

The Relief Situation
in
Colorado Rural and Town Areas

by

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INTRODUCTION

This report is largely based on data collected in the study of Public and Private Assistance in Rural and Town Areas, made by the Division of Social Research of the Works Progress Administration to obtain information concerning the intensity, the cost, and the trend of assistance in representative areas. The Colorado sample of eight counties, as shown in Figure 1, is a part of a national sample of 385 counties and townships in 36 states, selected as representative of rural and town areas. While the national sample includes areas with population centers ranging in size up to 25,000, the Colorado sample contains only two centers of over 2500, one 7,193 in population, the other 5,107 according to the 1930 census. Reports cover entire counties, and no sampling was done within any county.

Data presented are for the period January, 1936-May, 1937 inclusive; and cover number of cases assisted and amount of assistance given, for three classes of aid: The Social Security classes (Aid to Dependent Children, Blind Assistance, Old Age Assistance), Resettlement Emergency Grants, and General Assistance. These three classes of assistance constitute all relief of a direct nature paid from public funds in Colorado during the period. Only "outdoor" or "home" relief is included in General Assistance figures, "indoor" assistance or expense of care given in institutions having been excluded; surplus commodity distribution is omitted. Activities under the Works Program were not included in the study, though a trend of the Works Program case load for the sample counties is presented. Assistance given by private agencies in the sample counties to resident persons was so relatively inconsequential as to be eliminated from this report.

Information on Resettlement Grants was secured monthly from the state office of the Resettlement Administration for all sample counties except Kit Carson and Otero, which do not operate under the Colorado administration; such information for those counties was secured from the respective county offices. Figures on the Social Security classes and General Assistance were obtained month by month from the respective County Departments of Public Welfare, and from local county records. While reports on the Social Security classes might have been secured from the State Department of Public Welfare, accurate and complete figures on General Assistance were not available in the central office.

The survey in Colorado was transferred from the Division of Social Research of the Works Progress Administration to the State Department of Public Welfare as of June, 1937. Current month-to-month figures and trends for the entire United States sample are published by the Rural Section of the Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C. in a monthly bulletin Current Statistics of Relief in Rural and Town Areas.

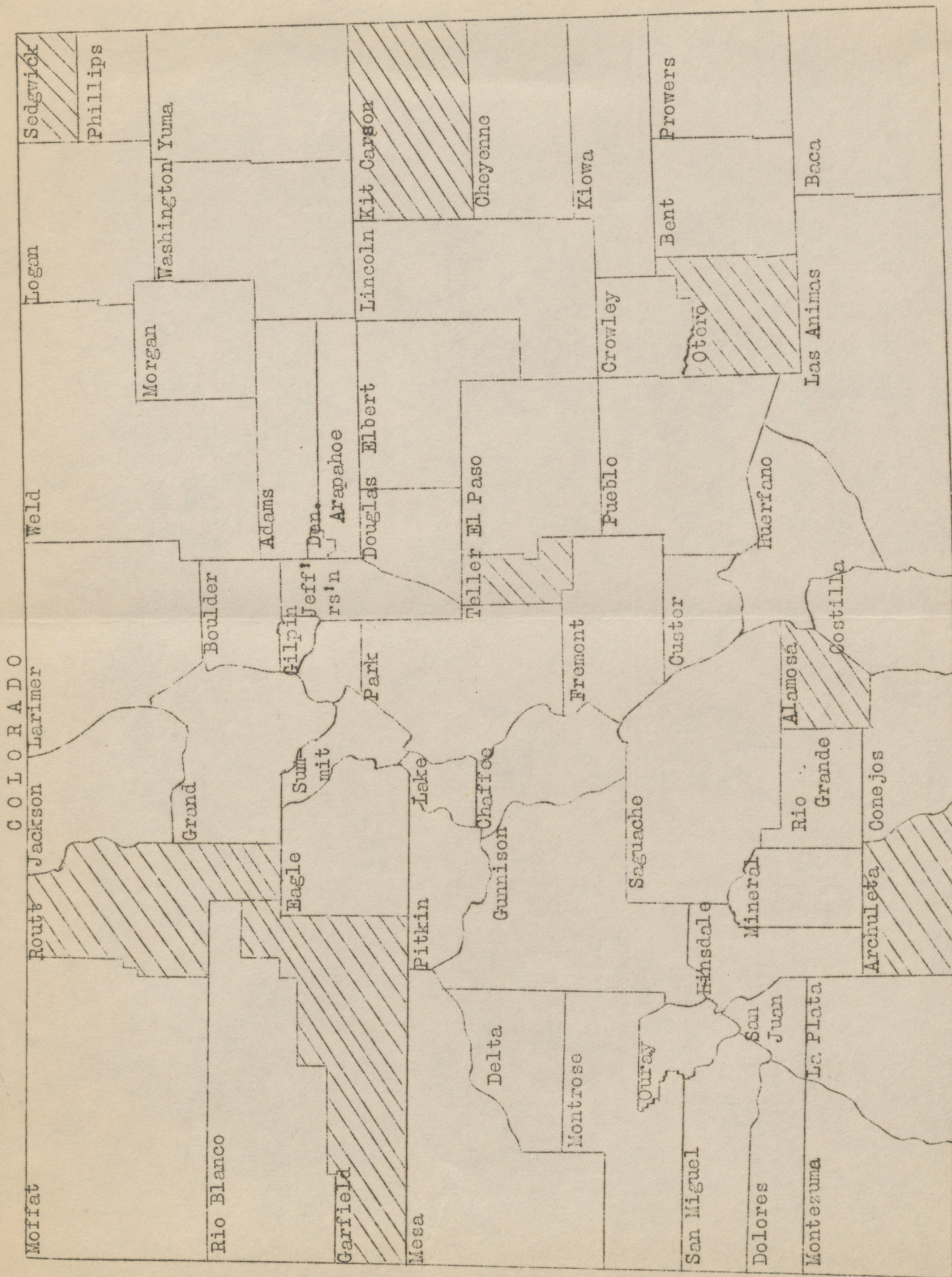


Figure 1. Sample Counties in Study of Public and Private Assistance in Rural and Town Areas

SUMMARY

This report attempts to present a picture of trends in public assistance extended in eight Colorado sample counties representative of rural and town areas during the period January 1936-May 1937, inclusive. Types of relief included in the scope of the study were the Social Security classes and general assistance administered by the County Boards of Public Welfare and Resettlement emergency grants; the Works Program was excluded except in making limited estimates of the total relief situation. April 1936 was taken as the base month and used as equal to 100 in calculating indices.

In April 1937 the total case load for the County Boards of Public Welfare, Resettlement emergency grant program, and the Works Program, duplications among agencies not eliminated, was 6 per cent below April 1936; however, the index number for May 1937 was 2.5 points above May 1936.

Distribution of the total case load among the three agencies, duplications among agencies not eliminated, in April 1937 was as follows: County Boards of Public Welfare, 57 per cent; Resettlement grants, 7 per cent; Works Program, 36 per cent; a year previous the distribution was: County Boards of Public Welfare, 49 per cent; Resettlement grants, 10 per cent; Works Program, 41 per cent. Case load indices in April 1937 as compared with the base month of April 1936 taken as 100, were as follows: County Boards of Public Welfare, 110; Resettlement grants, 65; Works Program, 81.

No records are available to determine the nature and extent of the duplication of households aided by the various relief agencies; hence it is impossible to obtain a complete and accurate picture of the relief situation at the present or for any time in the past.

Case loads for the Social Security classes in April 1937 were 43 per cent above the year previous; expenditures had increased 146 per cent. Even if all general assistance and Resettlement grants could be reduced to zero, the costs in 1937 for the relatively permanent Social Security aids would have been above all 1936 relief costs (excluding Works Program for both years).

Aid to dependent children has had the most rapid increase of the three Social Security classes since federal participation began April 1936; the case load index for April 1937 was 365 and the expenditure index was 624. Expenditures for aid to dependent children are about 11 percent of all Social Security costs, both case load and costs appear to be reaching a point where they will remain relatively unchanged.

The aid to the blind case load increased 14 per cent and costs increased 85 per cent in April 1937 over April 1936. Less than two per cent of the Social Security costs go to the blind. Neither case load nor costs need be expected to change much if present qualifications and benefits are retained.

Old age assistance case loads in April 1937 were 32 per cent over April 1936; costs had increased 130 per cent. About 87 per cent of all Social Security monies now go to the aged. The proportion of aged persons receiving old age assistance in the various counties ranged in May 1937 from 28 to 104 per cent of the number of persons aged 65 and over according to the 1930 census. Because of the increase in aged persons since 1930 these proportions are over-estimates but it was not considered safe to correct for these changes on a county basis. For the entire state, 40.6 per cent of the estimated aged population received the special relief in May 1937 whereas on the basis of 1930 figures the proportion would be 46.6. In May 1937 approximately 25 per cent of the old age assistance persons lived in households in which one or more other aged persons also received special aid.

Both case loads and costs for old age assistance will continue to increase for several decades, unless present policy with respect to qualifications and benefits are drastically changed, because of the natural increase in the number of aged persons in the population; the proportion of aged persons in the total population will also steadily increase for several decades.

General assistance case loads and expenditures were lower in each month of 1937 since January than for corresponding months of 1936; whether this fact reflects reduced need or reduced financial support from the state is not known. Hospitalization expenditures charged to individual cases amounted to 24 per cent of all general assistance expenditures for "outdoor" relief in the period January-May 1937; burial costs amounted to 3.6 per cent of the total in the same period. In the few counties where records and time permitted analysis, it was found that 36 to 52 per cent of general assistance "outdoor" relief costs were for hospitalization and medical care or treatment or supplies.

Although lack of coordination of the case records kept by the various relief agencies, and in some places lack of records, makes a state-wide estimate of the total relief load impossible and permits going back only through 1935 in the sample counties, the best estimate is that the number of persons dependent on relief in Colorado rural and town areas is 18 to 25 per cent less in 1937 than for corresponding months of 1935 when the peak in "emergency" relief was reached, but from 18 to 22 per cent of the population are still estimated to be dependent.

Relief costs, with Works Progress Administration expenditures included, are higher in 1937 than in comparable months of previous years.

THE RELIEF SITUATION IN COLORADO RURAL AND TOWN AREAS^{1/}

No longer can public assistance programs be considered as temporary.

