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WOMEN'S BUREAU
Bulletin No. 139

WOMEN UNEMPLOYED
SEEKING RELIEF
IN 1933

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
FRANCES PERKINS, Secretary
WOMEN'S BUREAU
MARY ANDERSON, Director



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By
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WOMEN UNEMPLOYED
SEEKING REEMPLOYMENT
IN 1933

REPORT NO. 1



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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,
WOMEN'S BUREAU,
Washington, March 2, 1936.

MADAM: I have the honor to transmit a report of unemployed women seeking relief.

The survey was conducted by the Women's Bureau in 1933 in Chicago, Cleveland, and the Twin Cities (Minneapolis and St. Paul) and information for individual women obtained. At the same time a similar project, with which the Women's Bureau cooperated, was under way in Philadelphia. Through the courtesy of Ewan Clague, the director of that survey as well as the author of the report, *Women Without Work*, some of these data have been incorporated in this study.

Though an investigation was made of the policies and practices governing the administering of relief by the various agencies, and of the types of aid given, the report as written is mainly a discussion of the facts regarding the women themselves, secured either directly from them, or from records of the agencies, or from both sources.

At this time acknowledgment is made to the Service Bureau for Women in Chicago, to the Friendly Service Bureau of the Young Women's Christian Association in Cleveland, to the Woman's Occupational Bureau in Minneapolis, to the Young Women's Christian Association in St. Paul, and to the Joint Committee on Research of the Community Council of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania School of Social Work for their cooperation on the study.

The survey was directed by Agnes L. Peterson, at that time assistant director of the Women's Bureau, and the report has been written by Harriet A. Byrne, assistant editor.

Respectfully submitted.

MARY ANDERSON, *Director.*

HON. FRANCES PERKINS,
Secretary of Labor.

WOMEN UNEMPLOYED SEEKING RELIEF IN 1933

INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

During the early months of 1933 a study of unemployed women seeking relief was made by the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor. The survey as planned and executed consisted of—

1. Study of case records and interviewing of unemployed lone women seeking aid.
2. Study of types of aid given to these unemployed women.
3. Study of agencies covered, with emphasis on policies and practices governing the administering of relief.

Eight cities were visited during the progress of the study. In three of these, Milwaukee and LaCrosse, Wis., and Winona, Minn., no information for individual women was obtained, only agencies being contacted. In Minneapolis and St. Paul case records of unemployed women seeking relief were secured from the agencies scheduled. In the remaining three cities, Chicago, Cleveland, and Philadelphia, agencies were scheduled, case records of individual women were copied, and women were interviewed by agents of the Women's Bureau.

Mention should be made here that in Philadelphia the study was undertaken in cooperation with the Joint Committee on Research of the Community Council of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania School of Social Work. A report of the survey made there, entitled "Women Without Work", has been written by Ewan Clague, director of research of the Joint Committee on Research. Since it is believed that many persons to whom it is not available would be interested in this excellent report, permission has been secured to publish part of it in this bulletin.

Due to the many and frequent changes that have taken place in the agencies engaged in disbursing relief and to the time that has elapsed since the collection of the data, this report will discuss only the facts concerning the women, secured from agency records and personal interviews in some of the cities and from agency records only in others. The information includes the women's age, race, nativity, marital status, length of residence in city of present abode, usual occupation, last occupation, and relief granted.

The numbers of women scheduled, city by city (records were copied for all women and many of the women were interviewed), are as follows:

Total.....	3, 543
Chicago.....	956
Cleveland.....	751
Twin Cities.....	182
Minneapolis.....	83
St. Paul.....	99
Philadelphia.....	1, 654

SUMMARY OF FACTS

Age.

Largely owing to differences in type of agency, there was no uniformity in the matter of the women's ages. The women in Chicago were an older group than those in the two other cities in the Middle West; more than two-thirds of the 933 women in Chicago reporting age were 40 years or older. In Minneapolis and St. Paul—in each case fewer than 100 women reporting—the proportions of women 40 years or older were smaller, close to two-fifths and one-fifth, respectively. In Cleveland only about one-sixth of 749 women who stated their ages were as much as 40; about two-thirds were not yet 30. Almost three-fourths of the 1,648 women in Philadelphia who gave the information were at least 40.

Nativity.

Practically five-sixths of the 954 women in Chicago and of the 1,635 in Philadelphia who reported on country of birth were born in the United States. About seven-tenths of the 727 women in Cleveland who reported on nativity also were native born, as were somewhat under seven-tenths of the 92 women in St. Paul; Minneapolis had the larger proportions of native born, more than 95 percent of the 83 women being so reported.

Race.

Very similar proportions in Chicago and Philadelphia, approximately 55 percent, and practically all the women in the other three cities, were white.

Marital status.

Of the 954 women reporting in Chicago, not far from one-half (45.4 percent) were widowed, and about one-third divorced or separated. Only 12 were married. The remainder, slightly more than one-fifth, were single. In Cleveland, of the 715 reporting, practically two-thirds were single and the remainder were fairly equally divided among the 3 other groups. Almost three-fourths of the 96 women reporting as to marital status in St. Paul, and about two-thirds of the 83 in Minneapolis, were single. Of the 1,640 women reporting in Philadelphia, practically three-tenths were single, and the remainder were widowed, divorced, or separated.

