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P.H. Landis

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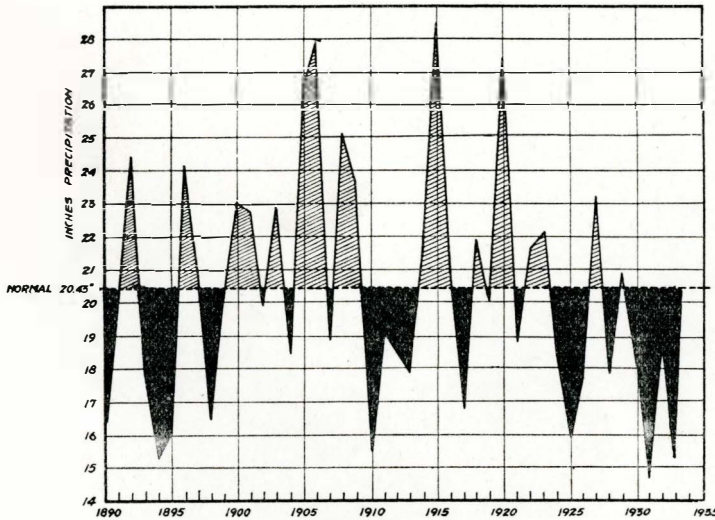
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Rural Relief in South Dakota

With Special Attention to Rural Relief Families
Under the New Deal Relief Program

By

Paul H. Landis



Drought—The Unconquerable Spectre Has Visited South Dakota
Bringing Lean Years.

Department of Rural Sociology
Agricultural Experiment Station of The South Dakota State College
of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts Cooperating With the Division of
Research and Statistics of the Federal Emergency Relief
Administration

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Rural Relief in South Dakota

With Special Attention to Rural Relief Families Under the New Deal Relief Program*

By
Paul H. Landis

I. Introduction

The Current Relief Situation In South Dakota

The relief situation in South Dakota is due primarily to drouth and only indirectly due to the nation-wide depression. Rainfall has been below normal for every year except two since 1923, and during one of these years barely reached normal. The period January 1, 1930 to January 1, 1934 climaxes the longest period of drouth the State has seen since weather bureau records have been kept. (See graph on front cover page). One can safely conclude that the state would have needed relief in the year 1933 had there been no depression. It is true that the preceeding years of drouth and depression had exhausted reserves, thus expanding relief needs to unusual proportions.

General Facts That Contribute To An Understanding of the Relief Situation

Settlement History in Relation to Precipitation.—The settlement of South Dakota has been erratic because of the marginal nature of the area for agriculture. The chief limiting factor is rainfall. Consecutive years of above normal rainfall have led to rapid settlement and land booms, whereas periods of prolonged drouth have led to migration from the state. During periods of land booms, grazing land has been taken over for cultivation which proved non-productive in periods of drouth.¹

The over-settlement of extremely marginal parts of the state has been stimulated by railroad companies, land speculators and other private interests.² The absence of a definite land settlement policy (unless it has been to get the maximum amount of land into private hands to produce tax revenue) on the part of the state has contributed to this situation.

Rural-Urban Distribution of Population.—South Dakota is one of the four most rural states in the union.³ It is strictly agricultural in practically all sections, and possesses the usual accompanying trade centers of any agricultural community. The trade centers are naturally dependent

* Full responsibility for data and statements appearing in this publication rest with the author rather than the Federal Relief Administration.

1. Landis, Paul H., *Growth and Decline of South Dakota Trade Centers, 1901-1933*, S. D. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. 279, pp. 5-10.

2. Johnson, Sherman E. and Steele, Harry A., *Some Aspects of the Farm Mortgage Situation in South Dakota and their Relation to a Future Land Policy*, S. D. Agr. Exp. Sta. Circular 9 pp. 56-58.

3. Kumlien, W. F., *The High School Education of Farm Boys and Girls in South Dakota*, S. D. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. 250 p. 5.

entirely upon the prosperity of the farming population in their hinterlands. Urbanization has progressed in the state but this also has been due primarily to changed agricultural conditions during the war and post-war period. Improvements in farm technique, a raised standard of living and an increase in the consumption of luxury articles created a need for more elaborate trade centers and more extensive merchandising than was previously necessary when rural people possessed more of those pioneer characteristics which made for self-sufficiency. Decline in farm income has consequently denied the farmer the things he ordinarily obtained from the trade center, which has in turn cut off the source of income of the agricultural trade center merchant.¹

Racial Characteristics.—The state is entirely Caucasian except for 21,833 Indians. The Indians are confined to reservations and therefore constitute a separate problem.

Cultural Characteristics.—The state is settled predominantly by immigrants of Northern European stock² who are by cultural background, and by reputation in this country, ambitious, energetic and thrifty. Their failure in the present depression is, therefore, an index of unavoidable conditions rather than of slothfulness.

Most of these groups by tradition believe in education, a high standard of living, and in progress. The state ranks high, viewed from the standpoint of proportion of people who are literate and the proportion of both rural and urban children attending high school.³

Agriculture is of necessity the principal occupation in most areas. The State Census of 1925 shows that 65 per cent of all workers were engaged in agriculture.⁴

The Credit Situation.—The period 1930 to 1934 cannot be understood from a credit standpoint without probing into the preceding ten-year period. The State Rural Credits Department, life insurance companies, and local banks extended credit on a large proportion of the land in the state. The trend in economic events which began in the latter part of the 1920's and which has extended into the 1930's has made it impossible for those who have loaned money to realize their principal or interest. This condition has made it impossible for many who borrowed money to maintain their farms and for others to clear them from debt. The risks involved in loaning money have led local banks to charge interest rates ranging from eight to ten per cent.

Banks.—Banks in South Dakota passed through the most severe crisis before the period covered by this study. In 1921 there were 694 banks in the state while in 1934 there were only 365.⁵ The majority of the 329 disappearing banks failed.

Price Conditions in 1932.—The only fair crop during the period studied came in 1932 when prices were so low that farmers were not compensated for seed and cost of production. This crop might well have been fed to livestock or have been carried over, but most farmers were compelled to sell at current low prices in order to live or to satisfy creditors.

1. Landis, Paul H. *op. cit.* pp. 9 and 21.

2. Kumlien, W. F., *op. cit.* p. 8.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 8 and 9.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

5. Landis, Paul H., *South Dakota Town-Country Trade Relations, 1901-1931*, S. D. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. 274 pp. 16 and 19.

Absence of Permanent Relief Agencies.—In the accepted use of the term there are no permanent relief agencies in the rural areas of South Dakota although all but fifteen of the sixty-nine counties are wholly rural, with only six of the total number having cities of more than 10,000 people. The board of county commissioners administers a fund set aside for the county poor, and in those counties having a poor farm, supervises the farm.

The county commissioners are not primarily a relief organization as they have many duties and administer many funds. They have, ordinarily, neither provisions for investigating needs of families, nor for doing family case work. They are primarily concerned in their relief activities with caring for the aged, or for chronic paupers.

The state has a mother's pension law authorizing the counties to make provision for mothers who would otherwise be dependent upon charity.

The Red Cross is the most active relief organization in rural areas. It has county and local chapters which have been very active in drouth relief throughout the state. It is supported locally by membership fees and other contributions, but in times of emergency brings funds and supplies from outside areas into the state. In fact, previous to the development of the federal relief programs in the state, the Red Cross provided a large share of the livestock feed and human relief.

During the early part of the depression period local contributions to the Red Cross were relatively large, but in 1932, when the federal government began activities, many communities were so stricken by drouth that Red Cross contributions were very low. In August 1932 the Federal Reconstruction Finance Corporation began a program providing work relief in the state. This was replaced in 1933 by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration which is in operation at the present time.

II. A Statistical Summary of Relief During the Drouth-Depression Period, 1930-1934

Red Cross Activities

Previous to the establishment of federal relief agencies the Red Cross assumed the major share of the relief program. Table 1 summarizes their drouth relief expenditures in South Dakota during the years 1931 and 1932. The total funds expended amount to \$648,728.54. Of this \$336,041.52 were spent in human relief.

TABLE 1.—A Summary of Red Cross Drought Relief Expenditures in South Dakota During 1931-1932*

Kind	Value
Human Relief -----	\$336,041.52
Livestock Feed -----	281,677.81
Locally Distributed Supplies -----	9,778.04
Distribution Expense -----	21,231.17
Total -----	\$648,728.54

* Information supplied through the courtesy of Wm. M. Baxter, Jr., Manager of American Red Cross, Mid Western Branch, St. Louis, Missouri.

Table 2 summarizes the supplies distributed from July first, 1932 to December first, 1933. The activities described in this table have been conducted parallel with activities of the federal government.

TABLE 2.—A Summary of Red Cross Supplies Distributed in South Dakota July 1, 1932 to December 31, 1933*

Items	Frequencies
Families Requesting Aid -----	34,048
No. other Distributing Agencies -----	9
Cloth Yards -----	504,846
Sheeting Yards -----	5,082
Blankets, Comforters -----	15,793
Garments, dozen -----	29,518
Sweaters, dozen -----	2,951

* Information supplied through the courtesy of Wm. M. Baxter, Jr., Manager of American Red Cross, Midwestern Branch, St. Louis, Missouri.

Relief Activities Of The County Commissioners

The care of county poor by county commissioners amounted to \$503,214.12 in 1930 and increased to \$986,326.46 in 1933 (Table 3). The items for mothers pensions, while not a relief expenditure, undoubtedly keeps many mothers from the relief rolls, and is, therefore, listed. This expenditure decreased from \$364,299.36 in 1930 to \$337,407.76 in 1933. The tendency of some counties to shift mothers pension cases to the Civil Works Administration or to the Federal Emergency Relief Administration may explain this decrease. It is unlikely that a decrease in the number of mothers needing public aid explains it.

TABLE 3.—Annual Expenditures by County Commissioners for Years 1920 to 1933 Inclusive*

	For Care of County Poor	For Mother's Pensions
1930 -----	\$503,214.12	\$364,299.36
1931 -----	\$653,543.09	\$360,179.09
1932 -----	\$984,180.70	\$364,481.70
1933 -----	\$986,326.46	\$337,407.76

* Source: Interest Bearing Debts and Classified Expenditures, bulletin issued annually by the state Division of Taxation.

The Federal Emergency Relief Administration Activities

The major relief activities of the federal government are summarized in Table 4 which shows the number of families and number of persons receiving aid; first, under the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and second, under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. Three hundred eighty-seven families received aid in August 1932. The climax came in February when 31,295 received Reconstruction Finance Corporation aid. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration program began in July 1933 with a total of 9,900 families on its rolls and reached its peak in April 1934 with 47,075 families on relief rolls. The majority of cases under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration have been maintained through work relief rather than direct relief. Single persons have made up a rather small proportion of the total persons helped and transient per-

TABLE 4.—A Statistical Summary of Families and Persons Receiving Federal Relief, August 1932 to April 1934*

Months	Resident Families Given Relief From All Public Funds						Single Resident Person		Transient Person
	Direct Work		Work Relief		Total Direct and Work Relief		Work	Direct	
	Number Families	Number Persons Represented	Number Families	Number Persons Represented‡	Number Families Net	Number Persons Net			
Under Reconstruction Finance Corporation									
1932									
August			387	1,438					
September			1,796	6,533					
October			14,991	51,926					
November			13,645	48,729					
December			20,144	113,040					
1933									
January			23,168	86,880					
February			31,295	117,356					
March			30,865	115,744					
April			18,928	70,980					
May			15,255	57,206					
Under Federal Emergency Relief Administration									
1933									
July	3,003	11,581	7,975	35,461	9,900	42,085	187	564	1,378
August	4,043	15,865	9,925	44,331	13,440	57,052	311	685	554
September	4,159	16,804	13,219	59,265	16,367	71,562	390	888	490
October	4,111	15,881	22,622	102,546	24,854	112,129	368	300	275
November	3,997	16,817	30,225	134,408	33,373	146,809	480	66	292
December	16,656	67,151	536	2,085	17,192	69,236	2,908	43	237
1934									
January	26,001	104,573	180	709	26,181	105,282	7,594	20	310
February	26,164	100,939	173	619	26,337	101,558	7,662	1,509	356
March	21,271	71,379	24,148	97,361	34,431	134,621	5,085	3,111	296
April	3,068	6,504	45,896	197,274	47,075	205,457	250	1,894	335

* Data were obtained from records of the State Relief Administration.

‡ Estimated for those receiving aid under Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

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sons have been in the minority even as compared to single resident persons.

The expenditures of federal funds for each month from October 1932 through April 1933 is pictured in Figure 1. The expenditures up to July 1932 were made by Reconstruction Finance Corporation, those for July and subsequent months through the Federal Emergency Relief Adminis-

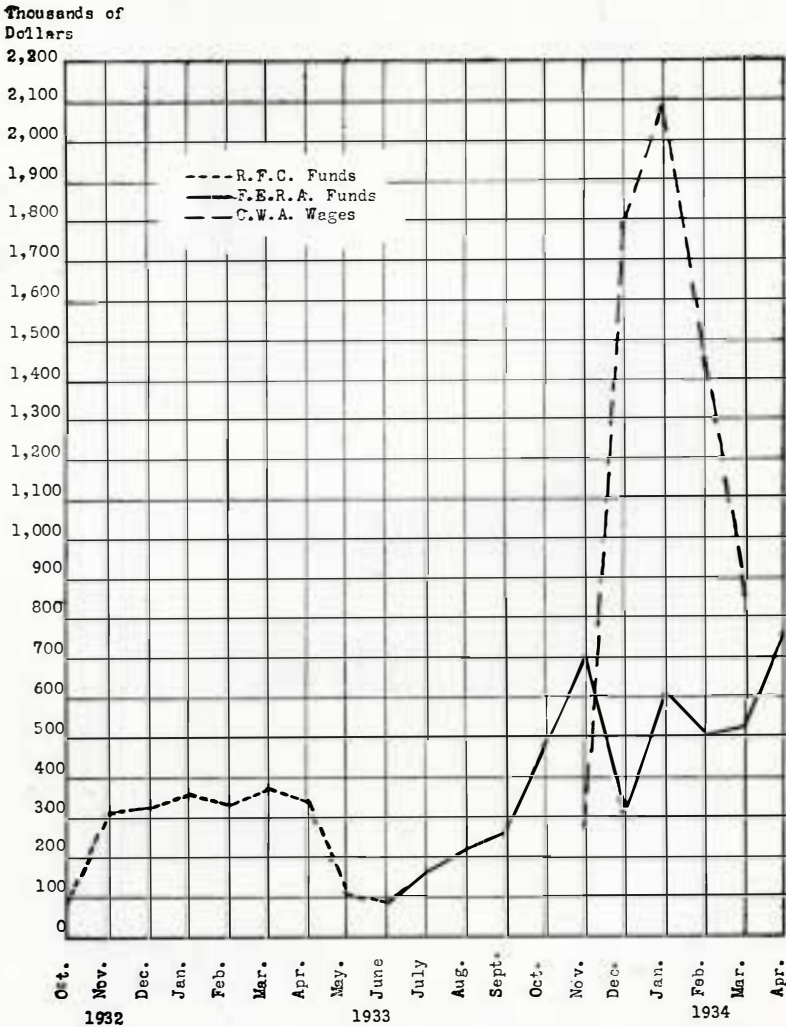


Fig. 1.—Federal Funds Spent for Relief in South Dakota, October 1932 to April 1934 inclusive, (Reconstruction Finance Corporation Funds to July 1933; Federal Emergency Relief Funds thereafter.) Along with Amounts Spent for Wages by the Civil Works Administration.

tration. The federal relief program began in October 1932 with an expenditure of approximately \$80,500 and reached its peak in March 1933 spending for that month over \$275,000. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration began in July 1933 with an expenditure of \$155,000. In November their expenditures increased to over \$700,000. The beginning of the Civil Works program, on November 18 in most counties, brought relief expenditures down to \$300,000 in December. By January, however, relief had climbed again to almost \$650,000. This may have been due in part to the cutting of Civil Works Administration laborers to a half-time basis. The largest expenditure for the entire period came in April totaling more than \$760,000. This is due no doubt in part to the fact that the Civil Works Administration in South Dakota was completely dispensed with on March 15.

