

women by over 1½ million, and when the 1940 census was taken there still were slightly more men than women in the population. When this is considered, it is not surprising that women are now over 30 percent of all workers, though in 1870 they were only 15 percent. The summary following gives an indication of the trends.

Notable changes also have occurred in the types of occupations in which women are chiefly engaged. They are now employed to a much greater extent than formerly in clerical and factory work. On the other hand, women's employment has declined through the years in some service occupations and hand trades that once were considered among the most characteristic occupations of women.

TRENDS IN EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN

	<i>Women workers (14 years and over)</i>		
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent of all workers</i>	<i>Percent of all women</i>
RECENT HIGHLIGHTS			
<i>[Census current sampling reports]</i>			
Today (1954)-----	19, 726, 000	31	33
Current (1953)-----	18, 912, 000	30	32
Pre-Korea (1950)-----	18, 063, 000	29	32
Postwar (1947)-----	16, 320, 000	28	30
World War II peak (1945)-----	19, 670, 000	36	37
Pre-World War II (1940)-----	13, 840, 000	25	28
LONG-TERM TRENDS			
<i>[Decennial census]</i>			
1950-----	16, 512, 000	27	29
1940-----	13, 015, 000	24	26
1930-----	10, 396, 000	22	24
1920-----	8, 229, 000	20	23
1900-----	4, 999, 000	18	20
1890-----	3, 704, 000	17	18

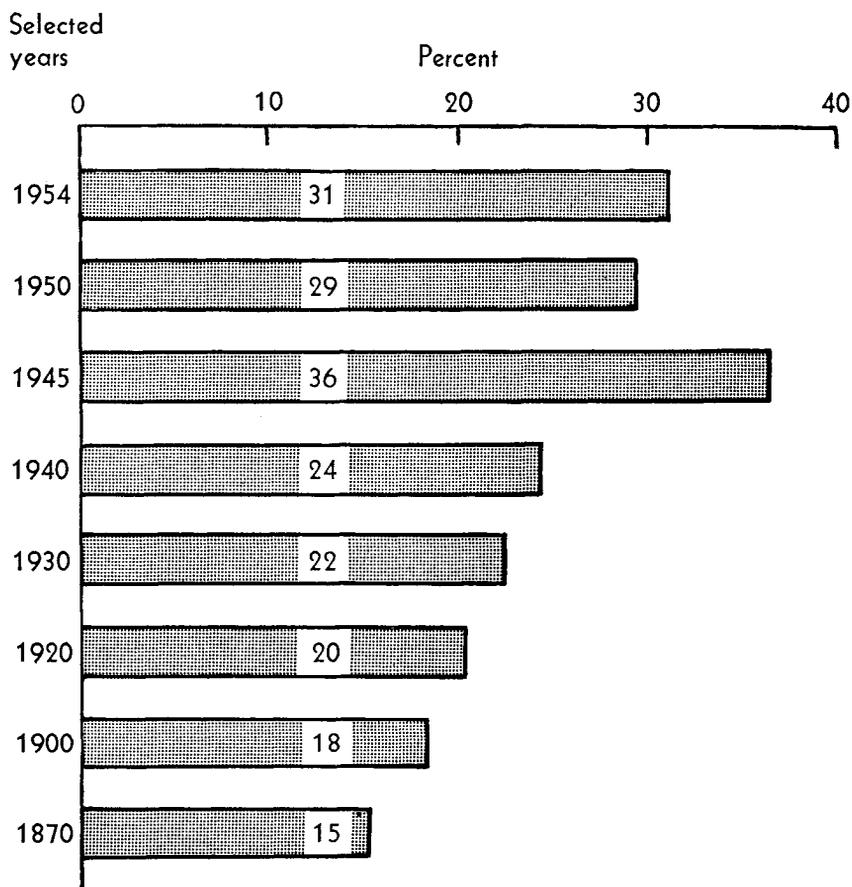
Source: U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Detail for 1954 not exactly comparable with previous years. Decennial census figures not exactly comparable with current sampling.

The total number of women who worked at some time during the past year is much larger than the 19½ million in the current labor force—in fact it is nearly 25 million. This is about 43 percent of all women of working age. Furthermore, the great majority of the women in the population have worked at some time in their lives.

On the other hand about a fifth of all employed women are in part-time jobs, defined by the Census Bureau as work for less than 35 hours a week. Many of these, and many of the full-time workers as well, have not been employed through the full year. Although 33 percent

of all women of working age are in the labor force, only about 17 percent are in full-time jobs for the whole year.

Chart 2.—Percent of all workers who were women, 1870–1954



Chief Occupation Groups

Many more women are in clerical work than in any other major group of occupations. Operatives come next, the majority of them in factory production. About half of all employed women are in these two occupation groups, as may be seen in the summary following. Next come those in service occupations (other than in private households) and in professional or technical work. However, a combination group of those in household employment and in other services would outnumber the operatives. The remaining women—about a fifth of the total—are chiefly salespersons or farm workers or are in

the group of proprietors, managers, and officials. Very few are craftswomen or laborers.

