

Parsons Paper Company Payroll & Employment Analysis - Stat 210

Anna Zhou and Sarah Edelson

2023-03-27

Table of contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Analysis of the Register	2
2.1	What's in the register?	2
2.2	How many days in a pay period?	7
2.3	How many employees during this era?	10
2.4	What types of jobs are there?	10
2.5	Tracking employment by job type for first 6 months of the register (Jan-Jun 1861)	11
2.6	How do Parsons wages compare to the Massachusetts state averages?	13
3	References	17
4	Appendix	18

1 Introduction

The Parsons Paper Register contains nearly 400 pages of employee, payroll, and financial records from January 1861 to April 1869 from Parsons Paper Company in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Founded in 1853 by Joseph Parsons, Parsons Paper Company was the oldest and largest manufacturer of cotton-based high quality writing papers in Holyoke until its liquidation in 2005.

The original pages of the register, which is now property of the Holyoke Public Library, were scanned on January 10, 2023 as part of this class (STAT210: Mining the History of Holyoke) and screenshots are included in the analysis below. Pages contain information such as employee name and signature, role, days worked, daily pay, and total wages earned, and are organized

by separate pay periods. We are focused mainly on the payroll, which is comprised by pages 1-316 of the register.

The goal of the following report is to explore patterns in employment by groups of employees over time by analyzing the payroll records in the 1861-1869 time period, both before and after the end of the Civil War.

In Section 2.1, we use a transcribed copy of page 253 (see Figure 2) of the register to compare the number of employees who were able to sign their own signatures to the number of employees who were not able to on a singular page, and examine whether there was a relationship between literacy and pay. Table 1 displays the transcript of page 253.

In Section 2.2 and Section 2.3, we aim first to quantify the length of a single pay period and then quantify the number of employees working at Parsons Paper Company during the era spanning the register. The 1860s were a time of great growth for the company, and by the beginning of the Civil War in 1861 Parsons Paper Company had already become the largest manufacturer of writing and envelope paper in the United States.

In Section 2.4, we identify the different roles within the company, ranging from women who worked in the “rag room” where the raw material for paper was cut and processed, to men who worked in the engine room and repairs. Most paper mills in the North purchased rags from companies in the South, and Parsons’ rag room was considered an “anomaly” (n.d.). We are also interested in examining the distribution of the different roles in the factory throughout the first six months of the register’s time period in Section 2.5.

Finally, in Section 2.6, we compare the weekly wages of Parsons Paper Company workers to state averages for paper workers across Massachusetts.

The central goal of this report is ultimately to make the information contained in the Parsons Paper Register and related materials more accessible and widely available to those interested in the rich history of Holyoke. A Shiny app is available to view individual scans of the register at r.amherst.edu/apps/nhorton/Parsons-Paper/. We hope that this report can provide some insight into the different day-to-day operations at Parsons Paper Company, as well as the individuals who worked there, many of whom stayed for several years.

2 Analysis of the Register

2.1 What’s in the register?

The figures below are direct scans of the original Parsons Paper Company register that provided the basis of our following analysis. We are interested in determining whether there was a relationship between literacy and wage for Parsons employees in the 1860s.

Received of the **PARSONS PAPER COMPANY**, *by their Agent, the*
being in full of all demands up to *February*

NAMES.	No. POUNDS.	No. REAMS.	No. DAYS.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.
<i>William Johnson</i>			<i>24</i> ^{<i>1</i>} / _{<i>2</i>}	<i>16</i> / _{<i>6</i>}	<i>67</i> 37	
<i>John W. Collins</i>			<i>21</i> ^{<i>2</i>} / _{<i>4</i>}	<i>16</i> / _{<i>0</i>}	<i>34</i> 95	<i>11</i> 67
<i>William Connor</i>			<i>25</i>	<i>16</i> / _{<i>6</i>}	<i>68</i> 75	<i>7</i> 25
<i>Martin Kennedy</i>			<i>23</i>	<i>9</i> / _{<i>9</i>}	<i>37</i> 38	
<i>James Casey</i>			<i>25</i> ^{<i>2</i>} / _{<i>12</i>}	<i>12</i> / _{<i>0</i>}	<i>51</i> 00	

Figure 1: Close-up of page 253 of register - February 1st, 1867. Payroll of the Parsons Paper Company (Holyoke, MA). Columns from left to right: Name, Days Worked, Price (daily wage rate), Total Monthly Wages, Rent/Board.

Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agent, the sum specified to and Signatures, being in full of all demands up to February 1st 1867.

NAMES	No. POUNDS.	No. REAMS.	No. DAYS.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	REST. ON BOARD.	BALANCE DUE.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
William J. Pison			24	16	67 37		67 37		Wm J. Pison
John C. Evans			21	19	34 95	4 67	30 28		John C. Evans
William Cornish			25	16	68 75	7 25	61 50		William Cornish
Martin Kennedy			28	19	87 58		87 58		Martin Kennedy
James Casey			26	12	81 00		81 00		James Casey
Chas. Ballou			28	12	87 50		87 50		Chas. Ballou
John Vaughan			23	12	50 00		50 00		John Vaughan
Pat. Boyle			27	12	40 50		40 50		Pat. Boyle
Saml. F. Wright			27	12	58 00	7 25	50 75		Saml. F. Wright
Phillip Gidday			28	12	57 00		57 00		Phillip Gidday
John Cochran			28	12	56 00	6 25	49 75		John Cochran
Frank Russell			27	12	48 12	9 00	39 12		Frank Russell
Thomas Pison			28	12	35 63		35 63		Thomas Pison
William Pison			27	12	41 50		41 50		William Pison
John Lynn			27	12	67 50		67 50		John Lynn
E. W. Willington			27	12	87 25	6 25	81 00		E. W. Willington
Stephen Moran			27	12	147 70		147 70		Stephen Moran
Wm. McKay			31	16	48 11	9 33	38 78		Wm. McKay
Charles Strong			27	12	88 50		88 50		Charles Strong
J. A. Allen			27	12	40 50	5 00	35 50		J. A. Allen
Wick Lyman			31	11	56 23		56 23		Wick Lyman
Pat. Keegan			31	11	46 50		46 50		Pat. Keegan
Wm. McKay			29	11	53 17		53 17		Wm. McKay
Edward Ford			28	16	40 63		40 63		Edward Ford
Pat. O'Keefe			28	16	44 60	11 67	32 93		Pat. O'Keefe
Pat. O'Keefe			27	16	48 58	5 70	42 88		Pat. O'Keefe
J. P. Beaudet			6	0	9 75	5 00	4 75		J. P. Beaudet
J. P. Beaudet Jr			25	0	48 50		48 50		J. P. Beaudet Jr
John Vaughan			27	16	112 5		112 5		John Vaughan
Erasmus Knapp			21	11	39 00		39 00		Erasmus Knapp
Thomas D. Davis			26	11	39 75		39 75		Thomas D. Davis
John Shea			18	9	27 25		27 25		John Shea
John Warren			2	11	75		75		John Warren
Mary Ambey			11	16	12 37		12 37		Mary Ambey
Kate Wilton			27	16	30 37		30 37		Kate Wilton
Kate Moran			31	11	27		27		Kate Moran
Kate Baldwin			23	11	25 87		25 87		Kate Baldwin
Phillip Gidday					7 12		7 12		Phillip Gidday
John Pison					1 00		1 00		John Pison
Parsons P. Co.					1750 00	1067	683 00		
Erasmus Knapp			26	18	76 50		76 50		Erasmus Knapp
Walter Buckley			28	18	61 50		61 50		Walter Buckley
J. M. Alden			25	19	62 50		62 50		J. M. Alden
Stephen Russell			23	18	51 78	11 00	40 78		Stephen Russell
Pat. Casey			32	19	52 82		52 82		Pat. Casey
Erasmus Knapp			27	18	81 00		81 00		Erasmus Knapp
Walter Buckley			27	18	81 00		81 00		Walter Buckley
J. M. Alden			27	18	67 50		67 50		J. M. Alden
Stephen Russell			27	18	60 75	4 00	56 75		Stephen Russell
Pat. Casey			33	19	53 67		53 67		Pat. Casey
TOTAL					3123 17	4110	2913 17		