Livestock Feed.—Federal expenditures for livestock feed have been heavy in the state. Table 5 indicates that \$616,623.31 worth of hay was

TABLE 5.—Amounts of Hay Distributed in South Dakota for Drouth Relief, December 1933 to April 20, 1934*

Month	Value
December	\$ 6,036.11
January	47,496.66
February	214,264.67
March	163,683.70
April (to 20th)	95,142.17
Others not classified by months	90,000.00
Total	\$616,623.31

* Information supplied by the State Relief Administration.

distributed during the winter months of 1933-34. In addition some 4,615-804 bushels of grain have been distributed. The Relief Administration has also obtained approximately 500 cars of wood for fuel. Other miscellaneous expenditures for administrative purposes and those expenditures of local governing units in connection with the Federal Emergency Relief Program have, no doubt, amounted to a considerable sum.

Surplus Foods Distributed.—In addition to the other activities summarized, the surplus commodities products listed in Table 6 have been distributed in the state. During the four months of the winter 1933 and 1934 almost 700,000 pounds of butter were distributed, approximately 850,000 pounds of flour, over 1,500,000 pounds of pork, about 200,000 pounds of beef, approximately 150,000 pounds of lard and about 40,000 pounds of cheese and almost 60,000 dozen eggs.

TABLE 6.—A Summary of Surplus Food Commodities Distributed in South Dakota, December 1933 to March 1934

Month	Pounds Butter	Pounds Flour	Pounds Pork	Pounds Beef	Pounds Lard	Pounds Cheese	Dozen Eggs
December	43,964.5	91,211.5	20,107.5	-----	-----	-----	-----
January	205,407.5	343,775.5	456,917.7	1,451	-----	-----	797
February	189,766	318,914	523,501	69,567	25,970	-----	51,902
March	252,777	88,282	686,922	118,533	120,374	39,053	4,763
Total	691,915	842,183	1,687,448	189,551	146,344	39,053	57,462

The Civil Works Administration.—Civil Works Administration activities are also summarized here (Table 7) even though Civil Works employment was not considered relief. Employment has such a direct bearing upon relief activities that a statement concerning the Civil Works program is important. A total of \$6,436,993.48 was spent for workers' earnings, \$1,213,078.12 for team hire and \$17,244.38 for truck hire. The weekly average number of workers employed was 32,585, of teams 16,417 and of trucks 42.7. The average weekly earnings in the state for workers was \$357,610.74, for teams \$67,393.60 and for trucks \$958.02. The maximum number of workers was employed during the period January 12 to March 1 when they totaled over forty thousand. The maximum payroll came on January 19, which date marked the end of full-time work in rural districts. At that time rural workers were reduced to a 15-hour week with pay at \$7.50 whereas they had previously worked 30 hours and received \$15.00 pay. The effect of the Civil Works Administration program on the activities of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration are pointed out in the summary which follows below and also in Part IV.

TABLE 7.—A Summary of Civil Works Administration Activities in South Dakota Showing Workers, Teams and Trucks and Their Earnings for Each Week From November 20, 1933 to March 22, 1934*

Week Ending	Number Workers	Number Teams	Number Trucks†	Workers' Earnings	Team Earnings	Truck Earnings
Nov. 23, 1933	8,495	4,543	--	\$ 97,552.50	\$ 19,350.34	\$
Nov. 30, 1933	16,426	3,458	--	193,454.88	44,240.88	
Dec. 7, 1933	27,833	12,441	16	340,882.69	55,777.97	159.86
Dec. 14, 1933	33,858	15,246	22	423,469.13	75,522.62	308.63
Dec. 21, 1933	37,523	18,325	27	516,273.83	91,691.15	451.31
Dec. 28, 1933	37,655	20,282	24	500,833.18	99,661.33	430.99
Jan. 5, 1934	38,604	19,416	22	521,821.00	99,664.32	402.30
Jan. 12, 1934	40,263	20,928	33	588,847.96	113,675.06	404.26
Jan. 19, 1934	41,056	22,333	24	606,941.73	121,626.10	421.11
Jan. 26, 1934	42,463	21,884	46	365,890.14	73,252.40	1,185.28
Feb. 1, 1934	41,170	21,585	101	349,631.38	68,305.00	2,540.22
Feb. 8, 1934	40,350	20,164	96	345,861.76	67,453.50	1,677.45
Feb. 15, 1934	41,131	20,760	71	359,404.79	66,305.26	1,921.09
Feb. 22, 1934	41,600	21,745	77	359,679.92	67,290.30	1,591.20
March 1, 1934	42,262	21,905	89	365,716.78	67,234.70	2,636.80
March 8, 1934	29,718	13,592	69	262,075.28	46,418.19	1,451.97
March 15, 1934	24,650	10,926	58	225,804.41	35,609.00	1,661.91
March 22, 1934	1,550	--	--	12,860.12		
Gross Totals	586,527	285,514	769	\$6,437,002.48	\$1,213,078.12	\$17,244.38
Weekly Av.	32,585	16,417	42.7	\$ 357,611.24	\$ 67,393.60	\$ 958.02

* Figures were obtained from records of the State Relief Administration previous to final auditing so slight inaccuracies may appear in some items.

† Trucks paid by County or by State Highway Commission are not included.

A further point of interest with reference to the Civil Works Administration is the ratio of female workers to male workers. The weekly average number of women on the pay roll was 695, that for men was 32,581, a ratio of approximately 1 to 50.

In addition to the Civil Works activities a total amount of \$198,196.79 was spent for Civil Works Service, which employed an average of 18 men and 81 women per week for 18 weeks at an average weekly expenditure of \$11,010.93. Female labor predominated in Civil Works Service with a ratio of four females to every male.

Summary

The per capita distribution of cash for human relief by the federal government in South Dakota during the last 19 months has totaled \$9.04 for every man, woman and child, which makes an average monthly expenditure of \$0.48 per person. (Table 8). The Civil Works expenditures for five months equal \$9.32 per person, or a monthly per capita average of \$1.86 for the five months in which the program was in operation. In addition to these expenditures the Red Cross for the winter 1931-32 spent a total average amount of \$0.49 per person for human relief. At the same time county expenditures for the care of the poor have increased the following per capita amounts per year: 1930, \$0.77; 1931, \$0.94; 1932, \$1.42; 1933, \$1.42.

In addition to the above expenditures extensive amounts of livestock feed and many commodities for human relief have been distributed which are not included.

TABLE 8.—Month by Month Per Capita Expenditures by the Federal Government for Human Relief* and for Wages on Civil Works Projects in South Dakota, October, 1932-April, 1934†

Month	Value of Federal Relief Per Individual	Value of Civil Works Wages Per Individual‡	Total Per Individual
1932			
October -----	\$.11	----	\$.11
November -----	.31	----	.31
December -----	.32	----	.32
1933			
January -----	.37	----	.37
February -----	.34	----	.34
March -----	.40	----	.40
April -----	.35	----	.35
May -----	.17	----	.17
June -----	.12	----	.12
July -----	.22	----	.22
August -----	.30	----	.30
September -----	.37	----	.37
October -----	.70	----	.70
November -----	1.01	.42	1.43
December -----	.44	2.57	3.01
1934			
January -----	.91	3.00	3.91
February -----	.74	2.04	2.78
March -----	.77	1.29	2.06
April -----	1.09	----	1.09
Total -----	9.01 (19 Mos.)	9.32 (5 Mos.)	18.36 (19 Mos.)
Monthly Av. 1932 ---	.25 (3 Mos.)	----	.25 (3 Mos.)
Monthly Av. 1933 ---	.40 (12 Mos.)	1.49 (2 Mos.)	.65 (12 Mos.)
Monthly Av. 1934 ---	.87 (4 Mos.)	2.11 (3 Mos.)	2.46 (4 Mos.)
Monthly Average			
Total Period -----	.43 (19 Mos.)	1.86 (5 Mos.)	.97 (19 Mos.)

* By the Reconstruction Finance from October 1932 to July 1, 1933; by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration after that date.

† Population figures for 1930 were used in making these calculations.

‡ Workers' wages only are included, no amounts received for trucks and teams.

III. Rural Relief Families In Miner, Spink and Walworth Counties

Location of Areas Studied

For the study of characteristics of relief families an attempt was made to select, in so far as possible, counties that represented typical farming areas in the state. Miner county was chosen as representative of a diversified farming area,¹ Spink county as representative of the spring wheat growing region² and Walworth county as representative of spring wheat growing and grazing.³ It is true that not all types of farming areas are represented by these counties, but it has not been possible to cover a larger area.

General Description of Land Use Policy and Social Organization in the Counties Studied

Miner County.—Miner county is located in southeastern South Dakota and is entirely rural, Howard the county seat having only 1224 population. Ninety-four and one tenth per cent of the land area is in farms, with 70.5 per cent of the land in crops.⁴ Using 100 as the state index figure for crop yields, Miner county yields 99.62 per cent.⁵ Approximately 28 per cent of the county is given to corn cultivation, 21 per cent to pasture, 20 per cent to oats, 15 per cent to hay, five per cent to barley and five per cent to wheat.⁶

Miner county has a precipitation averaging between 20 and 25 inches per year and has a population density of 10 to 20 per square mile.⁷ (Table 9).

TABLE 9.—Average Annual Precipitation for Miner County, 1926 to 1934

Year	Total	Variation From Normal
1926	18.36	-3.65
1927	20.50	-1.51
1928	20.71	-1.30
1929	23.55	1.54
1930	19.55	-2.46
1931	15.78	-5.88
1932	18.91	-2.75
1933	18.36	-3.30
1934 (Jan.)	0.39	-0.02

* Station is located at Howard.

Source: Climatological Data, U. S. Weather Bureau

1. Rogers and Elliot describe this area as a moderate livestock feeding area producing corn, oats, wheat and hay. *Types of Farming in South Dakota*, S. D. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. p. 4.

2. Rogers and Elliot classify it as the intensive spring wheat area—"Wheat is the most important single crop in the two counties that make up the larger part of this section. The soil and climate combine to make this an ideal wheat country. More diversity in farming has developed here in recent years, but wheat continues to be of first importance." *Ibid.*, p. 5.

3. Rogers and Elliot classify it as the extensive small-grain area—"Large farms and extensive grain growing characterize this territory. . . . It appears that this entire area is in a period of change from grain farming to more livestock." *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7

5. *Ibid.*, p. 15

6. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

7. Landis, Paul H., *South Dakota Town-Country Trade Relations, 1901-1931*, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

Due to the fact that farmers depend to a considerable degree upon hogs, dairy cattle and poultry for a living the feed shortage situation in 1931 and 1933 was especially critical. The bonus on pigs and brood sows was especially timely as pigs could never have been fed. Those pigs which remained were trucked out to Minnesota and Iowa by buyers, the farmers being paid only 75c to \$1.00 per head in many cases.

Many unusual circumstances have contributed to the need for relief in Miner County during the last four years. Bank failures subsequent to 1921 must be given an important place. Table 10 shows the number of banks in each of the towns of the county. These data indicate that banks declined in number from 10 in 1921 to 3 in March 1933. All but two of these failures came previous to 1930, but the consequences, lowered resources and insufficient credit, have carried over.

Crop conditions during the last five years are of fundamental importance. Rainfall has been below normal for each year since 1926 excepting 1929. (See Table 9). In 1929 there was a two-thirds crop in the county; in 1930 a half crop of small grain; in 1931 a complete crop failure; in 1932 a half crop of small grain; in 1933 a complete failure except for one township in the northeastern part of the county. During each year the western part of the county has suffered from drouth. To add to the difficulties in the years 1932 and 1933, grasshoppers did some damage. Hail destroyed crops in some section in the years mentioned. An anthrax epidemic also figured somewhat in 1932 and especially in 1933 causing some families to lose all of their cattle. This disease is still present.

All the towns in the county are under 2500 population and have no industries on which they can depend, except the railroad which employs a few men. Business is consequently closely identified with agricultural conditions.

TABLE 10.—Number of Banks in Miner County Towns and Cities at Stated Intervals, 1921-1933^a

Towns	Oct. 1921	Oct. 1926	Jan. 1931	March 1933
Argonne (St. Mary's) -----	2	1	1	1
Canova -----	2	1	1	1
Carthage -----	1	1	1	1
Fedora -----	3	2	1	1
Howard -----	1	1	1	1
Roswell -----	1	1	1	1
Vilas -----	1	1	1	1
Total -----	10	6	4	3

* As listed in Bradstreet's Commercial Ratings.

Spink County.—Spink county, located in the north central part of eastern South Dakota is entirely rural except for Redfield city which had 2664 people in 1930. Eighty-six and one tenth per cent of the land is in farms and 66.85 per cent of the land is in crops.¹ Using 100 as the index figure for crop yields in the state Spink county yields 91.10 per cent.² Thirty-two per cent of the county is given to wheat cultivation, 30 per cent to pasture, about 18 per cent to corn, 10 per cent to hay, eight per cent to oats, and a small per cent to barley and flax.³

1. Rogers and Elliott, *op. cit.*
 2. *Ibid.*, p. 15
 3. *Ibid.*, p. 17

TABLE 11.—Average Annual Precipitation for Spink County, 1926 to 1934.

Year	Total	Variation From Normal
1926	17.94	-5.2
1927	26.76	6.98
1928	15.34	-4.44
1929	18.31	-4.92
1930	22.17	2.92
1931	13.95	-8.68
1932	15.9	-6.73
1933	11.98	-8.86
1934 (Jan.)	0.05	-0.52

* Average for reporting stations located at Redfield, Ashton and Mellette.
Source: Climatological Data, U. S. Weather Bureau.

Approximately three-fourths of the county has a precipitation of 20 to 25 inches, whereas the southwest quarter has from 15 to 20 inches. (See Table 11). The density of population is 10 to 20 per square mile.¹

The chief marketing organizations are grain elevators, livestock shipping associations, and produce companies. The principal credit institutions have been local banks, the federal government which granted feed and seed loans (1932) and, in the period previous to the depression, life insurance companies and the State Rural Credits. Retailing establishments are those ordinarily found in rural trade centers. All marketing, credit and retail enterprises are directly and wholly dependent upon agricultural conditions.

