

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE
DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS
GENERAL MANUFACTURES BRANCH
OTTAWA - CANADA

Dominion Statistician:	R. H. Coats, LL.D., F.R.S.C., F.S.S. (Hon.)
Chief, General Manufactures Branch:	A. Cohen, B.Com.

THE BUTTON INDUSTRY IN CANADA, 1938

There were twenty-one establishments in Canada in 1938 engaged principally in the production of buttons, buckles, fasteners, etc. Twelve of these establishments were located in the province of Quebec and nine in Ontario. Goods amounting to \$1,338,583 were produced from materials costing \$498,674 while the 736 persons employed received \$572,858 in salaries and wages.

The operations of the button industry in 1938 were at a lower level. Compared with the previous year there was a reduction of \$251,859 or 15.8 per cent in the gross value of production, 103 in the number of persons employed and \$97,956 in the amount of salaries and wages paid. The physical volume of production was also lower.

Buttons, of plastic materials to the value of \$335,295 was the most important single item of production in 1938, followed by pearl and fresh water pearl buttons valued at \$311,389 and vegetable ivory buttons at \$178,768. These items represent respectively 25.0, 23.2 and 13.3 per cent of the total value of production.

Referring to Table 4 it may be noted that 6 establishments represented a capital investment of \$1,270,123 or 80 per cent of the total. These establishments produced goods valued at \$984,899 or 74 per cent of the total and employed 507 persons or 69 per cent of the total number employed in the industry.

Employment in this industry is fairly uniform throughout the year, there being no marked seasonal variations. Of the wage-earners employed in 1938, 373 or 60.9 per cent were males, as compared with a male employment of 431 or 60.4 per cent of the total wage-earners in 1937. The average salary in 1938 amounted to \$1,766, \$99 more than in 1937, and the average wage paid in 1938, \$578 was \$68 less than the 1937 average.

The export of buttons is of minor importance in Canada's export trade shipments in 1938, totalling only \$29,299. Imports were much higher but the \$205,218 so recorded in 1938 showed a decrease of \$85,760 over the previous year.

THE BUTTON INDUSTRY IN CANADA, 1938

Table 1. - Principal Statistics of the Button Industry, 1921-1938

Year and Provinces	Estab-lish-ments Report-ing	Capital Invested	Employees	Salaries and Wages	Cost of Materials Used	Gross Value of Production
	No.	\$	No.	\$	\$	\$
1921	20	1,212,229	490	423,288	359,661	1,239,814
1922	21	1,363,340	522	498,156	369,643	1,203,240
1923	20	1,414,602	509	486,710	313,099	1,099,035
1924	13	1,317,378	501	474,914	312,620	958,363
1925	13	1,273,041	547	458,831	316,170	1,030,514
1926	13	1,390,717	556	459,040	358,979	1,088,953
1927	13	1,393,132	484	412,670	306,498	955,397
1928	13	1,468,361	472	401,768	263,480	937,326
1929	13	1,517,123	458	386,456	278,825	955,256
1930	12	1,408,331	397	339,591	199,766	702,470
1931	11	1,177,573	413	353,105	217,510	773,710
1932	14	1,218,881	458	369,721	281,329	991,754
1933	18	1,326,745	568	434,561	389,858	1,135,624
1934	17	1,455,681	640	501,379	466,925	1,298,914
1935	17	1,429,340	699	542,015	477,788	1,370,706
1936	18	1,364,317	800	630,576	522,570	1,467,414
<u>1937</u>						
CANADA	21	1,432,343	839	670,814	634,647	1,590,442
Quebec	12	503,247	383	278,697	331,726	748,933
Ontario	9	929,096	456	392,117	302,921	841,509
<u>1938</u>						
CANADA	21	1,579,532	736	572,858	498,674	1,338,583
Quebec	12	464,992	328	230,906	289,467	630,020
Ontario	9	1,114,540	408	341,952	209,207	708,563

Note: Profits or losses cannot be estimated from Census figures as no data are collected for certain expense items, such as interest, rent, depreciation, taxes, insurance, advertising, etc.

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THE BUTTON INDUSTRY IN CANADA, 1938

Table 2. - Production, 1937 and 1938

Principal Products	Unit of Measure	1 9 3 7		1 9 3 8	
		Quantity	Selling Value	Quantity	Selling Value
			\$		\$
Buttons, vegetable ivory..	Gross	445,775	205,328	409,810	178,768
" pearl and fresh	"				
water pearl ...	"	1,410,312	373,632	1,102,302	311,389
" of plastic mater-	"				
ials	"	583,727	424,943	482,908	335,295
" metal	"	447,286	137,424	319,560	119,006
" covered	"	4,700	4,803	48,500	9,367
" celluloid	"	78,462	83,675	35,309	72,125
" all other, fibre,	"				
leather, etc. .	"	198,522	39,788	184,753	39,175
Buckles, of all kinds	"	19,157	41,897	18,412	52,823
Fasteners, of all kinds ..	"	-	95,305	-	63,935
Clips	"	-	-	3,014	16,828
Pins	"	-	-	12,248	20,409
All other products	"	-	183,647	-	119,463
TOTAL VALUE OF PRODUCTION			1,590,442		1,338,583

