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WEALTH IN THE UNITED STATES

THE NATION'S WEALTH

We are reproducing this week a table prepared by the National Industrial Conference Board showing the tangible wealth of each state, and what it amounts to in each state when reduced to a per capita basis. The computation is based on estimates for 1925.

According to the estimates of the Industrial Conference Board the total wealth of the United States in 1925 amounted to \$348,442,000,000. This represents wealth only in its tangible, physical forms such as land and improvements, the equipment of industrial enterprises and farms, livestock, railroad and public utility land and equipment, personal property, motor and other vehicles, but excludes gold and silver bullion, credits and currency.

Nevada has less aggregate wealth than any other state, but the amount of wealth per capita is \$7,299, or greater than in any other state. New York has a total wealth of 40 billion dollars, or nearly one-eighth of the total for the nation, but its per capita wealth of \$3,593 is exceeded by thirteen states. Alabama ranks lowest in per capita wealth, \$1,306, but eighteen states have less aggregate wealth.

Mining and agricultural states in the far west, northwest, and middle west show the greatest per capita wealth, Nevada, Wyoming, South Dakota, Iowa, Oregon, Nebraska, California, and North Dakota ranking highest, in the order given. While a considerable portion of the nation's wealth is concentrated in the great industrial states, none of these states shows a per capita figure high enough to be included within the first eight states. Connecticut ranks ninth, with \$3,812 per capita; New Jersey thirteenth, New York fourteenth, Massachusetts seventeenth, Pennsylvania twenty-first, and Illinois twenty-second.

Wealth in the South

Thirteen Southern states occupy the thirteen lowest positions in the table, ranging from \$2,239 per capita in Florida to \$1,306 in Alabama. Seven states make a poorer showing than North Carolina.

It is not surprising that the Southern states rank low in per capita wealth. It must be remembered that they are all agricultural states with a minimum of industrial wealth. Again, a third or more of the population in each of the Southern states are negroes only two generations removed from slavery. Finally, the whole South was in bankruptcy fifty years ago, and only within the last twenty years has wealth begun to multiply.

In 1912 North Carolina's per capita wealth was \$724, by 1922 it had increased to \$1,703, and in 1925 to \$1,879. In 1912 Mississippi had only \$650 of wealth per capita, compared with \$1,355 in 1925. Twenty more years may cause quite a different ranking among the states.

Even now the South is not poor. The lowest-ranking state shows tangible wealth to the extent of \$6,500 per family and in North Carolina the average family, black and white, has \$9,400. Unfortunately the number of families which have less than this amount far exceed those which have more. After all, average wealth or per capita wealth has very little significance. It is only useful as a measure of comparison.

True and Taxed Wealth

Perhaps the most significant thing about this study is the estimated aggregate wealth of North Carolina, \$5,284,000,000. That compares very well with an estimate of \$4,543,110,000 in 1922. This \$1/2 billion does not include intangible wealth. There is probably a billion dollars of intangible wealth in the state, but much of it is evidence of ownership in or claims against the physical property already counted. It is impossible to state whether the foreign securities held by North Carolinians equal in value the North Carolina securities held by people outside the state. It is not likely that the total wealth, tangible and intangible, belonging to North Carolina's citizens greatly exceeds the figure given in the table. The tax books show less than 3 billion dollars, but not all wealth is taxable. Every house-

hold is exempted to the amount of \$300, that is, if there is \$300 worth of furniture and household effects. Schools, churches, and many other institutions are tax-exempt. It is impossible to estimate the total taxable wealth of the state, but it is probably close to \$5,000,000,000.

The assessed value of tangible property in North Carolina in 1925 was \$2,526,650,000, or only slightly in excess of fifty percent of the true value of this property according to the National Industrial Conference Board's estimate.—Paul W. Wager.

