

THE DECLINE IN BOARDING AND ROOMING

IN

HAMILTON: 1900 TO 1948

BY

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ABSTRACT

Existing literature on boarding and rooming establishes the important role of boarding in the housing market. Boarding and rooming have traditionally provided temporary, inexpensive accommodation for those who have come to the city to seek employment.

The first half of the twentieth century was a period of dramatic economic and social change and yet there is no study of boarding during this period. This is a study of the declining incidence of boarding and rooming in Hamilton during the period 1900 to 1948.

There is a dramatic decline in boarding and rooming during the first fifteen years of the twentieth century. Rates remain low during the 1920's with a slight resurgence seen during the Great Depression and the Second World War. There is a substantial decline in boarding and rooming over the entire period of study 1900 to 1948.

Also, there is a decline in the percentage of boarders and roomers that were boarders during the period of study. Changing social tastes demonstrate an increasing preference for the nuclear family. Therefore, individuals residing with the family are no longer encouraged to live as one of the family.

The relationship that exists between boarding and rooming and periods of economic prosperity and recession are found to be complex and contradictory in nature. Although periods of prosperity allow individuals to find their own accommodation, this same prosperity attracts increasing numbers of people to the city creating a housing shortage and causing people to have to double up. Similarly, periods of recession create a need for inexpensive accommodation but also, many individuals return to farming during these periods.

Finally, the decline that took place in boarding and rooming during this period cannot be explained exclusively by economic changes but also by dramatic social changes that were also taking place during this period.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Historically, boarding and rooming have played an important role socially and economically. Providing temporary and inexpensive living accommodations for the transient and unstable within society has made boarding and rooming a housing alternative for many. Today boarding and rooming are less instrumental in the dynamics of the housing market. The first half of the twentieth century saw boarding and rooming rates plummet from one third of many North American households having a boarder or roomer to approximately one in five households containing a boarder or roomer in post World War II North America. The reasons for this decline however, are not fully understood.

A study of the decline in boarder and roomer rates in the first half of the twentieth century could prove to be of value in understanding the effect of changing economic conditions on the housing market. However, no study has concentrated on this period. Long run trends in the incidence of boarding and rooming have been studied by scholars, but much of this has been evidence and discussion of the decline of boarding and rooming since World War II.

The purpose of this study is to document the decline of boarding and rooming in Hamilton, Ontario over the period 1900 to 1948. A second goal is to begin to explain the changes that took place. This will contribute to a greater

understanding of housing trends in North America as well as demonstrate how responsive households were to changing economic conditions in Hamilton during this period.

1.1 METHODS

A review of the literature on boarding reveals it is quite substantial but that there is little written on the period 1900 to 1948 and nothing has been written on boarding in Hamilton for this period. This research will attempt to fill some of the gaps by studying the decline in boarding and rooming in Hamilton during the period 1900 to 1948.

A description of the data collection method from the City Directories for Hamilton will follow and a detailed description of the results obtained from the directories.

Data collected from other sources, notably the Labour Gazette, will then be described and used to help explain the trends from the directory data. This better understanding of causes allows this research to become not only a description of data but also a tool of analysis for the housing situation in Hamilton during this period.

This research will offer some observations on how typical Hamilton was, and therefore whether the results can be easily generalized to the rest of Canada or North America. This research will contribute to the existing knowledge of boarding and rooming and how the family can adapt to changing economic conditions.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to establish a setting for the analyses of the decline in boarding and rooming in Hamilton from 1900 to 1948 it is necessary to study the relevant literature on this subject area. An analysis of the existing literature will create an understanding of the importance of boarding and rooming both historically and in a contemporary view. The relevant literature for my research ranges from an analysis of general pieces on the nature and significance of boarding, to the study of the changing incidence of boarding in the long and short run and finally material on Hamilton that is pertinent to the subject area.

2.1 THE NATURE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF BOARDING

The classic work on boarding has been done by Modell and Hareven. In their paper "Urbanization and the Malleable Household: An Examination of Boarding and Lodging in American Families", an analysis of the social and economic effect of lodging on the late nineteenth century American family is attempted. Their study focuses on two questions. First, in view of the middle class opposition to the practice, how did boarding survive as long as it did, given the ample opportunities for institutional alternatives to have developed? And second, why did the ultimate decline of boarding come when at last it did? (Modell and Hareven,

1973)

Middle class opposition to boarding arose in the late nineteenth century in an attempt to create a nuclear family and keep out the bad influence of the young, wandering males who were most often boarders. However, boarding was a traditional practice that became a very necessary part of urbanization and industrialization. It provided temporary, inexpensive, family-like accommodation for young people who came to the city seeking employment. Boarding provided supplementary income for the family in a time when industrial wages promised poverty. Modell and Hareven view boarding as a necessary part of industrialization because it allowed the newcomers to live close to their place of employment.

Although boarders were taken in by families for primarily economic considerations, Modell and Hareven find that the head of the household was similar to the boarder through ethnic or occupational ties. It can be seen that although the existence of boarders within the household represented economic necessity, the family cushioned the shock of having an outsider in the home by choosing someone of similar background.

With the rise of wages and the increasing stability of industrial labour boarding eventually began to decline. Single person households became feasible and grew in social acceptance. Modell and Hareven bring to the study of

boarding and lodging an understanding of the family as a malleable economic unit. The authors also establish boarding, as practiced by all classes in the nineteenth century, as an acceptable form of supplementary income and surrogate family for the young men who came to the city during the early years of the industrial revolution. Modell and Hareven view economic necessity and social acceptability as highly correlated variables and do not attempt to distinguish between the two. These assumptions will be used in my research.

Further work on the nature and significance of boarding has been done by Mark Peel. In his work "On the Margins. Lodgers and Boarders in Boston, 1860-1900", Peel discusses lodgers and the lodging house in Boston, 1860 to 1900. His data suggests that many of the young men who resided in a lodging house had similar ethnic as well as occupational characteristics. Furthermore, since lodging houses often did not supply meals, the lodgers spent time together in local restaurants and saloons. The lodgers challenged the conventional understanding of single persons requiring a surrogate family. Hence, the lodging house introduced a new sector to society, single persons. The traditional view of boarders as part of the family is challenged and this leads to their ultimate rejection by society.

Peel's work brings into focus the moral decline of

lodging in the eyes of turn of the century reformers and citizens. As the economic need for lodgers declined taking in lodgers became a less desirable practice for supplementary income.

Peel's work as well as Modell and Hareven's suggest the role of boarding and lodging in the last half of the nineteenth century. Boarding and lodging played an essential part in early industrialization. The malleability of the family to sustain itself economically is demonstrated. Also, the attempt of the family to cushion the blow of having a stranger in the household by taking in boarders of similar ethnic and occupational background as well as the desire of the boarders and lodgers to live among surrogate kin is illustrated. The eventual decline of boarders and lodgers comes as economic need declines and the social distaste for boarding and lodging arises.

2.2 LONG AND SHORT RUN TRENDS IN BOARDING AND LODGING

In her article "The Social Consequences of Economic Cycles on Nineteenth Century Households and Family Life" Sheeva Medjuck discusses the reaction of the people of Moncton, New Brunswick to the volatile economic circumstances of 1851 to 1871. Medjuck challenges different theories about family structure. She concludes from her data that the household structure was considerably

malleable. The household structure could expand when economic situations demanded and returned to a more nuclear model when situations changed. Rapid economic growth markedly effects family size and structure. I will to demonstrate this same fact by comparing the number of boarders and lodgers in Hamilton at a given time from 1900 to 1948 to the economic situation at that time.

Medjuck criticizes the work of Anderson, Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire, because Anderson dismisses the idea that urbanization and industrialization changed family structure but rather he states that urbanization and industrialization simply changed the motivation to maintain and extended family structure. Anderson states that if economic need arose kin would reside with kin. Anderson explains that motivation for extended family residence changed with industrialization from traditional and religious values to economic motivation. He maintains the view that the family had been historically extended. I am in accord here with Medjuck who states that it is difficult to evaluate the rational of people who are long since dead. Anderson's data is useful however, in that it demonstrates the extension of the family when economic need arises. Whether this is out of traditional values or economic crisis is irrelevant in this context.

Furthermore, in his article "Family, Household and the Industrial Revolution" Anderson speculates on the

growing increase of coresidence of married couples in Lancashire, England during the later part of the nineteenth century. Once again he attributes this to economic necessity. His data for this study is quite useful in understanding changing family size during the industrial revolution.

Medjuck and Anderson disagree of the fundamental issue of the family as being historically nuclear. Medjuck states that the family has been traditionally nuclear and becomes extended during times of economic need. Anderson states that the family has been historically extended and the taking in of boarders and lodgers during industrialization was only different in its motivation.

John Miron in his book Housing in Postwar Canada. Demographic Change, Household Formation and Housing Demand discusses the housing situation in post World War II Canada. Miron discusses the decline in household size as a result of the increasing housing supply. His historical analysis of early twentieth century housing supply is useful in establishing the declining need of extended households. Further, Miron discusses the corresponding social value placed on privacy and the dawn of the individual household as a result of housing supply. Miron analyses the trends of post World War II Canada as continuations of existing trends as well as the trends of a changing society. This is quite useful in that it creates the need for a study of the

first half of the twentieth century. Declining household size is greatly related to the rising wages of the early twentieth century as well as changing social values including the changing role of women. Women in post World War II Canada were no longer confined to the home for employment and hence, being a land lady became less desirable.

Miron raises the question that although real wages rose dramatically in the 1920's why did we not see the explosion of single households as we do in post World War II society. He proposes that although single persons could afford to live alone they often preferred to board because of the convenience. Post World War II society had increasing home making technology that made life in a household much easier.

Miron's discussion of the changing twentieth century Canadian family offers many feasible explanations for the decline in boarding and lodging. It also creates a need for a study of the first half of the twentieth century to see the beginning of many of the trends seen in society today.

The study of long and short trends raises some fundamental conflicts in the literature. The issue of the family being historically nuclear will be assumed as true for my research. Although boarding and lodging was socially acceptable during the nineteenth century there is no evidence that this has been the case historically. The

increase in boarding and lodging during times of economic need, however, has been established through the literature and will be a fundamental assumption in my research.

2.3 HAMILTON

A debate arises in the literature over the significance of boarders as one of the family (Katz, 1975) or as a strictly economic entity in the household (Medjuck, 1980). Medjuck's work challenges the assumption of Modell and Hareven that boarding provided a surrogate family for young people. Medjuck compares her data for Moncton 1851, 1861, and 1871 with Katz's Hamilton data for 1861 to clarify the distinction of boarders as an integral part of the household.

Medjuck's analysis of her data suggests that boarders in Moncton as well as Hamilton tended to be male immigrants, ages 15 to 29 and worked in industry. Furthermore, as the economic situations worsened the number of boarders within the household declined. She concludes that there is a particular socio-demographic character to boarders and that this illustrates the economic component of boarders rather than boarders as one of the family. Medjuck stresses that this difference reflects the malleability of the family to take in strangers for economic need.

In Katz's book The People of Hamilton, Canada West,

he attempts to understand the structure of late nineteenth century society in Hamilton. Katz sees the family as the fundamental structure of society as his research shows that one third of all households contained a relative or boarder in 1861. Katz concludes that the family provided moral instruction as well as social order. In 1961 only one fifth of households contained a relative or boarder in Hamilton. Katz concludes from his data that family structure has become increasingly nuclear with the acceptance of individual households. The question arises of how the change in the social structure of the family is related to economic change. Was the decline in boarding simply a result of better economic circumstances and did these changing economic circumstances change the morality of society? Katz's research makes strong assumptions that societies values changed independently of economic circumstances. Katz does not substantiate this point with data figures. Although it is necessary to consider both social and economic factors in the decline of boarding my research will not consider these as independent but highly correlated variables.

Jane Synge's work (Synge, 1978) gives a qualitative view of life for working class women in Hamilton 1900 to 1920. Personal interviews reveal different aspects of boarding. For some boarders became one of the family and for others it was strictly a business arrangement. The

business of boarders was mainly the concern of the women of the household. Therefore, the interviews with women reveal the experience of boarding from within the household. This qualitative analysis provides insight into the acceptability of boarding and its role in a changing industrial society.

The work done on Hamilton provides a frame of reference for further work. An analysis of the decline of boarding and lodging in the first half of the twentieth century will help to fill the gap on Hamilton as a changing industrial city.

A review of the relevant literature on boarding and lodging opens up many different subject areas beyond the scope of my research. However, it is important to understand the work already done in order to provide a framework to document and explain the decline in boarding in Hamilton from 1900 to 1948. The literature will be useful for comparative purposes.

