 15) i.e. an increase of 10 per cent or more in business units was defined as growth, a decrease of 10 per cent or more as decline; trade centers fluctuating within the 10 per cent range were said to be stationary.

This short-time trend presents marked contrasts to the comparisons of the longer period as regards growing, declining, and stationary trade centers. The results of the two periods are compared in table 8.

The period, 1901-1931, was a little more dynamic in changes than was the period 1926-1933. Only 22.9 per cent of the trade centers remained stationary in the former period, while 38.4 per cent remained stationary in the latter period. Both periods, however, witnessed considerable growth and decline in trade centers.

The period 1901-1931 is best described as one of growing trade centers, for over 50 per cent grew, and only 25.9 per cent declined. This relationship held not only for the total but for practically every class.

The period 1926-1933 may best be characterized as a period of declining trade centers, for approximately 50 per cent declined, and only 12.1 per cent grew. All classes showed fewer growing than declining centers.

Note that for the period 1901-1931, 50.7 per cent of all trade centers under five business units grew, 61.8 per cent of the class 5-9, 55.6 per

3. Tabulations were made for five-year intervals only. The number of trade centers in 1921 and 1926 were practically equal. Population increased 8.8 per cent between 1920 and 1930. See Fig. 1.

4. The only reason for using the October ratings for one year and March ratings for the other was that these were the volumes furnished by Bradstreets.

cent of the class, 10-14, 56.5 per cent of the class, 15-19, etc., business units grew. The only exception is the class, 20-24, which showed a greater number of declining trade centers than growing trade centers. During the period 1926-1931, 14.3 per cent of the trade centers under five business units grew, 15.9 per cent of the class, 5-9 grew, 11.8 per cent of the class, 10-14, 9.6 of the class 15-19, etc., business units grew. The high ratio in practically all classes for 1926-1933 is in the declining column.

There is a final point which should be recognized. In neither period do larger centers have what may be termed a distinctly favorable advantage. Trends toward growth (1901 compared to 1931) and trends toward decline (1926 compared to 1933) apparently affect all classes in the same manner.<sup>5</sup>

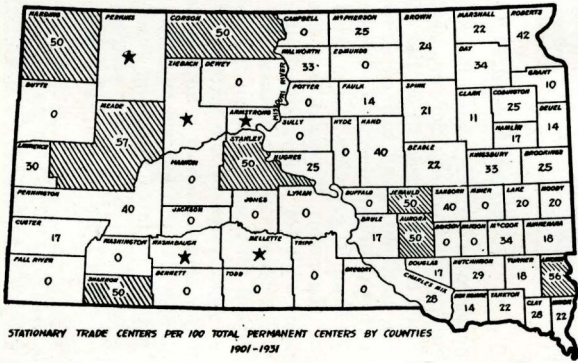
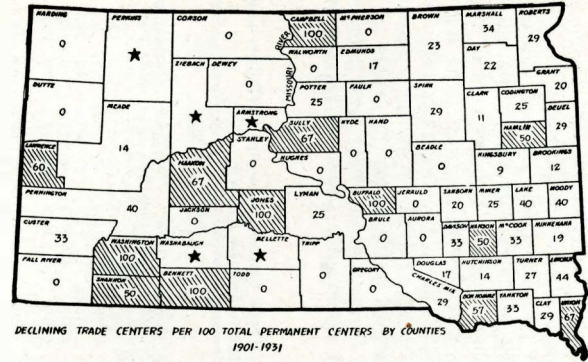
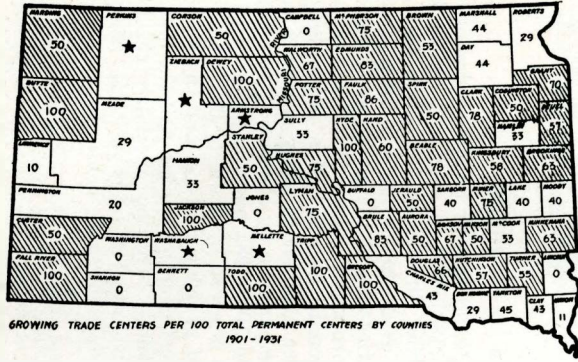
TABLE 8.—Number and Per Cent of Permanent Trade Centers Growing, Declining, and Stationary 1901 to 1931, and 1926 to 1933 by Classes

Classes (Business Units)	1901 to 1931				1926 to 1933			
	Total Pct.	Grew No. Pct.	Declined No. Pct.	Stationary No. Pct.	Total No.	Grew No. Pct.	Declined No. Pct.	Stationary No. Pct.
Under 5	136	69 50.7	28 20.6	39 28.7	223	32 14.3	59 26.5	132 59.2
5-9	55	34 61.8	18 32.7	3 5.5	88	14 15.9	66 75.0	8 9.1
10-14	27	15 55.6	5 18.5	7 25.9	68	8 11.8	47 69.1	13 19.1
15-19	23	13 56.5	5 21.7	5 21.7	52	5 9.6	39 75.0	8 15.4
20-24	31	12 38.7	14 45.2	5 16.1	39	4 10.3	25 64.1	10 25.6
25-49	65	28 43.1	18 27.7	19 29.2	106	7 6.6	56 52.8	43 40.6
50-74	19	10 52.6	5 26.3	4 21.1	28	2 7.1	10 35.7	16 57.2
75-99	6	4 66.6	—	2 33.3	10	1 10.0	3 30.0	6 60.0
100-199	4	2 50.0	2 50.0	—	7	1 14.3	2 28.6	4 57.1
200 and above	1	1 100.0	—	—	6	2 33.3	3 50.0	1 16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>188 51.2</b>	<b>95 25.9</b>	<b>84 22.9</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>76 12.1</b>	<b>310 49.4</b>	<b>241 38.4</b>

