

THE COCONUT FIBRE, RAMIE FIBRE, HORSEHAIR AND  
FEATHER TRADES.

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## THE COCONUT FIBRE, RAMIE FIBRE, HORSEHAIR AND FEATHER TRADES.\*

### Introductory.†

The tables on pages 260 to 262 are based on Returns received from firms in Great Britain and Northern Ireland whose business in 1924 consisted wholly or mainly in the production of coir mats and matting and other manufactures of sundry vegetable fibres, and the cleaning, dressing and preparing of hair and feathers. The number of such separate Returns was 108. 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 130 persons in all and that their total net output was probably not more than £25,000.

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

| Particulars.  | Unit. | 1924. | 1912. | 1907.          |
|---|-------|-------|-------|----------------|
| Value of goods made and work done (Gross output) .. .. .          | £'000 | 2,328 | 1,714 | 1,236          |
| Cost of materials used .. .. .                                    | "     | 1,414 | 1,160 | 809            |
| Net output .. .. .  | "     | 914   | 554   | 427            |
| Average number of persons employed (excluding outworkers) .. .. . | No.   | 4,768 | 7,068 | 6,282          |
| Net output per person employed (excluding outworkers) .. .. .     | £     | 192   | 78    | 68             |
| Mechanical power available:—                                      |       |       |       |                |
| Prime movers .. .. .  | H.P.  | 2,791 | 2,525 | 1,992          |
| Electric motors driven by purchased electricity .. .. .           | "     | 1,687 | 779   | (not recorded) |

*Qualifications affecting comparisons.*—In considering the above table and the other tables in this Report which show figures for the 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 the whole of Great Britain and Ireland, but that of 1924 applied only to Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The exclusion of Southern Ireland in 1924 does not, however, seriously affect the comparability of the figures, since the pre-war output in that area was not substantial.

\* More briefly referred to, in this Report, as the Fibre, Hair and Feather Trades.  
† See also the Notes on pp. vi to xiv.

(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 85, or 1·2 per cent. of the number employed by the remaining firms, as shown in the above table.

(4) The figures for 1912, but not for either of the other two years, include the particulars returned by firms engaged in the manufacture of gas mantles (see footnote, p. 256).

*Value of output and cost of materials.*—The figures in the above table, representing the value of goods made and work done, are the aggregates of the figures recorded by the firms making Returns, and they involve duplication (i.e., double or multiple records of the same articles by different firms concerned in different stages of manufacture) in so far as goods made by some of the firms formed the materials of other firms in the trade. When this duplication (the amount of which is discussed on page 257) is eliminated, the value of the output in 1924 of the Fibre, Hair and Feather Trades as a whole is found to be between £2,268,000 and £2,328,000. Similarly, when the figure representing the cost of materials used in 1924 is adjusted by excluding purchases of the products of other firms in the Fibre, Hair and Feather Trades, the cost of the materials purchased from outside those trades and worked up into their products is found to be between £1,354,000 and £1,414,000.

### Production.

*Principal products.*—The detailed information relating to production in 1924 is summarised in Table II on p. 260. The following statement shows, for the three censal years, the value and (where recorded) the quantity of the different classes of output, including not only the products manufactured by firms which made their Returns on schedules for the Fibre, Hair and Feather Trades, but also those made by firms whose Returns were furnished on schedules for other trades.

In addition to the goods dealt with in this Report, matting, etc., valued (on a "cost" basis) at £8,700 was produced in 1924 in H.M. Prisons.\* In 1907, matting valued at £2,000 was produced by labour employed in philanthropic institutions.

