Social and economic characteristics of 82 negroes receiving old age assistance from the Fulton County Department of Public Welfare during 1942

Ruby W. Mosley

ATLANTA UNIVERSITY

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.auctr.edu/dissertations

Recommended Citation
Mosley, Ruby W., "Social and economic characteristics of 82 negroes receiving old age assistance from the Fulton County Department of Public Welfare during 1942" (1943). ETD Collection for AUC Robert W. Woodruff Library. 3660.
http://digitalcommons.auctr.edu/dissertations/3660

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center. It has been accepted for inclusion in ETD Collection for AUC Robert W. Woodruff Library by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta University Center. For more information, please contact cwiseman@auctr.edu.
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF 82 NEGROES RECEIVING OLD AGE ASSISTANCE FROM THE FULTON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE DURING 1942

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ATLANTA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

BY

RUBY WASHINGTON MOSLEY

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
MAY 1943
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION ................................................................. 1
   Purpose of Study............................................................. 2
   Scope and Limitations..................................................... 2
   Method of Procedure..................................................... 3

II. LEGISLATION AND POLICIES CONCERNING OLD
    AGE ASSISTANCE............................................................ 4
    Legislation and Administration of Old Age
    Assistance Laws In Georgia........................................... 6

III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR OLD AGE ASSISTANCE AND
     THEIR EFFECT ON 82 NEGRO RECIPIENTS............................ 10

IV. SOCIAL FACTORS IN THE LIVES OF 82 NEGRO RECIPIENTS OF
    OLD AGE ASSISTANCE.................................................... 15
    Contact With Other Social Agencies................................. 16
    Age and Sex.................................................................. 18
    Marital Status............................................................... 19
    Children of Recipients.................................................. 20
    Education.................................................................... 22
    Occupational Training.................................................... 24
    Leisure Time Activities.................................................. 25
    Living Conditions.......................................................... 28
    Personal Appearance...................................................... 30
    Health........................................................................ 31

V. ECONOMIC FACTORS IN THE LIVES OF 82 NEGRO
    RECIPIENTS OF OLD AGE ASSISTANCE............................... 34
    Present Vocational Pursuits............................................. 34
    Income........................................................................ 35
    Supplements to Grants................................................... 39
    Insurance and Property................................................... 39

VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS............................................... 40

BIBLIOGRAPHY........................................................................ 43

APPENDIX........................................................................... 45

Schedule............................................................................ 46
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Age Verification of 82 Recipients of Old Age Assistance in Fulton County By Sex</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Social Service Index Clearance by Sex</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Marital Status of 82 Recipients of Old Age Assistance by Sex</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Grades Completed By 21 Recipients</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>House and Room Rent of 77 Recipients</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The stream of goods and services upon which life depends has never flowed with unfailing regularity. This statement partially explains why most men have always been insecure. However, it is the aged person who feels insecurity most. Throughout the early and middle periods of life, means of relieving anxiety are achieved through work or other ways. As a result a certain degree of economic security and well-being is achieved. However, in the aged individual, anxiety can be reduced greatly if some economic security, and a feeling of prestige that comes from being socially useful, have been accomplished.

What is old age? It is a stage of life usually characterized by gradual and irreparable failing of all faculties. This stage begins at different chronological ages in different individuals. There are a number of contributing factors causing this to be true. One important factor is the type of occupation in which the individual is engaged. To most people, old age means a decreasing ability to work, especially under modern conditions of production. In normal times, about one third of all persons 65 years of age or over are dependent on others for support.

Most people consider the family an essential social and economic unit. In relationship to caring for its aged, family responsibility

---

3Eveline M. Burns, op. cit., p. 8.
is delegated in most instances to children of the aged. The age, health and earning capacity of the children as well as their own obligations determine to a great extent how much will be contributed toward the support of an aged parent. When this source of assistance does not function, so society, through the Social Security Act, provides Old Age Assistance for aged persons in need.

The Social Security Act has as one of its objects the lessening of insecurity of the aged in two ways: (1) Old Age Benefits, which give cash annuities as a right to all workers 65 years of age and over, who have contributed toward their benefits while employed; (2) Old Age Assistance, which provides cash grants from federal, state and county funds to persons 65 years of age and over who are in need and can meet the remaining eligibility requirements. This study is concerned with the latter group.

Purpose of Study

The year 1942 was selected for this study because it was the first year in which applicants for Old Age Assistance in Fulton County were investigated in the chronological order in which the applications were filed, regardless of previous relief. The purpose of the study is to show the social and economic conditions of Negro recipients who were accepted and began receiving Old Age Assistance grants during 1942.

Scope and Limitations

During the year 1942, 8,524 Negroes were granted Old Age Assistance from the Fulton County Department of Public Welfare. For the purpose of this study, a sample of 82 cases has been selected by drawing every tenth case from the files.
Method of Procedure

A schedule of 18 items with sub-headings was prepared. These schedules were filled out from the material in case records at the Department of Public Welfare, supplemented by interviews with case workers who knew the individuals. Reports of the Georgia State Department of Public Welfare were studied as well as recent books and publications relating to the aged.
CHAPTER II

LEGISLATION AND POLICIES CONCERNING OLD AGE ASSISTANCE

The history of old age assistance in the United States started with a group of enthusiasts who were convinced of its essential need. Legislatures were pursued constantly until the pleas for their cause were heard. The process of establishing adequate systems of old age assistance has been slow. Arizona enacted an old age assistance law in 1914, but it was later declared unconstitutional. It was not until 1923, when Montana enacted legislation which allowed the County Commissioners to grant aid separate and distinct from ordinary poor relief, to aged persons, that the movement for old age assistance legislation in the United States began to make substantial progress. California passed a law granting non-contributory old age assistance to the aged in 1929. Massachusetts and New York followed in 1930.

Some of the early acts were drafted along the lines of what is known as the Standard Bill. Under this bill a citizen 70 years of age and over who had resided continuously for 15 years within the state and did not possess property of a value in excess of $3,000 was entitled to a pension which when added to other income, did not exceed a total of $1.00 a day. The principal requirements for eligibility under this bill concerned age, citizenship, residence, and degree of dependency. Administration was carried on either by County or Circuit judges.


During the depression of 1929, many individuals lost not only their savings and jobs, but many of their ideals and beliefs. Persons who before this time were too proud to accept relief were now in great need and sought governmental assistance. It was at this time that persons realized that social action through legislation was a means of partially solving the problem for the aged, the unemployed, and others in need of some form of assistance.

