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# The Influence of Migration Upon South Dakota's Population, 1930-50

J. P. Johansen

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THE INFLUENCE OF *Migration*  
UPON SOUTH DAKOTA'S POPULATION  
1930-1950

NORTH DAKOTA



SOUTH  
DAKOTA



MINNESOTA



NEBRASKA

RURAL SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT  
AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION  
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE COLLEGE  
BROOKINGS

IOWA

## Significance of South Dakota's Migration

**T**HIS BULLETIN deals primarily with two aspects of migration as it affects the population of South Dakota. The first of these is the rural-urban migration within the state, and the second is the migration from South Dakota. The most significant facts which emerge in the course of this study are the following:

1. Migration from the state of South Dakota represents a cumulative net population loss which is much more extensive than the absolute decrease from 1930 to 1950 as shown by the census. Net migration from the state was nearly equal to 202,000 persons, while the difference between the census of 1930 and that of 1950 was only about 40,000 persons.

2. From one year to another, South Dakota has a large excess of births over deaths. In 1949, for example, this should have added 12,524 persons to the population. But this large current natural increase is being offset by migration to other states. The loss is not simply one of numbers only; it affects also the composition of population who remain as residents of the state.

3. Net migration from South Dakota during the decade 1940 to 1950 involved a movement of 79,035 persons *out* of the state. However, there was a net migration *to* urban areas including 15,130 persons.

4. Migrants are preponderantly young people—either single young men and women or young married couples and their children. The continued removal of young people tends to increase the proportions of population in the older age-brackets. South Dakota has now a larger proportion of elderly and aged persons than the nation as a whole.

5. In the stream of migrants, women outnumber men to a considerable extent. Young women leave the rural communities in which they are reared in larger numbers and at an earlier age than young men do.

6. Migration is mostly outward-bound from South Dakota to other states. There is, however, also a smaller inward-bound movement mostly from states contiguous to South Dakota. This element offsets in part those who leave.

7. Migration from the state occurs largely because young people are looking for jobs or for professional openings. It is a complex social phenomenon which involves an adjustment of population to resources development. Job-openings and job-applicants need to be in balance with each other. Currently the population in South Dakota is increasing about 1.9 percent per year. Broadly speaking, a population which is increasing annually at such a rate needs a commensurate program of resources development.

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This report is based on a state project contributing to the North Central regional project on  
population dynamics, NC-18

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# The Influence of Migration Upon South Dakota's Population 1930-50

By JOHN P. JOHANSEN<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

ONE OF THE MOST rapid and most significant social changes of our time is the extensive shift of population from farms and small rural communities to large, metropolitan centers. On April 1, 1950, nearly two-thirds of the nation's population (64 percent) and one-third of the state's population (33.2 percent) lived in urban territory.

In South Dakota, two persons out of three live either on farms or in a small town or village with less than 2,500 inhabitants. Although a rapid process of urbanization has taken place, South Dakota still ranks 46th among the states in regard to the percent of population residing in urban places. It is still one of the most rural states in the nation. Because it is a highly rural state, and because it has relatively few large cities which attract population, South Dakota has sustained losses of population due to migration during the past 20 years.

South Dakota reached its highest population in 1930 with a count of 692,849 inhabitants. Ten years later the United States census reported a total of 642,961 inhabitants. By 1945, the state census enumerated a total population of 589,920 persons. Thus, from 1930 to 1945, there was a decrease of more than 100,000 persons in the state's population. However, during the post-war years a part of this decrease was again restored. The last federal census reported the state's population as

652,740 on April 1, 1950. Accordingly, South Dakota had a small increase of population, 9,779 persons to be exact, during the past decade. At the same time, the increase in the nation's population was over 19 million persons — the largest in its history.

## Definitions of Rural and Urban Residence

Before proceeding to the analysis of urban and rural population changes, it is necessary to define the terms of "urban," "rural," "rural-nonfarm," and "rural-farm." Quite often, the term "urban" is used as though it included all towns and villages from the smallest to the largest; and "rural" is used as though it meant the farm population. In

<sup>1</sup>Associate Rural Sociologist, South Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station. Acknowledgment: This study is a part of a more comprehensive research project which was made possible under the provisions of a cooperative agreement between the South Dakota State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts and the Bureau of Reclamation, United States Department of the Interior.

this study, so far as South Dakota is concerned, the term urban refers to incorporated places having a resident population of 2,500 persons or more, and all residents of territory outside of such places are rural. The rural population includes both farm and nonfarm residents.<sup>2</sup>

The farm population for 1950, as for 1940 and 1930, comprised all persons living on farms without regard to occupation. In determining farm and nonfarm residence in the 1950 census, however, certain special groups were classified otherwise than in earlier censuses. In 1950, persons living on what might have been considered farm land were classified as nonfarm if they paid cash rent for their homes and yards only. The rural nonfarm population included persons living in a variety of types of residence such as isolated nonfarm homes in the open country, incorporated and unincorporat-

ed villages and hamlets having less than 2,500 inhabitants, and also the fringe areas surrounding the larger urban incorporated places of the state. The Bureau of the Census adopted a new definition of urban areas and followed new criteria in determining the actual urban and rural nonfarm population in 1950. However, the effect of this new definition upon South Dakota's rural and urban population figures appears to have been negligible.

### Main Rural-Urban Population Trends, 1930-50

The rural and urban trends of population are shown in Table 1 and Fig. 1. Figures for the United States are given in order to reveal the prevailing trends in the nation.

<sup>2</sup>For the whole United States, a much more elaborate definition of urban and rural-nonfarm areas and population was followed by the Bureau of the Census. See 1950 U. S. Census of Population, U. S. Summary: General Characteristics, pp. vi-vii.

**Table 1. Urban and Rural Population of the United States and of South Dakota, 1930, 1940, and 1950, with Percent of Increase or Decrease**

	Population			Percent Increase or Decrease (—)	
	1930	1940	1950	1930-40	1940-50
UNITED STATES					
Total population ....	122,775,046	131,669,275	150,697,361	7.2	14.5
Urban .....	68,954,823	74,423,702	88,927,464	7.9	19.5
Rural .....	53,820,223	57,245,573	61,769,897	6.4	7.9
Rural-nonfarm ....	23,662,710	27,029,385	38,693,358	14.2	43.2
Rural-farm .....	30,157,513	30,216,188	23,076,539	0.2	-23.6
SOUTH DAKOTA					
Total population ....	692,849	642,961	652,740	-7.2	1.5
Urban .....	130,907	158,087	216,157	20.8	36.7
Rural .....	561,942	484,874	436,583	-13.7	-10.0
Rural-nonfarm ....	172,511	178,204	183,036	3.3	2.7
Rural-farm .....	389,431	306,670	253,547	-21.3	-17.3

Sources: *Sixteenth Census of the United States: Population, 1940*; Vol. II, Part I, U. S. Summary, p. 18; South Dakota, *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Part 6, p. 435. 1950 *United States Census of Population: U. S. Summary, General Characteristics*, Table 34, p. 1-87. *Ibid.*, South Dakota, *General Characteristics*, Table 13, p. 41-29.

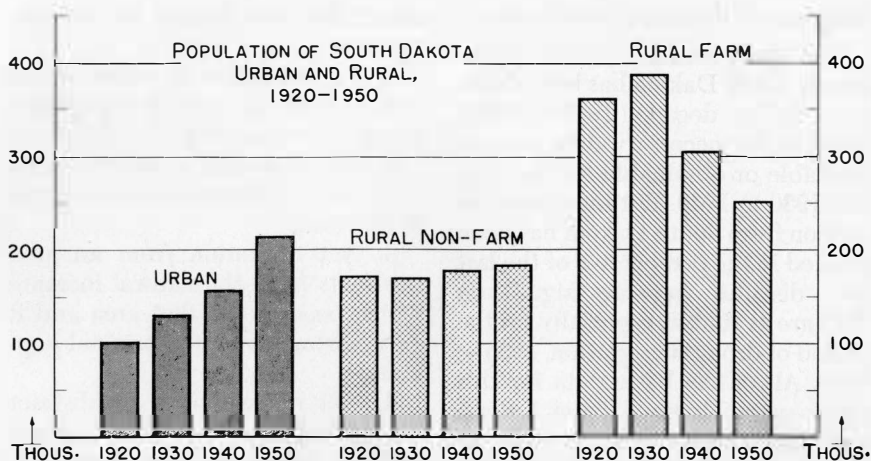


Fig. 1. Increase of urban population was greater (1940-50) than that of any earlier decade

They also make a comparison with South Dakota possible. Three general trends are very apparent. First, a pronounced increase took place in the urban population. Secondly, a drastic decrease reduced the rural-farm population both in the nation and in the state. In South Dakota the decrease in farm population amounted to 135,884 persons from 1930 to 1950. In the United States, the farm population was nearly the same in 1940 as in 1930—somewhat more than 30 million people. But during the recent decade, the farm population element has gone through an extensive decrease. The census in 1950 reported 23,076,539 persons with rural-farm residence, and they constituted 15.3 percent, or less than one-sixth, of the population of the continental United States.

The third great population change revealed in this table is the increase in the rural-nonfarm population. In South Dakota this in-

crease was comparatively small, but in the United States it was one of the most significant trends. This population element is a very mixed one. The large gain is due mostly to the growth of population residing in the urban fringe near the larger cities. In South Dakota, the rural-nonfarm population is made up mostly of small towns and villages, and the majority of these places lost population during the last decade.

### Scope and Method

This study is primarily concerned with two aspects of the migration of South Dakotans. The first aspect is the migration from rural to urban areas within South Dakota. The second is the interstate migration from South Dakota. Both movements have been very extensive and have far-reaching effects upon the economy, the community life and the social institutions of the state. Furthermore, they are directly related, as will be shown later, to the present



program of resources development.

The study of rural-urban migration in South Dakota has been limited to the last decade (1940 to 1950) because the necessary data are not available or obtainable for the decade 1930 to 1940. But interstate migration from South Dakota has been studied in the perspective of the last two decades because significant data are available, especially for the period of drought migration, 1935 to 1940. All of the basic data for this study were obtained from federal and state census reports or from reports pertaining to births and deaths and other vital statistics.

Since comparatively little factual information is available pertaining to migration, the approach to this study is an indirect one. The extent of migration can be determined with a high degree of accuracy because the basic data pertaining to births and deaths are both accurate and available in sufficient detail. Essentially the same method is used to determine both rural-urban and interstate migration. But in order to determine the extent and characteristics of migration, it will first be necessary to discuss some facts and conclusions pertaining to births and deaths and natural increase in South Dakota.

At the outset, it is worthwhile to establish firmly the following points

about the significance of net migration:

1. Net migration is either *to* the area or *from* the area or population group which is being considered.

2. Net migration *to* an area adds to the natural increase that occurred in that area.

3. Net migration *from* an area subtracts from the natural increase which occurred in that area and it may subtract from the original population.

4. Net migration is an abstract concept. It is the balance of in-migration offset by out-migration. Even in areas having a net out-migration it may be assumed that they had some in-migration, and *vice versa*.

5. The "turnover" of residents in a given area, therefore, is not known. The number of persons who were born in the area and who left the area and were replaced by in-migrants before the close of the decade, is not known.

The analysis of net migration through the known data about natural increase gets its significance mainly from the fact that it shows whether a city or county or state was able to attract migration over and beyond the natural increase; or whether the same area lost some of its natural increase or perhaps more than its natural increase because of out-migration.

## Births, Deaths and Natural Increase, 1940-50

**N**ATURAL INCREASE is the excess of births over deaths. It is the principal reason for population increase in South Dakota. In 1949, for example, there were 17,211 births and 5,687 deaths which occurred to residents of South Dakota. Consequently, the state should have had a population gain of 12,524 persons in the course of that year alone. Stated as a rate, it amounted to 17.7 per 1,000 inhabitants. From April 1, 1940 to the same date in 1950, the state should have had a natural increase of about 89,000 persons. However, it had an increase of only 9,779 persons because it was subject to a comparatively large out-migration.

Births and deaths require considerable comment in order that they may be properly understood. From 1945 to 1952, the number of births climbed upward rapidly, while deaths remained at comparatively stable numbers. Since the registration of births is somewhat incomplete, the data used in the tables of this study have been adjusted for under-registration.

### More Births, Fewer Infant Deaths

In South Dakota, as well as in the nation, the number of births increased greatly from 1946 to the present. The provisional number of live births in South Dakota, reported by the National Office of Vital Statistics was 18,520 in 1950 and 19,579 in 1952.<sup>3</sup> The post-war peak of babies in 1947 with 16,398 births was nearly the same as the post-war peak in 1921, with 16,392 births. But from 1923 to 1938, births declined until they reached a low mark of 11,782 in 1938.<sup>4</sup>

We have at present, therefore, a larger annual addition to the state's population of infants than ever before. Furthermore, the infant mortality rate has been reduced to a very low level. It is now about 25 per 1,000 live births. More than twice as many babies died during their first year of life in 1921 than in 1941. There is still room, however, for further improvement with respect to infant mortality. In 1950, for example, 72 deaths out of 470

under one year of age were non-white; they were practically all Indian.