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

| Output sold or added to stock,<br>and work done.                   | 1924.  |   |                             | 1912.                           | 1907.                           |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|  | Returned on<br>schedules for<br>the Fibre,<br>Hair and<br>Feather<br>Trades. | Returned on<br>schedules for<br>other<br>trades*. | Total.                      | Total.                          | Total.                          |
|  | Selling<br>value.<br>£'000.  | Selling<br>value.<br>£'000.                       | Selling<br>value.<br>£'000. | Selling<br>value.<br>£'000.     | Selling<br>value.<br>£'000.     |
| Coir :—  |  |   |                             |                                 |                                 |
| Mats and matting ..<br>(Th. sq. yds.)                              | 437<br>(2,519)   | 42<br>(253)                                       | 479<br>(2,772)              | 270                             | 247                             |
| Other manufactures (ex-<br>cept cordage) .. ..<br>(cwis.)          | 7<br>(5,000)   | 10<br>(7,000)                                     | 17<br>(12,000)              | (not<br>separately<br>recorded) | (not<br>separately<br>recorded) |
| Other fibres and bristles, pre-<br>pared and dressed :—            |  |   |                             |                                 |                                 |
| Fibres and bristles for<br>brushmaking .. ..                       | 122  | —   | 122                         | 122                             | 70                              |
| Fibres and bristles for<br>other purposes .. ..                    | 164  | 19  | 183                         | —                               | 33                              |
| <b>TOTAL—FIBRES AND<br/>MANUFACTURES THEREOF</b>                   | <b>730</b>   | <b>71</b>   | <b>801</b>                  | <b>392</b>                      | <b>350</b>                      |
| Hair :—  |  |   |                             |                                 |                                 |
| Hair, cleaned or dressed   | 400  | 2   | 402                         | 377                             | 219                             |
| Hair, curled .. ..   | 546  | 15  | 561                         | 342                             | 338                             |
| Hair seating and cloth of<br>hair mixed with other<br>fibres .. .. | 269  | 18  | 287                         | 179                             | 173                             |
| <b>TOTAL—HAIR .. ..</b>  | <b>1,215</b>   | <b>35</b>   | <b>1,250</b>                | <b>898</b>                      | <b>730</b>                      |
| Feathers or down, purified<br>or dressed .. ..                     | 318  | 4   | 322                         | 165                             | 167                             |
| Waste products .. ..   | 11   | —   | 11                          | (not<br>separately<br>recorded) | (not<br>separately<br>recorded) |
| Work done on commission or<br>for the trade .. ..                  | 2†   | 5†  | 7†                          | 6†                              | 2†                              |
| <b>TOTAL .. ..</b>   | <b>2,276</b>   | <b>115</b>  | <b>2,391</b>                | <b>1,461</b>                    | <b>1,249</b>                    |

\* Including the Canvas Goods and Sack Trades, Furniture Trades, Hardware Trades, and Artificial Flower and Ornamental Feather Trades, the Reports on which form part of other volumes.

† Amount received for work done.

*Other products.*—In addition to the products enumerated above, the schedules for these trades showed an output of *other products* (including ramie yarn and manufactures) valued at £52,000 in 1924, £343,000† in 1912, and £27,000 in 1907.

*Work done for the trade or on commission.*—Firms that made their Returns on schedules for the Fibre, Hair and Feather Trades stated

† This amount includes a sum of £224,000, being the value of the output of *incandescent gas mantles* in 1912. In 1907 the output of *incandescent gas mantles* was included in *other products* of the Heating, Lighting, Ventilating and Sanitary Engineering Trades, while in 1924 it is shown separately in the Report on the Jute, Hemp and Linen Trades, p. 163.

that they received £2,000 for work done for the trade or on commission. As the Returns contained no record of any payments made by firms in these trades for work given out, it appears that the £2,000 in question represents work done for merchants or for other firms outside the Fibre, Hair and Feather Trades.

*Value of output free from duplication.*—The gross output value of these trades (£2,328,000) includes a quantity of *hair seating and cloth of hair mixed with other fibres*, valued at £114,000, the hair used in which was probably purchased from firms who included it in their Returns as *cleaned or dressed hair*. The value of this hair, estimated at £60,000, may thus be duplicated in the gross output value. The value, free from duplication, of the output of these trades in 1924 may, therefore, be estimated as between £2,268,000 and £2,328,000. The corresponding estimate for 1907 was between £1,176,000 and £1,236,000.

*Cost of materials used.*—The cost of materials used by firms making their Returns on schedules for the Fibre, Hair and Feather Trades was returned as £1,414,000 in 1924, a sum which, by the exclusion of purchases of the products of other firms in the same trades, may be reduced to £1,354,000; the corresponding net figure for 1907 lay between £749,000 and £809,000.

