UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Frances Perkins, *Secretary*

BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
Isador Lubin, *Commissioner*

The Wage and Hour Structure of the Furniture-Manufacturing Industry October 1937

✦

Prepared by the
Division of Wage and Hour Statistics
JACOB PERLMAN, Chief

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Letter of Transmittal

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS,
Washington, D. C., June 15, 1939

The SECRETARY OF LABOR:

I have the honor to transmit herewith a report on The Wage and Hour Structure of the Furniture-Manufacturing Industry, October 1937. This report was prepared by the Division of Wage and Hour Statistics, Jacob Perlman, chief.

Respectfully submitted.

ISADOR LUBIN,
Commissioner of Labor Statistics.

Hon. FRANCES PERKINS,
Secretary of Labor.

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PREFACE

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has made a number of surveys of wages and hours in the furniture-manufacturing industry. The earlier surveys covered only selected occupations, but those for 1915, 1929, and 1931, as well as the present one, have included all occupations.

Prior to 1937, data were obtained only from establishments engaged primarily in the manufacture of wood household and wood office furniture. The scope of the present survey is wider, as metal office furniture and public seating have also been covered. Not included were such products as store and lunchroom furniture and fixtures as well as professional furniture, which as a rule are not made on a mass-production basis.

Since the last survey in 1931, the industry has been profoundly affected by Federal legislation and changes in industrial conditions. In particular, the N. R. A. code tended to raise wages and reduce hours of work. The purpose of the present survey was to ascertain what changes had taken place recently in the wage and hour structure of the furniture-manufacturing industry.

The Bureau is indebted to the many employers who cooperated by furnishing the data upon which the report is based. The Bureau also appreciates the assistance of the National Association of Furniture Manufacturers, the Southern Furniture Manufacturers' Association, the Steel Office Furniture Institute, and the Trade Practice Committee of the Public Seating Industry. Likewise, the Bureau wishes to thank the various trade-unions in the industry for their aid in the survey.

This report was prepared under the direction of Jacob Perlman, Chief of the Division of Wage and Hour Statistics. The text was written by Jacob Perlman, Victor S. Baril, and H. O. Rogers. Victor S. Baril was in charge of the survey. Abner C. Lakenan, John J. McCarthy, Edward Kilpatrick, and Vera C. Holtzclaw compiled the data. The following field representatives collected the data: Hugh F. Brown, Fred B. Cunningham, Wilbert E. Dinger, Clarence H. Doughty, Mell W. Fleetwood, Victor E. Green, H. S. Hammond, Ann Herlihy, Charles F. Jackson, John F. Laciskey, Fred B. Lindsey, Clarence T. Lundquist, Samuel J. Nordan, Charles Rubenstein, William C. Sims, Bernard L. Smith, George E. Votava, and Paul E. Warwick.

ISADOR LUBIN,
Commissioner of Labor Statistics.

JUNE 15, 1939.

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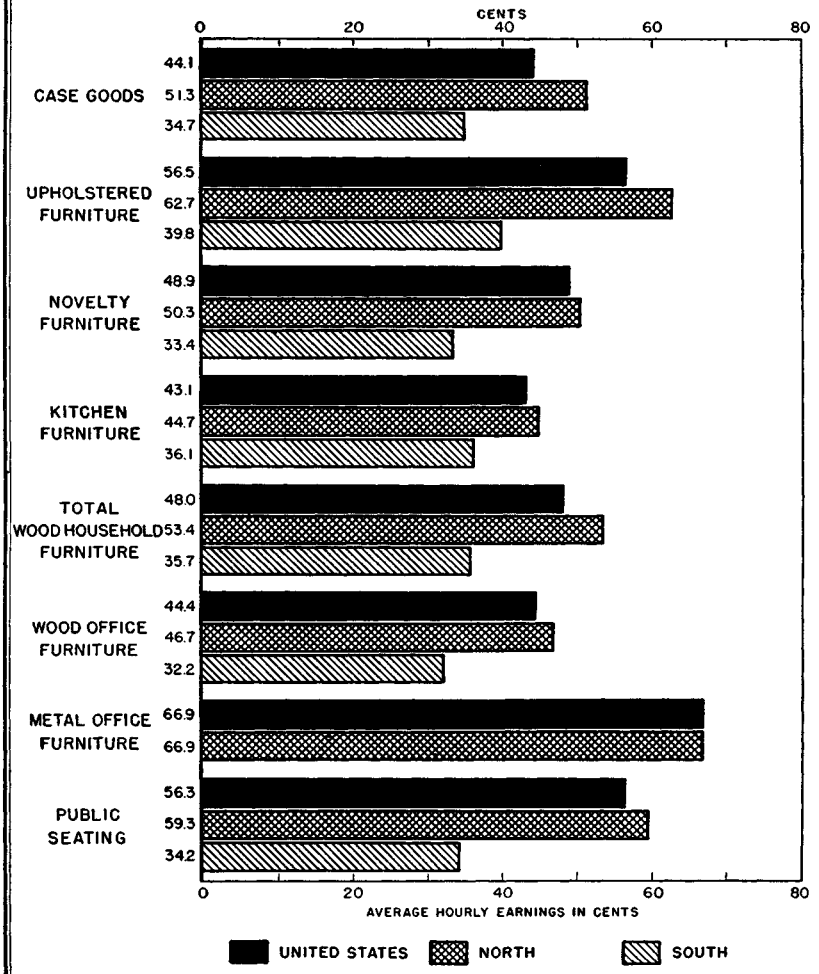
CHART I.

AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS OF WORKERS IN THE FURNITURE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY BY BRANCH AND REGION

OCTOBER, 1937



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The Wage and Hour Structure of the Furniture-Manufacturing Industry, October 1937

PART 1.—Background Material

Chapter I.—The Furniture-Manufacturing Industry

Definition of Industry

There are various definitions of the furniture-manufacturing industry. That of the United States Census of Manufactures is fairly broad. It embraces under the designation of "furniture, including store and office fixtures" any establishments engaged primarily in the making of furniture out of wood, metal, fiber, reed, rattan, and willow.

In addition to the different materials used, the industry thus defined produces a wide variety of articles. These are classified by the Census of Manufactures as follows: Household furniture, or furniture commonly used in dwellings (exclusive of mattresses, bed springs, and refrigerators), porch and camp furniture, and radio and sewing-machine cases and cabinets; office furniture; store and lunchroom furniture and fixtures; furniture for professional use in laboratories, hospitals, barber shops, beauty parlors, etc.; furniture for public buildings, including seats for public conveyances; shelving; lockers; and telephone booths.

According to the Census of Manufactures, there were 3,097 establishments in the furniture industry in 1937 whose product was valued at $5,000 or more. They employed an average of 170,072 wage earners during the year. They were paid $172,558,291 in wages. The total value of products amounted to $658,466,694, of which $350,163,047 was the value added by manufacture.

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TABLE 1.—*Number of establishments, number of wage earners, wages paid, and value of products in furniture-manufacturing industry, 1899 to 1937*

Year	Number of establishments [1]	Number of wage earners (average for year) [1]	Wages paid [1]	Average annual wages [2]	Value of products [1]	Ratio of wages to value of products
Furniture plants with a product valued at $500 or more:						
1899	1,929	88,964	$36,443,360	$410	$128,264,001	28.4
1904	2,637	113,486	51,655,685	455	176,615,364	29.2
1909	3,188	127,088	65,047,325	512	236,942,836	27.5
1914	3,338	130,423	73,401,611	563	271,610,464	27.0
1919	3,279	140,252	143,152,217	1,021	579,906,396	24.7
Furniture plants with a product valued at $5,000 or more:						
1921	3,038	124,362	144,148,061	1,159	550,413,020	26.2
1923	3,047	168,157	204,566,063	1,217	776,846,732	26.3
1925	3,239	181,016	225,297,743	1,245	868,719,971	25.9
1927 [3]	3,228	188,143	238,240,167	1,266	885,204,300	26.9
1929 [3]	3,778	193,399	242,832,096	1,256	948,116,358	25.6
1931 [3]	3,148	127,605	125,972,086	987	482,289,230	26.1
1933 [3]	2,411	105,488	76,346,466	724	297,729,981	25.6
1935 [3]	3,035	130,781	113,898,288	871	434,443,514	26.2
1937 [3]	3,097	170,072	172,558,291	1,015	658,466,694	26.2

[1] Taken from U. S. Census of Manufactures.
[2] These annual earnings were arrived at by dividing the total wages paid by the average number of wage earners for the year.
[3] Includes also figures for sewing-machine cases, cabinets, and tables.

Growth of Industry

Prior to the introduction of machinery, furniture was made for the most part in shops by master cabinetmakers aided by a few journeymen and apprentices. All of the work was done at a bench with the aid of hand tools. On the whole, these shops were small and their output consisted almost exclusively of custom-made furniture intended to meet the needs of the upper and middle classes. The poorer classes used very little furniture, which was generally made by themselves or by the local carpenter.

The transition of furniture making from handicraft to factory stage took place largely during the latter half of the nineteenth century. On the one hand, this change was brought about by the widening of markets for furniture products, which followed the rapid industrial development of the country and the consequent improved purchasing power of wage earners. On the other hand, it was made possible by the introduction of machines, which tended to lower production costs, thus bringing factory-made furniture within the reach of lower income groups.

The rapid progress in the furniture industry continued after the turn of the century. This may be seen by an examination of the data from the Census of Manufactures since 1899, which are shown in table 1.

In number of furniture plants, including all with a value of products of $500 or more, the industry expanded from 1,929 in 1899 to 3,338 in 1914, decreasing slightly to 3,279 in 1919. Since 1921 reports are available only for the establishments with a value of

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products of $5,000 or over; the number amounted to 3,038 in 1921. There was very little change in 1923, but by 1925 the number had increased to 3,239. After hardly any change in 1927, an all-time peak of 3,778 plants was reached in 1929. The effect of the depression upon the industry in the early thirties is shown by the reduction in the number of establishments to 3,148 in 1931 and 2,411 in 1933. By 1935, however, the number had risen to 3,035 and in 1937, it was 3,097, which figures are near the level of the early twenties.

Employment in furniture plants with a product valued at $500 or more rose from 88,964 in 1899 to 140,252 in 1919, a gain of 58 percent. On the basis of establishments with a product valued at $5,000 or more, the number of wage earners increased from 124,362 in 1921 to a peak of 193,399 in 1929, an advance of 56 percent. The effect of the depression upon the industry is shown by a reduction in the number of workers to 105,488 in 1933, a decline of 46 percent. By 1935, however, the number of wage earners had risen to 130,781, increasing further to 170,072 in 1937. The latter year, therefore, was still considerably below the 1929 peak.

In the year 1899, furniture workers earned an average of $410. By 1914, the annual wages had increased to $563. During the war period, however, annual wages rose sharply, the figure amounting to $1,021 in 1919. There was a further advance to $1,217 in 1923. From 1923 to 1929, the average annual wages were quite stable. During the depression, the annual earnings fell off sharply, dropping to $987 in 1931 and to $724 in 1933. Despite the advance between 1933 and 1937, the average for the latter year ($1,015) was still substantially below that for any census year between 1923 and 1929.

Changes in wages on the whole kept close pace with those in value of products. This was not entirely true between 1899 and 1919, when the relative gain in wages was somewhat smaller than in value of products. During this interval, the former advanced from $36,443,360 to $143,152,217 and the latter from $128,264,001 to $579,906,396. While much of this gain occurred between 1904 and 1914, by far the greater part took place during the war years (1914 to 1919). From 1921 to 1929, the relative increase in wages was only slightly smaller than that in value of products, the former increasing from $144,148,061 to $242,832,096 and the latter from $550,413,020 to $948,116,358. By 1933, wages had declined to $76,346,466 and value of products to $297,729,981. In 1935, wages stood at $113,898,288 and value of products at $434,443,514. During the next 2 years, both wages and value of products advanced sharply, so that by 1937 the former amounted to $172,558,291 and the latter to $658,466,694. It is interesting to note that from 1921 to 1937 the ratio of wages to value of products remained almost constant, namely, about 26 percent.

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Heterogeneous Nature of Products

As mentioned at the outset, the furniture industry has an extremely wide range of products. Thus, under each of the classifications used by the Census of Manufactures (see table 2), there are numerous subgroups, each of which in turn covers a large number of articles. Moreover, these articles in many instances vary with respect to materials used, and in some cases there is keen competition between items that differ only in materials. There is also lack of standardization in the various articles, so that a given item may differ greatly in quality and design. Lastly, all of these factors are reflected in the manufacturing processes, which range from hand to mass production and vary widely with the materials involved.

By far the most important classification is that of household furniture, which in 1937 accounted for 73 percent of the total value of the industry's products. This group covers living room and library, bedroom, dining room, kitchen, porch, camp, hall, juvenile, and miscellaneous furniture, as well as furniture in white. Not only is the greatest variety of individual articles found in this classification, but it also presents the widest range in quality and design. On the whole, most of the above items are the result of mass production, although the more expensive furniture is usually made by hand.

On the basis of materials used, wood comprised 88.6, metal 10.6, and other materials 0.8 percent of the total value of household furniture in 1937. Yet, in spite of the fact that wood dominates this field as a whole, metal furniture is a competitive factor of some importance. Thus, an examination of the data for each of the various subgroups within the classification reveals that the proportion of total value of products for metal amounted to 8 percent for the living room and library, 7 percent for bedroom, 26 percent for kitchen, 68 percent for porch, and 42 percent for camp furniture. Hence, metal dominates porch furniture, and is an important factor in both kitchen and camp furniture. However, it is relatively of minor importance in living room, library, and bedroom furniture. It should be added, however, that metal has increased considerably in popularity in living room and library (particularly modernistic) and kitchen furniture during recent years, while the trend in metal bedroom furniture has been in the opposite direction.

Office furniture constitutes another important classification, comprising 8 percent of the total value of products in the industry in 1937. Compared to furniture for household use, office furniture covers a relatively smaller variety of products. However, this limited range in items, coupled with their more or less standardized nature, is responsible for the greater utilization of mass-production methods in this branch of the industry.

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To a much greater extent than in household furniture, there exists very keen competition between wood and metal office furniture. Metal is the more important of the two, its products accounting for 61 percent of the total value of office furniture. An examination of the subgroups, however, reveals the fact that chairs and desks and tables are to a large extent made of wood rather than metal, the distribution being 67 percent for the former and 33 percent for the latter. On the other hand, all but 6 percent of the total value of filing cabinets and cases were metal.

Of importance also are the products classified by the Census of Manufactures as store and lunchroom furniture and fixtures. In 1937, these items represented 9 percent of the total product value of the industry. Included in this group are counters, tables, partitions, window backs, showcases, wall cases, cabinets, chairs and stools, display fixtures, and miscellaneous other items. Most of these are made of wood, which on the basis of value of products accounted for 72 percent of this group. The manufacture of store and lunchroom furniture and fixtures is highly specialized, and for that reason it does not readily lend itself to mass production.

TABLE 2.—*Value of products in furniture-manufacturing industry for the United States in 1937* [1]

Products	Value
1. "Furniture, including store and office fixtures" industry, all products, total value	$658, 466, 694
2. Furniture and store and office fixtures made in the industry	625, 697, 020
3. Other products (not normally belonging to the industry)	31, 012, 084
4. Receipts for contract, custom, and repair work	1, 757, 590
5. Furniture and store and office fixtures made as secondary products in other industries	50, 152, 934
Furniture and store and office fixtures, aggregate value (sum of 2 and 5)	675, 849, 954
Wood	528, 546, 050
Metal	143, 372, 165
Fiber	3, 931, 739
Household furniture, total	496, 404, 392
Wood, total	439, 660, 837
Living room and library	212, 160, 430
Bedroom	116, 558, 588
Dining room	57, 155, 223
Kitchen	18, 866, 633
Porch	3, 894, 386
Camp	2, 255, 554
Hall	779, 687
Juvenile	4, 739, 425
Furniture in the white	1, 193, 187
Built-in furniture	8, 204, 093
Other, miscellaneous, and not specified	13, 853, 631
Metal, total	52, 831, 166
Living room and library	18, 762, 515
Bedroom	8, 772, 173
Kitchen	6, 463, 238
Porch	8, 398, 798
Camp	1, 659, 182
Other, miscellaneous, and not specified	8, 769, 260
Fiber, rattan, reed, and willow	3, 912, 389

[1] Taken from U. S. Census of Manufactures.

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TABLE 2.—*Value of products in furniture-manufacturing industry for the United States in 1937*—Continued

Products	Value
5. Furniture and store and office fixtures—Continued.	
Furniture and fixtures for offices and stores, total	$116,791,116
Wood and fiber	65,534,635
Metal	51,256,481
Office furniture, total	55,766,956
Wood	[2] 21,552,481
Metal	34,214,475
Chairs, total	9,255,952
Wood	[2] 6,398,343
Metal	2,857,609
Desks and tables, total	16,210,533
Wood	[2] 10,545,057
Metal	5,665,476
Filing cabinets and cases, total	21,952,524
Wood	1,212,951
Metal	20,739,573
Other office furniture and such furniture not reported in detail, total	8,347,947
Wood	[2] 3,396,130
Metal	4,951,817
Store and lunchroom furniture and fixtures, total	61,024,160
Wood	43,982,154
Metal	17,042,006
Counters, tables, partitions, window backs, showcases, wall cases, and cabinets, total	33,688,014
Wood	28,753,356
Metal	4,934,658
Chairs and stools, total	4,918,569
Wood	2,998,233
Metal	1,920,336
Display fixtures, total	9,642,923
Wood	3,770,349
Metal	5,872,574
Other store and lunchroom furniture and fixtures and such furniture and fixtures not reported in detail, total	12,774,654
Wood	8,460,216
Metal	4,314,438
Professional, laboratory, hospital, barber-shop, and beauty-parlor furniture, total	14,273,605
Wood and fiber	6,048,060
Metal	8,225,545
Furniture for public buildings (schools, theaters, assembly halls, churches, libraries, etc.), total	23,517,790
Wood and fiber	14,477,066
Metal	9,040,724
Seats for public conveyances, total	6,030,421
Wood	421,376
Metal	5,609,045
Shelving, total	8,960,948
Wood	708,354
Metal	8,252,594
Lockers, total	4,965,922
Wood	4,821
Metal	4,961,101
Telephone booths, wood	1,085,089
Not reported by class, total	3,820,671
Wood	625,162
Metal	3,195,509

[2] Includes data for a small amount of fiber furniture.

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Professional furniture, which in 1937 accounted for only 2 percent of the total value of furniture products, is another specialty group. Among the more important items included here are laboratory, hospital, barber-shop, and beauty-parlor furniture. In terms of total value of products for this classification, 58 percent of the furniture was made of metal and 42 percent of wood and fiber. Due to its small size and also to its highly specialized nature, mass-production methods cannot be applied satisfactorily to this branch of the industry.

Public seating includes furniture for such public buildings as schools, theaters, assembly halls, churches, libraries, etc., as well as seats for public conveyances. This is a rather small branch of the industry, the value of its products amounting in 1937 to only 4 percent of the industry total. One half of public-seating equipment is made up of wood and fiber, as one may see from the fact that these materials accounted for 50 percent of the value of products for the group. The manufacture of public seating lends itself to quantity production, so that it resembles in that respect household and office furniture. Public-seating products, however, are entirely different in nature, which explains the fact that plants engaged in their manufacture generally specialize in them and seldom enter other fields. Likewise, household and office-furniture establishments, as a general rule, do not go into the public-seating field.

Also included in the furniture industry are shelving and lockers, the combined product value of which amounted to 2 percent of the industry total in 1937. Of the two products, shelving is by far the more important. It is significant that these items were nearly all made of metal. Thus, in terms of value of products, less than 1 percent of the lockers and only 8 percent of the shelving were made of wood.

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Chapter II.—Characteristics of Furniture-Manufacturing Industry

Geographical Distribution

At the outset, the manufacture of furniture was concentrated in the New England and Middle Atlantic States. Following the westward shift in population and the consequent widening of markets, the industry began to spread toward the Middle West. Another reason for this shift was the presence of an ample supply of lumber in that area, particularly in Michigan. A third reason is the bulky nature of furniture and the high transportation costs from the East. Not until the close of the century, however, did the industry begin to develop in the South, being encouraged there by an abundance of lumber, cheap labor, and a wide market for low-priced furniture. The development of the industry in the South has been very rapid. Furthermore, the trend here has been toward the manufacture of a better grade of furniture, so that now the southern region not only supplies its own needs but is also able to compete with most northern producers. More recent has been the development of the furniture industry on the Pacific Coast. Prohibitive freight rates from eastern furniture centers and an abundance of lumber explain this trend. At present, the Pacific Coast is practically self-sufficient as far as its furniture needs are concerned.

The wide geographical distribution of the industry may be seen from the fact that in 1937 furniture plants were found in 42 of the 48 States and the District of Columbia, as shown in table 3. However, the industry is chiefly concentrated in a few States. According to the 1937 Census of Manufactures, the leading State in the northern area was New York, which had 20,380 wage earners. Other important States were Illinois with 17,697, Indiana with 15,406, Michigan with 14,851, Pennsylvania with 11,021, Ohio with 10,481, Massachusetts with 7,798, and Wisconsin with 6,574 workers. On the Pacific Coast, California was the leading State, employing 7,311 wage earners. Among the southern States, North Carolina came first with 16,789 workers, followed by Virginia with 8,504 wage earners. As will be shown later, the geographical distribution varies with the different products in the industry.

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TABLE 3.—*Number of establishments, number of wage earners, wages paid, and value of products in furniture-manufacturing industry, by States, 1937* [1]

States	Number of establishments	Wage earners (average for the year)	Wages paid	Value of products
United States	3,097	170,072	$172,558,291	$658,466,694
Alabama	7	196	174,345	648,003
Arkansas	14	1,962	1,434,842	6,827,435
California	293	7,311	8,781,640	30,156,271
Colorado	16	305	347,304	1,459,511
Connecticut	40	917	950,253	4,459,440
Florida	19	376	349,326	1,176,550
Georgia	35	2,106	1,418,030	5,604,406
Illinois	297	17,697	20,130,903	76,749,649
Indiana	153	15,406	14,471,390	57,094,049
Iowa	19	1,006	983,884	4,587,341
Kansas	11	345	350,503	1,115,650
Kentucky	34	3,205	3,062,459	10,727,528
Louisiana	22	910	590,533	3,071,466
Maine	5	216	242,337	824,151
Maryland	41	1,392	1,335,716	5,067,614
Massachusetts	212	7,798	8,371,208	29,634,013
Michigan	159	14,851	16,176,028	57,899,188
Minnesota	47	1,241	1,436,011	4,808,316
Mississippi	5	88	58,591	308,140
Missouri	62	2,878	3,134,438	11,161,009
Nebraska	17	433	418,233	2,228,531
New Hampshire	20	1,010	931,538	2,833,291
New Jersey	70	2,472	2,983,568	11,954,624
New York	648	20,380	24,426,156	96,785,336
North Carolina	130	16,789	12,504,982	48,412,936
Ohio	153	10,841	12,279,651	47,666,099
Oregon	30	2,223	2,458,517	7,876,999
Pennsylvania	244	11,021	11,202,043	41,458,211
Rhode Island	8	149	156,556	631,026
South Carolina	10	1,094	631,306	2,579,788
Tennessee	28	3,308	2,391,220	9,326,727
Texas	36	1,606	1,450,940	5,927,606
Utah	3	96	124,159	502,858
Vermont	11	944	833,125	2,943,907
Virginia	49	8,504	6,601,638	30,016,087
Washington	51	1,845	1,852,951	5,519,383
West Virginia	7	265	207,924	769,177
Wisconsin	84	6,574	7,067,086	26,179,608
Other States [2]	7	316	236,957	1,474,770

[1] Taken from U. S. Census of Manufactures.
[2] District of Columbia, 1 establishment; Idaho, 1; Montana, 1; Oklahoma, 3; and Wyoming, 1.

It is significant that within most of the principal furniture-manufacturing States, the industry has tended to concentrate in certain localized areas. Nearness to an abundant supply of lumber was once the motivating force, but proximity to both labor and consumer markets have been more important factors in recent years. Among the furniture manufacturing centers are a number of smaller cities, such as Grand Rapids, Mich., High Point, N. C., Jamestown, N. Y., Evansville, Ind., Rockford, Ill., and Gardner, Mass. The industry has also developed rapidly in and around the larger cities, such as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago. On the Pacific Coast, the industry has tended to concentrate almost entirely around the larger cities, as most of the plants are found in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, Tacoma, and Seattle.

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Corporate Affiliation and Size of Establishment

The making of furniture is, on the whole, not controlled by any one company or a few companies. There are relatively few large establishments in the industry, most of the units being of medium and small size. It should be noted, however, that certain large establishments play an important role in this industry, especially with respect to specific products.

As shown in table 4, all but 232 of the 3,778 establishments reporting to the Census of Manufactures in 1929 were independent or single-unit operations, whether owned and operated by a corporation, individual, or partnership. These single-unit operations had somewhat more than three-fourths of the wage earners (78 percent), and they also accounted for approximately the same proportion (77 percent) of the total product value of the industry. On the other hand, although they constituted only 6 percent of the number of establishments, the multiple-unit operations had 22 percent of the wage earners and an output with a value equal to 23 percent of the total.

TABLE 4.—*Classification of establishments, wage earners, value of products, and value added by manufacture in furniture-manufacturing industry, according to type of operation, 1929* [1]

Type of operation	Number of establishments	Number of wage earners	Value of products	Value added by manufacture
Plural unit	232	42, 695	$217, 648, 321	$115, 254, 881
Single unit	3, 546	150, 704	730, 468, 037	406, 407, 308
Total	3, 778	193, 399	948, 116, 358	521, 662, 189

[1] Taken from U. S. Census of Manufactures.

The predominance of small and medium-sized establishments in the furniture-manufacturing industry may be seen from the fact that, according to the Census of Manufactures in 1937, all but 30 of the plants had 500 workers or less. There were only 31 plants that reported no wage earners, but 2,593 had from 1 to 100 workers. There were 443 establishments with 101 to 500 employees in that year. Of the total number of wage earners reported, 36.5 percent worked in plants with 1 to 100 employees, 50.0 percent in those with 101 to 500, and only 13.5 percent in those with 501 or over. (See table 5).

Mechanization and Labor Cost

Machines are now used extensively in the manufacture of furniture. The mechanization of the industry was rather slow at the outset. Crude woodworking machines, such as power-driven saws, planers, and lathes, were introduced at first to perform the heavier and rougher woodworking operations. These machines were rather

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simple, any journeyman being able to operate them. Gradually, however, the crude machines were improved and new ones developed. As the operation of the latter grew more and more involved, it became necessary to train men especially for their use. As a result, there developed a greater division of labor than heretofore, particularly in the larger establishments, which gave rise to a sizable class of semi-skilled workers.

It is almost impossible to measure accurately the extent to which the furniture industry has been mechanized. The rated horsepower capacity of prime movers and electric motors driven by purchased energy compiled by the Census of Manufactures, however, indicates the degree to which power is used by the industry, thus measuring in a limited way the extent of mechanization. In 1899, the total horsepower of the entire industry was 111,880, or 1.3 horsepower per wage earner. This gradually increased until 1929, the last year for which information is available, when the total horsepower was 503,970, or 2.6 horsepower per man. Thus, in 30 years the horsepower per wage earner doubled.

TABLE 5.—*Distribution of establishments in furniture-manufacturing industry according to number of wage earners, 1937* [1]

Establishments and wage earners	Total	1 to 5 wage earners	6 to 20 wage earners	21 to 50 wage earners	51 to 100wage earners	101 to 250 wage earners	251 to 500 wage earners	501 to 1,000 wage earners	1,001 to 2,500 wage earners
Number of establishments	[2] 3,097	612	961	630	390	342	101	25	5
Number of wage earners	170,072	1,939	11,251	20,613	28,331	51,310	33,635	16,531	6,462

[1] Taken from U. S. Census of Manufactures.
[2] In addition there were 31 plants which had no wage earners.

Labor cost is an important factor in the furniture-manufacturing industry. In 1937, as reported by the Census of Manufactures, wages paid by the industry represented over one-fourth (26.2 percent) of the total value of products and almost one-half (49.3 percent) of the value added by manufacture. Compared to other manufacturing industries, these ratios are high. Thus, of 19 important industries,[1] only 3—foundries and machine shops, lumber and timber products, and glass—showed a ratio of wages to value of product either equal to or higher than that of the furniture-manufacturing industry (34.1, 32.4, and 26.2 percent, respectively), the other 16 having ratios ranging from 5.5 percent for petroleum refining and tobacco manufacturing to 25.4 percent for cotton manufactures. Likewise, the ratio of furniture wages to value added by manufacture was higher than in 14, lower than in 4, and identical with 1 of the 19 industries. Tobacco manufacturing

[1] These industries are: Agricultural implements, bakeries, blast furnaces, cement, chemicals, cotton manufactures, foundries and machine shops, glass, leather, lumber and timber products, motor vehicles, meat packing, men's, youths' and boys' clothing, paper and pulp, petroleum refining, planing-mill products, rubber industries, steel works and rolling mills, and tobacco manufacturing.

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had the lowest ratio, 21.6 percent, and cotton goods the highest, 56.9 percent. Furthermore, instead of decreasing, these ratios in recent years have tended to increase somewhat in the furniture industry.[2]

Union Organization

Until recently there has been very little trade-union organization in the furniture industry. Such organization as did exist was generally confined to skilled occupations. Jurisdiction over these workers was divided by the American Federation of Labor among the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, the Upholsterers' International Union of North America, and the International Wood Carvers' Association of North America.

The first attempt at organization in this field came in 1873 when the International Furniture Workers Union was formed. The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners came into existence in 1881 and in time absorbed the membership of the older union. The highly skilled upholsterers have been organized into their own craft union since 1892, when the Upholsterers International Union was formed. This union joined the American Federation of Labor in 1900.

The furniture industry has shared in the recent expansion of union organization in all industries. A new union, the United Furniture Workers of America (Congress of Industrial Organizations affiliate) has entered the field, embracing all workers in the industry, organized on an industrial basis. Likewise, the craft unions of the American Federation of Labor, which had formerly confined their activities to skilled occupations, are now taking in all production workers in an establishment, excluding only such occupations as truck drivers, operating engineers, and firemen and oilers, which are left in most instances to their own respective organizations. At present there is considerable overlapping in jurisdiction between the two A. F. of L. unions, the upholsterers and carpenters. While the former normally covers the upholstering department and the latter the woodworking department, in a number of establishments either union will include the workers in both departments.

Because of the diverse nature of the furniture industry, other unions have also organized workers in some branches of the industry. The Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (A. F. of L.) and the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (C. I. O.) are found in some plants manufacturing radio cabinets. The Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (C. I. O.) has organized plants manufacturing metal office furniture, and the United Automobile Workers (C. I. O.) has some agreements in the metal-furniture branch of the industry as well as

[2] Between 1929 and 1935, the ratio of wages to total value of products rose from 25.6 to 26.2 percent, while the ratio to value added by manufacture increased from 46.5 to 50.3 percent. In 1937, however, the former ratio remained unchanged at 26.2, while the latter dropped to 49.3.

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the public-seating branch. Also, there are some federal labor unions, affiliated directly with the American Federation of Labor. The International Wood Carvers' Association of North America, organized in 1883, at present has only a small number of skilled artisans organized on a craft basis under the American Federation of Labor. Most of the furniture workers in the Jamestown, N. Y., area at one time were organized into the nonaffiliated Jamestown Furniture Workers' Association. Recently, locals in some of these plants have become affiliated with the United Furniture Workers.

It is estimated that at the present time less than 50 percent of the workers in the furniture industry are members of trade-unions, and a smaller percentage (under 40 percent) are working under union agreements with their employers. Of the 150,000 workers employed in the wood household furniture, wood and metal office furniture, and public-seating branches of the furniture industry, not more than 60,000 work under union agreements.

Union membership is much more extensive in the upholstery branch of the industry than in the other branches. A factor contributing to higher union organization within this industry is the location of the plants, which are largely confined to the northern, midwestern, and western areas and to metropolitan areas which have traditionally been centers of trade-union organization. It is estimated that over two-thirds of the workers in this branch are working under union agreements.

The predominant union in upholstered furniture is the Upholsterers' International Union. In collective bargaining, this union has no Nation-wide agreement, but it attempts to standardize conditions through the issuance of standards of work to be used as the basis for local negotiations. Although the union tries to obtain participation in a standard agreement by local employers' associations or groups of manufacturers in a particular locality, the usual practice is to negotiate and sign agreements with individual manufacturers. The International Executive Board of the union first approves all demands which the local union presents to the employer.

Although the youngest union in the industry, the United Furniture Workers started with a strong nucleus in upholstered furniture made up of locals of the older A. F. of L. union which had transferred affiliation to the C. I. O. These locals include such metropolitan areas as New York City, Boston, Newark, and Baltimore. The union now includes not only these transferred locals but newly organized locals in other sections of the country.

The extent of union organization in the case-goods, novelties, and kitchen-furniture branches of household furniture is less than that found in the upholstery branch of the industry. The Southern States, where more than 40 percent of this type of furniture is produced, are

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as yet almost entirely unorganized. Plants in the North and Middle West, particularly Indiana and Illinois, are largely covered by union agreements, but such areas as Grand Rapids, Mich., traditionally the hub of this industry, are largely unorganized. Not more than 25 percent of the wage earners in this branch work under union agreements with their employers.

The United Furniture Workers is the dominant union in the case-goods and novelty-furniture industry. Agreements are negotiated and signed on the basis of collective bargaining with individual employers. The Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners also has some locals in this branch of the furniture industry, chiefly in the North and West. With few exceptions, agreements with the carpenters' union in the furniture industry are on the basis of negotiations with individual employers. No standard agreement is drawn up, but use of the union label is restricted to those plants which grant the 8-hour day and the closed shop.

The extent and degree of organization in the manufacture of wood office furniture is approximately the same, about 25 percent, as that prevailing in the case-goods and novelties branches of the industry. The manufacture of metal office furniture, however, because of the nature of the material used as well as the location of the plants, presents a somewhat different situation. The location of plants near other metal-manufacturing areas has resulted in a somewhat higher degree of unionization. It is estimated that slightly more than one-third of the workers in this branch of the industry are now under union agreements. These workers are largely organized into locals of the United Automobile Workers, the International Association of Machinists, and the Steel Workers Organizing Committee.

The public-seating branch of the furniture industry has only about 13 percent of its employees working under union agreement. Of the 25 establishments in this branch, only 4 have union agreements; 2 with the United Automobile Workers, one with the Upholsterers' International Union, and one with a directly affiliated American Federation of Labor local union.

Distribution of Products

As a general rule, furniture manufacturers, especially those making household furniture, sell their products directly to retailers specializing in furniture or to department stores. Only a minor part of all furniture produced is sold to wholesalers. The manufacturer reaches the retailers through traveling salesmen, as well as through the various furniture marts. In the more remote sections of the country, however, the manufacturer generally deals with a wholesaler, who in turn reaches the various retailers in his territory. Few manufacturers have their own retail outlets.

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Furniture marts play an important part in the distribution of furniture. Because of its bulky nature, wide variety of products, and lack of standardization, furniture cannot be sold on the road by using samples. Furthermore, it cannot readily be sold from catalogues. Hence, in order to give buyers an opportunity to actually examine the various furniture products, the industry has devised a system of marts or exhibitions. These marts are held at least twice each year in the principal furniture producing and consuming centers. The shows are so timed that buyers can conveniently attend two or more of them in succession. At these shows, the various manufacturers display some of their products, particularly the "new lines," come in contact with the buyers, and take advance orders. Traveling salesmen then follow up the exhibitions, visit retailers, and take further orders. The different furniture marts precede the two generally recognized seasons in the industry, namely, the spring and fall seasons.

In addition to seasonal fluctuations, the industry is also very sensitive to any changes in general business conditions. This is due to the very nature of furniture products. It is only natural for people to want new furniture, particularly articles they have never possessed, and to satisfy this desire in times of prosperity. In periods of depression, however, people must confine themselves to essentials, especially insofar as furniture is concerned, with the result that furniture manufacturing falls off sharply.

As previously stated, manufacturers sell most of their furniture to retailers, who in turn sell it to the consumer. To a very great extent, the retail business is done on a credit or installment basis, the length of the credit period varying widely.

Practically all of the furniture manufactured in this country is intended for the domestic market. According to the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, exports in 1937 represented less than 1 percent of the total value of furniture produced. About three-fifths of the exports consisted of metal furniture. Furniture imports were even lower than exports in 1937. Imported furniture is limited to wood and fiber, there being no record of any imports of metal furniture.

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Chapter III.—Employment and Pay Rolls, 1923–39

Changes in Employment and Pay Rolls, 1923–37

A detailed picture of the fluctuations in the activities of the furniture-manufacturing industry may be obtained from the data on employment and pay rolls, which are compiled monthly by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The index numbers of employment and pay rolls since 1923 are presented in table 6 and plotted in chart 2.

An examination of the data from 1923 to date shows that on the whole the furniture industry has two well-defined seasons, one in the spring and another in the fall. Generally, the peak in the fall season is reached in October or November, which is followed by a low point in December or January. The highest point in the spring season is usually attained in February or March, and another low point is reached in June or July. The fall season is ordinarily more important than the spring season. The seasonal fluctuations are clearly indicated by the index numbers from 1923 to 1929, but they are obscured somewhat by the changes in the business cycle since 1929. It should also be noted that the fluctuations are more pronounced for pay rolls than for employment.

TABLE 6.—*Index numbers of employment and pay rolls in the furniture-manufacturing industry, by months, January 1923 to June 1939* [1]

[Index numbers are based on 3-year average 1923–25=100 and are adjusted to 1937 Census of Manufactures]

Month	1923		1924		1925		1926		1927		1928	
	Employment	Pay rolls	Employment	Pay rolls	Employment	Pay rolls	Employment	Pay rolls	Employment	Pay rolls	Employment	Pay rolls
January	97.5	92.4	94.9	91.7	104.4	101.9	110.0	109.5	109.1	109.2	106.0	101.9
February	99.1	95.1	97.8	99.9	106.5	107.6	112.2	116.0	109.5	114.8	106.9	109.4
March	99.6	97.6	98.3	99.2	106.8	109.2	112.2	116.1	109.4	115.5	107.5	108.7
April	98.9	97.8	96.9	98.2	104.6	103.3	110.1	112.4	106.8	111.9	104.4	102.1
May	98.2	97.6	94.0	93.1	101.3	100.7	106.0	106.7	104.8	108.2	101.0	98.6
June	97.0	95.8	90.6	89.1	99.7	98.3	104.1	105.6	104.4	106.0	100.4	100.6
July	97.2	94.8	89.7	82.9	99.2	94.9	103.8	100.3	104.5	102.7	100.8	96.5
August	98.2	94.8	91.3	90.4	102.7	102.7	107.2	109.6	107.6	109.8	104.6	104.6
September	97.2	96.2	95.3	95.2	106.0	106.5	112.0	115.4	111.0	113.5	108.8	111.5
October	98.5	100.8	99.3	103.1	110.4	116.6	116.2	123.0	114.0	119.2	113.0	119.7
November	98.9	100.9	101.6	104.1	113.4	119.8	115.8	124.6	114.3	117.7	113.9	120.2
December	97.4	98.9	104.6	109.3	112.9	119.3	114.5	121.9	110.7	113.5	113.0	116.0
Average	98.1	96.9	96.2	96.4	105.7	106.7	110.3	113.4	108.8	111.8	106.7	107.5

[1] Prepared by the Bureau's Division of Employment Statistics.

