

THE MATCH TRADE.

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Introductory.*

The tables on pages 157 and 158 are based on returns received from firms in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, whose business in 1924 consisted wholly or mainly in the manufacture of matches and firelighters. The number of such separate returns was 120. About 30 firms to which schedules were sent did not furnish returns, but these firms for the most part had very small establishments, and they included some which had ceased operations before the end of the census year. On the basis of the information available, it is estimated that they did not employ more than 70 persons in all, and that their net output probably did not exceed £10,000.

Summary of results.—The following table shows the main results of the Censuses of 1924, 1912 and 1907, comparisons between the figures for the three years being subject to the qualifications mentioned in the next paragraph.

* See also the Notes on pp. vii to xv.

Particulars.	Unit.	1924.	1912.	1907.
Value of goods made (Gross output) ..	£'000	4,454*	996	855
Cost of materials used	"	943	552	446
Net output	"	3,511*	444	409
Average number of persons employed (excluding outworkers)	No.	5,222	5,339	4,256
Net output per person employed (excluding outworkers)	£	672*	83	96
Mechanical power available :—				
Prime movers	H.P.	5,541	3,113	1,591
Electric motors driven by purchased electricity	"	623	126	(not recorded).

* Including Excise duty (see below).

Qualifications affecting comparisons.—In considering the above table and the other tables in this report, which show figures for different censal years, the following qualifications should be borne in mind :—

(1) The comparability of figures relating to value or cost is affected by the changes which have taken place in the general purchasing power of money.

(2) The Censuses of 1907 and 1912 covered Great Britain and the whole of Ireland, but that of 1924 applied only to Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Separate particulars relating to the Match Trade were not published in connexion with the Census of Production taken in the Irish Free State in respect of the year 1926, and the effect of the exclusion of Southern Ireland from the Census of 1924 cannot, therefore, be measured. It is not, however, believed to be important.

(3) The Censuses of 1907 and 1924 extended to all firms, however small, but in 1912 firms employing not more than five persons (excluding the proprietors) were merely required to state the average number of persons employed by them in the year. According to the information so furnished, the average number of persons employed in the establishments thus excluded was 221, or 4 per cent. of the number employed by the remaining firms, as shown in the above table. Correspondence on defective returns for 1912 had not been completed when the war compelled suspension of this work, and in these circumstances detailed information for 1912 is not given in the remainder of this report. The defects in the aggregate figures given above are, however, not important.

(4) The imposition since the pre-war years of an Excise Duty on matches seriously affects the comparability of the figures shown for 1924 in respect of gross value of output, net output, and net output per person employed with the corresponding figures for 1912 and 1907.

Production.

Detailed information as to the output of the Match Trade in 1924 will be found in Table II on page 157.

Principal products.—The following table shows the total quantity and value of matches and firelighters returned in 1924 and 1907, the figures for each year being inclusive of the output of similar products recorded on schedules for other trades.

Kind of goods.	1924.		1907.
	Quantity.	Selling value.	Selling value.
	Standard gross (of 10,000)	£'000	£'000
Safety matches	1,818,000	1,030	780
Other sorts of matches	5,531,000	3,253	
Firelighters	17,000*	146*	68
TOTAL VALUE		4,429	848

* Includes 1,000 standard gross, valued at £6,000, returned on schedules for other trades.

In 1907 firms were not required to state the quantities of matches made by them. As shown in the Accounts relating to Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom for January, 1925, the quantity of matches made in the United Kingdom and delivered free of duty or charged with Excise Duty in the calendar year 1924 was 7,538,891 ten thousands or standard gross. The small excess of 190,000 standard gross over the Census aggregate of 7,349,000 standard gross is due partly to the fact that the Excise figures represent the quantities presented in the year to the Revenue Officers for clearance, and may include some quantities produced in the preceding year, and partly to the fact that the periods covered by the Census returns were not invariably the calendar year.

The total value of the products enumerated in the above statement is substantially free from duplication in each year.

The great increase in the value of matches in 1924 as compared with the value in 1907 is very largely due to the introduction of the Excise Duty since the earlier year. The rate of duty in 1924 was 5s. per 10,000 matches in boxes not exceeding 80 matches, and one-third less for matches in excess of 80 per box. It appears from the reports of the Commissioners of H.M. Customs and Excise that the proportion to which the lower rate of duty applied was little over one-half of 1 per cent. of the total. The net receipts for Excise Duty in the financial year ended 31st March, 1925, were £1,763,217, and the Excise Duty chargeable on the products shown in the above table after deduction of the recorded exports and deliveries free of duty during the year (see below), may

be estimated at about £1,750,000, so that the value of the quantity of matches produced, apart from Excise Duty, would be about £2,533,000.