Among the unusual circumstances contributing to the relief situation in recent years are industrial conditions, which led to the closing of the North Western railroad shops in Redfield forcing about sixty men out of employment. This situation affected the cases studied very little, however, since Redfield city, being urban, was not included in the study. Bank failures contribute to the relief situation in a considerable degree. Only five banks remain in the county, whereas in 1921 there were 21. (See list in table No. 12) many people lost large amounts through bank failures.

Agricultural conditions induced the immediate relief situation. The last good corn crop came in 1927. In 1930 there was an average wheat crop, in 1931 a half crop, except in the southeastern corner of the county, where there was a complete failure. In 1932 there was an average wheat

TABLE 12.—Number of Banks in Spink County Towns and Cities at Stated Intervals, 1921-1933*

Towns	Oct. 1921	Oct. 1926	Jan. 1931	March 1933
Ashton	2	—	1	—
Athol	1	—	—	—
Brentford	1	1	1	—
Conde	2	—	—	1
Crandon	1	—	—	—
Doland	2	1	—	1
Frankfort	2	1	—	—
Mellette	2	1	2	1
Northville	1	—	—	—
Redfield	3	2	2	1
Tulare	2	1	1	—
Turton	2	—	—	1
Total	21	8	10	5

* As listed in Bradstreet's Commercial Ratings.

1. Landis, Paul H., *South Dakota Town-Country Trade Relations, 1901-1931. op. cit.*, p. 9.

crop; in 1933 wheat and other small grain crops were a complete failure while corn fodder and hay were scarce. The fodder which was cut was scarcely fit for feed unless stored in sheds, because of the dust storms which filled the shocks with dirt.

Livestock losses due to starvation were heavy in 1931 and 1932. Russian thistles were the principal local feed. In 1933 livestock was cared for almost entirely by feed shipped in from outside the state as a form of relief. The agricultural situation was directly responsible for the closing of elevators and other shipping industries.

Back of the agricultural situation was, of course, the prolonged drouth, data concerning which are summarized in Table 11. Only two years since 1926 have had normal rainfall. In 1931, and 1932 and 1933 the rainfall was over a third below normal.

The hot winds which accompany drouth are usually the destructive factor for small grain crops. Grasshoppers infested the county in 1931, and 1932, but the damage was confined to the irrigated gardens, as the fields were destroyed by the drouth before they came. A mild epidemic of black leg has been present in the county but losses due to the disease have been relatively few.

Walworth County.—Walworth County borders the Missouri river in the north central part of South Dakota and is entirely rural except for Mobridge city which had a population of 3464 in 1930. Eighty and eight tenths per cent of the land is in farms but only 48.11 per cent is in crops.¹ Using 100 as an index figure for the crop yields in the state, Walworth county yields 93.59.² Approximately 48 per cent of the area is in pasture, nearly 19 per cent is given to wheat, 15 per cent to hay, about nine per cent to corn, three per cent to oats, three per cent to barley and three per cent to flax.³

The greater part of Walworth county is in that area which has from 10 to 20 inches of precipitation a year, while the southeastern corner has 20 to 25 inches. The population density is 10 to 20 per square mile.

The fact that almost 50 per cent of the land area remains untilled is highly significant in understanding the present relief situation. The uncultivated land produces the native grasses from virgin sod so that grazing and wild hay are available, even after such years of drouth as the area has been experiencing. This is the chief factor to be taken into considera-

TABLE 13.—Average Annual Precipitation for Walworth County, 1927 to 1934*

Year	Total	Variation From Normal
1927	21.16†	
1928	14.69†	
1929	13.85†	
1930	17.15†	
1931	13.82	-4.27
1932	19.50	1.41
1933	9.21	-8.88
1934 (Jan.)	0.0	-0.74

* Principal station is located at Mobridge.

† Average for Glenham and Mobridge Stations.

Source: Climatological Data, U. S. Weather Bureau

1. Rogers and Elliot, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

tion in explaining why this county has fared much better in recent years than have Miner and Spink counties.

Among the unusual circumstances contributing to the current relief situation are the agricultural situation, bank failures, general industrial and business conditions. The agricultural conditions, aside from the unfavorable price level, have been produced principally by drouth. (See Table 13). The wheat crop, which is the chief crop in Walworth county, was fair in 1930 and 1931, average in 1932, but very poor in 1933, in fact, almost a total failure except in the southeastern part. A part of the eastern section has been subject to hail storms, while a grasshopper scourge extended throughout the county in 1933.

More than half of the entire county is in grass and hay. Grazing conditions have been good throughout the entire period due to the fact that the native grasses resist drouth. Moreover, hay is available for winter feed from the native grasses of the lowlands and old lake beds. In more severe years farmers supplement the local supply by crossing the river into Corson county where Indian reservation or government tracts can be rented for a small sum for grazing or for cutting hay. Most farmers, therefore, have not been forced to sell at prevailing low prices, and have been fortunate in having no livestock disease epidemics.

There have been seven bank failures in the last five years. Table 14 shows the number of banks existing in the various parts of the county for different intervals between 1921 and 1933. Losses of money through bank failures and the curtailing of credit facilities have much bearing upon the relief situation.

TABLE 14.—Number of Banks in Walworth County Towns and Cities at Stated Intervals, 1921-1933*

Towns	Oct. 1921	Oct. 1926	Jan. 1931	March 1933
Akaska -----	1	1	1	1
Glenham -----	1	1	1	1
Java -----	2	2	2	2
Lowry -----	1	1	1	1
Mobridge -----	3	3	3	3
Selby -----	2	2	2	2
Total -----	10	9	8	4

* As listed in Brdastreet's Commercial Ratings.

The only industry of any importance has been the repair shops of the Milwaukee railroad located in Mobridge. The moving of these shops to Miles City, Montana, in 1930 threw approximately 200 men out of work. While the majority of these men live in Mobridge, which excludes them from this study, some of them have moved to small tracts outside the city and therefore are covered by this survey.

Retail business activities and shipping and marketing activities, of course, have been severely afflicted by the conditions existing in agriculture.

Purpose and Method of Survey

The Purpose of the Study.—The study represents a preliminary attempt to understand why certain families in South Dakota have been unable to maintain their financial independence throughout the crisis per-

iod following 1929, while their neighbors, located in a similar situation and in the same community, have been able to continue on their own resources through the long period of misfortune.

That the factual data accumulated in this study should throw some light upon this problem will become evident as the study proceeds. Ultimately, the discoveries of fundamental differences, if such exist, between relief and non-relief families should lead to the formulation of social policies designed to get at the root of the difficulties lying beneath the economic inadequacy of families who fail in an emergency. The data in the South Dakota survey are hardly adequate for sweeping generalizations, but this is only one of several comparable studies which are going on throughout various states under the supervision of the Division of Research and Statistics of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration.

Period Covered.—The data on family characteristics cover intensively the period January 1, 1930 to January 1, 1934, however, some of the questions in the schedule deal with longer periods, others with shorter periods.

Collection of Data.—All of the data presented in this section are based on case study interviews with relief and non-relief families, the information being obtained in answer to a series of questions on a printed schedule. The schedules used were the standard form prepared by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in cooperation with which the study was conducted. The schedules used were DRS-3C, "A Survey of Rural Families Receiving Relief in October 1933", and DRS-16, "A Survey of Rural Non-relief Families", Question 23 of DRS-3C supplementary "Changes in Living" was also used with all families interviewed, both relief and non-relief. The schedules are reproduced in the appendix.

The schedules were collected by a staff of field workers all of whom had college degrees or equivalent training, and were mailed from the field daily and edited in the office at Brookings. Where inconsistencies appeared schedules were returned immediately to the field in order that errors might be corrected. Funds for field workers and tabulators were available through the Civil Works Administration.

Basic Definitions.—A relief family was one falling within the bounds of the following definition:¹

"Relief is to be taken to mean relief chargeable to public funds (Federal, State, or local) and covers only those cases of residents within the state which are eligible to be reported to the Federal Emergency Relief Administration each month on its Form 10-A. Relief includes both direct relief and work relief, and covers orders for food, shelter, clothing, fuel, light, household necessities (such as soap, matches, lamps, etc.), medical care given in the client's home or in a doctor's office (but not medical care given in a clinic or a hospital), transportation, moving expenses, car tokens, and cash whenever cash is given in lieu of the above-mentioned commodities or services or as wages for work relief."

A non-relief family was defined as one which had obtained no relief during the period January 1, 1930, up to the date when the study was made,—approximately February 15 in Spink county, March 1 in Miner county and April 1 in Walworth county. In order to be sure that the fami-

1. Issued in special instructions to local research supervisors by Dr. E. D. Tetreau, Rural Relief Analyst, Federal Emergency Relief Administration.

lies studied had not been on relief, records of the County Relief Administration, the County Commissioners' poor-relief list and records of Red Cross were checked. Because of the dire feed situation, families who had received only livestock feed were not considered relief families and were, therefore, eligible for study. This exception seemed to be necessary in order that we obtain a sufficient sample of non-relief families in two of the three counties.

The United States Census definition of rural and urban was accepted; that is a municipality of 2500 or more population constitutes an urban district. Only rural areas were studied.

Sampling Procedure.—Relief cases selected for study were those found on relief rolls of the respective counties in October, 1933. In Miner and Walworth Counties the entire October relief list was studied as there were less than two hundred cases; in Spink county where more than 700 families were on relief in October, every seventh case from a complete list was chosen.

Non-relief cases were sampled according to the following procedure: a list of all families receiving relief since January 1930 was prepared from the rolls of the various relief organizations, Red Cross, the county commissioners and County Relief Administration. Any individual whose name did not appear on this list was eligible for study. In the open-country the two nearest non-relief neighbors to the relief family were taken as a control group. In villages an alphabetical list of all heads of families was prepared, and after relief cases had been eliminated, a random sample twice as great as the number of relief cases studied was selected.

Explanation of Plan for Presenting Data

Classification of Cases.—A three-fold classification has been followed in most tables; village families, farm owners, farm tenants. This classification involves some inconsistencies but nevertheless seems to be more significant for the interpretation of the data than any other. These inconsistencies can be ruled out in part, or at least explained, by definition. A **village family** was defined as one not operating land. Under South Dakota conditions this means almost universally that the individual resides in a village. He may, however, own land as many village residents do. A **farm owner** was defined as one who both owns and operates land.¹ Part of the land operated may be rented. A **farm tenant** was defined as one who operates land, but who does not own land. For the sake of brevity "owner" is used for "farm owner" and "tenant" for "farm tenant" in presenting tabular material.

A village was defined, for purposes of this study, as any population aggregate large enough to be considered a village by people in the community. It needed not to be incorporated and might range in size up to 2500 population.

Summary of Number of Cases Studied.—The number of cases are synonymous throughout most of the tables, so frequencies are listed in Table

1. The Division of Research and Statistics of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration classified all cases into two groups: those operating three or more acres of land, and those operating less than three acres of land. Those operating less than three acres of land are synonymous with village residents as defined above, while the owner-tenant classification makes up the group operating more than three acres. The village-owner-tenant classification is much more significant in South Dakota where all farm land holdings are larger than three acres.

TABLE 15.—A Summary of the Samples Studied Grouped According to the Standard Classification Used

	Miner Co. Frequency	Spink Co. Frequency	Walworth Co. Frequency	Three Counties Combined Frequency
Relief Cases -----	114*	99†	110	323
Village -----	74	23	79	176
Open Country -----	46	76	31	147
Owner -----	3	14	9	26
Tenant -----	37	62	22	121
Non-Relief Cases -----	132	200	208	600
Village -----	134	45	129	308
Open Country -----	58	155	79	292
Owner -----	52	115	51	218
Tenant -----	6	40	28	74
Net Total Cases -----	306	299	318	923

* A total of 116 cases were on October Relief rolls, but of these two were unavailable, reducing the total to 114.

† A total of 100 cases were selected for study but one was unavailable, reducing the total to 99.

15 to avoid needless repetition and to conserve space in subsequent tables. Where the number of cases differs from the figures listed frequency columns appear in the respective tables.

Use of County Data in Tables.—Village-owner-tenant tabulations for each county were made but the printed tables which follow present only a summary of total relief and non-relief cases for individual counties, with the village-owner-tenant classification appearing only for the three counties combined. While the sub-classifications for the individual counties are interesting, the cases are too few to make comparisons significant. Where variations occur in the individual counties that seem large enough to influence strongly the total for the three counties combined, the reader is apprised of this fact in the text comment accompanying tables.

The gross figures for each county are presented for those who may be interested in the local situation. Because the total relief and non-relief sample for each county is of necessity small, and because general conditions, size of land holdings, types of farming, etc., create situations that are not always comparable, few comparisons between counties are made except as they may be essential to explaining the data appearing in the summary for the three counties.

Caution Necessary in Interpreting Results.—Caution is necessary in interpreting the data presented. A minute analysis and cross analysis taking into account all factors that cause a family to need relief was not possible, for numbers are too few to lead to trustworthy results when smaller group divisions are made. For this reason there are undoubtedly places where the most valid interpretation of the results obtained may not have been discovered.

It should also be stated that comparatively few of the cases studied are chronic relief cases, as these have been charges of the board of county commissioners and probably in most instances were not taken over by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration.¹ Cases for study were taken from the October lists of the county relief administration (federal); con-

1. Indigent poor were not eligible for federal relief in October although the tendency of county authorities was to shift as many cases as possible to the Relief Administration.

sequently chronic cases were for the most part omitted. Had the entire list of the county commissioners been included in the study, some characteristics of relief families might have been different. However, the results would have been less typical of the normal family which is compelled to accept public aid during the depression had the "county poor" lists made up a greater proportion of the cases studied.

Order of Presentation.—Topics are presented in the order in which they appear in the schedules used in collecting field data. Characteristics of relief families are compared throughout with those of the non-relief control group.