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TABLE 6.—*Index numbers of employment and pay rolls in the furniture-manufacturing industry, by months, January 1923 to June 1939*—Continued

Month	1929		1930		1931		1932		1933		1934	
	Employment	Pay rolls	Employment	Pay rolls	Employment	Pay rolls	Employment	Pay rolls	Employment	Pay rolls	Employment	Pay rolls
January	109.3	107.3	100.4	93.6	75.1	60.2	64.9	43.9	51.0	25.7	59.7	34.4
February	110.7	113.2	98.0	92.4	76.3	65.0	68.6	44.4	52.0	27.5	62.8	39.9
March	110.0	113.1	96.2	90.2	76.2	65.5	63.1	41.3	48.0	21.7	63.1	40.7
April	108.2	111.3	92.8	85.1	74.9	62.5	58.9	36.1	48.1	24.0	60.8	39.7
May	106.8	109.2	89.3	82.2	74.1	61.3	54.7	31.5	52.6	28.4	61.7	40.1
June	107.3	109.2	88.0	79.4	73.0	58.2	52.3	29.0	58.4	33.6	63.2	41.0
July	110.1	106.8	83.8	71.3	70.9	55.8	49.4	25.0	61.5	35.6	63.4	39.5
August	114.7	117.9	84.9	76.3	73.4	58.4	50.4	28.5	67.9	43.5	65.3	43.5
September	119.2	124.3	85.3	78.6	74.5	60.1	55.0	33.6	76.6	52.4	67.7	45.4
October	121.8	131.2	86.6	80.6	74.6	59.5	58.7	37.6	78.1	54.6	69.7	48.3
November	116.9	119.6	83.3	72.1	72.3	53.1	57.4	33.3	72.2	44.6	68.6	45.7
December	107.6	105.2	79.0	66.2	69.5	50.8	55.7	31.2	65.9	39.7	68.8	47.0
Average	111.9	114.0	89.0	80.7	73.7	59.2	57.4	34.6	61.0	35.9	64.6	42.1

Month	1935		1936		1937		1938		1939	
	Employment	Pay rolls	Employment	Pay rolls	Employment	Pay rolls	Employment	Pay rolls	Employment	Pay rolls
January	68.0	44.3	77.3	53.6	97.4	77.3	79.4	54.9	80.7	63.6
February	70.9	47.8	78.2	56.8	97.8	81.3	79.1	59.4	83.3	69.6
March	73.2	50.4	78.5	58.2	99.5	83.4	78.9	59.9	83.4	69.8
April	72.9	49.9	78.4	58.6	99.1	85.2	75.9	54.8	82.4	67.0
May	71.4	47.9	79.8	59.3	99.7	83.5	74.0	53.2	81.4	66.6
June	71.4	49.1	81.7	62.3	101.8	85.8	74.9	55.3	83.2	68.5
July	74.2	49.6	85.4	63.8	101.0	81.3	75.3	54.1	-------	-------
August	78.5	57.2	91.2	72.8	102.6	86.9	80.4	66.0	-------	-------
September	81.2	61.2	95.1	75.7	102.4	86.1	83.5	71.9	-------	-------
October	82.9	64.3	97.7	82.3	100.0	84.5	84.3	72.2	-------	-------
November	82.2	60.8	99.3	83.2	92.0	72.8	84.1	68.5	-------	-------
December	80.3	60.1	99.1	84.0	86.5	66.8	84.4	71.5	-------	-------
Average	75.6	53.6	86.8	67.6	98.3	81.2	79.5	61.8	-------	-------

Disregarding seasonal fluctuations, the trend in employment was steadily upward between January 1923 and October 1929. During this interval, using 1923-25 as a base or 100, the index of employment rose from 97.5 to 121.8 and the index of pay rolls from 92.4 to 131.2. After October 1929, there occurred a precipitous decline that continued until March 1933, at which time the index of employment stood at 48 and the index of pay rolls at 21.7. It will be noted that during this period of depression the decline in pay rolls was much greater than in employment. The rise in employment and pay rolls between March and October 1933 was very pronounced, the former increasing to 78.1 and the latter to 54.6. This sudden advance was due largely to the movement within the industry to build up inventories, in anticipation of higher labor and other production costs under the N. R. A. Following the fall season, however, the index numbers

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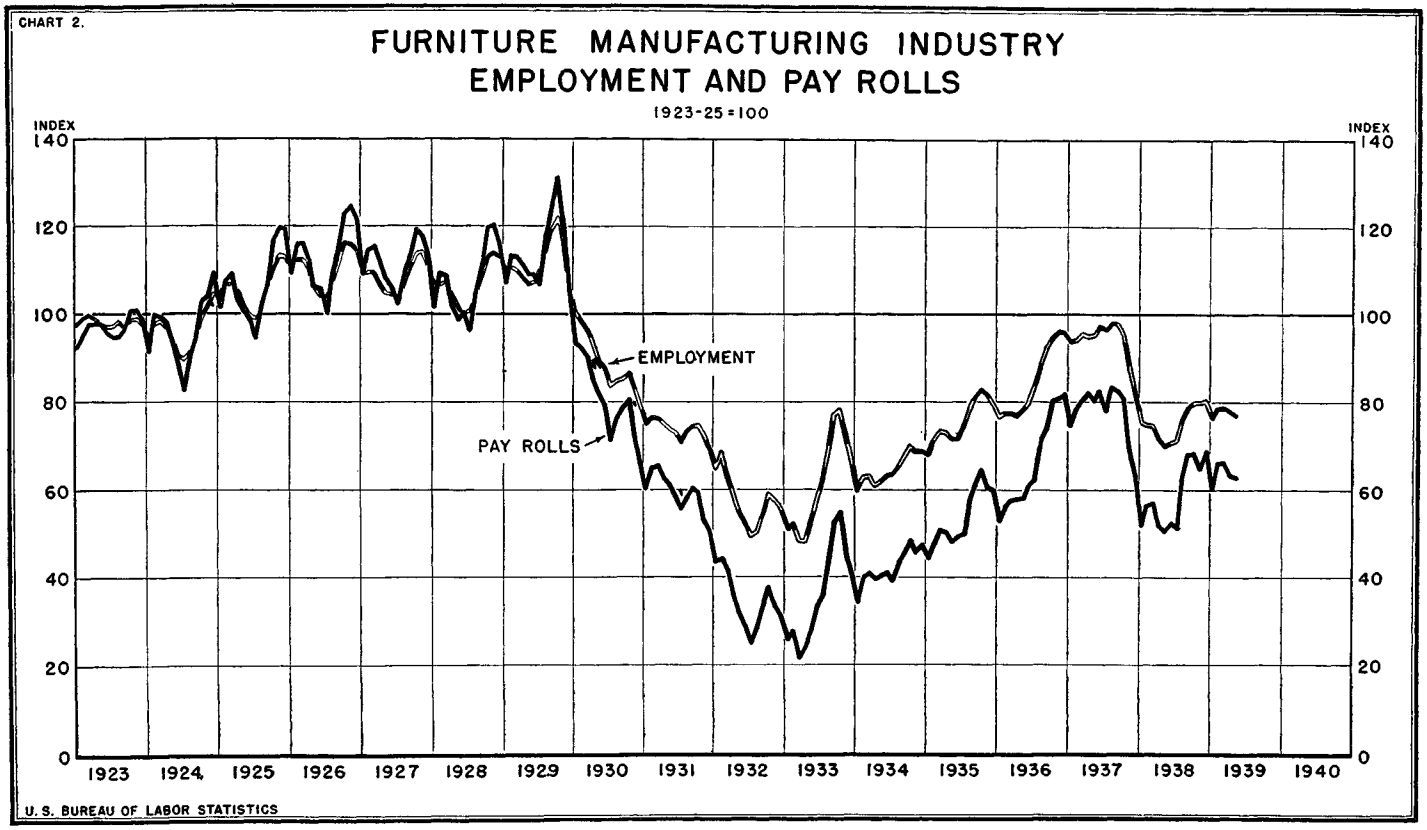

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PLATE 1.—CUT-OFF SAW OPERATOR.

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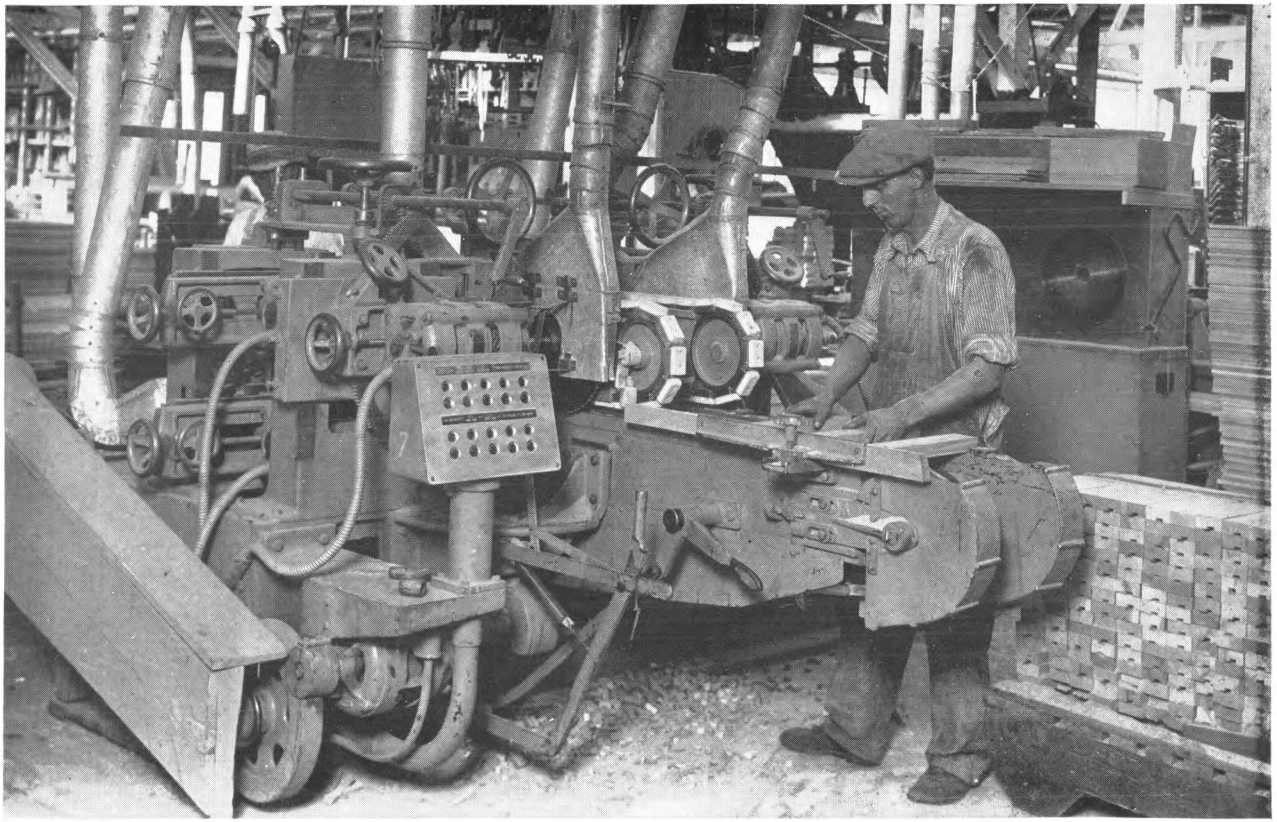

PLATE 2.—TENONER OPERATOR.

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dropped to 59.7 for employment and 34.4 for pay rolls in January 1934. Overlooking seasonal variations, the trend in employment and pay rolls then increased sharply between January 1934 and the fall of 1936, the index numbers being 99.3 in November for the former and 84.0 in December for the latter. This advance continued on a much more limited scale until August 1937, when the index of employment was 102.6 and that of pay rolls 86.9.

Fluctuations in Average Hourly Earnings and Weekly Hours and Earnings, 1933–37

Using the data on employment and pay rolls, it is possible to compute average weekly earnings. Moreover, in recent years the Bureau has been obtaining data on man-hours, which makes it possible also to calculate average hourly earnings and weekly hours. These figures, being available since 1933, are presented in table 7 and chart 3.

TABLE 7.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings in the furniture-manufacturing industry, March 1933 to June 1939* [1]

Year and month	Average weekly hours	Average earnings	
		Hourly	Weekly
1933			
March	30.7	$0.338	$10.55
April	33.0	.337	11.73
May	36.9	.325	12.60
June	39.7	.322	13.46
July	41.9	.310	13.43
August	39.3	.379	15.01
September	37.7	.421	15.84
October	38.0	.421	16.08
November	34.9	.426	14.28
December	33.0	.437	13.98
Yearly average	36.2	.337	13.71
1934			
January	29.9	.443	13.39
February	35.6	.414	14.79
March	34.3	.433	14.98
April	34.5	.437	15.18
May	33.3	.454	15.23
June	34.3	.447	15.28
July	32.4	.445	14.62
August	34.9	.444	15.70
September	35.4	.444	15.94
October	36.5	.441	16.41
November	35.2	.446	15.85
December	36.2	.449	16.41
Yearly average	34.6	.442	15.37
1935			
January	35.0	$0.441	$15.68
February	37.4	.436	16.39
March	38.0	.446	17.03
April	37.8	.448	16.94
May	36.8	.449	16.65
June	37.7	.453	17.15
July	36.5	.449	16.54
August	40.2	.448	18.13
September	41.5	.450	18.79
October	42.9	.450	19.37
November	40.5	.451	18.43
December	40.8	.454	18.70
Yearly average	38.9	.448	17.58
1936			
January	38.2	.452	17.27
February	39.5	.454	17.86
March	40.1	.456	18.25
April	40.0	.460	18.31
May	40.3	.458	18.44
June	42.1	.449	18.89
July	41.1	.451	18.55
August	44.1	.452	19.82
September	44.0	.448	19.69
October	46.2	.453	20.80
November	45.3	.461	20.76
December	45.2	.468	21.11
Yearly average	42.4	.455	19.25

[1] Prepared by the Bureau's Division of Employment Statistics. The average earnings per week are based on data furnished by all reporting firms. Average hourly earnings and average weekly hours, however, are based on a smaller sample of firms which furnish man-hours in addition to the employment and pay-roll data.

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TABLE 7.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings in the furniture-manufacturing industry, March 1933 to June 1939*—Continued

Year and month	Average weekly hours	Average earnings	
		Hourly	Weekly
1937			
January	41.8	$0.476	$19.69
February	43.5	.480	20.69
March	43.1	.488	20.81
April	43.0	.497	21.21
May	41.3	.503	20.63
June	41.0	.510	20.80
July	39.4	.512	20.01
August	41.2	.513	21.04
September	40.5	.516	20.85
October	40.4	.524	21.11
November	37.0	.532	19.66
December	36.0	.537	19.19
Yearly average	40.7	.507	20.50
1938			
January	31.7	.539	17.16
February	34.8	.534	18.56
March	35.2	.538	18.87
1938—Continued			
April	33.2	$0.544	$17.92
May	33.2	.543	17.89
June	35.0	.531	18.42
July	34.3	.522	17.87
August	39.3	.522	20.43
September	39.9	.524	21.50
October	40.5	.518	20.77
November	37.9	.524	19.75
December	39.5	.526	20.60
Yearly average	36.3	.529	19.22
1939			
January	36.9	.521	19.13
February	38.8	.523	20.26
March	38.5	.527	20.20
April	37.3	.532	19.74
May	37.5	.530	19.86
June	38.0	.527	19.91

The lowest point in average hourly earnings, 31 cents, was reached in July 1933.[3] By September, however, the average rose sharply to 42.1 cents. This advance coincides with the President's Reemployment Agreement, which was undoubtedly signed by a large number of furniture manufacturers. Average earnings per hour continued to advance, and in January 1934, or shortly after the adoption of the N. R. A. code, they stood at 44.3 cents. Disregarding minor fluctuations, the trend was slightly upward until October 1936. It is interesting to note that the abolition of the code (May 1935) did not affect the average hourly earnings for the industry as a whole. Beginning with October 1936, average earnings per hour rose sharply from 45.3 cents to 51.3 cents in August 1937. This upward trend coincided with the period of general wage increases throughout the country.

Average hours per week advanced from 30.7 in March 1933 to 41.9 in July of that year. The effect of the President's Reemployment Agreement, coupled with the fall decline in activity, was to bring about a sharp reduction in the average to 33.0 in December 1933. The decline continued during the first month of the code, the weekly hours dropping to 29.9 at the low point of the season in January 1934. After that, disregarding seasonal variations, the trend in average weekly hours rose. It is significant that, throughout the life of the N. R. A., the industry average did not exceed 38.0,

[3] In his letter of transmittal to the President, in connection with the Code of Fair Competition for the Furniture Manufacturing Industry, as approved on Dec. 7, 1933, Administrator Johnson stated: "In June 1933 more than 58 percent of the employees in northern factories and 68 percent of the employees in southern factories, more than 54,000 workers in all, earned less than the minimum rates established by the code." These rates were 34 cents in the North and 30 cents in the South.

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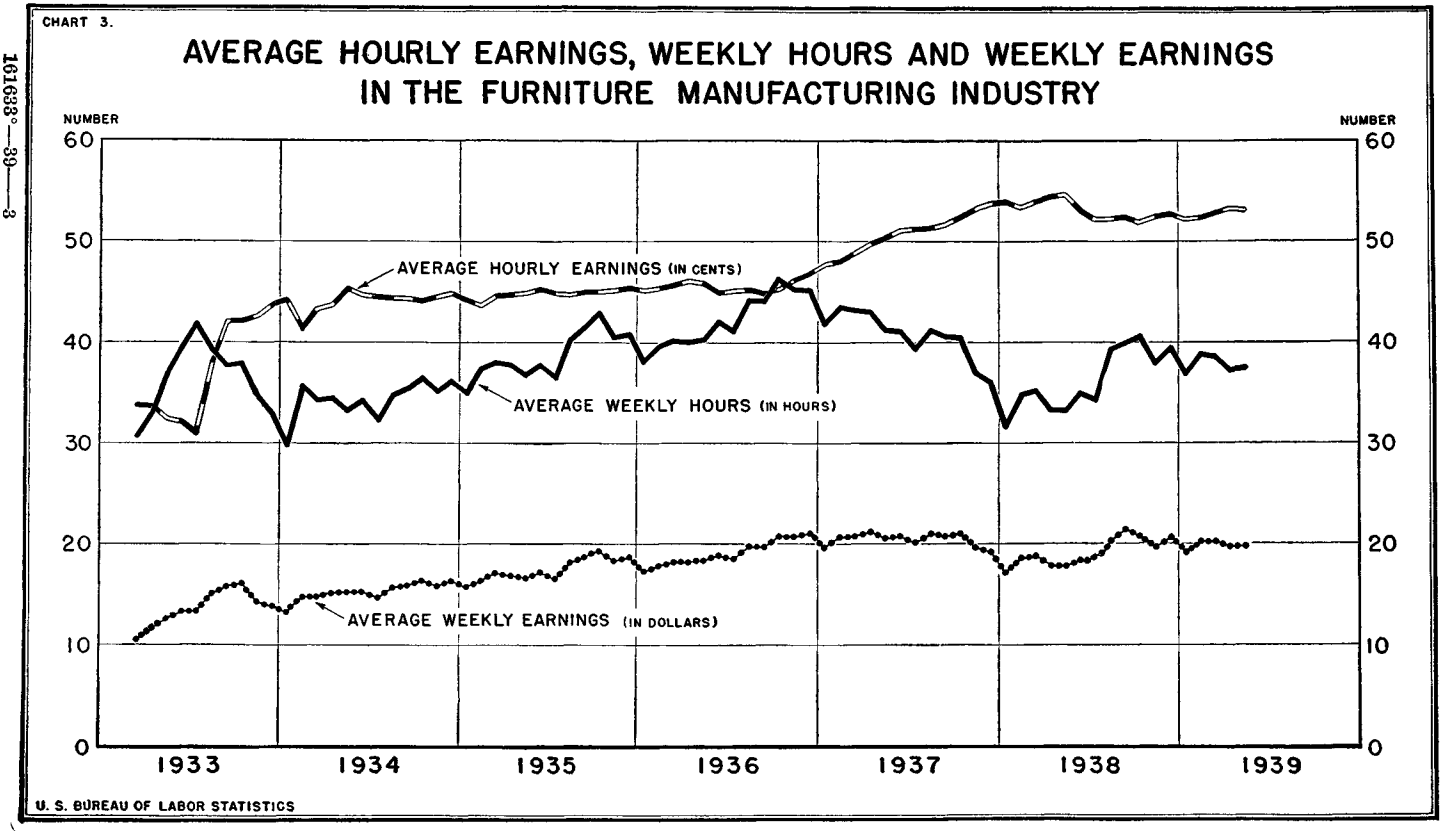

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or 2 hours below the maximum established by the code. Shortly after the discontinuance of the code, however, average weekly hours rose to 40.2, reaching a peak of 46.2 hours in October 1936. Except for 3 months, average hours remained above 40.0 per week until October 1937. Following this month, average hours per week declined rapidly, reaching a low of 31.7 in January 1938.

For the period as a whole, if minor fluctuations are overlooked, the general trend in average weekly earnings was upward. Thus, between March 1933 and April 1937, average earnings per week more than doubled, rising from $10.55 in the former to $21.21 in the latter month.

Changes Since August 1937

The highest point in both employment and pay rolls was reached in August 1937, at which time, as noted before, the index numbers were respectively 102.6 and 86.9. Although employment and pay rolls began to drop after August, the real decline did not set in until November. The lowest point in the employment index (74.0) was reached in May 1938. On the other hand, the index numbers of pay rolls dropped to 54.9 in January 1938, after which there was a small seasonal rise to 59.9 in March, followed by another reduction to 53.2 in May. In December, the index of both employment and pay rolls stood respectively at 84.4 and 71.5 and in June 1939 at 83.2 and 68.5.

Despite the sharp decline in employment and pay rolls, average hourly earnings advanced between August 1937 and April 1938, the only exceptions being February and March 1938. This advance may largely be explained by the fact that in periods of recession the least skilled and consequently the lowest-paid workers are the first to be laid off. This practice tends to raise average hourly earnings for the industry as a whole. In April 1938, average earnings per hour amounted to 54.4 cents. Average hourly earnings declined to 54.3 cents in May, 53.1 cents in June, and 52.2 cents in July and August but rose slightly to 52.4 cents in September. That the average did not drop sharply between July and September is surprising, in view of the substantial increases in employment and pay rolls during this interval.[4] Following a decline to 51.8 cents in October, average hourly earnings rose to 52.4 cents in November and to 52.6 cents in December 1938. In June 1939 average hourly earnings were 52.7 cents.

The effect of the recession has also been to reduce average weekly hours from 41.2 in August 1937 to 31.7 in January 1938. Due to seasonal activity, the weekly hours increased to 35.2 in March, only

[4] It should be noted that, for the same reason, average hourly earnings have a tendency to fluctuate inversely with seasonal activity, increasing at the low and decreasing at the high points of the season.

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to decline to 33.2 in April and May. With the start of the fall season, however, weekly hours rose sharply to 40.5 in October. After dropping to 37.9 in November, weekly hours advanced to 39.5 in December. In June 1939, average weekly hours were 38.0.

The average weekly earnings were $21.11 in October 1937, but they declined to $17.16 in January 1938. Due to seasonal activity, there was a rise to $18.87 in March, which was followed by a reduction to $17.89 in May 1938. As a result of the sharp advance in hours between July and August, weekly earnings rose to $20.43 in the latter month. The further advance to $21.50 in September was due both to higher average weekly hours and average hourly earnings. In December average weekly earnings were $20.60 and in June 1939 they were $19.91.

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Chapter IV.—Scope and Method

Product Coverage

While for many purposes the furniture-manufacturing industry may be treated as a whole, any analysis of the wage structure must take into account the heterogeneous nature of the products.

The products covered by this survey were limited to wood household furniture, both wood and metal office furniture, including shelving and lockers, and public seating. In selecting these products, the Bureau attempted to confine the survey to the branches of the industry that were operating primarily on a mass-production basis. There were excluded, therefore, such products as store and lunchroom furniture and fixtures and furniture for professional use and for laboratories, hospitals, barber shops, beauty parlors, etc., most of which are made on a custom-order rather than quantity basis.[1]

In covering wood household furniture, the survey also excluded a few of the highly specialized products of lesser importance, such as porch, camp, and juvenile furniture. The combined value of these products amounted to only $10,889,365 in 1937, or slightly over 2 percent of the total value of wood household furniture. Included in the survey were living-room and library, bedroom, dining-room, kitchen, hall, and miscellaneous furniture, the value of which amounted to $428,771,472.

In dealing with the wood household-furniture products covered here, however, it is customary to separate them into four groups, namely, case goods, upholstered furniture, novelties, and kitchen furniture. Case goods include primarily bedroom and dining-room sets, as well as library and certain articles of living-room furniture. Upholstered furniture embraces primarily overstuffed pieces used in the living room and other parts of the home. Novelties include a large variety of specialties, such as small tables, chairs, etc., which constitute the odds and ends that go to complete household furniture. Lastly, kitchen furniture is limited to cabinets, tables, chairs, and other items found in the modern kitchen. As a rule, upholstered and kitchen furniture are specialized fields, so that each constitutes a fairly distinct part of wood household furniture. On the other hand, it is difficult to draw a clear-cut line between case goods and novelties, as both types are often made in the same plant. However, in view of the different problems encountered in the making of the two types of

[1] The survey also excludes the relatively unimportant item of wood telephone booths.

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product, it was decided to keep them separate in the survey, which means that mixed establishments had to be classified according to their principal production. It should also be mentioned that most of the competition among plants is confined to those within each of these four groups, namely, case goods, upholstered, novelty, and kitchen furniture.

The survey excluded any household furniture made of metal, as well as of the relatively unimportant materials of fiber, rattan, reed, and willow. As pointed out before, there is considerable competition between metal and wood household furniture. On the other hand, having left out porch and camp furniture from the wood household group, any comparison between metal and wood products would have to be confined to living-room and library, bedroom, kitchen, and miscellaneous furniture. These products in metal, however, are not only varied, but they also account for a relatively small part of the total value of products. Hence, a break-down of these according to the four groups indicated under wood household furniture would provide a very thin coverage for metal. For these reasons, metal household furniture was excluded from the scope of the survey.

In view of the fact that office furniture is an important branch of the industry, it was included in this survey. Moreover, as indicated previously, there exists some very keen competition between wood and metal, each product being produced in substantial quantities. Among the products covered here were chairs, desks and tables, filing cabinets and cases, and other office furniture. Since shelving and lockers are used to considerable extent in offices, these products were also included as part of the office-furniture branch.

Lastly, the survey covered public seating, which includes furniture for public buildings, such as schools, theaters, assembly halls, libraries, etc., and seats for public conveyances. This is a distinct branch of the furniture industry. Moreover, although plants in the other branches of the industry are potential competitors of those in public seating, most of the competition takes place between the establishments of this branch proper. Since the same plants may use wood and fiber, as well as metal, in making public seating, no separate account was taken of these materials.

Characteristics of Sample

The survey was made on a sample basis, but the size of the sample varied from one branch of the industry to another. In selecting the sample for each branch, great care was exercised to make it fully representative of the branch. Among the factors considered, there were: Product (within a given branch), geographical distribution (within a given State, as well as between States), size of community, corporate affiliation, and size of establishment.

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The sample for wood household furniture covers 33,199 wage earners, which represents roughly about 25 percent of the industry branch in terms of employees. In view of the fact that this branch is the largest in the industry, it was felt that a 25-percent coverage was sufficient for the purpose.

Classified according to their principal products, 129 establishments with 16,175 wage earners made case goods; 99 plants with 8,333 workers, upholstered furniture; 49 establishments with 6,716 wage earners, novelties; and 21 plants with 1,975 workers, kitchen furniture. Thus, nearly one-half (48.7 percent) of the total employees were in the case goods, one-fourth (25.1 percent) in the upholstered, one-fifth (20.2 percent) in the novelties, and the balance (6.0 percent) in the kitchen groups. These proportions in the sample correspond roughly to the importance of each of these divisions within the wood household branch of the industry covered here.

As regards office furniture, the survey covered 50 plants and 7,111 wage earners. Of these, 31 establishments with 2,976 workers manufactured wood products and 19 plants with 4,135 employees made metal goods. In selecting the establishments, every effort was made to obtain the same proportion of wood and metal furniture as is found in this branch of the industry. The coverage here is approximately one-half of the total, a larger sample being required in view of the smallness of the branch.

Due to the very small size of public seating, the survey attempted to cover all plants engaged in this branch of the industry. The number obtained was 25, which employed a total of 3,118 workers.

Altogether, therefore, the survey included 373 establishments, employing 43,428 wage earners.

Nature of Data Obtained

As in similar surveys, the information was obtained here by actual visits of field representatives of the Bureau to the establishments covered. The data collected included wages and hours, annual earnings,[2] and general plant information.[3]

The wages and hours data are based on an exact transcription made from the pay rolls of each establishment for every worker included within the scope of the survey. All employees were covered except clerical workers and plant supervisors.[4] For each person, there was

[2] For an analysis of annual earnings in the Furniture Manufacturing Industry see April 1939 issue of the Monthly Labor Review, pp. 781–788.

[3] The general plant information covered such items as corporate affiliation, product, full-time hours, overtime, wage deductions and penalties, employer-employee relations, etc.

[4] Working supervisors were included in this survey.

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obtained his occupation, sex, color, [5] method of wage payment, and number of actual hours worked and total earnings for one pay-roll period.[6]

The wages and hours data for the most part covered a pay-roll period during the month of October 1937. Since the real decline in employment and pay rolls began with November 1937, a period in October presents a complete cross section of the occupational structure of the industry.

Using the above data, the Bureau compiled averages and distributions of hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings by product, skill, region, unionization, size of community, sex, and occupation.

In classifying the various occupations according to skill, the Bureau took into consideration the consensus in the industry with respect to the skill of each occupation, a classification of occupations by skill having been obtained from a person in charge of operations in every one of the plants visited. In case of those occupations for which the opinions were more or less evenly divided, the Bureau consulted experts in the industry, whose opinions were used in making the final allocation of the occupation according to skill.

In setting up the data on a geographical basis, the Bureau accepted the two broad wage areas established by the industry's code under the National Recovery Administration. These two areas coincide in a general way with the North and South. In the South were included the States of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. It should be mentioned, however, that under the code Missouri was divided up between the North and South. All other States were included in the North.

One of the tabulations of the wages and hours data in this report covers a break-down according to unionization. In preparing this tabulation, the Bureau took into consideration not the employee's membership in an organization but whether or not his occupation came within the jurisdiction covered by an agreement entered into between the union and employer. A distinction was made between trade-union and non-trade-union establishments. The former includes plants having agreements with outside labor organizations, or those affiliated with national or international unions or directly con-

[5] Not a sufficient number of colored workers was found to justify any separate tabulations.

[6] In case the pay-roll period exceeded 1 week, there was also obtained the number of hours worked during 1 continuous week within the pay-roll period. This enabled the Bureau to present weekly hours, as well as weekly earnings covering all employees.

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nected with the American Federation of Labor or the Congress of Industrial Organizations. It also includes independent organizations of labor, which covered more than one establishment.[7]

Separate tabulations were also made of the data according to size of community. This tabulation was prepared on the basis of metropolitan areas. For places with a population of 100,000 or more, the Bureau utilized the metropolitan districts set up by the United States Bureau of the Census. On the other hand, for communities with less than 100,000 population, the Bureau set up similar metropolitan areas including not only the population within a political subdivision but also that of the nearby area. In other words, an attempt was made here to classify wages according to labor market areas, within which there is competition among workers for jobs, as well as among employers for workers, thus influencing the wage levels.

[7] This includes the Jamestown Furniture Workers' Association.

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PART 2.—Wood Household Furniture

Chapter V.—Average Hourly Earnings

Data for Branch as a Whole

The 33,199 wage earners employed in the 298 establishments covered in the wood household branch of the furniture industry averaged 48.0 cents an hour in October 1937. (See table 8 and chart 4.) This average, of course, merely indicates the central tendency for the entire group. Hence, one must examine the hourly earnings in greater detail, in order to obtain a more complete picture of the wage structure.

TABLE 8.—*Average hourly earnings in wood household-furniture branch, by product, skill, and region, October 1937*

Product and region	Number of plants	Total workers		Skilled workers		Semiskilled workers		Unskilled workers	
		Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings
All products									
North	231	23,226	$0.534	9,113	$0.621	10,295	$0.508	3,818	$0.399
South	67	9,973	.357	3,285	.432	4,445	.339	2,243	.281
Total	298	33,199	.480	12,398	.569	14,740	.456	6,061	.355
Case goods									
North	88	9,237	.513	3,654	.578	4,046	.494	1,537	.402
South	41	6,938	.347	2,172	.419	3,145	.330	1,621	.280
Total	129	16,175	.441	5,826	.518	7,191	.422	3,158	.339
Upholstered furniture									
North	83	6,218	.627	3,037	.742	2,481	.556	700	.393
South	16	2,115	.398	849	.478	868	.371	398	.287
Total	99	8,333	.565	3,886	.681	3,349	.505	1,098	.354
Novelty furniture									
North	43	6,199	.503	1,899	.564	3,027	.505	1,273	.405
South	6	517	.334	165	.392	230	.326	122	.272
Total	49	6,716	.489	2,064	.550	3,257	.491	1,395	.392
Kitchen furniture									
North	17	1,572	.447	523	.502	741	.442	308	.366
South	4	403	.361	99	.413	202	.365	102	.300
Total	21	1,975	.431	622	.488	943	.427	410	.351

According to the distribution for all workers in table 9 (see chart 4), there is considerable variation in the hourly earnings of individuals. Even if the relatively few employees with extremely low or

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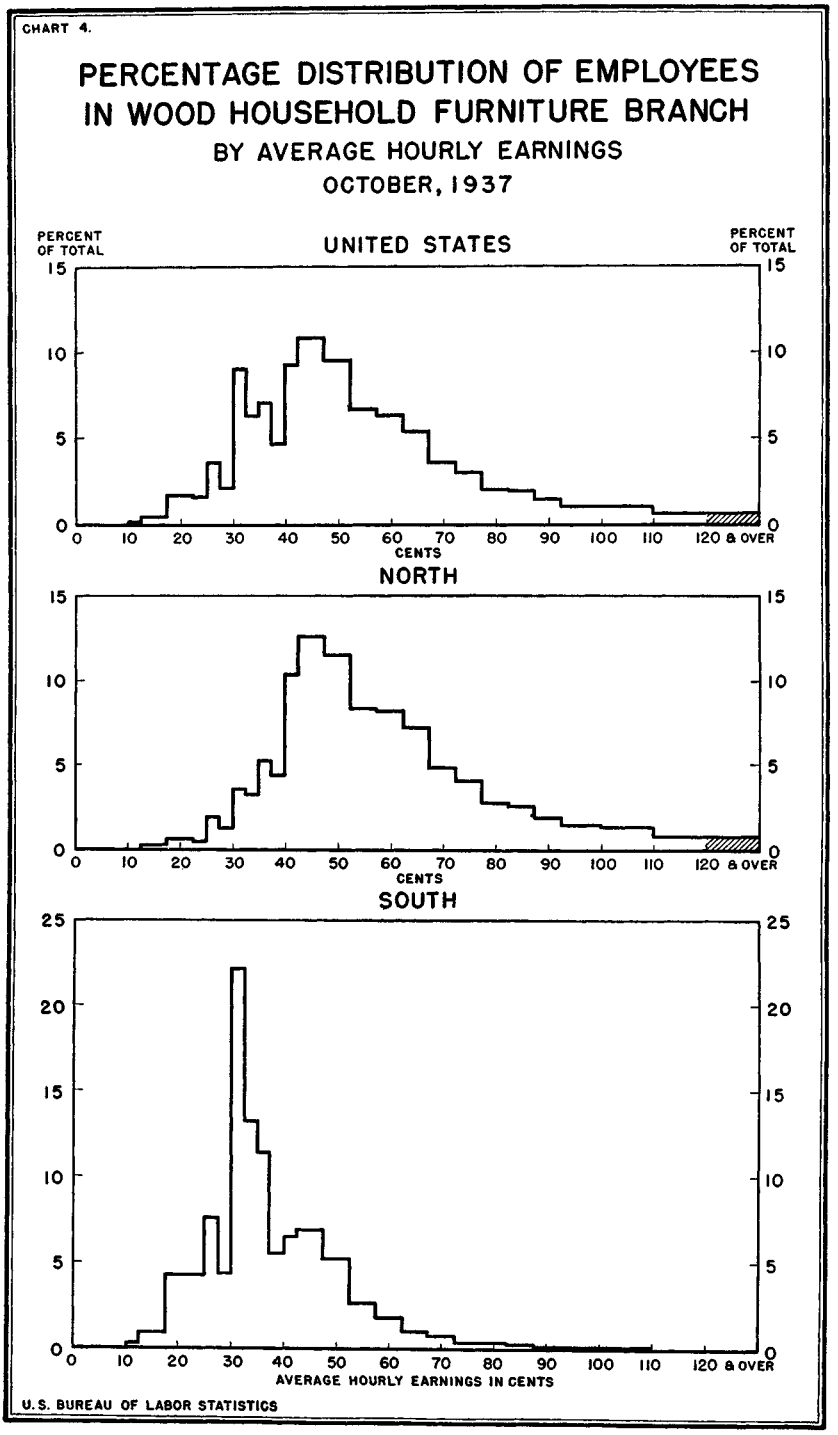

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high earnings are omitted, the range is from 17.5 cents to $1.20, within which are found 98.9 percent of the total labor force. Moreover, there is no very pronounced concentration in any of the classes between these limits, although three-fourths received between 30 and 67.5 cents. In terms of 5-cent intervals, the largest or modal class, namely 37.5 and under 42.5 cents, had only 14.0 percent of the workers.