In each city but St. Paul more than one-half of the women reported their usual work as in domestic and personal service; in St. Paul the proportion so reporting was not much over two-fifths. In three cities the next most important groups were clerical workers (Cleveland about one-fifth, and Minneapolis and St. Paul over one-fourth); in Philadelphia, factory workers (one-fifth); and in Chicago, industrial workers (something under one-fifth).

Reason for leaving usual job and time since leaving.

Of the 900 women in Chicago and the 239 in Cleveland whose reasons for leaving jobs were learned, roughly four-fifths in each city had lost their employment for industrial reasons. About one-half had been laid off.

The fifty-odd women reporting in Minneapolis gave industrial reasons as the cause in well over one-half the cases, as did most of the

small group reporting on this in St. Paul. No record of cause of separation is available for Philadelphia.

In four cities from two-thirds to three-fourths of the women who reported on this had been out of their usual employment for at least a year. In two cases about one-half, and in two more than one-half, had been out at least 2 years. For the other city, Philadelphia, the report states that an overwhelming majority of the women were laid off in the early days of the depression.

Last job subsequent to usual job.

In Chicago seven-tenths as many women reported a job subsequent to their usual employment as gave information about their usual job. In this smaller group there was a definite swing away from clerical and industrial employment and the unspecified jobs in domestic and personal service, into day's work and independent business. The former is especially significant, day's work being the usual employment of only 8.7 percent of the women, but reported as a job resorted to since loss of employment by as many as 32.7 percent. In Cleveland the results of this inquiry were quite different in some respects. Only about one-fourth as many women reported on subsequent jobs as gave their usual employment, and there was no such shift into day's work in domestic and personal service as had taken place in Chicago. Employment in private families went up as did independent business. Clerical and industrial employment declined.

Only 45 women in Minneapolis reported on type of last job held. A large part of these were in domestic and personal service, as were a majority of the 79 women in St. Paul who reported on this subject.

CHICAGO

SERVICE BUREAU FOR WOMEN

The Service Bureau for Women was established by the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission in October 1931 and was made a division of that commission in January 1933. At the time of the present survey the bureau acted as a central clearing house for all applications for individual relief coming from unattached resident women who were over 17 but under 60 years of age. The object of the organization was to give service and relief to employable non-family women under 60. Shelter, direct relief, and a limited amount of work relief were given to women applicants at the time of survey, but after September 1933 shelter was taken care of by other agencies.

More or less complete records of 956 lone women who had applied for relief to the Service Bureau for Women were copied there and the women were interviewed by Women's Bureau investigators.

WOMEN APPLYING FOR RELIEF

Age, race, and nativity.

As would be expected, the group seeking relief was composed of older women. Two-thirds of the 933 women who reported age were 40 years or older; one-third were at least 50.

Age (years)	Race		
	All women	White	Negro
All women—Number.....	956	544	412
Percent.....	100.0	56.9	43.1
Women reporting age—Number.....	933	530	403
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20.....	.6	1.1	-----
20, under 30.....	8.5	7.2	10.2
30, under 40.....	23.8	21.5	26.8
40, under 50.....	33.7	30.0	38.5
50, under 60.....	31.4	37.7	23.0
60 and over.....	2.0	2.5	1.5
Women not reporting.....	23	14	9

The vast majority of the women were native born. Practically 5 in 6 of the 954 reporting nativity were born in this country, though only 121 of them were native-born Chicagoans. Among the 161 foreign-born women, about 1 in 7 were born in Germany, in Great Britain or Ireland, and in Poland, and one-tenth were born in Norway or Sweden. The next smaller proportions were Canadians, Austrians, Russians, and Hungarians by birth, and the remainder were of many other nationalities.

The native-born women seeking relief were a younger group than the foreign born. About one-fourth of the former in contrast to less than one-sixth of the latter were 30 and under 40 years of age. Conversely, close to one-half (47.8 percent) of the foreign born and less than three-tenths (28 percent) of the native born were 50 and under 60 years.

Marital status.

Of interest in a study of lone women seeking relief is their marital status. From the facts following it will be seen that a very large part, close to four-fifths of the 954 women who reported on this subject, had been married. However, only 12 of these women were married at time of application. Only about one-fifth of the women (21.5 percent) were single.

The largest group of women were the 433 reporting themselves as widowed—45 percent of all. Not far from half of them were at least 50 years old. Only one-sixth were under 40.

The next largest group—one-third of the total—comprised the 316 women not living with their husbands, whether deserted, separated or divorced, and included the 12 women—too few to show separately—who stated that they were married. This mixed group were much younger than the widows. Only just over one-fourth were as much as 50 years and two-fifths were under 40.

Single women, the youngest group of all, were at no special advantage in other respects, as probably they had fewer persons on whom they could depend for assistance than had the women once married. Only 18 percent of the single women were as much as 50 years old; about 56 percent were under 40, and 22 percent were not yet 30.

