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LARGE INCREASE IN FARM TENANTS

North Carolina is probably headed into farm tenantry more rapidly than any other state in the Union. Such is the conclusion one must draw from a close study of the 1925 farm census data which have recently been released. In 1920 there were 117,459 farms operated by tenants in North Carolina. In 1925 there were 131,867, or a five-year increase of 14,408 tenant farms. The five-year increase in all farms was 13,729, which means that the increase in the number of farms operated by tenants was larger than the net gain in all farms. Only two states in the Union experienced larger increases in farms during the last five years, and probably no state had anywhere like as large an increase in farms operated by tenants.

In 1920 the farms operated by tenants were 43.5 percent of all farms in the state. The farm tenant ratio in 1925 was 46.5 percent, a ratio increase of three percent in just five years. This is a significant gain considering the enormous number of farms in the state.

The table which appears elsewhere ranks the counties from low to high according to the percent of all farms operated by tenants. The parallel or second column shows the ratio increases and decreases in farms operated by tenants for the five-year period.

Edgecombe Leads

Dare county, an exceptionally important county in agriculture, with only 7.6 percent of her farms operated by tenants, has the lowest farm tenant rate in the state. Edgecombe county has rapidly been heading into tenancy during recent years and now has the highest farm tenant ratio in the state. Of all farms in the county 83.3 percent are operated by tenants.

Forsyth county experienced the largest decrease in the ratio of all farms operated by tenants, dropping from 40.5 percent to 23.8 percent. Very likely this is accounted for by the presence of Winston-Salem which attracted the tenants off the farm into industry. Chowan, on the other hand, experienced the largest ratio increase in tenant farmers, moving up from 45.4 percent to 63.0 percent, a ratio increase of 17.6 percent. The largest numerical increases in farm tenants occurred in Wayne and Nash counties.

The West Decreases

A study of the table shows that the counties with low farm tenant ratios are in the central Piedmont and mountain areas, and the extreme eastern Tidewater counties. In other words those counties of the state which do not produce much cotton or tobacco have few tenants, and for the most part these are the counties in which the tenant rate decreased during the five-year period. The same was true for the census decade 1910 to 1920. For the most part the western counties are witnessing a loss of farm tenants, due to the exodus of this class to available industries.

The East Increases

On the other hand, the eastern half of the state, including the cotton belt along the South Carolina border, is rapidly headed into higher tenant ratios. The tenant belt of North Carolina is in the shape of a full crescent moon, with one horn in Rockingham county on the north, widening to the east and south as tobacco and cotton grow more important, then extending westward along the South Carolina border with the other horn resting in Cleveland and Rutherford counties against the Blue Ridge. In this area are located all the counties whose tenant rate exceeds the state average of 46.5 percent, forty counties in all. In these forty counties whose tenant ratios are above the state average two-thirds of all farms are operated by tenants. In the cotton-tobacco belt comprising approximately 57 counties are concentrated nearly nine-tenths of all farm tenants in the state. The percent of farms operated by tenants has a close correlation with the percent of agricultural wealth produced by cash crops, and vice versa.

Why the Great Gains?

It might be interesting to point out that, except for the 1890 to 1900 decade, our increase in tenant-operated farms was larger during the last five years

than during any previous five years since immediately after the Civil War.

How does one account for the fact that North Carolina leads all states in increase in number of farms operated by tenants during the last five years? The following three reasons are perhaps the main explanations.

First, the depression. During the prosperous war period immediately preceding 1920 thousands of farmers, mainly former tenants, made first payments on high-priced cotton-tobacco land. When the slump came these would-be farm owners found it unwise or impossible to hold the land. The land reverted to the original owners, and the would-be purchasers reverted to their former tenant status.

A second reason is that both cotton and tobacco are ideal tenant crops, and North Carolina is the only state in which both of these crops are grown in large quantities. These crops have sold at relatively high prices since 1920 and many farmers have come to the state to produce them. The majority of such newcomers necessarily begin as tenants.