Looking at the cumulative percentages, it will be seen that 3.8 percent of the workers earned less than 25 cents an hour,[1] and as many as one-tenth (9.5 percent) were paid under 30 cents. Furthermore, over one-third (36.7 percent) received less than 40 cents, and two-thirds earned under 52.5 cents. On the other hand, less than one-tenth (8.5 percent) were paid 77.5 cents and over, with only 2.2 percent receiving as much as $1 and more.

TABLE 9.—*Simple percentage distribution of all workers according to average hourly earnings in wood household-furniture branch, by skill, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
Under 12.5 cents	0.1	----------	0.1	0.2
12.5 and under 17.5 cents	.4	(1)	.3	1.1
17.5 and under 22.5 cents	1.7	0.2	1.3	6.0
22.5 and under 25.0 cents	1.6	.2	1.4	4.8
25.0 and under 27.5 cents	3.6	.7	3.3	10.0
27.5 and under 30.0 cents	2.1	.6	2.3	4.8
30.0 and under 32.5 cents	9.1	4.1	10.1	17.3
32.5 and under 35.0 cents	6.3	3.5	7.6	9.0
35.0 and under 37.5 cents	7.1	5.4	8.1	8.0
37.5 and under 40.0 cents	4.7	4.1	5.1	4.9
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	9.3	8.0	9.6	10.9
42.5 and under 47.5 cents	10.9	10.9	12.2	8.5
47.5 and under 52.5 cents	9.6	11.0	10.2	6.0
52.5 and under 57.5 cents	6.7	8.7	6.7	2.5
57.5 and under 62.5 cents	6.3	8.3	6.1	2.7
62.5 and under 67.5 cents	5.4	7.2	5.2	2.1
67.5 and under 72.5 cents	3.6	5.6	3.2	.4
72.5 and under 77.5 cents	3.0	4.8	2.5	.5
77.5 and under 82.5 cents	2.0	3.6	1.5	.1
82.5 and under 87.5 cents	1.9	3.3	1.5	.1
87.5 and under 92.5 cents	1.4	2.7	.8	.1
92.5 cents and under $1	1.0	2.1	.5	(1)
$1 and under $1.10	1.0	2.2	.3	----------
$1.10 and under $1.20	.6	1.4	.1	----------
$1.20 and under $1.40	.4	.9	(1)	----------
$1.40 and over	.2	.5	(1)	----------
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of workers	33,199	12,398	14,740	6,061

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

To some extent, the wide dispersion in hourly earnings may be accounted for by variation in skill. Despite the fact that wood household furniture is largely the result of quantity production, more than one-third (37.3 percent) of the employees were in occupations classified as skilled by the industry. However, the degree to which

[1] Since Oct. 24, 1938, when the Fair Labor Standards Act went into effect, the number of workers receiving less than 25 cents an hour has undoubtedly been greatly reduced, if not eliminated.

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mass-production methods are carried on in this branch is evidenced by the fact that semiskilled workers constitute the principal group, or 44.4 percent. The number of unskilled employees amounted to only 18.3 percent.

The average hourly earnings were 56.9 cents for skilled, 45.6 cents for semiskilled, and 35.5 cents for unskilled workers. The skilled averaged 11.3 cents more than the semiskilled, who in turn received on an average 10.1 cents more than the unskilled. Hence, the total spread between skilled and unskilled employees amounted to 21.4 cents.

Comparing the respective distributions, which appear in table 9, the number of workers earning under 25 cents an hour amounted to only 0.4 percent for skilled and 3.1 percent for semiskilled, as against 12.1 percent for unskilled. If 30 cents is taken as the upper limit, the percentages are respectively 1.7, 8.7, and 26.9. Moreover, the number receiving less than 40 cents amounted to 18.8 percent for skilled, 39.6 percent for semiskilled, and 66.1 percent for unskilled. In contrast, as many as 21.5 percent of the skilled employees were paid 72.5 cents and over, which may be compared with 7.2 percent of the semiskilled and only 0.8 percent of the unskilled.

Yet, the variation in skill alone does not account entirely for the differences in hourly earnings. These differences may also be explained to a large extent by regional differences in earnings. As noted before, a considerable proportion of the industry is located in the Southern States. In wood household furniture, out of the 298 establishments covered, 67 were in the southern and 231 in the northern region. In terms of wage earners, the representation of the South was even greater, the actual figure being 9,973, or 30.0 percent, as against 23,226, or 70.0 percent, in the northern area.

It should also be pointed out that there is considerable difference in the skill composition of the labor force between the northern and the southern regions. There were substantially more skilled (39.2 as against 32.9 percent) but fewer unskilled (16.4 as compared to 22.5 percent) workers in the North than in the South. In both regions, the relative number of semiskilled workers was about the same (44.4 percent in the North and 44.6 percent in the South). Differences in product and possibly in methods of manufacture may account for these variations.

Despite the regional variations in the skill set-up of the industry, there still exists in each skill group substantial differentials in favor of northern workers. These differentials amounted to 18.9 cents for skilled, 16.9 cents for semiskilled, and 11.8 cents for unskilled workers.

In the North, the average earnings for all employees amounted to 53.4 cents an hour. Looking at the distribution in table 10, it is found that all but 2.8 percent earned between 25 cents and $1.10.

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The largest total concentration within the above spread in the northern region was from 35.0 to 72.5 cents, which included nearly three-fourths (73.2 percent) of the labor force. On the basis of 5-cent intervals, the largest single class, with 14.8 percent of the total, was 37.5 and under 42.5 cents.

TABLE 10.—*Simple percentage distribution of workers according to average hourly earnings in wood household-furniture branch, by region and skill, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	North				South			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
Under 12.5 cents	(1)			(1)	0.2		0.2	0.5
12.5 and under 17.5 cents	0.2	(1)	0.1	0.7	.9	0.1	.9	1.9
17.5 and under 22.5 cents	.6	(1)	.5	2.3	4.3	.6	3.1	12.3
22.5 and under 25.0 cents	.4	(1)	.4	1.2	4.3	.7	3.6	10.9
25.0 and under 27.5 cents	1.9	0.3	1.5	6.4	7.6	2.0	7.5	16.0
27.5 and under 30.0 cents	1.2	.3	1.2	3.3	4.4	1.6	4.9	7.4
30.0 and under 32.5 cents	3.5	1.3	3.1	10.1	22.2	12.1	26.2	29.6
32.5 and under 35.0 cents	3.3	1.4	3.6	6.8	13.3	9.1	16.9	12.6
35.0 and under 37.5 cents	5.2	2.6	5.9	9.5	11.4	12.9	13.1	5.6
37.5 and under 40.0 cents	4.4	2.7	4.8	7.2	5.5	7.9	5.9	1.0
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	10.4	6.8	11.3	16.7	6.5	11.4	5.7	1.1
42.5 and under 47.5 cents	12.7	10.5	14.7	13.0	6.9	11.9	6.3	.8
47.5 and under 52.5 cents	11.6	11.0	13.1	9.4	5.2	11.2	3.3	.2
52.5 and under 57.5 cents	8.4	9.5	9.1	3.9	2.7	6.4	1.2	.1
57.5 and under 62.5 cents	8.3	9.6	8.5	4.3	1.8	4.6	.6	
62.5 and under 67.5 cents	7.3	8.9	7.4	3.4	1.0	2.8	.2	
67.5 and under 72.5 cents	4.9	7.0	4.5	.6	.7	1.8	.3	
72.5 and under 77.5 cents	4.1	6.2	3.5	.8	.3	.9	.1	
77.5 and under 82.5 cents	2.8	4.6	2.1	.1	.3	.7	(1)	
82.5 and under 87.5 cents	2.6	4.3	2.1	.2	.2	.5	(1)	
87.5 and under 92.5 cents	1.9	3.6	1.1	.1	.1	.4	(1)	
92.5 cents and under $1	1.4	2.7	.7	(1)	.1	.2		
$1 and under $1.10	1.3	2.9	.5		.1	.1	(1)	
$1.10 and under $1.20	.8	1.9	.2		(1)	.1		
$1.20 and under $1.40	.5	1.2	.1					
$1.40 and over	.3	.7	(1)		(1)	(1)		
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of workers	23,226	9,113	10,295	3,818	9,973	3,285	4,445	2,243

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

In the southern region, the average hourly earnings of all workers were 35.7 cents. According to the distribution, the spread here in the hourly earnings of individuals was much narrower than in the North, which may be seen from the fact that 97.1 percent were paid between 17.5 and 67.5 cents. Furthermore, the largest total concentration within these limits in the South, covering as many as 83.0 percent of the total, is only between 25 and 52.5 cents. Lastly, the modal 5-cent interval is 27.5 and less than 32.5 cents. It contained more than one-fourth (26.6 percent) of all employees.

The differential in average earnings per hour for all wage earners between the northern and the southern areas was 17.7 cents. Comparing the two distributions, it will be seen that, while only 1.2 percent

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of the northern workers received under 25 cents an hour, there were as many as 9.7 percent found in that classification in the southern region. Using 30 cents as the upper limit, the respective percentages are 4.3 and 21.7. Moreover, the number earning less than 40 cents amounted to 20.7 percent in the North, as against 74.1 percent in the South. At the other end of the distribution, it is found that 36.2 percent received 57.5 cents and over in the northern area, which may be compared with only 4.6 percent in the southern territory.

Differences by Product

As previously stated, wood household products may be classified into four groups, namely case goods, upholstered, novelty, and kitchen furniture. Differences in average hourly earnings exist among these groups, but they are due to a considerable extent to the varying distribution of the labor force as to skill and region. Hence, it is necessary to survey the wage structure separately for each product group.

Upholstered Furniture

The highest average hourly earnings in October 1937, namely 56.5 cents, are shown for the 8,333 wage earners in the 99 upholstered-furniture plants. As indicated by the distribution in table 11, the range of individual earnings upon which this average is based was considerable, with 99.0 percent of the workers receiving from 17.5 cents to $1.40. Moreover, the distribution does not reveal any pronounced concentration. There were 2.9 percent paid less than 25 cents and 7.2 percent under 30 cents. Slightly over one-fourth (25.7 percent) of the total earned less than 40 cents. On the other hand, well over one-third (36.7 percent) received at least 62.5 cents, nearly one-sixth (16.2 percent) at least 82.5 cents, and 6.5 percent $1 and over.

One reason for upholstered furniture having the highest average is that, unlike other wood household groups, its workers are predominantly skilled. Of the total number covered 46.6 percent were skilled, 40.2 percent semiskilled, and only 13.2 percent unskilled. This clearly indicates that the manufacture of upholstered furniture does not lend itself as readily to mass production as other wood household-furniture products. For instance, the difficult operation of upholstering must be performed by hand. Skilled employees averaged 68.1 cents an hour, semiskilled 50.5 cents, and unskilled 35.4 cents. Hence, there was a difference of 17.6 cents between the averages of skilled and semiskilled workers, with a further difference of 15.1 cents between the averages of the latter and unskilled employees.

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TABLE 11.—*Simple percentage distribution of workers according to average hourly earnings in upholstered furniture of wood household-furniture branch, by region and skill, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	United States				North				South			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers
Under 12.5 cents	(1)			0.2	(1)			0.1	(1)			0.3
12.5 and under 17.5 cents	0.3	0.1	0.1	1.7	0.3	(1)	0.2	2.3	0.2	0.1	0.1	.8
17.5 and under 22.5 cents	1.5	.1	1.3	6.6	1.1	(1)	1.2	5.4	2.4	.5	1.4	8.8
22.5 and under 25.0 cents	1.1	.1	.9	5.0	.4	0.1	.5	1.7	3.0	.2	2.1	10.8
25.0 and under 27.5 cents	2.8	.5	2.4	12.6	1.7	.3	1.7	7.9	6.1	1.1	4.4	20.8
27.5 and under 30.0 cents	1.5	.5	1.6	4.8	.6	.3	.9	1.3	4.0	1.4	3.3	11.0
30.0 and under 32.5 cents	5.9	1.9	7.4	15.7	2.8	1.1	2.9	10.2	15.0	4.7	20.3	25.5
32.5 and under 35.0 cents	4.1	1.9	5.4	8.2	2.1	.6	2.4	7.0	10.2	6.4	13.8	10.3
35.0 and under 37.5 cents	5.2	2.8	7.2	7.5	3.6	1.5	4.8	8.4	9.8	7.5	13.8	5.8
37.5 and under 40.0 cents	3.3	2.7	4.4	2.5	2.1	1.4	2.7	3.1	6.8	7.2	9.0	1.3
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	6.3	4.7	8.1	6.4	5.5	2.8	7.8	8.7	8.6	11.2	9.0	2.3
42.5 and under 47.5 cents	8.7	6.6	10.5	11.0	8.1	4.5	10.1	16.4	10.9	13.9	12.1	1.8
47.5 and under 52.5 cents	9.4	8.8	10.5	8.7	9.7	6.9	12.0	13.5	9.1	15.7	6.5	.5
52.5 and under 57.5 cents	6.7	7.1	7.2	3.5	7.3	6.4	8.8	5.4	4.9	9.7	2.5	
57.5 and under 62.5 cents	6.5	7.6	6.7	2.1	7.6	7.5	8.7	3.3	3.6	7.9	1.0	
62.5 and under 67.5 cents	6.3	7.3	6.7	2.0	7.7	7.8	8.8	3.1	2.5	5.8	.5	
67.5 and under 72.5 cents	5.4	7.0	5.0	.5	6.8	8.3	6.8	.9	1.0	2.5		
72.5 and under 77.5 cents	4.8	6.7	4.0	.3	6.2	8.3	5.3	.4	.6	1.3	.1	
77.5 and under 82.5 cents	4.0	6.2	2.7	.2	5.2	7.6	3.7	.3	.4	.9		
82.5 and under 87.5 cents	3.7	5.6	2.5	.1	4.8	7.0	3.4	.1	.3	.6	.1	
87.5 and under 92.5 cents	3.3	5.1	2.2	.3	4.3	6.4	2.9	.4	.2	.5		
92.5 cents and under $1	2.7	4.2	1.6	.1	3.5	5.3	2.2	.1	.2	.5		
$1 and under $1.10	2.8	5.1	1.0		3.7	6.5	1.4		.1	.2		
$1.10 and under $1.20	1.8	3.7	.4		2.4	4.6	.5		.1	.2		
$1.20 and under $1.40	1.2	2.3	.2		1.6	3.0	.3					
$1.40 and over	.7	1.4	(1)		.9	1.8	(1)					
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of workers	8,333	3,886	3,349	1,098	6,218	3,037	2,481	700	2,115	849	868	398

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

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Another reason for the high average in upholstered furniture is that, to a large extent, it is manufactured in the North. In terms of plants covered, 83 were in the northern and 16 in the southern area, the respective percentages for wage earners being 74.6 and 25.4. The hourly earnings were much higher in the North, where workers averaged 62.7 cents, or 22.9 cents above the southern average of 39.8 cents. This difference is also reflected in the distributions shown in table 11. In the northern region, only 14.7 percent of the employees earned less than 40 cents, 4.1 percent less than 30 cents, and 1.8 percent less than 25 cents. By contrast, 57.5 percent of the southern workers were paid below 40 cents, 15.7 percent below 30 cents, and 5.6 percent below 25 cents. Moreover, while few southern wage earners (1.9 percent) received as much as 72.5 cents and more, nearly one-third (32.6 percent) of the northern workers had earnings as high as, or higher than, that figure.

Some of the regional variation in hourly earnings for upholstered furniture is due to differences in the skill composition of the labor force. In the North, 48.8 percent of the employees were skilled, 39.9 percent semiskilled, and only 11.3 percent unskilled. In the South, however, semiskilled were slightly more numerous than skilled workers (41.1 against 40.1 percent), with the unskilled accounting for 18.8 percent of the total. To some extent differences in manufacturing processes and consequently in the occupational set-up of plants account for the regional variation in skill. All of the 16 southern establishments made their own frames, machining the parts in their own woodworking departments. On the other hand, 33 of the 83 northern plants, accounting for one-fifth (19.7 percent) of the workers, bought the frame parts already machined, some even buying fully assembled frames, thereby eliminating the many less-skilled occupations generally found in the woodworking and frame-assembly departments.

Nevertheless, within each skill group there are still found substantial differentials in favor of northern workers. The widest regional difference (26.4 cents) occurred in the hourly earnings of skilled employees, the northern average being 74.2 cents and the southern 47.8 cents. For semiskilled workers, there was a difference of 18.5 cents, those in the North averaging 55.6 cents and in the South 37.1 cents. The unskilled averages were only 10.6 cents apart, the figures being 39.3 cents in the northern and 28.7 cents in the southern region.

However, even after the influence of varying proportions of skilled workers and regional location of factories has been eliminated (see table 8), upholstered furniture pays higher wages than the other groups. The skilled workers in upholstered furniture in the North averaged

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about 17 cents more than in case goods and novelty furniture. In the South, the difference amounts to between 6 and 8 cents. Among the semiskilled workers in the various branches there is some difference in earnings, amounting to between 4 and 6 cents in favor of upholstery workers. But in the case of unskilled workers it is noteworthy that the averages show no significant differences as between the various products in the wood household-furniture branch.

Novelty Furniture

Next to upholstered furniture, the highest average was 48.9 cents an hour for the 6,716 workers in the 49 establishments making novelty furniture. All but 2.7 percent of the individual employees averaged between 25.0 and 92.5 cents. (See table 12.) Only 1.7 percent received less than 25 cents and 6.1 percent less than 30 cents. One-fourth (25.5 percent) of the total were paid under 40 cents. By contrast, over one-fourth (27.2 percent) earned 57.5 cents and more, and 5.0 percent received at least 82.5 cents.

TABLE 12.—*Simple percentage distribution of workers according to average hourly earnings in novelty furniture of wood household-furniture branch, by skill, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	United States				North			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
12.5 and under 17.5 cents	0.1	--------	--------	0.6	0.1	--------	--------	0.5
17.5 and under 22.5 cents	.8	0.1	0.5	2.5	.3	--------	0.3	1.0
22.5 and under 25.0 cents	.8	.1	.6	2.0	.3	--------	.3	.9
25.0 and under 27.5 cents	2.9	1.1	1.9	8.1	2.2	0.6	1.1	6.9
27.5 and under 30.0 cents	1.5	.2	1.3	4.1	1.5	.2	1.1	4.5
30.0 and under 32.5 cents	5.0	2.5	4.4	10.3	3.1	1.3	2.3	7.6
32.5 and under 35.0 cents	3.7	1.8	4.5	4.4	3.5	1.5	4.1	4.9
35.0 and under 37.5 cents	6.3	4.2	6.9	8.1	5.7	2.9	6.3	8.3
37.5 and under 40.0 cents	4.4	3.9	4.2	5.7	4.7	3.9	4.5	6.2
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	14.5	10.1	14.2	21.4	14.9	9.5	14.6	23.2
42.5 and under 47.5 cents	13.9	12.8	15.4	12.6	14.4	12.7	15.7	13.7
47.5 and under 52.5 cents	10.9	12.1	11.7	7.4	11.7	12.8	12.5	8.1
52.5 and under 57.5 cents	8.0	11.6	7.5	3.8	8.5	12.4	8.1	4.1
57.5 and under 62.5 cents	7.9	10.6	8.1	3.2	8.4	11.2	8.8	3.5
62.5 and under 67.5 cents	4.7	6.8	4.1	2.7	5.0	7.2	4.5	3.0
67.5 and under 72.5 cents	3.9	5.9	3.9	.9	4.2	6.3	4.2	1.0
72.5 and under 77.5 cents	3.3	3.3	3.9	1.6	3.5	3.6	4.2	1.8
77.5 and under 82.5 cents	2.4	3.5	2.6	.1	2.6	3.8	2.8	.2
82.5 and under 87.5 cents	2.8	3.9	3.1	.4	3.0	4.2	3.3	.5
87.5 and under 92.5 cents	1.2	2.5	.9	.1	1.3	2.7	1.0	.1
92.5 cents and under $1	.5	1.4	.2	--------	.6	1.5	.2	--------
$1 and under $1.10	.3	.8	.1	--------	.3	.9	.1	--------
$1.10 and under $1.20	.2	.7	--------	--------	.2	.7	--------	--------
$1.20 and over	(1)	.1	--------	--------	(1)	.1	--------	--------
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of workers	6,716	2,064	3,257	1,395	6,199	1,899	3,027	1,273

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

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Novelty furniture products are, as a rule, comparatively simple in construction, and for that reason mass-production methods can be employed here to advantage. This is clearly indicated by the skill set-up of the labor force. Not far from one-half (48.5 percent) of all novelty workers were semiskilled, whereas only 30.7 percent were skilled and 20.8 percent unskilled. Between the average hourly earnings of skilled (55.0 cents) and unskilled (39.2 cents), there was a difference of 15.8 cents. In distinct contrast with the upholstered furniture branch, skilled workers' earnings in novelty furniture were only 5.9 cents more than the average for semiskilled, 49.1 cents.

The chief reason that workers in the novelty-furniture division as a whole averaged 4.8 cents more than workers in the case-goods division is that the southern representation in this industry is very small. Only 6 of the 49 plants in the sample and 517 of the 6,716 wage earners were found in the South. Despite its limited size, the southern sample is nevertheless representative of the novelty-furniture group in that region. Care should be exercised in using these averages.

Northern workers in novelty furniture averaged 50.3 cents an hour, or 16.9 cents more than the southern average of 33.4 cents. The northern differential amounted to 17.2 cents for skilled, 17.9 cents for semiskilled, and 13.3 cents for unskilled workers.

As may be seen from table 12 only 0.7 percent of the novelty-furniture workers in the North earned less than 25 cents an hour and only 4.4 percent less than 30 cents. Over one-fifth (21.4 percent) averaged under 40 cents. On the other hand, 37.6 percent earned 52.5 cents or more and 11.5 percent earned 72.5 cents and over.

When a comparison is made of the average hourly earnings of workers in northern novelty-furniture and case-goods factories, there is little difference as between these two branches in the earnings of all employees, or of the different skill groups.

Case Goods

Although the largest of the 4 groups, the 16,175 wage earners in the 129 case-goods establishments had next to the lowest average hourly earnings, namely 44.1 cents. Exactly 96.0 percent earned between 17.5 and 77.5 cents an hour, as shown by the distribution in table 13. It will also be seen that 5.1 percent of the workers averaged under 25.0 cents, 12.0 percent under 30.0 cents, and as many as 46.1 percent under 40.0 cents. On the other hand, only 8.3 percent received as much as 67.5 cents, and only 3.5 percent were paid as much as 77.5 cents.

As indicated by the skill distribution of the employees, case goods are also largely the result of mass production, although a somewhat

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greater proportion of skilled labor is required here than in novelty furniture. Of the total number of workers in case goods, 44.5 percent were semiskilled and 36.0 percent skilled. Unskilled wage earners accounted for one-fifth (19.5 percent) of the labor force. Primarily because of the slightly higher proportion of skilled workers in case goods, average hourly earnings in case goods in the North and in the South are about 1 cent an hour higher than earnings in these respective regions in the novelty-furniture division.

Case-goods workers averaged 51.3 cents an hour in the northern area, as against 34.7 cents in the southern region. The fact that there were relatively more skilled workers in case goods in the North than in the South (39.6 against 31.3 percent) but fewer semiskilled (43.8 as compared to 45.3 percent) and unskilled (16.6 as against 23.4 percent) wage earners accounts for the difference in hourly earnings for the division as a whole between the North and the South being greater than that for any one of the skill groups.

The substantially higher earnings of northern wage earners may be verified from the distributions in table 13. The number earning under 25.0 cents was less than 1 percent in the North, but it amounted to 10.9 percent in the South. Moreover, the relative number paid below 30.0 cents was only 3.0 percent in the former, as compared with 23.8 percent in the latter territory. Furthermore, if 40 cents is taken as the upper limit, the proportion was only one-fifth (21.2 percent) in the North, although nearly four-fifths (79.6 percent) were found under that figure in the South. Looking at the other end of the distribution, it will be seen that, while 13.4 percent of the northern employees received 67.5 cents and over, there were only 1.4 percent found in that classification in the South.

Case goods showed substantial differentials in favor of northern over southern workers in the hourly earnings of each group according to skill. In the North, skilled workers averaged 57.8 cents an hour, semiskilled 49.4 cents, and unskilled 40.2 cents. This compares with 41.9, 33.0, and 28.0 cents, respectively, for southern employees. Hence, the differentials amounted to 15.9 cents for skilled, 16.4 cents for semiskilled, and 12.2 cents for unskilled wage earners.

Among the 4 product groups in wood household furniture, the southern representation was greatest in case goods, which accounts largely for the relatively low hourly earnings for the division as a whole. Of the total plants covered, 41 were located in the southern and 88 in the northern area. In terms of employees, the proportion in the South was even greater, namely 42.9 percent, which may be compared with 57.1 percent in the North.

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TABLE 13.—*Simple percentage distribution of workers according to average hourly earnings in case-goods furniture of wood household-furniture branch, by region and skill, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	United States				North				South			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers
Under 12.5 cents	(1)			0.1					(1)			0.1
12.5 and under 17.5 cents	0.5	(1)	0.5	1.2	(1)		(1)	0.2	1.1	0.1	1.1	2.2
17.5 and under 22.5 cents	2.4	0.3	1.8	7.9	0.5	0.1	0.3	2.0	5.0	.6	3.7	13.5
22.5 and under 25.0 cents	2.2	.3	1.9	6.4	.2		.1	1.2	4.8	.8	4.1	11.4
25.0 and under 27.5 cents	4.3	.9	4.3	10.4	1.4	.1	1.1	5.2	8.1	2.1	8.5	15.4
27.5 and under 30.0 cents	2.6	.8	3.0	4.9	.9	.2	.9	2.3	4.8	1.8	5.6	7.3
30.0 and under 32.5 cents	12.0	5.9	13.7	20.0	3.6	1.0	3.2	10.8	23.5	14.2	27.3	28.4
32.5 and under 35.0 cents	8.3	4.8	10.1	10.8	3.3	1.4	3.5	7.4	15.1	10.5	18.6	13.9
35.0 and under 37.5 cents	8.4	7.5	9.2	8.1	5.8	3.1	6.2	11.1	11.9	15.0	13.2	5.3
37.5 and under 40.0 cents	5.4	5.1	5.8	5.3	5.5	3.1	6.1	9.8	5.3	8.6	5.3	1.0
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	8.4	9.1	8.0	7.9	10.4	7.9	10.8	15.6	5.7	11.0	4.5	.7
42.5 and under 47.5 cents	10.7	12.3	11.4	6.0	14.5	13.2	16.8	11.8	5.6	11.0	4.5	.6
47.5 and under 52.5 cents	9.1	11.5	9.2	4.3	12.9	12.7	14.8	8.8	3.9	9.6	2.0	.1
52.5 and under 57.5 cents	6.0	8.8	5.8	1.4	9.1	10.9	9.8	2.7	1.9	5.2	.6	.1
57.5 and under 62.5 cents	5.8	8.1	5.2	2.9	9.2	10.8	8.9	6.0	1.3	3.4	.4	
62.5 and under 67.5 cents	5.6	7.8	5.3	2.1	9.3	11.3	9.3	4.4	.6	1.8	.2	
67.5 and under 72.5 cents	2.7	4.8	2.2	.2	4.3	6.7	3.7	.3	.6	1.6	.3	
72.5 and under 77.5 cents	2.1	4.2	1.2	.1	3.4	6.2	2.1	.3	.3	.8	.1	
77.5 and under 82.5 cents	.9	2.0	.5		1.5	2.8	.8		.2	.7	(1)	
82.5 and under 87.5 cents	.8	1.7	.4		1.3	2.5	.7		.1	.5		
87.5 and under 92.5 cents	.6	1.4	.2	(1)	1.0	2.0	.4	.1	.1	.4	(1)	
92.5 cents and under $1	.4	1.0	.1		.7	1.5	.2		.1	.2		
$1 and under $1.10	.4	.8	.1		.6	1.3	.2		(1)	.1	(1)	
$1.10 and under $1.20	.2	.4	.1		.3	.5	.1		(1)	(1)		
$1.20 and over	.2	.5			.3	.7			(1)	(1)		
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of workers	16,175	5,826	7,191	3,158	9,237	3,654	4,046	1,537	6,938	2,172	3,145	1,621

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

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Kitchen Furniture

The kitchen-furniture group is not only the smallest in size, but it also has the lowest average hourly earnings of the 4 divisions in wood household furniture. The 1,975 wage earners in the 21 kitchen-furniture establishments averaged 43.1 cents an hour. All but 4.5 percent of these workers received between 22.5 and 77.5 cents. There were 3.4 percent paid less than 25 cents, 10.1 percent under 30 cents, and as many as 43.2 percent less than 40 cents. At the upper end of the distribution, 13.8 percent earned 57.5 cents and over, but only 2.5 percent were paid as much as 77.5 cents and more. (See table 14.)

TABLE 14.—*Simple percentage distribution of workers according to average hourly earnings in kitchen furniture of wood household-furniture branch, by skill, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	United States				North			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
Under 12.5 cents	0.9		0.8	2.2				
12.5 and under 17.5 cents	.5	0.2	.6	.5	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.3
17.5 and under 22.5 cents	.6		.6	1.5	.6		.5	1.9
22.5 and under 25.0 cents	1.4	.2	2.2	1.2	1.5		2.6	1.3
25.0 and under 27.5 cents	3.4	.2	4.6	5.9	4.1	.2	5.5	7.5
27.5 and under 30.0 cents	3.3	1.1	3.3	6.8	3.6	1.3	3.5	7.8
30.0 and under 32.5 cents	12.6	6.8	10.8	25.4	7.4	3.6	6.2	16.7
32.5 and under 35.0 cents	8.1	6.3	7.2	12.7	7.2	5.9	6.2	11.7
35.0 and under 37.5 cents	6.9	5.9	6.9	8.5	6.7	5.4	6.9	8.4
37.5 and under 40.0 cents	5.5	4.2	6.3	5.6	5.5	3.8	6.1	7.1
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	11.5	12.7	11.6	9.8	12.7	13.2	12.8	11.7
42.5 and under 47.5 cents	12.8	18.0	12.0	7.6	14.5	19.0	13.3	9.1
47.5 and under 52.5 cents	11.0	14.1	10.8	6.8	11.1	13.4	10.3	9.1
52.5 and under 57.5 cents	7.7	7.7	9.3	4.1	8.4	7.8	10.0	5.5
57.5 and under 62.5 cents	4.4	6.8	4.1	1.2	5.0	7.1	5.0	1.6
62.5 and under 67.5 cents	2.6	3.2	3.3	.2	3.3	3.8	4.2	.3
67.5 and under 72.5 cents	2.6	4.2	2.7		3.1	5.0	3.0	
72.5 and under 77.5 cents	1.7	2.7	1.8		2.2	3.3	2.3	
77.5 and under 82.5 cents	.9	1.9	.6		1.1	2.3	.8	
82.5 and under 87.5 cents	.3	.6	.2		.4	.8	.3	
87.5 and under 92.5 cents	.5	1.6			.6	1.9		
92.5 cents and under $1	.4	.8	.2		.4	1.0	.3	
$1 and under $1.10	.2	.3	.1		.2	.4	.1	
$1.10 and under $1.20	.1	.2			.1	.2		
$1.20 and under $1.40	.1	.3			.1	.4		
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of workers	1,975	622	943	410	1,572	523	741	308

The proportion of workers in the various skill groups in kitchen furniture is about the same as that found in novelty furniture. The break-down among employees in kitchen furniture was 31.5 percent skilled, 47.7 percent semiskilled, and 20.8 percent unskilled. The average hourly earnings in kitchen furniture amounted to 48.8 cents for skilled, 42.7 cents for semiskilled, and 35.1 cents for unskilled. Hence, the differentials were 6.1 cents between the averages of skilled and semiskilled and 7.6 cents between those of the latter and unskilled workers.

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The manufacture of kitchen furniture is largely concentrated in the North, but the proportion of this division in the South was somewhat greater than in novelty furniture. Of the total coverage in kitchen furniture, 17 plants and 1,572 wage earners were in the northern and only 4 establishments and 403 workers in the southern area. Although small, the southern coverage is quite representative of this branch of the industry in that section.

The average hourly earnings of kitchen-furniture workers amounted to 44.7 cents in the North and 36.1 cents in the South. This is a differential of only 8.6 cents. The northern differential was 8.9 cents for skilled, 7.7 cents for semiskilled, and 6.6 cents for unskilled workers.

It will be seen from table 14 that well over one-third (36.8 percent) of the workers in the North earned less than 40 cents an hour and that one-tenth received less than 30 cents. There were 2.3 percent who averaged under 25 cents. Not far from one-half of the workers (46.7 percent) had earnings ranging from 40.0 to 57.5 cents. Only 5.1 percent of the employees earned as much as 72.5 cents and only 1.8 percent as much as 82.5 cents.

Variations Among States

Thus far, the analysis has concerned itself with broad regional variations, pointing out the differential in average hourly earnings between the northern and southern territories. The fundamental character of this differential is confirmed by the fact that the lowest State average in the North (43. 2 cents) is 4.0 cents higher than the highest State average in the South (39.2 cents). Nevertheless, this should not overshadow the fact that variations also exist among the several States within each region, as well as within each State, which are due to such factors as type and quality of product, size of community, and unionization. Unfortunately, the coverage is too thin to justify a break-down of the State figures by these factors, so that any differences within a given region must be studied on the basis of the data for each State as a whole.

In the North, the average earnings per hour by States covered a fairly wide spread, ranging from 43.8 cents in Ohio to 66.4 cents in California. (See table 15.)[2] The highest averages, those above 60 cents, are shown for the 3 Pacific States (Washington, Oregon, and California) and New York and New Jersey. In each case, the high hourly earnings are the result both of unionization and size of community. For example, all of the 23 plants covered on the Pacific Coast were located in large cities, and of these 13 had trade-union contracts. Similarly, there were 18 unionized establishments among the 49 covered in the States of New York and New Jersey, and 23

[2] The average for Missouri was 43.2 cents. Of the six establishments covered in this State, four were classified with the North and two with the South.

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(including 15 with trade-union contracts) of these were located in the metropolitan area of New York City. Conversely, lack of unionization and/or location in smaller communities accounts for the lowest averages, such as are shown for Missouri, Maine and New Hampshire combined, Ohio, Indiana, and Iowa.

TABLE 15.—*Average hourly earnings in wood household-furniture branch, by States, October 1937*

State	Number of plants	Number of employees	Average hourly earnings	Range of average hourly earnings of individual plants	
				Low	High
United States	298	33,199	$0.480	$0.181	$1.085
Arkansas	4	522	.382	.250	.428
California	17	1,369	.664	.468	.917
Connecticut and Rhode Island [1]	6	244	.490	.413	.638
Georgia, Florida, [1] and Alabama [2]	10	725	.326	.243	.471
Illinois	21	2,929	.550	.366	.755
Indiana	30	3,339	.447	.305	.570
Iowa	3	189	.461	.441	.588
Kentucky	5	535	.392	.336	.438
Louisiana	3	185	.274	.181	.306
Maine [1] and New Hampshire	4	272	.439	.320	.542
Maryland	4	393	.569	.509	.618
Massachusetts	15	1,052	.506	.382	.740
Michigan	18	2,122	.510	.381	.662
Minnesota	4	373	.493	.373	.724
Missouri	6	432	.432	.358	.555
New Jersey	7	965	.635	.488	.763
New York	42	3,780	.617	.332	1.085
North Carolina and South Carolina [2]	23	4,408	.360	.250	.453
Ohio	14	1,096	.438	.327	.621
Oklahoma [1] and Texas	5	476	.392	.297	.459
Oregon	3	558	.659	.645	.662
Pennsylvania	22	2,159	.495	.300	.964
Tennessee	7	855	.354	.333	.384
Vermont	3	221	.510	.347	.556
Virginia	8	2,121	.345	.319	.372
Washington	3	404	.607	.594	.646
Wisconsin	11	1,475	.499	.429	.771

[1] Includes only 1 plant.
[2] Includes only 2 plants.

In the southern territory, there is considerably less of a spread in the average hourly earnings among the various States, the range being from 27.4 cents in Louisiana to 39.2 cents in Kentucky and in Oklahoma and Texas combined. This relatively narrower spread here as compared with the North is due largely to the fact that in the South there are only a few trade-union establishments and no very large metropolitan areas.

In analyzing the State averages in both the northern and southern areas, however, there appear no well-defined sections within each territory, so that there is apt to be just as much difference between States that are close together as between those that are far apart.

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Chapter VI.—Relation of Size of Community, Unionization, and Size of Plant to Average Hourly Earnings

Differences by Size of Community

Average hourly earnings in wood household furniture not only differ by product, skill, and region, but they apparently also vary in accordance with size of community within which the plants are located.

According to table 16, 72 out of the 231 establishments and 27.2 percent of the workers in the North were found in communities with a population of 1,000,000 and over. In contrast to this concentration in the largest centers, 10 plants with only 2.8 percent of the employees were in rural territory, namely, communities of less than 2,500. Between these limits, the remaining establishments were fairly well scattered, with some tendency to concentrate in places of 10,000 and under 25,000 and of 100,000 and under 250,000.

A somewhat different picture prevailed in the southern territory. There are no metropolitan areas here with a population of over 500,000. However, the largest concentration, i.e., 32 of the 67 plants with 54.9 percent of the workers, was found in communities between 5,000 and 25,000. A smaller concentration occurred in centers of 50,000 and under 100,000, but some establishments were also located in each of the other classes. As in the northern region, only a relatively small portion of the industry was found in the rural area.

With some exceptions, the average hourly earnings of all workers in the North varied directly with size of community. The lowest average was 41.7 cents in places of less than 2,500 population and the highest 64.8 cents in centers of 1,000,000 and over, the latter being 23.1 cents, or 55.4 percent, higher than the former. The earnings in communities between 2,500 and 5,000 averaged 44.5 cents, but those in the next higher class of 5,000 to 10,000 were about the same as in rural territory. In places with 10,000 and under 50,000, however, the average earnings were around 47 to 48 cents. The averages for communities in all of the classes between 50,000 and 1,000,000 were all well over 50 cents, the lowest figure being 52.6 cents for places between 100,000 and 250,000 and the highest 57.2 cents for centers between 250,000 and 500,000. On the other hand, communities with 50,000 and under 100,000 had the same average, namely 55.2 cents, as those of 500,000 and less than 1,000,000. The largest metropolitan areas, namely with 1,000,000 and over, averaged 7.6 cents more than those between 250,000 and 500,000 and 9.6 cents above those between 500,000 and 1,000,000.

