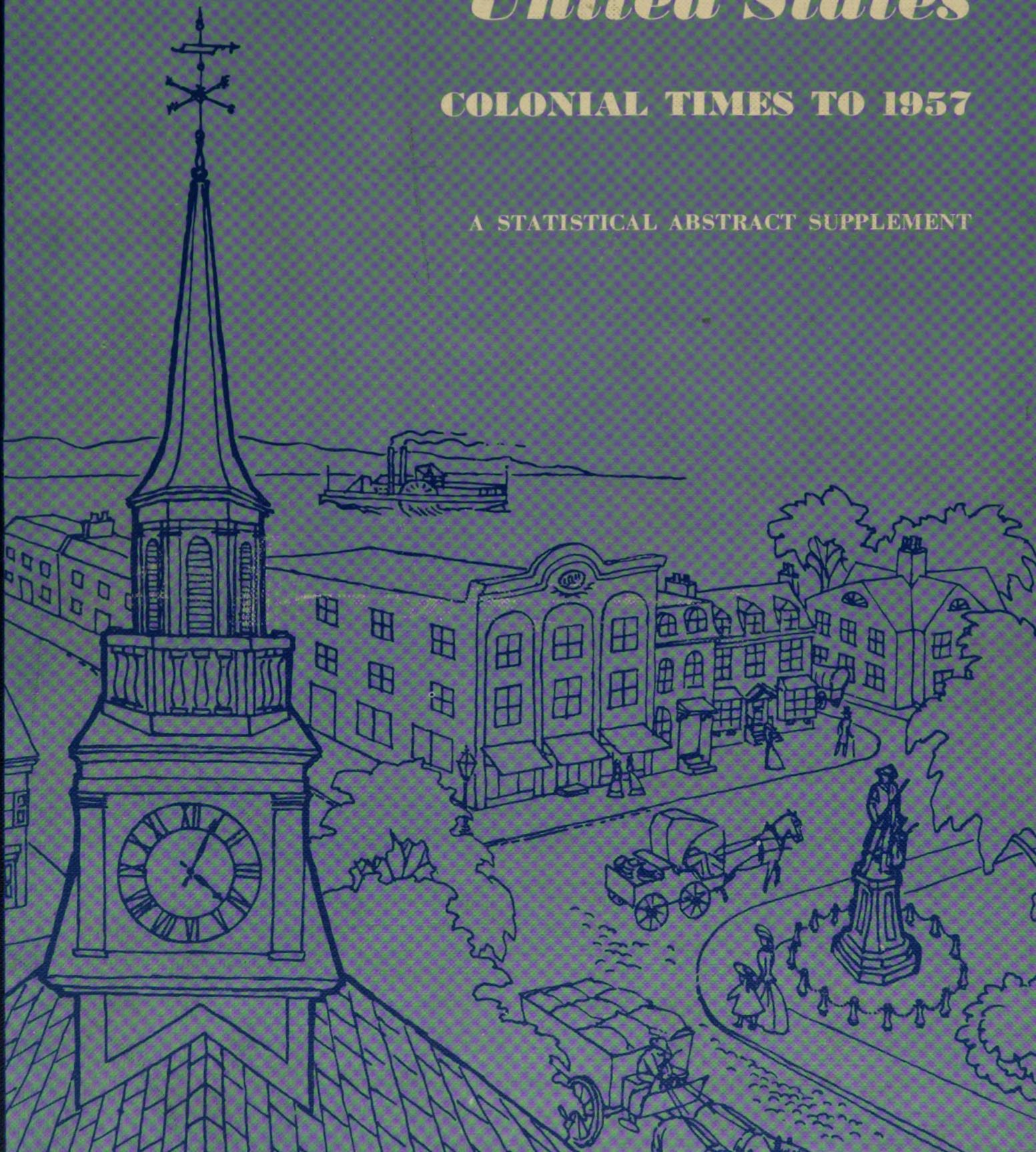


***HISTORICAL
STATISTICS of the
United States***

COLONIAL TIMES TO 1957

A STATISTICAL ABSTRACT SUPPLEMENT



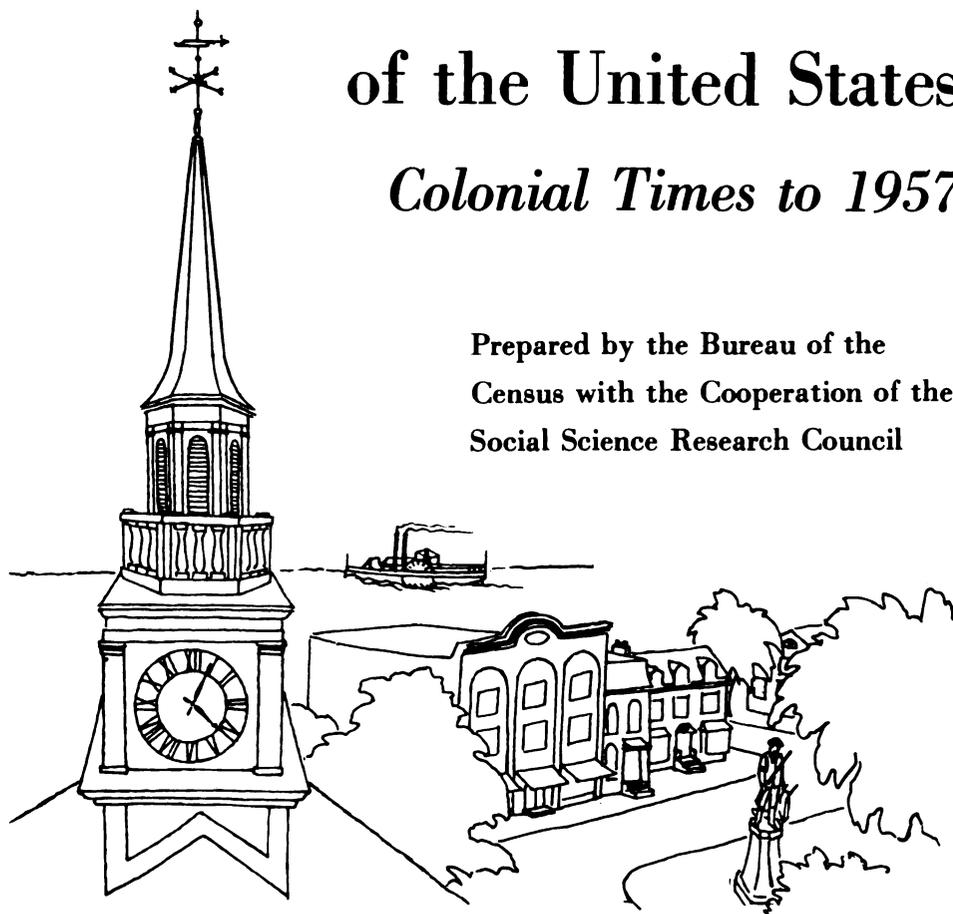
A STATISTICAL ABSTRACT SUPPLEMENT

HISTORICAL STATISTICS

of the United States

Colonial Times to 1957

Prepared by the Bureau of the
Census with the Cooperation of the
Social Science Research Council



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This volume stems from a joint interest by the Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council. It was planned, assembled, edited, and published by the Bureau, with the advice and assistance of the Committee on Historical Statistics appointed by the Council. Many other individuals and agencies cooperated and made significant contributions to this project. General acknowledgments for each chapter are presented on p. VII; other acknowledgments frequently appear in the text discussions of the various chapters.

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Contents

[The numbers following subjects are series numbers]

Chapter	Page
Acknowledgments for Chapter Contributions	VII
Introduction	IX
A. Population	1
Area and population (A 1-21)—Sex, color, age, residence, nativity, and race (A 22-122)—Population for States (A 123-180)—Urban and rural places (A 181-209)—Marital status and households (A 210-263).	
B. Vital Statistics and Health and Medical Care	
VITAL STATISTICS	17
Registration area and summary data (B 1-9)—Birth rates and reproduction rates (B 10-75)—Life expectancy (B 76-100)—Death rates (B 101-175)—Marriage and divorce rates (B 176-179).	
HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE	31
Physicians, dentists, and nurses; and schools, students, and graduates (B 180-194)—Hospitals and beds; and admissions to hospitals (B 195-274)—Reportable diseases (B 275-281).	
C. Migration	
INTERNAL MIGRATION	39
Native population, by place of birth and residence, by color (C 1-24)—Net intercensal migration, white and Negro, by States (C 25-73)—Movement of farm population (C 74-79)—Mobility status of civilian population (C 80-87).	
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION	48
