

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE IN PEORIA, 1867 TO 1932

In 1930 the Census Bureau listed 2,422 divorced persons in Peoria County or 22.3 for each thousand persons fifteen years of age and above. This lacks only a little of being double the proportion for the country as a whole and it is approximately twice the proportion for the entire state of Illinois. In Table 1 are given the comparative figures for the three units.

TABLE 1

NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF DIVORCED PERSONS IN THE POPULATION (15 YEARS AND OVER) IN THE UNITED STATES, ILLINOIS, AND PEORIA, 1930

	No. of Divorced Persons	Population 15 Years or Over	Divorced Persons per 1,000 Population 15 Years and Over
United States	1,062,626	86,718,170	12.3
Illinois	75,748	3,649,857	11.4
Peoria County	2,422	108,366	22.3

The foregoing figures reflect the fact that in comparison with the United States and Illinois, the number of divorced persons in Peoria County, is proportionately large, and this condition must have persisted for a period of some years to produce the large discrepancy in the figures. A study of the detailed data given in Appendix I, reveals this to be the case. So far as the figures are available from 1867 to the present time the divorce rate of Peoria County has been higher than the rate in the other geographic units. In the same appendix, figures on marriage and divorce are also given for Cook County, Illinois. These are included because it has been demonstrated recently that the high divorce rates occur particularly in urban areas and Cook County contains Chicago with its 1930 population

state of Texas, and two are Oklahoma cities. These two states ranked fourth and second respectively in high divorce rates among the forty-eight states in 1930.¹

TABLE 5

DIVORCE RATE (NUMBER OF DIVORCES PER 1,000 MARRIED POPULATION) OF 61 COUNTIES IN 1930

City and County	Total Population	Marrisd Population	No. of Divorces	Divorces per 1000 Married Population
TULSA				
Tulsa	187,574	88,698	1,250	14.09
DALLAS				
Dallas	325,691	152,556	2,112	13.84
OKLAHOMA CITY				
Oklahoma . . .	221,738	105,999	1,420	13.39
LITTLE ROCK				
Pulaski	137,727	61,033	772	12.64
HOUSTON				
Harris	359,328	166,916	2,074	12.42
SAN ANTONIO				
Bexar	292,533	120,086	1,466	12.20
FORT WORTH				
Tarrant	197,553	92,734	1,069	11.52
KANSAS CITY				
Jackson	470,454	228,203	2,488	10.90
WICHITA				
Sedgewick . . .	136,330	24,283	695	10.81
DES MOINES				
Polk	172,837	80,125	816	10.20
EL PASO				
El Paso	131,597	50,531	459	9.08
PEORIA				
Peoria	141,344	63,824	577	9.04
SAN FRANCISCO				
San Francisco	634,394	272,252	2,424	8.94
DAVENPORT				
Scott	77,332	35,571	309	8.68
SEATTLE				
King	463,517	216,101	1,733	8.01
SALT LAKE CITY				
Salt Lake . . .	194,102	80,254	594	7.40
SAN DIEGO				
San Diego . . .	209,659	98,784	714	7.22
COLUMBUS				
Franklin	361,055	169,934	1,214	7.14
SPOKANE				
Spokane	150,477	68,236	487	7.13

¹See Marriage and Divorce, 1930, Table X, p. 17.

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CITY

The present study is one made in Peoria, Illinois, a mid-western industrial city of slightly more than a hundred thousand population, the exact figure in 1930 according to the Bureau of the Census being 104,969. It is the writer's conviction that there are some advantages to be gained by an intensive study to be made in a city of this size with its population composition and characteristics. These advantages will be brought out, implicitly, at least, by the detailed description of the city in which the study has been made.

Characteristics of Population

The preponderating majority of the citizens of the community are native-white of native parentage, the total foreign-born when the census was taken in April, 1930, being 6,861. Revealing further the type of citizenship which makes up this community is the fact that of the 6,861, 70.7 per cent migrated to the city before 1900, only 5.5 per cent of the total foreign-born coming into the community during the period 1925 to 1930. Of this foreign-born group the large majority are white, the exact number being 6,738. For the most part they originated in the northern European countries, leaving only a comparative few to make up the diverse elements of the population originating in southern European countries which compose much larger proportions of the population groups of many of the largest cities of the country. The largest single group in the community here to be studied is composed of those born in Germany, the number being 2,224, and they compose more than 40 per cent of the entire foreign-born group.

There is a much larger group than the total foreign-born which can be said to have come under European influence, the Census Bureau designation for which is "one or both parents foreign-born." Table 6 gives this information in detail and is

taken from Table 2 of Volume II on Population, a part of the fifteenth census (1930). The countries are arranged in the order of the largest number found in the city and only those making up one per cent or more of the population are given. This entire group composes 26.65 per cent of the population of the city.

TABLE 6
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN OF FOREIGN-WHITE STOCK

Country	Number	Per Cent	Foreign-Born White	Native-Born, of Foreign or Mixed Parentage
All Countries.	27,977*	100.0	6,736	21,241
Germany.	11,401	40.8	2,244	9,157
Irish Fr. State.	2,923	10.4	344	2,579
England.	2,815	10.1	685	2,130
Sweden	1,537	5.5	449	1,088
France	950	3.4	201	749
Scotland	907	3.2	223	662
Canada (other than French)	803	2.9	231	572
Italy.	781	2.8	288	493
Russia	540	1.9	214	326
Jugoslavia	499	1.8	213	286
North Ireland.	458	1.6	63	395
Austria.	439	1.6	160	279
Poland	376	1.3	154	222
Greece	329	1.2	198	131
Denmark.	282	1.0	96	186
Syria.	268	1.0	111	157

*26.65 per cent of total population of city.

