

Royal Commission on the Relations Between Labour and Capital. Ottawa: Printed for the Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1889. NEW BRUNSWICK - Marysville

Volume 5
Evidence - New Brunswick

Alexander Gibson, Owner

Re: 1887: 25 million long lumber manufactured - deals, boards, scantling, edgings; 16 m laths; 14 m shingles.

700 men in getting logs out only and hauling (these contracted by others - Gibson pays by the superficial thousand; the men's wages from their contractors run from \$16 to \$22 a month. Little more for the teamsters.

200 stream drivers (separate from the 700 cutting and hauling)
\$1 - \$3 per day "and found" (receive their board also)
[even at \$1 per day the stream drivers earn considerably more than the men in the woods]

saw mill - employs 60 men. \$1 - \$2.50 per day. 75 men total all machines. Earn mostly \$1.25 to \$1.50 per day.

Brick kiln - only one operational this year - way down from last year's output. 1.5 to 2 million bricks; 20 men. 4 carloads sent to states this year - Caribou, Maine. \$1.25 per day these men. \$4 foreman

Woodsmen in summer farm, stream drive, mill work, railway, or do nothing. employed 7 months each year in mill, winter in woods; work generally available year round, but some opt to "do nothing." Some work cotton mill

Cotton Mill:

10 hours a day. Same as mill. No halfday on Saturday - "they gain ten minutes each day [by coming in 10 minutes early, 6:45] and knock off at 4:30 on Saturday." [both lumber and cotton mill] "We used not to do it, but the hands rather like the idea."

Pay every four weeks. Asks Mr. Goggin.

Pay in cash or goods, but not compelled to take goods

"I have hired men for the last 45 years, and I have never hired a man yet for anything but cash; still there are some men who anticipate their wages by taking goods out of the store." [Men in the woods need the store, not the company itself, as they are paid at the end of the drive]

Most operatives live on site.

Double tenements 6 - 7 rooms. \$40 - \$50 per annum. Fuel purchased at cost of hauling from mill. Many keep 1 - 2 cows; free pasturage.

Some have purchased farm with their savings yet come back to work the mill, esp. elderly. "I know that this whole settlement could be populated if I could give the people the accommodation they want. You see the cotton factory and the mill gives employment to a great many hands, and they give more employment to the families than a farm would."

Some families earn over \$100 a month.

Cotton Mill:

“We did try to fine the hands for bad weaving but the system is about obsolete now. I asked the men in the weaving room what he had collected in fines and he told me \$1.26 and so I told him that he need not collect any more fines.”
Could stand the loss. “That was all we ever fined for.”

Should have more houses - would increase punctuality but wants to build of brick not wood.

Can sell goods faster than they can be made.
Does not know if business increasing or decreasing.
Markets goods all across Canada

Re cotton cartel:

“I believe that they decided to kill me at their last meeting - that is, when the association met. Not a member of cartel. “I believe they passed a resolution at their last meeting to boycott me, and the result has been that I have had a hundred extra looms put in my factory, and I will shortly have them going.” (has heard of boycott from others)

Operatives are paid in full - in cash. If they get goods from the store the amount is deducted from their wages. Pre-payday loans readily available. Pay periods less than monthly are problematic, as experienced in American cotton mills.

Temperance: “There has been no liquor sold here since I have been in this place, and if any comes to the place it is brought in the bellies of the hands from Fredericton, and I am determined that none shall be sold in this place as long as I have the swing.”
(True even before Fredericton adoption of Scott Act) “The men in the woods are away from all temptation.”

Opposed to idea of selling a boarding house outright, as it might become a tavern. “A tavern in the vicinity of a cotton mill would be a dangerous thing to have around.”

Recreation: church, graded schools, “and as regards their being able to read and write, I think that you will find they compare favorably with any operatives in the intellectual character, in any other cotton mill in the country.” [Gibson takes a pretty narrow view of what is meant by the work “recreation,” the exact word asked by the commissioners.

No benefit societies. None needed. Girls can make good wages when they learn how to weave.

Strikes: their have been none, and no trouble. Need only post-office from government - not legislation to prevent strikes. Stated indirectly in Ottawa that he would pay for a post-office building, presently a space in the hotel - also a savings bank. Would build brick buildings for both out of his own pocket.

Cotton Mill business increasing. [said earlier he didn't know if his business was increasing or decreasing]
Almost 500 looms in the mill - soon to be 600. Will hire more staff.