Immigrants by country of origin, occupation, age, and sex (C 88-138)—Aliens admitted, deported, departing, and excluded (C 139-157)—Naturalization and citizenship status (C 158-184)—Nativity of foreign parents of native-white population (C 185-217)—Foreign-born population, by country of birth (C 218-233).	
D. Labor	
LABOR FORCE	67
Labor force status of the population (D 1-12)—Age, sex, color, and marital status of women (D 13-45)—Unemployment (D 46-47)—Industrial and occupational distributions (D 48-572).	
HOURS, WAGES, AND WORKING CONDITIONS	79
Hours, wages, and earnings, by industry, occupation, profession, degree of skill, sex, and union status (D 573-707 and D 728-734)—Supplements to wages (D 708-727)—Union membership (D 735-763)—Work stoppages (D 764-773)—Labor turnover (D 779-784)—Work-injury frequency rates (D 785-792).	
E. Prices and Price Indexes	101
Wholesale price indexes (E 1-100)—Wholesale prices of commodities (E 101-112)—Consumer price indexes (E 113-156)—Cost-of-living indexes (E 157-160)—Retail prices of foods (E 161-176)—Retail price indexes for utilities and fuel (E 177-185)—Rent indexes (E 186).	
F. National Income and Wealth	
NATIONAL PRODUCT AND INCOME	131
Gross national product in current and constant prices (F 1-9)—Value added, by industry group (F 10-21)—National income, by industrial origin and type of income (F 22-43 and F 49-66)—Gross domestic product, by major sector (F 44-48)—Gross and net national product, by type of product (F 67-157).	
NATIONAL WEALTH AND SAVING	145
National balance sheet (F 158-196)—National wealth, by type of assets (F 197-251)—Gross private, personal, and Government saving (F 252-345).	
G. Consumer Income and Expenditures	
FAMILY AND INDIVIDUAL INCOME	159
Distribution of families and individuals and personal income, by income level (G 1-98)—Percent of income received by each fifth, and by upper income groups (G 99-117 and G 131-146)—Average family personal income before and after Federal taxes (G 118-130)—Median wage income, by characteristics of recipients (G 147-190).	
CONSUMER EXPENDITURE PATTERNS	169
Personal consumption expenditures, by type of product (G 191-243)—Family expenditures, for urban and farm-operator families, by income class of family, by type of product (G 244-543)—Food indexes and nutrients available (G 544-551)—Per capita food consumption (G 552-584).	
	III

CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
H. Social Statistics	
SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE	189
Social welfare expenditures (H 1-45)—Workers and payrolls covered by social insurance programs (H 46-67)—Benefits and beneficiaries under social insurance and related programs (H 68-114)—Old-age, survivors, and disability insurance (H 115-161)—Unemployment insurance, and workmen's compensation (H 162-185)—Public assistance, and old-age assistance (H 186-212)—Child health and welfare services (H 213-222).	
EDUCATION	202
Elementary and secondary schools: Enrollment, attendance, graduates, teachers, public and private, receipts and expenditures, and subjects taught (H 223-315)—Institutions of higher education: Number, faculty, enrollment, degrees conferred, income, expenditures, plant fund operations (H 316-373)—Enrollment and years of school completed (H 374-406)—Illiteracy (H 407-411).	
CRIME AND CORRECTION	215
Prisoners in, and released from, Federal and State institutions (H 412-431)—Prisoners executed (H 432-444)—Urban crime (H 445-451)—Lynching (H 452-454).	
RECREATION	219
National parks, monuments, and allied areas (H 455-470)—National forest lands (H 471-474)—State parks (H 475-487)—Municipal recreation (H 488-499)—Recreation expenditures (H 500-515)—Selected recreational activities (H 516-525).	
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION	226
Church denominations, members, and edifices (H 526-530)—Membership of religious bodies (H 531-543).	
J. Land, Water, and Climate	
LAND AND WATER UTILIZATION	231
Territorial expansion (J 1-9)—Public lands, revenues and receipts from public domain, timber sales, grazing, leases, land sales and grants (J 10-48)—Land utilization and ownership (J 49-79)—Drainage and irrigation (J 80-90)—Water use and water wells (J 91-108).	
CLIMATE	241
Temperature and precipitation, for benchmark stations (J 109-245)—Temperature and precipitation for long-record city stations (J 246-265).	
K. Agriculture	257
Farms: Number, acreage, value, and color and tenure of farm operators (K 1-52)—Farm mortgage status, and size of farm (K 53-72)—Farm employment, wages, man-hours, and productivity (K 73-97)—Crop acreage and production (K 98-103)—Supply-utilization of farm food (K 104-115)—Farm taxes and insurance, cash receipts, income, indexes of prices received and paid, and parity ratios (K 116-149)—Machinery, equipment, and fertilizer (K 150-161)—Debt, loans, interest, and country bank deposits (K 162-180)—Associations (K 181-189)—Livestock, meats, dairying, wool, and poultry (K 190-253)—Production, acreage, and price for specific crops (K 254-315); for fruits (K 316-328).	
L. Forestry and Fisheries	
FORESTS AND FOREST PRODUCTS	305
National forests: Areas, purchases, timber cut, and receipts from, and payments to, States (L 1-22)—Lumber production, imports, exports, and new supply (L 23-60)—Timber products and prices (L 61-97)—Forest fires (L 98-109).	
FISHERIES	319
Yield and value (L 110-115)—Landed catches of principal species, by region (L 116-154)—Disposition of catch (L 155-163)—Production, imports, and value of fishery products (L 164-202)—Sponge sales, sealskins obtained, and whale production (L 203-206).	
M. Minerals	331
Summary (M 1-12)—Value and production of mineral products (M 13-77)—Consumption (M 78-87)—Fuels (M 88-177)—Nonmetals (M 178-194)—Metals (M 195-258)—Injuries and fatalities (M 259-274).	
N. Construction and Housing	
CONSTRUCTION	373
Value of private and public construction (N 1-60)—Indexes of building activity (N 61-67)—Construction contracts awarded (N 68-84)—Cost indexes (N 85-105).	
HOUSING	387
Dwelling units started (N 106-115)—Units standing and in Federal programs (N 116-128)—Residential wealth (N 129-138)—Occupied dwelling units and tenure of homes (N 139-146)—Residential price indexes, mortgage debt, finance programs, and foreclosures (N 147-195)—Savings and loan associations (N 196-203).	
P. Manufactures	401
Summary (P 1-10)—Capital in major industries (P 14-133)—Form of ownership (P 134-137)—Wage earners (P 138-146)—Production, by industry and for commodities (P 11-13 and P 147-232)—Capacity of industries (P 233-249)—Value of output of commodities (P 250-306).	

CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
Q. Transportation	
RAIL TRANSPORTATION -----	423
Intercity freight traffic (Q 1-11)—Transportation indexes (Q 12-14)—Summary of early railroads (Q 15-42)—Mileage and equipment (Q 43-65)—Passenger and freight operations (Q 66-94)—Capital, income, expenses, and tax accruals (Q 95-123)—Mileage in receivership, grade crossings, fuel received, and crossings (Q 124-137)—Pullman operations (Q 138-140)—Employment and accidents (Q 141-152).	
WATER TRANSPORTATION -----	438
Merchant vessels, by type and region (Q 153-190)—Persons entering by ship (Q 191)—Capacity of vessels entered and cleared (Q 192-203)—Waterborne imports and exports and domestic cargo (Q 204-229)—Freight on the Great Lakes and through canals (Q 230-244)—River and harbor expenditures (Q 245).	
HIGHWAY TRANSPORTATION -----	456
Rural and municipal mileage (Q 246-259)—Federal-aid highways (Q 260-264)—State and local highway finances (Q 265-309)—Motor vehicles, fuel usage, and travel (Q 310-327)—Gasoline tax rates (Q 328-329)—Public transit summary (Q 330-341)—Oil pipelines (Q 342-344).	
AIR TRANSPORTATION -----	465
Aircraft production and exports (Q 345-351)—Scheduled domestic and international air travel, revenues and expenses (Q 352-375)—Airports, aircraft, pilots, and miles flown (Q 376-383)—Accidents (Q 384-397).	
R. Communications	
TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH SYSTEMS -----	471
Telephones, calls, and rates (R 1-13)—Bell System summary (R 14-27)—Independent companies summary (R 28-42)—Domestic telegraph industry, and rates (R 43-71)—International telegraph industry and rates (R 72-89).	
RADIO AND TELEVISION -----	487
Stations, sets, and families with sets (R 90-98)—Advertising, finances, and employees (R 99-119)—Safety and special radio stations (R 120-138).	
POSTAL SERVICE, NEWSPAPERS, AND BOOKS -----	493
Post Office finances, rates, and volume of mail (R 139-164)—Books (R 165-168)—Newspapers and periodicals (R 169-186).	
S. Power -----	501
Horsepower of prime movers (S 1-14)—Electric energy production (S 15-35)—Consumption of fuels (S 36-43)—Generating plants and installed capacity (S 44-69)—Residential service and average prices (S 70-80)—Use of electric energy, by type of user (S 81-93).	
T. Distribution and Services -----	513
National income originating, and persons engaged, in selected industries (T 1-22)—Retail sales and establishments, by kind of business (T 23-182)—Chain stores (T 183-187)—Retail margins (T 188-207)—Wholesale trade sales and summary, by kind of business (T 208-302)—Wholesale trade margins (T 303-309)—Selected services establishments and receipts (T 310-345)—Advertising (T 346-351)—Farm-to-retail price spread (T 352-358)—Index of department store sales and stocks (T 359-360)—Hotel operations (T 361-365)—Inventories (T 366-386).	
U. Foreign Trade and Other International Transactions	
FOREIGN TRADE -----	529
Exports, imports, and duties (U 1-45)—Trade related to production (U 46-50)—Value of trade, by customs districts and economic classes (U 51-72)—Value of selected products (U 73-115)—Value, by destination and origin (U 116-151)—U.S. trade, as reported by Canada and Great Britain (U 152-167).	
BALANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PAYMENTS AND INVESTMENT POSITION -----	557
Balance of international payments (U 168-192)—International investment position of U.S. (U 193-207)—Direct investment in foreign countries (U 208-213).	
V. Business Enterprise	
BUSINESS POPULATION -----	567
Firms in operation, new firms, failures, and turnover (V 1-19)—Firms and employment, by size of firm (V 20-29)—Mergers (V 30-31)—Corporations, by industry (V 32-44)—Distribution of corporate income (V 45-56)—Concentration in manufacturing (V 57-64).	
CORPORATE ASSETS, LIABILITIES, AND INCOME -----	574
Balance sheet and income items, by industry and by assets-size classes (V 65-127)—Electric utility industries (V 128-202)—Value of plant and equipment in regulated industries (V 203-216)—Large manufacturing corporations (V 217-237).	

CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
W. Productivity and Technological Development	
PRODUCTIVITY INDEXES	598
Productivity per man-hour and per unit of labor and capital input (W 1-11)—Mining per man-hour (W 12-21)—Manufacturing per man-hour (W 22-38)—Transportation per worker (W 39-44)—Electric utility and distribution output (W 45-47)—Farm output (W 48-51).	
COPYRIGHTS, PATENTS, AND TRADEMARKS	608
Copyright registrations (W 52-65)—Patents filed and issued, by type (W 66-76)—Trademarks (W 77-78).	
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	609
Federal and private industry expenditures, by agency and industry (W 79-121).	
X. Banking and Finance	
BANKING	615
Early State banks and Second Bank of the U.S. (X 1-19)—All banks (X 20-41)—National banks (X 42-63)—Nonnational banks (X 64-96)—All commercial banks (X 97-128)—Bank deposit insurance status (X 129-154)—Branch banking (X 155-164)—Banking suspensions (X 165-191)—Bank earnings and expenses (X 192-215)—Bank debits, deposit turnover, and clearings (X 216-229)—Savings and deposits (X 230-239)—Postal Savings System (X 240-244)—Federal Reserve banks (X 245-265).	
MONEY SUPPLY AND GOLD	644
Bank deposits and currency outside banks (X 266-283)—Currency stock and in circulation (X 284-298)—Gold stock (X 299-304).	
MONEY RATES AND SECURITY MARKETS	650
Short-term interest rates (X 305-313 and X 322-329)—Commercial paper and bankers' acceptances (X 314-321)—Bond and stock yields and prices (X 330-354)—Private and public security issues (X 355-372)—Stock exchange sales (X 373-377)—Margin requirements (X 378-380)—Market credit and brokers' loans (X 381-388).	
CREDIT AND OTHER FINANCE	661
Federal loans (X 389-402)—Credit unions (X 403-414)—Consumer credit (X 415-422)—Net public and private debt (X 423-434).	
PRIVATE INSURANCE	665
Life insurance in force and sales (X 435-444)—Finances of life insurance companies (X 445-468)—Medical care insurance (X 469-482)—Private pension plans (X 483-500).	
Y. Government	
ELECTIONS AND POLITICS	679
Methods of electing presidential electors (Y 1-26)—Electoral and popular vote for President (Y 27-128)—Legislative activity (Y 129-138)—Political party affiliation (Y 139-145 and Y 201-204)—Vote for and apportionment in House of Representatives (Y 146-200).	
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT AND FINANCES	694
Employment and payrolls (Y 205-253)—Federal Government receipts, expenditures, and debt (Y 254-263 and Y 350-383)—Internal revenue collections (Y 264-279)—Income taxes (Y 280-332)—Estate and gift taxes (Y 333-349)—Federal, State, and local governments revenue, by source, and expenditure, by character, object, and function (Y 384-714).	
ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS	731
Characteristics of Armed Forces, by war (Y 715-762)—Military personnel on active duty (Y 763-775)—Veterans in civil life, by war and by age (Y 776-800)—Expenditures for veterans, by war (Y 801-811)—Expenditures for veterans benefits, services, and pensions (Y 812-854).	
Z. Colonial Statistics	
Population (Z 1-20)—Foreign trade: Value of trade, tonnage of ships, coal, fur, indigo, silk, iron, tobacco, tea, rice, slaves, timber products and timber (Z 21-311)—Whaling (Z 312-315)—Wages and prices (Z 316-354)—Money and currency (Z 355-381)—Taxes (Z 382-386)—Diets (Z 387-404).	748
Index	775

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Introduction

This volume is the second in the *Historical Statistics* series issued by the Bureau of the Census as a supplement to the annual *Statistical Abstract of the United States*. The first volume, *Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945*, was published in 1949. It provided, in a single volume, a wide range of series quantifying various aspects of the economic and social development of the Nation. A *Continuation to 1952* was issued in 1954 to provide data for 1946 to 1952 for the series shown in the first volume.