Finally, reviewing this literature reveals that a gap exists. It is apparent that there is no study of boarding for the first half of the twentieth century. A study of the decline in boarding in Hamilton will advance the understanding of the effect of economic changes on the family.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

In order to better understand the decline in boarding and rooming in Hamilton during the first half of the twentieth century, the nature of the decline must be better understood. The use of the City Directories will help to demonstrate the role and nature of boarding and rooming in Hamilton during the period of study. The City Directories data for Hamilton was collected by Dr. Richard Harris and is used in this research with his permission.

For this research the data source used is the City Directories for Hamilton for the years 1900 to 1948. The City Directory is a listing of all the adults, except married women, living in Hamilton. It gives the occupancy status of all adults listed and their place of residence. The data for the directories is collected through a private agency and is collected for private publication. The directories are filled with advertisements, reflecting them as a business pursuit, probably often used by companies for market research or solicitation.

Those adults that were boarders or roomers could be identified by having a 'b' or an 'r' placed beside their name. In this way they would be listed by where they were living at the time that the data was collected. Although the distinction between the terms boarder and roomer are never stated explicitly the definitions intended may be inferred. Usually, at that time, a 'boarder' was a person

renting a room within the household and living as a member of the household, joining the family for meals and sharing the household responsibilities. A 'roomer' was a person renting a room within a household but having no other connection to that household.

A random sample of listed adults was obtained by taking every twentieth page in the directory and using the households listed in the third column of the right hand page. This was done until approximately 1000 households were obtained per year. Although this process is not perfectly random, it effectively eliminates the problem of nationality bias. One thousand households took the sample at least half way through the alphabet to avoid any bias based on nationality from family names. This attempt to get at least half way through the alphabet explains the variation in the number of households collected per year.

The information obtained from the directory allows an estimate to be taken of the changing proportion of listed adults who were boarders and roomers. This can be revealing as to how common the practice of boarding and rooming was in Hamilton during this period.

Although applying a weighting to the data alters the original results obtained from the City Directories, this procedure is justifiable. Firstly, data obtained from the directories is only a sample of the total data available. Therefore, smoothing the data can help to average out errors

that exist strictly because of the sampling method.

Secondly, further bias may exist in the directories that vary in degree from year to year. For example, the quite extreme difference in the percentage of boarders and roomers from year to year can be seen in the data for the years 1919 and 1920 (Appendix 2). In 1919, the percentage of boarders and roomers was 4.6 percent. In contrast, in 1920 11.4 percent of listed adults being boarders and roomers. Some of the variation between the two can be explained by varying accuracy of data gathering, perhaps a bias existing against boarders and roomers in 1919 and this bias not existing (or being over compensated for) in 1920.

Thirdly, real, short term fluctuations in boarding and rooming that exist in the data may make it difficult to discern the long term trend. Smoothing helps bring out the more general long term trend. For example, the general increase that exists in boarding and rooming during the Great Depression is partly hidden in the year to year fluctuations of the unsmoothed data (Appendix 2). Although the values of the percentage of listed adults being boarders and roomers increase on average some years do not show this increase, for example 1939. Therefore, the smoothed graph allows the long term trends to be seen as opposed to the short term, year to year trends.

The data obtained from the City Directories, as displayed in Appendix 1, produces the graph, Appendix 2.

Although an overall downward trend is evident there is a lot of apparently random fluctuation. Therefore, the graph was smoothed in order to make the results meaningful. The smoothing was done by applying a weighting of 1,2,3,2,1 on each year (Graph 3.1). Giving the year in study a weighting of 3 and a weighting of 2 given to the year previous and the year following and 1 to the second year following and previous, makes a smoother graph.

This weighting was chosen after various other attempts to yield a smoothed graph provided less satisfactory results. Appendix 3 demonstrates the effectiveness of using a weighting of 1,1,1. Although the general trends in the graph are smoothed the variation in the values from one year to the next still show quite a sharp change. This leads to the belief that this weighting does not allow the data to take on the smoother, more subtle changes that would be expected from one year to the next in such data.

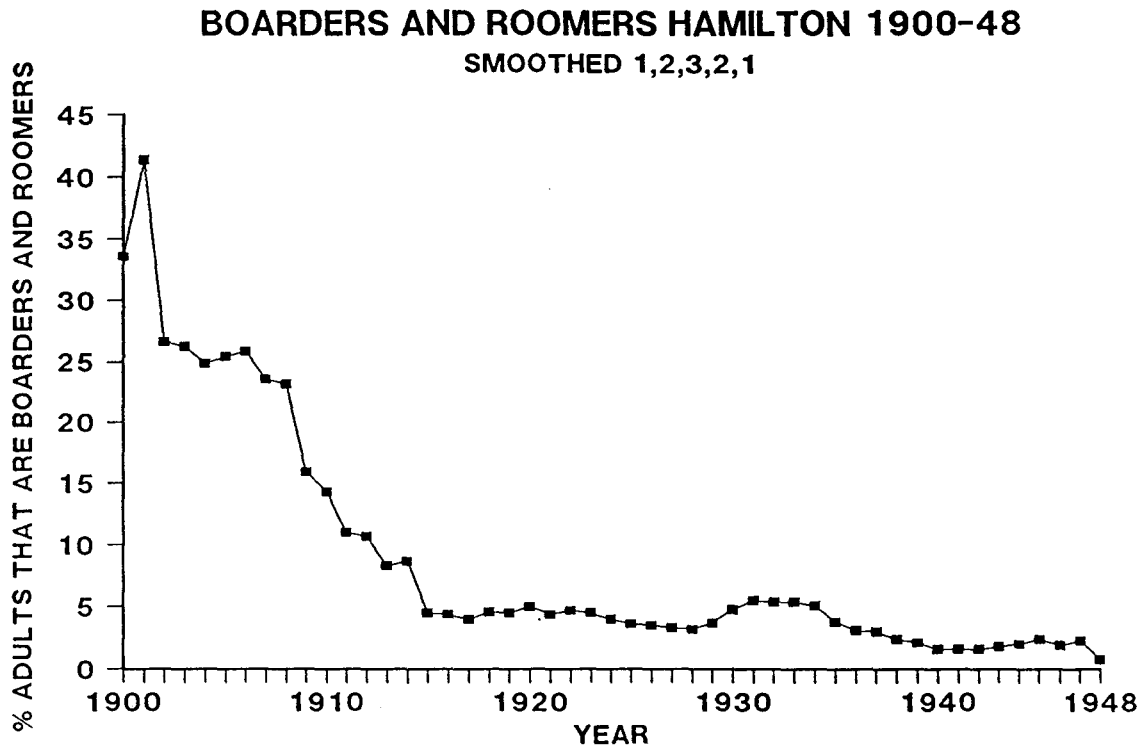
However, when the weighting 1,2,3,2,1 is used the graph produced is free of the more extreme value changes from year to year in the boarding and rooming data. For example, from 1900 to 1917 a more gradual decline is demonstrated than the more sporadic decrease that existed before the graph was smoothed or even with the weighting of 1,1,1 applied. Furthermore, the values from 1917 to 1929 show a leveling out that is quite consistent when the

1,2,3,2,1 weighting is applied with values ranging from 5.1 percent to 7.1 percent as opposed to values ranging from 2.9 percent to 11.9 percent for the corresponding years on the unsmoothed graph. Finally, the graph with the weighting of 1,2,3,2,1 is more revealing as to the subtle yet general increase that took place in boarding and rooming from 1929 until the end of the period of study, 1948. This increase is virtually hidden in the unsmoothed graph by the year to year variation that exists. However, even in the data that is weighted 1,1,1 the upward trend in boarding and rooming from 1929 is apparent but the year to year variation in data do not demonstrate the subtlety of the increase.

3.1 BOARDING AND LODGING

The final graph produced using the weighting of 1,2,3,2,1 demonstrates the trend in boarding and lodging over the first half of the twentieth century (Graph 3.1). The initial decline from 1900 to 1902 is quite rapid with values dropping from one third of listed adults to about one quarter of listed adults being a boarder or roomer. This value of one quarter of listed adults stabilizes until 1911 when again a quite rapid decline ensues. This decline continues until 1915 when the all time low for the time period of study exists at 4.86 percent of listed adults being a boarder or roomer. The values remain quite stable

GRAPH 3.1



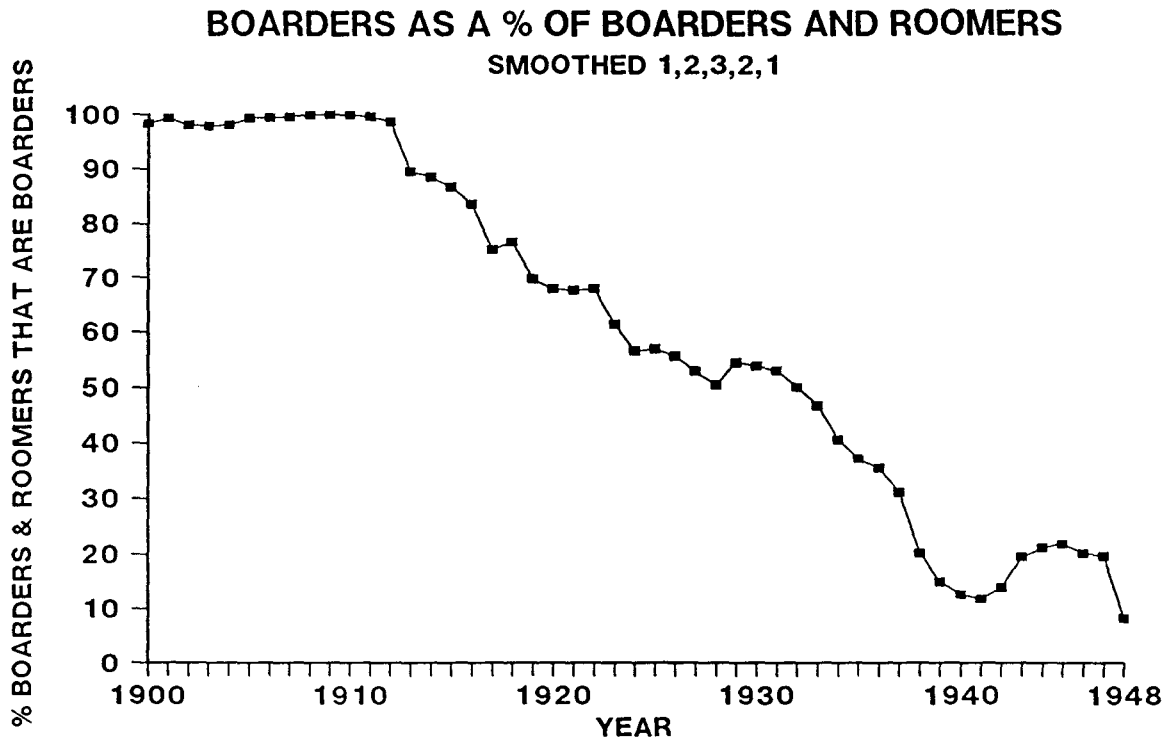
for the next fourteen years, averaging approximately seven percent, until 1929 when an increase begins. During the 1930's values stabilize at a higher point of approximately 9.7 percent of listed adults being a boarder or roomer.

In 1939 a more gradual upward trend begins. During the remainder of the period of study values stabilize at approximately 10.5 percent of households containing either a boarder or a roomer. During World War II and the period immediately following, boarding and rooming again became quite popular with about one in ten listed adults being a boarder or roomer. Therefore, Graph 3.1 reveals the long term trends in boarding and rooming during the first half of the twentieth century.

3.2 BOARDING AS A PERCENTAGE OF BOARDING AND ROOMING

Further manipulation of the above data produces Graph 3.2. Graph 3.2 shows the percentage of boarders and roomers that were boarders. Once again the weighting 1,2,3,2,1 produces a more smooth graph. Although there is a clear downward trend in the percentage of boarders and roomers that were boarders, the data must be qualified for the above reasons. Since the definitions of boarders and roomers were never clearly defined in the directories the data could be tainted by an unclear definition. The data was presumably collected by different persons over the years and therefore, the definitions may have varied from year to

GRAPH 3.2



year due to the lack of the data collectors definition of the two terms.

With this qualification in mind, Graph 3.2 demonstrates the trend in the percentage of boarders and roomers that were boarders during the first half of the twentieth century. From 1900 to 1912 virtually one hundred percent of boarders and roomers were boarders. In 1913 this value begins to decline quite rapidly until 1919 when it stabilizes at approximately 67 percent. Once again beginning in 1923 a fairly rapid decline ensues until 1928 when values increase marginally from 50.5 percent to 54.5 percent in 1929. Values once again begin to decline until 1932 when the 1928 value of 50.2 percent of boarders and roomers that were boarders exist.

