CLASS
AND OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY AMONG
FARM EMPLOYEES

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"In an age of explanation one can always choose varieties of truth."

Janet Frame Living in the Maniototo
ABSTRACT

Class mobility in farming works both ways, some farmer's children are unable to afford a farm, while others from non-farm families do succeed in farm ownership. The literature reviewed in this thesis suggests this situation is related to New Zealand's economic history. In the past small family farms have benefited from both secure markets and governments whose interests have been closely bound up with high productivity. This has led the state to offer cheap credit to prospective farmers with little capital of their own. Upward mobility has been possible, but at the same time state support has enabled relatively small farms to remain viable, and many of these are unable to secure farm ownership for all family members. In this thesis I explore class mobility and career patterns among farm employees and consider their wider implications.

There are many ambiguities in farm employment in New Zealand which stem from the predominance of petty bourgeois farm owners. Such farmers must deal with the capitalist markets of other sectors when they purchase inputs or sell their product, but family workers may act as a bulwark against commercial pressures by accepting lower incomes. Similar conditions may be forced on working class farm employees with no chance of ownership. The high number of people leaving farm employment offers indirect confirmation of such problems and this thesis investigates the context in which departures occurred.

Farm employees consist of three groups, those without interest in farm ownership, those with an interest and little chance of success, and those whose family background ensures farm ownership. Many farms only have one employee and take on non-family labour for short periods when the family labour which would otherwise do the task is unavailable. Some of the people they employ are offspring of neighbouring farm owners. This variation in class interests has exacerbated the disinclination of farm employees to take collective action in the face of poor wages and conditions.

By tracing a sample of farm employees through the electoral rolls over a period of ten years, I have been able to contact three groups of farm employees: those who have left for non-farm work in the intervening period; those who have been farm workers for at least ten years; and those who have since become farm owners. This has given me an insight into the proportion of farm employees who take up farming hoping to own their own farm, and the problems involved in succeeding. People who have left farming also provide an important perspective on farm employment. I have correlated outcome of career by various background factors, principally father's occupation, aspiration, and education. Job history is also important to my analysis. All these factors influence class mobility, and may either increase or mask the action of each other in different circumstances. By looking at mobility I will demonstrate the way class relationships impinge on individual lives.
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Behind every successful piece of research is a host of key people without whom the project could never have been carried out. This was never more true than for the farming people who spent their time providing the information on which this thesis is based. They shared their experiences with me in a way which the resulting work is unable to do justice to.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: CONCEPTION AND STRUCTURE

1.1 PREAMBLE

While I have been working on this thesis on farm employment a range of people have asked me the question "Do you come from a farming family?" The answer is no, but if they had asked "Have you worked on a farm?" the answer would have been yes. When I was exploring thesis topics I drew upon my personal interest in, and knowledge of, farming. The theoretical questions which I have pursued are related to that personal awareness of issues within farming. This has been both productive and frustrating, in that it has prompted me to look at areas which other people have already investigated, but from a slightly different angle.

The questions about my background brought up two issues. The first was whether there was an undertone of "only someone from a farm would be interested in farming" behind some of these questions. The lack of past sociological research into farming has been discussed with insight and clarity elsewhere (Carter 1988; 1990). However there is also a growing appreciation in New Zealand that the situation of rural people is important in itself and that issues of central sociological interest can be investigated through the situation of people who do not live in cities.

The second issue is that the first question was asked several times, but the second never. This says a great deal about general perceptions of farming within New Zealand. It is seen as the business of families rather than employers and employees, and I suspect that some people feel that class conflict in farming is the affair of historians. There is a body of literature which disputes this point of view, particularly papers by Gill (1981) and Martin (1984), but in general sociologists have been more attracted to the theoretical investigation of farming issues when they take place in exotic third world locations than in their own back yard.

My particular interest is in the position of farm employees rather than farm owners, although I do not feel that it is possible to look at their position without looking at the class structure of farming as a whole. I am also interested in Marxist analyses of class structure, and was attracted by the possibility that understanding more about the relations of production in farming could contribute to this area. This has proved to be a complex task, and in the process I have converted what began as an MA thesis into a PhD. In this introduction I will present some of the models of farm employment which I want to investigate, and the reasoning behind the methodological approach I have chosen.
1.2 NEW ZEALAND LITERATURE ON FARMING

Because farming is so important to New Zealand's economy there is plenty of literature on farming. However most of it is on production or marketing. What has been written on farmers and farm workers tends to be related to manpower planning and has no pretensions to contribute to theories about the nature of farming or class structure. These articles have a range of views on social and productive relations in farming but I feel there is one of two (contradictory) views underlying most studies:

i. employees are members of a working class with limited access to farm ownership. Their relationship to their employer is class based. This is expressed through concerns with income and working conditions similar to those in other industries where a class which owns and controls the means of production is in conflict with the direct producers;

ii. employees are generally members of the same class as farm owners because they are members of farm owners' families. The family is the unit of production, and the family is the unit determining class status. Ownership and control are maintained within the farm family across generations, generally through the male line. There is no barrier to the offspring of the farm owner, or other aspiring farmers achieving ownership. There may be conflicts between employees and employers but these are superficial, based on particular personalities and issues.

Analyses of the situation of farm employees in New Zealand are contradictory because there are elements of both of these situations in New Zealand farming, and small studies of particular locations or farm types reflect real, geographically based differences. A range of ways of meeting the labour needs of farms exists, from concentrating on mechanisation, to using paid labour on a full-time or part-time basis, to using contractors, to using family labour. The options available to individual farms and the particular ones chosen, create a situation which has implications for those who do and those who do not employ wage labour, and for wage workers themselves. In looking at the situation of farm employees, I hope to reconcile these two viewpoints within one model which takes the variety of farm employment situations into account.

1.3 MODELS OF FARM EMPLOYMENT

Some employers are government departments, whose task is to administer crown land. These employers are not the concern of this thesis, those farms owned by individuals are. A few farms are clearly capitalist, employing enough workers for the owner to be freed from working the farm. Some owners are not active in the management of the farm at all, regarding it as an investment to be run by others. There have been a number of attempts to specify the point at which the number of employees
divides petty bourgeois farms from capitalist ones: the limit will vary in different economic conditions. Although capitalist farms can be defined as those in which the owner receives an income from surplus value (Ghorayshi 1986), those with fewer employees are still acting as capitalists in relation to their employees. Some employ wage labour or sharemilkers at some stages in their careers, for example to allow the owners to leave the farm and travel or take a new job, or to semi-retire on the farm. Many employ so little wage labour it makes no difference to the amount of work done by the farmer and appears to the farmer as an extension of the work put in by family members. This is even more likely given that family members are often paid, or employees are related to other farm owning families. Farm workers are often described as being "apprentice" farmers. Low incomes are justified in these terms. If farm workers are sure of family help in buying farms later this may may be acceptable to them. But for many the low wages are all they will ever get.

Once the socio-economic backgrounds of farm employees are examined, it becomes obvious that some, who will later become owners, may have class interests in common with their employers rather than other workers. Two issues are important here:

i  Do farm employees wish to own their own farms? Wanting to own a farm is likely to affect an employee's attitude to the the job and choice of farm jobs. Farm employment is necessary because it provides experience even if it is not financially rewarding.

ii  Will the farm employee eventually achieve farm ownership? The chances vary with socio-economic background. Some farmer's offspring become farm owners without effort, others struggle for years until achieving success, with no more help than others from non-farm families. Sometimes members of farming families fail to achieve farm ownership. Failure is more common for those from non-farm backgrounds, but some do succeed without the backing of farm families.

If class position is to be assessed, the exact relationships within families become important. Farmers' daughters do not have the same access to farm ownership enjoyed by farmers' sons (Pomeroy 1988). However they are not completely excluded from farm ownership and certainly not from farm work. For this reason I will refer to "farmers' offspring" rather than "farmers' sons" unless women are specifically excluded. Nor, as I have suggested, do all farmers' sons become owners. Although few people work unpaid on family farms these days, accepting low pay may be more common among family members. Yet there is no guarantee that accepting low wages will lead to an equivalent reward later. Even if the owner remains willing to repay the "debt", the financial status of the farm may not allow it. Bedggood (1979) refers to downward mobility as being relatively common and although this issue was glossed over while farming was more prosperous, it has become more important in the 1980s. Current debates
on the possibility of exploitation within families also suggest class relationships of family members deserve more attention (Bernstein 1988; Friedmann 1986a).

As well as variations in the ability of families to ensure that a new generation will become farm owners, there are variations in the work histories and strategies for farm acquisition between those employees from farm owning families and others (Lowe 1985). A few of the former only work on their families' farm, eventually inheriting or buying it. Their interests are closely tied to those of farm owners. Others work on several farms for non-family, before inheriting or buying their parents' farm. In both these cases, the property may be bought on favourable terms. Others will buy on the open market, again with or without family help. Some farmers' offspring may have no more help than the offspring of urban working class people. Both farmers' offspring and others will often work off-farm to earn more money and for variety. Access to a good sharemilking position makes ownership more likely and these are often given to family members (Lowe 1985; Gregan and Anderson 1984). But sharemilking also provides the means to ownership for some non-farmers' offspring.

Not only do non-farmer's offspring share the job market with farmers' offspring, there are differences among their own ranks. The fact that some employees without farming backgrounds are also saving for and buying their own farms may have considerable implications for those who are farm employees for the job itself and the immediate returns that it gives. Again they are stuck with the low wages without the future rewards. Those who wanted to become owners but failed to do so may also reassess the job, as it is on its own terms, without this incentive.

The likelihood of farm employees combining to use joint strength to promote their collective interests is also reduced by the possibility of farm ownership. Because farm workers are often working with their employers rather than with other workers and there are relatively few of them, scattered over long distances, it is very difficult to contact them in order to organise activity (Gill 1979). Since many are farmers' offspring they may have less motivation to join anyway. Farmers' offspring on the home farm may benefit directly from foregone wages, if these are invested in the farms they will take over. A farm employee who will be an employer in future may benefit indirectly if high or uniform wages are not enforced through union activity, if this will make farming more viable in the future for owners.

Previous research shows that farm employees are interested in ownership and some do become owners. My supposition is that farm ownership is a carrot that keeps many in farming longer than they would stay otherwise. However structural constraints will not allow all to succeed, therefore there is a high rate of people leaving before retirement (often as early as in their twenties) because they see better opportunities elsewhere. Farm employees over forty are in the minority. Without examining the background attributes and experiences of those who left farming, our information on the farm work force is incomplete, as leaving foreshadows the future for many farm workers.
The changing economic position of farming over time complicates these issues. Lowe (1985) documents historical changes in access to farm ownership. Numbers of farm employees remain stable, but this masks changes in the farm types they are involved with. At the same time, absolute numbers of farm workers on pastoral farms are decreasing, because of new approaches to farming and increasing mechanisation, numbers involved with labour intensive plant crops are increasing.

After reviewing the literature on farm employees in New Zealand I concluded that their situation involved major class conflicts between employers and workers, and competition between workers from different class backgrounds. Many of these conflicts were not being openly acknowledged within the farming community. Limitations to class mobility were at the root of this conflict. Farm employment contained more contradictions than had been usually presented in single studies. Because of this, existing studies tended to raise as many questions as they answered. I wanted to look at the effect of both background and subsequent career on ability to achieve goals, for a wide range of people. I thought it would be worth covering some old ground in order to collect the new information which would allow several apparently disparate issues to be combined into one analysis which focused specifically on class structure and class mobility. By looking at a range of farm types, and farm employees who had made the transition to ownership as well as those who had not, I hoped to both answer my own questions and put past studies into a wider and more meaningful context. Once I had decided this and hypothesised that farm employees worked in a labour market where people with potentially different class positions worked in the same occupations, there were certain limitations on the way I could proceed with a study.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

Before I could look into my proposition that farm employees were being affected by the presence of both members of farm owning families and others in farm employment, I had to look at the extent to which this was in fact occurring. I then had to ascertain whether farm ownership was an issue for farm employees. If it was, I needed to find their chances of becoming owners. If it was not, I had to find out whether they had other goals, and whether these were being fulfilled. This dictated a large sample, based on prior knowledge of the distribution of farm employees, in order to include all the groups of interest. I chose Northland as a study area to allow the maximum comparability with previous work (Maunier et al 1985; Gregan and Anderson 1984). In order to find out whether background had an influence on both ability to achieve ownership, or if that was not wanted, to achieve other goals, I had to carry out a longitudinal study. The importance that I gave to barriers to achieving farm ownership meant that contacting people who had left farm employment was central to my work.
Given that methods are not theory-neutral, the realisation that I was planning to replicate some aspects of the methods of previous, non-Marxist studies, forced me to review the theoretical propositions that I held when I began this piece of research. Many of the questions raised by previous research revolved around class mobility. By looking at existing information, and drawing on my own experience of farm employment, I had formulated a topic which followed the lines of a conventional "Weberian" mobility study. The obvious route was to collect information about the socio-economic background of farm employees, particularly father's occupation, but also information about education and other experience which would contribute to a career in farm work. I would then look at aspiration and the influence of background on career structure, taking achievement of farm ownership, remaining a farm employee, or leaving farming altogether as the key signs of whether class mobility had occurred or not. Career structure itself, particularly the holding of sharemilking contracts, which have already been proved to provide access to ownership, might be a significant factor in mobility. There has been little research on the effect of inheritance of property on class mobility, although this is an important factor in farming, or the extent to which petty bourgeois farmers are dependent on other forms of credit than those provided by banks and other financial institutions. All these questions could be answered through collecting the life histories of people who had been farm employees.

However my original theoretical interest had been in Marxist class and economic theory and I was aware that it was not possible to explain the class structure of New Zealand farming, with its close interrelationship with international circuits of capital, by only interviewing individual farm employees. I was then faced with the question of the ways in which my interest in farm employees could contribute to Marxist interests in class structure.

Because Marxist theory proposes that continuing competition and concentration of resources in fewer hands will operate to reduce mobility into the capitalist class to the minimum, and that the petty bourgeoisie will also tend to disintegrate into either the capitalist or working class, there has been less interest in class mobility from Marxists than from those with Weberian backgrounds. However there can be strong interest in self-employment among working class people themselves (Scase and Goffee 1982) and movement into the petty bourgeoisie remains one avenue for class mobility. Friedmann (1978b) suggests that this is an important factor in reducing recognition by workers that their class interests are opposed to those of their employers. A Marxist analysis of class structure in farming could suggest the extent of constraints on activity related to class structure - both the likelihood of mobility, its effect on working conditions, and its implications for future farm employment. For these reasons I think it is worthwhile in Marxist terms to study a branch of production in which class mobility takes place, both to look at the conditions under which it takes place and the effects this has on other workers.
As it happened, one of the most attractive justifications for such a project came from a Weberian expert on class mobility. Goldthorpe comments on the current neglect of mobility by many contemporary Marxists in a discussion of the "social motives" of mobility studies (Goldthorpe 1980). To many contemporary Marxists writing on class structure the life chances of individuals are not significant compared with the structure of class positions. Goldthorpe sees the study of mobility as being consistent with Marx's own writing on the subject and he makes a case for investigating this area which Marx commented on, but never developed into a consistent analysis. Marx recognised the existence of a certain amount of mobility, and that any upward mobility would have an adverse affect on class consciousness. Incorporating new and effective entrepreneurs into the capitalist class would also strengthen the whole system. Marx foresaw the on-going increase in the unproductive working class, which is the current focus of Marxist investigation of class structure, and would have been vitally interested in the issues this raises for class consciousness. Without emphasising the inadequacies of the structural approach to class to the extent to which Goldthorpe does, it seems important to supplement it by investigating the issues raised by class mobility in relation to class consciousness. A Marxist researcher into class in Britain professes himself to be:

both puzzled and disturbed by contemporary western Marxist work in which the concrete differential impact of capitalist processes on people's lives and prospects ... seem to recede into remote distance ... or to be brought into the picture only in a context of abstraction which, untranslated, leave the reality of human experience difficult to recognize.

(Westergaard quoted in Scase and Goffee 1982: 19)

I wanted to understand the implications of structural constraints to class mobility for individuals and accepted Marxist theories as a satisfactory basis for my research. My next step was to look at appropriate methodologies.

Under a Marxist programme of research it is usual to work within a materialist theory of knowledge and a realist theory of scientific endeavour. The key elements of the former are recognition of reality as "independent of the 'knowing subject', the process of production of the knowledge, and the knowledge itself". Thought is assessed by its adequacy as an explanation of the world, it is also seen as existing in its own right. Reality is seen as "the result of underlying causal mechanisms" (Benton 1977: 171). In conjunction with this the realist strategy:

takes as its main premise the claim that social practices exist, and under descriptions which are intended to be uncontroversial. It then moves to conclusions about what the world must be like if it is to contain social practices. The main premise is contingent and so is the conclusion, the relation between them being a necessary one.

(Benton 1984: 194)

There are two main tendencies within sociology: one is to emphasise structural constraints on human action, and the other to emphasise the ability of human actors to influence social change. Benton
suggests that it is possible to provide an adequate realist explanation which incorporates both structural determination and the ability of actors to create social change. Firstly, he says that there is no necessity for structural determinates to be always external to actors through the "notion of unconscious determination of conscious life" (Benton 1984: 213). As well, structures can act as facilitators of action or conditions of possibility, not just constraints. Finally "Any more or less enduring relationship between agents ... or between agents and objects may be thought of as constituting a 'structure'." (Benton 1984: 214).

Benton's approach provides a theoretical underpinning for a project, such as the use of life history data for a class mobility study. The conclusions can then be referred back to analyses of structure to create a dialogue over further implications and possibilities of change. Benton makes the point that there are different uses of the word 'experience'. It is not legitimate to use "the 'experience' of the knowing subject" as "a theory neutral arbiter in cases of competition between theories." but experience as description of events is acceptable and necessary for a realist science. Attempts to demonstrate the interaction of structure and agency empirically have been fraught with difficulty, but Benton seems to suggest that it is not impossible. This area remains tempting for anyone wanting to do small scale research (on a low budget in my case) based on either in-depth interviews or more structured questionnaires, the results of which can which can be linked into a body of theory which will relate this data to wider social trends.

A small group of researchers have used the life history method to study the survival of artisanal bakery in France. There are a number of similarities between these small family based units of production and family farms. Over a series of long, loosely structured life history interviews, the researchers built up a picture of social relations within artisanal bakeries. They relied on a process of saturation sampling to provide confirmation of their interpretation. The structural constraints in this branch of production were so strong that the same patterns recurred among all bakers and bakery workers in the main centres, and these were directly related to those in rural areas. In this way the lives of individual people provided an analysis of structural relationships (Bertaux and Bertaux-Wiame 1981).

Compared with the position in the bakeries, there is more variety in the outcomes of farm workers' lives. However I felt that the underlying logic of the life history method could be adapted to my purposes. By using a larger sample and reverting to the survey method, the main outlines of the careers of farm employees from a wide variety of backgrounds could be collected. The patterns of job changes over a number of years, until a substantial number of the original sample had either become farm owners or left farm work completely, would reveal the structural constraints operating on people involved in farming, just as the life histories had for bakeries.
Although financial constraints combined with a need for a large sample pushed me towards a mail questionnaire, and in doing so reduced the chance of a meaningful study of ideology and class consciousness, the possibility of understanding more about some aspects of people's lives remained. I hoped to look at factual aspects of people's experience without losing sight of structural imperatives. In looking at class mobility in farming, political power is a key issue, but I have not attempted to look at class or political affiliation directly, through self-report. Instead I have looked at background factors and achievement of ownership which indicate class, and tried to correlate this with practical activity such as union activity, which indicate political and class affiliation. Identifying different class trajectories (for some people a working class occupation may be temporary) could provide a basis for further investigation into class consciousness using more qualitative methods.

1.5 STRUCTURE OF THIS THESIS

In the next chapter I will look more closely at the international literature concerning rural class structure, and the way in which an understanding of the position of farm employees and class mobility can contribute to it. There are two poles to the debate over rural class structure, the antecedents of which began in the nineteenth century. At that stage the potential for leading the Russian peasantry directly into socialism, by-passing the period of capitalist farming which Britain had already entered, was discussed. The debate hinges on whether small farmers working their own properties with the help of family labour are seen as petty bourgeois, fully integrated into the capitalist system, or whether such farmers are seen as having characteristics consistent with a non-capitalist mode of production.

Marxists have tended to accept that petty bourgeois farming would disintergrate under pressure from international competition and be replaced by a smaller number of capital intensive farms employing wage labour. Given that this process has been much slower than in industrial production, there have been a number of investigations into the nature of exploitation within farming. If farmers are not operating under the logic of capitalism they may accept a level of income which amounts to self-exploitation, even though they are nominally self-employed and independent of the exploitation inherent in the relationship between wage labourers and capitalists. In this case capitalists find farm production by small farmers more profitable than taking direct control of production themselves. The fact that capitalism is slow to take over direct production is given theoretical significance by claiming that farming constitutes a non-capitalist mode of production.

Taking a stand within this debate has a number of implications which bear on the analysis of New Zealand farm employees, even though the debate itself is generally oriented around farm owners, and more recently their families. One of the key issues is whether small farmers are now under threat because of technological breakthroughs. Farm employees are probably more vulnerable in the face of structural change than farm owners and the degree and nature of exploitation within farming directly
affects their interests. Class exploitation within the farm family has particularly strong implications for farm employees, many of whom have worked for family members who are farm owners, or competed for jobs with those are related to farm owners.

Until the 1980s, few New Zealand studies drew on the theoretical concerns which drove overseas studies of farming, they were very much oriented around practical problem-solving. More recent studies have looked at intergenerational transfer, the division of labour on farms, and the progress of union activity among farm employees. Chapter Three looks at past New Zealand research in the light of the theories outlined in Chapter Two. It also attempts to synthesise the information contained in previous work and assess the possibility for wider generalisations about the social relations of production than have been attempted by individual researchers. This will provide a useful base from which to launch my own and other research.

In order to design a piece of research that would fulfil the requirements indicated by the study of both theoretical issues and past New Zealand research I was confronted by various problems. The first was what did an adequate piece of realist research look like in the flesh? How did one measure underlying mechanisms such as the tendency of capitalism to alter the form of production as it came in contact with new areas? Chapter Four looks at the methodological issues I had to come to terms with and the limitations to what I achieved. With my original limit of one year's research for an MA thesis in mind I decided to collect survey data on class mobility then make such links back to "underlying mechanisms" as seemed appropriate, rather than spending a long time designing a more theoretically driven piece of research. I also faced some practical problems in gathering information which could contribute something new to this area. The main issues are sample design and biases, and the problems of working with information from mail questionnaires.

The results of the survey are discussed in Chapters Five to Nine. Chapter Five presents comparisons of the three main subgroups on the basis of their background characteristics; parents' occupation and class position, experience of farm work and rural life, education (including vocational education), and aspiration towards farm ownership and other goals. It also assesses the meagre information about the position of women in farming which the survey collected. Appendix One also makes a comparison between the nature of my own and other samples, so as to provide a basis from which to generalise about my own data. By making comparisons between my own results and those of surveys from other years and other areas I can also make suggestions as to where they could contribute to more contemporary theoretical interests.

Chapter Six assesses interaction between the background factors. The questions posed here concern the extent to which class background influences other factors which may be seen as being relatively independent of it, and whether some factors may be seen as more influential than others.
Class position, operationalised through father’s occupation, is closely related to experience of farm work, aspiration towards ownership and even education.

Chapter Seven discusses the outline of aggregate job histories and looks at the differences between people who achieve different outcomes. Job history is also intimately connected to background. Because so many factors have a significant relationship with outcome, it is important to try and tease out causal chains and assess which factor is more important than others. However this endeavour runs into some difficulties, partly caused by sample size, but also because class mobility in farming is not completely closed off and all the factors looked at have some independent significance which cannot be attributed to class background.

Chapter Eight looks at the comments respondents made about farm work at various stages of their careers, attempting to assess differences in attitudes relating to background factors and job history. It also looks at related issues, attitudes to the lifestyle which is associated with farm life and most importantly, to unions. At this stage the focus is on the differences among those who left farming, those who were still farm employees and those who had become owners, rather than attempting the three-way analysis of earlier chapters.

Chapter Nine looks at the source of finance for those who did buy farms, and assesses differences in the sources and amounts of finance according to background. Again it can be difficult to separate which aspects of background and job history are translated into tangible differences in results.

The final chapter returns to the theoretical issues of Chapter Two in the light of my case study. It looks at whether the picture built up contributes support to one or other of the models of class structure in farming which have been discussed, and where they may diverge. It will also look at the methodological adequacy of the completed project. The nature of the theories under analysis, which are difficult to verify, and the nature of the data, which cannot answer every question about farm employment and class mobility, prevent the presentation of any final verdict on class structure and farm employment. Past work on farming has given some indications of the relationship between farm employees and farm owners and the possibilities for class mobility, which my work confirms. Upward mobility exists but is limited, and balanced by downward mobility. Farm employees decry their wages but show little inclination to become involved in industrial action. The picture of a fragmented work force where conflict is individualised is supported. Martin framed a series of questions about the nineteenth century which apply today: “How was it, for example, that farmers in the nineteenth century could deplore the scarcity and the price of labour and yet there be considerable unemployment and demands for higher wages?” (Martin 1983b: 24). Some aspects of farm employment are changing, others seem to have remained the same.
CHAPTER TWO

THE NATURE OF THE FAMILY FARM AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS FOR PAID EMPLOYEES: A LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Having described the possible motivations and life chances of farm workers which this thesis investigates, I would now like to look at the nature of family farming, with particular reference to farm workers. Farm employees cannot be studied without referring in some detail to the nature of the class structure within which they are earning a living and pursuing their other goals. I am interested in empirically tested differences between farmers’ offspring and others in a specific time and place, but need to relate this material to other situations and to reflect on its significance for theories of class structure in farming.

In this chapter I will briefly refer to the main points of debate over the nature of family farms, then look at the way farm employees are incorporated into conflicting analyses. There are a number of issues which need to be looked at. There is little agreement over the position of small family owned and run farms within the capitalist mode of production. In fact it has been suggested that none of the analyses produced so far are adequate (Guille 1989: 254).

If class mobility from farm employment to ownership is possible the structural position of petty bourgeois farm owners vis-a-vis capitalist ones becomes important to farm employees as well as the capital-labour relationship. The way in which farm employees within a largely family run sector are characterised is also important, if in fact they are mentioned at all. Often theoretical discussions treat farm employees purely as proletarians with no other future, presuming that farmers’ offspring, who might be expected to become petty bourgeois, work only on farms owned by family members. I was interested in whether any theorist suggested there were class or other differences between farmers’ offspring working off the family farm and those who were not members of a farm owning family, and what implications they might draw from this situation. It is inevitable that theoretical positions on farmers’ offspring and farm employees in general are related to overall approaches to family farming, so that my final task in this thesis will be to return to the debate on the nature of family farms and try to assess how empirical research such as mine could contribute to the debate.

Given that the majority of New Zealand farmers are petty bourgeois, that is they work their own land, assisted by limited amounts of family and other labour, many of those who are wage workers or
sharemilkers are being employed in response to a specific need, by a family or person who would otherwise do the work themselves. Very few farmers employ permanent full-time workers, only 9% of Northland farms do so, although those that do, employ an average of 2.3 per farm. Some of these people will be family members and some of the farms will be run by institutions such as the Department of Lands and Survey, (now Landcorp). A sample survey of individual farmers found less than 20% of those who employed permanent full-time non-family labour employed more than one (Maunier et al 1985: 20).

Because of the large number of small farms, particularly dairy farms, established in New Zealand this century, differentiation among farms is not usually emphasised in local descriptions of farming. The "taken for granted" New Zealand definition is that these farms are owned by the person who does most of the work on them, assisted informally by family members. Additional work may be done by contractors, and occasionally by wage workers. There has been little local discussion of the class structure of New Zealand farming, or of the boundary between capitalist farms, which are dependent on wage workers, and family owned and worked farms. I examine the literature which does exist further in the next chapter along with key issues such as the nature of class relationships between farm owners and employees.

2.2 CLASS STRUCTURE IN FARMING

If "family farm" is generally used in New Zealand literature without definition, elsewhere alternative versions of this concept proliferate. The New Zealand version of family farming coincides with that portrayed by Winter (1979: 15-16), that is capital, labour and management skills are provided by the family. Some wage labour may be employed, particularly at crucial times of the family life-cycle (for example as people approach retirement, or when they are developing the property). Production is for the market, and management will be along capitalistic lines. Although capitalism has penetrated family farming to varying degrees, Winter suggests it will not necessarily do so completely because of the restrictions to development created by private ownership of property.

Farming is one of the few areas in which the family is still the unit of production. Marx defines family farmers and other petty bourgeoisie in "Theories of Surplus Value":

As owner of the means of production he is capitalist: as labourer he is his own wage-labourer. As capitalist he therefore pays himself his wages and draws his profit on capital: that is to say, he exploits himself as wage-labourer, and pays himself, in the surplus-value, the tribute that labour owes to capital.

(Marx quoted by Friedmann 1980: 561)

Whether theorists are discussing small farms, family farms, simple commodity production, petty commodity production or the petty bourgeoisie, there is general agreement that in these types of
farms ownership, labour and organisation coincide. Debate occurs over the degree to which capitalism has penetrated small family farms, and they cannot be defined without answering this question. A closely related issue is whether family farms are exploited within capitalism. Several theorists suggest that family-labour farms are being exploited in spite of being nominally self-employed. Davis has discussed the farmer as a propertyed labourer, using those involved in contract farming for large agribusiness firms as a model (Davis 1980: 135). Vergopoulos speaks of unequal exchange in which urban capitalists exploit rural producers (Vergopoulos 1978). Again this issue is subject to debate. In contrast to these analyses, Friedmann denies that farmers can be exploited because they are dealing with competitive markets in labour, land and capital, as owners of their own means of production (Friedmann 1980: 168). One issue of importance to farm employees in this argument is that a concern with the exploitation of farm owners can be allied to a reduction in concern about the specific plight of farm employees, whose exploitation may be presented as dependent on that of their employers, who are in turn exploited by agribusiness. (For an example see Vogeler (1981)).