“I think that we ought to have a customs Office here, for I calculate that we import and export here, except from Saint John and three other towns in New Brunswick, more than any other place in the province.”

Could build more tenements - the demand is there. “But before you go away I want you to look at my buildings, for they are all just as like one another as eggs.” [curious comment - does this say something about the desire for standardization and quality

control?]

Exports from Marysville in 1887:

25 million deals, boards, ends, scantling @ \$9 per thousand : \$225,000

16 million laths @ \$1.05 per thousand \$16,000

4 million shingles at 2.25 \$10,000

1 million bricks \$7,000

cotton cloth (1.86 million pounds) \$502,000

Total: \$761,000

Imports to Marysville in 1887:

Raw cotton \$223,000

Machinery \$25,000

Goods \$150,000

Dyes, mill supplies, lawns, etc. \$40,000

Total \$418,000

Difference: \$343,000

Anticipates business will increase 25 percent his year. [though said earlier didn't know if business increasing or decreasing]

Googhan superintendent of mill

425 employees one-third men

youngest girl about 12 years old

very few boys at that age

most women young

Total 1/3 men, rest young boys and girls and middle-aged women

believes help superior to any seen elsewhere

weavers get best pay - \$8 to \$9 weekly

run 6 looms, approx. \$1.25 per day

these are expert weavers salaries

beginners get 75 cents a day, though can rise to expert weavers in short order

boys 12 to 14 years of age. 40 to 60 cents a day

operatives "all work piece work, and they can sit down if they like." "Of course, their work obliges them to stand up a good deal." Commissioners noted presence of seat at end of looms. Not fined if they sit down.

"It is foolish to fine or take \$1 off a man or woman for bad work, because it is always hard to tell whether it is the fault of the person or not."

less drunkenness than in any other mill known to him. Wages "are fully as good as in most of the cotton mills, especially in the South."

operatives can live more cheaply in Marysville than in US

3 fire escapes "entirely separate from one another." In separate building (tower)

Rent "very cheap indeed." Ordinarily \$6 to \$8 a month; here \$4 to \$6. Tenements

about the same in quality and size as elsewhere

rent and expenses higher in Mass

Better off generally "for they have a church and a school."

Overseer of each department does the hiring

"Do they ask the young children, when employing them, whether they can read or write?" "No, I don't think they are asked these questions."

Separate lavatories

Both wages and expenses higher than in Mass.

Downplays notion of a "benefit society" which would for small monthly payment help cover emergency expenses such as doctor's care - like EI.

These societies "are in existence in almost every manufacturing down where a cotton mill is situated. But here its results would not be so apparent, nor would its benefits amount to much, for I think the way society is constituted here would stop its working."

No objection to operatives forming their own benefit society. No charge for minister's salary. Only charge for use of church and school "law of the land."

Whereas in some places a physician and minister are placed in charge of the benefit society, supported by member payments, "There is nothing of that kind here."

Only one accident since Googhan arrived. Pretty evasive on this. Claims only to have read about it in the papers, and has never asked room overseer about it, "for some reason which I cannot explain."

Believes mill pays doctor's bill for on-site injuries.

Goods best made anywhere.

Googhan at pains to emphasize that this mill works 60 hours a week while in some states, esp. Georgia and South Carolina, 66 is more common, as high as 70.

Mass. by law works only 60 hours a week. Southern hands do not make full-time hours due to heat and long stretches at a time. Pay every two weeks. "Out of 300 hands that I employed in one mill only a very, very small proportion of them worked full time." [in other words, the shifts were too intense to sustain for a full working week] Notes that shorter hours do not necessarily mean lower production, as in 1874 eleven hour weekdays and seven on Saturday were cut to 10 hours per weekday with one quarter cut increase in production.

run 34 - 60 yards a day per loom. many different styles of goods, all of which require different hours.

Operatives "more intelligent" than in the South [probably means better educated] but on par with New England

Work begins at 6:45. There is lunch break. When working in States noticed many ate lunch at the mill, even though boarding houses nearby - were English, probably English custom

Would be dock operative for being 15 minutes late

Windows opened in summer. Commissioner noted little boys in mill and on street in bare feet; Googhan says their own preference, not company policy

No labour organization attached to mill. "This is the most quiet place I have ever worked in, so far as dissatisfaction among the employees is concerned."