Age (years)	All women	Marital status				Women not reporting
		Women reporting	Women who were—			
			Single	Widowed	Other ¹	
All women—Number.....	956	954	205	433	316	2
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	21.5	45.4	33.1	
Women reporting age—Number.....	933	932	201	421	310	1
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Under 20.....	.6	.6	3.0			
20, under 30.....	8.5	8.5	19.4	1.4	11.0	
30, under 40.....	23.8	23.8	33.3	15.4	29.0	
40, under 50.....	33.7	33.6	25.9	37.1	33.9	1
50, under 60.....	31.4	31.4	16.9	43.2	24.8	
60 and over.....	2.0	2.0	1.5	2.9	1.3	
Women not reporting.....	23	22	4	12	6	1

¹ Includes only 12 married women; the others were deserted, separated, or divorced.

Practically four-fifths of the single women were white, but in the other marital groups almost equal numbers were white and Negro.

Length of residence in Chicago.

Though some loosening of the restrictions in the granting of relief had been necessary during the long period of the depression, length of residence in the community still is one of the facts inquired into and on which the decision as to the granting of relief is based.

In this study almost 94 percent of the 925 women reporting length of residence in Chicago had been there for at least 5 years. Somewhat more than one-third (35.2 percent) had resided there 25 years or more; one-eighth of the total had always lived there.

Of the 925 women reporting length of residence in Chicago, the following is the percent distribution.

Less than 5 years.....	6.4
5, less than 10 years.....	17.2
10, less than 15 years.....	19.6
15, less than 20 years.....	11.6
20, less than 25 years.....	10.1
25 years or more.....	35.2
Life ¹	12.9

¹ Included in those 15 years and over in the foregoing.

Usual occupation.

The women as a whole had been an employed group. Of the 956 women whose records were secured, only 15 had never had a regular job, 6 had not had one for a long time, and 1 did not report on the subject. Of the remaining 934 women, 18 were still employed but were not earning enough to provide the bare essentials of existence. Five were industrial workers, 4 day workers, 7 in independent business, and 2 canvassers. One woman worked in a factory shelling nuts, at which she averaged \$1.50 a week. Her rate was 2 cents a pound for broken pieces and 6 cents a pound for halves. One of the women earned only about \$2.50 weekly by washing done at home, and a day worker had only one-half day's washing a week, for which she was

paid \$2 and car fare. Another woman, who formerly had roomers in a good neighborhood, at time of interview was living in a basement flat in a poor district, where her sole roomer was unemployed and could pay nothing.

Of the 934 women who reported their usual occupation, well over one-half (53 percent) had been employed in some domestic or personal pursuit, and the next largest group, somewhat under one-fifth, in some industrial occupation. Practically one-tenth had been engaged in clerical work or in independent business. The few remaining women had been professional workers, sales or other store employees, or had been engaged in one of several other miscellaneous occupations. Of the 495 women who had been in domestic and personal service, approximately one-third had been employed in private families; almost one-sixth had been day workers; one-eighth were employed in laundries and dry-cleaning establishments; and almost one-third had been engaged in such other pursuits as waitress in restaurants and hotels, operator in beauty parlors, worker in hospitals, and so forth.

The 934 women reporting type of usual occupation are distributed in the list following:

	Percent
Clerical.....	9.9
Sales and other store employment.....	4.4
Industrial.....	18.6
Domestic and personal service.....	53.0
Private family.....	18.6
Day work.....	8.7
Other.....	25.7
Professional.....	3.6
Independent.....	8.7
Other.....	1.8

As would be expected, the proportions of women from the various occupations show great differences when age is considered. The youngest group seeking relief were those whose usual occupation had been of a clerical nature, one-half being under 40 years of age, over one-fourth under 35. The industrial workers and those who had been in domestic and personal service were, on the whole, an older group of women, exceeded in age only by those who had been independent workers.

When race is correlated with usual occupation it appears that a much smaller proportion of Negro than of white women had been in clerical service, in industrial pursuits, and in stores, and that a considerably larger proportion of the Negroes than of whites had been in domestic and personal service.

By length of residence in Chicago.—Many factors had some influence on women's occupations, and among those that should be noted is the length of residence in the city. From whatever cause, probably race or age, this had some effect on the line of work. More than one-third of the women who had always lived in Chicago, as compared with about one-fifth of the total group, had been industrial workers, and a considerably larger proportion of the natives of Chicago than of the total groups—more than one-fifth in contrast to one-tenth—were clerical workers. Only one-fourth of those who were born in Chicago, but over one-half of the whole group, had been engaged in some domestic or personal pursuit.

Reason for leaving usual job and time since leaving.

Of the 900 women who reported the reason for leaving their usual job, slightly over one-half (51.3 percent) had been laid off; somewhat under one-sixth had to leave because the firm went out of business; and about one-tenth left for some other industrial reason. More than one-fifth (about 22 percent) had left for personal reasons and 10 women had been discharged for such reasons.

The proportions of women leaving their jobs for certain specified reasons were as follows:

	<i>Percent</i>
Laid off.....	51.3
Personal reason.....	21.9
Firm went out of business.....	15.8
Other industrial reason.....	9.9
Discharged for personal reason.....	1.1

With the exception of day workers and laundry operatives in domestic and personal service, of whom about two-thirds and three-fifths, respectively, had been laid off, the proportions engaged in the various occupations who gave lay-offs as the reason for leaving the usual job did not vary greatly. The proportions who had left for personal reasons ranged from 15 percent of those independently employed to 34 percent of the other laundry workers.

