SELECTING ARIZONA SETTLERS

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Cover picture: A settler’s home and irrigation ditch about 1910. Photo by Reclamation Service.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary and Recommendations</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Object of the Study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for the Study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting Mormon Pioneers</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications of Homestead Entrymen</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria for Settlers on Reclamation Projects</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needed Improvements in Rating Applicants</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting Settlers for Resettlement</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting Settlers for State Land Settlements</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting Farmers by Apprenticeship</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief Appraisal of Experience in Selecting Settlers</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## ILLUSTRATIONS

**Plate I.**—Top, House in the Yuma Valley Constructed about 1880. Bottom, Settler's Box-Type House Constructed about 1910.

**Plate II.**—Modern Homes Constructed Since 1935 on Arizona's Reclaimed Lands.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The heart of settler selection is to arrive at ways and means of spotting the applicant who will be most likely to stay with the project, pay his obligations, and help develop a going community. No one criterion or method is sufficient, yet nothing is gained by multiplying tests, interviews, references, and questionnaires. The work of selection consists largely of determining the critical qualifications desired, of devising criteria that measure what they are intended to measure, and of applying these criteria effectively in the course of selection.

The object of selection is not to deny the settler the right to make mistakes and find his place in the social order in his own way and in his own good time. It is rather to limit the extent of his mistakes at public expense, once he has set up an enterprise of his own. Opportunity for personal development is provided at public expense, and during the course of his earlier years the individual does a considerable amount of starting out and backing off for a fresh start, both in school and in gainful employment. When he ventures into farming or business on his own, however, he assumes risks for which he alone is responsible. He does this with the hope for a return over and above expenses—a return that will reward him for his effort and his initiative. Taking up land on a federal reclamation project or in a state land colony is just such a venture. The settler, if he pays out his debt to the government, makes his mistakes largely at his own expense; but if he does not pay out his debt it is most probable that a large share of the cost of his venture will have to be borne by the government. Selection of settlers is aimed at reducing the extent of the burden of failures in farm settlements.

Results of selection should indicate, first of all, which applicants are least likely to succeed. That much at least can be accomplished. The next result to be desired is more difficult to obtain. It is the separation of the applicants that are most likely to succeed from among those that remain after those least likely to succeed have been rejected.

What are the characteristics of the most successful settlers? Among the most successful are those who may well be classified as belonging to the “farmer type.” This kind of settler “dislikes living in the city, bends every effort to develop his farm, and takes pride in the growth and betterment of his home, his land, his stock, and his family.” He does most of his own farm work, and his financial ambitions are modest. His goal is to develop a farm that will provide a decent living. He may not be a strong organization man and his participation in the community may be largely social, but he is a good neighbor and, above all, a family man. He will cling to his homestead and want his children to grow up there. He is the kind of human material on the basis of which land-settlement policies may well be built.

Somewhat in contrast with the farmer type of settler is the “investor type.” This type of settler may also prove successful, but he is interested in the homestead as an investment from which
he hopes to get a good return. Residence on the project is with him a matter of fulfilling requirements for proving up. He makes expenditures for the improvement of the land always with an eye to future sale value. If he stays with the project for any length of time, this type of settler will likely expand his operations in farming and may add other ventures also by way of further speculation. All this contributes to the development of the project in varying degree with the extent and quality of the settler’s farming activities, but the settler himself is always on the lookout for the chances of a good sale, or for an opportunity to take up some other line of activity that will be more profitable. The eventual object is probably to leave the farm and the project and spend what he has made there enjoying himself elsewhere. This type of settler is very often successful in making something for himself, and generally he contributes something as well to the development of the project. When this type of settler sells out it is more than likely that his land will be bought by a farmer-type settler, either for himself or for his sons.

Few settlers belong entirely in a single category. Many farmer-type settlers are also more or less “investors,” and some settlers of the investor type finally stay on a place they originally bought as an investment.

Another type of successful settler is the older man who, because of advanced years and limited capital, is able to handle only a small acreage. He seeks, most of all, for the security of food and shelter that he can obtain by the cultivation of a small acreage. This settler may have been a moderately successful farmer or small businessman, but his resources have been depleted by sickness, business depression, or other misfortune. Though weakened in body and in purse, he successfully applies intelligence and waning strength to his acres and lives in peace and independence through old age.

Still another type of successful settler is the young man with limited farming experience but with youth, ambition, and intelligence against which he may venture to make long-term commitments. The returned war veteran sometimes falls into this category. These young settlers prove successful if they possess, above all, the capacity to learn quickly and to get along without continual supervision. This is another way of saying that the outcome of their venture depends greatly upon foresight and adaptability.

Criteria for settler selection should be formed and the results of their use weighted to give preference to applicants of high general capacity and adaptability and of undoubted industriousness. A thoroughgoing determination to make a living at farming, and especially on the particular project being settled, is assumed in all applicants accepted. The character qualification should be rated in every way available to the selection board, and proven instability as evidenced by habitual drinking or otherwise should be sufficient ground for the rejection of an applicant, other qualifications notwithstanding. A farm settlement is not a reform institution.
Experience in farming is a requisite without which no settler can finally succeed, but it can be gained on the project to a considerable extent if necessary, provided the settler’s capacity and industriousness are unquestionable. These last-named qualifications are primary requisites to success. Without them no amount of experience will amount to much. Moreover, experience should be rated according to its intensity and quality rather than, as usual, as to its length in time.

Accumulated capital is not only essential to a beginning for settlers who do not expect to serve as apprentices, but to a considerable extent it is indicative of character and industriousness. It should be supplied on loans only to young settlers otherwise qualified, and to settlers who are seasoned farmers but who have experienced misfortune or disaster which has deprived them of any accumulations they may have made.

Settlers cannot make good with crops not suited to the physical character of the land in the project, nor can they carry charges on capital investment in the project beyond the normal earning power of the land, average market prices obtaining, and usual climatic conditions. Much can be said for starting settlers out on lands already developed and in crop or ready for crop.