Increases have occurred since 1940, some of them very great, in the number of women in every occupation group except in household and farm employment, which have declined. The greatest expansion has been among clerical workers. Operatives and those in service trades also constitute larger proportions of all employed women than formerly. Management and sales occupations show growth for women, though employing considerably smaller numbers than clerical, operative, and service occupations.

WOMEN IN EACH OCCUPATION GROUP

Occupation group	Number, 1954	Percent distri- bution		Percent of all workers	
		1954	1940	1954	1940
All women.....	18,604,000	100	100	31	26
Clerical workers.....	5,122,000	28	21	65	53
Operatives.....	3,462,000	19	18	28	26
Service workers (except private household).....	2,491,000	13	11	48	40
Professional workers.....	2,226,000	12	13	39	45
Private household workers.....	1,770,000	10	18	97	94
Sales workers.....	1,475,000	8	7	37	28
Managers, officials, proprietors.....	963,000	5	4	16	12
Farmers, farm laborers.....	719,000	4	6	12	8
Craftswomen.....	269,000	1	1	3	3
Laborers (except farm).....	107,000	1	1	3	3

Proportion of Workers Who Are Women

Practically all the private household workers are women, as are almost two-thirds of the clerical workers and almost half the service workers (other than in private households). Women are over a third of the professional and sales workers, a somewhat smaller proportion of the operatives, and a still smaller proportion of the employees in other occupation groups.

In most of the occupation groups, the proportion of workers who are women, though not as great as in wartime, is notably greater than in 1940. The professional group is the only one in which the proportion of women in the total is below that of 1940. Some explanation of this may be found in the current stress on scientific professions, in which women usually constitute a rather small minority; pressure for jobs for returned veterans, many of whom have been receiving college training; and a slowed-up entrance of women to their largest profession—teaching. Teaching requires a longer training period than, for example, many clerical occupations greatly in demand, or

some nonprofessional jobs offering relatively high pay. Although the number of women in the teaching profession has increased, the increase has been far less in proportion than in woman employment as a whole.

Important Individual Occupations

The decennial census (1950) gives a detailed occupation list of 446 items. Of these 270 are specific occupations, such as textile spinner, librarian, waitress, busdriver, telephone operator. Other items are in more general terms, as for example, operative in apparel or in electrical factory; official or administrator in State public administration; or forewoman in textile or apparel plant.

OCCUPATIONS EMPLOYING 99,000 WOMEN OR MORE, 1950

Rank	Occupation	Women employed	
		Number	Percent of all persons in the occupation
1.	Stenographers, typists, secretaries.....	1, 501, 090	94
2.	Saleswomen—Retail trade.....	1, 192, 323	49
3.	Teachers (n. e. c.) (school).....	834, 996	75
4.	Operatives—Apparel, accessories.....	616, 864	81
5.	Bookkeepers.....	556, 229	77
6.	Waitresses.....	545, 565	82
7.	Nurses (professional).....	388, 921	98
8.	Telephone operators.....	341, 706	95
9.	Managers, proprietors—Retail trade.....	320, 139	17
10.	Farm laborers (unpaid family workers).....	317, 578	35
11.	Operatives—Laundry and dry cleaning.....	287, 533	67
12.	Cooks (except private household).....	242, 422	56
13.	Operatives—Textile yarn, thread, fabric mills.....	220, 054	50
14.	Beauticians (includes manicurists, barbers).....	189, 870	50
15.	Operatives—Food products.....	186, 337	38
16.	Cashiers.....	183, 586	81
17.	Operatives—Electrical machinery, supplies.....	179, 946	54
18.	Housekeepers (private household).....	134, 453	96
19.	Dressmakers, seamstresses (except factory).....	134, 310	97
20.	Farm laborers (wage workers).....	130, 327	9
21.	Practical nurses.....	130, 304	96
22.	Attendants—Hospitals, other institutions.....	121, 261	59
23.	Office machine operators.....	116, 917	82
24.	Farmers (owners, tenants).....	114, 179	3
25.	Operatives—Footwear, except rubber.....	110, 743	53
26.	Operatives—Wholesale, retail trade.....	107, 834	38
27.	Operatives—Knitting mills.....	104, 926	72
28.	Textile spinners, weavers.....	99, 182	55

Note: N. e. c. means not elsewhere classified.

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census. Decennial Census. 1950.

Women are at work in all the 446 occupations, though of course some employ great numbers and others very few women. The largest groups of women workers are in some of the clerical and sales occupations, household employment, and teaching.