The third reason is the boll weevil which recently wrought havoc with cotton production in South Carolina, Georgia, and other nearby states, causing several thousand tenants to shift operations to North Carolina which was not suffering so badly from the boll weevil. The possibility of tobacco production was also an added attraction. South Carolina and Georgia suffered heavy losses of farmers, many of them settling down in North Carolina.

COUNTY PLANNING

At a recent meeting of the North Carolina Club Mr. F. S. Wilder, a graduate student from New Hampshire, presented a paper on planning the county. The following is a brief digest of his paper.

Much is said and written nowadays about planning a city to correct the defects, inconveniences, and mal-organization of city life. Are there not as serious but less obvious defects in the arrangements for life in the country? Cannot the country be planned for the benefit of its inhabitants as well as the city? This paper starts with that assumption and aims to outline the way in which the regional planner would go about planning a county.

The first task is to get a topographical survey of the region or county to be planned. No effective county planning can be accomplished until a minute survey of the sort performed by the U. S. Geological Survey has been made. This has not been done for Piedmont North Carolina, and it is very desirable that the state government cooperate with the Survey in completing this topographical map of the state. Starting with such a map the regional planner lists and locates the natural resources of the region such as minerals, water-power, types of soils, forests, etc. He gets records of rainfall and climate. He makes an economic and social survey of the county showing:

1. Distribution of the population by age, race, sex, occupation, and community relationships.
2. Markets and sources of incomes.
3. Means of transportation and communication.
4. Institutional organization.

When this is complete, he studies it in relation to the map of the region and in comparison with other regions.

Classifying Land

Topography affects two parts of county planning: the drawing of community lines and the classification of the uses of the land. It has little effect in the plains apart from rivers, but is dominant in the mountains. But the regional planner first classifies the land according to the uses of the soil with the aid of the contour lines on the topographical map. The three main classes are:

Grade Description of Soil Use

- | | | |
|---|--|----------|
| A | Level, well-drained, well-watered, fertile | Tillage |
| B | The medium slopes and narrow bottoms | Pasture |
| C | Rough, rocky, sloping, wet or dry, sterile | Woodland |

This will be found to correspond quite closely with the best present practices;

OUR LANDLESS MULTITUDE

North Carolina has twenty-two million idle wilderness acres, a hundred thousand vacant town and city lots, and a million three hundred and eighty thousand landless, homeless people, town and country. Almost exactly one-third of our white farmers and two-thirds of our negro farmers own no land. The people who live in rented dwellings in our towns and cities are from two-thirds to three-fourths of the various municipal populations.

These are the people in North Carolina who own not an inch of the soil they cultivate nor a single shingle in the roofs over their heads. They are fifty-two percent or more than half the entire population of the state.

Enduring social structures cannot be built on land-ownership by the few and land-orphanage for the many. Civilization is rooted and grounded in the home-owning, home-loving, home-defending instincts.—E. C. Branson.

yet it is astonishing how much land is broken for tillage that ought to be left in forest, for the value of the growing timber crop is bound to increase rapidly with the present rapid destruction of the remaining virgin forests. Every region, every farm where possible, should preserve sufficient land in forest to supply its own needs, and provide some surplus for local market when the farmer has spare time. Class B should include all land not tilled or in forest. Most Piedmont farmers either neglect pastures or do not know how to care for them, for good pastures can be and sometimes are maintained in that region—also in eastern Carolina. Dairy farms, exclusive of forest, should be about 50 percent pasture, since stock can be kept on them nine months in the year. Livestock and legumes is the combination for soil-building. Many children on the farm as well as in the city do not get enough fresh milk. The growing industrial centers are furnishing expanding markets for dairy products. I should therefore classify 25 percent of Piedmont North Carolina in pasture land instead of the present six to eight percent.

When the land has been classified for agriculture, sites for development and possible locations for the extraction of minerals should be noted and provided for on the planner's map. Convenient trade centers should be listed. The present population should be considered with the aim of improving quality, not to increase numbers. The home-builder is concerned with the quality of his neighbors—not with their number, as is the real estate agent.