Some of the other countries represented, but whose nationals compose less than one per cent of the population each are in the order of their numbers: Hungary, 236; Belgium, 213; Wales, 194; Norway, 180; Lithuania, 173; Czechoslovakia, 169; Netherlands, 145; and French Canada, 142.

Ogburn has pointed out that except for the Negro, the group in the population which secures divorces in larger numbers and in larger proportions than the others is the native-white of native parentage.¹ This fact makes itself apparent in the

¹E. R. Groves and W. F. Ogburn, American Marriage and Family Relationships (New York, 1928), p. 371.

present study. Table 6 reveals that Peoria is twelfth in a list of sixty-one cities when the divorce rate is figured on the basis of the number of divorces per thousand married population, and without exception those cities having higher divorce rates have a smaller proportion of their population either foreign-born or of foreign or mixed parentage. Moreover, there are few cities except southern ones whose divorce rates are lower than that of Peoria which do not have a larger proportion of their population coming under the category of either foreign-born or of foreign or mixed parentage. For example, Columbus is one of these cities and the proportion of the population making up the foreign group of the county in which that city is located is 18.13, whereas the same proportion in Peoria County is 26.65.

It may be noted also that there are only nine hundred and twenty-eight aliens in Peoria, 75.3 per cent of the total foreign-born having been naturalized and four hundred and eighty or 7 per cent more having taken out their first papers in the naturalization process. There are only one hundred and twenty-five persons among the foreign-born who do not belong to the white group. There are in the population of the city, 3,037 negroes, 169 Mexicans, and 28 Indians and Chinese.

A further detail concerning the population given by the Bureau of the Census¹ is with reference to the families of which there is a total of 26,494 and of these 25,816 are white, and 16,311 of these are composed of the group of native-white of native parentage. This leaves 6,580 of foreign or mixed parentage and 2,925 foreign-born families. There were at the same time 626 negro families and 52 families of other races.

Summarizing the population composition in Peoria, it is found to be a city composed largely of the group designated "native-white of native parentage." A strikingly small proportion of those of foreign extraction are of recent arrival in the city. The small number of negroes in the city make up less than 3 per cent of its population. When figures of family composition are studied the same results become apparent, viz., the comparative absence of large numbers of newly arrived immigrants from foreign countries in the community.

¹United States Census Bureau Publication, A Report on Population (Washington, 1930), VI, 354.

The Metropolitan Area

Peoria is a part of a metropolitan area, the total population of which was in 1930, 144,732. The metropolitan district consists of parts of Peoria and Tazewell counties, a few of the detailed comparative population figures being given in Table 7.

TABLE 7

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS OF PEORIA COMPARED WITH
THE METROPOLITAN AREA OF WHICH THE CITY IS A PART

	Males	Females	White	Negro	Native Par.	Foreign Mixed Par.	Foreign- Born Wh.
PEORIA	52,512	52,457	101,735	3,037	73,758	21,241	6,736
METROPOL- ITAN AREA	72,943	71,789	141,276	3,226	102,219	29,190	9,897

Industrial Phases

One of the important factors in the background of a study of any aspect of the social situation is the way a community makes its living. This metropolitan region is predominantly an industrial one, revealed by the fact that almost half of the males engaged in "selected" occupations are in manufacturing and mechanical industries. The number is 15,935 while the total number engaged in gainful occupations is 36,049. The male part of the population is engaged in a total of 105 occupations. Besides those engaged in manufacturing and mechanical industries, there are 4,190 in transportation and communication pursuits, 7,298 in trade, 1,609 in professional services, 2,343 in domestic and personal service and 2,886 are concerned with clerical occupations.

There are 12,770 women engaged in twenty-eight occupations. Of this number 1,608 are in manufacturing and mechanical industries, 294 in transportation and communication, 1,859 in trade, 1,638 in the professions, 4,168 in domestic and personal service, and 3,173 in clerical pursuits.

In order to give a basis for comparison, Table B present the numbers and the proportions of women fifteen years of age and over who are gainfully employed in Illinois and in the city of Chicago as given in the census reports and the table also gives the Peoria figures. Also given is the number in each of the units who are married and those who are both married and gainfully employed.

TABLE B

NUMBER AND PROPORTION GAINFULLY EMPLOYED WOMEN
AND THOSE MARRIED AND EMPLOYED IN ILLINOIS,
CHICAGO, AND PEORIA, 1930

	Total Female Population	Gain- fully Employed	Pro- por- tion	Total Married	Gainfully Employed, Married	Per Cent Gainfull Employed Married
Illinois	2,780,510	714,640	25.7	1,701,891	190,538	6.85
Chicago	1,262,223	406,482	32.2	746,821	109,164	8.65
Peoria	40,971	12,770	31.1	23,638	3,363	8.21

Census data are also available as to the number of children employed in gainful occupations and this information may be of some significance to us in our attempt to understand this community. The Bureau of the Census gives the figures for children in two groups, those in the age group ten to seventeen years of age and those from ten to fifteen years old. Tables 9 and 1 give these two groups respectively and for the purpose of easy comparison the figures are given not only for Peoria, but also for Chicago and the State of Illinois.

