MONTHLY REVIEW

Research computer programmers are an example of the new breed of women workers.

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF RICHMOND NOVEMBER 1965

WOMEN AT WORK IN THE FIFTH DISTRICT

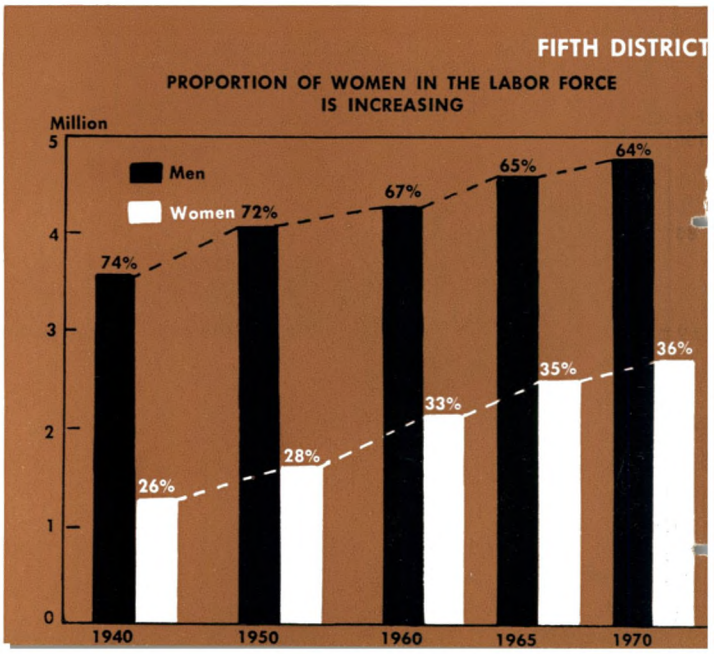
The past quarter of a century has witnessed a quiet revolution in woman's role in the economy. Following the impetus of the manpower shortage during World War II, women have continued to enter or re-enter the labor force. With the current shortage of skilled and trained workers, particularly for new jobs being created by technological change, industry and government are exerting pressure on women to remain in the work force or to come back to work. On the other side of the coin, the desire for a higher standard of living, particularly the cost of higher education, has exerted pressure on the wife and mother to seek paid employment. With one factor reinforcing the other, the number of working women has almost doubled in the past 25 years.

District Labor Force Trends Women in the Fifth Federal Reserve District's labor force currently number an estimated two and one-half million. By 1970 this number is expected to increase to around 2.7 million, a projected rise of 28% in the present decade. The number of men in the District's labor force during the 1960's will rise by an estimated 11%.

Not only is the number of women increasing at a much faster rate than the number of men, but by actual count there are more women entering the labor force than men. For example, between 1940 and 1960 the number of women in the Fifth District's labor force increased by 862,915 (69%) while the number of men increased by 687,356 (19%). In these two decades, the proportion of women changed from one out of four to one out of every three workers in the District's labor force.

The increase in the number of working women is coming primarily from the older and married ranks. From 1940 to 1960, the proportion of women 45 years of age and over rose from 20% to 35% of all of those working. The sharp increase in the ratio of older women to all women workers was due partly to the fact that the population in 1960 contained a higher proportion of women in this age group than in 1940. Labor demands within these two decades, however, enabled the mature woman to obtain a job and to hold it. Also, the gradual change in social attitudes encouraged the married woman to work outside the home—particularly after her children were launched in school. These factors partly account for the considerable increase from 1940 to 1960 in the proportion of married women to all women in the labor force (35% in 1940 to 57% in 1960). Also, the higher marriage rates during the period affected the proportion of married women, and conversely, the proportion of single women in the work force.

Geographical Distribution of the Labor Force As shown in Table I, there was in 1960 considerable variation among the Fifth District States in the number of women workers, the proportion of women in the labor force, and the proportion of women workers to all women of working age (14 years and over). These differences among the States reflect primarily the District's population distribution, but are also affected by such factors as the proportion of women to men in the population, the existence of industries which employ a high ratio of women, the



availability of jobs and, to a certain extent, to tradition.

In the urban District of Columbia, with a work force predominantly comprised of government and service workers, 44% of the labor force were women in 1960. This was the highest proportion in the country. Also the District of Columbia had the country's highest proportion, 52%, of women of working age in the labor force. At the other end of the scale, West Virginia had the country's lowest labor force participation rate for women, and its ratio of women to all workers was among the lowest in the country. These low ratios can be accounted for partly by the strong dependence of West Virginia's economy upon mining and heavy manufacturing which employ mostly men.

Occupational Mix In the District as in the nation, woman's work is concentrated in the clerical field; approximately one fourth of all women workers in 1960 were in occupations such as secretaries, bookkeepers, and telephone operators. The second ranking occupational group, accounting for 19% of the total number of employed women, is that entitled "operatives." This group includes graders and sorters in manufacturing, laundry and dry cleaning operatives, and textile knitters, spinners and weavers. Professional and technical workers ranked third (13%), and both service workers and private household workers accounted for 11% of the total labor force in 1960.