Birth rates are definitely correlated with economic and social conditions. Conditions which prevailed during the 1930's such as the general depression, the widespread unemployment and the prolonged droughts had a discouraging effect upon the ability of young people to get married and support families. By and large, the birth rate declined from 1920 to 1940, recovered somewhat during the rearmament and war years, 1940 to 1945, and rose with a pronounced upsurge during the post-war years from 1945 to the present (1952).

The present high level of births is associated with the general post-war boom, with the expansion of urban industries and services, with veter-

<sup>3</sup>National Office of Vital Statistics, Public Health Service, Federal Security Agency, *Monthly Vital Statistics Report*, Vol. 1, No. 12, Feb. 17, 1953, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>South Dakota Department of Health, Division of Public Health Statistics, *1950 Annual Report*, Table 1, p. 3.

**Table 2. Live Births in South Dakota  
by Age of Mothers**

Age-Group	In Percent of All Births		
	1940	1941-45	1946-49
All births	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20 years ----	8.4	7.6	9.1
20 to 29 years -----	57.9	58.2	61.1
30 to 39 years -----	28.7	29.7	26.4
40 years and over	5.0	4.3	3.3

ans benefits and allowances and with earlier marriages and younger families. There is a fairly pronounced tendency toward a larger proportion of young women among mothers as shown for example in Table 2.

#### **Births and Deaths Frequently Occur Away from Home**

A very large number of births and deaths occur to persons who are "away from home." The increasing use of hospitals during confinement, illness and surgery; the movement of people in order to use hospitals, clinics and health facilities not available at their usual residence; the general use of automobiles and other convenient means of transportation; the large increase of fatal highway accidents—all these and other factors are responsible for the fact that a large proportion of births and deaths which occur in a given place involve persons who are not residents of that place.

Births and deaths are therefore reported and compiled on two entirely different bases: first, according to the place of occurrence—and this is usually the one which is required by law; and, second, according to place of residence of those involved (infants, mothers, fathers,

decedents, etc.). Rates calculated on the first basis are called *recorded* rates while rates calculated on the second basis are called *resident* rates. Each of these basic tabulations has its own appropriate uses and justifications by health authorities. In the present study, the resident rates are used (except where noted) because they have greater comparability and validity. Accordingly, rural and urban birth rates in this study were obtained by relating the number of births in each area to the resident population.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Urban Birth Rate Now Exceeds Rural Birth Rate**

During the past decade, the increase of births in urban areas has been more pronounced than that which has taken place in rural areas. In both rural and urban areas, there have been marked increases in the number of births since the pre-war years. Ordinarily it should be expected that the rural birth rate would exceed the urban birth rate, but that is not the case now in South Dakota. (See Table 5.)

As shown in Table 3, the percentage of urban births increased from 28.4 in 1940 to 41.8 in 1950, and rural births decreased to a corresponding

<sup>5</sup>Since 90 percent or more of all births in South Dakota occur in hospitals and since hospitals are located in the larger areas or cities, the urban birth rate would be unduly high and the rural birth rate much too low if they were calculated on the basis of the population of the place of occurrence.

It is possible that certain errors occur in the registration of births and were not removed in the tabulating process. These errors occur in those instances where the residences of the mothers are reported as being in the towns which are their mailing addresses, although these mothers actually live on farms or in small towns. The result of such errors is to over-allocate rural births to urban areas.

**Table 3. Percent of Population and of Births, 1940 and 1950**

	Population		Births	
	1940	1950	1940	1950
Urban .....	24.6	33.1	28.4	41.8
Rural .....	75.4	66.9	71.6	58.2

extent. In both years, however, urban residents had more than their due share of all births; for they constituted 24.6 percent of the population in 1940 and 33.1 percent in 1950.

#### **Extent of Under-registration of Births**

In this study it was deemed necessary to make a correction of the total births in South Dakota because of the incomplete registration of births. The completeness of birth records is also of interest to many persons who may be directly concerned. On many occasions, it is necessary to furnish proof of age, birth place, parents' names, and other vital information. It has been said that "a person's birth certificate is his deed to citizenship." The data showing the completeness of birth registration in South Dakota and in the United States are therefore given in Table 4.

Since the first test was made of birth registration completeness in

1940, a considerable degree of improvement has been brought about in birth registration both in the nation and in the state. Much of the gain is due to more complete registration of non-white births. While South Dakota's registration as a whole compares favorably with the nation's, it should be noted that non-white registration is still seriously incomplete. The extent of death registration incompleteness is not known, but it is thought to be much less extensive than the incompleteness of birth registration.

#### **Births, Deaths, and Natural Increase**

Figure 2 shows births and deaths and natural increase in South Dakota from 1920 to 1950 inclusive. While births have fluctuated widely between peaks and troughs, deaths have changed in a much less pronounced fashion. The highest number of deaths was shown for 1934 with 6,559; and the lowest number on record (between 1920 and 1951, inclusive) was 5,112 in 1922. On the whole, the calculated death rate shows a slightly upward tendency over the last 30 years.

The death rate for urban areas is definitely greater than that of the rural areas. Why this should be the

**Table 4. Birth Registration Completeness Stated as a Percent of all Births in South Dakota and in the United States, 1940 and 1950**

	South Dakota		United States	
	1940	1950	1940	1950
All races .....	95.4	98.4	92.5	97.8
White .....	96.6	99.2	94.0	98.5
Non-white .....	79.8	82.7	82.0	93.4

Source: Federal Security Agency, Public Health Service, *Advance Release*, January 15, 1952.

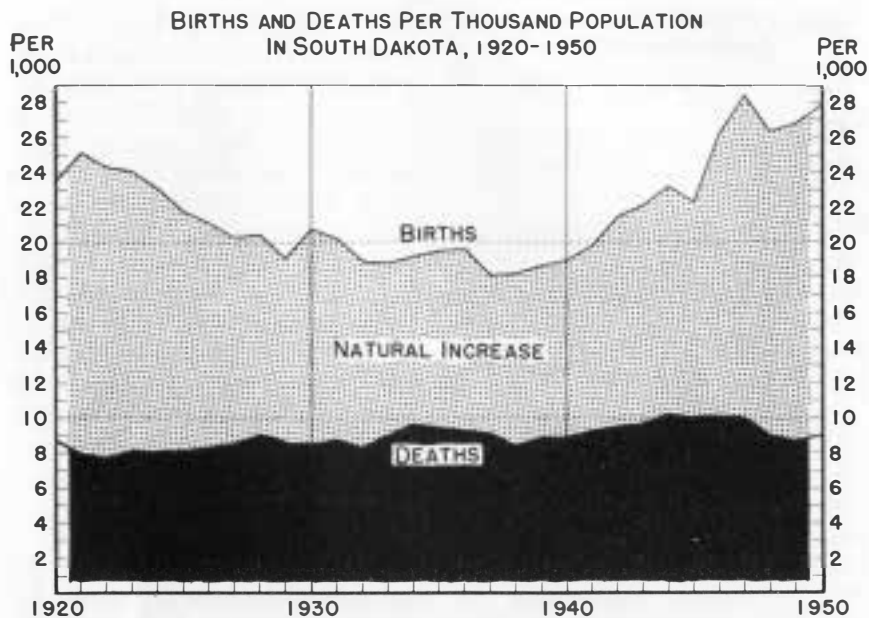


Fig. 2. While births have fluctuated widely (1920-50) deaths changed in less pronounced fashion

case is a matter of conjecture. It is likely that the urban death rate is boosted upward by the retirement of persons in the urban areas who formerly lived in rural communities.

It is also possible that the urban rate is influenced by the fact that homes for the aged and hospitals and other institutions are located in urban areas.

*Table 5. Births, Deaths, and Natural Increase in South Dakota and Its Urban and Rural Areas in 1940, 1947, 1948, and 1949 with Rates per 1,000 Population*

Area		1940	1947	1948	1949	Rates per 1,000 Population*			
						1940	1947	1948	1949
State									
Births	-----	12,054	16,539	16,405	17,211	18.7	25.4	25.2	26.4
Deaths	-----	5,700	5,730	5,806	5,687	8.9	8.8	8.9	8.7
Natural increase	-----	6,354	10,809	10,599	12,524	9.9	16.6	16.3	17.7
Urban area									
Births	-----	3,427	5,411	5,853	5,703	21.5	27.0	28.4	26.9
Deaths	-----	1,977	2,057	2,014	1,877	12.4	10.3	9.8	8.9
Natural increase	-----	1,450	3,354	3,839	3,826	9.1	16.7	18.6	18.0
Rural area									
Births	-----	8,627	11,128	10,552	11,508	17.8	24.7	23.7	26.1
Deaths	-----	3,923	3,673	3,792	3,810	8.1	8.1	8.5	8.7
Natural increase	-----	4,704	7,455	6,760	7,698	9.7	16.6	15.2	17.4

\*Mid-year population estimates obtained by straight-line interpolation.

Birth and death rates per thousand population for 1940, 1947, 1948, and 1949 are given in Table 5. Little further comment is necessary except the observation that these rates were calculated per 1,000 population without giving consideration to the differences in the composition of the

population as to sex, age, and marital status. While the birth rate is higher in urban areas than in the rural areas, the death rate of the urban area is also somewhat higher than that of the rural area so that the rate of natural increase is nearly the same in both areas.

## Rural-Urban Migration In South Dakota, 1940-50

### How Net Migration Is Determined

IN ANY GIVEN AREA such as a city, county, state or country the number of inhabitants is constantly changing because of births, deaths, or movement to and from the area. Migrants move into the area and others move out of it and the balance is called net migration. Comparatively few facts are known about the whole migration movement. Births and deaths, however, are subject to careful registration and the extent of *net* migration is therefore quite easily determined by certain logical methods. In reality, there is a much larger volume of movement both from and to the state, but the extent of in-migration and out-migration is not known. We do know the extent of net migration which is the balance of out-migration offset by in-migration.

Net migration from South Dakota during the decade 1940 to 1950 involved a movement of 79,035 persons out of the state. However, there was a net migration to urban areas including 15,130 persons. This net

gain of urban areas offset, to some extent, the large rural out-migration which amounted to 94,165 persons. These figures are shown in Table 6 and Fig. 3. They indicate that the rural areas of South Dakota *lost* about 1 person in 5 and urban areas *gained* about 1 person in 10 through migration on the basis of their 1940 population. This does not mean that all urban areas had gains and that all rural areas had losses; there were exceptions in both groups.

**Table 6. Births, Deaths, Natural Increase and Net Migration and Their Influence Upon the Rural and Urban Population of South Dakota, 1940-50**

	State	Rural	Urban
Population, April 1, 1940 .....	642,961	484,874	158,087
Births, April 1, 1940—March 30, 1950 .....	145,142	100,540	44,602
Deaths, 1940-49, inclusive .....	56,328	37,201	19,127
Natural increase, 1940-50 .....	88,814	63,339	25,475
Expected population, April 1, 1950 .....	731,775	548,213	183,562
Population, April 1, 1950* .....	652,740	454,048	198,692
Net migration, number .....	-79,035	-94,165	15,130
Net migration, percent, based on 1940 population ....	-12.3	-19.4	9.6

\*Rural and urban population figures were adjusted in accord with the 1940 definition of urban areas.

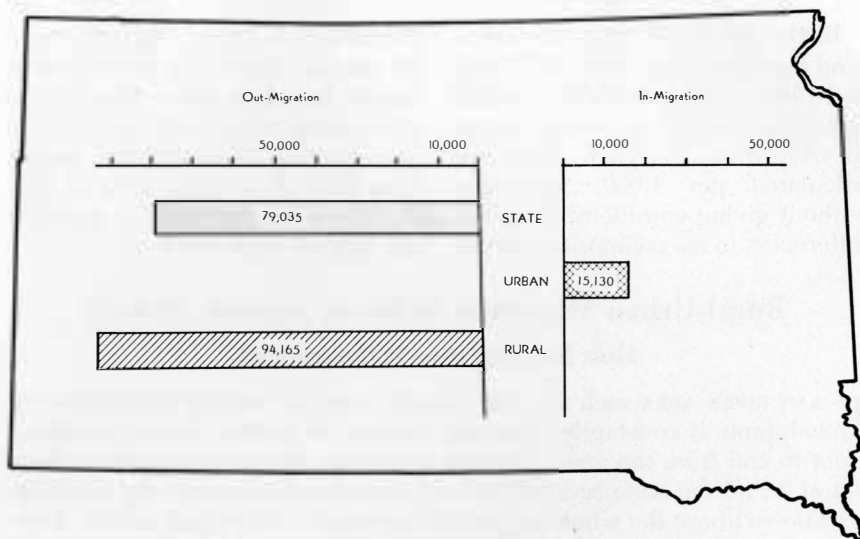


Fig. 3. Urban and rural net migration in South Dakota, 1940-50

The method used to determine the extent of net migration from the state as a whole and the net migration from its rural areas and to its urban areas may be explained as follows:

As stated previously, on April 1, 1940, South Dakota's population was 642,961 persons. During the decade from April 1, 1940 to March 31, 1950, 145,142 resident births occurred in the state. Deaths during the 10 years from 1940 to 1950, inclusive, numbered 56,328. Accordingly, natural increase, i.e., the excess of births over deaths, would be 88,814 persons. Therefore, if there had been no migration from the state, the total population on April 1, 1950 should have been 731,775 persons. Instead, the census on April 1 reported a population of 652,740 persons. It follows that a net migration from the state of 79,035 persons took place.