Larger Communities

How many rural communities should we have? The average number per township is decreasing. Good roads, autos, rural free delivery, and consolidated schools all point to fewer and larger rural communities. How organize the community to have real community life? Answer: Consolidated schools, community churches, community playgrounds, a town plan, a farmers' institute, town and outlying country under one local government. Such are the ideas entering into the county plan. For example, half the mileage in roads could connect up all the farm homes with the community center and the outside world if the roads were properly located and a few of the farm homes relocated. That would mean better roads, more chances for community contacts, and less loneliness in the farm home. The county planner would work this out with a good road engineer.

I might go on, but enough has been said to suggest what county planning is. Its immediate practical value lies in showing in what direction improvement of country life conditions can be made. Any county that wants such a plan can have it. If adopted officially, it would not be carried out in a few years. Changes, while slow, are inevitable and are going on continuously. If made in conformity with such a plan, the amount that could be accomplished towards carrying it out in the course of a decade would be astonishing. The country communities would just grow to it.

IN INTERESTS OF FORESTS

A hopeful lawyer from San Antonio, Texas, writes asking for information concerning the whereabouts of a tract of pine land of which he has heard in this state. As described to his clients, the attorney states that this tract contains 85,000 acres, is on a river, is bisected by a railroad, and contains timber which is estimated to cut 400 million feet of shortleaf and 200 million feet of longleaf pine.

It is needless to say that there is no such tract of timber in North Carolina. There has been no such tract for twenty years, at least. In fact, of all the great forests of longleaf pine which once covered the Coastal Plain, there remain only here and there some small tracts which have been preserved on account of litigation or by reason of sentiment. A tract such as that pictured in the letter of inquiry would be a fortune indeed.

Originally the stand of longleaf pine amounted to 400 billion board feet, distributed through the states of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Today there remains of this tremendous supply probably not more than one-fifth, practically all of which is in the five states bordering on the Gulf of Mexico. Longleaf pine in the Carolinas and Georgia is, in the commercial sense, a tale that is told.

There is a brighter side to the story of longleaf pine, if only present provision be made for future needs. Second growth, in distinction to old or original

growth, increases rapidly. For while for the first few years the growth of young seedlings consists chiefly in the development of a large root system, and generally from three to six years are required for longleaf to reach the height of three inches to one foot, this is preparation for the rapid shoot upwards which follows. At five years some longleaf saplings reach a height of from two to three feet, and at seven years of age are from five to eight feet high. On protected old fields in North Carolina measurements of longleaf pines show that in 35 to 50 years the average trees produce saw logs 14 to 20 inches at the butt and 20 feet in length.

With the abolition of the free range of hogs in Eastern North Carolina, young pines of the longleaf species are volunteering by the hundreds of thousands. A little foresight and protection from fire in many parts of the Coastal Plain will in another generation begin once more to produce longleaf pine commercially.

The old forests of original growth, which might have been maintained in all essentials by reproduction, have passed. But the new forest of the same species is still possible on account of the persistence, hardiness, and will to survive which the longleaf pine has shown against every possible practice designed for its extermination. Whether this new forest shall be realized within a reasonable period of time depends upon the degree to which public sentiment supports the effort of state and counties to afford it the necessary protection.—Natural Resources.

FARM TENANCY IN NORTH CAROLINA IN 1925 Percent Increase or Decrease, 1920-1925

In the table below the counties of the state are ranked from low to high according to the percent of farms operated by tenants in 1925. The second column shows the percent tenant ratio increase or decrease from 1920 to 1925. To illustrate: In Edgecombe county 83.3 percent of all farms were operated by tenants in 1925, and 79.4 percent in 1920. The tenant ratio increased 3.9 percent during the five-year period.

In 1925 farms operated by tenants represent 46.5 percent of all farms. The rate in 1920 was 43.5 percent. In 44 counties the tenant rate decreased, while it increased in 55 counties, mainly cotton and tobacco counties. One county showed no change.

During the last five years the number of farms in the state increased 13,729, while the number of farms operated by tenants increased 14,408. This is the largest increase in the history of the state, except from 1890 to 1900.