Since the termination of assistance from the Colorado Emergency Relief Administration on November 30, 1935 a permanent organization has been formed charged with the administration or supervision of all the welfare activities of the state; special permanent programs have been instituted, with federal support, for aged, blind and child dependents. Needy but unemployable persons are aided from state and county general assistance funds which in each county are largely administered by the permanent administrative body, the Department of Public Welfare. On the other hand, employable but unemployed needy persons are the concern of a variety of administrative agencies, county, state, and federal, both permanent and temporary.

It is to be assumed that every program involving direct assistance should distribute aid on the basis of need; this is not incompatible with the further assumption that it is a function of government to assist and encourage the unfortunate to achieve self-support as far as possible, for the future of the state rests on the self-dependence of its people.

With the recognition of at least part of the relief problem as permanent, it appears essential to appraise recent trends of cost and intensity of public assistance as an aid to formulating further public policy, evaluating administrative procedure, and predicting future possibilities to enable some degree of social planning.

The main objective of this report then, is to attempt to present recent trends in Colorado's relief situation in rural and town areas, not to enlarge on causes or policies. The total relief load is the result of a complex of economic, social and political events; the primary causes vary from area to area and case to case. In part, it may be true that the intensity of relief in any area is an indicator of relief policy.

^{1/} Full responsibility for the statements appearing herein rests with the authors and not with the Works Progress Administration.

CASE LOAD TRENDS BY AGENCIES

In figure 2 is given the trend in case load during April, 1936-May, 1937^{1/} for the three^{2/} public agencies administering direct and work relief in the state for the Colorado sample or Rural and Town areas: The Works Program^{3/}, the County Boards of Public Welfare^{4/}, and the Resettlement Administration.^{5/}

Interpretation of the trends depicted by Figure 2 is a challenge. The trend of the total relief load for all agencies combined, duplications among agencies not eliminated, injects a somewhat optimistic note by the fact that at no time has the load climbed back to that of the base month of April 1936; the load in April 1937 was however, only 6 per cent below that of a year previous. Questions begin to arise when it is noted that the May

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- ^{1/} Note that while the entire period of study is January 1936-May 1937 inclusive, the period of the trend presented in this section begins April, 1936. In April 1936, the County Boards of Public Welfare began functioning, bringing under one agency the Social Security classes and general assistance, which prior to that time were administered by two agencies, the County Court and the County Commissioners. This made possible elimination for statistical purposes of duplications among four types of assistance. The period beginning April, 1936 is used here so that the most comparable and accurate figures could be used in determination of the case load trend.
 - ^{2/} Assistance given families as a result of work in CCC is excluded; during the period of study recruits were supposed to be taken only from families eligible for relief. Surplus commodities are omitted.
 - ^{3/} Data secured from Area Statistical Office No. 9 of the Works Progress Administration, taken from WPA Form 837 Revised. Figures represent not only WPA case load, but an unduplicated case load count for all agencies participating in the Works Program combined, including WPA, Forestry, Soil Conservation, Bureau of Public Roads, NYA, etc. NYA student aid is omitted.
 - ^{4/} Administers general assistance and aid to the aged, blind, and dependent children.
 - ^{5/} Only Resettlement emergency grants included; all loans excluded.

1937 trend was 2.5 per cent above that of twelve months earlier. It will be noted later, however, that relief costs have tended to increase and remain above the index of 100 rather than below.

Taking each agency separately, the total load administered by the County Boards of Public Welfare is observed to have increased as the number of cases in April, 1937 was a gain of 10 per cent over the base month. That the peak load for this agency may be reasonably expected to be far higher than the base month of April, 1936 is indicated by two facts: (1) the index for the winter months reached a December peak of 132, (2) this permanent agency will probably bear the burden of reductions made by the more temporary agencies such as the Works Program and not absorbed by private enterprise. The Works Program was maintained at all times below the level of April, 1936; in April 1937, the case load index was 81. The index of cases receiving Resettlement grants dropped from 100 in the base month to 0 in July 1936, rose back to 81 in February 1937 and declined to 65 in April 1937.

When the month to month variations for each agency are considered in relation to each other, as is necessary if a complete picture of the relief situation is to be obtained, it is difficult to discover consistent relationships in the trends of the three agencies. It appears that monthly fluctuations in one agency are not regularly closely connected with case load fluctuations in the other agencies. This raises two questions: (1) does the load of any agency at any time reflect administrative policy and funds available as much as or more than human need, and (2) should not all segments of the public assistance programs be coordinated?

The case count on which Figure 2 is based is unduplicated within each agency so far as determination of duplication was possible, but is duplicated as between agencies; the trend of the total relief case load for the sample counties is, then, based on figures which are duplicated as between agencies. Data giving the extent of such duplication between agencies are not available, and will not be available, until tabulation is made of data collected through the Study of Public Assistance Extended to Households in Drought Areas.^{1/}

^{1/} In this study one household card was made for each household receiving any form of public assistance in certain sample counties during the period July-December 1936; any and all assistance received from all agencies by any member of the household during the period was entered upon the one card. Works Program and CCC were included. Such procedure permits accurate determination of percentages of duplications between agencies. Colorado counties included in the drought area study were Kiowa, Kit Carson, Otero, and Sedgwick.

Preliminary tabulations show from 8 to 24 per cent of the households received (a) public assistance from two or more agencies, or (b) had two or more cases receiving the same type of aid or aid from the same agency during the same month, or (c) had both (a) and (b) types of duplication.

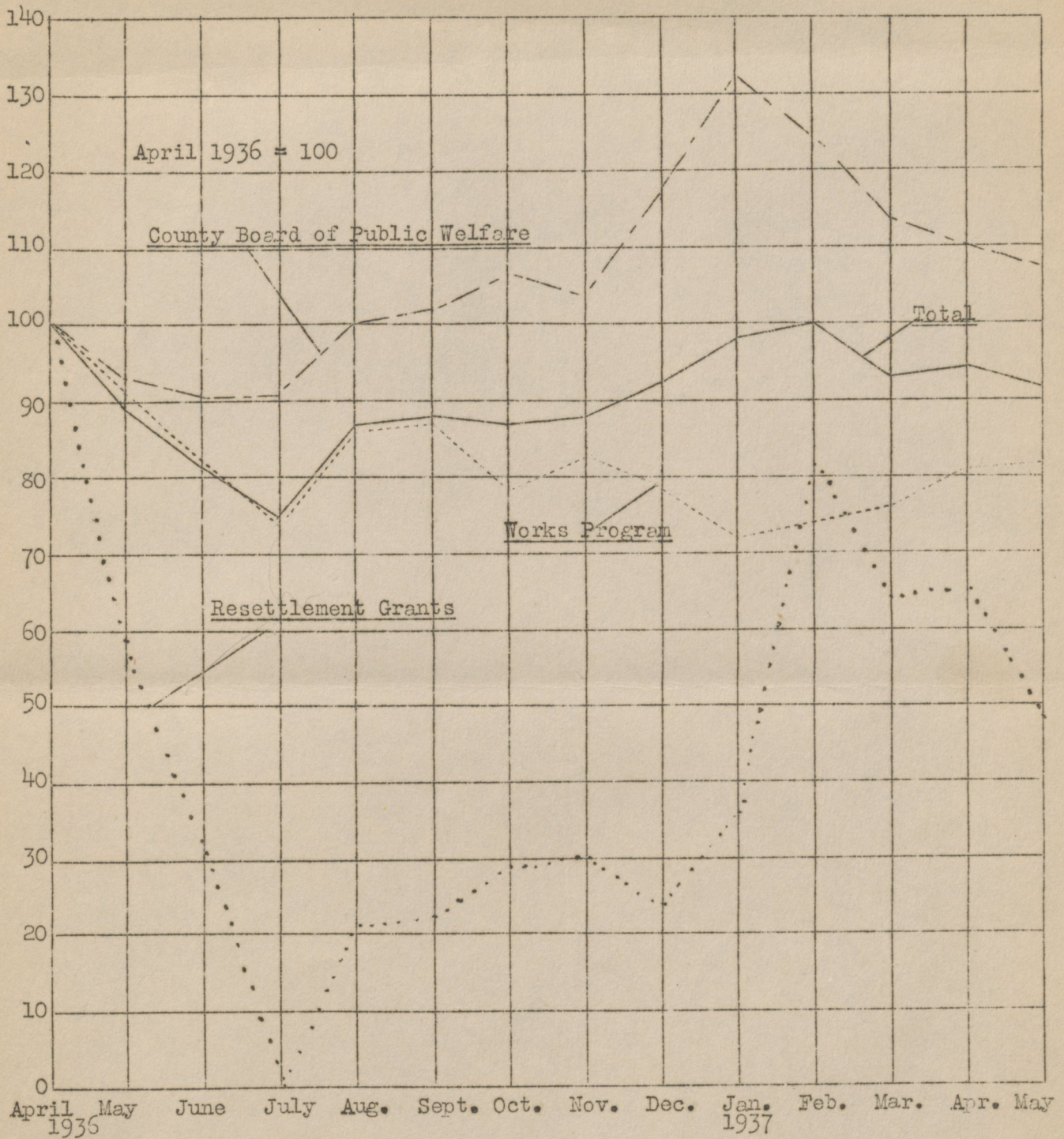


Figure 2. TREND OF CASE LOAD OF THREE AGENCIES IN EIGHT SAMPLE COUNTIES* (Unduplicated Count Within Each Agency, Not Between Agencies)

*County Boards of Public Welfare include general assistance and the Social Security classes of aid to the aged, blind, and dependent children.

Thus while available case load figures for the various agencies afford basis for plotting an adequate trend of the relief load for each agency in the sample counties over the period of study, such figures do not serve as a safe basis for determining the absolute relief load in any county for any given period for all agencies combined. Any figure given for the percentage of population on relief at any time and over any period covered by this study would have to be by estimate, and an evaluation of such estimates, based upon knowledge of available data pronounces the result of such venture questionable.

In order to accurately gauge the impact of the need for public relief, and the meeting of that need, upon the social and economic life of the state or any of its units, it seems desirable that such determination be based upon a total county or state case load count in terms of household units, as professionally distinguished from even family units; and that amounts received be recorded by household units, together with the number of individuals dependent wholly or in part upon such amounts for livelihood. Such desired figures for the period studied would also have to be an estimate based upon data that for such a purpose is incomplete.

In this connection, certain aspects of the data upon which the trends shown in Figure 2 are based should be pointed out. The Works Program load, being a count of workers, is affected by the fact that a change in priority because of illness or some incapacity may have brought more than one worker from one household on the job over the period of a month, and also by the fact that two persons from one household may have worked simultaneously throughout a month if one was working on a non-student NYA project.

