

## THE PACKING TRADE.

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## THE PACKING TRADE.

## Introductory.\*

The tables on pages 277 to 279 are based on Returns received from firms in Great Britain (mainly in Manchester and Bradford) and Northern Ireland whose business in 1924 consisted wholly or mainly in the packing and making-up† of textile goods for other firms. The number of such separate Returns was 275. About 20 firms to which schedules were sent did not furnish Returns, but these firms for the most part had very small establishments and included a number which ceased operations in the course of the censal year. On the basis of the information available it is estimated that they did not employ more than 100 persons in all and that their total net output probably lay between £10,000 and £20,000.

The value of the packing work done by textile firms within their own establishments, whether or not in a separate packing department, was included, for the purpose of the Census of Production, in the value of such firms' output, and is consequently not dealt with in the present Report.

Information relating to the work of firms engaged in packing is available for the year 1924 only, not having been sought in respect of the previous censal years 1907 and 1912. While comparable statistics are thus not available, it is certain that, as a result of the increased specialisation which has taken place, the trade has grown considerably throughout the period since 1907, until in recent years it is said to handle about 75 per cent. of the cotton textiles exported from this country.‡

The following table shows the main results of the Census of 1924 :—

Particulars.	Unit.	1924.
Value of work done (Gross output) .. .. .	£'000	3,279
Cost of materials used .. .. .	"	1,518
Net output .. .. .	"	1,761
Average number of persons employed .. .. .	No.	8,548
Net output per person employed .. .. .	£	206
Mechanical power available§ :—		
Prime movers .. .. .	H.P.	406
Electric motors driven by purchased electricity .. .. .	"	3,047

§ Excluding hydraulic power (see p. 276).

## Production.

The above total of £3,279,000 includes £3,262,000 in respect of the packing and making-up of customers' goods and £17,000 for other work done. In addition a sum of £44,000 was returned on

\* See also the Notes on pp. vi to xiv.

† In this trade the term "making-up" refers, not to the putting together of finished goods, such as clothing, from their materials, but to the making-up of consignments of goods in different lengths, folds or shapes, or with special tickets, tapes, ribbons, parcelling, etc., as may be required for various destinations or customers.

‡ Statement by Master Packers' Association to the Committee on Industry and Trade (see "Survey of Textile Industries," p. 15).

schedules for other trades (solely the Textile Finishing Trades) in respect of packing and making-up, thus forming a total of £3,306,000 recorded for such work. Firms were not asked to distinguish the value of their work according to the different kinds of textile goods handled, but investigation of the Returns suggests that about two-thirds of this sum may relate to work done on goods mainly of cotton and one-fifth on goods mainly of wool.

As the great bulk of the packing and making-up work included in the figures given above is done for merchants and not for manufacturers, the value of such work is not included to any substantial extent in the value of the output returned by manufacturers of textile fabrics, and it therefore forms an addition to the value of those fabrics as so returned.

## Wages.

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 Packing Trade which 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, 4,960 operatives, or 65 per cent. of the total of 7,624 operatives for the trade as a whole, and their net output totalled £1,252,000, or 71 per cent. of the aggregate net output of £1,761,000 for the trade as a whole. The total wage-bill of these firms, as returned to the Ministry of Labour, was £616,000, representing about 49 per cent. of their aggregate net output.

## Employment.

The detailed information relating to employment in 1924 is summarised in Table III on pages 277-8. The following table sets out certain particulars as to the average numbers employed in that year. For this purpose the average numbers of operatives of each sex returned for 1924 have been divided between the two age-groups in the proportion shown by the data relating to the week ended 18th October.

Average number.	Males.		Females.		Males and females.	
	Under 18.	All ages.	Under 18.	All ages.	Under 18.	All ages.
<b>1924.</b>						
Operatives .. .. .	415	5,302	493	2,361	908	7,663
Administrative, etc. .. .. .	57	686	27	199	84	885
<b>TOTAL .. .. .</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>5,988</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>2,560</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>8,548</b>

The numbers of operatives recorded month by month in 1924 ranged from 267 above the average, in December, to 158 below the average, in March (see Table III B., p. 278).

### Mechanical Power.

The detailed information relating to mechanical power in 1924 is summarised in Table IV, p. 279. The following table sets out the particulars relating to the capacity and kinds of *prime movers* and the capacity of *electric generators* installed in that year.

Power equipment.	Ordinarily in use.	In reserve or idle.	Total.
<b>PRIME MOVERS :—</b>	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.
Reciprocating steam engines ..	32	—	32
Gas engines .. .. .	274	98	372
Petrol and light oil engines ..	2	—	2
<b>TOTAL .. .. .</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>406</b>
<b>ELECTRIC GENERATORS :—</b>	Kw.	Kw.	Kw.
Driven by gas engines .. ..	41	83	124

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

Electric motors.	Ordinarily in use.	In reserve or idle.	Total.
<b>Driven by :—</b>	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.
Electricity generated in own works ..	23	—	23
Purchased electricity .. .. .	2,819	228	3,047

*High-pressure water power.*—The quantity of high-pressure water power returned as used for power purposes in 1924 was 137,884,000 gallons.