These figures represent a dramatic change from the picture in 1940 when almost one out of every three women workers was employed in private households or as farm laborers, and the number of clerical workers and saleswomen accounted for only 21%. Proportions of women employed in the other major occupational groups changed only slightly during the two decades. That for operatives dropped slightly from 21% in 1940 to 19% in 1960, reflecting in part the effect of automation. The proportions for the professional group and for service workers rose by two percentage points and that for women in managerial positions rose only one percentage point.

The occupational concentration for women is different from that for men. Both the craftsmen and operatives groups in 1960 included approximately one out of every five male workers. The managerial and the professional groups each included almost 10% of all male workers. Although there was a greater proportion of women in the professional group, they were employed primarily as nurses or elementary and secondary school teachers.

The occupational mix of both men and women varies considerably among the States within the Fifth District. The top three occupational groups based on the number employed in 1960, are shown in Table III for each District State and for male and female workers.

Pay Scales Occupational differences among the States and between men and women partly account for the differences in the 1959 median earnings, also shown in Table III. The median earnings for all women workers was highest in the District of Columbia, followed by Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. The median for men was highest in Maryland, followed by West Virginia, the District of Columbia, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. It should be noted that workers are classified by area of residence and not according to where they work.

In each area, the median for men for all occupations

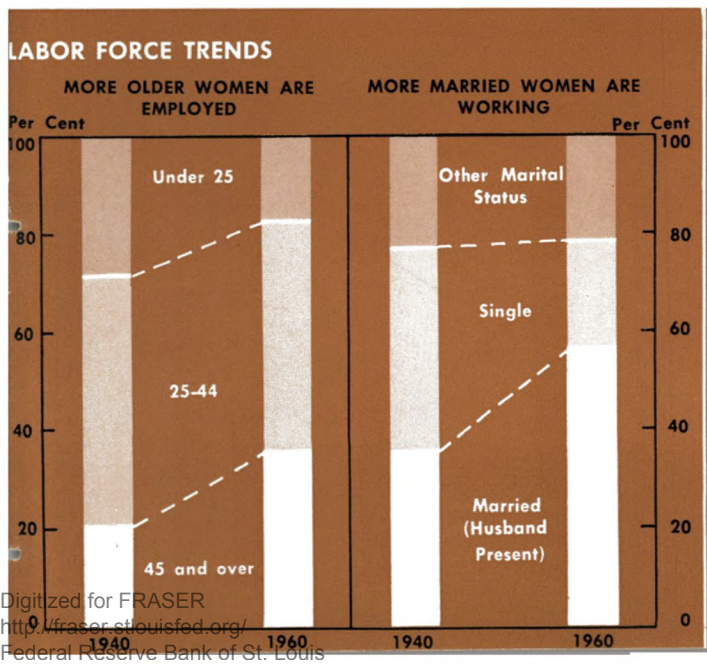


Table I

Number of Women Workers in the District, By State 1960

	Number in Labor Force	Percent of all workers	Percent of all women[1]	Percent change from 1940
United States	22,409,760	32	34	74
Fifth District	2,109,072	33	36	69
Maryland	399,330	32	36	100
District of Columbia	162,616	44	52	23
West Virginia	162,446	28	24	46
Virginia	473,734	31	34	99
North Carolina	600,051	34	37	71
South Carolina	310,895	35	38	45

[1] 14 years of age and over.

Source: U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

was greater than that for all women workers. The difference was least in the District of Columbia where the largest proportion of men and women worked in the same three major occupational groupings. The difference between the median earnings for men and for women was the largest in West Virginia, where most women worked in the clerical, professional, and services fields and most men worked as operatives, craftsmen, or managers.

In Maryland, the District of Columbia, and North Carolina the highest paid occupational group for men was that including managers, officials, and proprietors. In the other three states the professional group had the highest median earnings. For women, the professional group was the highest paid in each of the District areas. The majority of women professionals were employed as nurses, teachers, social workers, or librarians. Within these selected occupations, the highest paid women were secondary teachers in Maryland, the District of Columbia, West Virginia, and North Carolina; librarians in Virginia; and welfare workers in South Carolina. In each area, men received higher salaries than women in the teaching profession. This was also true for social workers except in the District of Columbia where women were paid more on the average than men. Comparative data were not available for nurses and librarians.

Labor Legislation Recent Federal and state labor legislation relating to minimum wage, equal pay, and sex discrimination has opened new avenues for advancement to the working woman.

In 1961, the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, commonly called the wage and hour law, was extended to cover approximately 3.6 million additional workers including around 2.2 million in retail trade, a major employer of women in both the District and the country as a whole. The 1961 amendment provided for wage increases at stated intervals until the minimum rate of $1.25 per hour became fully effective this September. The present Federal law covers approximately one half of the nation's 60 million nonfarm workers.