A bill for a federally administered old age assistance system had been introduced into Congress as early as 1907. However, it was not until 1932 that any hope for Congressional action appeared. That year the Dill-Connery Bill, which proposed federal aid to the states that granted old age assistance, was reported on favorably by the Senate and the House Committees, but Congress adjourned before the measure was voted upon.1

Prior to the depression of 1929, regardless of the fact that a few states were giving aid to aged individuals, many people believed that American citizens could provide for their own old age by individual savings.2 The time has passed when the individual can be expected to provide for himself against all the hazards to his personal economic security. This is especially true of the aged individual who is no longer able to earn a living.

In his message to Congress on June 8, 1934, President Roosevelt placed among the fundamental tasks of reconstruction the enactment of measures designed to insure individuals against unavoidable economic

1Jane M. Hoey, op. cit., p. 303.

This message was an immediate step leading to the passage of the Social Security Act which became a law of August 14, 1935.

Title I of the Social Security Act is concerned with state plans for Old Age Assistance. Some of the requirements which must be met by states which apply for Federal funds are: the state plan must provide that it shall be in effect in all political subdivisions of the State if administered by the State; provide for financial participation by the State; provide for granting to any individual whose claim for Old Age Assistance is denied an opportunity for a fair hearing before the State Agency; provide such methods of administration as are found by the Board to be necessary for efficient operation of the plan. Today Old Age Assistance laws have been adopted in every state. The conditions for qualifying for Old Age Assistance have been liberalized and while still low, the monthly grants have been increased and the standards of administration have been improved.

Legislation and Administration of Old Age Assistance Laws in Georgia

Since the early days of the State of Georgia the counties of the state have been administering pauper relief to their dependent citizens with the State Department of Public Welfare having little control of the program. The amount of these grants depended upon the financial condition of the county or upon the standing of the needy person and in some cases it was determined by the standing of the citizen who assisted the

1 Jane M. Hoey, op. cit., p. 302.
2 Jane M. Hoey, op. cit., p. 304.
needy person in getting on the list of eligibles. County officials generally knew the applicant and did not think further investigation of the individual necessary.¹

During a session of the General Assembly in 1935, a general county board of public welfare bill was passed by the Senate and House, but was vetoed later by the governor. During this same year, another bill similar to this one was passed and approved for counties of 200,000 population and over. Fulton County was the only county in the state affected by the bill.

The Fulton County Board of Public Welfare which began to function in 1935, consisted of seven members with the following duties:

1. Care of widowed mothers; dependent children; care of dependent and neglected children, care of aged needy persons, the unemployed, and handicapped.

2. By arrangement with the court having jurisdiction over juvenile delinquency provide probation service.

3. By arrangement with the county school board, extend cooperation in enforcement of school attendance.

4. Make contact with other counties, municipalities, the State Government or any Department or agency thereof, and any other agency or institution to administer relief services.²

The Georgia Legislature passed the Welfare Reorganization Act in January, 1937, largely to meet the state requirements for receiving Federal Social Security funds and to permit the state and its counties to levy taxes for support of the Social Security System. Social Security benefits, which include Old Age Assistance, started in Georgia on July 1, 1937.³

²Ibid., p. 7.
After fulfilling the requirements of the Social Security Act, each state is allowed to formulate its own program, so some of the requirements for Old Age Assistance differ from state to state. The State Welfare Department through its Public Assistance Division has the technical supervision of the 159 County Welfare Departments of Georgia, composed of the County Welfare Board, the County Director and Staff.

The staff of the County Welfare Department investigates for Old Age Assistance, Aid to Dependent Children and Aid to the needy blind. A summary of the approved cases is submitted by them to the State Department of Public Welfare. The State Department on its own initiative cannot make an award for payment of any type of public assistance. Payment is made only after the County Department has approved the award and has sent the proper forms to the State Department.

In Georgia, the basis of present participation in the payment of benefits for Old Age Assistance, Aid to Dependent Children, and Aid to the Needy Blind is as follows: Federal, 50%; State, 45%; County, 5%. The maximum grant is $30.00.

In the State of Georgia, Old Age Assistance cases are more numerous than Aid to the Blind or Aid to Dependent Children cases. Old Age Assistance cases also comprise the major part of the money appropriated for special assistance.

Fulton County has the largest number of applications received in the three categories of special assistance. Since it has the largest population of any county in the state this is to be expected.

For comparative purposes figures from the official report of the Georgia Department of Public Welfare for the fiscal year July 1, 1940 to June 20, 1941 are being used.
During the fiscal year applications received in Fulton County were divided in this manner: 7,686 for Old Age Assistance; 254 for Aid to the Blind and for Aid to Dependent Children; 2,285 to families with 5,969 to children. Chatham County with its population of 117,970 is next largest in population to Fulton County. The applications received in this county during the same fiscal year are: Old Age Assistance 291, Aid to the Blind 10, and Aid to Dependent Children, families 74, and children 208.

In Fulton County on July 1, 1940 there were 2,825 applications for Old Age Assistance pending; on June 30, 1941 there were 7,187 cases of Old Age Assistance pending. This large number of cases left pending at the end of the fiscal year is partly due to the fact that there were 2,825 cases pending at the beginning of the fiscal year, plus 7,686 applications received during the year.

The total public assistance benefits in Georgia for the fiscal year amounted to $5,328,710.50, $3,992,567.00 having been spent for Old Age Assistance; $1,165,169.50 for Aid to Dependent Children; $170,974.00 for Aid to the needy blind.¹

¹Official Report of the Georgia Department of Public Welfare for the Fiscal Year July 1, 1940 to June 30, 1941, pp. 8-9.
ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR OLD AGE ASSISTANCE

AND THEIR EFFECT ON 82 NEGRO RECIPIENTS

Old Age Assistance payments were first made in Fulton County in July, 1937. The investigations are made by the staff of the County Welfare Department. A summary of the approved cases is submitted by them to the State Welfare Department of Public Welfare. The state determines its own eligibility requirements within the general pattern set-up by the Social Security Act.¹ "There are three specific requirements contained in the Act. They are: recipients of aid to which the federal government contributes must be 65 years of age or over; the recipient must not be an inmate of a public institution; there is a general provision which states that the individual must be in need."²

The problem of proving age is for the aged a difficult requirement to fill. This is due mainly to the fact that there were few birth certificates issued when some of these old people were born. In the State of Georgia, regardless of the fact that the individual appears to be over 65 years of age, Old Age Assistance is denied unless state accepted means for proof of age are furnished.