"We pay big wages here, and I think that, taking everything into consideration, all the advantages they possess and being free from temptation to drink, they are as well fixed as the hands of any mill I ever worked in. It is not the amount of money that a man gets that counts at the end of the year, but it is the amount he has saved and has in hand that tells the tale."

"Everything needed for living is cheaper here than in other places."

W. E. Cheswell, Overseer Spinning Department

115 employees in department

all but nine women, aged fifteen and up; none he thinks as young as fourteen right

now

now

no hands in mill as young as twelve

does not ask in hiring if they can read or write

"I hardly think there are any who cannot read or write, but I think most of them can do both."

begin at doffing for 30 cents a day for first month

none make over \$7 a week, and very few that amount

average 75 to 80 cents a day

men make average of \$1.50 a day

lowest wages paid in mill \$1 a day [men]; they don't all do piecework and they are all paid by the day

Question: are the men all sober and industrious? "Yes, they are obliged to be."

Previous was overseer in Fall River, Mass. and in Saco, Maine.

"Our wages, here, on an average, are very nearly what are paid to the hands in those mills." Same as for piece work.

"The help in this mill are more capable to do their work than those in the United States are. We have a better class of help here than they have; they are more quiet and refined than in the sections where I have worked before. Where I have worked before they are chiefly French, and most of the help through the States is imported."

"Are they allowed to be employed by your proprietor?" "They are not. Mr. Gibson is very strict on this matter."

"Have you a black-hole in the cotton mill?" "No, we have nothing of that kind." No place of punishment at all.

Average hours 10 per day, 60 per week.

Knock off at 12 o'clock and return at 1 o'clock.

Knock off for day at 6 pm.

Worked 10 hours in Fall River, 11 in New Hampshire. "The St. Croix mill, in this province, used to make 11 hours a day, when I worked there."

Knows not of a great many workers who have savings in a bank; maybe five or six.

Can live as cheaply here as in the United States, "and in some ways a great deal cheaper." Advantages for bringing up a family "just as good" here as in US

Wages generally satisfactory to operatives

Discharged worker will generally have to wait until payday to receive final payment, even if he leaves on his own account without giving notice.

No compulsion to buy goods in the store.

If machinery breaks down, no operatives are required to work at night to effect repairs.

"Sometimes we have to do a little [work] at night." Not repair work. Has only had one or two smallish jobs to do at night in the 2 ½ years he has worked at the mill.

J. C. McPherson, Dyer, Cotton Mill

Foreman, 1 ½ years

Worked at St. Croix Mill, and Hudon Manufacturing Company

Wages compare favorably

nine men under him, five boys

average pay \$1.25 a day, the boys about \$2.40 a week

yearly employment

boys 13 or 14 when beginning at mill

boys 13 or 14 when beginning at mill

A boy of two or three years employment would be worth about \$1 a day

Does not ask the boys if they can read or write; immaterial

Has never had any trouble with the men, little with the boys

A boy who will not do right will be dismissed, but not beaten in any way

Is a tenant in the boarding houses himself; six rooms in house; pays \$7 a month

pays taxes in this house - \$4 to \$5 per year: school-tax, poll-tax, rate-tax, county-tax.

There was once a benefit society here, a benevolent society; he was not connected with it.

can live more cheaply here as in US, and has worked in American mills, chiefly because of the cost of meat and groceries

If machinery broke down the operatives would have to be docked for lost time, yes

Does not think dyeing business unhealthy

Has been in this line of work for 20 years

Frank Wood, Slasher-tender

has worked here three years, also in States

Does not hire men in his department; two others in department

Mr. Chesevell oversee department

Average pay \$10 per week

about the same as in States

works 10 hours a day, 60 a week

worked 11 hours a day in States

has worked in slashing business 9 years

no compulsion to buy in store; at payday, rent and store deducted from wages

married; has five rooms in house he occupies

largest room 12 feet square

works top floor

doors open outward and never locked

was never docked for arriving late

C. O. Shaw, Overseer Cloth Hall

fifteen hands, male and female, two girls seventeen

average wage 80 cents a day for women; \$1.25 a day for men

reason why men earn more than women: "The work that the men have to do is heavier than that which the girls have to do; the girls could not do it."