Legislation further extending the coverage and raising the present minimum hourly rate was proposed in both the Senate and the House at this session of Congress. The more liberal House bill would have taken in an estimated 7.9 million additional workers, including agricultural workers for the first time. The Administration predicts that legislation increasing the minimum wage and broadening the coverage will be passed in 1966.

Minimum wage legislation began at the state level with the 1912 enactment of such a law in Massachusetts. Presently 39 jurisdictions, including the District of Columbia, Maryland, and North Carolina have minimum wage laws. Those in Maryland and North Carolina apply to men, women, and minors, and the District of Columbia law relates to women and minors only. The year 1965 was particularly significant since Maryland enacted its first law in this area and North Carolina raised its statutory rate.

The concept of equal pay for equal work also started at the state level with the passage of such a law in 1919 by Michigan and Montana. Currently, 29 states, including Maryland and West Virginia, have provisions in their labor laws which require (with certain exceptions) that men and women performing equal work must receive equal pay. The Federal Equal Pay Act was passed in June 1963 and became effective in July 1964. This law is an amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act, and its provisions apply generally to establishments subject to the Act.

Table II

OCCUPATIONAL MIX OF EMPLOYED WOMEN

1960

Major Occupational Group	Fifth District	Md.	D. C.	Va.	W. Va.	N. C.	S. C.
	Percentage Distribution						
All groups	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Clerical and kindred workers	25	34	38	29	24	18	17
Operatives and kindred workers	19	13	4	15	11	28	26
Professional, technical, and kindred workers	13	13	14	14	16	11	11
Service workers, excluding private household	11	12	14	12	16	10	9
Private household workers	11	8	11	11	8	12	17
Sales workers	7	8	4	8	11	6	6
Managers, officials, and proprietors, excluding farm	3	3	3	3	4	3	3
Farm laborers and foremen	2	..	..	1	..	4	5
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Other*	7	7	11	6	7	7	6

*Includes women with occupation not reported, women workers classified as farmers and farm managers, laborers (except farm), and miners.

Details will not necessarily add to the totals because of rounding.

Source: U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Table III

MEDIAN EARNINGS IN 1959 OF EXPERIENCED CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE

By States, Major Occupational Groups and Sex

MARYLAND			
Women	$2,413	Men	$4,877
Clerical	3,246	Craftsmen	5,278
Professional	4,085	Operatives	4,231
Operatives	2,246	Professional	7,334
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA			
Women	$3,288	Men	$4,176
Clerical	4,163	Professional	6,559
Services	1,988	Clerical	4,369
Professional	5,012	Services	3,034
VIRGINIA			
Women	$2,004	Men	$3,818
Clerical	3,017	Craftsmen	4,596
Operatives	2,074	Operatives	3,236
Professional	3,494	Managerial	6,401
WEST VIRGINIA			
Women	$1,883	Men	$4,213
Clerical	2,586	Operatives	4,182
Professional	3,316	Craftsmen	4,946
Services	1,010	Managerial	5,821
NORTH CAROLINA			
Women	$1,820	Men	$2,974
Operatives	2,207	Operatives	2,888
Clerical	2,542	Craftsmen	3,624
Priv. Households	597	Farmers	1,313
SOUTH CAROLINA			
Women	$1,583	Men	$2,856
Operatives	2,289	Operatives	2,842
Priv. Households	542	Craftsmen	3,772
Clerical	2,493	Laborers	1,565

Note: Major occupational groups are listed in order of number employed. For complete titles of these groups see Table II.

Source: U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

Another Federal legislative advance benefiting the working woman is the provision in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 barring discrimination in employment because of sex, except for "bona fide" occupational reasons. Title VII, which became effective in July 1965, covers in general private employers, labor organizations, and employment agencies, including the United States Employment Service system. In its first effective year, it covers employers and unions with 100 or more workers. This number reduces by increments of 25 until by July 1968, organizations with 25 or more employees or members will be covered.

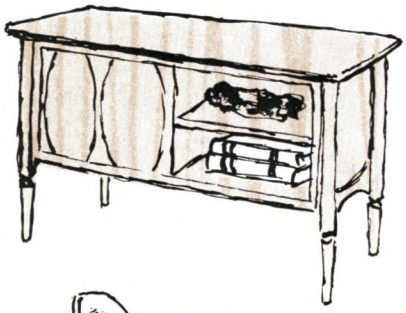
So far the Act has raised numerous questions and provided few answers on women's job rights. The sex provision was not debated before a congressional committee and the Act itself does not spell out what is meant by the exception—"bona fide" occupational reasons. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has issued only two rulings on this portion of Title VII. One required that newspapers help-wanted ads must specify that jobs are open to qualified members of either sex and the second ruling specified that companies cannot have a policy requiring women to quit work when they marry unless the same policy is applied to men.