A harmonious and co-operative family contributes greatly to settler success, but disharmony and dissatisfaction with farm life on the part of wife and children will generally drive a settler off a project no matter how excellent his ratings may be as to standard qualifications.

General good health and stamina in the settler and in the family members are desirable, but disqualification on account of health or physical handicap should be made with care, and only when individual disabilities have been measured against specific physical activities essential to success on the project.

Procedures for selecting settlers should be kept well in hand. Initial applications should be received, and final decisions as to applicants approved for settlement should be made by a qualified project-selection committee. No overhead board should be empowered to override the decision of the project-selection committee. Overhead organizations may well supply technical assistance in setting up criteria and in clarifying procedures, but the authority to select settlers for the project should reside in the local selection committee.
SELECTING ARIZONA SETTLERS
BY E. D. TETREAU

OBJECT OF THE STUDY

This study was set up to bring together a statement of the criteria and methods used by public and private agencies in selecting settlers for reclaimed lands; to determine which of these seem the most effective in selecting promising settlers; and to make recommendations applicable to Arizona conditions with particular reference to returned war veterans and to other younger men who desire to farm in Arizona.

REASONS FOR THE STUDY

With the reclamation of new lands along the lower Colorado River and the probable extension of additional water into the central part and other parts of Arizona, there has come the question of the kinds of settlers who will take over these new farming areas. There is concern over the outcomes of settlement in terms of farming, homes, and institutions and agencies that go with the American way of life. It is believed that these outcomes will to a great extent depend upon the quality of the settlers who are selected from among the applicants for farms. Some methods of selection that have been tried out are doubtless suitable for further use, others should be rejected, while new methods may, in the course of events, prove successful.

Early settlers of European origin who took over lands, later to be reclaimed for farming, were selected by the requirements of the Homestead Act, by the standards of the Mormon Church, and by the give and take of private transactions in land—not to mention the more romantic earlier arrivals who developed orchards and gardens under the impetus of Spanish exploration and missionary activity, and in whom were combined both pioneer and sedentary characteristics. Early in this century Congress passed the Reclamation Act (1902), and more recently the Bureau of Reclamation has developed certain criteria for the selection of settlers on reclaimed lands.

It is believed that much help may be gained by taking account of the qualifications set up for settlers from time to time and of the criteria and methods used in selecting them.

SELECTING MORMON PIONEERS

Mormon pioneers were noted for their qualities of group loyalty, for obedience to the word of the group leader, for industry and hardihood, and for their thrift and contentment of mind in the face of scarcity and privation. Farm implements and livestock were scarce, and their best use required direction by the group leader. Irrigation ditches, roads, and bridges had to be built, so they bent their backs in co-operative effort to accomplish together what the individual alone could not.
To them agriculture was not only a way of life but it was supreme among all occupations. The development of irrigation, no mean achievement in itself, gave farming a touch of distinction—or perhaps one might say glamor—that gave the pioneer a sense of fulfilling a calling, a sense of individual importance in the order of things.

They were men of family. Members of the family found contentment and peace in the home and in the local associations and assemblies of the Church. This made for stability in the settlement and conserved the energies of the farmer and of the housewife for the task at hand.

Pre-eminence was given to character and industry.

QUALIFICATIONS OF HOMESTEAD ENTRYMEN

A homestead entryman must be twenty-one years of age or the head of a family, a citizen of the United States or have declared his intention to become a citizen, and not the owner of more than 160 acres of land. Exceptions were made under the enlarged homestead acts. Entry might be made under one of these acts, provided the applicant's claims did not make up more than 320 acres and did not, with the homestead, aggregate more than 480 acres. A married woman was not qualified to make such entry unless she had been deserted by her husband or unless he was incapacitated by disease or otherwise prevented from earning a support for his family and she was really its main support. A widow might make a homestead entry notwithstanding entry made by her husband.

It seems quite evident that the Homestead Act of 1862 was intended to secure a wide distribution of ownership in land. Requirements for entry were more or less formal, and criteria of fitness for farming were not a matter of concern. Not until well into the present century did the government undertake to set up criteria for selecting settlers. First ventures in selection were made by the Bureau of Reclamation, and these came with the growing realization that good land for settlement was becoming exceedingly scarce.

Clearly, the greater part of Arizona's settlers on lands now under irrigation at first took up their land as homesteaders, whether they came in as Mormon pioneers or as individual settlers. Most of the area of the Salt River Project, for example, was filed upon and much of it proved up before water was available from the constructed works. Although the Roosevelt Dam

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1 In 1903 when the Reclamation Service came in there were at least 150,000 acres of the area now occupied by the project that had been filed for homesteading and much of it was patented. Much of this land was farmed, but water supplies, obtained by brush diversion dams on the Salt River, were uncertain. The Kent decree established the rights of settlers to the normal flow of the stream. When the project was opened in 1917, only 15,000 acres remained to be patented. All had been or was being homesteaded.
was completed in 1911, the necessary diversion dam, canals, laterals, pumping plants for supplementary water, etc., took additional time, and it was November, 1917, before the project could be turned over to the farmers as a going concern. Nevertheless, irrigation by homestead settlers had begun as early as 1867. Brush diversion dams were used to direct water into canals, the courses of which were often practically identical with those of canals used centuries ago by the early Indians (Hohokam). Thus, without criteria for selection at the time of settlement, farmers who came in as homesteaders carried on with uncertain water supplies and in some measure reclaimed their farms from the desert. Needless to say, many settlers were eliminated by a kind of "natural" selection, and out of this experience in the Salt River Valley and elsewhere rough criteria of selection began to be formed.

CRITERIA FOR SETTLERS ON RECLAMATION PROJECTS

As water from completed irrigation works became available for their reclamation, public lands were opened to settlement by qualified persons. Some sort of settler selection finally became necessary, since these lands were given an initial value not generally to be found in dry lands open for homesteading. Nonetheless, between 1908 and 1924 no specific qualifications were required of applicants for reclaimed lands. During these years something like 24,000 families took homesteads on irrigation projects.

