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## Migrants from Rural South Dakota Families: Their Geographical and Occupational Distribution

W. L. Slocum

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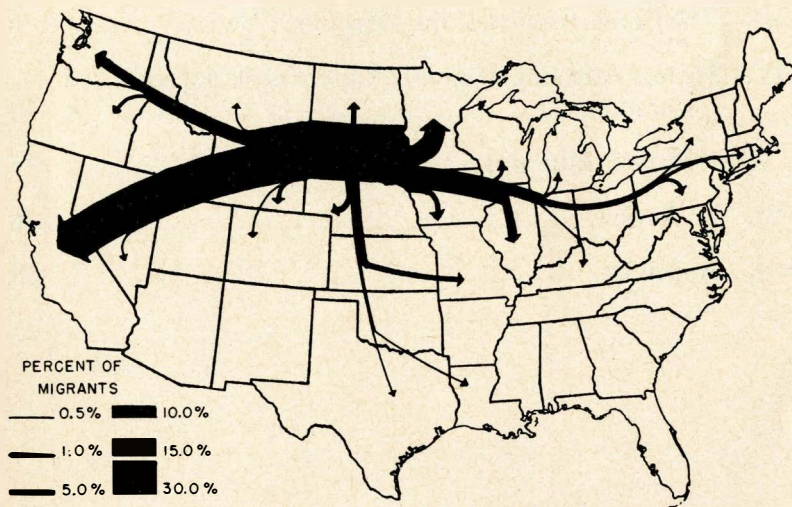
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# Migrants From Rural South Dakota Families

## *Their Geographical and Occupational Distribution*



PATTERN OF OUT-OF-STATE MIGRATION FROM RURAL  
SOUTH DAKOTA FAMILIES 1936-1941.

California got three out of each 10 of the recent out-of-state migrants from families in Custer, Edmunds, Haakon, Kingsbury and Turner counties.

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# Migrants From Rural South Dakota Families

## *Their Geographical and Occupational Distribution*

Walter L. Slocum<sup>1</sup>

### I. Introduction

A high degree of geographical and occupational mobility is an inherent part of the American tradition of democracy. Individuals have been relatively free to move at will from one part of the country to another and from one occupation to another.

South Dakota people have shared in this mobility. Migrating as single individuals and in family groups, our settlers came from other states and from northern Europe. Starting with only 11,776 people in 1870, the population of the area increased so rapidly that by 1890, one year after statehood was attained, the population numbered 348,600. From 1870 to 1930 each 10-year census showed an increase. Since 1930 there has been a considerable loss in population due to drouth and more recently due to the attraction of defense industries in other states.

It should also be pointed out that there has been a great deal of migration from place to place within the boundaries of the state.

Occupational mobility has not been carefully recorded but it is probably quite large. Some indication of its magnitude may be gained from the fact that the State Employment Service on December 30, 1939 had 30,998 active applications for employment on file.<sup>2</sup>

The characteristics of migrating families have been described to some extent previously.<sup>3</sup> In this report, attention will be directed to the occupational, educational, and other characteristics of persons who were reared in rural South Dakota families but who had left the parental home by the end of 1935.

Since pioneer days our rural families have sent out their grown children to participate in the life of the neighborhood, the community, and the general society. Until the present study, however, no one has attempted systematically to discover what has become of these young people who have been reared in rural South Dakota homes. This study attempts to answer in some detail the question: *Where do our rural young people go and what occupations to they select?* It also attempts to find out if there are factors in the family background which have contributed to the choice of occupation of the migrant.

The data, which are believed to represent the rural areas of the state, are based upon a 1935 sample from the following five South Dakota counties: Custer, Edmunds, Haakon, Kingsbury, and Turner and upon current data from a 1942 questionnaire covering the same counties.<sup>4</sup> An earlier report<sup>5</sup> based on the 1935 mobility study treated chiefly the mobility characteristics of families residing in the above mentioned counties plus Tripp County. The

1. Assistant Rural Sociologist, South Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station.

2. Third Annual Report of the Unemployment Commission of South Dakota, 1939.

3. See especially South Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 315, W. F. Kumlien, et. al. "Rural Population Mobility in South Dakota," Brookings, 1938.

4. See appendix for description of sampling procedures and tests of representativeness.

5. SDAES Bulletin 315.

1942 questionnaire was sent out so that defense officials and others might have a current picture of the trend of migration from South Dakota families.

## II. The Characteristics of the Families From Which the Migrants Came

One of the principal objectives of this study is to determine the influence of different family backgrounds upon the achievements of migrants. Consequently it may be desirable to review at the outset some of the outstanding characteristics of the 499<sup>6</sup> families from which the 1504 migrants came.

**1935 Residence.** Almost six out of each 10 of the families<sup>7</sup> lived in the open country. There are no cities<sup>8</sup> in any of the five counties. A comparison between sample families and all families in four of the five counties shows that families having children away from home did not differ<sup>9</sup> from all families in these counties with respect to residential distribution.

**Family Composition.** More than one out of every five<sup>10</sup> families had one parent only. Of the 106 one-parent families, 74 were headed by women and 32 by men.

**Number of Children.** The median number of living children, counting those who were away as well as those who were at home was 4.97. Omitting Edmunds county the median number was 4.77. In Turner, Kingsbury, Haakon, and Custer counties almost a third<sup>11</sup> of the families in the sample had no children at home in 1935. For those who did have children at home the median number was 2.69.