TABLE 9

CHILDREN 10 TO 17 IN GAINFUL OCCUPATIONS

	Total Number in Age Group	Number Gainfully Employed	Per Cent
Illinois. . .	1,088,533	95,780	8.8
Chicago . . .	455,680	43,417	9.5
Peoria. . . .	12,125	1,124	9.3

TABLE 10
 NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF CHILDREN 10 TO 15
 YEARS OF AGE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED

	Total Number in Age Group	Number Gainfully Employed	Per Cent
Illinois	816,191	11,820	1.4
Chicago	340,053	3,163	0.9
Peoria	9,002	129	1.4

From the foregoing tables it will be seen that the community under inspection does not vary greatly from the expected. It employs a slightly larger proportion of its children ten to seventeen years of age than the state as a whole, but a slightly smaller proportion than its large city neighbor. When the age group is changed to the period ten to fifteen, Chicago employs a smaller proportion and Peoria employs the same proportion as the state as a whole.

Of the 1,124 children in the ten to seventeen age group gainfully employed in Peoria, there are four hundred and twenty-seven engaged in manufacturing and mechanical industries, eighty-one in transportation and communication, two hundred and twenty-three in trade. (In this number there are seventeen newboys, thirty-four in professional service, one hundred and eighty-eight in domestic and personal service, and one hundred and fifty-eight in the clerical occupations.)

As compared with the 15,935 persons engaged in the manufacturing and mechanical industries in 1930 as given by the Bureau of the Census, a check in the late months of 1935 revealed that there were in the immediate neighborhood of 18,000 persons engaged in these pursuits. The largest single industry from the standpoint of the number employed is the Caterpillar Tractor Company, this number in November, 1935, being 7,500 while there had been an increase to somewhat beyond 9,000 by March, 1936, and perhaps 12,000 by December, 1936. This plant is in East Peoria, Tazewell County, and all of the employees do not live in the city or county of Peoria.

The Research Division of the Federal Housing Administration in its Analysis of the Real Property Inventory and Financial Survey of Urban Housing for Peoria, Illinois in its report dated January 1, 1935, gives a picture of the industrial activity in the Peoria Metropolitan area in these words:

. . . . In the peak year of 1929, the Peoria area was manufacturing products of approximately \$180,000,000 in value. There were two hundred and sixty-eight establishments with 15,000 wage earners who received \$20,000,000 in wages.

The major products are tractors, agricultural implements, power and washing machines, commercial solvents, paper, wire and steel products, machine parts, stoves and furnaces, cereal products, malt syrups, grain and feed, and creamery products. Lately, there has been a revival of what was once an important industry in Peoria, namely the production of distilled liquors. The Walker Distillery has just completed what is said to constitute the largest plant in the world for the production of distilled liquors.¹

The same authority points out that while Peoria is dominated by Chicago as a wholesale center there were in 1929 "326 wholesaling establishments with net sales of \$111,000,000 employing 3,100 employees and disbursing in salaries and wages over \$5,000,000."² And, to complete the picture, the same study indicates that in 1929 there were retail sales approximating \$92,000,000 with a full time employed force of 8,580 persons.³

Cultural Indices

Lichtenberger considers the increase in popular learning an important factor in the increase of the divorce rate in the United States. He says:

In a population thus intellectually equipped, all manner of obstructions which hinder freedom and progress, whether due to tyranny of men or to the domination of tradition, become increasingly obnoxious. This results, not because conditions are worse, but because with higher degree of enlightenment they are perceived more clearly. Much of the social unrest of our time is due not to more unfavorable economic, political, and other social conditions, for these conditions, by and large, have greatly improved, but to the greater degree of knowledge enjoyed by the masses which make surviving injustice and inequality of opportunity harder to

¹Analysis of the Real Property Inventory and Financial Survey of Urban Housing for Peoria, Illinois (Washington, D. C., 1935), p. 4.

²Quoted ibid.

³Ibid., p. 5.

bear with resignation. Wrongs are felt more keenly,¹ and as a consequence rights are demanded more persistently.

He believes that there is no doubt that this fact of American life has a definite bearing on our family situation. For this reason, it seems desirable here to study our community briefly as to its cultural life.

Peoria has an ordinarily adequate public school system, about which there is probably not a distinctive feature, but whose work in general is passably well done. There is a college, too, which is rather usual in a city as large as Peoria. It is a comparatively young college having been established in 1897 and is in the "small" college group. It is impossible to estimate the influence which it has wielded in the community. Approximately half of its students have been from the local area. There are numerous study clubs in the community, a well-equipped public library, night schools, a women's club with its lectures and educational program, a public forum worthy of note conducted by one of the churches; the number of churches is probably commensurate with what would be expected in a community of a hundred thousand people, luncheon clubs, etc. Book sellers have complained that the city bought too few books, but it has been suggested that the wide-spread use made by the citizenry of the public library would at least offset the apparent lack in the number of books purchased.

A bit of light is shed on this point by the most recent report made by the American Library Association. Forty-five of the cities whose divorce rates are compared in the preceding chapter of this study are reported as to the circulation of books per capita of population served. Peoria ranks twelfth from the highest city in the list. It will be remembered that its rank is twelfth also among the cities in divorce rate.² Only two cities, however, which have higher divorce rates than Peoria, have higher per capita circulation of the volumes of their libraries. These are Wichita, Kansas and Des Moines, Iowa.

