

STREET BEGGING
IN ST. LOUIS

Bureau for Homeless Men
St. Louis, Missouri

S T R E E T B E G G I N G

I N S T. L O U I S

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Including a Report of a Fact-Finding
Survey of Street Begging Made During
November and December, 1936

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B U R E A U F O R H O M E L E S S M E N

S T. L O U I S, M I S S O U R I

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FOREWORD

The survey of street begging reported in Part II of this pamphlet is the first of this kind ever made in St. Louis. Previous anti-begging campaigns were based upon the casual observations and opinions of committee and staff members and any changes in plan were based upon workers' reports and day by day observations. The surprising results of this survey show how inaccurate and misleading such methods can be.

We had difficulty securing competent personnel and because of this were unable to complete several other portions of the survey included in the original plans. The neighborhood survey should be extended; a study should be made of official records of arrests and convictions and of peddlers licenses; and other similar studies are needed before we know all there is to know about Street Begging in St. Louis. It is possible that we may find ways to complete the survey in the near future; if so, a supplementary report will be issued.

This report makes no attempt to recommend action or to lay out a program; it merely recounts the facts learned with an historical summary to furnish the necessary background. A theoretical discussion of the problem would also be of value, but this alone would be sufficient material for an entire volume. We hope that some one will some day write it.

G.M.G.

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PART I.AN HISTORICAL SUMMARY OF ANTI-BEGGING WORK
IN ST. LOUIS

One of the functions of the Bureau for Homeless Men almost from the time of its organization has been the control and prevention of begging. In the past eleven years some very intensive and profitable work has been done on this perplexing problem that in view of recent complaints that begging is increasing might well be reviewed to see what has been learned.

The Community Council of St. Louis in October, 1925, requested that the Bureau for Homeless Men form a committee to handle the beggar problem. As formed, this committee consisted of the Chief of Police, two municipal judges, Chief Probation Officer of the Municipal Courts, Director of Public Welfare, Superintendent of the Workhouse, Deputy City Comptroller, Associate Secretary of the Church Federation, Secretary of the Charities Bureau of the Chamber of Commerce, an attorney, representatives of the case working agencies, Publicity Secretary of the Community Council, and the President of the Bureau for Homeless Men. There were also some influential and interested citizens. A case committee was appointed to hear special cases presented by the agencies. This Citizens' Anti-Begging Committee, as it was called, was gradually enlarged to include the Secretary to the Mayor, Police Judge Advocate, Associate City Councilor, Judge of the Court of Criminal Correction Division #2, and Chief Probation Officer of the Juvenile Court.

In December, 1925, the Mayor invited the Committee to meet with him in his office and plan its work. It was decided at this meeting to attack this distinctly urban problem on a case by case basis and the following

plan was inaugurated:

1. The Police to arrest all those found begging upon the streets.

2. The police court to fine them and send them to the workhouse.

3. The probation officer to be notified and in turn to notify the Citizens' Anti-Begging Committee.

4. The Committee, using case workers borrowed from various agencies, to investigate each case and work out a plan for treatment.

5. If a client accepted the treatment of the Committee, his parole to be recommended. This parole, however, to be forfeited in case he failed to observe its conditions.

6. The probation office to appoint such representatives of the social agencies of the city serving as workers for the Committee to act as deputy probation officers as the number of arrested beggars made necessary.

7. Exceptions to be made in the case of the blind in that they were not to be sent to the workhouse, but turned over directly to the probation officer.

The Executive Secretary of the Bureau served as Secretary of this Anti-Begging Committee and directed its work. The first campaign was from December, 1925, to April, 1926. This plan being followed closely, it was definitely shown that beggars did have resources, and could be handled by the case work method. The regular work of the agencies became so heavy, however, that they could no longer lend workers to the committee and the campaign was discontinued until the following December, 1926. Similar campaigns were then inaugurated and continued through the winters of 1926-1927, and 1927-1928. The experience of these three campaigns demonstrated the need for:

1. A year around campaign
2. A centralized plan
3. Full time case workers

It was decided to meet this need, and a full time case worker-secretary, working under the committee but paid by and acting as a staff member of the Bureau, was employed in September, 1928. This centralization eliminated much of the confusion between the agencies and municipal authorities and served to keep the work operating on an even basis.

An educational campaign was waged through practically all avenues of publicity in the winter of 1928-29, including the distribution of 12,000 pamphlets entitled: "Three Things A Policeman Doesn't Like To Do." The committee was virtually inactive during 1930 owing to the excessive demands on the social agencies. In April, 1931, activities were resumed because of complaints of citizens regarding the increased numbers of beggars. The relief division of the Citizens' Committee on Relief and Employment, administering public relief, had also received complaints and requested that the committee take immediate action. At this time another publicity pamphlet entitled: "This Beggar Is Different" was issued.

The committee decided to work under the same plan with the addition of another full time case worker. The Chief of Police also detailed a special officer to work with the Committee. The general order of arrest already in force was not rescinded but was allowed to remain as supplementary to the work of the special officer. This officer gave the beggar a chance to accept the services of the case workers of the committee in utilizing the resources available for his rehabilitation, but arrested those who refused this offer of aid. It was found that this policy of kindness with firmness was fairly successful.

Arrangements were made with the Mayor's Secretary who issued permits for all monthly peddlers licenses,

whereby peddlers who used them as a camouflage for begging would be refused a renewal upon proof of misuse. In this way pressure was put on some of the difficult cases who were wise enough to manipulate their licenses in such a way that convictions were difficult to obtain. Regular "surveys" of the downtown section were also made by the case worker and the special officer to pick up any beggars found operating.

The first records which indicated the size of the problem were kept in 1928 and 1929, at which time the average case load was 49 cases per month and the case work-secretary of the committee was used to assist with the regular work of the Bureau for Homeless Men as well as the handling of beggars. For the first three months of 1933 the case load increased to 432 cases per month, including all street warnings and curbstome interviews.

After a reorganization of the Bureau in the fall of 1933, the Anti-Begging Department, along with all other departments of the Bureau, came in for very close scrutiny as to its place in the total picture and also the methods and thoroughness with which it was covering its field. It was found that the so called "beggar case load" was very much over-emphasized. For instance, the figure of 432 cases per month in the first three months of 1933 by actual examination proved to contain only about one-third this many active cases. The others were inactive, being held for observation, or consisted only of notations that the man had been seen on the street. It was also found that "once a beggar, always a beggar" was very much true in this case load. If a man stated to a worker of the Bureau that he had pan-handled at any time in recent months, even though it was only one offense, he was immediately transferred to the Beggar Department for attention. The mere fact that a single man has at some time or other requested a dime on the street or a sandwich at someone's back door

does not make him a beggar in the true sense of the word. There seemed to be no clear cut distinction between the one-time panhandler and the confirmed beggar and the entirely different problem each represented. For statistical purposes they were all part of the case load.

When the case load was finally cleared of all dead wood that had accumulated in it over the years, it was found that only about 50 to 60 cases of confirmed beggars existed. Many of these, however, had not begged to the worker's knowledge, in the past six months or a year. As a result of this, by the end of 1933, the begging work was being handled by one case worker, who spent his mornings in court and his afternoons at the office or visiting. His case load varied from 60 to 80 cases. The type of treatment that these cases received was in most instances exactly the same as given men in the Bureau Mass Treatment Department except that the amount of relief was generally higher.

In the meantime changes were taking place in other aspects of the Anti-Begging program. In the early days of the program, as pointed out in the foregoing history of its organization, the plan was that of a continuous police drive upon the beggars with the case workers, first borrowed and then employed full time, coming into the picture after the beggar's case had been heard by the courts. The job of keeping the streets clear of beggars was placed upon the police department with regular surveys by the Anti-Begging workers to assist them. The police were to perform their function of stamping out this misdemeanor by arresting the beggars and the committee was to furnish case work service for each beggar so arrested. It was believed that through this case work the Bureau could convince the police and the public of the fact that beggars were such through choice rather than necessity.