building at back of mill, over dye house

two stories

affirms that it would be a fair question to ask what percentage of his wages he receives in cash at the end of the month but when asked declines to state the amount

has been here three months

paid full in cash at end of month; nothing held back

confirms all that has been said earlier about wages and stores

John Murdoch, Overseer, Carding Department

forty to forty-two hands employed in dept

located on second floor; picking department off on the end of the building

when employees complain of the department he tells them the best thing they can do is to get out of it

as for the wages he receives. he says: "I should not like to speak right out and tell you.

as for the wages he receives, he says: "I should not like to speak right out and tell you, but I will tell you in private."

average wages per worker in dept \$1 per day, a little more when they are more experienced

has worked in same department in other cotton mills

likes it better than the other factories he has worked in

corroborates testimony of others regarding pay and stores; no compulsion to buy in the store

operatives make full-time except at Christmas

"Christmas is the only holiday we have. . . . It is all I want; if we want a holiday at any other time it is given to us."

can live as cheaply here as elsewhere

taxes cost about \$3 per year; par for course no matter where you live

has been employed here two years.

John Hatch, Foreman, Weaving Room

113 workers under him, on average, mostly women
piece work
earn average \$1 per day
none under sixteen years of age

men earn about \$1.75

reason: "because the men do the heavy work and look after the machinery."

male work also requires greater skill than women

five rooms in house he occupies; pays \$5 a month
worked in cotton mill in Lewiston, Mass
wages about the same

"Living is a little cheaper here."

no chastising of staff except a talking to; then dismissal if necessary

American citizen

there are many Americans in Gibson's employ

"I find the help here to be very nice; they are very smart and intelligent."

As to whether they are more apt to learn: "There is not much difference; if anything, they are quicker there than here."

But comparable in every other way, both morally and socially

Would not like to state his salary in public.

George Tapley, Long-Chain Beamer

second hand

six machines working in his room

average pay 75 cents to \$1 per day

receives between \$1.50 and \$2 per day himself

worked in St. Croix mills

wages about the same between here and there

costs about the same to live here or there
never any trouble in this mill
there are fines in the St. Croix mill: "The hands that are working on piece-work are
fined, sometimes."
for bad work, bad weaving

Frank Wheeler, Operative

puts band on the hooks of the spinning frame
has worked here two years
can read and write
most of the boys in the mill that he knows can read and write
receives 60 cents a day
was at school "about a year"; that was five years ago; learned to read and write in that
one year
fifteen years old
paid by the day
has never been beaten or ill-used in the mill
intends to remain in cotton mill until he becomes a weaver, maybe
has been working in mill two years [started when he was thirteen, then]
started at 40 cents a day for first year

Joseph Cheetham, Mule Spinner

23 or 24 hands in room
all men
work by day, not piece
earn \$1.70 per day
employed full-time
no understanding re purchases in store
amount of store bill is kept from him
no fines or trouble in mill
this line of work takes a great deal of practice to become good at it
has worked both in England and United States
this place compares favorably with both
England was a long time hence; doesn't remember wages well
"A man can live a little cheaper here" [than in the US]; can save a little more
has family; pays \$7 a month rent
taxes about \$4 or \$5
children grown up
knows little about schools of New Brunswick
has been employed in a good many places in the US
has experienced strikes in the US; not uncommon; cause dissatisfaction
here does not hear of complaints
"We have some Americans working in the mill.
some come from New Brunswick and other parts of Canada
"about as well paid" as counterparts in the US
no men here have built houses of their own

Blanch Wheeler, Operative

carries filling
four months employ in this department
started out in Chesewell's room carrying cotton yarn
started at 40 cents a day two years ago
now receives 70 cents a day
went to school and can read and write
believes that the men in charge of her are inclined to give her instruction in learning
her trade
no difficulty in mill
has not been checked for wrong doing
has never seen a boy beaten or cuffed
home is Marysville and lives with her parents

Judson Libby, Second Hand, Cloth Room

would prefer not to state salary
employed three years here
this mill only place of employ
fifteen hands in cloth room, mixed men and women
girls receive average 80 cents a day
men receive average \$1.25 a day
no family; lives at home
same re store, etc
as for being well satisfied: "I never saw a man yet that was well satisfied."
not married and does not board here
girls are not allowed to stand at the entrances to the water closets

Harry Osburn, Dyer

9 persons work in dye-house
pay from \$1 to \$1.50 per day
works piece-work, which means expertise pays more
has made as much as \$1.95 here
has worked in New Brunswick cotton mill
employment steady; wages about the same
at New Brunswick mill go to work at 6:30 and leave early Saturday
"I would sooner work here."
does not hear of grumbling in mill
is family man
boards in town but not a mill
pays \$3 a week, including washing [cheaper, hmm]
in Saint John paid about same rent as here
does not think you could get as good a situation rent-wise, all things considered, in
Saint John as in Marysville, would be about \$10 to \$15 a year more
generally satisfied all round

