

be expected, are different for men and for women aged 65 and over. One of the important differences is age; proportionately more of the women were aged 75 and over, and proportionately fewer were under age 70, as shown by the following figures (given in thousands) for July 1, 1955.

Age and sex	Number
Men aged 65 and over, total.....	6,559
65-69 .....	2,587
70-74 .....	1,896
75 and over .....	2,076
Women aged 65 and over, total.....	7,569
65-69 .....	2,766
70-74 .....	2,183
75 and over .....	2,619

Also important is the fact that more than half of all the aged women (about 70 percent of those aged 75 and over) were widowed (table 2).

The proportion of aged persons who were employed during a week in June 1955 was about four times as large for men as women. When the estimated numbers of employed women and of women (not themselves employed) married to earners are combined, however, the proportions with income from employment are 37 percent for men, compared with 22 percent for women.

Social insurance benefits likewise go to a larger proportion of aged men than of aged women, but the difference is much smaller than in the relative numbers with income from employment, because the major programs provide for benefit payments to widows as well as wives. Indeed, it is estimated that in June 1955, after adjustment for receipt of benefits from more than one program, there were some 3.5 million women (including 100,000-200,000 who did not themselves receive benefits but were married to beneficiaries) and about 3.8 million men receiving social insurance or related benefits.

Because the population aged 65 and over included about 1 million more women than men, the proportion with income from social insurance and related programs was 46 percent for women and 58 percent for men. For both men and women, at least four-fifths of the unduplicated total of beneficiaries were on the old-age and survivors insurance rolls.

For some time the old-age assist-

ance rolls have contained 3 women to every 2 men. In June 1955, approximately 20 percent of all aged women and 16 percent of all aged men were receiving public assistance. Assistance payments were more likely to be supplementary to old-age and survivors insurance benefits for men than for women because a large proportion of the women on the old-age assistance rolls are widows of workers who had no chance to qualify for insurance benefits.

Of the 1.6 million aged persons without income from employment, social insurance, or public assistance in June 1955, about 1.4 million were women. Here, too, one reason is the large number of women in the 65-and-over age group who were widowed before their husbands were able to acquire coverage status under old-age and survivors insurance and who had themselves never been in the labor force. Substantially all the 2.6 million married women aged 65 and over living with their husbands in mid-1955 had some money income from employment or a public income-maintenance program, either in their own right or as wives of income recipients. Of the 4.1 million widows aged 65 and over, however, at most one-fourth received widows' benefits under a program based on employment or military service, and probably no more, if as many, were either employed or in receipt of benefits as retired workers. At least one-fourth had no money income from employment or a public-income maintenance program.<sup>2</sup>

Although the number of aged women without money income from employment, social insurance, or public assistance is still substantial, in mid-1955—for the first time—such women comprised fewer than 1 in 5 of all aged women. It is estimated that the corresponding figure for men in June 1955 was down to less than 1 in 25. It is probable that for men this ratio is near the minimum, but that the proportion of aged women in this

<sup>2</sup> A considerable number probably received periodic payments under individual annuities and supplementary life insurance contracts; according to the latest estimate there were, in all, 590,000 women aged 65 and over (and 165,000 men aged 65 and over) receiving such payments at the end of 1953.

Table 2.—Percentage distribution of persons aged 65 and over by sex, age, and marital status, April 1955

[Continental United States]

Sex and marital status	Total	Aged 65-74	Aged 75 and over
Men, total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0
Married, spouse present.....	64.3	70.2	52.5
Widowed.....	23.0	16.4	35.0
Other.....	12.2	13.4	9.6
Women, total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0
Married, spouse present.....	34.2	42.2	15.4
Widowed.....	54.7	46.5	70.9
Other.....	11.1	11.3	10.8

Source: Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, No. 62 (Oct. 31, 1955).

situation will continue to decline for some time as the older widows die and a progressively larger proportion of women aged 65 and older become entitled to social insurance benefits on the basis of their own employment record or that of the husband.