**Occupation of Family Heads.** Most of the parental families<sup>12</sup> were headed by men. Six out of each 10 of these male heads were farm operators (Table 1). The next largest single category included those fathers who had no occupation. Table 1 shows the distribution among other occupations also.

Almost half<sup>13</sup> of the widowed and divorced mothers had no occupation in 1935, more than a third<sup>14</sup> were farm operators, mostly owners, and the remainder were in other occupations.

Of the heads of parental families engaged in agriculture almost three out of each four<sup>15</sup> were owners, the remainder being tenants. A comparison between sample families and all families in four counties shows a significant difference<sup>16</sup> between the two in this respect. The sample contains a much higher proportion of owners. Otherwise the differences are not significant. No doubt this difference can be partly explained by the fact that owner operators are about 10 years<sup>17</sup> older than tenants, and hence have more children old enough to migrate.

**Age of Parents in 1935.** As suggested above, many of the parents of migrants were older than were their neighbors. Table 2 below shows that three out of four were fifty years of age or older at the time of the survey. The median age of fathers was 56.9 years and the median age of mothers was 60.4

6. These 499 families comprise a 20 percent sample of the families which reported members away from home in 1935.

7. 58.3 percent

8. The census definition of a city as a place of 2,500 or more is used here.

9. Chi-square test.

10. 21.2 percent.

11. 32.7 percent.

12. 85.3 percent.

13. 47.4 percent.

14. 36.5 percent.

15. 73.4 percent.

16. Chi-square test.

17. United States Census of Agriculture 1940, Series II, South Dakota.

Table 1. 1935 Occupations of Fathers of Migrants, by Counties

Occupation	Haakon	Custer	Kingsbury	Turner	Edmunds	Total	Pct.
Farm Owner	33	22	26	62	45	188	44.2
Farm Tenant	4	7	25	23	12	71	16.7
Professional			1	5	3	9	2.1
Merchant	2	2	4	5	9	22	5.3
Skilled Labor	2	3	6	8	4	23	5.4
Clerical	1	1	3	1		6	1.4
Salesman	3		2	4	1	10	2.4
Common Labor		4	7	5	7	23	5.4
Farm Labor	1	1	2	2		6	1.4
All other	3	5	3	13	5	29	6.8
Unemployed	1	2	15	14	6	38	8.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>100.0</b>

years. This spread is due mainly to the fact that women live longer than men. The latest estimates<sup>18</sup> show that the expectation of length of life at birth is 60.6 years for males and 64.5 years for females. Additional information concerning age of parents is presented in Table 2.

**Education of Parents.** The educational achievements of mothers and fathers were very similar. A median number of eight years of school was completed by each. Considering both parents together two out of each three<sup>19</sup> had completed at least the eighth grade. Those who had at least a high school diploma comprised 9.5 percent while 1.6 percent had finished college.

**Place of Birth of Parents.** Information about the backgrounds of the fathers of the migrants is presented in Table 3. Almost three out of each four of the fathers were born in the United States—one out of each three having been born in South Dakota. Of those who were born in foreign countries the largest single group came from Russia. All of these lived in Edmunds County.

Table 2. Parental Families Classified by Age of Father and Mother in 1935

Years	Age of Father		Age of Mother	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
N.A.*	4	.9		
75+	21	4.9	9	1.9
70-74	28	6.6	42	9.0
65-69	49	11.5	81	17.3
60-64	84	19.8	122	26.1
55-59	93	21.8	77	16.5
50-54	91	21.5	60	12.9
45-49	39	9.2	35	7.5
40-44	13	3.1	20	4.3
35-39	2	.5	21	4.5
under 35	1	.2		
Median	56.9			60.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Not ascertainable.

18. *U. S. Life Tables, 1930-1939* Preliminary, U. S. Census Bureau July, 1941.

19. 66.3 percent.

Table 3. The Families Classified by Country or State in Which Father Was Born

County or State	Total	Percentage
Russia	44	8.8
Germany	14	2.8
Norway	18	3.6
Sweden	6	1.2
Other Foreign Countries	47	9.4
Minnesota	11	2.2
Wisconsin	32	6.4
Iowa	66	13.3
South Dakota	171	34.2
Other states	89	17.8
N. A.	1	.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### III. The Characteristics of the Migrants, 1935<sup>20</sup>

The migrants came from a wide variety of family backgrounds, entered diverse occupations, and migrated near and far. In spite of these variations, however, review of some of their more important characteristics reveals central trends and tendencies.

**The Patterns of Migration.** The geographical distribution of out-of-state migrants is pictured in Fig. 1.<sup>21</sup> Figs. 2 and 3 are presented to give the reader

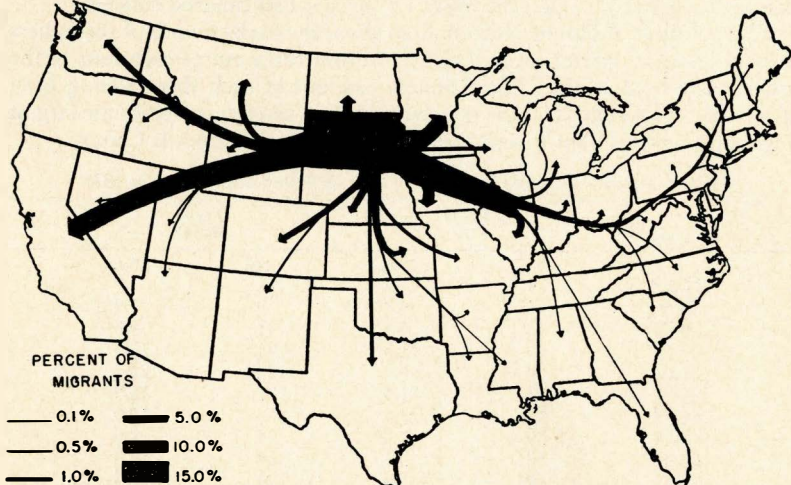


FIG. 1. LOCATION IN 1935 OF OUT-OF-STATE MIGRANTS REARED IN RURAL SOUTH DAKOTA FAMILIES.