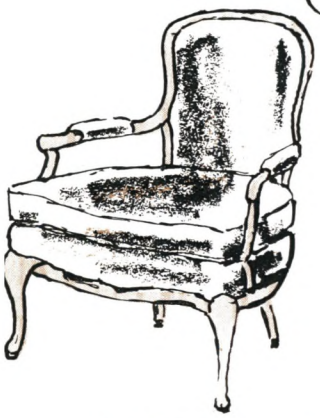
The impact of the sex provision in Title VII will depend to some extent on how actively women themselves push for new positions. Only a small proportion of the complaints on employment discrimination now pending before the Commission have been brought by women. The Federal Act provides that the grievance be first brought before a state agency if the state has a fair employment practices law.

Until the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, only two states had included sex in addition to race, color, religion, and national origin in fair employment practices laws. At the present writing, eight additional jurisdictions, including Maryland and the District of Columbia, prohibit employment discrimination based on sex.

A Challenge to Women Although working women are in the minority, their number is growing spectacularly and at a higher rate than that of men. The proportion of households with two pay checks is on the increase, as a greater proportion of women with children of school age return to the labor force. The social barrier against a wife and mother working is fast disappearing. Time is also gradually erasing the distinction between jobs traditionally for men and those traditionally for women. Technological advance is creating new jobs where only training and capabilities count. There is a shortage of highly skilled and trained workers. New legislation at the Federal and state levels requires equal employment opportunities for men and women. These factors have created a favorable climate for the advancement of women in the working world. To a certain extent, however, the future employment gains of women will depend on how actively they prepare themselves for and seek better jobs. For women who are willing to meet today's challenge by accepting fully the responsibilities of higher positions, the future is indeed bright.

5TH DISTRICT FURNITURE





Four times a year—January, April, July, and October—the town of High Point, North Carolina is invaded by hordes of furniture buyers, for it is here that many of the nation's major furniture manufacturers unveil their new lines. While walking through approximately 23 acres of showrooms, buyers for retail stores choose the furniture from which consumers ultimately make their selections.

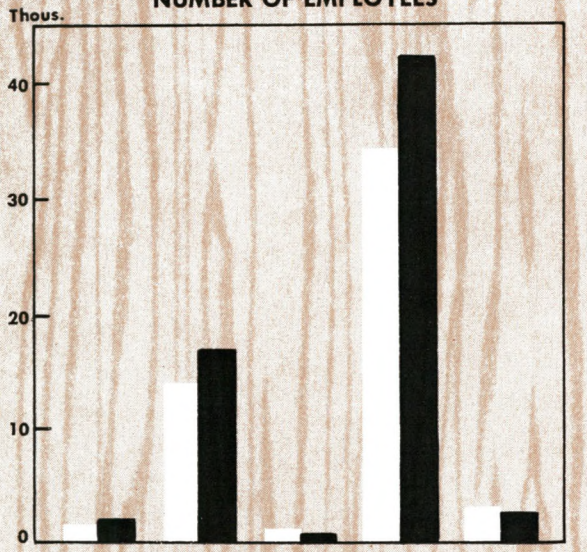
The latest entries in a variety of styles—Contemporary, Early American, Traditional, French Provincial, Italian Provincial, Mediterranean, and others—are introduced at the High Point market. The Mediterranean is the big newcomer. It has been the fastest-growing style in the last few years, and one retail panel predicts an increase of over 50% in sales of this style over the next two years.

Within a 200-mile radius of High Point, there is the greatest concentration of wooden furniture manufacturing in the world. Virginia and the Carolinas produce almost 60% of the nation's wooden bedroom furniture and over half the wooden dining room furniture. Among the 50 states, North Carolina ranks first and Virginia second in these two major categories. North Carolina is also first in the production of upholstered wooden household furniture, and in 1963 accounted for almost 20% of total United States shipments of this kind of furniture.

The groundwork for this large and fast-growing industry was laid in the Depression years. At that time, Southern furniture manufacturers were noted primarily as mass-producers of low-priced furniture for local markets which had a limited capacity to take higher-priced items. Steadily improving performance in these markets allowed expansion and modernization of production facilities, and as returning prosperity broadened the market for higher-priced furniture, Southern producers moved into more sophisticated lines. Today, producers in the Fifth District turn out furniture in all price ranges, from highest to lowest, and employ mass marketing techniques designed to reach a national market.

NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS

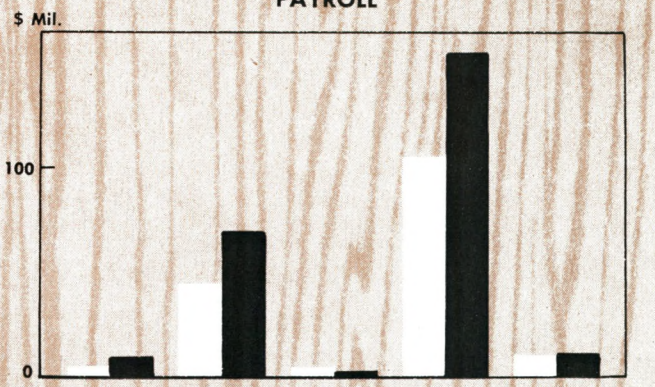
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES



MAN-HOURS WORKED

Source: Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

PAYROLL



VALUE OF SHIPMENTS

Source: Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

the HOME FURNISHINGS

The homes in which Americans live vary from cold water flats to palatial penthouses and from small, roughhewn cabins to white-columned mansions. The average American home is neither cabin nor castle, but its furnishings must be considered luxurious when compared with the decor of average homes throughout the rest of the world. The typical family, in its effort to translate the fruits of labor into something solid, is most eager to discard outmoded furnishings and substitute new appliances or furniture. To keep up with this demand, the home furnishings industry must be constantly aware of changing tastes and innovations in laborsaving devices.