Of more recent years settlers have been required to satisfy the Bureau of Reclamation as to their health, character, industry, capital, and farm experience. If acceptable as to health and vigor necessary for active farm work, and if satisfactory as to industry and character, the applicant was required to show a cash capital, or its equivalent in livestock and implements, of at least $2,000. This latter requirement was modified by an Act of August 7, 1939, the benefits of which were later extended to June 30, 1942, providing that prospective settlers might apply to the Farm Security Administration, U.S.D.A., for a loan which, if granted, should be considered as all or part of the capital required of settlers. What amounted to further modification appeared in the literature of the Bureau, July 17, 1941, announcing homestead openings in Idaho on the Payette Division of the Boise Reclamation Project. It was stated that preference would be given to needy and drought-stricken farm families which had been compelled to abandon their homes. It was supposed that careful study in the case of each family would show that it would be able to earn a livelihood on such irrigated lands.

Veterans' preference rights, such as have been granted in the opening of new reclamation projects, have not operated to modify the requirements for settlers. Whether a twelve- or a ninety-day preference was granted with the opening of a project, veterans were expected to meet all requirements for settlement, once their applications had been accepted for consideration. Preference
Plate I.—*Top*, house in the Yuma Valley constructed about 1880. *Bottom*, settler’s box-type house constructed about 1910.
SELECTING ARIZONA SETTLERS

rights have affected the order in which applications were accepted, but not the selection criteria of the settlers approved for the project.

What criteria are used in rating applicants with respect to their qualifications as settlers? A fair example is found in the schedule of qualifications and ratings used by the selection board of the Boise Project, Idaho, in 1941. They were as follows:

I. Character: fair, 5; good, 6 to 10; excellent, 11 to 15
II. Industry: fair, 5; good, 6 to 10; excellent, 11 to 20
III. Capital: $2,000-$2,999, 27; $4,000-$4,999, 29; $3,000-$3,999, 28; $5,000 or more, 30
IV. Farm experience
   A. In farming other than irrigation, two years... 10
      Additional credit of 5 per cent for each year beyond two years up to seven, or a maximum of... 35
   B. In irrigation farming, two years (any time)... 15
      Two years in last four years.......................... 20
      Two years in last two years.......................... 25
      Three years in last four years....................... 30
      Three or more years in responsible charge of irrigation farm in last four years............ 35
      Maximum total rating................................ 100

In determining the percentages to be given for experience under irrigated farming, the members of the examining board might reduce the rating from 1 to 5 points at any of the ratings above listed if in their judgment the experience reported by the applicant were not of the type that would justify his being rated for farming under such conditions as were found on the Boise Project. Credit for all farm experience, whether in irrigation or other farming, should not exceed 35 per cent of the total.

Farm experience stood highest among the Reclamation Service's four major qualifications for settlers. An applicant might receive as many as 35 points for farm experience out of a possible total rating of 100. Farm experience was largely measured as to its extent in time, its recency, and its nature—whether farming under irrigation or other than irrigation.

Industry, or industriousness, was another qualification for settlers on reclaimed lands, as was indicated by the selection schedule of the Boise Project. Criteria for this qualification were largely left to the persons used as references and to the individual members of the selection board for the project. Apparently the members of the selection board were expected to rate the applicants on the general idea of industry using a 3-point scale—“fair,” “good,” and “excellent.” It will be seen at once that this would be a difficult undertaking without personal observation or without information in some detail from persons who have had opportunity to observe the applicant and to form a rather clear idea of his
EXPERIMENT STATION BULLETIN NO. 196

application to the duties of farming, his willingness to work, and his ability to obtain employment.

Character, as a general qualification, was rated on a 3-point scale—"fair," "good," and "excellent"—as was industry. The criteria for this qualification were apparently left to the references and the members of the selection board, and doubtless some weight was attached to such items as length and thoroughness of acquaintance.

In the case of both industry and character there seems to have been a tendency on the part of selection boards to give the applicant the benefit of a doubt.

Capital owned was considered not only indicative of thrift and foresight on the part of the applicant, but necessary to an effective start on the new farm. Implements and livestock, as well as cash, were included in the estimate of capital owned.

NEEDED IMPROVEMENT IN RATING APPLICANTS

Much improvement in rating applicants might be made. For example, length of farming experience serves as a poor measure of the value of farm experience. Two years of experience with a mule, single plow, and hoe cannot be considered equal to two years on a general farm with power machinery, livestock, and a diversity of crops. More specific and detailed information should be obtained to throw light on the intensity of the experience and its quality.

Some improvement in rating an applicant’s intensity of farming experience can be obtained by asking capable farmers, as references, to rate the applicant with respect to specific achievements or characteristics. “Among men of similar circumstance and experience, where would you place the candidate as to the quantity and quality of crops produced during the same years on corresponding acreages? First? Second? Third? etc.” “What is the candidate’s reputation as a farmer in your community? Excellent? Good? Fair? Poor? Very poor?” If the applicant was farming in the 1930’s it will be important to know whether or not he received public assistance at any time during the years of the depression. This information can be obtained in the course of a complete occupational history, fitting together the farming and the relief segments of the applicant’s story. This information, if carefully obtained, may throw some light upon the intensity and quality of the applicant’s farming experience during those years. Whether the applicant has received public assistance or not, his occupational history is necessary to a fair evaluation of his efforts at self-support.

In many instances the applicant’s economic standing and his farming experience will stand in close relationship to each other. The intensity and quality of his farming experience will be reflected, at least in part, in his net accumulations. An applicant who has operated a farm for several years and can show cash and other capital valued at $5,000 or thereabouts as a result should rate
fairly high as a farmer. He apparently has managed to get a considerable amount of farming experience out of a few years. On the other hand, should the applicant have made no accumulations during a considerable farming period, it would seem redundant to rate him high as to occupational experience, even if the facts seemed to show range, intensity, and quality of performance. This is on the assumption that he had suffered no great losses due to extraordinary circumstance, such as extended illness in the family or repeated crop failures, and had been subject only to the ordinary vicissitudes of the occupation. Without question, rapid accumulation of assets is only partially due to the quality of farming, however, since business ability advantageously applied to the marketing of farm commodities is indispensable to profitable farming. This qualification will come in for consideration later in the discussion.