The percent of boarders and roomers that were boarders declines rapidly from 1932 to 1941 from 50.2 percent to 11.8 percent. This period corresponds closely with the period of regrowth of boarding and rooming on Graph 3.1, discussed above. In 1942 the percent of boarders and roomers that were boarders increases again, reaching values of 21.9 percent until it reaches an all time low in 1948 of 8.2 percent. Whether or not this rapid downward trend continues can only be speculated however, it seems clear from the trend demonstrated that boarders enter the second half of the twentieth century as a small percentage of listed adults that were boarders and roomers.

3.3 BOARDING

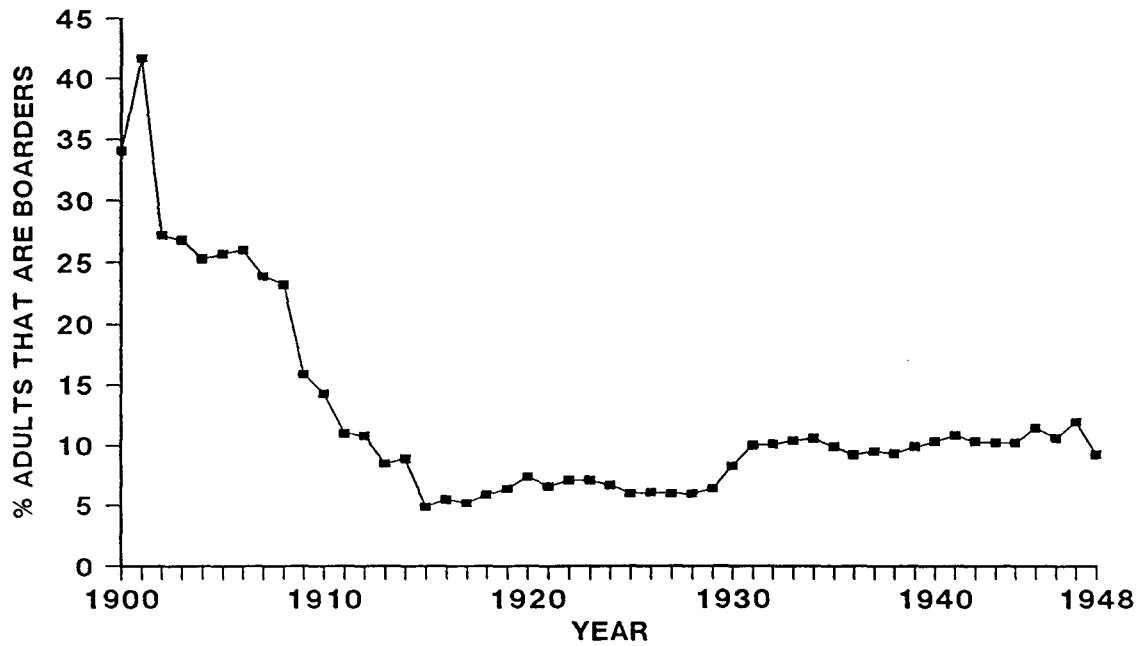
Graphs 3.3 was also smoothed using the weighting 1,2,3,2,1. Graph 3.3 shows the trend of boarding over the period 1900 to 1948. Boarding in Hamilton declines rapidly from 1900 to 1902 and then stabilizes for the next seven years with an average of 25.16 percent of listed adults being boarders. Boarding again declines rapidly until 1915 when the values begin to stabilize. A value of 4.5 percent of listed adults being boarders exists in 1915 and values remain low throughout the rest of the period. An all time low occurs in 1941 at 1.6 percent of listed adults being boarders.

3.4 ROOMING

Graph 3.4 is similarly smoothed using the weighting 1,2,3,2,1. Graph 3.4 demonstrates the trends in rooming in Hamilton over the first half of the twentieth century. Except for the first year of study where 0.6 percent of listed adults were roomers, listed adults that were roomers are virtually negligible (at less than 0.5 percent) until 1914. Roomers increase quite steadily during the 1920's and then increase even more quickly during the 1930's. The values peak in 1941 with 10.1 percent of listed adults being roomers. Values remain relatively high throughout the rest

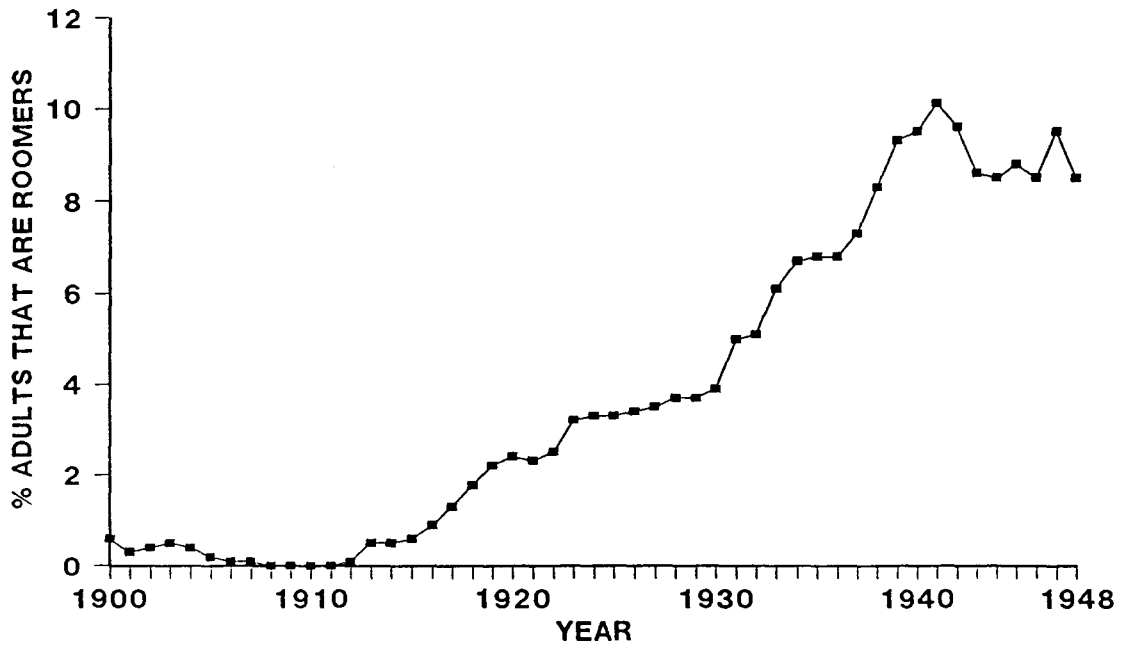
GRAPH 3.3

BOARDERS HAMILTON 1900-48
SMOOTHED 1,2,3,2,1



GRAPH 3.4

ROOMERS HAMILTON 1900-48
SMOOTHED 1,2,3,2,1



of the period. It can be inferred from this trend that rooming remains a more significant trend than boarding into the second half of the twentieth century.

The visual appearance of graphs 3.3 and 3.4 should however be qualified by noting the different scales of Graph 3.3 and Graph 3.4. The vertical scale of Graph 3.3 is four times greater than that of Graph 3.4. Therefore, boarding is decreasing at a greater magnitude than rooming is increasing.

The overall nature of decline in boarding and rooming in Hamilton over the first half of the twentieth century demonstrates definite characteristics. Firstly, the greatest and most sudden decline occurs between 1900 and 1917. During the 1920's although boarding and rooming remain relatively low there is slight increase in the middle of this period. There is an increase and stabilization of rates during the depression and war years. Finally, there is the suggestion that rates begin to decline after 1948.

The nature of the decline in boarding and rooming rates suggest that they are related to larger trends occurring in society. The large scale periods of change in boarding and rooming would suggest that changing economic circumstances have an effect upon boarding and rooming rates. Furthermore, the economic changes during the first half of the twentieth century are highly correlated with the social changes that occurred in this period of time.

CHAPTER 4: TRENDS FOUND IN BOARDING AND ROOMING DATA

Although the above trends are significant within themselves a greater understanding of boarding and rooming in Hamilton could be obtained through an attempt to explain the trends seen in Graphs 3.1 through 3.4. Information on the more qualitative aspects of life in Hamilton were obtained from the Labour Gazette. This publication reviewed, on a monthly basis, certain aspects of quality of life for working people. For example, cost of living information, labour movement information concerning job safety, job security, wages and hours of work as well as information of the status of employers and new employers. Using this publication would enable an attempt to explain the trends in boarding and rooming from 1900 to 1948.

In order to help explain the trends documented in boarding and rooming in Hamilton over the first half of the twentieth century, information obtained from the Labour Gazette will be used. The Labour Gazette was used to obtain data for the entire period of study 1900 to 1948. The Gazette was a monthly periodical that was published by the Canadian Department of Labour. Up until 1917, the Gazette contained monthly reports from local correspondents for various cities throughout Canada. Hamilton had a local correspondent from 1900 until 1917. These correspondents submitted a monthly column, which ranged in length from one

to three columns (a full page). The column contained various information on labour conditions in Hamilton for the month as well as varied information of company openings and closings, housing conditions, cost of living information and various seasonal information. The column would be read by people from all over Canada and therefore, was not intended to be read by Hamiltonians exclusively. The position of correspondent is held by four different individuals during the time period 1900 to 1917.

The Labour Gazette was used for the rest of the period of study to obtain information on rents in Hamilton in the hope of gaining understanding as to the trends witnessed in boarding and rooming for the period 1900 to 1948. The information varies throughout the period but is given in a standardized form from 1912 onwards. Rents are given for a six room working mans house with and without modern sanitary conveniences. The rents were taken from the months of April and October for each year, when available, and the two months were averaged to obtain the yearly average. The data were often given in the form of a range for each month, for example 20-25 dollars. Whenever a range was encountered the data were averaged, as in the above example 22.5 dollars would be the value used. These data as displayed in Appendix 14 are raw data and are not smoothed.

The intention of collection of rent information is to help to explain the trends witnessed in boarding and

rooming for the period 1900 to 1948. The following chapters will be an attempt to explain the trends observed in boarding and rooming using information obtained in the Labour Gazette as well as other relevant sources of information.

4.1 PATTERN ANALYSIS

Hamilton in the year 1900 had 34.1 percent of all listed adults (excluding married women) residing as boarders or roomers. One third of adults at this time found boarding and rooming to be a housing alternative to renting or homeownership. Boarding and rooming in Hamilton cost \$2.50 to \$3.50 per week and this was on average less expensive than most Canadian cities (Labour Gazette, Nov. 1900 vol. 1 p.91). Rent in a six room house was \$9 per month (Labour Gazette, Nov. 1900 vol.1 p.91) and was therefore, much more costly than boarding and rooming. Although this is the only year that provides the cost of boarding and rooming. Rents will be used to demonstrate the relative cost of shelter.

An increase in boarding and rooming in 1901 to 41.7 percent reflects the year to year fluctuations in the data. After 1901 boarding and rooming begin a steady and sure decline. The local correspondent for Hamilton reports for the months of 1900 that recent increases in wages have had the general effect of increasing prosperity in Hamilton

(Labour Gazette, Nov. 1900 vol.1 p.91). "All who have a desire to work can secure work of some sort" (Labour Gazette, Nov. 1900 vol.1 p.91). This was the general feeling in Hamilton in 1900 as increasing investment by industry in the east end had the effect of creating more jobs in industry (Labour Gazette, Nov. 1900 vol.1 p.91). A decrease in the incidence of criminal activity was thought by the correspondent to be a reflection of the increase in prosperity (Labour Gazette, Nov. 1900 vol.1 p.91) reflecting general well being in Hamilton.

During the first few years of the twentieth century, as boarding and rooming rates decline rapidly, a general feeling of well being and prosperity existed in Hamilton. Boarding seems to be negatively correlated with prosperity. Boarding was viewed as temporary, inexpensive accommodation and therefore, increasing pay and job security would allow for more working men to find their own accommodations. In 1901 wages and employment were felt to be good and steady with general labour earning 18 cents and hour (Labour Gazette, June 1901 vol.1 p.541). This helps to explain the rapid decline from year to year in boarding during this period.

There was a leveling out of boarding and rooming rates to approximately one quarter of listed adults from 1903 to 1908. Also at this time a general housing shortage existed in Hamilton. The same prosperity that decreased

boarding and rooming rates draws more people to urban centres, increasing the demand for housing. This increased pressure on the economy creates conflicting trends in boarding and rooming. In 1903 there is witnessed a general cost of living increase that is attributed to the increasing cost of fuel and the general increase in prosperity (Labour Gazette, Jan. 1903 vol.3 p.504). Although there is steady investment in industry during this period, there is not a paralleled growth in housing construction (Labour Gazette, Feb. 1905 vol.5 p.817). The cost of housing construction is increasing due to increasing wage costs and the increasing cost of supplies (Labour Gazette, Feb. 1905 vol.5 p.817). Although several hundred small homes are constructed there still exists a shortage of working mans homes (Labour Gazette, June 1905 vol.5 p.1326).