The classic Marxist texts on farming (by Marx, Lenin, and Kautsky) foretell that small farms (both petty bourgeois and those run by wage workers on a part-time basis), will be progressively incorporated into capitalist production, as economies of scale force the smallest out of farming and the larger become truly capitalist, employing wage labour (de Janvry 1981: 100-106). Vergopoulos (1978) provides an opposing view. In analysing the relationship of small farms in Greece to capitalism he has claimed that peasant farms are the basic unit of production of a non-capitalist mode of production. As such, they will continue to exist alongside the capitalist mode of production, although exploited by it. These arguments are a continuation of a debate about the role of small landowners which has been re-examined several times since the nineteenth century. Russian populists questioned whether the collective organisation present in Russian villages could form the basis of a socialist society without going through the full transition to capitalism experienced elsewhere (Hussein and Tribe 1983). Interest in the political implications of the class structure is always a strong component of the debate.

The extreme poles of the debate are conducted at the level of modes of production. Other arguments fall between these two. Although Vergopoulos's approach has been criticised by many, the concept has been developed further by those working with family farming in the United States of America and Great Britain. Friedmann suggests that small farms (she favours the term simple commodity production units) are a form of production rather than a mode, but like Vergopoulos, emphasises that family farms operate on a different logic to that of capitalist farms, one which continues to ensure their economic viability in comparison with the latter (Friedmann 1980: 160). For simple commodity producers the purpose of production is simple reproduction of the unit rather than

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1 Different theorists choose different terms consistent with the approach they wish to emphasise. I will therefore use the term favoured by the particular theorist I am discussing at the time.
accumulation of profit, and they can therefore continue to operate in a less favourable cost structure than will be tolerated by capitalist farmers.

An argument for the continuity of family owned and run farms within the capitalist mode of production can also be made without positing their operation outside the capitalist logic of accumulation. Gibbon and Neocosmos draw on the classic Marxist texts to argue that peasant commodity producers are an integral part of the capitalist mode of production. While some forms of petty commodity production are destroyed by capitalism, others are produced by it:

Provided that commodity production in the countryside is generalized, that somewhere within the overall social formation wage-labourers and capital are present, and that all enterprises systematically engaged in commodity production (including peasant ones) are necessarily specialized, dependent on the market and subject to the same laws of competition and accumulation, then commodity producing peasants are an integral part of the capitalist mode of production.

(Gibbon and Neocosmos 1985: 173)

Goodman and Redclift suggest that although petty bourgeois production is being created as well as destroyed by capitalism, its existence is historically contingent, with real subsumption replacing formal subsumption to become the ultimate form of commodity production. However its history is very different from that of industrial production, because its dependence on land, which is in limited supply, puts constraints on capitalist investment in agriculture. Uneven progress is being made, as capitalism is increasingly taking over the production of inputs, processing of raw materials, and marketing of products, all of which were previously carried out by the farm unit itself (Goodman and Redclift 1985: 241). Petty commodity production itself is an area which remains formally subsumed into capitalist production because capitalism has not yet undermined the "land barrier".

A useful theory of evolution in agriculture and other land based production comes from rent theory. Rather than approaching development from a class based analysis, which is general to all capitalist production and which has difficulty in theorising the contradictory character of the petty bourgeois farmer, rent theory looks at the specific attributes of land based production:

In agriculture the institutional form of modern landed property is the expression of the contradiction between the use value of land as an element in the agricultural labour process, and the exchange value form taken by social relations under capitalism

(Murray 1978: 12)

Murray suggests two ways in which social relations in capitalist farming are contradictory and which therefore act to limit productivity. Firstly, in order for the capitalist mode of production to be established, the direct producers had to be removed from the land and farming taken over by large scale, commodity oriented, capitalist farming. This was achieved, but land ownership was retained by
a class of non-producing landowners, production being organised by tenant farmers employing wage labour.

Secondly, because land is in limited supply and has particular (and varying) natural qualities it presents greater limitations to capitalist investment than industrial production. As well land is naturally monopolisable. Even though it does not itself create value (only labour does that), once capitalist production is established land will not be made available for production without any return. These factors create the conditions for land rent. Marx differentiates three different sources of rent which I will discuss very briefly, pointing out their relevance to owner-occupiers.

The contradiction between soil as a creator of use value and soil as a creator of exchange value leads to a situation where profit equalisation between sectors is prevented, by the particular qualities of land. Absolute rent is extracted from industrial capitalists through the sale of agricultural products at their value and above their costs of production. This is possible because landed property, as a barrier to investment, short circuits the free-flow of capital between sectors of production. Agriculture remains labour rather than capital intensive. Even marginal land will receive some return while this situation remains, but once the barriers to capitalist investment are removed, absolute rent will also disappear. While owner-occupation acts as a barrier to capital investment in farming, petty bourgeois farmers will also receive absolute rent.

Differential rent is income above normal profit created by differences in productivity, and therefore costs (Marx uses the term prices of production), between different areas of land. It applies to both natural differences and those created by inputs such as fertilizer or drainage. Prices of production are set by the least productive land which has had to be put into use to meet demand. More productive land receives differential rent. This is then available for extraction from the capitalist tenant farmer by the landlord under certain conditions. Overall, the extraction of rent is a deduction from income which would otherwise be available for productive investment. However, the first farmer to invest in new technology which lowers his costs, will retain the extra income until the technology has come into general use. By then the lowered costs will have been incorporated into the landlord's calculation of rents. In the case of owner-occupiers, differential rent will be retained by the farmer until capital intensity reduces the significance of land as a factor of production to that of industrial production. As with other industries, monopoly rent is also possible where prices of production are maintained above value (Murray 1977: 102).

There have been several attempts to overcome the contradictions created by the relationship between modern landed property and capitalism. One way has been to expand into new lands: New Zealand and other white settler colonies being examples. Another has been to foster production by owner-occupiers to minimise rent being paid to landlords and invested elsewhere. Capital intensity
has steadily increased in agriculture under the pressure of over-production and declining terms of trade. Expansion, owner occupation and over-production tend to be interrelated, but none of these trends have provided a permanent solution to the problems limiting capitalist investment. Rent is capitalised into purchase price and when the farmer first buys a farm he or she is likely to be in debt. This limits investment in development. Once the farm has been paid off, the incentive to increase production is also reduced, as outgoings are reduced, and the farmer may be insulated from market fluctuations. Adjustment in the structure of ownership has been continuous since the growth of owner-occupation first began. There has been growth in both the numbers of capitalist farms, and in part-time farming.

The activities of established farm owners will affect the access to land of potential farmers. Land is a finite resource. The fact that much of it is controlled by families, who may not operate in a free market for land, will increase competition for what is available and therefore the price of the remaining land. Small farm owners are also known to pay more for land than capitalist ones, because they prefer self-employment to wage labour (Harvey 1981: 19).

One of the strongest influences on the restructuring or preservation of patterns of land ownership in primary production is the state. Virtually all analyses emphasise its role even if they differ on individual points. There has been a strong tendency for the state to support agriculture on the grounds of national self-sufficiency, after the problems in maintaining food supplies during the two world wars. Farmers have also developed strong lobby groups which may influence state policies in agriculture (Goodman and Redclift 1985). The activity of such groups in New Zealand is followed up in Chapter Three. One area in which the state has supported farm owners has been its decision not to enforce adequate minimum wage levels and conditions for farm employees. However not all state policies help all farmers. Given that the state is interested in ensuring that large quantities of cheap agricultural raw materials are available for industrial production and urban workforces, incentives for production are a major part of these policies whatever the political situation. This has promoted over-production and made it difficult for smaller farms to maintain adequate incomes. The state has also been heavily involved in research and development, much of which has promoted larger scale farms (Goodman, Sorj and Wilkinson 1987).

A recent analysis of farming has taken the argument beyond that posed by rent theory, and suggested that the barrier to capitalist investment in food and fibre production is not private ownership of land by either landlords or the petty bourgeois, but the production process itself. They anticipate that capitalist investment in farming will continue to increase, as new technologies eliminate the risk and uncertainty traditionally associated with farming, and bring it under the same sort of control experienced in industrial production (Goodman, Sorj and Wilkinson 1987: 156).
2.3 FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RELATION TO DEBATES ABOUT CLASS STRUCTURE

Having discussed some major elements in the debate about the nature of farming and petty bourgeois farmers in particular, I will look at their significance for New Zealand farm workers. If many New Zealand farm workers are trying to become farm owners, the structure of farming has considerable influence on their chances. The individual farm worker will experience entry into farm ownership as being easy, difficult, or impossible, without considering the causes of this situation in the way I have done here. But underlying the experiences which contribute to decisions about farm work or ownership is a process of structural change, which is important for farm employees in assessing whether the situation is likely to become better or worse. As Murray (1978) points out, where the requirements of capitalism meet the limitations of the nature of land based production, change will occur. Just as petty commodity producers were established, they can be replaced by a combination of large scale production and part-time farmers. The availability of farm work is also affected. This does not mean that all family owned farms will disappear, but an increase in their scale of operations is likely. Some family farms have utilised family labour to consolidate, diversify and expand, with large families doing better than small ones (Marsden et al 1986).

For the farm employee, the result of developments in farm ownership will be the same, whether driven by state policy, competition or biotechnology. There are decreasing possibilities for farm ownership and continuing replacement of human labour with mechanical means, but with the maintenance of some wage work within farming, as capitalist units replace petty bourgeois ones.

Following on from the view that the fate of family farms is decided by the investment decisions of capitalists, that is external to the farm unit itself, the relationship between farmers' offspring and other farm employees is very much a side issue. Non-farmers' offspring working on small farms are clearly proletarian, and "... with the permanent use of wage labour, there is a clear division between ownership and labour, and capitalist class relations are present, if not in their archetypal form, within the enterprise." (Goodman and Redcliff 1985: 237).

Since it is accepted that the demands of capitalism take precedence over other factors, there is no necessity that petty bourgeois farms will continue to be reproduced if investment conditions change. The class position of farmers' offspring will not necessarily be the same as that of their parents, and although this issue is glossed over, the possibility that exploitation may occur within the family unit is not excluded "... it is obscurantist to deny class relations when ownership and labour are divorced ... by the discussion of personal loyalty, and the possibility that the wage workers in question may be farmer's sons attempting to scale the first rung on the 'agricultural ladder'." (Goodman and Redcliff 1985: 238).
On the one hand, there is clearly no warrant from discussions of rent or other theories which emphasise technological change to discuss class mobility in terms of personal experience, as a way of demonstrating these theories. On the other hand, there are some issues raised by arguments about structural change which information from individuals can throw light on, if only to document the progress of transformation. Under these terms, the investigation of the differences between farmers' offspring and others in the farm workforce, along with the implications of these differences, becomes an exercise in comparative class mobility. The results are unlikely to challenge the theoretical analysis, which accepts a range of actual conditions, since the presence of simple commodity production is said to be historically contingent (Goodman and Redclift 1985: 238). Moreover changes in class structure do result from decisions made by individuals in the face of new elements in their environment, and the way in which different individuals react is not always predictable. For instance low farm incomes have led to the growth of part-time farming in the United States of America, rather than the sale of farms and the entry of their former owners into the urban workforce as predicted (Goss et al 1980: 109).

Perhaps change in the structure of farming will also interact with farm employees' ambitions in unexpected ways, which will influence the possibilities for capitalist farming. For instance farm employees may leave for urban jobs at an even more rapid rate if the chances of upward mobility are reduced.

An example of the way in which comparison of farmers' offspring and others could reflect on structural change, is the degree to which petty bourgeois farmers may be insulated from the market for credit. Investigating the sources of finance used by farm employees buying farms should throw some light on the degree of integration into capitalist markets for finance among different groups of owners. Family inheritance may allow some insulation from market forces. If farmers' offspring fail to either inherit, or purchase a farm, even though that was their intention, the possibility of structural change is increased. People from non-farm backgrounds buying farms may be more integrated into the market, because of their dependence on capitalist sources of finance rather than inheritance. Alternatively, where family assistance remains an important source of finance for those with a non-farm background, there may be little change in this area.

Some groups with family help may also be buying more expensive farms, or be in a better position to improve their financial position once they are established, or both. The background of those with the ability to expand their holdings may be another indicator of potential for change, which may or may not be related to integration into capitalist markets for credit.

Goodman and Redclift may create an argument which is compatible with a research project into the differences between farmers' offspring and others, but they spend little time on a key issue in this differentiation. The nature of family relationships within the production unit must have a strong
influence on the position of farmers’ offspring off the family farm as well as while they are on it. This in turn must have an effect on the position of non-farmers’ offspring in the farm wage workforce.

I will now return to the work of Harriet Friedmann, who has continued to defend the conceptual differentiation of “the bludgeoned but still lively body of the family farm” from an untimely incorporation into straight capitalist social relationships (Friedmann 1986b: 189). For Friedmann, the farm family is a resource which tends to insulate the production unit from the challenges outlined above. This leads her to give much more attention to the position of farmers’ offspring than did Goodman and Redclift.

2.4 THE CLASS POSITION OF NON-OWNING FARM FAMILY MEMBERS

Friedmann’s approach goes beyond the project set by rent theory and looks at the mechanism by which simple production units are able to maintain themselves, even though capitalist units of production have taken over in industry. Again, this is an area of considerable debate, but it is worth entering into because it brings us closer to the relationship between farmers’ offspring, whether working on the family farm or off it, and other farm employees. Although the relationships between farm workers, farmer’s sons and farmers are interdependent, the nature of the relationship has not been explored much. The issues are similar to those of the class position of women, in that they challenge the focus on wage relationships, and look at other forms of relationship as well. These relationships also face similar problems in providing the type of definitive relationships which Marx discerned between capital and labour.

When Friedmann argues that family farming is a form of production, rather than a mode of production, she says that the unit of production has to be specified as well as the social formation. In the case of simple commodity producers, she says the unit is fully integrated into the social formation, which is capitalist, but has features which are not in themselves capitalist. Family farming is defined as simple commodity production when the external relations of the family unit are governed by competition and mobility of the factors of production. Simple commodity production is characterised by full integration into capitalist markets for produce, land and credit. It differs from capitalist production in that despite some wage labour, most production is done by members of the family, within which class relations do not exist.

In an early article Friedmann (1978a) used census data, from a wheat growing county in the mid-west of the United States of America which was dominated by small farms, to support her theoretical analysis of the nature of simple commodity production. Her primary interest is in farmers not farm

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1 A special analysis of census data for 1920 by Galpin and Larson allowed Friedmann to look at the reproduction of family farms during a boom year for wheat prices. At the time a viable economic required more than one person to run it unit.
workers, and once she has examined the wage worker's role in the reproduction of farm families, she gives them no further attention. However her discussion of farm employees is consistent with her characterisation of simple commodity production units, and when she develops her ideas on other aspects of it, such as family relationships, this automatically reflects back on the position of employees.

Friedmann divided the demographic cycle into two phases, one of labour deficit, when the farm family has insufficient labour to work the farm, and one of sufficiency or surplus in family labour. The data enabled her to distinguish social class, defined as being an attribute of households, from occupations, which are an attribute of individuals. Most (75.8% of all employed individuals) belonged to the simple commodity producer class, and 20.6% to the wage labour class. Of those whose occupation was agricultural worker, who made up 40% of the total farm workforce in the county, about half belong to the simple commodity producer class and half to the wage labour class. Of those who were from the simple commodity producer class but working as agricultural labourers, half were on their home farm, half on another farm.

Further subdivision of the sample showed significant differences in age range and marital status between agricultural workers from each class. The picture which came out of the census and other data was of a community in which a newly married head of a household set up on a farm between the ages of 30 and 40 years. Wage labour was hired until the first son reached the age of 18 years. If there is only one son, from then until the retirement of the household head, at about 60 years old, he will work on the property, marrying when he takes over from his father as owner or direct agricultural supervisor. There should have been few problems over reproduction of the unit. If there were two sons, the elder would move to another farm as a wage worker once the younger became able to work on the farm. His savings, with family assistance and a mortgage, would enable a second farm to be bought by the time the father was ready to retire. Friedmann presented figures on average farm income, land prices, operating costs, and wage labour to show that this was possible at that time. If there were more than two sons, or if daughters inherited equal shares of the property there would be no possibility of settling every offspring, but reproduction of the basic unit was assured. Under adverse circumstances and a rise in the cost of getting on to a self sufficient farm, the class of simple commodity producers could still exist, even though some households would sell out.

To sum up, Friedmann suggests that access to proletarian wage labour may even be necessary to simple commodity production - by supplementing labour shortfall due to changes in the size of

(1) Theoretically a region of simple commodity producers could be completely self-sufficient in labour, by exchanging labour between households at different stages of their life-cycles. This is not necessary in Friedmann's example because of an adequate source of proletarian wage labour in the area.
individual families. Sometimes farms will need to employ extra labour, at other times they will have more family labour available than they need and farmers' offspring will work on other farms (Friedmann 1978a: 96). Friedmann suggests that even when working for non-family, farmers' sons are not in an oppositional class relationship with their employer, as they are not dependent on these wages. Subsistence comes from the family, and the wage is saved for a farm deposit. They are working to reproduce themselves as simple commodity producers, whereas wage workers reproduce themselves as workers.

This is a stronger theoretical distinction between farmers' offspring and others than the one proposed by Goodman and Redclift. The reason Friedmann takes this stand is bound up with her claim that it is the internal relationships of the unit which give simple commodity producers an advantage over capitalist producers. The interests of family members must be subordinated to those of the production unit in times of crisis, in order for the unit to outcompete capitalist farms, but if family members receive no more return in the long run than any other employee, or less, there is no reason to continue this. I will therefore explore this in more detail in order to check out whether her explanation seems likely to be applicable to a wider range of conditions than those which she looked at in detail 1, while she was formulating her definitions. Since Friedmann argues that simple commodity production is conceptually different from capitalist production, rather than just a phase in its development, it is important to be able to theorise how much change in historical circumstances could occur before the concept becomes inappropriate as a description of reality. Increased mechanisation has reduced the number of people required to work a viable farm. This in turn might reduce the importance of family labour to the viability of the farm to the point where it is no longer able to cushion it in times of crisis. Pomeroy (1986) suggests that in New Zealand and other countries family labour is not essential to the success of capitalist farms and that where used it is generally paid at market rates.

The key issue in differentiating farmers' offspring and others is the amount of support the farm owning family supplies to its members. This is central to Friedmann's argument because the family provides the labour which will undercut capitalist production in times of crisis. On the capitalist enterprise, production is carried out by wage labour and the relationship is conflictual. Beneath the apparent flexibility of the labour market, within which workers can be taken on and put off according to the demands of the productive process, lies the inflexibility of the cost of wages, which are set outside the productive unit. Friedmann approaches the wage bill as a cost to the productive unit, and one which is a source of class conflict within the unit, as labourers and owners of the means of production each wish to maximise their shares of the unit's production (Friedmann 1978b: 556). Profit, which Friedmann defines as surplus product after the renewal of all elements of production, including wages, is also presented as a cost. If profit is not forthcoming, the capitalist will withdraw from

1 Wheat production on the North American mid-western plains from the late 19th century until the mid 20th century.
production and reinvest elsewhere. But the family farm unit will keep on producing even if its income is cut down to bare subsistence levels.

Against this I would argue that the simple commodity producer also needs to make a profit. Otherwise they would be better off reinvesting their capital elsewhere, just as capitalists would. Family farmers may not receive surplus value from wage workers but they should receive a return on their capital. Guille defines the limits to exploitation of farmers, which he suggests are widening as mechanisation increases. Simple commodity producers will not bother becoming owners unless their income is greater than that of agricultural labourers. Once they have committed themselves to ownership, they may be exploited, if they accept an income which is less than the wage of employees plus the surplus-value which has been retained by their employers. This rate tends to be the same as the income at which capitalist farmers will commit themselves to farm ownership, that is when they will make the average rate of profit (Guille 1989: 270). This analysis points out that to outcompete capitalist farmers as Friedmann claims they do, the farm family must exploit itself. If any form of inequality occurs within the family, one section of it may in fact be exploited by another. One of the problems which simple commodity producers face is that land is not a completely liquid asset and can not necessarily be sold in a downturn (Marsden et al 1986: 509) but this is a problem which capitalists also face. Both groups must make the decision whether to sell their farms while prices are low or wait until prices rise again, by which time they may decide to continue in farming.

Friedmann is not claiming that petty commodity producers will ultimately make a larger profit than capitalist ones as a result of their immediate sacrifice, only that they will produce even though prices have dropped. There is evidence, which Friedmann herself refers to, that the scale of production required to make a sufficient income is progressively forcing simple commodity producers out of farming, for example Goss et al (1980) in the United States of America or Marsden et al (1986) in Britain. Friedmann agrees that appropriate technical means of production are a necessary element in the reproduction of simple commodity producers (Friedmann 1978a: 95). However changing technology or policies on subsidies cannot challenge her conceptualisation of simple commodity producers on its own terms because it does not depend on the reproduction of particular individuals, only the continued existence of some simple commodity producers alongside capitalist farmers. Since her conceptualisation does not specify any point at which simple commodity producers could be considered to have been replaced, her theory can best be challenged in terms of its definitions, that is by looking at internal relationships themselves. These may contribute to the breakdown of simple commodity reproduction, or at least influence its method of reproduction, just as the offspring of French artisanal bakers did (Bertaux and Bertaux-Wiame 1981).

Once the means of production have been renewed by the simple commodity production unit, the remainder is disposed of according to the subjective decision of the family. Friedmann emphasises
that there is no class based exploitation within the simple commodity production family. However with the advent of feminist critiques of class relationships as they are applied to women, she admits that in fact equal distribution within the family is problematic and in a recent article (1986a) suggests that stratification may exist within families.

In order to further theorise about family relationships Friedmann turns to the domestic labour debate and discussions of women's role within the family unit of production. The same arguments apply to other family members, but there has been less specific research into their contribution. Friedmann identifies two types of gender and age stratification within simple commodity production families, relating to their nature as both capitalists and labourers. The first concerns inheritance, the second concerns the division of domestic and farm work.

Induction of farming into commodity production may initially increase patriarchal dominance, where the men take control of production for the market and the women become increasingly marginalised within domestic production. Money received from wage work may also remain under the control of the male household head. This process has occurred in family farming as areas of commodity production which were traditionally carried out by women, such as butter making or keeping poultry, have been taken over by agribusiness. However considerable amounts of work which contribute directly to farm production are still carried out by farm wives. Often this work is strategically important, for instance seasonal tasks, running errands, doing accounts. The same applies to children, who will contribute more labour to the farm when the unit is under stress.

The farm may also provide an apprenticeship for children who are to inherit. Friedmann points out the ways in which ownership of property both strengthens and weakens family relationships. Both wives and children are tied to working on the farm under the control of the farmer, because it is the source of their present and future income. Friedmann cites studies which show that divorce is discouraged and that farm owners use "threats, gifts, exhortations and deathbed promises" to keep their children on the farm. Heirs "give meaning to lives devoted to the family enterprise" (Friedmann 1986a: 53). More to the point, if family members withdraw their labour the whole enterprise may collapse.

As well as making the family more dependent on each other, commodity production also involves pressures on the continuity of the enterprise. The individualism essential to capitalism acts against the coherence of the family unit, the issue of devolution of control to adult offspring may add to the pressures on family relationships. Increases in the value of land may prevent the preservation of the unit if inheritance between children is to be equal. Increasing difficulties in passing on a viable unit promote conflicts of interest among family members. Friedmann stresses the ideological appeal of both family and property. They are the only institutions which in the experience of farm people give "concrete expression to desires for independence and for social relations based on generosity and
respect. ... A dream of non-alienated work underlies the appeal of individual property," (Friedmann 1986a: 55). But she must also admit that property ownership and patriarchy contradict the egalitarian possibilities of self-employment. Friedmann falls short of saying that this differentiation in control is class based exploitation, but Goodman and Redclift are moving further in this direction.

The farm families' sentiments are ideological in the sense that ideology "refers to a limited material practice which generates ideas that misrepresent social contradictions in the interest of the ruling class" (Larrain 1983: 27). Production by individual families is still alienated labour, and is little more oriented to social goals than individual wage labour, for instance farm employees may be heavily exploited. Others are moving towards a class analysis of the family. Bernstein reports that "Gibbon and Neocosmos [178, 202-3] suggest that the class places of capital and labour might be distributed differentially among social categories within PCP [petty commodity production] households. (Bernstein 1988: 266). Without explicitly agreeing himself that exploitation of surplus-value may occur within the family Bernstein suggests this is an area to research in view of materialist feminist critiques of the household.

Presentation of farm workers as members of farm owning families, who will take less pay because of their future prospects, could itself influence the position of wage workers. Once the lack of class differences within the family is called into question the basis for the reproduction of the class is also: self-exploitation by family members becomes contingent and Carter (1979) demonstrates how a class of simple commodity type producers almost disappeared as the coming generation refused to accept the cost of maintaining leasehold control of land. Differences between farm employees and family members working on the home farm or elsewhere also dissolve.

2.5 CONCLUSION

The two sets of theories which I have discussed in detail suggest slightly different approaches to researching the position of farm employees. Those which question the specificity of family owned and run farms, imply that differentiation will occur within families as well as between them, as the pressures on small farms increase. There is no necessary class distinction between farmers' offspring and others because of the possibility of exploitation within families. All bases for differentiation are of interest to this group, though there is an expectation that even though interest in ownership or other attitudes might appear to be related to change, the underlying cause would be related to access to material resources. A high level of class mobility would support this approach.

On the other hand, differentiating between families who own and run farms with limited wage labour and capitalist farm owners does not authorise differentiating the two in terms of attitudes either. The theoretical difference between the two is in the pool of cheap labour within the family, which is said to
be free of class relations. Within the family the division of both labour and rewards must be negotiated, and many of the elements of that negotiation are similar to those experienced by capitalists and wage workers, given that wage work provides an alternative for the family against which to measure the simple commodity production unit. However the suggestion that farmers' offspring are members of a different class from other employees, regardless of who they are working for, does promote a focus on issues related to the family, both on the requirements which the family makes of its members and the rewards with which it provides them.

This research investigates class relationships in farming, but focuses on the issue of the implications of working in a sector of production in which the nature of the productive units and the class position of farm employees may vary. The discussion in this chapter acts as a background to the findings rather than setting up a hypothesis or series of hypotheses to test. In this it favours the first approach, which takes each farm employee or farm owning family as facing particular problems in maintaining or improving their material position; without claiming that members of farm owners' families are not exploited but other farm employees are.

Those who are involved in agricultural production themselves will make distinctions which may differ from those of Friedmann or other theorists. They are a legitimate focus for research into ideology within the farming community. Attitudes become important, because they can influence behaviour in ways which benefit farm owners to the detriment of others such as farm workers. The ideology of class mobility for the motivated employee may keep people in farming even though their current position is poor and their future not much better. Although I am interested in the collective ideology and activities of farm owners, for example lobbying government, in this thesis I am looking at the effect of this, in areas such as wages, which are a constraint on employees' mobility, rather than the process of achieving hegemony. I am particularly interested in the effect of ideologies on farm employees themselves in terms of actual activity. For instance whether farm employees identify with union activity, which could help them in the short term, but which may not be in some of their long term interests as farm owners.

My purpose is to find out more about a group of people who have been the subject of some research, but are more often studied in relation to other interest groups than for themselves. My thesis is concerned with documenting a historical situation and will reflect on theory rather than attempt to reformulate it. Because of this my focus is broad ranging. It is likely that farm employees are divided at a basic level according to their differing economic prospects, which I suspect are related to class position. This is the situation I would like to document. I will explore people's socio-economic background, and whether this influences their choice of career and the subsequent progress of this career. I am interested in people's attitudes to their work and the options that they see as open to them, and whether background influences aspirations as well as success. If they have theoretical
importance, it is in the interaction between material position and expectations. I will also explore the contribution of family help or inheritance to class mobility for those wishing to become owners, and the effect of their initial position on their progress as farmers.

Because I am interested in a broad survey of the differences between farm employees, and wish to focus on them rather than owners I have sacrificed some of the detailed information which is required to look into all issues in depth. I have focused on individuals rather than families, which limits the extent to which I can learn about the ability of whole households to reproduce themselves. I also opted for a relatively brief mail questionnaire as a way of reaching enough people to explore the variety of career paths experienced by farm employees, rather than collecting more detailed and accurate information from fewer people. Despite these weaknesses I will discuss a number of important issues in the following chapters, before returning to theoretical issues in the conclusion. I may not be able to differentiate between various approaches on the basis of empirical evidence, but this in itself may provide a valuable commentary on the nature of the theories themselves. If the class relationships of farm owners and their families prove to be a paradox which cannot be solved as yet, at least the tension between competing explanations has proved an impetus to further research.

My first concern will be to review what has been written about farm employees in New Zealand, in the light of the issues brought up in this chapter. This provides both a historical background for my survey data and looks at issues which the survey does not cover such as the contribution to farm work made by the owner's family. It also looks at the area of class relationships on the farm and state involvement in and management of class conflict, which I have spent little time on in this chapter, in more detail.
CHAPTER THREE

THE NEW ZEALAND LITERATURE ON FARM EMPLOYMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Although there has been little sociological investigation of farm employees, and certainly nothing which approaches a definitive analysis of their situation, the persistent researcher will find numerous references to farm workers, particularly in journal articles and unpublished theses. If these do not provide a coherent view of farm employment, they do give some historical background to the present situation and, coupled with census material, an idea as to how hypotheses formulated from international literature might be related to empirical research. The material tends to be divided into overtly theoretical analyses of the rural class situation, and empirical investigations of contemporary problems which (with few exceptions) make no reference to such a concept as the social relations of production. Generally their theoretical underpinnings must be deduced after the fact, and turn out to be grounded in economic theory rather than more sociological concerns.