The case load count for the County Boards of Public Welfare involves three "types" or definitions of cases: for blind assistance and old age assistance a case is defined as the individual receiving the grant; for aid to dependent children, the family is the case unit, and for general assistance a case is defined as the entire household unit. This is of some significance in attempting to arrive at an unduplicated case load count, as is demonstrated at another place in this bulletin.^{1/} An unduplicated household count for the County Boards of Public Welfare was begun in the study with reports for April, 1937. However, the trend herein given is based on a case count for April and May 1937, in accordance with the varied definitions already presented, so that figures might be comparable with those for previous months. To arrive at such an unduplicated case count two or even three old age pensioners in one household had, of necessity, to be counted as two or three cases. However, when a person in such a household received general assistance, such

^{1/} See page 17.

assistance, it must be construed, going to all members of the household unit as a case, such was counted as only one duplication. Another consideration is the fact that for some households which received old age assistance or aid to dependent children and in addition general assistance, the general assistance was entered under a name other than that of the recipient of the categorical assistance. Occasionally office records did not show the categorical type case and the general assistance recipient to be in the same household. Under such circumstances the duplication most likely was not counted. Frequency of the occurrence is not known; such instances were occasionally noted.

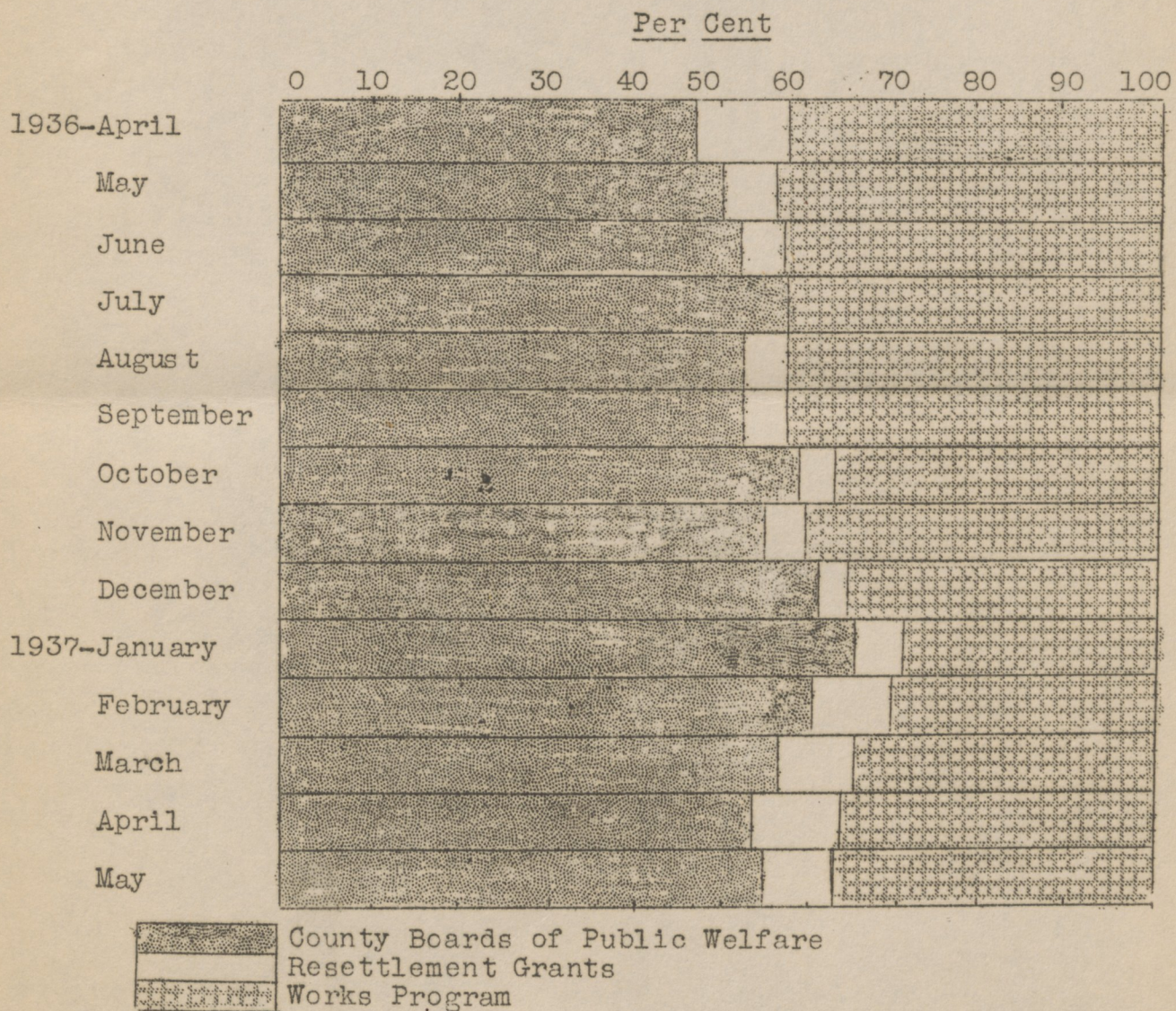


Figure 3. Per Cent of Case Load Carried By Each Agency
(Duplications Between Agencies Not Eliminated)

In figure 3 then which shows the percent of the total case load carried by each agency (duplications not eliminated) by months during the period April 1936-May 1937, a household, which should be the "case basis" for a study of Colorado's relief situation, may be represented more than three times in one month among the three agencies.

Securing the trend of the total relief load for the state and its distribution among agencies based upon figures for all 63 counties rather than only the 8 sample counties as given in Figures 2 and 3 is prevented only by the fact that accurate figures on general assistance are not available for the state as a whole.

Presentation of an expenditure trend for the three agencies similar to the one presented for case load, and based upon figures for the sample counties is prevented by the fact that strictly comparable figures for the Works Program are not available. Single projects as some in Forestry were operated with workers from several counties; there is no breakdown of expenditures on such projects by county of residence of workers; only available figures on expenditures are by county of work.

The data which have been presented, or statistics obtainable and not made prohibitive by time and expense involved, force these conclusions: (1) data available do not give an accurate and complete picture of the total relief situation in the past, (2) as a result of inadequate records kept in the past it is impossible to project trends to predict with reasonable assurance what relief needs will be in the future.

It would appear the relief situation must be considered in its entirety, not in unrelated segments. The sequence of this generalization is (1) that the entire family or household should be the unit whose need is the basis of assistance, rather than each individual considered as a separate entity within the group, (2) if the family group is the unit of assistance, then the special aids should be correlated with other forms of relief in determining whether need is met, and (3) all forms of aid granted to each unit aided can be correlated only through coordination of the records of the various administrative agencies by means of a central statistical clearing card system and administration which utilizes this clearing system.

TRENDS BY TYPE OF ASSISTANCE

With comparable figures on expenditures for Works Program by counties unavailable, with complete and reliable figures on general assistance available only for the eight sample counties, the more detailed discussion and presentation of data which follows is based on the Colorado sample for rural and town areas, with the

exception of certain developments to be noted in relief for the aged; figures and trends will be restricted to those classes and types of public assistance covered by the study of Public and Private Assistance in Rural and Town Areas, which does not include activities of the Works Program.^{1/}

Trends in case loads and expenditures will be for the period January 1936-May 1937 as contrasted to the period of trend previously used of April 1936-May 1937.

Using January 1936-May 1937 as a trend period presents a complication previously indicated. In April 1936, the various County Boards of Public Welfare began functioning, becoming responsible for the administration of aid to dependent children, old age assistance, blind assistance, and general assistance, and being responsible in their administration to the State Department of Public Welfare. Prior to that time these four types of assistance were administered by two separate agencies: the County Courts were responsible for aid to dependent children and old age assistance, while blind assistance and general assistance fell to the Boards of County Commissioners. Thus for the first three months of 1936, separate agencies had those types of assistance which, based upon results in later months, probably had the greatest percentage of duplication: aid to dependent children, old age assistance, and general assistance. Procedure in the study called for reports on assistance by agencies, eliminating duplications of assistance within each agency. To have gone beyond that in an attempt to eliminate duplications between agencies during these three months would not only have been impractical, but with records wholly inadequate for that purpose, it would have been impossible.

With consolidation of administrative responsibility for these four types of assistance under one agency in April 1936, efforts were begun at making a strictly unduplicated case count in the sample counties with improving results during the course of the study. Thus data involving a total case count for all types of assistance covered by the study for the first three months of the trend period and such figures for the remaining months of the period are not exactly comparable. It is, however, these data which must serve as a basis for plotting the trend of total relief load. The trend of the total load as shown in Figure 4 is based on data representing an approximately unduplicated case count between the Social Security classes and general assistance plus the Resettlement grant load in April 1936 and succeeding months, whereas for the months prior to that time the total figures represent little more than a simple sum of the case count for each type of assistance.

^{1/} Data on which all indices herein presented are based are available at the office of the Department of Economics and Sociology, Colorado State College, to responsible persons; comparable indices and data are also available for each of the eight sample counties.

Note that April 1936 serves as the base month for the index trends given for the period under study. The complication in plotting the trend, as just pointed out, is one reason for the selection. Of more significance is the fact that this was the month when the state first received federal funds for the Social Security classes of aid. It was believed that using this month as a base would most clearly show the effect of this federal participation upon the trend for the various types of assistance.

Figures 4 and 5 picture the trend of case loads and expenditures for each of the major types of aid coming within the scope of the study, and the trends for all types combined. Case loads and expenditures for the Social Security classes had a steady upward trend whereas general assistance and Resettlement grants, while fluctuating violently, were considerably less during 1937 than during the corresponding months of 1936. The total case load trend is following the same seasonal variations in 1937 as in 1936 but is tending to remain above 1936 levels; the index for April 1937 was 2.4 per cent above April 1936 and for May 1937 was 11.2 per cent higher than the previous year. While expenditure trends for general assistance and Resettlement grants follow case trends closely, Social Security expenditure trends have zoomed far above case load trends. Vital for public finance is the net result that expenditure trends for all relief studied was maintained in 1937 at 50 per cent or more above corresponding months of 1936. If all general assistance and Resettlement grants expenditures could have been eliminated in 1937 the cost of Social Security relief alone would still have been above the 1936 level for all forms of relief considered in this study.