Even though found in all occupations, women workers are concentrated to a large extent in relatively few. Of all employed women, almost a third are either manufacturing operatives, stenographers or typists, or private household workers. Half are either in one of these three occupations or are teachers, saleswomen, bookkeepers, or waitresses.

Each of 28 individual occupations employs about 100,000 women or more as the list on page 5 shows. Sixty percent of all women workers are in these occupations.

Proportion of Women in Individual Occupations

In certain individual occupations, most, or a very large proportion, of all workers are women. The list that follows shows the occupations in which half or more of the workers were women in 1950. Some of these are among the largest occupations for women, others are relatively small.

OCCUPATIONS WITH WOMEN HALF OR MORE OF THE WORKERS

Occupations with less than 100,000 women

Occupations with 100,000 or more women

WOMEN ARE NINE-TENTHS OR MORE OF THE WORKERS

Nurses (professional).	Nurses (student).
Dressmakers, seamstresses.	Laundresses (private household).
Practical nurses.	Attendants—Physician's, dentist's offices.
Telephone operators.	Dietitians, nutritionists.
Housekeepers (private household).	Librarians.
Private household workers (except housekeepers, laundresses).	Milliners.
Stenographers, typists, secretaries.	

WOMEN ARE ABOUT FOUR-FIFTHS OF THE WORKERS

Office machine operators.	Midwives.
Waitresses.	Demonstrators.
Cashiers.	Housekeepers (except private household).
Operatives—Apparel, accessories.	

WOMEN ARE ABOUT THREE-FOURTHS OF THE WORKERS

Bookkeepers.	Spinners (textile).
School teachers.	Attendants, assistants—Library.
Operatives—Knitting mills.	Boarding-, lodging-housekeepers.
	Operatives—Fabricated textiles.
	Dancers, dancing teachers.
	Religious workers.
	Operatives—Tobacco manufactures.

OCCUPATION WITH WOMEN HALF OR MORE OF THE WORKERS—Continued

*Occupations with 100,000 or more women**Occupations with less than 100,000 women*

WOMEN ARE HALF TO TWO-THIRDS OF THE WORKERS

Operatives—Laundry, dry cleaning.	Social, welfare workers (except group).
Attendants—Hospitals, institutions.	Attendants—Professional, personal services (n. e. c.).
Cooks (except private household).	Operatives—
Operatives—	Confectionery.
Electrical machinery, supplies.	Canning fruits, vegetables.
Footwear (except rubber).	Drugs, medicines.
Yarn, thread, fabric mills.	Charwomen, cleaners.
Beauticians (includes barbers, manicurists).	Packers, graders—Fruit, nut, vegetable.
Salespersons—Retail trade.	Operatives—
	Clocks, watches.
	Food (not specified).
	Technicians—Medical, dental.
	Bookbinders.
	Operatives—
	Personal services.
	Leather products (except footwear).
	Bakery products.
	Counter, fountain workers.
	Musicians, music teachers.
	Therapists, healers.
	Farm-, home-management advisers.
	Operatives—Paper, pulp products (miscellaneous).

Note: N. e. c. means not elsewhere classified.

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census. Decennial Census, 1950.

Women as Teachers

Teaching is one of the largest individual occupations of women, and this has been true in every decade since the Census Bureau has reported the occupations of women in full detail. Among women teachers in elementary and secondary schools three-fourths are in the elementary schools. Only about 5 percent of all women teachers are in institutions of higher education. Women are about nine-tenths of the elementary teachers, more than half those in secondary schools, and about a fourth of those in colleges and universities.

Chief Industry Groups

About two-thirds of the women employed in 1953 were in three industry groups—manufacturing, retail trade, and personal services. Each of these employs 3 million or more, manufacturing over 4 million. The number and proportion of women among all workers in

each industry group are shown in the following summary. Any industry may employ women in a wide variety of occupations, as for example, salespersons of several types, clerical office forces, manufacturing operatives, and so forth. Occupational data are shown elsewhere in this report (pp. 4. 5).

WOMEN IN EACH INDUSTRY GROUP

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Number, 1953</i>	<i>Percent of all workers</i>		<i>Percent distribution</i>	
		<i>1953</i>	<i>1940</i>	<i>1953</i>	<i>1940</i>
All groups.....	18,434,000	30	26	100	100
Manufacturing.....	4,524,000	26	23	25	21
Retail trade.....	3,666,000	39	31	20	17
Personal services.....	3,094,000	73	73	17	26
Professional, related services.....	2,904,000	57	57	16	17
All other industries.....	4,246,000	17	11	23	19

Women Factory Workers

Factories employ a fourth of all women workers, more than are in any other industry group—over 4¼ million women in 1954. According to current reports of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, about 40 percent of the women in manufacturing produce apparel, textiles, or foods. Together with those in several other industries that long have employed many women—the electrical machinery industry, printing and publishing, and leather plants—these account for about 60 percent of all women in factories. All but the electrical industry are in the nondurable goods group, which always employs by far the greatest number of women.