### Growth and Decline by Counties

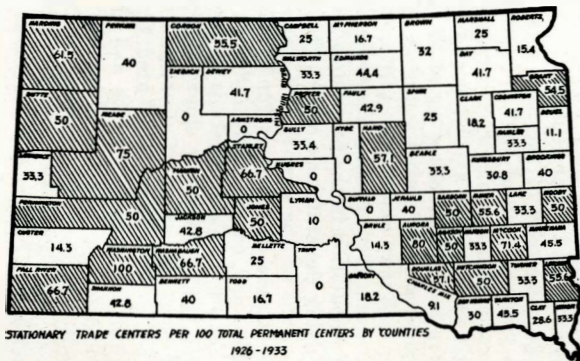
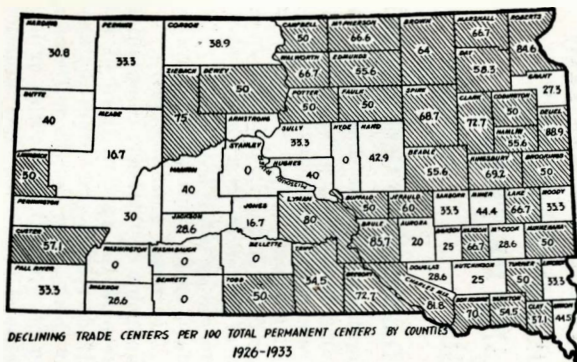
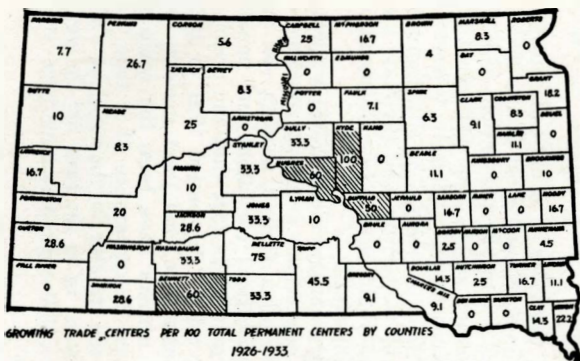
The ratio of growing and declining trade centers to total permanent centers for each county for the period 1901-1931 is shown in figure 4. Individual counties present rather striking differences, but there seems to be no constant trend toward growth or decline in any one large area except that a larger number of the counties east of the river have a ratio of more than 50 growing to the total permanent centers than have those west of the river. It seems that the county here is not a particularly significant unit for study, especially since numbers in many cases are so small. The chief value in presenting comparisons by counties is to show the marked contrasts between the period 1901-1931 and the period 1926-1933. A description of the latter period is given in figure 5. During this period few counties show a high ratio of growing centers; and these are in central and south central counties. Most counties throughout the state show a high ratio of declining trade centers. This is especially true of the eastern half. Stationary centers also show a high ratio, in many counties more than 50 per 100 total permanent trade centers.

5. These generalizations should not be construed as applicable to appearing and disappearing trade centers. The evidence is conclusive that the smaller centers are much more likely to go out of existence than larger centers. In the study of growth and decline only permanent trade centers are considered. See p. 15 for a definition of the term "permanent trade center."



THE FIGURES IN THE COUNTIES ON EACH MAP DESIGNATE THE NUMBER OF GROWING, DECLINING AND STATIONARY TRADE CENTERS RESPECTIVELY, PER 100 TOTAL PERMANENT TRADE CENTERS. SHADED COUNTIES ON EACH MAP ARE THOSE WITH 50 OR MORE GROWING, DECLINING OR STATIONARY TRADE CENTERS PER 100 TOTAL PERMANENT TRADE CENTERS. COUNTIES MARKED ★ WERE NOT YET ORGANIZED IN 1901 SO THEY ARE OMITTED IN THESE COMPARISONS.

Fig. 4.—Growing, Declining and Stationary Trade Centers per 100 Total Permanent Trade Centers by Counties, 1901-1931.



THE FIGURES IN THE COUNTIES ON EACH MAP DESIGNATE THE NUMBER OF GROWING, DECLINING, AND STATIONARY TRADE CENTERS RESPECTIVELY, PER 100 TOTAL PERMANENT TRADE CENTERS.

SHADED COUNTIES ON EACH MAP ARE THOSE WITH .50 OR MORE GROWING, DECLINING, OR STATIONARY TRADE CENTERS PER 100 TOTAL PERMANENT TRADE CENTERS.

Fig. 5.—Growing, Declining and Stationary Trade Centers per 100 Total Permanent Trade Centers by Counties, 1926-1933.

## V. GENERAL FACTORS RELATED TO THE APPEARANCE AND DISAPPEARANCE, GROWTH AND DECLINE OF TRADE CENTERS

### Distances Between the 670 South Dakota Trade Centers, 1931

Since a trade center draws a considerable part of its business from the tributary population in the surrounding hinterland, a large amount of rural territory unoccupied by other trade centers should be a distinct advantage to any town, other things being equal, (population density, ease of mobility, etc.). Distance is naturally a factor in drawing trade regardless of the size of a trade center or of its merits as a place to shop. Therefore the trade center that is unhampered by competition from nearby centers has the advantage. Conversely, trade centers that have to compete with a nearby center naturally face many more hazards.

Figure 6 indicates that, from the standpoint of distance, competition between trade centers has been most keen in the eastern third of the state, for here a large proportion of all trade centers are within the shadow of a major trading center. Many of them are within 25 miles of a center of 5000 population and practically all are within 20 miles or less distance of a center of more than a thousand population. The situation gradually changes as one moves westward. On the western margin of the eastern third of the state most trade centers are within 20 miles of a center of 1000 to 4999 population. The situation is quite the same in the Black Hills section, which covers most of Lawrence, Pennington, Custer and Fall River counties.

The remainder of the area west of the river is many miles distant from trade centers of 1000 or more population, and most of the area is a considerable distance from centers of 250 to 999 population. This indicates that, so far as distance is concerned, competition between trade centers is much more severe in the eastern part of the state, whereas it is almost entirely absent in the western part. Moreover the situation suggests that very small trade centers in the western part of the state may draw trade from greater distances than would centers of a thousand or more population in the eastern half of the state.

Taking the state as a whole, the spatial concept alone probably throws little light on the growth and decline, appearance and disappearance of trade centers. Distance is conditioned by other factors, namely, soil and rainfall, and consequently different agricultural conditions and population density, which explain to a great extent the fact that the areas of fewest trade centers in South Dakota, taking the period 1901 to 1931, have been the areas of greatest disappearance, and least growth, and the areas of thickly distributed trade centers have been the areas of greatest trade center growth and of least disappearance. It is true that during some periods casualties have been greater in the east, at other periods they have been greater in the west, as is the case for the years 1911 to 1931. Previous to 1911 and since 1931 casualties have been much higher in the eastern part of the state.

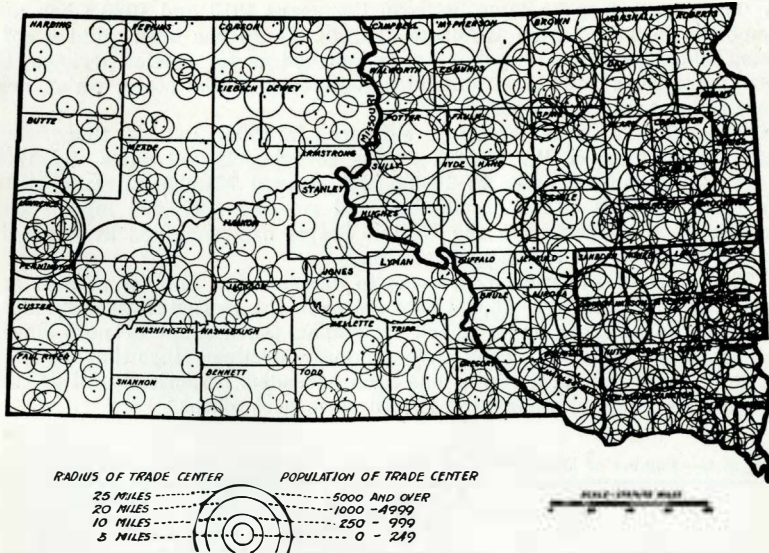


Fig. 6.—Distances Between the 670 South Dakota Trade Centers, 1931.