The housing shortage in Hamilton is reflected in a leveling out of boarder and roomer rates in these years. Since housing is difficult to find yet employment opportunities are still increasing (Labour Gazette, Nov. 1905 vol.6 p.502) boarding and rooming become a necessity for many. The arrival of skilled trades men in 1907 supplies some of the labour demand and also places greater pressure on the housing shortage (Labour Gazette, Sept. 1907 vol.8 p.271). In response to this shortage companies, for example Westinghouse, begin to build housing and sell it to their employees cheaply (Labour Gazette, Sept. 1907 vol.8

p.271) in order to maintain the labour supply.

From 1909 to 1914 boarding and rooming once again embark on a free fall. After a short economic slow down in 1908-1909, business and construction begin to pick up (Labour Gazette, Aug.1909 vol.10 p.159). An unusually large amount of residential building permits were issued at this time (Labour Gazette, Aug. 1909 vol.10 p.159). The housing shortage of earlier years stimulated industrious trade in the construction industry and the housing demand began to be met (Labour Gazette, May 1911 vol.11 p.1214). The steady decline of boarding and rooming to their all time low in 1915 reflects the increasing wages and stability of labour during this period (Labour Gazette, May 1911 vol.11 p.1214) as well as the departure of many young men to the armed forces.

However, the clear relationship between increasing prosperity and decreasing boarding and rooming rates is not always clear cut. A recession in Hamilton in the mid 1910's is not reflected in increasing boarder and roomer rates but instead in persistently falling rates. Immigrants arriving daily into Hamilton in these years, filled the needs for many labour positions including domestic service (Labour Gazette, Nov. 1912 vol.13 p.452). The unemployed in Hamilton blamed the immigrants for their economic state and asked the government to restrict immigration (Labour Gazette, March 1914 vol.14 p.1035). Relief organizations

were started for the unemployed (Labour Gazette, Nov. 1914 vol.15 p.551) and yet boarding and rooming rates continue to decline.

In comparison, it is interesting to see that in Toronto during the period 1900 to 1915 boarding and rooming rates are increasing dramatically (Harris, 1990). The general growth in Toronto during this period results in a housing shortage causing people to have to double up. This is characteristic of the complex relationship between boarding and rooming and economic prosperity and recession. However, by World War I the Toronto and Hamilton trends become more similar.

Also, the unprecedented decline of boarding and rooming to 1915 in Hamilton, cannot be exclusively explained by the growth and prosperity being experienced by Hamilton. Boarding and rooming were coming under increasing social scrutiny and distaste during this period, and this is also reflected in the dramatic decrease in rates.

The First World War provided industry with orders to help bring the economy back onto its feet (Labour Gazette, Jan. 1915 vol.15 p.779). Perhaps the low incidence of boarding and rooming during this period can be explained by a lack of pressure on the housing market because of men gone to war or helping the war effort (Labour Gazette, Feb. 1917 vol.17 p.97). Furthermore, many individuals returned to their home land (Labour Gazette, July 1915 vol.16 p.33),

Britain in most cases, or to their parents home during this time of economic recession in Hamilton.

Boarding and rooming slowly began to increase in the after war period. A flood of men returning home placed pressure on the housing market as can be seen in the rents. Rents increased an unprecedented three dollars a month from May 1919 to February 1920 (Labour Gazette, May 1919 vol.19 p.231 and Feb 1920 vol.20 p.181). During the first World War, the construction of residential and commercial buildings was virtually neglected and therefore, little new housing was built during this period.

War, and a recession until 1923 forced these cutbacks in residential development, and then work began on a new phenomena in Hamilton, the multi family apartment building. Apartment living although virtually nonexistent until this period proved to be quite popular in Hamilton as an alternate form of investment for builders and as an alternative form of living for Hamiltonians (Weaver, 1982 p.142). The apartment building provided an alternative form of housing for those who wanted to live in urban areas but could not afford the single family dwelling or the rental of an entire house. This group was formerly the boarders and roomers.

Now that an alternative form of housing was available to these younger men often working in industry, the boarding and rooming rates level out at the low level of

about six percent of listed adults being a boarder or roomer. In 1921 approximately seven out of ten household heads residing in apartments were between the ages of twenty-nine and thirty-nine (Weaver, 1982 p.142) reflecting the youthful age of these new apartment dwellers. Skilled labourers were more evident than the general population (Weaver, 1982 p.142) and since these buildings were often located along main streets this provided the apartment dweller with easy access to public transportation and to work. The increase in apartment dwellers during the 1920's was significant. In 1921 only 4 per cent of Hamilton households resided in apartments, but in 1931 the apartment proportion had increased to 15 per cent (Weaver, 1982 p.142).

However, with the onset of the Depression in 1929, apartment construction virtually stopped in its tracks and became an insignificant part of the housing market until after World War II. Rents remained steady during this period with a six room working mans house with sanitary conveniences renting for approximately 30 dollars a month until 1932. Unemployment jumped from 4.3 per cent in 1929, which had been standard throughout the 1920's, to 10.4 percent in 1930 (Labour Gazette, October 1934 vol.34 p.945) reflecting the onset of the Depression.

During the 1930's boarding and rooming begin to increase up to an average of about 10 per cent of listed

adults, for much of the period, being boarders and roomers. Rents began to decline during this period because of the general deflation that existed throughout the country during the 1930's. For example, rents dropped from an average of 30 dollars per month for a house with sanitary conveniences (Labour Gazette, April 1932 vol.32 p.455) to 25 dollars per month for the same in 1934 (Labour Gazette, April 1934 vol. 34 p.376). This reflects the general devaluation of the dollar at this time.

With unemployment rising to its all time high in Hamilton of 24.4 per cent (Labour Gazette, April 1934 vol. 34 p.370) in 1933 inexpensive housing was in great demand for those who could find work. For those who could not find employment many returned to the farm as we see a rise in farming employment during this period in Hamilton (Labour Gazette, May 1939 vol.39 p.509).

Boarding as opposed to rooming decreased rapidly throughout the first half of the twentieth century, reflecting the increasing social preference for privacy. Although boarding is still experiencing a declining share of boarding and rooming during the 1930's there is an increase in the number of listed adults who are boarders during this period. The corresponding increasing incidence of rooming implies that although there was still a need for inexpensive and temporary housing there was a growing distaste for having the roomer live as part of the family.

In this context, it is interesting to see the resurgence, albeit small, of boarding during the 1930's. The increasing relative cost of living made eating meals in restaurants too expensive for the roomer and therefore requiring meals within the household. Furthermore, the increasing need of the family for a supplementary income required the wife to do as much as possible to bring money into the household, since she probably found it very difficult to find employment outside of the home.

With the onset of World War II in 1939, Hamilton had an unemployment rate of 11.1 per cent (Labour Gazette, April 1940 vol.40 p.397) reflecting a return to more normal levels. Rents returned to their pre war rates and boarding and rooming experienced a slight decline. With the departure of many of the younger single males to war, the most prominent group of boarders and roomers was in decline. A great labour shortage existed in Hamilton and many women were called to work in manufacturing to help turn out war time supplies (Labour Gazette, Jan. 1943 vol. 43 p. 136).

This reflects a change in the typical boarder and roomer during this period. Instead of the young male working in industry it was now often the younger women who were now in need of a place to live near industry (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1984 p.21). Women were called to fill the jobs in industry to continue the supply of contraband to the war effort. It is conceivable that many of these women left

their children with relatives and needed a place to live in the cities. The 1940's level of boarding and rooming rates partially reflect the demand that these women placed on the housing supply in Hamilton.

By the end of the war Hamilton was a worn down city that had little to no investment in residential or commercial building since the 1920's. Pockets of housing blight existed in the north and east ends of Hamilton (Weaver, 1982 p. 159) demonstrating the state of deterioration in which much of the housing in Hamilton now existed. The municipal government in Hamilton had little funds throughout the 1930's and the war years for urban infrastructure (Labour Gazette, Nov. 1943 vol. 43 p. 1554) and therefore the city lie in a run down state.

With the return of the men from the war in 1945 Hamilton experienced a slight increase in boarding and rooming rates. With the economy on an upswing labour shortages existed and employment was quite plentiful. Boarding and rooming provided for those who required housing but still only accounted for 10 per cent of listed adults. Housing alternatives had been found throughout the first half of the twentieth century and boarding and rooming had become by 1948 a last alternative for housing in hard times.

By 1948 reinvestment had begun in Hamilton in not only industry but also residential and commercial development (Weaver, 1982 p.159). A decline in boarding and

rooming existed in 1948 and can be assumed that it was once again on the decline. Boarding and rooming, although in increasing disfavour since the end of the nineteenth century, provided a housing alternative to many through volatile economic times in the first half of the twentieth century.

From the above analysis it can be seen that a complex and contradictory relationship exists between economic prosperity and recession, and boarding and rooming rates. Furthermore, social changes are reflected in boarding and rooming rates as the distaste of the practice increases the rates decline at a very rapid pace. Hamilton underwent dramatic social and economic changes in the first half of the twentieth century and these are reflected in the boarding and rooming rates.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

During the first half of the twentieth century there was an overall decline in the incidence of boarding and rooming in Hamilton. The first fifteen years of the period saw the most dramatic decline, leading to the permanent reduction in boarding and rooming as a housing alternative for the rest of the period of study. In this context not only economic circumstances but also changing social preferences effected the declining boarding and rooming rates. The apparent increasing value placed on privacy hastened the decline of boarding and rooming. During the 1920's the decline continued reaching minimum boarding and rooming rates for the period of study. The Great Depression brings a minor resurgence, and boarding and rooming experience a slight increase through the war years and the years immediately following World War II.

The relationship between boarding and rooming rates and economic circumstances is complex and contradictory in nature. Periods of prosperity create circumstances which allow individuals to maintain their own house hold but also create circumstances that attract more people to urban areas placing pressure on the housing stock. Furthermore, periods of recession create a need for inexpensive housing but also encourage out migration from the city.

In general, it seems that boarding and rooming rates in

Hamilton were quite sensitive to general economic trends. The initial dramatic decline of boarding and rooming in the first fifteen years of the twentieth century reflect a general increase in prosperity in Hamilton. As previously mentioned, in Toronto during this same time period boarding and rooming rates were increasing at an equally dramatic rate that they were decreasing in Hamilton. The decline in Hamilton therefore, is out of proportion to the increase in prosperity especially when compared to Toronto. This is illustrative of the effects of prosperity on social tastes.

In contrast, this same prosperity brought growth. The short run effects of prosperity are an increase in urban population and therefore, a housing shortage causing people to have to double up. This creates an increase in boarding and rooming because of the resulting increase in urban population of those who have come to the city to share in the prosperity. However, as the prosperity lasts, as we see in the 1920's, boarding and rooming drop to lower rates as seen in Hamilton and Toronto as house construction begins to accommodate those who have enjoyed the urban prosperity.

The Great Depression causes an increase in the incidence of boarding and rooming as long term economic recession creates a need for inexpensive residence. Furthermore, there is virtually no residential construction during long term recession creating a housing shortage. In contrast, the short term effects of recession are a decrease

in boarding and rooming as many return to farming and fewer young people move away from their family's home.

During the first half of the twentieth century in Hamilton the changing boarding and rooming rates reflect the larger economic and social changes occurring in the city. The general decline in boarding and rooming over the period of study is characteristic of many North American cities. Furthermore, the findings in Hamilton are typical of other North American cities in that boarding as a percentage of boarding and rooming would presumably be on the decline everywhere. Cities would however differ in the time of decline because the rate of growth of different cities and the state of the housing stock vary so dramatically among cities, as can be seen in the case of Toronto. The complex relationship that exists between economic trends and boarding and rooming can be assumed however, to be reflected in the boarding and rooming rates of many cities.

The effect of larger economic trends on boarding and rooming rates in Hamilton reflect the ability of individual households to accommodate the larger trends within society. Although it has been assumed that the family prefers a nuclear structure, this will be altered when required for economic reasons as demonstrated in the case of Hamilton. The study of the declining incidence of boarding and rooming is a study therefore, of the ability of the family to accommodate changing larger economic trends.

TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS FOR APPENDIX 1

H'HO = Listed adults that are not boarders or roomers

BOA = Number of listed adults that are boarders

ROO = Number of listed adults that are roomers

TOTA = Total sample of listed people

%BOAR = Percent of total sample that were boarders

%ROOM = Percent of total sample that were roomers

%ROBO = Percent of total sample that were boarders or roomers

BO%ROBO = Percent of boarders and roomers that were boarders

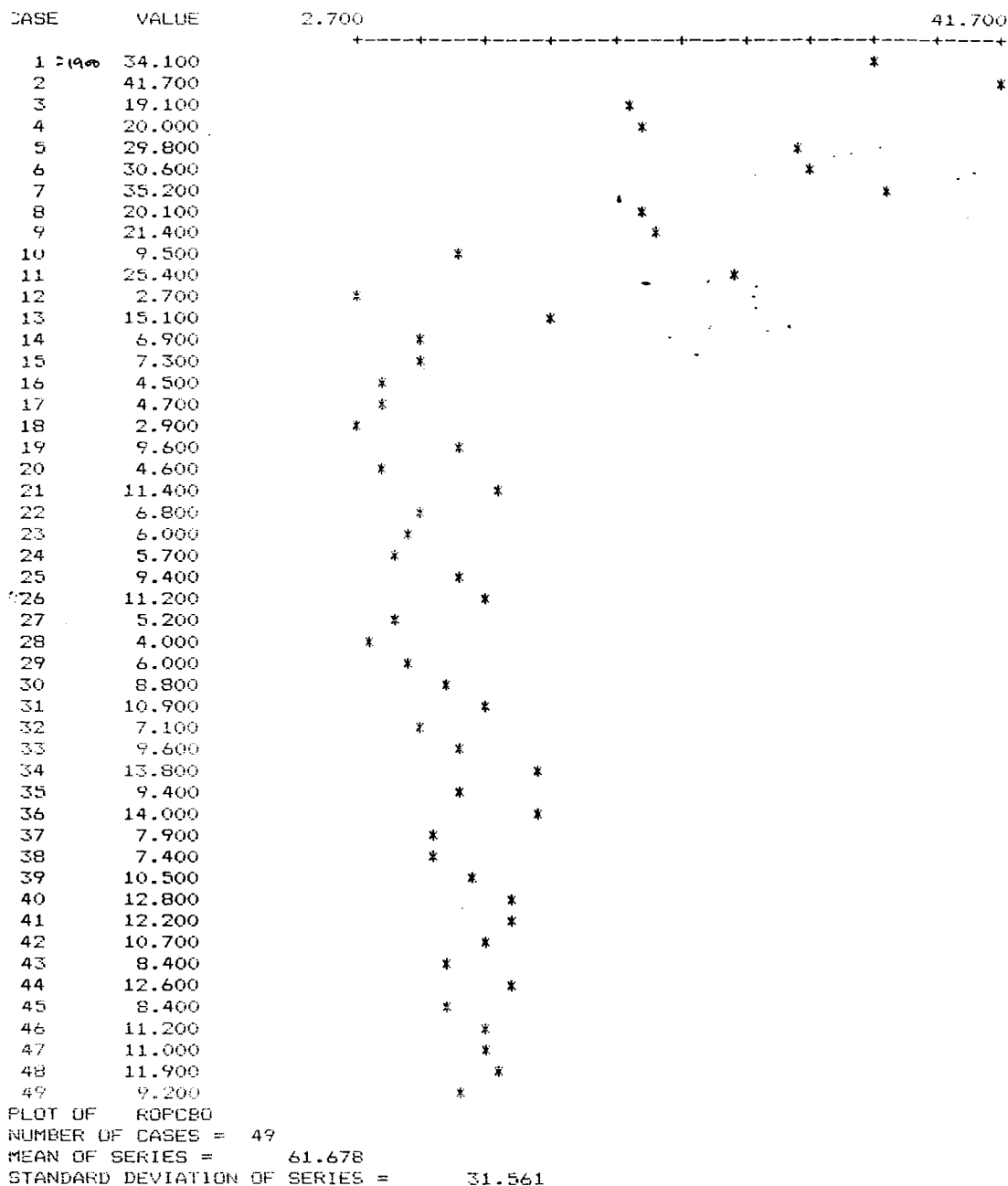
BOARDING AND ROOMING IN HAMILTON, 1900-1948

YEAR	H/HO	BOA	ROO	TOTA	%BOAR	%ROOM	%ROBO	BO%ROBO
1900	355	181	3	539	33.6	0.6	34.1	98.4
1901	380	270	2	652	41.4	0.3	41.7	99.3
1902	441	100	4	545	18.3	0.7	19.1	96.2
1903	479	119	1	599	19.9	0.2	20.0	99.2
1904	496	209	2	707	29.6	0.3	29.8	99.1
1905	707	302	10	1019	29.6	1.0	30.6	96.8
1906	614	333	0	947	35.2	0.0	35.2	100.0
1907	788	198	0	986	20.1	0.0	20.1	100.0
1908	780	212	0	992	21.4	0.0	21.4	100.0
1909	560	59	0	619	9.5	0.0	9.5	100.0
1910	918	312	0	1230	25.4	0.0	25.4	100.0
1911	896	25	0	921	2.7	0.0	2.7	100.0
1912	1032	184	0	1216	15.1	0.0	15.1	100.0
1913	933	67	2	1002	6.7	0.2	6.9	97.1
1914	960	73	3	1036	7.0	0.3	7.3	96.1
1915	1001	34	13	1048	3.2	1.2	4.5	72.3
1916	884	42	2	928	4.5	0.2	4.7	95.5
1917	1024	26	5	1055	2.5	0.5	2.9	83.9
1918	744	54	25	823	6.6	3.0	9.6	68.4
1919	1620	46	33	1699	2.7	1.9	4.6	58.2
1920	832	82	25	939	8.7	2.7	11.4	76.6
1921	856	40	22	918	4.4	2.4	6.8	64.5
1922	94	4	2	100	4.0	2.0	6.0	66.7
1923	900	36	18	954	3.8	1.9	5.7	66.7
1924	940	57	40	1037	5.5	3.9	9.4	58.8
1925	884	64	48	996	6.4	4.8	11.2	57.1
1926	900	21	28	949	2.2	3.0	5.2	42.9
1927	748	22	9	779	2.8	1.2	4.0	71.0
1928	896	31	26	953	3.3	2.7	6.0	54.4
1929	803	36	41	880	4.1	4.7	8.8	46.8
1930	820	50	50	920	5.4	5.4	10.9	50.0
1931	794	37	24	855	4.3	2.8	7.1	60.7
1932	728	50	27	805	6.2	3.4	9.6	64.9
1933	748	56	64	868	6.5	7.4	13.8	46.7
1934	792	28	54	874	3.2	6.2	9.4	34.1
1935	736	48	72	856	5.6	8.4	14.0	40.0
1936	638	18	37	693	2.6	5.3	7.9	32.7
1937	881	24	46	951	2.5	4.8	7.4	34.3
1938	752	28	60	840	3.3	7.1	10.5	31.8
1939	899	19	113	1031	1.8	11.0	12.8	14.4
1940	930	9	120	1059	0.8	11.3	12.2	7.0
1941	737	8	80	825	1.0	9.7	10.7	9.1
1942	856	11	68	935	1.2	7.3	8.4	13.9
1943	912	32	100	1044	3.1	9.6	12.6	24.2
1944	770	17	54	841	2.0	6.4	8.4	23.9
1945	732	22	70	824	2.7	8.5	11.2	23.9
1946	780	16	80	876	1.8	9.1	11.0	16.7
1947	870	23	94	987	2.3	9.5	11.9	19.7
1948	952	8	89	1049	0.8	8.5	9.2	8.2

APPENDIX 1

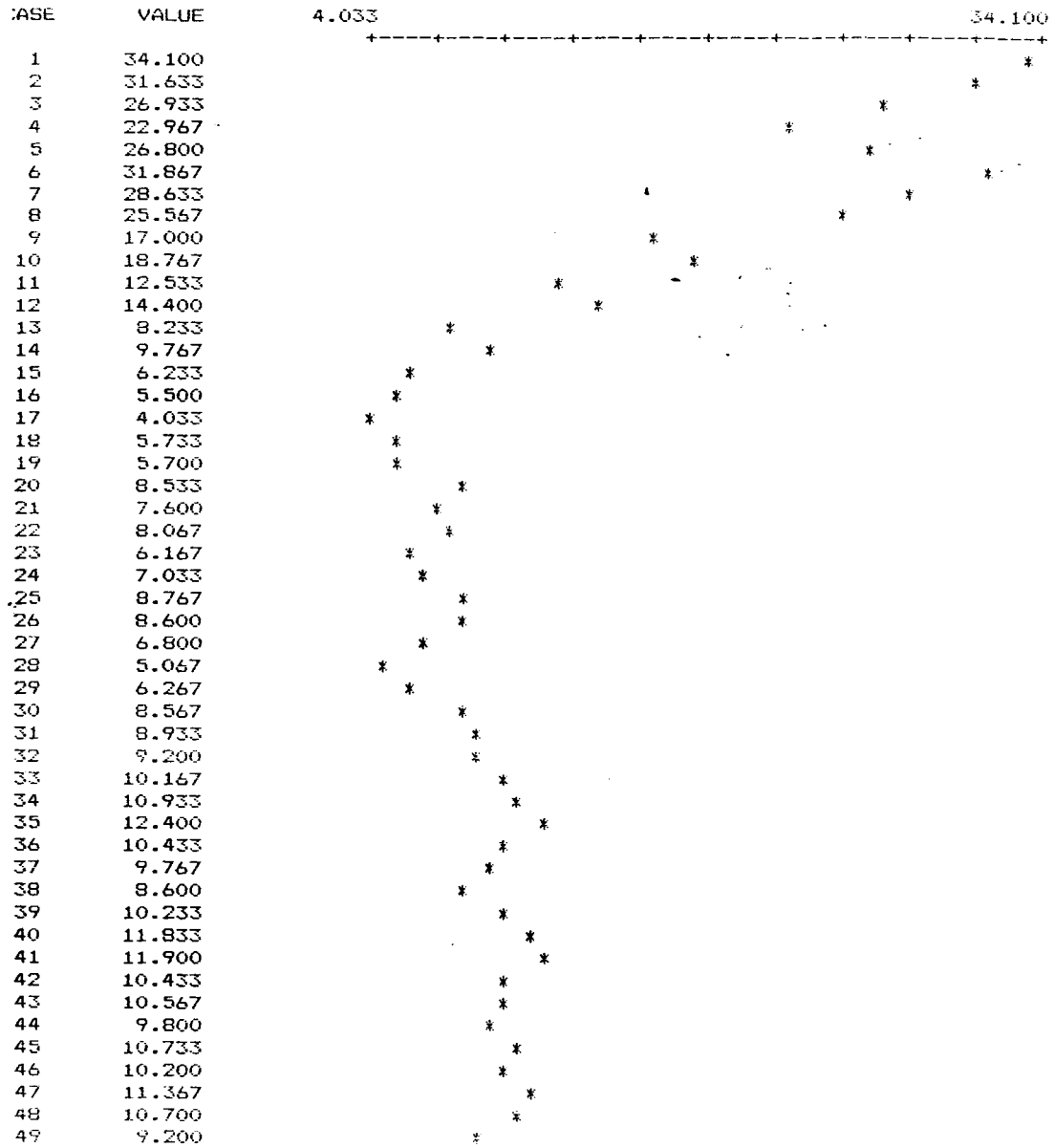
BOARDERS AND ROOMERS IN HAMILTON 1900-48