Considerable importance is generally attached to farm experience by selection boards. It equals both character and industry in importance, according to the rating assigned to it by the Boise Project Selection Board, referred to above, although on an earlier project it was rated on an equal with each of the three other qualifications. This higher rating on the Boise Project was in spite of the fact that it is recognized as a secondary qualification as compared with character and industriousness, notwithstanding the range of skills necessary to farming as an occupation and the need for time as well as application in acquiring experience. While farm experience is indispensable to successful farming, it is likely to be overrated in importance as compared with primary qualifications.

It will be seen at once that the criteria of economic qualifications, which were in terms of cash, livestock, machinery, and other valuable assets owned, would present difficulties in rating applicants. Uncertainties in rating this qualification were largely due to unreliable reports on the part of applicants and insufficient contact with dependable references. Unreliable statements about capital were doubtless due to a number of reasons. Some candidates with small assets may have felt that their chances for acceptance would be increased if their capital were reported as above the $2,000 minimum, while others with more capital may have trimmed their report so as not to have it greatly exceed $5,000. The motive in either case was important. If padding or concealing assets was done because of a strong desire to farm on that particular project, the candidate without question possessed therein a psychological asset of unmistakable value. Be that as it may, questions addressed to the applicant's bankers would in any case increase the reliability of statements of capital assets. It would not be unreasonable to require the applicant to furnish with his own statement of net worth a listing of his assets and his outstanding debts certified by a public accounting agency. Doubtless ratings on business ability would be useful to selection boards, especially in the cases of low capital accumulations. It
would seem self-evident that in cases of no capital accumulation, calling for recourse to a loan from the government in order to make any kind of a start, favorable ratings would be requisite to the approval of a loan. These could then be made available to the selection board. Without question, much remains to be done to improve the criteria of economic qualification for settlement.

Industry, or industriousness, was another qualification for settlers on reclaimed lands as illustrated by the selection schedule for the Boise Project. Criteria for this qualification were not very well determined, and those in use were not to any extent standardized. The same has been largely true with selection criteria on other projects. Again, a carefully filled occupational history would be useful. Rather dependable inferences may be drawn from such a record. If few or no periods of unemployment appear during the applicant's working career, especially during the years when unemployment was widespread, one may tentatively conclude that the applicant was not in the habit of avoiding labor except under extreme necessity. This would be particularly true of a common laborer or farm laborer. If self-employed as a farm operator, a study of the intensity and extent of the candidate's farming would give a fair idea of his industriousness. If he seemed to have been kept occupied on a small acreage with little degree of intensification, question might well be raised as to his industriousness. If, on the other hand, he farmed a moderate acreage intensively, the evidence would probably balance in his favor.

Letters of recommendation are usually very general in character, and are especially so with respect to industriousness and similar traits of character. More specific inquiries on the part of selection boards might improve them. An example of a specific inquiry is: "Does this man work only when conditions and wages are satisfactory, or will he accept any job at reasonable pay rather than lie idle?" As to the general qualification of industriousness a 5-point scale might be set up using such terms as "hard worker," "good worker," "fair worker," "indifferent worker," and "lazy" as check points for the reference.

Character, as a general qualification, has proven difficult to rate. Unless the selection board could establish real acquaintance with the applicants, reliable ratings on character were hard to get. Barring sufficient acquaintance on the part of the board, the next best method of estimating character was through references who were sufficiently acquainted with the applicants. Just what is sufficient acquaintance to qualify a character reference? This is by no means an idle question. To the man on the street, length of acquaintance in terms of years is accepted as indicating thoroughness of acquaintance. However, careful observers have concluded that length of acquaintance results in greater accuracy of rating only when it takes place in terms of days and weeks. Beyond such an optimum time, years of acquaintance work the other way. They result in an unconscious identification of self with the subject and hence tend to distort individual judgment and result in bias for
or against the subject. Thus it is important that the reference or selection board member has attained thoroughness of acquaintance, but not at the expense of impartiality. On the other hand, with long acquaintance proportional differences in age decrease, and persons become accustomed to one another's quirks and weak points. That is not conducive to objective rating.

What character traits have been found necessary to successful farm settlement? As an indirect answer one might point out that the settler is expected to pay, to stay, and to give and take together with his neighbors. In more formal terms, he should not only be capable of making an economic success of his venture, but he should be willing to pay up his obligations on time; he should be satisfied to live on the project and demonstrate staying qualities of character through adverse as well as favorable circumstances; and he should be a good citizen.

What criteria of character traits may be devised and applied so as to obtain the more desirable among applicants for settlement on farms? Some attention has already been given to the economic qualification. In addition it is important to know that the prospective settler is trustworthy and reliable. Though he may be rather of the slow-moving kind and likely to irritate clerks because he is not always on time with payments, it should be remembered that punctuality is demanded by gangsters as well as by legitimate traders and is not always indicative of trustworthiness and reliability. Criteria for selecting settlers who will be most likely to pay out their obligations should therefore be framed so as to favor those who have positive and responsible attitudes toward obligations and not those who merely make a good showing on the surface.

Criteria of stability should probe the applicant's character as to steadfastness in the performance of duties, sobriety, and temperance in personal habits. Heavy drinking has been found to be one of the primary reasons for settlers leaving a farm project. Another has been marital trouble, sometimes an outgrowth of personal instability. Heavy drinking should be an absolute reason for the rejection of an applicant. A reputation for carelessness in the performance of duties or for a lack of steadfastness in personal relations should likewise disqualify an applicant.