Each trade center is surrounded by a circle, different sized centers being given circles with varying radii. Centers with under 250 population are given radii of five miles, centers with 250 to 999 population are given radii of 10 miles, centers with 1000 to 4999 population are given radii of 20 miles and centers of 5000 or more population are given radii of 25 miles. The dots marking the center of each circle indicate the actual location of all trade centers in the state.

### The Development of Means of Transportation and Communication

The basic mechanical transportation device operated in the state previous to 1900 was the railroad. There were 3230.9 miles of railway in the state in 1900; by 1912 railroad building reached its climax with 4474 miles of road; it has maintained approximately this level of development since as is shown by the following data:<sup>1</sup>

Year	Miles
1901	3,230.90
1905	3,274.00
1912	4,474.01
1916	4,145.78
1921	4,282.94
1926	4,247.31
1931	4,222.40

The automobile was non-existent in the state previous to 1900 and did not become an important factor in transportation until after 1912. (See table 9). At that time a total of only 10,800 licenses had been issued for motor vehicles, but soon after that date automobiles increased very rapid-

1. Figures supplied by the Board of Railroad Commissioners, South Dakota.

ly. The greatest spurt came between the years 1913 and 1920 when automobiles increased from 15,669 to 121,173. There has been quite a consistent increase since 1920, but not so marked as for earlier periods. In 1930 there were 205,647 automobiles registered in the state, which was more than at any other period.

The rural mail route came into existence in 1896. In 1900 there were 1214 rural routes in the United States covering 29,000 miles. By 1905 these routes had increased to 32,055 and covered 721,000 miles; by 1915 they had reached 43,877 in number and covered 1,076,000 miles.<sup>2</sup> The number of rural routes in the United States has remained at approximately this level up to the present time.

The effect of the rural route was to decrease the number of post offices. In 1900 there were 76,688 post offices in the United States, by 1915, when the rural route had reached its climax the number of post offices had decreased to 56,380. They have gradually declined since that time<sup>3</sup> as the mileage of the rural routes has been extended. Practically all of this decline has occurred among the fourth class post offices.<sup>4</sup>

TABLE 9.—Number of Motor Vehicles\* Registered Annually in South Dakota Since 1900†

Year	No. Motor Vehicles	Pct. Increase Over Preceding Period	Year	No. Motor Vehicles	Pct. Increase Over Preceding Period
Previous to 1906	480‡	—	1921	119,956	-1.0
Previous to 1908	1,288‡	—	1922	125,894	5.0
Previous to 1910	6,250‡	—	1923	132,188	5.0
Previous to 1912	10,800‡	—	1924	142,735	8.0
1913	15,699	—	1925	168,373	18.0
1914	22,278	42.2	1926	168,639	.16
1915	30,537	37.3	1927	170,210	.93
1916	46,074	50.6	1928	192,038	12.8
1917	68,708	49.1	1929	201,750	5.1
1918	87,325	27.1	1930	205,647	1.9
1919	105,508	20.8	1931	195,094	-5.1
1920	121,173	14.8			

\* Includes all motor vehicles, autos, motorcycles, trucks.

† Information furnished by State Motor Vehicle Department.

‡ Accumulative total as licenses were not issued annually.

The progressive development of the rural route in South Dakota and the consequent elimination of fourth class post offices is shown in table 10. It will be noted that there has been a marked decline for practically every period in the number of fourth class post offices as rural routes have increased in number and mileage. When one understands the nature of a fourth class post office, the effect of its disappearance on the small trade center is obvious. The man in charge of a fourth class post office receives no stated salary, but is paid on the basis of cancellations on mail passing through his office. To operate a post office of this type on a full time basis would not be profitable. This means that a fourth class post office is almost always in connection with some mercantile establishment. In many cases, then, the disappearance of a fourth class office means its disappearance from some store. In some cases, of course, it means that the town grew to such an extent that it could establish a higher class post

2. Willey and Rice, *Communication Agencies and Social Life*, p. 109.

3. There were 48,733 post offices in the U. S. in 1931, *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*, p. 106.

office. The net loss of post offices has, however, been relatively great for, although population has increased 73 per cent and trade centers have increased 37 per cent since 1900, the number of post offices has declined.

There is little doubt then, but that the creation of the rural route proved a disadvantage to many small trade centers, not only in that they lost their post office with the creation of the rural route, but that they missed the regular visit of the farmer coming for his mail.

TABLE 10.—Post Offices and Rural Routes in South Dakota, 1900-1932\*

As of June 30	First Class	Post Offices by Classes			Total	Rural Routes	
		Second Class	Third Class	Fourth Class		Number	Total Mileage
1900	-	8	39	647	694	7	-----
1905†	1	10	60	569	640	249	-----
1910	2	20	99	604	725	505	-----
1915	4	18	121	563	706	616	-----
1920	7	25	167	472	671	650	19,391
1925	9	38	199	409	655	721	21,965
1930	9	46	204	367	626	699	24,519
1932	9	43	186	387	625	676	25,003

\* Data were supplied by the Third Assistant Postmaster General, Post Office Department, Washington, D. C.

† As of December 31, 1905.

Another index of transportation developments is found in the mileage of improved highways in the state. In 1904 there were 59,295 miles of public road in the state of which only 0.25 per cent was improved.<sup>5</sup> In 1910 there were 96,306 miles of which only 0.8 per cent was surfaced.<sup>6</sup> According to information from the state highway commission the following mileage of state trunk highways existed at the stated periods:<sup>7</sup>

Type Road	July 1, 1925	July 1, 1930	Jan. 1, 1933
	Miles	Miles	Miles
Concrete pavement	----	22	160
Oil, tar, etc.	----	----	316
Gravel surface	1726	3678	4105
Earth grade	2356	1336	650

In addition on January 1, 1933 there were 4848 miles of graveled surface highways in the county highway systems and 13,519 miles of permanently graded earth roads.

5. Statistical Abstract, 1910.

6. World Almanac 1920, quoting U. S. Dept. of Agriculture.

7 There was no state highway commission previous to 1919 so comparable figures on road mileage for early periods are not available.



## VI. AN ANALYSIS OF THE APPEARANCE AND DISAPPEARANCE, GROWTH AND DECLINE OF TRADE CENTERS

### The Location of Appearing and Disappearing Trade Centers With Reference to Selected Communication and Transportation Devices, 1901-1931

Herein an attempt is made, in so far as data are available, to learn the extent to which modern means of communication and transportation have influenced the appearance and disappearance of trade centers in South Dakota.

There are three general types of information that should throw some light on this problem: the relation of appearing and disappearing centers to railroad communication, to post office service, and to their location with reference to major trade centers which might act as a substitute for the home town since the widespread use of the family car.

Table 11 shows the number and per cent of disappearing trade centers that were located on railroads. The percentage of disappearing trade centers located on railroads is very low for each period presented. The percentage of disappearing trade centers located on railroads for the entire period 1901 to 1933 was 7.3. Between 1926 and 1931, 10.7 per cent of the disappearing centers were located on railroads. This increase over preceding years may have been largely due to the development of motor transportation which permitted trade centers not located on railroads to rival some trade centers of equal size that were on railroads.