Characteristics of Rural Relief Families

I. Composition of Households

Age.—Heads of relief families are approximately four years younger than the heads of non-relief families, while their wives are almost five years younger than those of the non-relief families. (See Table No. 16.) This is explained to a considerable degree by the situation which exists in the small agricultural villages in South Dakota. Retired farmers in

TABLE 16.—Average Age of Heads of Relief and Non-Relief Households*

	Male Head or Husband		Wife or Female Head	
	Frequency	Av. Age (years)	Frequency	Av. Age (years)
Miner County				
Relief -----	114	46.09	100	40.28
Non-relief -----	173	50.03	153	44.48
Total -----	287	48.43	253	42.81
Spink County				
Relief -----	96	44.40	90	39.30
Non-relief -----	185	49.94	173	46.28
Total -----	281	46.63	263	43.88
Walworth County				
Relief -----	98	45.89	93	38.67
Non-relief -----	197	47.60	183	42.14
Total -----	295	46.96	276	40.96
Three Counties Combined				
Relief -----	305	45.65	283	39.43
Village -----	161	47.07	143	39.77
Owners -----	24	53.32	25	47.15
Tenants -----	120	41.40	115	37.33
Non-relief -----	555	49.22	511	44.24
Village -----	270	48.04	272	41.20
Owners -----	214	52.67	185	48.17
Tenants -----	71	42.23	54	38.87
Total -----	860	47.94	794	42.40

* Computation of the significance of the differences between the total relief and total non-relief groups in terms of the probable error give the following results:

	Male	Female
Total -----	4.54	7.1
Village -----	.37	3.15
Owners -----	.78	.74
Tenants -----	.70	1.25

An index of three is considered statistically significant.

villages constitute a larger proportion of the non-relief group and therefore raise its age level. Also contributing to this is the fact that a greater number of non-relief families are owners. Owners throughout the state are older than tenants.¹

Education.—Non-relief heads and their wives have completed from a fraction of a year to two years more school grades than have relief heads and their wives. (Table 17.) The slightest difference appears between the relief and non-relief farm owners of Walworth county. (Indicated in tabulations not shown in table.) This is probably explained by the fact that in certain sections of Walworth county German-Russian families settled a generation ago and bought farms at the expense of their children's school opportunities. Many of them on arriving here were obliged to work to pay their ship passage, and consequently their children worked instead of attending school. Thus they acquired farms at the expense of educational training.

TABLE No. 17.—Average Years of School Work Completed by Heads of Relief and Non-Relief Families*

	Male Head or Husband		Wife or Female Head	
	Frequency	Average Years of Education	Frequency	Average Years of Education
Miner County				
Relief -----	114	7.87	100	8.50
Non-relief -----	173	9.45	153	10.30
Total -----	287	8.86	253	9.58
Spink County				
Relief -----	96	7.44	90	8.94
Non-relief -----	185	8.44	173	9.09
Total -----	281	8.09	263	9.04
Walworth County				
Relief -----	98	6.27	93	6.64
Non-relief -----	187	8.05	183	8.13
Total -----	285	7.32	276	7.63
Three Counties Combined				
Relief -----	305	7.22	283	8.07
Village -----	161	7.21	143	7.80
Owners -----	24	6.66	25	7.44
Tenants -----	120	7.32	115	8.41
Non-relief -----	555	8.60	511	9.10
Village -----	270	9.28	272	9.70
Owners -----	214	7.88	185	8.28
Tenants -----	71	8.25	54	8.72
Total -----	860	8.10	794	8.71

* Computation of the significance of the difference between the total relief and total non-relief groups in terms of the probable error give the following results:

	Male	Female
Total -----	3.27	7.23
Village -----	9.66	8.85
Owners -----	6.94	2.2
Tenants -----	4.31	0.81

An index of three is considered statistically significant.

1. Kumlien, W. F., *What Farmers Think of Farming*, S. D. Agr. Exp. Stat. Bul. 223, p. 9.

It is an interesting observation that wives of relief and non-relief families average more years of school work completed than do their husbands.

A comparison of the educational advancement of children of relief households who have already completed their school work with that of children of non-relief households indicates that children of relief households average .67 of a year less school grades completed while the children of relief families who are still in school lag .84 of a year behind the children of non-relief families. The one exception to the general statement is that the children of tenant relief families have a slightly better educational showing than tenant non-relief families.

These differences may be due to the greater mobility of relief families (Table 18) which would take them from one school to another, to inad-

TABLE 18.—Average School Grades Completed by Children of Relief and Non-Relief Families Who Have Completed Their Schooling, and of Those Over 14 Years of Age Who Are Still in School.*
() Equals Frequency.

	Average Grades Completed By Those Whose Schooling Is Completed		Average Grades Completed By Those Over 14 Years Old Who Are Still in School	
Miner County				
Relief -----	(65)	9.70	(37)	9.62
Non-relief -----	(72)	11.15	(37)	10.36
Total -----	(137)	10.54	(70)	9.83
Spink County				
Relief -----	(55)	9.61	(27)	9.33
Non-relief -----	(131)	10.46	(53)	10.67
Total -----	(186)	10.32	(80)	10.08
Walworth County				
Relief -----	(35)	9.60	(28)	8.92
Non-relief -----	(105)	9.84	(42)	9.74
Total -----	(140)	9.35	(70)	9.41
Three Counties Combined				
Relief -----	(155)	9.65	(90)	9.30
Village -----	(77)	9.88	(50)	9.84
Owners -----	(24)	8.75	(16)	9.18
Tenants -----	(54)	9.72	(24)	9.23
Non-relief -----	(308)	10.32	(128)	10.14
Village -----	(100)	11.25	(59)	10.64
Owners -----	(173)	10.43	(56)	9.67
Tenants -----	(35)	9.20	(13)	9.92
Total -----	(463)	10.19	(218)	9.79

* Computation of the significance of the differences between the total relief and total relief groups in terms of the probable error give the following results:

	Those Whose School- ing is Complete	Those Over 14 Who Are Still in School
Total -----	5.68	6.10
Village -----	5.23	4.40
Owners -----	5.19	3.92
Tenants -----	1.56	1.54

An index of three is considered statistically significant.

quate income for education, or to a lack of ambition. Differences between the relief and non-relief series are consistently high only for the village group.

No consistent difference appears when village, owners, and tenants within their respective relief and non-relief groups are compared.

Due qualification must be given throughout to the small size of the sample studied.

Size of Households.—The average relief household in the three counties combined is composed of one more member than the average non-relief household as is indicated by Table 19. This is true for each of the counties taken separately. Comparing village relief households with village non-relief households it is apparent that relief households average one and a half more members per families than do non-relief households (5.06 and 3.40 respectively). Owners differed in the same manner by slightly over one member per household. The one exception to the general rule is that appearing when relief tenants and non-relief tenants are compared. The two groups have about the same number of members in their households, although, those of the non-relief group are slightly larger.

Number of Dependents.*—One outstanding characteristic which differentiates relief and non-relief families is the number of dependents in the household as indicated by column one, Table 19. In Miner county relief families average more than twice as many dependents as non-relief families, in Spink county almost twice as many and in Walworth county approximately a fourth more. Taking the three counties together non-relief families average 1.29 dependents and relief families 2.27 dependents, approximately one more dependent per family for relief cases. This difference is consistent among the subclasses-village, owners, and tenants. Tenant families have more dependents in both relief and non-relief groups but tenant relief families are especially high with an average of more than three dependents per household.

A dependent has been defined here as a child under school age or still in school. Account is not taken of sick, disabled or aged members of households. The latter group probably constitute a very small proportion of the members of households, as the indigent poor provided for by county funds were not included in the sample studied.

Column three shows the percentage of households having dependents. Here again relief families are in the majority. In Miner county a third more of the relief families have dependents, in Spink county over a fourth more, while in Walworth county the difference is not so marked. These differences are also consistent among village, owners, and tenant groups.

Column four is a corollary to the former and indicates that a much greater percentage of non-relief families have no dependents. For the three counties combined only 26 per cent of the relief cases are without dependents while approximately 43 per cent of the non-relief cases have no dependents. A much larger percentage of non-relief households consist of an adult couple only, in fact, about twice as many. Village families constitute a much larger proportion of the adult couple class in both relief and non-relief groups. Village, owner and tenant non-relief families in the adult couple class constitute approximately twice as many households as in the corresponding classes of relief families.

The column showing percentage of households consisting of one member only shows inconsistencies when the three counties are compared. In Miner county there was almost twice as great a proportion of one-member families in the relief group as in the non-relief group, in Spink County the groups were approximately equal and in Walworth county there was

* Doubled-up families are eliminated from calculations in this section.

TABLE 19.—A Comparison of Relief and Non-Relief Families With Regard to Size of Households, Number of Dependents Per Household and Percentage of Households With and Without Dependents.*

	Average Members Per Household‡	Average Number of Dependents† Per Household For Total Sample	Per Cent Households With Dependents	Per Cent Households With No Dependents	Per Cent Households Adult Couple Only	Per Cent Households One Member Only
Miner County						
Relief	4.94	2.48	75.24	24.76	9.52	8.57
Non-relief	3.30	2.48	49.72	50.28	21.46	15.25
Total	3.91	1.56	59.22	40.78	17.02	12.77
Spink County						
Relief	4.74	2.28	80.44	19.56	6.52	6.52
Non-relief	3.81	1.3	57.96	40.04	14.77	6.25
Total	4.11	1.65	65.67	34.33	11.94	6.34
Walworth County						
Relief	4.15	2.02	66.67	33.33	9.52	14.29
Non-relief	3.88	1.52	63.69	36.31	16.32	5.78
Total	3.97	1.69	64.75	35.25	13.90	8.81
Three Counties Combined						
Relief	4.61	2.27	73.84	26.16	8.61	9.93
Village Owners	5.06	1.8	65.88	34.12	10.00	15.3
Tenants	3.84	3.13	86.67	13.33	6.67	2.86
Non-relief	3.67	1.29	57.27	42.73	17.5	9.02
Village Owners	3.40	1.17	53.82	46.18	21.45	12.00
Tenants	4.00	1.74	69.86	30.14	11.59	7.25
Total	4.00	1.64	63.20	36.80	14.32	9.35

* Doubled-up families are excluded.

‡ The median size of families are: Miner county, relief 4.6, non-relief 2.9; Spink county, relief 4.5, non-relief 3.7; Walworth county relief 3.7, non-relief 3.4. See Table 15 for base figures.

† A dependent is defined as any child under school age or still in school.

more than twice as great a proportion in the relief classification. For the three counties combined the proportion of single-member families is about equal in the relief and non-relief samples. The larger percentage of the one-member households in both classifications resides in villages. The one member-family is undoubtedly constituted of old people who have been unable to acquire savings, who have lost their savings, or whose present source of income is curtailed. Among the latter are no doubt some retired farmers whose land has not produced an income in recent years.

TABLE 20.—Relative Number of Foreign Born Population in the Relief Sample as Compared to the Total Population

	Per Cent Foreign Born*	Difference
Miner County		
Relief Families	12.93	4.31
All Families in County	8.62	
Spink County		
Relief Families	9.00	1.81
All Families in County	7.19	
Walworth County		
Relief Families	25.45	8.25
All Families in County	17.20	
Three Counties Combined		
Relief Families	15.95	4.00
All Families in Counties	11.95	
Village Relief Families	21.11	10.07
All Village Families in Counties	11.04	
Open Country Relief Families	9.59	.44
All Open Country Families in Counties ..	9.05	

* Based on United States Census of 1930.

Nativity.—In Table 20 a comparison is made with the relative number of foreign born in the relief sample as compared to that of the total population of the respective counties. In each county as well as the sum of the three counties the relief sample is composed of an excess of foreign born population. This is especially true of village families which constitute a much greater number than would be expected according to their normal ratio in the total population. This, of course, has its corollary in that native born villagers had 10 per cent below expectancy on the relief rolls. The ratio of foreign born in the open country relief sample is approximately the same as in the total population. Since the relief sample in two of the counties is composed of the total number on relief rolls in October, and since in the other random sampling was used, it seems safe to conclude that foreign born village families have been recipients of relief in a much greater proportion of cases. The major difference comes in Walworth county which was the most recently settled.

Sixteen per cent of the relief families studied were foreign born. The highest proportion of foreign born was found in Walworth County (25.5 per cent). Thirteen per cent of Miner county and nine per cent of Spink county relief cases were foreign born.

Even though there have been some population changes since 1930,

there is no reason to assume that there has been any important change in the ratios of native and foreign born during the period.

It is probable that foreign born families having come to the section more recently, have fared poorly as compared to native American families. On the other hand certain immigrant groups may have sought relief more aggressively. This is probably the situation in Walworth county where certain of those of the German-Russian groups who are communistically inclined have demanded relief.

Doubled-up Households*.—The number of doubled-up families constitute approximately five per cent of the total sample. No important differences appear in this respect in comparing relief and non-relief families. Typical reasons given for doubling up were economic, which was the most often mentioned, sickness, old age and unemployment.

II. Occupational History, Farm Tenure and Mobility of Head of Household

Work Record.—Table 21 shows that heads of relief households have on the average worked 23.5 years since they obtained their first job for pay, while those of non-relief households have a work record of 26.4 years. The difference is largely due to the greater predominance of the owner group among the non-relief families, this group being approximately 10 years older than the tenant group, which is probably an outgrowth of the fact that a man usually farms as a tenant a number of years before being able to acquire a farm.¹ The village non-relief group has an average employment record about two years greater than the village relief group. No marked differences appear when farm-tenant relief and non-relief families are compared.

More than half (53.6 per cent) of the relief heads have been unemployed at some time during their employment history. The major burden of this unemployment has rested with the village group. Only 20 per cent of non-relief heads have experienced unemployment. Among non-relief heads, also, the village group has experienced unemployment in a much greater proportion of cases than have the owners and tenants.

Differences are not extreme when relief and non-relief families are compared with reference to average number of periods of unemployment, that of the relief family heads being 1.59 years as compared to 1.41 years for non-relief family heads (difference 12.8 per cent). The greater number of village relief families with an unemployment period in their work history, no doubt, accounts for this difference. Such a comparison has little significance for farm families since they are usually considered employed even though their farming operations are not profitable.

The average years spent as unemployed by those who have experienced unemployment is equal for both relief and non-relief families, being 3.8 years in both cases. The village relief families, surprisingly, average 4.2 years while the village non-relief families average only 2.6 years. This is probably due to the fact that in the wheat farming and grazing counties there are retired farmers, who are considered unemployed and whose long unemployment history raises the group average.

* Household constituting persons other than head of household, his wife and his children.

1. Kumlien, W. F., *What Farmers Think of Farming*, S. D. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. 223, p. 9.

TABLE 21.—Summary of Work Record of Heads of Households From Acceptance of First Job

	Average Total Years Work Record for all Heads of Households*	Number and Per Cent of Heads Who Have Been Unemployed		Average Periods Unemployment Per Head With Unem- ployment History	Average Years Heads With Unem- ployment History Have Spent as Unemployed	Per Cent of Total Work Record of Those With Unemployment History Spent as Unemployed
		Number	Per Cent			
Miner County						
Relief	23.23	75	65.7	1.5	4.13	18.74
Non-relief	27.72	40	20.94	1.45	3.82	14.34
Total	26.04	115	34.53	1.63	4.51	17.42
Spink County						
Relief	23.02	31	31.31	1.96	2.38	12.67
Non-relief	27.22	26	13.26	1.31	6.6	26.13
Total	25.81	57	19.32	1.66	4.45	19.52
Walworth County						
Relief	21.30	64	58.71	1.32	4.00	19.25
Non-relief	24.43	54	25.96	1.42	5.90	22.55
Total	23.40	118	37.82	1.45	4.89	20.95
Three Counties Combined						
Relief	23.49	170	53.62	1.59	3.81	17.88
Village Owners	22.41	145	85.29	1.59	2.68	20.08
Tenants	31.23	5	19.23	1.40	1.28	4.97
Non-relief	20.86	20	16.52	1.60	.63	5.55
Village Owners	26.41	120	20.20	1.41	3.83	20.57
Tenants	24.36	96	31.78	1.41	4.27	23.02
Non-relief	31.01	20	9.13	1.20	2.13	9.43
Tenants	21.23	4	5.47	2.25	1.77	18.60
Total	25.39	290	31.83	1.51	2.95	19.13

* See Table 15 for frequencies.

