

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

JESSE H. JONES, Secretary

**BUREAU OF THE CENSUS**

I. C. CAPT, Director (Appointed May 22, 1941)

WILLIAM LANE AUSTIN, Director (Retired January 31, 1941)

PHILIP M. HAUSER, Assistant Director



**SIXTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES : 1940**

**POPULATION**

**THE LABOR FORCE**

(Sample Statistics)

**Usual Occupation**

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Prepared under the supervision of  
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## SIXTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1940

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## FOREWORD

Sampling techniques were utilized in the Sixteenth Decennial Census for the first time in the history of the Population Census. The use of sampling methods permitted the collection of statistics on a larger number of inquiries than had heretofore been possible, the release of preliminary population statistics at an early date, and the tabulation of a great many social and economic characteristics of the population at a relatively low cost.

This report is based on tabulations of a five-percent sample of the population returns and presents data on usual occupations of the labor force and of persons not in the labor force, by employment status and personal characteristics. These statistics are designed for the analysis of the incidence of unemployment upon various occupational groups, for the study of occupational shifts during the period of large-scale unemployment in which the census was taken, and for a description of the occupational skills to be found among possible recruits to the labor force. This report was prepared under the supervision of Dr. Leon E. Truesdell, Chief Statistician for Population, and Dr. A. Ross Eckler, Assistant Chief Statistician, by William H. Mautz, Chief of Economic Statistics, Dr. Barry Casper, and David L. Kaplan. The sampling procedures were under the direction of Dr. W. Edwards Deming, Mathematical Adviser.

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# USUAL OCCUPATION

## INTRODUCTION

### GENERAL

This report presents data on usual occupation based on tabulations of a five-percent sample of the returns of the Sixteenth Decennial Census of Population, taken in April 1940.<sup>1</sup> Statistics are presented for experienced persons in the labor force, and for persons 14 years old and over not in the labor force (except those unable to work or in institutions). Data on usual occupation are shown by color, age, nativity and citizenship, marital status, employment status, and current or last major occupation group.

The statistics on usual occupation for the experienced labor force, presented in this report, constitute the only body of occupation data to be published in the 1940 census reports in which a uniform definition of occupation is used for all experienced persons in the labor force. In other publications, the occupation data for employed persons and for those on public emergency work refer to their jobs during the census week, and the data for experienced workers seeking work refer to their last jobs of one month or more. The classification by employment status, which is shown in this report for experienced workers in each usual occupation, can be used for analyzing the occupational incidence of unemployment. In addition, this report provides, for each occupation, information on the personal characteristics of all experienced workers in the labor force. The data given here also make possible the study of shifts between usual occupation and current or last occupation.

The data for persons not in the labor force presented in this report serve as an inventory of the skills to be found among possible recruits to the labor force. The classifications by urban-rural residence, age, and marital status help to identify the groups most readily available for employment in each occupation.

### RELATED REPORTS

This is one of a series of reports based on sample tabulations, published under the general title "The Labor Force--Sample Statistics." The report entitled "Occupational Characteristics," in this series, presents statistics on the current occupation of employed persons and the last occupation of experienced workers seeking work, in terms of the intermediate occupation lists for males and females. The data are presented by color, age, years of school completed, class of worker, months worked in 1939, and other characteristics, for the United States and regions.

The report entitled "Characteristics of Persons Not in the Labor Force," also based on sample tabulations, presents data on usual major occupation group, age, color, marital status, household relationship, months worked in 1939, and Social Security status, for persons not in the labor force, for the United States and regions.

Volume III of the Reports on Population, entitled "The Labor Force," presents, for States and large cities, statistics on current occupation for employed persons and last occupation for experienced workers seeking work, based on a complete count of the census returns. The intermediate occupation lists are shown by such characteristics as race, age, marital status, and wage or salary income in 1939. Volume III also shows the numbers of men and women employed in each of the 451 occupations in the complete census occupation classification, as well as

<sup>1</sup> The 1940 Population Census schedule is reproduced in Part I of Volume III and Part I of Volume IV of the Sixteenth Census Reports on Population. The instructions to enumerators are also reproduced in these volumes.

data on current major occupation group for persons on public emergency work.

Occupation statistics for each State, county, and urban place, and for principal metropolitan districts, are presented in Volume II of the Reports on Population, entitled "Characteristics of the Population." That volume gives data on current major occupation group for employed persons, based on a complete count of the census returns.

### AREAS

Statistics on usual occupation for the experienced labor force and for persons not in the labor force are presented in this report for the United States and for each of four regions: The Northeastern States, the North Central States, the South, and the West. The accompanying map shows the States included in each region. In addition, the distribution by usual occupation of the experienced labor force is given for each State and for each city of 500,000 or more.