UNSMOOTHED



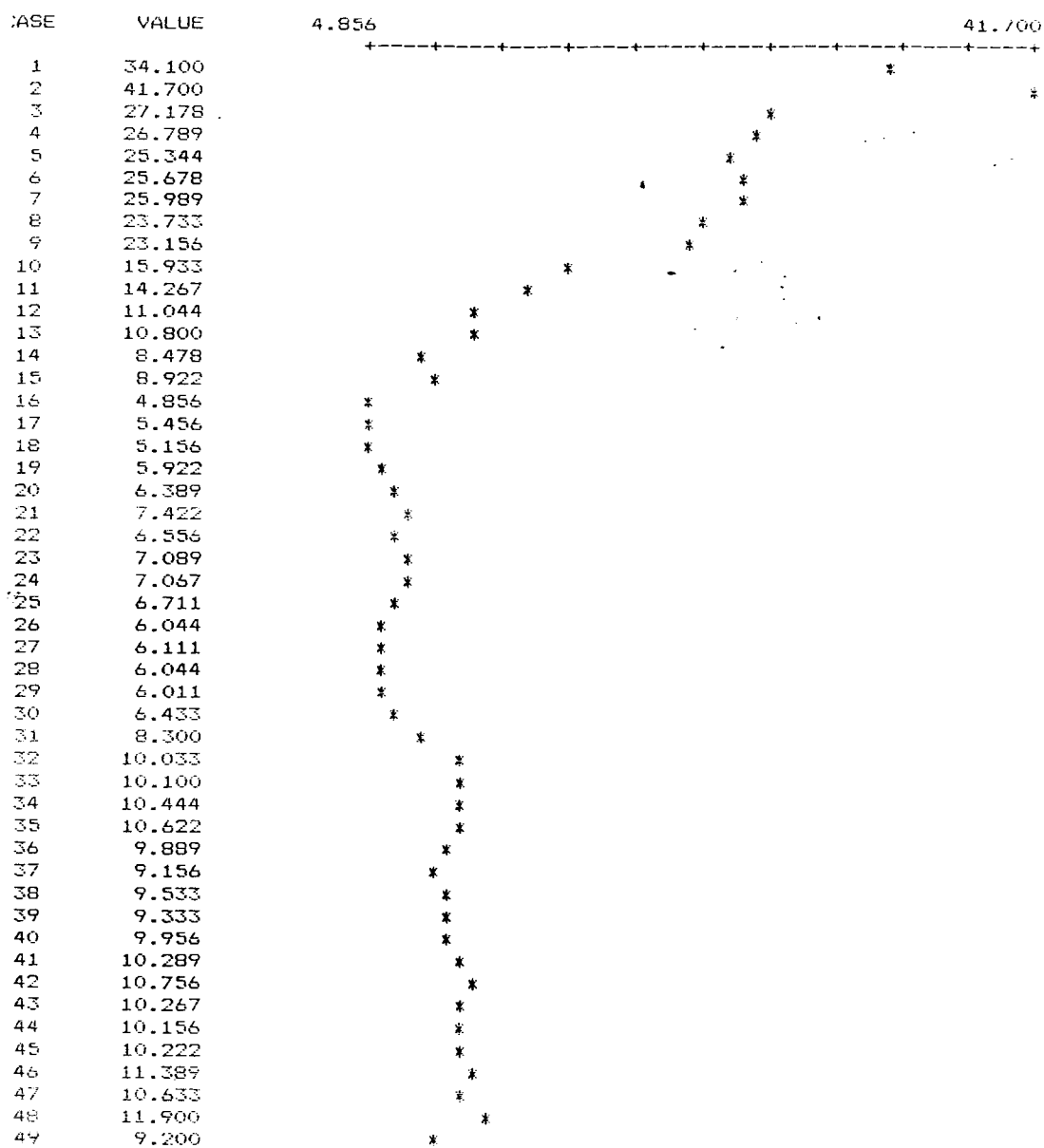
BOARDERS AND ROOMERS IN HAMILTON 1900-48

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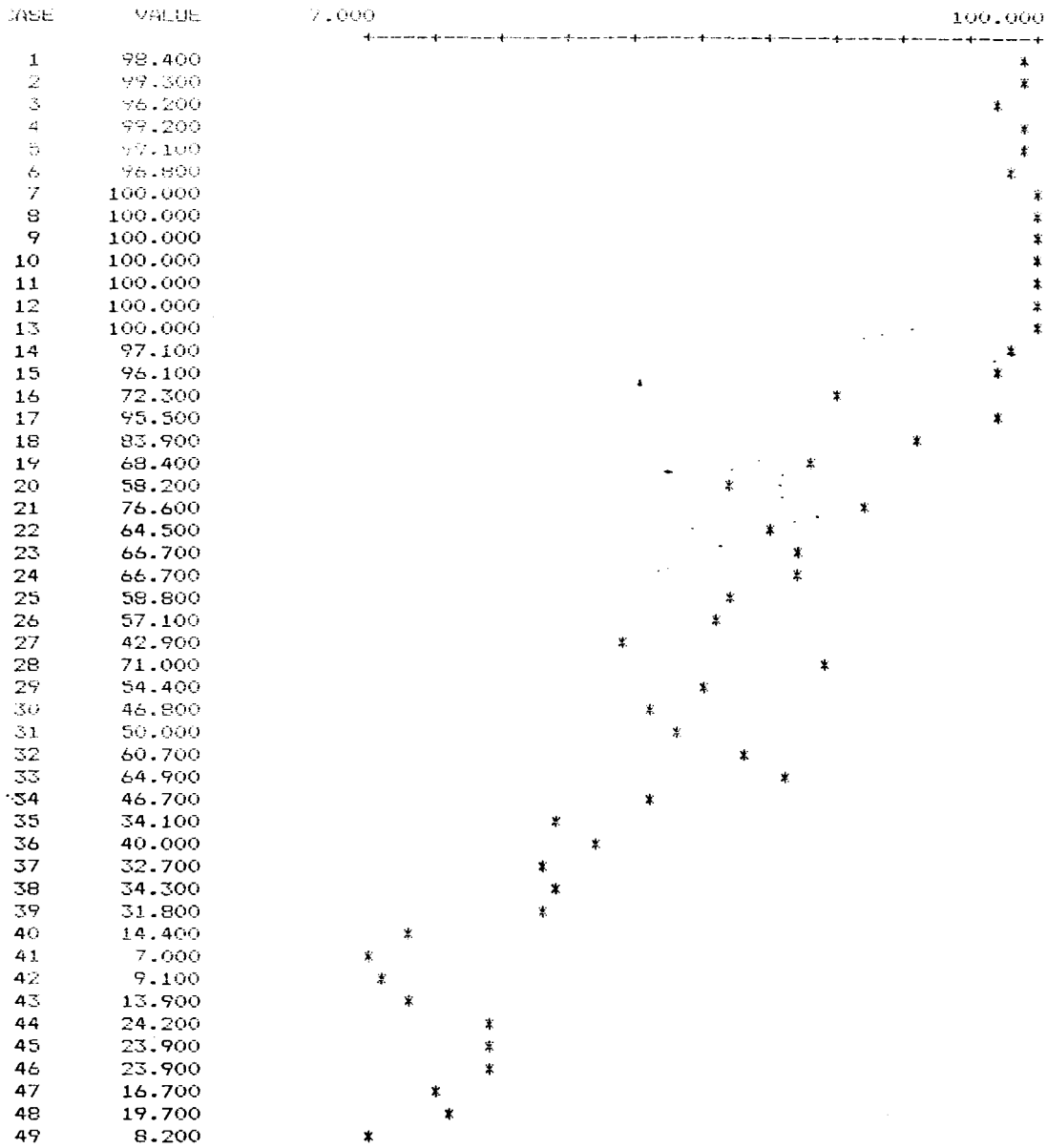


BOARDERS AND ROOMERS HAMILTON 1900-48

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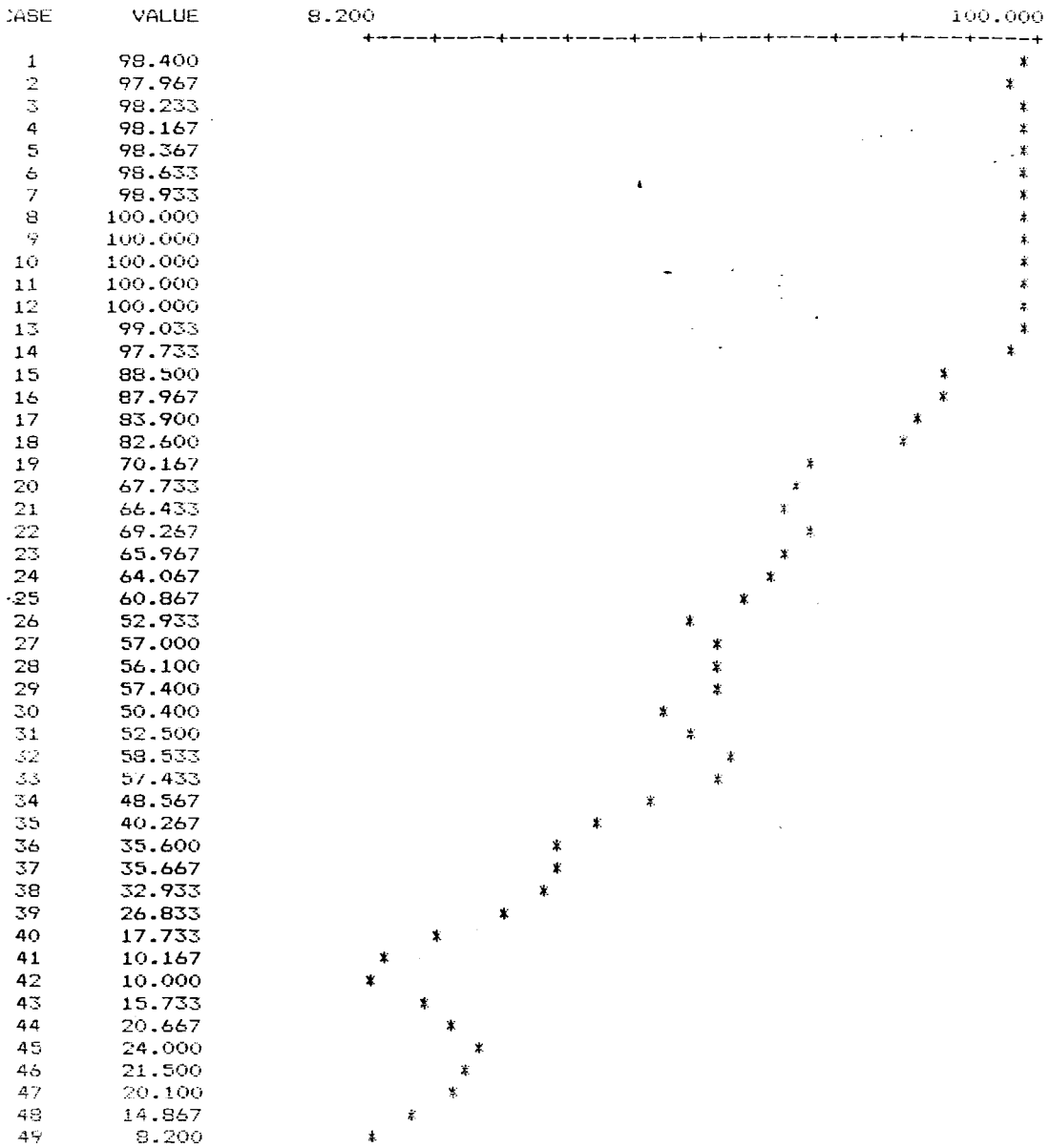


BOARDERS AS A PERCENT OF BOARDERS AND ROOMERS
UNSMOOTHED



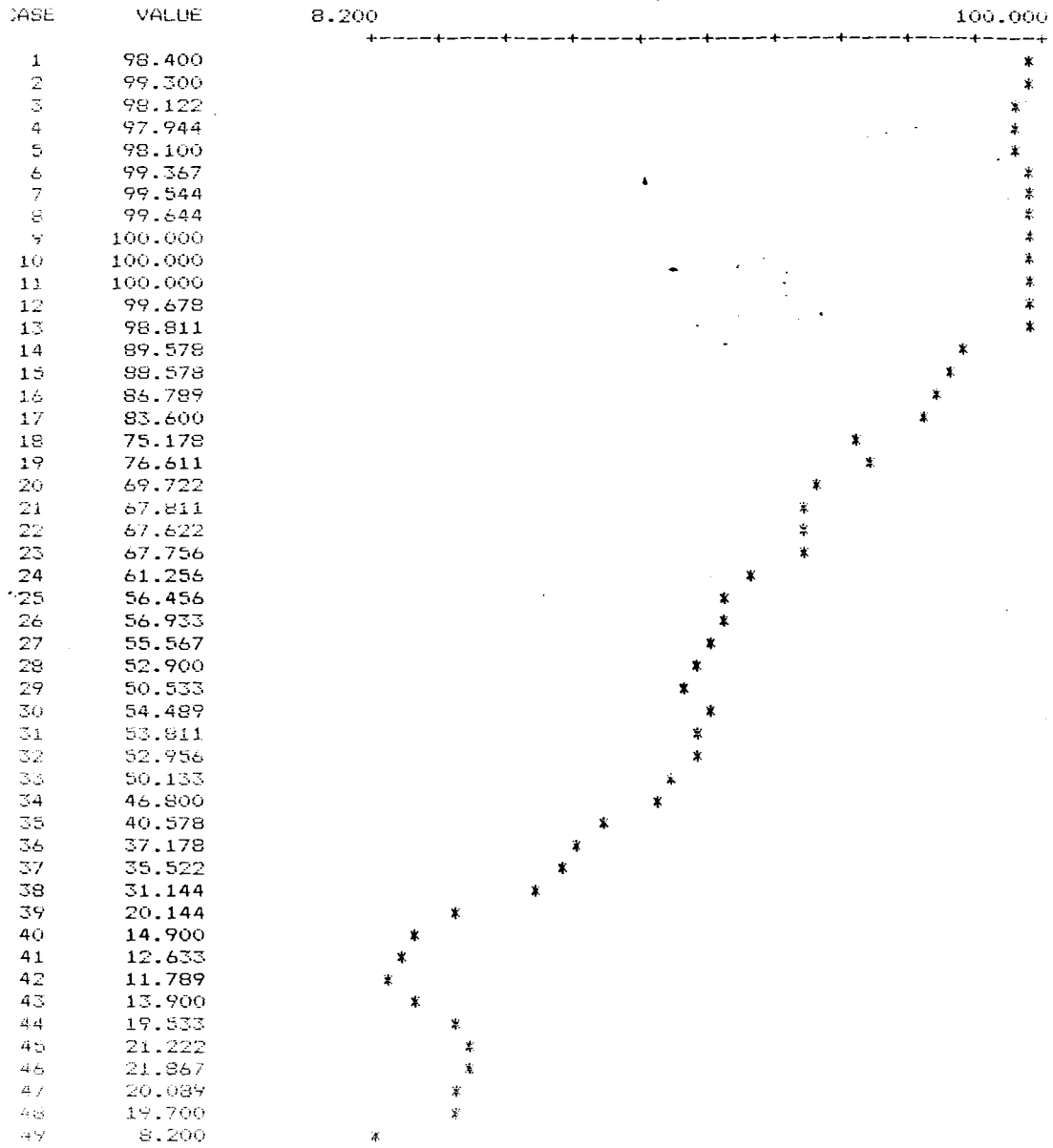
BOARDERS AS A PERCENT OF BOARDERS AND ROOMERS
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SEQUENCE PLOT OF SERIES