The same method was followed to ascertain rural and urban migration and the several steps need not be repeated. However, it is desirable to make certain additional comments pertaining to the basic data. The total births were adjusted for under-registration according to ratios furnished by the National Office of Vital Statistics. For the state as a whole, resident births without adjustment numbered 140,842; with adjustments (by being multiplied by 103.05 percent) they were estimated as 145,142. No adjustment was made for incompleteness of death registration.

While the total population of the state is that given by the census of April 1, 1950, the rural and urban totals were subject to some adjustments. These were made so that only the same places that were listed as urban in 1940 were included as urban in 1950. Six incorporated

places which had less than 2,500 population in 1940 but more than that in 1950 were included in the rural total of 1950. A small correction was also made so the rural and urban totals would be in accord with the urban definition used in 1940.

### Net Migration to and from the Urban Population of Counties

The cities of the state varied greatly in their capacity to attract migrants over and above the natural increase which they had during the decade, 1940 to 1950. Twelve cities of the state (using "city" as the equivalent of an urban area) scored gains through in-migration while seven cities showed losses through out-migration. The biggest gain both in actual numbers and percentage-wise was scored by Rapid City in Pennington County. The biggest

losses through out-migration were sustained by cities in Lawrence County. The largest proportional gains were shown by cities in Pennington, Hughes, Fall River, Brookings, and Clay counties. The first three of these counties owe their population increases largely to the construction and operation of civilian and military projects; and the last two have had a large net migration because the Bureau of the Census adopted a new rule in regard to the resident classification of college and university students. Figure 4 shows the counties of the state having urban areas which had either net in-migration or net out-migration. Basic data pertaining to the counties having urban incorporated places, their population in 1940 and 1950 and their natural increase and net migration during the decade are shown in Table 7.

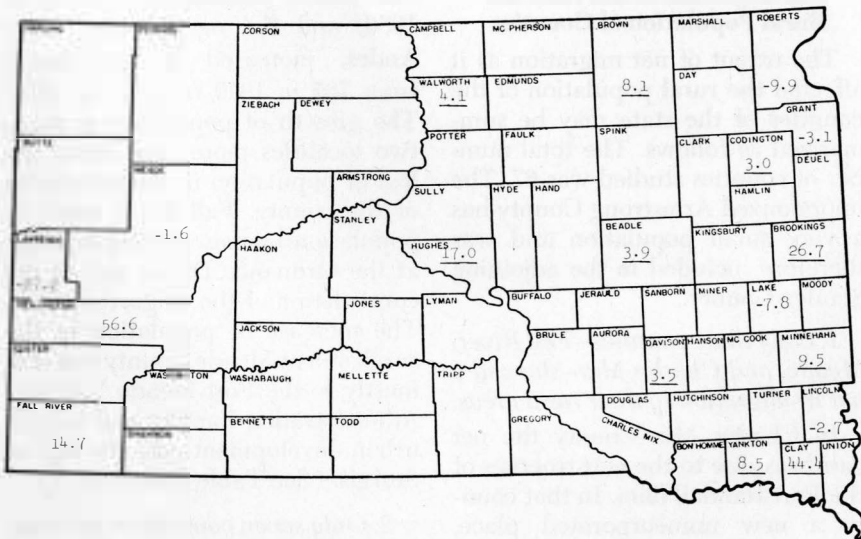




Table 7. Counties and Urban Areas of South Dakota with Net In-Migration and Net Out-Migration, 1940-50

County	City	Urban Population 1940	Natural Increase 1940-50	Net Migration 1940-50	Urban Population 1950
<b>South Dakota</b>	<b>All cities</b>	<b>158,087</b>	<b>25,475</b>	<b>15,130</b>	<b>198,692</b>
NET IN-MIGRATION					
Beadle.....	Huron .....	10,843	1,527	418	12,788
Brookings.....	Brookings .....	5,346	990	1,428	7,764
Brown.....	Aberdeen .....	17,015	2,661	1,375	21,051
Clay.....	Vermillion .....	3,324	537	1,476	5,337
Codington.....	Watertown .....	10,617	1,760	322	12,699
Davison.....	Mitchell .....	10,633	1,122	368	12,123
Fall River.....	Hot Springs .....	4,083	346	601	5,030
Hughes.....	Pierre .....	4,322	660	733	5,715
Minnehaha.....	Sioux Falls .....	40,832	7,987	3,877	52,696
Pennington.....	Rapid City .....	13,844	3,632	7,834	25,310
Walworth.....	Mobridge .....	3,008	623	122	3,753
Yankton.....	Yankton .....	6,798	336	575	7,709
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>Above cities</b>	<b>130,665</b>	<b>22,181</b>	<b>19,129</b>	<b>171,975</b>
NET OUT MIGRATION					
Grant.....	Milbank .....	2,745	323	-86	2,982
Lake.....	Madison .....	5,018	528	-393	5,153
Lawrence.....	Deadwood, Lead ..	11,620	1,247	-3,157	9,710
Lincoln.....	Canton .....	2,518	80	-68	2,530
Meade.....	Sturgis .....	3,008	510	-47	3,471
Roberts.....	Sisseton .....	2,513	606	-248	2,871
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>Above cities</b>	<b>27,422</b>	<b>3,294</b>	<b>-3,999</b>	<b>26,717</b>

### Net Migration to and from the Rural Population of Counties

The extent of net migration as it affected the rural population of the counties of the state may be summarized as follows. The total number of counties studied was 67. The unorganized Armstrong County has a very small population and was therefore included in the adjoining Stanley County.

*1. Only three counties—Fall River, Meade, and Charles Mix—showed a net in-migration to their rural areas.*

In Charles Mix County the net gain was due to the construction of the Fort Randall dam. In that county a new unincorporated place, Pickstown, located near the dam

site, had a population of 2,212 in 1950; and the nearby city, Lake Andes, increased its population from 785 in 1940 to 1,851 in 1950. The growth of population in these two localities more than offset the loss of population in the remainder of the county. Fall River owes its population increase to employment at the Ordnance Depot and at the construction of the Angostura dam. The increase of population in the rural area of Meade County was due mostly to the Fort Meade Veterans Administration Facility and to suburban development near the city of Sturgis. (See Table 8 and Fig. 5.)

*2. Only seven counties in the state had a larger natural increase than*

net out-migration from their rural population.

These counties were Minnehaha, Butte, Stanley, Perkins, Hughes, Potter, and Sully. In Minnehaha County, the comparatively small net migration is due to the increase in the rural population residing in the urban fringe adjacent to Sioux Falls; and the gain in that part of the county offset the loss in the rural population elsewhere. In Butte County, north of the Black Hills, the small net out-migration is traceable to the increase of population in the city of Belle Fourche.<sup>6</sup> In Perkins County, the increase of rural population was due to the presence of construction workers employed at the Shadehill dam and to the increase of population in Lemmon City.<sup>7</sup> The relatively small net out-migration in Stanley, Hughes, and Sully counties can without doubt be attributed to increases of rural

population associated with the construction of the Oahe dam. The Oahe dam is located 6 miles northwest of Pierre, the capital of the state. (See Table 8.)

3. Fifty-seven of the sixty-seven counties of the state had a larger net out-migration than the natural increase in the same counties from 1940 to 1950.

The counties which had the largest net out-migration were those having a large Indian population such as Washabaugh, Shannon, Mellette, and Dewey counties, or they were highly rural counties such as Harding, in the northwest corner of the state, or Campbell and McPherson in the north central part.

<sup>6</sup>The population of Belle Fourche City increased from 2,496 in 1940 to 3,540 in 1950. It was necessary, however, to classify Belle Fourche as a rural area in this study.

<sup>7</sup>The population of Lemmon City increased from 1,781 in 1940 to 2,760 in 1950. It was necessary, however, to classify this incorporated place as a rural area in this study.

Table 8. Net Migration to or from the Rural Population of Specified Counties in South Dakota, 1940-50

County	Rural Population 1940	Natural Increase 1940 50	Expected Rural Population 1950	Actual Rural Population 1950	Net Migration	
					Number	Percent of Population 1940
NET IN-MIGRATION						
Fall River .....	4,006	802	4,808	5,409	601	15.0
Meade .....	6,727	709	7,436	8,045	609	9.1
Charles Mix .....	4,703	493	5,196	4,399	797	1.3
SMALL NET OUT-MIGRATION						
Minnehaha .....	16,865	2,203	19,068	18,214	-854	-5.1
Stanley .....	2,001	214	2,215	2,107	-108	-5.4
Butte .....	8,004	1,053	9,057	8,161	-896	-11.2
Perkins .....	6,585	1,042	7,627	6,776	-851	-12.9
LARGE NET OUT-MIGRATION						
Washabaugh .....	1,980	439	2,419	1,551	-868	-43.8
Shannon .....	7,155	1,508	8,663	5,669	-2,994	-41.8
Mellette .....	4,107	570	4,677	3,046	-1,631	-39.7
Harding .....	3,010	391	3,401	2,289	-1,112	-36.9
Campbell .....	5,033	716	5,749	4,046	-1,703	-33.8



death rates of 1939-41 were applicable to the whole decade, and that there were no significant differences in the death rates of rural and urban groups. It was also assumed that the census of 1950 and that of 1940 made an accurate enumeration of sex-and-age groups.

In the present study, the chief concern is with the rural-urban aspect of migration as shown in Tables 9 and 10 (and Tables 1-A and 2-A in the Appendix). The interstate aspect of migration will be discussed in a later connection. To illustrate the method, note what happened in the case of the rural-farm boys who were 5 to 14 years of age in 1940. (See Table 9.) These boys numbered 32,679. It was estimated that there were 436 deaths in this group from 1940 to 1950. Therefore, the survivors numbered 32,243. These survivors were at that time 10 years older than the original group, or 15 to 24 years of age. The census of 1950 reported 21,861 persons of

that age. Consequently, the migration from this rural-farm group must have been about 10,382 persons. These migrants constituted 31.8 percent of the original 1940 group.

The same explanation may be applied to all the other groups. Urban girls who were 5 to 14 years of age in 1940 numbered 12,255. There were 122 deaths and 12,133 survivors by 1950. These survivors were, of course, 15 to 24 years old in 1950. But the census of that year enumerated 18,143 young women in this age-group. Consequently, there was a net migration of 6,010 young women to this urban group, an addition of nearly 50 percent more to the original number.

What, then, are the main conclusions when rural-urban migration is studied from the standpoint of the sex-and-age composition of the migrants?

1. Migrants were mostly youths and young adults. They came in large proportions from the rural-

**Table 9. Net Migration by Specified Sex, Age, and Residence Groups of South Dakota, 1940-50 (Age Group 5-14)**

	Census Ages 5-14 1940	Deaths* 5-24 1940-50	Survivors 15-24 1950	Census Ages 15-24 1950	Migrants†	
					Number	Percent of 1940 Census
MALES						
State .....	61,305	816	60,489	51,585	-8,904	-14.5
Rural-farm .....	32,679	436	32,243	21,861	-10,382	-31.8
Rural-nonfarm .....	15,896	210	15,686	14,148	-1,538	-9.7
Urban .....	12,730	170	12,560	15,576	3,016	23.7
FEMALES						
State .....	59,261	589	58,672	49,555	-9,117	-15.4
Rural-farm .....	31,313	312	31,001	17,099	-13,902	-44.4
Rural-nonfarm .....	15,693	155	15,538	14,313	-1,225	-7.8
Urban .....	12,255	122	12,133	18,143	6,010	49.0

\*Deaths were calculated by single years of age at rates obtained from *State and Regional Tables, 1939-41*, published by National Office of Vital Statistics, Public Health Service, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

†The minus sign (—) indicates migration from an area or class of population.

Table 10. Net Migration by Specified Sex, Age, and Residence Groups of South Dakota, 1940-50 (Age Group 15-24)

	Census Ages 15-24 1940	Deaths* 15-34 1940-50	Survivors 25-34 1950	Census Ages 25-34 1950	Migrants†	
					Number	Percent of 1940 Census
MALES						
State .....	60,577	1,216	59,361	48,800	-10,561	-17.4
Rural-farm .....	32,347	648	31,699	18,894	-12,805	-39.6
Rural-nonfarm .....	14,773	297	14,476	13,857	-619	-4.2
Urban .....	13,457	271	13,186	16,049	2,863	21.3
FEMALES						
State .....	59,007	838	58,169	45,151	-13,018	-22.1
Rural-farm .....	26,206	372	25,834	16,290	-9,544	-36.4
Rural-nonfarm .....	16,314	231	16,083	13,151	-2,932	-18.0
Urban .....	16,487	235	16,252	15,710	-542	-3.3

\*Deaths were calculated by single years of age at rates obtained from *State and Regional Tables, 1939-41*, published by the National Office of Vital Statistics, Public Health Service, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

†The minus sign (-) indicates migration from an area or class of population.

farm classification and less extensively from the rural-nonfarm grouping. They were added to the urban residence classification in large numbers and proportions.