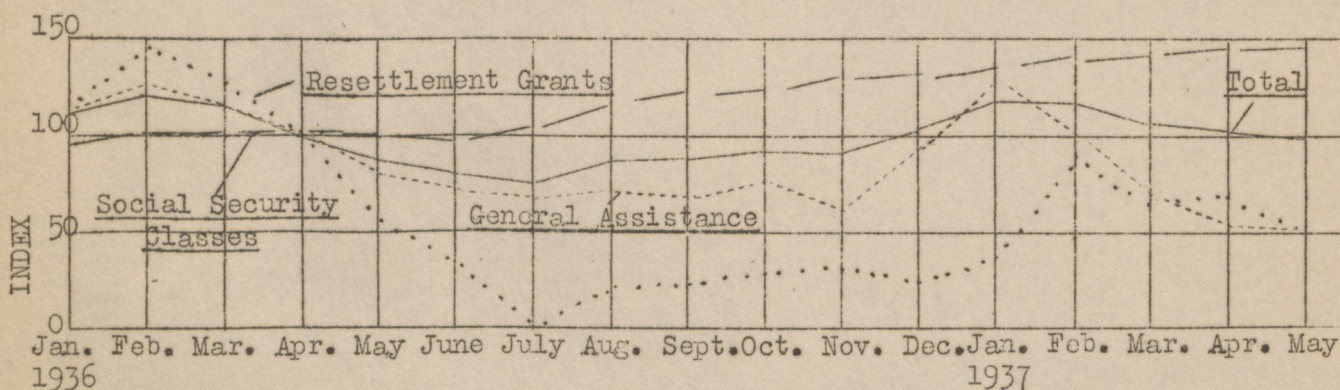


Figure 4. Case Load Trends in Eight Sample Counties (April 1936=100)

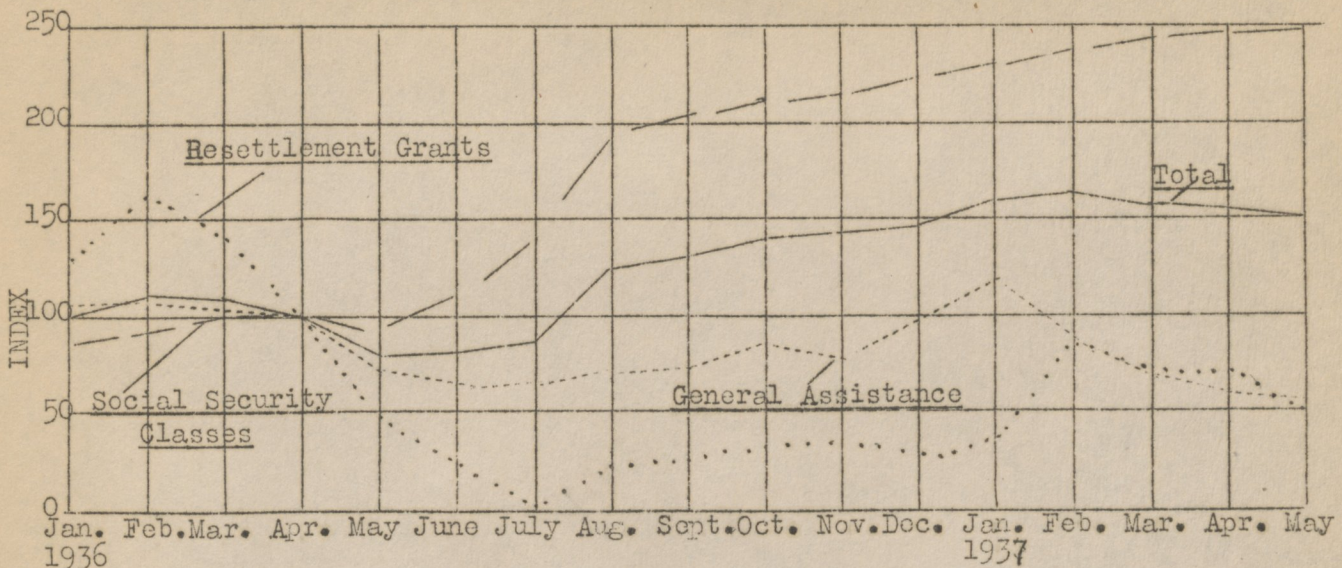


Figure 5. Expenditure Trends in Eight Sample Counties (April 1936=100)

Aid to Dependent Children. As indicated both by case load and by expenditures, aid to dependent children, although but a small part of the total relief load and costs, has risen most rapidly of the three types of special Social Security aid; the index figure in April 1937 for case load was 365 and for expenditures was 624 (Table IV). Both case load and costs appear to have reached a peak for the time being.

Data upon which the case load trend is based are for families, as contrasted with individual children.

Perhaps of all the types of assistance this form is of most significance to the state's public and social welfare in its broadest sense from the standpoint of conservation and best utilization of human resources. The logical place to start a social security program which looks forward to reducing future demands for public assistance is with the children of today. Over the period of study, amounts of expenditures for all three types of categorical assistance for the entire state are available only for July 1936-May 1937. Whether of any significance within itself or not, it is interesting to note that of the total amount of \$8,766,819.19 given in assistance during these eleven months for the Social Security classes, \$814,945.66 or 9.3 per cent went for aid to dependent children.^{1/}

^{1/} For old age assistance went \$7,787,419.76 or 88.8 per cent, and for blind assistance \$164,453.77 or 1.9 per cent. Data obtained from State Department of Public Welfare.

Blind Assistance. The number of blind cases aided increased 19 per cent in May 1937 over those of the base month and expenditures increased 93 per cent. There has been little change in either load or cost for nearly a year so this form of aid will probably continue in the future about as at present. Trends in expenditures and case load for the blind are based, of course, upon figures for actual assistance only. Additional expenditures in the form of other aid made from blind funds in the sample counties over the period of study include one burial costing \$100, and three blind treatments totaling \$271. These expenditures were all made in one county.

Old Age Assistance. Old age assistance constitutes the major relief burden in Colorado at the present time, taking 63.2 per cent of all relief expenditures in the sample counties falling within the scope of this study during January 1936-May 1937 and getting 89.5 per cent of all Social Security expenditures during the same period (Table III).

A steady upward trend in old age assistance case load and expenditures may be observed in Figure 6. The May 1937 index figure was 134 for case load and 232 for expenditures; thus costs had increased almost twice as fast as cases in a 13-month period. The figure clearly shows that in the month of July to August 1936, the index figure for case load rose 10 points and expenditures increased 56 points.

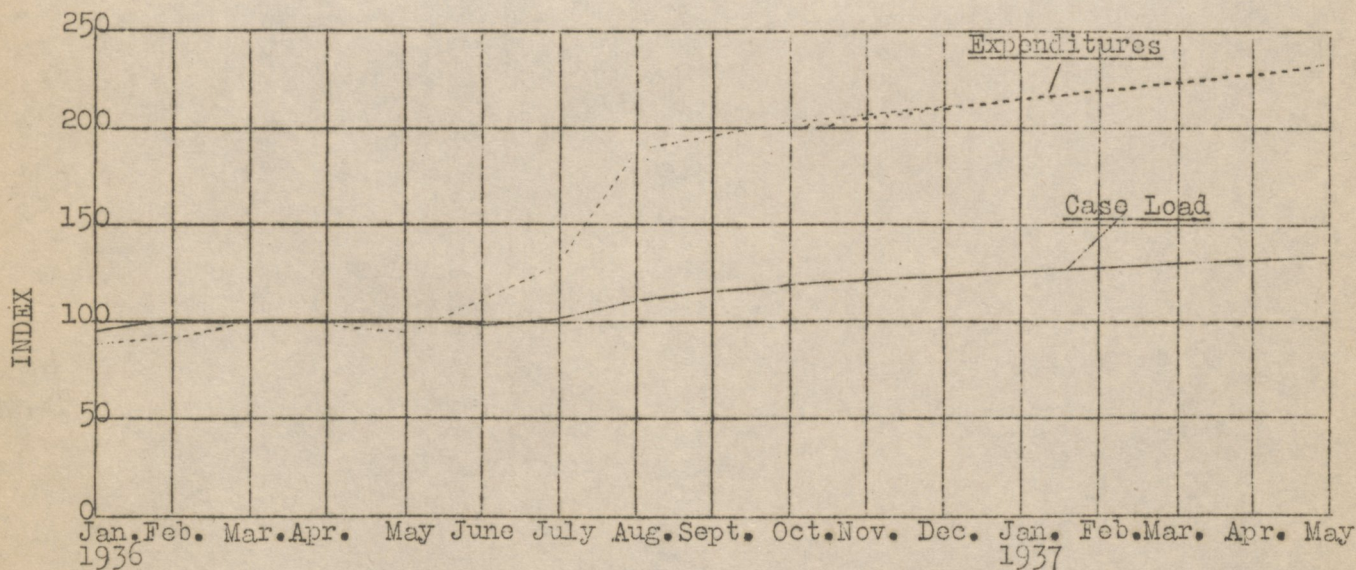


Figure 6. Trends in Old Age Assistance Case Load and Expenditures in Eight Sample Counties (April 1936=100)

There is a factor not previously mentioned which complicates the plotting of a trend of expenditures for the types of assistance involved in this study, and which grows out of a situation for one month in one of the sample counties. In March 1936 old age assistance recipients in one county received not only their regular grants of assistance; but after these had been made, a county surplus of old age assistance funds, built up over a period of months, was distributed among the pensioners. Surpluses accumulated prior to inauguration of the Departments of Public Welfare in all counties of the state were to be turned back to the state as of April 1936 according to a state ruling. This county was allowed no old age assistance funds by the State Department of Public Welfare for April, and no assistance was given pensioners in that month. In arriving at data for April, 1936 for this county, holding in mind that such month was to be used as a base for determining trends, expenditures for March were halved, and the resulting figure was used as March and April expenditures for old age assistance for purposes of this study. This procedure produced figures which for old age assistance expenditures in that county represent a 23 per cent increase, for old age expenditures for all sample counties represent an 8 per cent increase, and for expenditures for all types of assistance in the sample counties represent a 3 per cent increase, over what would ordinarily have been the case. Thus the indices obtained for expenditures are somewhat less than if this complicating factor had not entered. The case load figure used for April was the number of cases actually assisted in March, which procedure does not affect case load trends.

In presenting Figures 7 and 9, showing proportions of the population 65 years of age and over receiving old age assistance and average amounts of such assistance received per case by counties for the entire state, June 1936 was selected as the earliest month that would afford uniform comparison with the last month of this study. Prior to June 1936, the case load reports for some counties on number of grants made, may not necessarily correspond with the number of aged persons assisted. To illustrate, a grant was made to an aged husband including assistance also for his aged wife; in some instances such a grant was reported as representing two cases, in another as only one case. In June 1936, procedure was uniformly established, in all counties, of making a separate grant to each individual actually assisted.