¹J. P. Lichtenberger, Divorce, a Social Interpretation (New York, 1931), p. 401.

²See Table 5.

There is one index supplied by the census data, however, which may reveal something of a cultural attainment. Peoria ranks first among the regions in the country which the Bureau of the Census has designated "Metropolitan Districts" in the matter of literacy, only one half of one per cent of its population ten years of age or over being illiterate. Out of the 89,193 persons in the city in this age group, the census enumerators in 1930 counted only 440 who were illiterate. Only forty-three of these illiterate persons were in the group of native-white of native parentage which in this group is a proportion of only two-tenths of one per cent. In the foreign-born group, the proportion of illiterates was 2.8 while among the negroes it was also 2.8 per cent. For purpose of comparison, Table 11 gives a list of all of the cities listed by the Census Bureau having an illiteracy rate of less than one per cent.

Minneapolis is the largest city in this group, and in general it may be said that those cities which have a lower rate than the .5 illiteracy rate of Peoria are in small cities or in suburbs of larger cities where the population is highly selected. It may be noted that Brookline, Massachusetts with the very low rate of .2 is a city of 42,126 inhabitants.

A study of the list of cities in Table 11 reveals that in spite of the fact that there are here only a few which are not to be designated "small" cities, there are in this list of forty-two ten of the same cities which appear in our list whose divorce rates are compared in Table 5. These ten cities have, of course in comparison with the other cities in the divorce table, low illiteracy percentages. They have high divorce rates, ranking from Tulsa with its first place to Minneapolis which ranks thirtieth among the sixty-four cities. The rankings of the intermediate cities are: Oklahoma City, third; Wichita, tenth; Des Moines, eleventh; Davenport, fifteenth; Seattle, sixteenth; Salt Lake City, seventeenth; San Diego, eighteenth; and Spokane, twentieth, besides Peoria with its twelfth ranking in the list. In spite of this interesting fact, however, it is impossible to draw the conclusion that there is a cause and effect relation between literacy and a high divorce rate since there are five Texas cities as well as Birmingham, Kansas City, Missouri, San Francisco and Columbus in the list of the first

twenty cities with the highest divorce rates, and they do not appear in the list with low illiteracy rates. It would probably be difficult to establish a definite correlation, either positive or negative, between the two factors.

TABLE 11

CITIES LISTED BY THE BUREAU OF THE CENSUS AS HAVING AN ILLITERACY RATE OF LESS THAN ONE PER CENT

City	Per Cent Illiterate	City	Per Cent Illiterate
Brookline, Mass.	.2	Burlington, Iowa	.7
Norwood, Ohio	.2	Col. Springs, Col.	.7
Oak Park, Ill.	.3	Des Moines, Iowa	.7
Sioux Falls, S. D.	.3	Evanston, Ill.	.7
Ann Arbor, Mich.	.4	Glendale, Calif.	.7
Clinton, Iowa	.4	Highland Pk., Mich.	.7
Eau Claire, Wis.	.4	Lansing, Mich.	.7
Everett, Wash.	.4	Spokane, Wash.	.7
Fargo, N. Dak.	.4	Tulsa, Oklahoma	.7
University City, Mo.	.4	Wichita, Kansas	.7
Bellingham, Wash.	.5	Decatur, Ill.	.8
Cleveland Hts., Ohio	.5	Fort Wayne, Ind.	.8
Enid, Oklahoma	.5	Minneapolis, Minn.	.8
Long Beach, Calif.	.5	Oklahoma City, Okla.	.8
PEORIA, ILLINOIS	.5	Pasadena, Calif.	.8
Davenport, Iowa	.6	Seattle, Wash.	.8
Dubuque, Iowa	.6	Belleville, Ill.	.9
E. Cleveland, Ohio	.6	Cedar Rapids, Iowa	.9
Madison, Wis.	.6	Covington, Ky.	.9
Parkersburg, W. Va.	.6	Lakewood, Ohio	.9
Salt Lake City, Utah	.6	San Diego, Calif.	.9

Another cultural factor for which there are comparative data is that of church membership. There is no immediately apparent difference in the place which the churches of Peoria occupy in comparison with other communities. A study of the available figures, however, reveal some differences which may be significant. As this is written the results of the 1936 census of Religious Bodies are not available, but so far as is known there have been no important changes in the community since 1926 in the proportion of membership of the churches to the total population. Using the 1926 data as to church membership and an estimation of the population figures for the same year, Peoria, in comparison with the United States and Illinois, has a rather

strikingly smaller proportion of church membership, 37.22 for the city while 47.07 and 46.89 are the proportions for the country and state respectively. Table 12 gives figures for the three geographical areas.

TABLE 12*

PROPORTION OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP TO THE TOTAL ESTIMATED POPULATION FOR 1926 FOR THE UNITED STATES, ILLINOIS, AND PEORIA

	Estimated 1926 Population	Church Membership	Percentage of Church Membership
United States	115,949,276	54,576,346	47.07
Illinois	7,172,504	3,363,385	46.89
Peoria	93,330	34,742	37.22

*The figures in this table are taken from the 1926 Census of Religious Bodies, publication of the Bureau of the Census. The figures are based on church memberships as given by the various denominations. Since the membership of the Roman Catholic Church includes all children of Catholic families and this is not true of other denominations, it may be doubted whether Table 12 gives a complete or accurate picture. The story which the figures tell, however, is not far from accurate since the proportion of Catholic members does not vary significantly in the three geographic divisions. The percentage of Catholics in the United States is 16.05; in Illinois, 18.06; and in Peoria 13.24. Moreover, when the Catholic membership for each geographic division is excluded from consideration, the percentage of those belonging to the other denominations figures in the table. Thus excluding Catholic memberships, the percentage for the country as a whole is 31.02, while the comparative percentages of Illinois and Peoria are 28.03 and 23.98 respectively.