Contemporary discussions about the nature of farm employment and the variety of relations of production within the farm sector suggest that there are two important issues to consider in any investigation of rural class structure. The first is "Which classes are involved in production?" followed by "What are the relationships between these classes?" In New Zealand, capitalist farming was established by white settlers early in the nineteenth century, and rapidly came to dominate the economy. Small farms worked by members of the owner's family were also established, and grew steadily in importance, but less spectacularly. The nature of the relationship between capitalist farmers, their employees, and petty bourgeois farmers has involved competition for land, credit, markets, and manpower; competition between different classes of farm owners, as well as the straight class exploitation of employees by employers. I am now looking at whether there are differing class interests between employees as well. I am interested in any discussion of the relationship between employees and either type of farm owner. Without expecting to find material which explicitly discusses differences in class within farm employment as an occupation, I am interested in any references to farm employment which throw light on this issue. Maori farming moved from purely subsistence farming to provision of goods for sale to the settlers soon after contact with them, but because it was carried out without wage labour I will not look at the literature concerning these particular relations of production.
As the balance between those involved in different relations of production has shifted in favour of petty bourgeois farmers, the issue of their relationship to capitalist production has become more important. "Are farmers directly exploited by capitalists in other branches of production, are they forced to exploit themselves to survive?" For a country such as New Zealand, which is dependent on the export earnings of farm products, the possibility that petty bourgeois farmers are exploited by capitalists involved in transporting, processing and marketing farm products or supplying inputs to them should be of central interest. This and a related set of arguments analysing government influence through subsidies and tariffs has only been recently aired in these terms in New Zealand. I am interested in the extent to which the positions of all the classes involved, not just farm employees, are discussed, and whose interests are seen as being of primary importance in such discussions. Much of the literature looks at farm employees in terms of their function for society, at how they can be encouraged to maximise production, although there is an opposing argument which looks at conflict with farm owners. However concern with upward mobility into ownership, both as a means of ensuring a strong involvement with farming by farm employees, and high levels of production from the new owners, has long been of interest.

Another area which is of concern is the relationships within farm owning families. Although this is only addressed indirectly by my research, the extent to which farm owners use family labour has considerable implications for the position of farm employees. I am interested in any information which may have implications for the presence of class relationships within families. Definitions of class involve assumptions about intergenerational mobility and this is a central focus of my thesis. There has been some investigation of the division of labour on farms, but there has been more on class mobility, as researchers have looked at the chances of farmers' offspring and other employees becoming owners, generally with a concern for maximising competence and motivation among farm owners.

The theories discussed in Chapter Two may have long historical antecedents but many of them have achieved widespread discussion within rural sociology much more recently. Since the 1980s, research oriented about theoretical issues rather than more practical problems has become more common. There is a small but growing body of work which explicitly addresses issues such as exploitation of both farm owners and employees. Because the research I will discuss has been produced over an extended period of time, beginning in the 1930s, many of them do not even touch on the full range of issues which I am interested in. However one aspect of farm employment which they do generally refer to is the nature of the class relationship between farmers and their employees. Some look at class relationships between farmers and between farmers and employees through their ability to mobilise political power, and consciousness of their own interests. Others look at the boundaries between classes as well as mobility between them. This discussion of the literature is not intended to be exhaustive, but to cover a range of studies touching on farm employment, giving a
historical background for the thesis and demonstrating how each study has contributed to its formulation.

Because of the limitations to the theoretical analyses associated with the New Zealand literature on farm employees, I have chosen to organise it by subject heading and chronologically, by the period discussed, rather than by attempting to address the theoretical approaches of the previous chapter directly. The bulk of this chapter will consist of a review of the literature on farm employees, which will briefly cover: the history of farm employment, class relationships, the role of farm workers in the economy, farmer-employee relationships on the farm, the position of the farmer's family and class mobility for the farmer's family. This will be followed by a discussion of the extent to which the issues raised in the previous chapter have been addressed in the local literature.

3.2 BACKGROUND TO THE PRESENT SITUATION

Analyses of farming in New Zealand tend to divide it into two eras. The first period saw the establishment of farming and rapid change as the organisation of production developed. It is often seen as lasting up until the early twentieth century when dairying became well established. The period since is one in which change occurs, sometimes quite rapidly, but within the bounds of New Zealand's established organisation of production: the family farm. (Small scale capitalistic production by petty bourgeois farmers most of whom employ no non-family wage workers.) The first period has been the subject of a number of historical studies, and the differing class interests of large and small farmers and wage workers are well documented.

Fairweather (1982) traced changes in employment as the capital intensity of farming responded to changes in profitability. Early large scale landowners employed few people, but as the profitability of wool and sheep as breeding stock declined in the 1860s, production methods intensified. Workforces on big farms increased, some would have 20 employees or more. Wages were relatively high, to attract labour away from small farming.

Considerable mobility occurred between wage labour and small farming. However as the profitability of large agricultural and pastoral farms dropped in the 1880s, the big estates were sold up or reduced in size and the resulting capital gains invested away from farming. The new conditions favoured the more intensively farmed smallholding and merchants and bankers reoriented their policies accordingly. Availability of credit set up the pattern of debt and development which still motivates production increases today. "The greatest incentive to increased production is to be young, active, and with a big mortgage round your neck" (Philpott 1976: 10).
Fairweather documented the role of the state in facilitating the change in national role for small farming. Although originally a strong supporter of pastoral farming, the state was also interested in maximising revenue from taxes and land sales. To do this, new settlement had to be maximised. Measures were brought in to encourage the break-up of large estates, such as increased taxation on large estates and the provision of funds for purchase and resettlement of developed land. The Department of Agriculture was set up in 1892 and the Advances to Settlers Act passed in 1894, both with the intent of helping small scale farmers and laying the foundation for assistance which has continued into the 1980s (Fairweather 1982: 155-161).

The wage labour force remained quite large, but outnumbered by petty bourgeois farmers. Mobility between classes may have contributed to difficulties in mobilising farm employees in unions. Martin (1983b) emphasised the high social mobility which lay behind the apparent stability of the aggregate numbers of farm employees and farmers between 1874 and 1911 and Doig (1940) also documented high mobility into dairy farm ownership from a variety of occupations. Although farm employees may have been moving up to farm ownership, it is likely a considerable number of farm owners failed and returned to the working class.

Farming was generally considered to have moved into a new phase after the break up of the large estates and the establishment of dairying. This second period, dominated by owner occupiers, has been characterised as one where those involved in farming had strong interests in common because of the possibility for mobility into ownership (Dunstall 1981). This mobility legitimated the differences between the returns to farm owners and employees, and also those between smaller and larger farmers. However the strength of feeling behind statements such as Lloyd's "New Zealand's agricultural development has taken place within a 'one man one farm' philosophical context" (Lloyd 1974: 10) may have contributed to a glossing over of the importance of wage workers to the system.

By 1921 the number of holdings stabilised, and the relative proportions of dairy and other pastoral farming also became more settled. They fluctuated with changing markets, but the most dramatic change did not come until the 1960s, with the move to whole milk production and loss of viability for small dairy farms. The latest changes involve diversification including the increase in horticultural and other small blocks. Many women are employed in horticulture.

During most of this century the proportion of wage workers to other farm people remained just below one third (a higher proportion than in Friedmann's Cass County example). Unpaid family labour was still very important until World War One, providing nearly one fifth of the numbers involved in farming, but then tailed off, only re-emerging in greater numbers in the 1980s (the proportion had dropped below that reported by Friedmann (1978a) in Cass County by the end of World War One). In 1911 dairying, with its lesser dependence on wage labour, was expanding rapidly but the total percentages of wage
workers to other members of the farm workforce has not changed a great deal since then, and in fact the overall numbers involved in farming have been relatively stable (Tipples 1987: 5-6). Over this whole period, the proportion of women in farming has been relatively small. The proportion involved as "relatives assisting" has grown steadily throughout this century until they make up about 80% of people in this category. There has been a slight increase in the proportion of wage workers who are women, to about a third of all wage workers, but the increase in the proportion of women owners is much less. This began later, in the 1960s, and is related to tax advantages accruing to farms run as partnerships. [The position of women is a thesis topic in itself, which I am unable to investigate in more detail because of the methodology I have chosen.]

A common theme in writing on farming has been that mobility has been possible in the past - but we must be aware of current trends which will reduce it. Evidence on actual rates has been anecdotal. There has been a tendency for the situation of the farm employee to be defined by the farmer. Other groups in New Zealand, including sociologists have rarely challenged this. There has been as much study of the social relations of production in the first decades of settlement as there has been of more recent times. Farming families and farm workers tend to have been looked at in isolation from each other. There are exceptions to this rule of course, particularly because of the dramatic events of the 1930s depression. Massive interference in agriculture made it impossible to ignore the role of the state in rural industrial relations. Sir William Dunlop (quoted in Gill 1979: 10) talked of "the long history of harmonious personal relations" in farming, but the extent to which this view, beloved of Federated Farmers, was constructed and imposed by powerful farming interests rather than "natural" must be challenged. Recent interest in farm unionisation has also focused attention on different interests within farming.

Class mobility itself may not be an issue for working people if they can fulfil their goals while remaining in the same class. They may change jobs in search of greater job satisfaction, more money, or security, and achieve their goals without joining the bourgeoisie. Farming is unusual, in that class mobility may be directly involved because of the lack of career prospects for employees. Although farm incomes have dropped recently, ownership has provided unusually high returns in New Zealand, for most of this century they have been consistently above those of the majority (Ross 1987: 10-3). Data on the amount left in a sample of estates from 1984-85 showed farm owners had amassed property which was only equalled by that of high earning professionals such as doctors and lawyers (Crothers 1988). There are other advantages to farm ownership. Self-employment provides a sense of independence and the ability to make decisions, which although bounded by economic rationality, are still often made by the farmer alone.

A study of work satisfaction carried out by a psychologist found that farmers had higher levels of job satisfaction than farm workers in a number of areas. Most were those that 'common sense' would
predict, with farm owners having a wider variety of tasks and more personal autonomy, although there were a few areas such as income, where some farmers have lower satisfaction than employees (Clark 1979: 78). Inkson surveyed members of four occupational groups which have similar skill levels and status to farm employment: freezing workers, assemblers, watersiders and carpenters. He found job satisfaction to be relatively low in these groups, with little enthusiasm for promotion through present employment (Inkson 1977, 1979). However many workers had a strong interest in owning a small business and had already done so either full or part-time. Given that farm work seems to provide a fairly strong level of satisfaction (Clark 1979), the incentive to improve financial position through ownership rather than seeking an alternative occupation must be increased.

Previous studies which have collected information on the range of occupations experienced by all those who had ever been farm workers suggest that they go into a limited range of occupations. Out of the occupations given by a group of Canterbury farm workers leaving farm work, only a quarter were able to use farm skills and few left the working class. Some went to skilled trades, 18%, a few to low status white collar work, most to semi-skilled or unskilled work (Cant 1967: 45). These people may have experienced upward mobility later in life but occupational mobility out of these types of jobs is likely to be limited. On the positive side, many children from rural areas have knowledge and skills which can be easily converted into a paid farm job. On the negative side, they may have less knowledge of urban labour markets and fewer formal qualifications (Baldock 1971b). If some people are known to be successful in buying a farm without or with little family help, others will be encouraged to try. During previous years, sharemilking has provided excellent opportunities for increasing capital and farm ownership (Moran 1985). The tendency for farm employment to be temporary, as workers either become owners or leave for better pay elsewhere, probably discourages unionisation.

3.3 FARM EMPLOYEES AND TRADE UNIONS

Because of New Zealand's dependence on farming, a significant proportion of which is carried out by wage labourers, the relationship between farmers and their employees has had considerable attention from government over the years. Farmers have been able to present a picture of this relationship as being of a different quality from those of other employers and employees. The most thorough presentation of this attitude and the implications it had for farm employees themselves is Thompson's (1967) study "The Canterbury Farm Labourers' Dispute 1907-1908" but the problem has been revisited by Martin (1984) and Tipple's (1987).

When the Canterbury branch of the Farm Labourers' Union (FLU) applied to the Arbitration Court to have their wages and conditions regulated in 1906, in order to bring the worst conditions up to those of the better employers, farmers campaigned vigorously and successfully for farm work to remain free of regulation. The case extended for over a year, exhausting union resources. In the end, the
farmers' argument that the national interest was served by flexible wages and conditions and that regulation was unenforceable anyway prevailed. Although some groups did get an award, notably shearsers, the political scene was never again so favourable to general farm labourers. Canterbury FLU remained the strongest of the general farm unions, but its membership became smaller and more scattered as mechanisation increased, thus breaking up the large teams of workers employed on sheep and mixed farms.

Unsuccessful applications to have farm wages regulated were made to the Arbitration Court in 1919 and 1925 and in 1933 Belshaw discussed the effect this had on farm workers. He considered that because of the lowness of farm wages farm work would only be taken on for work experience, or because nothing else offered. There was no "hereditary class of farm labourers" (Belshaw 1933: 26). Nevertheless sheep farming had 131 wage workers to every 100 employers, self employed and family workers. Only the low numbers of wage workers in dairying brought the total proportion down to 84 wage workers to every 100 others. He noted the changes mechanization had made and the move to employ more single workers and casual labour. (As has virtually every commentator since.) He also looked at the factors which militated against union strength: a scattered workforce and powerful opposing interests led to an appearance of agreement within the industry.

During the depression, wages for non-unionised farm labour dropped more than some other wages even although they had been very low in the first place, as Ritches (1937) noted. He discussed the activities of the Labour government on behalf of the farming industry during the latter part of the 1930s depression. Because they did so much for farmers, revaluing mortgages, postponing interest repayments and preventing foreclosures, they took on the responsibility of ensuring some of these benefits were passed on to the farm worker. Hours were not regulated, but minimum wages were set, at higher rates than previous average rates. Dairying was regulated first, then other sectors.

Once in place, the awards set up by the 1936 Agricultural Workers Act were allowed to quietly vegetate (Gill 1979). The Farms and Stations order did not change from 1959 until 1975, the Dairy Farms one from 1960 until 1975. Wages drifted above the award rate, but varied considerably. The usual way to achieve a higher rate of pay was to move to a new farm. In 1973 the Labour government disrupted this situation by attempting to include farming in the general industrial relations legislation. This evoked strong protest, not only from Federated Farmers of New Zealand Inc (Federated Farmers) but from a group of farm workers who formed themselves into the Farm Workers' Association (FWA). The arguments used against the formation of compulsory unionism followed those of 1908 - that by its nature farm work was not able to be regulated, and to impose the conditions of other industries on it would cause untenable costs to New Zealand's vital but beleaguered primary production. A strong emphasis on the rugged individualism of farm workers was also added. In the face of such strong opposition from the people it expected to benefit, Labour dropped the legislation.
Gill, commenting on the affair for the New Zealand Journal of Industrial Relations (1979), wrote that the Farm Workers Association received strong moral and perhaps financial aid from both farmers and the National Party. The ambiguity of the position of the FWA is paralleled by the ambiguity of the farm worker, "neither truly aligned with the employer class nor the employee class" (Tipples 1987: 39). The gradual deterioration of the Association after the battle of 1975 reflected the lack of real support for a union. An attempt to make farm employees automatic members, with an option to leave if desired, was short-circuited by the prohibition of all compulsory unionism by the Industrial Relations Amendment Act 1983. Shortly after, the Association collapsed completely (Tipples 1987: 49).

Gill's interest in the rural scene culminated in a comparison between the history of shearsers' and general farm workers' unions in Australia and New Zealand. He considered the forces maintaining the current situation were both political and social. New Zealand shearsers gained their first award from the arbitration court in 1902 and have been fully represented by the New Zealand Workers' Union since 1916. This was in strong contrast to the history of other farm workers and Gill suggests that this is because disputes in shearing can and have been settled through militant collective action. The nature of shearing allows it to be regulated relatively easily, and the respective parties identify disputes as being inherent in the structure of their industry and not individual problems. However Gill's approach differed from those of most other analysts at this time in that it was much more analytical in its approach to the structure of farming. Farm owners have maintained such tight control over the situation (through prevention of regulation) that farm work has remained undesirable as a long term career, without any challenge to the situation beyond suggestions for minor improvements. The state has filled the gap between savings and farm prices through the Rural Banking and Finance Corporation and other schemes. The predominant approach had been oriented around individual problems rather than taking a holistic approach to class relationships in the industry.

3.4 THE MANPOWER MANAGEMENT APPROACH TO FARM EMPLOYMENT

After the 1930s depression, the issue of farm work and wages receded from the attention of social commentators and researchers until the 1950s. Farm workers were occasionally discussed in farming journals during the 1950s. The New Zealand Farmer kept up its perennial discussions of farmer-farm employee relationships and conditions of work and a commerce thesis looked at the conditions of farm labour. Freitag (1952) detailed many of the propositions put forward about farm labour both before her work and since. She noted the disadvantages of farm work: its long unregulated hours; low cash wages; free but possibly poor housing; lack of all year round work; isolation; exclusion from the arbitration system; and problems in moving into ownership. Farm workers wages were shown to have risen less than personal farm income (Freitag 1952: 125) during the thirties and forties and there was a tendency to hire young workers and discharge them when the need to pay them more arose. Freitag
considered that farm employees stayed on because they were committed to the "way of life". "He sees the crops and livestock grow and develop and understands what may be done without calculating the hours involved." (Freitag 1952: 139). Because of this, she saw regulation as neither necessary, nor, in the tradition of 1908, did she see it as desirable.

In the 1960s, interest moved into a new phase. It came to be widely accepted that there was a shortage of farm workers, particularly of skilled workers, and the debate moved beyond the confines of farming journals and conferences. In 1966 the first of several studies of the extent and causes of workers leaving their jobs, or leaving farming was published. The first studies approached farmers for their perceptions of their needs and tended to look at the problems of farm workers through secondary data for instance comparison of wage rates in similar occupations.

Cant and Morris (1966) found that overall, Cheviot County could have employed another 9% above the then current numbers of farm employees. They suggested wages and conditions were generally better than people realised and that the real problems were in working conditions, interpersonal relations, opportunities for long term financial advancement and long term financial security. Farm employees' problems are "industrial relations matters" and their interests are presented as being separate from those of farmers.

In 1967 Cant went to considerable trouble to trace employees who had left farming altogether (through the electoral rolls) and ask them why they had done so. The respondents gave similar reasons to those which had been suggested in previous studies (these options plus the chance to add any others were given to them in the questionnaire). Cant noted there were discrepancies in wage rates between farms and that farm employees were often not aware of better opportunities within farming when they left. He blamed a small number of farmers for a high proportion of turnover. His conclusion was more positive than Frietag's:

> that the farming industry must take more positive steps to compensate for the social and economic disadvantages of farm employment and give serious consideration to proposals designed to bring terms of employment for farm employees into line with those available to urban workers. Of all such proposals the one most likely to have immediate results is the introduction of overtime payments.

(Cant 1967: 47)

The manpower study to end all manpower studies was carried out by Lloyd (1974). His approach was to collate all the existing sources of information plus additional information from selected expert sources. He detailed national trends in farm size and social organisation using census data. Lloyd was interested in all farm labour, owners and unpaid family members as well as wage labour. His conclusion was that there may be a shortage of farm labour sufficient to affect production, and that the trend was to employ more family labour or change to less intensive farming systems - for example beef. Increases in permanent employment were not likely without a sustained rise in returns to farming. The
majority of farmers paid reasonable wages, offered reasonable conditions, and maintained good personal relationships, but he found that standards varied widely and some were not acceptable. His solutions did not address structural problems for farm employees so much as suggest some compensations for them.

Lloyd's emphasis was less on an agricultural working class as such than on the farming family. He suggested research into ways of recruiting a higher proportion of offspring of farmers, the expectations of people entering farming, and whether sufficient training and incentives are provided for them. His solutions to the problem were to adjust to using less labour, to use more casual labour, or to improve “man management” techniques. Many problems revolved around isolation and were seen as common to both owners and employees. However there is little discussion of the different ability of farm-owning families and farm employees and their families to cope with these problems.

If Lloyd's report summarised the studies which had preceded it, his conclusions have often set the parameters for the studies which have come after. In 1978 high mobility of labour in isolated areas could still be a problem, (Beattie 1978) but now reduction in productivity through inability to pay extra labour has become the more prominent theme.

In 1979 Lloyd's interest in the whole workforce seems to have borne fruit, and there was a return to research on the farmer and the farm family similar to that of Doig's early study. While P F Kaplan, an American rural sociologist, was at Massey University a survey of the effects of social factors on productivity was commissioned by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. Although not designed to exploit this fact, the survey was virtually a community study as it included nearly all the adults living in an isolated valley in the Wanganui area. The logic behind the study is set out in the combined introduction and summary.

The terms of trade then set the stage for population decline and then population decline and declining rural services form a deteriorating spiral or “whirlpool effect”. ... The majority of all categories of our respondents have a pessimistic short-term outlook for sheep-beef farming in the hill-country. With this model it becomes possible to understand why production is not increasing and why many farmers are not maximizing the potential of their farms.

(Kaplan [1978?]: 3)

The terms of trade relate directly to the ability of the farmer to pay for extra labour, and to the incentives for the farm employee to stay on the farm. Owning their own home, educating their children, or living where their wives and children could get work were found to be crucial in pushing the older farm worker to leave. These were all related to income in some way. Internal factors were also important to the farm's productivity. The age of the farmer was important. Local people felt that the a young man should take over the financial management of the farm at about 25 years, also the average age of
marriage. This allowed the farmer the maximum time in control before his productivity declined in his forties.

A great deal of information was gathered. It related the ways that personal factors such as age, health, or the demands of the family interact with perceptions of the best return for effort and produce a particular level of productivity from the farm. It is unfortunate that Kaplan does not refer back to general theories about class structure in his conclusion.

The social organisation of production received some attention - about 25% of farms were worked by the owner occupier only, almost half had one worker and the rest had two or more workers. Contractors were employed regularly for seasonal tasks. Many farmers found labour too expensive or could not retain good employees. Farm employees themselves reported few problems with their present jobs, but there was evidence that they were changing jobs quite often, bearing out Gill's (1981) analysis. The amount of work done by wives varied, but followed a strict division of labour between women's and men's work except for seasonal help. Unfortunately this was not related to the number of other workers on the farm. Relationships between farmers and employees and their wives received some attention also. A degree of social distance between them was reported. Among owners there had been little mobility into ownership from non-farm families, only 20%, and there was little expectation that current employees could become owners unless they had family help.

The first survey concerned solely with farm employees was carried out by the Lincoln College Agricultural Economics Research Unit (Harris 1980). Although this was a new approach for the unit, the rationale behind the study was not new. It attempts to find out how turnover among farm employees can be reduced. Lloyd's conceptual framework for looking at problems causing mobility was used - problems are divided into those over which the farmer has control, those over which he has some control and those over which he has little or none.

The survey was large and the response rate was very good at 74.5%. Unfortunately Harris does not discuss the major bias in his survey, which only includes members of the Farm Workers' Association. Since this organisation came into being under the auspices of Federated Farmers to avoid unionisation under general industrial relations legislation as was intended by the Labour government in 1973, this should have been discussed. Little attempt was made to compare the sample with the characteristics of the whole population of farm workers. Nor is there much discussion of the range of characteristics of workers within the sample, as most of the summary tables give the mean value for the sample without the range or standard deviation.

Nevertheless this study is a key source of information about New Zealand farm employees. The sample is divided into managers and general workers. As in Kaplan's study, managers were generally
older than other workers, had spent longer in farming, were more likely to be married and own property, and more likely to live on the farm. It was also more likely for their wives' to work on the farm as well. Managers were better paid than other workers and received other remuneration in cash and kind more often. Although farm employees were uniformly satisfied with the nature of their jobs, managers were more so than other workers. Not surprisingly they also differed in their main goals in life. Managers were less likely to want their own farm and more interested in home ownership and pensions. With regard to farm workers Harris concluded that there were two main groups: those under thirty years old and single, and those who were older and married with children (Harris 1980: 27). Harris's report does not allow this comparison to be made for individual issues, but possibly the older general farm worker has more in common with the manager, having, as Kaplan suggested, come to terms with the fact that they would never own a farm, and being more concerned with getting an acceptable lifestyle from their present job (Kaplan [1978?]: 58).

Harris went to considerable trouble to assess the effect of "perks" on total income and concluded, like Lloyd, that the return to farm employees was comparable to similar occupations or even better, but that hours were longer (he assumes they work a forty-five hour week) and living costs were higher (Harris 1980: 46-49). His conclusion was that wages were not a major cause of employees leaving, but that higher wages might compensate for some of the drawbacks of farm work such as isolation and high travel costs. This could be combined with some sort of promotion structure and easier access to loans for "stepping stone" properties (small uneconomic blocks which could be sold and a larger block bought). Another area which could be improved was social and working relationships between farmers and employees and their respective families. All in all, Harris's findings were very similar to those of Kaplan and of previous studies.

1983 saw a new area open up for manpower surveys: the horticultural districts. John Martin's report (1983a) for the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research assessed current recruitment and demand for labour, and the impact horticulture was having on the local community. He then compared potential local sources and future expected needs for labour and found that there would be a considerable shortfall from 1984 onwards. He suggested that growers would have to make more provision for attracting workers into horticulture, such as higher wages, cheap accommodation and transport, and creches. A study by Stokes (1983) found a similar situation, but emphasised the problems and prospects horticulture held out for local Maori people. Neither study challenged the status quo or looked at the way farmers were able to promote their own world view. Low wages were paid to local people who were dependent on the extra income provided by seasonal work and had little alternative employment, and to itinerant workers, regardless of the owners' income. Change was expected if scarcity of labour drove wages up, (at the time wages had been frozen by the state) rather than from the ability of unions to enforce ideals of equity. These studies did not question moves to
relax local building codes for seasonal worker accommodation or speculate on the effect of local rate rises for low income residents.

Martin's work was followed up in 1985 by the Town and Country Planning Directorate of the Ministry of Works and Development. Callister's conclusions are remarkably similar to Martin's: "Future problems have so far been accorded only a low priority in the kiwifruit industry as up until recently market forces have matched supply and demand." (Callister 1985: 56-59). In 1985 there were signs that labour was in short supply, and wages and conditions improved in response. Callister foresaw that this trend, plus better advertising and factors mentioned by Martin such as creches would be necessary to keep up with demand for labour during the next few years, but after that new technology or overseas labour would be needed to solve the problem. The social impact of such technology did not rate a mention however. Horticultural workers do have an award, but their union, the New Zealand Workers' Union, does not seem to have provided a strong alternative viewpoint. These studies are interesting because they depart from the exclusive concern with pastoral farming shown to date but there is a similarity to their suggestions for the future and little analysis of local class structure.

To sum up this section, few of these surveys have been written with more than a passing reference to sociological interests such as class boundaries or class mobility, and although a certain amount of information has accumulated over the years, it is often difficult to compare and can do little more than suggest areas which need further investigation. These surveys demonstrate a focus on production rather than society, the ongoing tendency for the problem of farm work to be defined by others, and the lack of a collective organisation which might be expected to contribute the employees' own viewpoint. Most of the studies discussed so far consider farm employees as working class and comment on the barriers to farm ownership. Given the acceptance in other studies that farm employees are often sons of farmers, biding their time and gaining experience before themselves becoming farmers, there can be no adequate understanding of the position of all farm employees without considering family farming and employment together. I will look at this area next.

3.5 STUDIES OF FARM EMPLOYMENT AND INTERGENERATIONAL FARM TRANSFER

Social geographers provide most of the examples of the alternative position: rather than being working class, with interests in wages and conditions similar to those of other workers, farm workers are farmers at an early stage of their life-cycle. It is interesting to contrast their approach with Gill's (1981) analysis of the relationships between farmers and employees in which employees are treated purely as working class. New Zealand social geographers have been interested in the family farm for a long time and a number of masters theses, papers and journal articles have been produced on farm topics. In particular there has been a series of studies of the effect of social conditions on production, relating to
land use change in Northland. Their principal concern was dairy farming, and the reasons why such a large percentage of dairy farms in Northland had left dairying 1. The most relevant publication in this series is the summary of a survey of owners of 76 dairy farms and 59 former dairy farms (Maunier et al 1985).

The study looked at the ways in which social and economic decisions interconnect, in particular the effect on production decisions of the farm family's life-cycle, the equity cycle (ability of the farmer to mobilise credit), and the off-farm income cycle. In general the topics covered are similar to those of the Kaplan study of Mangamahu and there is some similarity in their findings, although the Northland studies are more focused and the link between productivity and social conditions is better developed. In both Mangamahu and Northland the majority of farm owners were farmers' offspring, and although the exact figures vary in each study, they are in line with most other reports, which give rates above two thirds 2.

Detailed breakdowns of the source of labour on these dairy farms were given according to the age of the owner/operator. Male farm owners provided 53% of the total hours put into the farm but this varied markedly with age - the owner/operator contributed 68% of the total hours if under 35 years of age and 31% if over 55 years. The wives varied from providing 16% of hours while under 35 years, to 8% when over 55 years. During a lifetime the hours contributed by the farmer may remain stable, but productivity declines with age and family and non-family labour becomes increasingly important. Other family labour rose from 2% of hours to 36% and non-family labour from 14% to 26% (Maunier et al 1985: 15).

Despite this confirmation of the need for some wage labour, particularly if family labour was not available, employment of non-family labour was considered to be a disadvantage by respondents and inability to run the farm without family labour was a common cause of ceasing dairy production. This provides confirmation that many farm employees are filling in because family members cannot provide enough work, and also that if outside employees are not a practical option, the farm family will fill the gap as well as possible. Over the period in question, from 1974 to 1981, only 41% of farms had ever hired non-family labour, and many of these had not done so consistently. The average percentage hiring non-family workers for the whole year was 19% (Maunier et al 1985: 20). Over this period the main change in employment was an increase in casual, unmarried wage workers. Although two thirds of respondents felt that their work load was onerous, the sample generally was divided over the advantages and disadvantages of hiring non-family labour. A similar proportion would not employ labour because it was financially impossible or disadvantageous and more comments were made about the problems of finding skilled labour or of having employees living with the family.

1 The number of holdings primarily devoted to dairying had declined from 50% of all holdings in 1949-50 to 22% in 1979, while beef farms had grown from 2% to 26% in the same period (Anderson and Moran 1983: 81)
2 Pearson and Thorns (1983) reported figures from marriage certificates from this century which were comparable for the Johnsonville area, but lower for a different situation such as found in Karori.
The study suggested that because Northland farms tend to have lower than average incomes they were unable to pay for experienced reliable workers and prefer to employ casual or contract labour, or change from dairying. Reluctance to hire labour is not just limited to this area. Increased mechanisation has been a common theme through past studies. Hussey (1970) noted the possibility that farmers as a whole had bought more machinery than could be justified on strict economic terms. Avoidance of supervision of employees may be one of the motives for this. Maunier et al (1985: 61) confirm that farm owners will invest in mechanisation to avoid the additional responsibility of employing someone. This dependence on family labour may also relate to the paternalistic supervision styles identified by Gill (1981).

