(Sundry Manufactures)
Soap, Candles, Glue,
etc.
Interviews

Tallow : Soap : Glue manufacture.

Census returns 1891.	Persons.
1). Tallow Chandler, candle Grease mnfr.	886
2). Soap Boiler, mker.	624
3). Glue Size gelatine Isinglass	163
4). Manure mnfr. Bone Baker	79
5). Other Dealers in above	443
	2195.

Included in the above are.

1). Dogcake: biscuit maker.

3). Paste mker.

5). Sausage skin : Blood refiners.

Tallow, Soap, Glue

Chap iii. Sect. 33. [21]

Name	Occupation.	Page.
J. Calderwood.	Manager Prices Candle Co.	1
Stevens	Manager Fields soap & candles	4
Wilkie & Soames.	Thames Soap & candle Wks.	10.
Knight & Son.	Soap, candle & Oil works.	12.
W. Cock.	workman in Fields.	17.
W. Foster.	Peter Brooms Glue Works.	20.
Nelson Dale & Co	Gelatine	27.
Vickers	Isinglass makers.	28.
Sallett & Co.	Soap makers.	31.
W. O'Donnell.	workmen in Cook's soap.	34.
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H. Preece vs.	Sausage skin Dressers.	43.
T.D. Tucker vs.	Spratts. dog Biscuit Works.	44.

J. Calderwood. of Price's Candle Co.

To make candles.

July 19th G.H.D

J. Calderwood. manager to Prices patent Candle & Soap Company. Battersea - not far from Clapham junction Station.

Mr. Calderwood was most friendly: took 8 forms & will have each filled up for each department.
He will also send the actual wages & hours for all members of the firm for a given busy & slack week.
He took me round the works himself & explained the diff.t processes. & gave book.

Candles are made from
Tallow. Wax. Paraffin
Spermaceti Stearin
These matters must be melted & boiled with dilute acid in order to be cleaned & are then ready for the candlemaker.
Stearin is the name given to the hard fat obtained from tallow by pressing away

The manufacture of soap.

the oil; the stearin is then melted and used for candles.

Soap is tallow mixed with alkali & then boiled. The bottom sinks to dregs & the top is skimmed, the middle layer is poured off in to square iron receptacles with sides that can be removed. When cool the sides are taken off & the large cake of soap is left in the middle. The cake is marked off at given intervals then a man places a bit of wire round at the different notches & so the large cake is cut into slabs. The slabs are then taken & put into a machine & finally cut into the form in which household soap is needed for household use. ie in long bars.

If toilet soap is needed, this same soap is re-melted & again refined & then scented & coloured cut into small cakes and stamped.

Seasons.

Seasons. In the candle trade the slack season is from April to August both inclusive

Make for stock in slack season.

as the demand is naturally small when the days are long. This slackness affects the packers more than the Candlemakers inasmuch as we make for stock during the slack season.

The men employed by us in preparing Cocoa nut oil & Stearine are employed only from Oct to March as this material cannot be worked in mild weather. The men when they leave us find employment chiefly in connection with house decoration as paper hangers, plasterers etc.

Regularity.

Regularity. About 90 pc. of those employed in our manufacturing depts have regular work.

Shifting.

The rest have 6 months full work & then go elsewhere.

Shifting only to a small extent.

1891.

1891. The candle trade was above the average in Spring 1891. as the tradesmen laid in large stocks in the prospect of an advance in price.

Training

Training. The usual plan is for lads to be taken on who are fully qualified by the time they reach 20 yrs.

Loss of capacity

Loss of capacity as a rule not before 60. We have had several men able for good work up to or even over 70. years of age.

Field's Soap & candle Works.

Hours of work

full week : 60 hrs

July. 14th G. H. D.

Mr Stevens manager to Fields soap & candle Co. Upper Marsh. Lambeth.

Manufacturers of candles from Bees wax: spermaceti stearin & paraffin. Toilet soap & oil soap: bleaching bees wax & manufacture of stearin.

Hours. A day is counted as 10 hours.
Dinner 1 hour.
Breakfast ½ "
Preparation ½ "
Saturdays are paid as a full 10 hours day: work finishes at 1 – Very little work was actually done on Sat as the men wasted their time in sweeping up & produced very little.
Overtime is paid for Sat work after 1 PM.
Bank Holidays: Good Friday & Xmas are also paid for.

Night work.

Seasons.

for candles.

Soap.

Regularity.

Alternations.

Shifting.

Night work is worked when there is a press in winter & in summer as the weather is cooler & candle-making is easier. It is paid ⅕ more.

Seasons Sep to March are the busy months for candles.

Soap is more used in summer than in winter though to balance this fancy soaps are in demand at Xmas. But people do not wash sufficiently more in summer to make it possible to equalise the slackness in candles.

~~All~~ Men have regular work: // the boys are turned off every summer for 4 months & some of the men also these go painting & bricklaying & follow what are know as the summer trades (So also Prices Manager).

Soap & candle men do not interchange thought. neither is a skilled trade

The Bulk of the Trade may be said to be the same now as formerly but it

Extent of skill.

Inducements to remain with the firm.

is not so profitable.

Extent of skill. Candlemaking can be learned in a fortnight: & fancy d: in two months the only skill required is in turning on the hot & cold water - getting the moulds to the right heat before the wax is poured in & then turning on the cold gradually so that the wax cools equably.

Is taught by youths being put to work with men, very often a young man will turn out more work than an old one but his pay will not be so high. He will not begin to earn mens wages until he is 20.

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As he gets older & has been with the firm a longer time he will earn higher wages, hence there is considerable inducement to stay.

They are building a new Factory & transferring their soap manf: from Battersea so everything was in a mess.

They were putting in some of the newest

Hand moulding.

Machine moulders.

machinery & still had some of the oldest in use because the old men did not know how to manipulate the new.

The old way by "Hand frame, consisting of a number of moulds fixed, tip downwards in a wooden frame surmounted by a falling trough. The wicks cut to the proper length each supplied with a loop were pulled upwards through the tip orifices by means of a light rod armed with a hook at the end were then fixed by means of a short twist wire passed through the loop. The wicks were then pulled taut at the tip end secured by means of wooden plugs driven home by a mallet."...

The new Candle moulds are made of pewter & are in two parts the one forming the body of the candle & the other the tip piece. Candles are moulded with the bottom upwards when cold are forced out of the moulds by means of the movable tip piece which is fixed to a piston rod.

The making of Wax candles.

Of Sealing wax.

Wax candles. were also made here; they are almost the only makers in London chiefly for RC. churches. & very few private houses. mostly in the country.

These candles would either stick to the mould or crack when they left them if they were made by machinery.

The wicks are tied to a wooden loop hanging over a vessel of melted wax, the wax is taken up in a scoop & poured over each wick in turn. When the candles are of a certain size they are inverted, for they naturally become rather thicker at the bottom than at the top. & pouring begins again.

When pouring done, the candles are laid on a marble slab, sprinkled with water & then rolled & finally passed on to another who cuts them to the right length & with a piece of wood shapes the tips.

A large wax candle which they had just made 8 ft. high. 4 in in diameter wd. cost 30/-

Sealing wax. The firm had originally started as sealing wax makers but had gradually taken

Effect of mourning at the Spanish court.

Sealing wax making in 3 generations.

They allowed me to copy wages & hours for the whole firm.
Great improvement as regards drink.
Seen by the fact that so much better time is now kept.

or candle & soap. Sealing wax cannot now be made profitably by hand so they only make for themselves & have very few orders in England. "Spain is their great customer & they look out for the chance of the Spanish court going into mourning. The Spaniards use a great amount of black wax & they always get the order."

Sealing wax is made from shellac: there is a certain amount of mercury in it which is said to be unhealthy & produce dropsy. The man making it had succeeded his father who had succeeded his father, who had been the worked on piece. till old age.
The wax is poured in to moulds of the size required it is then polished by slightly melting the surfaces.

Fields was turned into a company (2) 2 years ago. they pay seemingly high wages but the men do not appear to be sharply looked after. The work was rather slack. Mr Stevens admitted it & said he was going to introduce piece work in each dept.

Seasons.

Regularity.

Shifting.

July. 17th. G. H. D.

Messrs Wilkie & Soames. Thames Soap & candle works, Greenwich. Maze Hill station. 15 min walk from.

Wages & hours. have been sent for every member of the business for an av. week.

Seasons. candles in winter & soap in summer. though the increase in soap is not very marked.

They make a large amount of yellow soap which is sold for use & also to other makers for further refinement.

Regularity The men have fairly regular work. The worst only being discharged in slack time. Boys are taken on to help in busy times & sent off in slack.

Those not regularly employed get about 8 mths work.

Shifting. There is none either from department to dept or from one business to another business.

Little skill required.

Rise since dock strike.

No export.

Double shifts in winter.

Boys.

Seasons are regular: before 91 & after being about the same.

Skill can be acquired in 2 or 3 months.

It cannot be called a skilled trade.

Those men like engineers & stokers who belong to recognized unions are paid their union Rate.

Candlemen themselves have no union that Mr Soames knew of.

Since the great dock strikes 10pc rise of wages was given in the cutting room.

London & the neighbourhood are the only parts supplied, there is no export. (Price being the only firm in London who did much exporting he said)

No foreigners are employed.

In winter double shifts of 12 hours are worked in the candle & paraffin refinery departments.

Boys. work for men & are paid by the men & ultimately admitted into the factory. They are all discharged in the middle of April for 4 months.

Overtime is paid at 5d an hour for men who ordinarily earn over £1.10 per week.

Hours per day

till 2 on Sats.

Seasons.

Regularity.

The gang piecework system.

July 19th. G. H. D.

Knight & Sons: soap: candle & oil works.
Silvertown. Tidal Basin station G.E.R.
on an introduction from Mr J. Calderwood.

Full working day is from 6 AM until 6 PM.
½ hour for breakfast.
1 hour for dinner.
Those who like are generally done by
5 oclock.
Summer is the season for soap: Knights
primrose is the best as shewn by the
fact that he gets the highest price for
it in the trade.
All men have regular work according to the
amount to be done
They work in gangs: so much soap is
given out to be done at so much a ton
they will not admit a lazy man to
their gang & so the work is brisk,
if a man does not do his full share
the whole takes longer to do & the

Shifting common.

Dip candles.

Dying out.

Trade 1891 before since.

No Unions.

Boys are taught.

bad worker has to go

Shifting is done from the soap to the melting rooms as there is more in one depot or the other.

Mr Knight only makes dip candles which are gradually dying out; they have been superseded by cheap oil just as the expensive wax have been by electric light. The middle class candles remain for ordinary uses & these he does not make.

The bulk of the trade is probably the same as in 1891. & the years before but profits are less.

Sunlight soap is said to turn out 600 tons a week, this competes in London & the competition among the London houses is very great.

There are no Unions in the trade: some of the men used to belong to the Union but are not known to do so any longer.

The business is taught to boys who learn in two or 3 months. They work at a given

The oil mill.

Depts for collecting stuff.

Higher wages to get better men.

weekly wage & are not allowed to go into piecework until they are past 18.

The oil mill is busy in winter & slack in summer :: oil cakes are not wanted this summer is an exception (p93). there has been so little hay that the orders for oil cakes have been continuous.
Oil is made by crushing cottonseed then heating it & then pressing out the oil. On the oil being pressed out the cakes are left & become oil cakes : the edges which have not been pressed are cut off by a special machine & then pressed again.

Mr Knight has departments for collecting slaughterhouse fat & kitchen sweepings in every part of London.
These bring in their tale which is mixed & melted & tallow produced : this is pressed again & stearin is the result.

He pays higher wages than is usual in the neighbourhood in order to get the pick

The superannuation scheme.

its failure & why.

Men long employed never allowed to go into Workhouse.

of the men who come chiefly from Canning Town where there are shops (there are very few in Silvertown). The men rent about £40 cottages & sublet the rooms.

The superannuation fund which was started 6 (?) years ago has just been dissolved.

An actuary was had down & discovered that they would be largely in debt.

The limit of years was 60 if it had been 65 they wd have been solvent.

Men were employed only on the understanding that they paid 2/(?) per week into the fund: this the firm found to be an infraction of the truck act.

The men were paid off with 3 pc in their money: they received the lump sum with rejoicing as if it had been a present.

The firm however never allows men to go into the workhouse & either keep them on at low wages or pension them, though when they come the men are especially told that they must not expect a pension.

The men have now a sick & burial society

Pays rather higher wages
in order to get the pick of the men.

of their own: Mr Knight has built a recreation room where there are lectures & classes. & billiard rooms: the men are not so very keen now that the novelty has worn off.

Bank Holidays. Good Friday. } are paid full wages.
Boxing day. Xmas

Mr Knight said that it paid him to give the men higher wages than any of the surrounding factories (Martineau's sugar: Anglo continental nitrate) for he got the pick of the men, he had less trouble from strikes & his men kept better time.

They certainly had a better set of men now than formerly & it was perhaps more this than anything else which made the diminution in drink & drunkenness so remarkable within the last 15 years.

Workman in Field's candle works.

Day work.

Wages.

Hours.

Board & lodging for 10/-

Rents in Battersea & Lambeth.

July 24. S.H.D.

Mr Lock. 20 Carrie Street. Everett Street Battersea. introduction from Mrs Tait a workman in Field's candle works.

Has worked with Field's since 1877.
He once got the sack which prevents him from now earning higher wages though he gets a rise every year.

Day work is the rule in the shop.
A few men work piece in the candle room but are sorry that they ever did so.

Mr Lock is paid 3/2 per day of 10 hours.
Saturdays are paid for as a whole day though the men only work 5 hours.
∴ he gets 19/- per week.

He gets board & lodging for 10/- per week. is a single man & lives in one room.
(The rents in Lambeth are 6/6 for a two roomed cottage; 4/6 for one single front room).

Piece work.

No shifting.

Boys taught.

Distances men come to work.

One week he has day & one week he has night work.

Piece work. Those on piece earn about 5d an hour, they often work 18 hours a day in winter. They are paid 6d an hour for overtime which begins after 10 hours. In winter they earn about 48s per week.

Now, in summer, they only get four days per week & make 20s. Before they decided on piece work these men were earning a regular wage of 30s.

Mr Cook did not favour piece or overtime work.

There is no shifting from department to dept.

The busy season is from October to the end of January.

Boys are taught the business by being put to work with men: they are paid by the Firm directly 6s 7s or 8s. per week. There is no skill really required.

Some of the men come great distances to their work. Of two men in his own dept one comes from Clapham, another

Was brought up as a
carriage spring maker.

from East Grinstead & Mr Lock himself
lives two miles from the Factory.

Mr Lock was brought up as a ~~piecework~~ carriage
spring maker but his eyesight failed
so he went into candles. His brother
is now earning a piece at carriage
springs £3 ~~to £4~~ a week regularly.

The whole body of men at Field get a rise
in their wages every year.

Mr Lock was in a hurry as he had with appl: that
w. but wd see me again after Aug.
13.

Mr. Foster. glue size.

Hours.

Seasons.

Causes.

July 25th. S.H.D.

Mr. Foster. manager of Peter Brown's glue & size. Verney Road Canal Bridge Old Kent Road.

Hours. 10 ½ per day:
6 AM — 6 PM.
½ hour for breakfast
1 hr for lunch.
until 2 on Saturdays for women.
4 ——— — men
} 60 ½ hours per week.

Seasons.

Summer busy.
Winter slack.
Size season begins in the middle of March goes on increasing until June is about the same through July & Aug. Slacks off in October.
This is in accordance with the demands of the decorators: people have their houses done up for the season or for the winter.

All Irish employed.

Season begins after St. Patrick's day.

The number of days in busy & slack 6 months that glue & size were made.

Summer. →
Winter →

Summer
Winter.

Womens wages: av. for summer & winter.

The men & women who are all Irish always count on working full time for full wages after St. Patrick's day 17th March. The work is too beastly for any English workman to consent to do it. Formerly Irishmen were specially imported; now they come of themselves & monopolise the glue industry in London.

Taking the last year.

Glue was boiled on	134	out of a possible 152 days.
	105	152
	239	304
Size	115	152
	72	152
	187	304

The firm gives their men 9 days compulsory holiday & pays them for 3 of them ie Xmas, Boxing day & Whitsunday.

Mr. Foster will send wages for all his hands for two actual weeks.

Womens wages averaged he said.

8/3 per wk. for the winter 6 months
11/3 . . . . . summer . . . .

Irregularity of work.

Not more than a quarter of the men in the Lodge Trade get a full years (ie 51 wks) work.

In the slack time he tries to give the men 3 days work per wk or per fortnight in rotation as he can manage it.

A reduction of 2/- is recognized in the trade in winter time for all men earning over 15/-: 1 of 1/- for all women.

Shifting except among Carers & stokers.

Shifting. Carers do not shift for they must know how to put the right amount of chemicals for washing & getting rid of the lime in the fleshings.

Stokers. do not shift.

All the rest shift as occasion requires it is purely unskilled labourers work.

eg. the women attend to turning over the glue in the drying sheds in the morning & come downstairs to the size which is ready from boiling in the afternoon.

Condition of Trade 1890–1893.

Trade was good in 1890. ordinary in 91. worse in 92. ordinary in 93.

No skill required.

The most skilled part of the work i.e. curers can be learned in 2 or 3 weeks; the rest is entirely unskilled.

Men useless after 50 years.

Men are quite useless after 50. years of age supposing they have been in the business all their lives. The stock they must work in makes them rheumatic; there is nothing about the smell that is really unhealthy, all the matter used is thoroughly cleaned & killed by lime.

Hard life.

There are heavy weights to carry both for men & women so that they must be strong.

But few makers in London.

There are only 3 makers of glue.
5 - —.. size in London.
Brockwell makes both rags & size.
Johnson, Cole, Brizer & Cawdrey makes size.

The Manufacture of Glue & Size.

Glue & size. are both made from the inside parings of skins after they have been limed

Glue is boiled longer & sold dry.
Size ..... shorter time & sold as a jelly.

These inside parings are sent in a limey state to the Glue & Size maker, then they

The manufacture of glue & size.

They are washed in a revolving ~~tub~~ barrel & some of the lime washed out: then they are treated with acid to counteract the remaining lime. This is done in large wooden tubs which are continually stirred by two men with long wooden poles.

The parings are then perfectly clean & fresh & the gelatine in them can be liberated by boiling. This is done in large pans with lids (no digesters are used in London): they are boiled in water to make size & in Mothers liquor to make glue.

Mothers liquor is the liquid that remains after boiling parings 3 times. Additional parings are boiled in this liquid instead of water to make glue

Glue is boiled until sufficiently strong (usually 8 hours): then it is ran into vats, is treated with an antiseptic & allowed to settle to clarify. It is then ran off into coolers which are long wooden troughs & cools for 3 days. Then the cakes or gobbets as they are technically called are cut with wire

March made, east wind
glue the best.

to the required size: the top & bottom pieces are scum & dregs & are no good but must be returned & remelted – Mr Foster amended this by saying instead of 'no good', 'not readily marketable'

The cells are then spread upon string nets & exposed to the air (this causes the markings on bits of glue). They are turned at least once a day, for if the string gets embedded the glue at once begins to rot, until they are dry, sometimes days weeks or months according to the weather. March glue dried in a strong East wind is the best.

The dirt is now washed off & the transparency shown by washing the cakes in hot water & scrubbing with a brush.

Then they are stoved to become thoroughly dry.

(The 3 women who scrub the glue are paid on piece but they do not make any more than the other women on daywork).

No glue is made in London from horns, bones & hoofs. The horns are sold to make combs. The refuse is sold as manure (i.e. the dregs)

The Best glue.

Mr Foster's appreciation
of Mr Booth's pension scheme.

The best & strongest glue shd be medium dark & transparent. A very light glue is of necessity weak. The French make their glue as a bye product from bones by a chemical process but this is not done in London.
The best glue is made from hide or skin parings & also from the back of the leg bones of animals.
Neat's foot oil comes from the back part of the leg of a calf & calves foot jelly also.

Mr Foster wd not have dreamt of giving any information if he had not been reading of pension schemes. He had read & considered all & finally concluded that Mr Booth's was the best, & to shew his appreciation he was anxious to give all information he could.
He will send full wages details in 10 days

Nelson Dale & Co.

Gelatine from a nigger's skin.

A man by staying all his life in the firm will ultimately earn 25/-

July 26th S.H.D.

Nelson, Dale & Co. gelatine makers 16 Dowgate Hill. EC.

They do not make in London but at Warwick but all the business part is in London. Mr Nelson very friendly gave an introduction to Mr Vickers in Devonshire Square.

Nelson Dale employs boys chiefly: there is no skill required. All their gelatine they make is from Buffalo hides. But any skin will make gelatine especially the human.
A friend of Mr Nelsons sent him home from the ~~canadian forests~~ Kaffir land the skin off the forearm of a nigger telling him to make a purse of it as is the custom of the Kaffirs.
This he wd not do, but turned it into gelatine, & very excellent gelatine it made.
They are by far the largest people in England.
Very little is made in London.
Gave introduction to Mr Vickers.

Vickers. Isinglass.

No seasons.

Isinglass from Sturgeons bladders.

July 26th. G. H. W.

Vickers. 6 Devonshire Square Bishopsgate street on an introduction from Mr Nelson. Isinglass makers.

They are the largest makers of Russian isinglass in London. Other people only prepare the rough bits & sell to brewers, about 1 pint is put into every barrel of beer & 2 pints into the cheap country beers.

There are no seasons now: there used to be regular seasons for the Russian, Penang & Bombay but now the Bombay & Penang arrive regularly throughout the year. The Russian comes from St Petersburg in the beginning of June (as soon as the ice breaks up).

The best isinglass comes from the Caspian, it is Sturgeons bladders unstained by blood.

There is no bleaching or manufacture.

The bladder must be cut free from the surrounding skin which is a somewhat skilled part as some of the glass is often cut

No skill required.

Any fish bladders will do.

Used for clarifying beer. 1. viii. 93.

away with the skin by unskilled workmen.
The requisite skill can be acquired in 3 weeks.
The second quality gelatine is a sturgeon's bladder blood stained. The blood sinks in & the pores & can never be cleared. It might perhaps be washed off when fresh but Mr Vickers has never suggested this as it suits him to have different qualities.
The bladders of any fish will do, Mr V. has never been able to discover from what fishes the bladders actually are taken.
Wages are up to 24/- per week.
There are only 5 Isinglass makers in London employing from 12 to 14 men.
London is the centre of the English Trade
Coarse isinglass in the form called ~~fining~~ is mixed with sulphurous acid & gradually filled up with water until the cask is full, a thick viscous liquid is the result a certain quantity of which is put into every barrel of beer, this settles down through the beer collecting any impurities and clarifying it.

Regular work.

Regular business.

Competing houses.

Uses of fine isinglass

Capacity until any age.

Process of manufacture

The best is quite white
Qualities vary till quite brown.

All men have regular work.
Business is the same now & has been the same for the last 30 or 40 years.
The men are paid by the week & go on until any age provided that they are willing not to earn more than 24/- per week. They are paid weekly & regularly whether there is anything for them to do or no (They had just been having a holiday ∵ machinery wanted mending & had been given full wages.
Mess. Wigans : Petty's : Gridley. are 3 houses connected with brewing who make their own isinglass : they are very jealous of one another
Fine isinglass is used also for refining wine & making court plaister & by chemists.
The best is that made from Russian sturgeons.
There is one man past 67 still working.
The bladders are received in cases packed under pressure, at the docks where they must be opened they spring up & another case must be placed over them. Then they are taken out & soaked & made soft then pared to take off skin & then put in the cutting machines to be cut according to fineness.

Dallett & Co. Soapmakers.

Regular work.

No seasons.

Men shift.

Very bad trade in last 3 years.

July 27th. G. H. W.

Dallett & Co. Soapmakers. Putney Bridge Row Putney.

Will send details of wages & hours on receipt of printed forms.

They make primrose soap chiefly. They used to make candles, but do not do so any more.

They employ 34 men & boys all exc 3 on working on time.

They get 52 weeks work in the year. When they want more men they take on more & then turn them off. 34 represents the permanent staff.

The men shift from dept. to dept. as occasion requires.

Trade has been very bad these last 3 years: Dallett will not consent to do a large trade without profit like so many other soapmakers. His business is small but he will have a profit: it is even

Competition of Sunlight Soap.

Hours of work.

Summer.

Winter.

35

Workmen are an ungrateful & selfish race

getting less – perhaps owing to his own stupidity he said – he did not know what to do to make it better.

Sunlight Soap was beating everyone out of the market even the London makers.

Sunlight Soap was now of a very good quality & the lasses thoroughly deserved the success they had gained with their daring & advertisement.

Hours. were from 6 to 6. with ½ for meals.

in winter the men worked from 8.30 – 6 at the same wage: This had been brought about by Mr D. having one cold morning come down himself at 6: he found it so very beastly that he thought the men must find it so also: he then settled that in dark or wet & cold weather the men need not come down until 8.30.

But workmen were an ungrateful lot, tried to be independent, spoke politely to your face & blackguarded you behind your back. They were a selfish lot & though Mr D said

Manf. of Soap & Candles.

Men live near Factory.

No Unions.

Is taught to boys.

Want of technical education in England.

that a certain amount of selfishness was no fault in a man yet that that shewn by his men in grabbing for favours and better places was an extremity of selfishness.

"God knows what is to happen to us, I had utopian ideas when I was young, but now I believe that no individual has power to reform the world, men are too selfish."

Soap is made by treating tallow with alkali
Candles by pressing tallow or paraffin.

The men all live in the neighbourhood of the Factory he thought 3/ 4/. 5/ & 6/. were paid for 2 roomed cottages. It was an expensive neighbourhood. he said

No men he thought belonged to Unions, a few of the biggest fools had once done so but had since left.

Carmen boys are put at 7/. per week to learn.
To be a good soap maker requires the labour of a lifetime. Boys learn their work in 1 month
Technical education is what is wanted, esp. in chemistry, a little latin & Greek is no education, we are beaten by the German: will send wages.

Wages.

Regular work.

Seasons make no difference.

No shifting.

Carmens boys are taught

Cost of houses in the district.

July 28th. G.H.S.

Mr. O'Donell. Irishman in the employment of Cook the large soapmaker in Bromley. Lived at 132 High Street. Bromley.

Wages. range from 20/- to 24/-
Before the Dock strike 18/- 22/- was the rule & is still so in some of the bad small firms in the neighbourhood
All men have regular work & are paid the same in both busy & slack seasons.
They work for stock during slack time.
Summer is the busy time for soap
There is no shifting.
There is a large hall in the works where the men breakfast & dine.
Carmen's boys are taught to do the work.
The men live in Stratford or Bow within a mile ~~or two~~ of the Factory.
Two roomed houses cost 4/6 or 6/- per week.
The 5 roomed house in which he lived cost 9/-

Men work till any age.

Mr O'Donnell is allowed to do political registration during working hours by Mr Cook who is a Home Ruler.

He lived in a dirty messy backroom, his study, littered with old newspapers & the walls covered with pictures of the pope & fancy pictures of Irish heroes, cursing Protestants. Smell of drains was appalling.

Said the men could work & did so long age between 60 & 70.

J. Green. Sheet Gelatine

No regular season

Regular work:

Introduction of waxed paper.

Very little skill.

Its use.

July 31. Interviewed by Mr. Bickell.

J. Green. Sheet Gelatine Factory 44 Ridley Road Kingsland. Had refused to make an appointment at his works but ~~broke~~ in as he happened to be passing.

Three Boys are employed to one man
He has now 6 boys.

There is no regular season: it depends on Fashion
He is busy all the year round.

The men have regular work: the Boys leave when they need higher wages.

About 1891 the waxed paper came in & this caused a great falling off in the demand for sheet gelatine. Trade is now improving though Germans are now making the gelatine which 10 years ago they used to buy here.

Very little skill required.

Only 3 or 4 other houses in London in a very small way of business.

This sheet gelatine is made by pouring the liquid on to glass evenly, it is taken off by boys, is cut to do up crackers.

E. R. Cook. Soap, Tallow, Bonemanure.

Wages. Wages increase with length of stay & not according to measure of skill.

Hours.

No man received without a certificate.

Seasons.

August 3rd. G. H. D.

E. Rider Cook. Soap works. Bow. on an introduction from J. Calderwood.

They are Tallow melters. Soap makers & Bone manure makers.

Wages. 23/- for first class men (generally amounts to 25/- with overtime).
18/- to 20/- for second class men.

Hours. 6 AM to 6 PM. which ought to be 7–7. but are now changed by the desire of the men.

No man is received without a certificate of ~~employment~~ character from his last employer. He must then sign a copy of the rules (which Mr Cook gave).

Seasons. Soap is busy from April until October and slack for the other 6 months. Tallow & manure are regular all the year round though bone is delivered most of all in the spring but is manufactured in the winter.

All men have regular work.

They shift from Dept to Dept.

Bulk of Trade much the same now as formerly but not profits.

Not much skill required

to enable spring orders to be met.

Regularity. All men have regular work ie 52 weeks work in the year. No new men are taken on during a slack time but none are discharged. If there is not enough work for them they are set to cleaning the floors, whitewashing, mending the roads belonging to the firm etc.

Shifting. The men are capable for any dept though of course they will acquire some knack for a particular branch. They are kept to one dept as far as possible but when necessary they change about.

Trade. The bulk of the soap trade is probably the same now as in 91 & before that year, but profits are less, there is so much competition & Sunlight soap has cut down the prices.
Mr. Cook. exports his soap abroad & to every part of England.

Skill. Soapmaking is an unskilled trade, practised & not skilled labourers are those who are needed. No particular

Capacity

Provision for incapacity of age.

The Sick Club.

training is necessary. Some men will develope a knack for cutting soap or preventing the coppers from boiling over but this cannot be taught to everyone.

Capacity depends on general health. Some men can work for 50 years beginning at 16 or 20. Others cannot. When a man gets beyond his work he is called up & told he is not earning sufficient for his masters.
This he generally (sic) admits & is told that his wages will be reduced from 23/- to 20/- & that he may spend his time with a spade tidying up. When he gets altogether incapable he is pensioned by the firm for 10/- a week.
No workman who has been with them many years is ever discharged.

Club. The men have a sick club which they manage themselves. Rule xiv. That E.R. Cook be president.
All men who do not belong to a Benefit Soc or Societies that will pay them at least 14/- per week when sick, must belong.

Rules of the sick club.

to this Society, either as full members or half members.

Each man who has subscribed for 12 wks is entitled to 10/- per wk. If by reason of an accident he is disabled he may receive benefits even though he has not subscribed 12 wks.

No allowance made for illnesses of less than 3 days.

Rule iv. 'That the amount of subscription be 2d weekly but men not in any other club shall pay 3d weekly, to entitle them to the services of the Societies Doctor. That the Firm may deduct the weekly payments together with all fines from wages; but for convenience other modes of collection can be adopted.

Members shall receive 10/- per wk for 12 wks. + 5/- for a further period of 12 wks if still ill.

Boys earning 15/- under pay 1d receive 5/- + 2/6.

Funeral allowance £5 + £2.10.0.

No sick allowance shall be paid if it is proved to have been caused by immoral conduct, drunkenness, quarrelling, fighting or any other unlawful act

Excerpts from the Rules.

Overtime rates.

Rents.

Two members shall visit each sick member once a week.

A workman leaving the Firm before he is entitled to sick Benefits shall not have any of his payments returned to him: same applies to any member who has been dismissed.

If a new man seem to be suffering from infirmities which may cause him to become a burden on the society the Committee may, before he has been on twelve weeks, have him examined by the Society's Doctor.
Such action to be reported to the Firm.

Overtime.

Mr Cook did not favour overtime though in the Books a fair number seemed to be working 2 or more hours overtime per week. Rates were 3d. 4d. 5d. per hour for OT. according to wages.

Rents. The better men live at Forest Gate come in by tram & go back on foot or vice versa. They rent a whole house & garden & then sublet it to live rent free

East End Labour after the Dock Strikes.

Two rooms cost 3/6 to 4/- in the neighbourhood & are inhabited by the other men.

Strikes. They have had no trouble: the result as far as they were concerned is that the men are allowed 1p instead of the 10d. they used to get as beer money.

(Mrs Donelly said the rise had been from 16/- to 18 & from 2/- to 23/-)

& the men work from 6-6. instead of 7-7.

If a man is not in the Factory at 6. he is shut out till 8.30. if he loses several quarter days he is warned & if he continues to offend he is dismissed.

East End Labour & dock strikes. Said it was most remarkable the effect the greater regularity of work since the strikes had had on the East End workers. The better men were now regularly employed & had become still better, the worse men were worse off than before & had to starve.

Sausage Skin Dressers.

Aug. 13th G. H.

From letter from H. Preece. 16 Grange Walk Bermondsey. SE.

"I made enquiries in Deptford today (Aug 4). re the Sausage Skin Dressers Union & find the same is broken up. The Strike completely disorganised the men & they never rallied." The late Secy is in Birkenhead.

"A considerable number of the men who were originally employed in the trade at Deptford have left the market & those engaged now are mostly "Germans" (sic).

T. D. Tucker. employed for 10 years in Spratts Factory.

Divisions of work.

Wages.

Hours.

Aug. 21. G. H. D.

Thomas D Tucker. 50 Russell Scotts Bds Rotherhithe. Employed for about 10 years in Spratts factory for dog biscuits, was dismissed for having led the strike there in 1891.

Divisions of Work.

1. Oven work.
2. Machine. 20/.
3. Brake - (rolling out the dough) 22/.
4. Drying floor. (men used to work nude both summer & winter on account of the heat).
5. Flour Floor.
6. Meal shed. (where the men grind poultry food.
7. Medicine Room. (3 or 4 men only employed here for soap & dog medicine store).

Wages. 4d. hour.
5d. hour overtime.

Hours. 6 AM. until 4.30. After 4.30 count as overtime.

Seasons.

All have regular work.

Earnings

Shifting.

The Normal working week was 60 hours, he said the average working week was 80-90 hrs.

Seasons. busy in August & ~~January~~.
Slack. in September.
In busy times he frequently worked 96½ hours. & sometimes 108.

Regularity. all men had regular work throughout the year, a few used to be taken on to manage the busy season but it was generally met by overtime work.

Earnings. he said the men would earn on an average 20/- & that he used to earn about 26/-
The Dock strike effected a rise of ~~from~~ 2/- a week & gave them time & a quarter as overtime rate.

Shifting. men shifted to every dept: Mr Tucker was equally at home in every dept & was never paid more in one than in another.
Men came to Spratts from Clarke & Peak Frans biscuit Factory but he never knew them leave Spratts for

Skill.

Business taught to boys.

Sick club & benefits.

Rents.

To make Dog biscuits.

for another house.

He would consider that it was a skilled trade

The business was taught to boys, a boy w^d be put down to work with 3 men & so learnt.

Mr T. required 4 or 5 years to learn the whole business.

Sick club. 6^d per wk. subscrip.

1/- death levy for member or member's wife.

10/- for 8 wks sickness 5/- afterwards

£5 at member's death.

The majority of the men lived near the Factory others came from Bow & Whitechapel.

Mr T. paid 4/9 wk for 2 rooms in Vine Buildings. top storey. where he lived with his wife & 4 children.

Dog biscuits. are made of Flour, beetroot, & buffalo meat fr. S America.

The beetroot is chopped in a machine & mixed up with the Flour, the Buffalo meat which comes dried in long coils, is then

Of. Flour, beetroot, & buffalo.

Girls & Boys now employed.

chopped & the whole is put into a mixer, the mixture is then rolled by a machine called a Brake & cut off in sheets.
These sheets are put in another mach & rolled thinner & as the lager comes out it is stamped & cut. (Women who do this are called machine men).
The biscuits are then put on boards in lots of 6 & taken to the oven where they are put singly on traveling plates to bake, for 40 minutes.
Spratts have four straight ovens 100 ft long the biscuit goes in at one end & tumbles out into baskets at the other.
& 2 round ovens.
The biscuits are then taken up to the drying rooms & laid over steam pipes to dry. They are then ready for use.
Spratts also make. Cabin biscuits. a better class
& 'Common round' or sailors biscuit

Since the strike a great number of boys women have been taken on at 10/- to do the men

Unhealthiness of oven & drying room work.

Life of Mr Tucker & family.

work. The oven work & drying room are the hardest & most unhealthy. Mr T. did not think anyone who began the work as a boy wd be able to live beyond 40. The oven work is so trying that men cannot keep at it for more than 1 hr at a time: they then must always have ½ hr off.

Mr Tucker formerly at Spratt's Biscuit factory is at present getting casual work as a builders labourer [he has had 3 children (once he had 7). his eldest is 10 & youngest 8 mths. The eldest a girl was brought up at St Olave's boys school Bermondsey].

He will not let his wife help by charing, says she is too valuable at home & it wd disgrace his manhood to let his wife work while he was able bodied. He wd emigrate but it wd. cost £20 for his wife & children to do so.

He will send the acct book he has kept of work for 3 years (if he can find it). & rules at present in force at Spratts.

1987

B