Limited resources confined the scope of the first volume to those data most readily available, usually from governmental sources. Nevertheless, some 3,000 statistical time series were presented. Because of the huge and intricate task of inspection, evaluation, and selection of time series, the compilers recognized from the outset that the first volume would have to serve as a working document to break the ground and set a pattern for a subsequent more comprehensive and definitive volume. The present publication is intended to achieve the purpose foreshadowed in the original volume.

The *Historical Statistics* volumes are designed to bring together historical series of wide general interest and to inform the user where additional data can be found. All of the broad subject areas covered in the first volume have been included and expanded in this volume, and a number of new subjects have been added. The new subjects include consumer expenditure patterns, social security, education, crime and correction, recreation, religious affiliation, climate, communications, distribution and services, business population, corporate assets, research and development, private insurance, Armed Forces and veterans, and colonial statistics.

This volume also presents the results of a complete review of the subject matter shown in the earlier volume. In a number of cases, series in the latter have been replaced or supplemented. Finally, an attempt was made to reduce the unevenness in scope and quality which characterized the text materials in the earlier work. Critical notes have been added along with further bibliographic material, cross references to other statistical compendia, and previously unpublished data (in some instances).

Origin of *Historical Statistics of the United States*

The volume, *Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945*, was formally initiated by a recommendation in 1945 by the Social Science Research Council that the Secretary of Commerce consider compilation and publication by the Bureau of the Census of a source book of economic statistics.

Earlier the same year, J. Frederic Dewhurst urged the development of a historical source book in a proposal to the American Statistical Association and the American Economic Association. A joint committee to explore the practical problems of preparing such a volume was named by these associations, joined by the Economic History Association. Dr. Dewhurst's proposal coincided closely with Bureau of the Census plans, then under consideration, to prepare a historical supplement to the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*. The formal decision in 1945 by the Bureau of the Census to compile and publish such a volume led to the reconstitution of the joint committee, which then became the Social Science Research Council Committee on the Source Book of Historical Statistics, Advisory to the Bureau of the Census.

After the first volume was issued in June 1949, the Economic History Association, in response to a request from the Bureau of the Census, appointed an advisory committee in September 1950 to evaluate the volume and to make specific recommendations affecting the question of its revision. This committee, formally designated as the Committee

of the Economic History Association on the Revision of *Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945*, was under the chairmanship of G. Heberton Evans, Jr., The Johns Hopkins University, and included the following as members: Arthur H. Cole, Harvard University; Shepard Clough, Columbia University; T. C. Cochran, University of Pennsylvania; and Solomon Fabricant, National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc. In April 1952 the committee submitted a report to the Bureau of the Census entitled "On the Revision of *Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945*." The conclusions and comments presented in this report were subsequently influential in getting underway the project for a revised volume.

Both *Historical Statistics* volumes have been prepared by the Bureau of the Census with the cooperation of the Social Science Research Council. A description of the relationship established for the first volume between the Bureau and the Social Science Research Council appears in the introduction to that volume. For the present volume, the Bureau designated a project director who served also as secretary of the Committee on Historical Statistics appointed by the Social Science Research Council to guide the Bureau in the program. The Bureau again assumed the responsibility for publishing the volume as a part of its *Statistical Abstract* program. The Social Science Research Council, in turn, obtained a grant from the Ford Foundation which provided funds for the procurement of services of experts in each field. More than 125 such specialists were engaged (although not all were paid) to serve as consultants. To make further use of the information assembled for this project, the Council also made arrangements with some of the consultants for the preparation of bibliographic essays on statistics in selected fields. Several of these essays have been published in the *Journal of the American Statistical Association*.

The Problem of Historical Statistics

Statistics are an indispensable adjunct to historical analysis. Few fields exist in which qualitative historical records cannot be clarified and enriched by quantitative data. For some time, however, it has been evident that users of historical data are faced with the paradox of overabundance and scarcity. On the one hand, a burdensome multiplicity of sources has frequently to be consulted in order to reconstruct one quantitative aspect of a particular subject. On the other hand, users are confronted just as often by a discouraging barrenness of data, discoverable only after much costly work and delay.

The scattered sources of historical statistics of the United States include the annual reports of the executive heads of the agencies of the Federal Government, reports of special Federal commissions, the volumes of the censuses of the United States, printed debates of the Congress, published reports of committees of the Congress and transcripts of hearings on important legislative measures, published reports and documents of the State governments, statistical publications of private research foundations and organizations and of the universities and colleges of the Nation, together with the great mass of statistical volumes printed by other private organizations and individuals.

