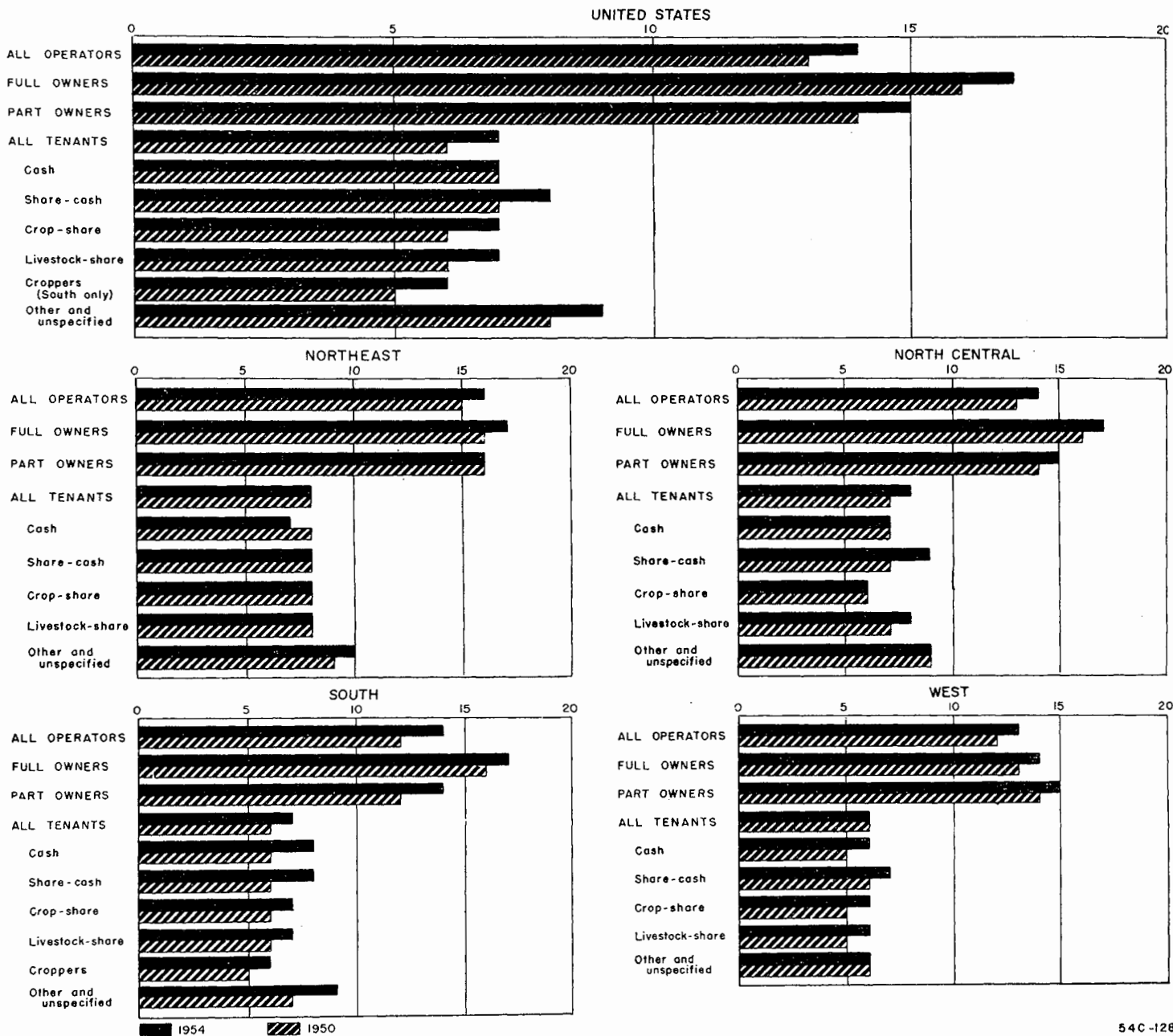


AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS ON PRESENT FARMS, BY TENURE OF OPERATOR, FOR THE UNITED STATES AND REGIONS: 1954 AND 1950



54C-128

Figure 49.

OCCUPANCY, MOBILITY, AND LENGTH OF TENURE

Average number of years on present farm.—Farm operators in the United States at the time of the 1954 Census had been on their farms an average of 14 years. At the 1950 and 1945 Censuses, farm operators had occupied their farms an average of 13 years, and at the 1940 Census 12 years. The average period of occupancy was slightly higher in the Northeast and North Central regions than in the South and West. Owner operators, on an average, had occupied their farms more than twice as long as tenants. In 1954, owner operators had occupied their present farms an average of 16 years as compared with 7 years for tenants.

Much of this difference may be explained by the differential in age of owners and tenants. In 1954, owners averaged 9.8 years

older than tenants. Among the younger farm operators, tenants outnumber owners; among the older operators, owners predominate. (See "Age and Residence of Farm Operators," this section.) Tracing each age group of farm operators through successive Censuses, for which tenure data are available by age of operator, shows that the proportion of tenancy has consistently decreased with increases in age. The percentage of tenancy in the higher age groups is small (9.3 percent for farm operators 65 years old and over in 1954). Most tenants move to the ranks of farm owners or cease to operate farms by the time they reach the higher age groups. For owners who were formerly tenants on the farm now occupied, years of occupancy of the present farm include their years of occupancy as tenant.

Generally, full owners had occupied their farms longer than part owners, although in the West part owners averaged slightly longer periods of occupancy than full owners. This longer period