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TABLE 16.—*Average hourly earnings of workers in wood household-furniture branch, by region, size of community, and skill, October 1937*

Region and size of community	Number of plants	Total workers		Skilled workers		Semiskilled workers		Unskilled workers	
		Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings
United States									
Under 2,500	13	878	$0.395	315	$0.451	404	$0.392	159	$0.294
2,500 and under 5,000	23	2,795	.415	970	.482	1,363	.396	462	.326
5,000 and under 10,000	35	4,856	.368	1,615	.439	2,191	.350	1,050	.291
10,000 and under 25,000	36	5,392	.425	1,870	.487	2,427	.417	1,095	.334
25,000 and under 50,000	24	2,530	.471	945	.537	1,116	.457	469	.374
50,000 and under 100,000	25	3,797	.473	1,469	.542	1,676	.462	652	.346
100,000 and under 250,000	30	3,537	.492	1,310	.573	1,592	.476	635	.367
250,000 and under 500,000	24	1,951	.499	686	.600	871	.471	394	.383
500,000 and under 1,000,000	16	1,157	.552	523	.673	446	.513	188	.336
1,000,000 and over	72	6,306	.648	2,695	.768	2,654	.597	957	.463
Total	298	33,199	.480	12,398	.569	14,740	.456	6,061	.355
North									
Under 2,500	10	647	.417	241	.479	297	.412	109	.298
2,500 and under 5,000	20	2,059	.445	739	.513	1,011	.425	309	.352
5,000 and under 10,000	13	1,409	.418	556	.477	619	.401	234	.318
10,000 and under 25,000	26	3,361	.472	1,194	.525	1,551	.463	616	.384
25,000 and under 50,000	20	2,097	.484	793	.542	924	.475	380	.382
50,000 and under 100,000	15	2,064	.552	847	.617	923	.539	294	.408
100,000 and under 250,000	24	2,865	.526	1,071	.601	1,299	.515	495	.394
250,000 and under 500,000	15	1,261	.572	454	.659	571	.544	236	.471
500,000 and under 1,000,000	16	1,157	.552	523	.673	446	.513	188	.336
1,000,000 and over	72	6,306	.648	2,695	.768	2,654	.597	957	.463
Total	231	23,226	.534	9,113	.621	10,295	.508	3,818	.399
South									
Under 2,500	3	231	.341	74	.373	107	.345	50	.284
2,500 and under 5,000	3	736	.320	231	.381	352	.300	153	.260
5,000 and under 10,000	22	3,447	.345	1,059	.416	1,572	.327	816	.282
10,000 and under 25,000	10	2,031	.347	676	.418	876	.334	479	.271
25,000 and under 50,000	4	433	.417	152	.508	192	.381	89	.341
50,000 and under 100,000	10	1,733	.393	622	.456	753	.383	358	.300
100,000 and under 250,000	6	672	.352	239	.447	293	.314	140	.276
250,000 and under 500,000	9	690	.368	232	.488	300	.334	158	.255
Total	67	9,973	.357	3,285	.432	4,445	.339	2,243	.281

Similarly, the average earnings per hour in the North varied directly with size of community for each skill group, but the extent of correlation was highest for skilled, somewhat less for semiskilled, and lowest for unskilled workers. Likewise, the spread in the averages between places of under 2,500 population and those with 1,000,000 and over was highest for skilled (28.9 cents), next highest for semiskilled (18.5 cents), and lowest for unskilled (16.5 cents) employees. Moreover, as regards the average varying directly with size of community, there were only 2 exceptions to the rule among the skilled, but 3 or more among the semiskilled and unskilled workers. In fact, for the unskilled wage earners the highest average, 47.1 cents, was found in centers with 250,000 and under 500,000, this figure being 0.8 cents above the average in metropolitan areas of 1,000,000 and over.

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In the southern region, on the other hand, the data indicate lack of correlation between average hourly earnings and size of community. It should be added, however, that the averages for the same class of labor in the same size community were in all cases lower in the South than in the North.

Differences Between Trade-Union and Non-Trade-Union[1] Plants

In addition to product, skill, region, and size of community, union organization also appears to exert an influence on average hourly earnings in wood household furniture.

The existence of a differential in average earnings per hour in favor of trade-union as compared with non-trade-union plants is indicated by table 17, which presents figures for the northern region on a product basis. The differential for all employees in favor of trade-union over non-trade-union plants was highest for upholstered furniture (15.3 cents) and kitchen furniture (13.8 cents), lowest for case goods (7.8 cents) and novelty furniture (6.7 cents). By skill groups, the highest differential was 16.2 cents for skilled employees in upholstered furniture, while the lowest was 5.7 cents for semiskilled wage earners in novelty furniture. It is interesting to note that, with the exception of kitchen furniture, the differential for unskilled was higher than that for semiskilled, while in case goods and kitchen furniture it also exceeded the one for skilled workers.[2]

[1] Includes 10 plants with employee-representation plans or independent unions confined to a single establishment. These plants employed only 2.8 percent of the total workers in wood household furniture. Of the 10 establishments, 4 were in case goods, 4 in upholstered furniture, 2 in novelty furniture, and none in kitchen furniture.

[2] Having classified the data for the northern area according to unionization and skill, it is interesting to compare the average hourly earnings among the four product groups.

For all workers, the highest earnings per hour were found in upholstered furniture plants, the averages being 73.8 cents for trade-union and 58.5 cents for non-trade-union establishments. On the other hand, there was very little difference among the averages in trade-union plants for the remaining three product groups, the figures ranging from 54.3 cents for kitchen furniture to 56.8 cents for case goods. In non-trade-union establishments, the hourly earnings in case goods and novelty furniture were both around 49 cents, but those for kitchen furniture were only 40.5 cents.

As regards skilled workers, the highest average hourly earnings, namely, 85.3 cents in trade-union and 69.1 cents in non-trade-union, were again found in upholstered furniture establishments. There was very little difference in the averages of case goods and novelty furniture, both for trade-union and non-trade-union plants, but the hourly earnings of each product group were respectively lower than those found in upholstered furniture. The figures for kitchen furniture were the lowest, this being especially the case in trade-union establishments.

Semiskilled workers in the upholstered-furniture branch also averaged more per hour than those in the other product groups. It will be noted, however, that the differential in favor of upholstered plants was much less pronounced here than in the case of skilled workers. As regards the other product groups, there was very little difference in the average hourly earnings for trade-union establishments, the figures ranging only from 54.3 cents for kitchen furniture to 55.1 cents for case goods. Similarly, in the non-trade-union plants, there was little difference between the case goods and novelty furniture averages, which were, respectively, 46.8 and 48.9 cents, but the figure for kitchen furniture was definitely lower, being 39.7 cents.

On the whole, there is relatively little variation in the average hourly earnings of unskilled workers among the four product groups for either trade-union or non-trade-union plants. In trade-union establishments the averages ranged from 46.5 cents for novelty to 48.6 cents for upholstered furniture. In the nonunion plants there was very little difference among novelty furniture (38.5 cents), upholstered furniture (37.7 cents), and case goods (37.4 cents), but the average of kitchen furniture was considerably lower (32.8 cents).

In other words, the average earnings per hour were, in nearly all instances, highest in upholstered furniture and lowest in kitchen furniture. There was very little difference in the averages between case goods and novelty furniture, but in general the former paid somewhat higher wages than the latter.

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TABLE 17.—*Average hourly earnings of workers in trade-union and non-trade-union plants of wood household-furniture branch in the North, by product and skill, October 1937*

Product and unionization	Number of plants	Total workers		Skilled workers		Semiskilled workers		Unskilled workers	
		Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings
Case goods									
Trade-union plants	20	2,769	$0.568	986	$0.638	1,308	$0.551	475	$0.467
Non-trade-union plants	68	6,468	.490	2,668	.557	2,738	.468	1,062	.374
Total	88	9,237	.513	3,654	.578	4,046	.494	1,537	.402
Upholstered furniture									
Trade-union plants	31	1,813	.738	1,027	.853	673	.610	113	.486
Non-trade-union plants	52	4,405	.585	2,010	.691	1,808	.537	587	.377
Total	83	6,218	.627	3,037	.742	2,481	.556	700	.393
Novelty furniture									
Trade-union plants	12	1,780	.552	487	.628	947	.546	346	.465
Non-trade-union plants	31	4,419	.485	1,412	.545	2,080	.489	927	.385
Total	43	6,199	.503	1,899	.564	3,027	.505	1,273	.405
Kitchen furniture									
Trade-union plants	4	534	.543	188	.582	250	.543	96	.466
Non-trade-union plants	13	1,038	.405	335	.464	491	.397	212	.328
Total	17	1,572	.447	523	.502	741	.442	308	.366

The difference in wage levels between trade-union and non-trade-union establishments is also indicated to some extent by table 18, which presents the distribution of average hourly earnings of individual plants by unionization and product.

TABLE 18.—*Distribution of individual plant average hourly earnings in wood household-furniture branch in the North, by product and unionization, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	All products		Case goods		Upholstered furniture		Novelty furniture		Kitchen furniture	
	Trade-union plants	Non-trade-union plants	Trade-union plants	Non-trade-union plants	Trade-union plants	Non-trade-union plants	Trade-union plants	Non-trade-union plants	Trade-union plants	Non-trade-union plants
30 and under 35 cents		8		5		1				2
35 and under 40 cents		24		10		2		7		5
40 and under 45 cents	4	27	3	11		7	1	7		2
45 and under 50 cents	8	34	3	16	1	9	3	6	1	3
50 and under 55 cents	9	28	3	12	2	7	4	8		1
55 and under 60 cents	7	18	4	7	1	9	1	2	1	
60 and under 65 cents	9	13	2	6	4	7	2		1	
65 and under 70 cents	8	3	3	1	5	2				
70 and under 75 cents	5	5	1		3	5			1	
75 and under 80 cents	4	3			4	2		1		
80 and under 85 cents	4		1		2		1			
85 and under 90 cents	2	1			2	1				
90 and under 95 cents	3				3					
95 cents and under $1	2				2					
$1 and under $1.05	1				1					
$1.05 and under $1.10	1				1					
Total	67	164	20	68	31	52	12	31	4	13

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Due to the small number of trade-union establishments in the South, it is not feasible to make a comparison between these and non-trade-union plants in that region.

Taking the wood household-furniture branch as a whole for the entire country, 74 of the 298 plants scheduled had union contracts. In terms of employees, the trade-union establishments accounted for 24.5 percent of the total sample. Of the trade-union plants, 7 were located in the southern and 67 in the northern area, their respective employment amounting to 7.2 and 32.0 percent.

According to table 19, the differential in favor of trade-union over non-trade-union plants in wood household furniture was 13.1 cents for the country as a whole. The differential was greatest for skilled workers, namely 14.9 cents, while the figures were 11.1 cents for semiskilled and 11.7 cents for unskilled employees.

TABLE 19.—*Average hourly earnings of workers in trade-union and non-trade-union plants in wood household-furniture branch, by region and skill, October 1937*

Region and unionization	Number of plants	Total workers		Skilled workers		Semiskilled workers		Unskilled workers	
		Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings
United States									
Trade-union plants	74	7,559	$0.583	2,913	$0.686	3,488	$0.542	1,158	$0.451
Non-trade-union plants	224	25,640	.452	9,485	.537	11,252	.431	4,903	.334
Total	298	33,199	.480	12,398	.569	14,740	.456	6,061	.355
North									
Trade-union plants	67	6,896	.603	2,688	.708	3,178	.560	1,030	.469
Non-trade-union plants	164	16,330	.507	6,425	.588	7,117	.485	2,788	.374
Total	231	23,226	.534	9,113	.621	10,295	.508	3,818	.399
South									
Trade-union plants	7	663	.399	225	.465	310	.381	128	.328
Non-trade-union plants	60	9,310	.354	3,060	.429	4,135	.335	2,115	.278
Total	67	9,973	.357	3,285	.432	4,445	.339	2,243	.281

The absolute differential in favor of trade-union over non-trade-union establishments for all workers was twice as large in the North as in the South, the respective figures being 9.6 and 4.5 cents. In the northern area, the differential was greatest for skilled workers, namely 12.0 cents, while the differentials of semiskilled and unskilled were respectively 7.5 and 9.5 cents. On the other hand, there was very little variation in the differential according to skill in the southern region, the figures being 3.6 cents for skilled, 4.6 cents for semiskilled,

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PLATE 3.—AUTOMATIC LATHE OPERATOR.

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PLATE 4.—CUTTING, MATCHING, AND TAPING VENEER.

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and 5.0 cents for unskilled workers. It will be seen that, for each skill group, the differential in the North was considerably larger than in the South.[3]

The higher wage level in trade-union as compared with non-trade-union establishments in the wood household-furniture branch as a whole also appears to be borne out by table 20, which presents the average hourly earnings of individual plants by unionization and region. According to this table there was not a single trade-union plant in the North averaging less than 40 cents an hour, which may be compared with 32 non-trade-union establishments found under that limit. On the other hand, as many as 30 trade-union plants had averages of 65 cents and over, as against only 12 non-trade-union establishments. Furthermore, while 13 trade-union plants averaged 80 cents and over, there was only 1 non-trade-union establishment in that classification. A similar situation existed in the South, although the number of trade-union plants in this area is too limited to draw any definite conclusions.

TABLE 20.—*Distribution of individual plant average hourly earnings in wood household-furniture branch, by region and unionization, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	United States		North		South	
	Trade-union plants	Non-trade-union plants	Trade-union plants	Non-trade-union plants	Trade-union plants	Non-trade-union plants
15 and under 20 cents		1				1
20 and under 25 cents		1				1
25 and under 30 cents	1	6			1	6
30 and under 35 cents		32		8		24
35 and under 40 cents	2	44		24	2	20
40 and under 45 cents	6	33	4	27	2	6
45 and under 50 cents	10	36	8	34	2	2
50 and under 55 cents	9	28	9	28		
55 and under 60 cents	7	18	7	18		
60 and under 65 cents	9	13	9	13		
65 and under 70 cents	8	3	8	3		
70 and under 75 cents	5	5	5	5		
75 and under 80 cents	4	3	4	3		
80 and under 85 cents	4		4			
85 and under 90 cents	2	1	2	1		
90 and under 95 cents	3		3			
95 cents and under $1	2		2			
$1 and under $1.05	1		1			
$1.05 and under $1.10	1		1			
Total	74	224	67	164	7	60

[3] It is now possible to measure the regional differential separately for trade-union and non-trade-union establishments. As regards trade-union plants, the difference in favor of the northern over the southern territory amounted to 20.4 cents for all workers. It was highest for skilled (24.3 cents), followed by semiskilled (17.9 cents), and lowest for unskilled (14.1 cents) employees. The differentials were much smaller for non-trade-union establishments, being 15.3 cents for all workers, 15.9 cents for skilled, 15.0 cents for semiskilled, and 9.6 cents for unskilled workers.

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It should be noted, however, that there is considerable overlapping in the distributions of individual plant averages between trade-union and non-trade-union establishments. It is also noteworthy that the dispersion in the distribution of trade-union plants is greater than that in non-trade-union establishments.

Differences Between Trade-Union and Non-Trade-Union Plants as Affected by Size of Community

The preceding analysis dealt separately with variations in hourly earnings according to the organizational status of employees and size of community, but a closer scrutiny of the data indicates that the two factors are closely interrelated. This may be seen by an examination of the figures in the northern region, where the coverage is sufficiently large to permit an analysis of the data.

Referring back to table 20, it will be remembered that all 32 establishments averaging less than 40 cents an hour were non-trade-union. It may be argued, however, that the lower averages are due to the fact that practically all of these plants were located in smaller communities, 21 being found in localities of less than 10,000 and all but 5 in places of less than 25,000. It is also of interest that the 42 plants with average hourly earnings of 65 cents or more, whether trade-union or non-trade-union, were nearly all located in the largest centers. Thus, 24 of the 30 trade-union and all 12 non-trade-union establishments with such hourly earnings were found in metropolitan areas of 1,000,000 or more. [4]

On the other hand, it may be seen from table 21 that, with one exception, the trade-union plants in the North paid higher wages than the non-trade-union establishments in communities of corresponding sizes. This is not only the case for the working force as a whole, but it is also true for each skill group. Moreover, the margin in favor of the trade-union plants was frequently of a decisive character. In fact, the difference amounted to more than 10 cents an hour in a number of cases. Taking the extreme example, in cities with a population of 250,000 and under 500,000 unskilled workers in unionized establishments averaged 57.3 cents, but those employed in non-trade-union plants averaged only 30.5 cents, a difference of 26.8 cents. As a rule, however, the spread was much narrower, frequently amounting to only a few cents. The single exception mentioned above

[4] There is a marked concentration of trade-union plants in the largest cities. Of the 67 trade-union establishments included in the northern sample, almost one-half with considerably more than one-third (36.2 percent) of the employees were found in the metropolitan areas of more than 1,000,000 inhabitants. For the non-trade-union plants, on the other hand, somewhat less than one-fourth of the establishments (39 of 164) were located in these centers, the number of workers amounting to 23.3 percent. (See table 21.)

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is found in places of 25,000 and less than 50,000, where both the skilled and semiskilled workers of non-trade-union establishments showed a small differential over those employed in unionized plants. But even in these communities the average of the unskilled workers was somewhat higher in the establishments with trade-union contracts. For the largest metropolitan areas, where the trade-union plants were relatively numerous, the differential in favor of trade-union establishments amounted to 9.7 cents for all employees, 13.0 cents for skilled, 3.2 cents for semiskilled, and 4.9 cents for unskilled.

TABLE 21.—*Average hourly earnings of workers in trade-union and non-trade-union plants in wood household-furniture branch in the North, by size of community and skill, October 1937*

Unionization and size of community	Number of plants	Total workers		Skilled workers		Semiskilled workers		Unskilled workers	
		Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings
Trade-union									
Under 2,500	1	130	(1)	34	(1)	80	(1)	16	(1)
2,500 and under 5,000	4	541	$0.490	198	$0.554	262	$0.469	81	$0.407
5,000 and under 10,000	2	106	(1)	49	(1)	40	(1)	17	(1)
10,000 and under 25,000	4	1,047	.519	261	.567	557	.526	229	.446
25,000 and under 50,000	7	721	.477	283	.522	338	.463	100	.400
50,000 and under 100,000	2	233	(1)	110	(1)	99	(1)	24	(1)
100,000 and under 250,000	6	615	.544	189	.610	315	.543	111	.432
250,000 and under 500,000	5	794	.637	267	.704	373	.615	154	.573
500,000 and under 1,000,000	3	211	.706	106	.772	87	.662	18	(1)
1,000,000 and over	33	2,498	.708	1,191	.843	1,027	.617	280	.498
Total	67	6,896	.603	2,688	.708	3,178	.560	1,030	.469
Non-trade-union									
Under 2,500	9	517	.393	207	.463	217	.375	93	.283
2,500 and under 5,000	16	1,518	.430	541	.498	749	.410	228	.334
5,000 and under 10,000	11	1,303	.409	507	.467	579	.394	217	.311
10,000 and under 25,000	22	2,314	.452	933	.515	994	.430	387	.347
25,000 and under 50,000	13	1,376	.487	510	.552	586	.481	280	.376
50,000 and under 100,000	13	1,831	.545	737	.609	824	.533	270	.409
100,000 and under 250,000	18	2,250	.521	882	.599	984	.507	384	.384
250,000 and under 500,000	10	467	.480	187	.606	198	.430	82	.305
500,000 and under 1,000,000	13	946	.523	417	.652	359	.484	170	.315
1,000,000 and over	39	3,808	.611	1,504	.713	1,627	.585	677	.449
Total	164	16,330	.507	6,425	.588	7,117	.485	2,788	.374

[1] No average computed for less than 3 plants or less than 50 employees.

Despite a number of inconsistencies, there is direct correlation manifested between the size of community in which the plant is located and average hourly earnings in non-trade-union establishments. The lowest earnings for all employees (39.3 cents) were reported in the smallest places and the highest average (61.1 cents) in the large metropolitan centers of 1,000,000 and over. It is noteworthy, moreover, that this order was maintained for each of the skill groups,

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although the margin in favor of the largest centers was greatest among the skilled. Between these extremes, however, the order is often inverted, with the confusion greatest in the unskilled group. These irregularities appear to be due, at least in part, to the thinness of the sample.

A similar situation appears among the unionized establishments. For all employees the average was highest (70.8 cents) in the largest communities, becoming progressively lower, with one exception, as the size of the community decreased. It is noteworthy, however, that the earnings were lowest in places of 25,000 and under 50,000. Some interest also attaches to the fact that the largest metropolitan areas had the highest over-all average only because of the substantially higher earnings of the skilled employees.

Hourly Earnings and Size of Plant

As in the furniture industry as a whole, the wood household-furniture branch is not dominated by a few large plants, but it is made up mostly of a considerable number of relatively small and medium-sized units. Of the 298 establishments covered here, over half reported not more than 100, and over a fourth employed not more than 50 wage earners. There were only 19 plants that had a labor force in excess of 500, with 6 having over 1,000. It should be noted that none of the establishments manufacturing kitchen furniture employed as many as 500 workers.

Considering the wood household-furniture branch as a whole, there are no indications of any correlation between size of establishment and average hourly earnings, as shown in table 22. For example, not only did the plants with the lowest and highest hourly earnings belong to the same size group, namely the one with 21 to 50 workers, but the 65 establishments found in the latter had averages in virtually every 5-cent interval between 15 cents and $1.10. Of equal significance is the fact that none of the 6 largest plants having from 1,001 to 2,500 employees are found in the same earnings class, the averages of these establishments ranging from a figure between 35 and 40 cents to one between 75 and 80 cents. Moreover, of the 9 lowest-paid plants, whose hourly earnings were below 30 cents, 3 had from 21 to 50, 2 from 51 to 100, 1 from 101 to 250, 2 from 251 to 500, and 1 from 501 to 1,000 wage earners. Likewise, of the 14 highest-paid establishments, with averages exceeding 80 cents, 1 employed between 6 and 20, 7 between 21 and 50, 3 between 51 and 100, 2 between 101 and 250, and 1 between 501 and 1,000 workers.

Even when allowance is made for regional differences, there are still sharp variations in average hourly earnings among plants of the same size group. Of the 13 establishments employing more than 500 workers in the North, 1 averaged between 40 and 45 cents, 2 between

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45 and 50 cents, 2 between 50 and 55 cents, 1 between 60 and 65 cents, 3 between 65 and 70 cents, 2 between 70 and 75 cents, 1 between 75 and 80 cents, and 1 between 80 and 85 cents. Even greater variation in hourly earnings is to be found in the smaller plants. The range of earnings was much narrower in the South, but at least 1 of the establishments with less than 50 employees was found in every 5-cent interval from 15 to 50 cents. Likewise, of the plants employing over 500 workers, 1 averaged between 25 and 30 cents, 2 between 30 and 35 cents, 1 between 35 and 40 cents, 1 between 40 and 45 cents, and 1 between 45 and 50 cents. Neither does there seem to be any appreciable correlation between average hourly earnings and size of establishment if the figures for each region are analyzed on the product basis.

TABLE 22.—*Distribution of individual plants in wood household-furniture branch, by average hourly earnings and size of plant, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	Total	Size of plant in terms of number of workers						
		6 to 20	21 to 50	51 to 100	101 to 250	251 to 500	501 to 1,000	1,001 to 2,500
15 and under 20 cents	1		1					
20 and under 25 cents	1		1					
25 and under 30 cents	7		1	2	1	2	1	
30 and under 35 cents	32	1	4	7	11	7	2	
35 and under 40 cents	46	1	5	13	18	8		1
40 and under 45 cents	39	2	8	7	17	3	2	
45 and under 50 cents	46	4	9	13	12	5	2	1
50 and under 55 cents	37	2	8	13	10	2	1	1
55 and under 60 cents	25	1	8	5	9	2		
60 and under 65 cents	22		6	7	6	2		1
65 and under 70 cents	11		1	1	4	2	2	1
70 and under 75 cents	10		4	3	1		2	
75 and under 80 cents	7		2	2	1	1		1
80 and under 85 cents	4		1	1	1		1	
85 and under 90 cents	3		3					
90 and under 95 cents	3	1		2				
95 cents and under $1	2		2					
$1 and under $1.05	1				1			
$1.05 and under $1.10	1		1					
Total	298	12	65	76	92	34	13	6

One reason for the lack of direct correlation between average hourly earnings and size of establishment is the fact that the majority of the unionized plants employed fewer than 250 workers, which may be coupled with the fact that the establishments with trade-union contracts showed, on the whole, the highest averages. In fact, of the 14 plants with the highest hourly earnings (80 cents and over), in the North, all but 1 employed less than 250 wage earners, and each of these, except 1, was unionized. Nevertheless, even if the trade-union and non-trade-union establishments are treated separately, neither shows any correlation between size of plant and average hourly earnings, nor does this tendency exist even if the figures are analyzed on the basis of individual cities.

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Chapter VII.—Weekly Hours

Data for Branch as a Whole

The full-time hours of work in the 298 plants of the wood household-furniture branch in October 1937 were fairly well scattered, ranging all the way from 35 to 59 per week. According to table 23, however, there were important concentrations at 40 and 45 hours, with minor concentrations at 44, 50, and 55 hours. It will be noted that by far the largest number of establishments (220) had a workweek of 45 hours and less.[1]

TABLE 23.—*Distribution of plants according to full-time weekly hours in wood household-furniture branch, by region, October 1937*

Region	Total	Full-time weekly hours										
		Under 40	Exactly 40	Over 40 and under 44	Exactly 44	Over 44 and under 45	Exactly 45	Over 45 and under 50	Exactly 50	Over 50 and under 55	Exactly 55	Over 55
United States	298	9	101	2	30	8	70	19	36	6	16	1
North	231	9	90	2	24	7	41	13	30	4	10	1
South	67	------	11	------	6	1	29	6	6	2	6	------

The distribution of northern plants according to full-time hours per week was similar to that in the country as a whole. It should be pointed out that the 9 establishments with normal hours of less than 40 were all located in the North. The largest number of plants in any single class in the southern area was at 45 hours, while in the northern region this appeared at 40 hours. Moreover, a proportionately greater number of establishments had full-time hours of over 45 in the South (20 out of 67) than in the North (58 out of 231).

The actual weekly hours of all wage earners in wood household furniture for the country as a whole averaged 42.5 in October 1937. Looking at the distribution upon which this average is based in table 24, it will be seen that nearly one-half (48.8 percent) of the employees worked 40 and under 48 hours per week. The largest concentration was exactly 25.0 percent in the class of 44 and less than 48 hours.

[1] This shows the influence of the code under the N. R. A., which established a 40-hour week to be averaged over a 6-month period, with the maximum of 45 hours in any 1 week.

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The proportion working 40 and under 44 hours was somewhat less than this figure, and 18.0 percent had a workweek of exactly 40 hours. About the same percentage worked 32 and under 40 (13.9) as 48 and less than 52 hours (13.4). Slightly over one-tenth (10.4 percent) had a workweek of under 32 hours, these being employees who worked part time during the week covered. On the other hand, 13.5 percent had a workweek of 52 hours and over. Many of these were employed in plants with long full-time hours, but quite a number belonged to occupations that usually required a workweek in excess of the prevailing normal hours in any establishment.

The fact that weekly hours were higher in the southern than in the northern region is also confirmed by an examination of the data relating to actual hours worked. As regards average hours per week, the figures for all wage earners were respectively 43.1 and 42.3. Comparing the 2 distributions, the relative number of employees working 32 and under 48 hours was 65.4 percent in the North, as against 55.7 percent in the South. On the other hand, the number whose workweek was 48 hours and over amounted to only 24.6 percent in the northern area, which may be compared with 32.7 percent in the southern territory.

TABLE 24.—*Distribution of workers according to actual weekly hours in wood household-furniture branch, by region, October 1937*

Weekly hours	United States		North		South	
	Number of workers	Simple percentage	Number of workers	Simple percentage	Number of workers	Simple percentage
Under 24	1,364	4.1	927	4.0	437	4.4
24 and under 32	2,104	6.3	1,388	6.0	716	7.2
32 and under 40	4,617	13.9	3,450	14.9	1,167	11.7
Exactly 40	5,961	18.0	4,520	19.4	1,441	14.4
Over 40 and under 44	1,924	5.8	1,311	5.6	613	6.1
44 and under 48	8,262	25.0	5,927	25.5	2,335	23.5
48 and under 52	4,457	13.4	2,924	12.6	1,533	15.4
52 and under 56	2,897	8.7	1,711	7.4	1,186	11.9
56 and under 64	1,103	3.3	730	3.1	373	3.7
64 and over	510	1.5	338	1.5	172	1.7
Total	33,199	100.0	23,226	100.0	9,973	100.0

It should also be pointed out that there was very little difference in the actual hours worked among the various skill groups. According to table 25, the averages for the country as a whole were 42.8 for skilled, 42.2 for semiskilled, and 42.7 hours for unskilled workers. There was just as little variation among the skill groups in the northern territory, but in the southern region skilled workers averaged somewhat more than either semiskilled or unskilled.

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TABLE 25.—*Average actual weekly hours in wood household-furniture branch, by product, region, and skill, October 1937*

Product and region	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semiskilled workers	Unskilled workers
All products				
North	42.3	42.3	42.1	42.9
South	43.1	44.0	42.7	42.5
Total	42.5	42.8	42.2	42.7
Case goods				
North	42.6	43.2	42.5	41.8
South	42.9	44.4	42.6	41.7
Total	42.8	43.6	42.5	41.7
Upholstered furniture				
North	39.6	39.2	39.4	41.6
South	42.6	42.6	42.3	43.6
Total	40.3	39.9	40.2	42.3
Novelty furniture				
North	43.8	44.7	43.0	44.3
South	47.7	47.1	47.4	49.0
Total	44.1	44.9	43.3	44.7
Kitchen furniture				
North	45.1	45.6	44.5	45.7
South	41.7	43.9	40.4	42.3
Total	44.4	45.4	43.6	44.9

Weekly Hours by Product

The weekly hours also differed by product. For the country as a whole, the average actual hours worked per week for all workers were lowest in upholstered furniture, namely 40.3, which is followed by 42.8 hours for case goods, 44.1 for novelties, and 44.4 for kitchen furniture. However, as pointed out previously, the coverage by region differed from one product to another. Hence, it is essential to analyze the actual hours worked separately for each product on a regional basis.

In case goods, the average actual hours worked per week for all employees were practically the same in both regions, the figures being 42.6 in the North and 42.9 in the South. On the other hand, there are striking differences between the 2 distributions, as shown by table 26. The number of wage earners working 32 and under 48 hours was 70.6 in the northern area, as against 56.7 percent in the southern territory. By contrast, the number who worked 48 hours and over was 21.8 percent in the North, which may be compared with 31.5 in the South. The relative number working part time during the week, under 32 hours, was also larger in the southern than in the northern region, the respective percentages being 11.8 and 7.6.

The average actual hours worked for all employees in upholstered furniture were 39.6 in the northern and 42.6 in the southern area, a difference of exactly 3 hours. This is also brought out by a comparison of the 2 distributions. (See table 26.) The relative number of wage

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earners working less than 44 hours was 66.0 percent in the North, as against 36.7 percent in the South. Conversely, while only 34.0 percent worked 44 hours and over in the northern region, 63.3 percent were found in that classification in the southern territory.

The average actual hours per week for all wage earners in novelty furniture amounted to 43.8 in the northern and 47.7 in the southern territory, which is a difference of nearly 4 hours.

TABLE 26.—*Distribution of workers according to actual weekly hours in case goods and upholstered furniture, by region, October 1937*

Weekly hours	United States		North		South	
	Number of workers	Simple percentage	Number of workers	Simple percentage	Number of workers	Simple percentage
Case goods						
Under 24	528	3.3	243	2.6	285	4.1
24 and under 32	998	6.2	465	5.0	533	7.7
32 and under 40	1,885	11.7	1,087	11.8	798	11.5
Exactly 40	3,384	20.9	2,234	24.2	1,150	16.6
Over 40 and under 44	945	5.8	496	5.4	449	6.5
44 and under 48	4,226	26.0	2,690	29.2	1,536	22.1
48 and under 52	2,041	12.6	1,020	11.0	1,021	14.7
52 and under 56	1,337	8.3	534	5.8	803	11.6
56 and under 64	594	3.7	362	3.9	232	3.3
64 and over	237	1.5	106	1.1	131	1.9
Total	16,175	100.0	9,237	100.0	6,938	100.0
Upholstered furniture						
Under 24	529	6.3	412	6.6	117	5.5
24 and under 32	771	9.3	653	10.5	118	5.6
32 and under 40	1,569	18.9	1,318	21.3	251	11.9
Exactly 40	1,447	17.4	1,280	20.6	167	7.9
Over 40 and under 44	561	6.7	438	7.0	123	5.8
44 and under 48	1,660	19.8	940	15.1	720	34.0
48 and under 52	1,046	12.6	680	10.9	366	17.3
52 and under 56	458	5.5	282	4.5	176	8.3
56 and under 64	198	2.4	137	2.2	61	2.9
64 and over	94	1.1	78	1.3	16	.8
Total	8,333	100.0	6,218	100.0	2,115	100.0

As may be seen from the distribution presented in table 27, 64.3 percent of the employees in the North worked 32 and under 48 hours and 28.6 percent 48 hours and over. The number who worked less than 32 hours was 7.1 percent of the total.

It is interesting to note that in kitchen furniture alone the average of actual hours worked per week for all wage earners was considerably greater in the northern as against the southern area, the figures being respectively 45.1 and 41.7, which is probably due to the thinness of the coverage in the South.

Comparing the averages of actual hours worked per week for all employees in each region, it will be seen that, if kitchen furniture is excluded, the lowest figure is shown for upholstered furniture, followed by case goods, and the highest for novelty furniture. As regards

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kitchen furniture, it has the highest average in the northern but the lowest in the southern territory. Occupational averages for the group as a whole as well as for each product are presented in tables 43 to 47 inclusive.

TABLE 27.—*Distribution of workers according to actual weekly hours in novelty and kitchen furniture, October 1937*

Weekly hours	United States		North	
	Number of workers	Simple percentage	Number of workers	Simple percentage
Novelty furniture				
Under 24	228	3.4	210	3.4
24 and under 32	263	3.9	231	3.7
32 and under 40	909	13.5	884	14.3
Exactly 40	932	13.9	880	14.2
Over 40 and under 44	330	4.9	305	4.9
44 and under 48	1,950	29.0	1,922	30.9
48 and under 52	850	12.7	748	12.1
52 and under 56	832	12.4	668	10.8
56 and under 64	262	3.9	205	3.3
64 and over	160	2.4	146	2.4
Total	6,716	100.0	6,199	100.0
Kitchen furnitur				
Under 24	79	4.0	62	3.9
24 and under 32	72	3.6	39	2.5
32 and under 40	254	12.9	161	10.2
Exactly 40	198	10.0	126	8.0
Over 40 and under 44	88	4.5	72	4.6
44 and under 48	426	21.6	375	23.9
48 and under 52	520	26.2	476	30.3
52 and under 56	270	13.7	227	14.4
56 and under 64	49	2.5	26	1.7
64 and over	19	1.0	8	.5
Total	1,975	100.0	1,572	100.0

Differences Between Trade-Union and Non-Trade-Union Plants

The weekly hours were lower in trade-union than in non-trade-union plants. This is shown by an analysis of the data relating to full-time hours as well as actual average hours worked per week. As mentioned previously, any comparisons on a product basis must be confined to the northern area, but it is possible to present figures for both territories for all products combined.

In the northern region, the average actual weekly hours were lower in trade-union than in non-trade-union establishments for each of the 4 products, the differentials being 1.3 hours in case goods, 3.5 hours in upholstered furniture, 4.8 hours in novelties, and 7.0 in kitchen furniture. (See table 28.) It should also be noted that for each kind of plant the lowest average was reported in upholstered furniture. In trade-union establishments, novelty and kitchen furniture came next, with case goods showing the highest average. In non-trade-union plants, on the other hand, the order following upholstered furniture was case goods, novelties, and kitchen furniture.

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TABLE 28.—*Average actual weekly hours of workers in trade-union and non-trade-union plants of wood household-furniture branch in the North, by product, October 1937*

Product	Trade-union plants	Non-trade-union plants
Case goods	41.7	43.0
Upholstered furniture	37.1	40.6
Novelty furniture	40.4	45.2
Kitchen furniture	40.5	47.5

For all products in the North, the average actual hours per week amounted to 40.1 in trade-union and 43.2 in non-trade-union establishments, which makes for a differential of 3.1 hours. The fact that the weekly hours were shorter in trade-union than non-trade-union plants is confirmed by table 29, which shows the distribution of full-time weekly hours. In trade-union establishments, the 40-hour week predominated, with 39 out of the 67 plants observing these hours. In fact, 47 trade-union establishments had normal hours of 40 or less. Of the remaining 20 plants, 14 reported full-time hours of exactly 45, with none of the establishments exceeding 50 hours. In the non-trade-union plants, however, the normal hours ranged all the way from under 40 to over 55, with concentrations at exactly 40, 44, 45, 50, and 55.

In the southern territory, the average actual weekly hours were 46.3 in trade-union and 42.8 in non-trade-union establishments, which is entirely contrary to the experience in the North. This is probably due to the small number of trade-union plants found in the southern area.

TABLE 29.—*Distribution of plants according to full-time weekly hours, in wood household-furniture branch, by region and unionization, October 1937*

Weekly hours	United States		North		South	
	Trade-union	Non-trade-union	Trade-union	Non-trade-union	Trade-union	Non-trade-union
Under 40	8	1	8	1		
Exactly 40	40	61	39	51	1	10
Over 40 and under 44		2		2		
Exactly 44		30		24		6
Over 44 and under 45	1	7	1	6		1
Exactly 45	16	54	14	27	2	27
Over 45 and under 50	5	14	2	11	3	3
Exactly 50	4	32	3	27	1	5
Over 50 and under 55		6		4		2
Exactly 55		16		10		6
Over 55		1		1		
Total	74	224	67	164	7	60

Weekly Hours by Size of Community

There is almost no relationship between average actual weekly hours and size of community in wood household furniture, as may be seen in table 30. In the North, the lowest average (37.9 hours) appears

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in communities with a population of 50,000 and under 100,000, the next lowest (40.6 hours) being found in metropolitan areas with 1,000,000 and over. The highest average (47.2 hours) is shown for places with 5,000 and under 10,000, but the communities with less than 5,000 averaged under that figure. The same lack of relationship is found in the southern territory, except that the smallest communities, namely under 2,500, had the longest weekly hours (51.1).

TABLE **30.**—*Average actual weekly hours of workers in wood household-furniture branch, by size of community and region, October 1937*

Size of community	United States	North	South
Under 2,500	45.5	43.6	51.1
2,500 and under 5,000	43.5	44.7	40.1
5,000 and under 10,000	43.8	47.2	42.4
10,000 and under 25,000	42.9	43.1	42.7
25,000 and under 50,000	43.2	42.7	45.8
50,000 and under 100,000	40.7	37.9	44.0
100,000 and under 250,000	43.3	42.9	44.7
250,000 and under 500,000	41.9	41.7	42.4
500,000 and under 1,000,000	44.8	44.8	----------
1,000,000 and over	40.6	40.6	----------
Total	42.5	42.3	43.1

It will also be seen that the average actual hours per week in the North were not always greater than in the South. In communities for which a comparison is possible, the northern averages were greater in all except those between 2,500 and 25,000.