Figure 2: Page 253 of register - February 1st, 1867. Payroll of the Parsons Paper Company (Holyoke, MA).

William Amory	27	21	94.50		94.50	Wm J. Amory
John Flynn	27	152	67.50		67.50	John Flynn
E. H. Wellington	27	176	57.25	6.25	51.50	E. H. Wellington
Walter Morgan	27	90	44.70		44.70	Walter Morgan
W. M. Kay	30	136	88.11	9.33	88.98	W. M. Kay

Figure 3: Close-up of page 253 of register from Figure 1. Signatures with an 'x' in the middle (like John Flynn above) indicate the worker was not able to sign their own name.

Table 1: Example Portion of Parsons Paper Company Register - Page 253.

Last Name	First Name	# of Days	Price 1	Price 2	Total	Rent/Board	Paid	Signed	Daily Pay
Johnson	William	24.50	16	6	67.37	NA	67.37	yes	2.750
O'Brien	John W.	21.50	9	9	34.95	4.67	30.28	yes	1.626
Connor	William	25.00	16	6	68.75	7.25	61.50	yes	2.750
Kennedy	Martin	23.00	9	9	37.38	0.00	37.38	no	1.625
Casey	James	25.50	12	0	51.00	0.00	51.00	no	2.000
Gallivan	Thos	25.00	9	0	37.50	0.00	37.50	no	1.500
Vaughn	John W.	25.00	12	0	50.00	0.00	50.00	no	2.000
Doyle	Pat K.	27.00	9	0	40.50	0.00	40.50	no	1.500
Knight	Samuel L.	27.50	12	0	55.00	7.25	47.75	no	2.000
Gilday	Phillip	28.50	12	0	57.00	0.00	57.00	yes	2.000
Couchon	John	28.00	12	0	56.00	6.25	49.75	yes	2.000
Russell	Frank	27.50	10	6	48.12	9.00	39.12	yes	1.750
Johnson	Chancy	28.50	7	6	35.63	0.00	35.63	no	1.250
Pomeroy	William	27.00	21	0	94.50	0.00	94.50	yes	3.500
Flynn	John	27.00	15	0	67.50	0.00	67.50	no	2.500
Willington	E.	27.00	19	6	87.75	6.25	81.50	yes	3.250
Moran	Martin	27.50	9	9	44.70	0.00	44.70	no	1.625
McKay	William	31.25	19	6	98.31	9.33	88.98	yes	3.146
Strong	Chester	27.00	13	0	58.50	0.00	58.50	yes	2.167
Allen	J.H.	27.00	9	0	40.50	5.00	35.50	no	1.500
Ryan	Mick	31.00	11	0	56.83	0.00	56.83	no	1.833
Bergin	Pat K.	31.00	9	0	46.50	0.00	46.50	no	1.500
Markham	Mick	29.00	11	0	53.17	0.00	53.17	no	1.833
Woolf	Edward	25.00	9	9	40.63	0.00	40.63	yes	1.625
Moriarty	Pat K.	25.50	10	6	44.62	4.67	39.95	no	1.750
O'Hare	Pat K.	27.00	9	9	43.88	5.00	38.88	yes	1.625
Beaudeax	Jos	6.00	9	9	9.75	5.00	4.75	no	1.625
Beaudeax	Jos Jr.	28.00	9	9	45.50	0.00	45.50	no	1.625
Naughton	John	27.00	10	6	47.25	0.00	47.25	no	1.750
Hurly	Eugene	26.00	9	0	39.00	0.00	39.00	no	1.500
Davis	Hiram	26.50	9	0	39.75	0.00	39.75	yes	1.500
Shea	John	18.50	9	0	27.75	0.00	27.75	no	1.500
Warren	John	0.50	9	0	0.75	0.00	0.75	yes	1.500
Donlan	Mary	11.00	6	9	12.37	0.00	12.37	no	1.125
William	Kate	27.00	6	9	30.37	0.00	30.37	no	1.125
Moran	Kate	24.00	6	9	27.00	0.00	27.00	no	1.125
Baldwin	Kate	23.00	6	9	25.87	0.00	25.87	no	1.125
Gilday	Phillip	NA	NA	NA	7.12	0.00	7.12	yes	NA
Flynn	John	NA	NA	NA	1.00	0.00	1.00	no	NA
Ely	Austin	27.00	18	0	81.00	0.00	81.00	yes	3.000
Buckley	Matteo	27.00	18	0	81.00	0.00	81.00	yes	3.000
Alden	J.M.	27.00	16	0	67.50	0.00	67.50	yes	2.500
Newell	Martin	27.00	13	6	60.75	4.00	56.75	yes	2.250
Casey	Pat K.	33.00	9	9	53.62	0.00	53.62	yes	1.625

55% (24/44) of the employees at Parsons Paper Company were illiterate, especially the women and immigrants, who largely lacked formal education. Additionally, employees who were literate received significantly higher wages compared to employees who were illiterate (see Figure 4).