In recent years, durable goods, often called the heavier industries, have shown a striking increase in employment of women; in 1954 they employed almost one-half million more women than in 1950. Important employers of women in this group of industries are electrical and other machinery, metals, and transportation equipment. Some of the durable goods industries formerly not thought of as large employers of women, have grown notably—machinery (except electrical), transportation equipment, and fabricated metals. The number and proportion of women in each of the various industry groups are shown in the following table. These figures include all the women in factory offices, as well as production workers. About four-fifths of the women in factories are production workers, but the proportion varies markedly from industry to industry. For example, in some of the metal industries half or more of the women are in the factory offices, while in the industries long known as important employers of women, such as textiles and clothing, well over nine-tenths of the women are production workers.

WOMEN WAGE AND SALARIED WORKERS IN CHIEF MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

Industry	Women					
	1954		Percent increase from 1950		Percent of all workers	
	Number	Percent increase from 1950	1954	1950	1954	1950
Total.....	4, 289, 700	14	100	100	26	27
Nondurable goods.....	2, 567, 100	2	60	67	38	38
Apparel, finished textile products.....	949, 000	4	22	24	77	76
Textile mill products.....	466, 400	² 15	11	15	43	43
Food products.....	339, 800	2	8	9	24	24
Printing, publishing.....	220, 800	14	5	5	27	27
Leather, leather products..	191, 800	6	4	5	51	46
Chemical products.....	143, 200	24	3	3	18	17
Paper products.....	121, 100	12	3	3	23	23
Rubber products.....	66, 100	10	2	2	26	26
Tobacco manufactures....	53, 500	² 1	1	1	58	57
Products of petroleum, coal.....	15, 400	43	(¹)	(¹)	6	5
Durable goods.....	1, 722, 600	39	40	33	18	17
Electrical machinery.....	432, 600	42	10	8	38	38
Transportation equipment..	236, 800	121	6	3	13	10
Machinery, except electrical.....	227, 400	35	5	4	14	13
Fabricated metal products (n. e. c.).....	205, 700	24	5	4	19	19
Instruments and related products.....	116, 200	51	3	2	36	33
Stone, clay, glass products.....	85, 400	9	2	2	17	16
Primary metal industries..	71, 800	20	2	2	6	5
Furniture, fixtures.....	62, 000	10	1	1	18	16
Lumber, wood products..	48, 600	² 4	1	1	7	7
Ordnance, accessories....	47, 900	989	1	(¹)	24	17
Miscellaneous manufacturing industries.....	188, 200	12	4	4	40	40

¹ Less than 1 percent.² In this case a decline.

Source: U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Employment and Earnings* (formerly *Employment and Payrolls*). (March figures.)

Of all factory employees in 1954, women were just over a fourth. However, women were half to three-fourths of the employees in apparel, tobacco, and leather factories, a somewhat smaller proportion

in textile mills, and well over a third of those in electrical machinery and supply plants and instrument making.

	<i>Women as percent of all workers</i>		<i>Women as percent of all workers</i>
Apparel.....	77	Printing, publishing.....	27
Tobacco.....	58	Rubber.....	26
Leather.....	47	Food.....	24
Textiles.....	43	Ordnance.....	24
Electrical machinery.....	38	Paper.....	23
Instruments.....	36		

Women as Federal Employees

More than half a million women are at work in the executive branch of the Federal Government. These women are a fourth of all such workers. About a fifth of them are located in Washington, D. C. Somewhat less than a tenth had veterans' preference in appointment to their jobs. Of these, over half are women who have been in the armed services; somewhat less than half are wives of disabled veterans, or widows and mothers of deceased veterans. The table following shows the number of women government employees in the postwar years, and other information about them along the lines discussed. The employment of women in government service was considerably greater during the war years—in fact, in the highest postwar year it was 42 percent less than at the wartime peak.

WOMEN IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF THE FEDERAL SERVICE

Year	Number	<i>Percent of women employees</i>			
		<i>Percent of all workers</i>	<i>Located in D. C.</i>	<i>With veterans' prefer- ence</i>	<i>Percent wives, widows, mothers¹</i>
1947.....	417, 200	24	21	9	40
1948.....	431, 500	23	(²)	9	43
1949.....	422, 200	22	(²)	10	39
1950.....	440, 600	23	(²)	10	41
1951.....	580, 700	25	20	8	42
1952.....	586, 600	25	18	8	44
1953.....	536, 000	24	18	9	45

¹ As percent of all women with veterans' preference.

² Not available.

Source: U. S. Civil Service Commission. Figures are for September in each year except 1947, when they are for November.