There is some tendency for the average actual weekly hours to vary inversely with the size of community in trade-union plants, as shown in table 31, but no such relationship is evident in the data for non-trade-union establishments. It should also be noted that, in all except the smallest (under 2,500) communities and centers of 50,000 and under 100,000, the average actual hours per week were greater in non-trade-union than in trade-union plants.

TABLE **31.**—*Average actual weekly hours of workers in trade-union and non-trade-union plants in wood household-furniture branch in the North, by size of community, October 1937*

Size of community	Trade-union plants	Non-trade-union plants
Under 2,500	44.0	43.5
2,500 and under 5,000	43.2	45.2
5,000 and under 10,000	41.1	47.7
10,000 and under 25,000	40.8	44.1
25,000 and under 50,000	40.1	44.0
50,000 and under 100,000	38.2	37.8
100,000 and under 250,000	41.3	43.4
250,000 and under 500,000	39.0	46.2
500,000 and under 1,000,000	38.1	46.3
1,000,000 and over	39.2	41.5
Total	40.1	43.2

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Chapter VIII.—Weekly Earnings

Data for Branch as a Whole

Taking the wood household-furniture branch as a whole, the average weekly earnings of all wage earners amounted to $20.42 in October 1937. However, this figure conceals wide differences, as may be seen in table 32. A fairly large proportion of the workers (27.0 percent) received less than $15, but it must be remembered that many of these were on a part-time basis during the week covered. Less than one-half of the total (47.3 percent) were paid $15 and under $25, which indicates that the weekly earnings of the majority were not relatively high. Another fifth (20.6 percent) received $25 and less than $35. On the other hand, the representation in the upper brackets was extremely meager, with only 5.1 percent earning as much as $35 and over and 1.5 percent being paid $45 and over.

TABLE 32.—*Distribution of workers according to actual weekly earnings in wood household-furniture branch, by skill, October 1937*

Weekly earnings	Total workers		Skilled workers		Semiskilled workers		Unskilled workers	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Under $5	498	1.5	91	0.7	198	1.3	209	3.4
$5 and under $10	2,245	6.8	357	2.9	1,050	7.1	838	13.8
$10 and under $15	6,200	18.7	1,219	9.8	2,976	20.2	2,005	33.2
$15 and under $20	8,642	25.9	2,617	21.1	4,168	28.3	1,857	30.6
$20 and under $25	7,130	21.4	2,883	23.3	3,388	23.0	859	14.2
$25 and under $30	4,370	13.2	2,302	18.6	1,838	12.5	230	3.8
$30 and under $35	2,460	7.4	1,615	13.0	798	5.4	47	.8
$35 and under $40	766	2.3	559	4.5	198	1.3	9	.1
$40 and under $45	428	1.3	357	2.9	67	.5	4	.1
$45 and under $50	216	.7	186	1.5	27	.2	3	(1)
$50 and under $60	161	.5	135	1.1	26	.2		
$60 and over	83	.3	77	.6	6	(1)		
Total	33,199	100.0	12,398	100.0	14,740	100.0	6,061	100.0

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

As in the case of hourly earnings, the weekly earnings differed considerably among the three skill groups. The averages amounted to $24.35 for skilled, $19.27 for semiskilled, and $15.19 for unskilled employees. (See table 33.) Hence, there was a differential of $5.08 between the skilled and semiskilled, and of $4.08 between the semiskilled and unskilled. These differentials reflect almost entirely the respective ones in hourly earnings, due to the fact that there was very little variation in the average actual weekly hours among the three groups.

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Comparing the three distributions according to skill, it will be seen that the relative number paid under $15, which is just below the average of the unskilled workers, was 50.4 percent for the unskilled and 28.6 percent for the semiskilled, as against only 13.4 percent for the skilled. If $20 is taken as the upper limit, which is just above the semiskilled average, the percentages were 81.0 percent for the unskilled, 56.9 percent for the semiskilled, and 34.5 percent for the skilled workers. However, the number earning $25 (or just above the average of the skilled) and over amounted to as much as 42.2 percent for the skilled, which may be compared with 20.1 percent for the semiskilled and only 4.8 percent for the unskilled wage earners.

TABLE 33.—*Average actual weekly earnings in wood household-furniture branch, by product, skill, and region, October 1937*

Product and region	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
All products				
North	$22.58	$26.27	$21.35	$17.09
South	15.39	19.01	14.46	11.95
Total	20.42	24.35	19.27	15.19
Case goods				
North	21.87	24.95	21.02	16.79
South	14.90	18.57	14.03	11.66
Total	18.88	22.57	17.96	14.16
Upholstered furniture				
North	24.80	29.10	21.91	16.37
South	16.96	20.34	15.69	12.51
Total	22.81	27.18	20.30	14.97
Novelty furniture				
North	22.03	25.24	21.73	17.94
South	15.92	18.47	15.45	13.34
Total	21.56	24.70	21.29	17.53
Kitchen furniture				
North	20.17	22.90	19.66	16.76
South	15.07	18.16	14.76	12.69
Total	19.13	22.14	18.61	15.75

Weekly earnings were substantially higher in the North than in the South. Compared with an average of $22.58 for all employees in the northern plants, the average for the southern wage earners was $15.39, a difference of $7.19. This difference also reflects largely the one in hourly earnings, since the average actual weekly hours in the southern region were only slightly higher than in the northern area. According to table 34, more than four-fifths (81.6 percent) of the total earned less than $20 a week in the southern as compared with two-fifths (40.8 percent) in the northern territory. Wholly different intervals of principal concentration are responsible for these marked variations.

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In the South, the modal concentration, accounting for 36.0 percent, occurs in the class of $10 and under $15. In the North, however, the largest proportion (25.8 percent) is found in the class of $20 and less than $25. Conspicuous differences also appear at the upper end of the distributions. The number earning $20 and under $30 amounted to 42.9 percent in the northern but only 15.4 percent in the southern region. Lastly, as many as 16.3 percent were paid $30 and over in the North, but only 3.0 percent were found in that classification in the South.

Differences by Product

Weekly earnings were highest in upholstered furniture, the over-all average for this division amounting to $22.81. Next in rank were the plants manufacturing novelty lines, whose average was $21.56. Earnings in the other divisions were appreciably lower, averaging $19.13 in kitchen furniture and $18.88 in case goods.

In the case of hourly earnings, it will be remembered that the differences among the four products were to a considerable degree due to the varying distribution of the labor force as to skill and region. The same thing applies in connection with the differences in earnings per week. In addition, however, the weekly earnings are also affected by the differences in weekly hours among the several products.

TABLE 34.—*Distribution of workers according to actual weekly earnings in wood household-furniture branch, by region and skill, October 1937*

Weekly earnings	North							
	Total workers		Skilled workers		Semiskilled workers		Unskilled workers	
	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage
Under $5	223	1.0	44	0.5	96	0.9	83	2.2
$5 and under $10	834	3.6	153	1.7	390	3.8	291	7.6
$10 and under $15	2,622	11.3	481	5.3	1,231	12.0	910	23.8
$15 and under $20	5,784	24.9	1,571	17.2	2,780	27.0	1,433	37.6
$20 and under $25	5,999	25.8	2,238	24.6	2,951	28.6	810	21.2
$25 and under $30	3,966	17.1	1,983	21.8	1,753	17.0	230	6.0
$30 and under $35	2,248	9.7	1,425	15.6	777	7.5	46	1.2
$35 and under $40	703	3.0	501	5.5	193	1.9	9	.2
$40 and under $45	405	1.7	334	3.7	67	.7	4	.1
$45 and under $50	203	.9	176	1.9	25	.2	2	.1
$50 and under $60	158	.7	132	1.4	26	.3	----------	----------
$60 and over	81	.3	75	.8	6	.1	----------	----------
Total	23,226	100.0	9,113	100.0	10,295	100.0	3,818	100.0

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TABLE 34. *Distribution of workers according to actual weekly earnings in wood household-furniture branch, by region and skill, October 1937*—Continued

Weekly earnings	South							
	Total workers		Skilled workers		Semiskilled workers		Unskilled workers	
	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage
Under $5	275	2.8	47	1.4	102	2.3	126	5.6
$5 and under $10	1,411	14.1	204	6.2	660	14.8	547	24.4
$10 and under $15	3,578	36.0	738	22.5	1,745	39.4	1,095	48.9
$15 and under $20	2,858	28.7	1,046	31.8	1,388	31.2	424	18.9
$20 and under $25	1,131	11.3	645	19.6	437	9.8	49	2.2
$25 and under $30	404	4.1	319	9.7	85	1.9		
$30 and under $35	212	2.1	190	5.8	21	.5	1	(1)
$35 and under $40	63	.6	58	1.8	5	.1		
$40 and under $45	24	.2	23	.7			1	(1)
$45 and under $50	12	.1	10	.3	2	(1)		
$50 and under $60	3	(1)	3	.1				
$60 and over	2	(1)	2	.1				
Total	9,973	100.0	3,285	100.0	4,445	100.0	2,243	100.0

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

It will also be recalled that for each product the average earnings per hour were substantially greater in the North than in the South. Due to the fact that the average actual weekly hours were longer in the southern than in the northern area in case goods, upholstered furniture, and novelties, the regional differentials in average earnings per week were relatively narrower than in average hourly earnings in each instance. These differentials amounted to $6.97 for case goods, $7.84 for upholstered furniture, and $6.11 for novelty furniture. In kitchen furniture the differential was $5.10, or relatively higher than in average hourly earnings, because of the fact that the average actual hours per week were longer in the North than in the South.

The same contrast between the northern and southern regions is brought out by the distributions for case goods and upholstered furniture, which appear in tables 35 and 36, respectively. Taking the number of employees earning under $20 a week, there were in this category in case goods 42.3 percent in the North as against 84.7 percent in the South. The respective percentages for upholstered furniture were 35.7 and 72.3. Tables 37 and 38, which relate to novelty and kitchen furniture, respectively, do not include distributions for the southern workers.

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TABLE 35.—*Percentage distribution of workers according to actual weekly earnings in case goods of wood household-furniture branch, by region and skill, October 1937*

Weekly earnings	United States				North				South			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
Under $5	1.7	0.7	1.3	4.1	0.9	0.5	0.7	2.0	2.7	1.0	2.1	6.1
$5 and under $10	8.9	3.5	9.3	17.9	3.6	1.8	3.4	8.8	15.9	6.4	16.9	26.6
$10 and under $15	22.6	12.4	24.6	37.0	11.2	5.0	11.6	25.1	37.8	24.9	41.4	48.1
$15 and under $20	27.2	24.8	29.5	27.2	26.6	19.7	28.9	37.1	28.3	33.5	30.1	17.8
$20 and under $25	19.2	23.5	19.7	10.1	26.7	26.9	29.2	19.4	9.3	18.0	7.3	1.3
$25 and under $30	11.9	17.6	11.0	3.2	18.4	23.2	18.4	6.6	3.2	8.1	1.5	----------
$30 and under $35	5.5	10.8	3.5	.4	8.3	14.2	5.9	.8	1.9	5.2	.5	----------
$35 and under $40	1.5	3.2	.8	.1	2.2	4.0	1.3	.1	.6	1.7	.2	----------
$40 and under $45	.8	1.9	.2	(1)	1.1	2.5	.3	----------	.2	.7	----------	.1
$45 and under $50	.4	.9	.1	(1)	.6	1.2	.2	.1	.1	.3	(1)	----------
$50 and under $60	.2	.5	(1)	----------	.3	.8	.1	----------	(1)	.1	----------	----------
$60 and over	.1	.2	(1)	----------	.1	.2	(1)	----------	(1)	.1	----------	----------
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

TABLE 36.—*Percentage distribution of workers according to actual weekly earnings in upholstered furniture of wood household-furniture branch by region and skill, October 1937*

Weekly earnings	United States				North				South			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
Under $5	1.4	0.9	1.2	3.6	0.9	0.4	0.7	3.6	2.9	2.7	2.6	3.8
$5 and under $10	5.2	2.2	5.8	13.8	3.8	1.4	4.8	11.1	9.1	5.3	8.5	18.6
$10 and under $15	16.8	8.2	20.1	37.3	11.9	6.0	15.0	26.3	31.2	16.0	34.4	56.5
$15 and under $20	21.7	16.8	26.2	25.1	19.1	13.6	23.1	29.3	29.1	28.1	35.4	17.6
$20 and under $25	18.9	17.8	21.5	15.0	20.1	16.7	23.7	21.6	15.7	21.9	15.2	3.5
$25 and under $30	14.7	18.8	13.6	4.0	17.3	19.9	17.1	6.3	7.2	14.4	3.5	----------
$30 and under $35	10.7	16.2	7.4	.9	13.1	18.3	9.9	1.4	3.5	8.4	.3	----------
$35 and under $40	4.2	7.3	2.1	.2	5.4	8.8	2.8	.3	.8	1.9	----------	----------
$40 and under $45	2.7	4.9	1.0	----------	3.5	6.1	1.3	----------	.3	.8	----------	----------
$45 and under $50	1.5	2.9	.4	.1	2.0	3.6	.6	.1	.2	.4	.1	----------
$50 and under $60	1.4	2.4	.6	----------	1.8	3.1	.8	----------	(1)	.1	----------	----------
$60 and over	.8	1.6	.1	----------	1.1	2.1	.2	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

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TABLE 37.—*Percentage distribution of workers according to actual weekly earnings in novelty furniture of wood household-furniture branch, by skill, October 1937*

Weekly earnings	United States				North			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers
Under $5	1.0	0.6	1.0	1.6	1.0	0.5	1.0	1.6
$5 and under $10	4.0	2.0	3.9	7.1	3.2	1.5	3.4	5.4
$10 and under $15	11.2	5.3	10.7	21.0	9.6	4.0	8.9	19.5
$15 and under $20	27.4	17.4	28.0	40.9	27.1	16.5	27.5	42.0
$20 and under $25	29.3	31.3	31.4	22.1	30.3	31.6	32.3	23.6
$25 and under $30	14.5	21.4	14.3	4.8	15.4	22.4	15.3	5.3
$30 and under $35	8.7	14.1	8.1	1.8	9.3	15.1	8.8	1.9
$35 and under $40	2.2	4.0	1.8	.4	2.3	4.2	1.9	.4
$40 and under $45	1.1	2.4	.6	.2	1.2	2.6	.7	.2
$45 and under $50	.4	.9	.1	.1	.4	1.0	.1	.1
$50 and under $60	.2	.5	.1	----------	.2	.5	.1	----------
$60 and over	(1)	.1	(1)	----------	(1)	.1	(1)	----------
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

TABLE 38.—*Percentage distribution of workers according to actual weekly earnings in kitchen furniture of wood household-furniture branch, by skill, October 1937*

Weekly earnings	United States				North			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers
Under $5	2.4	0.3	3.0	4.1	1.7	0.4	2.4	2.3
$5 and under $10	5.3	3.7	6.5	5.1	3.7	3.3	4.3	2.9
$10 and under $15	19.8	11.3	19.8	33.2	16.2	8.0	16.3	29.9
$15 and under $20	29.0	25.0	28.1	37.2	28.9	23.9	28.2	39.6
$20 and under $25	24.1	28.4	24.8	16.3	26.3	29.2	27.0	19.8
$25 and under $30	12.7	17.4	13.3	4.1	15.3	19.5	16.3	5.5
$30 and under $35	4.7	10.1	3.1	----------	5.7	11.7	3.8	----------
$35 and under $40	1.1	1.6	1.3	----------	1.3	1.7	1.6	----------
$40 and under $45	.4	1.0	.1	----------	.4	1.1	.1	----------
$45 and under $50	.3	.8	----------	----------	.3	.8	----------	----------
$50 and under $60	.1	.2	----------	----------	.1	.2	----------	----------
$60 and over	.1	.2	----------	----------	.1	.2	----------	----------
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Differences Between Trade-Union and Non-Trade-Union Plants

It has been pointed out previously that in the northern region the average hourly earnings were higher and average actual weekly hours shorter in trade-union than in non-trade-union establishments. As a result, the differentials in favor of the former establishments against the latter were relatively less pronounced in average weekly earnings.

The differentials in favor of trade-union plants in the North amounted to $2.58 in case goods, $2.72 in kitchen furniture, $3.59 in upholstered furniture, and only 37 cents in novelty furniture. (See table 39.) Skilled employees in novelty furniture were the only group that earned on the average less (11 cents) in trade-union than in non-trade-union establishments, while the semiskilled workers averaged only 19 cents more in the former as compared with the latter. In all other skill groups for each product, however, the dif-

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ferentials were very substantial, varying from $1.07 for skilled employees in kitchen furniture to $3.58 for unskilled employees in case goods. The differentials were particularly conspicuous for the unskilled workers in each product.

It is interesting to compare in the northern territory the average weekly earnings among the four product groups by trade-union and non-trade-union plants. For all establishments combined, it will be remembered, the highest average was in upholstered furniture, which was followed by novelties, case goods, and kitchen furniture. The same order prevailed in non-trade-union plants, but in trade-union establishments the order was upholstered furniture, case goods, novelties, and kitchen furniture.

TABLE 39.—*Average actual weekly earnings of workers in trade-union and non-trade-union plants of wood household-furniture branch in the North, by product and skill, October 1937*

Product and unionization	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
Case goods				
Trade-union plants	$23.68	$26.65	$23.05	$19.27
Non-trade-union plants	21.10	24.32	20.05	15.69
Total	21.87	24.95	21.02	16.79
Upholstered furniture				
Trade-union plants	27.34	31.25	22.77	19.01
Non-trade-union plants	23.75	27.99	21.59	15.86
Total	24.30	29.10	21.91	16.37
Novelty furniture				
Trade-union plants	22.29	25.16	21.86	19.41
Non-trade-union plants	21.92	25.27	21.67	17.39
Total	22.03	25.24	21.73	17.94
Kitchen furniture				
Trade-union plants	21.97	23.58	21.93	18.90
Non-trade-union plants	19.25	22.51	18.51	15.79
Total	20.17	22.90	19.66	16.76

According to table 40, the differential in favor of trade-union as against non-trade-union plants for both regions in wood household furniture was $4.18. By skill groups, the differential amounted to $4.01 for skilled, $3.72 for semiskilled, and $4.50 for unskilled workers. The absolute differentials were somewhat higher in the South than in the North. In the southern area, the differentials amounted to $3.32 for all workers, $2.56 for skilled, $3.42 for semiskilled, and $3.69 for unskilled. On the other hand, the differentials in the northern region were $2.23 for all workers, $2.34 for skilled, $1.74 for semiskilled, and $2.95 for unskilled.

Substantial differentials in favor of the northern as against the southern region are also found separately for trade-union and non-trade-union establishments. In case of trade-union plants, the dif-

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ferential amounted to $5.66 for all workers, $6.52 for skilled, $4.91 for semiskilled, and $3.82 for unskilled. In non-trade-union establishments, the differentials were $6.75 for all workers, $6.74 for skilled, $6.59 for semiskilled, and $4.56 for unskilled.

TABLE 40.—*Average actual weekly earnings of workers in trade-union and non-trade-union plants of wood household-furniture branch, by region and skill, October 1937*

Region and unionization	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
United States				
Trade-union plants	$23.65	$27.42	$22.11	$18.83
Non-trade-union plants	19.47	23.41	18.39	14.33
Total	20.42	24.35	19.27	15.19
North				
Trade-union plants	24.15	27.92	22.55	19.25
Non-trade-union plants	21.92	25.58	20.81	16.30
Total	22.58	26.27	21.35	17.09
South				
Trade-union plants	18.49	21.40	17.64	15.43
Non-trade-union plants	15.17	18.84	14.22	11.74
Total	15.39	19.01	14.46	11.95

Differences by Size of Community

With one exception, the average earnings per week of all wage earners in the northern region varied directly with size of community, as may be seen from table 41. The spread was from $18.16 in rural territory (with less than 2,500 population) to $26.31 in the largest metropolitan areas (with 1,000,000 and over), the difference amounting to $8.15. The only exception was in case of communities with 2,500 and under 5,000, which averaged slightly more than places of 5,000 and less than 10,000.

As regards skilled workers in the North, the average weekly earnings varied directly with size of community without any exception, the figures ranging from $20.77 in the smallest places to $30.74 in the largest metropolitan areas, which is a difference of almost $10. There was only one exception in the correlation for semiskilled employees, namely the communities of 2,500 and under 5,000 having a 50-cent advantage over those of 5,000 and less than 10,000. The spread in average earnings per week for this group was from $17.84 for rural territory to $24.42 for the largest metropolitan areas. This is a difference of $6.58, or below that found for skilled workers. On the other hand, the correlation for unskilled employees had several exceptions, but nevertheless there is sufficient evidence of average weekly earnings varying directly with size of community. The averages ranged from $13.29 for rural territory to $19.41 for places with 250,000 and under 500,000, although the largest metropolitan areas had an average only slightly below the latter ($19.10).

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TABLE 41.—*Average actual weekly earnings of workers in wood household-furniture branch, by region, size of community, and skill, October 1937*

Region and size of community	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semiskilled workers	Unskilled workers
United States				
Under 2,500	$17.97	$20.37	$17.79	$13.65
2,500 and under 5,000	18.04	21.44	17.00	13.95
5,000 and under 10,000	16.09	19.83	15.02	12.56
10,000 and under 25,000	18.25	21.41	17.67	14.14
25,000 and under 50,000	20.38	23.25	19.65	16.33
50,000 and under 100,000	19.25	22.20	18.62	14.21
100,000 and under 250,000	21.29	24.89	20.40	16.12
250,000 and under 500,000	20.92	25.38	19.66	15.94
500,000 and under 1,000,000	24.70	28.98	23.22	16.26
1,000,000 and over	26.31	30.74	24.42	19.10
Total	20.42	24.35	19.27	15.19
North				
Under 2,500	18.16	20.77	17.84	13.29
2,500 and under 5,000	19.89	22.89	18.86	16.09
5,000 and under 10,000	19.72	23.11	18.36	15.26
10,000 and under 25,000	20.30	23.21	19.75	16.06
25,000 and under 50,000	20.64	23.30	20.03	16.57
50,000 and under 100,000	20.91	23.59	20.06	15.87
100,000 and under 250,000	22.59	26.06	21.79	17.17
250,000 and under 500,000	23.83	27.69	22.60	19.41
500,000 and under 1,000,000	24.70	28.98	23.22	16.26
1,000,000 and over	26.31	30.74	24.42	19.10
Total	22.58	26.27	21.35	17.09
South				
Under 2,500	17.41	19.08	17.65	14.45
2,500 and under 5,000	12.85	16.84	11.64	9.62
5,000 and under 10,000	14.60	18.11	13.71	11.78
10,000 and under 25,000	14.86	18.22	13.98	11.67
25,000 and under 50,000	19.10	22.99	17.78	15.32
50,000 and under 100,000	17.27	20.31	16.86	12.85
100,000 and under 250,000	15.76	19.63	14.20	12.42
250,000 and under 500,000	15.60	20.87	14.08	10.75
Total	15.39	19.01	14.46	11.95

If the northern figures are shown separately by trade-union and non-trade-union plants, there is still considerable evidence of direct correlation between average weekly earnings and size of community in each case. (See table 42.)

The existence of such correlation is especially noticeable in the data relating to non-trade-union establishments. As regards all workers, there are two exceptions to the correlation, but the difference between the averages in rural territory and the largest metropolitan areas was $8.30. Considering the data on a skill basis, there is one exception to the correlation for skilled, three exceptions for semiskilled, and a number of exceptions for unskilled wage earners, but the ranges between the smallest and largest communities amounted, respectively, to $9.63, $8.07, and $6.03.

In spite of the thinness of the coverage, there is also sufficient evidence of direct correlation between average weekly earnings and size of community in trade-union plants. For all workers, the range was from $21.18 in places of 2,500 and under 5,000 to $27.72 in metropolitan areas of 1,000,000 and over, although the lowest average of

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$19.15 (the only exception) was reported in communities with 25,000 and less than 50,000. Similarly, the disparity for skilled employees was from $23.82 in places of 2,500 and under 5,000 to $32.09 in metropolitan areas of 1,000,000 and over, but the former figure was somewhat larger than the one ($23.47) in communities of 10,000 and less than 25,000 and considerably higher than the one ($21.05) in centers of 25,000 and under 50,000. The variance for semiskilled workers was from $20.24 in places of 2,500 and less than 5,000 to $24.69 in metropolitan areas of 1,000,000 and over. However, communities of 25,000 and under 50,000 averaged less than the former, while those of 500,000 and under 1,000,000 averaged somewhat more than the latter. For unskilled employees, the situation was more confused, but nevertheless the figures justify the statement that there is some correlation between the two factors.

TABLE 42.—*Average actual weekly earnings in trade-union and non-trade-union plants in wood household-furniture branch in the North, by size of community and skill, October 1937*

Unionization and size of community	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semiskilled workers	Unskilled workers
Trade-union				
Under 2,500	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
2,500 and under 5,000	$21.18	$23.82	$20.24	$17.76
5,000 and under 10,000	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
10,000 and under 25,000	21.19	23.47	21.17	18.63
25,000 and under 50,000	19.15	21.05	18.17	17.05
50,000 and under 100,000	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
100,000 and under 250,000	22.47	25.71	22.34	17.34
250,000 and under 500,000	24.81	27.27	24.03	22.45
500,000 and under 1,000,000	26.89	28.66	25.41	(1)
1,000,000 and over	27.72	32.09	24.69	20.24
Total	24.15	27.92	22.55	19.25
Non-trade-union				
Under 2,500	17.09	20.06	16.17	12.60
2,500 and under 5,000	19.43	22.54	18.38	15.50
5,000 and under 10,000	19.53	22.91	18.22	15.10
10,000 and under 25,000	19.90	23.14	18.95	14.55
25,000 and under 50,000	21.42	24.55	21.11	16.39
50,000 and under 100,000	20.63	23.34	19.76	15.89
100,000 and under 250,000	22.62	26.14	21.62	17.12
250,000 and under 500,000	22.17	28.29	19.90	13.70
500,000 and under 1,000,000	24.21	29.07	22.69	15.49
1,000,000 and over	25.39	29.69	24.24	18.63
Total	21.92	25.58	20.81	16.30

[1] No average computed for less than 3 plants or less than 50 employees.

It should also be pointed out that, with a number of exceptions, the average weekly earnings in the North were higher in trade-union than in non-trade-union plants in communities of the same size. Nearly all of these exceptions related to skilled workers.

As in case of average hourly earnings, there is no indication of any correlation between average earnings per week and size of community in the southern territory. However, the averages for the same class of labor in the corresponding size of community were in nearly every instance lower in the southern than in the northern region.

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Chapter IX.—Average Hourly Earnings by Occupational Groups and Sex

Data for Males

According to table 43, the highest average hourly earnings among males of the wood household-furniture branch in the North were 81.0 cents for upholsterers, who also constituted numerically the largest occupational group of the skilled employees. Working foremen averaged 72.8 cents and miscellaneous skilled workers in the upholstery department 71.3 cents. The "other skilled workers" had an average of 66.2 cents. There were 2 other occupational groups with an average of over 60 cents, namely the miscellaneous skilled workers in the maintenance (61.5 cents) and paint (61.3 cents) departments. The averages of the remaining 11 occupational groups were found within a relatively narrow range from 57.6 cents for miscellaneous skilled assemblers to 51.4 for belt sanders.

Among semiskilled males in the northern territory, the highest average earnings per hour were 64.8 cents for miscellaneous semiskilled workers in the upholstery department, which is 6.5 cents less than those for the miscellaneous skilled workers in the same department. Next to miscellaneous semiskilled workers in the upholstery department, the highest average, namely 62.5 cents, was reported for springers. The lowest average, amounting to 41.2 cents, was found for apprentices. Excluding the above, the remaining 15 occupational groups had averages ranging from 54.2 cents for polishers and rubbers to 47.1 cents for hand-finish sanders. The largest occupation numerically was that of miscellaneous semiskilled assemblers, whose average amounted to 52.3 cents, or 5.3 cents less than that for the miscellaneous skilled assemblers.

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TABLE 43.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings of workers in wood household-furniture branch, by region, sex, skill, and occupational group, October 1937*

Sex, skill, and occupational group	United States				North				South			
	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings
Males												
Skilled:												
Assemblers, miscellaneous, skilled	1,347	$0.534	43.9	$23.46	1,016	$0.576	43.6	$25.12	331	$0.408	45.0	$18.35
Finishers	514	.559	43.2	24.16	474	.575	43.4	24.94	40	.363	41.2	14.97
Foremen, working	1,179	.677	46.6	31.54	828	.728	46.3	33.66	351	.560	47.3	26.51
Inspectors	396	.492	43.7	21.50	262	.543	43.3	23.51	134	.393	44.7	17.58
Sanders, belt	648	.454	42.7	19.36	406	.514	42.7	21.91	242	.353	42.7	15.00
Sawyers, band	425	.514	43.3	22.24	297	.557	42.7	23.79	128	.418	44.6	18.64
Sawyers, cut-off	450	.477	42.9	20.45	308	.521	43.0	22.40	142	.380	42.7	16.21
Sawyers, other, skilled	252	.484	44.0	21.28	153	.544	44.5	24.23	99	.388	43.1	16.73
Shaper operators	470	.523	43.9	22.93	324	.575	42.9	24.64	146	.419	45.7	19.11
Sprayers	923	.520	43.4	22.61	671	.567	43.6	24.75	252	.393	43.0	16.90
Upholsterers	1,991	.754	37.1	28.02	1,631	.810	36.7	29.75	360	.515	39.1	20.17
Woodworking-machine operators, other, skilled	1,588	.502	43.7	21.94	1,078	.550	43.5	23.92	510	.403	44.0	17.74
Miscellaneous skilled workers, maintenance department	498	.574	46.8	26.85	342	.615	45.4	27.90	156	.493	49.8	24.57
Miscellaneous skilled workers, paint department	350	.520	42.3	22.00	218	.613	42.9	26.30	132	.360	41.4	14.89
Miscellaneous skilled workers, upholstery department	357	.666	40.9	27.25	300	.713	40.4	28.81	57	.435	43.8	19.03
Miscellaneous skilled workers, veneer department	299	.484	42.8	20.69	227	.521	42.7	22.25	72	.366	43.1	15.78
Other skilled workers	361	.618	46.4	28.69	271	.662	45.7	30.28	90	.493	48.5	23.89
All males, skilled	12,048	.573	42.8	24.56	8,806	.626	42.4	26.58	3,242	.434	44.0	19.08
Semiskilled:												
Apprentices	234	.412	41.5	17.08	233	.412	41.5	17.09	1	(1)	(1)	(1)
Assemblers, miscellaneous, semiskilled	2,800	.471	43.1	20.29	1,935	.523	43.2	22.58	865	.354	42.9	15.17
Boring-machine operators	486	.465	43.0	20.02	343	.513	42.9	21.97	143	.353	43.4	15.33
Craters, packers, and wrappers	1,076	.409	42.9	17.53	630	.475	43.6	20.68	446	.312	42.0	13.08
Gluers, rough stock	466	.419	42.5	17.80	278	.478	42.3	20.21	188	.332	42.9	14.25
Polishers and rubbers	959	.488	41.2	20.11	695	.542	41.8	22.64	264	.338	39.8	13.47
Sanders, cabinet, hand	837	.418	41.4	17.30	524	.491	40.7	20.00	313	.301	42.5	12.80
Sanders, finish, hand	954	.418	41.7	17.41	621	.471	41.8	19.69	333	.318	41.4	13.16
Sanders, machine, other than belt	852	.439	42.8	18.82	527	.497	42.7	21.22	325	.346	43.1	14.92
Sawyers, rip	482	.465	42.9	19.95	340	.509	42.9	21.80	142	.361	43.0	15.51
Springers	541	.578	37.7	21.81	454	.625	36.7	22.93	87	.369	43.3	15.96
Stainers and fillers, hand	560	.456	43.1	19.64	444	.487	42.7	20.83	116	.339	44.4	15.06
Trimmers and upfitters	349	.470	43.4	20.40	262	.506	43.3	21.90	87	.363	43.8	15.89

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Woodworking-machine operators, other, semiskilled	756	.469	42.0	19.72	520	.522	42.6	22.27	236	.347	40.6	14.10
Miscellaneous semiskilled workers, paint department	290	.490	42.8	20.98	230	.528	43.3	22.86	60	.338	40.8	13.79
Miscellaneous semiskilled workers, upholstery department	219	.580	39.0	22.64	171	.648	38.0	24.64	48	.364	42.6	15.50
Miscellaneous semiskilled workers, veneer department	321	.431	42.2	18.22	220	.479	41.9	20.07	101	.331	42.9	14.20
Other semiskilled workers	1,353	.461	46.3	21.34	854	.521	46.3	24.12	499	.357	46.4	16.58
All males, semiskilled	13,535	.458	42.6	19.53	9,281	.512	42.5	21.80	4,254	.340	42.8	14.57
Unskilled:												
Beginners	366	.325	40.9	13.31	222	.370	41.1	15.20	144	.256	40.7	10.40
Helpers, assemblers'	252	.375	45.0	16.84	198	.399	45.8	18.29	54	.276	41.7	11.51
Helpers, woodworking-machine operators'	1,534	.335	41.7	13.99	910	.374	42.3	15.82	624	.278	40.8	11.31
Janitors and sweepers	304	.354	42.5	15.02	170	.419	42.0	17.60	134	.273	43.0	11.74
Laborers, general	767	.368	42.5	15.65	517	.412	41.4	17.06	250	.285	44.7	12.73
Truckers and stock movers, hand	539	.374	42.5	15.88	362	.411	42.4	17.45	177	.298	42.5	12.65
Watchmen	270	.326	57.0	18.60	174	.347	57.4	19.91	96	.288	56.3	16.21
Miscellaneous unskilled workers, paint department	803	.376	42.4	15.95	432	.447	42.8	19.11	371	.293	41.9	12.28
Miscellaneous unskilled workers, upholstery department	89	.402	40.6	16.29	63	.454	39.4	17.91	26	.285	43.4	12.38
Miscellaneous unskilled workers, veneer department	255	.378	41.1	15.54	150	.444	41.0	18.22	105	.284	41.3	11.73
Other unskilled workers	720	.364	41.8	15.24	487	.404	42.3	17.07	233	.279	40.9	11.42
All males, unskilled	5,899	.356	42.8	15.24	3,685	.401	43.0	17.21	2,214	.282	42.4	11.97
Total, all males	31,482	.483	42.7	20.65	21,772	.539	42.6	22.96	9,710	.359	43.1	15.48
Females												
Skilled:												
All females, skilled	350	.432	39.7	17.18	307	.450	39.1	17.61	43	.320	44.0	14.07
Semiskilled:												
Packers and wrappers	105	.352	38.0	13.40	72	.368	40.6	14.95	33	.310	32.3	10.01
Sanders, finish, hand	228	.344	40.5	13.92	177	.375	40.3	15.10	51	.238	41.2	9.80
Sewers, hand and/or machine	545	.488	36.3	17.69	467	.517	35.4	18.30	78	.340	41.3	14.04
Other semiskilled workers	327	.433	38.9	16.84	298	.444	38.7	17.18	29	.327	40.6	13.30
All females, semiskilled	1,205	.432	37.9	16.37	1,014	.457	37.6	17.18	191	.306	39.6	12.10
Unskilled:												
All females, unskilled	162	.322	41.2	13.26	133	.342	40.7	13.92	29	.235	43.6	10.24
Total, all females	1,717	.421	38.6	16.24	1,454	.444	38.2	16.97	263	.300	40.8	12.22
Total, all occupations	33,199	.480	42.5	20.42	23,226	.534	42.3	22.58	9,973	.357	43.1	15.39

[1] No average shown for 1 employee.

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Miscellaneous unskilled workers in the upholstery department also showed the highest average hourly earnings among the unskilled males in the North. This figure amounted to 45.4 cents, which is 19.4 cents less than that received by the miscellaneous semiskilled workers in the same department. The lowest average was that of watchmen, namely 34.7 cents. Hand truckers and stock movers, general laborers, and janitors and sweepers averaged between 41 and 42 cents.

In the southern territory, the highest average earnings per hour among skilled males were 56.0 cents for working foremen. This is followed by 51.5 cents for upholsterers. Miscellaneous skilled workers in the maintenance department and "other skilled workers" both averaged 49.3 cents. Among the remaining 13 occupational groups, the averages ranged from 43.5 cents for miscellaneous skilled workers in the upholstery department down to 35.3 cents for belt sanders. The average hourly earnings of the 17 occupational groups shown for semiskilled males in the South covered a spread from 36.9 cents for springers to 30.1 cents for hand cabinet sanders. Likewise, there was even less variation among the occupational averages for unskilled workers, the figures ranging from 29.8 cents for hand truckers and stock movers down to 25.6 cents for beginners.

For every occupational group, the average hourly earnings were higher in the northern than in the southern area. Among skilled males, the differentials ranged from 12.2 cents for miscellaneous skilled workers in the maintenance department to 29.5 cents for upholsterers. The semiskilled differentials showed a spread from 14.3 cents for trimmers and upfitters to 28.4 cents for miscellaneous semiskilled workers in the upholstery department. Lastly, for unskilled employees, the range was from 5.9 cents for watchmen to 16.9 cents for miscellaneous unskilled workers in the upholstery department.

The occupational group averages for each of the four wood household divisions are presented in tables 44, 45, 46, and 47.