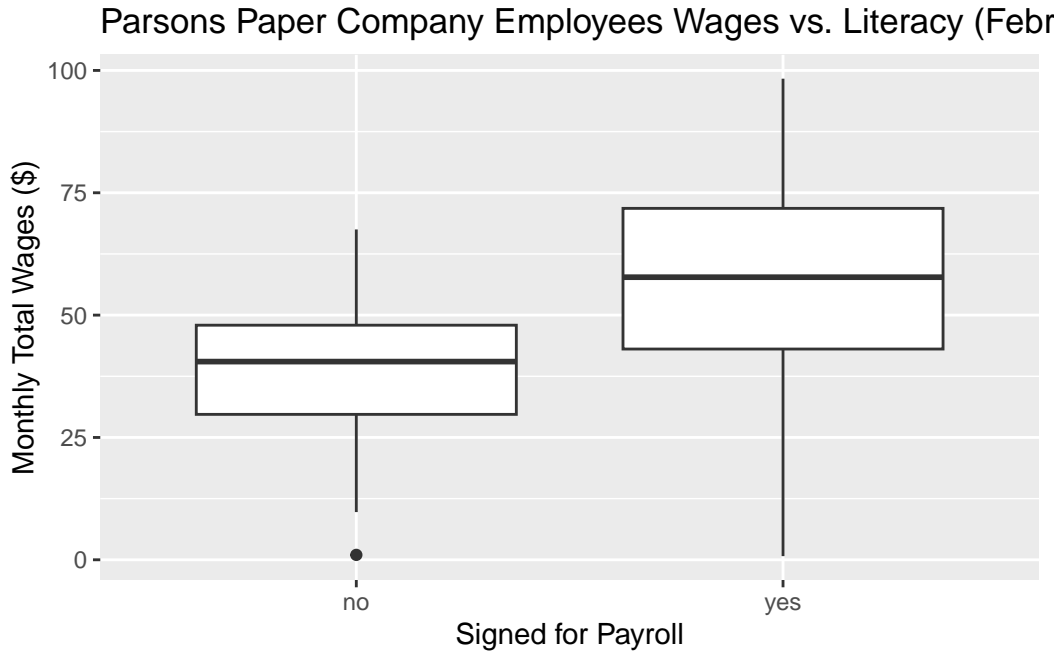


Figure 4: This plot shows the distribution of total wages for 44 employees at Parsons Paper Company in February 1867 from Table 1. Literacy is measured by an employee’s ability to sign their own name in the payroll. Employees who were literate, on average, earned high wages.

2.2 How many days in a pay period?

As mentioned in the introduction, the Parsons Paper Company register stored in the Holyoke Public Library comprises monthly pay periods from January 1861-April 1869 (page 1-316 of the register). Pay periods appear to be a month long with employees typically getting paid on the 1st of the next month. Based off Table 1 from page 253, most employees work between 20-30 days each pay period, with the average being around 27, so most employees work at least 6 days/week.

In Chapter IV of Constance Green’s *Holyoke, Massachusetts: A Case History of the Industrial Revolution in America* (Green 1939), it is reported that male Holyoke paper makers worked 58-72 hours a week. Working 11.25 hours five days a week in addition to 8.75 hours on Saturday was typical for Holyoke textile mills, while women tended to work slightly shorter hours.

(April 1st 1867 vs. April 1st 1868).

261

Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agent, the sum specified to our Signatures,
being in full of all demands up to April 1st 1868

NAMES	No. POUNDS.	No. REAMS.	No. DAYS.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.	BALANCE DUE.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
Geo Papillion			25	154	6432		6432		George Papillion
James P. Power			22	106	3981		3981		James P. Power
W. A. Lord			25	15	6375	725	5650		Walter Lord
Geo A. Day			25	15	6063	725	5338		Geo A. Day
O. S. Phillips			21	14	5077	1771	3246		O. S. Phillips
A. L. C. Spive			26	108	4550	1771	2779		A. L. C. Spive
L. Canell			21	15	5250		5250		L. Canell
Chas. Petersen			26	76	3250	1771	1479		Chas. Petersen
Chas. H. Morgan			26	5	2167		2167		Chas. H. Morgan
Ellen D. Quine			25	6	2500		25		Ellen D. Quine
J. A. Stack			26		3030		3030		J. A. Stack
K. Casey			25	6	2550		2550		K. Casey
James Spring			20		2050		2050		James Spring
Eyo Whittmore			26		2600	1329	1271		Eyo Whittmore
Sarah Slater			25		2350	1329	1021		Sarah Slater
Clara Woodworth			24		2400	1329	1071		Clara Woodworth
Theresa Quiry			26		2600		26		Theresa Quiry
Mary Quiry			26		2600		26		Mary Quiry
Sally Norton			27		2180	1329	851		Sally Norton
S. Buckland			18		1800	956	844		S. Buckland
E. Carlton			13		1300		13		E. Carlton
Lizzie Davison			26		2600	1329	1271		Lizzie Davison
A. Anderson			26		2600		2600		A. Anderson
Adair Dart			26		2600	1329	1271		Adair Dart
Maria Brown			15		1525		1525		Maria Brown
Maria Dart			25		2500	1329	1171		Maria Dart
Fronica Green			25		2550		2550		Fronica Green
Sarah Camp			24	5	2000		2000		Sarah Camp
Mary Smith			26	6	2600	1329	1271		Mary Smith
John Dow			2,124	27	358		2764		John Dow
Louy Allen			2,124	27	358		2977		Louy Allen
M. Brown			2,124	27	358		2009	1329	M. Brown
Margt. Davis			2,124	27	358		2871		Margt. Davis
E. A. Allen			1171	2	2342		2342		E. A. Allen
Mary Comfort			780		1560	1560	0		Mary Comfort
E. A. Lord			906		1812		1812		E. A. Lord
Mathia Knight			756		1512	700	812		Mathia Knight
E. Appleton			1069		2138	1329	809		E. Appleton
S. Baumgard			915		1830		1830		S. Baumgard
Addie Brown			209	7	710		7		Addie Brown
M. Brown			105	25	58		1464		M. Brown
M. S. Hockaday			254	9	58		58		M. S. Hockaday
Julia Corcoran			214	2	428		428		Julia Corcoran
M. Brown			168	2	336		336		M. Brown
M. Anderson			12	6	450		450		M. Anderson
Mary Dow			650	2	1300	625	675		Mary Dow
"			240	25	600		6		"
"			260	3	780		780		"
Mary Holland			702	2	1404		1404		Mary Holland
"			496	3	1488		1488		"
Mary Comfort			400	2	800	583	217		Mary Comfort
					131969	25507	97462		

25
 10
 5
 2

Figure 6: Page 261 of register (April 1st, 1868), also see pages 262-263 in Section 4.