Various ways have been accepted in Georgia by which proof of age can be verified. Those accepted are: a medical statement from a well qualified physician; an affidavit signed by a person who has known the individual for

a long period of time, and proving that the individual is 65 years of age or over; insurance policies in which the age given proves the present age of the individual to be 65 or over; the Social Service Exchange which proves the age requirement by ages given through registration with other agencies; family Bible records; marriage certificates and the census.

Of the 82 Negro cases studied, 41 verified their ages through medical statements, 11 through affidavits. This shows that these old people had no definite proof of their ages. However, because of the many methods accepted by the state for proof of age, there was not much difficulty involved.

The following table gives a picture of the various means by which the male and female recipients of Old Age Assistance in Fulton County verified their ages.

TABLE I

AGE VERIFICATION OF 82 NEGRO RECIPIENTS OF OLD AGE ASSISTANCE IN FULTON COUNTY BY SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical Statement</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affidavit of friend</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Service Index Report</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance Policy</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Bible</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage Certificate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Persons applying for Old Age Assistance in Fulton County are required to fill out an application form on which appears the following paragraph:

Applicants eligible for Old Age Assistance must be needy (need not be paupers) persons 65 years of age or older who have bona fide residence in the State for not less than one year, who are not inmates of a public institution at the time of receiving assistance and who are not receiving assistance under the "Aid to the Blind Act" and who have not made an assignment or transfer of property within the last two years for the purpose of becoming eligible for this assistance.¹

The signature of the applicant is obtained on the application form. For illiterate applicants the terms of eligibility are explained and the cross mark is accepted as a signature. All cases are assigned to case workers who investigate for proof of eligibility which is accomplished by home investigation and contact with references.

Investigations of applications are made in the chronological order in which they are filed and the awarding and rejection of grants are made in the same order.

Need is one of the requirements stated in the Social Security Act which must be met by each applicant in order to get financial assistance. In particular the determination of need should be made as realistic as possible, based upon consideration of health, family solidarity and the satisfaction of those human needs which enable the individual to live as a self respecting member of the community.²

---

¹Application for Public Assistance to the Needy Aged, Georgia State Department of Public Welfare, 1937.

decency and health. The State of Georgia simply states the individual need not be a pauper. This means that the individual need not be in a destitute condition. The requirements are not as rigid as those for general relief. Through investigation, all resources of the individual are considered and also the possibility of aid from relatives. From the findings of the 82 cases studied it was revealed that the majority of the families were of a low economic status. A good many of them could barely manage to maintain themselves on a standard of decency and health. For such families to care for an aged and needy parent would force them to a sub-standard level of existence.

The following is an example of a low income family having the responsibility of an aged member.

Case 1

Mrs. K., age 70, is not able to do much for herself. She lives with her only daughter who is married and has two daughters, 12 and 15 years of age. Her son-in-law works as a drayman and earns approximately $50.00 a month. He finds it difficult to take care of his family on the small amount of money he earns and does not feel any responsibility for his mother-in-law, but is willing to feed and lodge her if the agency will assume her other responsibilities. His wife is in poor health and unable to work. She is very devoted to her mother and is willing to make many sacrifices to have her mother with her.

The following are some of the requirements listed by the Department of Public Welfare to be met when the investigation has been completed.

The investigation must show that the applicant:

1. Has attained the age of 65 years.

2. Has not sufficient income or other resources to provide a reasonable subsistence compatible with decency and health.

3. Is not an inmate of a public institution.
4. Has made no transfer or assignment of property within two years prior to filing application in order to make self eligible for assistance.

5. Has resided in the state of Georgia continuously for one year preceding date of application.

6. Is not receiving aid to the blind.\(^1\)

In the Fulton County Department of Public Welfare, the "Suggested Budget Plan for Families of Low Income in Different Sections of the State, issued by the State Department of Public Welfare," is used as a guide in estimating the needs of Old Age Assistance clients. It is the policy of the agency after estimating the amount of relief needed to cut this amount by 25%, therefore the grant is only 75% of the estimated needs.\(^2\) The Federal Government will not participate in any grant which is for less than 75% of the deficit in the budget. Recurrent investigations are made once a year at which time the amount of grants is changed as the individuals needs change.

---

\(^1\)Fulton County Certification of Eligibility for Old Age Assistance, Form 114, Georgia State Department of Public Welfare, 1937.

\(^2\)"Suggested Budget Plan for Families of Low Income in Different Sections of the State", Atlanta, Georgia, State Department of Public Welfare, 1940. (mimeographed)
CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL FACTORS IN THE LIVES OF 82 NEGRO
RECIPIENTS OF OLD AGE ASSISTANCE

Many individuals now receiving old age assistance have at one time
or other, been recipients of some form of relief either public or private.
Contributing causes to this need for assistance among the aged in general
may be attributed to the fact that modern industry has placed the older
worker at a disadvantage. With increasing mechanization came emphasis
upon speed and intensity in routine operations, while individual skill
gained through long experience had gradually depreciated in value.\(^1\)
The depression of 1929 disrupted the economic status of many families
which up to that time were able to take care of their aged members with
no outside assistance.

Individuals who are now eligible for old age assistance were at
least 50 years of age in 1929, which means that they were fast becoming
classed as aged individuals during the depression years. The majority
of the Negroes who were placed on relief rolls were those who had held
laborious types of work such as farming and heavy domestic labor, there¬
by causing many to become aged early and unemployed sooner than indi¬
viduals living under different conditions. This is especially true of
the Negro in the southern section of the United States. As a result of
these contributing causes it is found that a large number of rural
inhabitants come to the larger cities seeking relief. Thirty five of
the 82 old people included in this study came to Atlanta between 1932-
35. Of this number 20 became public relief recipients under the Federal

\(^1\) Jane M. Hoey, "Old Age Assistance", The Social Work Book, (New York,
1937), p. 301.
Emergency Relief Administration these years. Of the 82 cases studied 44 had received some form of public relief before they applied for Old Age Assistance. Twenty-nine of this number were women, 15 were men. Twenty-two were relief recipients between 1932-35, 15 between 1936-39, and 7 between 1940-42. Most of these persons were general relief recipients or received work relief on a Federal Works program.

