

III.—PERCENTAGES WHO WERE OR HAD BEEN MARRIED, BY AGE GROUPS AND SEX,
CANADA, 1891-1931

SOURCE: Vol. I, Census of 1931, Table VI, p. 209.

Year	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and Over
MALES							
1891.....	0.38	12.89	56.72	83.86	90.16	92.40	93.60
1911.....	1.37	17.35	54.27	77.90	86.02	89.81	92.41
1921.....	0.58	18.11	62.16	81.55	86.43	88.78	91.33
1931.....	0.36	14.48	58.79	82.45	86.36	87.60	89.54
FEMALES							
1891.....	4.53	33.25	70.16	85.81	89.74	91.19	91.85
1911.....	7.11	40.48	73.19	85.33	88.17	89.35	90.34
1921.....	6.67	42.98	76.79	87.46	88.80	89.52	89.80
1931.....	5.10	36.87	74.15	87.50	89.58	89.05	89.14

Figures for other age groupings are available for 1861 and 1871, and by interpolation the marriage probabilities of successive age groups at different periods of life can be traced from one census to the next. The earliest group of women of whom anything is known is the group who were over 60 years of age in 1871. The marriages of the women in this group occurred mainly between 1820 and 1840 and 92 p.c. of them eventually married. The percentage married in each successive group of women decreased from then onwards until it reached a minimum for marriages taking place in the years around 1881. The probability of marriage then increased, reaching a maximum between 1905 and 1915. The final results of this latest period of numerous marriages will not be seen until the 1951 Census. The percentage of women who have been married may then prove to be nearly as high as in the early part of the nineteenth century.

Changes in marriage frequency in Canada have been intimately connected with the volume of immigration and its effect on the sex ratio. The most usual state of affairs has been a surplus of males at every single year of age from birth to over 70. There have been only three periods when this was not the case. In 1825 there appears to have been an excess of females at unknown ages; in 1871 and in 1881 immigration had slowed down and young men were moving from Canada to the United States, hence females exceeded males at the critical ages between 16 and 26. After 1881 immigration increased, reaching its high point in the early years of this century. A surplus of females did not occur again except, as a result of the First World War, in the age groups 22 to 26 years in 1931. The effect of immigration on marriage rates is direct. Women immigrants are usually married and so increase the proportion of married in the general population, while the large surplus of unmarried men increases the chances of marriage for all women. The relation is, however, not only one of mere numbers. Economic conditions which attract large numbers of immigrants also encourage marriage among the native-born. This is shown by the fact that in 1911, the proportion of Canadian-born males who had been married was considerably greater than in 1891.

(2) Annual Data—Crude Marriage Rates.—Events since 1921 can be followed in greater detail since annual marriage rates are available. The chart on the facing page shows for the period 1926 to 1939: (1) estimated percentages of wage-earners