A large part of the 864 women who reported the time elapsed since they left their usual job had been out for long periods. About one-third had been separated for 3 years or longer, and practically one-fifth for 2 but less than 3 years.

The 864 women who reported time elapsed since leaving their usual job are distributed as follows:

	<i>Percent</i>
Less than 6 months.....	9.3
6 months, less than 1 year.....	15.4
1, less than 1½ years.....	12.8
1½, less than 2 years.....	10.2
2, less than 2½ years.....	14.8
2½, less than 3 years.....	5.6
3, less than 3½ years.....	9.6
3½ years or more.....	22.3

When occupation is considered with lapse of time since the women had lost their usual jobs, some striking differences are noted. Roughly four-tenths of the clerical workers had lost at least 3 years' time, as had one-half of the 34 professional workers and 17 of the 38 store employees. In contrast, only one-fourth of the domestic and personal-service group had lost so much time.

With the exception of the independent workers, one-third of whom had lost less than 1 year and nearly as many at least 3 years, the proportions that had lost 2 to 3 years were fairly alike, around one-fifth.

Excepting the independent workers, to whom reference has been made, from one-tenth of the women in stores to somewhat more than one-fourth of those in domestic and personal service had lost less than a year from their usual work.

A much larger proportion (close to two-fifths) of the women under 30 years of age than of other age groups or all groups combined had been out of their regular work less than a year. There were great differences in the proportions of women of different ages who had been away from their usual jobs 3 years or longer. Only about one-eighth of

those under 30, as compared with close to two-fifths of those 40 and under 50, and around three-tenths and one-third of those 30 and under 40 years and 50 years and over, respectively, had lost 3 years or more from their regular work.

Last job, other than usual, previous to asking relief.

Information was secured as to jobs other than the usual one that these women had held before applying for relief. Though no tie-up was made between the usual job and such work as was secured after losing their regular job, some data are available regarding type of the latest employment. As before stated, the women had, broadly speaking, left clerical, industrial, and laundry work and gone into independent businesses and day work in domestic service. The increase in jobs classed as independent business may be accounted for partly by women trying to earn a living by doing work at home; the very great increase in day work (which had comprised only 8.7 percent of the usual employment but was 32.7 percent of the jobs secured after loss of the regular job) probably is due to householders substituting occasional day workers for full-time employees.

The 934 women reporting their usual jobs and the 651 describing their latest subsequent employment are distributed by type of work in the summary following:

Type of job	Usual job	Last job subsequent to usual job
Women reporting—Number.....	934	651
Percent.....	100.0	100.0
Clerical.....	9.9	4.9
Sales and other store employment.....	4.4	4.1
Industrial.....	18.6	11.8
Domestic and personal.....	53.0	59.8
Private family.....	18.6	18.7
Day work.....	8.7	32.7
Other.....	25.7	8.3
Professional.....	3.6	1.4
Independent.....	8.7	13.5
Other.....	1.8	4.5

Time since losing last job other than usual employment.

Of the 594 women who had held a job subsequent to their regular work, 545 reported the time since even that job was lost. About one-fifth had had no work for a year or longer, and somewhat more had been unemployed 6 months but less than a year. In only three groups, domestic and personal workers, factory workers, and women in independent business, were the numbers large enough for specific mention. More than one-fifth of the 67 industrial workers reporting, somewhat over one-sixth of the 332 domestic and personal workers, and just over one-tenth of the 62 women who had been in independent business had had no work at all for a year or more.

RELIEF

Number of agencies applied to.

That these women were not chronic relief cases is evidenced by the fact that close to three-tenths of the 952 reporting on this had contacted no other agency but the one at which they were interviewed. Practically three-fifths had made application to one other agency, in

many cases probably the one that referred them to the Service Bureau for Women. Only a very small proportion, less than 2 percent, had applied to three or more agencies.

Cause of seeking relief.

As would be expected, the most outstanding cause of seeking relief was the loss of job and the inability to find employment. In many cases savings had been used up, and in other cases the aid given by relatives or friends was inadequate or had been discontinued. In some instances sources of income other than earnings were cut off. A large number of women gave age or failing health as the cause for seeking relief.

Type of relief granted.

Of the 848 women who received relief, the largest number (747) were given a grocery order, and the next largest (322) were given coal. A considerable number (231) reported receiving clothing, 151 had had work relief, and 70 shelter. Naturally, many of the women were given more than one type of assistance.

When consideration is given to the usual occupation and the type of relief, certain distinctions appear. The work-relief cases varied much according to the woman's usual occupation. More than one-half of the 82 clerical workers reporting—by far the largest proportion of any group—were given this type of relief. The next highest proportion, roughly one-fifth, was that of the 155 industrial workers and of the 73 in independent business. Only a small proportion of the domestic and personal workers were given work relief.

When age is considered with type of relief granted, some relation between them is apparent. As would be expected, the proportion receiving grocery orders increased as age increased from about two-thirds of the 67 who were less than 30 years of age to well over nine-tenths of the 284 who were 50 or older. The proportions receiving shelter decreased sharply from almost three-tenths of those below 30 years to only one-ninth of those 30 and under 40, and much smaller percents of those still older. The women who were given clothing showed little variation. The largest proportion of those given work relief were 30 and under 40 years of age (24.5 percent), while only about one-seventh of those less than 30 and of those 50 or more were granted such relief.