In some of the tables, figures are shown separately for urban and rural areas. Urban population, as defined by the Bureau of the Census, is in general that residing in cities and other incorporated places having 2,500 inhabitants or more. The remainder of the population is classified as rural.

### AVAILABILITY OF UNPUBLISHED DATA

Some of the data obtained from the tabulations upon which the tables in this report are based have not been published because many of the categories in the unpublished tables are very small and hence are subject to comparatively large sampling errors. Statistics on usual occupation for persons in the experienced labor force, in terms of the intermediate lists of occupations for males and females, were tabulated for all cities of 175,000 to 500,000, and for selected cities of 100,000 to 175,000. In addition, usual occupation statistics for persons on public emergency work and for experienced workers seeking work, in terms of the complete 1940 census occupation classification, were tabulated by urban-rural residence and sex, for each of the four regions.

Such of the unpublished figures as are considered reliable can be obtained upon request, for the nominal cost of transcribing or reproducing them. Requests for such unpublished statistics, addressed to the Director of the Census, Washington, D. C., will receive a prompt reply, which will include an estimate of the cost of preparing the data.

### LABOR FORCE CLASSIFICATION

In the 1940 Census of Population, persons 14 years old and over were classified on the basis of their activity during the census week of March 24 to 30, 1940, into two major groups: (a) Persons in the labor force, including those at work for pay or profit or at unpaid family work, those with a job or business from which they were temporarily absent, those on public emergency work, and those seeking work; and (b) persons not in the labor force. The latter group includes persons reported as engaged in own home housework, in school, or unable to work; seasonal workers for whom the census week fell in an off-season, and who were not seeking work; others not employed, nor on public emergency work, nor seeking work; all inmates of penal and mental institutions and homes for the aged, infirm, and needy, regardless of their activity during the census week; and persons for whom employment status was not reported. Data relating to the various categories of persons in the labor force and not in the labor force are summarized for the United States, by sex, in table I.

## THE LABOR FORCE—SAMPLE STATISTICS

Table I. EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF PERSONS 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER, BY SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES: MARCH 1940

[Statistics based on a 5-percent sample]

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Total	Male	Female	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION		
				Total	Male	Female
Persons 14 and over.....	101,015,740	50,543,840	50,471,900	100.0	100.0	100.0
In labor force.....	52,966,280	26,958,800	26,007,480	52.4	26.9	25.8
Not in labor force.....	48,049,460	23,585,040	24,464,420	47.6	23.1	74.2
In labor force.....	52,966,280	26,958,800	26,007,480	100.0	100.0	100.0
Employed (exc. emerg. work)...	45,381,360	23,102,440	22,278,920	85.7	85.3	86.7
At work.....	44,203,740	22,251,600	21,952,140	83.5	83.2	84.2
With a job but not at work.....	1,177,620	850,840	326,780	2.2	2.1	2.5
On public emergency work.....	2,432,440	2,003,540	428,900	4.6	5.0	3.5
Seeking work.....	5,132,480	3,852,820	1,279,660	9.7	9.6	9.8
Experienced workers.....	4,401,500	3,414,500	987,000	8.3	8.5	7.6
New workers.....	730,980	438,320	292,660	1.4	1.1	2.2
Not in labor force.....	48,049,460	23,585,040	24,464,420	100.0	100.0	100.0
Engaged in own home housework.....	28,685,300	14,273,760	14,411,540	59.7	2.6	75.8
In school.....	9,034,660	4,585,240	4,449,420	18.8	43.3	11.9
Unable to work.....	5,221,500	2,953,400	2,268,100	10.9	27.9	6.1
In institutions.....	1,142,340	746,940	395,400	2.4	7.1	1.1
Other.....	1,978,520	1,200,540	777,980	4.1	11.3	2.1
Employment status not reported.....	1,987,140	822,160	1,164,980	4.1	7.8	3.1

## PERSONS IN THE LABOR FORCE

**Employment status categories.**—The employment status categories of persons in the labor force are defined below:

**Employed (except on public emergency work).**—The group classified as employed includes (a) persons who worked for pay or profit at any time during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, in private work or nonemergency Federal, State, or local government work, or assisted without pay on a family farm or in a family business; and (b) persons not actually at work and not seeking work during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, but with jobs, businesses, or professional enterprises from which they were temporarily absent because of vacation, illness, industrial dispute, bad weather, or lay-off not exceeding four weeks with definite instructions to return to work on a specific date. The group "Employed (except on public emergency work)" includes not only employees but also proprietors, farmers, other self-employed persons, and unpaid family workers.

**On public emergency work.**—This category includes persons who, during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, were at work on, or assigned to, public emergency work projects conducted by the Work Projects Administration (WPA), the National Youth Administration (NYA), the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), or State or local work relief agencies.