Contact With Other Social Agencies

Society realizes that there are individuals who have certain needs which cannot be met by the individual. As a result agencies have been provided through which their needs might be met. The Social Service Index Clearance made by the Department of Public Welfare, after its initial contact with each client, showed that the 82 old people were known to other community agencies and had made use of them. Seventy-five of the 82 clients were known to other agencies at the time of application to the Department of Public Welfare and 7 were not known to any agency. It would seem that from the nature of the evidence shown by the agencies to which these old people were known that illness and lack of finance were the two factors that caused the majority of these clients to apply for help. Thirty-five were known to the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and 24 were known to Grady Hospital. Since there are many diseases common to old people, it is surprising that only 24 of these recipients are known to a health agency. Only 3 had used the services of the Family Welfare Association. This does not necessarily mean that only three of these old people had personality difficulties. The three individuals who used the services of the Family Welfare
Association were referred to it by other agencies. The other agencies to which these old people were known were: The Works Project Administration; The Tuberculosis Association; The American Red Cross; Steiner Clinic and the Juvenile Court.

The following case story is an illustration of the unwillingness of two old people to accept aid for marital difficulties.

Case 2

Mrs. G, age 64, is separated from her husband, Mr. G, age 66. They have no children. Both are recipients of Old Age Assistance. Mr. and Mrs. G occupy the same house, each has separate rooms which are kept locked most of the time. Mr. and Mrs. G have been married for 40 years and have lived at their present address for 15 years. Each has quite a bit of respect and feeling for the other, however, marital difficulties ended in their present situation.

Case workers for the Department of Public Welfare have recommended the services of Family Welfare Association but though Mr. and Mrs. G are unhappy in their present situation they have not been willing to apply for advice.
TABLE 2
SOCIAL SERVICE INDEX CLEARANCE BY SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agencies</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Federal Emergency Relief Administration</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Grady Hospital</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Works Project Administration</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Family Welfare Society</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. T. B. Clinic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The American Red Cross</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Steiner Clinic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Juvenile Court</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age and Sex

Of the 82 recipients studied 46 were male and 36 were female. Only 18 of the individuals were able to give proof of their exact ages; therefore, it is not possible to list the correct ages. In instances where medical statements were used to prove that the individual was over 65 years of age, the physician gave as evidence only a written statement showing that the individual had certain degenerative diseases common to all people 65 years of age and over. When affidavits were used, approximate ages were given by persons who were older than the client and who had known the client for a long number of years. The oldest person for which
the exact age was given was 85 years of age. His age had been recorded in an old family Bible along with the ages of his sisters and brothers. The Bible was accepted as being authentic. The oldest person among the cases studied was approximately 95 years of age. Proof of age for this person was given through an affidavit.

Martial Status

The martial status of the individuals in the cases studied shows that in both male and female there are a greater number of widows and widowers than any of the other categories listed. Thirty-two were widowers, 22 were widows. Of those married and living with a spouse, 15 were male while only 3 were female. There were only 2 single males and no single females. None of the recipients were divorced. However, 5 males were separated, while only 1 female was recorded as being separated. There was recorded only 1 instance of common-law marriage. The marital status of all of the recipients remained as at the time of application, except in one instance where the wife of a recipient died six months after his application was accepted.

The following table shows the marital status of the 82 recipients of old age assistance included in this study.
TABLE 3
MARITAL STATUS OF 82 RECIPIENTS OF OLD AGE ASSISTANCE
BY SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Widowers &amp; Widows</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Married (living with spouse)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Separated</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Single</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Common-law Marriage</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children of the Recipients

Frequently it is thought that the only normal ethical and socially desirable method of handling the problem of the aged remains within the family group. The problem of the support of an aged parent or two is not difficult when there are a number of children who are willing and able to contribute toward a parent's support, however, it is quite different when the responsibility falls upon one or two children. The majority of the 82 recipients studied had only one child plus the fact that most of the children were of low economic status. It can readily be seen that these old people could not be wholly supported by their children.

Fifty-eight of the recipients studied had from one to 8 children.

The number of children recorded were those living at the time the individual applied for old age assistance. Twenty-seven were living in homes with children. Twenty-two of the men had from 1 to 8 children. No one had over 8 children. The majority of the recipients had only one child, nine male recipients had 1 child, 12 of the female recipients had 1 child. Even though 58 of the recipients had children, some had not seen or heard from them in several years. The case records did not give complete information of the ages and employment of the recipients' children. General information gathered from the case records shows that most of the children were of low economic status and were not able to assist an aged parent. There were a few who assisted their parents by giving them free shelter and food, but were unable to do any more. There were instances where the parent could not live in the home of a son or daughter because of over-crowded conditions. However, small amounts of money were given to help with their support.

The following is a summary of a case showing conditions of over crowding:

**Case 3**

Mrs. G lived with her husband in a small town in Georgia until his death 4 years ago. At that time she moved to Atlanta to live with a married son and his family. Her son's family consisted of five children and his wife. They occupied a small house consisting of one room and a kitchen. The man, his wife, and two of the younger children, slept in the kitchen. She did not like living this way, yet she did not wish to live alone. Her son earned approximately $10.00 a week working as a yardman for several white families. Her old age assistant grant was $8.87. The house rent was $8.00 a month.
There are some parents who because of personal and personality problems do not want to live with their children regardless of the assistance they might be able to give. Case 4 is an example of this:

Case 4

Mrs. S is 68 years of age, tall and much under weight. She lives alone in a basement room that is dark and damp most of the time. Religion is a very important factor in her life. The neighbors speak of her as being queer because of the things she does in keeping with her religious teachings. Mrs. S. has a daughter living in another section of this city whom she never visits because she does not approve of the life the daughter is living. At the present time the daughter is living in common-law relationship with a man who earns $15.00 per week as a truck-driver. She has offered her mother free shelter. Although Mrs. S. is in need, she refuses to live with her daughter as long as she remains unmarried to the man with whom she is living. Her old age assistance grant is $12.50 a month. The rent is $3.50 a month.

These cases show that even though the children of these old age assistance recipients have their own family obligations, there are those who are willing to give aid to their needy parents.

Education

Public schools for Negroes in Georgia were very few during the latter part of the nineteenth century.\(^1\) In the rural areas there were a few scattered fee paying private schools. In some parts of Georgia planters established schools for the children of their employees. Negro schools of any type were few. The majority of the 82 Old Age Assistance recipients were born and reared in the rural sections of Georgia. This accounts to a great extent for the large number of illiterates found among the recipients in this study.