2. Young women lead the procession to the city. They leave the rural homes, where they were reared, in greater numbers and at an earlier age than young men do. Consequently, the normal proportion of the sexes is disturbed. In cities, there is an excess of young women over young men. In the country, there is a great excess of young men in proportion to young women.

3. Urban areas generally attract both young men and women. But some net migration from cities of the state occurred on the part of both men and women who were 25 to 34 years of age in 1940 and the net out-migration was greater for women than for men.

4. Migration to cities occurs also in advanced age-brackets. Table 11 shows that there was a marked increase in urban areas of those over

65 years and at the same time there was a pronounced decrease of the same age-group in the rural-farm areas. It was very likely that retirement from active farming by elderly farm operators has been accelerated by the general prosperity of the past ten years.

### Causes and Consequences of Rural-Urban Migration

It is evident that rural-urban migration has played a very significant role as a factor which increases population in most of the cities of the state. If it had not been for the capacity of these cities, as well as a limited number of rural areas, to attract net migration, the migration from the state during the last 10 years would have been greater than it actually was. Migration within the state also brings about a transfer of young adults from farms and small towns to the larger urban centers of the state. Some of the consequences of this movement will be discussed later and others will be

omitted because they reach far beyond the scope of this study.

It should be mentioned that as a result of rural-urban migration, the sex and age composition of the urban population differs greatly from that of the rural-nonfarm and that of the rural-farm population. There is undoubtedly a direct relationship between the favorable age composition of the urban population and the relatively high birth rate. Rural-urban migration, on the whole, also transfers a large proportion of young adults who have completed high school or college from rural to urban areas.<sup>8</sup>

The causes of urban population increase in South Dakota may be classified into two groups; first, those that may be called nominal causes; and second, real causes. The first type pertains mostly to the definition of urban areas and residence. These include (1) the increase in the number of places having 2,500 population or more, (2) the annexation of rural areas to urban municipalities, (3) the change in residence classification of college students. The real causes of urban increase are (1) the in-migration of rural youth, (2) the large natural increase, (3) the increase in families and households, and (4) the in-

crease in employment by private and public enterprises.

The census of 1950 listed 25 incorporated places in South Dakota which had 2,500 inhabitants or more. Their total population came to 216,157. Six places — Belle Fourche, Lemmon, Redfield, Spearfish, Webster and Winner—had less than 2,500 residents in 1940 but had more than that in 1950 and were therefore included as urban centers. Besides the adding of six places to the urban classification, the aggregate of urban inhabitants was also increased by a process of annexation of rural areas adjacent to the larger cities. This occurred in numerous instances. In a few cases, areas also reverted to adjoining rural counties.

The exact number of residents affected by the process of annexation is not known. In some cases it was probably a fairly significant item in the total urban increase. There is, however, a strong opposition to annexation in many suburban areas. Study of 34 townships adjacent to the largest cities of the state reveal conspicuous population increases in these townships. But this increase in the rural townships goes to show

<sup>8</sup>The evidence bearing upon this point is very definite but the analysis is too long to be presented here. See 1950 U. S. Census of Population: South Dakota, General Characteristics, pp. 41-35 and 41-36.

**Table 11. Number of Persons Aged 65 and Over, by Urban-Rural Residence, 1940-50**

	1940	1950	Increase or Decrease (—) 1949-50	
			Number	Percent
State .....	44,440	55,296	10,856	24.4
Urban .....	11,390	18,888	7,498	65.8
Rural-nonfarm .....	17,381	22,537	5,156	29.7
Rural-farm .....	15,669	13,871	-1,798	-11.5

that probably the major part of the population increase in suburban areas situated along the main highways leading to the cities was not included in the 1950 classification of urban residents.

The urban population was also increased to a significant extent by the change in the census practice with regard to the residence classification of college students. In the recent census, students were enumerated as residents of the incorporated place in which the college was located. In the census of 1940 they were enumerated according to their usual residence; i.e., their home or parental residence. South Dakota has 16 institutions of higher education. Only three of these, a state-sup-

ported teacher's college and two church-related junior colleges, are located in rural centers. The remainder are located in urban centers. It is obvious, therefore, that the change in census practice tended to enhance the urban population.

In order to ascertain the influence of this new classification of college students upon the population of urban areas of the state and upon particular cities, the colleges of the state were classified according to the size of the population of the city in which they are located. Students registered in 1940 and in 1950 were classified into three groups: First, those whose home residences were in the same city as the college or university; second, those whose home

**Table 12. College Enrollment in 1940 and 1950, Classified According to Residence of Students and Location of the Colleges**

Enrollment Classified by Residence and Urban-Rural Location of College	1940	1950	Increase or Decrease	
			Number	Percent
<b>Total Enrollment</b> .....	<b>6,377</b>	<b>7,658</b>	<b>1,281</b>	<b>20.1</b>
<i>Colleges in urban centers of:</i>				
10,000 population and over .....	2,724	3,025	301	11.0
2,500-10,000 population .....	3,327	4,407	1,080	32.5
<i>Colleges in rural centers</i> .....	326	226	-100	-30.7
<b>Students who were residents of the college city or town</b> ..	<b>1,589</b>	<b>1,819</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>14.5</b>
<i>At colleges in urban centers of:</i>				
10,000 population and over .....	935	1,134	199	21.3
2,500-10,000 population .....	616	626	10	1.6
<i>At colleges in rural centers</i> .....	38	-59	21	55.3
<b>Students who were residents in remainder of state</b> .....	<b>4,188</b>	<b>4,621</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>10.3</b>
<i>At colleges in urban centers of:</i>				
10,000 population and over .....	1,527	1,380	-147	-9.6
2,500-10,000 population .....	2,385	3,096	711	29.8
<i>At colleges in rural centers</i> .....	276	145	-131	-47.5
<b>Students who were non-residents of South Dakota</b> .....	<b>600</b>	<b>1,218</b>	<b>618</b>	<b>103.0</b>
<i>At colleges in urban centers of:</i>				
10,000 population and over .....	262	511	249	95.0
2,500-10,000 population .....	326	685	359	110.1
<i>At colleges in rural centers</i> .....	12	22	10	83.3

residences were in the remainder of the state; and third, those whose home residences were in other states or abroad. A questionnaire was addressed to the registrar of each college and usable returns were obtained from 15 institutions. The results are shown in Table 12 and may be summarized as follows:

1. Colleges located in the smaller urban centers having from 2,500 to 10,000 inhabitants (including Vermillion, the seat of the State University, and Brookings, the location of the State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts) had greater increases in enrollment than the colleges located in the larger cities.

2. Colleges located in the larger urban centers had much greater increases of students whose home addresses were in the same cities. The total home-town student enrollment by colleges in the smaller urban centers was nearly the same in 1950 as in 1940 (626 compared with 616).

3. Colleges in the smaller urban centers attracted relatively more students from out over the state than did their competitors located in the larger cities. This was especially true of the State University and the State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts. The four Teachers' Colleges had 877 students from out over the state in 1950 compared with 1,285 in 1940.

4. The increase of enrollment of students whose usual residence was in other states and territories or abroad was much greater than that of the other two groups. It rose from 600 in 1940 to 1,218 in 1950. The increase of this class of students was

also especially large at colleges located in the smaller urban centers.

It seems conclusive, therefore, that the increase of urban population in places such as Brookings, Spearfish and Vermillion was due to a very considerable extent to this change in student residence classification by the census authorities. Moreover, in April 1950, some of the post-war veterans and their families were still in residence at the colleges. This group is now gone. The urban increase, therefore, was of a temporary nature.

### **Important Reasons for the Growth of Population**

The principal reason for the increase of population in most urban centers and in some rural areas was the expansion of the national basic economy which was conducive to an increase in employment in several industries and occupations. Gainful employment, however, was also greatly increased by military establishments and by civilian construction of projects under government auspices in various localities of the state. The general increase in the gainfully employed labor force of the state and of the nation was one of the most pronounced changes during the past decade, 1940-1950. The increase or decrease in the employment of men and women in South Dakota and its urban, rural-nonfarm and rural-farm areas are shown in Table 13.

Employment increased both in urban and in rural-nonfarm areas, but it fell off by 7,542 persons or 7.2 percent in the rural-farm classifica-



**Table 13. Number of Employed Workers in South Dakota 1940 and 1950, Classified by Sex and Rural-Urban Residence**

Employed*	1940	1950	Increase or Decrease 1940-50	
			Number	Percent
<b>State (total)</b> .....	<b>204,514</b>	<b>242,268</b>	<b>37,754</b>	<b>18.5</b>
Male .....	167,497	189,763	22,266	13.3
Female .....	37,017	52,505	15,488	41.8
<b>Urban areas</b> .....	<b>53,602</b>	<b>84,767</b>	<b>31,165</b>	<b>58.1</b>
Male .....	36,665	57,353	20,688	56.4
Female .....	16,937	27,414	10,477	61.9
<b>Rural-nonfarm areas</b> .....	<b>45,824</b>	<b>59,995</b>	<b>14,171</b>	<b>30.9</b>
Male .....	33,694	44,815	11,121	33.0
Female .....	12,130	15,140	3,010	24.8
<b>Rural-farm areas</b> .....	<b>105,088</b>	<b>97,546</b>	<b>-7,542</b>	<b>-7.2</b>
Male .....	97,138	87,595	-9,543	-9.8
Female .....	7,950	9,951	2,001	2.5

\*Not including experienced unemployed in 1950, and persons employed on public emergency work in 1940.

tion. Gainful employment increased much more for women than for men, particularly in urban areas. The employment of women increased both in large numbers and percentage-wise in wholesale and retail trade and in professional and related services. There were distinct gains among nurses, teachers, medical technicians, musicians, librarians, welfare and religious workers.

While the employment of men in the rural-farm area dropped by nearly 10,000, employment of women increased by 2,000. Analysis of the related occupational data reveals that there was a decrease in unpaid male farm labor from 12,280 in 1940 to 1,417 in 1950; but at the same time there was an increase in unpaid female farm labor from 721 to 4,603. This change was undoubtedly the result of the relatively high rise in farm wages and the scarcity of agricultural hired labor. The decline of employment in the rural farm area was largely the result of a

marked increase in agricultural occupations of persons residing in urban and rural-nonfarm areas in 1950. For these increases see Table 14.

The data in these tables have reference to persons actually at work during the calendar week of 1950 that preceded the enumerator's visit. In 1940 this week was fixed for all persons as March 24-30 regardless of date of enumeration. The data for 1950 excluded all experienced unemployed persons and also members in the armed forces residing in the state. The number of persons who were employed on emergency works projects in 1940 were also excluded. These rules were followed by the Bureau of the Census in order to obtain the greatest possible comparability of data.

The arrangement of employment by the principal industrial groups shown in Table 14 separates urban areas from rural-nonfarm areas; and in each area the 12 main indus-

tries are listed from the highest to the lowest according to the relative increase in total employment. Therefore, the arrangement shows which industries had greater and smaller increases than the general average.

In both the urban and the rural-nonfarm areas there were three industry groups which took a conspicuous lead; namely construction, ag-

riculture, business and repair services. The last mentioned group includes advertising, accounting, auditing and the like, and repair services include automobile repairs, and garages.

In urban areas there were four industry groups which ranked well above the average increase of employment; namely, entertainment and recreation; wholesale and re-

**Table 14. Increase or Decrease in the Number of Employed, 14 Years Old and Over from 1940 to 1950 in Urban and Rural Nonfarm Areas, By Main Industry Groups**

Main Industry Group	Number of Employed		Increase or Decrease (—) 1940-50	
	1940	1950	Number	Percent
<b>URBAN AREA</b>				
All industries .....	53,602	84,767	31,165	58.1
<b>Above average increases in employment</b>				
1. Construction .....	2,680	7,304	4,624	172.5
2. Agriculture, forestry .....	860	2,037	1,777	136.9
3. Business and repair services .....	1,689	3,417	1,728	102.3
4. Entertainment and recreation .....	690	1,200	510	73.9
5. Wholesale and retail trade .....	15,334	25,322	9,988	65.1
6. Transportation, communication, and utilities ....	4,878	7,981	3,103	63.6
7. Professional and related services .....	6,958	11,377	4,419	63.5
<b>Below average increases in employment</b>				
8. Public administration .....	3,361	4,864	1,503	44.7
9. Finance, insurance and real estate .....	2,278	3,280	1,002	44.0
10. Manufacturing .....	6,620	8,872	2,252	34.0
11. Mining .....	1,851	1,983	132	7.1
12. Personal services .....	5,567	5,868	301	5.4
<b>RURAL-NONFARM</b>				
All industries .....	45,824	59,955	14,131	30.8
<b>Above average increases in employment</b>				
1. Agriculture, forestry .....	2,801	7,182	4,381	156.4
2. Construction .....	2,925	6,974	4,049	138.4
3. Business and repair services .....	2,139	3,126	987	46.1
<b>Below average increases in employment</b>				
4. Finance, insurance, and real estate .....	1,152	1,461	309	26.8
5. Transportation, communication and utilities ....	3,638	4,564	926	25.5
6. Wholesale and retail trade .....	13,490	16,425	2,935	21.8
7. Public administration .....	3,564	4,200	636	17.8
8. Manufacturing .....	2,180	2,479	299	13.7
9. Entertainment and recreation .....	767	781	14	1.8
10. Professional and related services .....	7,436	7,524	88	1.2
11. Personal services .....	3,798	3,052	-746	-19.6
12. Mining .....	876	671	-205	-23.4

NOTE: The rural-farm classification has been omitted because of the limited number employed in occupations other than agriculture.

tail trade; transportation, communication and other utilities; and professional and related services. In the rural-nonfarm areas these four occupational groups had some positive increases to show but they ranked below the average relative increase.

