This PDF is a selection from an out-of-print volume from the National Bureau of Economic Research

Volume Title: Industrial Profits in the United States

Volume Author/Editor: Ralph C. Epstein assisted by Florence M. Clark

Volume Publisher: NBER

Volume ISBN: 0-87014-025-6

Volume URL: http://www.nber.org/books/epst34-1

Publication Date: 1934

Chapter Title: Front matter, preface, table of contents

Chapter Author: Ralph C. Epstein, Florence M. Clark

Chapter URL: http://www.nber.org/chapters/c5020

Chapter pages in book: (p. -11 - 0)

35-1340

# INDUSTRIAL PROFITS IN THE UNITED STATES

#### RALPH C. EPSTEIN

PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS, UNIVERSITY OF BUFFALO

ASSISTED BY

FLORENCE M. CLARK

A PUBLICATION OF THE

NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH

IN COOPERATION WITH THE

COMMITTEE ON RECENT ECONOMIC CHANGES

NEW YORK • 1934

COPYRIGHT, 1934, BY NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH, INC., 1819 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, N. Y. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

TYPOGRAPHY: ERNST REICHL
PRINTED AND BOUND IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BY H. WOLFF, NEW YORK

### PUBLICATIONS OF THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH, INC.

#### NUMBER 26

## INDUSTRIAL PROFITS IN THE UNITED STATES

The National Bureau of Economic Research was organized in 1920 in response to a growing demand for scientific determination and impartial interpretation of facts bearing upon economic and social problems. Freedom from bias is sought by the constitution of its Board of Directors without whose approval no report may be published. Rigid provisions guard the National Bureau from becoming a source of profit to its members, directors or officers, or from becoming an agency for propaganda.

#### Officers

OSWALD W. KNAUTH, Chairman GEORGE Soule, Vice-President JOSEPH H. WILLITS, President SHEPARD MORGAN, Treasurer CHARLES A. BLISS, Executive Secretary

#### Research Staff

WESLEY C. MITCHELL, Director of Research FREDERICK R. MACAULAY ARTHUR F. BURNS SIMON KUZNETS FREDERICK C. MILLS LEO WOLMAN

EUGEN ALTSCHUL, Associate

#### Directors at Large

OSWALD W. KNAUTH ELWOOD MEAD H. W. LAIDLER SHEPARD MORGAN L. C. MARSHALL GEORGE SOULE GEORGE O. MAY N. I. STONE

#### Directors by University Appointment

EDWIN F. GAY, Harvard WALTON H. HAMILTON, Yale HARRY JEROME, Wisconsin

HARRY ALVIN MILLIS, Chicago WESLEY C. MITCHELL, Columbia JOSEPH H. WILLITS, Pennsylvania

#### Directors appointed by other Organizations M. C. RORTY

DAVID FRIDAY American Economic Association LEE GALLOWAY American Management Association National Publishers Association GEORGE E. ROBERTS American Bankers Association

American Statistical Association ARCH W. SHAW ROBERT B. WOLF American Engineering Council