N. C. INDEBTEDNESS

At the last meeting of the North Carolina Club Dr. Fred W. Morrison, Secretary of the State Tax Commission, discussed the debt situation in the state. Dr. Morrison was a member of the State Educational Commission, and had much to do with the preparation of its supplemental report recently released under the title "The Financial Condition of Counties." With his wealth of ready information the speaker was able to present to the club an array of statistics in a most interesting manner.

Dr. Morrison explained that the report had classified indebtedness under the following heads: (1) Indebtedness of schools and for purposes other than schools; (2) bonded indebtedness and floating indebtedness; (3) indebtedness of counties, of districts and townships, and of cities and towns. A few salient facts relative to indebtedness follow:

Local Indebtedness

The total indebtedness of all subdivisions of North Carolina in 1926 amounted to \$326,782,980. Of this total, \$138,602,239, or 42.4 percent, was contracted by counties; \$138,068,327, or 42.3 percent, by cities and towns; and \$50,121,514, or 15.3 percent, by districts and townships. Of the total, \$278,915,416 is bonded and \$47,866,667 is floating indebtedness.

The indebtedness for schools is \$66,062,150; for purposes other than schools, \$260,719,930. One-fifth of the total is for schools and four-fifths for other purposes.

The total amount of sinking funds for retiring the bonded indebtedness of local governments is \$11,360,147. Of the total bonds outstanding, \$110,603,536 are sinking fund issues and \$168,312,880 are serial issues. The sinking funds amount to 10.3 percent of the sinking fund issues to which they are to be applied.

Countywide Bonds

The countywide bonded indebtedness is \$97,704,928. Of this, \$5,883,250, or 6 percent, was incurred for schools, and \$91,821,678, or 94 percent, for other purposes. The countywide bonded debt for purposes other than schools was incurred mainly for roads and bridges. This item amounts to \$76,113,760. The next biggest item, \$9,547,300, is for public buildings; the next, \$5,422,500, is for funding current expenses. Two other small items are \$378,718 for railroads, and \$164,400 for drainage.

District Bonded Debt

Bonds for school buildings are usually issued by school districts in North Carolina. The total bonded indebtedness of districts and townships for all purposes is \$49,027,729. The biggest item, by far, of this is \$39,576,729 for school buildings; the next biggest, \$8,265,500, is for roads and bridges. Other small items are for drainage districts, sewerage, railroads, and hospitals.

City and Town Bonds

Counties issue their bonds mainly for roads and bridges, cities and towns issue theirs mainly for streets and sidewalks and for the water and sewer lines under them. The total bonded indebtedness of cities and towns for 1926 was \$132,182,759. Of this, total, \$54,052,686 is for streets and sidewalks, and \$47,368,870 is for water and sewer, making a total for these two items of \$101,421,556. The next largest item, \$13,310,900 for "public improvements," is also more largely for streets and sewer than for anything else. The next biggest item, \$6,755,850, is for funding current expenses; the next, \$5,261,000, is for electric lights and

CULTURE OR MATERIALISM

If instead of the attainment of sainthood the attainment of wisdom could be made the commonly accepted goal and meaning of the activities of modern men, we should again have a culture in which industry would take its proper place. We have for it now no other goal than the making of money, and hence industry runs amuck while the spirit of commercialism crushes out all our values. We keep the wheels going round, but the quality of living and the meaning of our work decline. Cooperation in the service of the ideal gives way to a competitive struggle for material possession and power and our lives are used up in making a living. Only the peoples that have achieved a culture have a goal for which to labor.—Everett Dean Martin.

power. Next come public buildings with \$4,556,254, fire departments with \$687,000, and railroads with \$188,200.

Floating Debt

The unbonded indebtedness, or floating debt, of all subdivisions of the state in 1926 was \$47,866,664. The floating indebtedness of counties is \$40,897,311, of districts and townships \$1,093,785, of cities and towns \$5,875,868.

Of the nearly \$41,000,000 countywide floating debt, \$19,664,025 is for schools, and \$21,333,286 for other purposes. Fifteen millions of the total for schools were borrowed from the state through the special building fund for schools. Fifteen and one-half millions of the debt for purposes other than schools is for roads and bridges. Much of this is in the form of short-term notes given in anticipation of bond issues.