The addition of a plain clothes man to the Anti-

Begging Department in 1931 did a great deal to cut down this close cooperation with the Police Department. It is a well known fact in police circles that as soon as a special squad of men is detailed to any special branch of crime, the regular patrolman ceases to pay any attention to that part of his job. The result has always been - "Let the traffic squad attend to that." This was true with the special patrolman on the Anti-Begging staff. The general police force knew there was such a man and they could see no reason why they should bother with beggars. The regular patrolman was reluctant to arrest a beggar because it was necessary for him to appear in court during his time off duty to testify. Also there was little "glory" or recognition to be obtained from arresting beggars. The result was that the entire work of keeping beggars off the streets was thrown upon the special patrolman and the Anti-Begging workers.

We also find an even more drastic change in the attitude of the courts. The Anti-Begging worker in the police court served merely as a stop gap for the workhouse and the court. Court procedure required that any man paroled be paroled to the Probation Department and not to an outsider. However, in the case of begging it had merely become a formality. All arrangements were carried on with the Bureau's workers; the only contact with the Probation Department was that of record. Practically no beggars, even the ones having a long record of frequent arrests, were sentenced to the workhouse. They were paroled with a warning and turned over to the Bureau for relief. Even if they were sentenced or fined the maximum was \$100, which meant 33 days in the workhouse. As a general rule it was \$50 or 18 days. This was no deterrent whatever to a confirmed beggar but merely took him out of circulation for two weeks or a month if he served the sentence. The workhouse, on the other hand, was continually complaining against those men being sent to them. Their usual complaint was that they

were too old or too crippled to work and it simply meant one more man for them to care for. There are no statistics available, but our estimate would be that only one man in twenty ever went to the workhouse.

All of this resulted in a complete change of emphasis so that instead of the case workers being an aid to the court by offering case work service to beggars, the court was doing the case workers and the committee a "favor" by paroling the beggars to them. The courts and the beggars also came to believe that such a parole constituted a mandate by the court that the beggar was to receive relief without question. If he did not receive any relief requested he threatened to go out on the streets and beg again. When this did happen and he was brought back into court as a repeater, the case workers were often severely criticized by the court for not carrying out the instructions of the court. As these trials were frequently broadcasted from the court room, the agency was often placed in an embarrassing and undeserved light before clients and public.

Beggar clients were known throughout the Bureau as "preferred" clients and there were many cases in which relief recipients arranged to be caught panhandling in order to be eligible for the "beggar department", and so receive more relief. Relief statistics for the various departments of the Bureau show that for a long time the Beggar Department had the heaviest per capita relief cost. A large part of this was for clothing, yet beggar clients were notoriously ragged.

As these developments in the Beggar Problem and the difficulties that had arisen were analyzed, three things became more and more apparent. They were:

1. The Anti-Begging Program got off to a good and proper start. It had the support, through

the Citizens' Anti-Begging Committee, of the leading organizations, city officials, and business men of the community; they were all working together for the solution of a perplexing civic problem; they succeeded in evolving a sound, workable plan, one which was successful through at least the first two winters of operation. There can be no doubt on this point. The tremendous reduction in the number of beggars and the enthusiastic response and hearty cooperation from all organizations bear ample witness to this success.

2. At some point in its development the Program failed. There can be little doubt of this. Somewhere between 1928 and 1933, the Anti-Begging Program failed to meet the challenge and started on the downward trail. It is difficult to say just when this occurred. It is possible that the fatal mistake was made in 1928 when the committee changed from borrowed to a salaried case worker. Prior to that time, the use of borrowed workers had forced the cooperation of all organizations and officials and had made of the program a community undertaking, but with the change to a full time staff this cooperation was lost. Anti-Begging work was then a function of the Bureau for Homeless Men only. The advent of the depression with its unprecedented case loads fostered this tendency on the part of other social agencies to dump the entire job on the Bureau.

Another factor that undoubtedly contributed to the destruction of the Anti-Begging program was the failure of those responsible for planning to recognize the need for a change in program. When the Citizens' Anti-Begging Committee was

organized in 1925 it had two immediate goals. One was to meet an emergency and rid the city of a horde of beggars, the other was to demonstrate to the public and the authorities the value of case work methods in dealing with beggars. Both these goals were attained by the end of the second winter campaign and it was then that the plans should have been changed and the efforts directed to a more permanent set-up. Instead the only change was to employ a full time staff; the plan of operation remained the same throughout the life of the work.

Control of begging is first a police and then a court function. The social agency should appear only when relief is necessary or as a leader in pointing out the need for or in demonstrating the method and value of discharging that function. St. Louis agencies demonstrated successfully for two years and then continued to demonstrate on a basis of descending returns for seven more years.

3. The Anti-Begging Program of the Bureau had reached an impasse. By 1934 it was apparent that the work was at a dead end, that it was accomplishing nothing by its current methods and that it would be exceedingly difficult to effect any satisfactory changes.

It was eventually decided that the best way to put the program back on the proper basis would be to discontinue all begging work for a period of one or two years, allow all the existing misunderstandings and misconceptions to die out, and then re-establish it on a new plan. Accordingly, in the fall of 1934, the Anti-Begging Department was eliminated, the representative at the police courts was withdrawn, and the beggar cases

distributed through the regular case load. Relief to beggars was continued, of course, but they were handled as part of the regular load with no discrimination for or against them because of their illegal acts.

The only active anti-begging work since that time was the issue, during the winter of 1935-1936 of a pamphlet entitled "When You Give, It Hurts". This pamphlet points out that giving to beggars "hurts you, the beggar, and your community" by wasting your money, encouraging the beggar to a parasitical mode of living, and diverting the charitable resources of the community to illegal channels. Numerous talks on the subject were also made before various organizations, in an attempt to educate the public to an intelligent attitude toward begging and beggars so that the income of the beggars would be cut off at its source.

This was the situation in the fall of 1936 when numerous complaints from citizens, organizations, and the Community Council were received that begging was on the increase. The Committee on Begging of the Board of Directors discussed the question and decided that the only sound way to resume the anti-begging work would be to start a fact-finding survey.

PART II.

A REPORT OF THE FACT-FINDING SURVEY OF
BEGGING IN ST. LOUIS

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER, 1936

CHAPTER 1.
INTRODUCTIONGeneral Statement

The purpose of the survey was to gather as much information as possible regarding the prevalence of begging in the city, the number of beggars, their approximate income, and types of appeals. One surveyor was employed from Nov. 17 to Dec. 15 and one from Dec. 12 to 31. The first spent about two weeks in the downtown district, 3 or 4 days in the various neighborhood shopping districts and 8 days on a house-to-house survey. The second surveyor spent his entire time downtown.

For purposes of reporting results the survey is divided into a Downtown Survey and a Neighborhood Survey.

The Method

The method used in making a count of the beggars in the downtown district was to cover the entire district, an area of 72 blocks, as rapidly as possible and count each beggar or peddler seen. Care was taken to eliminate duplications or those persons who moved from place to place and might be seen at different locations on the same count. The accuracy of this depended upon the worker's powers of observation.

On other days detailed observations were made. Each beggar spotted was reported on a daily report and given a special case number. The entries from these daily reports

were then typed into chronological case records as permanent records. The more flagrant cases were watched for periods varying from 30 minutes to half a day and observations made of "earnings" and method. Some were also followed to their rooms when going off duty.

