

SOLDIERS WHO WOULD SETTLE ON THE LAND

ANALYSIS OF FIGURES GATHERED AT THE FRONT

Information obtained by Registration Cards in France deals only with Men who expressed wish to go on the Land after War.

Over 105,000 members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force have expressed the definite wish to take up farming in Canada after the war. This figure was obtained by interviewing 230,000 members of the forces overseas, and indicates that 43.9 per cent of those men wish to go on the land. The actual number of men returning after the war will be much greater. If it should be, for example, 345,000, on the assumption that the same proportion holds true, the number of men desiring to go on the land will be 157,500.

These facts and a great many details bearing on them have been compiled by the statistical division of the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-Establishment from the cards issued by the National Service Council to members of the Canadian forces overseas and signed by them. The facts given represent the men's own statements of their intentions, and in most cases there can be no doubt of their sincerity, as perusal will show.

The provinces in which they wish to settle are as follow:—

Ontario.....	25,400
Alberta.....	23,072
British Columbia.....	15,135
Saskatchewan.....	15,108
Manitoba.....	11,708
Nova Scotia.....	3,533
Quebec.....	3,330
New Brunswick.....	2,831
Prince Edward Island.....	816
Province not stated.....	4,518

Of these 105,000 the cards disclose that 78,000, or 74 per cent, have had previous agricultural experience. The number of men who have had three years' experience or more is 61,000, or 58 per cent, and the surprising number who have had twenty years' experience or over is 11,000, or almost 11 per cent.

FARM ATTRACTS THEM.

That this declaration represents a substantial prospective increase in the agricultural population is revealed by the fact that of the 105,000

men who wish to go on the land, fewer than 41,000 were actively engaged in agricultural pursuits at the time of enlistment.

The men were asked to state whether they desired to take advantage of any scheme of assisted agricultural settlement, and almost 96,000, or 89 per cent, stated that they wished to avail themselves of such assistance. The number who declined to accept Government assistance was over 6,000, or about 7 per cent. The remainder gave indefinite answers.

A further surprising fact was revealed that practically 50,000 of the 105,000 announced their willingness to work for wages to gain experience. The number who declined to work for wages was over 42,000, but this is easily accounted for by the fact already mentioned that 61,000 have had three years' experience or more.

In reference to the distribution of these men, it is noted that 72 per cent wish to take up land in the province from which they enlisted.

AVERAGE SAVINGS \$350.

Another question the men were asked to answer is how much money they expected to have at their disposal on their return to Canada. Only 38,000 answered this question with a sum of money, over 66,000 either stating that they had no money or not answering the question. Nevertheless, it was revealed that these 38,000 men would have an aggregate of \$13,000,000 at their disposal after the war. This would make an average for the 38,000 of approximately \$350, or an average for the 105,000 of \$130. These amounts are almost entirely exclusive of deferred pay, and as the cards were signed early in 1917, prior to the voting of three months' pay to every man on his discharge, another \$100 per man can be added, making a total of over \$24,000,000.

COMMENT ON RESULTS OBTAINED FROM CARDS

One of the first questions which is naturally asked concerning the results shown by the National Service Cards is, "Can these answers be taken as sincere? Are the Statistics genuine?" Some of the tests which have been made indicate one thing and others what is almost opposite.

One comment that has been made is that question 16 on the card: "Do you desire to take advantage of any available scheme of assisted agricultural settlement?" led a number of men to state that they wished to take up farming and that they wished to take advantage of any assistance offered, not because of any serious intention to go on the land but because they do not wish to debar themselves from getting any benefits that were coming to them

for their service overseas. In their minds was the reservation that if it was not agreeable to them they would not go on the land. It is notable in this connection that only 6,239, or approximately 7 per cent of those who wish to go on the land declined the government assistance, while the number giving indefinite answers was slightly over 3,000.

SUSPICIOUS OF QUESTION.