Table 2: Number of Parsons Paper Company Employees by Year Each April.

Year	Number of Employees	Subset Page Numbers
April 1861	92	8-10
April 1862	122	43-45
April 1863	141	79-81
April 1864	128	115-117
April 1865	159	151-153
April 1866	144	187-189
April 1867	131	223-225
April 1868	153	261-263
April 1869	153	314-316

2.3 How many employees during this era?

To quantify this, we counted the number of employees throughout each of the following pay periods by hand by going through the pages of the register one by one. We found that the average number of workers employed at Parsons Paper Company across the measured 9 years spanning the register is **136 employees between 1861-1869**. From Table 2, we can see that the number of employees generally increased over the years, with a noticeable boom in employment towards the end of the Civil War in 1865. In Chapter IV of *Holyoke, Massachusetts: A Case History of the Industrial Revolution in America*, Green mentions that these paper mills had abnormally high employee retention rates compared to other industries. We also know that at the end of 1867, Parsons employed 150 people and had “nineteen engines for grinding rags,” turning out “800 tons of paper yearly” (Burt 1867, page 79).

2.4 What types of jobs are there?

In *History of the Connecticut Valley in Massachusetts, with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers*, L.H Everts provides more information about the layout of the two Parsons Paper Company mills and the different departments of employment, which helped us determine job names that we could not originally decipher (i.e. “jobber”). Everts writes that,

“The buildings of this company are situated on the river-bank near the dam, and were built in 1853. They are two in number, the **main mill**, where the paper is made, and what is known as the **finishing-mill**, where it is finished. The former is a structure three stories and a basement high. The upper floor and attic are devoted to drying purposes, while the second story contains the storehouse and **rag-rooms**. About 175 persons are employed on the two floors. On the ground-floor is the **engine-room**, which contains sixteen 450-pound and fourteen 250-pound engines. The mill has three Fourdrinier machines, two of them are 62-inch and the other 72-inch. It has two bleach-boilers, of 3 1/2 and 2 1/2 tons respectively, and 4 sheet calendars and a web calendar and 2 hydraulic presses.

The finishing-mill is also situated on the bank of the river, a short distance from the other mill, and, like that, is a brick structure three stories high. The attic and third floor are used for **packing**, and on the second floor the paper is **reeled** and **jogged**. On the first floor are eight 6-roll calendars and three powerful hydraulic presses, and in the basement is a box-factory and plating-machines” (Everts 1879, page 919).

2.5 Tracking employment by job type for first 6 months of the register (Jan-Jun 1861)

Table 3 displays the different roles recorded for the first six months of the register, from January to June of 1861. The role labels on the register become very sporadic and difficult to track after 1861, however, ‘Repairs’ and ‘Repairs and Watchmen’ remain in their own section at the bottom of the register pages throughout all of the pay periods. There were 5 people under “Repairs” for April 1st, 1867 (see Figure 11 in Section 4) and 8 people under April 1st, 1868 (see Figure 12 in Section 4). Refer also to Section 4 for the link to the full spreadsheet.

The first pages of each pay period are typically comprised of unlabeled laborers (presumably the majority worked in the engine and machine rooms), in addition to Repairs and Watchmen, who are all males. The sorters, stampers, sealers, count and folders, and rag room/cutter roles all appear to remain throughout 1861-1869, although there are much fewer of them compared to the unlabeled male laborers. These roles are largely held by women, and their wages tend to be significantly lower than male workers, which can be seen in the next section.

Table 3: Parsons Paper Company Employment by Job Type (January-June 1861).

Month	Year	Page #	Job	Count	Monthly # Workers
January	1861	1	MFC	25	77
January	1861	1	repairs	4	77
January	1861	2	rag room	25	77
January	1861	2	finishers	23	77
February	1861	3	MFC	25	75
February	1861	3	repairs	4	75
February	1861	4	rag room	24	75
February	1861	4	finishers	22	75
March	1861	5	foreman	1	85
March	1861	5	machine room	3	85
March	1861	5	engine room	7	85
March	1861	5	loft hands	4	85
March	1861	5	fireman	2	85
March	1861	5	size hands	2	85
March	1861	5	joggers	3	85
March	1861	5	watchmen	4	85
March	1861	6	rag room	23	85
March	1861	6	repairs	4	85
March	1861	7	finishers	21	85
March	1861	7	sorters	5	85
March	1861	7	stamper & sealer	2	85
March	1861	7	count & folders	2	85
March	1861	7	sorters	2	85
April	1861	8	rag room	6	93
April	1861	8	cutters	17	93
April	1861	8	repairs	4	93
April	1861	9	MFC	1	93
April	1861	9	machine room	3	93
April	1861	9	engineers	7	93
April	1861	9	loft hands	3	93
April	1861	9	size hands	2	93
April	1861	9	joggers	5	93
April	1861	9	fireman	4	93
April	1861	10	finishers	25	93
April	1861	10	stamper & sealer	2	93
April	1861	10	count & folders	3	93
April	1861	10	sorters	11	93
May	1861	11	no label	25	105
May	1861	11	stamper	1	105
May	1861	11	sealer	1	105
May	1861	11	count & folders	2	105
May	1861	11	sorters	9	105
May	1861	11	extra	1	105
May	1861	12	no label	34	105
May	1861	12	repairs	3	105
May	1861	13	no label	25	105
May	1861	13	borders	4	NA
June	1861	14	no label	17	95
June	1861	14	repairs	3	95
June	1861	14	borders	6	95
June	1861	15	no label	24	95
June	1861	15	sorters	8	95
June	1861	15	count & folders	2	95
June	1861	15	stamper	1	95
June	1861	15	sealer	1	95
June	1861	16	no label	33	95

Parsons Paper Company Employment by Job Type in 1861



Figure 7: This plot shows the distribution of different roles within the paper company during the first six months of 1861. The unlabeled male laborers, MFC mill workers, finishers, and rag room workers appear to be the most common roles.

2.6 How do Parsons wages compare to the Massachusetts state averages?

Table 4 and Figure 8 are adapted from Judith McGaw's *Most Wonderful Machine: Mechanization and Social Change in Berkshire Paper Making, 1801-1885*, (McGaw 1987, page 314), which used data from the *Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor* (Statistics of Labor 1879, page 74). Refer to Figure 14 in Section 4 for a picture of the report.