This study is one of the few which looked at differences between farmers, identifying two main groups who left dairying, those on non-viable farms and those who were debt free and had greater choice over the size and source of their income. I chose to carry out my study in the same area as it allows me to compare the two sets of results. It is particularly interesting because of its study of the labour input into farms but, it said little about class position and prospects of non-farmers' offspring. Intergenerational transfer is noted as an issue which may influence enterprise change, but this study cannot look at the extent to which it was occurring.

Other research carried out in Northland also cast light on the situation of farm employees. A survey of sharemilkers and people employing sharemilkers found that there were consistent differences between the employment of a member of the family as a sharemilk and a non-family member (Gregan and Anderson 1984). The former situation was generally part of a strategy for transferring increasing control, then ownership of the family farm, to the next generation. It generally made little difference to the productivity and management of the farm. A non-family member is taken on for other reasons and has the intention of making as much profit as possible in the short term. This was generally part of a strategy for buying a farm also, but not the one sharemilked on. It was a less secure route to farm ownership and non-family members were slightly more likely to be planning to leave farming.

The role of sharemilking was also emphasised in a study of the relevance of the concept of the "agricultural ladder", whereby people wishing to own farms move through a series of positions with increasing control and asset accumulation (Lowe 1985). This study looked at the effect of a number of background characteristics, and of the current economic situation at the time of purchase, on a group of farm owners in Waipa county. Lowe's conclusion was that the agricultural ladder did exist in New Zealand because of the capital accumulation made possible by sharemilking, even if it no longer existed in the United States where the concept was formulated.
The results showed that there was considerable variation in the job history of farm owners, depending on their family background and personal characteristics, education in particular. Farm owners who inherited farms were likely to have spent considerably more time as general farm employees and less time as sharemilkers than those who bought farms on the open market. Lowe divided his sample by different variables to show the effects of different background characteristics. Farm employees had a variety of work experience and many farmers' sons had worked on several farms or had non-farm jobs. A very short average career path to ownership was shown by those who had School Certificate or a higher qualification (Lowe 1985: 76). The next shortest average career path was shown by those who were brought up on farms other than dairy farms. Position within a farming family made a considerable difference to career path. Small families are an advantage, those with one to three siblings achieved farm ownership earlier and had higher equity at the time of the survey $743,000 compared to $368,000 for those from families with seven to eleven children. Path lengths to ownership varied considerably, between 11.4 years for those who had some family assistance to 17.3 for those who inherited farms.

The study provides excellent data on the effect of various factors on the speed at which prospective farm owners can achieve ownership and on their financial position once on the farm. However the way the sample was drawn prevents Lowe from looking at the characteristics of those who wanted to own but failed to do so. Lowe shows that those with no farm background at all can become farm owners, but they will spend longer in the process. Since it has been shown by Lowe and Kaplan that achieving ownership by an early age has important implications for the financial position of the farmer, most who fail to achieve ownership by a certain age will give up the attempt. Although it was not necessary to investigate unsuccessful farmers as part of this research, I think this is an issue which should be discussed before assessing the openness of the "agricultural ladder" in New Zealand. The effect of Lowe's study was to downplay the differences between classes.

Lowe also divided the sample up by date of purchase and was able to show that there was considerable variation in path lengths and source of finance for farmers who purchased their farms in different years. Those who bought before 1960 spent the shortest time employed before farm purchase, those who bought between 1976 and 1980, when land prices were rising rapidly, the longest. The source of finance varied also as a result of changes in the lending policies of financial institutions, availability of family finance and need for and ability of the prospective purchaser to accumulate his own capital. The major provider of credit in many parts of New Zealand is the Rural Banking and Finance Corporation. It provides finance for a range of operations, including development, and has been particularly important as a source of finance for first farm buyers. In the past they have provided favourable interest rates as part of their policy to help young, competent farmers on to farms. During the period in which the majority of my sample bought farms (until 1984) they provided interest at about one third less than market rates, and also guaranteed mortgages given
to young farmers by other lenders. The Department of Lands and Survey and the Department of Maori Affairs also provided access to farms under conditions which were originally even more favourable (OECD 1987: 163-164). This was one of the forms of assistance given to farmers, although others, like income support, development subsidies, and fertiliser subsidies, were more likely to push up the price of land than help potential farmers. All these forms of subsidy were removed between 1984 and the end of 1985 (Cloke 1989: 36).

If the studies discussed in this section so far concentrate on the farmer's approach to employment, Gill (1981) was looking at the employee's point of view. He built up his analysis of farm employment by contrasting casual employees such as shearers and permanent employees. Shearers have very clear class interests which both sides acknowledge are in conflict with those of farm owners. These conflicts are formally regulated so that a working relationship can be maintained. Permanent farm employment is relatively long term, consists of many tasks and involves a personal relationship with the employer as well as a strictly business one. Gill considered the high rate of mobility of farm workers to be unofficial industrial action. The reasons given for leaving by South Canterbury ex-farm workers refer to industrial relations concerns - wages, working hours and unsatisfactory employers. Gill suggested a series of problems "potentially leads the farm worker from dissatisfaction with one employer to leaving agriculture altogether. Each step of this is associated with an emerging recognition of the structural divisions between farmers and workers." (Gill 1981: 153).

A small exploratory survey by P W Harvey, which Gill quoted, found that farmers tended to be over-paternalistic, particularly where young workers were living with the family. Farmers would force their workers to accept their standards in personal as well as work matters and could sack employees if they would not. Ex-farm workers were more in favour of farm unions than those in current farm employment, and the realisation that farm ownership was impossible created the strongest correlation between pro-union feeling and an understanding that farm workers had an inferior position in rural society.

Gill's analysis of the reasons people leave is more sophisticated than those of the commentators discussed in the manpower planning studies, which tend to look at solutions to the situation at the farm level. Gill's conclusion acknowledged that farmers do face problems themselves as a result of low returns on their labour and capital. In turn they have sought compensation from the state for various costs which they bear through assistance given to other producers. This gave the state a clear interest in holding down the cost of labour in farming, because this would assist farmers without loss to itself or other producers. One justification for assisting farmers has been that it is the equivalent of the subsidisation that went to industry through tariff protection. Though both forms of assistance are now rejected by government, it is possible that farmers will continue to contribute more in terms of labour and capital than other producers. When farming returns are low, land prices plummet and it is difficult to withdraw from farming. As prices rise again, the urge to withdraw recedes. Because of these
difficulties farmers will always be looking for reductions in costs and will encourage the continuation of previous policies with regard to labour.

One area Gill did not consider is the background of rural wage workers, his analysis treats all as working class without access to farm ownership. This is typical of the New Zealand literature, veering from treating farm employees as working class, with restricted mobility between classes, to treating all or the majority of farm employees as farmers' offspring, class mobility being unrestricted. The latter view tends to label problems within the farm workforce as individual or as inherent to farming, not just employees. The two viewpoints seem to be associated with different farming systems: studies of South Island pastoral districts leaning towards the former and studies of North Island dairying districts leaning towards the latter. This differentiation is artificial, as each contains both large and small farms and workers also move between farm types. For instance it is commonly said that dairy farming, particularly sharemilking, provides an entrance to farm ownership and that farmers may transfer to other farm types as their equity rises. A simple division of farm owners by class on the basis of farm type is hardly adequate but the information available through existing empirical research means that a coherent exposition of New Zealand's rural class structure must be provisional.

All these studies have demonstrated the tensions in the relationship between farm owners and employees. Awareness of future prospects is likely to affect the working relationship between owner and employee. Intergenerational transfer of farms is possible, but not all farmers' sons are being settled on farms, let alone daughters. Mobility of people from non-farm backgrounds into ownership is possible, but the extent of failure has not yet been examined. Farmers cannot provide employment for all offspring, often full-time wage work can only be provided for any adult child when the farm owner is reducing his or her input and negotiating the intergenerational transfer of property. On the other hand, some farms can provide work for additional people, but it is clear that there is often a reluctance to employ non-family, both because of the cost and because supervision reduces the degree of autonomy felt by the farm owner. As in Cass County in 1920, on some, although not as many farms, more employment is required than can be provided by farmers and their families (Friedmann 1978a). There is clear evidence of a mixture of class interests among employees and past studies have revealed unequal power relationships between owners and employees, backed up by the state. These differences are downplayed within the industry. Gill (1981) suggests that farm owners can use paternalistic methods of control over employees, effectively treating them as family members and obscuring class interests. Another way of reducing tensions is to cut out wage work and rely on a combination of family labour and contractors. Agricultural statistics suggest that this has been occurring in the 1980s (Department of Statistics 1982, 1987). The nature of the contribution made by farm families has been explored in some studies but more work needs to be done. Lowe's study showed that some owners had got help from family to purchase farms, others had not. He has not related this to the contribution of unpaid labour prior to help being offered. It is a sensitive area.

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existing studies suggest this could be substantial, but there is no agreement on the range of help given.

3.6 THE FAMILY LABOUR CONTRIBUTION

The information about farm families is even more limited than that about other farm employees. The most comprehensive information comes from a large national study of rural women, looking at the work and social lives of farm and non-farm women (Gill et al 1975). Most farm women worked on the farm as well as carrying out housekeeping and child-rearing responsibilities. Most of those working regularly on farms (62%), spent over ten hours a week on the farm on top of other duties. The tasks they undertook varied from stock work to bookkeeping. The position of women on farms has been taken up since, in community studies, studies of the farm workforce, and various seminars on rural problems. But none of these studies have presented as detailed evidence as is available from overseas studies, which suggest farm women are averaging up to 100 hours a week on combined farm and household tasks (Boulding 1980).

The Northland study of dairy farms showed farm wives contributing an average of just over 10 hours per week (Maunier et al 1985: 15). There was some correlation between the work contributed and the amount of control wives had over farm decision-making and farm assets, but there was also some mismatch (Maunier 1984). A small study of Taranaki dairy farms (Willis 1973) found a range of hours worked on the farm, from over twenty-eight hours a week for nearly a third of wives, to less than seven hours. The hours were longer than for the national sample, which included a wider range of farm types. The importance of the work done by wives during the period when the farm was being saved for was also mentioned. Although many were paid, or were in partnerships, not all were. The same applied to children, who also provided a small amount of strategically important assistance. As one respondent said:

I consider the amount of help given by farmer's wives and children grossly and continuously underestimated by both Government and its officials: and urban John Citizen with no personal experience of the 1001 odd jobs every month of the year, many of which a 10 year old farm reared child can do for Dad.

(Willis 1973: 47)

At present there is very little information available on the work done by farm children, even less than that available for farm owners' wives. However the evidence for the workload of farm wives suggests that where incomes are low, unpaid or low paid labour will be contributed by other family members.

The New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings shows very low percentages of women farm owners during this century, about 5%. It also shows very low numbers of unpaid workers, which may be less accurate given the results which came out of surveys of women's work I have just discussed, which find the majority of farm women help on the farm from time to time. The same studies suggested
up to 20% of women may be working off-farm, many in conjunction with work on the farm. The percentage of women owners has increased rapidly in the last 20 years, this is generally attributed to the tax advantages legal partnerships provide as well as changes in women's status.

Being a partner or a wife with legal rights under the Matrimonial Property Act 1963 will not necessarily ensure a just reward for farm wives. Pomeroy looked at the way actual cases have been settled in court and found differential treatment of women still made it very difficult for them to gain control of production (Pomeroy 1988). Pomeroy herself differentiates simple commodity producers, who require the contribution of the family to survive, from capitalist farms which do not, and considers few New Zealand farms fall into the latter category. However whether the contribution of the family is "necessary" or not, it is often available to farm owners. Exploitation of family may take place even if the farm is able to survive without it. The situation outlined by Doig (1940) with women often working long hours in the home and on the farm has not changed as much as many would like. Possible opportunities for off-farm work have increased and many women work off-farm to support family income as well as or instead of working on the farm itself (Moran et al 1989). It is difficult to compare the hours involved from the available samples without reanalysing them, but the evidence suggests that as one task becomes lighter others expand to fill up the week.

Friedmann stated that farm employees were members of two different classes. Farmers' sons were simple commodity producers, non-farmers' sons were proletarians. Although not all farmers' sons could inherit, family help made it possible to put together a deposit for those for whom inheritance was impossible. The situation may have been less open than the New Zealand one, but it has some key points in common with it. In the specific situation Friedmann was discussing, family help was necessary for prospective farm owners, as farm wages were too low to enable anyone to save for a farm deposit, this is true in New Zealand also. On the other hand it is clear that her definition of simple commodity producers required an incentive for the farm family to participate in what may have been a situation of self-exploitation. Although women and children work for the family enterprise they do not have equal control of the resources which are normally owned by the male head of the household. For sons this incentive is reproduction as farm owners. The evidence considered so far suggests that this is occurring in many cases in New Zealand, but there has been little collection of evidence about downward mobility. Downward mobility is a key element in judging the stability of the petty bourgeoisie as a class and the class of non-owning family members.

Very few farmers' offspring work without wages in New Zealand but some do work for low wages or pocket money in return for assistance later. When this assistance is short-circuited by the changing economic fortunes of the family downward mobility becomes inevitable. A lot of downward mobility could bring Friedman's assessment of farmers' sons' class position into question. Evidence so far suggests many farm families are able to keep ownership across generations, but there are also
indications that some farm owners' offspring have not become owners themselves and have settled for farm management (Kaplan [1978?]). Evidence of downward mobility supports the need for further investigation of and theorising of family relationships.

3.7 CONCLUSION

Recent literature has overtly discussed the theories outlined in Chapter Two, but earlier work has had other concerns, and the issues I have been interested in are discussed obliquely or inadequately. The fragmentary snapshots of the social relations of production in New Zealand farming which exist are difficult to compare in any precise way, as Chapter Five will show. But taking them generally, it is possible to build up a picture of a range of class interests involved.

Farm owners in New Zealand, as all farm owners, face problems with the terms of trade for their products. Differing amounts of government subsidy given to participants in the world market exacerbate the problems (OECD 1987). The international circuits of capital favour industrial producers, not producers of raw materials. Within this framework, relationships between classes and fractions of classes are complex and have been interpreted in a variety of ways. Gill (1981) diagnosed farmers as losing out to urban capitalists, but in turn compensated for this by government. Bedggood has made this point also, but emphasises the differences between farm owners. Some have benefited enough to be able to expand and become capitalists, others have been encouraged to produce but their final reward has been forced sale of an unviable farm (Bedggood 1979). Farmers themselves are able to pass on the squeeze to two groups - wage workers and unpaid or underpaid family members. There is clear evidence of the way they have mobilised to preserve a position of control vis-a-vis farm employees. The effects of joint action are enjoyed by a range of farm owners, from large capitalists employing substantial workforces, to those who employ labour occasionally to meet specific needs, including intergenerational transfer. The ability to emphasise the unity of the farming community even although different classes and therefore different interests are involved, has been one of its strengths.

The contribution of family has been assessed in some studies, but none of these have linked the labour contributed to the return received with strong empirical evidence. All studies concerned with the work of women and children on farms seem to question whether the return is adequate, but Pomeroy suggests that exploitation of family members is not necessary to the survival of New Zealand's capitalistic family farms (Pomeroy 1986: 261). However a recent study looking at increasing off-farm work by both husbands and wives has talked about double and triple burdens (Moran et al 1989) and the debate over the nature of family relationships continues.
Virtually all studies of New Zealand farming point to difficulties in the relationship of farm owners and employees and the evidence shows there are a variety of ways in which this inherently conflictual class relationship has been managed. One way was to fight regulation of farm employment and this has been highly successful. There has been a tendency for owners to operate with a continual turnover of young workers because it is hard to keep experienced people in farming under the conditions offered. Mechanisation is popular. Farmers may find employing people a burden, and in spite of the possibility for increased production may avoid it and use family labour, calling on contractors for large seasonal jobs. In the latter case exploitation of wage labour occurs but is managed by someone else (Pomeroy 1986). The success of these strategies has contributed to farm incomes since petty bourgeois farming was established.

Evidence suggests farm wages and conditions have often lagged behind those those of workers in comparable urban occupations. It is harder to assess whether the situation of farm employees in terms of mobility has changed over time as much of the early information on mobility is anecdotal. It seems that some upward mobility has always occurred, but there have been restrictions on it. This has allowed some observers to say it is possible, some it is not, and for concern over reduction in the possibilities for mobility to be endemic. Upward mobility may provide a strong incentive for farm employees to keep on in farming although dissatisfied with other aspects of the work. There is even less information on downward mobility for farm owners' offspring, or for upward and downward mobility among farm owners themselves. Lowe (1985) found that those from larger families (four or more children) seemed to have disadvantages in reproducing themselves as farmers, as their equity was considerably lower than that of people from smaller families.

While there has been much discussion of farm employees and unionisation, it is difficult to know whether farmers' offspring influence collective action. Studies of unionisation have tended to report historical events without assessing the attitudes of individual workers. There are no grounds for rejecting Friedmann's proposition that farmers' sons are of a different class to other farm employees so far, just of the need to be aware of gaps in our understanding of the full situation.

The difference between simple commodity producers and capitalist farmers is the former's ability to fall back on a pool of cheap labour when prices fall. As mechanisation has increased, the labour needs of the simple commodity unit have dropped and the cost of payments for machinery has risen. The proportion of income which farm owners have control over has become lower where money is borrowed for capital investment and more and more income is committed to interest payments. Not all farmers have debts, but this is an important issue in looking at contemporary New Zealand farmers who as a group were paying out between one third and one half of their operating surplus in interest from 1974 to 1986 (OECD 1987). The likelihood of family members staying on the farm, and being available to substitute their labour for other wage labour or contractors during a downturn may have also been
reduced. However it seems to be strategically important tasks which maintain the importance of family labour rather than long hours. Friedmann's analysis seems to remain applicable in that the increase in mechanisation in farming has not eliminated paid and unpaid work on farms by family members.

The situation in New Zealand differs from Friedmann's example in that most family workers now receive a wage. In Cass County in 1920 half the non-owning workforce was family labour and of this half, half was working unpaid on the home farm and half working elsewhere for wages. This has not been the case in New Zealand since some time during World War One. In 1976 only 5% of the non-owning workforce was listed in the census as "unpaid relatives assisting" although many more are paid. In my sample 29% were working for family in 1976. However the proportion of owners, either with or without employees, is similar to that in Friedmann's sample, and has remained remarkably stable, both in numbers and as a proportion of the farm workforce for most of this century. The key difference will be in the degree of downward mobility leading to a loss of return for previous input.
CHAPTER FOUR

STUDYING FARM EMPLOYEES: METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The class structure in New Zealand farming is relatively open and provides an ideal opportunity to study the mechanisms of mobility between working class and petty bourgeoisie, and the implications this has for all those working in the farm sector. Once I had decided to look at farm employment in terms of class mobility, a number of decisions concerning the research design followed on automatically. The information I needed could only be collected from individuals and the success of my research depended on a suitable sampling method. Other problems related to methods of collecting data. Like most researchers working with class mobility I chose to use a structured questionnaire. A mail questionnaire was not ruled out since I would be asking people for information which was often required for official forms such as marriage licences or loan applications and there was unlikely to be any dispute over its meaning. This sort of information is easily conveyed in written form.

I needed a sample which would allow me to look at both upward and downward mobility, and a survey instrument which would look at background in enough detail to fix class location, plus factors such as education, which are commonly held to be related to class location (Nash 1982). I also needed to look at intervening factors such as job history and be able to fix current class status. I was interested in whether aspirations and other attitudes, for instance about unions, were related to both class and material success. The questionnaire was partly ordered chronologically, as although it was a life history, and partly organised around related pieces of information, such as particular types of work. I hoped this would make sense to respondents and help them to think about their lives in terms of the key decisions (and non-decisions) which I was interested in.

I also asked for the respondents' own assessment of farm work and farm life, and the reasons why they had made various key job changes such as leaving farm work, or becoming a farm manager or sharemilker. (See Appendix Two for a copy of the questionnaire.) I had some specific questions to ask, but I also hoped that by collecting "life histories" and using open ended questions I would be able to relate the personal choices and problems of farm workers to the structural constraints in which I was also interested.
The problems I faced in drawing an adequate sample had to be solved before questionnaire design could begin. To address class mobility I needed to contact people who had been farm employees in the past and had become farm owners, and people who had left farming. People who remained farm employees would also provide an interesting comparison between the other more mobile groups. Those who had been farm workers in the past but left are the most difficult to sample (obviously it would be impractical to look in the general non-farm population for such people) but are the key to understanding the position of the whole workforce. Without examining the background attributes and experiences of those who left farming, my information on the farm workforce would be incomplete, as leaving foreshadows the future for many farm workers.

My other problems related to the number of people I wanted to contact and the nature of the information I wanted from them. My intention was to look at the influence of a range of factors on class mobility. I wanted to assess how these factors interacted with each other and, to do this I would need a large sample. I also felt there was a need to do further work using a large sample covering people from different localities and farm types so that there was more chance of integrating the disparate and sometimes conflicting empirical information that already existed.

At the same time limited resources meant personal contact with a large number of people was impossible. I compromised, by sending out a mail questionnaire, which could gather some of the information I needed adequately, but also attempted to approach issues which would have been better discussed in a face to face situation.

The year my survey was carried out was a year of considerable change within farming. The Labour Government elected in 1984 had been moving towards a reduction in state intervention in farming and by 1986 few subsidies remained. Incomes and land prices were low and the number of farmers who could not meet their interest payments was rising (Cloke 1989). It is difficult to know how much effect these conditions had on my survey results. None of the people who responded appeared to have been forced out of farm employment by the changes, but it is possible that such people existed but were not on my mailing list, or did not reply. Many farm owners were in severe financial difficulty. Comments made by those who left suggested some were discouraged from continuing in farming by recent events, but similar comments were made in every year. Farming has experienced many fluctuations in the last two decades, and it may take several years for the effects of the changes in government policy to be fully assessed.

In the following sections I will look at the practical problems I encountered in more detail. In the final section I will look at the implications of the ways I solved these problems in terms of my interest in realist methodology.
4.2 PROBLEMS IN SAMPLE CONSTRUCTION

When I first considered my research design I felt the ideal way to look at the effect of socio-economic background and other variables would be to locate a group of farm employees with varying backgrounds and varying ambitions with regard to farm employment, as they were starting their farming "careers". If I could follow such a group until the majority of them had finished with farm wage labour, either through becoming owners or leaving farming altogether, I would have a detailed understanding of the way background, personal attributes, and aspirations interact within a particular economic structure. Taken with the need to achieve a more broadly based sample but with even fewer resources at my disposal than previous researchers, it was obvious that longitudinal research would not be possible.

However by expanding on a strategy used by Cant (1967) I have been able to solve at least some methodological problems. Cant drew up a list of farm employees from the Selwyn and Ashburton electoral rolls then traced the same people three years later through the next edition of the rolls. He then sent a questionnaire to all those who had left farm work in the intervening period. This method allowed a group of people for whom no other practical contact point existed to be invited to participate in the survey. It has some problems, and it is worthwhile exploring them at some length since the validity of generalisations from the study depends on their significance. It is also a methodology which could be used to solve similar problems in other areas of research. With improved techniques, postal questionnaires are becoming a far more acceptable alternative to face to face interviews where resources are limited (Dillman 1978). However one of the main problems with mail surveys - assembling a mailing list for specific populations still exists. Electoral rolls play a part here.

Many of the benefits of a longitudinal study which re-surveyed respondents at intervals have been replicated by using the electoral rolls to identify people who had been farm employees in the past, then tracing them over time. This ensured that I knew in advance that there would be a sufficient proportion of each of the three groups which I was interested in (those that had left farming, farmhands, farm owners), for statistical comparisons to be made between these groups. I was less certain about the proportion of non-farmers' sons I would find in my sample. After analysing sample sizes for a range of American studies, Sudman (1976) found that the average regional sample with a few or no major subsets had a sample of between 200 and 500, and those with the average number of subsets between 500 and 1,000. The sample size for each study must be assessed on its individual merits but this gave me a rough guide to the sample size required, which I then had to balance against resources available. In the event, the electoral rolls chosen provided a final sample size in the smaller range, but the time involved in increasing that number was impractical.
Life histories of these people were then retrospectivesy reconstructed using a mail questionnaire. The research was originally conceived as a small exploratory study in this area, and carried out on a very small budget. Although the mailing list, with 1012 addresses, was potentially large enough to achieve a final sample size which would allow several variables to be crosstabulated, previous mail surveys carried out in New Zealand had achieved return rates which varied between 20% and 60% (Crothers 1978). However the results seem to have vindicated the methods used as the best available at that time and sufficient data has been collected for some conclusions to be drawn, if suitably qualified.

4.3 CONSTRUCTION OF THE SAMPLE

The sample was drawn from the 1975 Northland electoral rolls using occupation as a guide. A list of names and addresses from the 1975 rolls were then traced in the 1985 rolls where possible. The electoral rolls present a number of problems: not all people are on the rolls at any one time, and the occupation given may not be an accurate description of a person's work for research purposes. Now that the rolls are computerised, up to date lists are always available, but prior to this information from the rolls could be up to three years out of date.

Although electoral rolls have problems, so do alternative sources of contact lists. For example address lists of farmers from dairy companies have been used to study dairy farmers, but the most comprehensive list of farmers, held by the Department of Statistics, is confidential. Piecing together a sample from a variety of sources to cover all types of farmers would be time consuming and ultimately may be little more reliable than using the rolls. There are no comprehensive lists of farm workers at all. Research has been done using Farm Workers' Association membership lists (Harris 1980) but there were difficulties in accepting this as an unbiased sample then, and it would be impossible now with the disbanding of this organisation. Studies of small areas such as the Mangamahu study by Kaplan [1978?] are limited in the extent to which they can be generalised to other areas or farm types. All in all, the method I have used has problems and its lack of generalisability has to be taken into account, but it represented the best method available at the time the survey was carried out.

The 1975 Northland electoral rolls: Hobson, Whangarei, Rodney and Northern Maori, were chosen as the initial source for this study. Northland electoral rolls were selected for three reasons. Firstly they were chosen because a series of studies of the Northland dairy industry had been carried out in the Geography Department of the University of Auckland, particularly Anderson & Moran (1983) Gregan & Anderson (1984) and Maunier et al (1985) and I felt it was important to be able to compare my results with the largest, most up to date body of work on New Zealand farming people available. Their work was concerned with dairy farmers and former dairy farmers who had turned to beef but there is a wider mixture of farm types in Northland which allowed me to obtain people involved with other farm types for
wider comparison. Secondly there were practical reasons for choosing Northland. Its geography means its southernmost electoral boundary with Auckland metropolitan electorates is very short, minimizing major boundary changes over time. Even more important the southernmost boundary of the combined Northland electoral rolls is similar to the local county boundaries so that it will be possible to compare my sample with the whole population of Northland as it is represented in the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings and the Agricultural Statistics (Department of Statistics 1988, 1987). Finally Northland was easily accessible to Auckland for further field work if necessary.

All people whose occupations suggested that they were farm employees were recorded, for example any farm worker, employee, labourer, hand, manager or cadet, plus landgirls and sharemilkers etc; of these, anyone who was involved in pastoral farming, agriculture or orcharding was included. [Shearers are not included in this research because their situation is very different to that of other permanent farm workers (Gill 1981), and they not integral to my research problem.] Nor are contractors included for similar reasons: they are self-employed and their relationship with farmers is quite different from those of wage workers. For the purposes of this thesis sharemilkers will be considered along with waged farm employees, as non-farm owners. Since many respondents have been sharemilkers at one stage of their careers there is no meaningful way of separating them out from other farm workers. Part-time and casual employees are also excluded from the research design both because they could not be contacted through the electoral rolls and because I am presuming that their relationship with the rest of the farm sector is different to that of permanent workers.

The original search resulted in a list of 1403 names, addresses, and occupations. These names were then traced in the Northland electoral rolls for 1985. Each name was traced through each Northland roll. This produced little doubling up of names and it was decided that the study could be continued with a reasonable certainty that a usable mailing list would be produced. The remaining names were then searched for through the rest of the North Island rolls. Although most of the final list of respondents were living in Northland or Auckland, 122 or 12% were scattered over the rest of the North Island, confirming that only a mail questionnaire was practicable for a large rural sample drawn up in this way. The South Island rolls were not searched because of the time involved and the decreasing likelihood of tracing people in rolls that were further away from Northland.

4.4 SAMPLE BIASES

At every stage of the procedure a proportion of the original sample was lost. The Agricultural Statistics for 1975 gave the total of permanent full time workers as 2,358: 1,891 male workers and 467 female workers. Under the terms of the Department of Statistics' questionnaire, contractors should be excluded from these figures. Only 68% of the number of farm employees recorded in the Agricultural Statistics were found in the electoral rolls (Department of Statistics 1976). A count of the number of
farmers recorded gave no evidence that farm employees were listing themselves as farmers to any significant extent. In the event very few of those who returned questionnaires had not been full-time employees or sharemilkers, and many had spent the majority of their careers in farming. It is likely that the missing workers were not on the roll, or were not calling themselves farm workers, or were highly mobile both between farm jobs, and farm jobs and non-farm jobs, or a combination of all these. Many of the missing workers could have been under 18 years old, as most of my respondents started farm work before that age. Census figures show that about 20% of farm employees are under 20 years old (Department of Statistics 1984). Given that this study collects information about their working lives from people with a wide range of ages, this should not create too much of a problem. Those who began and left farm work before the age of 18 years will not be included suggesting that I will underestimate downward mobility. Because I was hypothesising that downward mobility does occur, and that people who wanted to be owners do miss out, the fact that these transient farm employees are not included in my sample, only strengthens my argument.