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TABLE 44.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings of workers in case goods of wood household-furniture branch by region, sex, skill, and occupational group, October 1937*

Sex, skill, and occupational group	United States				North				South			
	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings
Males												
Skilled:												
Assemblers, miscellaneous, skilled	940	$0.521	43.5	$22.63	676	$0.567	43.1	$24.44	264	$0.405	44.4	$18.00
Finishers	170	.481	43.5	20.95	139	.508	44.1	22.42	31	.351	40.9	14.36
Foremen, working	627	.661	46.2	30.56	395	.715	45.9	32.82	232	.571	46.8	26.72
Inspectors	194	.448	44.5	19.96	100	.512	44.1	22.59	94	.382	44.9	17.16
Sanders, belt	424	.443	41.9	18.56	228	.526	41.6	21.86	196	.349	42.3	14.74
Sawyers, band	212	.506	43.4	21.95	135	.558	42.5	23.69	77	.420	45.0	18.88
Sawyers, cut-off	262	.464	42.6	19.73	153	.521	43.0	22.40	109	.381	41.9	15.99
Sawyers, other, skilled	149	.451	43.5	19.62	77	.512	43.8	22.41	72	.385	43.2	16.64
Shaper operators	268	.502	44.2	22.20	165	.558	43.0	24.01	103	.419	46.1	19.30
Sprayers	489	.489	42.8	20.92	315	.551	42.3	23.33	174	.379	43.7	16.57
Upholsterers	218	.648	40.2	26.06	155	.734	38.6	28.33	63	.464	44.2	20.49
Woodworking-machine operators, other, skilled	836	.481	43.0	20.69	473	.546	42.6	23.25	363	.398	43.6	17.36
Miscellaneous skilled workers, maintenance department	292	.565	46.3	26.16	179	.616	44.1	27.17	113	.494	49.7	24.56
Miscellaneous skilled workers, paint department	211	.457	42.3	19.34	95	.582	44.0	25.59	116	.347	41.0	14.22
Miscellaneous skilled workers, upholstery department	40	.566	43.5	24.65	29	.637	42.4	26.99	11	(1)	(1)	(1)
Miscellaneous skilled workers, veneer department	208	.460	42.8	19.69	143	.502	42.8	21.49	65	.367	42.9	15.74
Other skilled workers	197	.613	45.0	27.57	128	.642	45.7	29.33	69	.497	48.9	24.36
All males, skilled	5,737	.519	43.6	22.64	3,585	.580	43.2	25.05	2,152	.420	44.4	18.63
Semiskilled:												
Assemblers, miscellaneous, semiskilled	1,265	.424	42.7	18.13	629	.511	42.4	21.69	636	.339	43.0	14.60
Boring-machine operators	237	.451	43.6	19.64	158	.504	42.9	21.64	79	.349	44.9	15.64
Craters, packers, and wrappers	594	.381	41.6	15.83	267	.469	42.4	19.88	327	.306	40.9	12.52
Gluers, rough stock	294	.397	42.4	16.81	148	.463	41.9	19.44	146	.331	42.8	14.15
Polishers and rubbers	510	.449	41.0	18.40	289	.533	42.6	22.73	221	.328	38.9	12.75
Sanders, cabinet, hand	457	.380	42.3	16.09	216	.479	41.3	19.81	241	.295	43.2	12.75
Sanders, finish, hand	525	.389	41.3	16.07	289	.454	41.2	18.70	236	.310	41.5	12.84
Sanders, machine, other than belt	482	.428	42.8	18.31	268	.502	42.1	21.13	214	.339	43.6	14.77
Sawyers, rip	292	.447	42.9	19.21	183	.504	42.7	21.51	109	.353	43.4	15.33
Stainers and fillers, hand	352	.445	42.3	18.84	257	.487	42.0	20.45	95	.335	43.2	14.48
Trimmers and upfitters	175	.448	42.2	18.91	119	.499	42.5	21.22	56	.338	41.4	13.98
Woodworking-machine operators, other, semiskilled	425	.448	41.6	18.62	262	.512	42.3	21.64	163	.340	40.5	13.77
Miscellaneous semiskilled workers, paint department	187	.483	43.2	20.87	140	.529	44.2	23.40	47	.331	40.2	13.33
Miscellaneous semiskilled workers, upholstery department	122	.461	42.8	19.74	87	.520	42.6	22.16	35	.316	43.5	13.72
Miscellaneous semiskilled workers, veneer department	244	.417	42.8	17.85	147	.474	42.8	20.31	97	.330	42.8	14.12
Other semiskilled workers	767	.431	45.6	19.65	405	.497	45.5	22.63	362	.358	45.6	16.32
All males, semiskilled	6,928	.424	42.6	18.06	3,864	.497	42.6	21.20	3,064	.331	42.6	14.11

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TABLE 44.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings of workers in case goods of wood household-furniture branch by region, sex, skill, and occupational group, October 1937*—Continued

Sex, skill, and occupational group	United States				North				South			
	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings
Unskilled:												
Helpers, assemblers'	79	$0.330	40.9	$13.48	31	$0.412	40.0	$16.49	48	$0.279	41.4	$11.53
Helpers, woodworking-machine operators	911	.331	40.7	13.46	446	.384	41.6	15.97	465	.278	39.8	11.06
Janitors and sweepers	170	.328	43.3	14.21	80	.399	42.8	17.04	90	.267	43.7	11.70
Laborers, general	403	.358	41.0	14.70	228	.422	39.4	16.65	175	.282	43.2	12.15
Truckers and stock movers, hand	296	.354	41.8	14.79	159	.406	42.2	17.13	137	.292	41.3	12.08
Watchmen	135	.323	56.4	18.24	74	.354	55.7	19.69	61	.288	57.2	16.47
Miscellaneous unskilled workers, paint department	434	.349	41.7	14.52	146	.460	41.6	19.12	288	.292	41.7	12.19
Miscellaneous unskilled workers, veneer department	198	.355	40.2	14.29	94	.438	39.1	17.12	104	.284	41.3	11.73
Other unskilled workers	491	.330	40.5	13.37	248	.394	41.1	16.18	243	.262	40.0	10.49
All males, unskilled	3,117	.340	41.7	14.18	1,506	.403	41.8	16.86	1,611	.280	41.7	11.68
Total, all males	15,782	.443	42.8	19.02	8,955	.515	42.7	22.01	6,827	.348	42.9	14.96
Females												
Skilled:												
All females, skilled	89	.436	41.8	18.25	69	.473	41.8	19.77	20	(1)	(1)	(1)
Semiskilled:												
Packers and wrappers	49	.388	41.8	16.22	34	.424	41.9	17.78	15	(1)	(1)	(1)
Sanders, finish, hand	91	.306	41.4	12.66	50	.385	40.8	15.69	41	.212	42.2	8.97
Sewers, hand and/or machine	52	.491	38.7	18.99	44	.520	38.4	19.99	8	(1)	(1)	(1)
Other semiskilled workers	71	.389	40.0	15.56	54	.413	39.3	16.24	17	(1)	(1)	(1)
All females, semiskilled	263	.378	40.6	15.36	182	.432	40.0	17.28	81	.263	41.9	11.04
Unskilled:												
All females, unskilled	41	.299	41.0	12.28	31	.347	39.5	13.71	10	(1)	(1)	(1)
Total, all females	393	.383	40.9	15.69	282	.433	40.4	17.50	111	.262	42.3	11.10
Total, all occupations	16,175	.441	42.8	18.88	9,237	.513	42.6	21.87	6,938	.347	42.9	14.90

[1] Too few employees to compute separate averages.

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TABLE 45.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings of workers in upholstered furniture of wood household-furniture branch, by region, sex, skill, and occupational group, October 1937*

Sex, skill, and occupational group	United States				North				South			
	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings
Males												
Skilled:												
Assemblers, miscellaneous, skilled	162	$0.627	43.2	$27.11	119	$0.701	42.3	$29.69	43	$0.438	45.6	$19.97
Finishers	123	.662	42.5	28.10	118	.671	42.3	28.40	5	(1)	(1)	(1)
Foremen, working	284	.758	45.6	34.54	192	.854	45.1	38.49	92	.563	46.7	26.30
Inspectors	65	.529	41.0	21.67	37	.601	39.8	23.92	28	.439	42.6	18.70
Sanders, belt	52	.480	43.5	20.85	30	.548	43.6	23.91	22	(1)	(1)	(1)
Sawyers, band	117	.562	41.1	23.09	80	.630	40.1	25.27	37	.424	43.3	18.38
Sawyers, cut-off	91	.517	41.3	21.35	68	.572	39.7	22.70	23	(1)	(1)	(1)
Shaper operators	77	.553	42.1	23.26	49	.635	40.6	25.76	28	.423	44.6	18.89
Sprayers	118	.544	42.8	23.26	69	.615	45.0	27.66	49	.431	39.6	17.06
Upholsterers	1,754	.772	36.7	28.34	1,464	.822	36.4	29.94	290	.531	38.2	20.27
Woodworking-machine operators, other, skilled	298	.569	43.4	24.72	193	.653	42.2	27.56	105	.426	45.7	19.47
Miscellaneous skilled workers, maintenance department	94	.603	46.1	27.80	65	.648	44.3	28.69	29	.515	50.1	25.79
Miscellaneous skilled workers, upholstery department	312	.679	40.6	27.59	266	.723	40.2	29.04	46	.445	43.1	19.16
Other skilled workers	163	.682	44.0	30.01	130	.736	43.8	32.22	33	.475	44.9	21.30
All males, skilled	3,710	.690	40.0	27.63	2,880	.756	39.3	29.70	830	.481	42.5	20.45
Semiskilled:												
Assemblers, miscellaneous, semiskilled	436	.544	41.5	22.55	316	.592	41.9	24.72	120	.414	40.7	16.85
Boring-machine operators	115	.508	40.4	20.54	76	.575	40.2	23.10	39	.379	41.0	15.54
Craters, packers, and wrappers	182	.442	43.1	19.08	105	.521	42.9	22.37	77	.336	43.5	14.61
Gluers, rough stock	68	.479	40.7	19.49	41	.565	39.1	22.06	27	.362	43.0	15.59
Polishers and rubbers	73	.515	43.7	22.47	35	.655	43.1	28.24	38	.388	44.2	17.15
Sanders, cabinet, hand	102	.412	41.0	16.89	44	.488	44.3	21.60	58	.346	38.5	13.32
Sanders, finish, hand	104	.428	42.0	17.96	54	.484	44.8	21.68	50	.359	38.9	13.94
Sanders, machine, other than belt	.170	.432	41.4	17.89	92	.498	40.2	20.02	78	.359	42.8	15.37
Sawyers, rip	62	.486	41.9	20.34	46	.524	41.2	21.60	16	(1)	(1)	(1)
Springers	491	.598	37.1	22.20	419	.642	36.1	23.18	72	.386	42.9	16.55
Woodworking-machine operators, other, semiskilled	143	.555	40.9	22.70	109	.615	40.3	24.75	34	.374	43.1	16.12
Miscellaneous semiskilled workers, upholstery department	190	.668	37.2	24.86	155	.745	36.0	26.83	35	.377	42.7	16.09
Other semiskilled workers	573	.460	44.5	20.47	445	.487	43.6	21.25	128	.374	47.5	17.78
All males, semiskilled	2,709	.513	41.1	21.09	1,937	.572	40.4	23.12	772	.374	42.8	15.98

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TABLE 45.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings of workers in upholstered furniture of wood household-furniture branch, by region, sex, skill, and occupational group, October 1937*—Continued

Sex, skill, and occupational group	United States				North				South			
	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings
Unskilled:												
Helpers, woodworking-machine operators'	172	$0.329	41.4	$13.61	84	$0.376	40.0	$15.06	88	$0.286	42.7	$12.22
Janitors and sweepers	86	.380	41.4	15.73	53	.443	40.2	17.79	33	.288	43.2	12.43
Laborers, general	103	.375	42.4	15.93	68	.431	38.9	16.77	35	.290	49.2	14.29
Truckers and stock movers, hand	72	.383	41.8	15.98	54	.415	40.2	16.67	18	(1)	(1)	(1)
Watchmen	61	.322	59.5	19.13	42	.338	62.5	21.09	19	(1)	(1)	(1)
Miscellaneous unskilled workers, paint department	71	.334	42.9	14.32	25	.390	47.7	18.60	46	.298	40.3	12.00
Miscellaneous unskilled workers, upholstery department	81	.411	40.1	16.51	59	.456	39.4	17.95	22	(1)	(1)	(1)
Other unskilled workers	396	.357	41.0	14.64	278	.390	40.4	15.79	118	.282	42.4	11.95
All males, unskilled	1,042	.357	42.4	15.17	663	.399	41.8	16.66	379	.288	43.6	12.56
Total, all males	7,461	.577	40.8	23.52	5,480	.645	40.0	25.80	1,981	.402	42.8	17.20
Females												
Skilled:												
All females, skilled	176	.466	38.1	17.73	157	.484	37.2	17.99	19	(1)	(1)	(1)
Semiskilled:												
Sewers, hand and/or machine	490	.488	36.0	17.55	421	.516	35.1	18.10	69	.343	41.3	14.15
Other semiskilled workers	150	.409	36.8	15.04	123	.420	37.8	15.87	27	.348	32.3	11.22
All females, semiskilled	640	.469	36.2	16.96	544	.493	35.7	17.60	96	.344	38.8	13.33
Unskilled:												
All females, unskilled	56	.281	40.0	11.26	37	.287	38.9	11.13	19	(1)	(1)	(1)
Total, all females	872	.455	36.8	16.75	738	.480	36.2	17.36	134	.333	40.2	13.39
Total, all occupations	8,333	.565	40.3	22.81	6,218	.627	39.6	24.80	2,115	.398	42.6	16.96

[1] Too few employees to compute separate averages.

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PLATE 5.—FITTING DRAWERS AND FINISHING.

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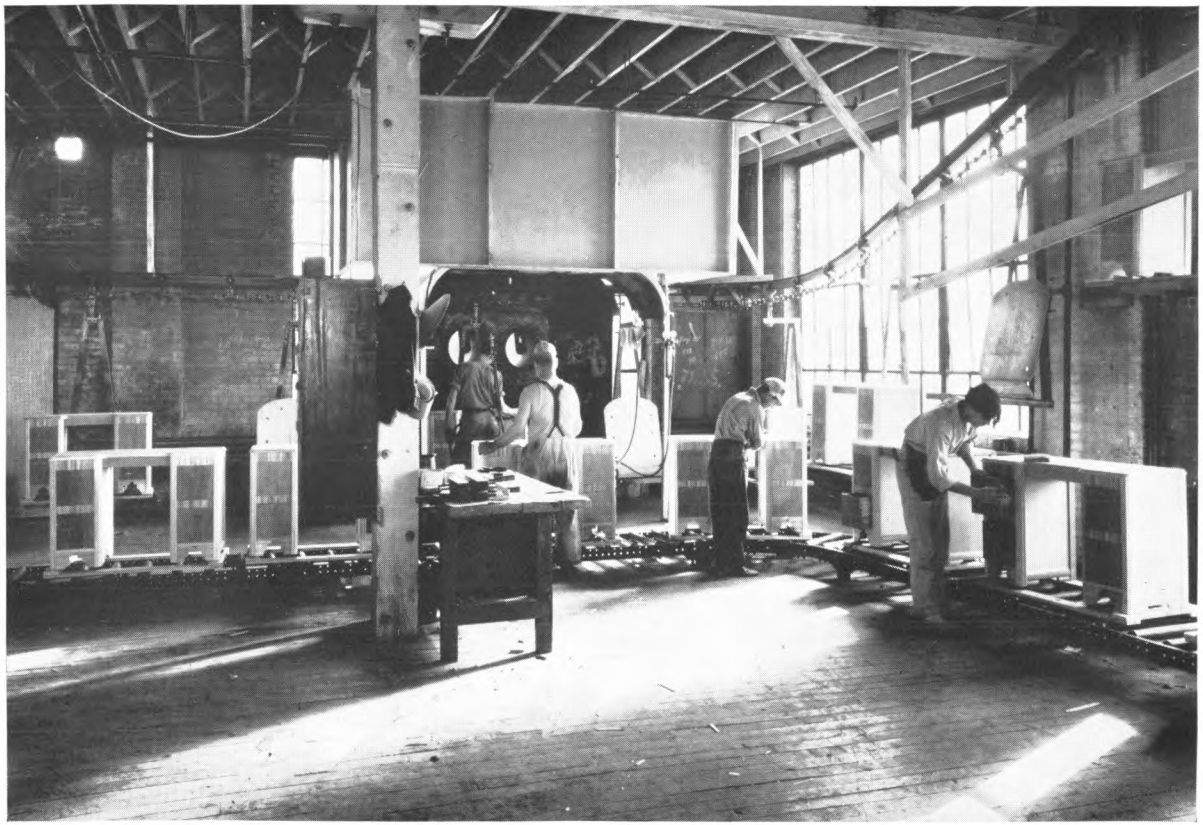

PLATE 6.—PAINTING FURNITURE.

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TABLE 46.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings of workers in novelty furniture of wood household-furniture branch, by sex, skill, and occupational group, October 1937*

Sex, skill, and occupational group	United States				North			
	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings
Males								
Skilled:								
Assemblers, miscellaneous, skilled	187	$0.537	46.6	$25.04	171	$0.554	46.2	$25.62
Finishers	167	.588	44.6	26.25	165	.592	44.6	26.39
Foremen, working	206	.642	48.4	31.06	186	.664	47.8	31.72
Inspectors	104	.576	43.2	24.85	98	.588	42.8	25.21
Sanders, belt	126	.491	45.2	22.17	113	.507	45.1	22.88
Sawyers, band	81	.492	45.7	22.48	72	.504	45.4	22.88
Sawyers, cut-off	70	.487	45.5	22.16	67	.492	45.3	22.29
Sawyers, other, skilled	60	.523	43.9	22.96	51	.545	44.0	23.97
Shaper operators	104	.578	43.7	25.27	95	.598	43.1	25.75
Sprayers	200	.562	44.2	24.85	190	.573	44.2	25.33
Woodworking-machine operators, other, skilled	365	.524	44.6	23.33	322	.542	44.6	24.15
Miscellaneous skilled workers, maintenance department	88	.598	47.6	28.49	82	.610	47.4	28.89
Miscellaneous skilled workers, paint department	82	.599	42.3	25.31	77	.616	41.7	25.70
Miscellaneous skilled workers, veneer department	72	.518	42.2	21.86	70	.523	42.0	21.94
Other skilled workers	69	.594	45.9	27.25	61	.611	47.5	29.07
All males, skilled	1,981	.557	45.1	25.11	1,820	.572	44.9	25.68
Semiskilled:								
Assemblers, miscellaneous, semiskilled	791	.521	43.7	22.75	731	.535	43.4	23.25
Boring-machine operators	98	.487	44.6	21.73	83	.514	44.5	22.87
Craters, packers, and wrappers	211	.438	45.3	19.85	185	.461	44.9	20.65
Gluers, rough stock	82	.453	44.2	19.98	74	.475	44.2	20.99
Polishers and rubbers	362	.536	40.9	21.96	357	.540	40.8	22.03
Sanders, cabinet, hand	232	.518	40.3	20.87	225	.527	40.0	21.11
Sanders, finish, hand	195	.480	42.8	20.57	172	.508	42.1	21.35
Sanders, machine, other than belt	166	.482	44.7	21.54	147	.500	44.9	22.45
Sawyers, rip	98	.509	42.8	21.79	91	.520	42.9	22.32
Stainers and fillers, hand	153	.491	44.1	21.65	146	.500	43.7	21.85
Trimmers and upfitters	98	.530	46.2	24.50	90	.546	45.5	24.82
Woodworking-machine operators, other, semiskilled	142	.472	44.4	20.94	123	.492	44.9	22.10
Miscellaneous semiskilled workers, paint department	51	.500	43.1	21.56	49	.508	42.9	21.81
Miscellaneous semiskilled workers, veneer department	66	.477	39.8	19.02	65	.479	39.7	19.02
Other semiskilled workers	233	.466	48.4	22.58	212	.484	47.8	23.15
All males, semiskilled	2,978	.498	43.6	21.75	2,750	.514	43.3	22.27
Unskilled:								
Helpers, assemblers'	150	.397	47.6	18.88	148	.399	47.6	19.01
Helpers, woodworking-machine operators'	331	.357	43.9	15.67	293	.371	43.4	16.09
Janitors and sweepers	38	.424	42.8	18.12	33	.446	42.1	18.81
Laborers, general	185	.390	44.4	17.31	158	.409	43.8	17.94
Truckers and stock movers, hand	127	.411	44.5	18.30	121	.417	43.8	18.26
Watchmen	53	.341	56.3	19.20	46	.355	55.6	19.76
Miscellaneous unskilled workers, paint department	221	.433	42.7	18.51	195	.456	42.1	19.22
Miscellaneous unskilled workers, veneer department	55	.454	44.0	19.97	55	.454	44.0	19.97
Other unskilled workers	173	.398	44.5	17.68	162	.408	44.2	18.03
All males, unskilled	1,333	.394	44.8	17.63	1,211	.407	44.4	18.06
Total, all males	6,292	.495	44.3	21.94	5,781	.510	44.0	22.46

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TABLE 46.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings of workers in novelty furniture of wood household-furniture branch by sex, skill, and occupational group, October 1937*—Continued

Sex, skill, and occupational group	United States				North			
	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings
Females								
Skilled:								
All females, skilled	83	$0.364	40.9	$14.86	79	$0.370	40.5	$14.99
Semiskilled:								
Sanders, finish, hand	118	.368	39.5	14.52	118	.368	39.5	14.52
Other semiskilled workers	161	.439	40.3	17.70	159	.442	40.2	17.78
All females, semiskilled	279	.409	40.0	16.36	277	.411	39.9	16.39
Unskilled:								
All females, unskilled	62	.367	42.4	15.54	62	.367	42.4	15.54
Total, all females	424	.394	40.5	15.94	418	.396	40.4	16.00
Total, all occupations	6,716	.489	44.1	21.56	6,199	.503	43.8	22.08

TABLE 47.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings of male workers in kitchen furniture of wood household-furniture branch, by skill and occupational group, October 1937* [1]

Skill and occupational group	United States				North			
	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings
Males								
Skilled:								
Assemblers, miscellaneous, skilled	58	$0.476	45.2	$21.53	50	$0.488	44.6	$21.74
Finishers	54	.478	39.3	18.82	52	.482	39.8	19.18
Foremen, working	62	.597	48.9	29.20	55	.611	48.2	29.45
Inspectors	33	.423	46.5	19.68	27	.433	46.5	20.14
Sprayers	116	.553	45.5	25.18	97	.573	45.6	26.17
Woodworking-machine operators, miscellaneous, skilled	241	.436	45.0	19.63	195	.446	46.1	20.57
Other skilled workers	56	.508	47.9	24.32	45	.532	47.8	25.40
All males, skilled	620	.488	45.4	22.16	521	.502	45.6	23.92
Semiskilled:								
Assemblers, miscellaneous, semiskilled	308	.435	45.2	19.65	259	.440	46.0	20.24
Craters, packers, and wrappers	89	.442	45.6	20.17	73	.464	45.5	21.13
Sanders, cabinet, hand	46	.321	38.3	12.32	39	.345	37.0	12.76
Sanders, finish, hand	130	.431	41.0	17.65	106	.449	41.6	18.68
Trimmers and upfitters	48	.433	44.7	19.35	38	.441	43.8	19.29
Woodworking-machine operators, miscellaneous, semiskilled	146	.408	42.9	17.50	92	.421	46.1	19.42
Other semiskilled workers	153	.448	45.0	20.18	123	.472	45.3	21.39
All males, semiskilled	920	.428	43.9	18.78	730	.443	44.6	19.74
Unskilled:								
Helpers, assemblers'	77	.403	45.1	18.17	66	.416	45.5	18.94
Helpers, woodworking-machine operators'	120	.316	43.9	13.87	87	.331	44.9	14.87
Laborers, general	76	.356	45.7	16.24	63	.365	45.5	16.61
Truckers and stock movers, hand	44	.376	42.6	16.00	28	.405	42.7	17.29
Other unskilled workers	90	.334	46.7	15.60	61	.346	49.1	17.00
All males, unskilled	407	.350	44.9	15.74	305	.366	45.8	16.76
Total, all males	1,947	.431	44.6	19.22	1,556	.448	45.2	20.22

[1] Due to the very limited number of female workers, it was impossible to show averages for them.

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In making regional comparisons for each of the occupational group averages, it should be remembered that on the whole the degree of skill is not as great in the South as in the North. This is due to differences in manufacturing processes as well as to the fact that a larger proportion of the furniture produced in the South is of cheaper grades than in the northern area.

Occupational averages for the United States as a whole are also presented in each of the preceding tables. It should be kept in mind, however, that such figures are a combination of the relatively high data in the North and the low figures in the South.

Data for Females

Relatively few females were found in the wood household branch of the furniture industry. Out of a total of 33,199 wage earners, only 1,717 or 5.2 percent were women. Most of the females were employed in the upholstery and finishing departments, and many of them performed tasks not generally done by males. Of the female occupations, by far the most important is that of hand and/or machine sewers, although a number of women were also found among the packers and wrappers and hand-finish sanders.

The average hourly earnings of all females in the country as a whole amounted to 42.1 cents in October 1937. Looking at table 48, it will be seen that as many as 6.7 percent of them received less than 25 cents, and 16.1 percent were paid under 30 cents an hour. Not far from one-half (47.6 percent) earned less than 40 cents, and more than two-thirds (68.4 percent) were paid under 47.5 cents. Only 4.5 percent of the women received as much as 72.5 cents an hour and over.

Most of the female employees were semiskilled (1,205 out of 1,717), with the skilled (350) exceeding the unskilled (162) workers. Actually, the average earnings per hour were the same for both skilled and semiskilled wage earners, namely 43.2 cents, but the unskilled workers averaged 32.2 cents, or 11 cents less.[1]

[1] The absence of a differential in favor of skilled over semiskilled females is largely due to the fact that piece work and to some extent bonus work, both of which make for higher earnings, were much more prevalent among the latter. As a matter of fact, in 2 of the 4 wood household-furniture branches (upholstered and novelty furniture), semiskilled workers actually averaged more per hour (0.3 and 4.5 cents, respectively) than skilled workers.

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TABLE 48.—*Simple percentage distribution of female workers according to average hourly earnings in wood household-furniture branch, by region and skill, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	United States				North				South			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers
12.5 and under 17.5 cents	2.6	0.9	2.6	6.8	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.0	14.1	(1)	14.7	(1)
17.5 and under 22.5 cents	2.4	.6	2.4	6.2	1.7		1.9	4.5	6.1	(1)	5.2	(1)
22.5 and under 25.0 cents	1.7	.3	1.7	5.6	1.0	.3	1.1	2.3	5.7		4.7	(1)
25.0 and under 27.5 cents	5.8	4.6	4.5	18.4	5.6	4.6	4.1	18.7	7.2	(1)	6.3	(1)
27.5 and under 30.0 cents	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.1	2.7	2.6	2.8	2.3	8.7	(1)	8.4	(1)
30.0 and under 32.5 cents	10.1	11.1	8.8	17.3	8.3	9.1	6.5	20.2	19.9	(1)	21.0	(1)
32.5 and under 35.0 cents	8.0	10.0	8.0	3.7	7.2	8.1	7.3	3.8	12.5	(1)	11.5	(1)
35.0 and under 37.5 cents	7.6	7.1	7.4	10.5	7.4	7.2	7.1	10.5	8.7	(1)	8.9	(1)
37.5 and under 40.0 cents	5.8	5.4	6.5	1.2	5.6	5.2	6.2	1.5	6.8	(1)	7.9	
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	8.2	9.1	7.7	9.3	9.0	10.1	8.6	11.3	2.7	(1)	3.1	
42.5 and under 47.5 cents	12.6	15.8	12.3	6.8	13.9	16.6	13.9	8.3	4.9	(1)	4.7	
47.5 and under 52.5 cents	9.3	8.6	10.0	4.9	10.5	9.8	11.4	6.0	1.9		2.6	
52.5 and under 57.5 cents	5.4	7.7	5.0	3.7	6.3	8.8	5.7	4.5	.8		1.0	
57.5 and under 62.5 cents	4.9	3.4	5.7	1.9	5.8	3.9	6.8	2.3				
62.5 and under 67.5 cents	4.5	4.3	5.1	.6	5.3	4.9	6.0	.8				
67.5 and under 72.5 cents	3.0	3.1	3.4		3.6	3.6	4.0					
72.5 and under 77.5 cents	1.9	1.1	2.4		2.3	1.3	2.9					
77.5 and under 82.5 cents	.8	.6	1.0		1.0	.7	1.2					
82.5 and under 87.5 cents	.6	.6	.7		.7	.7	.8					
87.5 and under 92.5 cents	.5	1.1	.4		.6	1.3	.5					
92.5 cents and under $1	.2	.3	.2		.3	.3	.3					
$1 and under $1.10	.3	.3	.4		.4	.3	.5					
$1.10 and under $1.20												
$1.20 and under $1.40	.1	.3	.1		.1		.1					
$1.40 and over	.1				.1	.3						
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

[1] Number of workers too small to permit the presentation of data.

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The average hourly earnings of all females were 44.4 cents in the northern and 30.0 cents in the southern area, which is a difference of 14.4 cents. Comparing the two distributions, it will be seen that, whereas only 3.3 percent of the northern females earned less than 25 cents, slightly over one-fourth (25.9 percent) were paid under that figure in the southern territory. The number receiving less than 30 cents was 11.6 percent in the northern and 41.8 percent in the southern region. Although 40.1 percent earned under 40 cents in the North, nearly nine-tenths (89.7 percent) received less than that figure in the South. Not a single female earned 57.5 cents and over in the southern territory, whereas one-fifth (20.2 percent) earned that much or more in the North.

Substantial differentials in favor of the northern over the southern area were found in each skill group of female workers. The differentials amounted to 13.0 cents for skilled, 15.1 cents for semiskilled, and 10.7 cents for unskilled. Of the three occupations (all semiskilled) sufficiently large to permit the presentation of separate data, the highest average hourly earnings (51.7 cents) in the North were reported for hand and/or machine sewers, with the averages amounting to 37.5 cents for hand-finish sanders and 36.8 cents for packers and wrappers. The southern averages were, respectively, 34.0, 23.8, and 31.0 cents.

Although the work of females in most instances is not comparable to that of males, it is interesting to make comparisons between the average hourly earnings of the two groups. In the wood-furniture industry for the United States as a whole, all male workers averaged 6.2 cents more than all female employees. The differential amounted to 9.5 cents in the northern and 5.9 cents in the southern territory. For the one occupation shown for both sexes, namely, hand-finish sanders, the differential in the North was 9.6 cents. On the other hand, in the southern territory, for hand-finish sanders the males had a differential of 8.0 cents.

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PART 3.—Office Furniture

Chapter X.—Wood Office Furniture

Average Hourly Earnings

The average hourly earnings of the 2,976 wage earners employed in the 31 wood office-furniture establishments covered in this survey were 44.4 cents in October 1937. (See table 49.) As one may see from the distribution of individual earnings in table 50 and chart 5, only 2.1 percent were paid less than 25 cents and 6.0 percent under 30 cents an hour. Approximately one-third (32.6 percent) earned 30 and less than 40 cents, so that 38.6 percent received below 40 cents. However, the largest concentration was between 40 and 52.5 cents, the number found between these limits also being 38.6 percent. Somewhat more than one-fifth (22.8 percent) were paid 52.5 cents and over, but only 6.9 percent earned as much as 67.5 cents and over.

The relatively low earnings found on the whole in wood office furniture is surprising, in view of the fairly large proportion of skilled workers in this division. Of the total employees, 40.1 percent were skilled, 40.9 percent semiskilled, and 19.0 percent unskilled. Moreover, nearly all of the plants included were in the northern area. In fact, only 3 establishments with 450 employees were covered in the southern region.

TABLE 49.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings in wood office-furniture division, by region and skill, October 1937*

Skill	United States				North				South			
	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings
Skilled workers	1,193	$0.506	42.6	$21.57	1,054	$0.525	42.4	$22.27	139	$0.368	44.2	$16.28
Semiskilled workers	1,217	.423	41.4	17.53	1,010	.447	41.0	18.34	207	.315	43.3	13.62
Unskilled workers	566	.356	42.3	15.06	462	.375	41.8	15.71	104	.275	44.3	12.19
Total	2,976	.444	42.1	18.68	2,526	.467	41.8	19.50	450	.322	43.8	14.11

As in other divisions of the furniture industry, the dispersion of hourly earnings in wood office furniture is explained in part by the diversity found among the different skill groups. Compared with an average of 50.6 cents for skilled employees, the hourly earnings of semiskilled averaged 42.3 cents, and the average for unskilled was 35.6 cents. Hence, the extreme spread was 15.0 cents, with the

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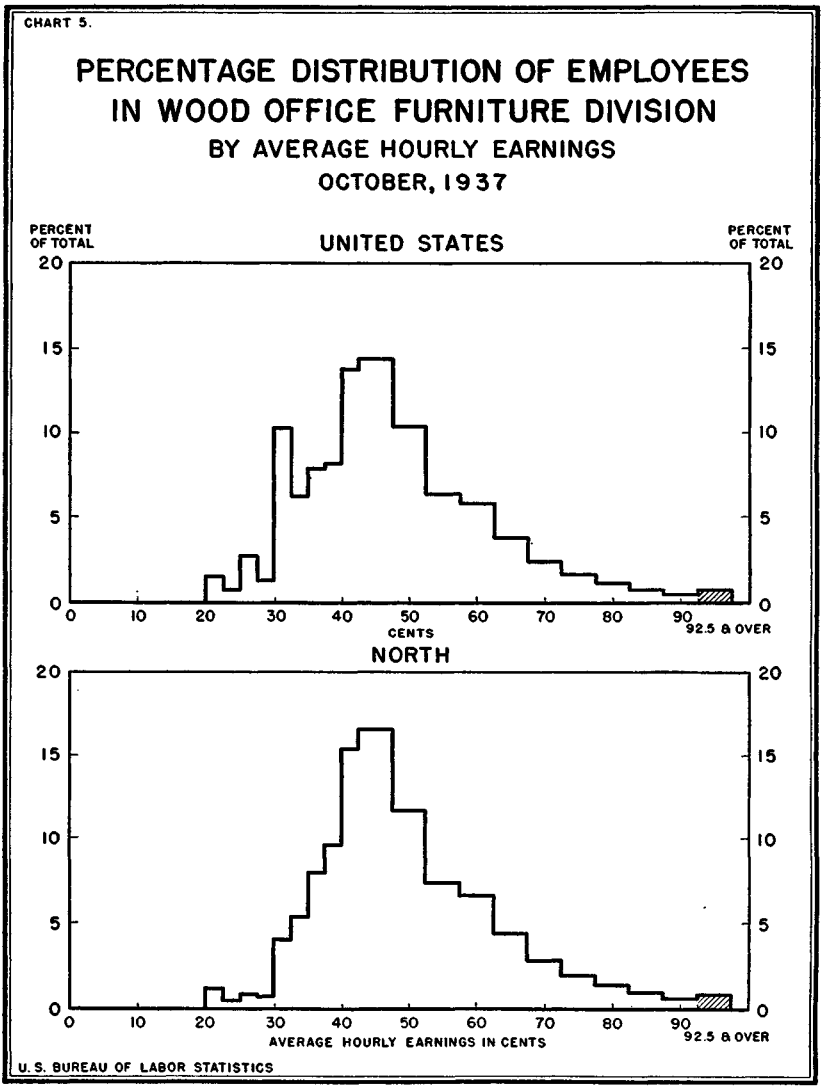
differential between skilled and semiskilled (8.3 cents) being somewhat higher than that between semiskilled and unskilled workers (6.7 cents).



Comparing the three distributions, it will be noted that hardly any wage earners (0.1 percent) were paid under 25 cents an hour among skilled, as against 1.9 percent for semiskilled and 6.9 percent for unskilled workers. The number receiving less than 30 cents amounted to 1.1 percent for skilled, 5.5 percent for semiskilled, and 17.4 percent for unskilled employees. If 40 cents is taken as the upper limit, the percentages are 19.6 for skilled, 43.4 for semiskilled, and 68.6 for un-

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skilled workers. On the other hand, 36.6 percent of the skilled earned 52.5 cents and over, which may be compared with 18.0 percent for semiskilled and only 4.8 for unskilled employees.

Regional differentials also contributed to the dispersion of hourly earnings. For all employees, the average was 46.7 cents for northern and 32.2 cents for southern plants, which is a spread of 14.5 cents. It should be remembered, however, that although the southern coverage is representative of the wood office-furniture division in that area, it is not sufficiently large in itself to permit anything except the broad generalization that wages in the North are higher than in the South.

To some extent differences in the composition of the labor force are partly responsible for the spread in hourly earnings between the two regions. In the northern plants, 41.7 percent of the employees were skilled, 40.0 percent semiskilled, and 18.3 percent unskilled, the respective southern figures being 30.9 percent, 46.0 percent, and 23.1 percent. Substantial differentials in favor of the northern over southern establishments are found for each skill group. These differentials are 15.7 cents for skilled, 13.2 cents for semiskilled, and 10.0 cents for unskilled workers.

As may also be seen from table 50, few wood office-furniture workers in the North earned either less than 30 cents or less than 25 cents an hour, the respective percentages being 2.9 and 1.5. In contrast, there were 29.7 percent with hourly earnings under 40 cents. Although more than one-fourth of the workers (26.6 percent) averaged at least 52.5 cents, only 5.4 percent received 72.5 cents or more.

TABLE **50.**—*Simple percentage distribution of workers according to average hourly earnings in wood office-furniture division, by skill, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	United States				North			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
Under 22.5 cents	1.4	0.1	1.2	4.6	1.1	--------	1.2	3.7
22.5 and under 25.0 cents	.7	--------	.7	2.3	.4	--------	.5	.9
25.0 and under 27.5 cents	2.7	.6	2.3	7.8	.8	0.2	.9	1.9
27.5 and under 30.0 cents	1.2	.4	1.3	2.7	.6	.3	.5	1.7
30.0 and under 32.5 cents	10.3	4.7	12.3	18.0	4.0	.7	3.1	13.9
32.5 and under 35.0 cents	6.2	2.4	7.2	12.2	5.3	.9	5.7	14.1
35.0 and under 37.5 cents	7.9	4.8	9.2	11.5	7.9	3.5	9.8	13.9
37.5 and under 40.0 cents	8.2	6.6	9.2	9.5	9.6	7.5	10.9	11.7
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	13.8	11.7	14.8	15.5	15.4	11.8	17.5	18.9
42.5 and under 47.5 cents	14.4	17.6	14.3	7.6	16.6	19.2	17.0	9.3
47.5 and under 52.5 cents	10.4	14.5	9.5	3.5	11.7	15.5	11.3	4.1
52.5 and under 57.5 cents	6.4	9.4	5.7	1.8	7.4	10.2	6.8	2.2
57.5 and under 62.5 cents	5.7	8.5	4.8	1.9	6.6	9.2	5.7	2.4
62.5 and under 67.5 cents	3.8	5.7	3.1	1.1	4.4	6.5	3.8	1.3
67.5 and under 72.5 cents	2.4	4.1	1.8	--------	2.8	4.6	2.2	--------
72.5 and under 77.5 cents	1.6	2.7	1.4	--------	1.9	3.0	1.7	--------
77.5 and under 82.5 cents	1.1	2.3	.6	--------	1.3	2.5	.7	--------
82.5 and under 87.5 cents	.7	1.4	.4	--------	.9	1.6	.5	--------
87.5 and under 92.5 cents	.4	.9	.1	--------	.5	1.0	.1	--------
92.5 cents and under $1	.3	.8	--------	--------	.4	.9	--------	--------
$1 and over	.4	.8	.1	--------	.4	.9	.1	--------
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of workers	2,976	1,193	1,217	566	2,526	1,054	1,010	462

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In addition to broad regional differentials, there is variation in average hourly earnings among the several States. All three southern plants were located in North Carolina, but in the northern area the plants covered a number of States. In the States with three or more establishments, the individual plant averages were 34.0, 35.6, 38.7, and 48.8 cents in Pennsylvania; 38.1, 38.2, 39.1, 43.3, and 44.0 cents in Indiana; 40.7, 43.2, 46.3, 50.2, and 73.9 cents in Michigan; 45.4, 46.5, 49.6, and 53.5 cents in Illinois; and 47.9, 58.4, and 61.7 cents in Ohio. On the whole, therefore, it appears that hourly earnings in Pennsylvania and Indiana were lower than in Michigan, Illinois, and Ohio, but it must be remembered that there is considerable overlapping in the averages among these States.