The question to be asked is whether the smaller church membership in Peoria as compared with the country as a whole is a significant factor in the explanation of Peoria's comparatively high divorce rate. Some clue to the answer to this question may be secured from the negative correlation figures and between the factors of church membership and divorce when the fifty-four Census Enumeration Districts of the city are taken as a basis for comparison.¹

These figures do reveal that there is a possibility of

¹See Chapter IV, infra.

significance in the fact that the proportion of church membership in Peoria is smaller than the state in which the city is found as well as in the country as a whole.

According to the census taken in 1926, there were twenty-seven distinct denominational groups in Peoria and there were sub-divisions in several of the groups. The 34,742 church members were divided into eighty-four separate organizations, of which, comparable to the country as a whole, the Roman Catholics make up the largest number and combined have the largest membership. Table 13 gives the information in detail as to the number of churches of the various denominations and the number of members.

TABLE 13

SHOWING THE DENOMINATIONS AND THEIR DIVISIONS.
WITH THE NUMBER OF CHURCHES AND MEMBERS
OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS IN 1926

Denominations	No. Churches	Membership
Totals	84	34,742
Seventh Day Adventist.	1	134
Baptist Bodies		
Northern Baptist Convention. . .	2	891
Negro.	3	488
Brethren, Plymouth		
Plymouth Brethren IV	1	5
Church of Christ Scientist	2	559
Church of God in Christ.	1	21
Church of the Nazarene	1	50
Church of the Living God; Christian Workers for Fellowship. . .	1	37
Congregational	3	1,257
Disciples of Christ.	4	2,414
Evangelical.	2	373
Evangelical Associations		
Apostolic Christian.	1	350
Missionary Church Ass'n.	1	135
Jewish Congregations	3	1,500
Latter Day Saints		
Latter-Day Saints.	1	79
Reorganized Latter-Day Saints. .	1	44
Lutherans		
United Lutheran Church in America.	1	333
Augustana Synod.	1	393
Synod of Mo. and other states. .	2	2,480
Mennonite Bodies		
Mennonite Church	1	29
Central Conference of Mennonites	1	97

TABLE 13-Continued

Denominations	No. Churches	Membership
Methodist Bodiae		
M. E.	7	3,113
Free Methodist of N. America.	2	107
African	1	212
Presbyterian Church of America.	7	2,570
Protestant Episcopal.	3	1,302
Reformed Church in America. . .	1	130
Roman Catholic.	16	12,364
Salvation Army.	1	38
Swedish Evangelical Covenant of Americc.	1	41
National Spiritualist Ass'n . .	2	78
Theosophical Society.	1	24
United Brethren in Christ . . .	2	187
Universalist.	1	810
Volunteers of America	1	64

Housing in Peoria

It is possible that there is some co-ordinated relationship between housing and divorce. A spot map (Chart 2, p. 40) of the city constructed to show the addresses of those seeking divorce over a period of four years reveals some tendencies toward concentration and these areas whence come a majority of the divorces are the same ones that have been found by the Federal Housing Administration as having dwelling units which "need repair," have no "central heating facilities," have no "private indoor toilet facilities," have no "bathing facilities," and in the regions where the rents are the lowest and the value of the property least.¹ These areas are located by means of a very recent study carried on by the research division of the Federal Housing Administration and published under the title, Analysis of the Real Property Inventory and Financial Survey of Urban Housing for Peoria, Illinois, and is dated January 1, 1935. It is important in this connection to point out that the study was made in Peoria exclusively as the Administration says in the introductory statement because the city is "subject to no unique

¹See infra, Chapter V, especially correlations dealing with economic factors and divorce rates.

influencee sufficient to make it unrepresentative, of sufficient size to be subject to many of the problems associated with large metropolitan areas, and yet not far removed from the small city state."¹ As was said before, this study was made exclusively in Peoria and its environs so that a comparison with other cities is impossible. And yet the statement is made that "there is a surprising lack of adequate equipment in the dwelling units of Peoria, for 22 per cent of the families have no private indoor toilet facilities and 32 per cent, no bath tubs or showers; 23 per cent are dependent on heating stoves, having no central heating facilities."²

Ogburn and Cahen have studied the relationship between poverty and divorce with practically negative results. Cahen's summary statement after reviewing the studies of both is: "All the foregoing facts and correlations fail to indicate a positive association between divorce and poverty."³

The findings of the present study are in conformity with Cahen's conclusion when divorce rates and poverty in various communities are compared. Appendix VI is a statistical table, the data for which were derived from a Real Property Inventory, made in 1934 of sixty-four cities by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce of the Department of Commerce of the Federal Government. The figures given in Appendix VI are for eighteen selected cities whose divorce rates are rather easily comparable with those of Peoria. The percentages are of aspects of housing which are caused by the existence of poverty. In order to test the relationship between poverty and divorce, the percentages as given in the table of undesirable aspects of housing were added and the cities ranked. By correlating this ranking with a ranking of the same cities based upon divorce rates there results a correlation coefficient of .30 with a probable error of .15. This correlation, not large enough to be significant, would tend

¹Analysis of Real Property Inventory and Financial Survey of Urban Housing for Peoria, Illinois, p. v.