*Net output.*—The net output in 1924 of the firms making their Returns on schedules for the Fibre, Hair and Feather Trades (whose gross output was valued at £2,328,000) was £914,000, that sum representing, without duplication, the total amount by which the value (at factory) of the aggregate output exceeded the cost (at factory) of the materials used.

The net output per head of persons employed (excluding out-workers) in the census year 1924 was £192, which compares with £78 in 1912, and £68 in 1907.

*Exports and imports.*—Owing to differences of classification, *coir mats and other manufactures of coir (except cordage, cables, ropes and twine)* are the only classes of goods for which a comparison can be made between the figures of production and those of exports and imports. The particulars for 1924 are shown in the following table :—

| Kind of goods.   | Production. | Exports.  | Net imports. |
|--|-------------|-----------|--------------|
|  | Quantity.   | Quantity. | Quantity.    |
|  | Sq. yds.    | Sq. yds.  | Sq. yds.     |
| Coir mats and matting .. ..  | 2,772,000   | 167,000   | 3,741,000    |
|  | Cwts.       | Cwts.     | Cwts.        |
| Other coir manufactures (except cordage,<br>cables, ropes and twine) .. .. | 12,000      | 900       | 1,300        |

The imports of coir mats and matting largely exceeded the quantity produced and retained in this country, while the average value of the imported goods was much lower than that of the British product, being only 2s. 1d. (c.i.f.) per sq. yd. as compared with 3s. 5d. (at factory). The average value of the British exports was 3s. 3d. (f.o.b.) per sq. yd.



## TABLES.

## I.—Summary of results.

| Particulars.  | Unit. | England and Wales and N. Ireland*. | Scotland. | United Kingdom. |
|---|-------|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Value of goods made and work done (Gross output) .. .. .          | £'000 | 1,963                              | 365       | 2,328           |
| Cost of materials used .. .. .                                    | "     | 1,219                              | 195       | 1,414           |
| Net output .. .. .  | "     | 744                                | 170       | 914             |
| Average number of persons employed (excluding outworkers) .. .. . | No.   | 4,184                              | 584       | 4,768           |
| Net output per person employed (excluding outworkers) .. .. .     | £     | 178                                | 291       | 192             |
| Mechanical power available :—                                     |       |                                    |           |                 |
| Prime movers .. .. .  | H.P.  | 2,569                              | 222       | 2,791           |
| Electric motors driven by purchased electricity .. .. .           | "     | 1,039                              | 648       | 1,687           |

\* In order to avoid the disclosure of particulars relating to individual firms, the figures for Northern Ireland have been combined with those for England and Wales.

## II.—Production.

| Goods sold or added to stock.                                  | England and Wales and N. Ireland†. | Scotland.        | United Kingdom.  |
|--|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
|  | Selling value.                     | Selling value.   | Selling value.   |
|  | £'000.                             | £'000.           | £'000.           |
| Coir :—  |                                    |                  |                  |
| Mats and matting .. .. .                                       | 437                                | —                | 437              |
| <i>(Th. sq. yds.)</i>  | (2,519)                            |                  | (2,519)          |
| Other manufactures (except cordage) .. .. .                    | *                                  | *                | 7                |
| <i>(cwtis.)</i>  |                                    |                  | (5,000)          |
| Other fibres and bristles, prepared and dressed :—             |                                    |                  |                  |
| Fibres and bristles for brush-making .. .. .                   | 122                                | —                | 122              |
| Fibres and bristles for other purposes, .. .. .                | 160                                | 4                | 164              |
| Hair :—  |                                    |                  |                  |
| Hair, cleaned or dressed .. .. .                               | 390                                | 10               | 400              |
| Hair, curled .. .. .   | 203                                | 343              | 546              |
| Hair seating and cloth of hair mixed with other fibres .. .. . | 269                                | —                | 269              |
| Feathers or down, purified or dressed .. .. .                  | *                                  | *                | 318              |
| Waste products .. .. .   | 11                                 | —                | 11               |
| Other products .. .. .   | 52                                 | ‡                | 52               |
| TOTAL .. .. .  | 1,962                              | 364              | 2,326            |
|  | Amount received.                   | Amount received. | Amount received. |
| Work done on commission or for the trade .. .. .               | 1                                  | 1                | 2                |
| TOTAL VALUE OF GOODS MADE AND WORK DONE (GROSS OUTPUT) .. .. . | 1,963                              | 365              | 2,328            |

\* In order to avoid the possible disclosure of particulars relating to individual firms, only total figures for the United Kingdom can be given in these cases.