This resumé of criteria for settlers on reclamation projects may be simplified by fuller descriptions to be found elsewhere if one so desires. It is by no means complete either in description or analysis, but it is sufficient to show the weaknesses in criteria used to measure settler qualifications and to indicate difficulties in the assignment of weight to each qualification. It also suggests and briefly illustrates lines along which improvements may be made.

Of more general interest is the fact that the selection of settlers for reclaimed lands differs a great deal from the acceptance of entrymen for homesteads under the provisions of the Homestead Act. The difference lies not so much in basic philosophy as in practical considerations. The federal government is still interested
in securing a wide distribution of ownership in land, but it recognizes that settlers on reclaimed lands must make a serious business of farming if repayment is to be made for federal expenditures on irrigation works.

Observation of settlers on reclaimed lands has made it possible to elaborate the list of qualifications being used by the Bureau of Reclamation.

A student of successful land settlement has brought together a summary of "certain ascertainable qualifications, generally possessed by successful settlers—likely to be absent or less pronounced in those who fail." In briefest form this summary is as follows:

1. Technical knowledge, gained chiefly through experience, of the type of agriculture to be practiced in the new farm settlement.
2. A rudimentary education and as much additional education as is in harmony with a favorable attitude toward farm life.
3. Co-operative and harmonious family life—a co-operative wife and children who want to live on and help with a farm and who have experienced agricultural life.
4. A size and age-sex composition of the family that is adjusted to the size and type of farm.
5. The general good health and stamina of the family members that are necessary for the particular type of farm life; the absence of hereditary disease or hereditary susceptibility to a disqualifying disease.
6. Character, stability, and a sense of responsibility.
7. Intelligence, alertness, resourcefulness, and judgment.
8. A favorable attitude toward farm life and the particular opportunity to settle—a wish to farm and a willingness to sacrifice comforts and other values when necessary.
9. Community co-operative ability, where common enterprise is of benefit.
10. Loyalty to an idealistic group if it tends to strengthen the agricultural virtues, and if membership in the group tends to bind the settler to others on the project rather than separate him from them.
11. Capital or other means for such expenditures as are required to develop the farm to the point of profitable cultivation, or a sufficient "deposit" investment to guarantee seriousness of purpose and the sacrifices necessary to surmount difficulties.

This summary is somewhat more elaborate than a bare statement of the qualifications respecting which applicants for reclaimed farms have usually been examined. Besides including in one form or another the requisite qualifications as to character, industry, capital, and farm experience, the summary lays emphasis upon such things as harmonious family life, family desire to live on a farm, health and stamina of family members, ability and willingness to co-operate with others, and loyalty to the group.
Plate II.—Modern homes constructed since 1935 on Arizona's reclaimed lands.
SELECTING SETTLERS FOR RESETTLEMENT

Rural resettlement for those families for which removal to new locations seemed necessary came under the direction of the Rural Resettlement Division of the Resettlement Administration. Selection specialists came to play a most important part in determining the qualifications of settlers and in standardizing the methods of contacting, investigating, and approving applicants. Several resettlement projects were set up in Arizona, and the standard procedures and methods of selection were, to a considerable extent, employed.

Preference was given to those families whose incomes were derived entirely from agricultural employment. Agricultural employment was defined to include employment in the production of agricultural commodities and those processing activities, carried on in rural communities, by which commodities were prepared for the market. Next preference went to those families whose incomes were chiefly derived from agricultural employment. Third in order stood those families for which agricultural employment was less important than other employment in making a livelihood. These last were placed only when families in the first two classifications were not available and might be required to vacate in favor of the other families when such became available.

Criteria for selection of families included age, amount of annual income, number in family, frequency of moves from place to place and of changes from job to job, evidence of sense of responsibility, evidence of mental and physical ability to compete in agricultural work, and evidence of willingness to utilize garden and subsistence facilities. Preference was given to applicants (heads of families) who were under fifty years of age, although those fifty or over were not disqualified solely because of age. Families whose income fell below $300 or stood in excess of $1,000 were not admitted to residence. Families were not admitted whose size exceeded six persons. An applicant who accepted temporary aid from public or private relief agencies during off seasons in employment or in time of illness was not declared ineligible on that account.

Families considered acceptable for settlement were finally passed upon by the Project Family Selection Committee. This committee consisted of the community manager (chairman), the home management supervisor, and the farm manager.

Before final approval by the selection committee the applicant was required to give detailed information as to his work record during the past twelve months, showing name of employer in each job or position, date each position was begun and concluded, whether it was full or part time, hours worked each week, rate of pay, and duties of the job or position held. Agricultural experience was checked as to type of farm, art or handicraft experience, and special interests in the farming industry. The page covering
financial status called for details of total cash income of the family for the past twelve months, securities owned and investments made, insurance carried, present indebtedness, and a statement of average monthly expenses for the past twelve months. Personal property was reported as to items owned or part owned.

A considerable report on the family composition and its social participation was also required. Family data included name, age, sex, education, vocational training, employment, wages, and the amount contributed by each member toward the family income. Other household members were recorded as to relationship, age, sex, vocational training, employment, wages, and amount contributed. Membership in co-operatives, lodges, and other organizations was indicated. Reasons for desiring a resettlement home and information about present living quarters were given, and finally the recommendations of the family selection specialist.

Further checking for eligibility included information for each member of the household at home and away from home as to marital status, relation to head of household, citizenship, naturalization, number of years in the United States, and nationality. Members of organizations reported the name of the organization, the number of meetings a year, the number of meetings attended the past year, offices held, committees, and other kinds of participation.

Occupational information included the tenure history of the head of the household, covering the years of each occupancy, the type of tenure, length in years for each farm occupied, number of acres operated, power machinery used, amount of cash income, location of farm occupied, and the name and address of the landlord. This tenure history covered experience as laborer, sharecropper, squatter, standing renter, share renter, cash renter, manager, or owner. The employment record of each member of the household was recorded under the same headings as that of the head of the household.