No attempt has been made to explore the effect of ethnicity on farm employees' careers. The initial search through the Northern Maori electoral roll yielded 107 names, of which 69, or 64% were traced through to 1985. Given that only 3% of the Northern Maori sample had listed themselves as owners in 1985 compared with 32% of the whole sample it was obvious that my method of finding respondents and probably the type of questionnaire I intended to administer was inappropriate for providing comparative data on the basis of ethnicity. Cultural differences and differences in land tenure between Maori and Pakeha farming people suggest that the effect of ethnicity on class mobility in farming should be studied as a separate issue (Stokes 1985).

Another area which could not be investigated using the methods I had chosen was the position of women in farming. The difference between the number of female farm employees located in the rolls and the number in the Agricultural Statistics was immense. In 1975 many women were calling themselves "married" or "spinster" rather than giving other occupations. Many of the women who did send in questionnaires proved to be wives of farm owners or sharemilkers who were drawn into farm work by their husbands. There is no way of distinguishing paid or unpaid family workers from others in the electoral rolls, which are totally inadequate as a way of tracing any of these women. Once located in the 1975 rolls, female workers were almost impossible to trace through the electoral rolls because of surname changes on marriage. There were insufficient resources available to trace these through the Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages. I felt that even if this was possible, the differences in women's job histories would mean that tracing them by an occupation from the electoral rolls, followed by a relatively structured questionnaire, was a less appropriate method of research into their problems. There is far less information available about female farm employees and it would be difficult to design a structured questionnaire to cover a range of varied and possibly unanticipated career patterns.
The results of some of these problems in tracing people are summarised in Table 4.1. The figure for questionnaires returned does not include those which turned out to be from outside the study population.

### TABLE 4.1

EFFECTIVENESS OF TRACING FULL TIME WORKERS THROUGH THE ELECTORAL ROLLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Males N</th>
<th>Males %</th>
<th>Females N</th>
<th>Females %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Statistics 1975</td>
<td>1891</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral Rolls 1975</td>
<td>1293</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral Rolls 1985</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires Returned</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This gives a very poor result in terms of contacting the whole population of Northland farm employees, and in no way can the final sample be compared with the total population as in a simple random sample. However this method is the only practical way of contacting people who were once farm workers and have since left, and provides as good a way as any of contacting both farm owners and farm workers on a large scale. No organisation other than the Department of Statistics has a complete list of farmers, and this is confidential.

Apart from the problems mentioned previously, the biases which are likely to occur in the final sample revolve around the loss of the population which shifts most frequently and over the greatest distance, and of those who were originally involved for a relatively short time or on a part-time basis, possibly with some other occupation being dominant in their working lives. Added to these are the problems of using mail surveys, which tend to show some under-representation of people who are older, less well educated, and from lower income groups (Dillman 1978: 53).

Although major sociological studies tracing people over time carried out in the United States of America have achieved almost complete success, the costs are high as researchers have often had to phone or visit old addresses or possible contacts (Eckland 1968). If 74% were traced from the electoral rolls alone, then additional searches would increase returns in New Zealand also. Livingstone (1981) traced 64% of his sample from lists 20 years old using a variety of methods. Study of the rolls suggested that ten years was the maximum length of time over which a reasonable proportion of the initial sample could be traced through the rolls. It was also a suitable length of time for my purposes in that the original 1975 sample was likely to range from the age of 18 to 60 years and the majority of farmers purchase their first farm in their thirties (Lowe 1985: 51; Kaplan [1978?): 2).
Even the most thorough study could not expect to trace everybody. Using census material on death rates and permanent outmigration I made a rough estimate that about 130 or 9% of my initial sample could have disappeared for these reasons. Even disappearing into a hospital or prison is a possibility. With limited time and resources I did not try to trace respondents through the South Island electoral rolls, although some may have travelled this far afield. The pattern of questionnaires returned confirmed that this was the right decision. The job histories of those who did return questionnaires revealed that some had travelled to the South Island to work, but this was often for relatively short periods. The likelihood of mistaken identity increased with distance and in fact none of the people traced to the Wellington area returned a questionnaire. The returned questionnaires did confirm the usefulness of the electoral roles. Many people did make return contact and of these many respondents had spent long periods of time in farming and were able to provide detailed job histories plus information about both their backgrounds and attitudes.

4.5 BIASES RESULTING FROM USE OF A MAIL SURVEY

Doing a mail survey enabled a far larger sample to be contacted despite limited resources. 469 people returned usable questionnaires 1, enough to examine interactions between three and sometimes four variables. However using a mail questionnaire also caused some problems. A postal questionnaire did not have the same impact as a personal approach and was easier to forget, ignore or postpone. There is a core of about 230 people (16%) who are likely to have received a questionnaire and were eligible to fill it out but failed to answer it. Table 4.2 below gives the final return rates and an approximate rate of return which has been adjusted for those known to have moved during the previous year and those who may have died or emigrated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>MAILED</th>
<th>RETURNED</th>
<th>ADJUSTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARMING</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM EMPLOYEES</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNERS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1011</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Some returned questionnaires which I did not use because they turned out not to have been farm employees in the sense that I required, or had left farming outside the timeframe of the study.
In designing the questionnaire, accompanying letters, and reminder procedures I made considerable use of the approach and formats suggested in Dillman's *Total Design Method* where possible, varying it in places where I felt obliged to save money. He suggests that the adjusted response rate to a survey of the general public, using the methods he recommends, would be 60% to 75% (Dillman 1978: 51). His method includes sending late respondents a third reminder which consists of a registered letter and a third copy of the questionnaire, which is said to increase response rates by a third of the previous response (Dillman 1978: 189). (I sent one reminder two weeks after the initial mailout with a letter similar to the one he suggests for the second reminder, and another reminder with a second questionnaire.) I omitted Dillman's third step because of lack of resources but I feel that otherwise the response rate would have been in line with those of other mail surveys using his full method, and above the minimum return rate of 50% recommended elsewhere (Sudman 1976: 15). In general Dillman's advice worked well in the New Zealand context where I was able to follow it. For instance a test mail out using freepost return envelopes instead of stamps produced a 5% lower response rate.

Return rates varied between the groups as expected. Farm owners, tied down by the heavy financial and emotional investment that farm ownership often entails, tend not to move often. They are probably more likely to be on the electoral rolls in the first place and their questionnaires less likely to be returned "Gone no address" in the second. Electoral rolls do not provide good rural addresses, but those of farm owners are most likely to be identified by New Zealand Post. Those who had left farming proved to be the most difficult group to track down. In a face to face pretest of the questionnaire carried out using Auckland addresses, 10% proved to be people with the same name who had never farmed and another 50% had moved or were not home when I called. Of course it is not just postal questionnaires which experience problems with return rates. Face to face interviews were achieving response rates of about 80% in New Zealand (Crothers 1978: 232), similar to those of Dillman's mail surveys. As methods improve, results for mail surveys are improving at a faster rate than those of face to face interviews, which are becoming increasingly expensive to carry out.

The unreliability of my mailing list makes it difficult to know how many people were actually refusing to fill in the questionnaire. Certainly there were no refusals in the face to face pilot study of those who had left farming and there was a high level of support from those who telephoned or wrote with various queries about it. A few contacted me to say that they did not have time for it: unfortunately I had little choice as to the dates when I sent out the questionnaires and the last ones went out in the middle of calving.

Although a respondent with a good memory whose life history and motives were not too complicated could have filled out the questionnaire in 30 minutes or less, I was aware when I sent it out that some would take longer to fill it in completely. One conscientious woman reported spending an hour and a

59
half on hers. One advantage of a mail questionnaire is that it allows increased accuracy. Others, of course, filled in only a bare outline of their job histories and decision making. This was related to age and familiarity with writing and filling in forms. Farmers provided more detail although their education was not necessarily better than that of other respondents. On the other hand they were more prone to letting their wives, who often did the paper work, fill out the questionnaire. Since these couples were likely to be familiar with each others lives and to have formed their opinions through years of shared experience, I did not see this as a big problem. I felt the questions did not cover issues which were likely to be private or sensitive within the family, which were likely to invoke different replies (such as an evaluation of each others role), or which only the respondent would be able to answer.

The bulk of the questions were identical for each subgroup. Those who had left farming, those who had remained farm employees over the tracing period, and farm workers who had progressed to ownership, were each asked specific questions as well. This did lead to lower response rates to some questions and possibly overall, through people receiving inappropriate questionnaires. In general the response rates to individual questions tended to be lower than those quoted by Dillman, who was achieving under 5% on item non-response (Dillman 1978: 60).

One of the main problems with my questionnaire, is that I did not pilot the mail questionnaire itself, although I had done a pretest using similar questions, which I then adjusted as a result of feedback from this process. Because I was trying to complete an MA thesis at that stage I did not have time for such a test. Dillman advises against using open ended questions and warns that attitudes are the most difficult area to target accurately. I felt that I would be unable to anticipate the full range of responses without such questions and was reluctant to close off potential responses by using check lists. Experience confirmed that Dillman was correct, my non-response rate was high. However the range of responses I gained was much wider than those given to researchers who had provided check lists. Sometimes substantial numbers of people made these unanticipated comments as well. For some questions I used an alternative layout to the one Dillman recommended because of lack of space through trying to cut costs. These questions and those on the back page also had higher non-response rates.

It is hard to assess the impact this has had on the final results. The reasons are probably mixed: it is higher for questions which respondents could interpret as irrelevant to them, in this case no answer probably means "not important". This was particularly common with the scaled questions on attitude to farm jobs, rural life, and unions. Some questions did ask for information that was sensitive, the amount paid for the farm purchased was the information most consistently withheld. In this case the bias in non-response could be assessed and proved to be in the expected directions, that is those who refused were older and less well educated, but none of the differences were statistically significant.
Another problem is that the questions about people's childhood and early years in farming, for instance their aspirations when starting out on a farm, ask people to remember how they felt about something at the beginning of their career. For older participants this can be forty or more years ago. Although some of these questions covered straightforward information such as where they were living and important issues such as aspiration, other issues such as education may have seemed more distant. Not all had fathers or had ones with easily described occupations. The number responding to each question is included in the tables. A complicating issue is that over time and changes in circumstances people's perception of how they felt may have changed, but unlike non-response this cannot be measured. Interest in the questionnaire and confidence in providing written answers to questions were obviously also key factors in all non-response. As many of the questions were open ended there was no specific request for people to say why they had not answered.

4.6 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Statistical techniques have not been used to verify theories in this study, but are important in trying to assess the comparative significance of results. Because my data is mostly at the ordinal level I chose to analyse association between variables using the gamma statistic to assess the strength of the relationships. I used the statistical package SPSSX (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to analyse the data. Chi-square and Gamma statistics were calculated for the two-way tables and zero order and first order partial gammas for multi-way tables. The gamma statistics have been quoted to indicate the strength of relationships between variables, while chi-square statistics have been quoted to indicate whether significant differences exist. Some other statistical analyses, calculation of confidence intervals and analysis of variance, have also been used but were not as widely applicable. The key variables were selected for further analysis on the basis of previous studies, but their importance in this case was confirmed by checking for statistical significance.

Because of limited sample size I have recoded variables, particularly father's occupation, more stringently than I would have done so otherwise (Blalock 1982:468). However I have tried to describe the full range of variability within the sample. Coding proved a major problem in the case of the answers to open ended questions. The original coding frame consisted of over 100 values. However because I was concerned with correlations between background variables and attitudes as much as the attitudes themselves, I recoded them into major issues. The problems involved highlighted the difficulty in trying to treat qualitative data in the same way as information which is easier to quantify. The relative importance of reasons for job changes given by individuals is difficult to assess: so is the importance of reasons to different individuals. This is a problem with sociological analysis, in that key factors such as income, education or occupation may actually explain quite small proportions of the total variance in a population, but adding new variables into the equation constructed on the basis on
individual's attitudes or values does not solve the problem either. Both elements are important, but difficult to incorporate into one research design.

My original ambition was to indicate which of the background variables, father's occupation, aspiration, or education was most significant in determining outcome. This proved to be difficult because each seemed to have a similar degree of influence. I then reanalysed the data using log-linear modelling. This technique did provide some indication as to the comparative strength of the relationship between each variable and outcome, and the amount of interaction between the variables, but confirmed the limits to both my sample size and the extent to which statistical techniques could display causal links to solve such problems. Because the log-linear analysis requires further recoding into dichotomous variables I have used it as a supplement to the other analyses rather than as a replacement.

4.7 CONCLUSION: LINKING METHOD AND THEORY

In the first chapter I established that survey research operating at an individual level could be integrated into a programme of Marxist research. Since I originally planned my research design, using ideas from a variety of sources from French artisanal bakeries to previous studies of New Zealand farm employees, a more concrete prescription for a piece of realist research than those provided in discourses on the philosophy of science has been published. Pawson (1989) surveyed current debates and research to come up with a series of rules for sociological measurement of the underlying mechanisms of society which realist science is concerned with. He specifically refers to research based on surveys, which require an integrated and disciplined approach.

Pawson stresses formulation of hypotheses which refer to a "generative mechanism", which is not directly observable but is the underlying cause of aspects of observed reality. A model of a generative mechanism will prescribe the specifications for the measurement of the mechanism's effects. He favours those which can be linked to existing propositions about reality, and the use of models which specify the probabilities of people in a range of social positions taking particular actions (Pawson 1989: 192). All should be stated in formal logical terms (Pawson 1989: 324). Categories which express something "elemental" about society may be used repeatedly to operationalise different hypotheses but just measuring regularities between social events in no way substitutes an adequate sociology. It may be difficult to observe generative mechanisms given the many conflicting trends which exist in real life, but observation must always be rigorously linked to theory.

In Pawson's terms linking the rates of mobility from my survey to wider issues counts as "post-hoc generative reasoning". As such, my research is open to the charge that whatever results were found, an explanation could be found to fit them. My original goals were stated in everyday language rather than formal terms. They do not focus sufficiently on issues such as intergenerational transfer to get to
the heart of the nature of family relationships and class reproduction, which are interpreted differently by Friedmann and Goodman and Redclifl. However my research fared better on some of his other criteria. I have attempted to remain aware of the weaknesses in my research design and use the data appropriately. By addressing previously specified theories rather than setting up one of my own on the basis of my results, some of the problems involved with post-hoc explanation are avoided.

Adequate control of variables which act to mask the action of a generative mechanism is the next step. Sociological investigation cannot be based on the experimental procedures of natural science, but methods of control which can separate key causal variables from others do exist. Statistical controls on specific variables are commonly used in this way, but lack the ability to separate all the factors active in a specific context. I have used them as an aid to analysis, but not limited the analysis to the presentation of such results. Pawson suggests use of comparative data and longitudinal research designs give a closer approximation to closed systems in which the action of the generative mechanism has been isolated, than statistical controls. Although analysis of different cohorts is secondary to analysis of class and aspiration, the fact that my questionnaire went to people who started in farming over a period of several decades, who have experienced a variety of changes in their careers, is central to my research design. The depth of focus allows for prediction of a variety of futures for those still involved in farm employment. I have supplemented survey data with secondary data and the results of previous studies in order to provide a historical context for the survey information.

Finally, since Pawson’s aim is to confirm the importance of survey data, he discusses the implementation of the survey interview. His conclusion here is that only subjects which people have common understanding of, that is factual items rather than values or beliefs, can be broached. Interviewers should tell their respondents as much about the survey as necessary to ensure that they both attach the same meaning to the concepts involved but the hypothesis should not be revealed. Again, without claiming to have implemented all his suggestions before I read about them, I felt that where I had concentrated on factual background material and job histories I had avoided a number of problems which the more qualitative questions raised. My questions about people’s reasons for taking different courses of action created a number of problems which I will discuss in Chapter Eight.

My survey design may not have linked theory to data collection as rigorously as others such as Wright (1985), whose model of class mobility was carefully specified, then operationalised using large numbers of filtering questions to establish class location. However I feel I have achieved my goal to provide descriptive and exploratory data as well as to provide support for either Friedmann's or Goodman and Redclifl’s theories on petty bourgeois farming. An issue as all embracing as class mobility requires a range of methods, from historical and economic analysis of the context in which structural change takes place, to in depth discussion of the way people interact with the political, economic and social aspects of their situation. It is difficult for any one project to address all these
issues. A clear theoretical focus is essential to separate out a suitable question for empirical research. The methods must be suitable for the questions asked, and achievable with the resources available. Success may depend on appropriate choices at each stage of design as well as desire to answer the questions with maximum theoretical impact.
CHAPTER FIVE

THE INFLUENCE OF BACKGROUND ON FUTURE LIFE CHANCES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

My first task in this chapter is to present the characteristics of the people who participated in the survey and establish the basic differences between those who differed in the outcome of careers:

1. those who have left farming;
2. those who have been farm employees for a considerable period of time;
3. those who have become farm owners;

This is the first move towards establishing conditions of upward and downward mobility.

My second task is to look at the differences between farmers' offspring and others, regardless of the position in which they ended up in. This will indicate whether these two groups differ in the range of characteristics which are associated with differences in outcome. This allows me to go beyond a general description of the position of farm employees and begin to look at class differentiation. Farm owners are not the only petty bourgeois in the sample, but it is important to look at inter-generational transfer of farms as well as class reproduction in a general sense. I am also interested in differences within classes and use the term socio-economic background to express this, for instance it covers differences between larger and smaller farmers. The aim is to establish which people experience upward or downward mobility and the characteristics associated with change. In the next chapter I will look into paths between these key characteristics. By following the life trajectories of sample members from childhood until they received the questionnaire, I will distinguish the different points at which people make decisions or are caught up in processes which permanently shape their lives. Later chapters will develop the issues raised by differing socio-economic backgrounds by looking at job history.

Throughout this thesis I have referred to farmers' offspring rather than farmers' sons because some respondents are women. I have not presented differences between the experiences of men and women for each variable because the study population of women is so small. However women face unique issues connected with farm employment and ownership and I will discuss the differences between men and women in my study population. Further research is required before a
representative discussion of women's problems in farming would be possible. In Appendix One I will look at the results of other surveys, so that I can establish whether the people in my sample seem typical of farming people in general, and how deeply the differences between farm types or geographical areas are entrenched.

To develop an argument about class mobility and competing class interests I must analyse the ways in which the three groups which experience different outcomes vary, and whether causal factors, such as families' socio-economic status or education or personal ambition, have the same impact within each group. My theoretical framework suggests that the class location of each respondent's father will provide the best predictor of farm ownership later in life, but there are many other factors such as career aspirations and education, which may be directly associated with family class. These must be ruled out before this can be empirically proved. For instance, farming may not appeal to those who can see its obvious disadvantages, such as variations in income from year to year or vulnerability to natural disasters. It is possible that only those who have experienced the satisfactions of working on a farm through early contact with farming may develop the desire to farm. Naturally, most of these people would be farmers' offspring. "Career" farm workers may be those who chose the work but reject the responsibilities which go with ownership. I will therefore look at the relationship of various types of farm background to outcome, in relation to aspiration.

Alternatively, those separated by the outcome of their careers as at 1986 may turn out to be identical in many ways, with farm owners being older than the other two groups, suggesting that success will come to others if they persevere. This is easily tested by comparing the age ranges of the three groups. In recent years, education may have come to be the key to success, as increasing difficulties in acquiring farms may limit the opportunities of those without a sound understanding of marketing and the ability to plan production meticulously. In summary, I will look at four scenarios for different rates of farm ownership:

1. Social class leads to different career outcomes;
2. Aspiration leads to different career outcomes;
3. Ability leads to different career outcomes;
4. There are no differences at all, only people at different stages of the same process.

In this chapter I will introduce the information which bears on all these options, before looking at their interaction in greater detail in the next chapter. In chapters Seven and Eight I will also look at the outline of job histories and the attitudes people expressed to their jobs and farm life in general, and a variety of personal information which might bear on these attitudes.

Within the whole sample there were a number of sub-groups which differed considerably. Sometimes differences between the three main subdivisions by outcome were greater than those within them, other the times the reverse was true - this is especially true for those who were still farm employees.
Often this means there is no statistically significant difference in the proportions with differing attributes who remained farm employees. The work histories of ex-farm workers suggest that few will retire as farm employees and that most of those who were farm employees when I surveyed them will eventually follow their colleagues into ownership or go on to other jobs. In the eleven years from 1975 until the questionnaires were sent out, the majority had left farm employment. Farm owners make up the largest group, 185 or 39.4% of the sample returned usable questionnaires. The smallest group is made up of 116 farm employees who have been on farms from 1975 until 1986 and make up (24.7%) of the sample. Their characteristics vary in closeness between farm owners and those who have left farming. As a group the 166 people who have left farming (35.8% of the sample) will differ significantly from farm owners.

5.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF AGE WITHIN THE SAMPLE

My fourth model suggested that there may be free mobility into farm ownership. This would be confirmed if farm owners were largely older than farm employees and those who had left farming when they became owners. Census figures show that the mean age of farm owners has always been older than that of farm employees, and the difference is growing as farm owners become older, while farm workers are getting younger (Gill and Gill 1975: 65). However data from the census can not address the issue of mobility with certainty, because they can not provide age at ownership. My sample clearly demonstrated that the owners were not only younger at the time they became owners, but were still younger at the time of the survey (See Table 5-1).

All respondents were over 29 years old at the time of the survey, with the oldest being in their seventies ¹. The age ranges within each outcome are quite different. The mean age of those who had left farming was 43.7 years, the mean age of those who were still farm employees was 40.7 years and the mean age of those who had become farm owners was 37.3 years. (The significance of the differences was confirmed by T-tests run on the different means). Some of those who left farming had retired completely by 1986. This is not the only reason for the mean age of people who left being higher, if people over sixty are excluded, there are still fewer people who left farming who are under 35 years old than there are people still involved as employees, 33% compared with 40%. Of those who left, 63% were under 45 years old, but 67% of farm employees and 89% of owners were also under 45 years. The oldest people currently still farm employees were 60 at the time of the interview and the oldest farm owner was only slightly younger. Age confirms that the three groups have different characteristics, they cannot be seen as similar people at different stages of the same type of career.

¹ Because of the way the sample was constructed the range of ages present in the group is slightly biased. Those who left farming before the age of 18 years have been excluded, as have those over 18 years who were not on the roll.
TABLE 5-1
OUTCOME OF CAREER BY AGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>29-35 YRS</th>
<th>36-45 YRS</th>
<th>46 YRS +</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM WORKER</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Missing Observations: 4
Significance of Chi-square .0000  Gamma: -.28

The age difference between the groups leads to a number of other differences. Education is the most obvious one, but there are other trends which also show up, such as changing family size. Some of these may in turn be independently related to outcome. The mean length of time spent in farm and other wage work before they finally left differs considerably between the three groups. Farm owners spent 15.2 years as employees on average, the mean for current farm employees was 24.5 years and those who had left had worked for 27.2 years before leaving farm work permanently, confirming that there is a significant basis for differentiating the three groups, even without adding the years those who have left have worked since 1.

Some of the current farm employees were young and may yet become farm owners, 6% planned to do so within the next 10 years. But the majority were past the most common age of acquiring a farm (few people over the age of 35 years still acquire a farm). Very few of those who had left already had definite plans to return to farming as owners. Some explicitly mentioned that they had left because they could not afford to buy a farm as farm workers (17%), but only a handful were planning to save for a farm in their new jobs. Those who mentioned they would return if farm ownership was possible often went on to say "if I won the lottery". All the evidence points to the presence of two groups of farm employees with different interests: those for whom farm employment is a training phase before ownership, and those for whom it is a career, whatever other ambitions they might have.

If the sample is divided by father's occupation, the differences between the farmers' offspring and others are confirmed (See Table 5-2). This is the first step in building up a case for the relationship between class and ownership. Farmers' offspring are younger than those from other backgrounds.

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1 This mean includes non-farm jobs held before or during a farm career but does not include non-farm jobs held by those who have made a final break with farming, or time spent as farm owners.
and age has already been shown to be related to ownership. Further analysis in other chapters will show whether this is associated with different aspirations or whether farmer's offspring have access to more concrete advantages. It is likely that more farmers' offspring over 45 years old in 1986 would have become owners before 1975 than non-farmers' offspring of that age, because of family help to get started.

TABLE 5-2
AGE BY FATHER'S OCCUPATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>FARMER</th>
<th>NON-FARMER</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-35 YEARS</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45 YEARS</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 YEARS +</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of missing observations: 36
Significance of chi-square: .0001  GAMMA: .35

5.3 FAMILY BACKGROUND AND ITS EFFECTS

Farming is often presented as a way of life. Rusty Chambers, a popular columnist in the New Zealand Farmer, lists the satisfactions of farm work which are "beyond monetary reward" and discourage the farmer from taking a fully business-like approach to farm profitability "working the soil, watching things grow, working independent hours, working out of doors, working with animals... the enjoyment of the harvest..." (Chambers 1976: 15). Although there are many differences between the lifestyle of employees and owners, they also have many work and life experiences in common. One of the reasons farming is seen as involving a lifestyle and an approach to life, in a way that other occupations do not, is that many of the people involved in it have grown up on farms and are utilising knowledge that they have developed over a long period of time. They may be committed to working on farms long before they leave school and take on their first permanent full-time job. Overall, 77% of my sample had spent some of their childhood on a farm. Even more of them, 84%, had either childhood experience or some farm work experience before their first job. A couple even went straight into management or sharemilking positions. In all, only 13% had no experience of farm work or life before they started their first permanent full-time position.
Not all these people with contact with farming are farmers' offspring. Overall 64% of respondents had fathers who were farm owners, and another 5% of fathers were farm employees. Those who were not owners had a variety of jobs. Of the rest, 13% had fathers who were in the service sector and 18% had parents who were in production or transport. Apart from farm owners and employees, respondents' fathers were involved in a wide variety of jobs, most of which had fewer than 10 people in each. The most common non-farm jobs were transport operator, working proprietor (for example shop keeper), construction worker, labourer and food processing industry worker (for example dairy and freezing worker). There was a wide variety of tradesmen, (20 people in 8 trades), making up 5% of the total, and a wide variety of professional people (24 in 8 professions), including several teachers, making up 6% of the total. However the majority of those who were not farm owners were in occupations which are said to be semi or unskilled. Apart from the predominance of farm people, the balance of white collar versus blue collar work in the sample is close to that of the population as a whole (Department of Statistics 1988).

Although many non-farm people had farm experience, the 64% of farmers' offspring were more likely to become owners. The relationship between coming from a farm owning family and achieving farm ownership is very clear, although there were smaller numbers of people coming to ownership by other routes (See Table 5-3). The evidence of deceased estate sizes suggests that of the non-farm owning fathers who are self-employed amass comparable wealth, but some professionals do. Non-farm parents from the petty bourgeoisie, for example tradesmen or shopkeepers gave their offspring little more advantage than working class ones. These people are the most marginal members of the petty bourgeoisie, having control of skills and tools rather than more substantial means of production. Well paid members of the working class are likely to have similar or better incomes. Because of this and because occupation was not enough to allocate people by class, I have used the Elley-Irving scale to differentiate father's occupation rather than class itself. The Elley-Irving scale takes pay into account when allocating jobs into different strata. I will use it as a proxy for economic position in the meantime and analyse the actual sources of finance for farms in detail later ¹.

Farm owners are represented by rank 4 on the Elley-Irving Scale, farm employees by 5 or 6 depending whether they are managers or not. Those participants who had fathers who had jobs which could be assessed as higher paid are more likely to become owners later in life. There was a clear relationship between having a father in a professional, highly skilled or white collar job, and ownership. Those whose parents were in non-farm jobs but were either white collar or skilled were also slightly more likely to stay on as farm employees than those whose parents were unskilled, although it is unclear why. The

¹ The Elley-Irving Socio-economic Index uses the median education and income levels for occupations at minor group level from the New Zealand Census of Occupation and Dwellings (Elley and Irving 1981). These are sorted into six levels, from those with the lowest level of occupation (6) to those with the highest (1). This survey used the latest version for both male and female occupational groups which were constructed in 1981 and 1976 respectively.
proportion leaving always increases as the proportion owning decreases. The relationship between class and occupation and the restrictions on the number experiencing upward mobility was confirmed. Even more interesting is that only half of farmers' offspring had become owners. The circumstances of the 49% who ended up in other positions will be followed up in later chapters.

**TABLE 5-3**

**OUTCOME OF CAREER BY FATHER'S OCCUPATION USING THE ELLEY-IRVING INDEX**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>FARM 4</th>
<th>1-3</th>
<th>NON-FRM 4</th>
<th>5-6</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM WORKER</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of missing observations: 38
Significance of chi-square .0000  Gamma: -.42

Although the importance of farm ownership is clear, I was still interested in the third explanation, that those who become owners were those with the strongest aspirations. This theory suggests that more farmers' offspring will be interested in ownership because of their prior knowledge of it. However far more people had farm experience before their first full-time job than had fathers who were farmers. In a few cases, this is because fathers had a career change or farmed part-time, in other cases other family or friends are involved. A few of those without contact were women, who came into farming through their husbands. Only 5.9% of the full-time working population were farm owners and 3.6% farm workers (Department of Statistics 1988), but a far greater proportion of the population has experience of farm work. Only a tiny proportion of those whose fathers were farmers recorded no experience of farms before starting farm employment.

When background experience in farming is compared with subsequent careers, the differences are consistent across each factor. Those who had both spent their childhood on a farm and worked on one as a youth before starting full-time work were most likely to become farm owners (45% did) which was quite close to the proportion of farmers' offspring who became owners (See Table 5-4). An average proportion stayed on as farm employees and the proportion who left was low. Those who had had farm work experience before starting their first job but had not lived on farms as children were next most likely to have become owners, the proportion was lower because more non-farmers' offspring
had this type of experience. The proportion who stayed on as farm employees was higher, as was the proportion who left. Out of the few people who only spent their childhood on a farm, not many became owners, although more than expected stayed on as farm employees. Except for this, the distribution was very similar to that of people with no experience at all. It seems likely that continuity of experience was so often related to farm ownership in the family that this boosted the proportion becoming owners compared with those who had experience but nothing else behind them. Experience may be important in forming aspirations, but was less important than other factors in predicting farm ownership.