Owing to the absence of any quantity data for 1907, a comparative measurement of the volume of goods produced in the two years cannot be made.

Other products.—In addition to the principal products shown in the preceding table, there were returned in 1924 on schedules for the Match Trade other goods to the value of £31,000, which, being of kinds mainly produced by firms in other trades, are dealt with in the reports on those trades. The corresponding figure for 1907 was £14,000.

Cost of materials.—The cost of materials used by firms that made their returns on schedules for the Match Trade was returned as £943,000 in 1924; the corresponding figure for 1907 was £446,000.

Net output.—The net output in 1924 of the firms that made their returns on schedules for the Match Trade (whose gross output was valued at £4,454,000) was £3,511,000, that sum representing, without duplication, the total amount by which the value, as delivered, of the aggregate output exceeded the cost, as purchased, of the materials used. As explained above, £1,750,000, or half of the total, represented Excise Duty.

The net output per head of persons employed (excluding outworkers) in the censal year 1924 was £672 (or £337, apart from Excise Duty), compared with £96 in 1907.

Exports and imports.—The following table, relating to the year 1924, shows the total production of matches in relation to the exports and imports.

Kind of goods.	Production.	Exports.	Net imports.	Available for consumption in the United Kingdom.	Share of home market held by British made goods.
	Ten thousands	Ten thousands	Ten thousands	Ten thousands	Per cent.
Safety matches ..	1,818,000	149,000	3,893,000	5,562,000	32.69
Other sorts of matches	5,531,000	153,000	2,038,000	7,416,000	74.58

Wages in 1924.

Under the Census of Production Act, 1906, the powers of the Board of Trade to require information do not extend to particulars of the amount of wages paid, and, consequently, no information on this head was secured in connexion with the Census of 1924. As a result, however, of the voluntary enquiry undertaken by the Ministry of Labour into wages and hours in the United Kingdom in 1924, information was obtained as to the total wage-bill of a group

of firms in the Match Trade that made returns both to the Ministry of Labour and to the Census of Production office. According to the Census records this group of firms employed, in the week ended 18th October, 1924, 4,203 operatives, or 89 per cent. of the total of 4,733 operatives for the trade as a whole, and their net output totalled £3,411,000, or 97 per cent. of the aggregate net output of £3,511,000 for the trade as a whole. The total wage-bill of these firms, as returned to the Ministry of Labour, was £474,000, representing about 14 per cent. of their aggregate net output, or approximately 27 per cent., after deducting Excise Duty.

Employment.

The detailed information relating to employment in 1924 is summarised in Table III on pages 157 and 158. The following table sets out certain particulars for that year, together with those relating to the 1907 Census. For the purpose of this comparison, the average numbers of operatives of each sex returned for 1924 have been divided between the two age-groups in the proportions shown by the data relating to the week ended 18th October:—

Average number (excluding outworkers).	Males.		Females.		Males and females.	
	Under 18.	All ages.	Under 18.	All ages.	Under 18.	All ages.
1924.						
Operatives	135	1,698	436	3,055	571	4,753
Administrative, etc. ..	8	348	4	121	12	469
TOTAL	143	2,046	440	3,176	583	5,222
1907.						
Wage earners	235	920	924	2,945	1,159	3,865
Salaried	25	322	13	69	38	391
TOTAL	260	1,242	937	3,014	1,197	4,256
Average number of outworkers.						
1924	3		—		3	
1907	1		116		117	

The numbers of operatives recorded month by month in 1924 ranged from 153 above the average, in February, to 154 below the average, in June (see Table IIIB, page 158).

Mechanical Power.

The detailed information relating to mechanical power in 1924 is summarised in Table IV on page 158. The following table sets out the particulars for 1924 and 1907 relating to the capacity and kinds of *prime movers* and the capacity of *electric generators* installed.