Farm expense the past year was given in some detail in the applicant's financial report, if he reported on income from a farm. This report included rent, taxes, interest, insurance, costs of feed, seed, fertilizer, machine maintenance and repairs, fencing, hired labor, and other items. Family expenses began with an item on food purchased and went down through clothing, medical care, household operation, improvements in housing and furnishings, school, church, life insurance, major purchases of household goods, and other expenses. Amounts of food purchased during the past year and the amounts cured, stored, canned, or otherwise saved were reported. Reports were in quarts, pounds, or bushels, depending on the product. An estimate was made of the value of the food produced and of all other goods produced on the farm for living during the year. Insurance carried referred to life, liability, casualty, burial, fire, and benevolent society benefits. Further details included the face value of the policy and the unencumbered cash value.
Upon recommendation for approval by the Project Family Selection Committee, all available data were submitted to the Regional Family Selectionist, who reviewed the applications, checked relief history, and passed approval pending physical examination. Medical approval was required before the family was permitted to move to the project.

In addition to the above, an "Appraisal Summary" was checked in the case of subsistence homestead families. The items appraised were: farm improvements, farm land, farm tenure, farm management, mobility, residence, household furniture, home management, financial management, adequacy of clothing, adequacy of diet, health of family, school facilities, organizations, locality, group medical care, and residence in local or other area. The last two items were checked "Yes" or "No." The other fifteen were checked on a 3-point scale: "Good," "Fair," and "Poor."

Reference letters were generally used in selecting families for settlement. Nine questions were asked of all references. These general questions covered length of acquaintance with the applicant and in what connection, past record in meeting obligations, diligence, honesty, sobriety, co-operativeness as a neighbor, interest in community affairs, record as a farmer, record of wife as home manager, family unity, and ability to make use of opportunities. In addition to these general questions, the landlord, in the case of a tenant applicant, was asked to indicate how long he had resided on his property as a tenant, to what extent he had met rental obligations, the kind of care he had taken of the property, and the quality of his farming methods.

Provision was also made for a statement of opinion by the county agricultural agent or the home demonstration agent as to the applicant’s and the wife’s inclination or ability, or both, to follow good farm-management practices, and as to their interest in local farm organizations.

Finally, all approved applications were sent to the Regional Supervisor of Family Selection. Supplementary data were sent in by field interviewers. Memoranda of rejection were written up by field interviewers and sent in to the Regional Supervisor for review. Families approved for the project were taken on an inspection trip by arrangement with the Regional Supervisor, who made all notifications to families as to acceptance or rejection.

Although minor steps in procedure have been omitted in the above brief description of selection for settlement, it is evident that the selection of settlers became rather involved. The number of specialists, interviewers, supervisors, and other officials served to stretch out the number of steps in procedure without apparently greatly improving the criteria by which the more promising applicants might be set apart from the others. The study of family composition, attitudes, and desire to live on the project was, however, an improvement over the earlier practice of almost total disregard of the family in passing upon applicants for farms.
SELECTING SETTLERS FOR STATE LAND SETTLEMENTS

While Arizona has not ventured into the field of state colonization on reclaimed lands, the experience of California in that respect offers some materials on the selection of settlers for colonies of this type. A study of two such settlements in California has recently been published. From this study, the following materials have been drawn.

The immediate purpose of the settlements was to demonstrate desirable land-settlement methods. The intention was to correct some of the mistakes made in private colonization, to improve the methods then in use, and to encourage permanent and large-scale activity in state land settlement.

Settlers were selected by the California State Land Settlement Board on the basis of their ability to succeed and to contribute toward the demonstration of desirable land-settlement methods. Not only were they expected to stay on the land and pay up their obligations; they were to help in establishing co-operatives for the purchase of supplies, in the marketing of farm commodities, and in performing some of the work on their farms. They were to demonstrate the restoration of small industries to the countryside where farmers would keep control over the sale of their products.

When the Durham settlement was first opened there was a surplus of applicants. This permitted selection with some care as to qualifications. However, as the numbers of applicants fell off it became necessary to accept all those whose qualifications came up to the minimum requirements.

On the other hand, at Delhi selection even at first was applied only to a limited extent. Production difficulties in the settlements and the general economic situation throughout the nation, following deflation which hit land values soon after the Delhi settlement was opened to the public, had much to do with the slowing down in the numbers of applicants.

Ex-service men were given preference, according to the California laws under which the settlements were organized. Veterans never were numerous at Durham, since the first allotments there were offered for sale in the spring of 1918 and were rapidly taken up. Delhi had more veterans. At one time they made up one half of the settlers in that colony.

It must be said that the advertising given to these settlements by the State Land Settlement Board served to bring in some settlers who were attracted more by the reform elements of the program than by the opportunity to buy and develop farms. Doubtless in

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2 Under a land settlement act, two settlements were established, one at Durham with about one hundred thirty settlers, and the other at Delhi with about two hundred thirty. Durham was located in Butte County and Delhi in Merced County, California. Sale of land at Durham began in May, 1918, and at Delhi in April, 1920.
the face of the scarcity of applicants many settlers were accepted who otherwise would have been rejected.

The economic qualifications of applicants accepted for settlement were high. The average value of the capital brought to the Durham settlement was $5,645. On the whole, these settlers made a valuable contribution to the capital required to develop the project. Settlers on the Delhi project brought in capital of an estimated average value of over $4,000. Without discussion of the distribution of this capital among the settlers or further details of its composition in cash, farm equipment, livestock, etc., it will be seen that, so far as evidence of thrift and foresight was concerned, most of the settlers made a creditable showing.

Even with lack of sufficient applicants to permit a careful selection of settlers, those who were accepted worked hard, maintained a confident spirit, and co-operated in getting their settlements under way as desirable places in which to live. Those who, from the first, were discontented and inclined to stir up trouble might practically all have been identified and rejected in the procedure of selection. That would have been the better course, scarcity of prospective settlers notwithstanding. Inexperienced applicants were accepted knowingly, the plan being to supply them the services of qualified practical advisers. Some of them were among the early trouble makers on these projects. Others who were inexperienced in farming under irrigation got along well because of their capacity and willingness to make adjustments.