Ages of Women Workers

Most young women of today take a job until marriage or for some time after. They then are most likely to leave the labor force during

the time their small children require continual care. When their children are partly grown and no longer need constant attention, many women return to work. Because of this cycle that appears in the lives of many American women, a larger proportion are in the labor force at the ages 20 to 24 years than in older groups. The proportion in the labor force declines in the age group 25 to 34 and increases again at 35.

In the woman population as a whole, a somewhat larger proportion than in 1940 are of the ages 35 to 64. Furthermore, a very much larger proportion than formerly of these women are in the labor force, as the following summary shows. There was a considerable movement of women beyond 35 into the labor force during wartime, and many of them remained at work after the war. Women 35 to 64 are now more than half the women workers, though in 1940 they were less than 40 percent. Also larger than in 1940 is the proportion of women under 20 years old who are in the labor force; however, these young girls are less than a tenth of all women workers.

The only age group present in the labor force in somewhat smaller proportion than in 1940 is that of women 20 to 24. This may be largely explained by the postwar increases in youthful marriages, and the high birthrate that keeps many of the wives at home to care for their young children.

AGES OF WOMEN IN POPULATION AND LABOR FORCE

Age (in years)	Percent of population who were in labor force		Percent distribution in—			
	1954	1940	1954		1940	
			Popu- lation	Labor force	Popu- lation	Labor force
All ages, 14 and over.	33	28	100	100	100	100
14 to 19.....	27	20	11	9	15	11
20 to 24.....	44	48	9	12	12	20
25 to 34.....	36	36	21	22	21	28
35 to 44.....	41	29	19	24	18	19
45 to 64.....	36	22	28	30	25	20
65 and over.....	9	7	12	3	9	2

The result of the changes just discussed is that the median age of the women workers of today, 38 years, is several years older than the median of the women employed in 1940. (The median is the midpoint, half the women being older, half younger.) The trend toward entrance of increasing numbers of older women into the labor force is not new, but has been continuing over a long period. However, it has been especially marked since 1940. In 1900 the median age of women workers was only 26 years, by 1940 it was nearly 32. Since 1940, the median age of women in the labor force has advanced as much as in the preceding four decades, as the following figures show.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Median age (years)</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Median age (years)</i>
1954.....	38	1940.....	32
1950.....	37	1930.....	30
1947.....	35	1920.....	30
1945.....	34	1900.....	26

Among all women workers about 30 percent are 45 to 64 years of age, but the proportions who are of these ages vary considerably in different occupations. The proportion 45 to 64 is much larger than this among management and household workers, somewhat larger among service and farm workers. At the more youthful end of the scale, over a fifth of the women workers are under 25 years of age, but among clerical workers the proportion under 25 is much higher.

Single and Married Women Workers

Half the single women 14 years and over are in the labor force, as are more than a third of the widowed and divorced women, and a fourth of the married women.

Marked changes have occurred since 1940 in the proportions of married and single women, both in the population and in the labor force. These changes, which are indicated in the accompanying summary, began in the war period and still show their effects. The population of today includes over 8½ million more married women and 3 million fewer single women than in 1940. This results to a considerable extent from the fact that the marriage rate was accelerated during and just after the war and has continued at a high level. There now are almost three and one-half times as many married as single women in the population, though in 1940 there were only twice as many married as single.

SINGLE AND MARRIED WOMEN IN THE POPULATION AND LABOR FORCE

<i>Marital status</i>	<i>Number of women (14 and over)</i>		<i>Percent distribution</i>	
	<i>1953</i>	<i>1940</i>	<i>1953</i>	<i>1940</i>
POPULATION				
Total.....	58, 940, 000	50, 549, 176	100	100
Single.....	10, 774, 000	13, 935, 866	18	28
Married (husband present).....	37, 106, 000	28, 516, 937	63	56
Other marital status.....	11, 060, 000	8, 096, 373	19	16
LABOR FORCE				
Total.....	18, 920, 000	13, 840, 000	100	100
Single.....	5, 140, 000	6, 710, 000	27	48
Married (husband present).....	9, 588, 000	4, 200, 000	51	30
Other marital status.....	4, 192, 000	2, 930, 000	22	21

The increase in married and decline in single women in the labor force is not explained entirely by the marked changes in the population, though it likewise stems from wartime influences. In 1940 about half the single women were already in employment. Great pressures were exerted to bring added numbers of women into wartime work. Both single and married women entered the labor force in increased numbers, a larger proportion of the single than of the married. But the number of married women in the population was increasing markedly, the number of single declining. Many more married than single women were available to meet the wartime needs for labor-force increases. Furthermore, many of the older married women were beyond the years when family care absorbs most of a woman's time and energy, husbands of the more recently married were in the Armed Forces, and the desire to be of service in the country's emergency was general.