²Quoted ibid.

³Alfred Cahen, Statistical Analysis of American Divorce (New York, 1932), pp. 54, 55.

to verify the findings of Ogburn and Cahen.¹

When, however, these same factors are studied in relationship with each other within the same community the results are quite definite. Discussion of details of the correlations found between certain economic factors and divorce in Peoria, however, will be reserved for Chapter IV.

Summary

The community in which the present inquiry is centered has been studied in four aspects of its life, the analysis of which it is hoped will make clearer than would otherwise be possible the setting in which we are attempting to understand the phenomenon of divorce. The four aspects of the community analyzed in this chapter are: the population composition, the industrial life of the community, some cultural indices, and the question of housing. Various phases of these aspects of community life are studied in their relation to the divorce situation in detail in Chapter IV.

¹Another factor which may cause this correlation to be of doubtful value is the fact that the eighteen cities are to be found in different states with varying divorce laws, though in such an important matter as the length of residence required before a divorce is granted the states in which the cities are found are uniform.

region and the remainder to the bluff. From the census data the proportion of the population of the City in the age group 21 to 44 is easily calculated, the percentage being 42.58. This latter figure was employed in the calculation of the proportions of the total population in bluff and valley sections of each of the four districts. The number of divorces in these districts lying in the bluff or valley sections respectively was determined by each individual address. The percentage of divorces to population 21 to 44 was then calculated. This procedure made possible the calculation of a divorce rate for the valley and bluff sections of the entire City; the former being 3.01 while the corresponding rate for the bluff region was 2.07. Table 14 shows these figures in detail.

TABLE 14

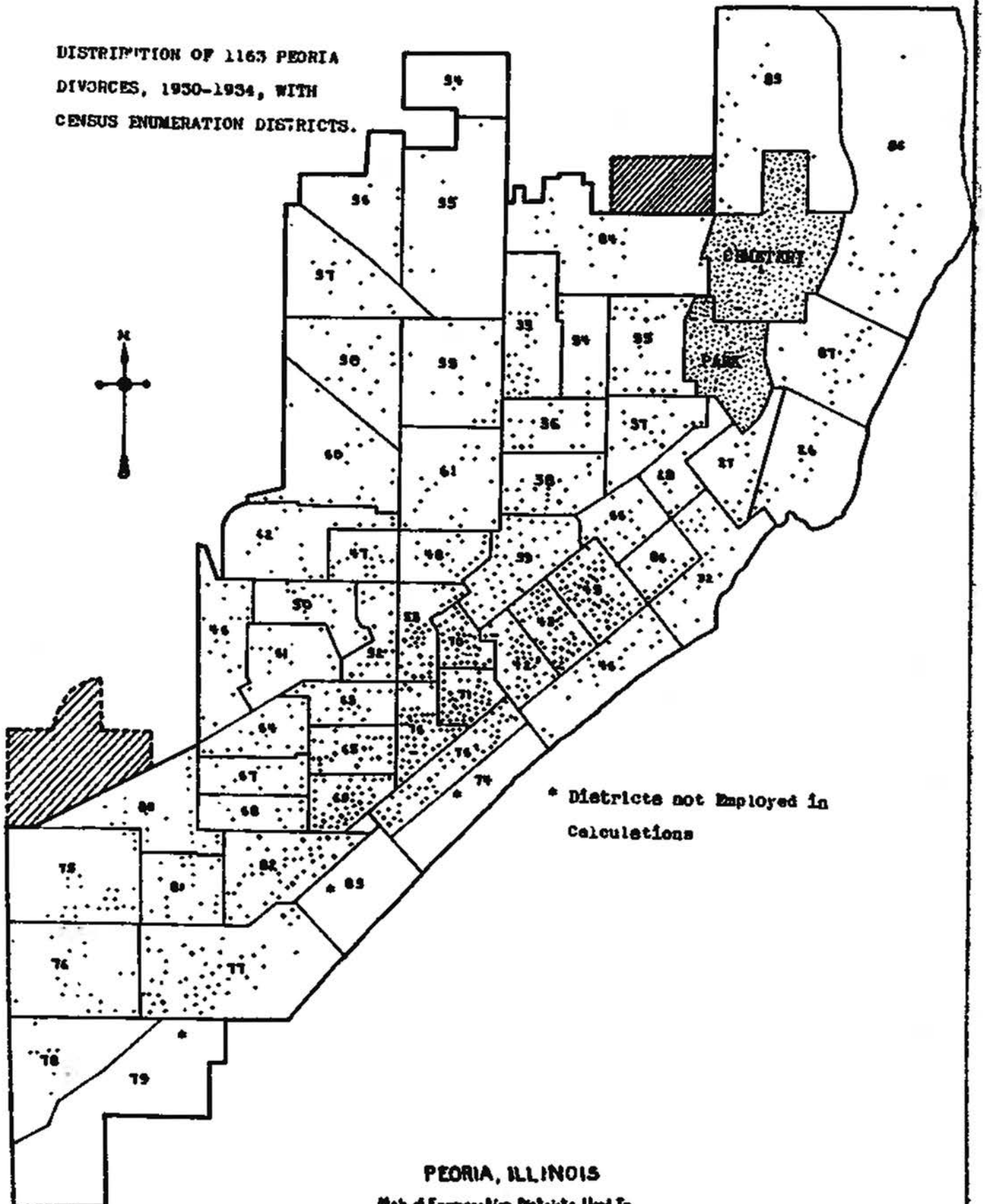
**TOTAL POPULATION, POPULATION 21 TO 44, NUMBER OF DIVORCES
AND DIVORCE RATES FOR BLUFF AND VALLEY REGIONS**

