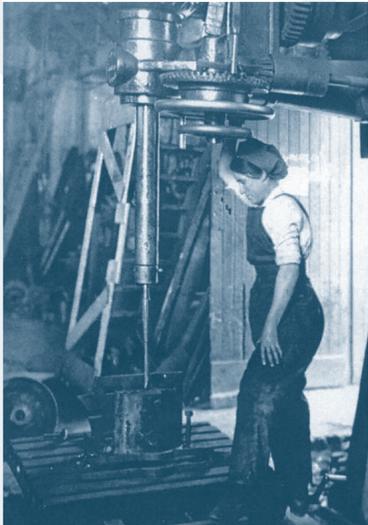
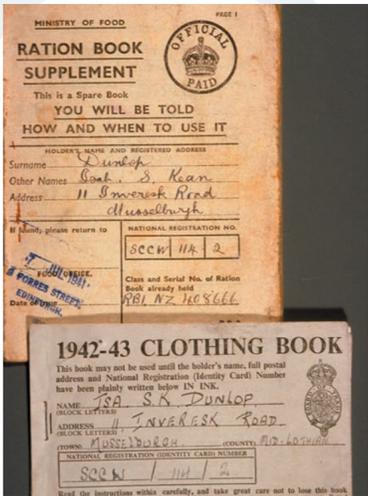


Bringing the Page to Life

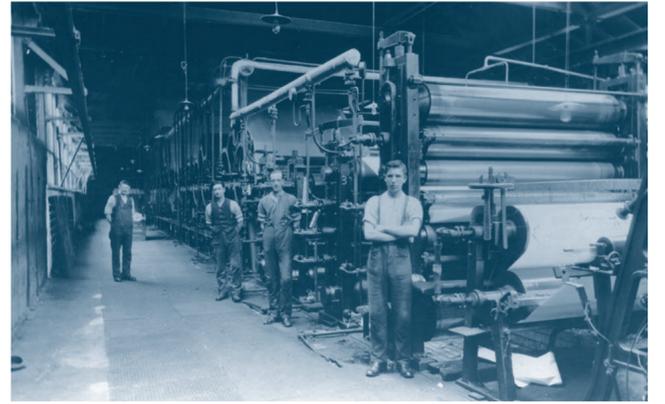
The War Years



Along with most heavy industry, papermaking was deeply affected by war-time. The Second World War, in particular, had a long term impact on the industry. Paper as an essential part of the war effort fell under the jurisdiction of Paper Control. This government organisation decided what could be produced, how paper was allocated and at what level the market price was set. It also controlled what raw materials were made available to mills: from 1939 all wood pulp, esparto grass and pulp wood was distributed through the Paper Controller. Restrictions on the industry stayed in place until 1956 when all government controls on imports of raw materials and paper were removed.



When traditional raw materials became scarce, manufacturers began to experiment with alternative sources for production. Paper was made out of many things including potatoes, tomato plants, reeds, rope ends and saw mill waste. Straw was commonly used but this was also rationed. Rationing and war-time restrictions often caused mills to shut down temporarily. Available labour to run the machines was also a problem as many men and women were



called up to do war work. By 1942 64% of men who worked at Galloways Mill were in service and it often had to close.

Often sections of mills were taken over for use by the Ministry of Defence. Kinleith Mill, for example was used as storage for rationed tea and sugar. Papermaking manufacturers such as James Bertram and Sons and Bertrams of Sciennes were commandeered by the Ministry of War and used for armament manufacture. This meant that only essential papermaking machine maintenance could be undertaken during this time. New papermachines and parts were difficult to acquire.

“Aye, everybody used to get their name down for blanket felts. An’ especially during the war, you know, it was a good source – save your coupons, your clothing coupons.”

Times were difficult for those who worked in the mills as they were often out of work, and were also subject to rationing. Normally felts from papermaking machines were recycled to make clothes, slippers and blankets. Clothes rationing during war-time meant demand for used felts increased dramatically.