Statistics on case load for old age assistance in all sample counties on which trends are based represent number of grants actually made, for months prior to June 1936 as well as for subsequent months.

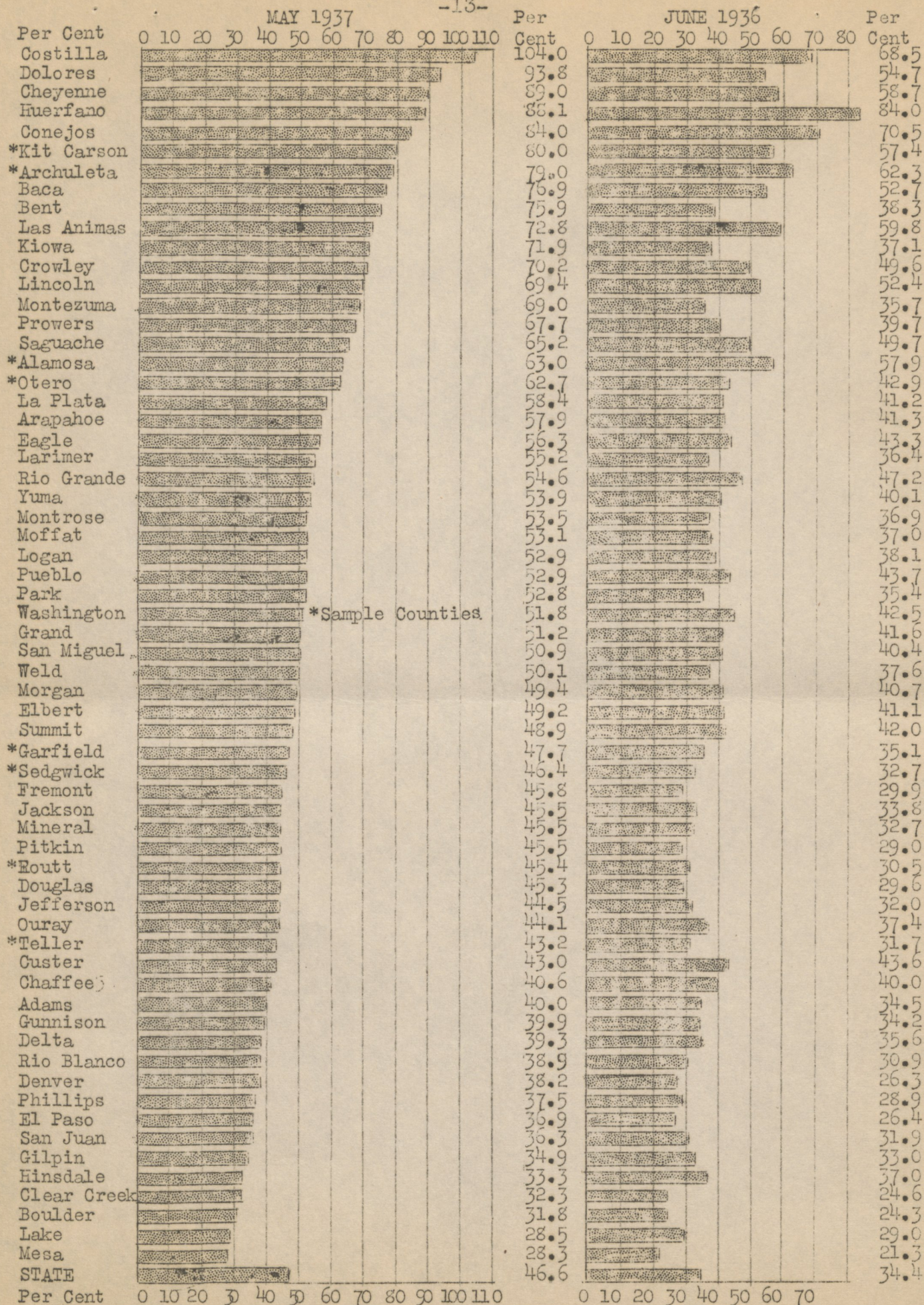


Figure 7. Ratio of Persons Receiving Old Age Assistance to All Persons Aged 65 and Over in 1930.

COLORADO

Under 41%

41% to 49.9%

50% to 66.9%

67% and over

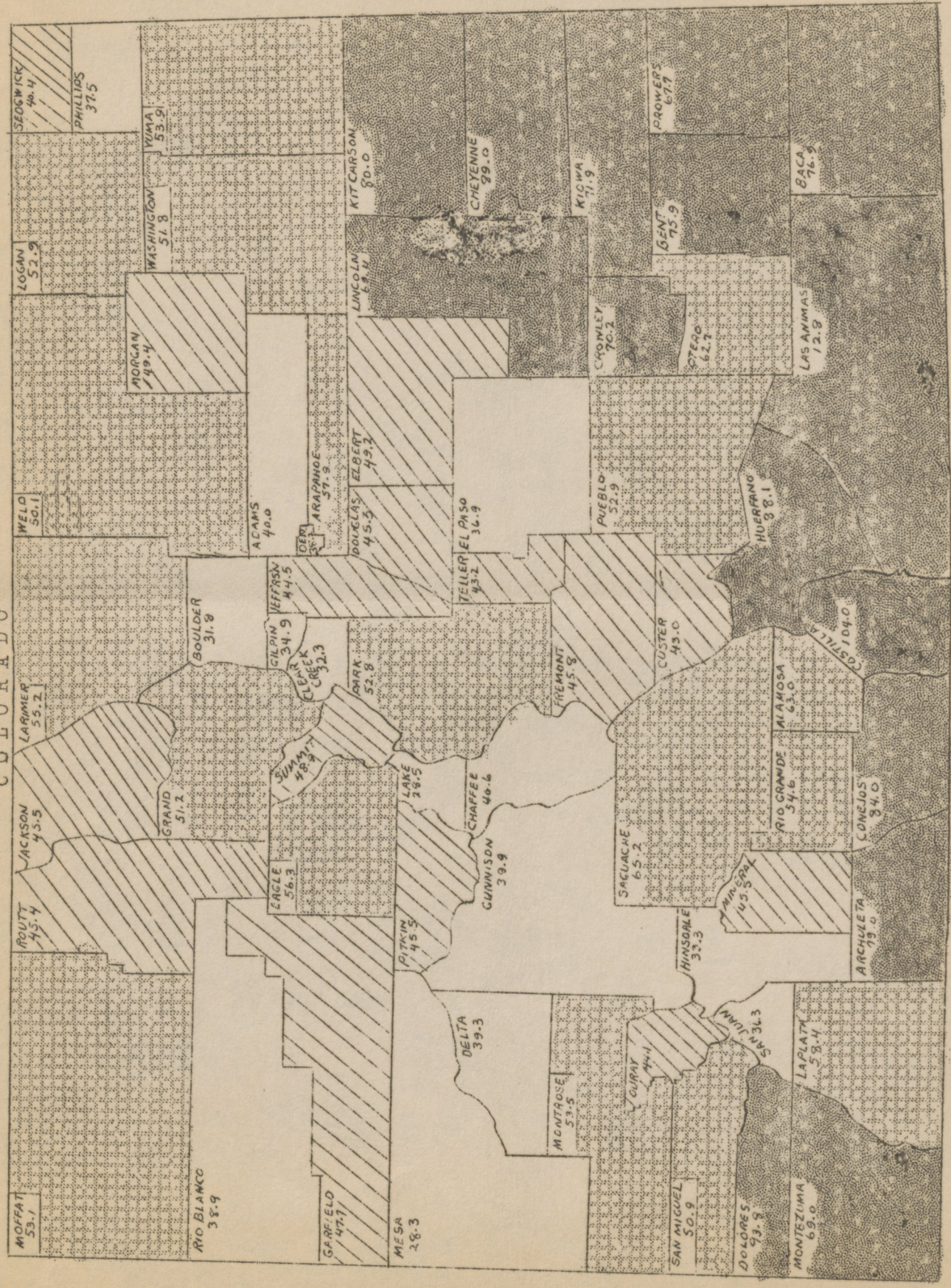


Figure 8. Ratio of Old Age Assistance Recipients May 1937 to Persons Aged 65 and Over in 1930.