Last year consumers in the United States spent almost $25 billion on furnishings for their homes. This figure represents outlays for durable furnishings only and excludes the cost of nondurable commodities such as household supplies, and services such as household utilities and domestic help. Included in the figure are purchases of furniture; kitchen and other household appliances; china, glassware, tableware, utensils, and similar items.

Growth As indicated by the chart on page 9, spending for home furnishings rose steadily from $14.1 billion in 1950 to $24.7 billion in 1964. While the chart also indicates that spending for automobiles and parts has increased at a more rapid pace, there have been several marked declines in such expenditures since 1950. Spending for furnishings, on the other hand, has increased fairly steadily with only a few periods of slackening in the rate of growth.

During times of prosperity spending for household goods is closely geared to personal income levels. The housewife quickly forgets her Depression maxim of "use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without." Since World War II there has been no economic downturn severe enough to reverse the general expansion of the home furnishings industry. As long as personal income continues to rise at a steady rate, the home furnishings industry should continue to flourish.

Sales In 1964 the Department of Commerce estimated sales made by furniture and home furnishings stores at $8.5 billion. In addition, household appliance and radio-television outlet sales were estimated at $4.6 billion. These figures were derived from a sample of retail outlets specializing in those areas and do not include sales made by department stores. Even so, sales of furniture and appliance stores increased 13% from the 1963 level, slightly more than double the percentage increase in total retail sales.

Furniture Survey Recently the Bureau of Labor Statistics published summary results of its 1960-1961 Survey of Consumer Expenditures among families and single consumers in a sample of cities selected to represent the entire Urban United States. Results of the survey indicate that furniture accounted for the largest percentage of the home furnishings dollar (approximately 30%).

Although the bare necessities for housekeeping are usually found in the kitchen and bedroom, the largest portion of the furniture budget was spent on living room decor. Second in importance was the bedroom with the dining room a distant third. Over two thirds of the average home furnishings budget was spent on living room and bedroom furniture leaving only one third for dining room, kitchen, outdoor, and other minor furniture items. As would be expected, the higher the income level of consumers, the greater the amount spent on furniture.

Appliances The survey indicates that the average consumer spent the second largest percentage of his home furnishings dollar on major appliances. The refrigerator was the most important single unit fol-

INDUSTRY

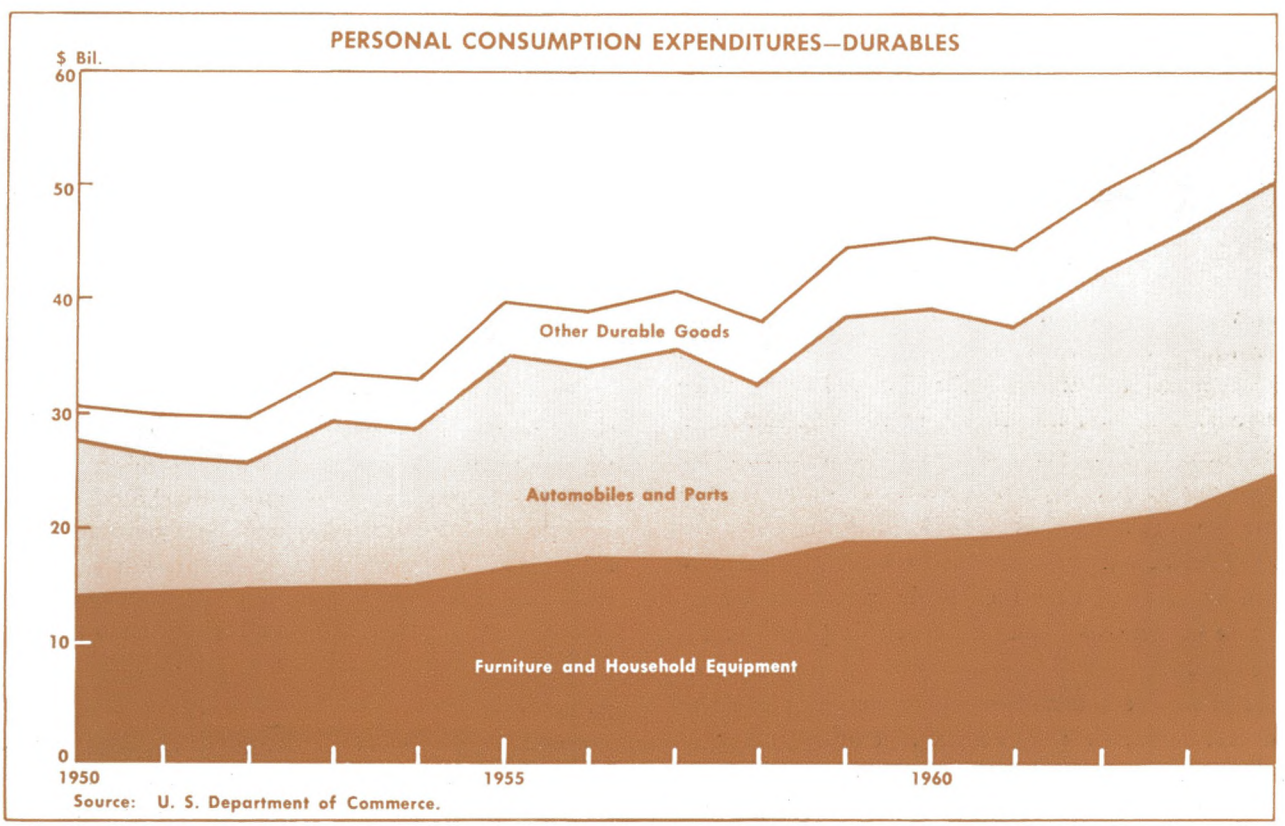
lowed by such items as washing machines, stoves, vacuum cleaners, air conditioners, sewing machines, and numerous others.

