

EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN THE RETAIL INDUSTRY

By CHARLES F. BEACH

INTRODUCTION

This report is one of a series of special studies based upon facts obtained in 1930 from the retail stores of the country in the first nation-wide Census of Distribution. It deals with the various phases of employment and wage costs in the retail industry and covers store operations for the calendar year 1929.

This report was prepared under the general supervision of Robert J. McFall, chief statistician for distribution, and John Guernsey, in charge of retail distribution.

Scope of this report.—This presentation, outlining certain salient facts relating to the personnel of retail stores, is designed to acquaint those interested in retail employment problems with some of the conclusions which may be reached from a study of the employment and wage data, secured in the first retail census and detailed in the several State reports. Reproduced below is the form of inquiry contained on all retail schedules, the replies to which form the basis for this report. Detailed data for all kinds of retail stores is contained in Tables 1, 2, and 3 of the United States Summary of Retail Distribution. No attempt has been made to cover every phase of retail employment. Rather, the discussion has been limited to a series of illustrations of the nature of data, now available, which might be used for subsequent studies of a more specific character. For a complete analysis of employment in the retail stores, reference should be made to the tables contained in the United States Summary of Retail Distribution and in each of the various State reports. Copies of these reports can be secured from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. A nominal charge is made to defray the cost of printing.

The first section of the report is devoted to a discussion of the different kinds of retail workers and a description of the principal kinds of stores in which they are employed. It points out some of the marked differences between cities and

NUMBER OF PAID EMPLOYEES FOR SPECIFIED MONTHS, AND TOTAL SALARIES AND WAGES PAID

(Report number of paid employees as of the fifteenth day, or nearest pay-roll date, for each month. Do not include proprietors and firm members or their salaries)

	APRIL	JULY	OCTOBER	DECEMBER	PRESENT TIME	
					Males	Females
a. Total number of employees.....	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
b. Total salaries and wages paid to all employees for the year.....	-----	-----	-----	-----	\$.....	
	APRIL	JULY	OCTOBER	DECEMBER	PRESENT TIME	
					Males	Females
c. Number of part-time employees * (included above).....	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
d. Salaries and wages paid (included above) to part-time employees for the year * ..	-----	-----	-----	-----	\$.....	

*NOTE.—Employees who work only part of the normal working day, and those who work only part of the normal working week, should be considered part-time employees.

States, with brief observations as to the reasons for these variations. This section includes a discussion of the service and repair employees of automotive establishments.

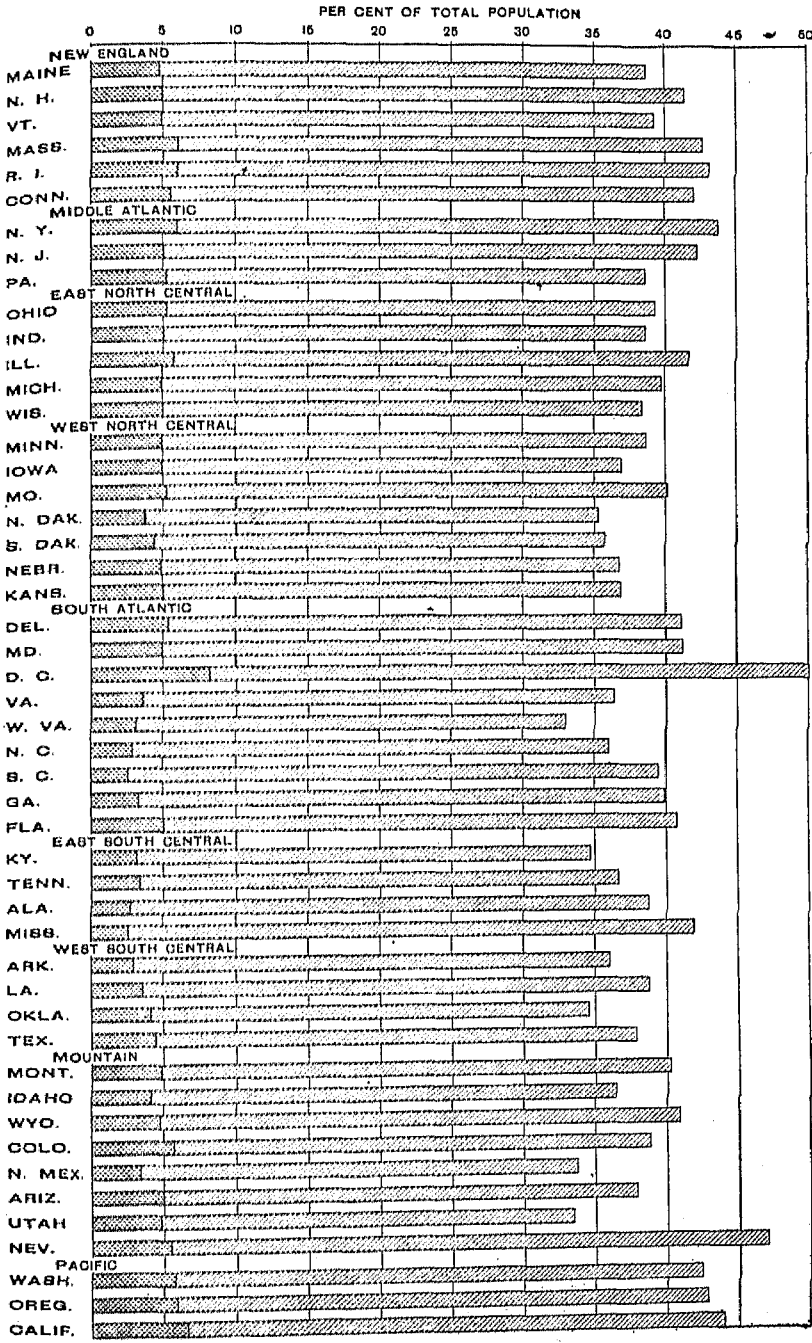
The second section of this report consists largely of a discussion of wage costs in retail stores and of an analysis of the wide variations in costs between different kinds of stores. For the purposes of this study all kinds of business have been divided into seven groups on the basis of the annual wages of the personnel. Each of the more important kinds of stores included in these groups are made the subject of a separate discussion of the basic reasons for these marked variations. Less important, but nevertheless a factor in wage costs, are the variations in average salaries paid, which are also included in this section.

The third section is divided into two parts. The first contains a discussion of the seasonal variation of retail employment. A measure of these variations is now available by kinds of business, and by States. The second part is devoted to consideration of the sex of retail workers.

The fourth section of the report deals with the average sales of retail employees.

The fifth section presents a comparison of wage costs between chains and independents.

CHART II.—PROPORTION OF GAINFUL WORKERS AND RETAIL WORKERS—BY STATES



GAINFUL WORKERS
 RETAIL WORKERS.