

slight fall, then a rise to a peak in October a few weeks after the end of the enquiry, followed by a steady decline. Retail prices appeared to follow the general trend, with only a very short time lag.

Over the period of the enquiry, retail prices ranged from 1s. 4d. to 2s. 6d. per lb. The majority of prices were nearer the bottom than the top of this range. Very few instances of shops selling at prices involving an odd halfpenny per lb. were found. In Table 19 the shops selling at these prices have been classified as selling at the nearest penny above the actual price. In most cases this was the price that was in fact effective, since the majority of sales were in half and quarter pounds. It is probably the desire to avoid odd farthings in small sales which accounts for the evenness of the prices.

In the larger towns the First Survey lasted about six weeks, and during this time a price change of a penny probably occurred in most shops. The duration of the Second Survey was shorter, but took place during a period when butter prices were rising comparatively fast.

Apart from seasonal changes, prices varied according to kind of butter, area and type of shop. It was on the whole unusual to find a shop selling butter from one country at more than one price, but occasionally two qualities were being retailed at prices differing by 1d. per lb. In the following tables, therefore, the number of prices recorded for one type is sometimes greater than the number of shops recorded as stocking that type.

The extreme range of prices of any one bulk butter in one town was generally about 3d. or 4d., but the majority of prices seldom differed by more than 1d. and the Co-operatives and large multiples nearly always sold at a uniform price throughout the town. The price of Irish butter varied more than any other. In London the range of prices was much wider than in the other areas.

As would be expected, the high-class shops tended to stock the more expensive butters and to sell all butters at a price slightly above the average; the shops classified as "low" tended on the whole to stock the cheaper types, but it was noted that the average prices of each type were rather above those ruling in the middle-class shops. The difference was never great, but except in the case of Irish butter, it persisted throughout all areas.