It should be said at this point that in 1931 the California legislature abolished the State Land Settlement Board and the Division of Land Settlement and turned over to the Division of State Lands in the Department of Finance such credits as remained. Following this, an agreement was worked out with each settler in the Durham and Delhi colonies. All of this resulted in the assumption of most of the losses by the state, the individual settlers being largely relieved of their indebtedness.

Mention has been made of the acceptance of inexperienced settlers, the plan being to supply the services of qualified advisers. Along with the promise of guidance other "promises" were made or implied in the promotion of these projects. Increments in land value were promised for lands that already stood the settler about $450 an acre. Excessive crop yields were promised. Repeated assurances of liberal credit were made. The idea that the state would see them through was built up in the minds of settlers. The policy of aid and direction to settlers gave support to certain claims upon the state and gave them a sense of security that was unjustified by the hard facts of the situation.

All in all, production difficulties were highly important in accounting for the failure of these settlements. It must be emphasized that the majority of settlers appeared to have had the requisites for a reasonable degree of success. Apparently, in addition to production failures, much of their difficulty with the state grew out of a sense of disappointment because of the unwilling-
ness of the state to keep its promises. The experience of the California State Land Settlement Board is clear. In selecting settlers, promises should be made with caution, if at all. The temptation to stress favorable aspects of a given project should be held in check. The point of this discussion of promises is that, while during the course of selecting settlers every confidence in the project should be built up in the minds of prospective settlers, all obligations of the government and the settler should be clearly set down in writing.

SELECTING FARMERS FOR APPRENTICESHIP

Quite different methods and procedures from those described above are used in selecting settlers for the apprentice farmer colony located on Goodyear Farms, Litchfield Park, Arizona. A tract of 2,800 acres of developed and irrigated land in the northwest corner of Goodyear Farms was set aside and divided into 80-acre farms as the physical plant for the training of young men in farming. The first apprentices arrived during the winter of 1937.

The apprentice plan is for young men of farm background, with limited means, who want farms of their own and independence. The young man who enrolls as an apprentice is given opportunity and expert guidance. Otherwise he is on his own. Usually he first comes in contact with the apprentice plan through the Future Farmers of America organization.

At first the apprentice is an employee of Goodyear Farms at prevailing monthly wages. He works nine hours a day at farming under irrigation. He is furnished a house, and generally after a short period arranges with the company to make a start on his own with a dairy cow. He may thus build up a small herd to which he attends morning and evening while carrying on as a regular farm hand nine hours a day. As rapidly as the man acquires one-half equity in his stock, the company finances the purchase of additional cows. Thus in the course of the first year a young man may accumulate a herd of eight cows. He pastures them on company grazing land at going pasture rates. Normally the next step is a share-crop lease on an 80-acre farm. As he makes progress he may take on a tract on cash-lease. He graduates from apprenticeship when he receives a land contract. The apprentice then has become owner of 80 acres, with a substantial equity in his land and full ownership in sight. His farm will cost up to $125 an acre, depending upon the capital investment by Goodyear Farms.

While each young farmer operates as an individual, he uses co-operative organizations to accomplish with the aid of his neighbors what he cannot accomplish alone. Heavy machinery, such as a combine harvester and a pickup hay baler, or such equipment as cotton and livestock trailers, has been purchased by the Adaman Farms Co-operative and is made available to members at flat rental rates. A full-time manager combines the
Plate III.—Top, apprentice farmer’s home on an 80-acre farm which he is buying on contract. Bottom, a pioneer on the Apprentice Farmer Project, a successful beef cattleman.
duties of bookkeeper, machinery custodian, and repairman. Members also pool purchasing power in buying seed and farm supplies, and they sell co-operatively or individually as they may choose. Water for irrigation comes from wells on the project. These, together with pumps, pipe lines, and supply ditches, are in the hands of a mutual water company to which individual apprentices and farmers pay the costs of their irrigation water.

Apprentices on adjoining 80's sometimes go together to buy a tractor or own in common a butane tank for household gas supply. They exchange work, borrow and lend tools, and consult one another about farm problems.

As each young man takes on a farm he finds it under cultivation with a small house and a small barn ready built, and with wire and posts furnished for fencing his tract of land. The farm homes are located on adjacent corners of the land tracts so that from two to four families may live within hailing distance.

The first group of apprentices were single men, but they were permitted to marry after the first year of service. With the coming of young wives to the project the making of homes began. Beginning with quilt tying for a new baby, the wives have done their part to build up neighborliness centered around interest in homemaking. Thus together and individually the young women of the project back up their men as they move toward the goal of home and farm ownership.

It was indicated above that the apprentice is given expert guidance as well as opportunity. A project council ties the farm apprentices and the Goodyear Farms management into an informal group composed of three project land-contract members, a general advisor in agricultural education, the project advisor, and the vice-president, farm manager, and cashier of Goodyear Farms. This council meets monthly and handles all matters of general policy affecting the apprentice project. Through it the company makes commitments to the apprentice group. Most important for purposes of this report, the council passes on applicants for enrollment in the project and decides as a unit for or against admittance.

On February 1, 1944, there were twenty-two members on the Litchfield Apprentice Farmer project. Twenty were married and most had children. Seven were natives of Arizona, six of New Mexico; two each of California, Missouri, and Texas; and one each of Illinois, Oklahoma, and Utah. Several born in other states came to the project from Arizona communities. From its beginning, a total of fifty-five young men enrolled in the project. Some have resigned, some are in the armed forces, the others remain. The membership is shown in the accompanying table.

A glance at the numbers resigned as compared with the numbers enrolled shows that eleven out of fifty-five, or 20 per cent, had left the project. Of the remaining forty-four, one half are in the armed forces, leaving twenty-two resident members.
Only a man-by-man study can bring out the reasons why the eleven men left the project, one of them after several years in it.