Two years earlier, in mid-1953, almost 1 in 4 of the women aged 65 and over and roughly 1 in 13 of the aged men in the continental United States are estimated to have been without income from employment or a public income-maintenance program. For the aged population as a whole, the relative number without such income dropped from about 1 in 6 in mid-1953 to 1 in 9 in mid-1955. This improvement occurred despite a slight decline in the absolute number of aged persons with income from employment or public assistance. It is attributable to an increase of one-third in the number of aged persons receiving benefits under the old-age and survivors insurance, other public retirement, and/or veterans' compensation and pension programs. The number of aged old-age and survivors insurance beneficiaries alone increased almost two-fifths in the 2-year period.

## Workmen's Compensation Payments and Costs, 1954

The rate of increase in payments for wage loss and medical benefits under workmen's compensation programs showed a further slackening in 1954. The total of \$880 million was only \$34 million or 4.0 percent more than payments in 1953. From a rec-

ord gain of 15 percent between 1950 and 1951, the rate of increase dropped to 11 percent, then 7 percent, and now to 4.0 percent.

That 1954 payments did not reach

higher levels is a direct reflection of the safety record established in that year. The total of all disabling work injuries was the lowest in 15 years, and the number of fatalities was the

lowest in 18 years, according to estimates of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The injury volume has decreased 23 percent from the high point reached in 1943, while total employment has gone up 12 percent.

Over the same period, expansions in workmen's compensation programs have resulted in a somewhat greater relative increase in coverage than in total employment, thus bringing more of all work accidents within the scope of the programs. That workmen's compensation payments in 1954 were more than two-and-a-half times those in 1943 is, however, primarily a reflection of the higher wages on which cash benefits are based and the higher costs of hospitalization and medical services.

Payrolls covered by workmen's compensation programs dropped slightly (1.5 percent) from an estimated \$148.5 billion in 1953 to \$146.3 billion in 1954. With employment levels somewhat lower in 1954 than in 1953, the number of covered workers in an average week in 1954 is estimated at 38-39 million, about 4 percent fewer than in the preceding year.

Employers spent about the same amount in 1954 as in 1953 to insure or self-insure their risks under workmen's compensation programs. The estimate of \$1.5 billion (again 1.0 percent of covered payroll) consists of (1) \$1,067 million in premiums paid to private carriers; (2) \$310 million in premiums paid to State funds (for the program for Federal employees, which is financed through congressional appropriations, these "premiums" are the sum of the benefit payments and the cost of the administrative agency); and (3) almost \$125 million as the cost of self-insurance (benefits paid by self-insurers, increased 5-10 percent to allow for their administrative cost).

The benefit payments of \$880 million represented 59 percent of the aggregate of \$1.5 billion in premiums. In 1953 the ratio had been 57 percent. The somewhat higher loss ratio reflects in part the heavier weighting of State funds and self-insurers in the 1954 total and in part the increase, from 49 percent in 1953 to 51 percent in 1954, in the loss ratio of private carriers.

Of the total payments of \$880 mil-

*Estimates of workmen's compensation payments, by State and type of insurance, 1954 and 1953*<sup>1</sup>

[In thousands]