The consumer in the lowest income category spent the second largest portion of his furnishings budget primarily on essential appliances such as refrigerators, washing machines, and stoves. In the $5,000-$7,500 income class, however, expenditures for less essential appliances such as home freezers, vacuum cleaners, air conditioners, clothes dryers, and sewing machines gained in importance.

The middle income family's average expenditure for appliances was hardly higher in absolute terms than that of the lowest income bracket. This is probably because by the time they have reached this income level, families have satisfied most of their major appliance needs. This group's average expenditure for dishwashers, however, was twice that of the lowest income class.

Consumers in the $10,000-$15,000 income bracket spent a considerably smaller portion of their home furnishings budget on major appliances. Although the most important single appliance was still the refrigerator, the average expenditure for refrigerators was only slightly above that for washing machines including washer-dryer combinations. As would be expected, the average expenditure on appliances by the highest income group ($15,000 and over) was considerably larger in absolute terms than for the other groups. Expenditures for refrigerators and stoves showed sizable increases suggesting that this group was an important factor in the market for the newer and fancier appliances. Also, there was a considerable increment in purchases of dishwashers and air conditioners in this income bracket.

Household Textiles and Housewares Household textiles constituted the third largest portion of the



home furnishings dollar except in the highest income bracket where floor coverings were slightly more important. In the lowest income bracket, the largest percentage of these purchases was for blankets, sheets, and towels—things which are considered necessities. As income increased, more was spent on items such as curtains, draperies, and tablecloths.

In the housewares category, the largest percentage of expenditures in the lower income groups were for cooking utensils and cleaning equipment. However, as income rose, these items became less important and flatware, china, and glassware increased their share of housewares expenditures.

Floor Coverings Expenditures for floor coverings averaged about 10% of the home furnishings budget for all consumer units. Some pundits claim they can judge a family's income by its carpets. The relationship does not hold in all instances, but there is perhaps some basis for the claim.

Expenditures for carpets were relatively unimportant in the lower income classes. Wall-to-wall carpeting was most popular with families in the middle income brackets. In the highest income bracket, wall-to-wall carpeting expenditures were moderately heavy but the average expenditure for hard surface floor coverings more than doubled the average for the preceding group. This was largely due to the group's purchases of higher-priced hard surface products such as vinyl and ceramic tile.

Prospects for Future Growth Since many home furnishings are relatively durable, the health of the industry depends largely on the rate of new household formation. Each household buys many items which it will never replace and others which wear out very slowly, but new households provide a market for nearly every type of furnishing and appliance.

According to Bureau of the Census figures, there were 57.3 million households in the United States in March 1965. Over a million new households were established in the last year. Projections indicate that the number of households will rise by over 6 million between now and 1970 making an increase of over 10 million for the decade with a further increase of over 13 million households predicted for the 1970's.

The most significant gains are expected to be in the formation of new families. Family formation has shown considerably less growth since the late 1940's than the number of individuals living alone. From now on, however, household formation probably will be dominated by the increasing number of young people reaching their late teens. As they marry and establish new households, conditions should be favorable for long-term growth in the demand for home furnishings.

Changing Living Patterns Today's consumer is considerably different from the typical consumer of a few years ago. There seems to be a growing emphasis on mobility and change. Furnishings are needed which can be transported from place to place easily and inexpensively. Some people feel that many of the major household furnishings may be rented in the future to facilitate this growing mobility. Furnishings are no longer purchased to last forever. The modern homemaker wants a fresh look at about ten-year intervals.