	Total Population	Population 21 to 44	No. of Divorces	Divorce Rate
Bluff	40,102	17,125	354	2.07
Valley	63,226	26,894	809	3.01
Totals	103,328	44,019	1,163	2.46

Ward Divorce Rates

A study of the ten wards of the City reveals that they may be classified as to their location on the bluff or in the valley. Six of the wards, the first, third, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth are valley wards, while the second, fourth and fifth wards are bluff regions except for one comparatively small corner of the fourth ward which extends below the bluff. The tenth ward is definitely a mixed district, having within its confines a residential area that extends to the river, forming a slum-like region, while also within its borders is Grand View Drive, one of the exclusive residential streets of the entire area. It winds along the brow of the bluff high above the river affording the choicest of scenery. It is because of these geographic conditions that this ward counts among its residents those marked by the greatest contrast of wealth and poverty.

DISTRIBUTION OF 1163 PEORIA
DIVORCES, 1930-1934, WITH
CENSUS ENUMERATION DISTRICTS.



PEORIA, ILLINOIS
Map of Enumeration Districts Used In
1930 Census

to leave the district as soon as economic circumstances make this possible. It has never been a first-rate residential area, the houses being small and lacking in modern conveniences. Individual wells and cisterns are still in use and evidence is general of the existence of the outdoor toilet. There are numerous signs announcing that apartments and rooms are for rent, and the section is known locally as the working man's area.

Not only has this region a high divorce rate, but it has also a high delinquency rate, second high of the districts, and its relief rate is also second from the highest. Its residents pay the lowest rents in the city and the lowest average value is placed upon the property here. The Protestant church membership rate is very low, the Lutheran membership rate is below the average for the city as a whole, though the Catholic membership rate is somewhat higher than the average. The number of children under the age of five in proportion to the population fifteen to forty-four is below the average rate for the city. The same result is apparent when the number of children under five are compared with the total female population.¹

There is nothing unusual about this District as to foreign elements in the population, the proportion of foreign-born in the population being somewhat above the average, while the proportion of native-born of foreign or mixed parentage is slightly below the average for the city.

Two other Districts, numbers 73 and 42, have comparably high divorce rates, the percentage being 5.15 and 4.81, respectively. The former includes a part of the loop district. It is two blocks wide, extending from Washington to Jefferson Streets, and from Liberty to Cedar which gives it, on the map, a long and narrow appearance. The upper end of the narrow area is entirely retail, and Adams Street, which runs parallel with and between Washington and Jefferson has a definite retail character through the entire length of the district. As much of Washington Street as lies within the area is a combination of retail, wholesale, and manufacturing district. The northern end of Jefferson Street lying within the district is retail in character, while somewhat

¹Information is not available to make possible the numbers of either sex by age groups.

more than half of its distance is covered by residences. It is a transitional area, rooming houses and small home apartments being plentiful. Within the area is one of the city's major recognized sections of prostitution. Like other areas with high divorce rates, this district has high delinquency and relief rates and the rent paid and the average value of property are low. Church membership in all the denominations included in the study is low, and while those of foreign or mixed parentage compose smaller than the average proportion, the percentage of foreign born is higher than the mean for the city. It is the district which has the highest proportion of male population, the per cent of the total being 65.1. The proportion of the population in the age group below twenty is low, and even with the small proportion of the population female, the number of children under five to the total female population, is below the average.

Many of the statements made about district numbers 69 and 73 may also be made of number 42. The most distinctive feature of this district, however, is the fact that it is entirely within the retail area. The 1315 persons whom the census takers found were undoubtedly largely those living in the hotels at the time, slightly more than sixty per cent of whom were males. There is here the low proportion of the population in the lower age brackets while both the relief and delinquency rates are above the normal for the city. Church membership is uniformly low.

Low Divorce Rate Districts

At the other extreme are two districts with unusually low divorce rates, numbers 55 and 34. The former of these has been discussed briefly. In practically all the measurable factors they produce an opposite picture from those with the high rates. They are low in both relief and delinquency rates, while they are equally high and almost as uniformly so in church membership rates. The exception lies in the Catholic membership rate in each of the districts in one of which, number 55, it is very low, while in the other this rate goes well above the membership rates of the other churches. The proportion of men and women in the population is almost equal, one of the districts showing exactly 50 per cent men while the other is 49.7 per cent. The proportion of the younger age groups in the population is

TABLE 37

DIVORCED AND CONTROL GROUPS COMPARED AS TO WHETHER
THEY WOULD MARRY THE SAME PERSON AGAIN,
A DIFFERENT PERSON OR NOT MARRY AT ALL

If You Had Your Life to Live Over, Would You	Divorced Group	Control Group
Marry the same person...	111	217
Marry a different person	193	10
Not marry.....	94	12
Undecided.....		1
Totals.....	398	240

The important, perhaps the surprising, figure in the foregoing table is the 111 persons of the Divorced group who declare that they would marry the same person again. One possible explanation is that now with both events in the past the divorce rather than the marriage seems to be the mistake. This is implied by many of those who answer the question thus when they state that their marriage would have been successful if some certain condition could have been avoided or error averted. For example, in this group of questionnaires the advice; "don't marry too young" is frequent and "move away from the city where your in-laws live" is typical of another small number.

