


Benson contends that the background for much of Steinbeck’s depiction of migrant life in The Grapes of Wrath, came not only from Collins’ camp reports, but also from the influence and friendship of Tom Collins, to whom the second part of the novel is dedicated. Hired in 1935 by the Resettlement Administration (later called the Farm Security Administration), Collins served as manager of the first migrant camp program in California. By 1936, Collins’ contributions to the camp program were becoming legend. When Steinbeck went to the Division of Information offices for help with a series of articles on the migrants, he was directed to Tom Collins at the Weedpatch camp. Benson credits Collins with the most important contribution to The Grapes of Wrath; that is, "the spirit at the heart of the novel, rather than…the details and color of its surface."

"Big Celebration at Migratory Camp." Terra Bella News (Tulare County Library, Visalia) 1941 September 5: ?.


California’s State Chamber of Commerce offers a recommendation to solve California’s migrant farm labor problem. Chief among Chamber report suggestions: (1) Federal relief programs should be increased in states of out-migration, and local and state support should be encouraged by federal matching grants; (2) FSA camps should be continued as an emergency measure; (3) Farmers must develop permanent housing facilities on their own land; and (4) State Employment Service should be re-organized to serve California’s needs more adequately.


Surveys everyday life and social relations in Arvin's Migratory Labor Camp near Bakersfield, California, one of eighteen camps in California that the Farm Security Administration was operating for migrant workers in 1940.


Camp nurse's attempt to educate "dust bowlers" about personal hygiene and preventative medicine as she contends with home remedies and superstition. For many "dust bowlers" life in the migratory labor camp was an improvement over the poverty and starvation they experienced since leaving their farms in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, and Kansas. Condescending article portraying the ignorance of migrants toward health care and nutrition. Reflects the prevailing view of migrants as shiftless and illiterate.

"Care of Transients this Winter to be Along Broader Lines." *Shafter Progress* September 1, 1933: 1.


Cotton pickers demonstration in Phoenix, Arizona in protest over their living conditions. Spokesman for the group claimed some 2,000 persons were "lured to Arizona by advertisements" promising work only to find themselves living in squalor outside the city limits.


"If there is no mob action and everyone goes home," declared Governor Stanford to the organizers of the Committee for Industrial Organization, he would see to it that the destitute pea pickers residing in the squalid camps west of Phoenix would receive aid. However, only six case workers would be assigned to assess the needs of the families. "It is the best we can do," said the secretary of the Maricopa County Board of Social Security and Welfare. "And to do that much, we will be taking food out of the mouths of Arizona residents." Governor Stanford intends to "evolve a plan" by which to return the pea pickers to their home states.


Sociological study of "Little Oklahoma" that includes supporting materials, surveys, along with supplementary tables. Author concludes that these refugees succeeded because they ceased to be migrants and instead became part of an established group. Through their hard work they contributed to the community as "substantial and valuable members of society."


As Acting Director of the Personnel and Labor Relations Division of the FSA, Evans discusses the factors which prompted the FSA to provide decent living conditions for the migrant farms workers living in California in mid-1930s.


Discusses the character, motivation, and the opportunity of the migratory farm labor groups as they moved across the country in search of work. Department of Agriculture’s efforts to alleviate the social and economic conditions of the agricultural workers were organized into three phases: 1) direct amelioration of conditions through the development of a labor camp program; 2) partial stabilization of farm labor families through the development of labor homes and gardens; 3) reestablishment of migratory farm families as independent farm operators.

"Farm Bureau Group Hears Advantages Clean Camps for Migratory Labor." *Bakersfield Californian* October 26, 1937: 5.


"First Lady Sheds Light on Problem of Migrants." *Fresno Bee* December 13, 1940.

Food Rushed to Starving Farm Colony." *The San Francisco News* March 10, 19??: ??.


Fruit pickers living in "jungles" around Marysville and Yuba City live in abject poverty. According to Girvin, the majority of these "jungle inhabitants" are former owners of small farms in the Great Plains forced because of drought, insects, and dust. However, social workers, according to Girvin, claim that the "Sacramento valley jungles...are clean respectable compared to conditions in Kern County." Migrants in the Buttonwillow, Buena Vista and Tuckerton live in "almost unimaginable filth—festering sores of miserable humanity."


Argues that migration from Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri, and Arkansas to California was not limited to the 1930s but had been occurring since the 1910s and lasted into the 1960s, that not all of them were poor sharecroppers, and that the employment opportunities presented to them by the state’s emerging aerospace industry let many escape farming but did little to attenuate their identity as a
group, which could be succinctly described as populist yet conservative in politics, evangelically religious, and fiercely self-conscious, especially through country music.


"Housing Officials Plan Fight To Get State Authority.” The Sacramento Bee March 9, 1940: ??.

Story on establishment of state housing authority.


Committee appointed to inquire into the interstate migration of destitute citizens, to study, survey and investigate the social and economic needs and the movement of indigent persons across state lines.


Defines elements that give the migrant worker the appearance of a separate “ethnic group” in some California communities. Author sees their organization into unions for collective bargaining as a way of improving their economic position. The problem in California in adjusting to this influx of migrant families is unique and has made their permanent absorption into the community a difficult and slow process.


Discusses the problem of transient farm labor in the Pacific coast states citing two Farm Security Administration (FSA) measures that helped improve the social and economic conditions of these agricultural workers: (1) a socialized health program that would benefit the general welfare of farm laborers; and (2) the development of a chain of sanitary farm labor campus financed mainly by the federal government that improved their standard of living.

"Local Officials Seek $120,000 in Federal Care of Migrant Groups.” Bakersfield Californian January 27, 1938: 13.


"Migrant Flow Held Peril to State Living Standards.” Bakersfield Californian March 20, 1940: 1.


Assesses the condition of migrant families in Kern County through an analysis of records relating to their use of public assistance, records to which the author had personal access as a former county employee. Among its findings are that although one-third were single-parent families, three-fourths of their children attended public school and often had average or above average IQ scores. As for their use of public assistance, it finds that only one-third of the families surveyed applied within a year of entering the county, apparently preferring to rely on their earnings than to accept county charity.


"New Camp Ground for Transients." *Shafter Progress* January 19, 1934:


"No Work, No Eat Plan Inaugurated in Tulare County." *Fresno Bee* April 17, 1934: 1.


Surveys the size and condition of the transient population in California by investigating its presence in the largest cities and presents proposals for its care by public agencies. It finds that transients are usually those displaced by economic change such as natural disasters and mechanization and that the continued public neglect of their poverty poses a substantial threat to the state. It therefore urges renewed requests for federal aid, expansion of county assistance to improve their health and employment, and greater uniformity in settlement laws to allow them a fairer chance at establishing residency.

"Poor Housing In Sutter and Yuba Is Investigated." *The Sacramento Bee* April 23, 1940: ??.

"Public is Shown Migrant Camp at Farmersville." *Fresno Bee* March 6, 1941.

"Red Cross Drive to Aid Victims in Drought Area." *Wasco News* January 30, 1931: 1.

"Relief Appeals Heard by Governor Stanford." *Arizona Republic* October 31, 1937.

"Relief Camps to Close as Conditions Improve." *Wasco News* April 1, 1932: 7.

"Relief for Needy." *Wasco News* December 5, 1930: 10.
Sanders, Mae. ‘Authorities Predict Increase in Migrant Flow to Kern Soon.” Bakersfield Californian August 7, 1939: 9.


__________. “Growers Are Providing Housing for Workers.” Bakersfield Californian August 16, 1939: 9.


“State Chamber Committee Studies Valley Conditions.” Bakersfield Californian January 15, 1940: 15.


Case study of a family of twelve, whose migrations up and down the San Joaquin Valley, California began in April 1935. David Krause, father, was born in Russian in 1889 and emigrated to North Dakota with his two brothers to work on his uncle’s farm in 1903, becoming a U.S. citizen in 1917. He married Sophie Werner in 1910. After twenty years of struggling and eleven children they sold their North Dakota farm and headed for Idaho in 1929, where they worked as seasonal laborers. In 1934, the entire family headed for California, as there was not enough work in Idaho. Their repeated efforts to get public relief in Idaho and California were thwarted by the bureaucracy that required them to live in one place for a minimum of six months prior to applying for aid. By mid-December 1935, the family was receiving no assistance from California’s State Relief Administration or any local agency. The outlook for the family was bleak as the attitude of the townspeople made it unlikely that the Krause family would receive much help. The author describes the Krauses as “honest, industrious, fundamentally healthy...potentially useful citizens who are facing starvation and there is no machinery to deal with their problems.”


Report cites the industrialization of California agriculture as the reason for the increase in migrants to California. Underhill provides information collected at grower-owned farm labor camps in Merced, Madera, and Fresno Counties, in the neighborhoods of Madera, Los Banos, Dos Palos and Firebaugh. Data includes: family size, income, residence status, previous occupations, relief received by 132 families including Mexican, white, black and Native American. The statistical tables emphasize the health situation of children, including nutrition, infections, hygiene, tuberculosis, congenital defects. Underhill concludes that although considered "migratory," most in study remained in the county. Many
migrant families do not receive relief; non-residents do not receive medical care and are unable to pay for private medical care. Those migrants who are residents often do not take advantage of medical services. Recommends that state and federal agencies should pay for the improvement of the poor conditions under which migrant families live.


U.S. Migratory Camp is Opened at Farmersville." Fresno Bee December 18, 1938: 1.


Report on the characteristics and activities of Depression migrant families who received relief from the transient program of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). Report debunks stereotypical misconceptions of migrants as irresponsible, chronic wanderers. Suggests as solution to the transient migrant relief problem the elimination of state settlement requirements which designate transient as a separate category. Contains detailed analysis of 5,489 migrant families selected from the total number receiving care in transient bureaus during September 1935. Includes reasons for migration, family histories, origins and movement, personal characteristics, such as composition of migrant families, age, ethnicity, citizenship, marital status, and education, among others. Contains tables and figures. Concludes that the transient relief problem is national; the solution is Federal leadership.


Describes how the city of Fresno has operated a shelter camp for migrants during the agricultural off-season over the past six years in order to reduce surges in the crime rate due to vagrancy exacerbated by cold and hunger. Migrants earn their keep by working on municipal projects and a committee headed by the mayor administers the camp. Surveys of the migrants show that they are generally honest and appreciate the camp's services, especially since work is difficult to find in the Central Valley.