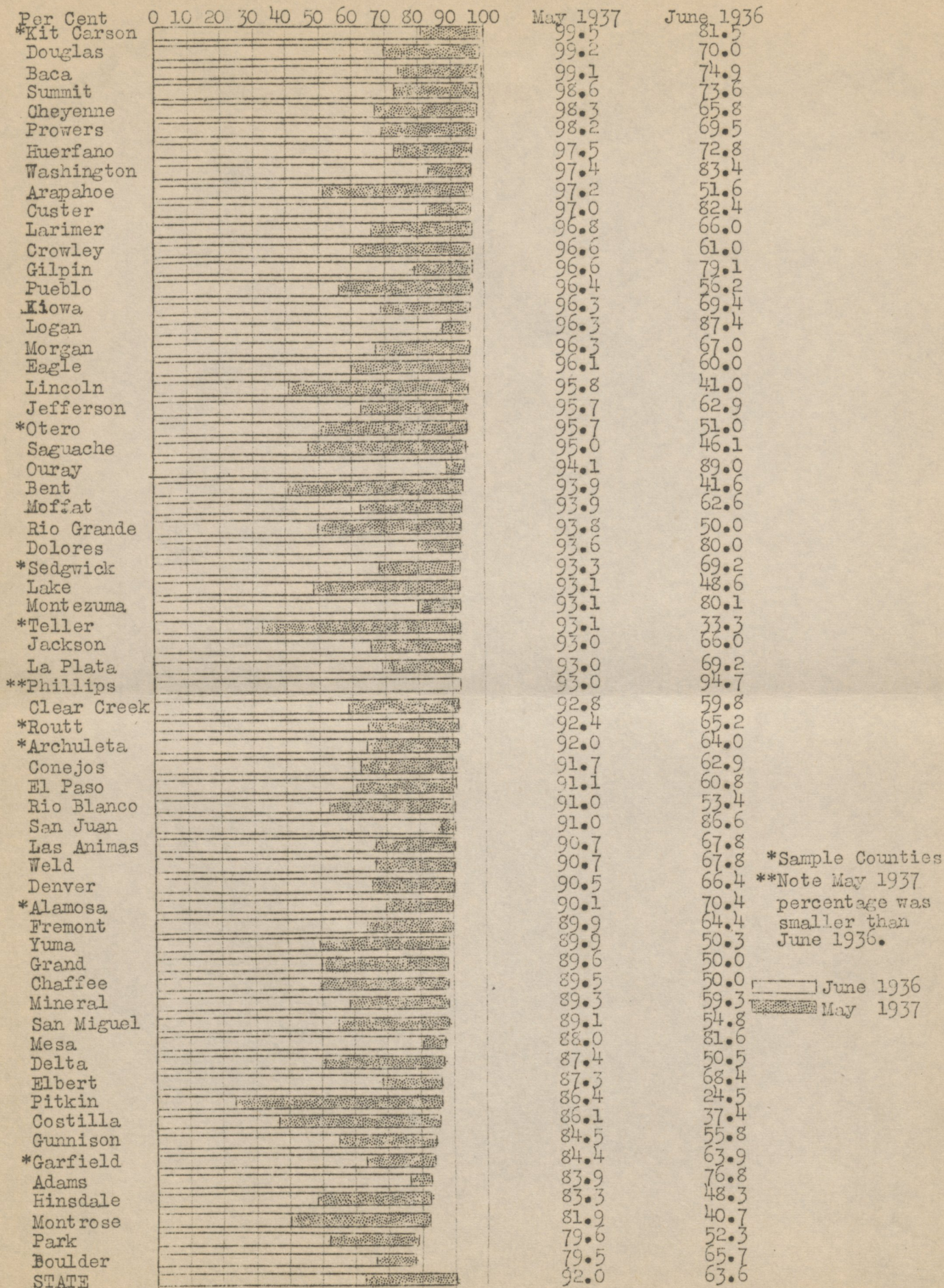


Figure 9. Percent of \$30 Maximum Grant Received by Average Old Age Assistance Case in June 1936 and May 1937.

The percentage of persons aged 65 and over in the various counties who received old age assistance in May 1937 ranged from 28 to 104 per cent of the number of aged persons present in 1930, according to Figure 7. For the entire state, 46.6 per cent of the aged persons as found by the 1930 census received this special aid. However this figure is a higher percentage than actually received assistance because persons aged 65 and over have increased about 15 per cent in number since 1930. When correction is made for this estimated increase, 40.6 per cent of the aged persons received special aid in May 1937. It was not considered safe to present county figures corrected for estimated population increase.

The high proportion of aged receiving assistance raises the question of causal factors, including the issue of whether able families shirk the responsibility of caring for their old.

When trends for the case load and cost of old age assistance are considered in relation to the future, it may be safely predicted that both will continue to increase for several decades if present policy and qualifications remain unchanged. Population specialists predict that by 1960 Colorado will have, barring even an influx due to the \$45 amendment, from 82 to 102 per cent more persons aged 65 and over than in 1930. At the same time the total population, which will have to bear this burden, will increase only 8 to 14 per cent. In other words, where in 1930 aged persons were only 6 per cent of the state's total population, by 1960 they will be over 10 per cent.

Counties having the highest proportion of their aged persons receiving aid are located in the southeastern and in the southern part of Colorado, Figure 8 shows. Questions may be raised concerning the variation from county to county in the intensity of the relief problem for the aged, and as to why the map is so black in certain sections of the state. In general, the counties with the highest intensity had the smallest proportion of their total population in the aged group in 1930. Part of the situation may be the cumulative result of years of drought and depression because some of the blackest areas for old age assistance in May 1937 had the heaviest intensity of relief under ERA^{1/} and had the greatest drought intensity of 1930-36.^{2/} No attempt is made to estimate how much of the county to county variation is due to actual need and how much to other factors.

^{1/} See cover page of "With Rural Relief in Colorado" Research Bulletin No. 1 of Cooperative Plan of Rural Research.

^{2/} F. D. Cronin and Howard W. Beers "Areas of Intense Drought Distress, 1930-1936" Research Bulletin Series V, No. 1, Works Progress Administration Division of Social Research.

From Figures 7 and 8 it may be seen that in May 1937 that 15 Colorado counties had two-thirds or more of their aged receiving assistance, 18 had from half to two-thirds, 17 had from 40 to 50 per cent and only 13 had less than 40 per cent; no county had as few as one-fourth.

Figure 9 is presented merely to show that in the past year grants have been pushed close to the maximum in all counties, whereas previously there was considerable variation.

In addition to actual old age assistance, in the sample counties and over the 14 month period April 1936-May 1937, \$10,518 from old age funds went for 109 old age burials, an average of \$96.50 per burial.

For April and May 1937, as previously indicated, an unduplicated count of households receiving assistance of any kind from the county Boards of Public Welfare was obtained. For that purpose old age assistance households, as contrasted with cases, were counted. In the eight sample counties for May it was found that 2167 old age cases lived in 1891 households: that among households with a member receiving old age assistance, between 14 and 15 per cent had more than one member receiving old age assistance; that between 25 and 26 per cent of the old age pensioners lived in households with another old age pensioner as a member.

This fact points to one of the generally recognized weaknesses of the special aids system: the individual is often dealt with administratively apart from the family unit, instead of as a member. Some welfare students believe, for example, that if assistance is given to an aged person within a family, the resources of the family and the proportion of the family expense properly chargeable to the aged person should be considered.^{1/}

General Assistance. This form of aid as herein used includes food, clothing, rent, fuel, electricity, water, household necessities, medical care in the home, transportation except for moving persons out of the county, burials, and incidental aid. Care in institutions such as hospitals, poor-farms, almshouses, orphanages, and the like, expense of physicians and nurses maintained full or part-time on a salary basis and general supplies for such physicians and nurses, have been excluded. Transient aid has been eliminated. Beginning January 1937 reports were made to include hospitalization for which a stipulated amount was paid and charged to the financial record of a particular relief case. In some counties no such "financial record" existed. When the study was begun in April 1936, only

^{1/} "Public Welfare in Wisconsin", Recommendations and Report of the Citizens' Committee on Public Welfare, p. 21.

four sample counties had any record from which a case count or expenditures could be taken, and three of these lists included only general assistance paid from the State Special Relief Fund, only one also included assistance paid from the County Poor Fund. In order to secure accurate data it was necessary to go through county vouchers, make up general assistance lists, and from these make the necessary counts. Keeping financial records from which case counts could be secured, during the period of study, was left to the discretion of the individual counties. In making up reports for the last month of the period of study, May 1937, it was still necessary to follow this procedure in two counties. It was impossible to determine who received how much and for what purpose in any other manner. The procedure of securing general assistance figures from county vouchers was a tedious task that required much time; frequently assistance for one household during a month was listed under the names of several different members of the household, and it was necessary to establish identification of each member, for which a claim was made on a voucher, with the correct household. The hospitalization item, being available only since January 1937, was eliminated from basic trend data used for this report. It is interesting to note that adding hospitalization statistics available for the period January-May 1937 to general assistance otherwise defined in the study, results in an increase of 6.3 per cent in the case load, and an increase of 31.4 per cent in expenditures (Table V).

Data on which trends are based include general assistance from all public funds, which over the period of study included money allotted counties from the State Special Relief Fund, and money from the various ordinary County Poor Funds. In some of the sample counties no money was spent for assistance as herein defined from County Poor Funds during the period. In only one county of the eight were expenditures from that fund comparatively appreciable. All expenditures from both funds for purposes other than assistance as defined were eliminated.^{1/}

In February 1937 and in each succeeding month the index of case load and expenditures for general assistance was lower than the corresponding month of 1936, according to Figure 10. Whether this reduction was due to decrease in need or due to lack of finances from the state is not indicated. The trend lines for both load and costs follow closely together. Including the hospitalization item would not be likely to change the trend lines shown unless this item was more variable during 1936 than it was in January 1937 and after.

^{1/} Examples of expenditures from State Special Relief Fund money excluded were those for Red Cross, Salvation Army, jail inmates, lunch projects and milk for school children, mileage for health officers, and others previously listed among items generally excluded.

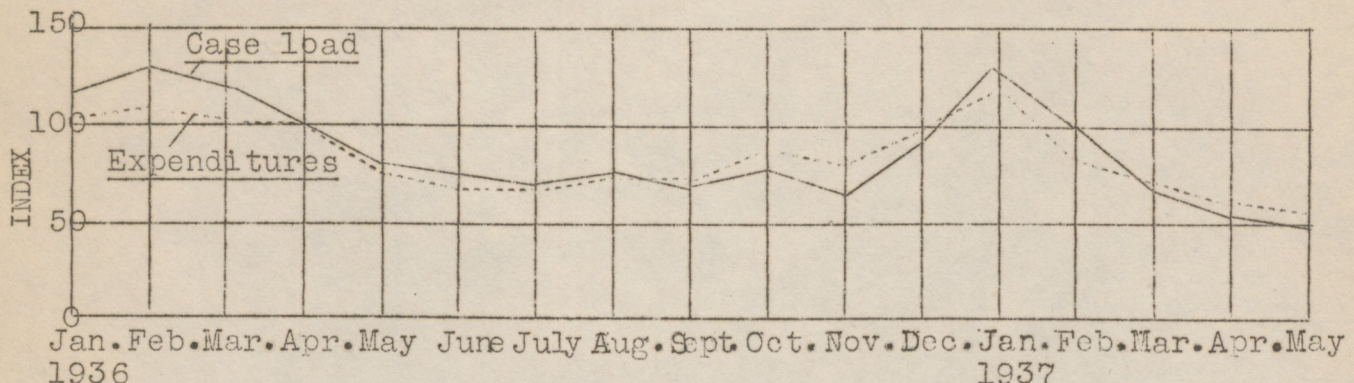


Figure 10. Trends in General Assistance Case Loads and Expenditures in Eight Sample Counties (April 1936=100)

It will be noted that the agency administering general assistance is termed County Board of Public Welfare rather than County Department of Public Welfare. This was done for a purpose. In some of the counties the local Departments of Public Welfare, their staffs, have no part in administering assistance given from the County Poor Funds. Such assistance in those counties is totally administered by the local Boards of Public Welfare, but is done in their capacities as County Commissioners. In order to avoid an additional reporting agency, which would have served no purpose, and to eliminate duplications in case loads reported, the technicality was overlooked and assistance from that fund was placed under the same agency as that from the State Special Relief Fund.^{1/}

Time or workers were not available to go through the mass of general assistance vouchers in one county for the first six months of 1936. Figures secured for these months for that county were based on local reports, believed to be accurate.

^{1/} Practice followed in the only sample county that gave appreciable assistance from the County Poor Fund was as follows: When all vouchers or claims for items of assistance were in for a given month, the County Board of Public Welfare ordered those approved paid from State Special Relief Funds until such available funds were exhausted, and in the capacity as Board of County Commissioners ordered the remainder of approved claims paid from County Poor Funds until they too were exhausted. Any remaining claims that were approved were ordered held over until funds for payment became available.