Employment in public administration (which includes the postal services and federal, state and local government administration) increased at less than the average rate both in urban and in rural-nonfarm areas. However, the number of government workers, defined as all persons who worked for any governmental unit (federal, state and local), regardless of the activity of the particular agency, increased from 21,691 to 26,254 persons. As a percentage of all employed, they were 10.6 in 1940 and 10.8 in 1950.

The three industrial groups which showed the smallest increases of employment in urban areas were manufacturing, mining, and personal services. In the rural-nonfarm area these three industries were also at the bottom of the list, and two showed decreases in employment.

The increase in employment which occurred in the construction industry was much more extensive than that which occurred in most other industries. The construction industry employs largely male labor. It requires many technical skills and is well paid. A large part of it, however, is seasonal and also temporary, being subject to removal when the project is completed. Construction of projects either for civilian or military purposes in various

parts of the state have been among the leading causes of population increase in several cities and localities in the state.

The greatest increase occurred in Charles Mix county where the Fort Randall dam is under construction directed by the Corps of Engineers, Department of the Army. In Hughes and Stanley counties there were increases of employment due to the construction of the Oahe dam, also under auspices of the Corps of Engineers. In Perkins county the construction of the Shadehill dam and in Fall River county the construction of the Angostura dam, both under the auspices of the Bureau of Reclamation, U. S. Department of the Interior, account for most of the increase in employment and population. (See Table 8 and Table 15.)

Jobs and positions are the magnets which attract the labor force of the state and provide gainful employment and income. They are the foundations of society and growth of population is a response to them.

#### **Causes of Migration from the Rural-Farm Area**

One of the main reasons for the extensive migration from the rural-farm population lies in the fact that the farms in South Dakota, and in the nation, generally speaking, are fewer in number, larger in size and more mechanized in their farming operations now than formerly. The federal census of agriculture reported 83,157 farms in South Dakota in 1930, 72,454 in 1940, and 66,452 in 1950. The smaller number of farms (by about 20 percent) is obviously

one of the main reasons for the decrease in farm population, but there are many others. The nation's agricultural production at the present high level requires only about two-thirds as much human labor as was necessary in 1920 for a like volume of production.<sup>9</sup> Tractors and trucks have displaced horses and mules, and machines have taken the place of much hand labor. The use of machines, such as combines and corn pickers, has leveled off the high seasonal demand for farmhands and has assisted in making agricultural production much more efficient.

In comparison with the wide-open homestead frontier of 70 years ago or less, agriculture is now a difficult field to enter. At current prices of land, buildings, livestock, machinery, and the like, a large amount of capital (or credit, or both) is required to start farming. Lack of the necessary capital is without doubt one of the primary reasons why more young people do not enter farming. The farm family itself is becoming more and more important, not only as a source of

farming experience and know-how, but also of financial and other help for young people who are to be the farm families of the future.<sup>10</sup>

The reasons which cause youth to leave the farm are complex and deeply rooted in economic, social and cultural conditions. The oldest boy in a farm family often reaches maturity long before his father is ready to retire. The young women find little opportunity for employment on farms unless they get married and become homemakers. Farm people often encourage their children to get a professional education in order to get away from the hardships and disappointments of farm life. The rural community is in process of decline and lacks many of the social and cultural attractions which the city affords. It does not have the aura of prestige which is attributed to the large urban center.

<sup>9</sup>R. W. Hecht, "Technology Levels Seasonal Farm Work," *The Agricultural Situation*, Vol. 31, No. 6, June 1947; also, M. R. Cooper and G. T. Barton, "A Century of Farm Mechanization," *Ibid.*, Vol. 32, Nos. 3-4, March-April, 1948.

<sup>10</sup>J. F. Timmons and R. Barlowe, *Farm Ownership in the Midwest*, Research Bulletin 361, Ames, Iowa, June 1949. (North Central Regional Publication No. 13.)

**Table 15. Number Employed in Construction in South Dakota, in Rural and Urban Areas and in Specified Counties, 1940 and 1950**

Area	Employed in Construction		Increase, 1940-1950	
	1940	1950	Number	Percent
State .....	6,208	15,111	8,903	143.4
Urban areas .....	2,680	7,304	4,624	172.5
Rural-nonfarm .....	2,925	6,974	4,049	138.4
Rural-farm .....	603	833	230	38.1
<b>Counties having federal projects</b>				
Charles Mix .....	84	1,546	1,462	1,740.5
Fall River .....	58	241	183	315.5
Hughes .....	107	464	357	333.6
Pennington .....	580	1,220	640	110.3
Perkins .....	36	260	224	622.2

Sources: Sixteenth Census, 1940: *Population, Second Series, South Dakota*, pp. 31, 52-60. 1950 U. S. Census of Population: *South Dakota, General Characteristics*, pp. 41-41, 41-73 to 41-81.

## Interstate Migration from South Dakota, 1930-50

FROM 1930 TO 1950, South Dakota's population decreased to the extent of 40,109 persons. But the total net migration from the state during the same period reached a much greater cumulative total; namely, 201,937 persons. The total out-migration more than offset the natural increase which occurred during the 20 years. The basic facts are presented in Table 16 and were ascertained in the following manner:

The state had a population of 692,849 in 1930. During the 20 years there were 278,174 resident births, 116,346 resident deaths and a natural increase of 161,828 persons. If there had been no migration from the state, the expected population should have come to 854,677 persons. Instead, the census of 1950 enumerated a population of 652,740 inhabitants. Consequently, net migration removed over 200,000 persons from the state.

### Extent of Migration by 5-Year Periods, 1930-50

In order to analyze and explain the causal factors and conditions which were associated with this extensive migration from the state, the two decades may be divided into four fairly distinct periods of five years each (Fig. 6). During the first two, from 1930 to 1940, the population of South Dakota was adjusted to diminishing resources and opportunities by means of large-scale out-migration. During most of this decade, a combination of adverse climatic, economic and sociological factors produced widespread and

general distress which was conducive to large scale out-migration. At the same time, the prevailing unemployment in industrial centers inhibited migration from rural to urban areas and from one state to another. Nonetheless, migration was adopted as the way out by thousands of individuals and families who had been floored by drought-stricken crops, by lack of employment, by loss of property and equities in property caused by the general economic collapse.

The period from 1940 to 1945 was utterly different in its economic, sociological, and international condi-

**Table 16. Natural Increase and Net Migration from South Dakota by 5-Year and Other Periods, 1930 to 1950**

Period	Natural Increase	Population at End of Period		Net Migration (—)*	
		Expected	Enumerated	Number	Percent
1930-1935 .....	38,949	731,798	675,082	-56,716	-8.2
1935-1940 .....	34,065	709,147	642,961	-66,186	-9.8
1940-1945 .....	36,166	679,127	589,290	-89,207	-13.9
1945-1950 .....	52,648	642,568	652,740	10,172	1.7
1930-1940 .....	73,014	765,863	642,961	-122,902	-17.7
1940-1950 .....	88,814	731,775	652,740	-79,035	-12.3
1930-1950 .....	161,828	854,677	652,740	-201,937	-29.1

\*The minus sign (—) denotes net out-migration from the state.

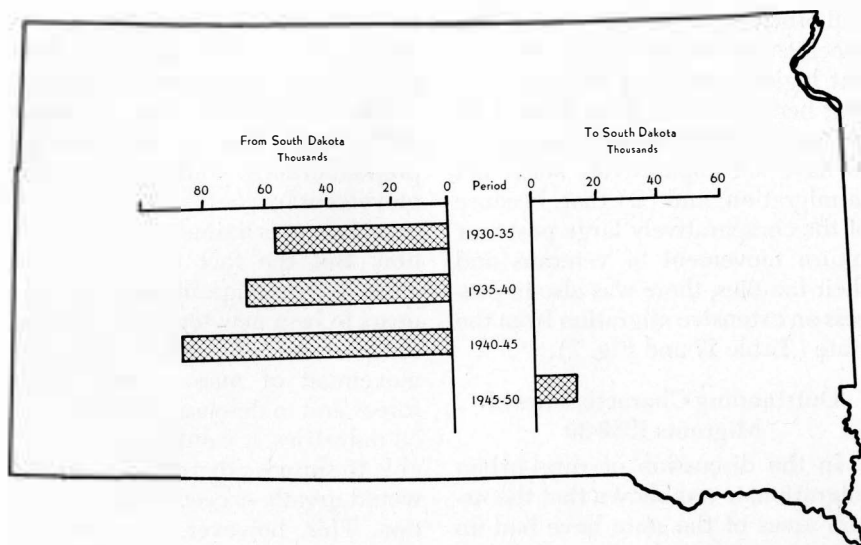


Fig. 6. Net migration from South Dakota, 1930-50. By contrast to the large out-migration from 1930-45, there was a small net return movement from 1945-50

tions. With the entrance of the nation upon a program of military rearmament, with the outbreak of World War II and the consequent draft on the manpower of the state by the armed forces and by wartime industrial employment, the nation and the state passed through a rapid transition from large-scale unemployment to full-time employment and manpower scarcity. On the whole, therefore, out-migration was speeded up. More than 66,000 migrants left South Dakota during the drought years, 1935 to 1940; but over 89,000 left the state from 1940 to 1945.

By contrast with the large out-migration from the state from 1930 to 1945, the net return movement to the state from 1945 to 1950 was comparatively small. It amounted to about 10,000 persons or 1.7 percent

of the state's population in 1945.

With the return of the armed forces from overseas there was also a very large return movement of veterans to the state. A release of the Bureau of the Census estimated that 50,795 veterans of World War II were residents of the state in April 1947, and it showed also that 58,197 men and women were residents of South Dakota prior to entry on active duty.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, many of these servicemen had wives and children who returned with them to South Dakota.

With the demobilization of the armed forces following the victory in Japan, the nation experienced a tremendous shift of population during the postwar years. Many returned to the state; many left again;

<sup>11</sup>Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-25, No. 5, Release dated Nov. 25, 1947.

still others came in their places. The specific facts cannot be ascertained, but logical reasoning indicates (1) that because of the large natural increase, the state could be expected to have a comparatively small net in-migration; and (2) that, because of the comparatively large post-war return movement of veterans and their families, there was also in process an extensive migration from the state (Table 17 and Fig. 7).

### Outstanding Characteristics of Migrants 1930-50

In the discussion of rural-urban migration, it was shown that the urban areas of the state have had an extensive net in-migration while the rural areas account for more than the entire net out-migration from

South Dakota. Two conclusions will receive attention in this part; first, that women greatly outnumber men in the net migration from the state; and second, that the migrants are preponderantly young adults. The movement by youths from their parental homes is a time-honored tradition. But the fact that there are more women migrants than men appears to be a new tendency. During the past decade with its extensive movement of men to the armed forces and to defense and war-related industries, it would seem reasonable to suppose that male migration would greatly exceed female migration. This, however, has not been the case.

The extent of migration by males and females from South Dakota by

**Table 17. Basic Data Showing Net In-Migration to South Dakota, 1945-50**

1. Population, State Census, 1945*	589,920
2. Natural increase, 1945-50	
a. Births, 1945-50, adjusted for under-registration	80,915
b. Deaths, 1945-50	28,267
c. Excess of births over deaths	52,648
3. Expected population, 1950, if natural increase had remained in South Dakota	642,568
4. Population, U. S. Census, 1950	652,740
5. Net in-migration, 1945-50	10,172
6. Net in-migration, 1945-50 in percent of 1945 population	1.7

\*If the estimate by the Bureau of the Census (547,000 persons on July 1, 1945) were used in place of the state census total, the calculated net out-migration from 1940 to 1945 would be much greater; in fact, it would amount to 132,127 persons. The return migration during the post-war years would also add up to a greater total, namely 53,092. The use of the larger state census figure tends to reduce the extent of migration from and to the state.

**Table 18. Net Migration by Males and Females from South Dakota by Decades from 1930 to 1950**

Net Out-Migration	Number of Migrants*			Percent of Population at Beginning of Decade		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
From 1930 to 1950	201,937	100,373	101,564	29.1	27.6	30.9
From 1930 to 1940	122,902	64,249	58,653	17.7	17.7	17.8
From 1940 to 1950	79,035	36,124	42,911	12.3	10.9	13.8

\*The data refer to net out-migration. Each figure is the balance of migrants to and from the state.