Practically all of the current liabilities of districts and townships, amounting to \$1,093,785, is for schools. The floating debt of cities and towns is \$5,875,669. The biggest part of this is for streets.

Bond Interest Rates

On the total outstanding issues, amounting to \$278,915,416, the annual interest charge is \$4,826,599. This is an average rate of 5.316 percent. The average for countywide issues is 5.330 percent, for district and township issues 5.417 percent, and for city and town issues 5.242 percent. The Commission is of the opinion that the average interest rate of 5.316 is higher than bonds of the subdivisions of North Carolina should be required to pay. One reason which it suggests for this conclusion is the fact that the range from the lowest rate paid to the highest is from 4 to 6 percent. The highest rate is 55 percent higher than the lowest rate. Thirty-one percent of the total issues bear six percent interest.

State Indebtedness

The total state indebtedness on June 30, 1926, was \$144,065,600. Of this indebtedness, \$43,766,000 was incurred for various objects under the General Fund, \$85,299,900 was incurred for highway construction, and \$15,000,000 was incurred for the special building fund loans for schools. Of the General Fund indebtedness, \$23,295,500 was incurred for educational and charitable institutions, \$9,438,000 in the form of notes in anticipation of bond issues, \$8,480,000 for funding and refunding, \$1,642,500 for public improvements, \$500,000 for State Hospital, \$250,000 for administrative buildings, \$160,000 for training schools for delinquents and defectives.

Total Public Debt

The combined indebtedness of the state and its subdivisions in 1926 was \$455,847,680. This indebtedness is 16.3 percent of the assessed valuation of all property in the state. Of this total, \$66,062,150, or 14.5 percent, was incurred for public schools; and \$389,785,530, or 85.5 percent, for purposes other than schools. The total per capita debt was \$159.30; for schools \$23.12; for purposes other than schools \$136.38.

USEFUL BIRDS

Now that the hunting season is open, interest is quickened in those birds that are of value to the North Carolina landowner.

The Biological Survey of the United States Department of Agriculture has just issued Farmers' Bulletin No. 755-1, "Common Birds of the Southeastern United States in Relation to Agriculture." This bulletin is available at Washington free of charge and every farmer in the state should write for a copy, according to C. H. Brannon, extension entomologist at State College.

The bulletin states that with cotton as one of the principal crops of this state, farmers are interested in those birds which prey upon cotton insects, such as the boll weevil, the boll worm, and chinch bugs. Among these birds, the most important are the orioles, swallows, blackbirds, meadowlarks, titlarks, and Carolina wrens. But there are some 60 additional kinds of birds which eat the boll weevil. There are 41 kinds that prey upon the cotton boll worm. There are also 57 kinds of bird policemen that eat the white grubs which injure corn and damage garden crops. The bull bat often used by sportsmen in target practice is one of the most useful insect destroyers, and should have greater protection.

This new bulletin, states Mr. Brannon, gives reports on the food habits of 23 of the most important of the 460 species found in this section of the United States. It shows that hawks do good by feeding on rodents and that crows destroy more insects than they do corn.

"We cannot overestimate the benefit to agriculture as a result of the many noxious pests destroyed by our bird friends," says Mr. Brannon. "The great increase in insect pests in recent years is due in large part to the destruction of insect-eating birds. Farmers, hunters, or others interested in agriculture or wild life, cannot afford to be without a copy of this new publication."—Lincoln County News.

KNOW THE SOUTH

In the course of an announcement of a special issue planned for publication by the Charlotte Observer the following amazing statement is made about the lack of information in regard to North Carolina in the text books studied in the schools of that state. On this point the Observer says:

"The High School students of North Carolina find more information in their text books about the resources of the Congo than they do of their own state. There is not a text book in print which gives the slightest conception of the dramatic struggles made by the leaders of industry to place North Carolina in the front rank of states as a great industrial center and the rising generation is given practically no information about the state's billion dollar industry or the history of its establishment."