The pattern of migration prior to 1936 shows a preference for adjacent states and for the west coast, especially California. Very few went to southern or eastern states.

20. This section refers principally to the sample selected from those families reporting children away from home in 1935. Where data from the 1942 questionnaire are used this is noted.

21. This map includes not only the 1504 migrants included in the sample, but all who had left their parental homes in these counties prior to 1935. It does not include those who migrated with their parents or whose parents left the county prior to the time of the study.

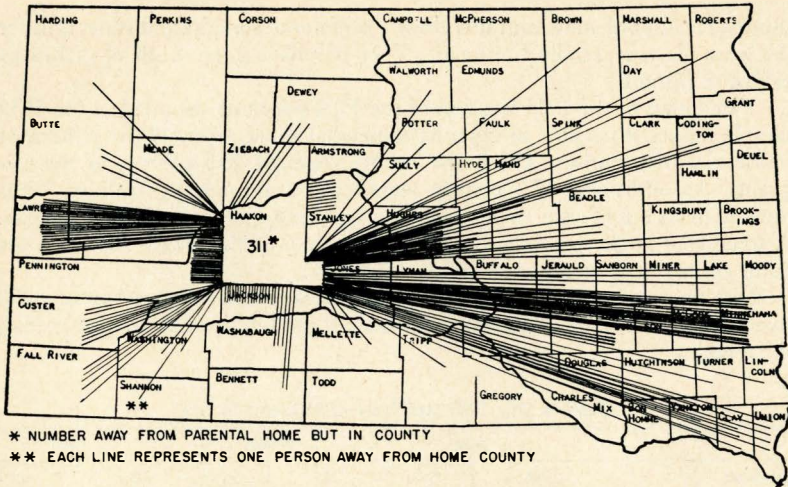


FIG. 2. LOCATION OF IN-STATE MIGRANTS FROM HAAKON COUNTY FAMILIES, 1935.

More in-state migrants from Haakon County moved to remote than to adjacent counties.

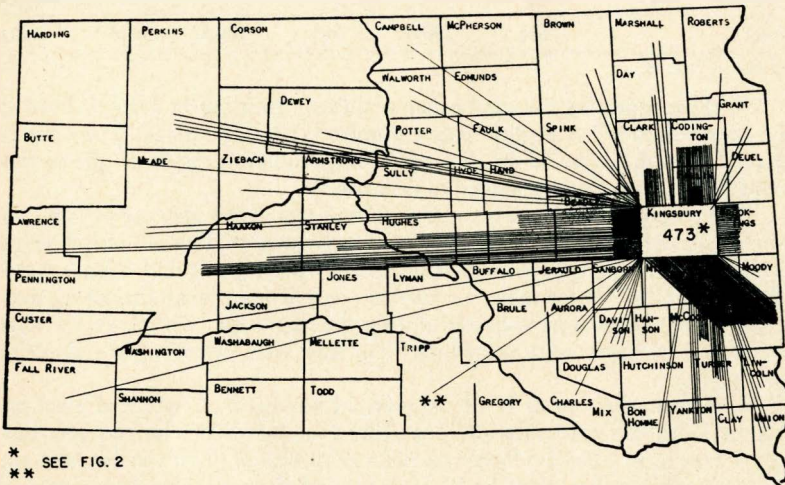


FIG. 3. LOCATION OF IN-STATE MIGRANTS FROM KINGSBURY COUNTY FAMILIES, 1935.

More in-state migrants from Kingsbury County moved to adjacent than to remote counties.

a more graphic idea of the characteristic patterns of migration within the state.

A review of these maps shows clearly that the majority of migrants moved only short distances. The established pattern has been for the greatest number to remain in the home county, the next greatest number in the adjacent



county, etc. Out-of-state migrants show a preference for adjacent states and for the west coast, especially California. Very few have gone south of Nebraska or east of Illinois.

Tabulation of the 1935 location of the 1504 migrants included in the 1935 sample makes it possible to describe somewhat more precisely the pattern of residential distribution. The home county retained 46.8 percent of the migrants. An additional 17.3 percent were located in adjacent counties. Thus more than six out of each 10 lived within easy driving distance of their parents. A somewhat larger proportion of the males than of the females lived in the home county or in an adjacent county (Table 4).

Less than one out of four had left South Dakota and almost half of these lived in adjacent states. The males showed a slight tendency to go farther than the females.

Table 4. The 1935 Residence of Migrants by Sex

Residence	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
County of study	336	49.0	361	45.0	697	46.8
Adj. counties	106	15.4	152	18.9	258	17.3
Elsewhere in S. Dak.	68	9.9	106	13.2	174	11.7
Adj. states	80	11.7	93	11.6	173	11.6
Elsewhere	96	14.0	91	11.3	187	12.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1489*</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Residence N.A. 15.

