

THE ARTIFICIAL FLOWER AND ORNAMENTAL
FEATHER TRADES.

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Introductory*.

The Tables on pages 337 to 338 are based on Returns received from firms in England and Wales whose business in 1924 consisted wholly or mainly in the manufacture of artificial flowers and the dressing and making-up of ornamental feathers. The number of such separate Returns was 99. Fifteen firms to which schedules were sent did not furnish Returns, but these firms for the most part had very small establishments. On the basis of the information available it is estimated that they did not employ more than 60 persons and that their net output probably did not exceed £8,000.

Summary of results.—The following table shows the main results of the Censuses of 1924, 1912 and 1907, comparisons between the figures for the three years being subject to the consideration that,

* See also the Notes on pp. vii-xiv.

in addition to the other qualifications mentioned in the next paragraph, the results for 1907 do not represent a complete survey of the trade.

Particulars.	Unit.	1924.	1912.	1907.
Value of goods made and work done (Gross output)	£'000	1,114	1,059	577
Cost of materials used	"	519	594	344
Paid for work given out to other firms	"	8	7	1
Net output	"	587	458	232
Average number of persons employed (excluding outworkers) ..	No.	4,598	6,871	3,606
Net output per person employed (excluding outworkers)	£	128	67	64
Mechanical power available :—				
Prime movers	H.P.	111	39	—
Electric motors driven by purchased electricity	"	188	83	—

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 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 number of persons employed in the establishments thus excluded was 169 or about 2½ per cent. of the number employed by the remaining firms, as shown in the above table.

(3) The results of the 1907 Census do not represent a complete survey of the Artificial Flower and Ornamental Feather Trades in that year, as particulars concerning several important firms escaped record. The 1907 figures are set out in the present Report for purposes of information but they are of very limited value for comparison with the figures of the two later years. So far as estimates can be made, the expansion which took place in these trades between 1907 and 1912 was, after making allowance for the omissions referred to, about 50 per cent.

Value of output and cost of materials.—The figures in the above table representing the value of goods made and work done and the cost of materials used are the aggregates of the figures recorded by the firms making Returns, and for the reasons explained in paragraphs (i) and (ii) on page xii, they may over-state the value of the output of, and the cost of the materials used by, the Artificial Flower and

Ornamental Feather Trades considered as a whole. The matter is discussed on page 334, where it is estimated that in 1924 the value, free from duplication, of the output of these trades lay between £1,096,000 and £1,114,000, and that the cost of the materials purchased from sources outside these trades and worked up into their products was between £509,000 and £519,000.

Production.

The information received as to production in 1924 is summarised in Table II on page 337.

Principal products.—The following statement shows, for the three censal years, the net selling value of the principal products of the Artificial Flower and Ornamental Feather Trades, the figures for each year being inclusive of the value of the similar goods recorded as manufactured by firms which made their Returns on schedules for other trades. As already explained, the figures for 1907 are incomplete.

Goods made for sale.	1924.	1912.	1907.
	Selling value.	Selling value.	Selling value.
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Artificial flowers	646*	364	286
Ornamental feathers dressed, dyed, etc. :—			
Ostrich feathers	289	556	285
Other feathers	148	138	72
Feathers not separately distinguished	91	—	—
Total—Ornamental feathers ..	528	694	357
TOTAL	1,174	1,058	643

* Including £82,000 in respect of artificial flowers recorded by firms that made their Returns on schedules for other trades.

The amounts shown in the table in respect of artificial flowers probably do not represent the total output of such products since it appears likely that a large proportion of the artificial flowers made by dressmaking and millinery firms, being used by them for decorating hats, dresses, etc., were not separately recorded, but were included in the value of the finished articles shown in the Census Returns made by those firms.

The output of *other feathers* in 1924 was no doubt affected to some extent by the restrictions imposed by the Importation of Plumage (Prohibition) Act, 1921.