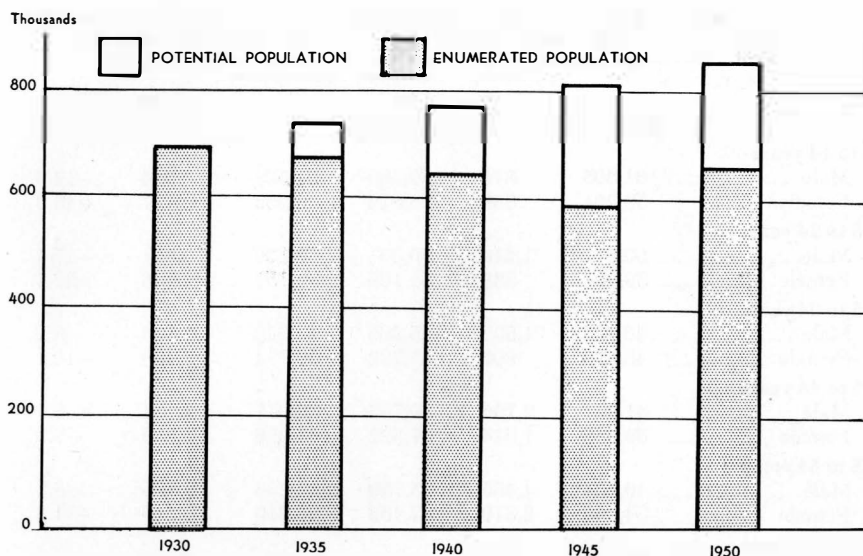


Fig. 7. Actual and potential population in South Dakota, 1930-50. Though South Dakota gained in population from 1945-50 there was also an extensive migration from the state

decades from 1930 to 1950 is presented in Table 18. To ascertain the facts, the steps followed are again the same as used before. Since the extent of natural increase can readily be determined for each sex, the expected population as it should be if no migration had occurred, is also quite easily determined. The difference between the expected male and female population and the actual numbers as reported by the federal censuses gives the extent of net migration.

The main point shown by these tables is that women have left the state in greater numbers or greater proportions than men. The tendency was more pronounced from 1940 to 1950 than from 1930 to 1940. Why there was this rather pronounced difference between the decades so far as the movements of women are

concerned, can only be conjectured. Migration during the first decade was spurred on by the drought and by unemployment in the home communities; but it was also inhibited by the extensive unemployment in the larger urban industrial centers. During the last decade migration was largely caused by available employment opportunities for women in wartime industries and other occupations. Large numbers of women married soldiers while the latter were stationed outside of the state.

The extent of migration from the state by males and females of different age-groups may be determined by the same indirect method which was used in Tables 9 and 10 in connection with the discussion of rural-urban migration. The facts showing this out-migration from South Dakota are given in Table 19.



**Table 19. Number of Deaths, Survivors and Migrants from 1940 to 1950, According to Specified Sex and Age-Groups of South Dakota Population, 1940 and 1950**

Age-Group 1940	Census 1940	Calculated	Survivors	Census of Corre-	Migrants 1940-50	
		Deaths 1940--1949*	of the 1940 Age-Group†	sponding Age- Group 1950‡	Number	Percent of 1940
<b>5 to 14 years</b>						
Male .....	61,305	816	60,489	51,585	8,904	-14.5
Female .....	59,261	589	58,672	49,555	9,117	-15.4
<b>15 to 24 years</b>						
Male .....	60,577	1,216	59,361	48,800	10,561	-17.4
Female .....	59,007	838	58,169	45,151	13,108	-22.1
<b>25 to 34 years</b>						
Male .....	46,438	1,232	45,206	41,043	3,803	-8.2
Female .....	45,624	892	44,732	39,234	5,498	-12.1
<b>35 to 44 years</b>						
Male .....	41,891	2,136	39,755	36,971	2,784	-6.6
Female .....	39,336	1,514	37,822	33,926	3,896	-9.9
<b>45 to 54 years</b>						
Male .....	40,254	4,465	35,789	32,234	3,555	-8.8
Female .....	34,966	2,810	32,156	28,210	3,946	-11.3
<b>55 to 64 years</b>						
Male .....	28,745	6,990	21,755	20,126	1,627	-5.7
Female .....	23,054	4,364	18,690	17,446	1,244	-5.4

\*Calculated by applying age-specific rates to sex-and-age-groups by single years of age grouped into 10-year cohorts.

†Survivors of each original 1940 10-years cohort at the beginning of 1950.

‡Each of these is a 10-years older age-group than those entered from the 1940 census.

Table 19 shows, for example, that males from 5 to 14 years of age numbered 61,305 persons in 1940. It was calculated that there were 816 deaths in this group. Consequently, at the beginning of 1950 there should be 60,489 survivors. The census of 1950 enumerated only 51,585 males in the age-group from 15 to 24 years. Therefore, the conclusion is that 8,904 male migrants left the state. These migrants were 14.5 per cent of the original 1940 group. The same method and reasoning applies to all the other age-groups shown in the table.

The following conclusions, therefore, seem to be substantiated by the evidence: (1) Migration by young adults during the decade 1940-1950 was more extensive than that

of any other younger or older age-group. It was probably most extensive from 20 to 24 years. (2) While migration removed smaller proportions of the upper age-groups, the death rate advanced materially with increases in age. (3) In each age-group, except the oldest one, there was a larger migration by women than by men. (4) The death rate of women is much smaller in each of the 10-years age-groups than the death rate of men in the corresponding age-groups.

#### **Extent and Characteristics of Drought Migration, 1935-40**

A series of reports on the internal migration of the people of the United States between 1935 and 1940 has been published by the Bureau of the

Census.<sup>12</sup> Data from these sources can be used to throw a great deal of light on the extent of migration to and from the state and on the social and economic characteristics of the migrants. The tabulated data were based on replies to the question, "In what place did this person live on April 1, 1935?" which formed a part of the population schedule of the census of 1940. The basic data in this part were obtained from these extensive reports; but the analysis and discussion have been limited to a few of the salient characteristics of interstate migration from South Dakota during this period.

During these five years South Dakota sustained a net loss of population through migration of 61,212 persons. This was somewhat less than 10 percent of the state's population in 1940. Only one state, North Dakota, had a larger proportion of net out-migration, namely, 10.4 percent. It should also be pointed out that these figures understate the extent of migration because the census question referred only to persons 5 years of age or over.

More than 4 out of 10 out-migrants left South Dakota to take up residence in the adjoining states (Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Wyoming, Montana and North Dakota.) Migrants from the state also trekked westward in large proportion. California received nearly as many out-migrants (14,139 persons) as Minnesota (14,859 persons). More than a third of all migrants who had lived in South Dakota in 1935 had become residents of California, Oregon and Washington by 1940. The

reverse movement from these states to South Dakota was a very small one.

It is important to note that there was about one in-migrant for every four out-migrants. The whole movement of people to and from the state implied a large turnover in the state's resident population. More than 7 out of 10 in-migrants came from the adjoining states to South Dakota and less than 3 out of 10 came from all other states. The largest contributor of in-migrants was Minnesota and Iowa was the next largest.

### Rural-Urban Origins and Destinations

This migration across the state borders was to a large extent a movement of people from rural origins to urban destinations and at the same time a shift from farm to non-farm occupations. It is a very complex movement and the data are also complex so that only a few phases of it can be discussed here. The largest actual out-migration occurred from the rural-farm areas of the state. But it should be noted that the urban areas of the state also had a net out-migration of both men and women. The detailed data are given in Table 20.

In the movement of rural-farm migrants to adjoining states, a much larger proportion remained in the rural-farm residence classification

<sup>12</sup>U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population: Internal Migration, 1935 to 1940. Color and Sex of Migrants*, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 1943. Second Part, same series: *Age of Migrants*. Third Part, same series: *Economic Characteristics of Migrants*, and Fourth Part, same series: *Social Characteristics of Migrants*, Washington, 1946.

Table 20. Out-Migration, In-Migration and Net Migration from South Dakota and Its Rural-Urban Population Groups, 1935 to 1940

Type of Migration*	The State	Urban Areas	Rural-Nonfarm	Rural-Farm	Residence Not Reported
MALES					
Out-migration	45,663	11,872	13,639	16,699	3,453
In-migration	14,303	5,955	4,220	4,128	
Net migration	-31,360	-5,917	-9,419	-12,571	-3,453
FEMALES					
Out-migration	43,251	12,372	14,001	13,927	2,951
In-migration	13,399	5,874	4,288	3,237	
Net migration	-29,852	-6,498	-9,713	-10,690	-2,951

\*Since the terms "immigration" and "emigration" usually refer to migrants from one country to another, the terms in-migrants and out-migrants are used here to refer to migrants to and from South Dakota. Net migration refers to the gain or loss of population of the state (or a given area or population class) through in-migration and out-migration. In tables, a minus sign (—) denotes net out-migration.

than was true on the part of those who moved to states on the west coast; or on the part of those who moved the greater distances. The majority of migrants to the west coast states became residents of urban communities. A much larger proportion of women than of men made the transition from rural to urban residence.<sup>13</sup>

In proportion to population, the migration from the rural-nonfarm population of South Dakota was much more extensive than the migration either from the urban or from the rural-farm classification. It was explained above that the rural-nonfarm population includes several types of residents but the majority of them reside in small towns and villages. Migrants came especially from the young adults who were residents of the smaller villages and hamlets (Table 21). The economy of these places was less able to meet the emergency of drought and unemployment than either the larger urban areas or the farm population. Works projects of many kinds were provided in the larger cities of the

state but could probably not be justified or financed in the smaller incorporated places. Various forms of loans and subsistence grants were made to farm families to assist them through the critical years. So it appears to be true that the economic pressure which stimulated out-migration was felt more strongly in the rural-nonfarm group than in the two other basic groups of the state.

The employment status of the migrants who were 14 years old and over as compared with the resident population of the state of the same

Table 21. Net Migration by Specified Age- and Sex-Groups 1935-40 in Percent of Resident Population, 1940

Age and Sex	Percent of Population, 1940		
	Urban	Rural-Nonfarm	Rural-Farm
MALES			
All Ages	8.4	11.6	8.3
20-24 years	14.0	25.6	14.4
24-29 years	14.0	23.4	14.5
FEMALES			
All Ages	8.6	11.9	8.5
20-24 years	12.6	26.0	17.3
25-29 years	14.6	18.5	11.9

<sup>13</sup>See Table 3-A in the Appendix.

**Table 22. Employment Status of Migrants\* 14 Years Old and Over from South Dakota 1935-40, Compared with the State's Population of the Same Age, 1940**

Employment Status	Total Population 14 Yrs. and Over, 1940			Migrants from South Dakota 14 Yrs. and Over, 1935-40		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
<b>Total population</b>						
14 years and over.....	477,255	248,491	228,764	51,385	26,428	24,957
<b>In labor force</b>						
Employed .....	204,514	167,497	37,017	25,674	18,420	7,254
Public emergency work .....	19,899	15,742	4,157	1,369	1,224	145
Seeking work .....	15,413	12,370	3,043	3,354	2,708	646
<b>Not in labor force</b> .....	237,429	52,882	184,547	20,988	4,076	16,912
<b>Percent Total</b> .....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>In labor force</b>						
Employed .....	42.9	67.4	16.2	50.0	69.7	29.1
Public emergency work .....	4.2	6.3	1.8	2.7	4.6	.6
Seeking work .....	3.2	5.0	1.3	6.5	10.3	2.6
<b>Not in labor force</b> .....	49.7	21.3	80.7	40.8	15.4	67.7

\*Net migrants, i.e., migrants from the state offset by migrants to the state.

age in 1940 is shown in Table 22. The data represent four groups: (1) Those who were employed in all industries and occupations; (2) those employed on public emergency work projects; (3) those who were unemployed and seeking work; and (4) those who were not in the labor force.

Several significant points may be noted. Among migrants, there were larger percentages in the labor force, the difference being especially marked in regard to women: among migrant women 29.1 percent were employed as contrasted with 16.2 percent among women in the resident population. Among migrants there were also much larger percentages of unemployed or those seeking work than there were in the resident population in April 1940. Finally, among migrants there were smaller percentages employed on public emergency works projects

than were thus employed in the resident population in 1940. Employment on public works projects was unquestionably a factor which helped many families and their dependents to remain in their communities.

#### **Social and Economic Characteristics of Migrants from South Dakota, 1935-40**

Most of the migrants from the state were young adult married couples and their children as well as single adolescents and older youths. Children from 5 to 17 years of age, for example, constituted nearly one-fourth of the whole stream of migrants, and adults from 18 to 34 years of age were nearly half of all the migrants. These conclusions are indicated by Table 23. The resident population in 1940 had a distinctly older age-composition than the net migration from the state.