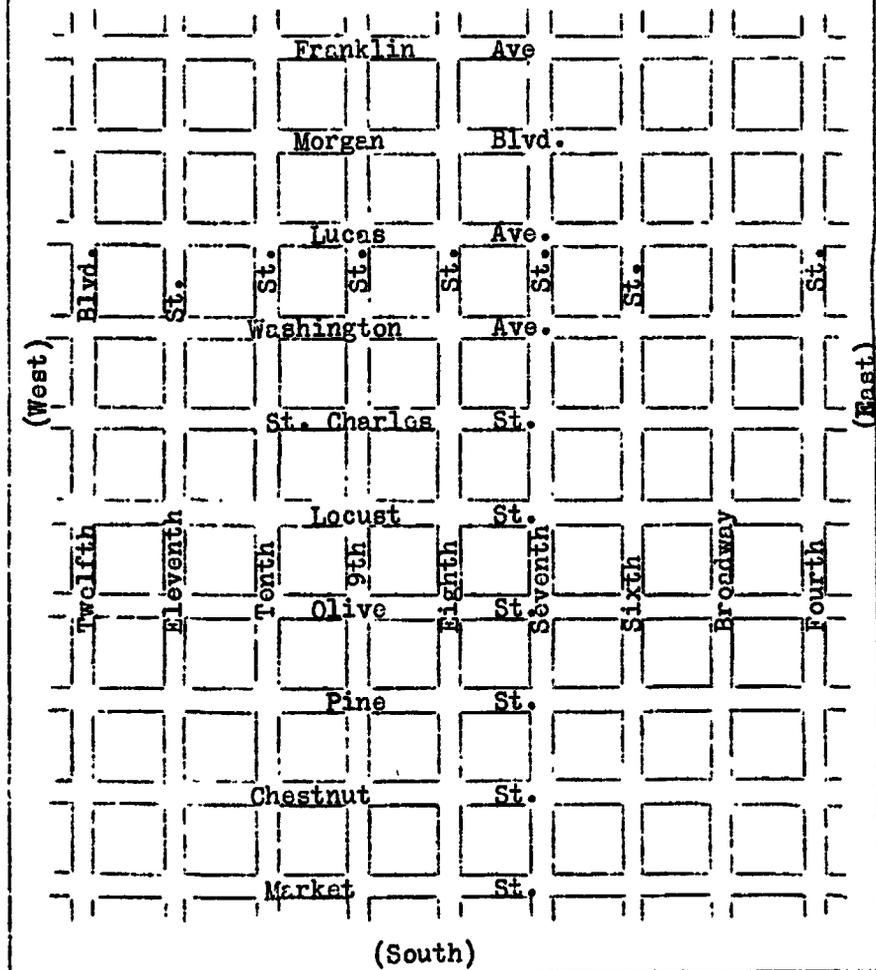
Department store doormen, newsboys, and beat patrolmen were engaged in casual conversations as a means of collecting valuable information regarding names, family histories, hours of work, and similar details. Casual remarks to bystanders often resulted in valuable comments on particular beggars. The worker frequently allowed himself to be panhandled as a means of opening a conversation and numerous meals were purchased to provide an opportunity for an interview. Other details of method will appear in the case stories given in a later portion of the report.

The method used on the neighborhood survey was a house-to-house canvass with a card filled out on each interview. This is discussed in greater detail in that section of the report.

DOWNTOWN ST. LOUIS

Showing the Territory Covered
in the Survey

(North)



CHAPTER 2
THE SURVEY OF THE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

Territory Covered. The territory covered in the survey of the downtown district was limited to the area bounded by 4th Street on the east, 12th Street on the west, Market on the south, and Franklin on the north. We found that the most popular streets for boggars were Olive and Locust from Broadway (5th Street) to Ninth, and Sixth and Seventh Streets from Olive to Washington. This latter territory contains the three large department stores of the city, the principal banks and office buildings, and also comprises the principal retail shopping district. Most of the persons in the district are either retail shoppers or office workers.

Classifications and Definitions. Much as we dislike the practice of labeling beggars as "moochers, panhandlers, professionals" and the like, it is necessary to have some classification system in a statistical type of study. In making our counts of beggars in the downtown district we found many persons selling razor blades, song sheets, Christmas novelties and toys, candy, and other salable products who obviously were not begging. We could not avoid considering these persons in our survey, neither could we class them as beggars.

We make a distinction, then, in our classification between vendors and beggars.

Vendors. Sidewalk salesmen of a salable product. In this class are placed those persons who have an apparent stock of goods representing an investment of at least \$1. Some of them have regular locations and carry a stock evidently worth \$8 or \$10. Observation has shown that members of this group in-

sist that the product be taken and change accepted. Money is not displayed as a bait for the passer-by. They give every indication of being legitimate, though impoverished, salesmen.

Beggars are divided in two groups according to the appeal used: Peddlers are those who display a few items of merchandise, such as 3 pair of shoe laces, a few pencils, or a few packages of gum as a blind for their begging operations. The giver, however, is not supposed to take the merchandise. One peddler was observed who displayed 5 or 6 packages of gum, but when a passer-by dropped a nickel in the box and picked up the gum, he said "That will be 10 cents." Many of these carry a street peddlers license as a protection against arrest as a beggar. The Panhandler is one who offers nothing, but requests a coin or a car token or who displays a deformity in such a way as to make a silent appeal. This includes the occasional "stemmer" as well as the full time beggar who makes no pretense of offering anything for sale.

The Number of Beggars. Estimates of the number of beggars in the downtown district made previous to this survey varied widely. Some of them ran as high as 100 and 200, and the lowest were "several dozen." Interested persons reported being "hit" 3 or 4 times in a few blocks walk, and statements regarding the "swarms of beggars" were frequent. In fact, as has already been mentioned, the Community Council received sufficient complaints to warrant a request to the Bureau to resume its anti-begging work.

We were much surprised, therefore, to find that the actual number of beggars on the streets was very small. The largest number counted in the 72 block area by a Bureau survey worker at any one time was 11. This was on Saturday, November 21. Other days varied from 5 on

Monday, December 14 which was a rather cold day, to 8 or 9. On Friday, November 20, three different counts were made with extra effort to watch for duplications. The early morning count showed 9. A count at noon only 4, and an afternoon count 10. Two of these were duplications, making a total of 21 different beggars during the day.

At the same time that these counts were being made, separate counts of the vendors were also kept. This number varied from a low of 13 to a high of 58. The latter figure was on Saturday, November 21. This group is more fully discussed in a later section.

The following table shows the figures on eight different days:

<u>TABLE NO. 1</u> <u>THE NUMBER OF BEGGARS AND VENDORS IN THE DOWN-TOWN DISTRICT</u>			
Day and Hour	Beggars	Vendors	Total
Tuesday, Nov. 17	9	x	
Friday, Nov. 20-9 AM to 12 M	9	13	22
" " " 12 M " 3 PM	4	23	27
" " " 3 PM " 5 PM	10(1)	13 (2)	23
Saturday, Nov. 21	11	58	69
Monday, Dec. 14	5	30	35
Monday, Dec. 21	8	x	
Wednesday, Dec. 23	9	x	
Friday, Feb. 12-11 AM to 1 PM	8	20	28
x - Not counted			
(1) - 2 repeaters. Total of different beggars for day was 21			
(2) - Estimated about 36 different vendors for the day			

These figures were so astonishingly low that special counts were made during the month of February by a regular case worker of the Bureau to check the accuracy

of the previous surveyor. The table shows that these counts, made by three different persons, all agree as to the smallness of the number of beggars.

It is natural for the casual observer to give an exaggerated estimate of the number. The irritation caused by the panhandler's request or the peddler's display stimulates the normal tendency to over-estimate. The location of the beggar is also a factor in these estimates. For example, in the count on Dec. 14, only 5 beggars were reported, yet 4 of these were within half a block of the intersection of 6th and Washington and it would have been possible for a person to walk one block and pass 3 of the 4 beggars. The fact that panhandlers seem to frequent a few streets at certain hours also tends to make the number seem larger. This is more fully discussed in the later section on panhandlers.

Regular Beggars. At the end of each day's work the surveyor turned in a report covering the day's observations. These were individual reports on beggars, giving the time, location, description and all details on each. Each beggar so reported was given a "case number", and subsequent reports regarding him were copied into his "case record". It is from these daily reports and case records that the results of the survey are tabulated.

During the six weeks that a surveyor was kept in the downtown district, reports were turned in on 44 different beggars, some of whom, of course, were seen on several different days. By tabulating the number of times each was seen and comparing this to reports of daily observations and also to outside reports received at the Bureau, we have separated these 44 into three groups, called regular, frequent, and intermittent beggars. Regular beggars are ones who are on the downtown streets practically every day. Only 12 fell into this group. Five of these were seen so often that we did not bother to count the number, but simply recorded

TABLE NO. 2 - REGULAR BEGGARS

Case No.	Times Reported	Description (1)	Usual Appeal
2	Continuous	Legless white man - age 55	Shoo laces for sale
15	"	Deformed Negro man - age 55	Outstretched hand only
#) 16	"	Blind white man - age 60	Pencils for sale
#) 16 A	"	White man - age 30	Pencils for sale
19	3	White man - age 35-appears sonile	Safety pins - sing song voice
24	4	Legless Negress	None - empty box only
29	3	Blind white woman - 4 ft. tall	Matches-"please buy"
30	6	Blind Negro man - age 38	Pencils - wears large crucifix
37	5	White boy - age 16	Shoe laces - "please buy"
42	2	Blind white man - age 50	Pencils
43	10	White man - right leg off	Pencils
44	Continuous	Legless white man - age 40	Gum

(1) Ages are generally estimated

(#) These two men generally work together, although the young man (16A) has been seen without the blind man.