After the war, when the number of single women in the population had declined, the proportion of single women who were workers dropped to the prewar level. Among married women, on the other hand, the proportion in the labor force not only maintained the wartime level but showed some additional increase. (See summary following.) A considerable part of the explanation for this is revealed in figures on age. The median age of single women workers is 24 years, of those married, 39 years. This indicates that married women of the ages when family cares are less pressing remained in the labor force to a considerable extent, having become accustomed to use of their new or revived skills at work. A custom well developed before the war grew even more usual—that the new wife remain at work for a time while establishing the home. This accounts for the fact that about a tenth of the married women workers are under 25 years of age. With both these sectors of the married woman population, the prevailing high living costs accentuated the need to continue in an earning status.

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN BY MARITAL STATUS

<i>Marital status</i>	<i>Percent of all women of each marital status who were workers</i>			
	1940	1944	1950	1953
All groups.....	27	35	31	22
Single.....	48	59	51	42
Married (total).....	17	26	25	27
Husband present.....	15	22	24	26
Husband absent.....	53	52	47	48
Widowed and divorced.....	32	36	36	35

The result of these changes is that among single women, who always are employed to a considerable extent, much the same proportion as in 1940 are employed—about half. Among married women with husband present, while 15 percent were employed in 1940, today 26 percent are employed. The changes in numbers appear especially great because the total number of married women has increased, of single women declined.

Occupations of Single and Married Women

There are notable differences in the occupations of single and married women. Much larger proportions of single than married women are in the clerical and professional groups, and considerably larger proportions of the married than of the single are in the operative and the managerial groups (the latter, however, being relatively small for women).

A much larger proportion of the widowed and divorced than of either the married or the single are in service occupations. However, more than three-fourths of all women workers, whether single or married, are clerical or sales workers, operatives, or service workers.

Working Couples

The number of married couples in the population has increased greatly since the prewar period, and in many more cases than formerly both husband and wife are in the labor force. The number of couples in the population with husband the head of the family increased from 26 $\frac{2}{3}$ million in 1940 to over 37 million in 1953. Of these couples, the proportion with both spouses in the labor force increased from 11 percent (almost 3 million couples) in 1940 to almost 26 percent (over 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ million couples) in 1953.

Mothers in the Labor Force

The exact number of working women responsible for the care of young children is difficult to ascertain. Available data report on married women with husband present. Thus, no account is taken of mothers who are widowed or divorced, nor of women, whether married or single, who are responsible for the care of children other than their own. The number of such women may be considerable, especially since the war.

Of all women in the labor force in 1953 just over 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ million (about 1 in 4) are married, living with husband, and have children under 18 years of age. The majority of these have children of school age only (6 to 17 years). Somewhat fewer than 2 million have children under 6; these constitute about 1 in 10 of all employed women.

Mothers of preschool children are much less likely to be in the labor force than those whose children have reached school age.

Among women with children of school age only, as well as among those with no children, just over 30 percent are workers, as the following summary shows. On the other hand, among the mothers of preschool children, the proportion who enter the labor force is only about half as high—15 percent.

The age distribution of married women workers is revealing in connection with their child-care problems. Over 45 percent of the employed married women are 40 years of age or older, and in many cases their children are grown. Somewhat larger proportions of the married women in older than of those in younger groups are workers—over 33 percent of those 40 to 44 compared to 25 percent of those 25 to 35 years of age.

In recent years when increasing proportions of married women have entered the labor force (thus contributing both to family finances and to the country's labor supply) their contribution to other primary phases of home life also is maintained; in fact the birthrate continues to be at a higher level than in almost any year in the past three decades. Furthermore, the number of children under 5 years of age per 1,000 women aged 15 to 49 years was 429 in 1953 (latest figures available), an increase from 281 in 1940, or more than 50 percent. In addition, of the women 25 to 29 years of age, 24 percent in 1953 as compared to 13 percent in 1940 had two or more children; of those aged 30 to 34, 15 percent in 1953 and 9 percent in 1940 had two or more children.

MARRIED WOMEN IN THE LABOR FORCE WITH AND WITHOUT CHILDREN, 1953

	<i>Number of women in—</i>		<i>Percent of all women workers</i>	<i>Percent in labor force</i>
	<i>Population</i>	<i>Labor force</i>		
Married women, husband present.....	37, 106, 000	9, 588, 000	51	26
With no own children under 18...	16, 430, 000	5, 038, 000	27	31
Total with own children under 18..	20, 676, 000	4, 550, 000	24	22
With children 6-17 only.....	8, 538, 000	2, 700, 000	14	32
With children under 6 only..	6, 618, 000	1, 028, 000	5	16
With children both 6-17 and under 6.....	5, 520, 000	822, 000	4	15
Total with own children under 6..	12, 138, 000	1, 850, 000	10	15

¹ Note that only married women with husbands present are reported for 1953. It is estimated that more than 1 million additional mothers are at work—primarily those who are widowed, separated, or divorced.