**Seeking work.**—This category represents persons without work of any sort in the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, who were actively seeking work during that week. The group seeking work was subdivided into experienced workers and new workers, the latter being persons who had not previously worked full time for one month or more. Persons seeking work for whom a report on work experience was lacking were classified as experienced workers.

**Experienced labor force.**—Many of the tables in this report present data for the experienced labor force, which includes employed persons, persons on public emergency work, and persons seeking work other than new workers. The entire labor force is composed of the experienced labor force and new workers. Occupation data for new workers are not available, since enumerators were instructed not to report occupation for persons who had never worked full time for one month or more.

**Misclassification of persons on public emergency work.**—In the interpretation of the data for persons on public emergency work, allowance must be made for the misclassification in the census returns of considerable numbers of public emergency workers. The number of persons reported in the census as on public emergency work in the United States was 2,529,606 (according to the complete count of the census returns), whereas the number recorded on the pay rolls of the Federal emergency work agencies at about the time of the census was 2,906,196 including the NYA Student Work Program, and 3,377,978 including that program. The most common type of misclassification was the reporting of emergency workers as "employed (except on public emergency work)." Persons on the NYA Student Work Program were very frequently returned as in school and not in the

labor force. There is also evidence that a considerable number of emergency workers were classified as seeking work. Since the amount of misclassification undoubtedly differed considerably among the various occupations, the occupation data for persons on public emergency work should be used with caution.

**Number of unemployed.**—The total number of unemployed, as usually defined, includes (1) persons seeking work and without any form of public or private employment, and (2) those on public emergency work programs established to provide jobs for the unemployed. Because of the misclassification of public emergency workers, the census total of these two groups understates the amount of unemployment. The statistics in this report which show the proportion of workers unemployed, for each occupation should, therefore, be interpreted with considerable care.

## PERSONS NOT IN THE LABOR FORCE

The figures relating to usual occupation presented in this report do not give a complete account of persons not in the labor force who had training or experience in each occupation. First, two groups of persons not in the labor force have been omitted from the tabulations because most of the persons in these groups are permanently outside of the labor force. These two groups are: (a) Persons reported as unable to work because of permanent disability, chronic illness, or old age; and (b) inmates of penal institutions, hospitals for the mentally diseased and defective, and homes for the aged, infirm, and needy. Second, some persons who had a usual occupation failed to report it. Third, some persons with experience in a skill regarded themselves as no longer having a usual occupation because they had been out of the labor force for a long time. Fourth, persons with experience in two or more skills could report only the one which they regarded as their usual occupation.

In the interpretation of the data for persons not in the labor force, consideration should also be given to the fact that this group includes 1,987,140 persons for whom employment status was not reported. The category "Employment status not reported" consists of two groups: (a) Persons reported as not in the labor force but not assigned to any specific category, who constituted about one-fifth of the 1,987,140 persons in the category "Employment status not reported;" and (b) those for whom enumerators did not obtain enough information to determine whether they were in the labor force, representing four-fifths of the total. The entire category is included in the total of persons not in the labor force, in the 1940 census reports, because most of the persons in group (b) were in classes of the population in which the proportion in the labor force is low. On the basis of available evidence, it is estimated that probably not more than 500,000 of the 1,987,140 persons for whom employment status was not reported would have been classified as in the labor force if full information had been obtained.

## DIFFICULTIES IN THE CLASSIFICATION OF WOMEN, CHILDREN, AND AGED PERSONS

In the interpretation of the number of persons reported in each occupation, according to employment status, age, and sex, certain difficulties in the labor force classification of women, children, and aged persons should be borne in mind. It is sometimes difficult to obtain a reliable employment status classification for women because most of them are normally engaged at least to some extent in home housework, though they may be working also for pay or profit or at unpaid family work. Women with part-time jobs may therefore have been reported in some cases as engaged in own home housework and not in the labor force. Likewise, some women who had lost their jobs and were keeping house while looking for another employment opportunity may have been classified as engaged in home housework instead of seeking work. The difficulty in classification was especially great in rural areas, where it is very often hard to distinguish between work for pay or profit or unpaid family work on the one hand, and incidental farm chores or home housework on the other.

For similar reasons, the employment status classification for persons of school age tends to be less reliable than for older persons. Many students working part time after school hours were probably reported as in school and not in the labor force, and it was doubtless difficult in many cases to determine whether a person attending school was also seeking work. A very large proportion of the youths on the NYA Student Work Program were reported as in school instead of on public emergency work. On the other hand, a considerable number of students in farming areas who performed only incidental farm

chores after school may have been included in the labor force as unpaid family workers.