It has been noted that on occasion compilers, desiring to save the time and effort required to obtain data directly from the original sources, make use of successive issues of the annual *Statistical Abstract of the United States* to construct long-term time series. The results of such a procedure are not always sound, since the space available in the *Statistical Abstract* for describing major revisions in time series may not permit adequate clarification. Of the many revised figures appearing

INTRODUCTION

in each issue, most revisions apply to the immediate preceding years, but revisions of much earlier years are not uncommon. Moreover, the revisions shown have followed no systematic pattern and may be scattered irregularly over many issues.

Impediments to the use of historical statistics, then, include the initial difficulty of determining whether the data in fact exist, of identifying the public or private document in which the data may be found, of constructing time series where the data may not be arranged in suitable form, and of identifying and interpreting changes in concept and coverage. Definitions employed in published historical tables, moreover, may have to be sought in separate publications if, indeed, they have been published at all.

The objective of the *Historical Statistics* volumes is to provide a convenient reference source which has two functions, *collecting* and *referring*. The *collecting* function consists of assembling, selecting, and arranging data from hundreds of sources and making them available within a single source. The *referring* function consists of text annotations to the data which act as a guide to sources of greater detail. The annotations also define terms used in the tables and include essential qualifying statements.

Planning and Compilation

As a first step in the actual preparation of this volume, the Bureau of the Census, with the advice and cooperation of the Committee on Historical Statistics, prepared a working outline and statement of basic premises to guide the selection of material. After an agreement on a basic framework, responsibility for the duties of "principal" or "review" consultant for specific subjects was assigned either to a Government agency or to an individual specialist.

As stated previously, a number of subjects are included in this volume which were not included in the first. Principal consultants responsible for these subjects had to prepare their material from inception, advise on the series to be used, and prepare descriptive, analytical, and bibliographic notes to accompany the tabular data. All other principal consultants were required to examine the presentation of data in their fields in the first volume and to make detailed recommendations for additions, deletions, and other changes. The relative importance of the data in the first volume had to be judged in light of historical series made available from more recent studies. These studies often contained an abundance of data from which consultants had to select specific series for inclusion here. The accompanying text also had to be prepared. Principal consultants were also called upon to resolve problems that arose during the processing and editing of the material. Review consultants were responsible for critical review of the data and text to be included during each phase of their preparation.

Coordination, final processing, and editing of the materials were carried out by the Bureau of the Census. A multitude of source publications was assembled. Data were excerpted, reviewed, and arranged in appropriate form and sequence. Source citations, text, titles, headnotes, and footnotes were brought into a consistent style and reviewed for clarity. Problems that emerged during preparation and review of the material were resolved in consultation with consultants.

Technical Notes and Explanations

Arrangement of the data. Data are arranged by subject in lettered chapters and numbered series. Subject-listing under chapter titles in the table of contents, together with the index, will facilitate reference, chapter titles being necessarily somewhat arbitrary. Each series or tabular column is assigned a number, the first series in each chapter beginning with 1. Each series is further identified in the table titles and cross references by prefixing the chapter letter. Thus, the 44th series in the chapter on agriculture is designated K 44 to distinguish it from the 44th series in the chapter on transportation designated Q 44. Because of possible confusion with numerals, the capital letters I and O have been omitted in identifying chapters.

All series begin with the most recent year for which data have been obtained and run backward in time. This arrangement was selected because it lent itself to more compact, less space-consuming presentation than the alternative of beginning with the earliest year. Insofar as possible, there are uniformly placed spaces above every year ending in 0 or 5. No data are shown for years subsequent to 1957, because most of the 1958 figures were still unavailable or preliminary at the time this volume was in preparation. Figures for 1958 and later years for most of the current series are presented in the *Statistical Abstract of the United States* beginning with the 1960 edition.

Basic guidelines. Before work was begun on the volume, certain guidelines were established to aid the Census Bureau staff and the consultants in the selection and presentation aspects of the operation. These guidelines, however, were not always rigidly adhered to. The problems encountered because of the scope and the variety of the subject matter and the attempt to achieve a relatively balanced presentation between subject fields made it necessary to modify the rules in a number of places. The guidelines applied and the elements subject to application are discussed below.

Area coverage. Unless otherwise specified, data are for continental United States as of 1958 (i.e., excluding Alaska and Hawaii). In some instances, the sources used for data failed to specify the area covered. Where practicable, the data were examined and the appropriate qualifications were added.

Because of limitations of space, data are not generally shown for regions, States, or localities. Some exceptions were permitted, however, in the following instances: Where regional statistics are essential for correct interpretation of data, such as presentation of merchant marine statistics separately for each coast and for inland waters; where data in the subject field cannot (by definition) be summarized effectively for continental United States, such as internal migration data; where summary data for a given subarea or market are indicative of general trend or level, such as prices on the New York Stock Exchange or cattle prices at Chicago; where data for a given area effectively represent the national picture because of concentration of production, etc., as Pennsylvania anthracite; where data are available for only a given area as in the case of many series concerned with early American history which are limited to the Atlantic seaboard.