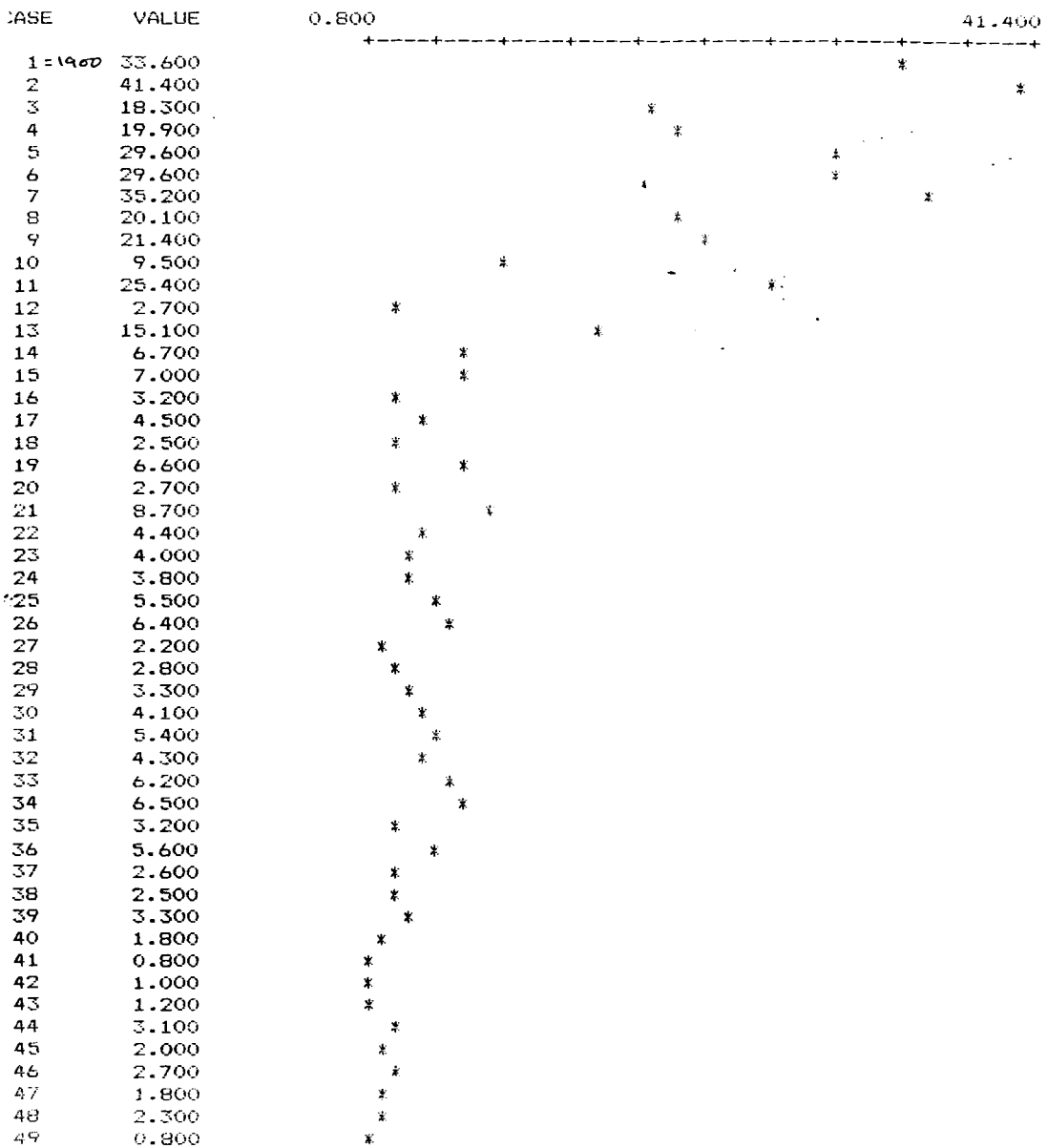
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BOARDERS HAMILTON 1900-48

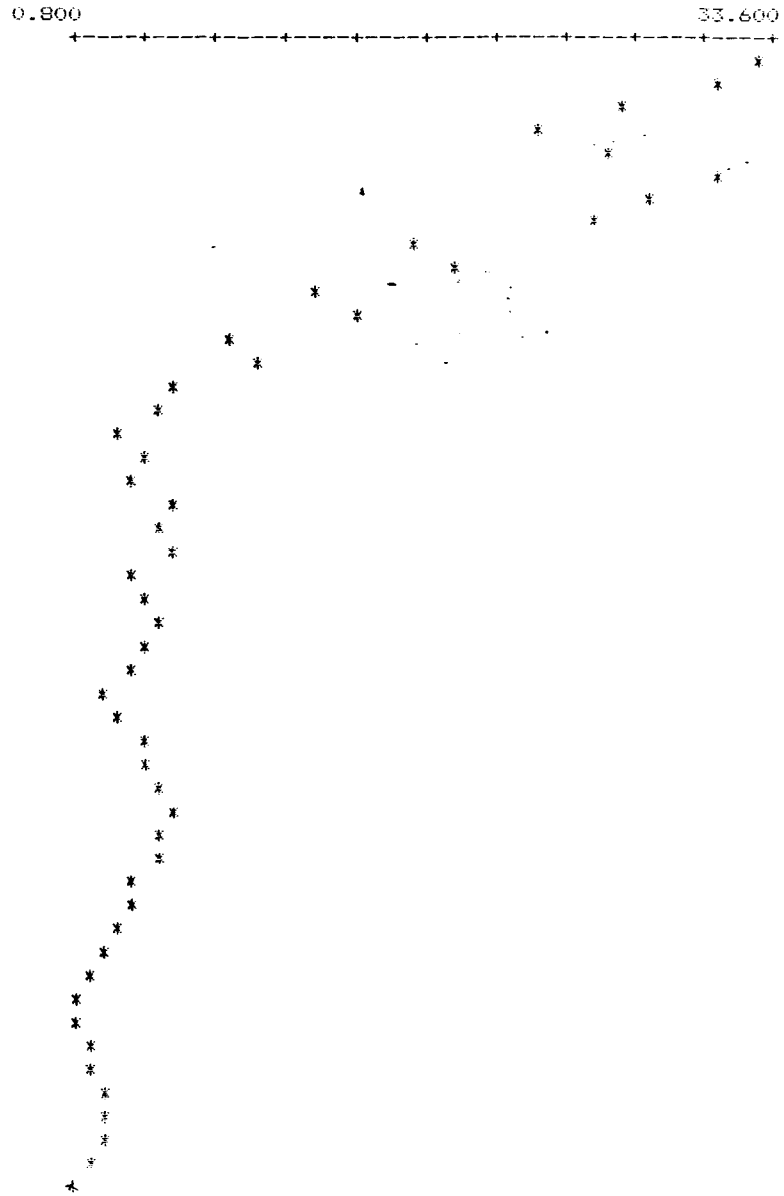
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BOARDERS HAMILTON 1900-48

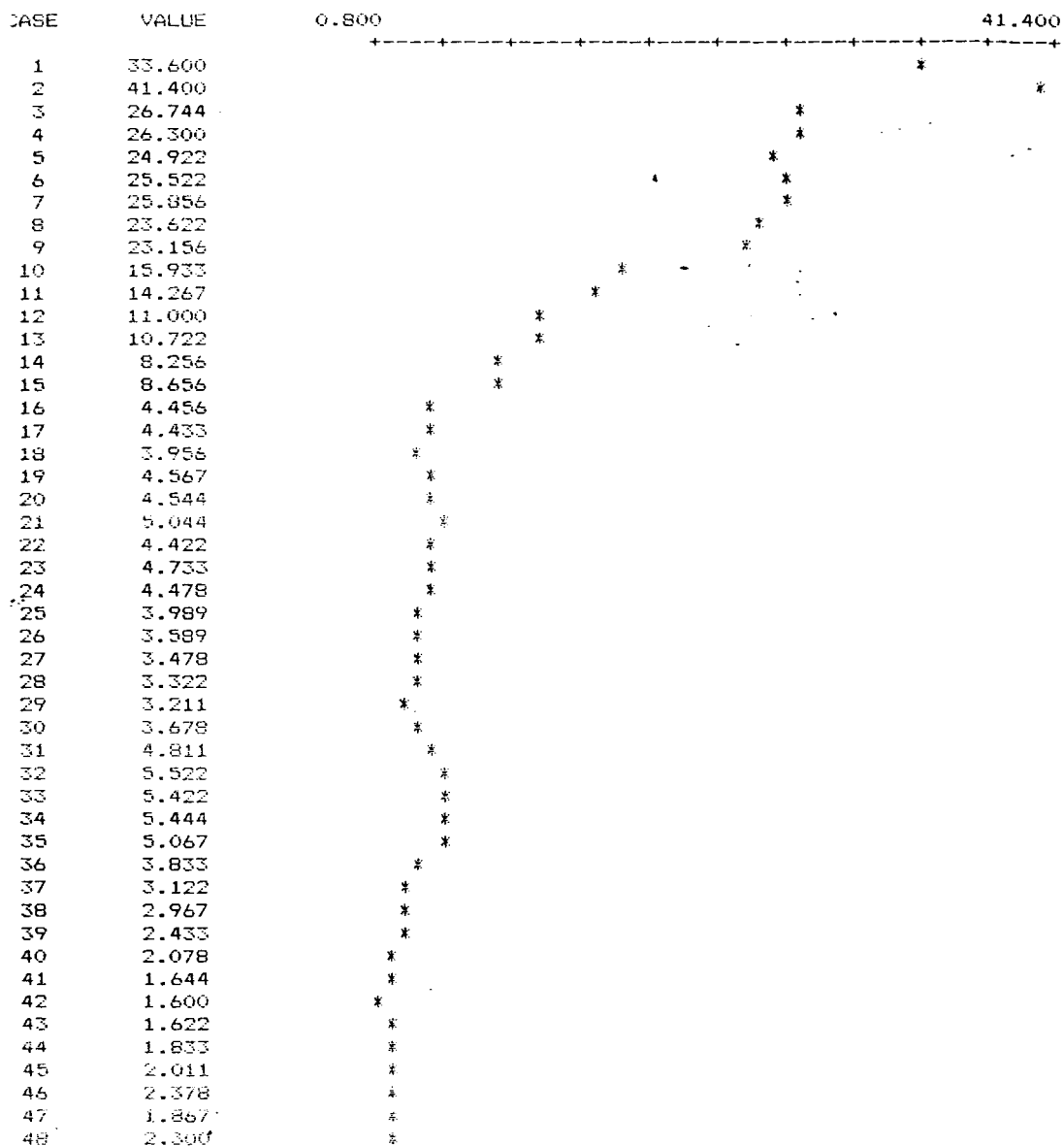
SMOOTHED 1,1,1

AGE	VALUE
1	33.600
2	31.100
3	26.533
4	22.600
5	26.367
6	31.467
7	28.300
8	25.567
9	17.000
10	18.767
11	12.533
12	14.400
13	8.167
14	9.600
15	5.633
16	4.900
17	3.400
18	4.533
19	3.933
20	6.000
21	5.267
22	5.700
23	4.067
24	4.433
25	5.233
26	4.700
27	3.800
28	2.767
29	3.400
30	4.267
31	4.600
32	5.300
33	5.667
34	5.300
35	5.100
36	3.800
37	3.567
38	2.800
39	2.533
40	1.967
41	1.200
42	1.000
43	1.767
44	2.100
45	2.600
46	2.167
47	2.267
48	1.633
49	0.600



