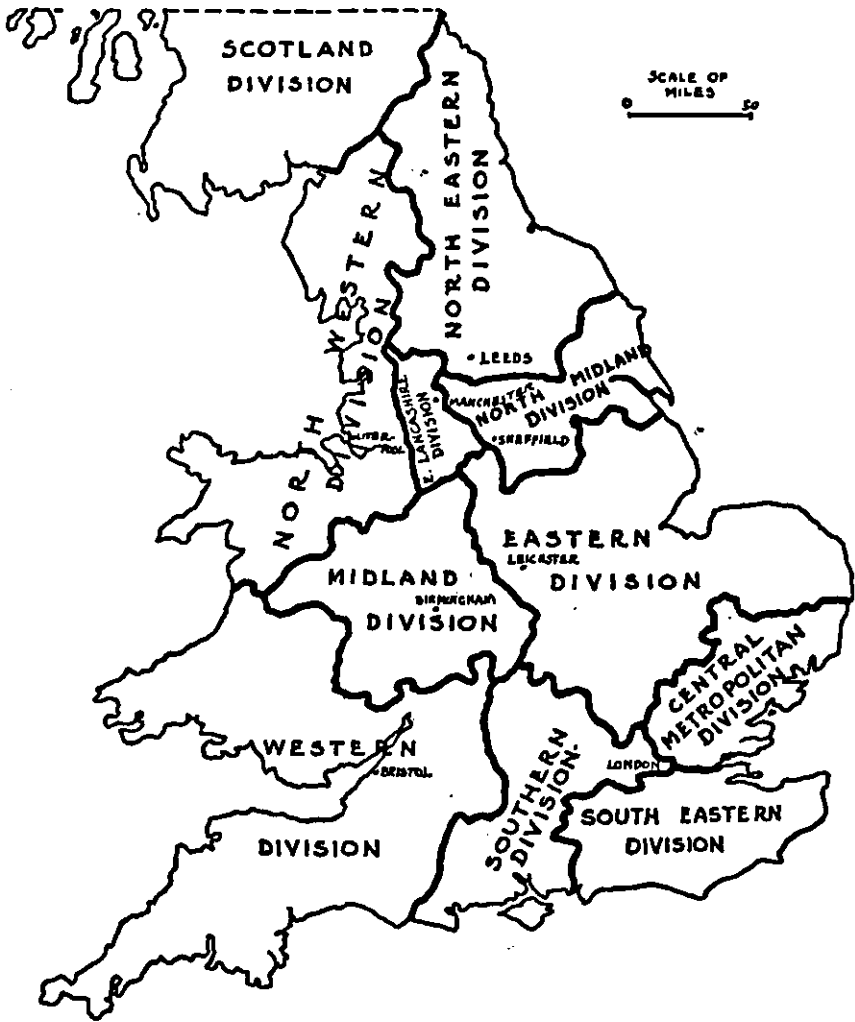


British Factory Inspection

By John Andrews

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THE ELEVEN FACTORY INSPECTION DIVISIONS IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND WALES, 1936

## Letter of transmittal

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,  
DIVISION OF LABOR STANDARDS,  
*Washington, March 1, 1937.*

MADAM: I have the honor to transmit herewith a study of the British factory inspection system, prepared by John B. Andrews, on special detail for the Division of Labor Standards.

VERNE A. ZIMMER, *Director.*

HON. FRANCES PERKINS,  
*Secretary of Labor.*

## Introduction

Much of the labor legislation in the States of this country is specifically designed to assure safe and healthful work conditions for industrial wage earners. The amount of protection afforded depends upon the adequacy of the laws and the effectiveness of their application. While many of the States have made substantial progress in developing better safety and health regulations, comparatively few have made equal advance in the technique of administration. Therefore it may be stated generally that the labor laws of the States are better than their enforcement. Few of the State administrators are able to secure sufficient funds to enforce completely and effectively the existing rules and regulations designed for the prevention of industrial casualties. A frank appraisal, however, would doubtless reveal that administrative ineffectiveness is sometimes due to lack of appreciation of the importance of this function and failure to work out the best means of utilizing to advantage the facilities available.

In any program of regulation and inspection the factory inspector is doubtless the most important single factor. He is the official who views first hand the conditions surrounding employment. He has the immediate responsibility of pointing out unsafe conditions that need correction and for the prompt detection of health hazards to be eliminated if a winning fight is to be waged on the mounting toll of industrial casualties.

Fortunately there is recent evidence of greater recognition of need for the selection, training, and supervision of factory inspectors. State labor-law administrators, either alone or in collaboration with adjoining jurisdictions, are developing training programs for fitting the factory inspector to carry out his important job of law enforcement and accident prevention. The Division of Labor Standards has been able to make a contribution to such efforts, and it is in line with this general aim that the bulletin on the British factory inspection system is presented. As pointed out by Mr. Andrews, the initial labor legislation and practice in this country were adaptations from the English experience. It is felt that a review of the British system will be helpful in supplying pertinent and valuable information to legislators, administrators, and others concerned in this important field. It will be of particular value and interest when studied in connection with the *Factory Inspectors' Manual* now in preparation for publication by the Division of Labor Standards.

Since the completion of this article, there has been introduced in Parliament a new factories bill containing numerous changes, among which are more stringent provisions in respect of safety and health, and a considerable increase in the inspection staff.