Time coverage. In general, only annual or census-period data which cover at least 20 years are presented. Exceptions were permitted primarily in the case of newly developed series of basic importance.

The general requirements as to time coverage were specifically designed to permit inclusion of "lapsed" series, particularly those falling within the nineteenth century. The lapsed series, which begin and terminate in the past, represent major fields of interest during various phases of American historical development; frequently they must be sought in out-of-print documents which are available in few libraries.

The identification of time-periods was complicated by failure of some sources to state whether the data were prepared on a calendar-year or on a fiscal-year basis; by shifts in time coverage from calendar to fiscal year during the period of the series, and, in some instances, by the lack of identification of the beginning or ending date of the fiscal year where this basis was used. In all such cases, particularly where time shifts seemed likely to have occurred, an effort was made to identify the correct basis.

Frequency of data. Annual data are given preference but certain series are presented only for census years (years in which a national census was conducted), and, in some instances (for example, telephone and telegraph rates), only for the few dates for which the data are available. Where both annual figures and decennial or quinquennial benchmark or census data exist, both series are sometimes shown.

Series linkage. No formal attempt was made to extend a single series back through time by linking it to another series which terminated at or near the date on which the first began. In a number of instances, however, such series are presented in adjoining columns, with an overlap for a period of years when available.

INTRODUCTION

Unpublished figures. In general, only published materials or unpublished estimates from the files of a Government agency or from a responsible private organization like the National Bureau of Economic Research were used. Unpublished estimates of private scholars, with rare exceptions, are not included in the volume.

Subject detail. Because of space limitations, series selected are confined to those regarded as of major importance in each field. The criteria of selection varied broadly, depending upon the subject. Within each subfield, the amount of subject detail was held to a minimum. Generally, only summary measures are shown and detailed cross classifications and information of a highly specialized character have been avoided. Presentation of data in excessive detail, such as for specific commodities, was discouraged. Exceptions were allowed, however, where it was considered more meaningful to present long series for selected specific commodities than to present an aggregate which is difficult to interpret.

Presentation of absolute rather than derived data. Primary emphasis was placed on the presentation of absolute figures rather than on derived data since the absolute figures offer somewhat greater flexibility to the user. The major exception was the presentation of index numbers. In general, percentage distributions of absolute data already shown are not presented. Other percentage data, and averages, medians, ratios, and rates were used only where they resulted in a significant economy in space or where they facilitated interpretation. No attempt was made, in view of the technical problems involved, to convert various series of index numbers to a common base year or period.

Omissions of data, "blank" cells. The significance of dashes in tabular cells varies from series to series. In general, the presence of cell "leaders" or "dashes" indicates merely that no information was provided for this volume. Dash entries may mean that no information exists for the given year; that the entry, if shown, would be zero; the information was not available; or the information is believed to exist in published form but it was not practicable to do the research necessary to locate the appropriate source. The user will have to judge from the context which meaning is appropriate in each particular instance.

The practices of the various sources of information differ as to the meaning of dashes in cells, the extent to which they label material as "not available," the meaning of the term "not available," the use of the zero entry, etc. In general, the policy adopted in preparing this volume was to retain "not available" notations where they appeared for intermediate years in the series; to change them to dashes where they appeared at the beginning or end of the series. Where cells were left blank in the sources, they were filled with dashes in this volume.

Since series of varying length taken from different sources are frequently found in adjoining columns in a table, the stub listings for years necessarily encompass the earliest and latest date for which any of the series in the table are shown. In itself, this tends to create many additional blank cells since missing entries have been replaced by dashes in order to make it easier for the user's eye to trace the entries for a given year across the entire table.

Text. For every series used, the text presents the precise source of the data. Where possible, the text also includes the definition of the concepts used, and sufficient methodological and historical information to permit intelligent use of the data. For many series the text includes a reference to where more detail can be found. Unusual values in a series are explained and major changes which affect comparability are noted. Where adjusted or derived figures are used, the methods used are described, often with a reference to a more complete description.

Responsibility

Because of the multitude of sources and the varied subject matter covered, the Bureau of the Census cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy or limitations of data other than those which it collects. Every attempt has been made, within the limits of time and available personnel, to verify and correctly identify the material. Final responsibility for selection of the material, and for its accurate and proper presentation, rests with the Bureau of the Census, even though carried out with the cooperation of many individuals and agencies who devoted much time and energy in providing data and descriptions of series for this publication.

The information presented in this volume supersedes all similar information presented in *Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945*, and in *Continuation to 1952 of Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945*.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON DATA PRESENTED

write to the agency indicated in the source note in the descriptive text for the given statistical series.

SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS

should be sent to:

The Director
Bureau of the Census
Washington 25, D.C.