Based on press summaries of the U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1925.

S. H. Hobbs, Jr.

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Rank	Counties	Percent tenants 1925	Ratio increase or decrease (-) 1920-1925	Rank	Counties	Percent tenants 1925	Ratio increase or decrease (-) 1920-1925
1	Dare	7.6	4.0	51	Beaufort	39.4	5.7
2	Henderson	9.0	5.1	52	Iredell	39.6	0.3
3	Avery	9.7	0.6	53	Davie	40.2	3.0
4	Mitchell	10.2	2.4	54	Gaston	41.3	0.8
5	Watauga	10.2	2.7	55	Hyde	42.4	3.4
6	Alleghany	10.3	0.2	56	Sampson	42.5	3.4
7	Ashe	11.3	2.3	57	Duplin	44.6	2.1
8	Buncombe	12.3	12.0	58	Stokes	45.3	0.7
9	Transylvania	12.4	6.0	59	Harnett	45.8	7.8
10	Brunswick	14.3	0.2	60	Rutherford	46.0	2.5
11	Alexander	15.3	3.5	61	Craven	46.5	2.5
12	Macon	16.2	6.8	62	Currituck	47.3	11.7
13	Wilkes	18.3	0.2	63	Cumberland	48.9	2.9
14	Randolph	18.9	2.8	64	Rockingham	50.7	4.2
15	Jackson	19.2	1.4	65	Perquimans	52.0	0.1
16	Carteret	19.5	0.9	66	Pasquotank	52.3	0.7
17	Davidson	20.4	0.7	67	Cabarrus	52.4	0.2
18	Caldwell	20.5	0.0	68	Narron	53.4	1.9
19	Cherokee	20.6	0.7	69	Cleveland	55.4	6.9
20	Haywood	20.7	13.6	70	Durham	55.7	0.3
21	McDowell	22.5	6.9	71	Washington	55.9	12.7
22	Swain	22.6	1.6	72	Caswell	56.0	1.0
23	Burke	22.9	3.4	73	Mecklenburg	56.3	5.6
24	Pender	23.0	1.6	74	Warren	56.6	1.8
25	Catawba	23.2	2.0	75	Johnston	56.8	4.6
26	Guilford	23.5	1.6	76	Wake	59.1	0.1
27	Graham	23.6	10.6	77	Martin	59.8	11.2
28	New Hanover	23.7	7.6	78	Jones	60.0	3.8
29	Forsyth	23.8	16.7	79	Bertie	61.1	6.9
30	Columbus	23.9	4.8	80	Person	61.5	13.0
31	Yadkin	25.6	5.3	81	Vance	61.8	7.8
32	Yancey	25.7	1.5	82	Granville	62.6	7.5
33	Bladen	27.7	1.4	82	Camden	62.6	7.4
34	Tyrrell	28.0	0.3	84	Chowan	63.0	17.6
35	Madison	29.1	3.0	85	Hoke	63.2	1.3
36	Moore	30.1	1.0	86	Richmond	64.3	2.3
37	Clay	30.5	4.7	87	Robeson	65.5	5.8
37	Polk	30.5	8.9	88	Anson	68.1	6.6
39	Pamlico	30.7	7.0	89	Northampton	68.2	8.5
40	Alamance	31.6	5.4	90	Franklin	69.2	6.2
41	Stanly	32.4	0.5	91	Hertford	69.5	1.3
42	Rowan	32.6	1.1	92	Nash	70.2	14.3
43	Surry	33.2	5.9	93	Halifax	70.4	3.9
44	Chatham	33.5	2.3	94	Lenoir	71.6	0.5
45	Orange	34.0	1.0	95	Pitt	77.0	5.2
46	Montgomery	36.5	3.4	96	Wilson	77.2	2.0
47	Lincoln	36.7	3.0	97	Wayne	80.0	14.4
48	Onslow	37.4	3.2	98	Scotland	80.2	0.6
49	Lee	38.4	2.0	99	Greene	82.0	3.8
50	Gates	38.8	2.9	100	Edgecombe	83.3	3.9