State	1954				1953				Percentage change in total payments, 1954 from 1953
	Total	Insurance losses paid by private insurance carriers <sup>2</sup>	State fund disbursements <sup>3</sup>	Self-insurance payments <sup>4</sup>	Total	Insurance losses paid by private insurance carriers <sup>2</sup>	State fund disbursements <sup>3</sup>	Self-insurance payments <sup>4</sup>	
Total.....	\$879,937	\$542,008	\$222,641	\$115,288	\$846,088	\$524,005	\$210,776	\$111,307	+4.0
Alabama.....	5,719	4,579	.....	1,140	3,891	3,113	.....	778	+47.0
Arizona.....	6,462	152	6,120	190	6,406	136	6,100	170	+0.9
Arkansas.....	4,757	3,897	.....	860	4,485	3,675	.....	810	+6.1
California.....	82,357	56,045	19,355	6,957	78,872	53,646	18,287	6,939	+4.4
Colorado.....	6,218	2,051	3,717	450	5,576	1,971	3,205	400	+11.5
Connecticut.....	14,519	13,069	.....	1,450	13,770	12,395	.....	1,375	+5.4
Delaware.....	1,117	892	.....	225	1,159	929	.....	230	-3.6
Dist. of Col.....	2,603	2,428	.....	175	2,568	2,368	.....	200	+1.4
Florida.....	15,782	14,552	.....	1,230	13,880	12,795	.....	1,085	+13.7
Georgia.....	7,190	5,845	.....	1,345	6,872	5,587	.....	1,285	+4.6
Idaho.....	3,080	2,070	640	370	3,082	2,055	657	370	-0.1
Illinois.....	45,665	36,725	.....	8,940	42,288	34,350	.....	7,938	+8.0
Indiana.....	14,024	11,944	.....	2,080	13,803	11,758	.....	2,045	+1.6
Iowa.....	6,419	5,139	.....	1,280	6,535	5,235	.....	1,300	-1.8
Kansas.....	7,403	5,923	.....	1,480	6,742	5,312	.....	1,430	+9.8
Kentucky.....	9,257	6,057	.....	3,200	9,443	6,183	.....	3,260	-2.0
Louisiana.....	18,664	15,814	.....	2,850	16,889	14,319	.....	2,570	+10.5
Maine.....	2,125	1,845	.....	280	2,221	1,931	.....	290	-4.3
Maryland.....	11,524	8,614	1,350	1,560	9,829	7,377	1,052	1,400	+17.2
Massachusetts.....	33,150	30,690	.....	2,460	34,581	32,021	.....	2,560	-4.1
Michigan.....	28,230	18,574	1,826	7,830	27,918	18,211	1,742	7,965	+1.1
Minnesota.....	13,969	11,569	.....	2,400	12,910	10,710	.....	2,200	+8.2
Mississippi.....	4,032	3,692	.....	340	3,913	3,583	.....	330	+3.0
Missouri.....	16,782	13,532	.....	3,250	15,788	12,733	.....	3,055	+6.3
Montana.....	3,853	1,196	1,976	681	3,282	1,276	1,529	477	+17.4
Nebraska.....	3,303	3,168	.....	135	3,159	3,029	.....	130	+4.6
Nevada.....	3,274	.....	3,117	155	3,000	2	2,858	140	+9.1
New Hampshire.....	2,246	2,206	.....	40	2,146	2,106	.....	40	+4.7
New Jersey.....	41,986	36,506	.....	5,480	40,988	35,638	.....	5,350	+2.4
New Mexico.....	4,707	4,357	.....	350	4,510	4,170	.....	340	+4.4
New York.....	147,953	90,384	33,619	23,950	147,145	88,873	34,454	23,818	+0.5
North Carolina.....	9,076	7,676	.....	1,400	8,807	7,457	.....	1,350	+3.1
North Dakota.....	1,528	.....	1,526	2	1,433	.....	1,431	.....	+6.6
Ohio.....	63,365	115	55,000	8,250	57,970	86	50,324	7,560	+9.3
Oklahoma.....	12,024	9,358	1,416	1,250	11,340	9,042	1,158	1,140	+6.0
Oregon.....	14,779	1,787	12,992	1,323	13,523	1,548	11,975	.....	+9.3
Pennsylvania.....	37,316	22,552	2,914	11,850	37,652	22,850	2,842	11,960	-0.9
Rhode Island.....	5,840	5,545	.....	295	5,617	5,342	.....	275	+4.0
South Carolina.....	5,103	4,103	.....	1,000	4,877	3,897	.....	980	+4.6
South Dakota.....	1,134	944	.....	190	1,051	891	.....	160	+7.9
Tennessee.....	8,911	7,151	.....	1,760	7,974	6,324	.....	1,650	+11.8
Texas.....	47,271	47,271	.....	400	47,329	47,329	.....	.....	-0.1
Utah.....	2,448	942	1,106	400	2,352	942	1,020	390	+4.1
Vermont.....	1,236	1,121	.....	115	1,288	1,168	.....	120	-4.0
Virginia.....	7,703	6,163	.....	1,540	7,380	5,905	.....	1,475	+4.4
Washington.....	20,294	344	19,500	450	19,483	266	18,767	450	+4.2
West Virginia.....	12,305	29	11,461	815	11,625	40	10,884	701	+5.8
Wisconsin.....	16,219	13,379	.....	2,840	16,225	13,409	.....	2,816	( <sup>c</sup> )
Wyoming.....	1,323	9	1,314	.....	1,155	20	1,135	.....	+14.5
Federal employees.....	43,692	.....	43,692	.....	41,356	.....	41,356	.....	+5.6