For persons 65 years old and over, and to some extent for those 55 to 64 years old, the statistics on employment status are less reliable and less meaningful than for younger persons. In these age classes it is difficult to draw the line between able-bodied persons seeking work and disabled or retired persons no longer in the labor force. Moreover, many men in these age groups at the time of the census had been forced into retirement because of their inability to compete with younger workers, although they were still able and willing to work. Many of these prematurely retired workers should be considered as part of the nation's unused labor supply, although they were not actively seeking work at the time of the 1940 census.

OCCUPATION

Two inquiries relating to occupation<sup>2</sup> were made in the 1940 census. First, an inquiry regarding "current" or "last" occupation was made of all persons in the experienced labor force during the census week. For employed persons and for persons on public emergency work, this question referred to the job in which they were engaged during the census week. For experienced workers seeking work, the question referred to the job in which they were most recently engaged for one month or more. Second, an inquiry regarding "usual" occupation was made

of a five-percent sample of all persons 14 years old and over (except new workers), regardless of whether they were in the labor force during the census week. This question referred to the occupation which the person regarded as his usual occupation and at which he was still physically able to work.

SHIFTS BETWEEN USUAL OCCUPATION AND CURRENT OR LAST OCCUPATION

Although most of the data in this report are based on usual occupation, data on current or last occupation are also presented in some of the tables. Statistics on current major occupation group for employed persons, by usual occupation, are presented in table 9. This table shows the number of persons with a particular skill who were currently employed at that general level of skill. The table also shows the level of skill at which persons were employed if they were not working at their usual level of skill. Table 10, which presents a cross-classification of usual occupation with last major occupation group, gives similar information for experienced workers seeking work. These two tables together indicate employment status differences in shifts between usual occupation and current or last occupation. A summary of the data in tables 9 and 10 is presented in table II, which shows the percentage of persons in each usual major occupation group who reported both usual occupation and current or last occupation in the same major group.

Table II. EMPLOYED PERSONS (EXCEPT ON EMERGENCY WORK) WHO REPORTED USUAL AND CURRENT OCCUPATIONS, AND EXPERIENCED WORKERS SEEKING WORK WHO REPORTED USUAL AND LAST OCCUPATIONS, BY USUAL MAJOR OCCUPATION GROUP AND SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES: MARCH 1940

[Statistics based on a 5-percent sample. Percent not shown where base is less than 2000]

USUAL MAJOR OCCUPATION GROUP AND SEX	EMPLOYED (EXC. ON EMERG. WORK)		SEEKING WORK, EXPERIENCED			
	Reporting current occupation	Reporting current and usual occupations in same major occupation group		Reporting last occupation	Reporting last and usual occupations in same major occupation group	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
<b>MALE</b>						
Reporting usual occupation.....	31,930,820	29,670,520	92.9	2,945,520	2,644,060	89.8
Professional and semiprof. workers.....	1,860,780	1,752,720	94.2	86,100	75,430	87.7
Farmers and farm managers.....	4,846,680	4,530,060	93.5	59,100	25,220	44.4
Proprietors, managers, and officials, except farm.....	2,881,860	2,771,820	96.2	78,500	53,240	68.0
Clerical, sales, and kindred workers.....	4,192,120	3,911,360	93.3	303,640	278,260	91.6
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers.....	4,959,900	4,528,420	91.3	593,740	537,340	90.5
Operatives and kindred workers.....	5,840,960	5,478,360	93.8	664,240	598,520	90.1
Domestic service workers.....	122,940	111,690	90.8	15,400	13,380	88.9
Protective service workers.....	557,400	542,000	97.2	18,600	16,680	89.7
Service workers, exc. domestic and protective.....	1,846,680	1,293,320	95.3	145,720	133,440	91.6
Farm laborers and foremen.....	2,555,160	2,265,800	88.7	276,480	243,180	88.0
Laborers, except farm and mine.....	2,766,340	2,495,980	90.2	709,000	658,320	92.9
<b>FEMALE</b>						
Reporting usual occupation.....	9,876,800	9,509,280	96.3	767,500	723,520	94.3
Professional and semiprof. workers.....	1,351,640	1,305,980	96.6	49,300	45,460	92.2
Farmers and farm managers.....	125,580	112,700	89.7	900	380	-
Proprietors, managers, and officials, except farm.....	336,280	319,240	94.9	5,380	4,300	79.9
Clerical, sales, and kindred workers.....	2,954,560	2,863,420	96.9	218,160	207,520	95.1
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers.....	105,260	95,260	90.5	8,160	7,160	87.5
Operatives and kindred workers.....	1,879,500	1,829,160	97.3	131,960	124,560	95.9
Domestic service workers.....	1,718,660	1,658,540	96.5	173,880	164,340	94.5
Protective service workers.....	4,380	3,960	90.4	800	220	-
Service workers, exc. domestic and protective.....	1,049,680	1,000,100	95.3	96,760	90,200	93.2
Farm laborers and foremen.....	254,960	240,160	94.2	16,680	15,300	91.7
Laborers, except farm and mine.....	95,620	80,760	84.5	15,980	14,080	88.1

Table 11 presents, for whites and nonwhites, the distributions of employed persons by usual occupation and by current occupation, and the distributions of experienced workers seeking work by usual occupation and by last occupation. This table indicates the amount of shift into and out of each occupation according to employment status and color. Similar statistics by age are presented for employed persons in tables 12 and 13.

