

As a further indication of the tendency to reduce the size of families, the following table shows the period elapsing after marriage before the birth of the first child :—

Table No. 13.—Table showing Duration of Marriage, in Years, before the Birth of the First Child, for 1914 to 1943

Duration of Marriage, in Years.	Proportion per Cent. of Total First Births.			
	1914.	1924.	1934.	1943.
Under 1 year	52.95	50.06	46.25	34.42
1 and under 2 years	28.62	26.64	26.79	30.47
2 " 3 "	9.02	10.43	10.24	14.20
3 " 4 "	3.43	5.51	6.16	9.40
4 " 5 "	1.88	3.03	3.96	4.09
5 " 10 "	3.26	3.36	5.49	6.06
10 years and over	0.84	0.97	1.11	1.36
Totals	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

The heavy decline in first births under one year of marriage in 1943 is probably due to causes connected with the war, and subsequent figures will probably show a increase, due to the increase in the marriage-rate. The average duration of marriage before the birth of the first child was :—

1914 .. 1.63 years.	1934 1.85 years.
1924 .. 1.76 years.	1943 2.14 years.

During the period 1936 to 1940 there was a larger relative increase in first births due largely to the consummation of marriages postponed during the depression. There was a fall from 1940 to 1943 due to the war. The subsequent rise has been due to the return of troops from the war.

Over the same period, however, the age of the mother at the birth of the first child tended steadily to decline, as shown in the next table.

Table No. 14.—Table showing the Age of the Mother at the Time of the First Birth for various Years from 1914 to 1943

Age of Mother.	First Births, Proportion per Cent. at each Age-group to Total First Births.			
	1914.	1924.	1934.	1943.
Under 20	6.73	7.55	8.90	6.13
20 and under 25	35.89	38.16	40.39	42.53
25 " 30	35.01	32.59	32.79	31.45
30 " 35	15.61	14.68	13.10	13.99
35 " 40	5.52	5.33	3.79	4.46
40 " 45	1.16	1.59	0.99	1.37
45 and over	0.08	0.10	0.04	0.07
Totals.. .. .	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

The average age of mothers at the birth of their first child was—

1914 26.55	1934 25.90
1924 26.39	1943 26.10