

The average age varies considerably from State to State but, in general, was highest for States reporting the lowest percentages of tenancy. Farmers in the Southern and Mountain States average somewhat younger than those in other parts of the country. Mississippi farmers, as a group, are the Nation's youngest, averaging 43.6 years; and New Hampshire's are the oldest, averaging 53.8 years.

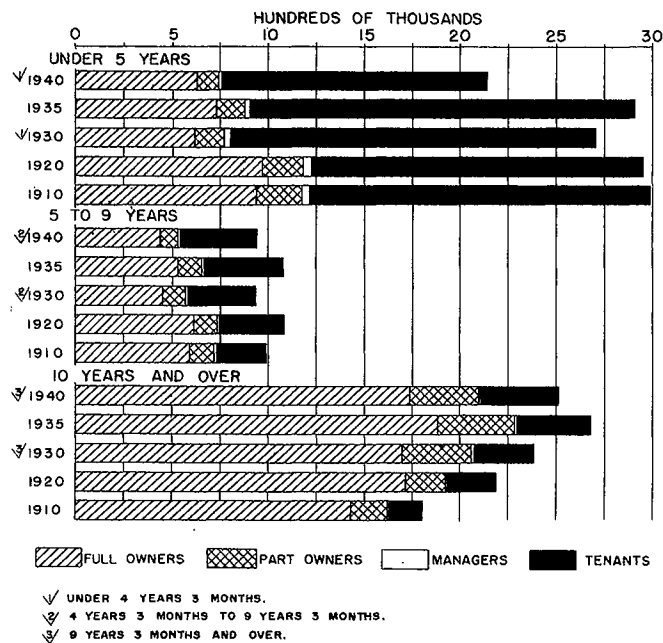
Ownership of farms is definitely associated with operators in the higher age groups. While no figures are available for the number of operators who acquired ownership after first renting a farm, it is significant that in the last census, as an average, tenants were 10.6 years younger than owner operators. The average age for tenants was 41.5 years as compared with 52.8 years for full owners and 48.8 years for part owners. More tenants fell into the 25- to 34-year group than any other age group. In this age group there were, approximately, 2 tenants to each owner operator. The proportion of tenants to owners decreases with the age of the operator. Fewer tenants than owners were represented in the 35- to 44-year age group. In the 45- to 54-year age group, the ratio was, approximately, 1 tenant to 2 owners and in the 65-years-and-over group the ratio was 1 tenant to 5 owners. In general, both owners and tenants were younger in the Southern and in the Mountain States. The greatest variation in ages of owners and tenants was in the Great Plains States, the difference in the average ages of owners and tenants in Kansas was 13 years. The highest average ages reported by States was 56.9 for full owners in Kansas, and the highest for part owners and tenants was 52.1 and 46.6, respectively, for Rhode Island. The lowest average age reported for full owners was 47.0 for Arizona; and the lowest for part owners and tenants was 45.1 and 38.7 years, respectively, for Utah.

Nonwhite operators generally averaged younger than white operators; the United States average was 45.3 and 48.4 years, respectively. However, both nonwhite owners and nonwhite tenants averaged slightly older than did white owners and white tenants. This apparent anomaly was due to the high proportion of tenancy among nonwhite operators as compared with white operators. In general, a much smaller proportion of nonwhite owner operators were under 45 years of age than of white owner operators, although the difference in average age of nonwhite owners and tenants was slightly less than for white owners and tenants. This was due to the higher average age of the nonwhite tenants.

Years on farm.—By the term "Years on farm" is meant the number of years the farm operator had occupied, as operator, the farm on which he was located on the census date. The statistics presented for years on farm reflect, in part, the stability or instability of operators on a particular farm. A farm operator may or may not have had previous farm experience. Thus, for a farm operator who moved from another farm, the years on farm represent only a part of his experience as a farm operator, while for an operator who had no previous experience the years on farm represent his total experience as a farm operator. It should be noted that the years on farm do not necessarily refer to the total years of farm experience, even on the farm being operated on the census date, since the operator may have been on that particular farm a number of years prior to the time he began to operate the farm on his own account.

The schedule inquiry called for the "Year when you began to operate THIS farm." When the returns are presented in terms of the replies to this question they are referred to as "year of occupancy." When the returns are presented in terms of the length of time the operator has occupied the farm the term "years on farm" is used. In tables 5 and 14 a somewhat more explicit heading is used, namely, "Number of years of occupancy of farm operated on census date." In tabulating the returns, farm operators were grouped into 9 classes as to year of occupancy. Also an average year of occupancy was obtained by making a summation of all the years of occupancy reported and dividing the total by the number of operators reporting year of occupancy. The resulting quotient was shown as a whole number, for example: When the average came to something in excess of 1928 but not as much as 1929 the average year of occupancy is shown in the tables as 1928. The 1940 Census was the first for which such an average was calculated.

**YEARS ON FARM - NUMBER OF OPERATORS
REPORTING, BY TENURE, FOR THE UNITED STATES:
1910 - 1940**



The period of occupancy of farm operators is closely related to their tenure. For this reason the statistics are presented by tenure of the operator, with separate tabulations for white and nonwhite operators. United States totals are shown for all census years for which such figures were obtained. Only comparative data for 1935 and 1930 are shown by divisions and States. County data, published in volume I and in the Second Series State Bulletins for the 1940 Census of Agriculture, are limited to the average year of occupancy by color and by tenure of the farm operator.

In the tables in which figures are shown for other census years, the statistics for 1940 have been presented as years on farm rather than as year of occupancy in order that they may be more readily compared with those for the other years. When presenting the data as years on farm, it was not possible to translate the year of occupancy into an exact number of years on the farm since the census date was as of April 1 and the reports were in terms of calendar years. In translating to years on farm, the number of calendar years from the census date were used, 1940 being considered as less than one year, 1939 as one year, 1938 as two years, etc. Thus, under the less-than-one-year group are recorded those operators who reported that they had moved onto their farms in 1940, a 3-month period only. However, for the United States as a whole, approximately 7 out of 10 (ratio based on 1930 figures) farm operators, who move to a different farm, move in these 3 months. But this is not true for all States. Not only is the comparability of the figures for the under-one-year group seriously affected in the translation of year of occupancy to years on farm, but each of the other groups is also affected, the effect being less, the greater the length of time from the census date.

For the 1930 Census there was also some difficulty in translating the data into years-on-farm groups that were comparable with the groupings for previous censuses. The inquiry however asked for the month as well as the year of occupancy and the month was taken into account in determining the less-than-one-year and the one-year groups. Therefore, each of these groups represents a full 12-month period. For the other groups the classification was based on the year of occupancy in the same manner as in 1940. With the 1935 and 1925 censuses, each being taken as of January 1, the year of occupancy could be translated into years on farm without difficulty. However, for these years, the less-than-one-year group