(See section on "Case Stories" for details on some of these cases)

them as "continuous." One other was reported 10 times, another 6, and others less often. We have reason to believe, however, that a survey on 2 or 3 days at any time of the year (not necessarily during the Christmas shopping season) would find practically all of these 12 beggars on duty and that all of them make their living by begging.

Table No. 2 gives some details regarding them.

It is interesting to note that nine of these twelve beggars are handicapped in some way, 4 of them blind, and 4 having one or both legs off, and that one of the other three makes a pretense of being senile and feeble-minded. Only 3 of the group use any kind of verbal appeal, the others merely display their deformity and small stock of pencils or laces, and wait. 10 of the twelve display a commodity that is apparently for sale, the other 2 rely entirely on the appeal of their deformity.

It is possible that some of the "frequent" beggars discussed in the next section should be classed as "regulars", but so far as we are able to establish, these 12 persons are the only regular members of St. Louis' downtown "standing army" of beggars. Removing them permanently from the streets would practically solve the beggar problem.

Frequent Beggars. We class as "frequent" beggars those who were observed only 2 or 3 times during the period of the survey and who, we have reason to believe, beg only as a side line and at times when the returns should be unusually good. There are only 9 in this group. Table No. 3 gives details regarding them.

We find a much smaller proportion of handicapped persons in this group than among the regular beggars, only 5 of the 9 being handicapped. 3 of these are blind, 2 have lost one leg, and the other 4 are apparently

physically sound. As mentioned in foot note (2) on case No. 5, this couple would normally be classed as vendors, but on two occasions the man was seen to separate from the woman, who was selling candy, and accept money. The baby was used as his appeal. This case is fully discussed in a later section. Many of the persons in the next group might be classed as frequent beggars if we knew more about them.

Intermittent Beggars are those who were seen only once during the period of the survey. We have no way of telling whether this was their only offense, but we can be sure that they are not regulars. 23 of the 44 beggars fall into this group. Ten of them were panhandlers and apparently were using this method to pick up some odd change or spending money. Three of them were blind, two "selling" pencils and the other playing a guitar and mouth harp and accompanied by a woman carrying a cup. Three were legless, one of them selling pencils, one begging with an empty box, and the other was seen begging a meal in a restaurant.

Physical Condition. Much has been said in the previous sections regarding the physical handicaps of the various beggars. The following table gives a summary of these facts for the entire group of 44 persons.

<u>TABLE NO. 4</u>				
<u>THE APPARENT PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE BEGGARS</u>				
	<u>Totals</u>	<u>Regulars</u>	<u>Frequent.</u>	<u>Intermit.</u>
Totals	44	12	9	23
Blind	10	4	3	3
1 or both legs off	9	4	2	3
Deformed or crip.	2	1	0	1
Apparently fit	23	3	4	16

TABLE NO. 3 - FREQUENT BEGGARS

Case No.	Times Seen	Description (1)	Appeals Used
2	2	White man - age 65	Laces - razor blades
4	2	White man - age 50	Ordinary panhandler
(2) 5	2	Young white couple with baby	Candy
8	2	White girl - age 18	Razor blades
18	2	White man - age 60 - blind	Pencils
31	3	White man - age 22 - 1 leg off	Pencils and laces
(3) 32	2	White man - age 38 - blind	Plays a guitar
34	2	Elderly white woman - right leg off	Novelties
(3) 39	3	White man - age 50 - blind	Plays an accordion

- (1) Ages are generally estimated
 (2) This couple are frequently on the street, but beg only occasionally
 (3) Always accompanied by a woman, apparently his wife
 (See section on "Case Stories" for details on some of these cases)

From this table it can be seen that 21 of the 44 beggars were physically handicapped to such an extent that they are not normally employable. 10 were blind, 9 had one or both legs amputated, and 2 were deformed or crippled in such a way that the deformity was apparent to the casual observer. Every one of these 21 persons was using his or her handicap as the chief item in the appeal for money. It is also interesting to note that the percentage of physically handicapped persons is largest in the "regular" group and decreases through the other classifications. 75% of the regulars were handicapped, 55% of the frequent beggars, and only 22% of the intermittent beggars.

Miscellaneous Information. The following table gives miscellaneous information regarding sex, ages, etc.

Information	Totals	Regular	Frequent	Intermit.
Instrument players	3	0	2	1
Children (under 12)	1	1		
Older boys	1	1		
Girls	1		1	
Women	7	2	1	4
Couples	3		3	
2 men	1	1		
Negroes	4	3	0	1

All of the "musicians" were blind. The one child listed begged after school and on Saturdays with his older brother who was a regular beggar. These 2 boys were sent to the Bureau office by the surveyor, but an attempt to visit their home address as given showed that the information was false. Of the women, one of the regular beggars was blind and one crippled, the frequent beggar was crippled and one of the others was deformed. Two of the couples listed consisted of a blind man and a

sighted woman, and the other of the young couple with the baby. The "two men together" was a blind man and his sighted male companion. One of the Negroes was blind and all of the other three either crippled or deformed. One of them was a woman.

Working Hours. It is rather difficult to set any definite time as the "working hours" of the beggars, but by piecing together portions of the reports on the various persons, we can arrive at some conclusions that fit in most cases. We must, however, remember the difference between the three groups, the regular, the frequent, and the intermittent beggars. The regular beggars, as a rule, work all day and seem to have a definite route and time schedule. Once this schedule is known, they can be located at any given time on any work day. The frequent beggars, on the other hand, work for shorter periods of time and over varying routes. They seem to choose their location at random without any definite knowledge as to the best stands and they may be seen anywhere. The intermittent beggars work more as a group and will be congregated on certain streets at regular times. (See section on "Panhandlers".) The only ones, then for which we can set any definite working hours, are the regulars.

Taking case No. 15, a partially paralyzed Negro man, who has been rated by the surveyors as St. Louis' No. 1 Beggar, we find that his route is very definite. He rides to work on the northbound Broadway car, arriving at Broadway and Olive about 9:30. He then works up Olive to 7th, north on 7th to Washington, east to 6th, and south on 6th to a point between St. Charles and Locust Sts. This has taken him from one to one and a half hours. From then until noon, he seldom moves more than 15 or 20 feet. At noon he takes 15 minutes off for a light lunch, purchased at the bakery counter of a nearby Five and Ten Cent Store and eaten on the running board of a car. During the afternoon he works up 6th St. to Olive, west on Olive to 8th, south on a side trip to Chestnut and then back to Olive.

It is then about 3:30. The next hour he spends going east on Olive to Broadway, arriving there between 4:30 and 4:45 to board the Broadway car for home and the end of this day's work. This itinerary seldom varies, and his working day is generally 7 hours - from 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

In Case No. 16, an elderly blind man accompanied by a younger, sighted man, we find that they also start to work at 9:30 each morning. They differ from the previous case, however, in that they spend most of their time standing in one location, generally the corner of 7th and Washington. Promptly at 4:20 each day they start home, the earlier quitting time probably caused by the fact that they walk home instead of riding street cars and so require a longer time to reach there.

The legless white man in Case No. 3, who propels himself on a small, three-wheeled truck, gets to work a little later in the morning, usually about 10:00. Until about 12:30 he can generally be found on 9th Street near the old Federal Building. After noon he works east on Olive Street to 7th and south on 7th to Chestnut. At 3:30 PM he generally starts for home. His shorter working day is probably due to the fact that he travels slower and it takes him longer to reach home.

In all three cases the beggar reaches home about 5:00 to 5:15. It is also interesting to note that all three of these beggars live within a block of each other and that near there is a novelty store featuring laces, pencils, gum, candy, and other products for sale to street peddlers. These beggars are also acquainted with each other and were seen by the surveyor to engage in conversation near their homes.

