

THE GOLD AND SILVER REFINING TRADE

INTRODUCTORY

This trade comprises firms that were engaged wholly or mainly in the refining of gold, silver and other precious metals. The *value* of all metals refined on commission is excluded from the particulars given throughout the following tables.

Table I A.—General summary

Particulars	1935	1934	1933	1930	1924
Value of products (Gross output)...	£'000 31,182	£'000 34,585	£'000 31,847	£'000 8,095	£'000 15,796*
Cost of materials, fuel and electricity used	30,129	33,330	30,787	7,028	14,801*
Amount paid for work given out	26	12	3	8	10
Net output	1,027 No.	1,243 No.	1,057 No.	1,059 No.	985 No.
Average number of persons employed	2,367	2,094	1,937	1,902	1,778
Net output per person employed...	£ 434 No.	£ 594	£ 545	£ 557 No.	£ 554 No.
Number of returns	19	} †	† {	21	26
Number of establishments...	23			33	†

* These aggregates are probably overstated in respect of certain precious metals refined on commission but recorded as refined for sale.

† Not available.

Table I B.—Firms employing not more than ten persons on the average

Particulars	1935	1930	1924
Number of returns received	No. 18	No. 23	No. 28
Average number of persons employed:—			
Males	66	96	117
Females	24	28	36
TOTAL	90	124	153
Number of firms not making returns	—	—	—

In 1924 the value of the gross output of the small firms making returns amounted to £160,000 or 1.0 per cent. of the total, the principal item affected being gold leaf, the output of which was valued at £24,000, or 15.3 per cent. of the total.

Table II.—Size of establishments in 1935

Size of establishment (average number employed)	Number of establishments	Gross output	Net output	Number of persons employed	Net output per person employed
11-24	No. 7	£'000 485	£'000 43	No. 112	£ 388
25-49	4	565	45	168	265
50-99	6	1,655	165	376	440
100 and over	6	28,477	774	1,711	452
TOTAL	23	31,182	1,027	2,367	434

Table III.—Particulars of output, etc., in each of the principal areas of the United Kingdom

Area*	Number of establishments†	Gross output	Net output	Number of persons employed	Net output per person employed
5... ..	No. 9	£'000 1,558	£'000 119	No. 351	£ 338
Other areas	{ 1935 1930	9 1,719	129	331	390
	{ 1935 1930	14 29,624	908	2,016	450
	{ 1930	12 6,376	930	1,571	592
TOTAL	{ 1935 1930	23 8,095	1,027 1,059	2,367 1,902	434 557

* For particulars see page xviii.

† Number of returns for 1930.

Table IV.—No sub-divisions of this trade have been distinguished.

PRODUCTION

Table V A.—Total output of refined Gold, Silver and Platinum (including metals refined on commission, whether used for further manufacturing purposes in the same works or not)

Kind of goods	1935		1934
	Quantity	Entries	
Gold, refined in bars	Th. ozs. troy 6,219.6	No. 5	Th. ozs. troy 8,424.6
Platinum, in grain, ingot, bar or powder	186.2	6	176.8
Silver, refined	189,060.5*	10*	128,026.1*

* Including 6,586,300 ozs. (2 entries) for 1935, and 4,173,900 ozs. for 1934 returned by firms whose returns were made on schedules for other trades.

Table V B.—Principal products made for sale

Kind of output	1935			1934	
	Quantity	Value	Entries	Quantity	Value
	Th. ozs. troy	£'000	No.	Th. ozs. troy	£'000
Gold :—					
Refined in bars, and manufactures of gold (other than gold leaf)* ...	2,797.5	19,099	16	3,848.6	25,648
	Million leaves			Million leaves	
Gold leaf ...	25.6	114	5	25.3	116
	Th. ozs. troy	34	1	Th. ozs. troy	20
Platinum :—					
In grain, ingot, bar or powder ...	180.7	1,147	6	171.7	1,136
Other sorts, including alloys and manufactures* ...	27.4	194	4	4.4†	30†
Silver :—					
Refined ...	83,334.6	8,215	9	65,233.4	6,190
Manufactures* ...	6,558.9	871	14	7,802.5	756
Other refinery products ...	...	1,146‡	10	...	545
Work done for the trade ...	...	357§	20	...	205§
TOTAL — PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS ...	...	31,177	...	...	34,646

* Exclusive of jewellery, plate, watches, etc., for which see the reports on the Plate and Jewellery Trade (page 520), and the Watch and Clock Trade (page 534).

† So far as recorded separately.

‡ Including partly refined metals.

§ Amount received.

The figures shown in the preceding table include the following output recorded by firms whose returns were made on schedules for other trades and are not, therefore, included in Table I A.

Kind of output	1935			1934	
	Quantity	Value	Entries	Quantity	Value
	Th. ozs. troy	£'000	No.	Th. ozs. troy	£'000
Silver, refined... ..	2,197.9	284	2	1,557.5	152
Manufactures of silver ...	199.6	25	4	330.9	29
Work done for the trade ...	...	13*	6	...	6*
TOTAL ... ..	...	322	...	...	187

* Amount received.