In November 1936 it became necessary, in connection with the Study of Public Assistance in Drought Areas, to make a list of general assistance recipients by months for the county, beginning with July of that year. A large margin of error was disclosed in the reports on which figures for this study had been based, for the months July through October. It was determined that figures for months of 1936 prior to July were likewise in error. Through the drought study corrected figures were secured for months beginning in July, but neither time nor workers have been available for correcting figures for months prior to July. General assistance figures then, for the first six months of 1936 for that county, and on which trends herein given are based in part, are figures corrected by the best estimate available.

Every possible effort was made to secure general assistance figures on an obligations incurred basis: that is figures representing assistance actually received by cases in the month such figures were reported. Success in this was largely assured in only two counties of the sample.

In those two counties what may be called a "live record" was kept of assistance given; i.e. each day a record was made of assistance given during that day. At the end of a month records were then available of the assistance actually received during that month. This type of record is in contrast to what may be called a "dead record", which type is made up at the end of a month from claims sent in for goods or services given relief cases by order, and paid if sufficient funds are available from general assistance funds. This type of record was used in the other six sample counties, or if not used, as previously indicated, was made up for purposes of this study. Such a "dead record" may or may not represent assistance actually given during that month. A claim for payment of a grocery order given a relief case in January may not be sent in by the grocer until time for payment of March bills by the county and in such a "dead record" assistance, received by the case in January, will appear as assistance given in March.

During the period of study it was practically impossible for some of the counties to keep a "live record", one that may be administratively used from day to day, because of the practice followed in administering general assistance. There was no centralized responsibility in some counties within the various Departments of Public Welfare for orders given for such assistance. Members of the County Boards of Public Welfare gave orders for assistance and authorized professional services to relief cases frequently. Frequently no record of such action got to the County Welfare Offices until claim for payment was made perhaps at the end of the month in which assistance was actually received by the case, perhaps a month or two later. With such a practice no "live record" was possible.

In the two counties where a "live record" was kept by the Departments of Public Welfare, these departments were given no responsibility in the expenditures of the County Poor Funds, and assistance from those funds was not included in the record, but had to be obtained from vouchers in the offices of the county clerks. Such expenditures in these counties, however, were slight in comparison to that shown on the department records.

The extent of this discrepancy in having assistance given one month reported in a subsequent month is difficult to estimate for all the sample counties, and would here serve no required purpose. Time and expense of accurately determining that made it prohibitive. However, in the county where such practice was generally most noticeable, the frequency of the occurrence among vouchers presented for April 1937 payment of claims for assistance orders given in months prior to March was checked. It was found that 17.5 per cent of the cases represented received no assistance in March, but only in months prior to March; that 23.5 per cent of the expenditures represented were for months prior to March.^{1/}

General assistance data on which trends are based are adequate for such a general purpose, but those data can not be taken to represent the relief situation for general assistance in any county for any given month.

That general assistance funds spent for relief are used for other than subsistence needs of food, clothing, and shelter is made clear by this study. Hospitalization costs charged to specific relief cases alone amounted to 23.9 per cent of total general assistance expenditures in the eight sample counties during the period January-May 1937, the time when hospitalization was included in the study. In the same period, burial costs amounted to 3.6 per cent of the total, as pictured by Figure 11.

A more complete analysis of general assistance, separating out medical costs, is presented for three separate counties for varying periods of time in Figures 12, 13, and 14; the nature of available records and lack of personnel prevent more adequate presentation. Figure 12 for one county during September 1936-May 1937 shows 31 per cent of general assistance funds spent for

^{1/} These percentages exclude consideration of hospitalization where such discrepancy is most likely to occur. Including hospitalization the figure for cases is 18.3 per cent, for expenditures 24.7 per cent.

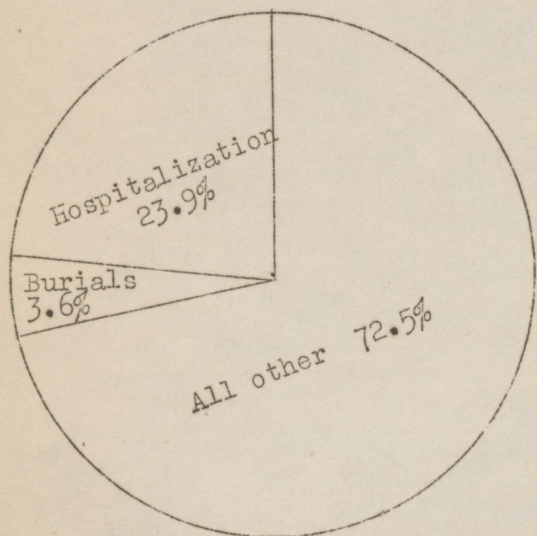


Figure 11. Distribution of General Assistance Expenditures for Outdoor Relief in Eight Sample Counties, January-May 1937

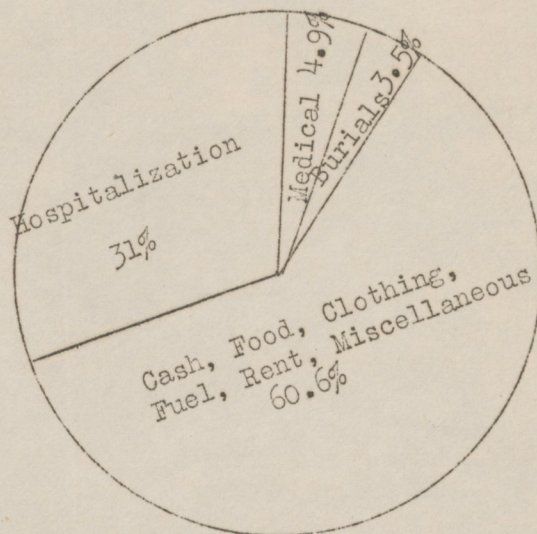


Figure 12. Distribution of General Assistance Expenditures for Outdoor Relief in County A, September 1936-May 1937

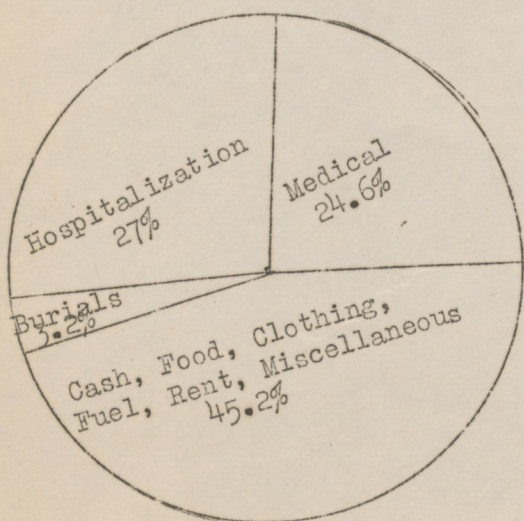


Figure 13. Distribution of General Assistance Expenditures for Outdoor Relief in County B, September 1936-May 1937

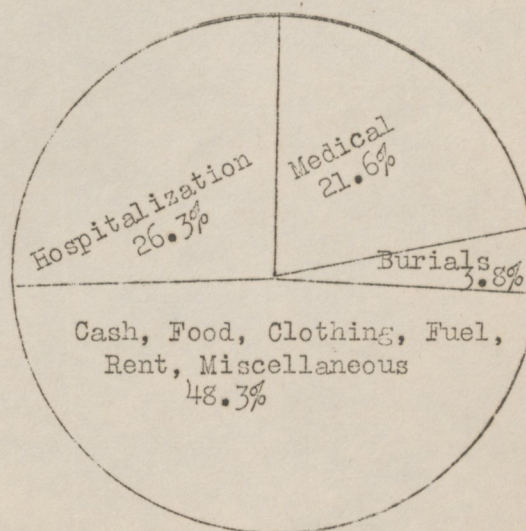


Figure 14. Distribution of General Assistance Expenditures for Outdoor Relief in County C, April 1937

hospitalization, 4.9 per cent for medicals, 3.5 per cent for burials and 60.6 per cent for items such as food, clothing and rent. The county represented by Figure 13 spent 27 per cent for hospitalization, 24.6 per cent for medical care, 3.2 per cent for burials, and 45.2 per cent for "subsistence" items. The third county depicted by Figure 14 for April 1937, had a distribution very similar to the second.

With from 36 to 52 per cent of the "outdoor" general assistance money going for hospitalization and medical care, the question arises whether this money is being spent for care of chronic ailments or for what might be called preventive treatment. A basic cause of dependency is physical disability. It would appear that treatment of ailments in early stages which will correct the difficulty and prevent permanent disability and hence permanent public dependency would be a sound policy.

Resettlement Grants. It is difficult to draw any conclusions regarding the trend of Resettlement grants because some of the fluctuations are due to administrative policy. The index figure for July 1936 for both cases and expenditures is zero because of an administrative order which resulted in but one grant being made in the sample counties in that month. It is true that when seasonal variations are eliminated, both case load and expenditures trend downward; both indices follow closely together.

During the 17-months period of this study, Resettlement grants were 9.7 per cent of both total cases and expenditures for all types of relief.

FUTURE TRENDS

Plans have to be made for financing relief costs; public and administrative policy with respect to relief must continue to be shaped and reshaped. Projections into the future must be based on past trends. The knowledge of past trends must rest on actual records. Yet if a complete picture of relief trends in Colorado is desired it is impossible to secure necessary data because the various programs have been operated without statistical coordination.

Even in the eight sample counties there is no record over the full period of study of the complete actual relief situation; trends can be calculated for each agency and the data from all agencies thrown into a total but this process takes no account of the extent or nature of duplication of aid among agencies. It is impossible under any circumstances to go back of 1935 to obtain data approaching completeness in these counties and

some of the data for this period is questionable^{1/}. Nevertheless, the challenge of hazarding an estimate in trends of relief intensity in the past is accepted.

Estimated percentages of the 1930 population in these eight sample counties dependent upon relief are shown in Table I. These estimates exclude general assistance cases receiving hospitalization only and CCC enrollees and take no account of duplication among agencies. The February 1937 load was approximately 25 per cent less than the peak loads of one and two years previously which had marked an all-time high. The May 1937 load was approximately equivalent to the June 1936 load and was roughly 18 per cent under the load of June 1935 which was the year when emergency relief loads were at a peak in Colorado. Thus the best guess is that the trend of total load is downward, but relatively more reduction has been made in the winter than in the summer load.