A few of the recipients realized that not being able to read and write was a handicap to them. Two learned to read and write by taking lessons from their children, 8 attended W. P. A. schools. Of those who attended W. P. A. schools, none advanced above the third grade. How the remaining 25 received the little education they had could not be ascertained.

Of the 82 cases studied the case records show that 21 were literate. Fourteen were not recorded as being literate, however, evidence of being literate was shown by the applicants signature on the application blank. If the applicant cannot write, a cross mark is made in the presence of a witness. It was concluded from this that the 14 persons could read and write. Twenty-four of the illiterate recipients stated that they could not read or write because when they became old enough to go to school their parents had them remain at home to help with the work or do small jobs on a farm. Others stated that there were no schools near to attend.

Of those fortunate enough to attend a school, only 1 went long enough to complete the eleventh grade; 5 completed the fourth grade; second, third and fourth were the grades completed by the majority of the recipients recorded as literate.

The following table shows the number of grades completed by the 21 literate recipients from whom this information was gathered.
### TABLE 4
GRADES COMPLETED BY 21 LITERATE RECIPIENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Sex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Occupational Training**

Eight of the male recipients had some special occupational training. None of the female recipients had special occupational training. Four male recipients had special training in carpentry, 2 in brick masonry, one in roofing and one in repairing umbrellas. These occupations were learned by working as apprentice with persons who knew the trades, not in schools. None of the male recipients are making use of their special
occupational training because of their physical incapacity for the type of work for which they are qualified. It is difficult for a man 65 years of age or over to find employment as a brick mason or a carpenter. Beside considering them slow, employers regard persons of that age as being too great a liability.

The following is an example of a case where the age was a handicap to employment.

Case 5

Mr. S. is approximately 70 years of age and lives alone in a room that is badly in need of repair. He has no relatives in Atlanta. Until 1937, he worked as a roofer with a small contracting firm. A few years before he stopped working he began to show signs of age. His work slowed up and he was not able to keep up with the other workers. He was allowed to continue with the firm, not as a roofer, but to assist with odd jobs. Gradually he became more feeble and his eyesight became poor. Mr. S. was released. He worked on small jobs earning very little. In 1942 he applied for Old Age Assistance. Mr. S. is now very feeble and is wholly dependent upon his old age assistance grant of $10.87 per month.

Leisure Time Activities

Leisure time activities for individuals 65 years of age and over are not as numerous as those participated in by middle aged and young individuals. Aged people have considerable free time, unfortunately there are only a limited number of leisure time programs for them to participate in. Aged persons who are fortunate enough to be members of a closely knit family group have more outlets for leisure time activities than those who live alone with few or no family connections. The activities that may be participated in by aged individuals in connection with the home and the family group are: conversations with members of the family, sewing, games that require very little physical exercise such as checkers, dominoes, etc.
Family outings such as picnics and rides are also enjoyed. The church with its many activities furnished wholesome leisure time activities for aged individuals. The many clubs, programs, church fairs, etc, offer enjoyment to persons 65 and over.

The leisure time activities mentioned are types of activities that may be participated in by older persons in general. The old age assistance recipients in this study are limited to a very few forms of recreation.

The health and economic conditions of these individuals are two main factors that determine to a great extent the type of free time activities in which these old people might participate. Seeking the company of others and church activities were participated in by the largest number of individuals as a means of utilizing free time. There were only two instances where the radio served as a leisure time pursuit. The means by which all the recipients spent their free time was not recorded.

Only 16 of the recipients lived with their families. The majority were widows and widowers with grown children who had families of their own. In many instances economic conditions prevented an aged parent from living with a son or daughter. As will be explained in a following chapter, living conditions in the homes of many of these recipients were not conducive to wanting to remain in them all of the time. These are some of the factors that serve to take the individuals out of the home seeking the company of others as a leisure time activity.

The following is an illustration of an old age assistance recipient seeking the company of others as means of leisure time activity.
Case 6

Mrs. M. is a widow approximately 67 years of age. Her husband died in 1939. She has no children. Before her husband's death she lived in a three-room house in a fairly good neighborhood. She now occupies only one room in which the cooking and sleeping are done. She is totally dependent upon her old age grant of $10.87. Mrs. M. is seldom at home when the case worker calls. However, she can usually be found visiting one of the tenants in the house where she lives or at a neighbor's house near by. Mrs. M. stated that she becomes lonesome and goes out to talk with her neighbors.

It is a well known fact that the church is a very strong factor in the lives of many Negroes, then it is only natural to expect that some of their leisure time needs would be met through church affiliations. The greater part of Sundays, several nights a week plus a few hours during the week days are spent in activities of the Negro Church. Church clubs, programs, suppers and fairs are a few of the leisure time activities in which aged individuals might participate. The churches attended by the clients were Methodist, Baptist, Spiritualist, Seven Day Adventist and Catholic. The church affiliations of each recipient was not included in the case record, however, of those recorded the greatest number attended or were members of the Baptist and Methodist Churches. There was only one who was a member of a Catholic Church.

Although church activities are used as a means of social satisfaction, they are usually tied up with hope, faith and the life hereafter. The following is an illustration of church activities being used as recreation.

Case 7

Mr. A., age 68, is an old age assistance recipient. He lives in a small two room house with his wife and grandson. His only income is his old age assistance grant. His grandson pays the rent and buys some of the food. Mr. A is a member of a Baptist Church in his neighborhood. At one time he was pastor of a small church. A heart condition caused him to give up preaching. He enjoys working for the church and stated that his work with the church is his only recreation.
Living Conditions

The housing conditions of the 82 Negro Old Age Assistance recipients used in this study are deplorable. The majority of the recipients live in concentrated areas that are made up of old one and two room dwellings or dilapidated tenement house. Such an area can usually be spotted as one in which a considerable number of relief recipients are housed. When these conditions exist poverty, ignorance and disease are prevalent. Sub-standard dwellings attract relief recipients because the rents are cheap. The amount of money given for relief is small, only 75% of the estimated need is given in Georgia, therefore, in order to buy food and a few necessities, the individual must live in a cheaply rented room or house.

Sixty-one of the individuals studied roomed; 16 rented whole houses, only 5 owned their own homes. Of the 61 who roomed, 33 roomed alone in the homes of persons who were not children or relative; 15 roomed in the homes of their daughters; 8 in the homes of their sons; 4 in the homes of their granddaughters; only one lived with a sister. Four of the 5 who owned their homes had them paid for, only 1 was in debt.

