

# Movement of Farmers Within Sargent County, N. Dak., During the Two Year Period, January 1943 to January 1945

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**T**he following study of the movement of farmers from township to township and within townships for the period January, 1943 to January, 1945 was made by means of a direct survey. The 1943 mailing list, which was corrected in January of that year, was used as the basis. Each farm in the county is located on a large map showing the exact location of the farmstead and the name of the operator. In January, 1945, letters were sent to four farmers in each township requesting from each a complete list of the farmers in his one-fourth of the township. A map accompanied this letter and the farmer was asked to locate each farm on the map. This gave each farmer a limited area; all within two or three miles of his own home.

One farmer reported on sections 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15; another on sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 16, 17 and 18; a third on sections 19, 20, 21, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33, and a fourth on sections 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 34, 35, and 36. Upon completion of the new map of the county it was possible to determine which of the farmers had moved from one township to another or from one farm to another within the township. New names indicated farmers who had come in from outside the county or who were young farmers starting out on their own for the first time. Names that no longer appear on the mailing list indicate three groups:

1. Those who have left the county.
2. Those who have moved into town.
3. Those who have died.

Complete information as to whether those who left the county are engaged in farming or not has not been obtained.

Table 1, which is a summary of this information on a township basis indicates that a total of 54 farmers moved from one township to another within the county (see Columns 1 & 6). Map 1 is a graphic presentation of these moves. The point of the arrow indicates the township **to** which they have moved and the other end of the arrow indicates the township **from** which they came. This map also shows 17 new farmers who started in the two year period and the location of the 42 farmers who came to the county from other counties or states.

Map 2 indicates the number of farmers who left the county or who quit farming during the two year period. It will be noted (Columns 2 and 3, Table 1) that four of these died. In 1943 there was a total of approximately 1160 farm operators. This figure is not an exact one because of father-son combinations which are sometimes listed as separate units and at other times listed as joint operations. Our loss of

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**TABLE 1**

**Summary of the Changes in Farm Operators in Sargent County  
Between January 1943 and January 1945**

Township	Moved out of Twp.			Total	Vacant Bldgs.	Moved in			Total	Loss or Gain
	Within County	Out of Co. or Quit	Died			Within County	From Outside of County	Began Farming		
Denver		4		4		1	1	2	4	0
Wivian		2	2	6	3	1	2		3	3
Whitestone Hill	4	2		4	5	4	3	1	8	4
Willey	5	4	1	8	3				3	5
Milnor	4	15		19	6	3	3	1	11	8
Hall	4	5		19	6	3	3	1	11	8
Verner	2	1		3	9	1	2		3	6
Harlem	2	4		7	3	1	1		3	4
Bowen	4	2		6	10	6	5		11	5
Dunbar	1	6		8	11	4	1		6	3
Shuman	3	4	1	8	11	3	3	2	5	3
Herman		4		8	2	2			4	4
Jackson	2	3		5	5	5	3	1	7	2
Sargent	3	3		8	5	5	1	1	7	1
Forman	3	4		6	3	3	1	1	6	0
Rutland	3	4		6	3	3	1	1	6	0
Ransom	2	1		3	2	2	2		6	0
Kingston		1		3	2	2			3	0
Southwest		10		10	4	1	3		4	6
Brampton	4	2		2	4	1	1		2	0
Taylor	1	2		6	7	1			2	4
Weber	1	1		2	3	1	2	1	4	2
Tewaukon	1	4		6	4	4		2	6	0
Marboe	3	8		9	14	1	3	1	5	4
		7		8	4	1			1	7
SARGENT COUNTY	54	100	4	155	142	54	42	17	116	-39

100 farmers who have either moved out of the county or quit farming is rather staggering as it represents nearly nine percent of the farm operators. Some, but not much, of this loss is due to the drafting of operator's sons and only two cases to the drafting of a farm operator himself. Reasons for leaving the county or for quitting farming are classified as follows:

Age (retirement) .....	22
High wages (defense plants) .....	21
Change in business .....	15
Farming elsewhere .....	7
Operator drafted .....	2
Cause unknown .....	33

100

Of a total of 96 shown under the heading "Moved In" (Columns 6 and 7, Table 1) only 12 moves are known to be due to the purchase of a farm, the large majority being tenant moves. It should be borne in mind that this tabulation did not include those moves within the

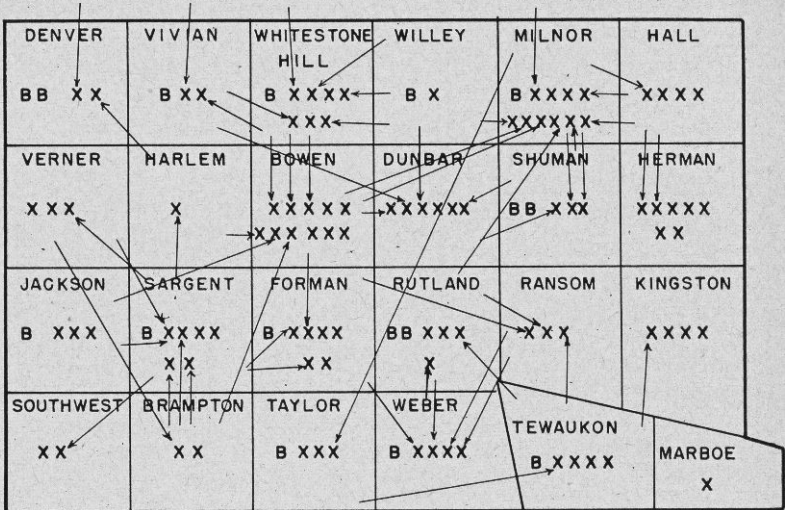
**TABLE 2**  
**Ownership Status of Farmers**  
**Moving From One Farm**  
**To Another**

	Moves within Township	Moves from Twp. to Twp.
By tenants	36	29
By tenants buying land	21	23
Others	6	2

township. Map 3 indicates these moves and shows that there was a total of 63 farmers who made moves from one farm to another within the township during the two year period. A number of those who are shown as having moved within the two year period have actually made two moves, although only one is accounted for since we did not check on change of address in 1944. Estimating the cost of moves within the county at \$150 each, which is a very low estimate, the cost of these tenant shifts

MAP NO. 1

MOVEMENT OF FARMERS INTO SARGENT COUNTY TOWNSHIPS  
JANUARY 1943 TO JANUARY 1945

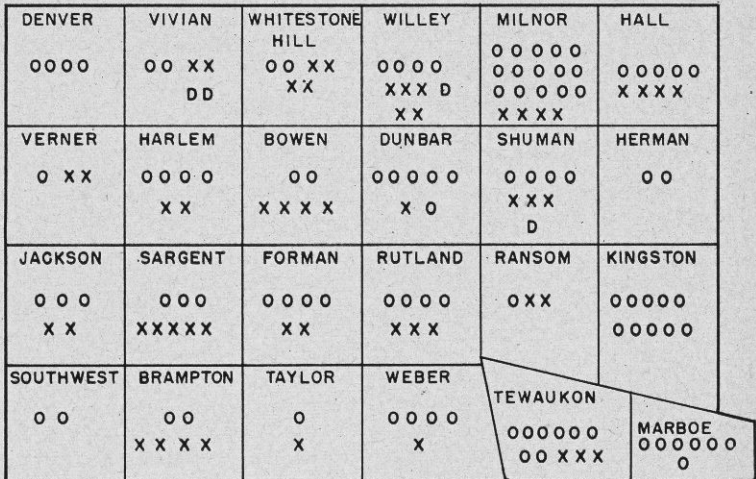


B - BEGINNERS (NEW FARMERS)

X - FARMERS WHO MOVED IN. THE ARROW INDICATES THE TOWNSHIP THEY MOVED INTO AND LINE STARTS IN TOWNSHIP FROM WHICH THEY MOVED.