The reason some of them would marry the same person is that they realize that there was "nothing else to do under the circumstances." Two of those who married for business or financial reasons declare there was nothing else they could have done.

Some of the number would marry the same person again because they were defendants in the divorce suit and were opposed to the severing of the marriage relations and in one case there had been "no good reason" for the divorce, though it had been granted on grounds of desertion. A reconciliation seemed to be desired by both persons involved, and this was actually brought about later by the young man, a college senior, who studied the case.

The question in regard to the reasons for marrying was

asked thus: "Check which of the following were your two main reasons for marrying: to please parents, to escape your family, for money, for business reasons, social reasons, loneliness, to have a home, romantic love, in order to give name to child, to improve health, other....." As is to be expected, perhaps, the largest number in each group answers that the cause for marriage was romantic love, 300 of the total tabulation of 576 in the Divorced group and 226 of the 466 total in the Control group listing this cause as one of the two main reasons for marrying. The tabulation of the reasons given is shown in Table 38. The differential factor may be more difficult to locate here than in most of the tabulations given, but it may be also that there is some significance in the comparatively large numbers in the Divorced group giving the first three causes in the list as their reason for marrying. In three other items there is quite a large difference between the figures for the two groups, viz., "to give name to child," "loneliness," and "to have a home."

TABLE 38

DIVORCED AND CONTROL GROUPS COMPARED AS
TO REASONS FOR THEIR MARRIAGES

Reasons	Divorced Group	Control Group
To please parents....	11	0
Escape family.....	26	13
Money.....	17	0
Business reasons....	3	5
Romantic love.....	300	226
To give name to child	26	4
To have children.....	2	3
Social custom.....	25	26
Loneliness.....	113	25
To have a home.....	53	164
Totals.....	576	466

As was pointed out earlier in this treatise the divorce rates are higher in the urban centers than they are in the rural areas.¹ It is not surprising to find, therefore, a slight differential of city origin in the Divorced group as compared with the

¹Page 7.

TABLE 43

CONTRAST OF LEGAL AND REAL REASONS
FOR DIVORCES OF 410 PERSONS

Statement of Cause	Legal	Real
Cruelty.....	220	191
Non-support.....	59	117
Desertion.....	117	4
Adultery.....	21	0
Veneral disease.....	5	0
Drunkenness.....	20	35
Mental cruelty.....	13	0
Insanity.....	5	1
Incompatibility.....	8	0
Infidelity.....	8	0
General indignities.....	1	0
Alienation of affection.....	1	0
Other woman in case.....	.	78
Other man in case.....	.	58
Sex Difficulty.....	.	36
Relatives.....	.	62
Too frequent child bearing...	.	11
Poverty.....	.	10
Church differences.....	.	19
Loneliness.....	.	26
Personal irritation.....	.	69
Different Tastes.....	.	43
Different interests.....	.	45
Failure to have children.....	.	10
Deceitfulness.....	.	56
Poor housekeeping.....	.	21
Jealousy.....	.	24
Educational differences.....	.	17
Difference over money matters	.	56
Didn't agree.....	.	2
Trouble with in-laws.....	.	2
Political differences.....	.	1
Boarders.....	.	1
Totals.....	478	1,025*

*See paragraphs 36 and 37 in Appendix XIII.

Several points in the preceding table may be commented upon briefly. First, is the fact that cruelty is resorted to legally in somewhat larger proportion of cases than in those where it is a real factor, while non-support is resorted to in only about half the cases in which it is an actual factor. Non-support is not a legal cause for divorce in the State. It is

possible that those who answered the question thus were confusing non-support with desertion. Desertion is the real cause in only four cases while it is given as the legal cause in more than a hundred. Drunkenness is employed as a legal factor in only about one-quarter of the cases where it is a factor, the phraseology of the law in Illinois, "habitual drunkenness for two years," probably being the reason.

It is to be noted that only five of the legal causes for divorce in Illinois were named by the group, while seven which are not legal causes were named. This latter fact is to be accounted for in all probability on the basis of one of two factors; first, confusion of terms, and second, the confusion in the minds of those answering, of the actual causes for marital difficulty with the legal cause, upon which suit for divorce was brought.

Summary

The best source of information for a study of personal factors in divorce is a group of divorced persons. This chapter is a report of the answers of 410 divorced persons who were persuaded to fill out the answers to a questionnaire. These are contrasted and compared with answers to similar questions secured from a Control group. There was an attempt to hold such factors as the proportion of the sexes, occupations, economic status, sections of the City in which they lived, constant for the two groups. While there was no attempt to hold the factor of church membership constant, of those who expressed church preference 21.43 of the Control group either preferred or were affiliated with the Catholic Church while 19.19 per cent of the Divorced group preferred or belonged to that denomination.

A summary of the principal findings follows:

A larger proportion of the Divorced group was married by a judge or justice of the peace than was true of the Control group and a correspondingly larger proportion of the latter group sought the services of a minister or priest than was true of the former group.

The mean of the ages at which the two groups were married varied only one-half of one percentage point, the Control group