Of those reporting on rural-urban residence, four out of each 10 lived in the open country.<sup>22</sup> A slightly larger number<sup>23</sup> lived in villages. Only one in seven<sup>24</sup> lived in a city. As the distance of migration increased, the proportion living in the open country tended to decrease.<sup>25</sup>

**1935 Occupation.** Of the men, 36.2 percent were farm operators (Table 5). More than twice as many were tenants as were owners. This is not surprising since the median age of men was 31.6 years. Ownership normally comes somewhat later in life. There may be a further complicating factor, however, inasmuch as these data were collected during the depression when farmers were losing title to farms more frequently than they were acquiring the status of ownership.

More than four out of 10 of the married women were wives of farm operators. With this exception and one other (the fact that relatively few husbands were farm laborers) there was not a great deal of difference between the occupational distribution of male migrants and that of husbands of married women.

Of the women having their own occupations almost three out of 10 were classed as professional workers—mainly school teachers. The next largest group was unemployed. Next came those engaged in domestic labor. Quite a large number were clerical workers.

22. 40.8 percent.

23. 44.6 percent.

24. 14.6 percent.

25. Percentage living in open country: in county of study 57.7, in adjacent counties 44.3, in other South Dakota counties 17.6, in adjacent states 23.0, and in all other places 9.3.

Table 5. The 1935 Occupations of Migrants by Sex

Occupation	Male Migrants		Husband of Migrants		Female Migrants Own Occupation		Total	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Farm owner	79	11.7	102	15.6			181	12.3
Farm tenant	166	24.6	186	28.4			352	23.9
Professional	31	4.6	35	5.3	42	29.2	108	7.4
Merchant	36	5.5	24	3.7	1	.7	62	4.2
Artisan	79	11.7	68	10.4	9	6.2	156	10.6
Clerical	14	2.1	10	1.5	22	15.3	46	3.1
Salesman	24	3.6	34	5.2	10	6.9	68	4.6
Common labor	74	11.0	102	15.6	1	.7	177	12.0
Domestic labor					28	19.4	28	1.9
Farm labor	76	11.3	21	3.2			97	6.6
Miscellaneous	65	9.6	35	5.4	2	1.4	102	6.9
Unemployed	29	4.3	37	5.7	29	20.2	95	6.5
<b>Total (Excluding N. A.)</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1472</b>	<b>100.0</b>
N. A.	18		9		5		32	

**Age of Migrants in 1935.** The median age of the men was 31.6 years and the median age of the women was 30.06 years. More than three out of four men<sup>26</sup> and about the same proportion<sup>27</sup> of the women were between 20 and 45.

**Age of Migrants at Time of Leaving Home.** Girls have a tendency to leave the parental home before boys do. This is indicated by the median age at time of leaving home: for girls it was 20.48 years while for boys it was 22.28 years. The age of greatest migration was 18 for girls and 21 for boys. More than twice as many girls as boys left home before reaching 18 years of age.<sup>28</sup>

**Education of Migrants.** The female migrants had completed more years in school than had males. The median number of years of school completed was 8.78 for males and 10.34 for females (Table 6). Only 25 percent of the males graduated from high school as compared to 42 percent of the females. The level of educational achievement was considerably lower in Edmunds county than in the other four counties; 40 percent of the migrants from Edmunds county families had not completed the eighth grade whereas for all the five counties the corresponding percentage was 13.9.

**Marital Status of Migrants.** At the time of the survey in 1935 four out of

Table 6. Education of the Migrants, by Sex

School Completed	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Under 8th gr.	110	16.0	98	12.1	208	13.9
Grad. 8th gr.	298	43.4	255	31.5	553	37.1
1, 2, 3, yr. H. S.	107	15.5	115	14.2	222	14.8
Graduate H. S.	90	13.1	198	24.5	288	19.2
1, 2, 3, yr. College	42	6.1	101	12.5	143	9.6
College graduate	39	5.9	42	5.2	81	5.4
Median		8.78		10.34		8.02
<b>Total (Excluding N. A.)</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1495</b>	<b>100.0</b>
N. A.	6		3		9	

26. 78.2 percent.

27. 78.7 percent.

28. The percentages are: girls 13.8, boys 5.4.

every five migrants were married. More of those who lived in the open country were married than of those who lived in villages and the smallest proportion married was found among those living in cities.<sup>29</sup> These differences were more pronounced for the women than they were for the men.

#### IV. Factors Affecting Migrants' Choice of Occupation and Location

Choice of occupation is influenced by many factors. This is also true of choice of location. It may seem a little strange to some young people to learn that these choices are affected by anything besides personal preference on the part of individuals. It is true of course, that personal preference is important within the range of choices that are really available.

The numbers and nature of the effective opportunities are, however, very materially influenced by the nature of the experiences of the individual—especially is this true in normal times. In this section an attempt is made to weigh the influence of family backgrounds and individual experience including education.

**Occupation of Parent.** In a static society such as China or India a son usually follows his father's calling. Little, if any, rise in occupational status takes place between generations. In an open class society such as ours it is quite otherwise. But even here there is some tendency for sons to follow in their father's footsteps—especially in certain occupations.

Table 10 shows the proportion of sons who entered their father's occupation. The most notable tendency for sons to follow in their father's footsteps

Table 10. Percentage of Migrant Sons and Daughters Having Same Occupation as Parent in 1935.