All seven of the 1937 and 1938 enrollees who remain are land-contract men, having received their contracts December 2, 1943. They are first evidence of the success of the plan of selecting farmers by the method of apprenticeship.

What are the essentials of the Litchfield Apprentice Farmer Plan of selecting young men to become farm owners? Briefly, they are as follows:

1. Preapprentice selection through high-school agricultural-education departments and performance in the Future Farmers of America organization.
2. Approval by the project council functioning as a selection board and thoroughly considering the qualifications of each applicant.
3. One year's trial as a laborer on Goodyear Farms with beginnings of individual enterprise through livestock purchase.
4. Share-crop status on individual farms.
5. Advancement to cash-lease status after satisfactory performance as share-tenant and on guarantee-lease.
6. Experience as operator, including making of budgets and crop plans, accounting for farm and household expenditures.
7. Experience as member of co-operative enterprises and as neighbor.
8. Evidence of ability to manage own enterprise, resulting in accumulation of capital to lay down one fifth of the purchase price of an 80-acre farm on a fifteen-year land contract.

What are the qualifications desired in applicants for a place in the Apprentice Farmer Plan? In brief they may be stated as follows:

1. Youth, sound body and mind, good health, ambition.
2. Farm background, high-school level of education, and limited financial opportunity.
3. Strong desire to become a farm owner and willingness to undergo hardship to achieve this end.
4. Capacity to maintain personal integrity and stability in the face of unpleasantness and disappointment in human relationships.

5. Industry, thrift, foresight, and the sturdiness of character requisite to make the land yield a living.

What are the criteria for the final acceptance of an apprentice farmer as a farm-owner-operator? In brief terms, and without any considerable detail, the measuring sticks used in selecting the men who become the pioneers in the apprentice farmer plan are:

1. High-school record with attention to grades, extent and quality of activity in the Future Farmers of America organization, interest in agriculture.

2. Agricultural background, but limited opportunity of becoming an independent farmer.

3. Performance in agricultural squadron on Goodyear Farms, the first year of formal apprenticeship.

4. Performance in class instruction in marketing, financing, and budgeting during the year in the agricultural squadron.

5. Extent of savings and investment in stock and implements during early years of apprenticeship.

6. Opinions of fellow apprentice farmers as to neighborliness, co-operativeness, and general value as a neighbor.

7. Improvements on farm unit indicating intention to develop farm to a high level of productivity.

8. Improvements in farm home and grounds, indicating a desirable standard of living for self and family.

9. Extent of savings and investment in stock and implements after a period of years, as indicative of ability to carry and liquidate debt in land, thus achieving ownership of an 80-acre farm unit.

10. Indications of capacity and industriousness, sufficient to operate successfully and finally own a 160-acre farm under irrigation.

How is the Apprentice Farmer Project financed? It is a private enterprise financed from private funds. The Chairman of the Board of Directors of the sponsoring corporation says, "There are two major keystones in this plan:

1. "That the apprentices be given thorough training in the management and operation of their 80-acre tracts.

2. "That the price of the land they are acquiring be fixed upon a basis of its fair earning capacity rather than on any speculative or promotional considerations."

It may well be said of the young families whose homes are on the project that they "have found no life of ease, with a benevolent sponsor committed always to smooth the way. True, they have many advantages flowing from that sponsorship which they could not enjoy otherwise; but there is still emphasis upon the sturdy characteristics of industry, thrift, foresight—which alone wring a livelihood from the soil."
BRIEF APPRAISAL OF EXPERIENCE IN SELECTING SETTLERS

Mormon experience in the West has demonstrated the value of a religious sanction in selecting settlers for the difficult task of subduing the desert and establishing permanent settlements under irrigation.

As to settlement under the Homestead Act, it was largely individualized. The give and take of those hard years, before reclamation works afforded some assurance of a water supply for the fields throughout the season, resulted in a more or less rigorous selection of settlers. Some have stayed through the years, largely because they were willing to try again and to learn when they did try again. It is probable that no amount of preliminary selection of applicants for reclaimed lands can obviate final selection by trial and error, the only method known to early homesteaders. A sort of "natural selection" will continue to play a large part in determining who remains on a project and who moves off because he cannot or will not make a go of it.

Experience gained by the Reclamation Service in rating applicants for farms has demonstrated that industry and character should be rated at least equally with capital and farm experience. Recent selection practices show this. All rating methods show need of improvement, first in the criteria selected, and second in the reliability and accuracy of the information on the basis of which judgment as to the prospective settler's qualifications is to be made. It has been found that ratings on character fall far short of accuracy and usefulness in selecting and rejecting applicants for reclaimed farms. While the same may be said of the ratings of other qualifications, it has been with respect to character that the most evident shortcomings have appeared.

Resettlement experience in selecting settlers has been most distinctive in the use of the case method of family study preliminary to acceptance or rejection. Emphasis has been laid upon the qualifications of the members of the applicant's family as well as upon his own. This consideration has been greatly needed, and the experience of the Resettlement Administration in applying the case method to settler selection should not be overlooked by selection boards.

The State Land Settlements contribute to our knowledge of successful selection of settlers in the sense that promises by the state should be definite and embodied in written agreements, if made at all. Most certainly they should not be in the form of implications to be deducted from promotion literature or from conversation with state employees in charge of the settlements. Also, and of utmost importance, is the physical condition of the project both as to land and irrigation works with respect to prospects of crop production. There are physical requisites to the success of a project for the absence of which no amount of settler selection can compensate.
As to experience with apprentice farmers, the value of youth along with a degree of maturity becomes evident. Expert guidance finds in youth a flexibility of mind requisite to success under that kind of system. This quality does not always go with youth, nor is it necessarily absent from maturer minds, but it is necessary if guidance is to be effective. Another contribution to our knowledge of selection comes from the apprentice farmer's experience with group enterprises such as co-operatives. Strengthening the individual by group action in owning heavy machinery, for example, results not only in his greater opportunity to succeed as a farmer, but also in his greater experience in teamwork as applied to farming. This operates as a selective agent as well.
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