ST. CROIX COTTON MILL**Louis Dexter, Assistant Superintendent**

average 630 employees
957 looms, 32,000 spindles
average pay \$1 to \$1.50 - must run six looms to earn \$1.50, most run four
youngest to be trusted with a loom 14 years; average 20 to 25 years old
details here on starting responsibilities and increasing workload, etc. - technical

spinning room operatives 60 to 80 cents a day
spinners average \$1.25 to \$1.50 - these are the best paid of the hands
some doffers are fifteen - but most 28 and up
details here on average wages of various departments; sounds about the same as
Marysville

no unskilled labourers employed
summer work schedule 6:30 am to 6 pm; winter schedule 7 am to 6 pm
summer close at 12 on Saturday; 4:30 in winter
mill never stops for any length of time
fine for bad weaving
being late too often may result in time taken off

close the door for fifteen minutes 3 minutes before starting of time clock - so that
those late lost automatic 15 minutes
at each end of the mill there is a tower separated from the mill by brick walls; doors
open outward into each of these towers, and the doors of the towers itself open
outward

stairways in tower approx. 18 feet wide
mill is generally emptied in about five minutes after quitting time; speculates same
would be case in event of fire

as to whether there are any fire escapes in the mill: "Those towers at each end of the
mill are virtually fire escapes."
the stairs in the towers are brick and stone

the water closets are in a central tower; back to back on each floor, separated by
partitions 10 to 12 feet
the approaches to these water closets are not separate by common

cannot say what fines were exacted in the mill previous year
occasionally fine for things beside bad work

youngest employees 11 eleven years old - sweeping and doffing - this is intermittent
work

figures most make monthly pay last until next pay period, as very few ask for an
advance, and it is not the company's policy to make advances except in the case of
necessity

no corporal punishment in mill; no place of confinement

"The pay period ends on the last Saturday of the month, and we pay on the third
Wednesday of the following month." [cf. Eagen]

pay full in cash
most hands come from within a radius of 20 miles
sides somewhat the morality of the men and boys "exceptionally good," as opposed to
the female, "high"

had to import labour initially, but not now
help now better than ever

much of the help comes from single families - father, mother and several children;
they typically own their own homes; board in houses owned by workingmen of mill
or live at home

average boarding rates in Milltown \$2.25 per week
thinks general state of education among workers rather high
never superintendent in any other cotton mill

company owns foremen's, overseer's, two of the hands' houses and a boarding house

get about \$75 to \$100 a year for these houses each - hands' \$75, foremen's \$100

knows of the Cotton Manufacturer's Association ["combine"]; is member
arranges a schedule of prices
purpose "to make a fair price for goods and to get the cotton made as cheaply as
possible" yes

"It like all other combinations, has the tendency to break up all outsiders in time; that
is the reason why the cotton factories are not in it." Does not embrace Mr. Gibson's
mill.

heads of departments do the hiring

payroll averages \$19,000 month

strike few years back was caused by reduction in wages of weavers
interviewer asks why this department seems more prone to labour unrest. Dexter
admits that the spinning and weaving departments are indeed more prone to unrest but
says his own experience is not wide

very little drunkenness among hands
give hands Saturday afternoons off in summer to forestall problems in the picnic
season

As for relative cost of production among mills, does not know about margins in the
Upper Provinces; sees no reason why this mill cannot produce as cheaply as they

occasional serious accidents; some time back man was killed when he got caught in
the machinery and his head was crushed
in other incident, a boy fell down an elevator shaft but though seriously hurt was not
killed

the mill gave assistance in the case of the man who was killed but not in the case of
the boy

finer are only for repeat offenses

hands eat both in the mill and at home; those who stay in the mill eat at their
workplace

Q. Are they instructed not to go between the moving and stationary part of the
machinery? A. They are; we do not allow boys to do that if we know it. It was just
this way that the man was killed — by going between the machines when we told him
not to.