Power equipment.	1924.			1907.
	Ordinarily in use.	In reserve or idle.	Total.	Total.
	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.
PRIME MOVERS :—				
Reciprocating steam engines ..	542	846	1,388	1,294
Gas engines	2,934	711	3,645	
Petrol and light oil engines ..	26	—	26	
Heavy oil engines	208	274	482	
Water power	—	—	—	
TOTAL	3,710	1,831	5,541	1,591
ELECTRIC GENERATORS :—	Kw.	Kw.	Kw.	Kw.
Driven by—				
Reciprocating steam engines	245	355	600	101
Gas engines	1,110	356	1,466	
Petrol and light oil engines ..	—	6	6	
Heavy oil engines	137	183	320	
Water power	—	—	—	
TOTAL	1,492	900	2,392	116

The capacity of *electric motors* recorded in 1924 was as shown below :—

Electric motors.	Ordinarily in use.	In reserve or idle.	Total.
			H.P.
Driven by—			
Electricity generated in own works	2,095	484	2,579
Purchased electricity	466	157	623

Corresponding information was not required for 1907. The total number of Board of Trade units of electricity purchased for power and lighting purposes in that year was returned as 36,000.

TABLES.

I.—Summary of results.

Particulars.	Unit.	United Kingdom.*
Value of goods made (Gross output)	£'000	4,454
Cost of materials used	"	943
Net output	"	3,511
Average number of persons employed (excluding outworkers)	No.	5,222
Net output per person employed (excluding outworkers)	£	672
Mechanical power available :—		
Prime movers	H.P.	5,541
Electric motors driven by purchased electricity	"	623

* In order to avoid the possible disclosure of information relating to individual firms, figures can only be given for the United Kingdom as a whole.

II.—Production.

Goods sold or added to stock.	United Kingdom.*	
	Quantity.	Selling value.
	Standard gross (of 10,000)	£'000
Safety matches	1,818,000	1,030
Other sorts of matches	5,531,000	3,253
Total—Matches	7,349,000	4,283
Firelighters	16,000	140
Firewood	18
Other goods made	13
TOTAL VALUE OF GOODS MADE (GROSS OUTPUT)	4,454

* See footnote to Table I.

III.—Employment.

A.—NUMBERS EMPLOYED IN WEEK ENDED 18TH OCTOBER, 1924.

Kind of staff.	Males.		Females.		Males and females.	
	Under 18.	All ages.	Under 18.	All ages.	Under 18.	All ages.
United Kingdom* :—						
Operatives	135	1,704	432	3,029	567	4,733
Administrative, technical and clerical staff	8	348	4	121	12	469
TOTAL	143	2,052	436	3,150	579	5,202

* See footnote to Table I.

B.—OPERATIVES EMPLOYED IN ONE WEEK IN EACH MONTH OF 1924.

United Kingdom.* (Annual average : Males, 1,698 ; Females, 3,055 ; Total, 4,753.

Week ended.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Week ended.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Jan. 12th ..	1,735	3,158	4,893	July 19th ..	1,650	2,966	4,616
Feb. 16th ..	1,720	3,186	4,906	Aug. 16th ..	1,687	2,919	4,606
March 15th ..	1,725	3,157	4,882	Sept. 13th ..	1,692	2,938	4,630
April 12th ..	1,703	3,151	4,854	Oct. 18th ..	1,704	3,029	4,733
May 17th ..	1,683	3,111	4,794	Nov. 15th ..	1,709	3,041	4,750
June 21st ..	1,658	2,941	4,599	Dec. 13th ..	1,711	3,059	4,770

* See footnote to Table I.

C.—NUMBER OF OUTWORKERS AT TWO SPECIFIED PERIODS IN 1924.

Country.	January.			July.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
England and Wales* ..	3	—	3	3	—	3

* No outworkers were recorded for Scotland or Northern Ireland.

IV.—Mechanical Power.

PARTICULARS OF PRIME MOVERS, ELECTRIC GENERATORS AND ELECTRIC MOTORS.

Power equipment.	United Kingdom.*	
	Ordinarily in use.	In reserve or idle.
PRIME MOVERS :—	H.P.	H.P.
Reciprocating steam engines	542	846
Gas engines	2,934	711
Petrol and light oil engines	26	—
Heavy oil engines	208	274
TOTAL	3,710	1,831
TOTAL OF PRIME MOVERS INSTALLED	5,541	
ELECTRIC GENERATORS :—	Kw.	Kw.
Driven by—		
Reciprocating steam engines	245	355
Gas engines	1,110	356
Petrol and light oil engines	—	6
Heavy oil engines	137	183
TOTAL	1,492	900
TOTAL OF ELECTRIC GENERATORS INSTALLED	2,392	
ELECTRIC MOTORS :—	H.P.	H.P.
Driven by—		
Electricity generated in own works	2,095	484
Purchased electricity	466	157

* See footnote to Table I.