The working day of these persons, then seems to be between 9:30 and 4:30. These are the hours when business executives and shoppers, rather than office

workers and retail clerks, are on the streets and are probably chosen because these folk represent the most lucrative prospects.

It is possible, of course, that some of the beggars return to work in the evening and so work more than a 7 hour day, although our surveyors have seen only one of them on duty in the evening. This is a logless man who spends most of his time on Grand Avenue. These same observations also apply to Sundays and holidays when the only activity in the downtown district is near the hotels and theatres.

Earnings. In order to establish a basis for computing the earnings of these beggars, it is necessary to go back to the individual case reports and quote the observations of the surveyor.

Referring again to Case No. 15, we find the following entries - "at 9:30 AM watched him for 20 minutes and he received 2 coins.....On the south side of Olive between 7th and 8th observed for half an hour. He received 5 coins. At 3 PM near the Wainwright Bldg. he received 3 coins in half an hour. From 3:45 to 4:40, he received 8 coins while walking from 8th to 7th on Olive....While he was resting he took a handful of change from his pocket and started counting. I counted up to 22 coins before he started across the street." (This was at noon.)

From Case No. '3, we take the following - "His approach was principally to women shoppers by removing his hat. He made 15 approaches in 20 minutes, with 4 contributors, but none took his pencils....During this 2 hour period, he received 13 coins that I actually saw and he may have received some that I couldn't see because of the heavy pedestrian traffic."

From Case No. 16 - "As the people would pass and drop a coin in the box, the sighted man would pick it up and hand it to the blind man who would feel the coin

with his right hand, evidently to determine its value, and then place it in his right hand overcoat pocket. Once he received a larger coin, apparently a quarter, which he put in his vest pocket, I observed these 2 men from 2:20 to 4:20 PM. During this time they received 12 nickels, 3 dimes, and 1 quarter, an average of 8 coins per hour...Watched them for 35 minutes. They received 7 coins."

This is the only case on which the surveyor was able to stand close enough actually to identify the coins as they were received and so is our only guide to an average value per contribution. These 16 coins represent a total value of \$1.15 or an average of $7\frac{1}{4}\phi$. If we accept this as an average on all the regular beggars, we can reach an estimate of the day's earnings. Table No. 6 summarizes this information from a group of cases.

TABLE NO. 6

THE EARNINGS OF BEGGARS

Case No.	Time Observ.	No. of Coins	Aver. per hr.	Average earnings	
				Per hr.*	Per day*
3	230 Min.	22	6.3	\$0.46	\$3.22
15	135 "	18	8	.58	4.06
16	195 "	28	8.6	.62 $\frac{1}{2}$	4.37
19	90 "	11	7.3	.53	3.72
24	240 "	30	7.5	.54	3.80
30	40 "	6	9	.65	4.56
42	120 "	12	6	.43 $\frac{1}{2}$	3.04
Averages			$7\frac{1}{4}$.52 $\frac{1}{2}$	3.68
* Figured at an average of $7\frac{1}{4}\phi$ per coin and a 7 hour working day					

The average earnings for a full time regular beggar in the downtown district, then, would seem to be about

\$3.70 per day. The poorest of the group can expect to make a minimum of \$3.00 per day and the best ran as high as \$4.50. This "No. 1 Wage Earner" was a blind Negro man about 38 years old, and rather neatly dressed. Even on the coldest days his overcoat was opened to display a five-inch gold cross hung on his chest. He also held a box of pencils and laces and kept repeating, "please buy, please buy a pencil." While the actual count of his earnings covered only a very short time, he was always reported as receiving frequent contributions.

The next highest paid beggar, Case No. 16, was the blind man mentioned several times previously. He is always accompanied by a sighted man, so that 2 persons must live on his earnings. While he has never been seen without his companion, there were several days when this companion, a man about 38 or 40 and apparently physically sound, was seen begging alone. On these days his earnings seemed to be rather poor.

The above cases have all been cited from the regular group. There was one intermittent beggar, however, who had hourly earnings much higher than any of these. He was a blind accordion player, a man about 50, neatly dressed, accompanied by a woman about the same age who carried the contribution cup. (Case No. 39) They were observed for an hour on each of 2 different days. In one hour they took in 12 ccins and in the other 13. This was an average of 90¢ per hour, although this couple apparently worked only a few hours each day.

No attempt has been made to estimate the total earnings of the intermittent beggars and panhandlers as their hours and earnings are too irregular.

Police Interference. The surveyors were instructed to be especially watchful for police interference with the

activities of beggars and to ask about this in conversations and interviews. On only one occasion were the police seen to arrest a beggar. This was an elderly drunk (Case No. 41) who was walking north on 6th asking for "a nickel for a cup of coffee." A traffic officer placed him under arrest.

We find several instances of police questioning beggars. In Case No. 15, the partially paralyzed Negro who is classed as the "No. 1 Beggar", we find the following entry - "A police squad car carrying plain clothes men pulled up to the curb on Olive, one man got out and talked to the beggar for a few minutes, then returned to the car and drove on. The beggar continued on his route and did not cease begging."

In Case No. 32, a blind guitar player accompanied by a woman, one of the frequent beggars, we find this report - "A patrolman walked up to the blind man and spoke to him. The woman (who had been looking in the store windows while the man played and sang) walked around them trying to hear what was being said. She then stepped between them and said a few words to the officer. The couple then walked south on 8th Street to Olive, where the man gave her some change and she entered the Five and Ten Cent Store. He continued to play and sing while she was gone."

These two are the only occasions upon which the police were seen to interfere in any way, and in neither case did the beggar discontinue his work. The surveyors reported several times that beggars were seen to move on to another block when a police officer approached, but no interference was noted and no such fear of the police was ever displayed by any of the handicapped beggars. In most cases, the police attitude was one of studied indifference. The following report is indicative. (Case No. 6) - "An elderly man, in filthy condition, carrying a bag of umbrellas, went into a department store on 7th

Street. Approached 3 clerks and obtained 2 coins. Crossed the street to a drug store and was refused by clerks there. Crossed to a theatre and was refused by the doorman. He continued north on 7th Street for a block and succeeded in collecting at the door in 2 stores. At the others, he was merely taken by the arm and led to the street. While this man's actions and appearance attracted considerable attention from passers-by, a sergeant of police and a traffic officer standing on the corner ignored him."

Some comments by the beggars themselves are also illuminating. For example, this one from an 86 year old pencil salesman. "I asked if he had to buy a license and he replied that he had been here for 4 years and never bothered about a license. The police all know him and are his friends." And this from the 16 year old beggar (Case No. 37) who has a stock of two pair of laces - "He said he had no license but he knew the 'cops' around there. However, the other day, a new detective came up to him, but when he said that he was giving the money to his mother, the detective went away."

It is not surprising that the average beat patrolman does not like to arrest a beggar. There is no glory attached to such an arrest, and under the system in use by the police department in St. Louis, the patrolman making an arrest must appear in court on his own time to testify. Under these circumstances, they much prefer to ignore the beggar unless complaints are made by merchants or others molested, or at best they merely warn him off their beat.

Child Beggars. The surveyors reported children being used in only 3 cases. One of these was Case No. 5, the young couple with the baby, mentioned in a previous section and also in the later section on "Case Stories." The mother sold candy during the noon hour to workers on

the WPA census project at the old Federal Building while the father went around the corner with the baby, who was crying, and collected several coins from sympathetic workers. The baby was apparently about 18 months old.

The second was Case No. 37, the 16 year old regular beggar who was sent to the Bureau office by the surveyor, but who gave a fictitious address for his family and could not be located. He generally had with him a 9 or 10 year old boy, supposed to be his brother, who begged near him or across the street. The report contains this entry - "Vernon and the younger brother were observed today on Olive St. near 9th, the other boy on the north side and the younger on the south side. They boat a hasty retreat when they saw me. A razor blade salesman informed me that he was told that these boys have a gang begging. He said the larger boy has a different small boy with him about every 10 days. He understands that the small boy occasionally gets a 50¢ piece and on one occasion got a dollar bill. People sympathize with him on account of his small size and shabby clothes." We were never able to check this report and cannot vouch for its truth. He had only the one youngster during our survey.

