AN OUTLINE OF
BRITISH CROP HUSBANDRY
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*This map is available for download from www.cambridge.org/9781107586574
PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

A complete treatise on crop husbandry, even though limited to Great Britain, would be a cumbersome volume. This book does not attempt to present the whole picture, but only to sketch in the outline: therefore, important subjects such as varieties, yields and uses of the common crops have been omitted. In particular, it may be urged as a serious criticism that grass—the most important crop in Britain—is only referred to incidentally. But with that crop there are many important details of husbandry which are peculiar to itself, and hence are best dealt with in books devoted entirely to grassland. To a greater or lesser extent this is true of all crops, and consequently the majority of published works have been concerned with the different crops severally; it was with the object of providing some sort of link between these works that the present book was written.

Farming conditions vary widely even within the confines of this small country, and a writer inevitably gives undue weight to the systems and methods common in the district with which he is most familiar. It must be admitted frankly that crop husbandry is viewed in this book through East Anglian spectacles, but it is hoped that great distortion will not be found, because the aim has been to subordinate detail to principle: the former varies sharply from district to district, almost, indeed, from parish to parish, but the latter should have general applicability. Undoubtedly, success in farming demands a thorough mastery of local detail, but that can soon be added to a knowledge of the underlying principles, and of the manner in which they are applied elsewhere.

It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr A. Amos, M.A.; his generous assistance, when I took over from him a course of lectures on crops, laid a deep obligation upon me. To Mr W. S. Mansfield, M.A., and to Mr F. H. Garner, M.A., I am particularly grateful, not only for all that I have learnt from them during ten years of very pleasant association in the teaching of agriculture, but also for their

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reading of the whole of the typescript; their helpful criticisms and suggestions have been invaluable and greatly appreciated. My grateful thanks are also due to Mr F. A. Buttress, who has aided me in selecting and checking the references given at the end of chapters, and to Mr D. A. East for his almost uncanny skill in reading my handwriting, and for checking the Index.

H. G. SANDERS

June 1939

NOTE ON THE SECOND EDITION

Although the whole book has been revised for the Second Edition, it is only in Chapter xix that major change has been made. Mature reflection and kindly instruction from Professor Edgar Thomas have convinced me that theoretical estimates of costs of production are not worth the paper on which they are written. This chapter has, therefore, been shortened very considerably.

H. G. S.

March 1949

NOTE ON THE THIRD EDITION

A new edition has given the opportunity to bring the book up to date, to incorporate the very large advances that have been made in crop husbandry during the last ten years. New materials and new methods have become available to the farmer, who has had to find how best to utilise them in his scientific art, but nothing has occurred to change fundamental principles. It has not, therefore, been necessary to alter the general layout of the book. The difficulty has been to decide what new has become established, and so should be described in a textbook, and what is promising but still unproven.

One change that cannot be ignored is the continuing increase in the use of compound fertilisers. Somewhat reluctantly it was decided to discuss manurial dressings in terms of plant nutrients rather than of straight fertilisers. In past editions a short guide
NOTE ON THE THIRD EDITION

to further reading was given at the end of each chapter but this has been discontinued. Publications of merit follow each other very closely so that numbers of references would be very great, for few of the older ones could be dropped; this, of course, is the ever more harassing problem of the teacher.

I am greatly indebted to Miss L. Samiloff for very considerable help in the onerous work of typing and checking.

H. G. S.

August 1957