The average hourly earnings in the North were higher in trade-union than in non-trade-union plants, the respective figures amounting to 54.6 and 46.0 cents. In both cases, there was considerable range in the average hourly earnings of establishments, which cannot be discussed separately for the two groups of plants without revealing their identity.

Among the 28 establishments, there were 12 that averaged under 45 cents, nine between 45 and 50 cents, three between 50 and 55 cents, one between 55 and 60 cents, two between 60 and 65 cents, and one between 70 and 75 cents.

According to table 51, the 28 northern plants were fairly well scattered with respect to size of community, being found in places varying in population all the way from rural territory under 2,500 to metropolitan areas of 1,000,000 and over. If there is any direct correlation in this division of the industry between average hourly earnings and size of community, it is that, on the whole, the lowest-paid groups are located in places under 100,000 and the highest paid in metropolitan centers of 100,000 and over.

TABLE **51.**—*Distribution of individual plants in wood office-furniture division in the North, by size of community and average hourly earnings, October 1937*

Size of community	Total	Average hourly earnings						
		30 and under 35 cents	35 and under 40 cents	40 and under 45 cents	45 and under 50 cents	50 and under 55 cents	55 and under 60 cents	60 cents and over
Under 2,500	4	1	1	1	1			
2,500 and under 5,000	3		2		1			
5,000 and under 25,000	4		2	1				1
25,000 and under 100,000	2		1	1				
100,000 and under 250,000	5			2	1	2		
250,000 and under 1,000,000	2							2
1,000,000 and over	8				6	1	1	
Total	28	1	6	5	9	3	1	3

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On the other hand, there is little evidence of correlation between average earnings per hour and size of establishment in the North, as shown by table 52. The plant with the lowest average was in the 21 and under 50 group, and that with the highest average was in the 101 and under 250 group. The remaining establishments were scattered. The 2 smallest plants had hourly earnings above the average for the whole division.

TABLE 52.—*Distribution of individual plants in wood office-furniture division in the North, by average hourly earnings and size of plant, October 1937*

Size of plant in terms of number of employees	Total	Average hourly earnings								
		30 and under 35 cents	35 and under 40 cents	40 and under 45 cents	45 and under 50 cents	50 and under 55 cents	55 and under 60 cents	60 and under 65 cents	65 and under 70 cents	70 and under 75 cents
6 to 20 employees	2				2					
21 to 50 employees	6	1	1	1	2			1		
51 to 100 employees	7		3	2	2					
101 to 250 employees	10		2	2	2	2	1			1
251 employees and over	3				1	1		1		
Total	28	1	6	5	9	3	1	2		1

Male workers predominate in the manufacture of wood office furniture, as only 57 females were found in the establishments covered. Among males, the occupational averages ranged from 65.3 cents an hour for working foremen to 32.5 cents for wood-working machine operator's helpers. Outside of working foremen, the highest-paid skilled occupational groups were those of upholsterers, finishers, and miscellaneous maintenance workers, their respective averages being 59.9, 56.8, and 56.2 cents. The averages of the remaining skilled occupational groups ranged from 54.8 cents for "other skilled workers" to 42.9 cents for belt sanders. There was considerable overlapping in the occupational averages of skilled and semiskilled males, which may be seen from the fact that the spread of the semiskilled occupational groups was from 48.9 cents for hand cabinet sanders to 37.3 cents for hand-finish sanders. The averages of the unskilled male occupational groups ranged from 39.3 cents for general laborers to 32.5 cents for wood-working machine operators' helpers. The 57 women in this division averaged 38.1 cents. (See table 53.)

Weekly Hours

The full-time weekly hours of work in the 31 establishments making wood office furniture ranged from 40 to 50 in October 1937. Of the total, 10 plants had a workweek of 40, 1 of 41.5, 3 of 44, 6 of 45, 1 of 49.5, and 10 of 50 hours.

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TABLE 53.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings of workers in wood office-furniture division, by sex, skill, and occupational group, October 1937*

Sex, skill, and occupational group	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings
Males				
Skilled:				
Assemblers, miscellaneous, skilled	294	$0.477	42.5	$20.28
Finishers	61	.568	39.7	22.54
Foremen, working	119	.653	45.5	29.70
Inspectors	39	.463	41.5	19.22
Sanders, belt	75	.429	42.1	18.09
Sawyers, band	40	.482	42.6	20.50
Sawyers, cut-off	56	.455	42.0	19.11
Shaper operators	39	.520	41.6	21.62
Sprayers	72	.486	42.3	20.56
Upholsterers	46	.599	42.0	25.17
Woodworking-machine operators, other, skilled	183	.477	41.4	19.76
Miscellaneous skilled workers, maintenance department	52	.562	45.9	25.80
Miscellaneous skilled workers, veneer department	60	.433	41.7	18.04
Other skilled workers	47	.548	46.2	25.28
All males, skilled	1,183	.507	42.6	21.62
Semiskilled:				
Assemblers, miscellaneous, semiskilled	116	.442	43.3	19.13
Boring-machine operators	44	.447	41.3	18.46
Craters, packers, and wrappers	84	.411	43.3	17.78
Gluers, rough stock	42	.400	38.6	15.42
Polishers and rubbers	95	.442	40.9	18.06
Sanders, cabinet, hand	46	.489	31.2	15.26
Sanders, finish, hand	117	.373	42.3	15.79
Sanders, machine, other than belt	93	.439	41.9	18.43
Sawyers, rip	51	.448	40.8	18.29
Stainers and fillers, hand	99	.432	41.1	17.74
Trimmers and upfitters	62	.487	39.1	19.03
Woodworking-machine operators, other, semiskilled	98	.442	42.4	18.74
Miscellaneous semiskilled workers, veneer department	44	.422	42.5	17.93
Other semiskilled workers	181	.387	44.4	17.17
All males, semiskilled	1,172	.424	41.7	17.71
Unskilled:				
Helpers, assemblers'	30	.375	39.1	14.66
Helpers, woodworking-machine operators'	158	.325	39.2	12.74
Laborers, general	89	.393	43.7	17.14
Truckers and stock movers, hand	35	.384	41.4	15.90
Watchmen	33	.346	57.4	19.84
Other unskilled workers	219	.358	42.2	15.12
All males, unskilled	564	.356	42.3	15.07
Total, all males	2,919	.445	42.2	18.78
Females				
All female employees [1]	57	.381	35.4	13.48
Total, all occupations	2,976	.444	42.1	18.68

[1] Not enough female employees in the different occupational groups to justify the computation of an average.

The actual weekly hours of all employees in wood office furniture for the United States as a whole amounted to 42.1 in October 1937. According to the distribution in table 54, seven-tenths of the total (70.9 percent) worked 40 and under 52 hours a week. There were 18.3 percent with an actual workweek of exactly 40 hours, and nearly one-fourth (23.6 percent) who worked 40 and less than 44 hours. This may be compared with 27.7 percent working 44 and under 48 and 19.6

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percent 48 and under 52 hours. Only 5.5 percent had an actual workweek of 52 hours or longer. On the other hand, nearly one-fourth (23.6 percent) worked less than 40 hours, most of these being wage earners who were on part time during the week covered by the survey.

The actual weekly hours were higher in the southern as against the northern region, the respective averages being 43.8 and 41.8. The southern average also exceeded that for the North for every skill group. On the other hand, the differences in average actual hours worked among various skill groups were less pronounced, the figures for the country as a whole amounting to 42.6 for skilled, 41.4 for semiskilled, and 42.3 for unskilled workers. (See table 49.)

Of the 5 trade-union establishments in the northern area, 2 had full-time hours of 40 per week, while the remaining plants worked, respectively, 44, 45, and 50. In terms of actual average hours per week, however, the shorter hours of trade-union as against non-trade-union establishments are quite evident, the figures being 35.6 for the former and 42.4 for the latter.

Of the 10 plants having 50 as their full-time hours per week, 4 were located in rural territory (with a population of under 2,500), 3 in communities between 5,000 and 50,000, and 3 in places between 100,000 and 250,000. By contrast, of the 10 establishments with full-time hours of 40, 2 were found in communities under 5,000, 2 in places of 10,000 to 25,000, 1 in a community of 50,000 to 100,000, 1 in a place of 100,000 to 250,000, and the remaining 4 in metropolitan centers of 250,000 and over. In other words, there is some evidence that, on the whole, plants with longer hours are located in smaller communities. On the other hand, there is little evidence of correlation between full-time hours per week and size of plant.

Among skilled males, the longest average actual weekly hours were 46.2 for "other skilled workers," 45.9 for miscellaneous skilled workers in the maintenance department, and 45.5 for working foremen, the averages of the remaining occupational groups ranging from 39.7 hours for finishers to 42.6 hours for band sawyers. Of the semiskilled occupational groups, three averaged less than 40, but none exceeded 45 hours. As regards unskilled occupational groups, the watchmen were conspicuous with an average of 57.4 hours, while the remaining averages showed a spread from 39.1 for assemblers' helpers to 43.7 for general laborers. The females averaged 35.4 hours. (See table 53.)

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TABLE 54.—*Distribution of workers according to actual weekly hours in wood office-furniture division, October 1937*

Weekly hours	United States		North	
	Number of workers	Simple percentage	Number of workers	Simple percentage
Under 24	116	3.9	98	3.9
24 and under 32	181	6.1	168	6.7
32 and under 40	405	13.6	369	14.6
Exactly 40	544	18.3	488	19.3
Over 40 and under 44	158	5.3	126	5.0
44 and under 48	823	27.7	665	26.3
48 and under 52	584	19.6	487	19.3
52 and under 56	107	3.6	71	2.8
56 and under 64	37	1.2	33	1.3
64 and over	21	.7	21	.8
Total	2,976	100.0	2,526	100.0

Weekly Earnings

The average earnings per week of all wage earners in wood office furniture for the country as a whole were $18.68 in October 1937. (See table 49.) From the distribution of individual earnings in table 55, it will be seen that more than four-fifths of the total (80.7 percent) received $10 and under $25 a week, with the modal concentration (35.9 percent) in the class of $15 and less than $20. Only 6.1 percent earned under $10, many of these being on a part-time basis during the week covered. At the upper end of the distribution, there were 13.2 percent paid $25 and over, but only 2.3 percent received as much as $35 and over.

On the basis of skill groups, the average weekly earnings amounted to $21.57 for skilled, $17.53 for semiskilled, and $15.06 for unskilled workers. As a result, the differential between skilled and semiskilled ($4.04) is considerably larger than the one between semiskilled and unskilled ($2.47). Owing to the relatively small variation in average actual weekly hours, these differences reflect mainly the respective ones in average earnings per hour.

A comparison of the three distributions shows that the number paid under $15, or just below the average of unskilled employees, amounted to 50.8 percent for unskilled and 30.4 percent for semiskilled, as against only 13.3 percent for skilled wage earners. By contrast, the number earning $20 and over, which is below the skilled average, was 54.9 percent for skilled and 29.6 percent for semiskilled, as compared with only 13.6 percent for unskilled workers.

In spite of the fact that the average actual weekly hours for all employees were longer in the southern than in the northern territory, the differential in weekly earnings in favor of the latter over the former was $5.39, the respective averages being $19.50 and $14.11.

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TABLE 55.—*Simple percentage distribution of workers according to actual weekly earnings in wood office-furniture division, by skill, October 1937*

Weekly earnings	United States				North			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
Under $5	1.4	0.7	2.0	1.8	1.3	0.7	1.7	2.2
$5 and under $10	4.7	2.3	4.5	10.2	4.0	2.0	4.1	8.2
$10 and under $15	21.3	10.3	23.9	38.8	15.5	6.5	17.1	32.3
$15 and under $20	35.9	31.8	40.0	35.6	36.9	30.7	41.8	40.9
$20 and under $25	23.5	31.3	21.3	11.8	26.9	34.1	25.3	14.3
$25 and under $30	7.3	11.8	5.7	1.2	8.4	12.8	6.8	1.5
$30 and under $35	3.6	6.6	2.1	.4	4.2	7.4	2.6	.4
$35 and under $40	1.3	2.8	.4	----------	1.5	3.1	.5	----------
$40 and under $45	.6	1.5	----------	.2	.8	1.7	----------	.2
$45 and over	.4	.9	.1	----------	.5	1.0	.1	----------
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of workers	2,976	1,193	1,217	566	2,526	1,054	1,010	462

It is interesting to note that the average earnings per week were practically the same for both trade-union and non-trade-union establishments, the respective figures being $19.46 and $19.50. It will be remembered that the average hourly earnings were substantially higher in trade-union than in non-trade-union plants, but the average actual weekly hours were sufficiently shorter in the former as against the latter to equalize the weekly earnings.

The highest weekly earnings among skilled males were found in the three occupational groups which had the longest hours per week in addition to relatively high hourly earnings. These were working foremen, miscellaneous skilled workers in the maintenance department, and "Other skilled workers," whose average earnings per week amounted, respectively, to $29.70, $25.80, and $25.28. Upholsterers, who had relatively high hourly earnings but shorter hours per week, came next with an average of $25.17. Moreover, finishers, with relatively high hourly earnings but with weekly hours of less than 40, averaged only $22.54. Hand cabinet sanders, who had the highest earnings per hour and by far the shortest weekly hours among semi-skilled males, showed the lowest earnings per week for the group, namely $15.26. On the other hand, watchmen, with relatively low hourly earnings but with the longest weekly hours, averaged $19.84 per week, or higher than any of the semiskilled and five of the skilled occupational groups. (See table 53.)

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Chapter XI.—Metal Office Furniture

Average Hourly Earnings

For all wage earners in the metal office division of the furniture industry, hourly earnings averaged 66.9 cents in October 1937. Probably the most noteworthy feature of the distribution of individual earnings in table 56 and chart 6 is the relatively small number of employees found in the lower-wage classes. Only 0.7 percent averaged less than 40 cents an hour, and all except 9.1 percent received 47.5 cents and over. Another distinguishing characteristic of the distribution is the absence of a pronounced concentration in any single class. Instead, nearly three-fourths (74.0 percent) are distributed in fairly uniform proportions over the 35-cent range from 47.5 to 82.5 cents. Slightly over one-sixth (16.9 percent), however, received 82.5 cents and over, with less than 1 percent paid $1.10 and over.

TABLE **56.**—*Distribution of workers according to average hourly earnings in metal office-furniture division, by skill, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	Total workers		Skilled workers		Semiskilled workers		Unskilled workers	
	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage
Under 40.0 cents	27	0.7	1	0.1	14	0.7	12	1.6
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	100	2.4	15	1.1	44	2.2	41	5.7
42.5 and under 47.5 cents	248	6.0	46	3.3	132	6.5	70	9.6
47.5 and under 52.5 cents	460	11.1	64	4.7	220	10.8	176	24.2
52.5 and under 57.5 cents	462	11.1	83	6.0	275	13.5	104	14.3
57.5 and under 62.5 cents	474	11.4	117	8.5	268	13.2	89	12.2
62.5 and under 67.5 cents	486	11.7	136	9.9	273	13.4	77	10.6
67.5 and under 72.5 cents	450	10.9	163	11.8	242	11.9	45	6.2
72.5 and under 77.5 cents	400	9.7	172	12.6	189	9.3	39	5.4
77.5 and under 82.5 cents	335	8.1	167	12.1	127	6.3	41	5.6
82.5 and under 87.5 cents	235	5.7	114	8.3	99	4.9	22	3.0
87.5 and under 92.5 cents	197	4.8	94	6.8	93	4.6	10	1.4
92.5 cents and under $1	152	3.7	105	7.6	46	2.3	1	.1
$1 and under $1.10	81	2.0	72	5.2	8	.4	1	.1
$1.10 and under $1.20	17	.4	16	1.2	1	(1)		
$1.20 and over	11	.3	11	.8				
Total	4,135	100.0	1,376	100.0	2,031	100.0	728	100.0

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

These relatively high earnings may be explained partly by the fact that all of the 19 metal-office-furniture plants covered were located in the northern territory. On the other hand, the earnings are relatively high in spite of the fact that the semiskilled workers are the dominating group in this division. Of the 4,135 employees, 49.1 percent were semiskilled, as compared with 33.3 percent skilled and only 17.6 percent unskilled workers. (See table 57.)

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The average hourly earnings varied considerably among the different skill groups. The figures were 75.1 cents for skilled, 64.5 cents for semiskilled, and 57.8 cents for unskilled workers. The extreme spread, therefore, was 17.3 cents, of which 10.6 cents was the differential between skilled and semiskilled and 6.7 cents that between semiskilled and unskilled.

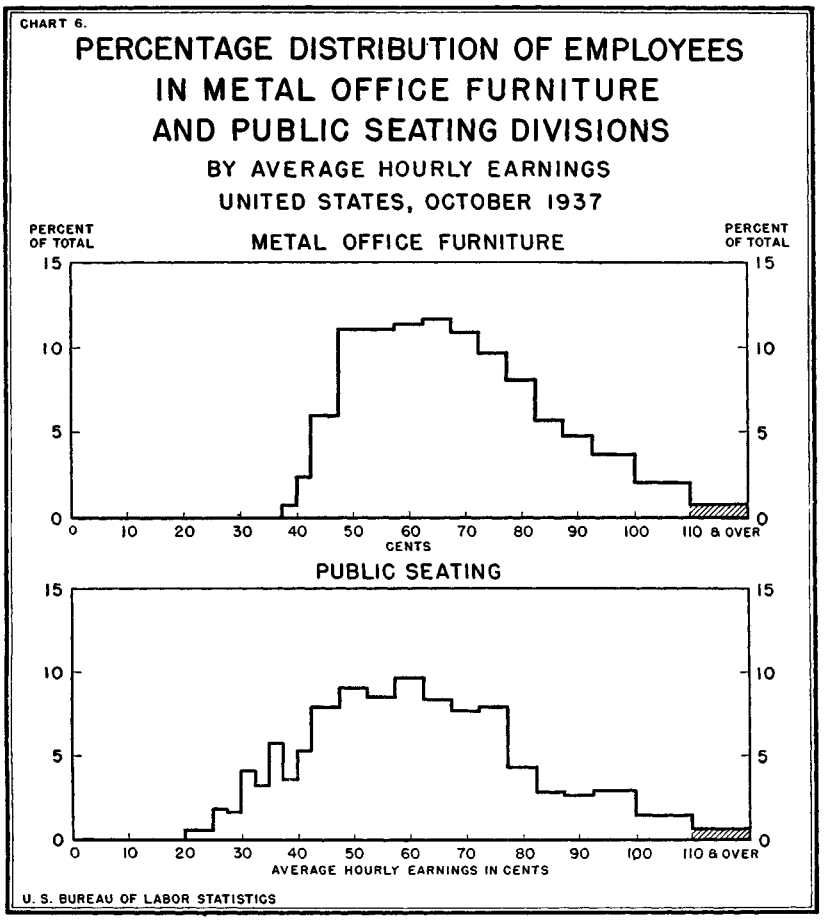

TABLE 57.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings of workers in metal office-furniture division, by skill, October 1937*

Skill	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings
Skilled workers	1,376	$0.751	40.8	$30.66
Semiskilled workers	2,031	.645	39.9	25.73
Unskilled workers	728	.578	39.9	23.03
Total workers	4,135	.669	40.2	26.90

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A comparison of the three distributions indicates that very few workers in each skill group averaged less than 40 cents an hour. The number paid under 47.5 cents was 4.5 percent for skilled, 9.4 percent for semiskilled, and 16.9 percent for unskilled employees. By contrast, the number paid 82.5 cents and over was 29.9 for skilled, which may be compared with 12.2 for semiskilled and only 4.6 for unskilled workers.

Geographical location appears to have little bearing on average hourly earnings, as shown by the fact that plants located in the same State and often within proximity of each other have a wide range in average earnings. For example, the spread between the lowest and highest individual plant averages amounted to 13.7 cents in Western New York, 25.5 cents in Illinois, and 33.6 cents in Ohio. These rather wide variations are undoubtedly due to the competitive influence of wage levels of other industries in the same locality. Thus, wages in metal office-furniture plants located near the large steel producing centers are influenced by those paid in the steel plants. In terms of geographic divisions, the spread was 18.3 cents in the Middle Atlantic and 37.5 cents in the Midwestern States.

In metal office furniture, the average hourly earnings were somewhat higher in non-trade-union than in trade-union plants, which is contrary to the experience in wood household and office furniture. The average earnings per hour in metal office furniture were 67.7 cents in non-trade-union and 65.3 cents in trade-union establishments. It is true that one of the three plants with the highest averages (over 70 cents) was unionized, but the establishment with the very lowest average was also operating under a trade-union agreement. In fact, all except two of the trade-union plants had hourly earnings below the average for the entire division.

The 19 plants engaged in the production of metal office furniture were located in communities of different sizes, varying in population all the way from 5,000 to 1,000,000 and over. (See table 58.) The coverage is too thin to warrant any definite conclusions, but there does not seem to be any correlation here between average hourly earnings and size of community. In the 7 establishments located in places between 50,000 and 100,000, for example, the average earnings per hour varied from a figure under 50 cents to one over 70 cents. Furthermore, of the 6 plants averaging between 65 and 70 cents, one was located in a community between 10,000 and 50,000, 2 in places between 50,000 and 100,000, 2 in communities between 100,000 and 500,000, and 1 in a metropolitan area between 500,000 and 1,000,000. Lastly, the 2 establishments in communities of 1,000,000 and over averaged less than 60 cents, which is below the average for the entire division.

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TABLE 58.—*Distribution of individual plants in metal office-furniture division, by size of community and average hourly earnings, October 1937*

Size of community	Total	Average hourly earnings						
		Under 50 cents	50 and under 55 cents	55 and under 60 cents	60 and under 65 cents	65 and under 70 cents	70 and under 75 cents	75 cents and over
5,000 and under 10,000	2		2					
10,000 and under 50,000	2	1				1		
50,000 and under 100,000	7	1		1	2	2	1	
100,000 and under 500,000	4					2	1	1
500,000 and under 1,000,000	2				1	1		
1,000,000 and over	2		1	1				
Total	19	2	3	2	3	6	2	1

Most of the plants in metal office furniture were either medium-sized or large. Of the 19 establishments, 4 had 100 employees or less, with the remaining plants varying in size from over 100 to over 500, as will be noted in table 59. Although the coverage is too thin to justify any conclusions, this table indicates the existence of direct correlation between size of establishment and average hourly earnings. For example, each of the 3 plants that averaged above 70 cents employed more than 500 workers. In fact, none of the 7 establishments that employed over 500 wage earners averaged less than 60 cents. By contrast, of the 7 plants with 250 employees or less, all but 2 averaged under 55 cents.

TABLE 59.—*Distribution of individual plants in metal office-furniture division, by average hourly earnings and size of plant, October 1937*

Size of plant in terms of number of employees	Total	Average hourly earnings							
		45 and under 50 cents	50 and under 55 cents	55 and under 60 cents	60 and under 65 cents	65 and under 70 cents	70 and under 75 cents	75 and under 80 cents	80 and under 85 cents
6 to 100 employees	4	2	1			1			
101 to 250 employees	3		2			1			
251 to 500 employees	5			2	2	1			
501 employees and over	7				1	3	2		1
Total	19	2	3	2	3	6	2		1

Male workers predominate in the metal division of the office-furniture industry. Among the skilled male occupational groups, the highest average earnings per hour were 88.2 cents for tool and die makers, 87.1 cents for working foremen, and 84.7 cents for die setters. The averages of the remaining occupational groups ranged from 76.6 cents for miscellaneous skilled maintenance workers and welders other than spot to 66.1 cents for shear operators. The spread among

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the semiskilled occupational groups was much narrower, the averages ranging from 68.8 cents for miscellaneous semiskilled maintenance workers to 59.3 cents for hand-finish sanders. As regards the unskilled occupational groups, the averages covered a spread from 62.0 cents for miscellaneous helpers in the paint department to 50.0 cents for watchmen. The 55 females found in this division averaged 50.2 cents. (See table 60.)

TABLE 60.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings of workers in metal office-furniture division, by sex, skill, and occupational group, October 1937*

Sex, skill, and occupational group	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings
Males				
Skilled:				
Assemblers, miscellaneous, skilled	172	$0.709	39.5	$28.03
Bending-machine operators	155	.722	40.8	29.45
Die setters	39	.847	39.6	33.57
Foremen, working	151	.871	44.3	38.62
Grainers	58	.703	37.6	26.41
Inspectors	54	.715	40.8	29.18
Machine operators, miscellaneous, skilled	58	.689	40.2	27.71
Maintenance workers, miscellaneous, skilled	98	.766	43.6	33.40
Shear operators	94	.661	39.0	25.79
Sprayers	176	.718	40.6	29.12
Tool and die makers	74	.882	40.6	35.82
Welders, other than spot	76	.766	39.7	30.42
Other skilled workers	155	.750	41.4	31.05
All males, skilled	1,360	.753	40.9	30.76
Semiskilled:				
Assemblers, miscellaneous, semiskilled	387	.680	39.6	26.91
Craters, packers, and wrappers	221	.629	40.4	25.40
Dippers	42	.645	40.6	26.20
Filers	58	.660	40.8	26.92
Grinders, miscellaneous	67	.670	38.8	26.00
Helpers, assemblers'	102	.600	41.7	24.99
Helpers, welders'	44	.617	37.2	22.94
Maintenance workers, miscellaneous, semiskilled	26	.688	43.5	29.96
Polishers and rubbers	25	.670	37.8	25.32
Punch-press operators	349	.669	38.4	25.69
Sanders, finish, hand	83	.593	40.1	23.78
Trimmers and upfitters	33	.640	39.9	25.50
Welders, spot	243	.668	39.5	26.41
Other semiskilled workers	317	.610	41.7	25.42
All males, semiskilled	1,997	.648	39.9	25.87
Unskilled:				
Helpers, machine operators'	158	.615	39.0	24.00
Helpers, miscellaneous, paint department	112	.620	39.7	24.58
Janitors and sweepers	47	.505	42.8	21.60
Laborers, general	38	.536	41.4	22.19
Truckers, hand	145	.561	37.9	21.23
Watchmen	53	.500	46.7	23.33
Other unskilled workers	170	.593	39.3	23.29
All males, unskilled	723	.578	39.9	23.07
Total, all males	4,080	.671	40.2	27.00
Females				
All female employees [1]	55	.502	38.1	19.10
Total, all occupations	4,135	.669	40.2	26.90

[1] Not enough female employees in the different occupational groups to justify the computation of separate averages.

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Weekly Hours

The 40-hour week generally prevailed in the metal office-furniture division in October 1937. Of the 19 plants, the weekly full-time hours were 40 in fourteen, 44 in one, 45 in three, and 48 in one.

The actual weekly hours of all wage earners in metal office furniture averaged 40.2 in October 1937. (See table 57.) As is seen from the distribution in table 61, as many as 40.1 percent of the employees worked exactly 40 hours, with 46.1 percent working 40 and under 44 hours. There were 19.3 percent with a workweek of 44 and less than 48 hours, and 8.3 percent with a workweek of 48 and under 52 hours. Only 3.6 percent, nearly all of whom were in occupations that customarily operate on a workweek in excess of the regular full-time hours for the plant as a whole, worked 52 hours or longer. This leaves 22.7 percent working less than 40 hours, most of whom were wage earners on part time for various reasons during the week scheduled.

There was very little difference in actual weekly hours among the skill groups, the averages being approximately 41 for skilled and 40 for semiskilled and unskilled wage earners.

Of the six unionized plants, the weekly full-time hours were 40 in four and 44 and 45 respectively in the two remaining establishments. As a result, the average actual weekly hours were slightly longer in trade-union than in non-trade-union plants, the respective figures being 40.6 and 40.0.

An examination of the full-time hours in the 19 establishments does not show any evidence of correlation between weekly hours and either size of community or size of plant.

TABLE 61.—*Distribution of workers according to actual weekly hours in metal office-furniture division, October 1937*

Workers	Total	Weekly hours									
		Under 24 hours	24 and under 32 hours	32 and under 40 hours	Exactly 40 hours	Over 40 and under 44 hours	44 and under 48 hours	48 and under 52 hours	52 and under 56 hours	56 and under 64 hours	64 hours and over
Number of workers	4,135	126	253	562	1,657	249	797	342	79	59	11
Simple percentage	100.0	3.0	6.1	13.6	40.1	6.0	19.3	8.3	1.9	1.4	0.3

Among skilled males, the average actual weekly hours were longest for working foremen and miscellaneous skilled maintenance workers, the figures being, respectively, 44.3 and 43.6. The averages in the remaining occupational groups ranged from 41.4 for "other skilled workers" to 37.6 for grainers. The miscellaneous semiskilled maintenance workers had the highest average hours per week (43.5) of the semiskilled occupational groups, the remaining averages showing a spread from 37.2 for welders' helpers to 41.7 for assemblers' helpers

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and "Other semiskilled workers." Of the unskilled occupational groups, the watchmen had the longest average weekly hours (46.7), with the averages of the remaining occupational groups ranging from 37.9 for hand truckers to 42.8 for janitors and sweepers. The females averaged 38.1 hours per week. (See table 60.)

Weekly Earnings

The average weekly earnings of all employees in metal office furniture amounted to $26.90 in October 1937. (See table 57.) According to the distribution in table 62, four-fifths of the total (80.2 percent) received $15 and under $35, and nearly one-half (48.6 percent) were paid $20 and less than $30. Only 5.1 percent earned under $15, most of these having worked part time during the week covered. As many as 14.7 percent received $35 and over, but only 0.9 percent earned as much as $50 and over.

TABLE 62.—*Distribution of workers according to actual weekly earnings in metal office-furniture division, by skill, October 1937*

Weekly earnings	Total workers		Skilled workers		Semiskilled workers		Unskilled workers	
	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage
Under $5	22	0.5	3	0.2	9	0.4	10	1.4
$5 and under $10	37	.9	12	.9	16	.8	9	1.2
$10 and under $15	154	3.7	16	1.2	96	4.7	42	5.8
$15 and under $20	539	13.0	118	8.6	269	13.2	152	20.9
$20 and under $25	1,000	24.3	227	16.5	527	26.0	246	33.8
$25 and under $30	1,002	24.3	268	19.5	574	28.4	160	22.0
$30 and under $35	768	18.6	332	24.0	352	17.4	84	11.5
$35 and under $40	382	9.2	214	15.6	145	7.1	23	3.2
$40 and under $45	144	3.5	112	8.1	31	1.5	1	.1
$45 and under $50	47	1.1	39	2.8	7	.3	1	.1
$50 and under $55	21	.5	17	1.2	4	.2	----------	----------
$55 and under $60	10	.2	9	.7	1	(1)	----------	----------
$60 and over	9	.2	9	.7	----------	----------	----------	----------
Total	4,135	100.0	1,376	100.0	2,031	100.0	728	100.0

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

As the average actual weekly hours differed but little among the skill groups, the average earnings per week reflect largely the variations in average hourly earnings. The average weekly earnings were $30.66 for skilled, $25.73 for semiskilled, and $23.03 for unskilled workers.

If one compares the three distributions, it is found that the number of employees earning under $20 a week amounted to 29.3 percent for unskilled and 19.1 percent for semiskilled, which may be compared with only 10.9 percent for skilled wage earners. On the other hand,

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as many as 29.1 percent of the skilled were paid $35 and over, as against only 9.1 percent of semiskilled and 3.4 percent of unskilled workers.

The average earnings per week were slightly higher in non-trade-union than in trade-union plants, the respective figures being $27.07 and $26.51.

Of the skilled males, working foremen showed the highest average earnings per week, namely $38.62; due to the fact that they had the longest weekly hours and second highest hourly earnings. The next highest average earnings per week were $35.82 for tool and die makers, $33.57 for die setters, and $33.40 for miscellaneous skilled maintenance workers. The averages of the remaining occupational groups ranged from $31.05 for "Other skilled workers" to $25.79 for shear operators. Among semiskilled males, the highest average was $29.96 for miscellaneous semiskilled maintenance workers, who had the highest hourly earnings and longest weekly hours in this group. The averages of the remaining occupational groups showed a spread from $26.92 for filers to $22.94 for welders' helpers. For unskilled males, the averages ranged from $24.58 for miscellaneous helpers in the paint department to $21.23 for hand truckers. The females averaged $19.10 a week. (See table 60.)

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PART 4.—Public Seating

Chapter XII.—Public Seating

Average Hourly Earnings

The average earnings per hour of the 3,118 wage earners employed in the 25 plants making public seating amounted to 56.3 cents in October 1937. (See table 63.) Looking at the distribution of individual earnings in table 64 (see chart 6), the outstanding feature is the wide range covered by the data. Omitting the first and last classes the average hourly earnings of almost 99 percent of the employees covered a spread from 25 cents to $1.10, with none of the intervals between these extremes accounting for more than a relatively small fragment of the total. Such massing as does occur, in terms of 5-cent class intervals, appears in the 45-cent range from 32.5 to 77.5 cents, within which are found more than three-fourths (77.4 percent) of the labor force. Relatively few workers are found in the lowest-earnings classes, only 0.5 percent receiving less than 25 cents and 3.9 percent under 30 cents. However, as many as one-fifth (20.6 percent) were paid less than 40 cents. On the other hand, 14.6 percent earned 77.5 cents and over.

Of the total number of public seating establishments, only three were located in the South, and these employed 10 percent of all wage earners. Another noteworthy feature of this division is the relatively large number of semiskilled employees, who constituted 51.2 percent of the total labor force. This may be compared with 33.2 percent skilled and only 15.6 percent unskilled workers.

TABLE **63.**—*Average hourly earnings in public-seating furniture division, by region and skill, October 1937*

Region	Total workers		Skilled workers		Semiskilled workers		Unskilled workers	
	Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings	Number	Average hourly earnings
United States	3,118	$0.563	1,035	$0.644	1,597	$0.552	486	$0.428
North	2,806	.593	940	.675	1,452	.579	414	.458
South	312	.342	95	.399	145	.336	72	.272

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TABLE 64.—*Distribution of workers according to average hourly earnings in public-seating furniture division, by skill, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	Total workers		Skilled workers		Semiskilled workers		Unskilled workers	
	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage
Under 25.0 cents	17	0.5			4	0.3	13	2.7
25.0 and under 27.5 cents	56	1.8	4	0.4	13	.8	39	8.0
27.5 and under 30.0 cents	50	1.6	1	.1	17	1.1	32	6.6
30.0 and under 32.5 cents	129	4.1	17	1.6	66	4.1	46	9.5
32.5 and under 35.0 cents	100	3.2	28	2.7	67	4.2	5	1.0
35.0 and under 37.5 cents	180	5.8	52	5.0	96	6.0	32	6.6
37.5 and under 40.0 cents	113	3.6	18	1.7	69	4.3	26	5.3
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	165	5.3	50	4.8	80	5.0	35	7.2
42.5 and under 47.5 cents	245	7.9	64	6.2	100	6.3	81	16.7
47.5 and under 52.5 cents	284	9.1	70	6.8	153	9.6	61	12.6
52.5 and under 57.5 cents	268	8.6	72	7.0	156	9.8	40	8.2
57.5 and under 62.5 cents	307	9.9	93	9.0	192	11.9	22	4.5
62.5 and under 67.5 cents	262	8.4	80	7.7	152	9.5	30	6.2
67.5 and under 72.5 cents	239	7.7	73	7.1	158	9.9	8	1.6
72.5 and under 77.5 cents	246	7.9	93	9.0	144	9.0	9	1.9
77.5 and under 82.5 cents	135	4.3	77	7.4	54	3.4	4	.8
82.5 and under 87.5 cents	87	2.8	59	5.7	26	1.6	2	.4
87.5 and under 92.5 cents	82	2.6	65	6.3	16	1.0	1	.2
92.5 cents and under $1	89	2.9	69	6.7	20	1.3		
$1 and under $1.10	45	1.4	31	3.0	14	.9		
$1.10 and over	19	.6	19	1.8				
Total	3,118	100.0	1,035	100.0	1,597	100.0	486	100.0

The wide dispersion in hourly earnings is partly explained by the different wage levels among the three skill groups. Skilled employees averaged 64.4 cents, as against 55.2 cents for semiskilled and 42.8 cents for unskilled workers. This makes a total spread of 21.6 cents, with the differential between skilled and semiskilled (9.2 cents) somewhat less than the one between semiskilled and unskilled (12.4 cents).

No skilled workers earned less than 25 cents an hour, and only 0.3 percent of semiskilled and 2.7 percent of unskilled employees were found under that limit. The great majority of skilled wage earners (88.5 percent) received more than 40 cents, while all except 0.5 percent averaged more than 30 cents. Earnings of less than 40 cents, however, were reported for somewhat more than one-fifth (20.8 percent) of the semiskilled and almost two-fifths (39.7 percent) of the unskilled group. Moreover, although the hourly earnings of all except a very few of semiskilled employees (2.2 percent) were above 30 cents, 17.3 percent of unskilled workers were found below that limit. Conversely, the skilled group is relatively well represented at the upper end of the distribution, but very few semiskilled or unskilled employees are found in the higher wage brackets. Compared with not far from a third (30.9 percent) of the skilled group earning 77.5 cents and over, only 8.2 percent of semiskilled and 1.4 percent of unskilled workers had earnings of this amount.

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Although the southern representation in the coverage is relatively small, it gives some indication of existing sharp regional differentials. For all employees, the average earnings per hour were 59.3 cents in the northern and 34.2 in the southern territory, which is a spread of 25.1 cents. Substantial differentials in favor of northern over southern plants are also found in connection with each skill group. There are too few cases to present a detailed distribution by skill groups in the South, but it may be noted that among unskilled workers 9.8 percent received less than 25 cents, 59.2 percent less than 30 cents, and all received less than 40 cents.

In the Northern States with 3 or more establishments, there is much greater difference between plant averages in a single State than there is between the averages for the various States. Thus, the highest wage plant in Michigan averaged 38.5 cents more than the lowest wage plant in that State. The spread was 33.5 cents in Indiana, 31.0 cents in Illinois, and 14.7 cents in Wisconsin. The relatively wide range in the averages for each State, coupled with the fact that there is considerable overlapping in the averages among the several States, indicates that on the whole geographical location appears to have little influence on hourly earnings within the northern region.