Persons who reported a lower level of current or last occupation than of usual occupation were for the most part underemployed workers, that is, persons whose skills were not being completely utilized. On the other hand, persons who reported a higher level of current or last than of usual occupation, were mainly those in the process of occupational advancement. It should be noted, however, that the data on usual occupation undoubtedly reflect a tendency for persons to report their highest occupational skill. Because of this tendency,

the group reporting a lower level of current or last occupation than of usual occupation includes not only persons who were temporarily forced to accept employment at a lower skill, but also many who had worked at a lower skill for so long that they were unlikely to return to their former activity, and some who were no longer physically able to perform the tasks of their former job. For the same reason, the group reporting a higher level of current or last occupation than of usual occupation does not include all persons who were in the process of occupational advancement, since many of these persons probably reported their current or last job, rather than their usual job, as their usual occupation. In addition, the relatively large number of persons who did not report a usual occupation should be taken into consideration in comparing the data on usual occupation with those on current or last occupation.

STRUCTURE OF THE OCCUPATION CLASSIFICATION

The occupation classification used for the 1940 census contains 451 titles, arranged in 11 major occupation groups. Of these 451 titles, 221 represent distinct occupations, and

<sup>2</sup> For exact phrasing of the questions, complete definitions, and other technical details, see the instructions to enumerators, which are reproduced in Part 1 of Volume III of the Reports on Population.

the remaining 230 represent industrial subdivisions of five occupations: "Proprietors, managers, and officials;" "Foremen;" "Inspectors;" "Operatives and kindred workers;" and "Laborers."

The use of the 451-item list is restricted to the presentation of statistics on current occupation for employed workers by sex in Volume III of the Reports on Population. In this report, intermediate occupation lists of 167 items for males and 76 items for females are used for the presentation of statistics on usual occupation. These lists were made up chiefly by combining items in the detailed list of 451 occupations that are closely related or numerically small. The composition of each of the intermediate occupation groups in terms of the detailed occupations is shown in the Appendix to the report entitled "The Labor Force--Sample Statistics, Occupational Characteristics."

The Bureau of the Census has published the "Alphabetical Index of Occupations and Industries: 1940" which gives an alphabetical list of approximately 25,000 occupation designations and shows the category of the complete census occupation classification to which each return should be assigned. The Bureau of the Census has also published the "Classified Index of Occupations: 1940," in which the 25,000 occupation designations are arranged according to the 451 categories in the census list.

With two minor exceptions, the 167 items in the census intermediate occupation list for males are convertible to the standard intermediate Convertibility List of 99 occupations, which was designed by an interdepartmental Joint Committee on Occupational Classification (sponsored by the Central Statistical Board and the American Statistical Association) to increase comparability among occupation statistics compiled by various governmental and private agencies. The census intermediate list of 76 items for females and the 99-item Convertibility List are both convertible to a somewhat broader grouping of occupations.

#### DIFFICULTIES IN THE CLASSIFICATION OF OCCUPATIONS

The task of classifying the enumerators' returns on occupation would be difficult enough if all the returns were specific and accurate descriptions of the occupations concerned, since it involves the assignment of many thousands of different designations to one or another of the categories in the census occupational classification. It is made more difficult, however, by the failure of many enumerators to return exact designations of specific occupations. Indefinite returns resulted in some cases from carelessness on the part of the enumerators or from their lack of knowledge of occupational designations. In other cases, the housewives and others from whom the enumerators obtained their information did not know the specific occupations of the persons to whom the questions referred. The latter difficulty was probably even more frequent in the replies to the inquiry on usual occupation than to the inquiry on current or last occupation.

In many instances, however, indefinite occupation returns can be assigned to the proper classification through an examination of other entries on the schedule. For example, the return "Druggist" can often be assigned to the occupation class "Pharmacists" or to the class "Proprietors,.... drug store" on the basis of such collateral information as age, education, class of worker, and wage or salary income. Likewise, a person for whom the return was simply "Farm laborer" can usually be classified as a wage worker or as an unpaid family worker on the basis of schedule entries for family relationship, age, and receipt of income.