CLEVELAND

FRIENDLY SERVICE BUREAU OF THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

In Cleveland the agency through which the women included in the survey were contacted was the Friendly Service Bureau of the Young Women's Christian Association. This bureau was established by the association in December 1930 to care for the needs of girls and women who were unemployed or underemployed. At the time of survey any girl or woman was cared for temporarily and was given food, lodging, and medical or other attention as the need existed. Extended assistance was given in some cases. Employment was a large feature of the work of the bureau, with its objective to find work for as many as possible.

Data for 751 women were copied from the records of this organization and many of the women were interviewed.

WOMEN MAKING APPLICATION

Age and nativity.

As would be expected of a group applying to an agency of the Young Women's Christian Association, many of these women were young. Of the 749 whose ages were learned, close to one-third were not yet 20 and nearly one-fourth were 20 but not yet 25. Only about one-sixth of the women applying at this agency were as much as 40.

Age (years)	Number	Percent
All women.....	751	-----
Women reporting age.....	749	100.0
Under 20.....	235	31.4
20, under 25.....	177	23.6
25, under 30.....	84	11.4
30, under 40.....	131	17.5
40, under 50.....	88	11.7
50, under 60.....	31	4.1
60 and over.....	3	.4
Women not reporting.....	2	-----

About three-tenths of the 727 women reporting nativity were foreign born; well over two-fifths were natives of Cleveland; and the remainder, just over one-fourth, were born elsewhere in the United States. Of the 215 foreign born, about one-sixth were from England, Scotland, or Ireland, and roughly one-eighth each were from Germany, Poland, and Hungary. Practically all the women reporting in this study were white.

Of the 727 women reporting their nativity, the following is the percent distribution:

Foreign born.....	29.6
Native born:	
Cleveland.....	44.2
Other United States.....	26.3

Marital status.

A much larger proportion of the women in Cleveland than in Chicago were single. Practically two-thirds of the women reporting marital status fell in this group. The remainder were fairly equally divided among the married, the widowed, and those separated, divorced, or deserted.

The percent distribution of the 715 women whose marital status was learned is as follows:

Single.....	66.2
Married.....	12.2
Widowed.....	10.5
Separated, divorced, or deserted.....	11.2

Length of residence in Cleveland.

Of the 706 women who reported length of residence in Cleveland, 4 in every 9 had been there all their lives. Close to one-third had been residents of the city 20 years or longer—the great majority of them life-long residents—and a somewhat larger proportion, about two-fifths, for 10 and under 20 years.

	Percent
Less than 1 year.....	3.7
1, less than 3 years.....	5.0
3, less than 5 years.....	7.2
5, less than 10 years.....	12.5
10, less than 15 years.....	11.6
15, less than 20 years.....	28.3
20, less than 25 years.....	16.0
25 years or more.....	15.7
Life ¹	44.6

¹ Included in those 15 years and over in the foregoing.

Usual occupation.

As was the case in Chicago, only a few women had never had a regular job. Well over one-half of the 696 who reported the type of their usual job had been in domestic and personal service, about one-fifth in clerical work, and about one-tenth each in industrial work and in selling or some other job in stores. By far the largest part of the domestic and personal workers had been employed by private families.

	Percent
Clerical.....	20.7
Sales and other store employment.....	9.2
Industry.....	10.2
Domestic and personal service.....	54.9
Private family.....	41.8
Day work.....	.6
Other.....	12.5
Professional.....	2.0
Other.....	¹ 3.0

¹ Includes 6 women in independent business.

By age.—When age and usual job are correlated, the largest proportion of every age group but that of 25 and under 30 years had been in some domestic and personal pursuit. Close to two-thirds of those under 20 and almost three-fourths of those 40 years and over had been so employed. The largest proportion of the women of 25 and under 30 had been clerical workers, though here too a large proportion had been in domestic and personal service. In every age group but that of 40 years and over the smallest proportion applying were professional workers; among those 40 years and over the smallest proportion was that of industrial workers.

Reason for leaving usual job and time since leaving.

Only a small proportion, about one-third of the 707 women who had lost their jobs, reported the reason. Close to four-fifths of these 239 women had been separated from their usual jobs due to industrial reasons, and for just over one-fifth the reasons were personal. Almost one-half of all separations were due to lay-offs.

	Percent
Personal.....	¹ 22.2
Industrial.....	² 77.8

¹ Includes 11 who were discharged for personal reasons.

² Includes 115 who were laid off and 18 who left because of working conditions.

Of the 373 who reported the time since they had lost their usual jobs, close to one-third in each case had had no employment at their regular jobs for 1 and under 2 years and for 2 years or more. Only

about 1 in 20 had been separated from their regular jobs for less than 6 months.

In only two groups, clerical work and domestic and personal service, were numbers large enough for separate showing.

Among the clerical workers the proportion who had lost their jobs 2 or more years before interview was very similar to that for the whole group, almost one-third. A somewhat larger proportion of these workers, well over two-fifths, had been out of their usual employment for 1 and less than 2 years.