Table VI.—Average values of goods produced, exported and imported

Kind of goods	Production (at factory)		1935 as a percentage of 1934	Exports (f.o.b.)		Imports (c.i.f.)	
	Average value			Average value		Average value	
	1935	1934	1935	1934	1935	1934	
	£ per oz. troy	£ per oz. troy	Per cent.	£ per oz. troy	£ per oz. troy	£ per oz. troy	£ per oz. troy
Gold :—							
Refined in bars ...	7.10	6.89	103.1	7.11	6.85	7.13	6.83
	£ per thous. leaves	£ per thous. leaves		£ per thous. leaves	£ per thous. leaves	£ per thous. leaves	£ per thous. leaves
Gold leaf ...	4.45	4.59	96.9	4.23	4.11	2.95	2.85
	£ per oz. troy	£ per oz. troy		£ per oz. troy	£ per oz. troy	£ per oz. troy	£ per oz. troy
Platinum, refined, etc....	6.35	6.62	95.9	6.45	6.92	6.83	6.40
	d. per oz. troy	d. per oz. troy		d. per oz. troy	d. per oz. troy	d. per oz. troy	d. per oz. troy
Silver :—							
Refined ...	23.66	22.78	103.9	30.72	22.59	30.87	21.73
Manufactures ...	31.88	23.25	137.1	—	—	—	—

Table VII.—Volume of Production, 1924-1935

Kind of output	Total production			Production index (1935 = 100)			
	1935 as returned	1934		1924	1930	1933	1934
		As returned	At 1935 average values				
	£'000	£'000	£'000	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Gold refined, and manufactures of gold (other than gold leaf) ...	19,099	25,648	26,275	62	30	148	138
Gold leaf ...	148	136	132				
Platinum, including alloys and manufactures ...	1,341	1,166	1,120				
Silver, refined ...	8,215	6,190	6,430	48	33	84	78
Manufactures of silver ...	871	756	1,036	41	75	78	119
Other refinery products...	1,146	545	378	44	104	119	33
Work done for the trade	357	205	208	12	18	33	58
TOTAL	31,177	34,646	35,579	15	28	58	114

Table VIII.—Production in relation to Exports and Imports

Exports and imports of refined gold and silver do not bear any relation to the quantities produced at refineries in this country. Particulars of the exports and imports of gold leaf and refined platinum in 1935 and 1934 are given below in relation to production in those years.

Kind of goods	Production	Exports	Proportion of production exported	Retained imports	Available for use in the United Kingdom	Share of home market held by British goods
Gold leaf ...	1935	0.2	0.8	30.8	56.2	45.2
	1934	0.8	3.2	32.5	57.0	42.9
Platinum :— In grain, ingot, bar or powder	1935	18.4	9.9	110.5	278.3	60.3
	1934	14.4	8.1	18.3	180.7	89.9
Other sorts, including alloys and manufactures, not elsewhere specified	1935	25.1	91.6	†	2.3	100.0
	1934	4.9	...	†	...	...

* So far as recorded separately.

† Re-exports in excess of imports.

Table IX.—Other output of the Gold and Silver Refining Trade

The value of the gross output of the firms whose returns were made on schedules for the Gold and Silver Refining Trade was £31,182,000 in 1935 and £34,585,000 in 1934, of which £30,855,000 in 1935 and £34,459,000 in 1934 consisted of products included in Table V B. Particulars of the remaining items are shown below.

Kind of output	1935	1934
	Value	Value
	£'000	£'000
Copper and manufactures thereof ...	15	3
Other non-ferrous metals, alloys and manufactures thereof ...	24	39
Other goods made ...	25	15
Scrap metal, including concentrates, residues, etc., sold ...	263	69
TOTAL ...	327	126

MATERIALS AND FUEL**Table X A.—Materials, fuel and electricity purchased and used**

Kind of materials, etc.	1935		1934
	Quantity	Cost	Cost
	Th. tons	£'000	£'000
Fuel and electricity used for all purposes* :—			
Coal ...	10.4	12	33.330
Coke ...	2.9	5	
Heavy fuel oil ...	1,026 Th. galls.	16	
	6,235 Th. B.T.U. (Kw.-hrs.)	22	
Purchased electricity ...		22	
All purchased materials and other fuel		30,074	
TOTAL ...		30,129	33,330

* So far as recorded separately.

Table X B.—Consumption of coal, coke and electricity in 1935 and 1930

Kind of fuel	1935	1930
	Th. tons	Th. tons
Coal ...	10.4	10.8
Coke ...	2.9	3.1
	Th. B.T.U. (Kw.-hrs.)	Th. B.T.U. (Kw.-hrs.)
Electricity :—		
Generated in same works ...	—	—
Generated in other works under same ownership ...	—	—
Purchased ...	6,235	3,981
Total electricity consumed ...	6,235	3,981

EMPLOYMENT

Table XI A.—Average numbers employed in 1935 and 1934

Persons employed	Males		Females		Total		
	Under 18	All ages	Under 18	All ages	Under 18	All ages	
Operatives (average for the year) ...	1935	156	1,583	92	310	248	1,893
	1934	136	1,369	81	289	217	1,658
Administrative, technical and clerical staff* ...	1935	2	364	1	110	3	474
	1934	4	331	3	105	7	436
TOTAL ...	1935	158	1,947	93	420	251	2,367
	1934	140	1,700	84	394	224	2,094

* As at 12th October, 1935, and 13th October, 1934.