Table 4: Weekly Wages of Massachusetts Paper Workers, 1860-78 (all wages in US dollars).

Job	1860	1872	1878
Foreman	16.63	16.00	26.49
Millwright	9.86	16.00	15.21
Paper-machine tender	10.00	16.00	15.25
Mechanic	9.75	NA	13.20
Finisher	7.70	11.33	10.20
Rag-engine tender	7.90	14.67	10.41
Engineer/fireman	6.64	10.52	8.77
Finisher's helper	5.80	NA	7.27
Cutter	6.90	8.89	7.95
Bleacher	6.70	8.89	7.56
Men on stock	5.88	9.33	6.57
Laborers	5.50	9.33	6.55

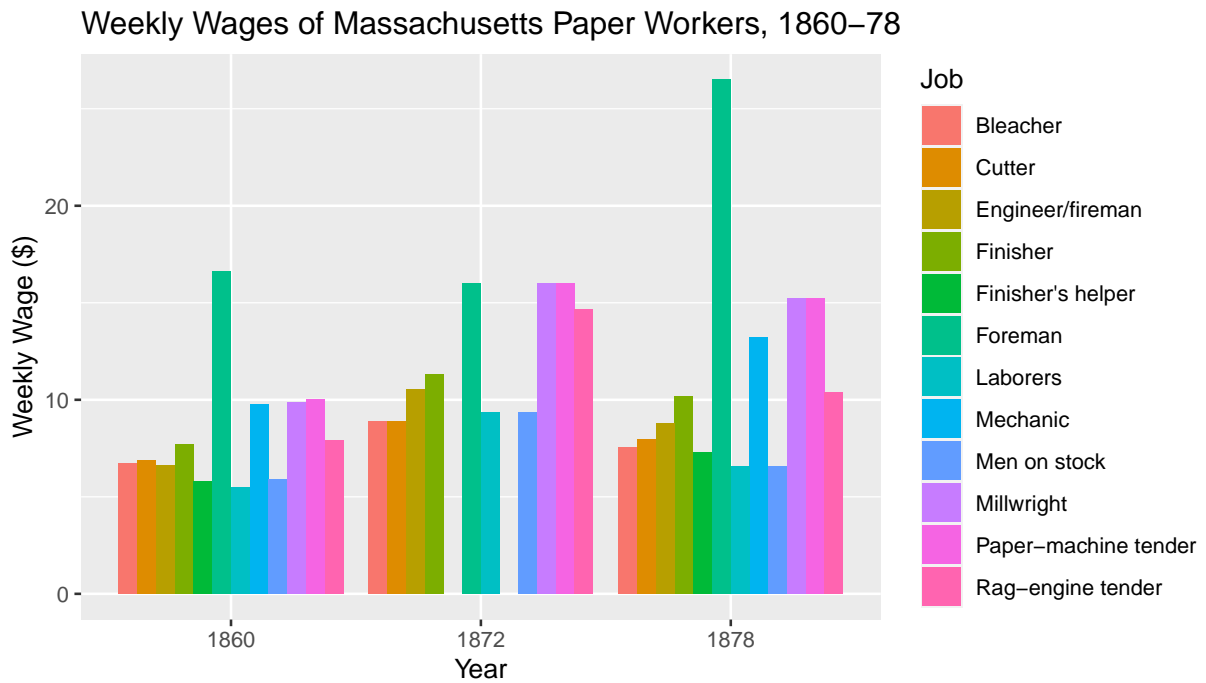


Figure 8: This plot, adapted from Table 4, displays average weekly wages for various roles in paper factories across Massachusetts between 1860-1878.

Table 5: Parsons Weekly Wages - 1861 (all wages in dollars).

Job	Weekly Wages
repairs	14.12
foreman	14.00
machine room	14.00
repairs	12.25
machine room	11.79
engineer	10.50
overseer	10.50
watchmen	10.50
fireman	8.75
watchmen	7.00
finishers	4.38
cutter	4.38
rag room	3.50
rag room	3.50

Table 5 displays weekly wages by job in 1861 for Parsons Paper Company. We calculated the wages by dividing the total wages from the payroll by the number of days worked for that pay period, and then multiplying that number by seven to obtain the weekly wage. The table indicates that Parsons Paper Company employees were, for the most part, paid at comparable rates to other Massachusetts paper factory workers across the state, although the pay for several common roles, especially those held by women (finisher, cutter), is noticeably lower compared to the state average, while other more “important” roles such as engineer and mechanic tended to be paid more at Parsons compared to other Massachusetts paper mills. It may be beneficial to compare the Parsons Paper Company wages to those of other paper mills in Holyoke, as opposed to the entire state, to get a better understanding of how the Parsons Paper Company paid relative to its direct competitors.

Weekly Wages of Parsons Paper Company Workers – 1861

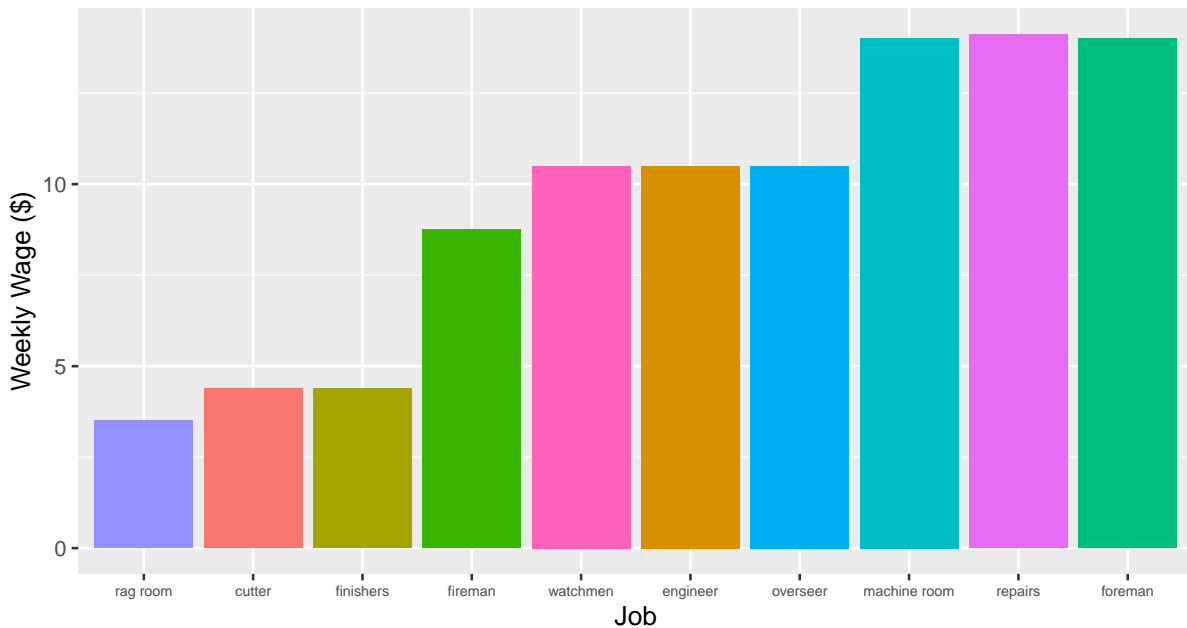


Figure 9: Weekly wage breakdown for various worker roles in Parsons Paper Company in 1861.