TABLE 5-4

OUTCOME OF CAREER BY FARM EXPERIENCE BEFORE FULL-TIME WORK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>BOTH</th>
<th>CHILDHOOD</th>
<th>YOUTH</th>
<th>NONE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM WORKER</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of missing observations: 7
Significance Chi-square: .0002  Gamma: -.36

Seventy-two percent spent their childhood (years at school) in the Northland or Central Auckland Statistical Areas, but another 10% came from the Auckland metropolitan area, and the rest from more distant parts of New Zealand or Great Britain (See Table 5-5). Even more, (80%) began their first job in these two statistical areas. The area in which respondents grew up is related to current status, more owners were from Northland or close to Auckland, but only 28% of those who have left came from this area. Of those who spent their childhood in Northland, 79% were farmer's children and so were 86% of those from Central Auckland. The area in which people spent their childhood was related to rates of farm ownership and leaving farming, no doubt because those who were from farm owning families were both more likely to move to farm employment, and thence to ownership, and less likely to be geographically mobile. High regional mobility seems to be associated with people who had less assurance as to their future prospects in their place of birth. In general the further away from Northland people were, the less likely they were to have parents who were farmers and the more likely they were to leave farming. This reflects the degree of continuity which exists across the generations in farming, young farmers tend to either inherit, or buy farms in the neighbourhoods with which they are familiar because of the importance of local knowledge of climate and other conditions.
Mother's occupation was less significant as an indicator of life chances than other background factors, probably because many spent a large part of their working lives as housewives, and were less likely to have direct control of large sums of money as a result of that work (See Table 5-6). A few (11%) listed their mothers as farmers, and another 13% listed them as farm workers. One man graphically described his mother as "slave to a farmer". Since the question was not very specific it does not allow us to make any assumptions about the extent of ownership and control these women had.

Another 7% of mothers were involved in either sales, clerical or professional work. Few had service jobs such as cooking or hairdressing (2%), the manufacturing and transport sectors in which so many
men worked were even less common. The majority of mothers were said to be housewives, including many of those married to farmers. There were two main divisions, between those whose mothers were in white collar work or farm owners, and all others. Those who were said to be working on farms were closest to those owning them. The differences in the proportions in each outcome for women who were farm owners compared with the other women with high status jobs, and between housewives and those in low skilled work were insignificant. It is possible that marriage to a farmer may explain some of the differences which appear to be related to status of respondents' mothers. About half (54%) of mothers came from a farm background but again there are no significant differences in current status that can be related to this.

Not only is the outcome of respondents careers more closely related to fathers' occupation than mothers' for the majority of the sample, it is unclear what the role of those women who are influential is. High status jobs are more common for younger women because of increases in workforce participation and many farmers' wives are teachers or nurses, a phenomenon which has been noted in other studies (Gill et al 1975; Moran et al 1989). It may also be related to the age of the respondents, the tendency for those who were younger to appear more successful as older people who became owners had left the sample population before 1975.

One of the motivations for asking about mothers' background was to investigate the influence that farm women, who tend to be more highly qualified than farm men, might have on their offspring's job choice. However since so many women were labelled as housewives, and mother's education was not asked for, it is difficult to separate out mother's occupation from other factors such as father's occupation or age of respondent which were more significant. Since farm wives may tailor their work to fit in with the needs of the farm, their choice may reflect the position of the family as a whole and not just their own attributes. In an occupational group where education itself is a key to success, the relationship with mother's occupation is much clearer (Baldock 1971a). The relationship between education, class and success is well proven (Nash 1982) but complicated in farming because of the value placed on practical experience within the farming community.

Of all the aspects of family background just discussed, fathers' occupation remains the strongest. In the next sections I will look at the propositions that education and aspiration are also key factors. The following chapter will then look at the relationship between these variables. Although neither Friedmann nor Goodman and Redclift comment on these factors, they must be carefully examined in the New Zealand context, where there is considerable state support for entry into farming, and upward mobility occurs.
5.4 EDUCATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Education is related to background but it is a complex relationship, as is the interaction of farm experience and family background. It is difficult to define the nature of the link between education and ownership: it could represent natural ability or socio-economic background. The most important influence on education is age. Because educational standards are rising over time, many of the educational differences between groups must relate to their different age ranges. I will return to this relationship in more detail in the next chapter. Compared with the general population, those in my sample do not appear to be well educated, although compared with all the people in farming (industrial major group 111), 74% of whom have no formal qualifications, they are well educated (Department of Statistics 1988). The mean age of farmers in the census was 43 years, slightly older than my whole sample and my sample of farmers in particular. Matching the census figures for the general male working population who were over the age of 30 years and in full-time work, closes the gap. Of this population 53% had no formal qualifications, close to the 60% of my sample had none. The figures for those with School Certificate only were 18% and 27% respectively. Of the matched census population 30% had a higher qualification compared with only 14% of my sample.

Farm ownership does increase within the group which has secondary school and tertiary qualifications but the relationship was not linear (See Table 5-7). Those without School Certificate in at least one subject were least likely to become owners and more likely to leave. There was little difference between those with School Certificate and those with even more qualifications, both were more likely to become owners than those without School Certificate. Of those with higher qualifications, the majority had Sixth Form certificate or University Entrance, while one third had Higher School Certificate or a Bursary. There were no significant differences between the distribution of these qualifications by outcome. It is likely that with the problems farming has been experiencing, those who do have high capabilities or alternative qualifications will be tempted to use these to get a higher or more secure income elsewhere and this accounts for the high proportion of these people leaving farming. A study carried out shortly after many of my sample would have left school, provides support for this idea (Baldock 1971b).
## TABLE 5-7

### OUTCOME OF CAREER BY SCHOOL QUALIFICATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>* &lt;SC</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>&gt;SC</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM WORKER</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Missing Observations: 32
Significance of chi-square: .00035  Gamma .24

* <SC: No formal qualifications.
SC: School certificate in one subject or more
>SC: Higher than School Certificate

This survey of the vocational aspirations of fourteen year old boys carried out in 1967 (Baldock 1971b), found that those who wished to farm had educational aspirations between those who intended lower white collar work and those who intended blue collar work. The only exceptions were the sons of professional or executive parents who still intended getting high qualifications (Baldock 1971b: 130). Those with farm backgrounds who did have high educational aspirations were more likely to have high abilities and generally intended to go into the professions. Boys who preferred farming were more likely to have low ability (Baldock 1971b: 134). Baldock concluded that farming involved a high proportion of manual labour and education was not considered important for farm people. Farm boys in small towns are surrounded by others with farm or blue collar backgrounds and have less access to academic training. Those who went to boarding schools were still likely to opt for farming but had higher educational aspirations. Possibly those who went to boarding school were from large farms and this reinforced interest in education.

In New Zealand the difference in education between those with rural and urban backgrounds was much lower than that which exists worldwide. Certainly there was no real difference in the educational achievements of farmers' offspring and others in my sample (See Table 5-8). There was no difference between the proportions of farmer's offspring and non-farmer's offspring gaining farm qualifications either, although 12% fewer farmer's offspring gained trade qualifications. Only 7% gained any other sort of qualification, for example an arts degree, or did a course of religious instruction, and there was no difference in the proportions here according to background. Since those with a farm owning background had more access to ownership, this suggests that the differences between those with and without formal qualifications must be related to factors such as ambition or socio-economic background as well as ability as measured by School Certificate. On the other hand, an equal number
of farmer's offspring had no School Certificate, but fewer of these people became owners. It is possible the differences were related to socio-economic differences between farm owners.

**TABLE 5-8**

**EDUCATION BY FATHER'S OCCUPATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th>FARMER</th>
<th>NON-FARMER</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; SCHOOL CERT</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOL CERT</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; SCHOOL CERT</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of missing observations: 62  
Significance of chi-square: .80  
Gamma: -.01

It seems that there is a relationship between education and outcome of career which is not just a matter of father's occupation, but changing levels of education confuse the picture. Those without School Certificate may be older and lack of success may be related to lack of initial help towards ownership rather than lack of ability. Whether there are other conditions within families, for example attitudes encouraging success in school, which foster both education and ownership independently, or whether family income is the significant factor, is not clear at this point. Farming differs from many occupations in that formal qualifications are not necessary for entrance, unless lending agencies indirectly impose them. Until there is more evidence produced on this point, formal education can not be eliminated as an indicator of an ability which is also a predictor of increased likelihood of ownership, but other factors are also at work. It is certainly a reliable predictor of whether someone will leave farming or become an owner and acts consistently with the view that education acts to preserve socio-economic differences between families.

Although farming and other tertiary qualifications were often gained during a respondent's working life rather than straight after school I will discuss these in conjunction with school qualifications. Those with school qualifications were less likely to have trade qualifications but more likely to have farm or other qualifications. Many of my respondents did not have any additional qualifications at all, about a quarter had farm qualifications and just under half that many had non-farm ones. Almost nobody had both. Nearly half the qualifications had been gained through short courses, the rest were trade certificates, degrees and diplomas. The majority of the degrees and diplomas held were related to farming. Trade training is more likely to be gained before farm work is begun, although a number of people attended
courses which would obviously be useful to them on farms while still doing farm work. Even for those who left farming, only 38% gained their trade qualification after they had left farming.

**TABLE 5-9**

OUTCOME OF CAREER BY FARM AND TRADE QUALIFICATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>NO FARM</th>
<th>FARM</th>
<th>NO TRADE</th>
<th>TRADE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM WORKER</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Missing Observations: 15
FARM: Chi-Square 10.68 DF 4 Significance .03 Gamma .20
TRADE: Chi-Square 18.73 DF 4 Significance .0009 Gamma -.39

There is a relationship between having tertiary qualifications and current work status although it is not as significant as other background factors (See Table 5-9). Those with some farm qualifications are more likely to become farm owners, those without are also slightly more likely to leave farming. The relationship reverses for those with non-farming tertiary qualifications. As usual the differences within the group of current farm workers are fairly small.

It is unlikely that farm qualifications act alone. Those with higher school qualifications were more likely to get some kind of tertiary qualification. The older respondents were, the less likely they were to have any additional qualifications. These factors reinforce each other. Farm qualifications may promote upward mobility for some who missed out on other advantages, but in many cases it is another element related to socio-economic background.

**5.5 ASPIRATION AND ITS EFFECTS**

The high number who wanted to own, coupled with the overwhelming number with farm work experience as young people, suggests that aspiration to become a farmer is not limited to those with high chances of success and should be investigated as an alternative key to ownership. There are certainly more farm owners' offspring than non-farm ones who were interested in owning farms at the time that they started work (See Table 5-10).
Aspirations are a complex mixture of ideals and practical possibilities which change over time. This analysis of the effect of desire to own a farm is based purely on what people said their aims were at or near the beginning of their working life. This was intentional, as I felt that the longer people were in farming, the more likely they would be to tailor their aspirations towards what they saw as possible. This process would have been underway before they started work, but as I am particularly interested in the way being actually involved in farm work affects people’s ability to fulfil their aspirations, this seemed like the most appropriate single time to do a survey of aspirations. This information also relies both on people’s memories and interpretation of past events and feelings which may change over time. I also asked people when they made the decision to go into farming, to further explore the relationship of background and aspiration.

This particular measure does not take into account those who changed their minds later. Information on the changes in people’s thinking can be gleaned by studying the questions on their reasons for changing jobs and shows that a number of people did become interested in ownership later, but were unable to buy farms and ended up leaving farming altogether. The percentage of people who eventually left who had wanted to own at the beginning of their farming careers was 42%, but another 11% had decided on ownership in mid-career, bringing the total to 53%. Since there is no specific question on this and the total relies on spontaneous comments the figure could be higher. When people who had left were asked whether they would return to farming, several said they would only return as owners. About half were still serious about owning if they had the chance, for others it was just a way of saying that they certainly were not interested on any other terms. A few of those who were originally interested in ownership seem to abandon this as a project, and do not mention it again in the questionnaire.
Change is not limited to those who left farming. Those who were currently farm workers were also likely to have decided in favour of ownership later in life, 23% did so. This raised the total percentage of current farm employees who had ever wanted to own to 70%. However only 6% were hoping to become owners within the next 10 years. In all, 76% of those who were farm employees in 1975 had either wanted to own and done so, wanted to own and were still hoping to do so or at any rate had not left, or had wanted to own but become completely disillusioned with their chances and left. This confirms the importance of aspiration to own in shaping people's attitudes to farm employment. The implications this might have for people's decision making are explored further in my discussion of unionism in the Chapter Eight.

The ambition to own a farm is related to success in ownership although the exact nature of the relationship is not clear and will be explored more in the next chapter. There is little difference between those who were undecided or had other plans. Of those who wanted to own a farm when they started work, 52% had done so by the time of the survey and 6% of farm employees hoped to do so within the next 10 years. This suggests that there are other factors than aspirations, involved although aspirations are an important element. The strength of the relationship is similar to that of father's occupation and education. Far fewer of those who were undecided about their future or had other ambitions became owners, and more left. As usual, there is relatively little variation in the proportion staying on as farm employees related to having different aspirations. Over half of current farm owners who had been undecided were influenced by family commitments, either taking over from parents, or deciding ownership would give their own offspring a secure, healthy lifestyle (See Table 5-11). This confirms the importance of background in shaping career moves.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>OWN FARM</th>
<th>UNDECIDED</th>
<th>OTHER JOB</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM WORKER</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Missing Observations: 11
Significance of chi-square .0000  Gamma -.37
This still does not answer the question of whether or not people decide to become farm owners because they know it is possible. In previous work parent's social rank has been the single most important variable in shaping level of aspirations (Baldock 1971a: 145). If more farmers' offspring wanted to own and more who want to own succeed (See Table 5-11), does this represent a self-fulfilling prophecy, in that some never raise their sights high? In an attempt to explore this issue I asked those who were not owners whether they had access to financial help from their family and whether this made a difference to their plans. Only 16% did have access to financial help from their parents, evenly divided between those who left and those still farm employees. A few felt they had benefited from family help, but more felt that they would have followed the same course without it.

Those without access to family help, particularly those still employed on farms, were more likely to think it did not make a difference. The most common comment was that respondents preferred to be independent of family help and many felt they would fulfil their goals by alternative means. However others felt that they were now too old for family help to make a difference even if it became available and may have appreciated it earlier. Another small group would have liked family help and felt that its lack had reduced their achievements. Differences in the attitudes between those who had left and those who had not yet, suggest that the latter group has a stronger belief in the possibility of achieving their goals in farming. This may be related to the fact that the majority have expressed a desire to own a farm. Comment from following chapters will confirm that they are generally less disillusioned than those who left, even although there is a strong probability that few of them will become owners.

The importance of aspiration and background is reinforced when the age at which many respondents were deciding to go into farming is considered. Over a third had decided as children. Another 37% were deciding at school age, or after working for a short time, when they were likely to be more aware of alternative jobs available to them. The final 25% had decided on farming after several years in other jobs and some of them were committing themselves to a change in lifestyle as well as a change in job. People who eventually became owners were far more likely to have decided earlier and those who left farming were likelier to have decided later.

The depth of the desire to take up farm work varies considerably. The most telling descriptions come from the respondents themselves, in answer to the question "When did you decide that you wanted to work on a farm?" Many had decided on farming very early in life and their choice was clearly based on emotional values rather than a clear understanding of the economic benefits or otherwise of farming. Others made a choice when they were old enough to judge farm work against other types of work. Knowledge of its disadvantages had to be weighed up against other factors, such as that it was available locally. The reasons women took up farming tend to differ from those of men, and will be looked at in the next section.
Farm owner, 31 years old, no school qualifications: 
"Right from when I can remember"

Farm employee, 37 years old, School Certificate: 
"It was decided by family circumstances and a certain obligation to run the home farm"

Farm employee, 45 years old, no school qualifications: 
"No definite decision, it just happened"

Left farming, 33 years old, School certificate: 
"When I had a family of my own"

Left farming, 33 years old, no school qualifications: 
"It was the only type of work available"

The decision to go into farming did not always mean farm ownership. Many respondents did want to own a farm (55%), but another 11% were happy to be employees. As expected at that stage, 25% were undecided and 9% were planning to leave farming later. The earlier in life the decision was made to go into farming, the more likely ownership was intended (See Table 5-12). Those who were undecided tended to be older. Making an early decision about farm work does seem to be related to background experience and so to ownership, 45% of farmer's offspring had done so compared with 30% of others; 36% of others had decided after working for a while, compared with 17% of farmers' offspring. Of this 17%, some had left farming to get a qualification or try another type of work, while others were still working on the home farm, without having made a definite decision about what to do next.

TABLE 5-12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>EARLY IN LIFE</th>
<th>NEAR SCHOOL LEAVING AGE</th>
<th>CHANGE IN LIFE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM WORKER</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Missing Observations: 42
Significance of chi-square .0003  Gamma -.29

82
Clearly aspiration is directly related to father's occupation, and although it may have some independent effect on chances of ownership, the stronger tendency of farmers' offspring to want own and the length of time many farmers' offspring had wanted to go farming make it difficult to disentangle the two factors. In the next chapter I will concentrate on separating the effects of each variable by controlling for father's occupation. This does not solve the problem of the whether more people would have chosen ownership if they had thought it possible, but does confirm that neither aspiration nor farm background cancel each other out.

At this stage I can conclude that both leaving farming and farm ownership are related to a range of background factors. Some may not be very important in themselves, for example mother's occupation, farm experience, and age may merely be related to other significant characteristics, such as father's occupation. Education appears to be important in spite of the manual nature of much farm work. The literature, from Baldock's study of school pupils to Nash's review of the international literature on class and education provide evidence that education is strongly related to class as well as ability, and the next chapter will examine this theme. Age is analysed as an indicator of speed at which success has been achieved rather than as important in itself.

However before I go on to further analyse these particular variables, I will look at whether these results are typical of all farm employees. First I will compare a number of results on the basis of gender. This will emphasise the fact that although many of the issues discussed apply to women who are farm employees, women also face a number of special problems. Although the results presented in this section represent only a few women, they are consistent with other studies of farm women.

5.6 WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES IN FARMING

One of the principal characteristics which differentiate people's life chances is gender. Farm ownership and paid employment are dominated by men, and although negative attitudes to women in farming are under pressure, there are still barriers to equal participation in farming by women (Pomeroy 1988; Sparrow 1983). Pastoral farms employ fewer women than other types such as horticulture (Department of Statistics 1988). Northland (the Northland Statistical Area plus Rodney County) is dominated by dairy farms, and although many women work on them, relatively few are paid employees. 3,297 women in farming were working owners, another 897 paid employees both full-time and other, and a few were unpaid helpers at the time of my study (Department of Statistics 1987). There are over twice as many men in total, but women dominate in the part-time categories ¹. This situation is exaggerated in my sample because of the special difficulties involved in tracing women through the electoral rolls over time. Only 25 or 5% of my respondents were women. Out of these only seven

¹ The Agricultural Statistics for 1986 do not differentiate unpaid workers by sex in this year.
became farm owners and only one of these is the sole owner. Most became involved in farming because they had access to farm work through their families.

It is difficult to generalise about the differences between men and women in my sample because tracing problems mean that no statistical testing of differences can be carried out. Those who had remained single from 1975 to 1986 and those who married before 1975 were most likely to be traced and this may have heavily biased the numbers in each category for example towards married women owners and those working on their parent's farms. I will comment on the experiences of the few women I did trace because they are quite different to those of the men, but I am not suggesting these are typical. A smaller proportion of women than men became farm owners (29% compared with 39%), or remained farm employees (21% compared with 25%) and a larger proportion of women left farming (50% compared with 36%).

The women in my sample were less likely to come from farm families than the men. They were less likely to work on farms before their first full-time job (54% compared with 84%) and less likely to be daughters of farmers (52% compared with 64%). Except for one of those who left farming all of those whose families were not originally in farming married farmers or farm employees. The effect of family background on the likelihood of their becoming owners was much less and a far greater proportion of women whose fathers' were farmers left farming than men from farm families (45%, compared with 28%). Ownership is most common among women from non-farm backgrounds who have married farm owners or potential farm owners. In my sample, which was younger than the total population, marriage was a more common way of becoming an owner than inheritance. There was little difference in the pattern for those who were still farm employees though.

Those who had worked on farms early in life were less likely to become owners than those who had not. They remained employees in most cases unless they married men who become owners. All those who were still farm employees had fathers who owned farms. The majority worked on their parents' farm and were single (except for two who married farm employees). They enjoyed farming, only two of them had worked away from farming, and none of them were expecting to leave. Those whose fathers owned farms were more likely to become owners than those who did not, but the difference is much less than it is for men.

Most of those who became owners were in partnership with their husbands but two were single and farming their parent's farms. Just under half of their fathers were not farmers but were tradesmen of some sort. In general these women had had more off-farm experience than those who were still farm employees. These women also liked farm life although they made far more negative comments about their income than the other groups did.
Those who had left farming were least likely to have come from farm families and all the rest had trades or semi-skilled occupations. Only one women who took a farm job after separating from her husband had come to farming without contact through a husband or family. Although she found it difficult to find an employer she persevered. Three had retired after working on family farms. The others were older on average than the women who had stayed in farming. They were still working - two were separated and supporting children, two had no children. They had enjoyed farm work while they did it but saw a better future elsewhere.

The proportions of men and women without formal qualifications was similar which is slightly unexpected considering that rural women are usually better educated than their husbands (Gill et al 1975: 18). The main difference was that more women had advanced past School Certificate. Education was related to ownership, possibly through socio-economic background, and its effect on choice of marriage partner. Any qualification was related to increased likelihood of owning (from 7% to 60%) and decreased the likelihood of leaving considerably, although this is partly related to the age of the women as well. It is possible that this association is a result of self selection by the women who received the questionnaires of course, since there seems little practical link between education and ownership for those who were not solely responsible for buying a farm. Few women went on to get farm qualifications, only 8% had any. This reflects the different role most are playing on the farm. Most were working with others rather than planning the operation alone. Many were also looking after young children and a few worked off-farm occasionally as well.

Although traditionally few women have owned farms this does not mean that they have not been keen to become owners. One third of my sample were interested in ownership. Those that did want ownership were more likely to get it, or were still farming and enjoying it. Those women who had not wanted to become owners had mostly left, although three were still farm employees. Success was more closely tied to family for women than men, but through marriage partners rather then parents. Three of those who wanted to go farming mentioned social pressure on them not to. In contrast to men, women are much more likely to go into farming later in life and half of these became owners. More women felt that their families were able to help them out financially but the future of these women is tied up with that of their partner anyway.

The differences between men and women in this study are consistent with the results found in others. Women face greater limitations than men in getting access to farm work, let alone ownership and are often only able to do so through their relationship with owners. These same relationships will also define and confine the nature of the work they contribute and the degree of control they have over farm resources. Few women from this study were working as employees on the same terms as the "average" male employee but it is impossible to tell whether the differences were typical. It seems likely
that even if those that were, they would face barriers to ownership based on general attitudes about the ability of women to cope with farming.

The comments women made about farm work show some of the differences between the position of men and women in farming, but also common problems:

Left farming, 45 years old, no qualifications:
[on decision to work on farm] "after marriage no option"

Left farming, aged 39 years, University Entrance:
"Eventually found a manager prepared to give me a go"

Farm owner, aged 47 years, University Entrance:
"Always wanted to but social pressure was very much against this as a career ... married a farmer and now enjoy owning a farm"

Left farming, 33 years old, School Certificate:
"Thoroughly enjoyed it. Felt at times we were exploited, working 7 days and only 1 weekend off a month for low pay, but we enjoyed the lifestyle very much"

Farm owner, aged 37 years, Sixth Form Certificate:
"We, as a family are considered to be very hard workers, however this last 8 months everything has come down around us financially"

Farm employee, aged 37 years, Sixth Form Certificate:
"I always wanted to farm from a very early age ... [planned to] teach until I had enough money to go into farming of some kind ... Because of the low pay when a person 'sticks' at farming (as employers or farm workers) we find they are very dedicated. In other words they are in it for the love of farming not the pay"

5.7 CONCLUSION

So far, it has not been possible to say whether father's occupation, education, or aspiration is more important, all seem to be highly influential. Nor is it possible to separate out how much of the effect of one characteristic could actually be attributed to another. For instance, it is difficult to know whether class and education are independent of each other. The literature suggests that education levels are strongly related to family background rather than just ability (Nash 1982), but this may differ for a manual occupation in which many are self-employed (Loveridge 1989). Education may lead directly to a better performance in achieving farm ownership, through more knowledgeable decisions and easier access to credit. But it is likely to be connected to a range of factors which are not related to ability: quality of local schooling, ability of a family to support a child at school, and ambition to succeed in this area. None of these factors might be important, if family finance is the only factor which can ensure farm ownership. The apparent effect of age may just mean that some older members of the study group had less help available to them than some of their contemporaries, not that they were disadvantaged by lack of education. The success of younger members with School Certificate may be related to family
background, and rising levels of education may be coincidental for achievement in farming. Aspiration is another complex mixture of factors. It may be kindled by any positive experience of farm life, or by the knowledge that ownership is possible. Some kinds of farm experience are more closely related to ownership than others. Those who leave often have differing characteristics to those who own.

Looking at individual cases for the effect of socio-economic background has introduced issues such as education and aspiration which were not considered by either Friedmann or Goodman and Redclift. However the evidence of both upward and downward mobility revealed in Table 5-3 makes it essential to look into the conditions under which it occurs. I have already suggested that farmers’ offspring sometimes work for their parents for low pay. If this is added to the knowledge that some downward mobility is occurring, Goodman and Redclift’s argument appears to be supported rather than Friedmann’s. However we need to know the conditions under which downward mobility has happened - whether it is a matter of individual choice, below average competence, an unviable farm, or a sign of structural change. It may be that the ability of petty bourgeois to achieve intergenerational transfer of property is limited under contemporary conditions.

If downward mobility is the result of rejection of farming as an occupation, there are few implications for either theory. Some leave farming by choice, and some farmers’ offspring leave. Chapter Six will look at whether these groups overlap. If downward mobility is a move from self-employment with little income to a working class occupation with higher returns, as Bechhoefer and Elliot (1981) suggest is often the case, the balance tips towards Goodman and Redclift’s analysis of petty bourgeois farming. If downward mobility is the result of impossibly high conditions of entry but ownership is still seen as desirable Friedmann’s logic is supported in that farmers value independence and will accept lower incomes to stay on the land. But although Goodman and Redclift do not confront this issue, merely emphasising the exploitative aspects of small farmers’ position, the presence of high motivation does not invalidate their argument. There is no indication that exploitation is driving farmers’ offspring away, which would support Goodman and Redclift, but downward mobility does not support Friedmann’s case either. Friedmann suggests an [unspecified] amount of downward mobility is consistent with petty commodity production, in that the presence of some petty commodity producers alongside capitalists shows that competition is still possible. Friedmann emphasises the commitment of petty commodity producers to ownership much more than Goodman and Redclift, but their argument does not preclude such commitment. Chapter Nine on finance for farms will look at this area. Any involuntary movement off farms suggests that external causes are more important than the fact that the enterprise is run by a family and that its ability to undercut the prices required by capitalist farmers is limited.

Barriers to farm ownership may occur when parents are unable to provide their offspring with financial help towards buying a farm. Even inheritance by one person may be ruled out if the farm must be sold.
to provide retirement income. Alternatively help may be available, but may need to be supplemented by savings, in which case the personal ability of the aspiring farm owner may be the key to success. Both aspiration and father's occupation are necessary to assess the type of downward mobility which is occurring and its implications for the theories under analysis. The effect of education is important in assessing the levels at which barriers lie, but unless it can be firmly linked to class background it has a neutral effect with regard to the two theories. Further analysis of the causal relationships between all these variables will be carried out in the next chapter in an attempt to categorise the type of mobility which is occurring.

The trends outlined here need to be linked back to the issues of Chapter Three. In this chapter I have focused on individuals and the influence of their families, leaving out the influence of one of the most important players, the state. Through agencies such as the Rural Bank the state influences the conditions under which entry into ownership will occur. State funded research provides technology which has often been available to all farmers and has maintained the viability of the petty bourgeois farm. Levels of interest payments and available loan money have been set to encourage upward mobility and discourage downward mobility. The conditions under which individual mobility occurs have implications for the productivity of the farming sector.

If farming is seen as undesirable, only those without chances elsewhere may remain in farming and it may tend to stagnate. If the perception that farming is desirable remains, with only the most wealthy managing reproduction of their offspring as owners, incompetence may be still be discouraged, by the threat of downward mobility. Further analysis will look at these issues. If farm ownership is seen as desirable and is possible for the most competent outsiders, productivity will be encouraged. Equity issues are important in considering who should have access to ownership, but New Zealand's belief in access to farm ownership has always been tinged by the knowledge that competent farming will increase the country's export earnings and lower domestic prices. Totally free access to ownership would not necessarily support these goals and results so far confirm it has not been occurring.
CHAPTER SIX

FURTHER EXPLORATION OF THE INFLUENCE OF BACKGROUND
ON FUTURE LIFE CHANCES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter has made it clear that the class structure in New Zealand farming is not completely closed. Farmers' offspring are more likely to become farmers than others, regardless of their own ambitions. But there are always exceptions who defeat the odds against them. Farm ownership is rather like a game of Snakes and Ladders, in which farm employees have little more control than dice throwers, because so many of the factors are outside their control, or fixed before they realise their significance. If someone is born into a farm owning family they can advance 10 squares towards ownership, if not they miss a turn. But if the farm employee comes from a non-farm family with some ability to help financially, or is clever, experienced and determined, the lost chances may be made up, and a farm purchased just a few years later than the average. Differentiation also appears among farm owning families and not all farmers' offspring achieve ownership as originally intended.

The main influences on success are:

- father's occupation
- aspiration towards ownership
- education

Age is also strongly correlated with success, but acts more as an indication of the presence of causal factors than as a cause in itself. A number of related variables cluster around these influences and sometimes it is difficult to separate out individual aspects of a complex situation. For instance, almost all who said they were farmer's offspring had spent their early life on a farm, but so had a number of people who were not from farm owning families. The area in which people spent their childhood is also related to life chances. Again, some of these causal effects can be attributed to father's occupation but not all.