The taste level of the American consumer has been rising due to a higher level of educational attainment, wider circulation of books and magazines, and more opportunities for travel. More money is being spent for higher-quality items. The new trade-up economy is especially noticeable in furniture and home furnishings. Style has joined price, comfort, and durability as the most important factors in the homemaker's choice of furniture. Magazines with home furnishings ideas are making American homemakers more fashion conscious by stressing the importance of keeping in step with the times. Homes again are becoming more spacious with formal dining rooms replacing nooks in the kitchen and elaborate living rooms required in addition to livable family rooms. Everything in the modern home must be coordinated—from draperies to carpets and furniture to accessories.

Conclusion The outlook for the home furnishings industry appears bright. Besides the rising number of families, increased education, and changing tastes which have just been discussed, other factors contribute to the optimistic outlook. The pocketbook of the American public is bulging. More income will be available for making life easier and more enjoyable. Worn-out and obsolete household goods will be replaced by newer, more modern items —frost-free refrigerators, self-cleaning ovens, stereophonic high-fidelity music systems, tape recorders, and the biggest item of all—color television sets. All of these factors increase the prospects for a bright future in the home furnishings industry.

THE FIFTH DISTRICT

CROP PRODUCTION PROSPECTS

The year 1965 will be remembered as a year of ups and downs in District crop production if recent estimates of the U. S. Department of Agriculture are realized. Weather appears to have been the prime factor producing these changes from a year ago. For some crops it has played the role of benefactor; for others it has been the villain. But acreage cuts resulting chiefly from participation in the various Government programs have also played their part.

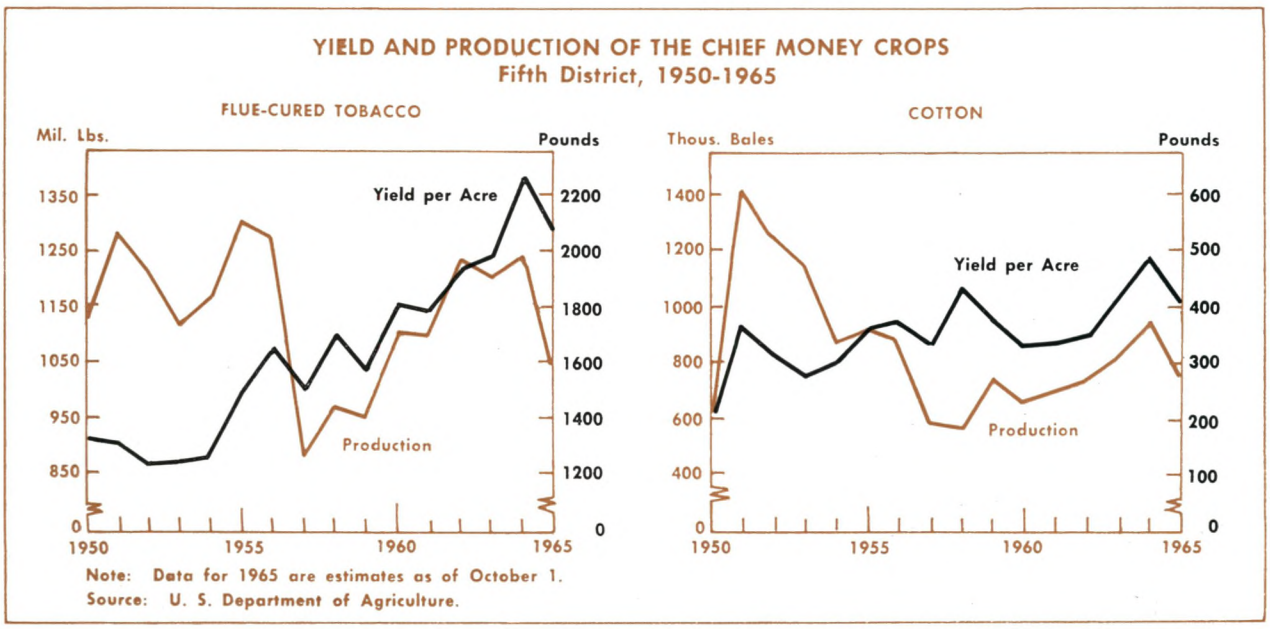
Total acreage of the principal crops for harvest in 1965 is expected to be 2% smaller than in 1964 and some 5% below the 1959-63 average. Though there is actually little difference from last year in total crop acreage, there are some significant shifts in acreage among the various crops.

Drought plagued farmers for the third consecutive summer in some counties of northern Virginia and in adjoining portions of Maryland and West Virginia, while there was too much rain in much of the cotton producing area. But with a generally good growing season in other sections, record yields per acre are anticipated for soybeans, corn, peanuts, Maryland tobacco, wheat, and oats, and the second highest per-acre yields ever recorded are expected for both flue-cured and burley tobacco and for barley.

On balance, production gains over last year ranging from slight to spectacular are indicated for many major District crops. Only cotton, tobacco, and small grains show significant decreases from 1964.