Changes in Occupation and in Residential Location.—A greater percentage of relief families than of non-relief families have changed residence by a move from one township to another. (Table 22.) The evidence is consistently in this direction except for village families where the two groups are about equal in proportion changing residence.

TABLE 22.—Percentage of Relief and Non-Relief Heads of Households Who Have Changed Residential Location and Occupations

	Residential Changes		Occupational Changes	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Miner County				
Relief	90	78.95	102	89.47
Non-relief	143	74.48	191	99.48
Total	233	76.14	293	95.75
Spink County				
Relief	74	74.75	99	100.00
Non-relief	118	59.00	196	98.00
Total	192	64.21	295	98.66
Walworth County				
Relief	80	72.73	107	97.27
Non-relief	144	69.23	207	99.52
Total	224	70.44	314	98.74
Three Counties Combined				
Relief	244	75.54	308	95.36
Village	132	75.00	167	94.89
Owners	21	80.77	23	88.46
Tenants	91	75.21	118	97.52
Non-relief	405	67.50	594	99.00
Village	227	73.70	302	98.05
Owners	134	61.47	218	100.00
Tenants	44	59.46	74	100.00
Total	649	70.31	902	97.72

Almost the entire sample of both relief and non-relief heads have changed occupations at some time during their lifetime, so only minor differences exist between them. The total for the combined counties shows that a slightly less percentage of relief families have changed occupations than have non-relief families.

A comparison of the number of occupational changes for relief and non-relief families is shown in table 23. There is only a slight difference in the average number of occupational changes for the relief and non-relief groups, although the relief group is slightly greater. The two columns at the right differentiate those with an unemployment record from those without an unemployment record. Relief families with an unemployment record have made fewer occupational changes than those of the non-relief families with an unemployment record. The same relationship holds true for those without an unemployment record. Both relief and non-relief groups with an unemployment record have averaged more occupational changes than those without an occupational record.

A comparison of the number of major changes in the residential location¹ of relief and non-relief families is given in Table 24. The average

1. Changes in residence taking household from one township to another.

TABLE 23.—A Comparison of the Number of Occupational Changes of Relief and Non-Relief Families Differentiating Those With an Unemployment Record From Those Without It.*

	Average Number for All Those Who Have Changed Occupations	Average Number for Those With an Unemployment Record	Average Number for Those Without an Unemployment Record
Miner County			
Relief	(102) 2.72	(71) 2.97	(31) 2.22
Non-relief	(191) 2.89	(40) 3.45	(151) 2.73
Total	(293) 2.83	(111) 3.13	(182) 2.65
Spink County			
Relief	(99) 2.62	(31) 3.25	(68) 2.33
Non-relief	(196) 2.54	(26) 3.34	(170) 2.42
Total	(295) 2.57	(57) 3.30	(238) 2.40
Walworth County			
Relief	(107) 3.16	(60) 3.32	(47) 2.95
Non-relief	(207) 2.85	(54) 3.22	(53) 2.72
Total	(314) 2.96	(114) 3.27	(100) 2.78
Three Counties Combined			
Relief	(308) 2.85	(162) 3.15	(146) 2.51
Village Owners	(167) 3.14	(136) 3.12	(31) 3.19
Tenants	(23) 3.00	(6) 3.50	(17) 2.82
Non-relief	(118) 2.41	(20) 3.25	(98) 2.23
Village Owners	(594) 2.76	(120) 3.32	(474) 2.62
Tenants	(302) 3.25	(95) 3.16	(207) 3.28
Non-relief	(218) 2.26	(20) 3.60	(198) 2.12
Tenants	(74) 2.27	(5) 5.00	(69) 2.07
Total	(902) 2.79	(282) 3.22	(620) 2.59

* Unemployment does not constitute an occupational shift.

number of major changes in location for relief families who have moved is 3.52 and for non-relief families 3.2. The table also differentiates families with an unemployment record from those without an unemployment record. Relief families with an unemployment record have also changed their residences more than the non-relief families with an unemployment record. The same is true for those without an unemployment record.

People with an unemployment record are more mobile as measured by major changes in residential location than are people who have no unemployment record. The evidence is consistent throughout the entire distribution, except for Walworth county relief families.

Last Occupation in Which Engaged.—The majority of relief cases have been farm tenants according to the last occupation listed in their occupational histories as is shown in Table 25. The greatest number of non-relief cases were farm owners, and constitute 36.33 per cent of the non-relief cases. Next in rank is business with an average of 27 per cent of the total non-relief cases in the three counties combined. However, in this respect there is a variation from county to county. In Miner and Walworth counties business people constitute a slightly larger percentage of the non-relief sample than do farm owners, while Spink county farm owners constitute almost five times as great a percentage of the sample studied as do business men.

Walworth county has a larger proportion of railroad employees on its relief list than do the other counties, while Miner county has a larger proportion of professional persons and public officials in both the relief and non-relief samples.

TABLE 24.—A Comparison of the Number of Major Changes in Residential Location of Relief and Non-Relief Families Differentiating Those With an Unemployment Record From Those Without It.

	Average Number For All Families Who Have Moved	Average Number For Those With Unemployment Record	Average for For Those Without Unemployment Record
() Equals Frequency			
Miner County			
Relief	(90) 3.79	(63) 3.79	(27) 3.78
Non-relief	(143) 3.59	(33) 3.91	(110) 3.49
Total	(233) 3.67	(96) 3.83	(137) 3.55
Spink County			
Relief	(74) 3.38	(23) 3.83	(51) 3.18
Non-relief	(118) 2.97	(23) 3.04	(95) 2.96
Total	(192) 3.13	(46) 3.43	(146) 3.03
Walworth County			
Relief	(80) 3.36	(41) 3.59	(39) 3.13
Non-relief	(144) 2.99	(38) 3.45	(106) 2.82
Total	(224) 3.12	(79) 3.52	(145) 2.90
Three Counties Combined			
Relief	(244) 3.52	(127) 3.73	(117) 3.30
Village	(132) 3.58	(107) 3.70	(25) 3.04
Owners	(21) 3.71	(5) 5.60	(16) 3.13
Tenants	(91) 3.41	(15) 3.33	(76) 3.42
Non-relief	(405) 3.20	(94) 3.51	(311) 3.10
Village	(227) 3.41	(74) 3.41	(153) 3.41
Owners	(134) 2.90	(17) 3.71	(117) 2.79
Tenants	(44) 2.98	(3) 5.00	(41) 2.83
Total	(649) 3.32	(221) 3.64	(428) 3.08

* Data covers only such changes in residence as appear in the occupational history of the head of the family, which shows only those moves involving a shift in residence from one township to another.

Outcome of Last Farming Enterprise.—A comparison of the outcome of the last farming enterprise for relief and non-relief families appears in Table 26. Almost all relief families suffered loss in their last farming enterprise, whereas about 38 per cent of non-relief families in Miner county, 58 per cent in Spink county and 63 per cent in Walworth county suffered loss. On the other hand, no relief families in Miner and Walworth counties, and only three in Spink county found their last farming enterprise profitable. Approximately 53 per cent of non-relief families in Miner county, about 32 per cent in Spink county and 19 per cent in Walworth county found their last farming enterprises profitable.

The combined averages for the three counties show that among relief families a much greater percentage of owners broke even and a smaller percentage suffered loss than did tenants. The reverse is true between owners and tenants in the non-relief group; i. e. owners broke even in fewer cases and suffered loss in more cases. More owners, however, conducted their last farming enterprise on a profitable basis.

In interpreting these results it must be born in mind that the categories "profitable," "broke even" and "suffered loss" are very general, and that the classification is based entirely upon the farmer's own classification of himself.

III. Employment Status of Members of Household Other than Head

Relief families have had fewer persons per household employed during their occupational history than have non-relief families. (Table 27). Com-

TABLE 25.—Per Cent of Relief and Non-Relief Cases Employed in Various Industries as Indicated by Last Occupation in Which Engaged.*

Industry in Which Employed	Miner		Spink		Walworth		Three Counties Combined	
	Relief	Non-relief	Relief	Non-relief	Relief	Non-relief	Relief	Non-relief
Agriculture	60.53	32.29	57.88	78.00	53.64	37.98	66.56	49.50
Owner	7.02	26.56	15.15	58.00	10.00	24.52	10.53	36.33
Tenant	41.22	4.17	63.64	20.00	29.09	13.46	43.96	12.67
Laborer	12.29	1.56	9.09	-----	14.55	-----	12.07	.50
Business	19.29	38.54	9.09	12.00	14.54	20.76	14.55	27.00
Railroad	3.50	1.56	2.02	2.00	9.09	2.40	4.95	2.00
Domestic	2.63	1.04	-----	1.50	8.18	2.89	3.71	1.83
Professional	6.14	9.37	-----	2.50	-----	3.36	2.16	5.00
Public Official	2.63	12.50	-----	1.50	.91	2.40	1.23	5.33
Retired	-----	3.64	1.01	1.50	-----	8.17	.31	4.50
Never Worked	-----	-----	-----	1.00	1.81	-----	.62	.33
All Others	5.26	1.04	-----	-----	11.81	12.02	5.88	4.50

* See Table 15 for base figures.

TABLE 26.—A Comparison of the Outcome of the Last Farming Enterprise of Relief and Non-Relief Cases Engaged in Farming*

	Total Frequency	Profitable		Broke Even		Suffered Loss	
		Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Miner County							
Relief	40	—	—	1	2.50	39	97.50
Non-relief	58	31	53.44	5	8.62	22	37.93
Total	98	31	31.63	6	6.12	61	62.24
Spink County							
Relief	76	3	3.94	3	3.94	70	92.10
Non-relief	155	49	31.61	16	10.32	90	58.06
Total	231	52	22.51	19	8.22	160	69.26
Walworth County							
Relief	31	—	—	4	12.90	27	87.09
Non-relief	79	15	18.99	14	17.72	50	63.29
Total	110	15	13.63	18	16.37	77	70.00
Three Counties Combined							
Relief	147	3	2.04	8	5.44	136	92.51
Owners	39	3	7.69	6	15.38	30	76.92
Tenants	108	—	—	2	1.85	106	98.14
Non-relief	292	95	32.53	35	11.98	162	55.47
Owners	219	84	38.35	23	10.50	112	51.14
Tenants	73	11	15.06	12	16.43	50	68.49
Total	439	98	22.32	43	9.79	298	67.88

* Only those who were engaged in farming when the schedules were taken are included.

binning the three counties, the non-relief families have had almost twice as many with four or more members employed and a considerably greater proportion with two or more members employed, whereas the relief families have had a greater proportion with only one person employed. The relationship is even more extreme when one considers the number of members employed in October 1933. Non-relief families far exceed in proportion the number of persons employed in October. The greatest contrast appears in the column showing no one employed. Approximately a third of the relief families had no members employed in October 1933, whereas non-relief families show only 7.67 per cent with no members employed. These figures are even more striking when one eliminates the open country population, which group is seldom considered unemployed even though the farming enterprise may be operating on an unprofitable basis. Approximately 61 per cent of village relief families had no members employed in October 1933, whereas only 13.64 per cent of non-relief cases had no members employed. The above relationships are fairly constant for the three counties, although there are some variations. Due to the preponderance of village families making up the sample in Miner county there was a greater proportion of families with no members employed in October 1933.

IV. Economic Status of Household

Land and Livestock As of January 1, 1934.—Households on relief rolls operate less land than do those who are not on relief as is indicated by table 28. This is true for both owners and tenants. It will be noted that relief families predominate in small land classification groups while non-relief families predominate in larger land classification groups. These data

TABLE 27.—A Comparison of the Percentage of Relief and Non-Relief Households Having One to Five or More Members Previously Employed* and of Those Having None to Four or More Members Employed in October 1933.†

Number of Members Employed	Per Cent of Families Having Members Previously Employed					Per Cent of Families Having Members Employed in October 1933				
	1	2	3	4	5 or more	0	1	2	3	4 or more
Miner County										
Relief	42.11	45.61	9.65	1.75	.88	48.25	46.49	2.63	2.63	---
Non-relief	45.83	41.67	7.81	2.60	2.08	8.33	72.40	14.58	3.13	1.56
Total	44.44	43.14	8.50	2.29	1.63	23.20	62.75	10.13	2.94	.98
Spink County										
Relief	48.48	35.35	12.12	2.02	2.02	17.17	74.75	5.05	3.03	---
Non-relief	39.00	39.50	15.00	4.00	2.50	3.50	69.50	19.50	5.00	2.50
Total	42.14	38.12	14.04	3.34	2.34	8.03	71.23	14.72	4.35	1.67
Walworth County										
Relief	69.09	27.27	2.73	.91	---	31.81	64.54	3.64	---	---
Non-relief	42.78	47.11	7.21	1.92	.96	11.06	70.19	14.42	3.85	.48
Total	51.88	40.25	5.66	1.57	.63	18.23	68.23	10.69	2.52	.31
Three Counties Combined										
Relief	53.25	36.22	8.05	1.55	.93	33.12	61.30	3.72	1.86	---
Village	63.64	29.54	4.55	1.70	.57	60.79	36.36	2.27	.57	---
Open Country	40.82	44.21	12.24	1.36	1.36	---	91.15	5.44	3.40	---
Non-relief	42.59	42.83	10.00	2.83	1.83	7.67	70.67	16.16	4.00	1.50
Village	45.45	44.80	7.79	1.30	.65	13.61	71.10	12.33	2.92	---
Open Country	39.38	40.75	12.32	4.45	3.08	1.37	70.20	20.21	5.14	3.08
Total	46.26	40.52	9.32	2.38	1.52	16.57	67.38	11.80	3.25	.98

* Previously employed is interpreted as one having drawn regular wages at any time during his life.

† The head of the household is included. See Table 15 for base figures.

TABLE 28.—A Comparison of Amounts of Land Operated by Relief and Non-Relief Farm Owners and By Relief and Non-Relief Farm Tenants in Miner, Spink, and Walworth Counties, January 1, 1934.

Acres	OWNERS				TENANTS			
	Relief		Non-relief		Relief		Non-relief	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Under 100	3	11.5	8	3.7	6	5.0	4	5.4
100-259	4	15.4	23	15.1	50	41.3	7	9.5
260-499	11	42.3	89	40.8	59	48.8	31	41.9
500-999	7	26.9	59	31.7	6	5.0	24	32.4
Over 1000	1	3.8	19	8.7			8	10.8
Total	16	100.0	218	100.0	121	100.0	74	100.0

indicate that there is a correlation between size of farming enterprises and need for relief¹.