The situation with regard to the location of appearing centers on railroads is quite different in several respects. First, during the early periods presented, approximately 30 per cent of the appearing trade centers were located on railroad lines. During the last 12 years, a decreasing proportion of appearing centers have been located on railroads; for the entire period an average of 29.5 per cent have appeared on railroads. Here again the increasing use of the automobile truck and the cessation of railroad building probably explains the ability of a trade center to appear at a distance from a railroad much more frequently than in the pre-automobile period.

The data for disappearing centers that possessed post offices are similar to those for railroads (table 12). The number of disappearing trade centers having had post offices were also in the minority for the first two periods presented, under 10 per cent of those disappearing having had post offices. Almost 40 per cent of the disappearing trade centers had post offices for the period 1926 to 1931, and 36.8 per cent for the period 1931 to 1933. The average proportion of disappearing centers having possessed post offices for the entire period covered was 23.1 per cent. It is interesting to note the constant increase in the proportion of disappearing trade centers that possessed post offices.

An average of 30.7 per cent of all appearing trade centers have possessed post offices. The highest proportions with post offices appeared

**TABLE 11.—Relative Number of Disappearing and Appearing Trade Centers Located on Railroads by Periods, 1901-1933**

Period	Disappearing Trade Centers			Appearing Trade Centers		
	Number	Trade Centers on R. R.	Per Cent	Number	Trade Centers on R.R.	Per Cent
1901-1906	42	3	7.1	118	39	33.1
1906-1911	69	3	4.3	267	92	34.5
1911-1916	102	7	6.9	84	22	26.2
1916-1921	101	5	4.9	31	10	32.3
1921-1926	37	2	5.4	36	5	13.9
1926-1931	28	3	10.7	29	1	3.4
1931-1933	19	6	31.6	8	0	—
1901-1933	398	29	7.3	573	169	29.5

between 1921 and 1926 (30.6 per cent), and between 1931 and 1933 (37.5 per cent); the lowest proportion appeared between 1916 to 1921 when only 12.9 per cent possessed post offices.

### Critical Periods for Appearing and Disappearing Trade Centers

It seemed best for purposes of analysis to investigate in some detail periods which are unique for their large numbers of appearing or disappearing trade centers. These periods exhibit abnormal trends and may, therefore, be labeled critical periods.

The critical period in the appearance of trade centers was 1906 to 1911, when 267 trade centers made their initial appearance.

Figure 7 shows the location of each of these appearing centers by counties and also with reference to location on or near railroad lines. Aside from the fact that numerous trade centers appeared in this period, it is significant that a great proportion of them were concentrated in certain counties, notably Perkins, Meade, Tripp and Haakon. Note also the distribution of these appearing trade centers with reference to railroad lines. Many of them appeared on railroad lines built during the years 1906 to 1911. It was during this period that two railroads made their way across the state to the Black Hills, and that the several branches were projected westward in the northern part of the state. Each of these railroad lines mark the birthplace of several new trade centers.

The crisis-period for trade centers came between 1911 and 1921 when 203 trade centers went out of existence (1911-1916, 102; 1916-1921, 101). Figure 8 shows the location of each of them with reference to railroad lines and to distribution by counties. Aside from the fact that a great number of trade centers disappeared, it is significant that they disappeared in counties that saw the greatest boom during the period 1905 to 1911, notably Perkins, Meade, Tripp and Haakon counties. It is of further significance that most of these disappearing centers were located at some distance from a railway.

The area of disappearing centers for the period 1911-1916 is quite the same as that of disappearing centers for 1916-1921, the large majority in both cases disappearing west of the river. During the former period, more centers declined in the northeastern corner of the state than declined in the latter period. Disappearing centers were relatively few in the eastern third of the state for both periods.

TABLE 12.—Relative Number of Disappearing and Appearing Trade Centers with Post Offices by Periods, 1901-1933

Period	Disappearing Trade Centers			Appearing Trade Centers		
	Number Trade Centers	Trade Centers with P. O. Number	Per Cent	Number Trade Centers	Trade Centers with P. O. Number	Per Cent
1901-1906	42	3	7.1	118	19	16.1
1906-1911	69	7	10.1	267	111	41.6
1911-1916	102	22	21.6	84	21	25.0
1916-1921	101	32	31.7	31	4	12.9
1921-1926	37	10	27.0	36	11	30.6
1926-1931	28	11	39.3	29	7	24.1
1931-1933	19	7	36.8	8	3	37.5
1901-1933	398	92	23.1	573	176	30.7

### The Location of Growing and Declining Trade Centers with Reference to Selected Communication and Transportation Devices, 1901 to 1931

It is usually assumed that there is a definite relationship existing between certain of the newer means of communication and transportation and the growth and decline of trade centers.<sup>1</sup> With a view to testing this assumption, the relation between growing and declining centers and the possession of post offices and also location on a railroad has been determined. The method used was to take all permanent centers (centers in existence during the entire period 1901 to 1931) and calculate the percentage of growing, declining and stationary centers possessing post of-

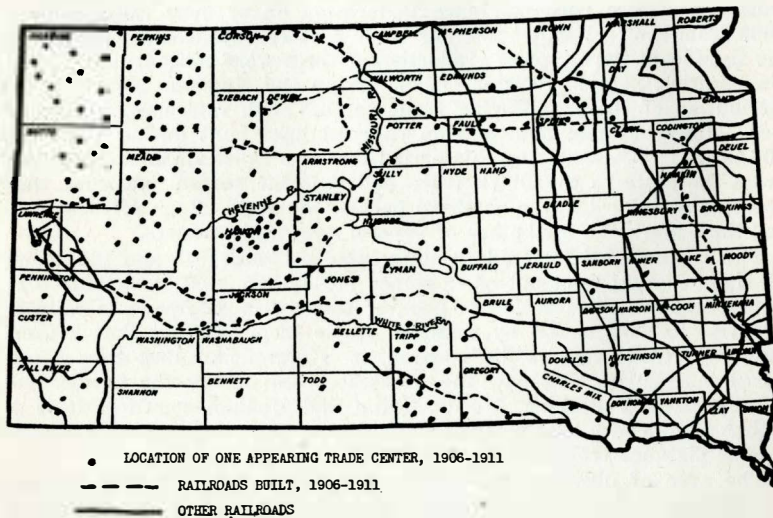


Fig. 7.—The Location of all Appearing Trade Centers for the Period 1906 to 1911 by Areas and with Reference to Railways.