Table I. Estimated Proportion of 1930 Population in Eight Sample Counties on Relief.

Period	Estimated Number Persons Dependent on Relief*	Per Cent of Total Population on Relief
February 1935	20,860	27.8
June 1935	16,462	22.0
February 1936	21,881	29.2
June 1936	13,346	17.8
February 1937	16,486	22.0
May 1937	14,112	18.8

*Number dependent persons estimated as sum of persons on ERA and general assistance (excluding those receiving only hospitalization) old age assistance and blind assistance cases, aid to dependent children cases multiplied by 3, Resettlement grant cases multiplied by 4.7 and Works Program workers multiplied by 4.

^{1/} No attempt was made to present 1935 data collected because (1) ERA was active until the last month of 1935 but not after, (2) Many cases aided by ERA were absorbed by later agencies and special aids so no trend extended into 1935 for any later aid or agency would have been of much value (3) records in 1935 for some months for some counties for certain types of assistance are of questionable value.

Analysis of the agencies whose case loads comprise these total estimates reveals that barring any appreciable reduction in old age assistance, major reductions in the load must result from curtailment of the Works Program. From the standpoint of local and state financed programs the chief possibility for improvement is general assistance. It must be remembered, however, that the case loads of these two forms of assistance are, in practice, likely to be closely related.

Trends in the cost of financing relief are less optimistic than case load trends. While strictly comparable data for Works Program expenditures are not available it is clear that total relief expenditures, Works Program included, were higher in these eight counties in 1937 than for comparable months in 1935, when the "emergency" peak was reached. (Table VII).

It appears that at least the problem aspect of relief trends as presented in this report will not be questioned.

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TABLE II. Percentage Distribution of Total Case Load and Expenditures Among Three Major Types of Public Assistance in Colorado Sample Rural and Town Areas^{a/}

Month	Total		Social Security Classes*		General Assistance**		Resettlement Grants	
	Cases	Costs	Cases	Costs	Cases	Costs	Cases	Costs
All Months	100.0	100.0	59.9	70.6	30.4	19.7	9.7	9.7
January 1936	100.0	100.0	44.5	44.7	37.9	30.1	17.6	25.2
February	100.0	100.0	42.0	42.1	37.9	29.2	20.1	28.7
March	100.0	100.0	44.4	46.8	36.9	28.5	18.7	24.7
April	100.0	100.0	49.5	50.7	34.4	29.9	16.1	19.4
May	100.0	100.0	56.9	61.0	32.7	27.6	10.4	11.4
June	100.0	100.0	61.1	69.7	32.4	24.1	6.5	6.2
July	100.0	100.0	68.7	77.5	31.3	22.5	0	0
August	100.0	100.0	66.7	78.7	29.5	17.6	3.8	3.7
September	100.0	100.0	68.6	79.5	27.3	16.7	4.1	3.8
October	100.0	100.0	66.3	76.9	22.7	18.4	5.0	4.7
November	100.0	100.0	69.7	78.4	24.9	16.8	5.4	4.8
December	100.0	100.0	64.4	76.6	31.7	19.7	3.9	3.7
January 1937	100.0	100.0	56.6	73.0	38.4	22.4	5.0	4.6
February	100.0	100.0	58.7	74.1	30.0	15.1	11.3	10.8
March	100.0	100.0	67.5	77.7	22.5	13.4	10.0	8.9
April	100.0	100.0	70.9	79.8	18.6	11.3	10.5	8.9
May	100.0	100.0	74.0	83.4	17.9	11.0	8.1	5.6

* Old age assistance, aid to dependent children and aid to blind.

** Includes only "outdoor" relief, excludes hospitalization.

^{a/} Percentage distributions presented here vary slightly, but insignificantly, from similar computations based on data for Colorado previously published in Current Statistics of Relief in Rural and Town Areas; this is due to revisions in data and to adjustments necessitated for the purpose of calculating trends.

Table IV. Case Load and Cost Trends for Public Assistance in Colorado Sample Rural and Town Areas (April 1936 = 100)^{a/}

Month	Total, All Types Aid		All Social Security Classes*		Old Age Assistance		Aid to Dependent Children		Aid to Blind		General Assistance**		Resettlement Grants	
	Cases	Costs	Cases	Costs	Cases	Costs	Cases	Costs	Cases	Costs	Cases	Costs	Cases	Costs
January 1936	112	101	96	89	97	89	86	85	100	97	118	102	117	131
February	123	111	100	92	101	92	89	89	100	97	130	108	148	164
March	117	109	100	100	101	101	88	89	105	100	120	104	130	138
April	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
May	87	79	100	95	99	95	117	109	100	100	83	73	57	46
June	81	81	98	111	97	110	126	138	100	100	75	65	32	26
July	76	89	104	136	101	132	160	224	100	110	68	67	0	0
August	88	124	116	193	112	188	193	313	119	162	74	73	21	24
September	88	131	121	206	116	198	227	395	108	165	69	73	22	26
October	93	140	123	212	118	203	242	418	111	174	77	86	29	34
November	91	141	126	217	120	208	249	432	116	187	65	79	30	35
December	101	147	129	223	122	212	262	452	116	189	91	97	24	28
January 1937	116	159	132	229	124	216	298	536	114	185	129	120	36	38
February	117	162	137	237	127	221	340	599	111	180	100	82	81	90
March	105	158	140	242	130	226	356	615	114	185	67	71	64	72
April	102	157	143	246	132	230	365	624	114	185	54	59	65	72
May	98	151	144	248	134	232	356	615	119	193	50	55	48	43

*Old age assistance, aid to dependent children, and aid to blind.

**Includes only "outdoor" relief, excludes hospitalization.

^{a/} Indices presented here vary slightly, except for aid to dependent children and to the blind, from similar computations based on data for Colorado previously published in Current Statistics of Relief in Rural and Town Areas; this is due to revisions in data and to adjustments necessitated for the purpose of calculating trends.

Table V. Percentage Increase in General Relief Case Load
And Expenditures in Colorado Sample Rural And
Town Areas When Hospitalization Added to Base
Used in Plotting Trends

Month of 1937	Percentage Increase In Case Load	Percentage Increase In Expenditures
January	3.7	24.1
February	6.0	36.4
March	6.7	30.9
April	9.7	34.5
May	9.5	37.3
TOTAL	6.3	31.4

Table VI. Number of Persons* Dependent on Public Outdoor Relief in Eight Sample Counties

Type of Aid	February 1935	June 1935	February 1936	June 1936	February 1937	May 1937
TOTAL	20,860	16,462	21,881	13,346	16,486	14,112
Percent of 1930 Population	27.8	22.0	29.2	17.8	22.0	18.8
Emergency Relief (ERA)	18,565	14,105	0	0	0	0
General Assistance	1,392	1,199	5,113	2,784	4,405	2,041
Old Age Assistance	778	1,008	1,632	1,572	2,063	2,167
Aid to Dependent Children	90	111	216	306	825	864
Aid to Blind	35	39	37	37	41	44
Resettlement Grants	0	0	3,911	851	2,148	1,284
Works Program	0	0	10,972	7,796	7,004	7,712

* Persons on emergency relief secured from ERA Form 198; general assistance data excludes hospitalization; old age assistance data are number of grants which previous to June 1936 may have been smaller than number of persons aided; aid to dependent children based on number of cases multiplied by three, estimated average size of family; Resettlement grants based on cases multiplied by 4.7, estimated average size of household; Works Program based on number of certified workers multiplied by 4, estimated average size of household; total figures for all types of aid do not eliminate duplications.

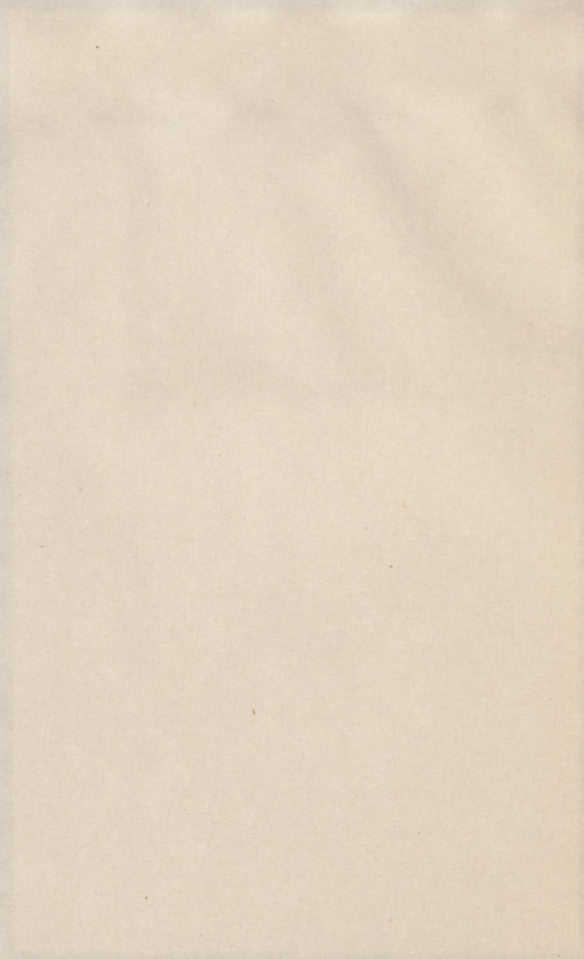
Table VII. Expenditures for Outdoor Relief in Eight Sample Counties

Type of Aid	February 1935	June 1935	February 1936	June 1936	February 1937	May 1937
TOTAL, ALL Types	\$128,012	\$101,629	\$136,310	\$106,828	\$144,226	\$137,868
Emergency Relief (ERA)	113,806	83,446	0	0	0	0
General Assistance*	4,504	3,314	17,870	10,773	13,514	9,140
Old Age Assistance	8,677	13,713	24,079	28,784	57,876	60,637
Aid to Dependent Children	490	556	1,105	1,718	7,477	7,685
Aid to Blind	535	600	560	576	1,037	1,111
Resettlement Grants**	0	0	17,555	2,763	9,640	4,618
Works Progress Administration***	0	0	75,141	64,214	54,682	54,697

*Excludes hospitalization, hence February and May 1937 amounts are less than those previously published in Current Statistics of Relief in Rural and Town Areas.

**Amounts for February and May 1937 above those previously published in Current Statistics of Relief in Rural and Town Areas.

***Includes only expenditures on projects operated on a county-wide basis; does not include expenditures by National Youth Administration nor by other federal agencies participating in the Works Program; excludes payments to non-certified persons. Source: Area Statistical Office No. 11



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