A smaller proportion of the domestic and personal workers—about one-fourth—had been out of their regular employment 2 years or longer; for about three-tenths the time had been 1 and less than 2 years. Well over two-fifths of these workers had lost their jobs within the past year.

Time since losing usual job	Usual job					
	All types ¹		Clerical		Domestic and personal service	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Women reporting.....	373	100.0	89	100.0	195	100.0
Less than 6 months.....	18	4.8	2	2.2	13	6.7
6, less than 9 months.....	59	15.8	8	9.0	44	22.6
9 months, less than 1 year.....	52	13.9	14	15.7	32	16.4
1, less than 1½ years.....	80	21.4	27	30.3	40	20.5
1½, less than 2 years.....	43	11.5	11	12.4	17	8.7
2, less than 3 years.....	55	14.7	16	18.0	20	10.3
3 years and more.....	66	17.7	11	12.4	29	14.9

¹ Details aggregate less than total, because no other group was large enough for the computation of percents.

The older women had suffered longer periods of unemployment than had the younger. In each age group the smallest proportion had lost less than 6 months. Of those under 20 years the largest proportion had lost 6 and less than 9 months; of those 20 and under 30 years, 12 to 18 months; and of those 30 and under 40 years and 40 years and over, 3 years or more in each case.

Last job subsequent to usual job.

Only 178 of the women had been able to secure work in other lines after losing their regular jobs. Of the 168 who reported type of such employment, about 62 percent had been in domestic and personal service, 4 in 5 of them in private families. Just over one-tenth reported clerical work and just under one-tenth employment in stores.

	Percent
Clerical.....	10.7
Sales and other store employment.....	9.5
Industrial.....	7.7
Domestic and personal service.....	61.9
Private family.....	48.2
Day work.....	1.2
Other.....	12.5
Professional.....	.6
Other.....	19.5

¹ Includes 6 women in independent work.

Time since losing last job.

Of the 101 who reported the time that had intervened since leaving their last job and applying for aid at the Friendly Service Bureau, one-half had had no work for 6 months or longer, not far from one-fifth for at least a year.

RELIEF**Number of agencies contacted.**

Of the 458 women who reported the number of agencies contacted before applying to the Friendly Service Bureau, more than one-third had made only one previous appeal and almost one-fourth had made no appeal but the present one. Somewhat under one-fifth were known to two other agencies, and the remainder to three or more.

About the same proportions of single, married, and widowed women as of the group as a whole—practically one-fourth—had had no contact with any other agency. Well over two-fifths of the married, about one-third of the single, and much smaller proportions of the other two groups had had only one previous contact.

Type of relief granted.

Less than half of the 751 women reported on the relief received. Of the 365 reporting, not far from three-fifths had received some relief. With the exception of car fare, the largest proportion had been given food.

MINNEAPOLIS AND ST. PAUL**AGENCIES CONTACTED**

As stated at the beginning of this report, records of unemployed women seeking relief in these two cities were sent in by the agencies. The women were not interviewed by the Women's Bureau investigators. In Minneapolis the agency supplying these data was the Woman's Occupational Bureau, which had established the Girls' Seventh Street Club as a shelter for unemployed women. The Young Women's Christian Association, which was given funds by the Community Chest for shelter and other assistance to unemployed women, furnished the information for the women in St. Paul. In this way records were made available for 83 women in Minneapolis and 99 women in St. Paul. Due to the small numbers the data for both cities will be discussed in this section.

WOMEN MAKING APPLICATION**Age, nativity, and marital status.**

The groups seeking relief in the Twin Cities comprised younger women than those who applied in Chicago. Somewhat over two-fifths of the 82 women reporting on age in Minneapolis and more than three-fifths of the 98 reporting in St. Paul were below 30. As was the case in Cleveland, the large proportion of young women in St. Paul was due, no doubt, to the fact that records were obtained from the Young Women's Christian Association.

Age (years)	Minneapolis	St. Paul
All women.....	83	99
Women reporting age—Number.....	82	98
Percent.....	100.0	100.0
Under 30.....	42.7	62.2
30, under 40.....	18.3	20.4
40, under 50.....	24.4	9.2
50 and over.....	14.6	8.2

Though 95 percent of the 83 women in Minneapolis were native born, only 5 women reported being born in Minneapolis itself. A smaller proportion of the 92 women in St. Paul, somewhat under seven-tenths, were native born. In each city practically all the women reporting were white.

Nativity	Minneapolis	St. Paul
Women reporting—Number.....	82	92
Percent.....	100.0	100.0
Native born.....	95.5	68.5
Foreign born.....	4.8	31.5

Large proportions of the women seeking relief at the 2 agencies were single—close to two-thirds of the 83 women in Minneapolis and about three-fourths of the 96 reporting in St. Paul. In each city slightly more than one-fourth were widowed, separated, divorced, or deserted.

Marital status	Minneapolis	St. Paul
Women reporting—Number.....	83	96
Percent.....	100.0	100.0
Single.....	65.1	74.0
Married.....	8.4	-----
Widowed, separated, or divorced.....	26.5	26.0

Usual occupation.