Among the northern establishments, hourly earnings were generally higher in plants operating under trade-union agreements. In all except one of the unionized establishments, the average hourly earnings were substantially above those for the entire division. The average for the 4 unionized establishments was 62.9 cents, or 4.2 cents higher than the 58.7-cent figure for the 18 non-trade-union plants in the North.

As in other branches of the furniture industry, men constitute the overwhelming majority of the labor force in public seating. Of the 3,118 workers, 2,994 were males and only 124 females. Among the male occupational groups, the average earnings per hour ranged from 36.2 cents for watchmen to 89.9 cents for tool and die makers. Aside from watchmen, none of the occupational groups averaged less than 40 cents. In addition to tool and die makers, relatively high averages were reported for upholsterers (85.4 cents), welders (other than spot) (83.5 cents), and foundry molders (79.0 cents), all of which are skilled occupations. The averages of the remaining skilled occupational groups showed a spread from 53.6 cents for other skilled woodworking-machine operators to 67.7 cents for miscellaneous skilled maintenance workers. Among the semiskilled occupational groups, finish grinders averaged 85.6 cents, but this high figure is due to the relatively high earnings of employees in one establishment who were paid straight piece rates. There were 3 other semiskilled occupations with averages above 60 cents, namely, miscellaneous semiskilled maintenance workers (64.6 cents), drill-press operators (63.1 cents), and spot welders

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(61.4 cents), the averages of the remaining semiskilled occupational groups ranging from 45.4 cents for cabinet hand sanders to 56.4 cents for stainers and fillers and other semiskilled workers. Excluding watchmen, the averages of the unskilled occupational groups were spread from 40.6 cents for general laborers to 46.3 cents for miscellaneous helpers in the paint department. The 124 females averaged 50.6 cents, and the only occupation with a large enough number of women to justify a separate average was that of hand and/or machine sewers, who averaged 55.9 cents. (See table 65.)

TABLE 65.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings of workers in public-seating furniture division, by sex, skill, and occupational group, October 1937*

Sex, skill, and occupational group	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings
Males				
Skilled:				
Assemblers, miscellaneous, skilled	62	$0.543	45.7	$24.79
Foremen, working	92	.658	47.8	31.50
Inspectors	43	.604	40.1	24.23
Maintenance workers, miscellaneous, skilled	75	.677	46.3	31.40
Molders, foundry	35	.790	32.5	25.64
Sanders, belt	50	.555	43.9	24.34
Sawyers, miscellaneous, skilled	69	.557	45.3	25.24
Shear operators	25	.627	43.8	27.44
Sprayers	72	.539	46.3	24.93
Tool and die makers	36	.899	45.6	40.98
Upholsterers	104	.854	33.1	28.26
Varnishers and finishers	41	.643	44.9	28.86
Welders, other than spot	45	.835	41.4	34.58
Woodworking-machine operators, other, skilled	113	.536	44.0	23.56
Other skilled workers	134	.670	41.7	27.94
All males, skilled	996	.650	42.8	27.84
Semiskilled:				
Assemblers, miscellaneous, semiskilled	308	.545	43.2	23.54
Craters, packers, and wrappers	131	.491	43.9	21.55
Dippers	34	.535	49.3	26.37
Drill-press operators	29	.631	35.0	22.07
Gluers, rough stock	27	.523	44.3	23.15
Grinders, finish	47	.856	40.8	34.96
Maintenance workers, miscellaneous, semiskilled	25	.646	41.7	26.94
Metalworking-machine operators, miscellaneous, semiskilled	34	.557	39.2	21.83
Punch-press operators	153	.558	43.9	24.51
Sanders, cabinet, hand	32	.454	47.7	21.65
Sanders, finish, hand	58	.475	43.5	20.69
Sanders, machine	83	.532	42.8	22.80
Sawyers, miscellaneous, semiskilled	44	.533	43.0	22.94
Stainers and fillers	30	.564	43.8	24.69
Welders, spot	59	.614	43.7	26.81
Woodworking-machine operators, other, semiskilled	64	.508	44.4	22.56
Other semiskilled workers	360	.564	41.4	23.34
All males, semiskilled	1,518	.553	42.9	23.72
Unskilled:				
Helpers, machine, and off-bearers	61	.416	42.9	17.85
Helpers, miscellaneous, paint department	38	.463	45.1	20.88
Janitors and sweepers	33	.425	44.6	18.95
Laborers, general	31	.406	44.5	18.08
Stock movers and hand truckers	93	.449	42.8	19.21
Watchmen	29	.362	55.4	20.05
Yard laborers	53	.412	44.8	18.47
Other unskilled workers	142	.443	40.7	18.05
All males, unskilled	480	.429	43.6	18.70
Total, all males	2,994	.565	43.0	24.29

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TABLE 65.—*Average hourly earnings, weekly hours, and weekly earnings of workers in public-seating furniture division, by sex, skill, and occupational group, October 1937*—Continued

Sex, skill, and occupational group	Number of workers	Average hourly earnings	Average weekly hours	Average weekly earnings
Females				
Skilled:				
All females, skilled	39	$0.494	40.5	$20.03
Semiskilled:				
Sewers, hand and machine	41	.559	33.2	18.56
Other semiskilled workers	38	.486	37.8	18.37
All females, semiskilled	79	.521	35.4	18.47
Total, all females	[1] 124	[1] .506	[1] 36.3	[1] 18.36
Total, all occupations	3,118	.563	42.7	24.05

[1] Includes unskilled females who were too few in number to permit the presentation of separate data.

Weekly Hours

Of the 25 public-seating plants, 8 were operating on a full-time schedule of 40 hours a week in October 1937. Among the remaining establishments, 2 had full-time hours of 44, 6 of 45, 1 of 47.5, 2 of 48, 1 of 49, 2 of 49.5, 2 of 50, and 1 of 55.

The effect of these full-time hours was to produce considerable dispersion in the distribution of actual weekly hours worked by individuals, as may be seen from table 66. Fully a fourth (25.5 percent) of the employees had an actual workweek of exactly 40 hours, and 7.0 percent worked over 40 and under 44 hours. There were 15.5 percent working 44 and under 48, 12.0 percent 48 and under 52, 7.5 percent 52 and under 56 hours. Relatively long hours (56 and over) are shown for 7.4 percent of the total. On the other hand, one-fourth (25.1 percent) worked short time during the week covered by the survey.

TABLE 66.—*Distribution of workers according to actual weekly hours in public-seating furniture division, October 1937*

Weekly hours	Number of workers	Simple percentage	Weekly hours	Number of workers	Simple percentage
Under 24	105	3.4	48 and under 52	375	12.0
24 and under 32	177	5.7	52 and under 56	234	7.5
32 and under 40	500	16.0	56 and under 64	146	4.7
Exactly 40	796	25.5	64 and over	83	2.7
Over 40 and under 44	218	7.0			
44 and under 48	484	15.5	Total	3,118	100.0

According to table 67, the average actual hours per week of all wage earners in the industry as a whole amounted to 42.7. There was very little variation in the averages among the skill groups, but substantially fewer hours were worked in the northern than in the southern territory. This was true of the average for each skill group as well as for all employees.

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The 4 unionized plants in the northern territory averaged 42.5 hours, which may be compared with 41.8 hours for the 18 non-trade-union establishments.

TABLE 67.—*Average weekly hours and earnings in public-seating furniture division, by region and skill, October 1937*

Region	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers	Region	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
Weekly hours					*Weekly earnings*				
United States	42.7	42.7	42.5	43.3	United States	$24.05	$27.54	$23.46	$18.55
North	41.9	41.9	41.6	42.8	North	24.81	28.27	24.07	19.58
South	50.2	51.0	51.6	46.4	South	17.18	20.34	17.37	12.63

Among the skilled male occupational groups, the longer average actual weekly hours were 47.8 for working foremen, 46.3 for miscellaneous skilled maintenance workers and sprayers, 45.7 for miscellaneous skilled assemblers, 45.6 for tool and die makers, and 45.3 for miscellaneous skilled sawyers. In 2 occupations, namely, upholsterers and foundry molders, the averages were very low, amounting respectively to 33.1 and 32.5 hours. Of the remaining skilled occupational groups, the averages ranged from 40.1 for inspectors to 44.9 for varnishers and finishers. Among the semiskilled male occupations, only dippers (49.3) and hand cabinet sanders (47.7) had average weekly hours in excess of 45, and only miscellaneous semiskilled metalworking-machine operators (39.2) and drill-press operators (35.0) averaged below 40 hours. In the unskilled occupations, watchmen showed an average of 55.4 hours, the remaining occupational groups varying from 40.7 for "Other unskilled workers" to 45.1 for miscellaneous paint-department helpers. The average weekly hours of all females were 36.3, although the skilled females had an average of as high as 40.5. (See table 65.)

Weekly Earnings

The average earnings per week of all workers in public seating for the country as a whole were $24.05 in October 1937. (See table 67.) On the basis of the distribution of individual earnings in table 68, more than three-fourths (77.5 percent) of the total earned $15 and under $35 a week, and not far from one-half (46.7 percent) were paid $20 and less than $30. One-tenth (9.9 percent) received $35 and over, but only 1.4 percent earned $45 and over. Lastly, one-eighth (12.6 percent) had weekly earnings less than $15, although a number of these worked part time during the week scheduled.

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TABLE 68.—*Distribution of workers according to actual weekly earnings in public-seating furniture division, by skill, October 1937*

Weekly earnings	Total workers		Skilled workers		Semiskilled workers		Unskilled workers	
	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage	Number	Simple percentage
Under $10	110	3.5	21	2.0	44	2.8	45	9.3
$10 and under $15	284	9.1	57	5.5	150	9.4	77	15.8
$15 and under $20	589	18.9	129	12.5	307	19.2	153	31.5
$20 and under $25	800	25.7	223	21.6	433	27.0	144	29.6
$25 and under $30	656	21.0	223	21.6	381	23.9	52	10.7
$30 and under $35	372	11.9	168	16.2	193	12.1	11	2.3
$35 and under $40	180	5.8	123	11.9	55	3.4	2	.4
$40 and under $45	83	2.7	53	5.1	28	1.8	2	.4
$45 and under $50	28	.9	22	2.1	6	.4		
$50 and over	16	.5	16	1.5				
Total	3,118	100.0	1,035	100.0	1,597	100.0	486	100.0

Reflecting largely the differentials in average hourly earnings, the average earnings per week amounted to $27.54 for skilled, $23.46 for semiskilled, and $18.55 for unskilled workers. Hence, the differentials were $4.08 between skilled and semiskilled and $4.91 between semiskilled and unskilled employees.

According to the distribution of weekly earnings by skill groups, the relative number of wage earners receiving less than $15 a week was 7.5 percent for skilled and 12.2 percent for semiskilled, as against 25.1 percent for unskilled employees. On the other hand, only 3.1 percent of the unskilled and 17.7 percent of the semiskilled were paid $30 and over, which may be compared with 36.8 percent of the skilled employees.

For all employees, the differential in weekly earnings in favor of northern as against southern establishments amounted to $7.63, the respective averages being $24.81 and $17.18. Each skill group showed a substantial differential in favor of the North as compared with the South.

The average weekly earnings amounted to $26.69 in trade-union and $24.54 in non-trade-union plants in the northern territory, which is a differential of $2.15 in favor of the former as against the latter.

The highest average weekly earnings for any occupational group were $40.98 for tool and die makers. Welders other than spot came next with an average of $34.58, which was followed by $31.50 for working foremen and $31.40 for miscellaneous skilled maintenance workers. As regards the remaining skilled male occupational groups, the averages ranged from $28.86 for varnishers and finishers to $23.56 for other skilled woodworking-machine operators. It is interesting that, although upholsterers had the second highest average earnings per hour, their weekly earnings were sixth in order, due to the short

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hours worked by them. Outside of finish grinders, who averaged $34.96 a week, the averages of the remaining semiskilled male occupational groups covered a spread from $20.69 for hand-finish sanders to $26.94 for miscellaneous semiskilled maintenance workers. Although watchmen had the lowest average hourly earnings among the unskilled occupational groups, their average weekly earnings ($20.05) were next to the highest. Of course, this is due to the relatively longer hours worked by watchmen. Miscellaneous helpers in the paint department had the highest average weekly earnings, $20.88, as well as the highest hourly earnings among unskilled workers. The remaining unskilled occupational groups had averages ranging from $17.85 for machine helpers and off-bearers to $19.21 for stock movers and hand truckers. The average weekly earnings of all females amounted to $18.36, but those of skilled females averaged $20.03. (See table 65.)

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PART 5.—Comparisons and Summaries

Chapter XIII.—Comparisons and Summaries

Interdivisional Comparisons

In connection with wood household furniture, a comparison has already been made of the data covering case goods, upholstered furniture, novelties, and kitchen furniture. It now remains to compare these divisions with wood and metal office furniture and public seating.

Looking at the average hourly earnings of the seven divisions in the furniture industry, it will be seen that the highest figure, namely 66.9 cents, appears for metal office furniture. The next highest average is 56.5 cents for upholstered furniture, which is only slightly higher than the figure of 56.3 cents reported for public seating. The latter is followed by 48.9 cents for novelties. There is very little difference among the averages of the remaining three divisions, the figures being 44.4 cents for wood office, 44.1 cents for case goods, and 43.1 cents for kitchen furniture. (See table 69.)

Any comparison of the all-round averages among the seven divisions, however, is obscured by differences in the composition of the respective coverages as to region and skill. Hence, a more logical comparison among these divisions would be for the same region and skill.

TABLE 69.—*Average hourly earnings in furniture industry by product, region, and skill, October 1937*

Region	Wood household furniture				Office furniture		Public seating
	Case goods	Kitchen furniture	Novelty furniture	Upholstered furniture	Metal	Wood	
United States	$0.441	$0.431	$0.489	$0.565	$0.669	$0.444	$0.563
Skilled	.518	.488	.550	.681	.751	.506	.644
Semiskilled	.422	.427	.491	.505	.645	.423	.552
Unskilled	.339	.351	.392	.354	.578	.356	.428
North	.513	.447	.503	.627	.669	.467	.593
Skilled	.578	.502	.564	.742	.751	.525	.675
Semiskilled	.494	.442	.505	.556	.645	.447	.579
Unskilled	.402	.366	.405	.393	.578	.375	.458
South	.347	.361	.334	.398	----------	.322	.342
Skilled	.419	.413	.392	.478	----------	.368	.399
Semiskilled	.330	.365	.326	.371	----------	.315	.336
Unskilled	.280	.300	.272	.287	----------	.275	.272

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If the comparison is limited to the northern region, the order of averages is 66.9 cents for metal office, 62.7 cents for upholstered, 59.3 cents for public seating, 51.3 cents for case goods, 50.3 cents for novelty, 46.7 cents for wood office, and 44.7 cents for kitchen furniture. The order among the averages for skilled workers is exactly the same, but it is somewhat different for semiskilled and unskilled employees. In each case, the highest averages are found in metal office furniture, and the lowest appear in kitchen furniture, with the averages in wood office furniture only slightly above those in kitchen furniture. Although upholstered furniture has the second highest average for skilled workers, its averages rank third for semiskilled and fifth for unskilled employees.

As the survey did not include metal office furniture in the southern territory, the comparison of wages within this region is restricted to the remaining six divisions of the industry. It should also be remembered that there are relatively few southern plants in some of the divisions, so that the figures should be used with caution. With this limitation, it will be seen that the highest average, namely 39.8 cents, was reported for upholstered furniture. This is followed by 36.1 cents for kitchen furniture, 34.7 cents for case goods, and 34.2 cents for public seating. The lowest averages are 33.4 cents for novelties and 32.2 cents for wood office furniture. As regards each of the skill groups, the order of averages varied somewhat, but, except for unskilled workers, upholstered furniture ranked first and wood office furniture ranked last. It will also be seen that the variation among the averages in the southern territory was considerably less than that found in the northern region.

Data for Wood Household and Office Furniture Combined [1]

Thus far figures have been presented separately for wood household and wood office furniture. Since these divisions have many problems in common, it is interesting to combine the data for both in a single tabulation. It will be remembered that in selecting the sample, the coverage in terms of wage earners included one-fourth of the wood household-furniture and one-half of the wood office-furniture divisions. Hence, in developing tabulations for wood furniture combined, the figures for wood household were given a weight of 4 and those for wood office a weight of 2. However, one should keep in mind the fact that these weights are approximate, so that the resulting tabulations are in effect estimates.

[1] It should be noted that this does not cover the wood-furniture industry as a whole, as certain unimportant branches have been left out in connection with this survey. (See ch. IV, pp. 24 to 25.)

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TABLE 70.—*Simple percentage distribution of workers according to average hourly earnings in wood household and wood office furniture combined, by region and skill, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	United States				North				South			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Unskilled workers
Under 12.5 cents	0.1	----------	0.1	0.2	(1)	----------	(1)	(1)	0.2	----------	0.2	0.5
12.5 and under 17.5 cents	.4	(1)	.3	1.1	0.1	(1)	0.1	0.7	.9	0.1	.9	1.9
17.5 and under 22.5 cents	1.7	0.2	1.3	5.9	.6	(1)	.5	2.4	4.3	.6	3.1	12.2
22.5 and under 25.0 cents	1.5	.2	1.4	4.7	.4	(1)	.4	1.2	4.3	.7	3.6	10.9
25.0 and under 27.5 cents	3.5	.7	3.3	9.9	1.8	0.3	1.5	6.2	7.7	2.0	7.6	16.4
27.5 and under 30.0 cents	2.1	.6	2.3	4.7	1.1	.3	1.1	3.2	4.4	1.6	5.0	7.4
30.0 and under 32.5 cents	9.2	4.2	10.1	17.2	3.5	1.2	3.1	10.3	22.8	12.7	26.8	29.6
32.5 and under 35.0 cents	6.3	3.4	7.6	9.1	3.4	1.4	3.7	7.2	13.3	9.2	16.8	12.4
35.0 and under 37.5 cents	7.1	5.4	8.1	8.2	5.4	2.7	6.1	9.7	11.3	13.1	12.9	5.5
37.5 and under 40.0 cents	4.9	4.2	5.3	5.1	4.7	3.0	5.1	7.4	5.3	7.7	5.8	1.0
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	9.4	8.2	9.8	11.0	10.7	7.1	11.6	16.8	6.5	11.3	5.6	1.1
42.5 and under 47.5 cents	11.1	11.3	12.2	8.5	13.0	11.0	14.8	12.9	6.8	11.8	6.2	.8
47.5 and under 52.5 cents	9.7	11.1	10.1	5.9	11.6	11.2	13.0	9.1	5.2	11.1	3.2	.2
52.5 and under 57.5 cents	6.7	8.7	6.7	2.5	8.3	9.6	9.0	3.8	2.6	6.3	1.2	.1
57.5 and under 62.5 cents	6.3	8.3	6.1	2.7	8.2	9.6	8.4	4.2	1.7	4.6	.5	----------
62.5 and under 67.5 cents	5.3	7.2	5.1	2.1	7.2	8.7	7.2	3.2	1.0	2.7	.2	----------
67.5 and under 72.5 cents	3.6	5.6	3.2	.4	4.8	6.9	4.4	.6	.7	1.7	.3	----------
72.5 and under 77.5 cents	2.9	4.7	2.4	.5	4.0	6.0	3.4	.7	.3	.9	.1	----------
77.5 and under 82.5 cents	2.0	3.5	1.4	.1	2.7	4.5	2.1	.1	.3	.7	(1)	----------
82.5 and under 87.5 cents	1.8	3.2	1.4	.1	2.5	4.1	2.0	.2	.2	.4	(1)	----------
87.5 and under 92.5 cents	1.4	2.7	.8	.1	1.9	3.4	1.1	.1	.1	.4	(1)	----------
92.5 cents and under $1	1.0	2.0	.5	(1)	1.3	2.6	.7	(1)	.1	.2	----------	----------
$1 and under $1.10	.9	2.1	.3	----------	1.3	2.8	.5	----------	(1)	.1	(1)	----------
$1.10 and over	1.1	2.7	.2	----------	1.5	3.6	.2	----------	(1)	.1	----------	----------
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

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The average hourly earnings of all wage earners in wood household and office furniture combined amounted to 47.9 cents in October 1937. The distribution presented in table 70 shows there were only 3.7 percent of the workers earning under 25 cents an hour and 9.3 percent less than 30 cents. However, 36.8 percent received under 40 cents. In terms of 5-cent intervals, the modal concentration, including 14.3 percent, is found in the class of 37.5 and less than 42.5 cents. There were 14.7 percent earning 67.5 cents and over, and 6.2 percent 82.5 cents and over.

According to table 71, the average earnings per hour amounted to 56.7 cents for skilled, 45.5 cents for semiskilled, and 35.6 cents for unskilled employees. Hence, the spread between skilled and semiskilled was 11.2 cents, which is not much higher than that of 9.9 cents between semiskilled and unskilled workers.

There is a well-defined difference between the average hourly earnings of all workers in the northern and southern areas, the respective figures being 53.0 and 35.7 cents. The extent of this difference is confirmed by a comparison of the two distributions. Only 1.1 percent of the northern employees earned less than 25 cents an hour, but in the South this group amounted to 9.7 percent. The number receiving under 30 cents was 4.0 percent in the North, which may be compared with 21.8 percent in the South. Only 21.0 percent in the northern territory were paid less than 40 cents, as against almost three-fourths (74.5 percent) in the southern area. On the other hand, as many as 20.0 percent of the northern workers earned 67.5 cents and over, but only 1.7 percent were found in that category in the southern territory.

TABLE 71.—*Average hourly earnings in wood household and wood office furniture combined, by region and skill, October 1937*

Region	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
United States	$0.479	$0.567	$0.455	$0.356
North	.530	.616	.505	.397
South	.357	.431	.338	.281

Comparisons of Hourly Earnings Between 1937 and Previous Years in Wood Household and Wood Office Furniture Combined

Surveys covering wood household and wood office furniture combined have been made by the Bureau at intervals since 1910, but comparable data for all employees are available only for 1915, 1929, and 1931. The average hourly earnings of all workers were 21.4 cents

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in 1915, 49.0 cents in 1929, and 41.1 cents in 1931.[2] The 1937 figure of 47.9 cents, therefore, is 1.1 cents less than that of 1929 but 6.8 cents above the 1931 average.

The 1931 survey covered 17 States.[3] It included such wood household furniture as bedroom, dining room, sitting room, and parlor suites, library and hall pieces, tables, chairs, and radio cabinets and such wood office furniture as desks, tables, and chairs. The figures obtained were for a representative pay-roll period during the fall of 1931, mainly in the months of August, September, and October.

It is interesting to compare the distribution in wood household and office furniture combined between 1937 and 1931. (See table 72.) In 1931 there were 13.8 percent of the employees earning less than 25 cents an hour, as against only 3.7 percent in 1937. As many as 23.8 percent received under 30 cents in 1931, but the figure was only 9.3 percent in 1937. The number paid less than 40 cents amounted to 47.8 percent in 1931 and 36.8 percent in 1937. At the other end of the distribution, it will be seen that whereas only 9.5 percent earned 65 cents and over in 1931, there were as many as 17.5 percent in that classification in 1937.

TABLE 72.—*Simple percentage distribution of workers according to average hourly earnings in wood household and wood office furniture combined, 1931 and 1937*

Average hourly earnings	1931	1937	Average hourly earnings	1931	1937
Under 15.0 cents	1.7	0.1	60.0 and under 65.0 cents	5.2	6.3
15.0 and under 20.0 cents	4.7	.5	65.0 and under 70.0 cents	2.9	4.6
20.0 and under 25.0 cents	7.4	3.1	70.0 and under 75.0 cents	1.9	3.1
25.0 and under 27.5 cents	6.3	3.5	75.0 and under 80.0 cents	1.3	2.5
27.5 and under 30.0 cents	3.7	2.1	80.0 and under 85.0 cents	1.0	2.0
30.0 and under 32.5 cents	7.0	9.2	85.0 and under 90.0 cents	.5	1.7
32.5 and under 35.0 cents	4.7	6.3	90.0 and under 95.0 cents	.6	1.1
35.0 and under 37.5 cents	7.4	7.1	95.0 cents and under $1	.2	.5
37.5 and under 40.0 cents	4.9	4.9	$1 and under $1.10	.4	.9
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	8.4	9.3	$1.10 and under $1.20	.4	.6
			$1.20 and over	.3	.5
42.5 and under 45.0 cents	4.1	4.8			
45.0 and under 47.5 cents	6.3	6.4	Total	100.0	100.0
47.5 and under 50.0 cents	3.4	3.9			
50.0 and under 55.0 cents	9.7	8.8			
55.0 and under 60.0 cents	5.7	6.2			

Using the data for identical States, it is possible to compute separately for the northern and southern regions [4] average hourly earnings for wood household and wood office furniture combined for 1929, 1931, and 1937. In 1929, the average hourly earnings in the North amounted to 52.5 cents, dropping to 45.8 cents in 1931, and increasing again to

[2] See U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Bull. No. 571: "Wages and hours of labor in the furniture industry, 1910 to 1931."

[3] These were as follows: California, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

[4] The Northern region includes California, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Included in the southern region are Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

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52.9 cents in 1937. In the southern region, the 1929 figure was 33.0 cents, as against 27.5 cents in 1931 and 35.6 cents in 1937. Comparing 1937 with 1929, it appears that the increase is much greater in the South than in the North. As a result, the differential between the two regions has decreased from 19.5 cents in 1929 to 17.2 cents in 1937.

It is evident furthermore that the lower average hourly earnings for 1937, as compared with 1929, for the wood-furniture industry as a whole are due to the increasing importance of the industry in the South. In each area considered separately, hourly earnings in 1937 were higher than in 1929. In 1929, 17.0 percent of the wage earners covered were in plants located in southern States, whereas in 1937, 24.7 percent were in such plants.[5]

Comparisons Between Wood and Metal Office Furniture

As noted before, there is considerable competition between plants in wood and metal office furniture, so that it is essential to compare the data between these divisions. However, since the coverage in metal office furniture was limited to the North, any such comparison must of necessity be for that region only.

The average earnings per hour of all wage earners in the North in October 1937 amounted to 66.9 cents for metal office furniture and 46.7 cents for wood office furniture. This makes a differential of 20.2 cents. Comparing the two distributions as shown in table 73, less than 1.0 percent of employees in metal office furniture earned under 40 cents an hour, as against 29.7 percent in wood office furniture. Conversely, the relative number paid 52.5 cents and over was 26.6 percent in wood office furniture which may be compared with 80.1 percent in metal office furniture. Furthermore, the number receiving 72.5 cents and over was only 5.4 percent in wood but 34.7 percent in metal office furniture.

Substantial differentials in favor of metal as against wood office furniture also appear in the average hourly earnings for each skill group. The figures are 22.6 cents for skilled, 19.8 cents for semiskilled, and 20.3 cents for unskilled workers. (See table 69.)

It has been argued that inasmuch as metal office-furniture plants, all of which are in the North, must compete with both northern and southern wood office-furniture establishments, any comparison of their respective average hourly earnings should be made for the country as a whole.

[5] Since the census does not present employers separately for wood and metal furniture, it is impossible to compare these samples with the total number of wage earners in all plants.

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TABLE 73.—*Simple percentage distribution of workers according to average hourly earnings in office furniture in the North, by product and skill, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	Wood office furniture				Metal office furniture			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers	Total workers	Ski led workers	Semi-ski led workers	Un-skilled workers
Under 22.5 cents	1.1		1.2	3.7				
22.5 and under 25.0 cents	.4		.5	.9				
25.0 and under 27.5 cents	.8	0.2	.9	1.9	(1)			0.3
27.5 and under 30.0 cents	.6	.3	.5	1.7	(1)		0.1	
30.0 and under 32.5 cents	4.0	.7	3.1	13.9	(1)		.1	.1
32.5 and under 35.0 cents	5.3	.9	5.7	14.1	(1)		(1)	
35.0 and under 37.5 cents	7.9	3.5	9.8	13.9	0.2	0.1	.1	.8
37.5 and under 40.0 cents	9.6	7.5	10.9	11.7	.2		.3	.4
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	15.4	11.8	17.5	18.9	2.4	1.1	2.2	5.7
42.5 and under 47.5 cents	16.6	19.2	17.0	9.3	6.0	3.3	6.5	9.6
47.5 and under 52.5 cents	11.7	15.5	11.3	4.1	11.1	4.7	10.8	24.2
52.5 and under 57.5 cents	7.4	10.2	6.8	2.2	11.2	6.0	13.6	14.3
57.5 and under 62 5 cents	6.6	9.2	5.7	2.4	11.6	8.5	13.2	12.2
62.5 and under 67.5 cents	4.4	6.5	3.8	1.3	11.7	9.9	13.4	10.6
67.5 and under 72.5 cents	2.8	4.6	2.2		10.9	11.8	11.9	6.2
72.5 and under 77.5 cents	1.9	3.0	1.7		9.7	12.6	9.3	5.4
77.5 and under 82.5 cents	1.3	2.5	.7		8.1	12.1	6.3	5.6
82.5 and under 87.5 cents	.9	1.6	.5		5.7	8.3	4.9	3.0
87.5 and under 92.5 cents	.5	1.0	.1		4.8	6.8	4.6	1.4
92.5 cents and under $1	.4	.9			3.7	7.6	2.3	.1
$1 and under $1.10	.4	.9			2.0	5.2	.4	.1
$1.10 and under $1.20	(1)		.1		.4	1.2	(1)	
$1.20 and over					.3	.8		
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

Between the average hourly earnings of all metal office-furniture workers, 66.9 cents, and those of all wood office-furniture workers, 44.4 cents, there is a spread of 22.5 cents. It will be seen from the distribution in table 74 that, whereas less than 1 percent (0.4) of the metal office-furniture workers averaged less than 40 cents an hour, not far from two-fifths of the wood office-furniture workers (38.6 percent) had such earnings. Four-fifths of the metal office-furniture workers (80.1 percent) averaged 52.5 cents or more, and over one-third (34.7 percent) at least 72.5 cents. In contrast, only 22.7 and 4.4 percent, respectively, of the wood office-furniture workers had such earnings.

Data for Furniture-Manufacturing Industry as a Whole

In addition to presenting figures for wood household and office furniture combined, it is also possible to show data for all divisions of the furniture industry covered in this survey, namely, wood household furniture, wood and metal office furniture, and public seating. In selecting the sample, the coverage, it will be remembered, included one-fourth of the wood household, one-half of the wood and metal office furniture, and all of the public seating divisions. As a result,

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in preparing tabulations for the furniture industry as a whole, the figures for wood household furniture were given a weight of 4, those for wood office furniture a weight of 2, those for metal office furniture a weight of 2, and those for public-seating furniture a weight of 1. Of course, these weights are approximations, and the resulting tabulations must be looked upon as estimates.

TABLE 74.—*Simple percentage distribution of workers according to average hourly earnings in office furniture, by product and skill, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	Wood office furniture				Metal office furniture			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
Under 22.5 cents	1.4	0.1	1.2	4.6				
22.5 and under 25.0 cents	.7		.7	2.3				
25.0 and under 27.5 cents	2.7	.6	2.3	7.8	(1)			0.3
27.5 and under 30.0 cents	1.2	.4	1.3	2.7	(1)		0.1	
30.0 and under 32.5 cents	10.3	4.7	12.3	18.0	(1)		.1	.1
32.5 and under 35.0 cents	6.2	2.4	7.2	12.2	(1)		(1)	
35.0 and under 37.5 cents	7.9	4.8	9.2	11.5	0.2	0.1	.1	.8
37.5 and under 40.0 cents	8.2	6.6	9.2	9.5	.2		.3	.4
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	13.8	11.7	14.8	15.5	2.4	1.1	2.2	5.7
42.5 and under 47.5 cents	14.5	17.6	14.3	7.6	6.0	3.3	6.5	9.6
47.5 and under 52.5 cents	10.4	14.5	9.5	3.5	11.1	4.7	10.8	24.2
52.5 and under 57.5 cents	6.4	9.4	5.7	1.8	11.2	6.0	13.6	14.3
57.5 and under 62.5 cents	5.7	8.5	4.8	1.9	11.6	8.5	13.2	12.2
62.5 and under 67.5 cents	3.8	5.7	3.1	1.1	11.7	9.9	13.4	10.6
67.5 and under 72.5 cents	2.4	4.1	1.8		10.9	11.8	11.9	6.2
72.5 and under 77.5 cents	1.6	2.7	1.4		9.7	12.6	9.3	5.4
77.5 and under 82.5 cents	1.1	2.3	.6		8.1	12.1	6.3	5.6
82.5 and under 87.5 cents	.7	1.4	.4		5.7	8.3	4.9	3.0
87.5 and under 92.5 cents	.4	.9	.1		4.8	6.8	4.6	1.4
92.5 cents and under $1	.3	.8			3.7	7.6	2.3	.1
$1 and under $1.10	.3	.8			2.0	5.2	.4	.1
$1.10 and under $1.20	(1)		.1		.4	1.2	(1)	
$1.20 and over					.3	.8		
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

For all wage earners, the average earnings per hour in the furniture industry as a whole were 49.0 cents in October 1937.[6] From the distribution in table 75, it will be seen that only 3.4 percent were paid less than 25 cents an hour, and 8.7 percent earned under 30 cents. The number receiving below 40 cents was about one-third of the total (34.4 percent). One-sixth of the workers (16.9 percent) were paid 67.5 cents and over, and 4.9 percent earned as much as 87.5 cents and over.

As one may see from table 76, the average hourly earnings were 57.7 cents for skilled, 46.8 cents for semiskilled, and 36.8 cents for unskilled workers. This makes for a total spread of 20.9 cents,

[6] It will be recalled that the average for the furniture industry for October 1937, presented in connection with the per capita data by months from 1933 to date, was 51.8 cents. The difference is due at least in part to differences in coverage. The present study does not include any professional furniture or metal household furniture. It is believed that their inclusion would raise the average.

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approximately one-half of which represents the differential between skilled and semiskilled and the other half for the one between semiskilled and unskilled employees.

The differential in average hourly earnings of all wage earners between the northern and southern regions was 18.5 cents, the respective averages being 54.2 and 35.7 cents. Comparing the two distributions, it is found that most of the relatively low-paid workers are in the southern territory.[7] This may be seen from the fact that the number earning under 25 cents an hour was 1.1 percent in the North and 9.6 percent in the South. The respective percentages of workers paid less than 30 cents were 3.8 and 21.7, while below 40 cents they amounted, respectively, to 19.4 and 74.7. Conversely, the number earning 67.5 cents and over was 22.3 percent in the northern area, as against 1.6 percent in the southern region.

[7] It should be remembered that of the higher-wage divisions, i. e., metal office furniture and public seating, none of the plants in the former and only three in the latter were located in the South.

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TABLE 75.—*Simple percentage distribution of workers according to average hourly earnings in furniture industry as a whole, by region and skill, October 1937*

Average hourly earnings	United States				North				South			
	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semi-skilled workers	Un-skilled workers
Under 12.5 cents	0.1	----------	0.1	0.2	(1)	----------	(1)	(1)	0.2	----------	0.2	0.5
12.5 and under 17.5 cents	.3	(1)	.3	1.0	0.1	(1)	0.1	0.6	.8	0.1	.9	1.9
17.5 and under 22.5 cents	1.6	0.2	1.2	5.5	.6	(1)	.5	2.2	4.3	.6	3.0	12.1
22.5 and under 25.0 cents	1.4	.2	1.3	4.4	.4	(1)	.4	1.1	4.3	.7	3.6	10.8
25.0 and under 27.5 cents	3.3	.7	3.0	9.3	1.6	0.3	1.4	5.6	7.7	2.0	7.5	16.5
27.5 and under 30.0 cents	2.0	.6	2.1	4.5	1.1	.3	1.0	3.0	4.4	1.6	5.0	7.5
30.0 and under 32.5 cents	8.5	3.9	9.4	16.2	3.2	1.1	2.8	9.4	22.9	12.6	26.9	29.8
32.5 and under 35.0 cents	5.9	3.2	7.1	8.5	3.1	1.3	3.3	6.5	13.5	9.2	16.9	12.3
35.0 and under 37.5 cents	6.7	5.1	7.6	7.8	5.0	2.5	5.6	9.0	11.3	13.1	13.0	5.4
37.5 and under 40.0 cents	4.6	4.0	5.0	4.8	4.3	2.8	4.7	6.8	5.3	7.7	5.8	1.0
40.0 and under 42.5 cents	8.9	7.8	9.2	10.7	9.9	6.6	10.6	15.6	6.5	11.4	5.6	1.1
42.5 and under 47.5 cents	10.7	10.7	11.6	8.7	12.2	10.4	13.7	12.7	6.8	11.8	6.1	.8
47.5 and under 52.5 cents	9.7	10.7	10.1	7.0	11.5	10.7	12.8	10.5	5.1	11.1	3.2	.2
52.5 and under 57.5 cents	7.0	8.5	7.2	3.2	8.6	9.3	9.4	4.8	2.6	6.3	1.2	.1
57.5 and under 62.5 cents	6.6	8.3	6.7	3.2	8.5	9.5	9.0	4.9	1.7	4.6	.5	----------
62.5 and under 67.5 cents	5.8	7.3	5.7	2.6	7.6	8.8	7.8	3.9	1.0	2.7	.2	----------
67.5 and under 72.5 cents	4.1	5.9	3.9	.7	5.3	7.2	5.2	1.1	.7	1.7	.3	----------
72.5 and under 77.5 cents	3.4	5.1	3.0	.8	4.5	6.5	4.1	1.1	.3	.9	.1	----------
77.5 and under 82.5 cents	2.4	4.0	1.8	.4	3.1	5.0	2.5	.6	.2	.7	(1)	----------
82.5 and under 87.5 cents	2.1	3.5	1.6	.3	2.8	4.4	2.2	.4	.2	.4	(1)	----------
87.5 and under 92.5 cents	1.6	2.9	1.0	.2	2.1	3.7	1.4	.2	.1	.4	(1)	----------
92.5 cents and under $1	1.2	2.4	.6	(1)	1.6	3.1	.8	(1)	.1	.2	----------	----------
$1 and under $1.10	1.0	2.3	.3	(1)	1.4	3.0	.5	(1)	(1)	.1	(1)	----------
$1.10 and over	1.1	2.7	.2	----------	1.5	3.5	.2	----------	(1)	.1	----------	----------
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

[1] Less than 1/10 of 1 percent.

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TABLE 76.—*Average hourly earnings for the furniture industry as a whole, by region and skill, October 1937*

Region	Total workers	Skilled workers	Semiskilled workers	Unskilled workers
United States	$0.490	$0.577	$0.468	$0.368
North	.542	.626	.518	.412
South	.357	.430	.338	.281

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