We do not for a moment question the accuracy of this statement, and yet it is a striking illustration of the unwisdom of educational work in the South which never has adequately set forth what the South has, what it is doing, and what the history of the Old South tells of the men who created the business interests of that section. We have often marveled to find that many professors in Southern colleges know so little about the Old South or the real achievements of the South of today. For years we have been pleading with Southern educational institutions to stress the importance of the history of the South from the industrial or business standpoint as to its past and its present. It is gratifying to see that the Observer has come out with such a bold statement, which should challenge the attention of every educator in North Carolina and challenge the attention of every father and mother in the South who should demand that their children be adequately trained and educated in a knowledge of the South.—Manufacturers Record.

ALAMANCE SURVEY

An economic and social survey of Alamance county has been completed recently by John Harden, a student from the county in the Department of Rural Social-Economics at the University of North Carolina. It will be published jointly by the University Extension Bureau, the Alamance County Board of Commissioners, and the Alamance County Board of Education.

TANGIBLE WEALTH IN THE UNITED STATES

Total and Per Capita Wealth in Each State, 1925

The following table gives the total and the per capita wealth for each state as computed by the National Industrial Conference Board for 1925. The states are ranked according to per capita wealth.

The total wealth of Nevada, \$565,000,000, is less than that of any other state, but its per capita share, \$7,299, is greater than in any other state. New York leads in total wealth but ranks fourteenth in per capita wealth. Alabama's per capita wealth, \$1,306, is less than that of any other state.

North Carolina ranks twentieth in total wealth, with \$5,284,000,000, but forty-first in per capita wealth, the latter figure being \$1,879.

The term "wealth" used in these computations represents only its tangible, physical forms such as land and improvements, the equipment of industrial enterprises and farms, livestock, railroad and public utility land and equipment, personal property, motor and other vehicles, but excludes gold and silver coin and bullion, credits and currency.

Department of Rural Social-Economics, University of North Carolina

Rank	State	Total wealth 1925 (in millions)	Per capita wealth 1925	Rank	State	Total wealth 1925 (in millions)	Per capita wealth 1925
1	Nevada	\$ 665	\$7,299	25	West Virginia	\$5,284	\$3,211
2	Wyoming	1,136	4,961	26	Rhode Island	2,168	3,192
3	South Dakota	3,338	4,907	27	Missouri	11,094	3,184
4	Iowa	11,242	4,646	28	Indiana	9,733	3,145
5	Oregon	3,775	4,374	29	Michigan	12,985	3,031
6	Nebraska	5,737	4,185	30	Wisconsin	8,785	3,087
7	California	16,718	4,000	31	Delaware	709	2,979
8	North Dakota	2,562	3,996	32	Maine	2,264	2,877
9	Connecticut	6,039	3,842	33	Maryland	4,448	2,861
10	Montana	2,505	3,728	34	Vermon	930	2,639
11	Washington	5,628	3,727	35	New Mexico	945	2,461
12	Kansas	6,705	3,698	36	Florida	2,825	2,289
13	New Jersey	13,288	3,691	37	Virginia	5,539	2,228
14	New York	40,108	3,593	38	Texas	10,760	2,064
15	Minnesota	9,359	3,584	39	Louisiana	3,791	1,995
16	Arizona	1,534	3,584	40	Tennessee	4,838	1,976
17	Massachusetts	14,697	3,546	41	North Carolina	5,284	1,879
18	Idaho	1,781	3,506	42	Oklahoma	4,226	1,842
19	New Hampshire	1,559	3,449	43	Kentucky	3,927	1,566
20	Utah	1,728	3,429	44	Arkansas	2,832	1,506
21	Pennsylvania	32,116	3,389	45	South Carolina	2,704	1,499
22	Illinois	24,009	3,385	46	Georgia	4,363	1,402
23	Colorado	3,469	3,336	47	Mississippi	2,427	1,355
24	Ohio	20,915	3,233	48	Alabama	3,264	1,306