From Figure 9, we can see that the top paying roles at Parsons Paper Company in 1861 were the foreman, followed by repairs and machine room workers, who each made nearly 15 dollars a week. From John Hickey’s 1954 University of Massachusetts thesis *The Holyoke Area Paper Industry*, we know that repairs were undertaken on Sundays, typically the only day off for many paper workers: “In replacing a wire on a Fourdrinier paper machine, workers in the Holyoke mills receive half a day’s pay besides their regular pay during the hours they work on the replacement. This acts as an incentive to the workers to get the machine back in operation as soon as possible” (Hickey 1954, 94).

In contrast, female laborers who worked in the rag room and as cutters and finishers were paid much lower wages, with almost all women being paid less than 5 dollars a week.

From Hickey’s thesis, we also found the following quote:

“In 1861, after a period of severe readjustment just prior to the Civil War, twenty-one of the thirty-six manufactures of fine papers met at Pittsfield...to organize a protective association. They desired to raise prices which had fallen drastically as the result of a decrease in demand. They agreed to reduce output by about one-third for about three months. This was the first trade association established in the paper industry of the United States....The Parsons Paper Company and the Carew Manufacturing Company were charter members of this organization” (Hickey 1954, 108).

This agreed upon reduce in output in 1861 is important because it may indicate that at the start of the register, employee wages were lower than they would have been under normal circumstance. Any subsequent change in payment patterns throughout the rest of the 19th century is important for future analysis, as it can indicate both local and domestic economic shocks and sector-specific economic factors.”

3 References

- n.d. Available at <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/pz50hj728> (Accessed 03/05/2023).
- Green, Constance McLaughlin. 1939. *Holyoke, Massachusetts: A Case History of the Industrial Revolution in America*. Yale University Press, New Haven, CT. https://archives.yale.edu/repositories/12/archival_objects/1572349.
- Hickey, John P. 1954. “The Holyoke Paper Industry: 1899-1951.” Master’s thesis, Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts.

4 Appendix

224

Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agent, the sum perferred to our Signatures,
 being in full of all demands up to April 1st 1867

NAMES.	No. POUNDS.	No. REAMS.	No. DAYS.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.	BALANCE DEC.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
William Kelly	26	1/2	78		8.54		69.66	April 15	William Kelly
Samuel S. Knight	26	1/2	52		6.25		43.75	"	Michael Ryan
Misspell Ryan	26	1/2	42.25		5.00		37.25	"	Kate & Mary
Catherine Brady	25	7/8	29.17				29.17	"	Ellen & Conroy
Ellen Conroy	25	7/8	29.17				29.17	"	Brady & McCarroll
Brady & McCarroll	4177		90		57.59		37.59	"	Miss E. ...
Robert W. Brown	2929				2.56	2.00	24.56	"	Kate & Han
Carlson Emerson	3783				53.53		33.53	"	Mary & Murphy
Catherine O'Casey	3165				23.49		28.49	"	Hannah & Morris
Mary Murphy	3559				32.63		32.63	"	Ellen & Skind
Ellen Skind	3614				32.53		32.53	"	Mary & Sonchun
Mary Sonchun	3836				34.52		34.52	"	Miss & Flynn
Delight Keady	3246				29.21		29.21	"	Mary & Fitzgerald
Margaret Fitzgerald	3155				34.52		34.52	"	Julia ...
Julia ...	3697				33.27		33.27	"	Mary & Lynch
Mary Lynch	2203				19.87		19.87	"	Ellen & ...
Ellen ...	2532				2.98	7	15.98	"	Brady & Maloney
Brady & Maloney	3911				35.20		35.20	"	Mary & Kelly
Mary Kelly	3545				3.92		3.92	"	Brady & Haffey
Brady & Haffey	3322				38.90		38.90	"	Brady & Haffey
Margaret Haffey	3434				30.91		30.91	"	Kate & ...
Catherine Sheridan	3434				31.09	7.00	24.09	"	Ella & ...
Ella ...	2760				24.84		24.84	"	Johanna & ...
Johanna ...	3755				33.52		33.52	"	Mary & ...
Mary ...	3103				27.93		27.93	"	Kate & ...
Kate ...	2169				19.52		19.52	"	Ellen & ...
Ellen ...	3239				29.25		29.25	"	Mary & ...
Mary ...	4264				58.58		58.58	"	Mary & ...
Mary ...	1863				16.77		16.77	"	Mary & ...
Margaret ...	3949				35.34		35.34	"	Mary & ...
Julia ...	4173				37.56		37.56	"	Mary & ...
Mary ...	3108				27.97		27.97	"	Ella & ...
Ella ...	3066				27.60		27.60	"	Mary & ...
Mary ...	3432				30.88		30.88	"	Mary & ...
Mary ...	2957				26.61		26.61	"	Mary & ...
Mary ...	1714				15.42		15.42	"	Mary & ...
Johanna ...	3169				28.52		28.52	"	Johanna & ...
Johanna ...	4249				38.16		38.16	"	Johanna & ...
Mary J. O'Casey	2836				18.77		18.77	"	Mary & ...
					12212		3559	1208.06	

Handwritten notes at bottom: *25 10 10 10 10*

Figure 10: page 224 of register - April 1st, 1867 (2nd of 3 pages of the April 1867 payroll)

Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agent, the sum professed to and Signatures,
 being in full of all demands up to April 1st 1867