The absence of the husband from the family tends to increase markedly the necessity for the mother to seek employment. Among all mothers with own children under 18, of those with husbands present, 21 percent were in the labor force, but of those with husbands absent, 53 percent had gone to work, according to latest data available

(1951). Where all children were under school age, only 14 percent of the mothers were in the labor force if the husband was at home, but 41 percent of those with husbands absent had to work.

Of all children under 5 years of age in this country (1952) almost nine-tenths have mothers not in the labor force (about 14½ million children). The remaining tenth (almost 2½ million) have mothers who work, some on part time, some in their own business, some on full-time jobs.

Women as Heads of Families

In sharp contrast to the popularly envisioned picture of the "average" family, consisting of father, mother, and children, stands the fact that in 1953 a woman was the head in nearly 4 million of this country's families (two or more related persons living together). This is about a tenth of all families in the United States.

Of the women family heads in 1953, two-thirds are 45 years of age or older, a fourth being 65 or older. Almost 60 percent of them are widowed. Over a fourth of them have families of four or more members. About half—almost 2 million women family heads—have children under 18 in the family, over one-half million of them having at least one child under 6 years of age.

The percent of women family heads is likely to be appreciably higher among the underprivileged than in the Nation as a whole. The standard of living in families headed by women is lower than the average for all families. The median income in families headed by a woman was not much over half the median for those headed by a man, according to the latest report available (1952 income). Almost half such families have incomes below \$2,000 a year.

Not all family heads, be they men or women, are in the labor force. Data available on this subject (1949) show about 45 percent of the women family heads in the labor force, most of them undoubtedly working not only for their own support but also toward the family's maintenance.

Before the war, the number of families with a woman head was increasing. Constituting 9.4 percent of all families in the country in 1930, such families were 11.0 percent of all families by 1940. In spite of the accelerated marriage rate, the number of families with women heads increased sharply during the war, for men in the armed services were not counted as members of families unless living at home off post. In the postwar period, accompanying the return home of men from the war and the continuing increases in numbers of married couples in the population, families with women heads returned to the 1930 proportion.

Women as Part-Time Workers

Work on a part-time basis brings into use the skills of a considerable number of women who would be unable to take full-time jobs because of family and household responsibilities or for other reasons. The Census Bureau defines part-time employment as work for less than 35 hours a week. Under this definition more than a fifth of all women workers were on part time in late 1953. Some of these are only temporarily in this situation, some are unable to work full time for economic reasons such as slack work or unavailability of full-time jobs. Three-fourths of the women who regularly work part-time do not want or could not accept full-time employment, though these constitute only 16 percent of the woman labor force as a whole.

Part-time work is more likely to be sought by women than men, since women frequently need to combine a paid job with household cares. Over 60 percent of all those who usually work part time are women.

Nearly a third of married women workers but only about a fifth of other women workers are on part time, according to an earlier census report (1950). If married women workers have children, especially preschool children, they are much more likely to take a part-time than a full-time job. If there are no children under 18, the proportion of married women workers who are on part time is similar to that of the single or the widowed or divorced.

Almost two-thirds of the women part-time workers are in household employment, sales occupations, or farmwork. To obtain more detailed information on kinds of part-time jobs women are doing, skills required, hours worked, earnings, and advantages and disadvantages in such employment, the Women's Bureau made a special study of more than 9,000 women part-time workers and over 1,000 employers of such workers, in 10 cities. (See Bull. 238.) This study, which did not include household employment or farmwork, shows that in most cities some part-time employees are in social agencies, hospitals, educational and library services, insurance, and numerous other types of work.

The age distribution of women part-time workers does not differ greatly from that of the woman labor force as a whole. However, larger proportions of the part-time than of the full-time woman labor force are in the youngest and the oldest groups—under 20 years of age, and 55 years of age or older.

Women as Members of Unions

Complete information on the number of women workers who are union members is not available. Many unions keep no separate record of woman membership. Some organizations count only paid-up members, others report a wider count. Officers of unions can make rough estimates, often on a local rather than a nationwide basis. It is estimated that about 3¼ million women are union members. The State labor departments in California and Massachusetts give pertinent information on membership of women in unions, from a questionnaire sent out to the locals of all unions in the State. Reports of these show that unions in industries known to be large employers of women, such as the textile, clothing, telephone, and shoe industries, have larger numbers and proportions of women members than such industries as teaming and trucking, railroading, gas and electric, in which women are much smaller percentages of the employees. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports the number of union members from questionnaires sent to the officers of the unions. About 80 unions give some report on their woman membership, and of these the 12 listed below each report more than 35,000 women members. Largest of these, each with over 260,000 women, are two great unions of clothing workers, and three other important unions also have well over 100,000 women members apiece.