The industry return in particular is often of great assistance in the classification of an occupation; in fact, for many of the items in the occupational list some dependence on industry is essential. This is true not only of those in which the occupational designation itself involves reference to an industry (as "Spinner, cotton mill"), but also of other cases where the return in the industry column indirectly points out the proper occupational classification. A return of occupation and industry, "Salesman, pushcart," for example, would be classified under "Hucksters and peddlers" rather than under "Salesmen."

To some extent the difficulties in the classification of occupations grow out of the nature of the occupations themselves. At some points in what might be termed the occupational series the groups are clear-cut and distinct. A cabinetmaker, for example, is easily distinguished from a plumber or a bricklayer. At other points in the series the occupations do not fall into distinct categories or convenient groups but shade off one into another in such fashion as to call for almost arbitrary allocations to standard groups or classes.

From this it follows that some parts of the occupation classification must be accepted as representing categories less accurately and specifically defined than the cabinetmakers, plumbers, and bricklayers mentioned above. Frequently, there is difficulty in distinguishing, for example, between trained nurses and practical nurses, between technical engineers and stationary engineers, or between truck drivers and deliverymen, as a result of which the figures for these occupations must be considered somewhat less accurate than the figures representing occupations not involved in difficulties of this kind. Additional detail regarding classification problems will be presented in a subsequent report.

#### COMPARABILITY WITH OCCUPATION DATA FROM EARLIER CENSUSES

No comparisons of the 1940 census data on usual occupation with occupation data from the 1930 and earlier censuses are included in this report. Such comparisons are complicated by four important considerations.

Firstly, the 1940 data for the experienced labor force are not directly comparable with the census statistics for gainful workers in 1930 and earlier years, partly because of differences in definition and partly because of differences in the types of questions upon which the data were based. "Gainful workers" were persons reported as having a gainful occupation, regardless of their activity at the time of the census. The experienced labor force is defined in the 1940 census on the basis of activity during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940. Certain classes of persons, such as retired workers, some inmates of institutions, recently incapacitated workers, and seasonal workers neither working nor seeking work at the time of the census, were frequently included among gainful workers in 1930, but in general, such persons are not in the 1940 labor force. On the other hand, the 1940 experienced labor force includes persons reported as in the labor force for whom neither occupation nor industry was entered on the schedule, whereas in previous censuses some persons who were actually gainful workers, but for whom neither occupation nor industry was reported, were not included in the gainful worker figures. For particular occupations, therefore, the number returned as in the labor force in 1940 may have been far different from the number who would have been counted as gainful workers if the 1930 procedure had been used.

The 1940 labor force figures are restricted to persons 14 years old and over, whereas the number of gainful workers shown in earlier censuses included persons 10 years old and over. The number of workers 10 to 13 years old has become relatively small and no longer justifies the additional burden of enumeration and tabulation necessary to retain the 10-year age limit. In making comparisons between the 1940 labor force data and the gainful worker statistics in earlier census reports, the slight difference in age limits should be taken into consideration.

Changes in census dates also affect the comparison of 1940 data with those for earlier years. In 1900 the census was taken as of June 1, whereas in 1910 it was taken April 15, and in 1920, January 1; in both 1930 and 1940, the census date was April 1. These changes may have had a pronounced effect, especially in agricultural areas, on the size of the group returned as gainful workers and on their occupational distribution.

Secondly, persons reporting gainful occupations in earlier censuses did not necessarily return their usual occupations. Consequently, it is difficult to determine to what extent the figures for these earlier censuses may represent current or last occupation rather than usual occupation. The data in this report, on the other hand, refer specifically to usual occupation.

Thirdly, the 1940 classification of occupations differs from that used in previous censuses. The occupation classifications used for the 1910, 1920, and 1930 censuses differed in relatively minor respects only, so that the occupation statistics for these censuses are reasonably comparable. The classification adopted for the 1940 census, however, differs considerably from those used for these earlier censuses, with respect to arrangement and content of titles. In 1930, for example, most of the 534 occupation titles were grouped under a few major industrial headings ("Agriculture," "Forestry and fishing," "Extraction of minerals," etc.), based upon the industry in which the occupation was most commonly followed. In 1940, the occupation titles are grouped into 11 major subdivisions which are essentially occupation groups ("Professional and semiprofessional workers," "Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers," "Operatives and kindred workers," etc.), regardless of industrial attachment. In addition, many titles

appear in the classification for one year but not for the other, and even similar titles in the two classifications are sometimes different in actual coverage. At many points, therefore, the two classifications are not directly comparable, although for occupations having well-defined standards of education and experience, especially for many professional and skilled-craft occupations, the comparability is adequate for most purposes. Studies are being made to determine for each title in the 1940 classification the most nearly comparable title or group of titles in the 1930 classification, and to determine the degree of comparability where there is a difference in coverage. The results of these studies, which will be presented in a later publication, will facilitate the comparison of occupation statistics for 1940 with those for earlier census years. Although the adoption of the new occupation classification for the 1940 census has created some problems of comparability with the past, it is believed that this difficulty is outweighed by the advantages that result from the use of a classification which is comparable with those used by other agencies.