NAMES	No. POUNDS.	No. REARS.	No. DAYS.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.	BALANCE DEB.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
William J. Pomeroy	26		15	325	84.50		84.50	Apr 15	Wm. J. Pomeroy
E. W. Wellington	27		15	275	72.25	6.25	68	"	E. W. Wellington
John Duffey	26		15	250	66.25	6.25	60	"	John Duffey
John Flynn	22		15	225	49.50		49.50	"	John Flynn
C. D. Carr	26		15	225	42.25		42.25	"	Chas. Carr
Charles Hogan	26		15	200	52.00		52	"	Chas. Hogan
J. H. Allen	26		15	200	39.00	5	34	"	J. H. Allen
Michael Ryan	17		15	196	29.75		29.75	"	Michael Ryan
John Keane	37		15	176	65.62		65.62	"	John Keane
John Naughton	22		15	199	35.75		35.75	"	John Naughton
Michael MacMahon	26		15	196	45.50		45.50	"	Michael MacMahon
Kate Baldwin	26		15	196	21.67		21.67	"	Kate Baldwin
Marion Moran	26		15	196	39.00		39	"	Marion Moran
James Moran	23		15	196	34.50		34.50	"	James Moran
Jefferson Powell	26		15	196	39.75		39.75	"	Jefferson Powell
William J. Pomeroy	25		15	197	63.12	8.34	54.78	"	Wm. J. Pomeroy
Pat Donohue	26		15	196	39.00	11.00	35	"	Pat Donohue
Wm. Conroy	26		15	196	66.37	8.34	58.03	"	Wm. Conroy
Marion Kennedy	26		15	196	39.00		39	"	Marion Kennedy
James Casey	26		15	196	55.00		55	"	James Casey
John Haggan	26		15	196	52.00		52	"	John Haggan
Patrick Cogan	31		15	196	51.00		51	"	Patrick Cogan
J. A. Ballitt	26		15	196	57.50	8.34	50.16	"	J. A. Ballitt
Wm. J. Pomeroy	25		15	196	47.20		47.20	"	Wm. J. Pomeroy
Frank Russell	25		15	196	38.25		38.25	"	Frank Russell
Mich. Haley	24		15	196	3.6		3.6	"	Mich. Haley
Joseph Bordland	25		15	196	40.13	10	30.13	"	Joseph Bordland
John Cochran	22		15	196	40.30	10	30.30	"	John Cochran
Frank Cummings	25		15	196	35.25		35.25	"	Frank Cummings
Edmund Cain	26		15	196	39		39	"	Edmund Cain
Patrick Ryan	27		15	196	43.88	11	32.88	"	Patrick Ryan
Frank Cummings	11		15	196	81		81	"	Frank Cummings
Morris Lamont	12		15	196	18		18	"	Morris Lamont
Morris Lamont	25		15	196	42.75		42.75	"	Morris Lamont
Wm. J. Pomeroy	25		15	196	25		25	"	Wm. J. Pomeroy
John Cochran	7		15	196	16.95		16.95	"	John Cochran
					1570.75	77.52	1493.23		
Repairs &c.									
Austin Ely	26		15	196	65.00		65	"	Austin Ely
J. H. Allen	26		15	196	65.00		65	"	J. H. Allen
W. C. Walters	26		15	250	65.00	8.34	56.66	"	W. C. Walters
Patrick Casey	32		15	196	52.00		52	"	Patrick Casey
Martin Powell	18		15	225	49.50		49.50	"	Martin Powell
					217.50	1.34	216.16		

Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agents, the sum purposed to our Signatures,
being in full of all demands up to April 1st 1868.

NAMES.	No. PAGES	No. REAMS	No. DAYS	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.	BALANCE DUE.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
William Johnson			26	166	71.50		71.50		Wm Johnson
John O'Brien			3	94	4.88		4.88		Wm Johnson
William Connor			26	146	71.80	7.25	64.55		Wm Connor
Thomas Kennedy			28	94	45.50		45.50		William Kennedy
James Cassel			26	121	53.50		53.50		James Cassel
John Ballinger			26	91	39		39		John Ballinger
John Langdon			26	121	49		49		John Langdon
John Shea			29	91	43.40		43.40		John Shea
Saml B. Knight			26	12	5.25	7.25	44.25		Saml B. Knight
Phillip Sullivan			26	136	60.19		60.19		Phillip Sullivan
John Archer			26	21	53	6.25	46.75		John Archer
Frank Russell			25	106	43.75	7.00	36.75		Frank Russell
Chamney Johnson			26	76	32.50		32.50		Chamney Johnson
Karen H. Davis			24	91	31.87		31.87		Karen H. Davis
William Connor			26	21	91.00		91		William Connor
Wm. Glynn			27	18	67.50		67.50		Wm. Glynn
E. W. Wellington			26	196	54.50	6.25	78.25		E. W. Wellington
Magnum Moran			26	99	43.07		43.07		Magnum Moran
Wm. M. Gray			26	196	80.50	9.33	75.17		Wm. M. Gray
Charles Strong			26	13	56.33		56.33		Charles Strong
John H. Allen			26	91	39	5.00	34		John H. Allen
Rich. Ryan			25	11	59.57		59.57		Rich. Ryan
Pat. Quinn			15	11	37.50		27.50		Pat. Quinn
Rich. Parkham			28	11	52.24		52.24		Rich. Parkham
Edw. Holt			26	106	46.37		46.37		Edw. Holt
Pat. Montgomery			26	106	45.04	4.67	41.21		Pat. Montgomery
Pat. O'Hare			27	94	43.88	5.00	38.88		Pat. O'Hare
Joseph Beaudant Jr			25	94	40.63	5.00	35.63		Joseph Beaudant Jr
John Naughton			26	106	45.50		45.50		John Naughton
George Kenley			21	91	31.50		31.50		George Kenley
Pat. Doyle			26	"	39.97		39.97		Pat. Doyle
Math. C. Dine			25	"	37.50		37.50		Math. C. Dine
Thomas Shuby			26	"	39.37		39.37		Thomas Shuby
David Denton			26	64	29.25		29.25		David Denton
Kate Hillman			26	"	29.25		29.25		Kate Hillman
Kate Moran			26	"	29.25		29.25		Kate Moran
Kate Baldwin			24	"	27.00		27		Kate Baldwin
James O'Keefe			7	7	10.50		10.50		James O'Keefe
John Flynn					1.00		1.00		John Flynn
					17,391	63.29	1,407.1		
Repairs &c.									
Agnes O'Connell			26	18	78.00		78		Agnes O'Connell
Walter Buckley			21	18	63.00		63		Walter Buckley
J. M. Allen			26	18	64.37		64.37		J. M. Allen
William Murrell			22	134	49.57	4.00	45.50		William Murrell
Pat. Casey			8	189	51.20		51.20		Pat. Casey
John Sullivan			7	106	12.25		12.25		John Sullivan
Edw. Dwyer			8	99	13.40		13		Edw. Dwyer
Henry Blackmore			7	121	14.00	4.00	10		Henry Blackmore
					345.30	8.00	337.30		