1. Smith, op. cit. Part III; Lively, op. cit. p. 31 ff.

fices and railroads in 1901 and those possessing them in 1931. The results on the relative number of growing, declining and stationary trade centers possessing post offices are shown in table 13. Results are classified for east and west river as well as for the entire state. Commenting first upon the situation in 1901, it seems that about an equal number of those trade centers destined to grow and those destined to decline possessed post offices, while a fewer number of those destined to remain stationary

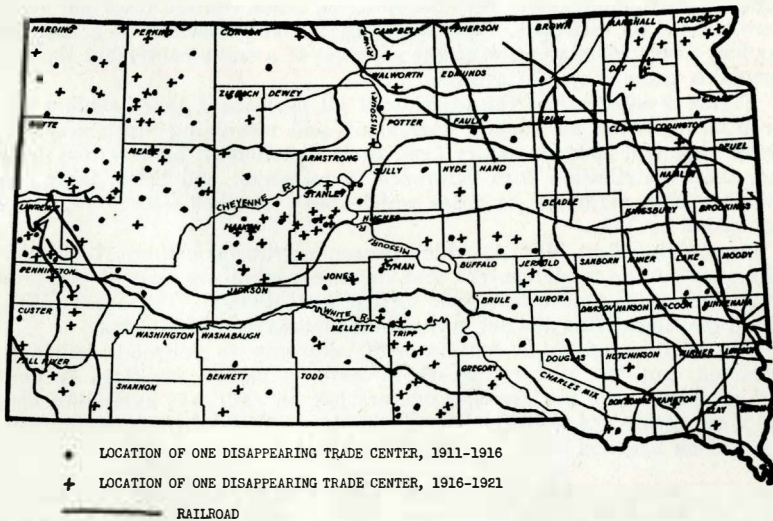


Fig. 8.—The Location of all Disappearing Trade Centers for the Periods 1911 to 1916 and 1916 to 1921 by Areas and with Reference to Railroads.

possessed them. It is possible that after the coming of the rural route in about 1905, the possession of the post office did little to influence the growth of the town; at least the facts indicate that possession of the post office in 1901 did not assure a trade center's growth over its competitors. The situation in 1931 is somewhat different, in that a larger per cent of trade centers that have grown during the intervening years possessed post offices than those either having declined or having remained stationary, indicating that the ability to maintain or to obtain a post office has proved some slight advantage.

Similar data are recorded in table 14 for the location of growing, declining and stationary trade centers with reference to railroads. The possession of a railroad in 1901 apparently gave a trade center a decided advantage for 80.9 per cent of growing trade centers were located on railroads, while 68.4 per cent of declining centers and 66.7 per cent of stationary centers were located on railroads. Location on railroads apparently did much more to assure growth in the eastern than in the western part of the state. The situation in 1931 indicates that success in maintaining or obtaining railway connections during the intervening years has been a decided advantage for all areas of the state. Eighty-nine and nine-

tenths per cent of growing centers possessed railways in 1931 only 67.4 per cent of declining centers possessed railroads and 66.7 per cent of stationary centers possessed them. This indicates that having had possession of a railroad at the beginning of the period or having obtained it in intervening years has been of some advantage in assuring growth over competitive centers.

Recapitulating the results obtained in making similar comparisons for appearing and disappearing trade centers in the previous section, it was found that proportionately few disappearing trade centers (10.7 per cent) were located on railroads. Apparently then, the possession of a railroad has had a very close relation to the survival of a trade center but has not assured a trade center of growth.

Figure 9 summarizes the location of all permanent trade centers differentiating those increasing, decreasing and remaining stationary between 1901 and 1931. It shows first, their distribution by territory; second, their distribution with reference to railways; and third, their distribution with reference to cities which have reached 10,000 or more population by 1931.

Considering first Map A, which presents growing centers, it is clear that most of the trade centers that have increased are east of the Missouri river in the more favorable agricultural district. There are also a few in the Black Hills district in the southeastern part of the state.

The location of trade centers with reference to railroads has been discussed, but the picture presented here is rather striking. A very high proportion of the growing centers are on railroads extending east and west across the eastern half of the state. Most of the growing centers are on railroad lines.

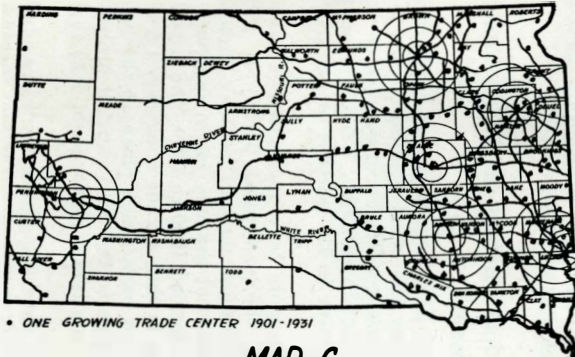
TABLE 13.—Number and Per Cent of Growing, Declining and Stationary Trade Centers, East and West of the Missouri River and in the State with Post Offices, 1901 and 1931

	1901			1931		
	Growing	Declining	Stationary	Growing	Declining	Stationary
<b>East River:</b>						
Number	123	56	47	154	61	49
Per Cent	75.9	74.7	69.1	95.1	81.3	72.1
<b>West River:</b>						
Number	13	14	3	25	17	15
Per Cent	50.0	70.0	18.8	96.2	85.0	93.8
<b>Total State:</b>						
Number	136	70	50	179	78	64
Per Cent	72.3	73.7	59.5	95.2	82.1	76.2

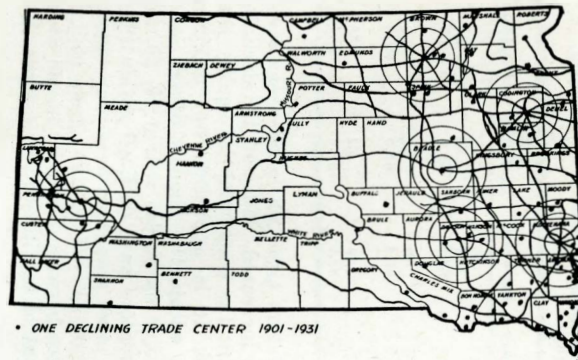
Touching on the third point, there is apparently no noticeable relationship existing between the growth of a trade center and its location with reference to a major trade center. In the eastern part of the state where most of the growing trade centers are located, there is about a normal number within a 10, 20 or 30-mile radius of these major centers as compared to territories outside of these boundaries but in a similar area of the state.

Map B presents the location of all trade centers which decreased at least 10 per cent in number of business units between the years 1901 and 1931. Decreasing centers are most numerous in the southeastern corner of the state. The general distribution throughout the state is quite the same as for growing trade centers; in other words, the area of growing

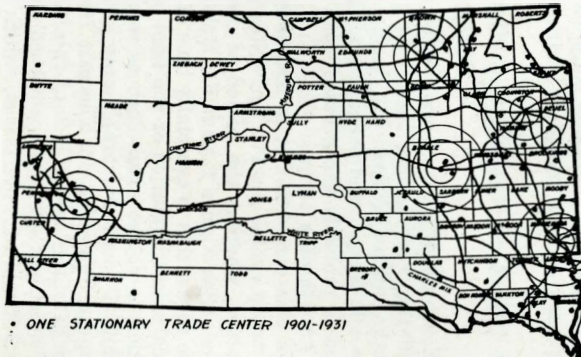
MAP A.



MAP B.



MAP C.