† See footnote to Table I.

‡ Less than £500.

## III.—Employment.

A.—NUMBERS EMPLOYED IN WEEK ENDED 18TH OCTOBER, 1924  
(EXCLUDING OUTWORKERS).

| Kind of staff.                                    | Males.    |           | Females.  |           | Males and females. |           |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|
|   | Under 18. | All ages. | Under 18. | All ages. | Under 18.          | All ages. |
| <i>England and Wales and Northern Ireland :—*</i> |           |           |           |           |                    |           |
| Operatives .. .. .                                | 282       | 1,965     | 427       | 1,802     | 709                | 3,767     |
| Administrative, etc.† .. .. .                     | 34        | 264       | 34        | 119       | 68                 | 383       |
| TOTAL .. .. .                                     | 316       | 2,229     | 461       | 1,921     | 777                | 4,150     |
| <i>Scotland :—</i>                                |           |           |           |           |                    |           |
| Operatives .. .. .                                | 1         | 50        | 113       | 490       | 114                | 540       |
| Administrative, etc.† .. .. .                     | 4         | 38        | 2         | 14        | 6                  | 52        |
| TOTAL .. .. .                                     | 5         | 88        | 115       | 504       | 120                | 592       |
| <i>United Kingdom :—</i>                          |           |           |           |           |                    |           |
| Operatives .. .. .                                | 283       | 2,015     | 540       | 2,292     | 823                | 4,307     |
| Administrative, etc.† .. .. .                     | 38        | 302       | 36        | 133       | 74                 | 435       |
| TOTAL .. .. .                                     | 321       | 2,317     | 576       | 2,425     | 897                | 4,742     |

\* See footnote to Table I.

† Administrative, technical and clerical staff.

B.—OPERATIVES EMPLOYED IN ONE WEEK IN EACH MONTH OF 1924  
(EXCLUDING OUTWORKERS).

*England and Wales and Northern Ireland.\* (Annual average : Males, 1,958 ; Females, 1,843 ; Total, 3,801.)*

| Week ended.   | Males. | Females. | Total. | Week ended.   | Males. | Females. | Total. |
|---------------|--------|----------|--------|---------------|--------|----------|--------|
| Jan. 12th ..  | 1,990  | 1,796    | 3,786  | July 19th ..  | 1,938  | 1,863    | 3,801  |
| Feb. 16th ..  | 1,969  | 1,766    | 3,735  | Aug. 16th ..  | 1,894  | 1,875    | 3,769  |
| March 15th .. | 1,940  | 1,860    | 3,800  | Sept. 13th .. | 1,941  | 1,855    | 3,796  |
| April 12th .. | 1,980  | 1,865    | 3,845  | Oct. 18th ..  | 1,965  | 1,802    | 3,767  |
| May 17th ..   | 2,001  | 1,855    | 3,856  | Nov. 15th ..  | 1,967  | 1,866    | 3,833  |
| June 21st ..  | 1,965  | 1,861    | 3,826  | Dec. 13th ..  | 1,946  | 1,855    | 3,801  |

*Scotland. (Annual average : Males, 49 ; Females, 483 ; Total, 532.)*

|               |    |     |     |               |    |     |     |
|---------------|----|-----|-----|---------------|----|-----|-----|
| Jan. 12th ..  | 46 | 413 | 459 | July 19th ..  | 47 | 512 | 559 |
| Feb. 16th ..  | 49 | 452 | 501 | Aug. 16th ..  | 48 | 503 | 551 |
| March 15th .. | 50 | 458 | 508 | Sept. 13th .. | 49 | 483 | 532 |
| April 12th .. | 49 | 483 | 532 | Oct. 18th ..  | 50 | 490 | 540 |
| May 17th ..   | 47 | 520 | 567 | Nov. 15th ..  | 51 | 477 | 528 |
| June 21st ..  | 47 | 519 | 566 | Dec. 13th ..  | 52 | 484 | 536 |