Occupation of Father	Percent of sons	Percent of daughters' husbands
Agriculture	60.7	59.4
Farm operator	43.9	52.2
Farm owner	11.1	19.4
Profession	50.0	28.6
Merchant	12.9	5.0
Skilled Labor	37.9	18.5
Clerical Work	16.6	0.0
Salesman	14.3	0.0
Unskilled Labor	13.8	31.2

was in agriculture, where six out of each 10 migrant sons were in agriculture. This includes sons employed as farm laborers. Excluding farm laborers more than four out of each ten migrant sons of farm operators were also operators. As might be expected, the sons of farmers were not so well established as their fathers. This is indicated by the data just noted and confirmed by the fact that only a little more than one out of each 10 migrant sons of farm owners was an owner.

The greatest shifts occurred among the sons of merchants, unskilled laborers, salesmen and clerical workers.

29. The percentages married were: in the open country 90.6, in villages 78.8, in cities 49.5.

The table also shows the proportion of daughters whose husbands had the same occupation as the female migrants' father. There was a marked preference for farmers among farmers' daughters; almost six out of each 10 married farmers. Apparently the husbands of farm girls were better established than were the sons of farmers. This may be explained in part by the general tendency for girls to marry someone a few years older than themselves.<sup>30</sup> With the exception of unskilled labor the greatest shifts took place among the same occupations as noted above for sons.

**Residence of Parents.** As noted in the preceding chapter<sup>31</sup> only one out of each seven migrants lived in the city. To some extent this may have been due to the fact that the homes in which they were reared were located in rural counties. This, however, is very difficult to establish; a very large proportion of the people now living in cities were reared in rural areas<sup>32</sup> and rural-urban migration is continually occurring.

A little more than six out of each 10 of the migrant sons of open country families resided in the open country in 1935<sup>33</sup>. A slightly smaller proportion<sup>34</sup> of the migrant sons of village families lived in villages in 1935.

The residential distribution of migrant daughters shows that less than half<sup>35</sup> of the daughters of open country families lived in the open country whereas slightly over half<sup>36</sup> of the daughters of village families lived in villages.

These data indicate a somewhat greater tendency for sons than for daughters to choose their place of residence in conformity with their parent's residence.

**Year of Leaving Home.** The year in which the migrant son or daughter left home apparently had considerable influence upon the most recent occupation. This may be seen from a review of Figs. 4 and 5. This is due to two factors: (1) Available employment opportunities differed from time to time and (2) the occupation reported by the families and presented in the charts is not their employment but the current employment as of the reporting date.

That such a high proportion of the boys leaving home since 1940 should have gone into the armed services is not strange. As everyone knows this number is constantly increasing. Because the information refers to the most recent rather than to the first job it is clear from the cover chart that relatively few of those who left home during the period 1936-1940 had left their regular jobs by January 1942 to enter the armed forces.

During the period 1935-1940 a very marked change took place in the employment pattern of sons. The proportion entering agriculture fell from almost 50 percent in 1935 to less than 25 percent in 1940.<sup>37</sup> Evidently this is to be explained by the fact that fairly large numbers had entered the armed services by January, 1942, while many others had become skilled laborers. In this connection it may be well to point out that practically all of the skilled laborers leaving home after 1935 were reported by their parents to be working in defense industries.

30. Willard Waller, *The Family*, p. 220.

31. Page 4.

32. National Resources Committee. "The Problems of a Changing Population," p. 112.

33. 61.6 percent.    34. 55.7 percent.    35. 46.9 percent.    36. 52 percent.    37. 23.6 percent.

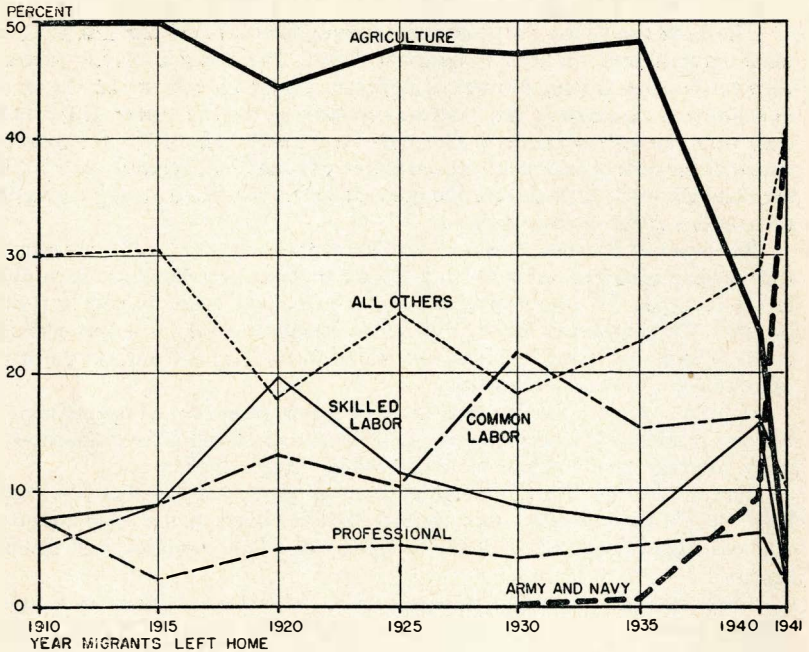


FIG. 4. MOST RECENT OCCUPATION FOR MALE MIGRANTS, BY YEAR OF MIGRATION FROM HOME.

Since 1935, migrant sons have been entering the armed forces and becoming skilled laborers rather than entering agriculture.

The influence of time of leaving home upon the achievement of a favorable status in agriculture is clearly shown by Fig. 5. The highest proportion of ownership is to be found among those who left home prior to 1930. The highest proportion working as farm laborers is to be found among those who left home between 1935 and 1942.