**Table 23. Net Migration of Children, 5 to 17 Years, and of Young Adults, 18 to 34 Years, from South Dakota, 1935-40**

Residence and Sex	Migrants All Ages	Age: 5 to 17 Years		Age: 18 to 34 Years	
		Number	Percent of All Ages	Number	Percent of All Ages
MALES					
State .....	31,360	7,347	23.4	14,291	45.6
Rural-farm .....	12,571	3,145	25.0	5,439	43.3
Rural-nonfarm .....	9,419	2,106	22.4	4,529	48.1
Urban .....	5,917	1,356	22.9	2,761	46.7
FEMALES					
State .....	29,852	7,150	24.0	14,044	47.0
Rural-farm .....	10,690	3,102	29.0	4,411	41.3
Rural-nonfarm .....	9,713	2,052	21.1	4,974	51.2
Urban .....	6,498	1,316	20.3	3,257	50.1

One of the most significant comparisons that can be made of the characteristics of the migrants with the resident population is that which shows the years of school completed in each group. The larger and more detailed table in which this comparison is made is presented in the Appendix. Only a segment of it is given in this immediate connection. The available data are limited to migrants and to residents who were from 25 to 34 years of age in 1940 when the census was taken (Table 24).

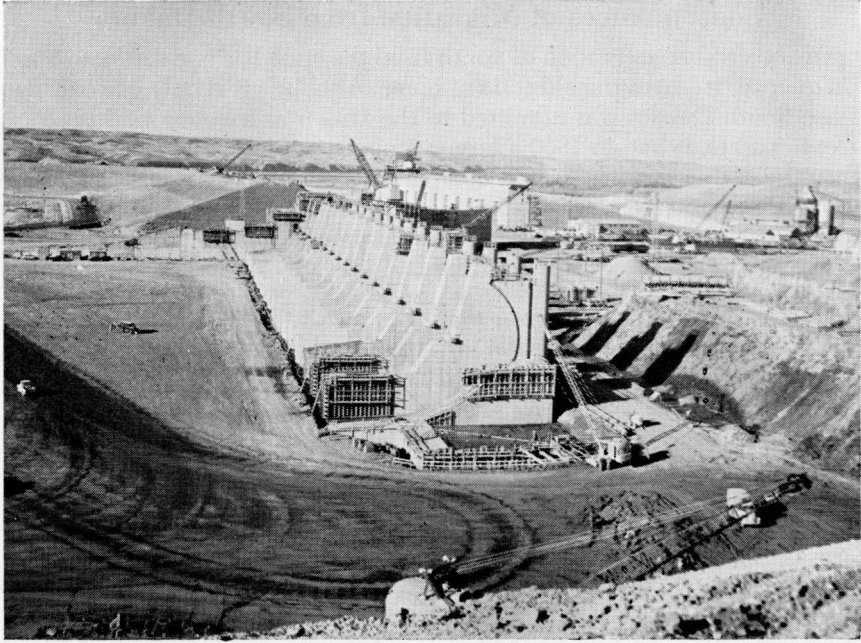
**Table 24. Percent of All Persons 25 to 34 Years of Age Who Had Completed 4 Years of High School or Additional Years of College**

	Residents of S. D., 1940	Migrants from State
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>41.4</b>	<b>46.3</b>
Males .....	33.8	39.9
Females .....	49.3	58.4

Migrants from South Dakota had completed more years of high school and college than those who remained as residents of the state.

The basic data reveal that both in-migrants and out-migrants had relatively more schooling than the non-migrants in the population. An elaborate breakdown of the data is presented in Table 4-A. This is about the most reliable body of evidence which is available that the state was subject to a selective process of out-migration of its educated youths. One can not but wonder what comparable data for later periods would show; but such data are not available. In comparison with the recent post-war years, the labor market then was clogged with unemployment and offered relatively few openings for youths who had completed their college education.

To sum up: An extensive net migration from South Dakota took place from 1935 to 1940, not only from the rural areas of the state but also from the larger urban centers. The period was a critical one with years of drought and sub-normal rainfall and extensive unemployment. An extensive program of public assistance, public works projects,



Ft. Randall Dam. A program of resources development offers jobs to a growing population

and social security was financed by the federal, state and local governments. This migration brought about a distribution of the state's "surplus" population to adjoining states, and particularly to the Pacific coast region. It was a movement from rural origins to urban destinations.

A large proportion of the migrants were farmers and farm laborers. It was a movement of young,

unemployed adult families and their children. The largest proportion of migrants came from young adults 20 to 24 years of age in the rural-nonfarm population. Although many of the migrants because of adverse circumstances had probably not enjoyed the advantage of high school and college education, the migrants had on the average completed more years of schooling than had the resident population.

## Consequences of Migration from South Dakota

THE CONTINUED migration of youth from the state has one distinct consequence. It leaves the old folks at home. Although it is only 64 years ago since South Dakota was admitted to the Union as a young and bouyant frontier state, it had in 1950 a larger proportion of aged in its population than the nation as a whole. The comparative figures, as regards persons 65 years of age and over, were 8.5 percent for South Dakota and 8.1 percent for the United States. This relatively rapid process of aging of South Dakota's population is shown in Fig. 8 and in Table 25.

### *1. Migration of youths from the state increased the proportion of aged in the resident population of South Dakota.*

A comparison of the age composition of South Dakota's population in 1930 with that of 1950 is made possible by the data in Table 26. The age-groups are: under 20 years, 20 to 39 years, 40 to 59 years and 60 years and over. The elderly and aged (60 and over) have increased

by nearly 50 percent. In all the younger groups there have been decreases except for children under 5. This group increased rapidly (by 32.4 percent) from 1940 to 1950. The gist of the matter is that South Dakota has now, and can expect during the next decades, a larger proportion of dependents in relation to supporters than it has had heretofore.

The reduced number of those

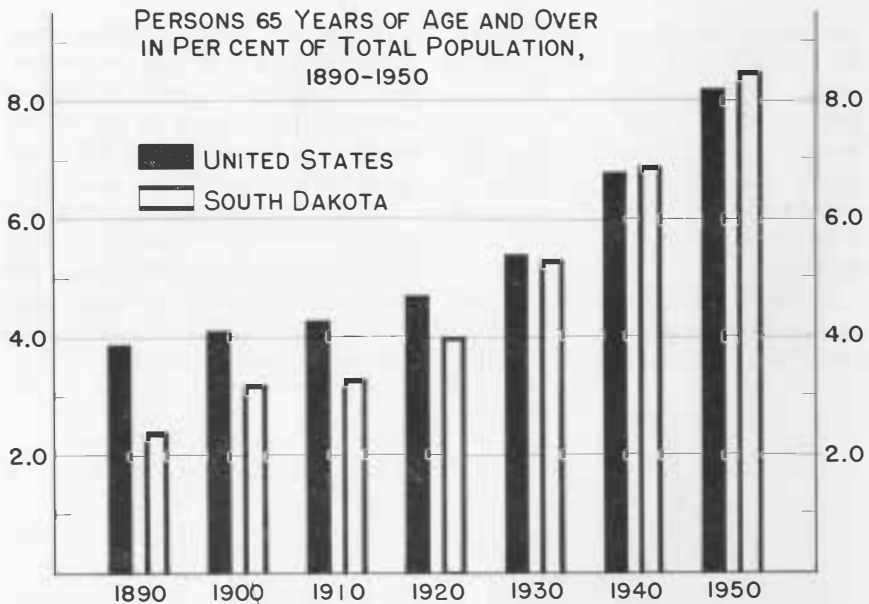


Fig. 8. South Dakota now has a larger proportion of aged in its population than the nation

Table 25. Increase of Population 65 Years and Over in South Dakota and the United States, 1890—1950

Census Year	South Dakota			United States		
	Total Population	Population 65 and Over	Percent of Total 65 and Over	Total Population	Population 65 and Over	Percent of Total, 65 and Over
1950	652,740	55,296	8.5	150,697,361	12,270,602	8.1
1940	642,961	44,440	6.9	131,669,275	9,019,314	6.8
1930	692,849	36,915	5.3	122,775,046	6,633,805	5.4
1920	636,547	25,536	4.0	105,710,620	4,933,215	4.7
1910	583,888	19,288	3.3	91,972,266	3,949,524	4.3
1900	401,570	12,836	3.2	75,994,575	3,080,498	4.1
1890	328,808	7,846	2.4	62,622,250	2,417,288	3.9

Source: 1950 U. S. Census of Population: U. S. Summary, General Characteristics, p. 1-112. Same: South Dakota, General Characteristics, p. 41-33.

Table 26. Changes in the Age-Composition of South Dakota's Population from 1930 to 1950

General Age-Group	Ages	1930	1950	Increase or Decrease (—)	
				Number	Percent
State	All ages	692,849	652,740	—40,109	—5.8
Children and youth	Under 20	294,286	241,554	—52,732	—17.9
	Under 5	71,324	76,713	5,389	7.6
	5 to 19	222,962	164,841	—58,121	—26.1
Young adults	20 to 39	206,729	186,054	—20,675	—10.1
Mature adults	40 to 59	135,641	141,504	5,863	4.3
Elderly and aged	60 and over	55,817	83,628	27,811	49.8

NOTE: The total for 1930 includes 376 persons whose ages were not reported.

who are in the prime years of life is also a serious omen; for this is the vital group which supplies the bulk of industrial and agricultural manpower and which sustains the family life and the community activities of the state. This is the age-group which is a source of most migration from the state. The increase of the elderly and the aged brings in its wake a host of problems: retirement and declining capacity for self-support, frail health and mental infirmities, and general dependence on others.

To be sure, the quality of age is not entirely a matter of years. Yet the advancing age of those at the

helm colors the outlook and limits the energy of those in charge of farms, businesses and industries. Larger numbers of farm operators and farm homemakers have reached advanced years and there are fewer children under 21 at home. In fact, the aging of the whole population is a gradual but unspectacular change which affects the whole economy and the social institutions of the state in a sense which in some instances is very obvious and in others very subtle and unobserved.

The comparatively rapid aging of the population of the state is the result of the rapid influx and settlement of the state, mostly from 1880



to 1890, followed by a renewed influx and settlement, mostly west of the Missouri River from about 1905 to 1920. But since 1930 not only has this influx stopped but an exodus of young people has occurred and has accentuated the increase in the upper age bracket. Besides, the calculated life expectation is longer in South Dakota than in all other states except one, namely Nebraska. On the basis of data for the years 1939-41, South Dakota ranks nearly at the top with respect to the expected length of life not only at birth but also at 40, 60 and other advanced years of age (Table 27).

The span of life is a long one in South Dakota. Three-score-and-ten years is nearly the average and not the exception. Infant mortality has been greatly reduced; and high standards of living, better medical care, increased use of hospitals and improved public health services all contribute by adding years to life.

**2. The greater migration of women than of men from the state affects the composition of the state's population adversely.**

From April 1, 1940 to April 1, 1950, net migration removed 6,787

more women than men from the state. Among the migrants there were only 84.2 males per hundred females. In other words, interstate migration is one of the forces which tends to perpetuate an unfavorable ratio of males to females in the resident population. To be sure, as the following list reveals, there are several other factors which have influenced the sex ratio of the state's population (Table 28). In 1950 the ratio was 106.9 males per 100 females.

At the time of birth, males usually outnumber females. The ratio for the 10-year period, 1940 to 1950, was 105.3 males per 100 females. Deaths among males greatly outnumber deaths among females. The original surplus of males would soon disappear if other factors did not enter the situation. But other factors do operate significantly in South Dakota to increase or decrease the sex ratio. While the state was a raw frontier territory, it attracted a much larger number of males than females. Immigration from abroad usually brought a much larger number of men than women.

The interstate migration of women is in reality a part of the general

**Table 27. Expected Length of Life at Birth and at Other Ages in the United States, Nebraska and South Dakota, by Sex\***

	At Birth	40 Years	60 Years
<b>MALES (WHITE)</b>			
United States .....	62.77	29.97	15.00
South Dakota .....	66.09	32.52	16.36
Nebraska .....	70.04	35.14	18.30
<b>FEMALES (WHITE)</b>			
United States .....	67.23	33.18	16.94
South Dakota .....	69.99	35.14	18.22
Nebraska .....	70.04	35.14	18.30

\*National Office of Vital Statistics, Public Health Service, Federal Security Agency, *State and Regional Life Tables, 1939-41*. (Prepared in the Statistical Bureau of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.) March 11, 1948.

Table 28. Factors that Influence the Sex Ratio of South Dakota's Population

Factors	Males	Females	Ratio: Males per 100 Females
<b>Biological:</b>			
Births, April 1, 1940 to April 1, 1950*	74,458	70,684	105.3
Deaths, 1940-49, inc. ....	33,597	22,731	147.8
<b>Immigration:</b>			
Foreign-born white, 1950 .....	17,088	13,679	124.9
<b>Occupation and migration:</b>			
Rural-farm residence, 1950 .....	138,375	115,170	120.1
Urban residence, 1950 .....	106,472	110,238	96.6
Net out-migration, 1940-50 .....	-36,124	-42,911	84.2

\*Corrected for under-registration of births.

movement from rural communities to urban centers. The most pronounced differences in the sex ratios are observed when the urban population is compared with the rural-farm population. Among rural-farm residents the sex ratio in 1950 was 120.1 males per 100 females; among urban residents it was 96.6 males per 100 females. In other words, among farm people there are six men for each five women but in urban areas there is a surplus of women. Differences in the extent of migration by women and by men now appear to be among the chief factors which influence the basic sex composition of the state's population.