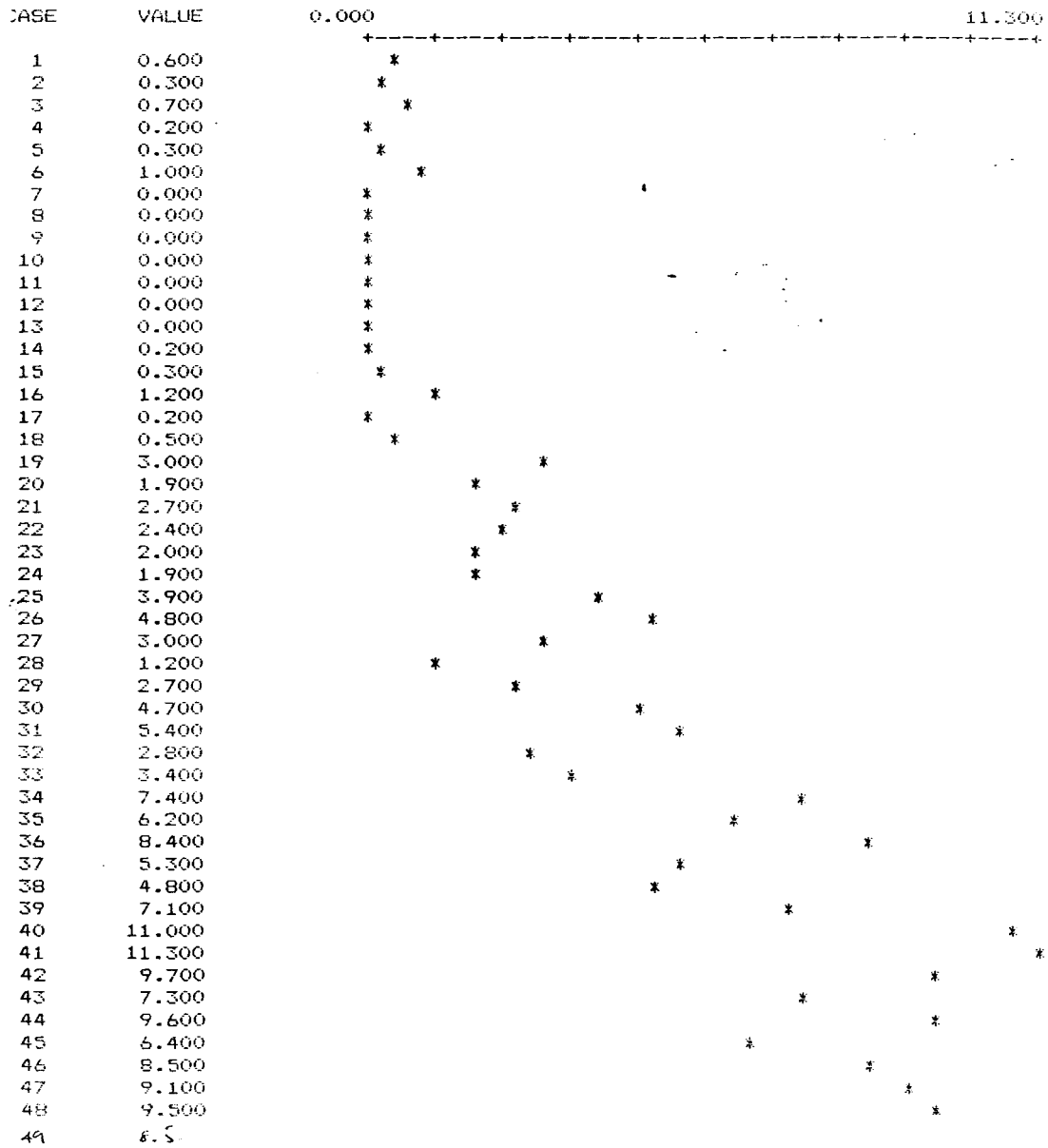
BOARDERS HAMILTON 1900-48

SMOOTHED 1,2,3,2,1



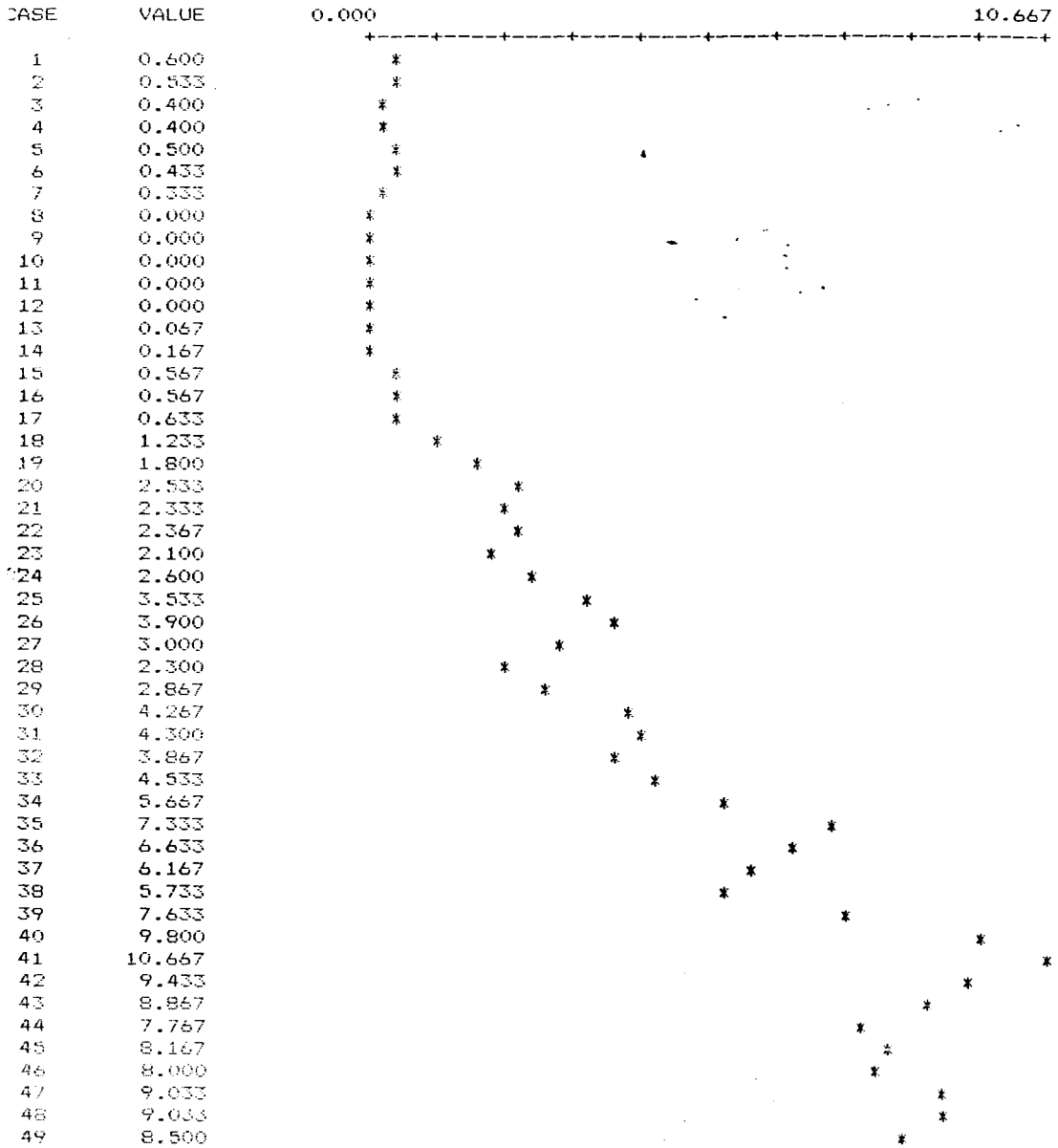
ROOMERS HAMILTON 1900-48

UNSMOOTHED



ROOMERS HAMILTON

SMOOTHED 1,1,1



ROOMERS HAMILTON 1900-48

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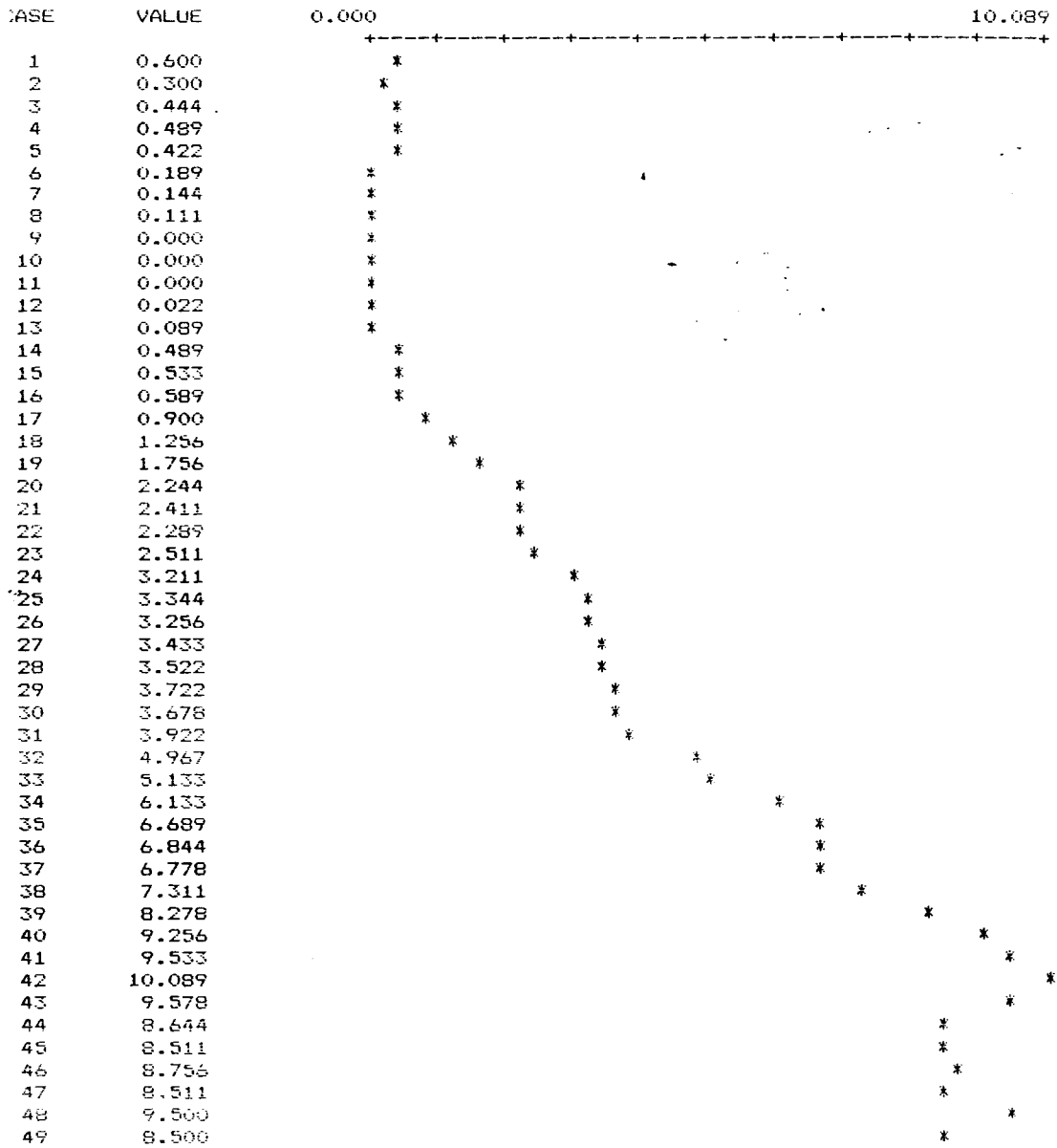


TABLE 2: COST OF RENT IN HAMILTON 1900-1948

A: COST OF RENTING A 6 ROOM HOUSE WITHOUT SANITARY
 CONVENIENCES
 B: COST OF RENTING A 6 ROOM HOUSE WITH SANITARY CONVENIENCES
 C: AVERAGE COST OF RENTING A HOUSE

YEAR	A	B
1900	6	
1901	7	
1902	10	
1903	11	13
1904		
1905		
1906		
1907		
1908		
1909		
1910	-	15
1911		
1912	14	18
1913	14	18
1914		
1915	13	17
1916	14	18
1917	17	22.5
1918	17	22.5
1919	18	24
1920	19.5	25
1921	22.5	30
1922	22.5	32.5
1923	21.5	30
1924	21.5	30
1925	21.5	30
1926	21.5	30
1927	21.5	30
1928	21.5	30
1929	21.5	30
1930	21.5	30
1931	21.5	30
1932	21.5	30
1933	16	28.5
1934	16	28.5
1935	16.5	26
1936	18	29
1937	20	30
1938	20.5	30.5
1939	20.5	30.5
1940	21	31
1941	22.5	32
1942	22.5	32

YEAR	C
1943	28
1944	28
1945	28
1946	28
1947	28.5
1948	30.5

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