**Education of Migrants.** Education is one of the primary values of our American way of life. In South Dakota, the State Constitution guarantees to every child the right to an education at public expense. The statement as it appears in section 1 of Article VIII shows clearly the high regard our "founding fathers" had for education:

"The stability of a republican form of government depending on the morality and intelligence of the people, it shall be the duty of the legislature to establish and maintain a general and uniform system of public schools wherein tuition shall be without charge, and equally open to all; and to adopt all suitable means to secure to the people the advantages and opportunities of education."

The laws of the state further provide that high school education be available tuition free to residents.<sup>38</sup> Institutions of higher learning are also supported from the public purse.

38. 1939 South Dakota Code, Chapter 15.2711.

Not only is this true but it has become the custom to get at least a high school and preferably a college education. This custom has developed partly because of the recognition by our people of the broadening influence of educational experience. Perhaps even more important, however, has been the use of education as a sort of elevator to raise the economic and social status of the individual.

This pattern of behavior is reflected in the statistics. The general level of educational achievement is rather high, especially for females. Furthermore, the educational level is highest in those lines of work in which advancement depends upon special knowledge of a type that can be attained most readily through formal schooling (Table 11).

The educational level of the migrant sons and daughters engaged in agri-

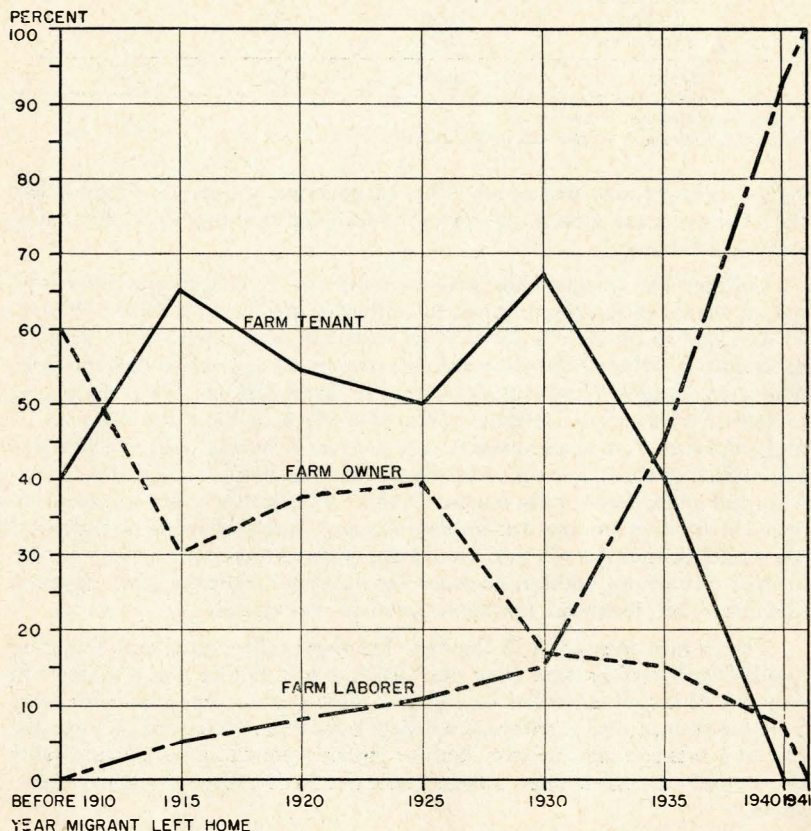


FIG. 5. MOST RECENT TENURE STATUS REPORTED FOR MALE MIGRANTS ENGAGED IN AGRICULTURE, BY YEAR OF MIGRATION FROM HOME.

As might be expected, more of the earlier migrants are owners and more of the recent ones are laborers.

Table 11. Migrant Sons and Daughters Classified by 1935 Occupation and Median Number of Years of School Completed.

1935 Occupation	Median years of school completed		
	Sons	Married daughters*	Single daughters
Farm Owner	8.50	8.72	
Farm Tenant	8.38	8.66	
Merchant	10.50	12.33	
Professional	**	**	**
Skilled Labor	9.71	12.20	12.50
Clerical	12.25	11.50	13.00
Salesman	9.75	12.50	12.17
Common Labor	8.68	9.46	
Domestic Labor			9.75
Farm Labor	8.57	9.00	
All Others	11.00	10.50	
Unemployed	9.00	8.56	12.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.79</b>	<b>9.46</b>	<b>12.33</b>

\*Classified by husband's occupation

\*\*All of the professional workers were college graduates

culture is lower than that of any other occupational group. This may reflect the feeling of some groups that formal educational training is not essential to success in farming.

**College.** The occupational attainments of the 82 college graduates is of special interest in this discussion of the influence of education. Of the 39 men, 24 were still in the state in 1935. With respect to occupation there was not a great deal of difference between the two groups of men except that the three who were engaged in agriculture were all in South Dakota. Those remaining in South Dakota were distributed occupationally as follows: Farm owners 2, high school teachers or administrators 8; lawyers 2; unemployed 2. There was one in each of the following occupations: Doctor, dentist, skilled labor, salesman, real estate dealer, farm tenant. Of those who left the state, two were engaged in teaching and one was employed in each of the following occupations: lawyer, office manager silk mill, electrical engineer, undertaker actuary for life insurance company, auditor, inspector for insurance company, civil engineer, food inspector, electrician, telephone lineman, veterinarian.

The 39 men were from 28 families. The three college graduates living on South Dakota farms were from one family; their mother was a widow. In only one of the nine families having 2 or more male college graduates away from home did either parent have a college education. This exception was the case of a minister and his wife, both of whom were college graduates. Only three other parents of male college graduates were college graduates themselves.