### Migration and Marital Status

Rural areas of the state are sending forth a stream of young women to cities and to metropolitan areas. On farms and ranches there is little to retain them unless they get married and become homemakers. Relatively few of them can find their place in the homes and families of rural areas; it is also difficult for young people to get started on farms and ranches or in business and serv-

ice establishments in the small towns. In the larger cities, on the other hand, young women find jobs with pay-checks, personal freedom, association with other young people and more frequent opportunity of marriage.

The last point is subject to some controversy. The statistical facts are somewhat paradoxical. A smaller proportion of urban women 14 years of age and over are married as compared with rural-nonfarm women and rural-farm women of the same age. The percentages are, in the order mentioned, 63.5, 65.9, and 74.1 percent.<sup>14</sup> The large proportion of married women in the rural-farm group is obviously the result of the migration of *single* women from this group. While the urban sex-ratio probably is not favorable to marriage, the whole present economic situation is much more conducive to marriage and to the formation of new families and households.

A surplus of men remains on farms and ranches while a surplus of women is attracted to cities. The

<sup>14</sup>1950 U. S. Census of Population: South Dakota, Detailed Characteristics. p. 41-104.



Both pre-school children and elderly persons are increasing in numbers in South Dakota

situation then, is that the sexes are very unequal in numbers during the years when marriage normally occurs; and as a result, a large proportion of males in the rural-farm areas of South Dakota remain single. Statistics for 1950 reveal that the state had a larger proportion of single males than all other states except North Dakota (Table 29).

**Table 29. Percent of All Males 14 Years of Age and Over, Who Were Single 1950**

State	Percent Who Were Single	
	All Males	Rural Farm Males
United States .....	26.2	31.0
South Dakota .....	31.3	36.5
North Dakota .....	34.7	40.6

### **3. Migration from the state is selective with regard to the state's educated youths.**

In the discussion of migration from South Dakota from 1935 to 1940, it was pointed out that migration was quite definitely selective of

the state's educated youths. When the same age-groups were compared, migrants have, on the average, completed more years of high school or more years of college than the resident population. Strictly comparable evidence pertaining to other periods are not available, but some data bearing upon the residence and migration of college students have been compiled and published by the United States Office of Education. This agency collected data showing the state of residence of students attending colleges and universities in 1938-39 and 1949-50, and showed also the location of colleges and universities attended by state of residence of the students. From these sources Table 30 has been compiled. It shows among other things the following points:

1. There was a distinct increase in the number of South Dakota residents attending schools from 7,845 in 1938-39 to 10,583 in 1949-50. This was an increase of 34.9 percent.

2. There was also an increase in the total attendance in South Dakota's colleges and universities between 1938-39 and 1949-50. This increase amounted to 42.3 percent.

3. The most important point, however, appears to be that in both years (but slightly more in 1949-50 than in 1938-39) *South Dakota residents attending colleges and universities outside of the state in greater number than residents of other states were attending the state's institutions.*

Since most of South Dakota's leading higher educational institutions are located near the border of

the state, their very location tends to give them an advantage in attracting students from other states. Notwithstanding this fact, in 1949-50 nearly 30 percent of the 10,583 residents of South Dakota who attended collegiate schools attended institutions outside of the state. Undoubtedly many of these were graduate students attending advanced professional or technical schools.

These facts and others, such as the recruiting of college graduates by large industrial concerns located in other states, the offering of scholarships to the best-qualified high

school graduates by leading universities, and also the fact that a very large proportion of the graduates of the state's higher educational institutions do not become residents of the state—all point toward the conclusion that the state is subject to a selective process which attracts the best educated youths away from the state.

To sum up then, we may say that migration from the state transfers youth, manpower, young families and their children, trained intelligence and technical skills to other states.

**Table 30. Migration and Residence of College Students in South Dakota, 1938-39 and 1949-50**

Residence and Attendance	1938-39	1949-50	Increase 1938-39 to 1949-50	
			Number	Percent
<b>I. South Dakota residents attending schools</b>				
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>7,845</b>	<b>10,583</b>	<b>2,738</b>	<b>34.9</b>
1. In South Dakota .....	5,662	7,445	1,783	31.5
2. In other states° .....	2,183	3,138	955	43.7
<b>II. Attendance in South Dakota schools</b>				
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>6,184</b>	<b>8,802</b>	<b>2,618</b>	<b>42.3</b>
1. Residents of South Dakota .....	5,662	7,445	1,783	31.5
2. Residents of other states† .....	522	1,357	835	160.0
<b>III. Net loss through inter-state migration</b> .....	<b>1,661</b>	<b>1,781</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>7.2</b>
( Line I-2 minus II-2 )				

Source: Federal Security Agency, U. S. Office of Education. Pamphlet No. 98, *Residence and Migration of College Students* (pp. 11, 14-18); and Miscellaneous Publication No. 14: *Residence and Migration of College Students, 1949-50*, pp. 14-15.

\*Figures include also students who were attending schools of outlying parts of the United States and foreign countries.

†Figures include students who were residents of outlying territories and foreign countries.

## Conclusion: South Dakota's Migration in a National Setting

IT IS IMPORTANT to place the problem presented by South Dakota's migration in a national setting for several reasons. The federal government came to the rescue of the state during the years of drought and depression with millions of dollars spent for drought relief, public assistance and public works projects. Presently it is making a large investment in Missouri Basin projects designed to provide flood control, irrigation, hydro-electric power, and other advantages. Migration from South Dakota is nationwide in its consequences, both in years of disaster as well as in years of prosperity. Furthermore, both the state and the nation need a program of resources development which is commensurate with the present rate of natural increase.

In this study, two facts are very obvious: first, the sheer size of the population which has left the state during the past twenty years, and secondly, the relatively large rate of natural increase (Table 31). We have discussed primarily the extent, characteristics and consequences of migration, but the relatively large rate of natural increase should receive its due emphasis; for it is, in a sense, the reason for the large migration. Migration from the state occurs largely because young people are looking for jobs and for professional openings. Job-vacancies and job-seekers need to be in close balance with each other. The movement by people in response to job opportunities is on the whole a desirable social phenomenon. Migration involves an adjustment of population to resources. It is the present job openings or potential business opportunities, or other gains, that attract population. Much migration, however, may be considered as being futile, leading only to blind alleys and to a rootless existence.

The United States has now an an-

nual addition of over two million to its population. A population which is increasing at such a rate needs a program of resources development. An expanding economy of agricultural and industrial production, commercial and service occupations, new housing facilities, schools and churches and cultural institutions, and all of the amenities of life are needed to provide for this population growth. In regard to the adjustment of population to resources, the alternatives were demonstrated during the drought and depression years, either in the form of the drastic reduction of the birth rate or in the downward adjustment of the whole standard of life.

**Table 31. Rate of Natural Increase of the United States and of South Dakota, 1950**

	United States	South Dakota
Population, 1950 ..	150,697,361	652,740
Births .....	3,548,000	18,532
Deaths .....	1,456,000	5,971
Natural increase ..	2,092,000	12,561
Annual rate, % .....	1.39	1.92

Birth and death figures are provisional as given in the *Monthly Vital Statistics Bulletin*, Vol. 13, No. 13 (April 24, 1951). Published by the National Office of Vital Statistics, Public Health Service, Federal Security Agency.

An extensive program of resources development is needed to provide opportunities for the youth of the state, to increase and stabilize its agriculture, and to make a more satisfying way of life possible. Several great projects such as the Fort Randall dam, the Oahe dam and the Gavin's Point dam are now being planned and constructed by the United States Corps of Engineers, cooperating with the Bureau of Reclamation, the United States De-

partment of Agriculture and other federal and state agencies. These projects involve flood control, irrigation, generation of hydro-electric power, municipal water storage, river-flow regulation, recreation and soil conservation. As these projects advance from blueprint to finished construction, and as they are successfully geared into the whole economy of the state, they hold promise of opportunity for the people of the state.

## Appendix

**Table 1-A. Net Migration by Specified Sex, Age, and Residence Group of South Dakota, 1940-50**

	Census Ages 25-34 1940	Deaths* 25-44 1940-50	Survivors 35-44 1950	Census Ages 35-44 1950	Migrants†	
					Number	Percent of 1940 Census
<b>MALES</b>						
State .....	46,438	1,232	45,206	41,403	-3,803	-8.2
Rural-farm .....	22,055	586	21,469	17,905	-3,564	-16.2
Rural-nonfarm .....	12,298	326	11,972	11,790	-182	-1.5
Urban .....	12,085	320	11,765	11,708	-57	-.5
<b>FEMALES</b>						
State .....	45,624	892	44,732	39,234	-5,498	-12.1
Rural-farm .....	18,487	365	18,122	15,096	-3,026	-16.4
Rural-nonfarm .....	13,271	258	13,013	11,572	-1,441	-10.9
Urban .....	13,866	269	13,597	12,566	-1,031	-7.4

**Table 2-A. Net Migration by Specified Sex, Age, and Residence Groups of South Dakota, 1940-50**

	Census Ages 35-44 1940	Deaths* 35-54 1940-50	Survivors 45-54 1950	Census Ages 45-54 1950	Migrants†	
					Number	Percent of 1940 Census
<b>MALES</b>						
State .....	41,891	2,136	39,755	36,971	-2,784	-6.6
Rural-farm .....	20,588	1,050	19,538	16,022	-3,516	-17.1
Rural-nonfarm .....	10,882	552	10,330	10,538	208	1.9
Urban .....	10,421	534	9,887	10,411	524	5.0
<b>FEMALES</b>						
State .....	39,336	1,514	37,822	33,926	-3,896	-9.9
Rural-farm .....	17,417	682	16,735	12,377	-4,358	-25.0
Rural-nonfarm .....	10,699	406	10,293	10,433	140	1.3
Urban .....	11,220	426	10,794	11,116	322	2.9

\*Deaths were calculated by single years of age at rates obtained from *State and Regional Tables, 1939-41*, published by the National Office of Vital Statistics, Public Health Service, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

†The minus sign (—) indicates migration from an area or class of population.

**Table 3-A. Migrants Who Were Rural-Farm Residents of South Dakota in 1935 and Who Were Residents of Specified States and Their Urban and Rural Areas on April 1, 1940**

State of Destination	Number of Rural- Farm Migrants	Percent Who Were Residents in 1940 of:		
		Urban Area	Rural- Nonfarm	Rural-Farm
MALES (WHITE)				
United States, exclusive of S. D. ....	16,580	24.0	22.9	53.1
California .....	2,074	54.2	27.0	18.7
Oregon .....	1,718	19.7	34.2	46.1
Washington .....	2,034	24.6	33.7	41.7
Minnesota .....	3,180	14.1	9.7	76.2
Iowa .....	1,652	17.4	13.5	69.1
Nebraska .....	999	14.9	22.4	62.7
FEMALES (WHITE)				
United States, exclusive of S. D. ....	13,832	30.3	23.7	46.0
California .....	1,825	61.8	23.3	14.9
Oregon .....	1,463	24.0	33.2	42.9
Washington .....	1,639	26.7	34.3	39.0
Minnesota .....	2,692	23.0	12.8	64.2
Iowa .....	1,309	27.0	17.0	55.9
Nebraska .....	892	18.9	23.0	58.1

**Table 4-A. Years of School Completed by the Resident Population of South Dakota, 25 to 34 Years of Age in 1940 and by Migrants from South Dakota of the Same Age, 1935-40**

Years of School Completed	Population 25-34 Yrs. of Age in S. Dak. 1940			Migrants From S. Dak. 25-34 Yrs. of Age 1935-40*		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
<b>Total population, all years .....</b>	<b>92,062</b>	<b>46,438</b>	<b>45,624</b>	<b>14,431</b>	<b>7,627</b>	<b>6,804</b>
<b>Grade School</b>						
Under 5 years .....	1,532	844	688	176	124	52
5 and 6 years .....	2,465	1,425	1,040	237	177	60
7 and 8 years .....	35,476	21,459	14,017	4,508	2,917	1,591
<b>High School</b>						
1 to 3 years .....	14,445	7,034	7,411	2,499	1,373	1,126
4 years or more .....	21,706	9,319	12,387	4,160	1,902	2,258
<b>College</b>						
1 to 3 years .....	11,443	3,481	7,962	1,976	646	1,330
4 years or more .....	4,995	2,876	2,119	885	498	387
<b>Percent, all years .....</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Grade School</b>						
Under 5 years .....	1.7	1.8	1.5	1.2	1.6	.9
5 and 6 years .....	2.7	3.1	2.3	1.6	2.3	.8
7 and 8 years .....	38.5	46.2	30.7	31.2	38.2	23.4
<b>High School</b>						
1 to 4 years .....	15.7	15.1	16.2	17.3	18.0	16.5
4 years .....	23.6	20.1	27.2	28.8	24.9	33.2
<b>College</b>						
1 to 3 years .....	12.4	7.5	17.5	13.7	8.5	19.5
4 years or more .....	5.4	6.2	4.6	6.1	6.5	5.7

\*Net migrants, i.e., migrants from the state offset by migrants to the state.