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Report for 1939-45

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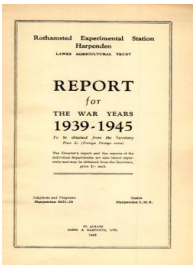
Rothamsted Experimental Station
Harpenden
LAWES AGRICULTURAL TRUST

REPORT
for
THE WAR YEARS
1939-1945

Woburn Experimental Station

Rothamsted Research

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was sown out to pasture without removing the stumps and without cultivation, in another cultivation was carried out, and in a third the tree stumps were also removed and the land has since been cropped.

The Crop Physiology Section has acted as a link between farm and laboratory, preparing the detailed plans of the field experiments and exercising general supervision from the laboratory side. This Section also carried out certain urgent investigations arising from the war. One of these was concerned with damage to crops that might be caused by war gases, and another with the storage of potatoes in clamps. These duties curtailed the work on the factors affecting leaf growth and leaf size on which the Crop Physiology Section is engaged.

Woburn Experimental Station

The work at Woburn (run by Rothamsted since 1926) has been continued under Dr. H. H. Mann. The light, somewhat sandy, soil is derived from the Lower Greensand and is in marked contrast to the fairly heavy soil from the Clay-with-Flints at Rothamsted. Woburn, therefore, provides a useful centre at which experiments carried out at Rothamsted can be repeated on a very different soil type.

The continuous wheat and barley experiments, commenced at Woburn in 1876, have been greatly modified, following fallows in 1927-28 and 1933-34 to get rid of weeds, and since 1940 the influence of previous manuring on the effectiveness of nitrogenous manures has been studied. Amongst the more recent work is a rotation experiment, similar to one at Rothamsted, with artificial manures only, which has been going on since 1930, and so far there is no sign of any deterioration in the crops. In 1938 an interesting long-term alternate-husbandry experiment was started to compare the fertility of soil, after three years under a grazed grass-and-clover ley, or under lucerne cropped annually for hay, with land which carries a well manured arable crop each year. Other experiments deal with cultivation problems, green manuring, the making of a market-garden soil, the manuring of sugar beet, take-all diseases of wheat and barley, and various other problems. Several lines of work are also being carried out in the pot-culture station including the studies on clover sickness commenced about 10 years ago : the conclusion has been reached that the disease is due neither to an eelworm nor to a fungus.

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