<sup>1</sup> Data for 1954 preliminary. Calendar-year figures except for Montana and West Virginia, for Federal employees, and for State fund disbursements in Idaho, Maryland, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, and Utah, for which data for fiscal years ended in 1953 and 1954 were used. Includes benefit payments under the Longshoremen's and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act and the Defense Bases Compensation Act for the States in which such payments are made.

<sup>2</sup> Net cash and medical benefits paid by private insurance carriers under standard workmen's compensation policies. Data primarily from the *Spec-*

*tator: Insurance by States of Fire, Marine, Casualty, Surety and Miscellaneous Lines*, 82d and 83d annual issues.

<sup>3</sup> Net cash and medical benefits paid by State funds; compiled from State reports (published and unpublished) and from the *Spectator*; estimated for some States.

<sup>4</sup> Cash and medical benefits paid by self-insurers, plus the value of medical benefits paid by employers carrying workmen's compensation policies that do not include the standard medical coverage. Estimated from available State data.

<sup>c</sup> Less than one-tenth of one percent.

lion, private carriers were responsible for 62 percent, State funds for 25 percent, and self-insurers for 13 percent. Total State fund disbursements, including payments to Federal Government employees, again increased at a slightly faster rate than private carrier payments—5.6 percent and 4.4 percent, respectively. The unevenness in the rate of increase from State to State may be seen in the accompanying table.

Medical and hospitalization benefits are estimated at \$310 million in 1954, a considerably larger proportional increase than for cash compensation. The distributions by type of payment are shown below; data for 1954 are preliminary, and those for 1953 have been revised.

[In millions]

Type of payment	1954	1953
Total.....	\$880	\$846
Medical and hospitalization.....	310	290
Compensation, total.....	570	556
Disability.....	500	486
Survivor.....	70	70

## Age of Wife When Husband Retires\*

Attainment of age 65 is one of the requirements for receipt of both old-age benefits and wife's benefits under old-age and survivors insurance; it is also a common requirement in private pension plans. Whenever improvements of the old-age and survivors insurance program are being considered, some thought is usually given to the advisability of changing the present retirement age for women, at least for receipt of wife's benefits.

Women with husbands aged 65 or over are on the average 4 or 5 years younger than their husbands. As a result, a man may be eligible to retire and receive an old-age benefit in, say, 1955, but his wife may not be eligible for wife's benefits until 1959 or 1960. Many men do not retire at age 65; the average age at retirement is actually about 68½ or 69.<sup>1</sup> Should these figures be accepted as an indi-

\* Prepared by Robert J. Myers, Chief Actuary.

<sup>1</sup> See the *Bulletin*, December 1954, page 11.