Other products.—In addition to the output shown in the above table there were returned goods of kinds mainly produced by other trades to the value of £10,000 in 1924, £28,000 in 1912 and £5,000 in 1907.

Work done for the trade.—Particulars of the amounts received for work done for the trade in the three censal years are given in the following table :—

Work done.	1924.	1912.	1907.
	Amount received.	Amount received.	Amount received.
On artificial flowers	£'000	£'000	£'000
On ornamental feathers	12	15	16
TOTAL	12	16	7

Value of output free from duplication.—The gross value of the output of the Artificial Flower and Ornamental Feather Trades in 1924 was returned as £1,114,000. This sum is substantially free from duplication except in respect of a small quantity of artificial flowers (not exceeding £10,000 in value) which may have been sold by the manufacturers to other firms for making up into wreaths, etc., and in respect of such part of the work done for the trade (valued at £12,000) as may have been done for firms in the Artificial Flower and Ornamental Feather Trades. The amount of duplication under the latter heading cannot have exceeded £8,000, the sum recorded by firms in these trades as having been paid for work given out to other firms. The amount of duplication in the gross output value was, therefore, not greater than £18,000 and the value of the output, free from duplication, lay between £1,096,000 and £1,114,000.

Cost of materials and work given out.—The cost of materials used by firms making their Returns on schedules for the Artificial Flower and Ornamental Feather Trades was returned as £519,000 in 1924, a sum which, by the exclusion of artificial flowers (valued at £10,000) which may have been purchased from other firms in the same trades, may be reduced to £509,000.

The amount paid to other firms for work given out to them was returned as £8,000 in 1924, £7,000 in 1912 and £1,000 in 1907.

Net output.—The net output in 1924 of the firms making their Returns on schedules for the Artificial Flower and Ornamental Feather Trades (whose gross output was valued at £1,114,000) was £587,000, that sum representing, without duplication, the total amount by which the value, as delivered, of the aggregate output exceeded the cost, as purchased, 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 (excluding out-workers) in the censal year 1924 was £128 as compared with £67 in 1912, and £64 in 1907.

Exports and imports.—The following table, relating to the year 1924, shows the total production of ornamental feathers in relation to the exports and imports of similarly described goods :—

Kind of goods.	Production.	Exports.	Net imports.
	Value at factory.	Value f.o.b.	Value c.i.f.
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Ornamental feathers dressed, dyed, etc. :—			
Ostrich feathers	289	10	204
Other feathers	148	29	417
Feathers not separately distinguished	91	—	—
TOTAL—ORNAMENTAL FEATHERS	528	39	621

Similar information is not available for the pre-war years.

In the case of artificial flowers, it has been explained above that the figures shown in the Census Returns do not represent the total output. The value of exports and net imports are shown in the following statement :—

Kind of goods.	Exports.	Net imports.
	Value f.o.b.	Value c.i.f.
	£'000	£'000
Artificial flowers	154	376
	105	934

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 Artificial Flower and Ornamental Feather 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, 3,444 operatives or 79 per cent. of the total of 4,333 operatives for the trades as a whole, and their net output totalled £472,000 or 80 per cent. of the aggregate net output of £587,000 for the trades as a whole. The total wage-bill of these firms, as returned to the Ministry of Labour, was £267,000, representing about 57 per cent. of their aggregate output.

Employment.

The detailed information relating to employment in 1924 is summarised in Table III on pages 338. The following table sets out

certain particulars for that year together with those relating to the two previous censal years. 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 proportion shown by the data relating to the week ended 18th October.