Smaller Cotton Crop Cotton, second only to flue-cured tobacco as a crop income producer and estimated at 734,000 bales, is 22% smaller than last year's exceptionally good crop and only slightly larger than the average for 1959-63. Though cotton allotments this year were the same as in 1964, there was somewhat heavier participation in the domestic allotment program. District cotton acreage is thus about 5% under a year ago and 8% below average. Combined with this acreage cut are expectations for sharply reduced yields per acre, presently estimated at 395 pounds—91 pounds under last year's slightly more than a bale-per-acre average.

Though this year's crop is expected to be smaller than in 1964 in all District cotton producing states, production comparisons with a year ago will vary widely among the states. In South Carolina where weather permitted generally effective control of insects, production is estimated to be only 10% smaller than a year earlier and well above average. But in North Carolina where frequent, and sometimes ex-



cessive, rains limited the effectiveness of poisons, boll weevil infestation on September 1 was reported to be at the highest level since 1950, and this year's cotton crop is expected to be 40% below a year ago and well below average.

Less Tobacco Combined output of all types of District tobaccos will be 15% smaller than last year if present indications materialize. Except for a slight increase in Virginia fire-cured leaf, production of all types will be down. For burley, Southern Maryland, and Virginia sun-cured tobaccos, the reduced production will result entirely from acreage cuts.

The District's flue-cured crop, its chief money crop and largest farm income producer, is expected to total 1,042 million pounds. If realized, 1965 output will be down 16% from 1964 and 7% from the 1959-63 average. Most of this reduction can be attributed to the acreage-poundage program adopted this year, which is designed to limit the volume of tobacco that can be marketed and to encourage production of quality tobacco. The 1965 yield per acre, estimated at 2,076 pounds, is second only to 1964's record 2,254 pounds and compares with the 1959-63 average of 1,813 pounds. During the marketing season thus far, bright leaf prices have averaged considerably higher than in the same period last year, and the quantity of tobacco placed under Government loan has been substantially smaller. Quality of the crop is also reported to be much better.

More Soybeans and Peanuts Soybean producers are looking forward to a record-breaking crop. Nearly 20% above 1964 and more than one and one-half times 1959-63 average production, the large crop is the result of a new peak in per-acre yields and an all-time high acreage for harvest. Soybean acreage, in fact, is 13% above a year ago and one-third larger than average.

Peanut farmers are expecting a 13% larger crop than in 1964 and one that promises to be 20% above the recent five-year average. Acreage for harvest is slightly larger than a year ago, and yields per acre are expected to average 2,240 pounds. A new high, this compares with last year's average of 2,027 pounds and, if realized, will mark the fourth successive year that peanut yields have surpassed a ton per acre. Quality of the crop is said to be good, though kernel sizes are smaller than last year.

Larger Fruit-and-Nut Crops District orchardists as a group enjoyed a generally good year on the production front, although Maryland and West Virginia peach and apple growers had somewhat smaller crops than last year. With this year's peach crops in the Carolinas sharply above last year's freeze-damaged crops, total District peach production in 1965 is estimated to have been more than three times as large as in 1964 and 5% above average. Harvest of the District's commercial apple crop is expected to be about one-tenth larger than last season's, although in some sections the size of the apples has been reduced by dry weather.

The District's grape and pecan crops, produced only in the Carolinas, are also expected to be larger. Anticipated grape production is 20% above a year ago and more than double the 1959-63 average. Output of pecans is indicated to be more than three and one-third times last year's extremely short crop and some 50% greater than average.

Hay and Feed Grain Prospects With District drought conditions not as widespread as in 1963 and 1964, total hay production in 1965 is expected to be larger than in both recent years despite a slight decline in acreage. The crop as of October 1 gave indications of being about 4% bigger than last year's but somewhat smaller than average.

Total feed grain production now shaping up gives promise of being around one-tenth larger than last year, despite farmers' heavier participation in the feed grain program and the consequent reductions in acreage from year-ago levels. The indicated increase is due to two factors: (1) the significant gain in the size of the corn crop, and (2) the record or near record yields per acre that have helped to offset the acreage cuts of each of the feed grains. Actually, output of each of the small grains—oats, barley, and sorghum grain—is expected to be down from last year. But the corn crop, estimated at 189 million bushels, will hit a new production peak, 14% above 1964 and one-fourth larger than average.

Other Prospective Changes Despite 1965's record per-acre yields, the heavy signup in the wheat program produced a sizable cut in acreage. The resulting wheat crop was about one-sixth smaller than in 1964 and 15% below average. Slightly lower yields and a similar reduction in acreage produced a rye crop around one-fifth below a year ago though one-fourth larger than average.

Farmers harvested substantially larger crops of late spring and early summer Irish potatoes and a somewhat larger late summer crop. Total District output for the year was estimated to be up 18% from a year ago. Harvest of an expected 13% bigger crop of sweet potatoes than last year is well underway. The Virginia harvest is about the same as in 1964, but significant increases are anticipated in other District states.