Fourthly and finally, the 1940 data presented here are based on a five-percent sample. Considerable caution should therefore be exercised in the comparison of the figures for categories with small numbers. This caution is especially important for occupations that are unusual for women and children. In previous censuses, cards representing questionable returns for women and children were checked back to the schedules. In 1940, however, this check was made only in the extreme cases where the occupation seemed to be quite impossible for women or children (e. g., locomotive engineer). A nominal increase in the number of women or children in such groups as "Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers" and "Protective service workers" should be regarded, therefore, as possibly resulting from sampling variations or from the change in the editing procedure.

#### COMPARABILITY WITH OCCUPATION DATA FROM OTHER SOURCES

The statistics on occupation collected by other agencies are not entirely comparable with census data because of differences in the methods of obtaining the information. Statistics obtained from detailed interviews with individual workers may be considerably different from those obtained by the census method of house-to-house enumeration. In census enumeration, the information is frequently obtained from the wives of the workers or from other members of their households who may not be able to describe accurately the worker's occupation. Even when the respondent is entirely familiar with the worker's job, his description is often inexact. Moreover, the enumerators frequently lack the technical knowledge needed to distinguish between closely related occupations and to select the information most essential for accurate classification.

#### PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

##### COLOR

Because of the great differences in economic status between whites and nonwhites, statistics on usual occupation are presented separately for each of these two groups. Nonwhites include Negroes, Indians, Chinese, Japanese, and other nonwhite races. Persons of Mexican birth or ancestry who were not definitely Indian or of other nonwhite race were returned as white in 1940. The great majority of the nonwhites are Negroes, except in the West, where there are many Indians, Chinese, and Japanese.

##### AGE

The data on usual occupation by age are useful in the study of many problems, such as child labor, vocational guidance, social insurance, and unemployment. The statistics presented here for the experienced labor force and for employed persons provide information on age differentials in the incidence of unemployment among workers in each occupation. They can also be used for analyzing the relationship of age to shifts between usual occupation and current occupation. For persons not in the labor force, the age data are helpful as

indications of potential availability for employment. The age classification is based on age of the person at his last birthday before April 1, 1940, that is, age in completed years.

#### NATIVITY AND CITIZENSHIP

The statistics on nativity and citizenship show the occupational differentials existing between native workers, foreign-born workers who have become naturalized citizens, and aliens. In the classification by nativity, a person born in the United States or in any of its territories or possessions is counted as native. Likewise included as native are the small number of persons who, although born in a foreign country or at sea, were American citizens by birth because their parents were American citizens. The classification of the foreign born in regard to citizenship embraces two major categories: Naturalized citizen, and alien. Citizenship by naturalization is open only to white persons, persons of African nativity or descent, and descendants of races indigenous to the Western Hemisphere. Foreign-born Chinese, Japanese, and other Asiatics are not eligible for citizenship except under rare circumstances. There is an additional category designated "Citizenship not reported," comprising persons for whom the enumerators secured no report as to citizenship.<sup>3</sup>

#### MARITAL STATUS

Data on marital status by usual occupation are presented only for females in this report. The statistics on this subject are especially useful in the determination of availability for employment of the women with a particular skill who were not in the labor force during the census week.

In the classification by marital status, two groups are shown: Married, husband present; and other marital status, that is, single, married with husband absent, widowed, or divorced. A woman was classified as "married, husband present" if her husband was reported as a member of the household in which the woman was enumerated. Women in each marital status category are classified by age in order to provide further indications of the family responsibilities which affect their ability to take jobs.