One of the most striking differences appearing in the entire study becomes evident in comparing relief and non-relief families with regard to the number of livestock owned. (Table 29). Throughout the entire sample, county by county, and for each type of livestock ranging from horses to chickens, the non-relief families average a greater number of head. The owner-tenant differences explain this in part. Owners of land in most cases have more livestock according to the sample studied, and owners make up a larger proportion of the non-relief sample than of the relief sample. However, comparing relief owners with non-relief owners and relief tenants with non-relief tenants we find the same consistent differences favoring the non-relief groups. Another factor is the larger acreages op-

TABLE 29.—Average Number of Livestock Per Relief and Non-Relief Farm Households*

	Number of Farm Households	Horses and Mules	Milk Cows	Other Cattle	Hogs	Sheep	Poultry
Miner County							
Relief	40	5.0	6.0	7.7	3.7	6.6	57.6
Non-relief	58	6.3	7.4	25.3	12.0	12.2	133.7
Total	98	5.82	6.8	18.0	8.6	9.9	102.69
Spink County							
Relief	76	5.9	5.8	9.5	4.0	7.5	68.1
Non-relief	155	8.4	7.4	17.8	9.9	22.2	107.7
Total	231	7.6	6.9	15.0	8.0	18.4	94.7
Walworth County							
Relief	31	3.5	4.1	6.6	3.0	.71	50.0
Non-relief	79	5.2	8.4	31.1	4.6	8.9	53.8
Total	110	4.7	7.2	24.2	4.1	6.6	42.8
Three Counties Combined							
Relief	147	5.1	5.5	8.4	3.7	5.8	61.46
Owner	26	6.8	6.5	11.1	5.6	12.1	78.92
Tenant	121	4.8	5.3	7.8	3.3	4.4	57.71
Non-relief	292	7.2	7.7	15.3	8.9	16.6	98.36
Owner	218	7.4	7.9	25.1	10.2	15.4	106.44
Tenant	74	6.5	7.1	16.2	5.0	20.1	74.55
Total	439	6.5	6.9	13.0	7.2	13.0	86.01

* Based on total farm households rather than number actually reporting ownership.

1. See also C. M. Hampson, Paul Christophersen, *Estimated Returns from Farms of Large, Medium, and Small Size of Business in the Spring Wheat Area of South Dakota* Circular 20, S. D. Ag. Exp. Sta. May, 1934.

erated by non-relief families which may explain to some extent the difference in number of livestock, but would have no necessary connection with number of milk cows, hogs, sheep and poultry owned. It might have a definite bearing upon the number of horses and mules and the number of cattle—other than milk cows owned.

The field workers frequently commented that the farmer who had diversified by milking cows, raising hogs, poultry and sheep, in addition to crop raising was the one who had come through the depression the better. The evidence presented in this table verifies the accuracy of their observation. Apparently livestock raising has been an important differential factor in setting apart relief and non-relief families.¹

A factor which may enter to qualify the above generalizations to some extent is that families with greater numbers of livestock were not on relief because they had greater possibilities of borrowing money through mortgages on livestock.

Another factor which may enter into the explanation of this situation is that relief families have, no doubt, in many more cases sold their livestock to meet obligations and living expenses, or to avoid feed shortage. The study provides no data dealing with these points so this statement must be taken only as a possible explanation. It is true that a greater proportion of relief families have lost livestock and losses per family have been heavier than for non-relief families according to evidence presented in Table 35.

TABLE 30.—Average Decrease in Indebtedness Per Relief and Non-Relief Family During The Period January 1, 1930 to January 1, 1934 and Average Outstanding Indebtedness Per Relief and Non-Relief Family as of January 1, 1934.*

	Average Decrease in Indebtedness January 1, 1930 to January 1, 1934	Average Outstanding Indebtedness as of January 1, 1934
Miner County		
Relief	\$265.32	\$ 788.37
Non-relief	463.75	1556.34
Total	389.07	1270.24
Spink County		
Relief	320.32	1592.28
Non-relief	883.67	2818.61
Total	700.49	2412.56
Walworth County		
Relief	293.25	703.38
Non-relief	483.56	1796.40
Total	417.73	1418.31
Three Counties Combined		
Relief	290.98	1005.82
Village	164.80	402.73
Owner	139.57	3698.50
Tenant	507.04	1304.46
Non-relief	612.26	2060.32
Village	488.24	1077.76
Owners	729.54	297.97
Tenant	733.37	3438.95
Total	499.83	1691.30

* See Table 15 for base figures.

1. These observations agree with findings of Hampson and Christopherson presented in *Estimated Returns from Operating 800 Acres in the Spring Wheat Area Under Four Different Plans*. S. D. Exp. Sta. Circular 21, May 1934.

Table 30, which shows the average decrease in indebtedness for relief and non-relief families during the four-year depression period, indicates that relief families in the three counties combined have decreased their indebtedness by \$270.98 per family while non-relief families have decreased their indebtedness by \$612.26 per family. The major part of this decrease in indebtedness among the relief families has come in the tenant group, whereas that in the non-relief families comes among both owners and tenants. A probable explanation of the larger decrease in indebtedness in the tenant groups, especially in the relief ranks, may be found in the fact that a number of these tenants were mortgaged owners, who were forced to give up their land and become tenants thereby decreasing their indebtedness by the amount of the mortgage on the land. There are wide variations between the three counties studied. Spink county non-relief cases have decreased their indebtedness by twice the amount of those in Miner county. However, inter-county differences between relief cases are small.

Column two deals with the average outstanding indebtedness as of January 1, 1934, and shows that outstanding indebtedness among non-relief families is twice as great as that among relief families. Relief owners have a large outstanding indebtedness, equaling \$3698.50, whereas the non-relief tenant load of indebtedness is much greater than the relief tenant load equaling \$3438.95. The average indebtedness for all the families studied is \$1691.30. The outstanding indebtedness is much greater for both relief and non-relief groups in Spink county than for the other counties. This is probably explained by the greater land holdings in Spink county which makes a heavier tax burden.

TABLE 31.—A Comparison of the Proportion of Relief and Non-Relief Cases Incurring Economic Liabilities During the Period January 1, 1930 to January 1, 1934.*

	Per Cent of Cases Increasing Indebtedness	Per Cent of Cases Decreasing Reserves	Per Cent of Cases Having Losses or Extraordinary Expenditures
Miner County			
Relief -----	90.35	53.50	86.84
Non-relief -----	74.86	64.92	83.76
Total -----	80.31	60.45	84.64
Spink County			
Relief -----	95.95	66.66	98.98
Non-relief -----	67.00	78.50	95.50
Total -----	76.58	74.58	96.65
Walworth County			
Relief -----	87.27	41.81	82.72
Non-relief -----	87.98	65.38	95.67
Total -----	87.73	57.23	91.19
Three Counties Combined			
Relief -----	91.02	53.56	89.16
Village -----	85.22	44.88	81.25
Owners -----	100.00	57.69	100.00
Tenants -----	97.52	65.28	98.34
Non-relief -----	76.66	69.50	91.67
Village -----	73.05	59.09	84.41
Owners -----	78.89	79.35	99.54
Tenants -----	85.13	83.78	98.65
Total -----	81.69	63.92	90.79

* See Table 15 for base figures.

Liabilities Incurred During Four-Year Drouth-Depression Period.—

The accompanying table (31) indicates that over 90 per cent of the relief cases have increased their indebtedness during the four depression years; while approximately 77 per cent of the non-relief cases have increased their indebtedness. Farm owners in the relief group have all increased their indebtedness, and nearly all farm tenants in the relief group have done so. Of the entire sample studied approximately 82 per cent have increased their indebtedness.

Approximately 54 per cent of relief cases have decreased their reserve in comparison to 69.5 per cent of non-relief cases. Village owner, tenant groups have each decreased their reserves more than their corresponding groups among the relief cases.

The various classes do not differ greatly in the proportion having had losses or extraordinary expenditures, since nearly all families have had them.

Relief families have increased their indebtedness less than have the non-relief families through mortgages, unpaid taxes, and other debts. (Table 32). This is true for most sub-classes also, which is to be expected since families were eligible for relief only after having exhausted their possibilities for credit.

Increase in mortgage indebtedness is greater in Spink than in Miner county, and greatest in Walworth. The same is true of increase in tax indebtedness. Total debts are greatest in Spink county and least in Miner county.

The average mortgage indebtedness for the 275 farm families having mortgage indebtedness in the three counties was \$1595.59, that for relief families was \$808.21 and that for non-relief families \$2135.62. The farm

TABLE 32.—Average Increase in Indebtedness Per Household for Those Increasing Indebtedness During the Period January 1, 1930 to January 1, 1934.

() Equals Per Cent of Total Sample

	In Mortgaged Indebtedness		In Unpaid Taxes		In Other Debts	
			Miner County			
Relief	(27.2)	591.00	(71.1)	96.06	(74.6)	311.88
Non-relief	(15.2)	1382.75	(26.7)	227.23	(61.3)	417.17
Total	(19.7)	973.68	(43.6)	147.34	(65.9)	372.64
			Spink County			
Relief	(52.5)	862.53	(69.7)	121.68	(83.8)	479.49
Non-relief	(35.0)	2156.70	(37.0)	207.18	(44.5)	786.60
Total	(40.3)	1605.09	(47.8)	165.93	(57.5)	638.14
			Walworth County			
Relief	(26.4)	943.00	(49.1)	111.50	(78.2)	281.01
Non-relief	(30.8)	2456.25	(34.6)	268.59	(78.8)	519.12
Total	(29.2)	1984.37	(39.6)	201.20	(78.6)	437.21
			Three Counties Combined			
Relief	(34.7)	808.21	(63.2)	108.81	(78.6)	356.19
Village Owners	(11.4)	523.75	(54.0)	72.42	(72.2)	231.86
Tenants	(84.6)	1251.90	(88.5)	408.95	(96.2)	573.16
Non-relief	(27.2)	2136.62	(33.0)	234.79	(61.5)	551.46
Village Owners	(13.6)	2422.61	(27.9)	181.97	(62.3)	410.11
Tenants	(38.5)	2602.57	(37.6)	338.74	(37.7)	817.68
Total	(29.8)	1595.59	(43.6)	170.85	(67.5)	471.85

TABLE 33.—Average Decrease in Reserves Per Household from January 1, 1930 to January 1, 1934 for Those Who Have Decreased Reserves.
() Equals Per Cent of Total Sample

	In Savings	In Chattels	In Land and Buildings	In Forfeited Installment Payments	In Life Insurance	By Borrowing on Life Insurance	Other
Miner County							
Relief	(10.5) \$1698.33	(14.0) \$325.93	(4.4) \$5265.00	(5.3) \$ 519.66	(30.7) \$2937.14	(9.7) \$334.54	(.9) \$ 400.00
Non-relief	(33.3) 1928.26	(15.6) 475.90	(3.1) 6500.00	(1.0) 125.50	(22.9) 2640.00	(16.1) 859.54	(3.1) 3927.83
Total	(24.8) 1878.80	(15.0) 423.73	(3.6) 5938.63	(2.6) 321.12	(25.8) 3119.18	(13.7) 722.04	(2.3) 3423.85
Spink County							
Relief	(9.1) 482.77	(23.2) 280.47	(5.1) 8190.00	(3.0) 226.66	(39.4) 2525.64	(18.2) 661.55	(2.0) 304.00
Non-relief	(38.5) 1783.80	(47.5) 651.35	(5.0) 7065.50	(.5) 2500.00	(21.0) 3114.28	(22.5) 597.04	(2.5) 2802.00
Total	(28.8) 1647.65	(39.5) 579.06	(5.0) 7440.33	(1.3) 795.00	(27.1) 2830.86	(21.1) 615.47	(2.3) 2088.28
Walworth County							
Relief	(9.1) 365.90	(8.2) 377.22	(6.4) 2124.28	(2.7) 177.33	(23.6) 2088.46	(7.3) 217.75	(.9) 200.00
Non-relief	(15.4) 1626.08	(9.6) 446.35	(2.9) 5166.66	(.5) 110.00	(24.0) 3316.06	(18.8) 470.76	(28.8) 248.81
Total	(13.2) 1207.35	(9.1) 424.86	(4.1) 5020.76	(1.3) 160.50	(23.9) 3073.72	(14.8) 427.70	(19.2) 248.01
Three Counties Combined							
Relief	(9.6) 925.29	(14.9) 313.75	(5.3) 5973.23	(3.7) 360.83	(31.0) 2691.00	(11.5) 468.37	(1.2) 302.00
Village Owners	(10.8) 1139.68	(6.3) 240.72	(3.4) 262.83	(3.4) 532.34	(26.1) 2806.52	(6.8) 654.16	(.6) 200.00
Tenants	(3.8) 2000.00	(15.4) 357.50	(3.8) 6000.00	(---)	(34.6) 4555.55	(26.9) 579.57	(3.8) 500.00
Non-relief	(9.1) 457.27	(27.3) 332.78	(8.3) 7977.50	(5.0) 152.50	(37.2) 2200.00	(14.9) 301.27	(1.7) 254.00
Relief	(28.8) 1771.74	(24.2) 586.77	(3.7) 6393.40	(.7) 715.25	(22.7) 3236.90	(19.2) 624.98	(11.8) 739.52
Village Owners	(26.0) 1812.07	(4.9) 560.26	(2.9) 5666.66	(.7) 125.50	(22.4) 2797.37	(17.5) 609.68	(11.0) 927.29
Tenants	(32.6) 1896.87	(46.8) 651.19	(3.7) 6631.87	(.9) 1305.06	(19.7) 3937.20	(18.4) 700.20	(10.6) 806.39
Non-relief	(29.7) 1221.27	(37.8) 366.32	(6.8) 7320.00	(---)	(32.4) 3245.83	(28.4) 521.04	(18.9) 173.64
Total	(22.1) 1643.11	(20.9) 518.87	(4.2) 6210.25	(1.7) 449.43	(25.6) 3005.58	(16.5) 586.86	(8.1) 716.18

owners in both groups lead in the amount of mortgage indebtedness although the mortgage indebtedness of the village non-relief group runs almost as high. The same relationship holds throughout for unpaid taxes, as well as for other debts, as one compares the groups mentioned.

These results throughout conform with what one would expect to find. The farm owner had more property to mortgage and more property on which to accumulate taxes than had the farm tenant. He acquired obligations against his holding during the period covered because his opportunities for making money have been as limited, in most cases, as have those of the tenant. Village relief families are probably those who owned little property against which to acquire obligations, whereas the non-relief families have been people with property. Because of the agricultural situation many of the most thrifty have obligated themselves heavily during the last four years to keep from the relief rolls.

Decrease in reserves (Table 33) through the loss of land and buildings constitutes the largest item for all families, both relief and non-relief, and village, owners and tenants, except village relief families. The greatest loss of this group was in life insurance. The chattels and land and building item did not, however, apply to many families. The second greatest loss per family was through cancelled life insurance, this item involving a large proportion of the families studied. The average decrease has exceeded \$3000 per family; for relief families the amount cancelled averages \$2691, and for non-relief families \$3236.90. Losses in savings rank third in amount per family and second in number of families involved. Decreases in reserves by borrowing on life insurance equal \$586.86 per family while those in chattels average \$518.87.