The third case, very appropriately No. 13, is the most flagrant of the three. "Noticed near the west entrance of a department store a man about 38 or 40 with 2 boys aged 10 or 12, each boy with a box covered with colored paper. He seemed to be giving them instructions and soon they entered the store while he remained in the vestibule. I followed one boy and found that his box contained 2 packages of gum. The boy would select some woman customer and stop close to her as she was receiving change after a purchase. His plea was 'won't you please buy some gum?' He was successful almost every time. This was repeated 10 or 12 times, unnoticed by any floor walker and never reported by any clerk. He then returned to the door and in guarded actions turned

his money over to the man." The group then went into another large department store and repeated the procedure. The man later separated from the boys without apparently giving them any of the money. The surveyor unwisely chose to follow the man instead of the boys and later lost him in a saloon. Neither he nor the boys was ever seen again, although a careful watch was kept, nor was a similar arrangement seen at any later time.

Vendors. One of the most noticeable things on St. Louis streets is the extremely large number of vendors, or sidewalk salesmen. Most of them seem to be legitimate salesmen, not interested in begging or in accepting money without giving their product in exchange. They always offer the purchaser his change and generally insist that it be accepted. They apparently are as legitimate as newsboys or many of the other products of urban life.

The most popular items offered for sale are razor blades at 5¢ a package, approximately half of the vendors having this commodity only for sale. The next most popular seems to be city maps and guides at 10¢ each. Other items offered are safety matches at 1¢ a box or 10¢ a carton, song sheets, candy, gum, peanuts, popcorn, and similar edibles, and wall pockets, artificial flowers and similar home made articles. These vendors generally sell one item only.

Referring back to Table No. 1 we find that on Friday, Nov. 20, 36 different vendors were counted on the downtown streets during the 3 counts made on that day. The following day, Saturday, 58 were counted. On Monday, Dec. 14, there were 30 and on Friday, Feb. 12, there were 20. During the weeks immediately preceding Christmas their numbers were augmented by those selling Christmas decorations, novelties, and toys. Most of these men all congregated on 3 or 4 streets, so that it is not at all unusual to see 4 or 5 to a block. On

Dec. 14, the surveyor reported 10 in one block, 5 on each side of 6th Street between Olive and Locust.

Another "depression phenomenon" of downtown St. Louis is the large number of "car washers". These are usually Negro boys or men, equipped with a bucket containing rags and sometimes polishing materials, who steer the auto driver into a parking space at the curb and then offer to wipe off his car for 10¢. They will also give the car a complete wash, borrowing water from a nearby store, or polish it for a larger amount. While they are not "organized" in any real sense of the word, each does have his own territory, usually one or both sides of the street, for one block, and is willing to protect it with his fists if necessary. These territorial rights are so well defined that they are salable for amounts sometimes running as high as several dollars for good blocks. The police seldom molest them except as part of periodical drives caused by stealing from parked cars. On these rare occasions they are all chased out and it is necessary to reestablish the territories when the police zeal dies down. On Friday, Feb. 12, the surveyor counted 25 such "car washers" in the survey territory.

Intermittent Panhandlers. Several times in preceding pages we have referred to this section and promised an explanation of the activities of the intermittent panhandlers. Eleven of the forty-four beggars upon which the surveyors made detailed reports were in this group. None of them were seen more than once in the six week period of the survey and most of them ceased begging immediately after receiving one or two coins. They beg not as a means of earning an easy living, but to pick up 15¢ or 20¢ needed for spending money. It is a spasmodic and intermittent proceeding rather than a regular profession.

Reports from several of the records will illustrate

this point:

Case No. 1 - "At 12th Street observed a tall, thin man, partially drunk, approaching everyone. In 2 blocks he made about 15 approaches with no success. He then turned south and proceeded to Chestnut St. with no further approaches."

Case No. 2 - "A man about 40, very ragged and dirty approached a woman waiting for a street car at 8th and Olive. Upon receiving a coin, he also appeared to be waiting for a car, but after she boarded one he went south to Market Street and entered a saloon."

Case No. 11 - "A man about 50, very neatly dressed. His method of approach is to ask for a cigarette and then follow with 'could you spare a nickel for a cup of coffee?' He also approaches persons sitting in parked cars. Appears to be very successful, probably because of his good appearance."

Case No. 17 - "A man about 40, very ragged and dirty. He was frantically approaching everyone and after many attempts received one coin. He immediately went south to Market Street."

Case No. 25 - "Man about 65, weight about 200. As I approached he asked several persons for coins but they did not stop. I gave him a nickel. After trying several others without success, he went south on 8th to Chestnut and entered a restaurant. He drank a cup of coffee and then proceeded to 8th and Market where he sat down on the corner with several other men."

Case No. 4 - "Waiting on the corner, I watched one man about 50 years of age sitting with 4 other men jump up each time a 'prospect' appeared. He had

no success, much to the amusement of his friends."

These men spend most of their time on or near Market Street and make that their base of operations. The most lucrative period for their style of panhandling is from about 10:00 to 11:30 AM. During this time most of the persons on the street are shoppers and business men rather than employed workers. When plying their trade, they range north from Market Street, along Chestnut, Pine and Olive Streets, seldom going any farther north. After picking up their quota of 10¢ or 20¢, they go back to Market Street and wait for the afternoon period which extends roughly from about 2:30 to 8:30 PM. During the early part of this period they catch the same type of prospects, shoppers and business men, as in the morning. After 5:30 PM they catch the group staying downtown for dinner and still later, the downtown theatre crowd.

There are, of course, scattered panhandlers at other times and in other parts of the district, but these are the periods of greatest concentration. The most popular of the two periods is the morning one and the concentration is greatest at this time, partly because of its popularity and partly because the working time is shorter.

Photographs. In order to have a means of positive identification and also material for possible publicity use later, a commercial photographer with a "candid camera" was employed to photograph some of the regular beggars and typical intermittent panhandlers. These photographs are not only interesting for record purposes, but they show in dramatic fashion the type of persons begging on our streets. One set of two shows a blind pencil peddler in his characteristic shuffle while on duty and stepping out in full stride when heading for home.

Case Stories. The following case stories are summaries of relief record information on some of the cases and quotations from the actual reports of the surveyors. They give some interesting and informative sidelights on the appeals used and methods of operation.

CASE NO. 3.

A white man, aged about 55 with both legs amputated above the knee. Travels by sitting on a small truck with three rollers. Carries a small box of shoe strings on his lap. "I observed this man on the south side of Olive between 8th and 9th and followed him very closely. Pedestrian traffic was heavy and he moved slowly to 7th and Olive, stopping about every fifteen or twenty feet with his back against the wall asking 'please buy a pencil?' For two hours he moved up and down Olive between 7th and 9th. During this two hour period, I saw him receive 13 coins. No one took pencils. From 2:30 to 3:30 he went south on 7th to Chestnut receiving 4 coins. He then closed his pencil box and started for home.....he had difficulty getting up certain curbsings so he unhitched his truck, walked on his stump pads across the street, carrying his truck in his hands and climbed the curb on the other side." He traveled 10 blocks going home.

CASE NO. 5

A young couple, both aged about 26, with a baby, about 18 months. Their equipment consisted of a suitcase containing candy, and a camp chair. While the woman stood by the case calling her wares, the man took the baby around the corner and sat down on a coping near where many office workers were congregated. "The baby was crying and while he asked for nothing, it was a scene to create sympathy. Eight people walked over and gave him a coin in the first 15 minutes. He remained there about 15 minutes longer until the baby fell asleep and

CASE NO. 8.

"Girl about 16 with small box containing razor blades and shoe laces. I bought a pair of shoe laces and asked why she was doing that kind of work. She at first told me she was married and her husband was in Buffalo, N.Y., and this was the only way she could find to make a living. Later she admitted that her husband was here, that they recently arrived from Baltimore, Md. and that her husband, who is 29 years old, also sells razor blades, although with little success. It is hard for them to make more than \$1 per day. They pay room rent of 75¢ per night and have no other source of income. She displayed a peddler's license." About three weeks later, the following report was made on the same girl - "She was asking people to buy razor blades, pencils, and shoe laces. Made 3 sales and gave an article each time she received money. A man stopped and asked 'why don't you try to get some other employment?' She replied that she had tried. She then left with this man and boarded a street car. Three hours later I saw her back at the same spot."