Of the 43 women who had completed a college education, there were but 17 remaining in the state in 1935 with the other 26 spread throughout the United States with residences at such far points as California, Texas and North Carolina. Over half of the women still in the state were in the teaching

profession themselves or had husbands who taught. One was a stenographer, and the rest were classed under their husbands work one each in the following: Bank teller, proprietor of bakery, auto salesman, oil salesman, sales manager of automobile company, owner of beer garden, druggist. None of the women who had graduated from college and remained in South Dakota were wives of farmers.

Teaching claimed nearly as many out-of-state women migrants as it did of those remaining in South Dakota—six were teachers and two were married to teachers. All but the six teachers were married; two of the husbands were doctors, three were lawyers, the occupation of one was unknown, and there was one in each of the following jobs: Pharmacist, geologist, civil engineer, interior decorator, engraver, salesman for steel company, civil service worker, service station operator, railroad conductor, furniture store manager, farm owner, farm dairy manager. The last two occupations listed are the only ones of the total 43 classed in the occupation of farming.

The 43 women were from 35 families. In 29 cases, parents had one female college graduate away from home, in 4 there were 2 graduates away, and in 2 cases there were 3 graduates away. There were only 2 cases where the fathers had college educations, and one where both parents were graduates. Eight fathers and one mother had no education at all.

Few parents of college graduates of either sex are college graduates themselves. The greater percentage of the parents didn't even graduate from high school. In general the occupation of the parents and migrants differ enough to indicate importance of education as a means of raising social and economic status.

## V. The 1935-1940 Migrants

Migration is continually taking place. Families and single individuals move from place to place so that in a few years the composition of any given community may be significantly altered. Of particular interest, at the present time, is migration since 1935.

To meet the demand for information about the migrants who have left South Dakota families since 1935, a questionnaire was sent (January 24, 1942) to a random sample<sup>39</sup> of families in the five counties included in the earlier study. Information was secured for 130 males and 107 females.

**Geographical Patterns of Migration.** Comparison of the cover chart with Fig. 1 shows a considerable amount of resemblance between the geographical pattern of migration of these migrants and those who left parental homes prior to 1935. For example there is a rather marked preference for California among the long distance migrants in both cases. Further comparison of the two maps indicates a tendency for more of the recent migrants to move farther away from the parental home.

Tabulation of the 1935-1941 data shows that for males there has been a great reversal in the earlier tendency of migrants to move only short distances. Only 14.6 percent of the 1935-1941 male migrants remained in the home

39. See Appendix for description of sampling procedure.



Table 12. The 1941 Residence of 1936-1941 Migrants by Sex.

Residence	Percentage Distribution		Total
	Male	Female	
County of Study	14.6	23.4	18.6
Other S. D. counties	18.5	32.7	24.9
Adjacent state	19.2	13.1	16.5
Other states	36.9	29.0	33.4
Outside U. S.	4.6	0.0	2.5
N. A.	6.2	1.8	4.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

county compared with 49.0 percent of those who left earlier<sup>40</sup> (Table 12).

Whereas more than seven out of 10 of the earlier male migrants remained in the state only one out of three of the recent ones remained. Of those who left home in 1941 six out of each 10 left the state<sup>41</sup>. The change in the migration patterns of females was less pronounced but in the same direction.

Of those who left the state, more than twice as many moved to remote states as moved to adjacent states.

**Occupational Distribution in 1941.** Fig. 4 shows graphically the nature of the changes in occupational distribution of male migrants that have been taking place since 1935 and especially since 1940. The proportion entering agriculture has diminished from almost 50 percent<sup>42</sup> in 1935 to 4.3 percent during 1941. The proportion becoming skilled laborers doubled during the five year period but declined in 1941 as did the other specified occupations except the army and the navy.

Of the female migrants leaving home during the same period a little over half<sup>43</sup> were domestic laborers, one out of each five<sup>44</sup> was a school teacher or a nurse and nearly one out of each six<sup>45</sup> was a stenographer or other clerical worker.

## VI. In Review

This report has presented a graphic picture of the main currents of geographical migration and of the patterns of occupational choice. Against the backdrop provided by the 1935 data the more recent migration becomes more significant.

Prior to 1936 the pattern of geographical migration was mainly that of short-range movement. More migrant sons stayed in the home county than left it, and more than six out of 10 of both sexes stayed within the borders of the state of South Dakota. For those who left the state, the west coast—especially California—seemed to be peculiarly attractive; all but a few avoided the southern and far eastern states.

The patterns of occupational choice also followed traditional lines before 1936. With the exception of the migrants who had college training the occupations chosen were mainly those available without specialized training in the home community. In short it is clear that occupational choices are lim-

40. See page 8.

41. 60.7 percent.

42. 48.1 percent.

43. 51.9 percent.

44. 20.2 percent.

45. 16.3 percent.

ited by the range of experience of the migrant. Especially in agriculture is the influence of family and community background noticeable. The majority of the migrants—males and married females alike—are, like their parents, engaged in agriculture. Very few migrants from non-farm families entered farming. Within agriculture the tenure status of sons is not so high as that of that of their fathers. In agriculture the time sequence of migration has had a great deal of influence upon the attainment of a favorable status.

With the advent of defense work and of war major changes have taken place in the patterns of migration and occupational choice. The traditional pattern of short range migration has been altered for girls and boys alike, but especially for boys. Instead of emphasis upon short range movement the current emphasis is upon long range migration, especially to California. Likewise the movement of young men into agriculture has almost ceased. Defense work and service in the armed forces now takes boys leaving parental homes.

