

Weights and Measures

Although not a mathematically exact measurement, British merchants accommodated 63 Russian poods to a British ton = 20 hundredweight = 20 Cwt [1 Cwt = 112 pounds (50.802 kg)] = 2,240 pounds (1016.040 kg); a Russian pood = 40 funty = 16.38 kilograms = 36.113 pounds; therefore, 63 Russian poods = 1 British ton (not 2,240 pounds but 2,275 pounds, a difference of almost 1 pood).

One arshin = 0.77 yard, or 2.33 feet, or 27.96 inches. British merchants accommodated 1 arshin to 28 inches. Forty-five arshins = 35 yards = 1 piece.¹

1. See J. Jepson Oddy, *European Commerce, Shewing New and Secure Channels of Trade with the Continent of Europe: Detailing the Produce, Manufactures and Commerce, of Russia, Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany; as well as the Trade of the Rivers Elbe, Weser, and Ems; with a General View of the Trade, Navigation, Produce and Manufactures, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; and its Unexplored and Improvable Resources and Interior Wealth* (London, 1805), p. 137, "9 arsheens are 7 yards English, or the arsheen 28 inches"; and B. R. Mitchell with the collaboration of Phyllis Deane, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), p. 201, n. (d), "Prior to 1810. . . . For this table, these latter entries have been converted to yards on the assumption that each piece was 35 yards long. (This assumption is based on the rates of valuation. . . .)"

The author is aware that there is not one universal equivalent of Russian piece in arshins and has used the most appropriate equivalent based upon a thorough examination of the manuscript sources.

The complexity of determining this measure is illustrated in the following studies:

Oddy on p. 119: [1 piece =] "Ravenducks, 50 arsheens long, 28, 31 1/2, 36 inches wide. . . . Flems, 50 and 57 arsheens long, 42 and 45 inches wide. . . . Drillings, bleached and unbleached, 50 arsheens long, 28 inches wide. . . ."

Marten G. Buist, *At Spes Non Fracta. Hope & Co. 1770-1815. Merchant Bankers and Diplomats at Work*. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), p. 508: "Calamancoes (also known as drillings) . . . (1 piece = approx. 35 arshins)."

S. D. Chapman and S. Chassagne, *European Textile Printers in the Eighteenth Century: A Study of Peel and Oberkampf* (London: Heinemann Educational Books, The Pasold Fund, 1981), p. 213: "Calculations: French equivalents of English measures in brackets. The English piece measured 28 yards long in the lower price brackets (60% of output) and 30 yards in the higher price ranges; averages 28.8 yards. The Continental piece averaged 20 aunes = 24m. = 26.3 yds."