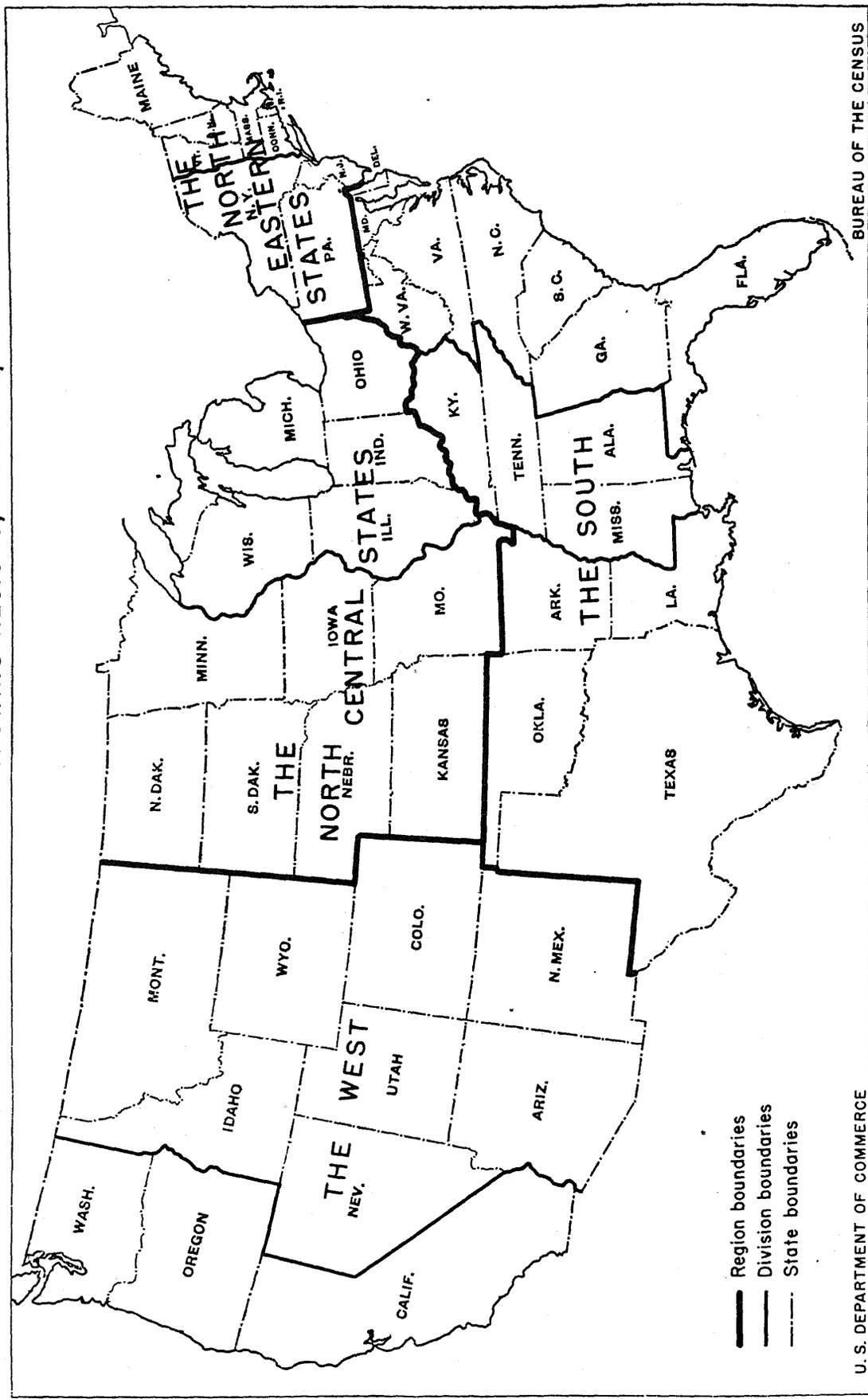
#### COMPARISON BETWEEN RESULTS OF SAMPLE TABULATIONS AND COMPLETE COUNT

The statistics shown in this report are based on tabulations of a five-percent sample of the 1940 census returns, multiplied uniformly by 20. Exact agreement is not to be expected between the tabulations of the sample and the corresponding tabulations of a complete count, but the sample data nevertheless indicate the relationships among the various characteristics involved. With regard to the individual numbers in the tables, comparisons thus far made with figures obtainable also from the complete count indicate that 95 percent of the numbers above 10,000 will differ from those available from the complete count by less than 5 percent, 95 percent of those between 5,000 and 10,000 will differ by less than 10 percent, and 95 percent of those between 2,000 and 5,000 will differ by less than 20 percent. Somewhat larger variations may occur in the case of numbers below 2,000, but even here the majority of the differences are less than 10 percent, although much larger differences occasionally occur.

In a forthcoming technical report there will be a detailed exposition of the sampling method, descriptions of the various samples that were taken, and comparisons between the samples and complete count. The purpose of the report will be to assist in evaluating the data that are published on the basis of the samples.

<sup>3</sup> In the 1940 census there were 825,072 foreign-born white persons in the United States for whom citizenship was not reported. It would appear that this group consisted predominantly of aliens. This conclusion is based partly upon the fact that the total number of foreign born reported as aliens, plus those for whom citizenship status was not reported, is approximately equal to the number of aliens registered under the Alien Registration Act of 1940.

MAP OF THE UNITED STATES SHOWING REGIONS, DIVISIONS, AND STATES



BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE