
 THE LAUNDRY, CLEANING AND DYEING TRADES.

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Introductory.*

The Tables on pages 345 to 348 are based on Returns received from firms in Great Britain and Northern Ireland whose business in 1924 consisted wholly or mainly in laundry work and the cleaning and dyeing of garments. The number of such separate Returns was 3,697. About 1,340 firms to which schedules were sent did not furnish Returns, but these firms for the most part had very small establishments and they 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 3,500 persons and that their net output probably did not exceed £300,000.

Summary of results.—The following table shows the main results of the Censuses of 1924 and 1907, comparisons between the figures for the two years being subject to the qualifications mentioned in the next paragraph. No particulars for the year 1912 are available, as laundry work was excluded from the Census of that year.

* See also the Notes on pp. vii–xiv.

Particulars.	Unit.	1924.	1907.
Value of work done (Gross output)	£'000	21,050	9,380
Cost of materials used	"	4,462	2,071
Paid for work given out to other firms	"	255	100
Net output	"	16,333	7,209
Average number of persons employed	No.	120,322	131,521
Net output per person employed	£	136	55
Mechanical power available :—			
Prime movers	H.P.	45,899	39,351
Electric motors driven by purchased electricity	"	18,094	(not recorded)

Qualifications affecting comparisons.—In considering the above table and the other tables in this Report which show figures for the two 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 Census of 1907 covered the whole of Great Britain and Ireland, but that of 1924 applied only to Great Britain and Northern Ireland. According to the Census of Production taken by the Government of the Irish Free State in respect of the year 1926, the total value of work done in the Laundry, Cleaning and Dyeing Trade in that year was returned as £470,000, and the average number of persons employed as 2,650.

(3) The particulars shown for both years almost completely cover power laundries, but they are exclusive of a large number of hand laundries, the names of whose owners were included in the official list of Occupiers of Factories and Workshops. This is more especially the case in the Census of 1924, since proprietors of hand laundries were not pressed to furnish Returns to that Census, while in that of 1907 an attempt was made to secure as many Returns as possible from these small establishments; while in 1924 only about 1,000 Returns from hand laundries were received, in 1907, as a result of the policy adopted, about 3,000 were received. The difference was, however, not the result of the variation in procedure alone. Apart from laundries included in the official list of Factories and Workshops, it must be remembered that, as stated in the Final Report on the First Census, "there is no official record of the large number of very small laundries where one woman or a very few women only are employed, but in such cases the weekly income of the establishment, or the amount received for work done, generally represents the equivalent of only a low rate of remuneration to the principal after wages, rent, and other charges have been defrayed." Whether the work done by establishments of this nature was of greater or less importance in 1924, in relation to the data ascertained, is not known, though it is generally believed that development in the work of power laundries has taken place which has tended to reduce the volume of hand work done.

Duplication.—The figures in the above table representing the value of work done are the aggregates of the figures recorded by the firms making Returns, and owing to the duplication involved (see the Notes on pages xi-xiv), they may over-state the value of the output of the Laundry, Cleaning and Dyeing Trades considered as a whole. The matter is discussed on page 342, where it is estimated that the value, free from duplication, of the output of these trades in 1924 was not less than £20,795,000.

Production.

Value of output.—The detailed information relating to work done in 1924 is summarised in Table II on page 345. The following statement shows, for the two censal years, the value of the different classes of work done, including not only the work done by firms which made their Returns on schedules for the Laundry, Cleaning and Dyeing Trades but also the small amounts of £8,000 and £17,000 recorded, in 1924 and 1907 respectively, for similar work done by firms whose Returns were furnished on schedules for other trades.

In addition to the work dealt with in this Report, laundry work valued, on a cost basis, at £31,000 in 1907 and £135,000 in 1924 was recorded on Returns made to the Census by Railway Companies, Army and Royal Air Force laundries, etc.* In 1907, laundry work valued at £14,000, done for customers by philanthropic institutions was also recorded; such institutions were not asked to make Returns in 1924.

Kind of work done.	1924.	1907.
	Value of work done. £'000.	Value of work done. £'000
Laundry work :—		
Fully finished	15,241	} 6,157
Semi-finished	597	
Wet-wash	238	
Not separately distinguished	730	
TOTAL—LAUNDRY WORK	16,806	6,157
Dry cleaning or dyeing	3,777	} 1,775
Valeting service	289	
Carpet beating, cleaning, etc.	150	
Laundry, cleaning, dyeing, etc., not separately distinguished	—	1,441
Other work done	36	24
TOTAL VALUE OF WORK DONE	21,058	9,397

Firms were instructed to state, as the value of work done, the actual amounts charged to customers, less discounts, and payments for postage of parcels or to transport firms for delivery of goods. When delivery was carried out by the firm's own staff, the cost was not to be deducted. Particulars relating to agency work were to be excluded from the Returns.

* Such production falls within the scope of the Report on Public Utility Services, which forms part of a separate volume.

The sum of £289,000 shown against the heading *Valeting service* represents the amount received for cleaning, pressing and carrying out minor repairs to garments, as recorded by firms that specialised in such work. Many firms engaged in dry cleaning and dyeing also executed repairs, etc., to garments, beds, upholstery and similar goods sent to them to be renovated or dyed and such firms were instructed to include the cost of the repairs, etc., with the cost of cleaning or dyeing.

As in the year 1907, firms whose business was confined to carpet beating were not asked to furnish Returns to the Census office. The value of such work is included in the figures shown above only in so far as it was carried out by firms that were mainly engaged in laundry, cleaning or dyeing work.

Duplication in value of gross output.—The Returns show that the sum of £255,000 was paid in 1924 by laundry, cleaning and dyeing establishments to other firms for work given out to them. In so far as this work was done by firms in the Laundry, Cleaning and Dyeing Trades, the amount paid for it is duplicated in the gross output value of the trade (£21,050,000) through being included in the output recorded both by the firms which did the work and by those which gave it out. On the assumption that the whole of the work given out was duplicated, the value of laundry, cleaning, and dyeing work done in 1924, free from duplication, was £20,795,000, exclusive of similar work done by employees of public bodies, etc., and exclusive also, to a large extent, of that done by hand laundries. The corresponding figure for 1907, estimated on the same basis, was £9,280,000.

Cost of materials and work given out.—The cost of materials used by firms making their Returns on schedules for the Laundry, Cleaning and Dyeing Trades was returned as £4,462,000 in 1924. The corresponding figure for 1907 was £2,071,000.

The amount paid to other firms for work given out to them was returned as £255,000 in 1924 and £100,000 in 1907.

Net output.—The net output in 1924 of the firms making their Returns on schedules for the Laundry, Cleaning and Dyeing Trades (whose gross output was valued at £21,050,000) was £16,333,000, that sum representing, without duplication, the total amount by which the value of the work done exceeded the cost of the materials used and the amount paid to other firms for work given out to them.

The net output per head of persons employed in the censal year 1924 was £136 as compared with £55 in 1907.

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 Laundry, Cleaning and Dyeing Trades 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, 62,832 operatives or 57 per cent. of the total of 110,653 operatives for the trades as a whole, and their net output totalled £8,933,000 or 55 per cent. of the aggregate net output of £16,333,000 for the trades as a whole. The total wage-bill of these firms, as returned to the Ministry of Labour, was £4,905,000, representing about 55 per cent. of their aggregate net output.

Employment.

The detailed information relating to employment in 1924 is summarised in Table III on pages 346-347. The following table sets out certain particulars for that year together with those obtained in 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.

In the case of the 1924 Census, firms were instructed to include in their statement of employees the staff at any receiving office or collecting depôt owned or rented and managed by them in addition to the staff employed at the laundry or factory itself. Laundry agents, however, were not to be included as employees.

Average number.	Males.		Females.		Males and females.	
	Under 18.	All ages.	Under 18.	All ages.	Under 18.	All ages.
1924.						
Operatives	4,982	20,397	19,953	89,373	24,935	109,769
Administrative, etc. ..	103	3,989	866	6,564	969	10,553
TOTAL	5,085	24,385	20,819	95,937	25,904	120,322
1907.						
Wage earners	3,792	19,178	15,930	101,506	19,722	120,684
Salaried	219	3,629	743	7,208	962	10,837
TOTAL	4,011	22,807	16,673	108,714	20,684	131,521

The numbers of operatives recorded month by month in 1924 ranged from 1,826 above the average, in June, to 3,558 below the average, in January (see Table III B, p. 347). There was relatively little variation in numbers during the second half of the year.

Mechanical Power.

The detailed information relating to mechanical power in 1924 is summarised in Table IV on page 348. 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 ..	27,288	4,234	31,522	27,453
Steam turbines	1,627	585	2,212	1,040
Gas engines	9,982	1,366	11,348	10,057
Petrol and light oil engines ..	252	47	299	
Heavy oil engines	262	47	309	
Water power	209	—	209	
Other	—	—	—	311
TOTAL	39,620	6,279	45,899	39,351
	Kw.	Kw.	Kw.	Kw.
ELECTRIC GENERATORS :—				
Driven by—				
Reciprocating steam engines ..	2,394	961	3,355	2,180
Steam turbines	1,100	390	1,490	700
Gas engines	302	29	331	245
Petrol and light oil engines ..	22	—	22	
Heavy oil engines	4	250	254	
Water power	10	—	10	
Other prime movers	—	—	—	
TOTAL	3,832	1,630	5,462	3,125

The capacity of *electric motors* in 1924 and in 1912 was as shown below :—

Electric motors	1924.		
	Ordinarily in use.	In reserve or idle.	Total.
	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.
Driven by—			
Electricity generated in own works ..	3,330	522	3,852
Purchased electricity	16,488	1,606	18,094

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 2,594,000.

No information was obtained in the 1924 Census regarding establishments operated wholly by *rented power*; in 1907, the firms recorded as renting all the power they used were responsible for 0·2 per cent. of the total gross output of the trade.

TABLES.

I.—Summary of results.

Particulars.	Unit.	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Great Britain.	Northern Ireland.
Value of work done (Gross output)	£'000	18,385	2,372	20,757	293
Cost of materials used	"	3,860	533	4,393	69
Paid for work given out to other firms	"	233	21	254	1
Net output	"	14,292	1,818	16,110	223
Average number of persons employed	No.	104,716	13,733	118,449	1,873
Net output per person employed ..	£	136	132	136	119
Mechanical power available :—					
Prime movers	H.P.	38,551	6,215	44,766	1,133
Electric motors driven by purchased electricity	"	15,607	2,317	17,924	170

II.—Production.

Kind of work done.	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Great Britain.	Northern Ireland.
	Value.	Value.	Value.	Value.
	£'000.	£'000.	£'000.	£'000.
Laundry work :—				
Fully finished	13,831	1,194	15,025	212
Semi-finished	459	104	563	34
Wet-wash	150	80	230	8
Not separately distinguished	715	15	730	—
Dry cleaning or dyeing	2,807	929	3,736	37
Valeting service	259	30	289	—
Carpet beating, cleaning, etc. ..	131	19	150	*
Other work done	33	1	34	2
TOTAL VALUE OF WORK DONE (GROSS OUTPUT)	18,385	2,372	20,757	293

* Less than £500.

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	4,229	17,366	17,310	79,122	21,539	96,488
Administrative, etc.* ..	85	3,499	671	5,417	756	8,916
TOTAL	4,314	20,865	17,981	84,539	22,295	105,404
<i>Scotland</i> :—						
Operatives	769	2,989	2,506	9,430	3,275	12,419
Administrative, etc.* ..	9	425	175	1,027	184	1,452
TOTAL	778	3,414	2,681	10,457	3,459	13,871
<i>Great Britain</i> :—						
Operatives	4,998	20,355	19,816	88,552	24,814	108,907
Administrative, etc.* ..	94	3,924	846	6,444	940	10,368
TOTAL	5,092	24,279	20,662	94,996	25,754	119,275
<i>Northern Ireland</i> :—						
Operatives	50	305	277	1,441	327	1,746
Administrative, etc.* ..	9	65	20	120	29	185
TOTAL	59	370	297	1,561	356	1,931
<i>United Kingdom</i> :—						
TOTAL	5,151	24,649	20,959	96,557	26,110	121,206

* Administrative, technical and clerical staff.

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

England and Wales. (Annual average : Males, 17,136 ; Females, 78,664 ; Total, 95,800.)

Week ended.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Week ended.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Jan. 12th ..	16,412	76,440	92,852	July 19th ..	17,343	79,812	97,155
Feb. 16th ..	16,640	76,785	93,425	Aug. 16th ..	17,322	79,246	96,568
March 15th ..	16,751	77,255	94,006	Sept. 13th ..	17,355	78,850	96,205
April 12th ..	17,157	78,196	95,353	Oct. 18th ..	17,366	79,122	96,488
May 17th ..	17,248	79,552	96,800	Nov. 15th ..	17,351	79,205	96,556
June 21st ..	17,379	80,063	97,442	Dec. 13th ..	17,305	79,445	96,750

Scotland. (Annual average : Males, 2,959 ; Females, 9,322 ; Total, 12,281.)

Jan. 12th ..	2,836	8,958	11,794	July 19th ..	2,995	9,452	12,447
Feb. 16th ..	2,843	8,943	11,786	Aug. 16th ..	2,968	9,490	12,458
March 15th ..	2,932	9,049	11,981	Sept. 13th ..	2,978	9,530	12,508
April 12th ..	2,994	9,333	12,327	Oct. 18th ..	2,989	9,430	12,419
May 17th ..	3,011	9,458	12,469	Nov. 15th ..	2,986	9,359	12,345
June 21st ..	2,982	9,455	12,437	Dec. 13th ..	2,989	9,407	12,396

Great Britain. (Annual average : Males, 20,095 ; Females, 87,986 ; Total, 108,081.)

Jan. 12th ..	19,248	85,398	104,646	July 19th ..	20,338	89,264	109,602
Feb. 16th ..	19,483	85,728	105,211	Aug. 16th ..	20,290	88,736	109,026
March 15th ..	19,683	86,304	105,987	Sept. 13th ..	20,333	88,380	108,713
April 12th ..	20,151	87,529	107,680	Oct. 18th ..	20,355	88,552	108,907
May 17th ..	20,259	89,010	109,269	Nov. 15th ..	20,337	88,564	108,901
June 21st ..	20,361	89,518	109,879	Dec. 13th ..	20,294	88,852	109,146

Northern Ireland. (Annual average : Males, 301 ; Females, 1,387 ; Total, 1,688.)

Jan. 12th ..	294	1,271	1,565	July 19th ..	300	1,412	1,712
Feb. 16th ..	309	1,288	1,597	Aug. 16th ..	301	1,431	1,732
March 15th ..	297	1,304	1,601	Sept. 13th ..	301	1,438	1,739
April 12th ..	301	1,387	1,688	Oct. 18th ..	305	1,441	1,746
May 17th ..	302	1,405	1,707	Nov. 15th ..	302	1,428	1,730
June 21st ..	302	1,414	1,716	Dec. 13th ..	307	1,417	1,724

IV.—Mechanical Power.

PARTICULARS OF PRIME MOVERS, ELECTRIC GENERATORS AND
ELECTRIC MOTORS.

(a) Ordinarily in use. (b) In reserve or idle.	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Great Britain.	Northern Ireland.
	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.
PRIME MOVERS :—				
Reciprocating steam engines .. { (a)	22,072	4,488	26,560	728
.. (b)	3,608	431	4,039	195
Steam turbines { (a)	1,177	450	1,627	—
.. (b)	135	450	585	—
Gas engines { (a)	9,560	265	9,825	157
.. (b)	1,321	—	1,321	45
Petrol and light oil engines .. { (a)	231	13	244	8
.. (b)	47	—	47	—
Heavy oil engines { (a)	257	5	262	—
.. (b)	47	—	47	—
Water power { (a)	96	113	209	—
TOTAL { (a)	33,393	5,334	38,727	893
.. (b)	5,158	881	6,039	240
TOTAL OF PRIME MOVERS INSTALLED				
	38,551	6,215	44,766	1,133
	Kw.	Kw.	Kw.	Kw.
ELECTRIC GENERATORS :—				
Driven by—				
Reciprocating steam engines .. { (a)	1,626	663	2,289	105
.. (b)	738	190	928	33
Steam turbines { (a)	800	300	1,100	—
.. (b)	90	300	390	—
Gas engines { (a)	249	15	264	38
.. (b)	29	—	29	—
Petrol and light oil engines .. { (a)	22	—	22	—
.. (b)	4	—	4	—
Heavy oil engines { (a)	250	—	250	—
.. (b)	8	2	10	—
Water power { (a)	8	2	10	—
TOTAL { (a)	2,709	980	3,689	143
.. (b)	1,107	490	1,597	33
TOTAL OF ELECTRIC GENERATORS INSTALLED.. .. .				
	3,816	1,470	5,286	176
	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.	H.P.
ELECTRIC MOTORS :—				
Driven by—				
Electricity generated in own { (a)	2,614	569	3,183	147
works { (b)	404	118	522	—
Purchased electricity { (a)	14,185	2,140	16,325	163
.. { (b)	1,422	177	1,599	7