Only 2 of the 83 women in Minneapolis and 15 of the 99 in St. Paul had never been employed. As to usual occupation, well over one-half of the 73 women in Minneapolis who reported on this had been engaged in domestic or personal service, and more than one-fourth in some clerical pursuit. Somewhat over two-fifths of the St. Paul women who reported the type of their regular job had been engaged in domestic or personal service—the great majority in private families—and well over one-fourth had been in clerical work. Thirteen had been professional workers.

Usual occupation	Minneapolis	St. Paul
Women reporting—Number.....	73	83
Percent.....	100.0	100.0
Clerical.....	27.4	27.7
Sales.....	5.5	4.8
Industrial.....	5.5	3.6
Domestic and personal service.....	54.8	44.6
Private family.....	37.0	41.0
Other.....	17.9	3.6
Professional.....	2.7	15.7
Other.....	4.1	3.6

Reason for leaving usual job and time since leaving.

Cause of leaving the last usual job was reported by some of the women in both cities. In Minneapolis only 51 of the 81 who had been employed reported the reason for leaving their regular jobs. Of these, well over one-half had left for industrial reasons. A much smaller proportion in St. Paul, only 23 of 84 women who had been employed, gave the reason for leaving their last usual job; 16 of these reported some industrial reason.

Of significance in a study of this kind is the time elapsed since the women lost their regular jobs. For some of the women this meant total unemployment, but others had secured temporary work for part of the time. However, temporary jobs frequently are of short duration and not sufficiently remunerative to enable the women to get along without aid.

Of the 71 women in Minneapolis reporting the time since losing their usual job, about three-fifths gave such time as a year or longer. Young as well as old women had been separated from their regular jobs for long periods. Of the 30 women who were not yet 30 years of age, 18 had been out of work for a year or more, 2 for as long as 3 years. Of 27 women who were 40 or more years of age, 16 had lost a year or more, 11 as much as 3 years.

More than two-thirds of the 82 women in St. Paul who reported on this had been out of their usual employment for a year or more, one-half of them for at least 2 years, one-fourth for as long as 3½ years.

Last job subsequent to usual job and time since leaving.

As already mentioned, some of the women had temporary work after they lost their regular jobs. Only 45 women in Minneapolis reported on the type of last job held prior to seeking relief. Three-fourths of these jobs were in domestic and personal service and nearly all the remainder were in some clerical line.

In St. Paul, 79 women reported on the type of last job. As was true of Minneapolis, the largest proportion of these jobs were in domestic and personal service, followed by clerical work, the two chief types of usual employment.

Only 1 of the 69 women in Minneapolis who had secured temporary jobs after losing their regular work was still employed. Fourteen of the 38 reporting the time since they had lost this last job had been out of work for 6 months or more, 8 for at least a year. One-third of the 72 women reporting in St. Paul had been wholly unemployed for a year or longer. Ten of the 20 clerical workers had lost at least a year, 3 of them as much as 3 years. Of the 9 domestic workers who had lost a year or more, 3 had been out of work for 4 years or longer.

RELIEF**Cause of seeking relief.**

As would be expected, a large proportion (more than seven-tenths) of the 78 Minneapolis women who reported the reason for asking relief gave it as loss of job, and almost all the others stated that it was age or ill health. In St. Paul also these were the causes most frequently reported.

Type of relief granted.

Every one of the 83 women in Minneapolis was given some work relief. Nearly all received meals and almost as many were given shelter. In St. Paul, 93 of the 99 women were given shelter and the same number meals; the next largest group, 59, had received clothing.

PHILADELPHIA

The data given here regarding 1,654 unemployed, destitute women living alone in Philadelphia have been taken from the report, *Women Without Work*, written by Ewan Clague.¹ Permission to incorporate these facts was secured from the author, to whom grateful acknowledgment is given here. Two agents of the Women's Bureau cooperated with the Joint Committee on Research in securing the data. Only material analogous to that analyzed for the other cities has been taken from the above report. Many other important factors, such as shelter, employability, and illness, were included in the original survey.

Age.

One of the outstanding facts of the study in Philadelphia was the unusually large proportion of lone women in the older age groups, as may be seen from the table following:

Age (years)	Number and percent of women	
	Number	Percent
All women—number.....	1,654	-----
Women reporting age.....	1,648	100.0
Under 20.....	13	.8
20, under 30.....	135	8.2
30, under 40.....	271	16.4
40, under 50.....	406	24.6
50, under 60.....	372	22.6
60 and over.....	451	27.4
Women not reporting age.....	6	-----

Though no comparable figures by age and color and race are available in the report, some interesting facts are given. The Negro women were younger on the average than the white. They were proportionately more numerous in every 5-year age group up to 55, above which the proportions were sharply reversed, except for the small group over 90 years of age, of whom the Negroes had 3 of the 4. The average age of the 749 Negro women was 46.6 years.

Among the whites, the 605 native-born were the younger, averaging 50.8 years of age, or about 4 years above that of the Negro. The average age of the 281 foreign-born white was 56.2 years, or nearly 10 years above that of the Negro.

¹ *Women Without Work—A study of 1,654 unemployed destitute women living alone in Philadelphia—Publication No. 7, January 1934.* Joint Committee on Research of the Community Council of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania School of Social Work.

Race and nativity.

Of the 1,635 women reporting on race and nativity, somewhat under one-half were Negroes. Considerably more than one-third were native-born white and the remainder, about one-sixth, were foreign-born white.