MAP NO. 2

FARM OPERATORS WHO MOVED OUT OF SARGENT COUNTY TOWNSHIPS  
OR QUIT FARMING BETWEEN JANUARY 1943 AND JANUARY 1945



O - FARMERS WHO MOVED OUT OF THE TOWNSHIP OR QUIT FARMING

X - FARMERS WHO MOVED FROM ONE TOWNSHIP TO ANOTHER WITHIN THE COUNTY

D - FARMERS WHO DIED

MAP NO. 3

FARM OPERATORS WHO MOVED FROM ONE FARM TO ANOTHER  
WITHIN SARGENT COUNTY TOWNSHIPS DURING THE PERIOD  
JANUARY 1943 TO JANUARY 1945

DENVER OO	VIVIAN OOOOO	WHITESTONE HILL OOOOO	WILLEY OOO	MILNOR	HALL O
VERNER OOO	HARLEM OOOO	BOWEN OOO	DUNBAR OOOO	SHUMAN OOO	HERMAN
JACKSON O	SARGENT O	FORMAN OOOO O	RUTLAND OOOOOO	RANSOM OOOOO	KINGSTON O
SOUTHWEST	BRAMPTON O	TAYLOR OOO	WEBER OO	TEWAUKON OOO	MARBOE OO

O - INDICATES FARMER WHO MOVED WITHIN TOWNSHIP

amounts to \$17,550. Then, one should add to this the 42 who moved in from somewhere outside the county, whose moves would cost more than \$200 each, or a total of \$8,400 plus. Of those who quit farming or who left the county 37 made comparatively short moves to towns within the county. These moves might be calculated at \$150 apiece or a total of \$5,550. Just how many of the remaining 63 moves can be charged to agriculture is debatable. Twenty-one went to defense plants and 33 are simply known to have left the county. Disregarding the cost of the moves for these 63 entirely, we still have a net two-year cost of \$31,450, or \$15,725 annually. A recent check with some of the men who have moved from one farm to another in the last two years indicates that the estimated cost per move is very low.

Of the 63 moves from one farm to another within the township 36 were made by tenants, 21 by tenants buying land and in six cases

the reason for the move is not known. Of the 54 farmers who moved from one township to another 29, or 54 percent, were tenants; 23, or 42 percent, were moving on to farms that they had purchased and, in the other two cases, the ownership status is not known.

The cost of the moves may be estimated, although probably inaccurately, but who can estimate the loss to agriculture due to the type of farming carried on by the constantly moving tenant? The low livestock numbers and lack of grass and alfalfa on these farms is noticeable. Usually they are weedy, fences in poor repair, and buildings poorly kept up. What effect does the impermanency of the farm home have upon the thinking of the children? Do our nomadic farmers take an active part in school and church, and in local government? Do their children develop a love of home and pride of community that they might develop if they were somewhat permanent residents?

The survey also indicates 140 vacant sets of farm buildings. These vary from excellent sets of buildings worth from \$5,000 to \$10,000 to buildings hardly fit for human use. What effect have these vacancies had upon the schools and churches of the rural areas, and upon the business of the community?

It would be interesting and instructive to make a study of 100 tenants who move frequently, as

compared to 100 owners or tenants with long-term leases. A comparison of their participation in community affairs, the extent to which their children are educated, etc., might indicate more definitely than any purely economic study, the results of tenancy. The ultimate determination of the good or evil of tenancy as an institution must be based upon its LONG TIME EFFECT UPON THE TENANT and Society.

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**The Chinese Agriculture News Letter** states that from 1938 to 1943 the provincial and national governments of China have built 31 irrigation systems, irrigating some 133,000 acres of land in the province of Szechwan. Plans are being developed to bring 4,170,000 acres of that province under irrigation in the next 10 or 20 years. An old irrigation system built in that province about 221 to 206 B.C. has a capacity of irrigating 500,000 acres. (H.L.W.)