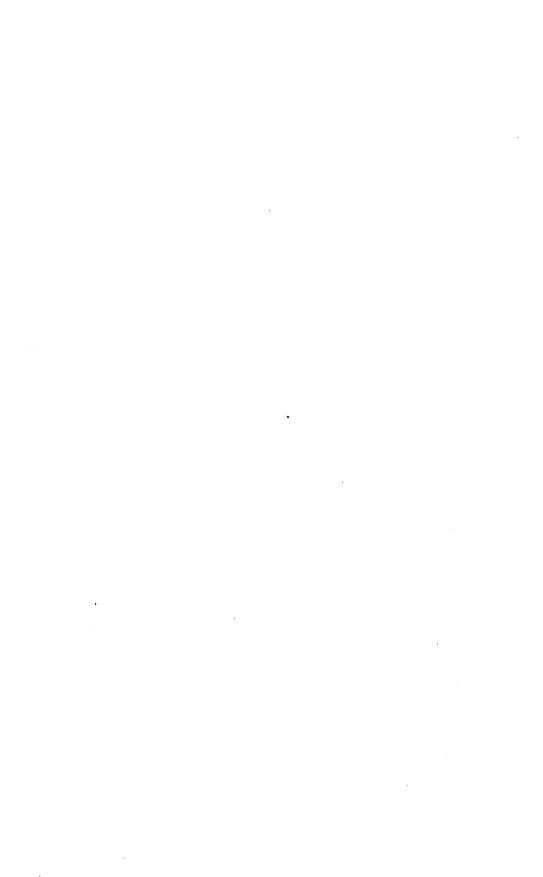
#### RELATION OF THE DIRECTORS

#### TO THE WORK OF THE NATIONAL BUREAU

#### OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH

- 1. The object of the National Bureau of Economic Research is to ascertain and to present to the public important economic facts and their interpretation in a scientific and impartial manner. The Board of Directors is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the work of the Bureau is carried on in strict conformity with this object.
- 2. To this end the Board of Directors shall appoint one or more Directors of Research.
- 3. The Director or Directors of Research shall submit to the members of the Board, or to its Executive Committee, for their formal adoption, all specific proposals concerning researches to be instituted.
- 4. No study shall be published until the Director or Directors of Research shall have submitted to the Board a summary report drawing attention to the character of the data and their utilization in the study, the nature and treatment of the problems involved, the main conclusions and such other information as in their opinion will serve to determine the suitability of the study for publication in accordance with the principles of the Bureau.
- 5. A copy of any manuscript proposed for publication shall also be submitted to each member of the Board. If publication is approved each member is entitled to have published also a memorandum of any dissent or reservation he may express, together with a brief statement of his reasons. The publication of a volume does not, however, imply that each member of the Board of Directors has read the manuscript and passed upon its validity in every detail.
- 6. The results of an inquiry shall not be published except with the approval of at least a majority of the entire Board and a two-thirds majority of all those members of the Board who shall have voted on the proposal within the time fixed for the receipt of votes on the publication proposed. The limit shall be forty-five days from the date of the submission of the synopsis and manuscript of the proposed publication unless the Board extends the limit; upon the request of any member the limit may be extended for not more than thirty days.
- 7. A copy of this resolution shall, unless otherwise determined by the Board, be printed in each copy of every Bureau publication.

(Resolution of October 25, 1926, revised February 6, 1933)



#### AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE data upon which this study mainly rests have been published by the Department of Commerce under the title Source-Book for the Study of Industrial Profits, by the author in collaboration with Florence M. Clark. As pointed out in the Source-Book and at various places in the present volume, the data are statistical samples and as such are subject to certain qualifications. These qualifications are discussed in Chapter 43, which should be consulted by critical readers who wish to examine the statistical bases for many of the conclusions presented in earlier chapters. Attention is called also to the Glossary.

It is not possible here to name all of the persons consulted in connection with the statistical, accounting and other problems encountered in the preparation of both this volume and the basic tables on which it rests. I do wish, however, to make mention of the generosity of Professor William L. Crum, Mr. George O. May, former Secretary of Commerce Robert P. Lamont, Dr. Julius Klein, Mr. Arch W. Shaw, Dr. Frank M. Surface and Professor Roy B. Kester in having given valuable aid on numerous occasions. Less directly, but also very kindly, the following persons have helped in either the collection or interpretation of the materials: Mr. W. T. Sherwood, Mr. Edward White, Mrs. S. B. Blandy, Professor J. Franklin Ebersole, Mr. George B. Roberts, Mr. Carl Snyder and Mr. Lawrence H. Sloan. I am indebted to Professors Frank H. Knight. Charles S. Tippetts, Shaw Livermore and Mrs. John D. Sumner for criticism of the manuscript (to Mrs. Sumner for valuable statistical assistance also), as well as to members of the staff and the Board of Directors of the National Bureau of Economic Research.

The faith of Edwin F. Gay and Wesley C. Mitchell in the ultimate outcome of what at even an early stage was seen to be a difficult and somewhat hazardous undertaking, and their constant support, are largely responsible for the study's completion.

Finally Mrs. Alice W. Herbst and Mrs. Lorna J. Marple are due thanks for their efficient services in helping to prepare the manuscript for press. The debt to Miss Clark throughout the entire course of the investigation is evident from the title page.

R. C. E.

#### CONTENTS

The	Problem of Measuring Profits, a Preliminary Note by Wesley C. Mitchell	3					
	Воок І						
THE BROAD FINDINGS							
1	An Introductory Summary	31					
2	A General View of Industry	49					
3	Earnings Rates in Different Industries	70					
4	Return upon Sales in Different Industries	114					
5	Size and Geographical Location of Corporations	128 144					
6 7	Cyclical Fluctuations in Profits Cyclical Fluctuations (Continued)	161					
٠,	Cyclical Fluctuations (Continueu)	101					
	Воок II						
EARNINGS OF LARGE CORPORATIONS							
8	Introduction	209					
9	Manufacture and Its Major Groups	216					
10	Foods and Food Products	246					
11	Textiles and Textile Products	252					
12	Leather and Leather Products	258					
13	Rubber and Rubber Products	262					
14	Lumber and Lumber Products	266					
15	Paper and Paper Products	270					
16	Printing and Publishing	274					
17	Chemicals Storm Clay and Class	278					
18 19	Stone, Clay and Glass Metals	283					
20	Special Manufacturing Industries	287 295					
20	Fix 7	473					

[x] 21 22 23 24 25 26	Trade and Its Major Groups Retail Trade Wholesale Trade Retail and Wholesale Trade Mining and Its Minor Groups Finance and Its Minor Groups	300 313 318 323 327 337				
Воок ІІІ						
EARNINGS OF SMALL CORPORATIONS						
27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42	Introduction Manufacture and Its Major Groups Foods and Food Products Textiles and Textile Products Leather and Leather Products Rubber and Rubber Products Lumber and Lumber Products Paper and Paper Products Printing and Publishing Chemicals Stone, Clay and Glass Metals Special Manufacturing Industries Trade and Its Major Groups Retail Trade Wholesale Trade	349 353 371 378 384 390 394 400 406 412 418 424 430 436 442				
Воок IV						
۰	PROBLEMS OF ESTIMATION AND	)				
	INTERPRETATION					
43 44 45 46 47	Problems of Sampling and Weighting Comparison of Minor Group Samples The Valuation of Assets: Capitalization Problems Problems of Classification Profits and the Regulation of Production	455 496 524 548 577				

CONTENTS			
GLos	SARY	595	
APPE	NDICES		
Α	Explanations of Methods Used in Preparing Certain Charts and Tables	601	
В	Absolute Data Underlying Certain Charts and Tables	611	
C	Supplementary Frequency Distributions	649	
D	Block Diagrams of Earnings Rates	654	
List o	of Tables	659	
List o	List of Charts		
INDE	Index		