<i>Union</i>	<i>Number of women reported</i>
International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (AFL)-----	292, 500
Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (CIO)-----	261, 800
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (AFL)-----	150, 000
Retail Clerks International Association (AFL)-----	125, 000
United Automobile, Aircraft & Agricultural Implement Workers of America (CIO)-----	118, 500
United Steelworkers of America (CIO)-----	80, 000
Laundry Workers' International Union (AFL)-----	65, 000
Bakery and Confectionery Workers' International Union of America (AFL)-----	60, 200
Building Service Employees' International Union (AFL)-----	55, 500
Alliance Independent Telephone Unions (Ind.)-----	45, 500
American Federation of Teachers (AFL)-----	37, 500
Brotherhood of Railway & Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express & Station Employees (AFL)-----	36, 000

Negro Women Workers

Negro women are 10 percent of the woman population and 12 percent of the woman labor force, according to the decennial census, 1950.

Of all the Negro women in the population, 37 percent are in the labor force. These women are 35 percent of all Negro workers. The num-

ber of Negro women in the labor force increased about 20 percent from 1940 to 1950. The following summary shows the numbers of Negro women employed in the chief occupation groups.

CHIEF OCCUPATIONS OF NEGRO WOMEN

Occupation	Number	Negro women workers, 1950	Percent distribution	
			1950	1940
Total employed.....	1, 869, 956	35	100	100
Private household workers.....	773, 590	96	41	59
Service workers (except private household).....	¹ 351, 856	43	19	11
Cooks.....	60, 385	58	-----	-----
Waitresses.....	42, 139	50	-----	-----
Operatives.....	¹ 274, 000	27	14	6
Laundry.....	98, 998	69	-----	-----
Apparel, fabricated textiles.....	52, 910	87	-----	-----
Farm laborers.....	139, 657	28	8	13
Unpaid family workers.....	72, 751	39	-----	-----
Wage workers.....	66, 906	21	-----	-----
Professional workers.....	¹ 104, 728	58	6	4
Teachers.....	67, 857	78	-----	-----
Clerical workers.....	74, 255	41	4	1
All other occupations.....	151, 870	-----	8	6

¹ Total exceeds details, as only the individual occupations that employ as many as 40,000 Negro women are shown.

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census. Decennial Census. 1950.

Changes in Employment of Negro Women

The number of employed Negro women increased from 1940 to 1950 by 20 percent. In the same period the total number of employed women increased about 40 percent.

In the occupations of Negro women, marked changes occurred from 1940 to 1950. The addition to the Negro labor force of 60,000 women as clerical workers and 40,000 as professional workers brought these groups to 10 percent of all employed Negro women from only 5 percent in 1940. The number of Negro women employed as operatives and as service workers (except in households) each increased by more than 175,000. Well over half the operatives are in laundries or apparel factories. Over 10,000 Negro women were added to each of the groups of sales workers, laborers, and managers and proprietors, and nearly 10,000 to that of craftswomen. On the other hand, Negro women declined in number by more than 144,000 as household workers and almost 75,000 as farm workers.

Owing to the changes in employment, 10 percent of the Negro women workers are in professional and clerical occupations (com-

bined) as compared to 5 percent in 1940, 15 percent are operatives as compared to 6 percent in 1940, and almost 20 percent are service workers (other than in households) compared to 10 percent in 1940. As a result of the declines that occurred over the decade, household occupations engage just over 40 percent of the Negro women compared to almost 60 percent in 1940, and 9 percent are at work on farms compared to 16 percent in 1940.

Negro women are a larger proportion of the women workers in 1950 than in 1940 in all groups except farmwork. The gains in proportion of Negroes among all women workers are especially marked among household employees and general laborers.

CHANGES IN MAJOR OCCUPATION GROUPS OF NEGRO WOMEN, 1940-50

Occupation group	Change in number of Negro women, 1940-50 ¹	Negro women as percent of all women	
		1950	1940
All occupations.....	327, 683	12	14
Service groups.....	51, 332	35	34
Private household workers.....	-145, 411	58	47
Service workers (except private household)....	196, 743	18	13
Manual groups.....	202, 722	9	5
Operatives.....	178, 605	9	5
Laborers (except farm, mine).....	15, 007	22	13
Craftswomen, forewomen.....	9, 110	5	2
White collar groups.....	131, 217	3	2
Professional workers.....	38, 091	5	4
Clerical workers.....	61, 180	2	1
Sales workers.....	17, 674	2	1
Managers, proprietors, officials.....	14, 272	4	3
Farm groups.....	-74, 640	30	52
Farm laborers, forewomen.....	-59, 373	31	62
Farmers, farm managers.....	-15, 267	27	30
Occupation not reported.....	17, 052	11	8

¹ Increase unless minus sign shown.

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census. Decennial Census, 1940 and 1950.