

Source: Lange, Dorothea, and Paul Taylor. *An American Exodus: A Record of Human Erosion*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1969.

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LC-USF346-BN-018271-C

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Please see "The empire of cotton stretches across the
South from the Atlantic to the Pacific." ca. 1935-1938
American Exodus, p. 19 ([View at OAC](#))



“Hoe culture.” Alabama, 1937. LC-USZ6-1028

"The South is poor, the land is poor, the only crop is cotton, the houses are without paint, weeds crowd up to the door, the tenants are ill-clad..."

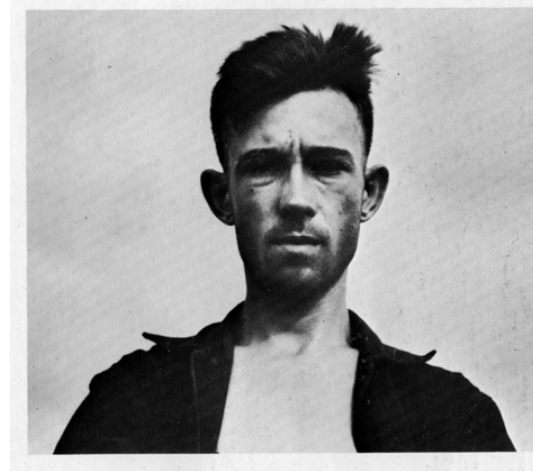
Rupert B. Vance

Alabama, 1937.

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"Old South." Alabama, 1937.

American Exodus, p. 21 left ([View at OAC](#))



"Hit's a hard git-by. The land's just fit fer to hold the world together. We think the landlord ought to let the government have this land and build it up, but he's got money and he don't believe in that way. Between Buck Creek and Whitewater Creek nobody can make a living."
Young sharecropper on \$5/month "furnish"

"A piece of meat in the house would like to scare these children of mine to death."
Neighbor

Macon County, Georgia / July 1937. LC-USF34-017913-C

"I remember when the Yankees come through, a whole passel of 'em hollerin', and told the Negroes you're free. But they didn't get nothin 'cause we had carried the best horses and mules over to the gully."

Couple, born in slavery, on an abandoned 28-family plantation.

Greene County, Georgia / July 1937. LC-USZ62-46679

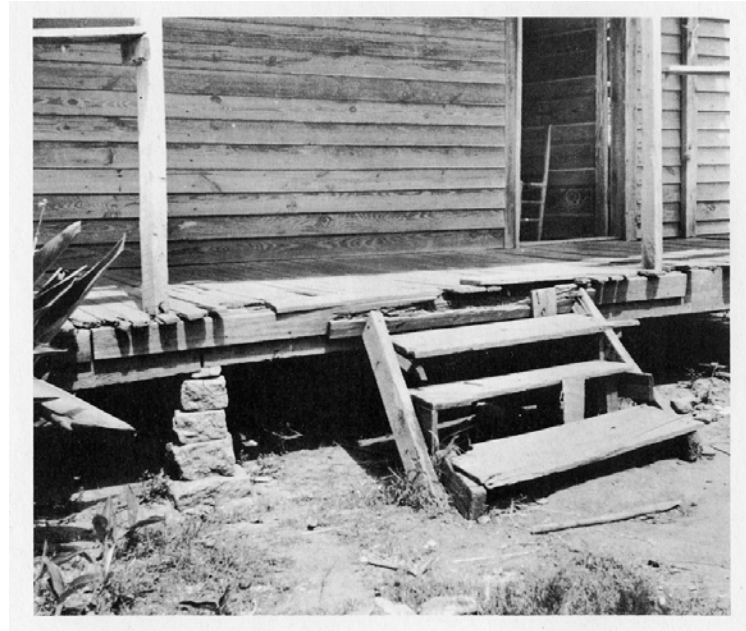




Greene County, Georgia / July 1937. LC-USF34-017944-C

“The Committee’s examination of the agricultural ladder has indicated an increasing tendency for the rungs of the ladder to become bars – forcing imprisonment in a fixed social status from which it is increasingly difficult to escape.”
President’s Committee on Farm Tenancy.

Georgia / 1937. LC-USF34-018030-E



“The collapse of the plantation system, rendered inevitable by its exploitation of land and labor, leaves in its wake depleted soil, shoddy livestock, inadequate farm equipment, crude agricultural practices, crippled institutions, a defeated and impoverished people.”

Arthur F. Raper

Georgia / July 1937. LC-USF34-017941-C



PLANTATION UNDER THE MACHINE

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Pulaski County in the Arkansas Bottoms / June 1938
In *American Exodus*, p. 31 ([View at OAC](#))

Day-labor hoers return to work after lunch on a plantation.

Mississippi / June 1937. LC-USF34-017464-E



MIDCONTINENT

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1) Near Henryetta, eastern Oklahoma / August 1938

In *American Exodus*, p. 47 ([View at OAC](#))

2) “We’re bound for Kingfisher, Oklahoma, to work in the wheat, and Lubbock Texas, to work in the cotton. We’re not trying to, but we’ll be in California yet.” *Family with seven children from Paris, Arkansas, on the highway near Webber Falls.*

Oklahoma / June 1938.

In *American Exodus*, p. 48 ([View at OAC](#))

3) Driving home from California: “People aren’t friendly like they are here, but they appreciate the cheap labor coming out. When there’s a rush for work they’re friendlier than at other times.”

Canadian County, Oklahoma / August 1938

In *American Exodus*, p. 52 ([View at OAC](#))

PLAINS



Vacant farmhouse in area of mechanization and drought near Olustee, Oklahoma. LC-USF34-018263-C

DUST BOWL



Abandoned farm in the Dust Bowl. Coldwater District, near Dalhart TX. LC-USF34-018260-C

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“If you die, you’re dead – that’s all.”

Texas Panhandle / 1938.

In *American Exodus*, p. 81 ([View at OAC](#))

LAST WEST 1939

ME
TRAIN
acific



TRAVEL WHILE
YOU SLEEP



San Joaquin Valley, CA / November 1938. LC-USF34-018619-



LC-USF34-018302-E

“People just can’t make it back there, with drought, hailstorms, windstorms, duststorms, insects. People exist here and they can’t do that there. You can make it here if you sleep lots and eat little, but it’s pretty tough, there are so many people. They chase them out of one camp because they say it isn’t sanitary – there’s no running water – so people live out here in the brush like a den o’ dogs or pigs.”
Tenant farmer from Cook County, TN, in the brush with his six children

Wasco, CA / June 1938. LC-USF34-016311-E





LC-USF347-000826-D

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21A.348 / CMS.835 Photography and Truth
Spring 2008

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