The patterns of migration and occupational choice emphasize the need for educational training designed to assist the migrant in making an adjustment to agriculture or to other occupations familiar to the region. The needs of the present migrants are probably quite different from the needs of those who left home earlier. The current movement of young men into occupations outside of agriculture and outside of the state makes it seem likely that after the emergency there will be a very great need for young people to take up the work of the state. Undoubtedly people reared in the state can make the best adjustments here. After the war some of the replacements will doubtless come from the ranks of returning soldiers and sailors. Probably still more will come from the ranks of those who are now in school. Their educational training should be devised with this in mind.

## Appendix

**Source of Data.** The principal source of the data was the schedules collected in 1936 by the cooperative study of rural population mobility which was undertaken in 1935 by the Department of Rural Sociology, South Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station; Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture. During the course of this study a complete census was made of the mobility of all families then living in the following South Dakota counties: Turner, Kingsbury, Edmunds, Tripp, Haakon and Custer. The number of schedules collected was 12,088. These schedules were analyzed with special reference to the mobility of resident families and the results presented in South Dakota Experiment Station Bulletin 315, "Rural Population Mobility in South Dakota," by W. F. Kumlien, R. L. McNamara and Zetta E. Bankert. These schedules were also used, together with comparable schedules from seven other states, in the preparation of the nationwide report entitled "Rural Migration in the United States," WPA Research Monograph XIX.

As noted above, the emphasis in the earlier analysis was upon the migration and mobility of families rather than that of single individuals. In Bulletin 315 attention is called to the fact that the families interviewed had reported 18,209 children who were living and 16 years of age or over January 1, 1935; of these 10,282 were away from home. Since the data pertaining to these persons had not been fully analyzed it seemed that there might be an opportunity to salvage some valuable information regarding the patterns of migration of individuals reared in South Dakota families. This possibility was explored by two students of the author's, Raymond Hatch and O. Cudley Scandrette. Their reports, based on one county each, made it seem worthwhile to undertake a sampling study of the data available.<sup>46</sup> The interested reader is referred to page 30 of Bulletin 315 for a copy of the original Rural Population Mobility Study.

To bring these data up to date a questionnaire was sent to sample families in the five counties.

**Representativeness.** Before accepting the results of a study based on sample data the critical reader nearly always asks what parent population the data

46. The schedules for Tripp county had been lost so that the study was necessarily confined to the other five counties.

Appendix Table 1. Comparison of Statistics from All Rural South Dakota Counties and Five Sample Counties

Item	All Rural Counties	5 Sample Counties
Percent Rural Farm	63.9	63.3
Percent Male	52.8	53.0
Percent of ages 7-13 in school	97.6	97.6
Percent of ages 18-20 in school	26.8	25.1
Percent of males 15 years and over who are married	19.7	20.2
Percent of females 15 years and over who are married	19.6	20.1

Appendix Table 1. (Continued)

Item	All Rural Counties	5 Sample Counties
<b>Percentage-Age distribution</b>		
<b>male</b>		
under 5	10.1	9.6
5-9	11.0	8.2
10-14	10.8	11.1
15-19	10.0	10.0
20-24	8.4	8.6
25-29	7.1	7.6
30-34	6.7	7.1
35-44	13.3	14.0
45-54	10.2	10.8
55-64	6.6	6.9
65-74	4.1	4.4
75+	1.7	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Percentage-Age distribution</b>		
<b>female</b>		
under 5	11.0	11.0
5-9	12.0	12.0
10-14	11.6	11.2
15-19	10.5	10.1
20-24	8.6	8.9
25-29	7.2	7.3
30-34	6.8	6.9
35-44	12.4	12.5
45-54	9.1	9.1
55-64	5.9	5.5
65-74	3.5	4.0
75+	1.4	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

represent. If the reader has had statistical training he will probably also ask how the sample was selected so that he can make his own evaluation of representativeness.

The selection of counties was, of course, determined by the staff of the Rural Population Mobility Study. In spite of the fact that the number of counties involved has declined from six to five, tests of representativeness indicate that the five county sample is representative of all rural counties with respect to all items tested. (Appendix Table 1).

**Sampling Procedures.** The procedure followed in the selection of the sample families within the five counties makes it reasonably certain that the families selected are representative of the situation within these counties. Because of these considerations one may be reasonably confident that the data used are representative of migration from rural white South Dakota families. The procedure used in selecting the sample follows:

Schedules for every family living in Custer, Edmunds, Haakon, Kings-

bury and Turner counties in 1935 were on hand.<sup>47</sup> A stratified random method was used in selecting the schedules for the main part of the study.

As a first step all the schedules of families having children away from home in 1935 were segregated. These were then classified according to village and open country residence. The village schedules were subclassified by occupation of head and the open country schedules were subclassified by tenure and by size of farm. In Edmunds County the large foreign-born Russian group was identified as a major stratum.

Twenty percent of the family schedules in each of these strata were selected randomly by means of the 1940 draft list. The number of families secured was 499.

A slightly different procedure was employed in selecting the 1941 sample. Almost a thousand (997) double penny-postcards were sent out to families in the five counties mentioned above. The 1935 Rural Mobility schedules were arranged by counties and every tenth one was selected for questioning. Information was received for 426 of the families.

<sup>47</sup> Rural Mobility Study. See SDAES Bulletin 315, "Rural Population Mobility in South Dakota."