Q. Have the wages of the employees increased since the Manufacturers' Association
came in force? A. No.

elevators protected with automatic safeguards, except where the boy fell down at the
end of the hall

company will pay for accidents only when it is not a case of carelessness and the
individuals cannot pay themselves; in no other case

finer in weaving room amounted to about \$20 last year; total in all departments \$30 to
\$90

moisture in spinning and weaving rooms produced here by steam, though in some
other mills produced by water; knows that

Charles Smith, Carder

tenure 7 or 8 weeks

previously worked in card room in Grenville, New Hampshire factory

started at 13 or 14

started at 25 cents a day; now earns \$1

wages here better than States; hours about the same

works 6:45 to 6; to 3 on Saturday

positive on treatment of workers; does not know of discontent

waterclosets separate; on opposite sides of the building; but "conveniences" not
separate

There was a system of fines but it has been shifted.

John McFarlane, Second-Hand, Spinning Room

single, four years employ, no other work experience

paid \$7.50 a week

paid \$1.50 a week
about 45 others in department; mostly women

Q. Are there any fire escapes in the building? A. No, except the slides.

pays \$3 to \$3.50 board
hot in summer but are allowed to open skylights if they wish;
all the machinery in his room operated by water power

John Lieper, Fixer

two years employment
worked in Scotland previously
\$1.95 to \$2.00 weekly
seventeen hands in dept
no girls
separate conveniences
relation between workers at employees "seem to be pretty good just now"
no complaints, nor hears of any elsewhere
rents tenement
did same in Scotland
cost of living "much higher" than in Scotland, though meat a fuel cheaper
thinks wages less here than in Scotland

COTTON MILLS, Saint John

John H. Parks, Manager Cotton Mills Saint John

President and Manager Saint John Cotton Mills, also New Brunswick Mills
500 hand employed: 200 Saint John mills, 300 New Brunswick mills
none employed under 12 years of age
no law regarding minimum age of employment in effect as of yet; Factory Act passed
last year but not yet operational

hands get \$6 to \$10 a week; foremen \$10 to \$40
women work piece-work; earn \$3 to \$4 at low end weekly; \$7 to \$8 at high
children \$1.50 to \$4 depending on ability

no labour troubles
no qualms about imposing fines for lateness and inferior work but all trivial in
amount. "When are large number of people are employed in your mill you must have
strict discipline."

has never heard of undue harshness by foremen towards underlings

cannot say what use is made of the fines for imperfect work as opposed to lateness;
nor what disposal of them is made at all for that matter - all a trifling amount

poor weaver will attend two looms; a very good one six
tending six looms earns more than three times tending two

weavers paid by the yard
work is 60 hours a week; stops at noon Saturday
work begins at 6:30 ends at 6:15

separate conveniences in New Brunswick mill; does not know about Saint John mill

paid on Saturday noon for week ending previous Wednesday

Q. Do you find any difficulty in paying your hands **weekly wages**?

A. No. I think it is the proper thing to do. It makes very little trouble in the office, and

At 110, I think it is the proper thing to do. It makes very little trouble in the office, and a clerk can fix it up in a very short time. I think that all working people should be paid weekly, and I would like to see that principle embodied in the Factory Act.

If workers leave without giving 2 weeks notice their wages are confiscated generally but not always give 2 weeks notice when firing

“The Company belongs to the Cotton Association of the Dominion.”

No connection with American cotton mills

Miss Ellen McLean, Operative

operative reeling room
mostly women
two to three years to become expert
\$1.50 starting wage
piecework after learning the business
11 ½ hours work daily
¾ of hour for lunch
half day Saturday
youngest girls in mill 9 years old; in this department 17
year-round employment
no fines lately
paid every Saturday for pay period previous Wednesday
room well ventilated by windows;
always paid full in cash
eat in same room as work

Miss *, Operative**

winder, employed six years
weaving dept
week-work
skilled hands received \$4 weekly

Miss *, Operative**

weaving room
maximum 3 looms per weaver; they earn \$4 to \$6 per week
\$1.50 for one loom, \$2 to two
piece work
never been fined
only ventilation windows
has never seen anyone younger than 13 in her dept
many eat dinner in weaving room
room to sit down and be comfortable while eating
warm in winter, sometimes too warm
very pleasant in summer
allowed to sit while looms are running
sometimes you can sit awhile, sometimes not
no night work for years
if a day stoppage sometimes overtime required by never more than 15 or 20 minutes;
no extra pay for that