The rents paid for the rooms ranged from $2.00 a month to $8.00 a month. The rents paid for houses ranged from $5.00 a month to $10.00 a month. Nine individuals paid $5.00 a month for room rent; 9 paid $4.00 per month for room rent; 8 paid $8.00 per month; only one paid $7.00. Four of the recipients paid $10.00 per month for house rent while only one paid $3.00.

The following table shows the amount of rent paid for rooms and houses by the old age assistance recipients in this study.
Table 5

HOUSE AND ROOM RENT OF 77 RECIPIENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rent</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Houses</th>
<th>Rooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>77</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1.00 - 2.00</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00 - 4.00</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.00 - 6.00</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.00 - 8.00</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.00 - 10.00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cheap rent paid for the majority of the rooms and houses is an indication that these aged individuals are living in houses that are in many ways below the standard of decency and health. The case records describe some of the dwellings as being unfit for use. In one instance the recipient was living in a shack he built for himself out of large boxes that were given him. Another recipient who had tuberculosis lived in a basement room that was dark and damp all of the time.

An example of a dwelling unfit for use may be seen in this story.

Case 3

Mr. E. is approximately 70 years of age. He is very feeble and suffers with rheumatism. He lives in an old dilapidated one room house near a railroad track. The roof leaks, broken window glasses are repaired with card board. The boards of the floor are rotten and have large holes in them in several places. Large pieces of lumber have been pulled from the side of the house and used as firewood by the neighbors. Although the house is in a very bad condition
he remains because any other house or room that rents for $4.00 a month is sure to be in the same condition.

The following case is an illustration of bad housing as a threat to a person's health.

**Case 9**

Mrs. D, is an old age assistance recipient who lives in a basement room. To reach the room she has to go down a stairway that is rickety. There is one window and one door to the room. Very little sunlight gets inside; as a result, it is dark and damp. Mrs. D, has lived in this room for 6 years and seems to be satisfied in spite of the fact that she has been told that it is bad for her health. She has rheumatism and frequent colds. She is about 65 or 70 years of age and does not get about much. Therefore, she is in this dingy, damp and poorly ventilated room most of the time.

There was only one male recipient who roomed and boarded and he paid his landlady $12.50 a month. Four dollars of that amount was for room rent the remaining $8.50 was for board. There was one man living on his former employer's place. He had worked for the family over a long period of years when he became too old to work he was allowed to continue living on the premises free of charge.

The house keeping standards of 59 of the recipients were recorded in the case records. These standards were based on the opinions of the case workers on the case. Forty-three were classified as fair in their housekeeping, 13 were classified as having good housekeeping standards, and 3 were classified as having poor standards of housekeeping. This shows that even though these persons are old the majority of them are interested in keeping the places in which they live fairly clean.

**Personal Appearance**

In the case records are recorded the workers evaluation of the
recipients’ personal appearance. Even though several case workers may have worked on the same case, the opinions have not varied to a great extent. The writer has used the evaluation of the last worker. The individuals’ personal appearance is referred to as being neat or untidy. Twenty-eight of the men were neat in their personal appearance; 17 were untidy; no evaluation was given for one male recipient. Twenty-five women were neat in personal appearance; 6 were classified as untidy; no evaluation was given for 5 of the women. This shows that the majority of the individuals gave some thought and attention to their personal appearance. For recipients who are unable to do their own laundry, a small amount of money, $0.75-1.00 is included in the budget for this purpose.

Health

Poor health is one of the major causes of financial dependency at all age periods. In studying the needs of the aged it is important to examine the nature and significance of the diseases to which old people are subject. Since aging is the result of the deterioration of the organs and tissues of the body, it is understandable why the diseases from which most aged persons suffer are chronic and degenerative. However, much depends upon how much care the individual has taken of himself plus his constitutional equipment.

All of the recipients in this study had some form of physical illness with the exception of one who was in good health (these facts are derived from doctors opinions). They are divided in this manner; those in good health, those under the care of a physician, invalids, those in poor health

1I. M. Rubinson, op. cit., p. 5.
but not under the care of a physician. The case records show that 60 of these old people have been in ill health from time to time, but at the time of the study none of this number were under the care of a physician, 19 were under the care of a physician, 2 were invalids, only one was in good health. Many of the recipients who were ill, but not under the care of a physician have at one time or other taken medical treatments over a period of time getting very little if any results. Case workers have tried to get them to continue medical treatment with little or no results. An example of this is seen in a case where the recipient told the case worker that doctors could not cure her because she was suffering from old age. Many have this belief and will not see a doctor. As a result a considerable amount from the grant is spent buying medicine to take internally and with which to rub their stiff aching joints.

The following illustrates ill health increasing the economic needs.

Case 10

Mrs. M is a small feeble looking person. Arthritis has left her body crippled in the legs and arms. She does not have the use of her legs at all. Her daughter, a widow, does washing for families at home earning from $3.00 to $5.00 a week. Mrs. M's old age assistance grant is $12.00 a month. She spends a large amount of her grant for medicine, living in hopes that she will walk again.

Prolonged illness places a great strain on the relationship of members of the family household of which the patient is a member. Aside from being a financial burden, such individuals are usually ill tempered and exacting in their demands. Frequently it is the son-in-law or daughter-in-law who tire quickly of such strain.

All of the recipients who were under the care of a physician were receiving treatment from Grady Hospital with the exception of one person who received treatment from Steiner Clinic. The illnesses that these
old people suffer from are: cancer, apoplexy, rheumatism, disease of the arteries and syphilis. Some of these are also the diseases that are common to aged people in general. When a physician makes out a medical statement to be used as proof that the individual is 65 years or over he gives evidence of having found the individual a victim of chronic degenerative diseases such as these aged people have.

Many Negroes have old fashioned beliefs concerning their illness. When the resources of legitimate medicine seem to bring no relief they resort to treatment from various types of quacks and cultists who charge as much as they can get the individual to pay. People who believe in this type of treatment are usually willing to pay the price demanded. An example of this is seen in the following case.