Table 1.—Percentage distribution, by age, of wives of workers awarded old-age benefits in 1953

Age of worker	Age of wife										
	Total <sup>1</sup>	Under 60	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	Over 67
Total.....	100.0	25.9	4.9	5.1	5.9	6.3	6.8	7.4	5.7	4.8	20.4
65.....	100.0	36.3	6.7	6.9	7.4	7.5	7.1	6.7	3.9	2.8	6.5
66.....	100.0	30.9	6.1	6.3	7.5	8.0	8.3	8.1	5.6	3.7	7.9
67.....	100.0	27.2	5.7	5.5	6.3	7.8	8.5	8.6	7.2	5.6	10.0
68.....	100.0	23.1	4.5	4.1	6.6	6.6	8.8	9.8	8.3	7.3	14.7
69.....	100.0	19.0	3.8	4.6	5.2	5.1	7.7	9.9	9.3	7.8	20.9
70.....	100.0	17.5	3.7	3.8	4.6	5.3	6.9	8.4	8.7	7.6	27.6
71.....	100.0	13.4	3.0	4.1	3.5	5.5	5.9	8.1	9.4	7.4	33.7
72.....	100.0	12.9	2.1	2.5	3.5	4.6	4.4	8.0	6.8	8.8	41.9
73.....	100.0	11.0	1.7	2.2	2.3	2.9	4.2	7.1	6.2	7.8	50.4
74.....	100.0	10.1	1.8	1.9	2.6	3.9	3.5	5.7	4.9	5.8	55.1
75-79.....	100.0	9.3	1.3	2.0	2.5	2.1	3.0	4.4	4.5	4.7	62.5
80 and over.....	100.0	6.0	.9	1.1	1.6	1.4	2.6	2.7	3.0	2.5	78.2

<sup>1</sup> Includes wives of unknown age.

cation that a man postpones his retirement until his wife is also eligible for benefits so that there will be an adequate retirement income for the family?

To determine if there has been any tendency for men to put off their retirement until their wives reach age 65, a study has been made of 1953 awards of old-age benefits to married men. Table 1 shows the percentage distribution, according to age, of wives whose husbands were awarded old-age benefits in 1953. Although there tend to be somewhat more wives aged exactly 65—particularly among those whose husbands were aged 67, 68, and 69—there is no significantly great clustering at age 65. Part of the concentration is certainly due to the normal age difference between husbands and wives, and part may be due to the tendency for husbands to de-

fer retirement until the wife reaches age 65.

An analysis leading to a somewhat more definite conclusion may be made by comparing the percentage distribution, by age, of wives of workers awarded benefits in 1953 with the corresponding distribution from a "standard population" that is unaffected by benefit receipt conditions. If the two distributions were similar, it would be evidence that the fact that the wife does not become eligible for benefits until age 65 has no effect on retirement rates. If, on the other hand, the old-age and survivors insurance data showed relatively few cases where the wife was under age 65 and relatively more where the wife was aged exactly 65, or perhaps somewhat older, then the evidence would seem to point to the conclusion that retirement had been deferred until the wife was eligible for benefits.

The best available source of "expected" distributions is the *Family Composition Study*.<sup>2</sup> Analysis along the lines indicated was made, using these data as the base. For each age, the actual percentage of the retired workers with wives in each of three age groups was compared with the corresponding percentage from the "standard population." Naturally, some difference between "actual" and "expected" is to be anticipated merely on account of random fluctuations. Among retired workers aged 65, 66, and 67, the ratios for each of the

(Continued on page 32)

Table 2.—"Actual" number of wives as percentage of "expected" number, by age group, for various ages of workers awarded old-age benefits in 1953

Age of worker	Age of wife		
	Under 65 <sup>1</sup>	65	Over 65
65.....	99	108	102
66.....	102	99	93
67.....	99	97	106
68.....	98	113	100
69.....	97	127	99
70.....	100	124	96
71.....	103	125	95
72.....	101	151	95
73.....	89	137	102
74.....	99	112	100
75-79.....	112	119	96
80-84.....	118	145	96
85 and over.....	194	75	89

<sup>1</sup> Women of unknown ages considered as being under age 65, since none are entitled to wife's benefits.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Bulletin*, April 1939, page 9.