TABLE 34.—Average Amount of Extraordinary Expenditures for Relief and Non-Relief Households Through the Specified Channels From January 1, 1930 to January 1, 1934.*
() Equals Per Cent of Total Sample

	In Medical Care		In Funerals		In Personal Injuries		Other Losses	
Miner County								
Relief	(66.7)	\$144.31	(---)	\$-----	(5.3)	\$ 36.66	(---)	\$-----
Non-relief	(54.2)	333.68	(67.7)	317.69	(3.1)	102.83	(1.6)	1006.00
Total	(58.8)	253.72	(4.2)	317.69	(3.9)	79.75	(1.0)	1006.00
Spink County								
Relief	(76.0)	161.78	(3.0)	233.33	(8.0)	102.87	(2.0)	400.00
Non-relief	(63.5)	318.43	(11.0)	457.54	(1.5)	58.33	(4.5)	1056.00
Total	(67.9)	263.77	(8.4)	430.64	(3.7)	90.72	(3.7)	936.72
Walworth County								
Relief	(68.2)	162.41	(10.9)	72.00	(4.5)	150.00	(.9)	2000.00
Non-relief	(68.3)	212.59	(7.7)	177.06	(6.7)	131.50	(1.4)	525.00
Total	(68.2)	195.71	(8.8)	135.60	(6.0)	136.36	(1.2)	893.75
Three Counties Combined								
Relief	(70.3)	160.11	(4.6)	140.93	(5.9)	103.68	(.9)	933.33
Village	(62.5)	135.89	(5.7)	97.20	(4.0)	182.14	(.6)	2000.00
Owners	(93.1)	137.31	(11.5)	290.00	(3.8)	180.00	(---)	-----
Tenants	(81.0)	191.71	(1.7)	143.00	(9.1)	73.57	(1.7)	400.00
Non-relief	(62.2)	282.66	(8.5)	335.86	(3.8)	117.08	(2.5)	939.80
Village	(61.7)	251.99	(9.1)	286.64	(3.2)	81.80	(2.0)	118.21
Owners	(59.6)	341.23	(6.4)	463.57	(5.5)	153.75	(3.7)	869.25
Tenants	(71.6)	248.94	(12.2)	290.33	(1.4)	30.00	(1.4)	50.00
Total	(65.0)	256.14	(7.2)	283.22	(4.6)	108.23	(2.0)	938.72

* See Table 15 for base figures.

TABLE 35.—Average Amount of Losses Per Household for all Relief and Non-relief Cases Through the Specified Channels from January 1, 1930 to January 1, 1934.†
() Equals Per Cent of Total Sample

	In Bank Failures	In Stocks and Bonds	In Bad Debts	In Cooperative Failures	In Losses of Livestock	In Crop Failures
Miner County						
Relief	(8.8) \$ 234.80	(.9) \$ 87.00	(33.3) \$ 239.52	(3.5) \$ 75.00	(36.0) \$276.82	(38.6) \$4926.21
Non-relief	(11.5) 1101.63	(4.7) 2743.44	(35.9) 1245.92	(4.2) 322.75	(17.7) 257.64	(34.4) 3571.28
Total	(10.5) 830.75	(3.3) 2477.80	(35.0) 888.23	(3.9) 240.16	(24.5) 265.26	(35.9) 3949.86
Spink County						
Relief	(9.0) 248.11	(3.0) 350.00	(16.0) 428.06	(6.0) 192.80	(66.0) 347.95	(75.0) 4314.60
Non-relief	(27.0) 2525.75	(7.0) 2573.21	(30.0) 1554.38	(6.5) 360.38	(46.9) 310.70	(74.5) 5106.08
Total	(21.1) 2200.38	(5.7) 2180.88	(25.4) 1317.26	(6.7) 301.75	(52.8) 325.15	(74.9) 4841.07
Walworth County						
Relief	(10.9) 2801.00	(---) ---	(14.5) 250.62	(---) ---	(25.5) 184.41	(36.4) 2406.60
Non-relief	(39.4) 1493.82	(3.4) 812.85	(35.1) 2060.00	(.5) 35.00	(26.9) 179.80	(36.4) 3725.21
Total	(29.6) 1348.60	(2.2) 812.85	(28.0) 1733.98	(3.6) 35.00	(26.1) 225.27	(49.4) 3331.93
Three Counties Combined						
Relief	(9.6) 385.25	(1.2) 284.25	(21.7) 285.15	(3.4) 150.00	(41.5) 291.67	(49.2) 3890.81
Village Owners	(9.1) 293.93	(.6) 87.00	(25.6) 299.73	(.6) 50.00	(9.1) 105.62*	(14.8) 1327.46*
Tenants	(19.2) 74.80	(3.8) 200.00	(26.9) 322.57	(7.7) 200.00	(80.8) 443.47	(92.3) 6845.83
Non-relief	(8.3) 286.60	(1.7) 425.00	(14.9) 234.16	(6.6) 150.00	(80.2) 289.50	(90.8) 3851.60
Village Owners	(26.3) 1797.68	(5.0) 2213.53	(33.7) 1631.27	(3.7) 331.90	(30.3) 280.56	(55.3) 4287.23
Tenants	(24.0) 1344.31	(5.5) 1910.64	(35.1) 2036.96	(.6) 146.50	(1.6) 366.00*	(20.1) 2445.16*
Non-relief	(31.2) 2557.30	(5.5) 2825.00	(34.9) 1427.25	(7.3) 412.43	(60.6) 297.33	(92.7) 4765.76
Tenants	(21.6) 666.12	(1.4) 25.00	(24.3) 963.88	(5.4) 102.50	(60.8) 221.88	(91.9) 4545.23
Total	(20.5) 1544.85	(3.7) 1986.55	(29.5) 1284.84	(3.7) 271.27	(34.2) 284.70	(53.2) 4158.85

† See Table 15 for base figures.

* These individuals own farm land but are not farm operators.

A number of interesting observations can be made regarding Tables 34 and 35 which summarize losses and extraordinary expenditures during a four-year period. The non-relief families have been the heaviest losers, except in livestock, for all types of losses listed. Relief families have lost more through the death of livestock.

Losses in bank failures during the four-year period have been less per family than that in stocks and bonds, but losses in bank failures were much more universal among the samples studied. The greatest amount of loss among families was in crops, which loss also involved the greatest percentage, both of relief and non-relief families. Livestock losses were quite numerous both among relief and non-relief families.

Among the relief families the loss in bank failures, stocks and bonds, bad debts and in medical care was greater for farm tenants than that for farm owners, while that for owners was greater in failures of farm co-operatives, in livestock, in crops, in funerals and in personal injuries. The difference in value of livestock and crop losses of owners is doubtless due to their greater number of livestock and acreages per farm. Among non-relief families the situation is reversed in many cases, the farm owners having had heavier losses in every item listed. Losses of village relief families have been less for almost all of the items listed than for village non-relief families.

The percentage of relief families experiencing losses in bank failures was only a little more than one third as great as that of the non-relief families, slightly more than one-fifth as great for bad debts and about half as great for funerals. For the items, failures in cooperatives, crop failures and medical care the differences is not great. A much greater percentage of relief families than non-relief families have lost through death of stock, and through personal injuries.

The percentage of owners suffering loss is greater than that of tenants for most of the items listed.

All of the data in Part IV doubtless contains a high percentage of error. Most farmers keep no account books so have to depend upon memory. In this case figures given represent estimates in most cases. In all cases losses in livestock and through crop failure must be estimated on a very general basis. At best the data presented represents a rough approximation.

V. Types and Sources of Relief and Other Extraordinary Forms of Aid

Most of the relief given in October, 1933 was work relief, (Table 36) although there was some direct relief in each county. Village families

TABLE 36.—Types of Relief Received in October 1933

	DIRECT		WORK		FEED		OTHER	
	Number of Cases	Per Cent	Number of Cases	Per Cent	Number of Cases	Per Cent	Number of Cases	Per Cent
Miner Co.	30	26.31	106	92.98	-	-----	4	3.50
Spink Co.	10	9.09	99	100.00	-	-----	-	-----
Walworth Co.	19	17.27	93	84.54	4	3.63	5	4.54
Three Counties Combined	59	18.26	298	92.26	4	1.23	9	2.78
Village Owners	38	21.59	156	88.63	3	1.70	4	2.84
Owners	1	3.84	25	96.15	-	-----	-	-----
Tenants	20	16.52	117	96.69	1	.82	4	3.31

were given direct relief in a slightly larger proportion of cases than were farm families, which is probably due to a greater number of old people residing in villages. Owners and tenants were given work relief almost entirely. However, a greater percentage of tenants received direct relief than did owners.

An attempt was made in the interviews to determine whether or not the households were known to a relief agency before January 1, 1930. The following results were obtained: 2.58 per cent of Miner county relief cases, 2 per cent of Spink county cases and 5.45 per cent of Walworth county cases stated that they were known to a relief agency previous to January 1, 1930. The absence of relief agencies in the counties previous to the establishment of the County Emergency Relief Administration offices made it unlikely that cases would have been on relief previous to January 1, 1934 unless they were indigent poor who are cared for by the board of county commissioners. These cases were supposed to have been cared for by the county commissioners even after the establishment of the County Emergency Relief Administration, so should not have appeared on the relief rolls, but there is little doubt that part of them are on the relief rolls. There is another reason why these data are probably unreliable—families who have been on relief previous to January 1, 1930 would no doubt have

TABLE 37.—Number and Per Cent of Relief Families Who Have Received Relief One, Two, Three, or All Four Years for the Period January 1, 1930 to January 1, 1934.*

	One Year Only		Two Years		Three Years		All Four Years	
	Num-ber	Per Cent	Num-ber	Per Cent	Num-ber	Per Cent	Num-ber	Per Cent
Miner County	49	42.24	43	37.07	22	18.96	2	1.72
Spink County	66	66.00	32	32.00	1	1.00	1	1.00
Walworth County	61	55.45	34	30.91	9	8.18	6	5.45
Total	176	53.99	109	23.44	32	9.82	9	2.76

* See Table 15 for base figures.

tried to conceal this fact from the investigators since many of them felt that the information obtained in the investigation would have a bearing upon their relief status.

It is evident from Table 37 that Spink county families succumbed to relief later than either Miner or Walworth county families, for Spink county has the largest percentage of cases who have received relief for only one year and the smallest percentage of those having received relief all four years. Walworth county shows the greatest percentage of families who have been on relief for all four years, but this undoubtedly is due to the fact that more chronic relief cases were studied in that county as is suggested by the figures presented in the above paragraph. In all counties the number having had relief more than two years is small.

Non-relief Forms of Assistance.—Table 38 shows the non-relief forms of assistance received by relief and non-relief families during the year 1933. The benefits received through the Civil Works Administration were received by the largest proportion of cases. The second item of importance was the aid through the Farm Credit Administration. The latter, of course, applies largely to farm families or to village residents who own land. A much greater proportion of relief families than of non-relief families were given aid through the Civil Works Administration. Open-country

TABLE 38.—Per Cent of Relief and Non-Relief Families Receiving Non-Relief Forms of Assistance in 1933.*

	Farm Credit Administration	Commodity Credit Corporation	Agricultural Adjustment Administration	Civilian Conservation Corps	Civil Works Administration	Other
Miner County						
Relief	9.65	2.63	4.39	---	84.21	7.89
Non-relief	2.08	---	3.65	---	2.60	4.17
Total	4.90	.98	3.92	---	33.00	5.55
Spink County						
Relief	7.07	---	16.16	---	96.97	3.03
Non-relief	1.00	---	9.50	---	9.00	2.50
Total	3.01	---	11.71	---	38.13	2.68
Walworth County						
Relief	.91	---	3.64	2.73	70.91	10.00
Non-relief	2.88	---	7.69	---	10.57	1.44
Total	2.20	---	6.29	.94	31.45	4.40
Three Counties Combined						
Relief	5.88	.93	7.74	---	83.59	7.12
Village	.57	.57	1.70	---	78.97	10.23
Country	12.24	1.36	14.97	---	89.12	3.40
Non-relief	2.00	---	7.00	.50	7.50	2.67
Village	.65	---	1.62	.97	3.90	2.27
Country	3.42	---	12.67	---	11.30	3.08
Total	3.36	.33	7.26	.33	34.13	4.23

* See Table 15 for base figures.

families benefited in a greater proportion of cases than did the village families through the Civil Works Administration. The benefits through the various agricultural acts do not present the actual situation. Many families benefited to a considerable degree through the prospective advances of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. One mail order house accompanied its special fall catalog with a circular which stated that it would grant credit to families expecting checks for the reduction of wheat acreages. Most of the checks for wheat reduction, as well as those received on the corn-hog program, came after 1934 and so are not shown in these tabulations. There is no doubt that considerable purchasing was done in anticipation of the checks.

VI. Changes in Living as Indicated by Decreases in Use of Communication Devices

Table 39 contrasts relief and non-relief families with regard to use of automobiles, radios and telephones, contrasting January 1, 1930 with January 1, 1934. Taking the three counties together there has been a decrease of 17.8 per cent in the use of automobiles by relief families and a decrease of 8.0 per cent by non-relief families, a decrease more than twice as great for the relief families. The decrease in the use of radios is relatively more extreme for the relief families than for non-relief families. The proportion of relief families dispensing with the telephone is almost twice as great as that of the non-relief families. Comparing the decrease in the use of these three items we find that automobiles have been dropped in the least proportion of cases for both classes, telephones rank second, whereas radios have been taken out of use in the largest proportion of cases.

Comparing village and open-country families with regard to decrease in automobiles, we find that village relief families have dispensed with their automobiles in approximately four times as great a proportion as have open country families. The decrease among the non-relief village families is almost twice as great as that among the non-relief open country families. The situation is reversed with regard to the radio. Approximately four times as many country families have done away with the radio as have village families, which is undoubtedly due to the greater expense of operating a radio in rural districts where battery sets must be used. The differences between village and open-country are not so extreme with regard to the telephone, although village relief families have dispensed with the telephone more than the open country relief families. Village non-relief families have dispensed with the telephone in a smaller number of cases than open country non-relief families. The only item increased in the entire distribution is the radio among non-relief families in Walworth county and the increase here was only slight, namely, 3.5 per cent. Taking the entire distribution into account, 26.45 per cent of the people dispensed with the radio, 25 per cent with the telephone, and 9.4 per cent with the automobile.

Table 40 shows similar data for newspapers and magazines. The differences here are more extreme than those in the former table. Approximately 11 per cent of relief families decreased daily newspapers, whereas less than one per cent of non-relief have canceled daily newspaper subscriptions. For other newspapers the difference is 10.65 per cent and 3.34

per cent respectively, whereas for magazines it is a 3.85 per cent decrease and a .74 per cent increase respectively. These differences are constant throughout each of the counties. Taking the entire sample 5.51 per cent have cancelled other newspapers, 3.67 per cent daily newspapers, 0.53 per cent magazines. It is interesting to note that Walworth county relief cases have increased in considerable proportion the use of magazines. Taking into account the preceding table this may be in part a compensation for the extreme decrease in automobiles, radios, and telephones among this group.