THE DOTS MARK THE LOCATION OF TRADE CENTERS ON EACH MAP. THE HEAVY LINES MARK RAILROADS. THE CIRCLES ARE DRAWN AT 10, 20, AND 30 MILE RADIUS FROM THE MAJOR TRADE CENTERS (THOSE WITH MORE THAN 10,000 POPULATION)

Fig. 9.—The Location of Growing, Declining and Stationary Trade Centers with Reference to Railroads and Major Trade Centers, 1901-1931

TABLE 14.—Number and Per Cent of Growing, Declining and Stationary Trade Centers, East and West of the Missouri River and in the State, Located on Railroads, 1901 and 1931

	1901			1931		
	Growing	Declining	Stationary	Growing	Declining	Stationary
<b>East River:</b>						
Number	141	56	51	152	52	50
Per Cent	87.0	74.7	75.0	93.8	69.3	73.5
<b>West River:</b>						
Number	11	9	5	17	12	6
Per Cent	42.3	45.0	31.3	65.4	60.0	37.5
<b>Total State:</b>						
Number	152	65	56	169	64	56
Per Cent	80.9	68.4	66.7	89.9	67.4	66.7

centers is also the area of declining centers although in all areas fewer trade centers have decreased than have increased. Many of the declining centers are located on railroad lines, but the proportion is smaller than that of growing centers thus located. It is apparent that declining centers are not particularly numerous within the shadow of the large trade centers which are shown surrounded by circles within 10, 20, and 30 miles radii. It is true that several centers have declined within these boundaries, but apparently they are no more numerous here than outside these territories. It is interesting to note, however, that trade centers have declined rather markedly in the area between Sioux Falls and Sioux City, even though a considerable amount of territory here is more than 30 miles distant from either city.

Map C gives the comparable information for trade centers that have neither decreased nor increased more than 10 per cent in trade units. There is a random distribution of stationary centers throughout most areas of the state and there is apparently no marked relationship between stationary centers and their location near major trade centers.

### The Effect of Natural and Historical Factors on Trade Center Development

South Dakota towns are for the most part trading points for a rural population surrounding them. Take away the rural population and the greater number of them will disappear; increase the rural population and they will prosper and perhaps even increase in numbers. Tributary population is probably the greatest single factor in the success or failure in the growth of a town.

In this connection it is interesting to note that population increases and trade center growth correlates with the prolonged period of high moisture, whereas the period of decline began during the long drought period. (See Figure 1, page 6). Moisture is not the only factor involved in these cases; this is especially true of the period 1900 to 1909. The psychological overstimulation of the land boom in that decade encouraged a migration to poorer areas such as would not have taken place on the basis of rainfall alone. Favorable crop yields due to the good rainfall probably encouraged speculation. The exit from this territory no doubt was much more definitely due to lack of rainfall.

The recent drought undoubtedly has done something to destroy individual business enterprises, which is often the destructive factor in

small trade center enterprises. Between January, 1931 and March, 1933 a net total of some 964 business units disappeared in the state, which number was 7.9 per cent of all business enterprises.

It is somewhat difficult to predict population trends or trade center trends solely on the basis of rainfall, especially in the plains area since the particular season of the year when the major amount of rainfall comes may be as important or more so than the amount of precipitation during the entire period. One must also keep in mind that rainfall may vary greatly in different areas of the state during the same season; however, there is enough relationship between the total amount of rainfall and the average rainfall of any particular area to make the general average of value in predicting these sociological trends.

### The Consolidation of Business Enterprises

The decline in number of business enterprises in the state during the last seven years is further indicated in the diminishing number and size of trade centers. The number of people for each business unit is indicated in table 15. There was a larger population unit for each business enterprise in the state in 1933 than at any other period covered.<sup>2</sup> Since 1911 the trend has been toward an increase in population for a given business enterprise. This is true not only for the entire state, but for the eastern and western sections as well. There was a marked increase in the population unit per business enterprise in the eastern division of the state between 1931 and 1933 (54.5 to 60.5.) In comparing east and west river sections by periods, it will be noted that the most marked contrast was in 1921 when there was a population of 49.6 persons per business unit east of the river and 57.7 west of the river. The same general relationship has held for every period except 1901, when the east river section had a larger population per business unit than the west river section. In 1931 the western division of the state still had a larger population per business enterprise than the eastern part of the state. Both sections had more population per business unit in 1933 than at any other interval tabulated. Just what the normal ratio should be between units and population one cannot say. There is a suggestion here that there is a greater population unit per business enterprise in periods of depression than in normal times. It may be that business enterprises cannot now survive on the population units which supported them previous to 1921. The tendency for the population unit to increase per business enterprise is very likely indicative of a trend toward an increase in size in business enterprises. It is undoubtedly true that with increasing urbanization certain types of business expand and require a much larger population unit, the urban department store, for instance, compared to the small-town general store. South Dakota department stores increased from one in 1901 to seventy-one in 1931.<sup>3</sup> The tendency for the large department store to replace the small general store may be typical of changes in certain other business enterprises in the state.

Further evidence is found in the relatively greater increase in chain stores than in independent stores.<sup>4</sup>

2. Population figures for 1930 were used in this comparison. If the population in the state has increased perceptibly, the population unit for a given enterprise is even greater than the results shown above.

3. Landis, Paul H., *op. cit.* p. 17.

4. *Ibid* p. 42.



## Miscellaneous Factors

### Possession of the County Seats

Historically, there has been considerable rivalry over attaining county seats. The assumption has doubtless been that, other things being equal, the town with a county seat has greater chance of success. The trend of growth and decline in county seats was measured with a view to throwing some light on this problem.

There are 48 county seat towns that have been in existence since 1901. Their growth was measured by the same method used for other trade centers (see p. 15). This study shows that 64.6 per cent of the county seats increased in size, 20.8 per cent decreased, and 14.6 per cent remained stationary. As compared to all trade centers in South Dakota, a greater per cent of the county seat towns have increased in business units, and fewer have declined. (See table 8.)

### Possession of Special Institutions

Certain institutions frequently cause trade centers to develop beyond what would be warranted by their hinterland. For instance, the possession of government institutions has led to the growth of certain towns as well as the possession of superior private institutions of various kinds; schools, marketing organizations and recreational functions.

Towns that have chanced to be located on railroad terminals or breaks in transportation between land and water (in South Dakota this means cities located on railway lines at the crossing of the Missouri river) in some cases made unprecedented growth.

TABLE 15.—The Average Number of People Per Business Unit for the State and for East and West River Divisions of the State, 1901-1933\*

Year	Entire State	East	West
1901	53.0	53.4	49.1
1911	50.7	50.6	51.3
1921	51.2	49.6	57.7
1931	57.0	54.5	67.0
1933	62.0	60.5	67.1

\*Population figures on which these calculations are based are for nearest census period.

### Location with Reference to Certain Unique Advantages

In the Black Hills district there has been the fact of mineral resources to reckon with in the growth and decline of trade centers. Some trade centers have depended exclusively upon a mining population which has disappeared with the exhaustion of the mineral resources, while others with more permanent resources have remained. Some have reached the dimension of cities. Some cities in this same area owe considerable growth to the development of the tourist trade in the Black Hill's region.

## VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

### Modern Means of Communication and Transportation

There are certain interesting relationships between the development of means of communication and the growth and decline of trade centers.

1. The effect of the rapid growth in railroads was reflected in the growth of trade centers. Between the years 1901 and 1912, more than 1200 miles of railroad were built in South Dakota. Many of the new trade centers which appeared during this period were located on these new railroad lines. There were more miles of railroad in operation in the state in 1912 than at any period since that time. It was in 1911 that the trade centers numerically reached their peak.

2. There seems to have been an inverse relationship between the development of the automobile and improved highways, and the growth in the number of trade centers. The critical period in the decline of South Dakota trade centers was 1916 to 1921. In the year 1915 there were only 28,725 automobiles registered, by 1921 there were 119,274 automobiles in the state.<sup>1</sup> In other words, during this period automobiles came to be possessed by almost every household. (There were 142,793 families in 1920.<sup>2</sup>) The effect is obvious. The team haul to market during this short period became a matter of history, for the distance the family could go to trade with an automobile was much greater than that traveled with a horse and buggy. It is little wonder that many of the weaker trade centers totally disappeared in the face of this new transportation device.

3. The rapid distribution of the newspaper made possible by these new devices enabled the wide-awake trade center to contact the rural community daily, and to stimulate the development of local markets at the expense of weaker trade centers that had not taken advantage of the newer communication devices.

4. This trend has perhaps been accentuated considerably by the invention and widespread diffusion of the radio. (Forty-four and two-tenths per cent of South Dakota families possessed radio sets in 1930.<sup>3</sup>) The radio broadcasting station is still the possession of the larger trade centers (those that approach metropolitan dimensions) but it is undoubtedly true that the centers which possess broadcasting stations are able to stimulate trade over a wide hinterland, frequently at the expense of smaller trade centers.

5. About 1905 the rural mail route was developed as a special service of the post office department to rural districts. Many of the post offices previous to that date were located in stores and the merchant tended to the distribution of the mail as a part of his work. The introduction of the rural route made frequent trips to the small trade center for mail unnecessary. Later developments of the automobile and good roads helped push the rural routes into regions that were formerly not covered by them. All of these factors have tended to destroy the marginal trade center.

6. The rural route struck another blow, which was rather indirect but

1. Includes trucks, but does not include motorcycles.

2. U. S. Census, Vol. II, p. 1269, 1920.

3. Preliminary news release, November 30, 1931, *Families and Radio Sets for the U. S.*, Bureau of the Census, Washington.

probably fatal, to some small trade centers. It made the delivery of parcel post to the farmstead possible, thus stimulating greatly the development of mail order trade among the rural population. There is little doubt but that the cumulative effect of this change has been very influential throughout the years in reducing the volume of business in local trade centers. Perhaps it is only recently, with the local establishment of retail branches of mail order houses, that this influence has been partially overcome.

7. The entire organization of rural-urban life has been affected by the new developments in transportation and communication. Each hinterland has tended to become oriented about a trade center possessing the maximum number of services. The position of the weaker trade center is quite comparable to that of the small grocer located in the residential district in the large town. He can depend only on "drop-in" trade while the larger part of each family's business goes to the merchant who is so situated that he can make deliveries to the home and provide a full range of selection in goods. The small center has to eke out an existence from "drop-in" trade of the tourist or from the trade of the rural man who, in an emergency, goes to the nearest center rather than the most fully equipped one.

8. The trade center that has been successful in developing a variety of attractive social institutions has undoubtedly gained an advantage in our present mobile age such as it never possessed in the days of the horse and buggy. Such a center probably attracts people from a very wide range of territory, for with an automobile the rural family is likely to go to that trade center which has the most magnets attracting in its direction; moving picture shows, swimming pools, community organizations that recognize rural leadership and attempt rural cooperation, schools—high schools especially—churches, fairs, and similiar institutions.

### National and Local Social Trends

Existing evidence suggests that there have been widespread and generally uniform influences upon trade centers that has produced similar conditions in widely differing territories. The figure on the front cover page suggests the general uniformity in trend for Minnesota, Louisiana and South Dakota.<sup>4</sup> In all cases, the period of rapid increase, the climax, and the period of decline are present. These changes in each state came at approximately the same time.

The common factors involved seem to have been the following:

1. The outstanding factor was undoubtedly, as has been suggested in the preceding paragraphs, the universal and year-round use of the automobile with the accompanying development of surfaced roads, additional snow moving equipment, widespread use of radiator anti-freeze compounds, better gasoline and carburetors, self-starting devices and other similar improvements. (The improved winter driving conditions apply to northern states only, but driving in wet weather has been improved in all sections by surfaced roads.) The team-haul to market, and the horse-and-

4. The data for each of these states is comparable, having been taken from the Bradstreet ratings, the figure is based on figures presented in the following: Louisiana, Smith, Op. Cit., table 1, p. 12; Minnesota, Lively, Op. Cit., table 1, p. 4; South Dakota, Landis, Op. Cit., table 3, p. 35.

buggy drive to town rapidly disappeared with the diffusion of the auto truck and horseless carriage among farm families.

2. The high price of farm products during the war and immediate post-war period doubtless did much not only to stimulate the diffusion of the automobile among farm peoples, but also to make people tolerate the high taxes necessary for road construction and maintenance. The effect of high income throughout the country was to raise the standard of living, to encourage freedom in spending, to stimulate installment buying, and to lead to the accumulation of obligations against the future through the acquisition of lands or other property. This same spirit was manifest in public life and expenditures. Public conveniences were developed, and the taste for private luxuries cultivated. The new buying habits were reflected not only in an increase in business enterprises, but also in a marked decrease in trade centers, which meant fewer but larger and more luxurious trade centers.

Business units did not show a decline in 1926 in South Dakota. It was not until 1931 when the reduced purchasing power of the farmer had been severely felt, that business units showed a marked decline. The decline was even more marked between January 1, 1931 and March 1, 1933 when 964 or 7.9 per cent of the business units in the state disappeared.

3. There is little doubt that in South Dakota the period of high rainfall, and consequent land boom and extensive population migration into the sparsely inhabited area west of the Missouri river, accentuated greatly the very rapid development of trade centers during that period. Simultaneous with this development was the building of approximately 800 miles of railroad west of the Missouri river and over 1200 miles in the state.

4. Whether the marked decline in the number of business units in South Dakota since 1926 and the decline in trade centers since 1931 is indicative of a new trend toward fewer business establishments is altogether a matter of speculation. These facts may simply indicate a situation that is due to the peculiar stress of the present time, and which may disappear with a recurrence of normal economic condition. It may even reflect a trend toward a consolidation of business enterprises resulting in fewer but larger business units.

5. A new type of chain store has entered South Dakota during the last ten years which perhaps has done considerable to center people's shopping tours in a larger trade center.<sup>5</sup> They are retail branches of nationally known mail order houses, department stores, five and ten cent stores and grocery stores, most all of which are located in focal trade centers. Previous to 1920 most of the chain organizations in the state were lumber yards, elevators, coal yards, and farm implement establishments, all of which are located in very small trade centers almost as frequently as in larger centers.