Table XI B.—Operatives employed in one week in each month of 1934 and 1935 by firms furnishing returns in respect of the twelve months ended December

Mid week of*	Operatives employed		Monthly index†		
	1934	1935	1933	1934	1935
January ...	1,339	1,564	75.1	84.6	98.2
February ...	1,320	1,577	76.9	83.4	99.1
March ...	1,324	1,583	76.7	83.7	99.4
April ...	1,329	1,572	76.7	84.0	98.7
May ...	1,328	1,685	76.6	83.9	105.8
June ...	1,342	1,572	79.1	84.8	98.7
July ...	1,351	1,579	81.1	85.4	99.2
August ...	1,361	1,465	81.8	86.0	92.0
September ...	1,419	1,585	84.9	89.7	99.6
October ...	1,485	1,610	86.4	93.8	101.1
November ...	1,509	1,656	86.9	95.4	104.0
December ...	1,529	1,655	87.1	96.6	104.0
Average for the twelve months	1,386	1,592	80.8	87.6	100.0
Proportion of total operatives represented ...	83.59	84.10	...	...	...

* For the ending date of each week see page xiv.

† Based on the estimated average for the year 1935.

Table XI C.—Average numbers employed, 1924-1935

Year	Operatives	Administrative, technical and clerical staff	Total
1924 ...	1,438	340	1,778
1930 ...	1,522	380	1,902
1933 ...	1,529	408	1,937
1934 ...	1,658	436	2,094
1935 ...	1,893	474	2,367

WAGES

Table XII.—Wages paid by firms furnishing returns of wages in 1935 and 1930

The aggregate amount of wages paid by firms furnishing returns of wages was £214,000 in 1935 representing 33.2 per cent. of the net output of these firms, the corresponding figures for 1930 being £170,000 and 37.7 per cent. The figures for these firms given below indicate the size of the sample and the extent to which it is representative.

Firms furnishing returns of wages	1935		1930	
	Aggregate	Proportion of trade	Aggregate	Proportion of trade
Gross output... ..	£'000	Per cent.	£'000	Per cent.
Net output	29,016	93.1	5,591	69.1
	645	62.8	451	42.6
Operative staff employed :—	No.		No.	
During mid-week of October :—				
Males	1,233	77.1	}	*
Females	195	62.3		
Total	1,428	74.7	1,170	75.4
Average for the year	1,414	74.7	1,157	76.0
Administrative, technical and clerical staff	379	80.0	*	*
Number of establishments	14	60.9	...	...

* Not recorded separately.

COUNTRY TABLES (1935)

Note.—The figures given in the following tables relate only to firms whose returns were made on schedules for the Gold and Silver Refining Trade. The particulars cover firms in England and Wales, no production being recorded for Scotland or for Northern Ireland.

Table I.—General summary (see page 496)

Table II A.—Total output of refined Gold, Silver and Platinum
(including metals refined on commission, whether used for further manufacturing purposes in the same works or not)

Kind of goods	England and Wales
	Th. ozs. troy
Gold, refined in bars	6,219.6
Platinum, in grain, ingot, bar or powder	186.2
Silver, refined	182,474.2

Table II B.—Output made for sale

Kind of output	Quantity	Value
	Th. ozs. troy	£'000
Gold :—		
Refined in bars and manufactures of gold (other than gold leaf)	2,797.5	19,099
Gold leaf	25.6	114
		34
Th. ozs. troy		
Platinum :—		
In grain, ingot, bar or powder	180.7	1,147
Other sorts, including alloys and manufactures	27.4	194
Silver :—		
Refined	81,136.7	7,931
Manufactures	6,359.3	846
Other refinery products		1,146
Copper and manufactures thereof		15
Other non-ferrous metals, alloys and manufactures thereof		24
Other goods made		25
Scrap metal, including concentrates, residues, etc., sold		263
Work done for the trade		344*
TOTAL		31,182

* Amount received.

Table III A.—Materials, fuel and electricity purchased and used (see page 501)

Table III B.—Consumption of electricity (see page 501)

Table IV A.—Numbers employed in week ended 12th October, 1935

Persons employed	Males		Females		Total	
	Under 18	All ages	Under 18	All ages	Under 18	All ages
Operatives	158	1,599	93	313	251	1,912
Administrative, technical and clerical staff	2	364	1	110	3	474
TOTAL	160	1,963	94	423	254	2,386

Table IV B.—Operatives employed in one week in each month of 1935

Week ended	Males and females	Week ended	Males and females
January 19	1,873	July 13	1,878
February 16	1,894	August 17	1,754
March 16	1,902	September 14	1,880
April 13	1,865	October 12	1,912
May 18	1,987	November 16	1,953
June 15	1,866	December 14	1,956
Average for the twelve months			1,893

Table V.—Firms employing not more than ten persons on the average (see page 496)