Average number (excluding outworkers).	Males.		Females.		Males and females.	
	Under 18.	All ages.	Under 18.	All ages.	Under 18.	All ages.
1924.						
Operatives	67	555	1,039	3,689	1,106	4,244
Administrative, etc. ..	11	200	17	154	28	354
TOTAL	78	755	1,056	3,843	1,134	4,598
1912.						
Wage earners	88	489	2,052	5,943	2,140	6,432
Salaried	15	250	24	189	39	439
TOTAL	103	739	2,076	6,132	2,179	6,871
1907.						
Wage earners	40	258	984	3,101	1,024	3,359
Salaried	5	138	12	109	17	247
TOTAL	45	396	996	3,210	1,041	3,606
Average number of outworkers :—						
1924	1		284		285	
1912	—		481		481	
1907	2		204		206	

It will be observed that the proportion of males to females employed was notably greater in 1924 than in either of the earlier Census years.

The numbers of operatives recorded month by month in 1924 ranged from 127 above the average, in May, to 145 below the average, in January (see Table III B. p. 338).

Mechanical Power.

The power equipment recorded for 1924 was confined to (i) *prime movers* (gas engines) of a total capacity of 111 horse-power, of which 109 horse-power was returned as being ordinarily in use during the year; and (ii) *electric motors*, driven by purchased electricity, of a total capacity of 188 horse-power, of which 182 horse-power was returned as ordinarily in use.

In 1912 the power equipment consisted of (i) *prime movers* of a total capacity of 39 horse-power (reciprocating steam engines 21 horse-power and gas engines 18 horse-power); and (ii) *electric motors* of a total capacity of 86 horse-power, of which those driven by purchased electricity accounted for 83 horse-power.

No particulars of power were recorded in 1907.

TABLES.

Note.—No production was recorded in Scotland or Northern Ireland.

I.—Summary of results.

Particulars.	Unit.	England and Wales.
Value of goods made and work done (Gross output)	£'000	1,114
Cost of materials used	"	519
Paid for work given out to other firms	"	8
Net output	"	587
Average number of persons employed (excluding outworkers)	No.	4,598
Net output per person employed (excluding outworkers)	£	128
Mechanical power available :—	H.P.	
Prime movers		111
Electric motors driven by purchased electricity	"	188

II.—Production.

Output sold or added to stock and work done.	England and Wales.	
	Selling value.	
	£'000	
Artificial flowers	564	
Ornamental feathers dressed, dyed, etc. :—		
Ostrich feathers	289	
Other feathers	148	
Feathers not separately distinguished	91	
Total—Ornamental feathers	528	
Other products	10	
TOTAL VALUE OF GOODS MADE	1,102	
Work done for the trade on ornamental feathers	12*	
TOTAL VALUE OF GOODS MADE AND WORK DONE (GROSS OUTPUT)	1,114	

* Amount received for work done.

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</i> :—						
Operatives	69	573	1,060	3,760	1,129	4,333
Administrative, technical and clerical staff	11	200	17	154	28	354
TOTAL	80	773	1,077	3,914	1,157	4,687

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

England and Wales. (Annual average : Males, 555 ; Females, 3,689 ; Total, 4,244.)

Week ended	Males.	Females.	Total.	Week ended	Males.	Females.	Total.
Jan. 12th ..	503	3,596	4,099	July 19th ..	562	3,704	4,266
Feb. 16th ..	537	3,568	4,105	Aug. 16th ..	562	3,594	4,156
March 15th ..	544	3,667	4,211	Sept. 13th ..	573	3,705	4,278
April 12th ..	551	3,683	4,234	Oct. 18th ..	573	3,760	4,333
May 17th ..	552	3,819	4,371	Nov. 15th ..	574	3,712	4,286
June 21st ..	557	3,777	4,334	Dec. 13th ..	570	3,688	4,258

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

Country.	January.			July.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
<i>England and Wales</i>	1	223	224	1	344	345

IV.—Mechanical Power.

PARTICULARS OF PRIME MOVERS, ELECTRIC GENERATORS AND
ELECTRIC MOTORS.

The mechanical power available in England and Wales was returned as follows :—

	Ordinarily in use.	In reserve or idle.
	H.P.	H.P.
PRIME MOVERS :—Gas engines	109	2
ELECTRIC MOTORS driven by purchased electricity	182	6