Case 11

Mrs. S. has been ill for a number of years. She has attacks of dizziness and has fallen on the street several times. After having attended Grady Clinic for two years, her condition was not improved. A neighbor told her of a "root doctor" whom she knew to be very good for the illness with which she suffered. The "root doctor" led Mrs. S. to believe that her illness was not from natural causes. He charged her prices that she was unable to pay. As a result of this Mrs. S. complains constantly that her grant is inadequate.
CHAPTER V

ECONOMIC FACTORS IN THE LIVES OF 82 NEGRO RECIPIENTS OF
OLD AGE ASSISTANCE

The economic needs of aged people should be considered seriously because in the final analysis it becomes a very serious problem of what all individuals will be able to do for themselves when they pass into that group.¹ Employment for the aged is a phase in society's planning for the group that has been neglected. However, now during these days of war jobs and shortage of man-power age requirements are not as rigid as in pre-war days. This does not mean that individuals who are old and feeble are being employed, but it does mean that older people are being employed now in jobs that would not have been open to them in pre-war days. It is true that in the older person productive activity is lessened, but there are many jobs not requiring much physical activity that can be held effectively by old people.

Present Occupational Pursuits

The occupational pursuits of the 82 old age assistance recipients in this study are few. The men are engaged in the following occupations: carpentry, yard work, janitorial work, farming, preaching, and domestic service. For the women there are only laundry work in the home and domestic service. Nine men and six women were employed. None were regularly employed. Some worked one or two days a week, while others worked only as their services were desired. Four men were employed as yard workers;

¹I. M. Rubinon, op. cit., p. 7.
only one was employed in each of the remaining occupations mentioned for men. Six women were employed, 3 did laundry work for small families. The highest amount earned by any one of the individuals was $6.00 a week for yard work; the least amount earned was $1.00 a week for domestic work and washing.

Case 12 illustrates the irregularity of employment for an aged individual.

Case 12

Mr. M., age 68, is still fairly energetic for his age. At one time he was considered a very good carpenter. He earned good salaries when he was younger. Now it is hard for him to get any kind of employment. Occasionally some one who knows the type of work that he once did, will hire him to repair a fence, or a broken step. He is still able to do small jobs of this type very well. His physical appearance is a handicap to him, for he appears to be much older than he is.

An example of how poor health plus old age lessens the earning capacity may be seen in the following case.

Case 13

Mr. B., age 70, was at one time the pastor of a fairly large church. At the age of 68 he became ill with a paralytic stroke. He was unable to walk for a number of months. Now he is able to get about with the aid of crutches. While he was ill, the people of the church secured a regular pastor. He is allowed to preach there occasionally but has no church of his own and is not employed.

Income

The present financial status of the recipients in determined largely by the amount of money received from their Old Age Assistance grants, for other income is negligible. The grants received by these old people ranged from $4.00 to $28.00. Thirty-six of the grants ranged from $9.00 to $12.00.
The recipient's grant is affected by the number of legal dependents included in the budget and living arrangements. The living arrangements may be divided in this manner: those living alone, those living with dependents, those living with other relatives, and those living with unrelated persons. It was found that recipients living with dependents either dependent children or an unemployable spouse, had the largest grants.

One recipient with 4 minor children had an estimated deficit amounting to over $30.00. The grant in this instance was $28.00. The grants of those with unemployable spouses were second largest. Those living with other relatives and those who had a spouse receiving Old Age Assistance were smallest. Fifty-six recipients received grants ranging from $9.00 to $16.00.

An illustration of dependents of the recipients included in the grant is seen in the following story.

Case 14

Mr. G. is an epileptic patient about 67 years of age. His wife died in 1940, leaving 8 children, 4 of whom are over 18 years, while the remaining 4 are younger. Mr. G. is not able to hold a job because of his epileptic condition. He is an old age assistance recipient receiving a monthly grant of $28.00. The four young children are included in the grant.
### TABLE 6
PRESENT AMOUNT OF AID OF 82 RECIPIENTS OF OLD AGE ASSISTANCE BY SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grants</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$4.00 - $7.00</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.00 - 11.00</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.00 - 15.00</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.00 - 19.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.00 - 23.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.00 - 27.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.00 - 31.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rent is a very important item in the budget of an old age assistance recipient. Many of them will pay rent with the only money they have because of a great fear of being evicted. With this low income group rent comes first, then the remaining money is divided among other necessities.

Cases 15 and 16 illustrate opposite attitudes toward payment of rent of recipients living in the homes of relatives.

**Case 15**

Mrs. N., age 68, lives with her sister. She has lived with her for 5 years and pays $4.00 a month rent. Mrs. N's sister is buying the home in which they are living. The $4.00 that Mrs. N. pays her sister is used toward payment on the house. She is very proud of the
fact that she can help. Her old age assistance grant is $12.00.

Case 16

Mr. D. is approximately 72 years of age. He lives with a married sister and her family and promised to pay $3.00 a month rent. He is never punctual with his payments and complains about having to pay rent at all. Even though he shares a room with two of his sister's children he has a bed to himself and is apparently comfortable. He is allowed the use of the kitchen for cooking purposes. Mr. D. talks of moving, but never does. His old age assistance grant is $14.47.

In instances where recipients lived in household groups there were only a few cases where the grant was computed to include the family group. The case recordings were not complete in regards to the earnings of each member of a household. Other public assistance to the families of recipients consisted of 6 old age assistance grants and two Works Project Administration employees. In one family there was a cousin and a brother of the recipient receiving Old Age Assistance grants. An interpretation of the amount of other income will not be undertaken because the amount of other income in the household in the majority of the cases could not be ascertained.

It is the policy of the agency to place some of the responsibility of the client's support on a son or daughter who is financially able to help. Case 17 illustrates how the income of a son affected his aged parent's grant.

Case 17

Mrs. S. is approximately 70 years of age. She lives with her son and his wife. Her son is employed as an insurance agent, earning approximately $90.00 a month. His wife is unemployed. The son is devoted to his mother and contributes small amounts of money toward her support. Mrs. S. is in ill health and buys numerous kinds of medicine thereby spending a considerable amount of money. Because of the financial aid, Mrs. S. receives from her son, her grant is only $6.00 a month.
Supplements to Grant

Recipients of Old Age Assistance often report that their grants are inadequate. Some who can work do so to supplement the grant. Fifty of the recipients were totally dependent upon their grants. Of this number 31 were men and 19 were women. Thirty-two were partially dependent; 15 were men and 17 were women. It is interesting to note that there were more totally dependent men than women and more partially dependent women than there were men. The recipients classified as being partially dependent consist of those who are able to earn small amounts of money doing odd jobs, those who received aid from children, aid from former employers, aid from insurance, and rent from property. Aid from children served as a supplement to grants more than any other sources listed.

