TOBACCO OF THE UNITED STATES
AN ABSTRACT

"Tobacco helped to build the United States". With this short and challenging sentence, Messrs. J. F. Marsh, J. A. Hicks and C. E. Bankhead, of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, USDA, began their recent publication on "Tobaccos of the United States; Acreage, Yield Per Acre, Production, Price and Value By States 1866-1945 and by Types and Classes, 1919-1945". Tobacco is a native of America and was grown by the Indians long before the coming of the white man. Its seeds were taken to Europe and the Orient before 1600. Two species, Nicotiana tabacum and Nicotiana rustica were grown by the Indians. Nicotiana tabacum has become the important tobacco of commerce.

Tobacco production is highly specialized, some six main classes including 29 types, being produced. The harvested acreage of tobacco in the United States was 394,000 acres in 1868; the peak acreage up to 1945 was reported in 1930 with an acreage of 2,124,000. The 1940 acreage was 1,822,500 acres.

Tobacco furnishes both farm income and federal income. This publication reports that the United States tobacco growers obtained over one billion dollars of farm income from that crop in 1946 and that for each year of the period, 1942 to 1946, the Federal Government collected from the sale of tobacco and tobacco products more than 950 million dollars. In addition states collect substantial excise taxes on tobacco.

Yields per acre of all tobacco have been on a rather steady upward trend since 1933, a trend attributed by the authors to the effect of acreage controls causing a dropping out of the low-yielding fields from production and the general use of more fertilizer and better cultural practices. Light colored, aromatic, flue cured tobacco of types 11, 12, 13 and 14 (as reported in this publication) which are the principal components in domestic cigarettes, make up more than half of the total production of American tobacco. (Abstract by H. L. Walster).