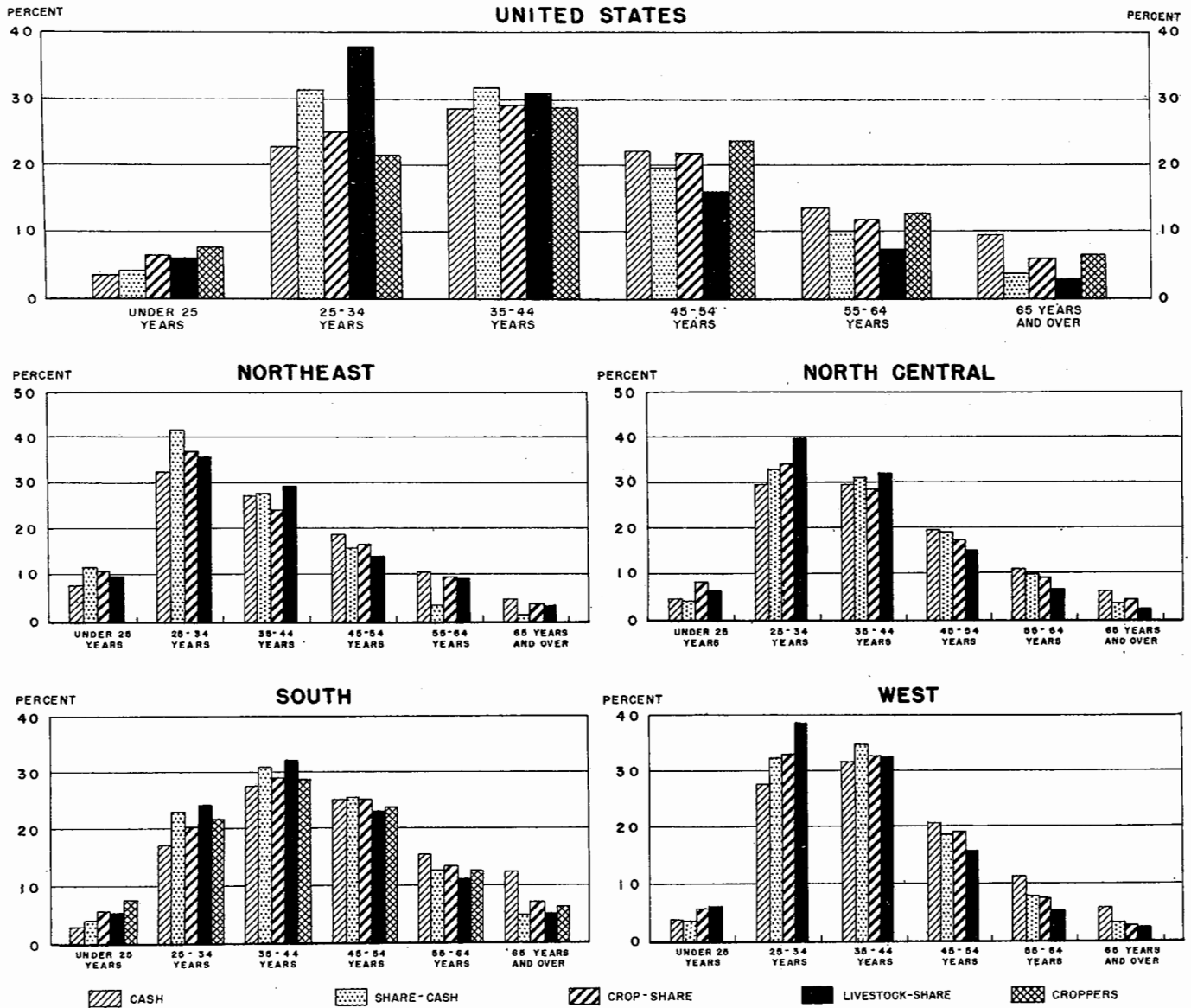


PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF TENANT OPERATORS IN EACH TENURE GROUP, BY AGE, FOR THE UNITED STATES AND REGIONS: 1954



64C-184

Figure 55.

Distribution of farm operators by age groups.—In 1954 nearly *one-half* of all farm operators (48.0 percent) were 35 to 54 years of age, more than *one-third* (36.9 percent) were 55 years old or older, and only 1 in 7 (15.1 percent) was under 35. One in 6 (16.6 percent) of all farm operators was 65 years old or over. Since 1910 the proportion of operators of intermediate age has remained rather constant, but the proportion of older operators has been increasing and the proportion of younger operators decreasing. In 1910 only 23.6 percent of farm operators were 55 years old and over and 28.9 percent were under 35. By 1954 there were only *one-half* (50.0 percent) as many farm operators under 35 as

in 1930 and only *two-fifths* (38.8 percent) as many as in 1910. The total number of all farms in 1954 was about 25 percent lower than in 1930 and 1910.

To operate a farm today requires a much greater capital investment for machinery and equipment than a few decades ago. Also, the cost of operation is much higher, requiring large cash outlays for such items as tractor fuel, hybrid seeds, commercial fertilizers, pesticides, etc. Young men have difficulty in commanding the necessary capital to operate farms on their own account.