Miss *, Operative**

winding room
seven girls there
weekly work
skilled hands get \$3.50 weekly
no fines for imperfect work
room cold sometimes in winter
just about right in summer
good ventilation. youngest girl fifteen

can start at 12 or 13
never asked to work at night
pay not large enough for work
\$2 a week reasonable board rate in Saint John; available

Miss *, Operative**

winding room
four years
never fined for imperfect work, nor asked to work nights
hours too long for wages
reprimands for bad work done in gentlemanly fashion

Miss *, Operative**

reeling room
twenty hands
three or four days training required
piecework
average pay \$5 to \$7
year-round employment
not hard work
youngest seen employed 12 years old
none that age now
room very comfortable, winter and summer
well ventilated and not crowded
worked here seven years
wages have increased over years
no accidents in room

Miss *, Operative**

twisting room
thirty hands
young ladies
average age fifteen
never known children to work there
eight years there
week not piece work
average wage \$4 weekly
room comfortable and machinery not dangerous

Miss *, Operative**

spinning room
forty-five or fifty hands
some boys
two to three years to become expert
begin at \$2
weekly work
skilled \$4 weekly
trestle spinning, not mule
machinery not dangerous; no accidents
room comfortable, good ventilation
thirteen or fourteen youngest known to work there
no children ever known there
never fined, nor known others to be
can work fifteen or twenty minutes overtime if daytime stoppage; no pay for hat
never reprimanded for bad work nor known others
yarn has been returned for bad work but reprimand verbal only - be more careful
most eat in work room
machinery is stopped at that time
never known any to be discharge for bad work

James Hargreaves, Superintendent, New Brunswick Cotton Mill

300 hands in mill
evenly divided between men and women
children about one quarter
twelve the youngest on staff

Q. Have you had any regulation fixing the lowest age that you will permit them to work ?

A. We have no particular regulation, but we reckon not to go below twelve ; if we could avoid it we would not take them under thirteen.

60 hours a week: 11 on five days and five one-half on Saturday
three quarters of boys are grown up
youngest boy thirteen
girl of 12 or 13 receives \$1 to \$1.20 per day
weekly work
piece work for older girls
average wage for weaver \$5 week - three looms
no fines for imperfect work

We do impose a fine occasionally for being late in the morning, but it is only counted for time that is lost and that ought to be devoted to their work ; if they lose time we take a little for it. Q. Do you take for the actual time lost or do you make the time deducted more than that actually lost by the operative? A. I think they lose more time than the money we actually take off. »

no more than three looms at a time allowed: “ours is fancy shirtings, and not common goods.”

They generally begin as small girls in the spinning room — some twelve, some fourteen years of age then, when we give them, as I said before, from \$1 to \$1.20 for a start.

never known case of corporal punishment, nor approves of it
men mostly employed in mule spinning and dye house - average wage \$8 to \$9

no male weavers

Q. Have you separate conveniences — separate water-closets for male and female operatives throughout the mill? A. Not throughout the mill; but the principal part of the men, they have separate water-closets — but there are rooms in which the males and females use one water-closet. Q. Do you not think that is a matter that ought to be rectified? A. We have never had any trouble.

Q. You know that where there are factory laws these things are not permitted ?

A. I have stated the facts of the case, and these things have never happened. I have worked in mills in England where they had only one water-closet with a greater number of hands, and I think the morality here is as good as it is there and as good there as it is here.

mills has been build as trade warranted it, hence no separate bathrooms in all places; but they try to do this when possible

most skilled hands come from England
he has worked in English mills
thinks wages rather better than in England
probably wages a bit less than in Massachusetts
19 years since worked in England
only night watchmen work at night

work and eat in one room; machinery stopped
factory between 40 and 50 feet high
2 fire-escapes on every flat
building square; one on two ends of the square
doors open outwards
door always open; never fastened [this contradicts Mr. parks]
many women live with parents

Albert Sutcliffe, Overseer

45 to 50 in spinning room
average wage \$4 week
range from \$1.5 to \$6
youngest employee 12; instructed not to take under 12
sometimes desire on part of a few people to crowd in children under 12
more applicants than positions
parents of these children do not look especially bad off
some can read and write; most can at least read
no public night schools in Saint John that he knows of

J. W. Cudlip, Second Hand

20 in mule room
skilled hands, weekly employment
young children "back-boys," putting in bobbins and sweeping, oiling
very youngest not constantly employed; older are usually
youngest 12 or 13

accident before Christmas were boy had ribs broken when machine he was oiling was
turned on prematurely; cannot say if boy paid for time off - some few weeks - nor for
medical attendance

