

Preface

This book has three aims: to chart technological developments with especial reference to Britain, to indicate how they have affected and been affected by social life at certain stages and to offer some clues as to the origins of innovations and institutions. So that readers can answer other, perhaps more relevant, questions selected bibliographical references are given for each chapter. These amplify statements and facts in the text and indicate (as far as possible) sources of further information. The professional institutions mentioned in Appendix B are most kind in lending books or giving information.

There is also need to abstain now, more than ever, from the retailing of packaged history and predigested fact. This, it is hoped, is more of a sketch map of some determinants of contemporary life. Contemplating the activity of others in this field, I am only too conscious of being amongst the epigoni, following up and making small parcels of their work. Dedications are often missed, but I would like to offer this to members of the Newcomen Society and especially to the late Engineer-Captain E. C. Smith, R.N., who, with his fellow enthusiasts, have done so much for the history of engineering. The frequency with which the abbreviation *T.N.S.* occurs in the references indicates my debt to their *Transactions*. Other abbreviations include:

<i>A. of S.</i>	= <i>Annals of Science</i>
<i>Econ. H.R.</i>	= <i>Economic History Review</i>
<i>J.H.I.</i>	= <i>Journal of the History of Ideas</i>
<i>J.T.H.</i>	= <i>Journal of Transport History</i>
<i>N. & R.R.S.</i>	= <i>Notes and Records of the Royal Society</i>
<i>Proc. Roy. Soc.</i>	= <i>Proceedings of the Royal Society</i>

Unless otherwise stated, books listed in the chapter bibliographies are published in London.

Preface

To the general editor of the series, Sir Peter Venables, and also to Mr. L. F. Isaac, I am grateful for much advice and help; to my colleagues in the Faculties of Science and Engineering who so willingly open up discussions on some of the themes in this book I am continuously obliged; and to Miss Margaret Revitt, Miss Anne Gray and Miss Susan Carr who grappled with the galleys I am very much indebted. This should have been a better reward for all their efforts.