Table 3. - Materials Used, 1937 and 1938

Principal Materials	Unit of Measure	1 9 3 7		1 9 3 8	
		Quantity	Cost Value at the Factory	Quantity	Cost Value at the Factory
			\$		\$
Pearl, shell	lb.	64,023	23,512	50,448	14,637
Vegetable ivory nuts	"	991,821	34,760	852,682	28,903
Plastic materials (artificial horn, galalith, lactoid, casein, bakelite, catalin)..	"	251,971	123,952	537,708	166,787
Celluloid	"	88,992	52,610	45,442	25,800
Steel and brass	"	314,692	34,551	262,026	24,674
Blanks	gross	1,485,009	166,242	983,893	126,381
All other materials	-	-	184,308	-	99,116
Containers	-	-	14,702	-	12,376
TOTAL COST OF MATERIALS USED			634,637		498,674

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Table 4. - Principal Statistics of the Button Industry in Canada
for 1938, Grouped According to the Size of Establishment

Establishments having a production of -	Estab- lish- ments	Capital Invested	Em- ployees	Salaries and Wages	Cost of Materials Used	Gross Value of Production
	No.	\$	No.	\$	\$	\$
Under \$5,000	2)					
\$5,000 to \$25,000	7)	80,464	59	36,805	49,892	111,507
\$25,000 to \$50,000	6	228,945	170	118,650	82,416	242,177
\$50,000 to \$100,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
\$100,000 to \$500,000	6	1,270,123	507	417,403	366,366	984,899
\$500,000 to \$1,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
\$1,000,000 and over	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	21	1,579,532	736	572,858	498,674	1,338,583

THE BUTTON INDUSTRY IN CANADA, 1938

Table 5. - Capital Invested, 1938

Year and Provinces	Fixed Capital	Working Capital		Total Capital
	Land buildings, fixtures, machinery, tools, etc.	Stocks of raw materials and finished products on hand, goods in process, fuel and miscellaneous supplies, etc.	Cash, bills and accounts receivable, prepaid expenses, etc.	
	\$	\$	\$	\$
1926	758,671	434,166	197,880	1,390,717
1927	757,057	399,417	236,658	1,393,132
1928	769,667	399,284	299,410	1,468,361
1929	777,060	437,250	302,813	1,517,123
1930	776,987	294,369	336,975	1,408,331
1931	721,885	300,446	155,242	1,177,573
1932	730,517	269,463	218,901	1,218,881
1933	716,803	324,972	284,970	1,326,745
1934	784,533	410,060	261,088	1,455,681
1935	874,811	361,031	193,498	1,429,340
1936	738,344	389,404	236,569	1,364,317
<u>1937</u>				
CANADA	757,389	501,720	173,234	1,432,343
Quebec	236,339	187,413	79,495	503,247
Ontario	521,050	314,307	93,739	929,096
<u>1938</u>				
CANADA	752,041	492,614	334,877	1,579,532
Quebec	235,005	170,430	59,557	464,992
Ontario	517,036	322,184	275,320	1,114,540

Employment

Table 6. - Employees, Salaries and Wages, 1937 and 1938

	1937			1938		
	Male	Female	Salaries and Wages	Male	Female	Salaries and Wages
	No.	No.	\$	No.	No.	\$
Employees on salaries	95	31	210,029	101	23	218,959
Employees on wages (average number)	431	282	460,785	373	239	353,899
TOTAL	526	313	670,814	474	262	572,858

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Table 7. - Wage-earners by Months, 1937 and 1938

Months	1 9 3 7			1 9 3 8		
	Male No.	Female No.	Total No.	Male No.	Female No.	Total No.
January	426	267	693	373	253	626
February	461	291	752	402	259	661
March	451	312	763	402	255	657
April	433	309	742	380	251	631
May	428	293	721	362	247	609
June	434	269	703	372	223	595
July	418	276	694	366	228	594
August	447	262	709	381	227	608
September	424	270	694	379	243	622
October	422	280	702	359	230	589
November	411	282	693	347	223	570
December	405	273	678	357	214	571
Total	5,160	3,384	8,544	4,480	2,853	7,333
Average number employed during the year	431	282	713	373	239	612

Table 8. - Average Weekly Earnings and Number of Wage-earners in the Month of Normal Employment, and Their Regular Hours of Work, 1938

Number of Hours Worked per Week	Number		Number of Hours Worked per Week	Number	
	Males	Females		Males	Females
30 hours or less	21	4	51-54 hours	104	45
31-43 hours	47	41	55 hours	-	-
44 hours	25	8	56-64 hours	-	-
45-47 hours	54	80	65 hours and over	1	-
48 hours	106	88	Average hours per week	47	46
49-50 hours	30	3	Average weekly earnings	\$14.72	\$10.89

The above table does not include overtime.