### TABLES.

#### I.—Summary of results.

Particulars.	Unit.	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Great Britain.	Northern Ireland.
Value of work done (Gross output)	£'000	3,133	64	3,197	82
Cost of materials used .. ..	"	1,469	24	1,493	25
Net output .. .. .	"	1,664	40	1,704	57
Average number of persons employed .. .. .	No.	7,755	288	8,043	505
Net output per person employed	£	215	139	212	113
Mechanical power available :—					
Prime movers .. .. .	H.P.*	406	—	406	—
Electric motors driven by purchased electricity .. ..	"	2,680	252	2,932	115

#### II.—Production.

Particulars.	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Great Britain.	Northern Ireland.
	Value.	Value.	Value.	Value.
Packing (including making-up of customers' goods) .. .. .	£'000. 3,116	£'000. 64	£'000. 3,180	£'000. 82
Other work done or goods made .. ..	17	—	17	—
<b>TOTAL VALUE (GROSS OUTPUT) ..</b>	<b>3,133</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>3,197</b>	<b>82</b>

#### 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.
<i>England and Wales :—</i>						
Operatives .. .. .	387	5,043	378	1,874	765	6,917
Administrative, etc.* .. ..	55	643	26	182	81	825
<b>TOTAL .. .. .</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>5,686</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>2,056</b>	<b>846</b>	<b>7,742</b>
<i>Scotland :—</i>						
Operatives .. .. .	3	88	41	169	44	257
Administrative, etc.* .. ..	1	13	—	6	1	19
<b>TOTAL .. .. .</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>276</b>
<i>Great Britain :—</i>						
Operatives .. .. .	390	5,131	419	2,043	809	7,174
Administrative, etc.* .. ..	56	656	26	188	82	844
<b>TOTAL .. .. .</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>5,787</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>2,231</b>	<b>891</b>	<b>8,018</b>
<i>Northern Ireland :—</i>						
Operatives .. .. .	23	143	72	307	95	450
Administrative, etc.* .. ..	1	30	1	11	2	41
<b>TOTAL .. .. .</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>491</b>
<i>United Kingdom :—</i>						
<b>TOTAL .. .. .</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>5,960</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>2,549</b>	<b>988</b>	<b>8,509</b>

\* Administrative, technical and clerical staff.

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

*England and Wales. (Annual average: Males, 5,065; Females, 1,865; Total, 6,930.)*

Week ended.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Week ended.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Jan. 12th ..	5,008	1,778	6,786	July 19th ..	5,125	1,895	7,020
Feb. 16th ..	5,016	1,802	6,818	Aug. 16th ..	5,055	1,893	6,948
March 15th ..	4,956	1,776	6,732	Sept. 13th ..	5,008	1,830	6,838
April 12th ..	4,974	1,817	6,791	Oct. 18th ..	5,043	1,874	6,917
May 17th ..	5,059	1,832	6,891	Nov. 15th ..	5,128	1,975	7,103
June 21st ..	5,194	1,906	7,100	Dec. 13th ..	5,214	1,997	7,211

*Scotland. (Annual average: Males, 93; Females, 176; Total, 269.)*

Week ended.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Week ended.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Jan. 12th ..	103	192	295	July 19th ..	89	164	253
Feb. 16th ..	103	188	291	Aug. 16th ..	90	161	251
March 15th ..	99	184	283	Sept. 13th ..	85	161	246
April 12th ..	94	185	279	Oct. 18th ..	88	169	257
May 17th ..	94	176	270	Nov. 15th ..	90	178	268
June 21st ..	92	179	271	Dec. 13th ..	92	178	270

*Great Britain. (Annual average: Males, 5,158; Females, 2,041; Total, 7,199.)*

Jan. 12th ..	5,111	1,970	7,081	July 19th ..	5,214	2,059	7,273
Feb. 16th ..	5,119	1,990	7,109	Aug. 16th ..	5,145	2,054	7,199
March 15th ..	5,055	1,960	7,015	Sept. 13th ..	5,093	1,991	7,084
April 12th ..	5,068	2,002	7,070	Oct. 18th ..	5,131	2,043	7,174
May 17th ..	5,153	2,008	7,161	Nov. 15th ..	5,218	2,153	7,371
June 21st ..	5,286	2,085	7,371	Dec. 13th ..	5,306	2,175	7,481

*Northern Ireland. (Annual average: Males, 144; Females, 320; Total, 464.)*

Jan. 12th ..	146	323	469	July 19th ..	135	302	437
Feb. 16th ..	146	333	479	Aug. 16th ..	139	304	443
Mar. 15th ..	143	347	490	Sept. 13th ..	145	308	453
April 12th ..	148	354	502	Oct. 18th ..	143	307	450
May 17th ..	148	328	476	Nov. 15th ..	145	307	452
June 21st ..	143	327	470	Dec. 13th ..	143	306	449

## IV.—Mechanical Power.

## PARTICULARS OF PRIME MOVERS, ELECTRIC GENERATORS AND ELECTRIC MOTORS.

Power equipment.	England and Wales.		Power equipment.	England and Wales.	
	Ordinarily in use.	In reserve or idle.		Ordinarily in use.	In reserve or idle.
PRIME MOVERS:—	H.P.	H.P.	ELECTRIC GENERATORS:—	Kw.	Kw.
Reciprocating steam engines .. ..	32	—	Driven by gas engines	41	83
Gas engines .. ..	274	98	ELECTRIC MOTORS:—	H.P.	H.P.
Petrol and light oil engines .. ..	2	—	Driven by—		
			Electricity generated in own works ..	23	—
TOTAL .. ..	308	98	Purchased electricity	2,556	124

The only mechanical power of the above descriptions which was reported in the other parts of the United Kingdom consisted of *electric motors*, driven by purchased electricity, totalling 252 horse-power (of which 103 horse-power in reserve or idle) in Scotland, and 115 horse-power (of which 1 horse-power in reserve or idle) in Northern Ireland.

*Hydraulic power.*—In addition to the power shown above, firms engaged in the Packing Trade used high-pressure water power to the extent of 137,884,000 gallons of water purchased in 1924. Of this total Scotland accounted for 784,000 gallons, Northern Ireland for 87,000 gallons, and England and Wales for the remainder.