### The Prospect for the Small Trade Center

What can be said regarding the future of the small trade center? No prediction can be absolutely accurate for one cannot foretell the extent of future changes in means of transportation and communication or of changes in social organization. However, if the past gives any clue, as

5. Landis, *op. cit.* Part IV.

TABLE 16.—The Number of South Dakota Trade Centers in Various Classes, 1901 Compared to 1931

Class (Business Units)	Trade Centers — 1901 Number	Per Cent	Trade Centers — 1931 Number	Per Cent
Under 5	252	51.4	276	41.9
One	122	24.9	159	23.7
5- 9	59	12.0	101	15.1
10-14	27	5.5	68	10.2
15-19	25	5.1	49	7.3
20-24	31	6.3	38	5.7
25-49	63	12.9	90	13.4
50-74	21	4.3	27	4.0
75-99	6	1.2	10	1.5
100-199	5	1.0	5	.7
200 and above	1	.2	6	.9
Total	490	100.0	670	100.0

we believe it does, the following may be said regarding the small trade center:

1. The mortality of small centers has been and probably will be much greater than of larger trade centers. With regard to the permanence of trade centers it is conclusively shown that the small center is much less permanent than is the large center. This is explained largely by the fact that it possesses fewer business units. If these business enterprises cease to operate, or fail, the trade center goes out of existence. In the larger center where there are many trade units, a considerable proportion may fail and the trade center still maintain its existence. Certain conditions may, however, put the trade center with few business units in a position of special strain. The changes during the years 1911 to 1921 did this, as have conditions in recent years.

2. The trade center located on a railroad line has had a much greater possibility of surviving and a slightly greater possibility of growing than one located away from a railroad. This relationship will doubtless persist but perhaps will have diminishing importance as trunk highways and truck lines are extended.

3. There is every evidence that the state of South Dakota will possess relatively fewer very small trade centers than it possessed previous to the coming of the automobile. In summary on this point tables 16 and 17 are presented. Table 16 shows the actual number and per cent of various classes of trade centers in the state for the years 1901 and 1931. In 1901 approximately 25 out of each 100 trade centers possessed only one business unit, in 1931 approximately 24 out of 100, which represents a four per cent decrease. The relative decrease in trade centers under five business units is even more marked, in 1921 more than half (51.4 per cent) of all trade centers possessed under five business units, in 1931 only 41.9 per cent of all trade centers were under this size, a decrease of 18.5 per cent. For practically all classes above five business units the percentage is higher for 1931 than for 1901. These comparisons indicate clearly that it is the trade center with less than five business units that has declined, and also that those centers with two to four business units have declined more than have single business unit trade centers.

Table 17, which shows the percentage distribution of all business units by classes of trade centers, presents similar but much more striking evi-

dence. In 1901, 1.7 per cent of all stores in the state were in trade centers of one business unit, whereas, in 1933 only 1.4 per cent were in centers of one business unit, which represents a decrease of 17.6 per cent. In 1901, 6.3 per cent of business units in the state were in trade centers of under five business units; in 1933 only 4.1 per cent of business enterprises were in trade centers of under five business establishments, which represents a decline of more than one-third. In other words, in 1933 there were one-third fewer business enterprises in trade centers of under five business enterprises than in 1901. The relative decline is much more marked in the eastern part of the state, for 5.3 per cent of all business enterprises there were in trade centers of under five population units in 1901 whereas in 1933 only 2.5 per cent were in such centers. This represents a decline of more than 50 per cent of business units in small trade centers. The trend in the western section of the state is in the same direction but relatively much less, varying from 13.4 per cent in 1901 to 9.5 per cent in 1933, which represents approximately a 30 per cent decrease. Trade centers of 5 to 24 business units show a relative increase in the state as a whole and a marked increase in the western part of the state; they maintain approximately the same general distribution in the eastern part. The relative importance of trade centers with 25 to 99 business units is less in 1933 than 1901 in the state and in the eastern part of the state, but greater in the western part. The relative number of business units for the state in trade centers of more than 100 business units is much greater than in 1901 being, in fact, almost 70 per cent greater. The increase has been due to an increase in these centers in the eastern part of the state rather than in the western part.

TABLE 17.—Relative Proportion of Business Units in Various Sized Trade Centers, 1901 Compared to 1933 for the State and for East and West River Divisions

Class (Business Units)	State—Per Cent		East—Per Cent		West—Per Cent	
	1901	1933	1901	1933	1901	1933
<b>Under 5</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>9.5</b>
One	1.7	1.4	1.4	.6	4.0	4.2
<b>5-24</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>26.0</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>27.5</b>
5-9	5.3	6.4	5.6	5.7	3.7	3.9
10-14	4.4	6.7	4.9	6.7	1.3	6.8
15-19	6.0	6.6	6.1	6.8	5.5	5.9
20-24	9.8	6.6	9.6	6.9	11.6	5.9
<b>25-99</b>	<b>55.0</b>	<b>47.4</b>	<b>57.7</b>	<b>47.3</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>47.7</b>
25-49	30.9	26.3	32.6	27.5	18.4	21.8
50-74	17.3	12.1	17.1	12.1	18.3	11.8
75-99	7.0	9.1	8.0	7.7	—	14.2
<b>100 and above</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>27.7</b>	<b>15.3</b>
100-199	8.9	5.8	6.1	6.3	27.8	4.2
200 and above	4.1	16.3	4.7	17.8	—	11.0

All the evidence indicates clearly, then, that it is the trade center with less than five business units which is declining in South Dakota. The decline in numbers of this type of center has been approximately 10 per cent, while the decline in the number of business units in the state located in these centers has been approximately 35 per cent. During the same time the number of business units in cities of 100 or more business units have increased approximately 70 per cent.

This smallest trade center is declining in both the eastern and western sections of the state, though much more rapidly in the eastern part where trade centers are much more dense, and where larger cities are more numerous.

4. Other studies indicate clearly that the small trade center both in South Dakota<sup>6</sup> and elsewhere<sup>7</sup> is also losing many of its functions. In fact it is retaining largely only those types of business enterprises that deal in practical and necessary merchandise — enterprises dealing in those types of goods in which people demand little selection such as work clothing, staple food, and gasoline. Articles purchased at less frequent intervals such as dress clothing and furniture, as well as luxuries, are monopolized by larger centers. The farmer's deliberate shopping tours are directed to these larger centers.

5. There is no reason to believe that small trade centers (under five business units) will very soon disappear; in fact they may not entirely disappear at all in South Dakota. It is noteworthy that between 1900 and 1933 trends toward growth have affected large and small centers in the same way and to about the same degree. That is, during this period that has been characterized by a decline in trade centers, the smaller centers which have succeeded in surviving have declined no more radically than larger centers. However, a much lower proportion of them survive in crisis periods.

---

6. Landis, *Op. Cit.*, p. 38 ff.

7. Zimmerman, *Op. Cit.*, p. 19 ff.; Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p. 45 ff.