CASE NO. 15.

Negro man, aged 51, with crippled feet. He was known to the Bureau as a professional beggar from March, 1929 until June, 1934. No relief was given during this time, as he was always living with relatives who were able to support him. The following record of arrests for begging are known to the Bureau:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
3 12 29	Fined \$100 - paroled
10 11 30	Discharged
11 8 30	"
12 16 30	"
8 24 31	Fined \$25
12 23 31	Discharged
1 18 32	Fined \$100

2	1	32	Fined \$300
6	10	32	" \$100
9	4	32	" \$250
12	23	32	Discharged
1	9	33	Fined \$250 - appealed
2	9	33	Conviction sustained
5	16	33	Fined \$25 - paroled
6	10	33	" " "
6	13	33	Fined \$100 - paroled
8	11	33	Fined \$200 - appealed
8	21	33	Fined \$100 - appealed
8	31	33	Both convictions sustained
12	20	33	Fined \$100 - paroled
6	16	34	Fined \$100 - paroled & lectured

This man was arrested 19 times, fined 13 times with 6 paroles and discharged 6 times. During the year from June, 1932 to June, 1933, he was in court 7 times, 3 of them in a 27 day period. During the year 1933, he spent 8 of the 12 months in the workhouse. To our knowledge he was begging continuously during this five year period. During this survey, he was seen on the streets begging practically every day and was classed by the surveyors as the city's "No. 1 Beggar".

The following sections of our survey give some idea of the methods he uses. "He received a coin from a Negro woman, putting on a good act of the 'shakes' while she was fumbling in her purse for the coin...He was standing crouched against the building with one hand outstretched and the other resting on his cane. He does not ask for help, but the expression on his face and the quiver of his body seems to be his plea."Other aspects of his case have been quoted in previous sections of the report.

CASE NO. 16

Blind man, aged about 60, accompanied by a sighted man about 28 to 30, without a hat. The blind man wears

dark glasses, carries a white cane, and has a large cardboard sign on his hat with the word "blind." One or the other of them also carries a small box with several pencils and shoe laces.

Their procedure is as follows: "The two men stood side by side against the building, the blind man to the right, the sighted man holding the box. As people dropped a coin into this box, he would pick it up and hand it to the blind man who would feel it with his right hand, evidently to determine its value, then drop it in his right hand overcoat pocket. Once he got a larger coin - probably a quarter - which he put in his vest pocket.....The blind man had his eyes fixed on the ground, the sighted man made his eyes look peculiar at times and on several occasions he would look east and west as if looking for someone. At first I thought he was blind also, but when a bus pulled up to the curb and someone threw a cigarette out, he went over, picked it up and returned to his post and started to smoke." When they started home "they entered a Five and Ten Cent Store. As they entered the store the blind man removed his sign. They purchased 10¢ worth of candy and they proceeded toward home."

These men lived 14 blocks away and apparently always walked to and from their work. A druggist near their home gave the following information - "he said the men beg on the street with a few pencils. He also informed me they make more than he does. He knows this because they come in with their nickels, dimes, and quarters for him to change into paper money." The blind man was always accompanied by his partner, but on several occasions the sighted man was seen begging alone.

CASE NO. 19

Man about 35 to 38 who has been reported to the Bureau several times in recent months for begging. He

has been reported as far back as June, 1936, as a safety pin salesman at department store doors and also as a flower salesman in the theatre district at night. "From his stooped position against the door, he would appear to be a much older man. He was holding 3 cards of safety pins and in a pitiful sing-song voice crying 'O, lady, won't you please stop and buy some pins; please buy some pins.' He had his head down and shook it from side to side as if crying. During 30 minutes he attracted a great deal of attention and received 6 coins. No one took the merchandise and he made no attempt to offer it. At the end of this time, he put his safety pins in his pocket, straightened up, and from an apparently old man became the young man he really is. He walked across the street to a corner drugstore and bought a package of cigarettes then stopped at the corner newsstand to smoke. He borrowed a paper to read and while reading, I noticed that he was particularly keen and alert. He then returned to his post at the department store and went through the same motions."

CASE NO. 24

A legless Negro woman always seen sitting on a small roller frame in front of a cheap hotel. She carries a box of pencils and most of her gifts seem to come from Negroes who apparently know her. "At 11:30 AM the front door of the hotel was opened by a Negro man, the woman rolled out and took up her regular post. I watched her for 3 hours and she received 20 coins. On 2 occasions people took pencils.....At this hour the front door of the hotel was opened and the woman moved in."

CASE NO. 30

Small Negro man, apparently blind, aged about 38 years, neatly dressed. His overcoat is always unbuttoned and he wears a cross which hangs from a cord around his neck and hangs on his chest. The cross is large - about

5 x 3 - and is prominently displayed. He also carries a small box of pencils. His usual plea is "please buy a pencil." He was watched for 40 minutes and received 6 coins. At 4:40 he started for home walking so fast it was difficult for the surveyor to keep up with him. He walked 26 blocks to his home.

CASE NO. 32

Blind man about 38 years old, playing a guitar with cup attached to handle. He was accompanied by a woman about 24 years old. "Observed him for two hours and during this period he received 21 coins. He moves along very slowly while playing and singing. The woman leads him across the street, sees that he has a clear place to start. She tells him the distance to the building and then leaves him, to go window shopping, occasionally looking to see how he is getting along. She then takes his arm and leads him to another spot farther up the street." When this couple were ready to go home, they boarded a service car, which would be a fare of 15¢ each, and rode to their home in the west end.

CASE NO. 39

Tall man, about 50, blind, accompanied by a woman. He plays an accordion. She leads him by the arm, walking on the inside, and holds a cup in her hand. She extends the cup as her silent plea. "I saw this couple coming out of the hotel at 10:30 and followed them one hour and they received 13 coins. At 1:30 PM I again picked them up and followed them over different streets for one hour during which time they received 12 coins. At 4:15 they returned to their hotel....As they went up Olive to 11th, I observed them for 20 minutes and they received 7 coins.....After each piece he plays, he takes out his handkerchief and wipes his eyes, which seem to be running all the time....At 9:30 this couple

came out of the hotel, without the accordion, and spent 20 minutes walking around while the woman looked into various store windows. At 9:50 they returned to the hotel. "

Recapitulation. In order to emphasize the high lights of this portion of the survey, we recapitulate here the chief points that have been brought out.

- 1) Not more than 11 beggars were found at any one time.
- 2) Only 12 regular, full-time beggars were found.
- 3) A total of 44 different beggars were reported. This included the 12 "regulars", 9 frequent, and 23 intermittent beggars.
- 4) 10 of the beggars were blind and 11 were deformed or crippled.
- 5) The normal working day of the regular beggar was found to be 7 hours.
- 6) The average "wage" of a full-time beggar was found to be about \$3.70. Some were observed to take in as much as 95¢ in one hour.
- 7) The police seldom interfered with the activities of the beggars.
- 8) 58 different vendors were counted on the streets in one day. 25 Negro "car washers" were counted on another day.

- 9) The ordinary panhandler seems to be interested only in getting 15¢ or 20¢. As soon as this is received, he quits work.

CHAPTER 3

THE SURVEY OF BEGGING IN NEIGHBORHOODS

General statement. The original plan for the neighborhood portion of the survey called for interviews with approximately 50 housewives in each of 10 different neighborhoods of the city and suburban communities. We were not able to complete this many interviews, however, during the time of the study and have not been able to arrange any method of completing it since that time.

Three neighborhoods were covered with a total of 109 housewives interviewed. We realize this is a very small number from which to draw conclusions or make generalizations and this section of the survey might consequently be criticized. However, we must recognize the fact that these neighborhood reports are not the result of actual counts made by the housewives but are estimates made on a moment's notice at the request of the interviewer and, as these estimates were quite uniform, with few exceptions, in all 3 districts, we believe that we are fairly safe in using them.

It is hoped at a later date to complete the survey with several hundred more interviews from other districts, but as we were unable to do that for inclusion in this report, we believe the present material is too valuable to omit. We report the following results then, fully realizing that it may be necessary to revise them when extended over a larger number of interviews.

