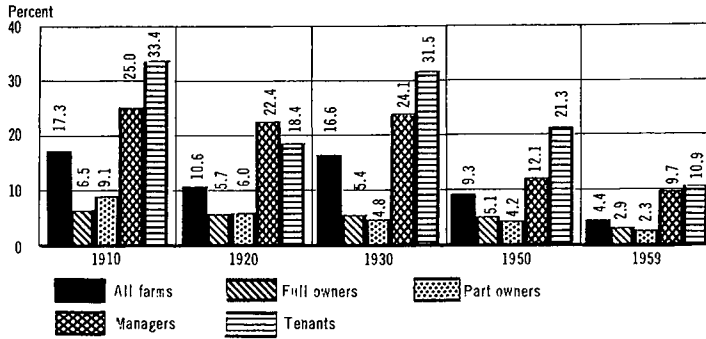


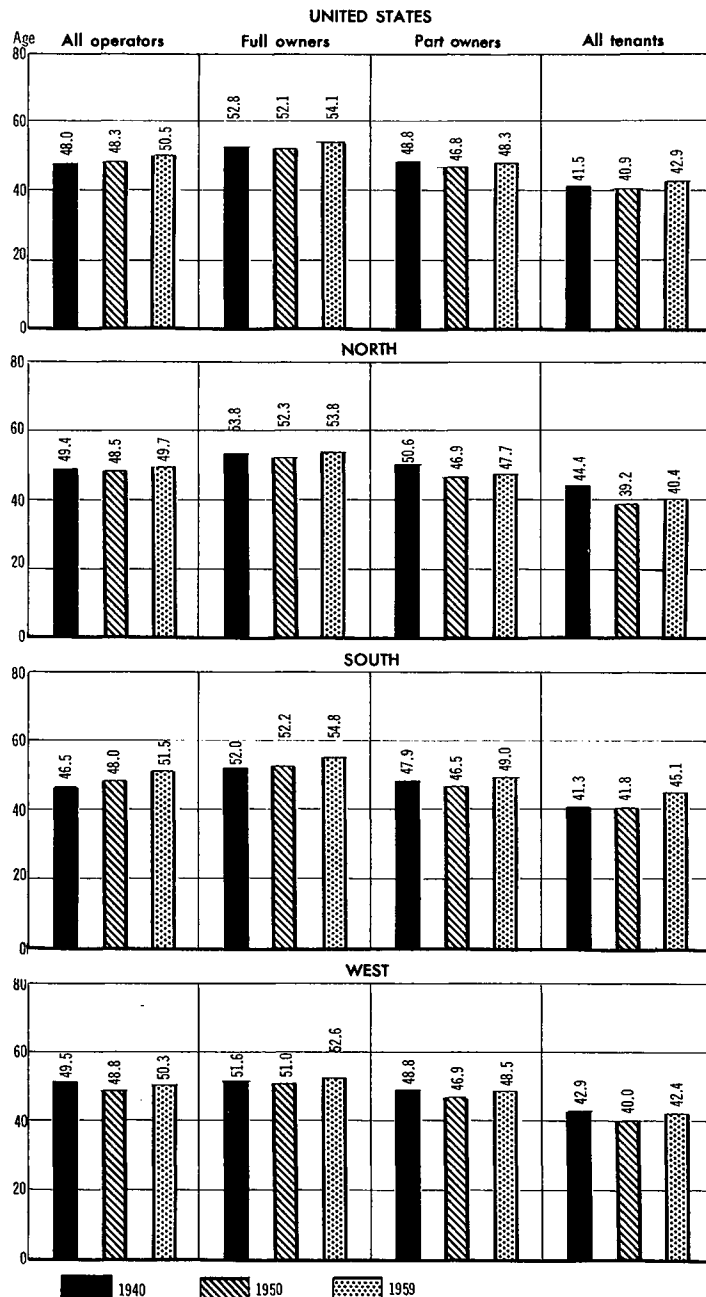
PERCENT OF FARM OPERATORS ON PRESENT FARM 1 YEAR OR LESS, BY TENURE, FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1910 TO 1959



Operators on present farms 1 year or less.—In 1910 slightly more than 17 percent of the farm operators had been on their farms 1 year or less. Even as recently as 1950, 9.3 percent had occupied their farms 1 year or less, whereas in 1959 this proportion had dropped to 4.4 percent. Of those farm operators on their farms less than 1 year, nearly half were tenants, an indication of their greater mobility. Almost 11 percent of all tenants had been on their present farms 1 year or less.

AGE AND RESIDENCE OF FARM OPERATORS

AVERAGE AGE OF FARM OPERATORS, BY TENURE, FOR THE UNITED STATES AND REGIONS: 1940 TO 1959



Average age of farm operators.—In 1959 the average age of all farm operators was 50.5 years. This was an increase of 2.5 years since 1940. The main reason for the increase in average age has been a lower entry rate of young farmers into agriculture than in the past and a higher proportion of young farmers leaving agriculture for nonfarm employment.

A high proportion of older farm operators are full owners. The average age of full owners in 1959 was 54.1 years. Most of the farm operators who are successful in achieving farm ownership do so in the middle years of their lives. This tends to make the average age higher for full owners than for other tenure groups. Many of the owners choose to go into semiretirement on their farms as they become older by renting out part of their land. Farm operators 65 years of age and over amounted to 16.8 percent of all farmers in 1959. This group included not only persons partly retired from farming, but also persons retired from non-farm employment who had acquired farms and were living in semiretirement on the land.

Part owners, on the average, are considerably younger than full owners, but older than tenants. Part owners averaged 48.3 years old in 1959. Farmers in this tenure group frequently cease to rent additional land as they approach their retirement years. In this way they pass into the ranks of the full owners, thus reducing the average age of part owners.

Tenants are the youngest of the tenure groups. In 1959 the average age of tenants was 42.9 years. Many individuals begin their farm operating careers as tenants. As they become older many acquire the capital to buy land and join the ranks of owners, thus affecting the number of older tenants.

Among the tenant classes, those with livestock-share leases were youngest. Their average age was 39.7 years. Croppers averaged 43.9 years of age, just one year older than the average of all tenants.