Aspiration to own is influenced by knowledge of farming as a child and youth as well as father's occupation. When farm employees have gained their enthusiasm for farming through experience on their parents' farm, it is difficult to separate this from the knowledge that ownership will be possible because of parental help. This question will also be examined in Chapter Eight, using the answers to
open ended questions about farm work. The age at which people made a decision to take up farm work is tied to their background and aspirations as well. Once the interaction of several different variables is examined it becomes clear that aspiration alone is not enough to predict ownership, especially for those who are not farmer's offspring. However it remains the most important one, alongside father's occupation. This is a complex area and I will analyse people's job histories in Chapter Seven as well as the sources of finance for those who did become owners in Chapter Nine, in an attempt to disentangle the circumstances in which either becoming a farm owner or leaving are most probable, whether for farmers' offspring or others.

Education levels differ with age. Among younger participants there is a tendency for people to remain at school for longer, even although they do not necessarily gain a qualification before leaving. Higher education also seems to indicate people with improved chances of farm ownership, regardless of age. As I mentioned in the last chapter, formal education is not just an indicator of ability which may extend to farming ability. Socio-economic background may further complicate its significance as an indicator of competence. Nor does tertiary education always have the same effect as school qualifications. Among younger participants, there is a greater tendency for those with higher school qualifications to get farm qualifications as well. This relationship reverses for older people, who are more likely to have gained extra farm qualifications if they spent less time at school. Education does not indicate an urban-rural split, although if father's occupation were subdivided into small and large farmers and differing urban occupations when used as a control variable differences might appear.

Timing of the stages of a career can also influence success. Many began farming as teenagers, 66% of all participants and 79% of those who ended up owning had chosen farm work as their first job, 81% had gone into farming by their second job. Some do come into farming considerably later, the oldest starting age was 50, the mean was 23.4 years instead of 16 years as it was for those for whom farming is their first job. Although farm workers' futures are not necessarily determined at this stage, they are launched on to a particular path relatively young. Subsequent choice of jobs or investment may have a further influence on life chances. Chapter Seven will look at the freedom available to people in this area, and the correlation between outcome and availability of work on the home farm. Once people have begun a farm career there are many situations in which both decisions and accidents can enable farm employees to become owners, or prevent ownership. A bad year sharemilking at the wrong time can destroy the chance of ownership, in the same way a well timed or even just plain lucky investment can provide the nucleus for a farm deposit. Both events can occur regardless of background. If an opportunity comes up, even those who did not originally want to own may buy a farm. Not all the people interviewed wanted to become farm owners, or would pursue such possibilities, although the majority did. But because this thesis is concerned with the class mobility of people from different class backgrounds, I will emphasise both the factors which made this possible and the ones which are related to people leaving altogether. The effects of jobs and later decisions will be looked into in more
depth in the next chapter. Job history can be shown to be as important an element determining outcome as any other and I will look into the relationship of background factors and job history in depth.

Despite the complex ways in which variables interact with each other, with no single variable influencing all others, and many being required to complete the picture, I feel that the four variables I have picked out represent the most important aspects of people's background, and that the picture would not be made any clearer by presenting a wider range of characteristics. This is confirmed by the log-linear analysis of the four variables which are the subject of this chapter.

Log-linear analysis helps to establish the comparative importance of father's occupation, aspiration, education and age, and should help to separate out the effect of father's occupation (which was the original focus of the research), from competing explanations. However because it is difficult to analyse the result of this type of statistical procedure without dichotomising the variables involved, I will also present a series of three-way tables which will provide more detail about the individual relationships between each aspect of each variable. It will be established that there is little statistically significant interaction between each variable and the others, that is they act in a straightforward manner, where more of a favourable characteristic leads to more success no matter which other variables are analysed in the model. However some variables will interact differently with different levels of the other variables. These interactions may not be statistically significant, but they may have interesting implications which are still pertinent to the purpose of the research. For instance, a higher proportion of those with more education will become owners under most circumstances, but for those with no farm background, the highest qualifications are linked with leaving farming. It is also possible that some variables are masking the effects of others, and this is more readily determined by analysis of three-way tables. For this reason I will go ahead and examine the results of the three-way tables, using the log-linear analysis as a summary, and to help speculate on the results of the interaction of all four variables. Rather than looking at the interaction between all these variables and all of the others, I will concentrate on the effect these background factors have on each other. Ideally I would like to be able to separate out the aspect of each background variable which makes the greatest contribution to the outcome of each career, but there were limits to the extent I could do this. The log-linear and other statistical analyses suggest there is no major difference between the importance of each variable in predicting the outcome of the careers of various subgroups.

To sum up, the areas I wish to examine are:

- The effect of father's occupation as opposed to other variables;
- The separation of the effects of a rural background from membership of a farm owning family;
- The interaction of aspiration with other variables, including the ability of those without family help to fulfill their goals;
- The effect of education, and whether it can be treated as a proxy for ability or social class;
- I will also look at the way background factors relate to each other for people in different age ranges;
- Finally I will relate the results back to the theoretical questions driving the research.
6.2 RESULTS OF THE LOG-LINEAR ANALYSIS

In an attempt to separate out the effect of each of the main background factors in terms of final outcome, I ran a series of log-linear models. Because of the nature of the procedure, I dichotomised all the variables involved, in order to make the results easier to interpret. Three series of models were run, looking at:

* likelihood of leaving for non-farm employment versus not leaving;
* likelihood of remaining in farm work versus doing something else;
* achieving ownership versus not achieving ownership.

These dummy outcome variables were treated as dependent variables in the log-linear analysis. The independent variables are father's occupation, aspiration, farm experience, education and age. Father's occupation remained the same, the others were recoded into:

* wanting to own a farm or not wanting to;
* no School Certificate or School Certificate;
* less than 40 years old, 40 years or more.

My sample size was not large enough to include all the most significant variables in one model so I expanded this series, by varying the independent variables. In this way I tested all the possible combinations of father's occupation, aspiration, education and age.

The first procedure was to look at the goodness of fit of models involving only the main effects of the explanatory variables, in conjunction with outcome. Interaction terms were then successively added to see whether there was any significant improvement in the goodness of fit. For each series of models reported on in Table 6-1, the main effect of the dependent variable and a series of two-way interactions between the dependent and each independent variable are entered first, then on the next line, the same series plus an additional three-way interaction follows. The p values are those associated with the likelihood ratio chi-square test of goodness of fit. Very low p values suggest that the data cannot be adequately modelled by the corresponding log-linear specification. If a model including an interaction term showed a significantly better fit compared to the main effects this is indicated in the final column.
## Table 6-1
### Comparison of Goodness of Fit of Loglinear Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Likelihood Ratio $X^2$</th>
<th>Degrees of Freedom</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>Fit Sign Improved</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$X,XF,XP,XE$</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.936</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ XFE$</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.847</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ XFP$</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.846</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ XPE$</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.845</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$X,XF,XP,XA$</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.509</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ XFP$</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.366</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ XFA$</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.788</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ FPA$</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.519</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$X,XP,XE,XA$</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>.400</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ XPA$</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.443</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>.327</td>
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<td>.601</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$X,XF,XE,XA$</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ XEA$</td>
<td>6.65</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.084</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ FFE</td>
<td>9.93</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ XEA$</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>.341</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$C,CF,CP,CE$</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>.813</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>.816</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>.790</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<td>$+ CEP$</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>.681</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$C,CF,CE,CA$</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>.650</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>.931</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>.526</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
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<td>1.94</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.584</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$C,CP,CE,CA$</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>.661</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ CPE$</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.521</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ CPA$</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.492</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ CEA$</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.884</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$C,CF,CP,CA$</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.453</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ CFA$</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.338</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ CFP$</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.474</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$+ CPA$</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.303</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Key
- $X =$ Left Farming
- $F =$ Father's Occupation
- $C =$ Still Farm Employee
- $E =$ Education
- $O =$ Farm Owner
- $P =$ Aspiration
- $A =$ Age
Generally the addition of higher order interaction terms did not significantly improve the fit of the model, although some of the models for those who left and those currently farm employees were slightly improved by the additional three-way interactions. Adding three-way interactions only improved the fit to a statistically significant degree in one case. The series of models involving those who left, father's occupation and age had a poor fit but this was improved by adding an interaction among exit, education and age to the two-way interactions. (This is not surprising, as age is the least significant of the four main variables. If enough interactions are included in the model the effect of age will disappear.) Taking all of these factors into account, there is little evidence of higher order interaction between the explanatory variables except for education and age. Consequently I will concentrate on the two-way interactions, looking firstly at which series gave the best results and secondly at the ratio values of variables within the model.

There is some variation in the number of missing cases for each model but I do not think they make a significant difference to the relationships shown. The smallest number of missing cases were found for those who ended up as farm owners and in this section the differences between models are smaller.
rather than larger. Most respondents with missing cases have only one variable missing and they tend to be either older or to have had less education. Because of this the number of missing cases increases rapidly for multiple interactions, but it is unlikely that the direction of relationships would be changed if the information was available. Those who are not farm owners are likely to be older or to have less education, and those who left were less likely to want to own, so including these cases would increase the differences between owners and non-owners. The one area which it is impossible to predict is father's occupation.

The model which included father's occupation, aspiration and education gave the best fit for all outcomes: those who left, those still in farming and those who were farm owners. Each of this cluster of variables made a significant difference to the proportion leaving farming and becoming owners, but only aspiration had a significant effect on the proportion currently employed on farms.

The variables included in the next best fit vary from one outcome to the next. For those who left, father's occupation, aspiration and age provided the second best fit. Aspiration, education and age provided the third best fit, with father's occupation, education and age the worst fit. The fit of the models did not give conclusive evidence that father's occupation was more important than aspiration, but given that the model which did not include aspiration at all had the worst fit it is certainly no less important. Education is associated with a better fit than age.

The effects of different attributes can be expressed as ratios calculated from the coefficients provided by the log-linear analysis 1. The relative risk from the best fitting model is compared in Table 6-2. For instance, people whose fathers were farmers were 0.67 times as likely to leave farming as non-farmers' offspring. If the Z values of all the variables are considered, all have a significant effect on outcome. However, the differences in the size of the effect of each variable are slight. Those whose fathers' were not farmers, or who had not wanted to own a farm, or who had no formal school qualifications, or were 40 or over, were all more likely to leave, but none of these effects appear to be more influential than the others.

Those who were still in farming as employees have a different hierarchy in the goodness of fit of models to that of people who left, but again, it is very difficult to distinguish between father's occupation and aspiration. Education featured in all the better fitting models and age was least important. Very few variables made a significant difference to the proportion staying on. The differences in ratios are slight for each variable, but aspiration had the strongest effect within the best fitting model. Having less education increased the likelihood of staying on in farming, father's occupation made virtually no difference and aspiration to own slightly decreased the proportion staying on.

1 The formula is $\exp(1+a)/\exp(1-a)$
There was an overall tendency for the models for farm owners (the largest group) to fit better than those of the other groups, although the order of fit is similar to that of current farm employees. Aspiration seems to have an edge on father's occupation for this group, with education being slightly more important than age. All the variables are significant. Wanting to own made the most difference to success, followed by having a father who was a farmer, being younger and being better educated.

To sum up, all four background variables tend to have an independent effect on outcome. It is very difficult to state categorically that father's occupation was more important than aspiration, although both aspiration and father's occupation seem more important than the other two and age is least important. Aspiration remains important in the presence of father's occupation but not quite as important as father's occupation, which also shows slightly better fitting models. As the ratios show, some variables are more important for some outcomes, aspiration is more so for owners and farm employees, father's occupation for those who left. As the following presentation of relative risk ratios for the best fitting models will show, the combination of aspiration to own and father being a farmer is no better at predicting success than aspiration to own and higher education.

### TABLE 6-2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LEFT FARM</th>
<th>FARM EMPLOYEE</th>
<th>FARM OWNER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FATHER'S OCC</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>1.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Farm</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASPIRATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Farm</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Qual</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC or More</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although there was little evidence of higher order interaction between the variables, it is still interesting to explore the interaction between background factors because of the potential for one variable to confound relationships between others. I will now go on to the more detailed analysis of the effect of background factors, using three-way tables.
Many background factors are related to each other, for example more farmer's sons want to own farms, and age explains differences in education. Because of this I will attempt to discuss the variables in groups, by their relationship to each other or in order of their occurrence in people's life histories, as well as in order of importance. I will look at age first, because it is different to the others. It is an indicator of progress rather than a causal factor. Parents' occupation will come next, then aspects of experience before starting work, aspiration to farm, and education. The latter has slightly different implications from those of the other variables so I will discuss it last. Although vocational training is sometimes separate from schooling in time, it still seems most appropriate to discuss it with education. Of course none of the four main background variables explain all the effects of any other one, and it is just as difficult to assess which has more effect using three-way tables as it is through log linear analysis.

6.3 EFFECT OF AGE OF RESPONDENT ON RESULTS

Age has different qualities to the other variables, in that it separates people who may have different needs because of family commitments, and also may imply changing relationships between different generations of the same family. It has an important association with outcome, although it appears to account for less variation than father's occupation, aspiration and education. It also has a different significance from the others, in that it represents historical change within society, as well as factors relating to the family and the individual. For these reasons I will discuss it fully. It is relatively straightforward in its relationship to life chances, that is as sample members become older they are more likely to have left farming and are less likely to be owners. This relationship holds up in conjunction with a range of intervening variables.

Once age is controlled for, variation in life chances within each age range is generally reduced. Some of the results are affected by the sample construction, in that certain age groups and groups of people have been excluded from the sample. It is also possible that aspirations are affected by events within farming in any one period, but this type of historical analysis is outside the scope of my study. The individual variables, father's occupation, aspirations and education would ideally be investigated by following a cohort of people taking up farm work in a particular year. If a sample of the people entering farming in any one year were surveyed this would enable the full range of aspirations to be discovered for all that cohort. I have chosen not to as it requires a detailed analysis of historical events and represents a thesis topic in its own right. With the sampling method I used, which produces a range of ages, it becomes harder to compare attributes among members as they get older. Many of the contemporaries of these people have left farm work before the initial sample date in 1975. This would be less of a problem (since I am looking at the careers of a particular group of farm workers rather than all

---

1 Possibly age would also have to be controlled for although survey data shows that there is a relatively narrow range of ages within which people take up farm work for the first time.
people who wanted to own a farm) if the number of older farm owners in my sample did not drop to 20, reducing the statistical reliability of any analysis in which they are involved.

In my study group, career aspirations were associated with different life chances among different age groups. Older participants were less likely to have wanted to own a farm, 63% of under 36 year olds did, but only 41% of over 45 year olds. While those under 45 years old were also more likely to succeed, whatever their aspiration, aspiration to own is most necessary for success for those over 45 years old. At this stage, most have either left, or are settled as farm employees. Aspiration may also be influenced by events in particular years, such as the 1930's depression, but because of rate of ownership drops further than aspiration to own, it seems most likely that the construction of the sample, which excludes farm owners who began as employees at the same time as older members of the study group is responsible.

Other factors than aspiration may be affected by general changes in society. Dividing the sample up by age shows changes in educational achievement. Education levels have been rising throughout this century. The most commonly used indicator of achievement is possession of School Certificate, but this examination was only introduced in 1944 (Campbell 1952: 87). Again, the ideal sample would follow people from their entry into farming in a particular year, so that education levels would be comparable. As it is, my sample contains relatively few people who are too old to have sat School Certificate: 29 of those who left, 10 of those who are still in farming and 2 of those who are now farm owners, 9% overall, but its significance has changed as it has become more common for farm employees to possess it. Only 26% of those under 35 years had spent less than 3 years at school, compared to 61% of those over 45 years old. The life chances of those with or without formal school qualifications varied little within each age group, with those without formal qualifications being less likely to own and more likely to leave.

Father's occupation is a strong indicator of the likelihood of people becoming farm owners at present, but changes within farming may have made entry from non-farm occupations easier in the past. Since white settlement began the number of farms has increased steadily until its peak in 1955 (Department of Statistics 1982). This increase in settlement has meant that in the past many people from non-farm backgrounds have moved into farm ownership. The government's policy of settling returned servicemen on farms under favourable conditions has reinforced this trend. A survey of dairy farmers carried out in the late 1930s reflected this influx from outside (Doig 1940: 26). Comments from contemporary observers (Belshaw 1933; Freitag 1952) suggested mobility has been a problem in the past, particularly on to sheep farms, but it is difficult to assess whether it has tightened up since.

As it happens, the effect of father's occupation is strongest among the youngest and oldest respondents. It had less effect on likelihood of leaving in the older age groups. Education has a
similar pattern, it makes least difference to 36 to 45 year olds. Few of those in the middle group with School Certificate left and the proportions with differing educational qualifications becoming owners were almost identical. In this age group, the participant's own resources seem to be more important than in the younger group, allowing those whose fathers were not farmers, or who had other favourable background characteristics, for example education, or who came from a higher socio-economic status, to attain their goals after all.

To sum up, my sample includes people of a range of ages, and age is related to achievement of farm ownership. There is a tendency for people to be in a position to achieve ownership by a certain age, or not at all. The highest proportion achieve it in the middle age group, as some of those for whom it is a little harder, catch up with others. Ideally, I would like to address the influence of changes in the social and economic conditions of farming, but it is difficult to address changes in historical influences because of small numbers in the older age groups.

6.4 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FATHER'S OCCUPATION AND OTHER FACTORS

Because my principal interest is in class mobility I will look at the interaction of parents' occupations and other background factors first, to confirm that it is responsible for many of the effects which showed up in the two-way interactions. I will then look at how father's occupation and aspiration interact with background experiences which might influence, firstly a decision about a career, secondly ability to carry out goals. I did not discuss the results of the log-linear analyses involving farm experience before first job because they did not prove to be significant, but I will do so here because it is so closely tied to aspiration. I wanted to separate various background factors and see how each influences career outcome. I will then compare the effectiveness of aspirations and education in explaining what might appear to be the result of parental background, but may in fact be related to determination to succeed and ability. Both aspiration and education are complex variables which can trigger other actions, such as seeking vocational qualifications, and cause different effects on different groups of people. I will discuss each one in conjunction with father's occupation.

Although more in my study group had fathers who were farmers, at 64% they did not outweigh those from other backgrounds as much as would be expected in a self-sufficient farming community. This gives me a subsample of 153 people who did not come from farm owning families, some of whom did become owners. The problem of small cell sizes encountered with age is less important for father's occupation because it has been reduced to two alternatives. This masks important differences amongst both farming and non-farm families, but is the lesser problem. I do not have sufficient information to identify differences within farm families because I did not collect information about the financial position of parents. This would need a study more specifically oriented around inheritance. Chapter Seven will give more insight into this issue, although some points here also indicate
differences. I could meaningfully categorise non-farm families by father's occupation as I did in Chapter Five, but the cell sizes are too small to allow further analysis.

**Father's Occupation - Mother's Occupation**

The tables assessing the effect of mother's occupation confirm the proposition that father's occupation is responsible for effects which appeared to be related to mother's occupation. The Zero-Order Gamma for the relationship between outcome and mother's occupation was -.17, but when father's occupation was controlled for the First-Order Partial Gamma dropped to -.13, suggesting that father's occupation accounted for some variance in the relationship. However the results indicate there may be strata among farm owning families (See 6-3). Because of their access to farm work, farmers' wives were less likely to say they were housewives. Those whose parents were both farmers were also slightly less likely to become owners than those whose mothers were working in well paid jobs off the farm, suggesting differences in strata among farmers themselves. Doig found that where farmers' wives were working long hours on the farm the family would have a lower standard of living, suggesting necessity rather than choice (Doig 1940: 102). There were no mothers running a farm without any help from other family members.

**TABLE 6-3**

**OUTCOME OF CAREER BY MOTHER'S OCCUPATION ON ELLEY-IRVING INDEX BY FATHER'S OCCUPATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>FATHER = FARMER</th>
<th>FATHER = NONFARM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM WORKER</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Missing Observations: 41

Most of those with mothers in jobs with higher gradings did well in terms of ownership. The best combination of background factors was for someone to have a father who was a farmer and a mother who worked in a white collar job, 65% of these people became owners. They were in contrast to the very small number who had fathers who were not in farming and mothers who had professional or highly skilled jobs. Seven out of ten left, suggesting they had access to better possibilities elsewhere. Of those who did become owners, one was a woman and one had received full vendor finance from an
ex-employer. The differences between the proportions becoming owners, leaving farming, or staying on as employees which were related to mother's occupation were minimal. There were very few families which could be classified as "dual class", where women were said to have held jobs their ranking was close to that of their husbands on the Elley-Irving index.

My conclusion is that father's occupation remains the key difference and that mother's occupation influences very few cases. Within the major split, between farm owning families and others, the trends are the same for both farmers's and non-farmers's offspring. If their parents are in a better financial position, they are more likely to become farm owners and less likely to leave.

Father's Occupation - Farm Experience

Very few farmer's offspring had not spent their childhood on a farm (three) or worked on a farm as a youth (two) so that the results of a three-way table controlling for father's occupation are similar to those of Table 5-4. Farmers' offspring had a higher rate of ownership than any group of non-farmers' offspring, no matter what their experience. This boosted the proportion of owners in the "both" category to 50%. Otherwise the results for non-farmers' offspring were very similar to those of groups in Table 5-4 who did not have fairly continuous farm experience until their first job. For non-farmers' offspring, spending time on a farm gives little advantage unless it is just previous to starting full-time work - it is clear that other factors than knowledge of farm work and life are involved.

Aspirations - Farm Background

As expected, spending time on a farm as a child or working on one as a youth is related to increased interest in farm ownership - nearly half the sample came into this category. This in turn is related to increased likelihood of success. However the proportion of all farm children who both wanted to own and succeeded in owning was slightly lower than that of farmer's offspring in the same position: 55% compared with 59% (See Tables 6-4 and 6-5). Farm experience may have been more important for a small group of determined non-farmers' offspring. Those who were not farmer's offspring, but wanted to own and did have farm experience, had a proportion becoming owners that was close to that of farmer's offspring. Very few people decided to try for ownership without some experience and most who failed left, having become disillusioned with farm work itself. Others have bought small blocks of land, no doubt as a cheaper alternative.

Few who did not want to own a farm when they started farm work achieved ownership, unless they came from the category with continuous experience (called "both" in tables) which indicated that they were more likely to be farmers' offspring. Those with no experience at all are more likely to leave farming, but otherwise were no worse off than those with some experience, but no family backing.
They are less likely to stay on as farm employees. The highest proportion to leave had been undecided about their future when they started farm work and were not farm children, 61% of them left. The difference made by background almost disappears for those who had alternative careers in mind.

### TABLE 6-4
OUTCOME OF CAREER BY FARM EXPERIENCE BY ASPIRATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>BOTH</th>
<th>YOUTH</th>
<th>NONE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM EMP</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>BOTH</th>
<th>YOUTH</th>
<th>NONE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OTHER PLANS/UNDECIDED</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of missing observations: 52

In conclusion, aspiration is closely related to farm experience, and both are related to the proportions of those leaving or staying, but even together they do not provide a total explanation of who will become owners. They do not explain the differences in outcome between those with various types of farm experience, whether for those who wanted to own or those with other plans. Differences between the types of farm experience correspond to differences in father's occupation - no combination of two variables can account for any third one, especially if the third one is father's occupation.

### 6.5 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ASPIRATIONS AND OTHER FACTORS

Aspirations are a complex mixture of ideals in interaction with practical possibilities which change over time. This analysis of the effect of desire to own a farm is based purely on what people recollected their aims were at or near the beginning of their working life. This was intentional, as I felt the longer people were in farming, the more likely they would be to tailor their aspirations towards what they saw as possible. This process would have occurred already, but as I am particularly interested in the way actual involvement in farm work affects people's ability to fulfill their aspirations, in other areas than farm ownership as well, this seemed like the most productive time to do a snapshot of aspirations. It is also important to look at aspiration at the beginning of careers in relation to choice of jobs, as I will do in the next chapter.
Slightly over half (55%) of the sample wanted to own a farm at the time they started farm employment, 25% were undecided and only 20% had alternative careers in mind (some of these were in farming but did not involve ownership). This means that the problem of small cell sizes is more widespread than it was for father's occupation, since it exists for both those who are undecided and those who did not want to own. There is a particularly large concentration of people who wanted to own and did so, 27% of the whole sample, leaving the cell sizes for those who did not want to own but did so marginal.

**Father's Occupation - Aspirations**

There is definitely a relationship between father's occupation and aspiration. Although the log-linear analysis of the relationship has already suggested that the two variables do not have higher order interaction it is possible one might mask the effect of the other. Each has a linear relationship with outcome. Those whose fathers were farmers were more likely to report that they had decided on ownership at the time they first began as farm employees, 63% did so compared with only 42% of non-farmers' sons. However wanting to own a farm is not the same as owning one, even for farmer's offspring. Of farmer's sons who did want to own, 59% succeeded. This is a high proportion compared with other groups, but it does suggest involuntary downward mobility was a problem. Only 36% of non-farmers' offspring who wanted to own did so. Since many farm workers began farm work relatively young, it is not surprising that over one-third of them are undecided or have other ambitions, unless they have grown up expecting to farm, as many farmer's sons do. Being undecided has a different significance for non-farmer's offspring even although a similar percentage had not made up their minds (See Table 6-5). While more farmer's offspring who were undecided became owners than those with other plans, this was reversed for non-farmers' offspring. Only 12% of non-farmers' offspring who were undecided became owners and the proportion leaving was correspondingly high.

**TABLE 6-5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>FATHER = FARMER</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>FATHER = NON-FARM</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OWN</td>
<td>UNDEC</td>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>OWN</td>
<td>UNDEC</td>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td>64</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM EMP</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of missing observations: 46
The results for those who had other aspirations than ownership differ less. There were more non-farmer's offspring in this group but once an alternative career has been decided on, both farmer's offspring and non-farmer's offspring tend to follow it up. Close to 50% left farming, with the rest being evenly divided between remaining as farm employees and leaving farming. The size of the Zero Order Gamma between outcome and aspiration (-.36) shows one of the stronger relationships in this study, but the first order partial gamma (-.32) when father's occupation is controlled for suggests that it was slightly masked by father's occupation.

While early aspiration and father's occupation increase ownership there are clearly other factors working, which ensure success to some who did not originally intend to own and deny it to some of those that did. This issue will be explored further in the following chapters. In the meantime it is interesting to look at what happened to the 41% of farmer's sons who wanted to own and did not.

Those whose fathers were farm owners who left farming despite an earlier ambition to own had slightly different characteristics to those who left in general. The overwhelming reason for leaving was financial. Some had not gone ahead with ownership for reasons which were unrelated to background. For instance, 7% left to pursue religious activities which over-rode their interest in farming. Another 4% left because of their health. A few (9%) had actually owned farms in the past, sold them and returned to farm employment, then left permanently. Even more had some connection to land ownership. A number who were working full time in non-farm jobs had also purchased small blocks of land for part-time farming or had shares in a farm, others hoped to do so in the future. For these people, as for most of this group, the impossibility of buying a farm, or uncertainty in the industry if they did so, or the lowness of their wages, drove them to seek a better income in another industry. Even those who had been sharemilking were getting little benefit from it, because of low returns.

The jobs this group changed to tended to depend on the time they left. Those who left earlier, for example for health reasons, were more likely to have taken on some type of retraining. Others tended to move into work for which they had some useful experience. Their new jobs ranged from accountancy, to a trade, to driving, with the majority in semi-skilled jobs. Only a few have remained self employed, and most are in very small businesses, which are relatively precarious, such as owner-drivers. In terms of possibilities for accumulation of capital assets, all were worse off than they would have been as farmers.

If the characteristics of this group are compared to those who left in general, the differences are small and not statistically significant because of the small numbers, but are generally consistent with those of people known to be keen on ownership. They were slightly more likely to have had a non-economic block, more likely to be in the 36-45 year old group, and much more likely to have had farm qualifications.

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Some respondents reported making a decision to take up farm work in early childhood - presumably based on a desire to continue in the tradition of the family lifestyle, rather than an occupational choice as usually described in the literature. Farmer's offspring were likely to make this early choice, 45% had chosen to go into farming long before school leaving age, and not many decided after they had established themselves in an alternative career or job. Of those that did, some deliberately chose to get an alternative qualification, some intended a different career but disliked it, some received pressure from their parents to come back to the farm. As you would expect, background and aspirations were more important than time of decision in predicting where people will end up. However for non-farmer's offspring, time of decision-making is much more important. Non-farmer's offspring who made an early choice were more likely to either become farm owners or stay in farming. This was presumably related to the combination of experience of farm life and strength of determination mentioned in the previous section. Knowledge that it was possible to achieve this goal may have contributed to this aspiration. It is also important to start ownership early in order to reduce the mortgage while still young (Kaplan [1978?]). Non-farmers' sons were quite likely to decide to go into farming later in life, 36% did so, but few of these people became owners, and most left. Presumably several factors would be important for non-farmers' offspring in deciding to own, because they are more dependent on their own resources, both in terms of motivation and money.

6.6 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND OTHER FACTORS

Education has a relatively regular relationship with other variables: spending longer at school is generally related to increased chances of ownership and decreased likelihood of leaving. It does not eliminate differences caused by other factors such as family background, but comes closest to doing this for those with School Certificate. The problems in interpretation relating to education caused by changes in standards over time have been outlined earlier in the chapter. There is no difference in the proportion of people in various other groups who have gained formal qualifications, for example farmer's offspring and others were equally likely to have School Certificate.

The majority, (60%) of those who were involved in farm employment had no formal school qualifications. Another 26% had School Certificate in one paper or more. Those who gained Sixth Form Certificate or some other qualification beyond School Certificate were relatively rare (14% had such), leading to problems with small cell sizes for this analysis. Those who left farming and current farm employees are more likely to be older, exaggerating the problem.
Years at School and Qualifications

I recorded both formal qualifications and number of years at secondary school, but I have chosen to accept formal qualifications as being more closely related to ability than years at school. A number of people stay three or more years at school without gaining a formal qualification. A considerable number of those who were at school for three years or more, 38%, did not acquire a formal qualification (given that this examination has a predetermined fail rate, this is to be expected). Another 7% were at school for four years without gaining this sort of success, but 71% of these people with an extra year of schooling later became farm owners, a far higher proportion than for those who came out of school better qualified. The longer people were at school, the less likely they were to leave farming and the proportion staying on as farm employees was unaffected by level of education, remaining at about 24%. The cell sizes are small for those spending longer at school, but it does seem likely that length of time at school is related to the socio-economic status of parents and in turn, farm ownership. Spending three years at school without getting any qualification has a closer relationship with owning a farm than being two years at school. Of those who did get School Certificate in one subject or more, 45% took four years. Unlike those who stayed on without getting qualifications, taking longer to get School Certificate made little difference in the proportion becoming owners, although they were less likely to leave because more were still farm employees.