Figure 12: page 262 of register - April 1st, 1868 (2nd of 3 pages of the April 1868 payroll)

Received of the PARSONS PAPER COMPANY, by their Agent, the sum paid to and Signatures,
being in full of all demands up to April 1st 1868

NAMES	No. POUNDS.	No. REIMS.	No. DATES.	PRICE.	TOTAL AMOUNT.	RENT, OR BOARD.	BALANCE DUE.	DATE.	SIGNATURES.
William Kelly			26/181		78 00	9 53	68 67		William Kelly
Nich ^d Sullivan			28 9		46 32	5 00	41 32		Michael Ryan
Ellen Coffey			26 71		30 33		30 33		Ellen + Coffey
Kate Sheridan			26 71		30 33	7 00	23 33		Kate + Sheridan
Ann Casey			26 71		30 33		30 33		Ann + Casey
Mary Donohue			23 69		25 87		25 87		Mary + Donohue
John McCarry			20 9		22 50		22 50		John + McCarry
Elizabeth Gayley	1	2476			80		19 80		Cath + Doyle
Katherine Shulton	2	933					7 46		H + Shulton
Mary Corrigan	3	2754					22 03		Mary + Corrigan
Bridget Mulligan	4	2215					17 72		Bridget + Mulligan
Anna Emmons	5	2003				2 00	14 02		Anna + Emmons
Mary Duffing	6	2771					22 16		Mary + Duffing
Kate C. Keel	7	2757					22 05		Kate + Keel
Bridget McEneaney	8	3527					28 21		Bridget + McEneaney
Bridget Casey	9	2051					16 40		Bridget + Casey
Ann O'Rourke	10	500					4 00		Ann + O'Rourke
Mary Duffing	11	2422					19 37		Mary + Duffing
Mary Lynch	12	2250				5 00	13 00		Mary + Lynch
Bridget Flynn	13	1850					14 80		Bridget + Flynn
Ellen Shanon	14	18050					24 40		Ellen + Shanon
Mary Jones	15	2457					19 65		Mary + Jones
Mary Donohue	16	2963					23 22		Mary + Donohue
Mary Shahan	17	2587					20 31		Mary + Shahan
John C. Keel	18	2670					21 36		John + Keel
Mary Mahoney	19	2158					17 26		Mary + Mahoney
Julia Shay	20	826					6 60		Julia + Shay
Ellen Shahan	21	2871					22 96		Ellen + Shahan
Mary Shahan	22	2129					25 03		Mary + Shahan
Hannah Ferris	23	2863					22 89		Hannah + Ferris
Mary Shay	24	2571					20 56		Mary + Shay
Bridget Mulloy	25	3380					27 04		Bridget + Mulloy
Ellen Burk	26	3188					25 50		Ellen + Burk
Bridget Dunne	27	3204					25 63		Bridget + Dunne
Mary Mulligan	28	1754					14 03		Mary + Mulligan
Bridget Keefe	29	3773					30 18		Bridget + Keefe
John C. Keel	30	1924					15 39		John + Keel
Eliza Rogers	31	2958					15 66		Eliza + Rogers
Anna Moran	32	2658					21 20		Anna + Moran
Ellen Shack	33	2532					20 25		Ellen + Shack
Ann Kennedy	34	3634					29 07		Ann + Kennedy
Bridget Kennedy	35	4848					27 34		Bridget + Kennedy
Mary Sullivan	36	2880					23 08		Mary + Sullivan
Julia Sullivan	37	3951					31 60		Julia + Sullivan
Mary Luckford	38	2099					16 79		Mary + Luckford
Eliza Rodgers	39	2763					22 10		Eliza + Rodgers
Mary Brockman	40	2106					16 84		Mary + Brockman
Julia Gayley	41	2889					23 11		Julia + Gayley
Mary Duffing	42	2803					22 42		Mary + Duffing
Mary Hussy	43	3140					25 12		Mary + Hussy
John C. Keel	44	2893					22 76		John + Keel
Mary Shahan	45	3330					26 64		Mary + Shahan
Sarah Hume	46	17 421					3 36		Sarah + Hume
Mary Burns	47	3748					11 58		Mary + Burns
Kate Brady	48	892					7 83		Kate + Brady
					1219 72		2522 119 137		

Figure 13: page 263 of register - April 1st, 1868 (3rd of 3 pages of the April 1868 payroll)

Full Spreadsheet of Parsons Paper Company Employment by Job Type

OCCUPATIONS.	AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE. STANDARD, GOLD.			Increase or Decrease for 1878 as com- pared with 1860.
	1860.	1872.	1878.	
MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS — <i>Con.</i>				
Finishers	\$10 85	-	\$14 46	+\$3 61
Mill-men	12 38	-	14 19	+ 1 81
Action-makers	13 67	-	14 09	+ 42
Action-makers, women	6 72	-	7 11	+ 39
Tuners	16 49	-	15 00	- 1 40
Laborers	7 17	-	7 70	+ 53
PAINTS.				
Foremen	\$15 00	-	\$18 50	+\$3 50
Mixers and grinders	7 93	-	10 46	+ 2 53
Boys	3 91	-	5 41	+ 1 50
PAPER.				
Foremen	\$16 63	\$16 00	\$26 49	+\$9 86
Millwrights	9 86	16 00	15 21	+ 5 35
Rag-engine tenders	7 90	14 67	10 41	+ 2 51
Paper-machine tenders	10 00	16 00	15 25	+ 5 25
Thresher-women	3 70	8 89	7 40	+ 1 70
Rag-cutters	7 50	-	8 40	+ 90
Finishers	7 70	11 33	10 20	+ 2 50
Finishers, girls	3 92	6 93	5 27	+ 1 35
Finishers, boys	5 50	-	7 00	+ 1 50
Finishers' helpers	5 80	-	7 27	+ 1 47
Cutters	6 90	8 89	7 95	+ 1 05
Cutters, girls	3 40	5 33	5 00	+ 1 60
Bleachers	6 70	8 89	7 56	+ 86
Rag-sorters	3 27	4 00	4 53	+ 1 26
Men on stock	5 88	9 33	6 57	+ 69
Mechanics	9 75	-	13 20	+ 3 45
Engineers and firemen	6 64	10 52	8 77	+ 2 13
Laborers	5 50	8 33	6 55	+ 1 05

Figure 14: Portion of page 74 of the Massachusetts Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor. Average statewide wages for various roles in 1860, 1872, and 1878 are listed for the paper industry under 'paper.'