*United Kingdom. (Annual average : Males, 2,007 ; Females, 2,326 ; Total, 4,333.)*

|               |       |       |       |               |       |       |       |
|---------------|-------|-------|-------|---------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Jan. 12th ..  | 2,036 | 2,209 | 4,245 | July 19th ..  | 1,985 | 2,375 | 4,360 |
| Feb. 16th ..  | 2,018 | 2,218 | 4,236 | Aug. 16th ..  | 1,942 | 2,378 | 4,320 |
| March 15th .. | 1,990 | 2,318 | 4,308 | Sept. 13th .. | 1,990 | 2,338 | 4,328 |
| April 12th .. | 2,029 | 2,348 | 4,377 | Oct. 18th ..  | 2,015 | 2,292 | 4,307 |
| May 17th ..   | 2,048 | 2,375 | 4,423 | Nov. 15th ..  | 2,018 | 2,343 | 4,361 |
| June 21st ..  | 2,012 | 2,380 | 4,392 | Dec. 13th ..  | 1,998 | 2,339 | 4,337 |

\* See footnote to Table I.

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

| Country.                     | January. |          |        | July.  |          |        |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|--------|--------|----------|--------|
|                              | Males.   | Females. | Total. | Males. | Females. | Total. |
| <i>England and Wales*</i> .. | 9        | 56       | 65     | 10     | 54       | 64     |

\* No outworkers were recorded in Scotland or in Northern Ireland.

## IV.—Mechanical Power.

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

| Power equipment.                         | England and Wales and N. Ireland*. |                     | Scotland.          |                     | United Kingdom.    |                     |
|--|------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|  | Ordinarily in use.                 | In reserve or idle. | Ordinarily in use. | In reserve or idle. | Ordinarily in use. | In reserve or idle. |
| <b>PRIME MOVERS :—</b>                   | H.P.                               | H.P.                | H.P.               | H.P.                | H.P.               | H.P.                |
| Reciprocating steam engines .. ..        | 1,034                              | 79                  | 113                | 35                  | 1,147              | 114                 |
| Gas engines .. ..                        | 1,069                              | 75                  | 42                 | 17                  | 1,111              | 92                  |
| Petrol and light oil engines .. ..       | 19                                 | 6                   | —                  | —                   | 19                 | 6                   |
| Heavy oil engines .. ..                  | 257                                | —                   | —                  | —                   | 257                | —                   |
| Water power .. ..                        | 30                                 | —                   | 15                 | —                   | 45                 | —                   |
| <b>TOTAL .. ..</b>                       | <b>2,409</b>                       | <b>160</b>          | <b>170</b>         | <b>52</b>           | <b>2,579</b>       | <b>212</b>          |
| <b>ELECTRIC GENERATORS :—</b>            | Kw.                                | Kw.                 | Kw.                | Kw.                 | Kw.                | Kw.                 |
| Driven by—                               |                                    |                     |                    |                     |                    |                     |
| Reciprocating steam engines .. ..        | 129                                | —                   | —                  | —                   | 129                | —                   |
| Gas engines .. ..                        | 424                                | 32                  | —                  | —                   | 424                | 32                  |
| Heavy oil engines .. ..                  | 66                                 | —                   | —                  | —                   | 66                 | —                   |
| Water power .. ..                        | —                                  | —                   | 2                  | —                   | 2                  | —                   |
| <b>TOTAL .. ..</b>                       | <b>619</b>                         | <b>32</b>           | <b>2</b>           | <b>—</b>            | <b>621</b>         | <b>32</b>           |
| <b>ELECTRIC MOTORS :—</b>                | H.P.                               | H.P.                | H.P.               | H.P.                | H.P.               | H.P.                |
| Driven by—                               |                                    |                     |                    |                     |                    |                     |
| Electricity generated in own works .. .. | 605                                | 68                  | —                  | —                   | 605                | 68                  |
| Purchased electricity .. ..              | 1,019                              | 20                  | 606                | 42                  | 1,625              | 62                  |

\* See footnote to Table I.