Method Used. The method used was to have the surveyor personally interview each housewife and fill out the desired information on each interview card. He introduced himself by presenting a typed and signed introduction card from the Secretary of the Bureau, stating

that the bearer was conducting a house-to-house survey of beggars and peddlers and that any courtesy shown him would be appreciated. This was generally sufficient introduction and he reported that his reception was in most cases cordial and that most persons were willing to give the desired information. He did not, of course, carry any cards or notebooks in his hands when approaching the door.

The following 3 x 5 card was used to record all interviews, a separate card being used for each one. It is so arranged that a check can be used as an answer to most questions, thus saving as much time as possible. This is especially important on a midwinter survey, as most persons are reluctant to invite the surveyor into the house and also object to holding the door open for too long a period. Any comments of the housewife were written on the reverse side of the card.

NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY OF BEGGING - BHM - 1936

Street _____ Blk. _____ (APT) (Fl) (SmHs) (La.Hs) _____
 BEGGARS. No. Per WK (M) _____ (W) _____ Regulars? _____
 Ask for (Work) (Money) (Clo) (Food) _____
 How Give (Never) (Seldom) (Often) (Always) _____
 What Give (Work) (Money) (Clo) (Food) (Reg) _____
 Att. of Beg. _____
 PEDDLERS. No. Per WK (M) _____ (W) _____ Regulars? _____
 Selling? _____
 Buying (Never) (Seldom) (Often) (Always) _____
 Appeal used? _____
 Att. of Ped. _____
 CHILDREN. No. Per WK (B) _____ (G) _____ Regulars? _____
 Begging? _____ Selling? _____ What? _____
 Buy or Give (Never) (Seldom) (Often) (Always) _____
 Appeal Used _____
 Att. of Ch. _____

Territory Covered. As previously mentioned, three districts were covered with a total of 109 interviews. There were 47 interviews in the West End district comprising the 5600, 5700, and 5800 blocks on Cates, Clemens and Enright Avenues; 42 interviews in the South Side district comprised of the 3700 and 3800 blocks on Humphrey, Connecticut, and Juniata Avenues; and 20 in the North Side district comprised of the 4700 and 4800 blocks on Farlin and Anderson. Most of the interviews were in small or large houses. While there were some apartments in each district, we found that most of these did not allow beggars or peddlers.

BEGGARS

The Number of Beggars. Of the 109 housewives interviewed, 69 or 63% reported some beggars each week and 40, or 37%, reported that they had no beggars. Breaking down the 63% who reported some, we find that 41% (of the total number of housewives) reported an average of one beggar each week, 19% reported 2 a week and the other 3% reported that they had 3 or more. The West End district was the only one reporting a regular beggar. This was a Negro woman who carried a basket and begged food from door-to-door and from neighborhood grocery stores. No one could give any details regarding her as none had inquired. This woman was also the only woman beggar reported in the survey. The average number of beggars per week was slightly less than one for all housewives interviewed, and about $1\frac{1}{2}$ for those reporting some beggars.

The following table, giving the percentages in the three districts reporting beggars, is given to show the uniformity of the reports, a uniformity which was present in practically all phases of the survey, and which leads us to believe that additional interviews would show the same result.

TABLE NO. 7 THE NUMBER OF BEGGARS (Shown as Percent of Housewives Interviewed)				
No. of Beggars	Totals	D i s t r i c t		
		West	South	North
None	37 %	36	36	40
1	41	32	48	50
2	19	26	16	10
3	3	6	0	0
Totals	100	100	100	100

Requests. The beggars who called at the door made requests for different things. The housewives reported that 93% of them asked for food or a "handout", 16% asked for cast-off clothing, and 4% asked for money. Only 57%, however, asked for work or offered to work in exchange for anything given.

Frequency of Giving. Only 2/5, or 40%, of the 69 housewives report that they "often" give to beggars; of the other 60%, 51% seldom give, and 9% will never give under any circumstances. None reported that they always give. The West End is most "hard-boiled" on this, as the percent who never give is highest there and lowest on the South Side. The converse is also true, that the percent who often give is lowest in the West End.

From the above figures, the beggar's chances of obtaining a contribution in answer to his request, would seem to be only 2 in 5. When we consider the answers to the next question, however, we see that he actually has better odds than this, for 98% of the housewives (not considering those who report that they never give) are willing to give a beggar a "handout" if they have any left-over food available. 14% will try to find a job for him or will require him to work for anything he

receives, while 8% will give him any cast-off clothing that happens to be handy.

Attitude of Beggars. The attitude of the beggars was uniformly reported as "good". A few reported that the beggars were "appreciative," but in every case these were persons who also stated that they generally gave. Some also reported that the attitude of the beggars was "not very good" or "surly", but these were persons who never gave to beggars and who also seemed to be very indignant about the nuisance of continually answering the door bell.

PEDDLERS

The Number of Peddlers. Every housewife interviewed reported that she had some peddlers each week. In getting an estimate of number, we asked that she not include legitimate salesmen, such as brush salesmen, vacuum cleaner men, and magazine solicitors, but only peddlers of more or less unsalable novelties, shoe laces and notions. It was, of course, very difficult to draw an accurate dividing line but we did the best we could. It was apparent from most of the answers that this estimate of the number of peddlers represents the housewife's opinion of a "nuisance" rather than a division between peddlers and salesmen.

As mentioned before, every housewife reported some peddlers each week. The lowest estimate received was 5, two women reporting this number. The highest was "18 or 20", although we are inclined to doubt this figure as it does not fit the reports from the other houses in the block. One woman, who was interviewed late in the afternoon, reported 5 by actual count that day. The average for the entire survey was 10, district averages being 9 in the West End, 10 on the South side, and 11 on the North side. The following table

shows the number actually reported.

No. of Peddlers	Percent Reporting
5	2
7	1
8	20
9	12
10	43
12 or more	22

Sex. 93% of the housewives reported some women each week, the average being 2 in each of the 3 districts. The average number of men reported was 8 per week, or approximately 4/5 of the number of peddlers.

Regulars. 88% reported "some" regulars each week, although none of them were willing to estimate what proportions. They merely remembered "seeing the same faces." The percent reporting regulars was highest on the North Side and lowest in the West End.

Willingness to Buy. When asked if they ever buy from peddlers, 17% of the housewives responded with an emphatic "no!" 13% often buy and 70% seldom do so. We find here again that the West End is the most "hard-boiled" section, as it has the highest percentage of those who never buy.

One curious fact in this connection is that housewives seem to be more willing to give outright to beggars than to buy from peddlers, as evidenced by the reports that 87% seldom or never buy from peddlers while

only 60% have this attitude toward beggars. Our only explanation of this is that it may be another evidence of the "nuisance value" of the peddler - there are so many peddlers calling at the door that their very numbers have built up a feeling of resentment against the entire group.

Children. No child beggars or peddlers were reported in any part of the city. We were rather surprised at this, as we had expected to find almost as many children as women peddling novelties from door-to-door.

Comments of Housewives. The surveyor was instructed to write on the reverse side of the interview card any comments made by the housewives that would show their attitude toward beggars and peddlers. This was done on about one-half the interviews.

Reading these comments, three attitudes seem to stand out as typical - (1) The woman has a sentimental sympathy for all "those people" and is "always willing to give them something to eat or to buy something," (2) she is incensed and resentful of the continual nuisance of answering the door; or (3) she cannot understand why the government does not take care of them. The following comments are typical:

"This woman is always willing to give the men a meal because she knows they are hungry. Believes she is a 'marked house' but does not care."

"Will not give them a hearing. Merely closes the door."

"It is a nuisance, but not as bad as last year."
(This is a frequent comment.)

"Will not give them anything when she sees they

are selling something."

"Believes with all the money the government is spending there should be a place for these people."

"Why can't these people be taken care of by relief with all the money that is given?"

"Wishes something would be done to stop these people from ringing her door bell."

"Cannot understand what relief is for if it does not help these people. It is a nuisance answering the door."

"Closes the door as soon as she discovers them. She knows they can get work or help if they deserve it."

"Always gives them something to eat and usually a nickel or dime to peddlers, without taking the article."

In practically no instance did we discover any intelligent understanding of the social problems involved in begging. This indicates the tremendous job of interpretation and education that needs to be done if the giving public is to become informed on social and welfare matters.