Question 15 asked "How much money do you expect to have at your disposal on your return to Canada?" Only 38,000 of the 105,000 answered this question with a sum of money. One deduction which has been made is that those 38,000 men indicated their extreme sincerity when they mentioned that they expected

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS DISCLOSED BY 230,000 NATIONAL SERVICE CARDS SIGNED BY SOLDIERS OVERSEAS IN APRIL, 1917, AND ANALYZED BY STATISTICAL DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOLDIERS' CIVIL RE-ESTABLISHMENT.

(Published by Authority of the Minister).

Soldiers interviewed..... 230,000

Wish to farm after war..... 105,451 or 43%

Number. Percentage.

Of 105,451 who wish to farm:

Have had previous experience.....	78,634	74.6%
Have had 3 years experience or more...	61,352	58.2%
Have had 20 years experience or more...	11,343	10.7%
Actively engaged in agriculture on enlistment.....	40,859	38.7%
Expect to have money at disposal on return to Canada.....	38,663	36.7%
Total amount money expected.....	\$13,673,800	
Average per man of 38,663.....	\$	350
Average per man of 105,451.....	\$	130

Favor government scheme of assisted agricultural settlement.....	95,964	89. %
Declined government assistance.....	6,239	7. %

Balance gave indefinite answers.

Will work for wages to gain experience.	49,741	47. %
Declined to work for wages, etc.....	42,051	40. %

Balance gave indefinite answers.

Wish to farm in province from which they enlisted.....	75,893	72.1%
Wish to farm in Prince Edward Island.	816	
" " " Nova Scotia	3,533	
" " " New Brunswick	2,831	
" " " Quebec	3,330	
" " " Ontario	25,400	
" " " Manitoba	11,708	
" " " Saskatchewan	15,108	
" " " Alberta	23,072	
" " " British Columbia	15,135	

Province not stated..... 4,518

Single men, 74,904; Married men, 29,110;

Widowers, 1,437.

Having no dependents.....	51,127	48.5%
Total number of dependents.....	73,131	
Having no children.....	83,345	79. %
Total number of children.....	55,979	

Average age of men who wish to farm, 27;

Average age, Ontario and East, 26.;

Average age, Manitoba and West, 29.;

Average years of experience, 64.

to have a certain sum of money, as the context of the question left the soldier open to make the deduction that the Government might wish to make this scheme on the basis of requiring the man to utilize a large proportion of the money he might have. One returned soldier who was in a military hospital in England when the cards were distributed informed the writer that there was a general suspicion of this question and that, while the other questions, so far as the men in his ward were concerned, were answered sincerely, there was a great deal of ridicule of this question and many of the men declined to state how much money they expected to have.

It is assumed that the answers were not inclusive of deferred pay and it is known that they are exclusive of post discharge pay, which averages about \$100 a man, because post discharge pay had not been voted for at the time the cards were signed.

Two officers who were at the front at the time the cards were distributed were asked for their opinion about the cards and both mentioned that men in their immediate vicinity had the impression that if they said they wished to take up farming after the war, especially under a Government scheme of

assistance, they would be the first ones brought home for demobilization.

It is noted that while 78,000 of the 105,000 men stated that they had had previous agricultural experience, although only 41,000 were actively engaged in agricultural pursuits at the time of enlistment. It is pointed out that these proportions appear to be normal as a great many men have attempted farming at some time or other in their life and failed. Furthermore, the practice every year of taking out a large number of men from eastern Canada to the west to work as harvesters, would give a great many whose habitual occupation is not farming no small amount of experience. Just how much this experience is worth would have to be discovered in each individual case, no doubt.

Over 11,000, almost 11 per cent, stated that they had twenty years' experience of farming or over. If one considered this on the basis of experience in printing or carpentry the figure might be open to serious criticism, as in any such trade it would be assumed that the man did not begin until he was 16 or 17 years of age at least, which would make him 36 or 37 at the time of enlistment.

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