Insurance and Property

Insurance and property are two items that are not owned by many relief recipients. Of the 82 recipients only 5 owned their own homes. To own a home means added expenses of paying taxes, and keeping up repairs. Numerous incidentals occur in connection with home ownership that makes it undesirable for persons of low income groups. Sixteen of the recipients owned some type of insurance on which the weekly payments of none was over $.15.
A study of the social and economic characteristics of 82 Negroes receiving Old Age Assistance shows that financial aid alone does not meet all the needs of these old people. A program is needed to meet the needs of their social and physical as well as financial problems. The point of view of many individuals in dealing with old people is that nothing much can be done for them, except to provide them with food and shelter. This point of view is based on the fact the the life span of persons over 65 years of age is near its end and time for any form of development is limited. Those who hold such a belief are disregarding the fact that old people have some of the same physical, social and personality difficulties as persons of younger age groups. Until more people become aware and are willing to do something about the many problems of the aged, there will continue to be those in the aged group ending their life span as decrepit, maladjusted, physically and mentally ill individuals.

This study revealed that of the 82 Negroes receiving Old Age Assistance, 46 were men and 36 were women. Seventy-five of the recipients were known to other social agencies, 35 of this number were relief recipients under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. Those who had received some form of public assistance before applying for Old Age Assistance numbered 44.

The ages of these recipients ranged from 65 years to approximately 95 years. Over half had deceased spouses, 19 were living with spouses, only 2 were single. Fifty-eight of the recipients had children. None had over eight children. The majority had only one child. Aid to the parents consisted mostly of free shelter.
The living conditions were poor. Sixty-one rented one room. Of this number 33 roomed alone in the homes of persons who were not their relatives. Twenty-seven lived in the homes of their children, only 5 owned their own homes. Rents ranged from $2.00 to $10.00 a month. Four recipients paid $10.00 a month for house rent. The housekeeping standards given of the 82 recipients show that their rooms and houses were fairly well kept.

The health conditions were poor. All of the recipients had some physical illness with the exception of one. Sixty were in poor health, but not under the care of a physician. All suffered from diseases common to old people.

Thirty-five were literate and 47 or over half were illiterate. The eleventh grade was the highest grade completed. First, second, and third were the grades completed by the majority of the recipients. Eight of the men had some special occupational training.

The leisure time activities were limited. Seeking the company of others and church activities were participated in by the majority of the recipients. Only 15 had some form of occupation. None were regularly employed. The wages earned were from $1.00 to $6.00 a week. There were 50 recipients who were totally dependent and 32 who were partially dependent upon their Old Age Assistance grants.

Recipients who had legal dependents had the largest grants; those living alone were lowest. The amounts of grants ranged from $4.00 to $28.00. Thirty-six received grants ranging from $9.00 to $12.00.

In conclusion it may be said that the 82 old persons with whom this study is concerned are in need of a number of services other than
financial assistance. In any enlarged program for their care provision should be made for meeting needs along the line of medical, personality and social adjustments.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Articles

Bulletins and Reports
Compilation of the Social Security Law, Including the Social Security Act, as Amended and Related Through the 76th Congress. Washington: Social Security Board, 1941.

Unpublished Material

"Suggested Budget Plan for Families of Low Income in Different Sections of the State" Atlanta, Georgia, State Department of Public Welfare, 1940.
APPENDIX
I. Identifying Data

1. Name______________________________ 3. Age______ Sex______
2. Case Number________________________ 4. Birthday_____________

5. How age was verified

II. Previous Relief____________________ None

1. Kind___________________ Year received___________________
2. Length of time received________________________
3. Amount of relief

III. Present O. A. A.

1. First date of application________________________
2. Date application was received_________________
3. Date applicant received first O. A. A. grant________

4. Amount of grant_________________________
5. Amount estimated in budget__________________
6. Number of persons included in budget 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, over.

IV. Social Service Index Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Known to:</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
V. Marital Status

1. At time of application

M __ S __ W __ D __

2. Present time

M __ S __ W __ D __

VI. Education

1. Illiterate

2. Literate Grades completed 1, 2, 3, 4, 5,

6, 7, 8, 9, (over specify)

3. Special training

VII. Relatives

1. Number of Children 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, over.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Employed</th>
<th>Unemployed</th>
<th>Amount contributed to O. A. A. Client</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Other members of the family on relief

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Kind</th>
<th>Amount received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over

(a) Number of other relatives living in home
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, over.

(b) Living elsewhere in city
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, over.

VIII. Extent of dependency on O. A. A. grant
1. Totally dependent
2. Partially dependent

IX. Supplement to O. A. A. grant
1. None Working Begging Others

X. Vocational pursuits
1. Gardening
2. Janitor
3. Yard work
XI. Present amount of Earnings

4. Washing
5. Sewing
6. Domestic service
7. Handicraft
8. Woodcraft
9. Preaching
10. Carpenter
11. Others

XII. Health

1. In good health (determined by doctor's statement)
2. Under care of physician
3. Invalid (determined by doctor's statement)
4. In poor health but not under care of a doctor

XIII. Personal Appearance (worker's estimate)

1. Neat Untidy

XIV. Housing

A. Owns home
   1. Paid for Paying for

B. Rooming
   1. Renting house Amount paid
   2. Boarding

C. Living Quarters
   1. Occupy whole house alone
2. Occupy whole house with spouse and children __________
3. Occupy whole house with spouse __________
4. Occupy whole house with others __________
5. Occupy one room
6. Occupy one room with spouse
7. Occupy one room with son _______Daughter_____

XV. Housekeeping standards (Standards of cleanliness -- workers estimate)
1. Good ___________ Fair ___________ Poor ___________
2. Physically unable to keep house (doctor’s statement)

XVI. Attitudes of members of household for O. A. A. Client.
1. Resent O. A. A. Client and regard him as a burden _____
2. Toleration because of financial aid __________
3. Pity __________________

XVII. Insurance ___________________ None __________
1. Kind ________________
   1. ____________________ 3. ____________________
   2. ____________________ 4. ____________________
2. Property ________________ None __________
   1. Kind ________________

XVIII. Leisure time activities
1. Seeks company of others ______________________
2. Listens to radio ______________________________
3. Attends church __________________________________
4. Sewing ______________________________________
5. Weaving _____________________________________
6. Gardening
7. Reading
8. Checkers
9. Movies
10. Others