The counties vary at the two intervals, (January 1, 1930 and January 1, 1934) in the proportion of relief and non-relief families having automobiles, radios and telephones. The proportion of relief and non-relief families in Miner and Spink counties having automobiles, radios and telephones both in 1930 and 1934 about equaled each other, whereas in Walworth county marked differences appear between the two groups. In fact only about a third as many relief families possessed these devices as did non-relief families. The explanation may be that since the relief situation has been much less stringent in Walworth county fewer of the once prosperous families have been compelled to go on the relief rolls than have done so in Miner and Spink counties.

VII. Reasons for Closing and for Opening and Reopening Relief Cases

The results of certain phases of a survey made by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration* in Kingsbury county are briefly summarized in the following order: First, reasons for discontinuing relief to rural families who were dropped from the relief rolls; second, reasons for opening or reopening cases.

Reasons for Discontinuing Relief To Rural Families

Table 41 indicates that 816 or 76.5 per cent of all cases dropped from relief rolls were dropped because they were employed by the Civil Works Administration, while 30 or 2.8 per cent were dropped because they received private employment and 20.7 per cent for all other reasons listed.

It is interesting to note that during the early period of the Civil Works Administration employment no cases were dropped because of having received private employment, while in March after the Civil Works Administration was discontinued, 20 per cent were dropped because of having received private employment. It is also interesting to note that even while the Civil Works Administration was in operation there was a monthly increase from 1.2 per cent in January to four per cent in February of cases dropped from the relief rolls because of being employed by private industry.

Data for reopened cases is available, showing why they had previously been dropped from relief rolls. A summary of these data in Kingsbury

* Schedules used in field work were: F.E.R.A. Form DRS-12A, "Survey of Closed Rural Relief Cases," and F.E.R.A. Form DRS-14A, "Survey of Opened and Reopened Rural Relief Cases." The study was under the direct supervision of Charles Rudd of Miller, South Dakota. Hand county was included in the study but part of the tabulations were forwarded to Washington before summaries were obtained for this publication.

county from December 1933 to April 1934 shows that 922 had been dropped because of Civil Works Administration employment, while only 74 were dropped for other reasons. The category of other reasons covers all the other points listed in Table 41 and the accompanying footnote.

TABLE 41.—Reasons for Discontinuing Relief to Families in Kingsbury County, November 1933 to March 1934.

	Total Cases	Because of Transfer to C.W.A.		Private Employment		Other Reasons (*)	
		Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
November							
Total	500	487	97.4	—	—	13	2.6
Village	169	163	96.5	—	—	6	3.5
Open Country	331	324	97.9	—	—	7	2.1
December							
Total	17	17	100.00	—	—	—	—
Village	4	4	100.00	—	—	—	—
Open Country	13	13	100.00	—	—	—	—
January							
Total	300	269	89.7	4	1.2	27	9.0
Village	82	62	76.8	4	4.9	15	18.3
Open Country	218	206	94.5	—	—	12	5.5
February							
Total	150	42	28.0	4	4.0	102	68.0
Village	46	10	21.7	4	8.7	32	69.6
Open Country	104	32	30.8	2	1.9	70	67.3
March							
Total	100	1	1.0	20	20.0	79	79.0
Village	52	1	1.0	14	26.9	38	73.1
Open Country	48	1	2.1	6	12.5	41	85.4
Grand Total	1067	816	76.5	30	2.8	221	20.7

* Among those listed were: Civilian Conservation Corps; Employed on Public Works Administration project; Other Federal, State, or local Government; More hours per day or more days per week; increased rate of pay; Crop and livestock loans (Farm Credit Administration); Advances on commodities (Commodity Credit Corporation); Payments for crop reduction (Agricultural Adjustment Administration); Crop marketed; increased prices; sale of farm or chattels; reopening of banks; other frozen assets made available; client failed to report or unable to locate client.

Reasons for Opening and Reopening Rural Relief Cases

It is interesting to note the number of relief cases appearing on relief rolls each month. They are shown in Table 42. In December 443 new cases appeared on the relief rolls, in January 467, in February 94, in March 138, and in April 52. Reopened cases were more numerous in March when the Civil Works Administration program was terminated, totaling at that time 512. They were also heavy for April, totaling 248 cases.

The reasons for opening and reopening cases in Kingsbury county for the period of December 1933 to April 1934 are summarized as follows: Loss of job on Civil Works Administration project, 1337 cases; crop fail-

ure 531 cases; loss of job in private industry, 127 cases. All other possible reasons are given by a very small proportion of the cases.*

TABLE 42.—Numbers of New and Reopened Relief Cases in Kingsbury County for Each Month, December, 1933 to April, 1930.

	Opened (New)	Reopened
December		
Village	174	23
Open Country	269	34
Total	443	57
January		
Village	149	62
Open Country	318	121
Total	467	183
February		
Village	27	5
Open Country	67	5
Total	94	10
March		
Village	50	165
Open Country	88	347
Total	138	512
April		
Village	1	16
Open Country	51	232
Total	52	248
TOTAL	1194	1006

Summary and Conclusions

The relief situation in South Dakota, which has led to the expenditure of several millions of federal funds and to the depletion of local relief funds, in many counties, must be attributed for the most part to factors which have been beyond human control. The chief among these is drouth, which has persisted for several years and with progressively disastrous effects.

This study was primarily concerned with determining the characteristics of those families who have been recipients of public relief during the current period. The results of the findings of the field survey may be summarized briefly as follows:

Composition of Households.—Heads of relief families and their wives are younger than those of non-relief families, probably due to the fact that tenants constitute a larger proportion of the relief group, and retired individuals a larger part of the non-relief group.

Relief heads, their wives and their children have completed fewer school grades than have the non-relief heads, their wives and their children.

* A total of 205 cases list some one of the following reasons: left Civilian Conservation Corps; loss of job on Public Works Administration project; loss of other Federal, State, or local government employment; fewer hours of work per day or fewer days per week; decreased rate of pay; bank failures; losses of livestock; low crop prices; loss due to fire, storm, flood, "acts of God."; failure of client's business; transferred from other agency.

The evidence is conclusive to the effect that relief families have dependents in a larger proportion of cases and the average number of dependents are greater per household, clearly indicating that relief families have more economic responsibilities. The non-relief group shows a much larger percentage of families consisting of only an adult couple than does the relief group.

Foreign born village residents have had relatively large representation on relief rolls, while foreign born farm families have no larger representation than do the native born.

Doubled-up families constitute approximately five per cent of both the relief and non-relief households.

Relief heads have made more occupational changes per head than have non-relief heads. Heads of families with an unemployment record have made more changes in occupation than have those without an unemployment record.

Relief families average a slightly greater number of residential shifts per household than do non-relief families and among both relief and non-relief groups those with an unemployment history are most mobile.

Farm tenants made up the greatest proportion of relief families studied, and farm owners the greater proportion of non-relief families. Business men made up the second largest group of non-relief cases.

The outcome of the last farming enterprise was unprofitable for nearly all relief families and a smaller number of them "broke even" or profited by their last farming enterprise than did non-relief families.

Occupational History, Farm Tenure and Mobility of Head of Relief Household.—Heads of relief households have a work record three years shorter than those of non-relief households, which is probably explained by the fact that heads of non-relief families are older.

A greater proportion of relief than of non-relief families have been unemployed at some time during their work history. The length of time spent as unemployed is practically equal for the relief and non-relief groups that have experienced unemployment.

Village heads of households naturally account for a greater percentage of the unemployment since open-country people are seldom unemployed in the usual sense of the term.

A greater percentage of relief than of non-relief heads have moved from one township to another, but a higher proportion of non-relief heads have changed occupations.

Employment Status of Members of Relief Household Other Than Head.—Relief families have had fewer persons employed in their household during the entire occupational history of the members, and had fewer members employed in October 1933. This is despite the fact that relief households have more members on the average than do non-relief households. The explanation lies partly in the fact that relief households have more dependents who have not reached an employable age.

Economic Status of Relief Household.—Relief families farm on a smaller scale than do non-relief families, viewed both from the standpoint of number of acres of land operated and the number of livestock raised. Large scale farming and diversification in livestock raising seems to have been a factor in making for success, in a greater number of cases, during the period covered by this study. The evidence suggests that livestock

raising and larger land holdings are a safeguard in drouth-depression periods.

Relief families have decreased their indebtedness by much smaller amounts than have non-relief families. Most of the decrease came among those who were tenant farmers in 1934, which undoubtedly suggests that a large part of the decrease in indebtedness may have been due to forfeited land holdings, machinery bought on time contracts and chattels. It probably cannot, in most cases, be due to the debts having been paid.

A larger proportion of relief than of non-relief families have decreased their indebtedness during the last four years, but the average decrease per relief family has been less than for non-relief families. Non-relief families have, in a greater proportion of cases, decreased their reserves, and those decreasing reserves have decreased them by a larger amount than have the relief families. Most all families, both relief and non-relief have had extraordinary expenditures, and so do not differ greatly in proportion on this point.

On January 1, 1934, non-relief families had greater amounts of outstanding indebtedness, having suffered much greater losses and extraordinary expenditures than have relief families, indicating clearly that the relief family head had less reserves at the outset of the drouth-depression period than had his non-relief neighbor. He succumbed to the pressure of circumstances and had to have outside assistance, while his neighbors' reserves were not yet depleted. However, non-relief families have kept off relief rolls at the cost of acquiring large amounts of indebtedness during the last four years. A greater proportion of relief than of non-relief families have lost livestock and the loss per family has been slightly greater, despite the fact that they own less livestock per household.¹

Types and Sources of Relief and Other Extraordinary Forms of Aid.—The practice of all the counties studied was to give work relief rather than direct relief, and there were few exceptions to this policy in October 1933.

Comparatively few of the cases studied were on relief previous to 1930 and most cases received relief in only two years out of the four years studied, if one accepts statements of subjects interviewed at their face value. It is likely that the facts were understated in some cases, since families frequently thought that their answers to questions in the schedule would have something to do with the relief they would receive in the future.

The Civil Works Administration helped the greatest number, although checks to be received through the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, which had not been received by many families up to January 1, 1934, will help a large proportion of the families.

Changes in Living of Relief Households as Indicated by the Decrease in the Use of Communication Devices.—Relief families have reduced their standard of living by dispensing with the use of automobiles, radios, telephones, newspapers and magazines in a much greater proportion of cases than have non-relief families. The three groups differed in the number possessing these devices in 1930, the non-relief households having had them in a larger proportion of cases, especially in Walworth county. Village families have dispensed with the automobile in a much greater pro-

1. They owned less livestock per household January 1, 1934. It is probable that they did throughout the four-year period.

portion of cases than have open-country families, while the latter have dispensed with the radio in a much greater proportion of cases.

Reasons for Closing, Opening and Reopening of Relief Cases.—Drouth was the initial factor in causing most rural relief cases to be opened. The coming of the Civil Works Administration program was the important factor in closing relief cases, and the doing away with this program was the principal factor in the reopening of cases. The situation would doubtless have been much different had not the drouth persisted into the spring months, discouraging farmers in employing help.

Appendix

Schedules Used for Field Survey

F.E.R.A. Form D.R.S.-3C

SURVEY OF RURAL FAMILIES RECEIVING RELIEF IN OCTOBER 1933*

I. IDENTIFICATION AND COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLD

1. Schedule No. _____ Date of interview _____ Field agent _____
2. Full name of head of household _____
3. Residence: (a) State _____ (b) County _____ (c) Village _____
(d) If this family does not live in any village, check (✓) here (____).
4. Color (or race) of head of household (check (✓) one of the following:
(a) White (____) (c) Mexican (____) (e) Japanese (____)
(b) Negro (____) (d) Chinese (____) (f) Filipino (____)
(g) American Indian (____) (h) Other _____
(Specify)
5. Members of household during October 1933.

Line No.	Relationship to Head of Household	Sex M or F	Age at Birth- Day	Native or Foreign Born (N. or F.B.)	If Foreign Born, Years Lived in United States	Number Years Completed			Was Member Still in School? (Yes or No)	Was Member in Household January 1, 1933? (Yes or No)
						Grade School	High School	College		
(*)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)
1	Head									
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
11										
12										
13										
14										
15										

* The non-relief schedule was identical except for omission of starred (*) questions, and was Form DRS-16.

6. †If household was formed after January 1, 1930, give date of its formation _____
7. (a) Did October household include a combined or "doubled-up" family?
Yes (---) No (---)
- (b) If October household included a combined or "doubled-up" family, answer the following:
- (1) Did this combination take place after January 1, 1930? Yes (---)
No (---)
- (2) If so, give line numbers of persons shown in question 5 who joined the family of head after January 1, 1930 _____
- (3) Reasons for combination _____
- (c)*If any members of October household did not receive relief in October 1933, give line numbers shown in question 5 _____

II. OCCUPATIONAL HISTORY, FARM TENURE, AND MOBILITY OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD

8. Occupational history of head of household (include periods of unemployment). Begin with first job for pay. If working at home for wages, write "home" under column (i).

Month and Year Began	Duration of Job or Period of Unemployment	Occupation	Industry	Usual Monthly Earnings	Residence			
					State	County	Township	Miles To Job
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

† Not taken into account for tabulations in this bulletin as cases were too few.

V. TYPES AND SOURCES OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE RELIEF AND OTHER EXTRAORDINARY FORMS OF AID

17. *Indicate types and sources of relief received by this household during October 1933.

Type (a)	Relief Agency		Form of Relief (Cash or Kind) (d)	Value (e)
	Public or Private (b)	Name of Agency (c)		
(a) Direct relief	-----	-----	-----	\$-----
(b) Work relief	-----	-----	-----	-----
(c) Feed for livestock	-----	-----	-----	-----
(d) Other (specify)	-----	-----	-----	-----
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

18. * (a) Was household known to any type of relief agency before January 1, 1930? Yes (___) No (___) Not ascertainable (___)

(b) Number of months for which household received any relief during: 1930 _____ 1931 _____ 1932 _____ 1933 _____

19. Other forms of assistance received from January 1, 1933, to January 1, 1934.

Type	Month When Received	Amount
(a) Crop and livestock loans (Farm Credit Administration)	-----	\$-----
(b) Advances on commodities (Commodity Credit Corporation)	-----	-----
(c) Payments for crop reduction (Agricultural Administration):		
(1) Wheat	-----	-----
(2) Cotton	-----	-----
(3) Tobacco	-----	-----
(4) Corn	-----	-----
(5) Hogs	-----	-----
(6) Other (specify)	-----	-----
(d) Civilian Conservation Corps	-----	-----
(e) Civil works employment	-----	-----
(f) Veterans' compensation and pensions	-----	-----
(g) Loans on adjusted compensation certificates	-----	-----
(h) Old-age relief	-----	-----
(i) Mothers' relief or pension	-----	-----
(j) Other (specify)	-----	-----

F. E. R. A. Form DRS-3C (Supplementary)

Only Question 23 was used for this bulletin. It was as follows: 23. Facilities for communication used by household. Check (✓) appropriate items.

Item	In Use as of January 1, 1930	In Use January 1, 1934	If not in Use January 1, 1934, Give Reason
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
a. Radio			
b. Telephone			
c. Car			
d. Daily Newspaper			
e. Other Newspaper			
f. Magazines			
g. Other items (specify)			