Thomas Whalen, Mule-Spinner

18 months there
before that in Gibson mill
worked in England
pay about the same here and there
overall easier to live in New Brunswick than England
been here since 1883
many more mills in England; previous burned
came to New Brunswick under contract

Charles H. Doig, Dyer

24 in dye house
\$7 to \$9 weekly
here 13 years
not constant employment but never more than 6 weeks off
from Scotland
does not find dying dangerous, even with cuts
did not come out under contract

William Cox, Warper

2 hands
wages average \$8 week
fair bit of time off last summer, but not common
five years in country

John Garside, Beamer

four hands, two boys
shut down three times a year for cleaning
came from England in 1881
about the same working conditons here as in England

came out by contract

John Garrett, Second Hand, carding room

50 to 60 hands

three small children thirteen or fourteen

40 women; rest men

wages from \$3 to \$6

women get less than men

wages not stopped if have to shut down

MONCTON COTTON MILL

Richard Hocken, Manager

170 hands, of which 70 men (35 of which boys), and 100 women (thirty girls)

youngest in each 12 years

begin 6:30 and 6:00

hour lunch break

Saturday stop 3pm

have fine system for bad work

reprimand follows with fine: up to 25 cents

mainly happens in weaving room

finances amounted to \$25 last year

payroll \$35,000 a year

conveniences for male and female separate

entrance for men outside; women inside

three stories in mill

no fire escapes on outside of building

doors open out

main entrance kept locked during all working hours

no complaints of ill treatment

pay every second week - 10 days kept back

2 weeks leave notice required

no portion of wages confiscated if no leave given

appeal for fines in place

never been an appeal for fine

10 days held back to keep staff from "clearing out"

at one time paid monthly

generally inquiries as to age made before hiring

most weavers run four looms

men earn more than women

most go home for dinner

no overtime in mill

does not think fines actually pay for damage causes

does not know of any cotton mill in the province that does not impose fines

has been at mill two years

Peter Duxberry, Spinner

four and a half years in Moncton

\$10.50 week

no full time last 9 months

wages as low as \$7 week

caused by lack of orders

no fines imposed

no death or accident in room

from England

cannot do better here than in England - coal higher and rent more expensive

Isidore Legare, Card Grinder

\$1.25 daily

stopped last week for day

six years at mill

Arthur Ambrose, Employee, Cotton Mill

four years employed
40 cents day
started at 30 cents
spinner
started at 11 years old, now fifteen
“Quite a lot” of boys younger than he in mill
well treated, no fines

Joseph Garside, Operative

cloth department
four years at mill
women do not do the heavy lifting

Jane Ashworth, Operative

weaver
runs six looms
works 9 ½ hours day
no fines, rules posted in room
youngest girl in room 12
one hour for dinner
eat in room
room comfortable in summer and winter
doors leading to street open inwards
winding stair
no wages kept back
very little work of late; mill has been running short 8 months
no overtime; no requirement to work late if machinery breaks during day
worked in Valleyfield mill, Montreal
earned about the same
born in England
only worked four looms in England
board \$2 to \$2.50 week

Ruth Vail, Carder

\$4 to \$4.50 per day carding room
short time lately
working four years
no fines

Annie Tower, Spinner

four years at top-spinner
began at \$6 month
now earns \$3.20 week
“That is what most of the spinners get.”
youngest in dept 14

Note Bene: the index under “Child Labour” gives mostly cotton mill references

General Testimony Volume 5

James Pender, Manufacturer of Horseshoe Nails

best iron comes from Sweden
tariff should allow nail-rods in duty free, as there is no source for them in Canada and
the draw-back from government pays only 2/3rds of cost of import

T. S. Simms, Brush and Broom Manufacturer, Saint John

average skilled wage \$10 to \$15 weekly
youngest boy 12 years old
knows of no law in New Brunswick stipulating minimum age of employees

knows of no law in New Brunswick stipulating minimum age of employees
boys begins at \$1.25 week
all piecework, some women, few girls
9 hours day
winter begin later
competition from prison-made goods from Upper Canada, which causes them to cut
prices but transportation costs there to here help
paid weekly
have had accidents
pays hands until they get well
separate conveniences
no factory inspector in New Brunswick to his knowledge

Alexander Christie, Door, Sash and Wood Manufacturer
business slow of late big after 1877 fire