Nativity and race	Number and percent of women	
	Number	Percent
All women—number	1,654	-----
Women reporting nativity and race.....	1,635	100.0
Native-born white.....	605	37.0
Foreign-born white.....	281	17.2
Negro.....	749	45.8
Women not reporting.....	19	-----

Marital status.

Of the 1,640 women reporting on marital status, more than one-fourth, 28.6 percent, were single, more than one-half, 53.2 percent, were widowed, and the remainder, close to one-fifth, 18.2 percent, were divorced or separated.

Marital status	Number and percent of women	
	Number	Percent
All women—number	1,654	-----
Women reporting marital status.....	1,640	100.0
Single.....	469	28.6
Married.....	-----	-----
Widowed.....	872	53.2
Separated or divorced.....	299	18.2
Women not reporting.....	14	-----

The Negroes differed markedly from the whites in marital status. Somewhat under one-sixth were unmarried, about three-fifths were widowed, and slightly more than one-fourth were separated. Among the foreign-born whites about the same proportion were widowed as among the Negroes, but nearly twice as many were unmarried and less than half as many were separated. Of the native-born whites, the proportion of single women was about 3 times greater than among the Negroes, 44 percent, and almost a like proportion were widowed, and a smaller than average proportion, separated.

Length of residence.

A large part of these women had been residents of Philadelphia for a long time. Some were native Philadelphians—over one-half of the native-born whites as compared with less than one-tenth of the Negroes. Over three-fourths of the native-born whites and nearly one-seventh of the Negroes were Pennsylvania born.

From the table below may be seen the length of residence of the persons born elsewhere than Philadelphia who reported the time they had lived there. Well over one-half, 55.8 percent, of the foreign born had lived in Philadelphia for 28 years or more, as compared with about two-fifths of the native-born whites and one-fourth of the Negroes. Only very small proportions of the three groups had been in Philadelphia less than 5 years.

Length of residence in Philadelphia (years)	Number and percent of women					
	Native-born white		Foreign-born white		Negro	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total ¹	258	100.0	260	100.0	663	100.0
Less than 5.....	13	5.0	5	1.9	55	8.3
5, less than 13.....	46	17.8	15	5.8	192	29.0
13, less than 18.....	36	14.0	19	7.3	123	18.6
18, less than 23.....	29	11.2	37	14.2	74	11.2
23, less than 28.....	28	10.9	39	15.0	53	8.0
28 and over.....	106	41.1	145	55.8	166	25.0

¹ Exclusive of native Philadelphians and those not reporting.

Usual job.

Domestic service was the job reported by the largest proportions of the group as a whole, of the Negro women, and of the foreign-born white women. More than seven-tenths of the Negro women as compared with somewhat under one-fifth of the native-born white women were engaged in domestic service. Among the native-born whites, clerical work was reported by the largest number. Of second importance for these three groups were the proportions reporting factory work as their usual occupation. See table following.

Usual job	Number and percent of women								
	Total		Native-born white		Foreign-born white		White-birth-place unknown	Negro	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Number	Percent
All women—number.....	1,654	-----	605	-----	281	-----	19	749	-----
Women reporting usual job.....	1,187	100.0	464	100.0	192	100.0	13	518	100.0
Domestic service.....	534	45.0	86	18.5	75	39.1	4	369	71.2
Factory work.....	234	19.7	91	19.6	53	27.6	2	88	17.0
Clerical work.....	122	10.3	111	23.9	7	3.6	4	-----	-----
Retail trade.....	70	5.9	57	12.3	8	4.2	1	4	.8
Cleaning offices.....	58	4.9	20	4.3	20	10.4	-----	18	3.5
Nursing.....	48	4.0	35	7.5	10	5.2	-----	3	.6
Business for self.....	35	2.9	12	2.6	5	2.6	-----	18	3.5
Sales.....	17	1.4	11	2.4	4	2.1	1	1	.2
Waiting table.....	14	1.2	7	1.5	-----	-----	-----	7	1.4
Teaching.....	11	.9	7	1.5	2	1.0	1	1	.2
Dishwashing.....	10	.8	2	.4	3	1.6	-----	5	1.0
Miscellaneous.....	34	2.9	25	5.4	5	2.6	-----	4	.8
Women not reporting.....	467	-----	141	-----	89	-----	6	231	-----

Length of time out of work.

In Philadelphia no information was available as to why the women left their usual jobs, but facts as to the length of time were. Some women had been dropped from their usual jobs in prosperous times many years ago, as in the cases of the white teachers, who averaged 8 years and 7 months of unemployment, or the clerical secretaries, who averaged 5 years and 7 months. But by far the most prevalent averages were from 2½ to 3½ years, which means that the overwhelming majority of the women were laid off in the early days of the depression.

Relief.

To many of the women in Philadelphia the need for assistance was not a new thing. More than one-half of those reported had received help from the bureau of unemployment relief, which had operated the previous winter. A slightly larger proportion, about three-fifths of the Negroes, and a smaller proportion, less than one-half, of the native whites previously had received relief.

These women likewise were widely known among the agencies in the predepression era. Approximately one-eighth of the women reporting had been known to service agencies before the depression and a like proportion to relief-giving organizations prior to the period of depression.