Fuel Consumption

Table 9. - Fuel Consumption, 1937 and 1938

Kinds of Fuel	Unit of Measure	1 9 3 7		1 9 3 8	
		Quantity	Cost Value	Quantity	Cost Value
Bituminous coal	Ton	1,139	7,650	1,091	7,168
Fuel oil	Imp.Gal.	27,600	2,387	28,200	2,335
Gas	M.cu.ft.	1,457	1,287	895	884
Electricity	-	-	18,740	-	17,456
TOTAL COST OF FUEL AND ELECTRICITY	-	-	30,064	-	27,843

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Table 10. - Power Equipment, 1937 and 1938

Classes of Power	1 9 3 7			
	Ordinarily in Use		In Reserve or Idle	
	Number of Units	Manufacturer's Rating of Horse-power Capacity	Number of Units	Manufacturer's Rating of Horse-power Capacity
Steam engines and steam turbines	1	6	-	-
Electric motors operated by purchased power	169	962	1	5
TOTAL POWER USED IN MANUFACTURING	170	968	1	5
Boiler installation	5	235	1	60

Classes of Power	1 9 3 8			
	Ordinarily in Use		In Reserve or Idle	
	Number of Units	Manufacturer's Rating of Horse-power Capacity	Number of Units	Manufacturer's Rating of Horse-power Capacity
Steam engines and steam turbines	1	6	-	-
Electric motors operated by purchased power	169	974	-	-
TOTAL POWER USED IN MANUFACTURING	170	980	-	-
Boiler installation	5	235	1	60

Imports and Exports

Table 11. - Imports, Calendar Year 1937 and 1938

Materials and Articles Imported	1 9 3 7	1 9 3 8
	\$	\$
Raw and partly manufactured materials -		
Ivory nuts, vegetable	31,894	12,391
Button blanks of animal shell in the rough	143,352	90,845
Pearl, mother of, unmanufactured	17,123	3,834
Celluloid, xylonite or xylonite in sheets, bars, blocks, etc.	-	-
Celluloid, xylonite or xylonite in sheets, lumps, blocks, cylinders, rods or bars, not further manufactured than moulded or pressed (To February 25th, 1937)	343,224	-
Cellulose nitrate or pyroxylin plastics, in tubes, cylinders, balls, strips, sheets, plates, blocks, bars, rods, angles, channels, tees or other shapes or sections, not further manufactured than moulded or pressed, when for use in Canadian manufactures	824,481	889,203
Manufactures of pyroxylin plastics, or of which pyroxylin plastic is the component or chief value n.o.p.	391,200	373,858

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Table 11. - Imports, Calendar Year 1937 and 1938 - Concluded

Materials and Articles Imported	1937	1938
	\$	\$
Manufactured articles -		
Buttons, shoe, papier maché	882	414
Buttons, shoe, n.o.p.	1,117	460
Buttons, vegetable ivory	519	3,167
Buttons, cuff and collar	11,823	17,138
Buttons, all kinds, covered or not, n.o.p. including recognition button, and button blanks, etc.	276,637	184,039
TOTAL IMPORTS	2,042,252	1,575,349

Table 12. - Exports, Calendar Years, 1937 and 1938

Articles Exported	1937	1938
Buttons	43,894	29,299

A P P E N D I X

Firms Manufacturing Buttons in Canada, 1938

QUEBEC

Canadian Buttons Limited	1850 St. Antoine Street, Montreal
Ginn Brothers, Reg'd.	423 Mayor Street, Montreal
Governor Fastener Company, Reg'd.	1030 St. Alexander Street, Montreal
Ideal Button Company	Rm. 23, 1193 Phillips Place Bldg. Montreal
Jiffy Join Incorporated	649 Notre Dame Street West, Montreal
London Button & Buckle Mfg. Co.	270 St. Catherine Street West, Montreal
Patent Button Company Limited	2210 St. Parthenais Street, Montreal
Premier Button & Buckle Co.	1435 Bleury Street, Montreal
Record Slide Fastener, Limited	Rm. 321, Ontario Bldg., 10 Ontario Street West, Montreal
Stein Button Company	745 St. Maurice Street, Montreal
The Pearl Button Manufacturing Company of Canada Limited	St. Therese
Universal Ornament, Buckle Mfg. Co. Ltd.	540 Beaudry Street, Montreal

ONTARIO

Button Sales Limited	252-260 Richmond Street West, Toronto
Dominion Button Manufacturers Limited	57 Water Street North, Kitchener
Kitchener Buttons Limited	Cor. Edwards & Victoria Sts., Kitchener
Kogan & Merker	243 Queen Street West, Toronto
Mitchell Button Company Limited	97 Victoria Street, Kitchener
Richard Roschman & Brothers Limited	27 Queen Street South, Waterloo
Toronto Button Company Limited	110 Spadina Avenue, Toronto
Universal Button Fastening & Button Company of Canada, Limited	1076 Walker Road, Walkerville
York Button Company	604 King Street West, Toronto

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