Education - Father's Occupation

The level of school qualifications between those with and without fathers who were farmers was very similar but interacted very differently with life chances. Obviously, those whose fathers were farmers were more likely to become farm owners, whatever their level of education. For farmers' offspring, more education increased their likelihood of farm ownership even further and decreased the likelihood of their leaving. (Although only a few, 34, had higher qualifications than School Certificate, 65% became owners.) Of those who were still farm employees, there were fewer with higher qualifications. There were no differences in the proportion gaining a particular level of qualification which could be attributed to coming from a rural background.

The effect of school qualifications is not quite so regular for those whose fathers were not farmers, nor is it so strong (See Table 6-6). Those with parents in white collar jobs had slightly higher levels of education, 27% had a higher level than School Certificate, compared with 14% of the whole sample. There was also an increase in ownership for those with parents in white collar jobs over and above the level attributable to School Certificate, but it was not significant. Those with even higher qualifications were more likely to leave farming - almost as many did as those with none. They were less likely to become owners, or to have remained in farm work, than those with only School Certificate. These were people who had been committed to farming but were able to gain better opportunities elsewhere.
once health or dissatisfaction with farm pay encouraged them to leave. Education closed the gap between farmers' and non-farmers' offspring. Those with School Certificate were almost as likely to become owners as farmers' offspring with no qualifications, 39% did compared with 44% of the latter. Non-owners' offspring with School Certificate were also more likely to still be farm employees than others, 33% were, compared with the average of 27%. All had a strong commitment to farming, a higher proportion of them were sharemilkers and managers than the average. The zero order Gamma of .25 for the relationship between outcome and education suggests it is slightly masked by father's occupation (the First-Order Partial Gamma was .27).

**TABLE 6-6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>FATHER = FARMER</th>
<th>FATHER = NON-FARM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>&lt;SC  SC  &gt;SC</td>
<td>&lt;SC  SC  &gt;SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>154  75  34</td>
<td>85   36  23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>%    %   %</td>
<td>%    %  %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT F</td>
<td>34   19  15</td>
<td>55   27  52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMP</td>
<td>23   24  21</td>
<td>24   33  22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOWN</td>
<td>44   57  65</td>
<td>21   39  26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100  100 100</td>
<td>100  100 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Missing Observations: 62

* SC: SCHOOL CERTIFICATE 1 SUBJECT OR MORE

**Aspiration - Education**

Education has a relationship with aspiration and together they provide a good prediction of outcome, but common sense suggests there are likely to be other factors involved. Like aspiration, education is related to improved chances of becoming a farm owner but is generally more independent of other variables. Those with School Certificate in one or more subjects were most likely to want to own, and 64% of them became owners while only 16% left. Fewer with School Certificate only were undecided, although fewer who were undecided still became owners that is having School Certificate did not improve the chances of those who were undecided (See Table 6-7).

Of those who were undecided but had higher school qualifications, 56% became owners later, even more than those who wanted to own. Presumably people with higher educational qualifications were thinking very carefully before taking on a career in farming and were most likely to be undecided, but also more likely to succeed once they had made up their minds. Slightly fewer of those with no formal qualifications wanted to own. Possibly age was influencing this relationship, that is those who did want to own had already dropped out of the sample population. Possibly they perceived more barriers than
those with School Certificate. The gamma statistics suggest that there is a moderate relationship between outcome and aspiration of which a little could be attributed to education (Zero-Order Gamma - .37, First-Order Gamma - .33).

In general, there do seem to be two trends operating to reinforce each other. Those who wish to own are more likely to do so than those who do not, those with higher education are more likely to own than those with little. For those that did want to own, education makes more difference to the proportions who end up in each outcome. It seems likely that the relationship between wanting to own a farm and education is related to family background and expectations of success. Higher aspirations in younger people coincide with higher education and this also boosts the strength of the relationship, with class as an important underlying factor.

**TABLE 6-7**

**OUTCOME OF CAREER BY ASPIRATIONS BY SCHOOL QUALIFICATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>WITHOUT SC</th>
<th>WITH SC</th>
<th>HIGHER THAN SC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>NOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F EMP</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F OWN</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Missing Observations: 42

* OWN: OWN A FARM       UND: UNDECIDED       NOT: OTHER THAN OWNING FARM

**Education - Farm and Trade Qualifications**

Acquisition of farm and school qualifications seems to be related, the proportion of those with farm qualifications increased from 17% to 38% for those with School Certificate or more. The same is not so true for trade qualifications. Farm qualifications were more common in those who are younger, whereas trade ones were more common for those who are older and had previous non-farm work experience. The effect of farm and trade qualifications is less clear cut than their distribution. The relationship between having or not having a farm qualification and life chances is not particularly strong, but is usually related to better chances of ownership and decreased likelihood of leaving (See Table 6-8). It seems to make most difference to those without school qualifications. Like farm work experience as a youth, it seems to be related to better chances for those who otherwise lacked advantages. On the other hand, trade qualifications were held by those who had less advantages in the first place, and
worked elsewhere first, or moved elsewhere since they could make little headway in farming. Statistical analysis shows little difference in the proportions with and without farm qualifications who left farming, stayed on as employees or became owners, whatever their educational level. Trade qualifications do show a statistically significant decrease in the proportion reaching different outcomes for each educational level.

TABLE 6-8
OUTCOME BY FARM AND TRADE QUALIFICATIONS BY EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>WITHOUT SC</th>
<th>WITH SC</th>
<th>HIGHER THAN SC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FARM</td>
<td>TRADE</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM WORK</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of missing observations: 37

**Father's Occupation - Farm and Trade Qualifications**

Farming qualifications are held by only a quarter of the sample, and father's occupation makes no difference to the proportion. However farming qualifications have different implications for each. They make little difference to the life chances of farmers' offspring, but they improve the chances for non-farmers' offspring. The percentage of non-farmer's offspring with a farming qualification achieving ownership is as high as that for farmer's offspring with no qualifications. This is consistent with the association between education, aspiration, age and career outcome.

Trade training is related to increased likelihood of leaving the farming sector for all the sample, while far fewer farm owners have such qualifications. Those with trade qualifications are also less likely to have remained as farm employees. The effect is stronger for non-farmer's sons, who as one would expect are more likely to have such qualifications - 25% do compared with 13% of farmer's sons. Many trade qualifications were gained before people started in farm work, particularly by those who later left. Fewer gained such qualifications while still farm employees. Of those who left, nearly a third had gained a qualification since their break with farm work.
### TABLE 6-9
OUTCOME OF CAREER BY QUALIFICATIONS BY FATHER’S OCCUPATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>FATHER = FARMER</th>
<th></th>
<th>FATHER = NON-FARM</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FARM TRADE TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>FARM TRADE TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>67 35 106</td>
<td></td>
<td>39 38 73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>% %</td>
<td></td>
<td>% % %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>24 40 28</td>
<td></td>
<td>36 68 50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM WORKER</td>
<td>24 29 23</td>
<td></td>
<td>15 21 26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>52 31 49</td>
<td></td>
<td>49 11 25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100 100 100</td>
<td></td>
<td>100 100 100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Missing Observations: 34

### Aspiration - Farm and Trade Qualifications

Those that want to own a farm are most likely to have farm qualifications, 32% did compared with 15% of those who were undecided. However extra training made little difference to the level of success of those who did want to own a farm, although it was related to better chances for those who were undecided or had originally wanted to do something else. In this, aspiration is very similar to father’s occupation. There are few differences in the proportion with trade qualifications from one aspiration to the next, but large differences in the relationship it has with wanting to own a farm. In spite of wanting to own, those with a trade qualification were much more likely to leave. The difference between the proportions leaving related to gaining trade qualifications or not is much larger for those who wanted to own than for those who did not want to own. The numbers are involved are small, they may have left in larger numbers because they knew they could fulfill more of their goals elsewhere, or the result may be purely coincidence.

### 6.7 CONCLUSION

Both the log-linear modelling and the three-way interactions presented in this chapter pursue the questions raised in Chapter Five as to which groups are involved in upward and downward mobility. Quantitative methods cannot differentiate the exact nature of the relationship between background, aspirations and success. This may need a more thorough, qualitative approach. Upward and downward mobility are based on combinations of factors rather than just one. But in the meantime there are some questions which can be answered.
In Chapter Five I indicated further analysis was necessary to look at the implications of downward mobility for Friedmann's, and Goodman and Redcliff's theories on the class position of farmers' offspring and other farm employees. Until the effect of aspiration and education had been assessed after father's occupation had been controlled for I could not further explore the problem. This chapter has confirmed that farmers' offspring who wanted to own have been unsuccessful. Farmers' offspring who wanted to own were successful in 60% of cases, only 11% ahead of farmers' offspring in general. I also know that although more of these people have some links to ownership, through sharefarming or part-time farming, they ended up in very similar jobs to those of non-farmers' offspring who left. Their immediate income may be higher but the chance of accumulating assets through capital gains has gone.

Nor were farmers' offspring who wanted to become owners the sub-group which provided the highest proportion of owners. The highest proportion of owners come from farmers' offspring who had progressed past School Certificate or who had mothers who had white collar jobs, 65% of these people became farm owners. As Chapter Seven will show, subsequent careers will demonstrate father's occupation is even more important than has been suggested so far. If a farm is too small to employ family members full-time, it may be too small to provide a substantial amount of help towards ownership. There are high proportions of owners in groups who are not necessarily all farmers' offspring as well. Of those who wanted to own and had School Certificate, 65% became owners. Aspiration is important but probably not the key factor.

The detailed exploration of the paths to upward and downward mobility has clarified some issues, and brings me a little closer to being able to comment on the relative standing of Friedmann's or Goodman and Redcliff's ideas than did Chapter Five. Involuntary downward mobility has been identified, and the position of farmers' offspring who left farming, in terms of occupation, confirms that downward mobility is involved rather than a sideways move within the same class. There were some comments, which will be discussed further in Chapter Eight, which indicated farmers' offspring and others were rejecting farming because of low sector incomes. However without doing further field work, it seems that farming was still seen as desirable, but that farm prices were too high for families to provide enough assistance for all offspring to become owners. By 1986 the situation may have changed, and farming more likely to be rejected, but my study was carried out too early for this to be assessed.

Barriers to entry mean that only half of the most competent, determined and wealthy of non-farmers' offspring become owners. The distinctions between this group and the least advantaged farmers' offspring in terms of achievement of farm ownership start to blur, but where farmers' and non-farmers' offspring are compared within similar levels of education or aspiration there are always substantial differences in their chances. The amount of mobility present in my results confirms the tenuous status of the petty bourgeoisie, neither fully capitalist nor working class. Inheritance of productive
capital is important in reproducing the capitalist class, but inheritance of small amounts of capital makes no difference to class position for the working class. To automatically assign farmers' offspring to the class of their parent's may appear to solve the thorny problem of class definition of non-owning family members but in the long run it begs as many questions as it solves.

Given that a degree of openness exists, and that people's own activities are likely to have an effect on their life trajectory, it is important to look at work history as well as background. Unless job history is totally determined by background, some of the handicaps of background may be overcome by carefully planning jobs to build up both finance and experience. It is likely that background will influence job history, particularly the availability of work on a family farm, but it is possible that the importance of factors will vary when their interaction with job history is assessed. People's attitudes, formed by their background, may be important here.

The information presented so far, suggests that there are a number of important subdivisions within farm employment, among people with different backgrounds and expectations for the future. There are differences in the ability of farm owning families to reproduce their offspring as owners as well as between owners and non-owners and non-farm families which lead to differing class mobility. Those who left farming generally show the opposite characteristics to those who became owners. The majority of non-farmers' offspring with other plans than ownership and school qualifications left (75%), followed by 64% who had been undecided about their future or had no formal school qualifications. Those who had stayed on as farm employees seem to correspond to neither one group nor the other.

Although past research has often focused on farm employment as the preserve of either farmers' offspring or working class employees, doing this clearly misses an important aspect of the farm employee's reality. Without acknowledging the conflicting interests involved in the divided nature of the labour market, research is going to be inadequate. I am also interested in the degree to which attitudes to unionisation vary with background, and will look at participation rates for people from different backgrounds. I will look at the period between starting work, when the influence of background may be modified by new experiences, in the next two chapters, then go on to look at the sources of finance actually used by successful owners. This should complete the exploration of the key points at which people's goals can be either promoted or frustrated and provide some assessment of the relative contribution of the various factors involved.
CHAPTER SEVEN

JOB HISTORY AND LIFE CHANCES

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Although background has been shown to be related to outcome of career, the mechanisms by which this is brought about are complex. This chapter and the next will look at people's work histories to see whether this is a source of differentiation. Some jobs have different income potential or implications for future prospects. People with different expectations and attitudes may seek different opportunities or use jobs in different ways to further their interests. This chapter will look at job histories themselves to see whether some elements of them are related to background, while Chapter Eight will explore the likelihood that some background characteristics or job histories are related to different values and attitudes. Expectations of success may play a part in shaping job histories, and these two chapters will attempt to look at whether these or more concrete factors seem more important.

Lowe's (1985) study of Waikato farmers showed that sharemilking gave people a head start in accumulating capital for farm ownership. The results of my research have confirmed this relationship. However it is important to investigate whether sharemilking or other jobs have an independent association with leaving farm work, staying on or becoming an owner. Lowe did not look at whether sharemilking on a farm owned by another family member was any different from a contract with non-kin. It is also possible that taking a job such as sharemilking is associated with background factors, particularly coming from a farm owning family, which lead to sharemilking and then farm ownership, as part of the intergenerational transfer of the farm. By looking at the relationship between sharemilking and farm ownership for those who are not from farm owning families, some of these interrelationships can be teased out.

I am also interested in whether a particular combination of jobs, or order of jobs, was more likely to lead to a particular outcome. Those who emphasise the possibility of mobility into farm ownership in New Zealand often point out that the personal qualities of farm employees are important in determining their chances. One aspect of this might be "making the right moves" in terms of gaining experience and taking jobs in management or sharemilking, which are generally better paid. Of course the fact that people have held a particular sequence of jobs, does not say anything about their attitude to them and their longer term plans. However making particular job choices may effect outcome for people, in spite of their having had specific goals at various stages in life. As I mentionned in Chapter Five, aspirations
change during people's careers as they are confronted with new situations. I will begin by presenting a series of job histories narrated by respondents to highlight the changes in situation which people face.

After looking at the experiences outlined in a few "typical" job histories, I will go on to aggregated comparisons of the job histories of the different groups of people in my sample, condensing people's wide experiences into a series of differing job sequences. With these I will look at the effect of particular jobs, independent of motivation, on the outcome of these farm careers as at 1986. I will relate people's overall job history with background factors and try and look at whether the two are acting independently. Job history is related to background factors but ideally we need to know if background leads to a particular job type, and whether the job then leads to success, or whether people with a certain background will become farm owners regardless of the type of job they had. Finally, I will look at some aspects of job history in more detail, focusing on the way in which people's jobs changed over time. After this chapter and Chapter Eight I will make some comparison between the importance of people's aspirations and attitudes, and other factors over which they have no control, in determining outcome.

7.2 INDIVIDUAL JOB HISTORIES

When I designed the mail questionnaire I did not ask people why they took on each job, or left it. I was interested in the job changes between the particular types of work which I felt would be most related to career moves aimed at achieving long term goals. Because of this I restricted open ended questions to asking people why they took on or left the types of jobs which previous research suggested would prove significant (See Appendix Two for questionnaire). These were:

* NON-FARM WORK HELD BEFORE FIRST FARM JOB
* GENERAL WAGE WORK
* MANAGERIAL WORK
* SHAREMILKING
* NON-FARM WORK BETWEEN FARM JOBS

Gill (1981) saw experience of repeated problems as an important element of people's decision to leave farming, but these issues also come out when people make major changes in their jobs, such as taking on a sharemilking contract or leaving farming. Full job histories could demonstrate the way that frustration can build up through repeated problems very graphically, but for analytical purposes I feel that my respondents have conveyed crucial reasons for change and so I have quoted from them at length 1.

There is a lot of variety as well as important similarities in the problems faced by farm employees. Alan, a farm employee, aged 35 years, had always wanted to own a farm. His father had died while he was

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1 The names given to respondents are not their real names.
young and he stayed on at school to get Higher School Certificate. Alan decided to work on a farm in his first year at secondary school. When he started work he:

"Wanted to gain experience in farming a)sheep and cattle b)dairying so as to be able to carry out farming responsibilities on my own."

He left farming temporarily to go to Teachers College:

"... couldn't see myself ever owning sheep and cattle farm. Taught for 3 years saved enough money to buy part of herd - left teaching in 1978 to get dairying experience."

After two dairying jobs he became a sharemilker.

"To get closer to farm ownership and to increase incentive to work the long hours - much easier when you're working for yourself. Was to be the means for farm ownership. Was a natural progression from wages jobs to a position of responsibility."

Greg was a male farm owner aged 36 years. His father was a farmer. He had a Diploma of Dairy Farming from Massey University. Greg decided to work on a farm when he was five years old. When he first left school he was trying to build up experience, just as Alan had:

"Worked for father for 3 mths then applied for job in Waikato to get 18 mths practical experience on an approved farm for my Diploma. After attaining Diploma in dairy farming worked for 6 mths on sheep and beef farm to broaden experience in other types of farming."

He did some non-farm work, mainly related to farming:

"To broaden my outlook on other aspects of the community and also make better money."

But finally he returned to farming as a sharemilker for his parents, and bought a nearby farm which he runs in partnership with his parents.

Doug, aged 41 years, had originally wanted to own a farm but by 1986 had left farming. He had left school without gaining a formal qualification. He started off as a farm labourer, milking cows, but had also worked in a combined dairy farm and market garden. After four years he:

"... left farming and went to work in a saw mill as had had enough of being put off during winter months."

He came back to farming as a sharemilker two years later "with the intention of buying own farm after a few years", but left after two years:

"Accountant advised us to do so as we had pigs as well as the cows and the prices of pig meat dropped while the prices of meal escalated."
At this stage he went back to work for wages, as an employee of the Department of Lands and Survey. He worked on two different farms for them and then for a private farmer before becoming a manager. His comment was:

"We were unable to buy our own farm on wages. Did not like the insecurity of not being able to buy our own home. Tired of being exploited by a man who was not really even a farmer."

A manager's job was offered to him and he stayed with them (the Department of Lands and Survey) for another five years. He then went to a private employer for another three years. This was his last farm waged job and he left for a reason which was not directly related to the work itself:

"Couldn't get on with the owner and his wife as she considered herself the farmer and owner of property."

Since then, he has been working as an orchard developer, bulldozer driver, and self-employed contractor. He now has a cottage industry doing saddle and leather repairs. He also shears and has a 30% share of a small sheep farm.

These job histories illustrate a number of the factors farm employees have to contend with. The role of chance, including good and bad seasons, affects the availability of work. Farmers' own agendas, for example replacing employees with their own offspring, also limit the choices available and confirm the importance of family ownership in shaping the situation of employees in general. Farm employees do plan their jobs to improve their chances, and may succeed in spite of the limitations they face, but there is often frustration and insecurity involved.

I will now go on to look at the aggregate job histories of the sample members. The full range of jobs and the progressive nature of moves through a series of different jobs, illustrated by the people who I have quoted fully, is collapsed into a series of categories for aggregate comparisons.

7.3 OVERALL JOB HISTORIES

People participating in the survey had had a huge variety of jobs which have been categorised in order to construct a series of generalised job paths or clusters. The basic building blocks out of which the categories have been constructed are:

- general farm jobs = FARMHAND
- jobs as a farmhand plus sharemilking/managing = SHAREMILKING
- jobs as a farmhand plus management of farm = MANAGER
- non-farm work before working on a farm = BEFORE
- non-farm work in between farm jobs = NONFARM
Some people did hold managerial jobs on dairy farms but these were much less common (20% of the jobs in this category, many of which would have been held by those who also sharemilked) than sharemilkking, which is taken to be the major characteristic. This is why the combined group is referred to as sharemilkting.

Farm type is an important aspect of work, but because the numbers involved in some jobs are relatively low, this has been reduced to dairy or non-dairy. Non-dairy consists of sheep or beef farms and those with varying combinations of sheep and beef, plus horticulture etc. From now on, any farm type with over 50% or more of its income from either dairy cows or other stock or crops will be referred to by the principal form of production to simplify the analysis. Anyone who had half or more of their jobs on dairy farms was categorised as having a "dairy" career, few were on the borderline between dairy and other careers. Slightly more than half of respondents had spent over half of their jobs on dairy farms, but there was no real difference in the proportion in each farm type in the likelihood of people having various mixtures of non-farm work, general farm work and managing or sharemilkting (p=0.1).

There are sixteen different ways these basic categories have been combined to summarise actual careers, organised by the number of people in each category of job history (See Table 7-1). Even this range of categories hides variation, in the number of jobs held and the number of times people moved in and out of the various types of jobs. Unfortunately these job histories are difficult to compare with available information on the distribution of workers among farm types in Northland in any one year. Data on farm type in 1982, a year when many of my study population were still farm employees suggested that dairy farm careers were heavily over-represented, and beef under-represented (Department of Statistics 1983). However since Northland beef farms may just be less likely to employ non-family labour this does not necessarily mean my study group is not representative of farm employees as a whole.
TABLE 7-1
FREQUENCY OF EACH CAREER TYPE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAIRY</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FARMHAND</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARMHAND &gt; NONFARM &gt; FARM</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARMHAND &gt; SHAREMILKING/MANAGING</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARMHAND &gt; NONFARM &gt; SHAREMILKING/MANAGING</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>17</td>
</tr>
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<td>SUBTOTAL NON-DAIRY</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NON-DAIRY</th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FARMHAND</td>
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<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>35</td>
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<td>BEFORE &gt; FARMHAND &gt; NONFARM &gt; MANAGING</td>
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<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBTOTAL NON-DAIRY</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| TOTAL                                      | 100| 453 |

However even this simplified range of categories is far too complex to allow meaningful analysis of the relationship between outcome, jobs and background factors. A small number of key dimensions have been used to construct categories suitable for further analysis. The final categories chosen were:

* FARMHAND
* SHAREMILKER
* MANAGER
* BEFORE

The sharemilking category was clear cut. The apparent similarity between the structure of dairy and non-dairy careers disappears if outcome is taken into consideration. For those on dairy farms there was a wide range in the proportion becoming farm owners, depending on the type of job history they had been allotted. Those with sharemilking experience are always more likely to have become owners. Sharemilkers with no off-farm experience were most likely to become owners: 72% did so. There was a drop in the rate for those with both sharemilking and non-farm experience but 58% still came to be
owners. Sharemilking remained significantly different from other jobs and I have separated out those with this as a component in their careers.

The farmhand category was also straightforward to construct. The drop in the proportion becoming owners for those with only general farm work was substantial and the proportion of those who left rose. Those with general experience on non-dairy farms were clearly different from managers. Non-dairy and dairy careers showed similar proportions leaving farming or becoming owners. Having non-farm experience in between farm work did not make a significant difference to outcome either, so I have combined all four groups into one.

For those who spent most of their careers away from dairy farms, progress into management was the most significant feature. The greatest concentration of managers was among those who were still farm employees. Again, having non-farm work between farm jobs did not make a significant difference to the proportion with managerial experience in each outcome so these two groups have been amalgamated into another category.

There were some differences between those who had worked in non-farm work before they had gone into farm work, related to whether they had sharemilking experience or not, but the numbers are so low in some categories if all the distinctions within this group are preserved, that I have also grouped all those with non-farm work before farm work together. Where a major difference exists I will comment on it in the text.

There are other ways of categorising careers than by the presence or absence of particular types of work. I also tried categorising careers by the time spent in the predominant type of work done over a working life, rather than by the occurrence of a particular type of job (for any length of time). I wondered if some combinations of jobs are more closely related to ownership than others, and whether it was the combination that was important, or one particular element of it. As it happened, there was no significant improvement in the chances of ownership for most of those who had spent most of their career in a particular job compared with those who had done it for an unspecified length of time. The one category which did make a significant difference was non-farm work between farm work. Normally this was related to slightly lower levels of ownership, although the effect was not consistent. But curiously enough, 57% of a small group who had spent most of their careers in off-farm work after beginning in farming, became owners. All of these people came from farm owning families and had some assurance that if they were interested in ownership, help would be available.

Because categorising people by the job in which they spent most of time makes little improvement in prediction of outcome I have not made use of this approach for further analysis. There are other problems with it as well - 29% of the sample cannot be said to have had one job which predominated in
their careers and therefore members of this group are therefore difficult to categorise in a meaningful way.

There was a wide variety in the numbers of jobs held, as well as the types. Very few people had one job, only 9%. Slightly more had only worked as general farm employees - 16%. Another 21% had never worked off farms. The majority, 63%, had been in a combination of farm and non-farm jobs. As a group, 93% of those who were in one job were general farmhands. But those with two or three jobs were unlikely to be only general farm employees. The rest were divided between those with a mixture of farm jobs and those with non-farm jobs who had only been general farm employees. The more jobs people had, the more likely they were to have had a wider range of jobs. About one third of those with seven or more jobs had had at least one of all the different types (this does not take whether they were dairy or not dairy into account). Only 15% had no off-farm experience.

There is obviously a wide variety of job histories among the people in this sample and many ways of categorising them. But in order to look at the relationship of job history with outcome it is necessary to select one aspect of the job, the most significant in terms of outcome, leaving others unexplored. Numbers of jobs, the length of time spent in them and the year in which a job was held in relation to events in the economy, are all important aspects of career history, but must be excluded in order to be able to concentrate on clarifying the relationship between job history, outcome and background factors.

7.4 RELATIONSHIP OF JOB HISTORY AND OUTCOME

There is no doubt that there is a relationship between job history and outcome. Some clusters of jobs were related to leaving farming altogether, particularly those with non-farm work before their farm work. Others were associated with still being a farm employee, particularly having a job as a farm manager. Farm ownership appeared to have a strong link with sharemilking. All these relationships have been identified in the literature already, (Harris 1980; Lowe 1985), although the exact nature of the relationship has not been fully analysed.

As expected, the group with non-farm experience before they began in farming had the highest percentage of people who left. They were followed by those who had a limited variety of farming jobs (See Table 7-2). There was little difference between those with predominantly dairying careers and those with various mixtures of sheep and beef farming, for this category. Those with managerial jobs (non-dairy) were unlikely to leave, and those with sharemilking jobs, least likely of all. There was a clear hierarchy between non-farm experience and different types of farm experience. If those who come into each job category are ranked from those with the highest percentage in that outcome, to those with the lowest percentage, the ranking of those who left is almost the reverse of those who become
owners. The percentages of the two groups most likely to leave are significantly different from the group which is least likely to leave, at the 5% confidence level.

TABLE 7-2
OUTCOME BY JOB HISTORY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>FARMHND</th>
<th>SHAREMILKER</th>
<th>MANAGER</th>
<th>BEFORE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>N =</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM WORKER</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significance of chi-square = .0000
R = Rank by proportion with each job within each outcome

Although those who have made some kind of progressive move in their career were more likely to stay on in farming, there was a clear difference between farm management, which was related to staying on as an employee, and sharemilking, which was related to ownership. Naturally, those sharemilking were least likely to still be farm employees. Outside management, there was a sharp drop in the proportion of people in other jobs who were still farm employees. Those with non-farm experience who were on dairy farms (who could have had sharemilking experience) were among the least likely to still be farm employees. In some aspects the results were like those of people who left, in others like owners, they remained a mixed group in this aspect of their lives as much as in their background characteristics. For those still in farming the split between those who had gone straight into farming and become managers and other groups is significantly different at the 5% confidence level.

Becoming a farm owner varied considerably across various career types, and with the concentration of owners in dairying the group most likely to become owners was significantly different from those least likely to do so at the 5% confidence level. Those who had only been general workers were much less likely to become owners. Probably a key factor those who did not become owners had in common was lack of family help into a position where they could make money. I will follow up this point in Section Nine of this chapter. Off-farm work at the beginning of a career was related to limited chances of ownership, but the difference between dairy and non-dairy farms remained.

This is strong evidence that some jobs are more associated with particular outcomes than others. But at this stage it is not clear whether it is the jobs themselves which are associated with a particular outcome, or whether other factors, such as family support, access to particular sorts of jobs (which
might also be mediated by family support), aspirations, or ability in the job, are responsible for the apparent result. I will look into the interaction of background with job history next and comment on the way respondents themselves saw their situation in Chapter Eight.

7.5 EFFECT OF BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

A number of trends resulting from background characteristics were noted in Chapter Five - ownership was more likely for people who were farmers’ offspring, or wanted to own farms or had more education. If people’s overall job histories are broken down by these background characteristics, the trends identified in Chapter Five are often intensified by particular jobs. Choice of job was related to a number of other factors. People taking on a job have considered the schooling and jobs of other family members; the whole family’s preference for places where friends and family are close and preference for some localities; their preference for particular aspects of a job: for example they may choose a particular employer or type of stock; and of course the jobs available at that particular moment. Some indicated that they had not chosen a job so much as submitted to circumstances. People will give weight to these immediate issues as well as long term goals and they will both be discussed further in Chapter Eight. Father’s occupation and aspirations were both related to significant differences in the proportion ending up in some career paths (See Tables 7-4 and 7-5). Only education is not and I have not included age here because, as discussed in Chapter Six, it tends to register results rather than causes. The question is whether differences in outcome within career paths are related directly to career or to background factors.

TABLE 7-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>FATHER = FARMER</th>
<th>FATHER = NON-FARM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>FH* SM* M BEF* TOT</td>
<td>FH* SM* M BEF* TOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT</td>
<td>% % % % %</td>
<td>% % % % %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM</td>
<td>35 14 25 37 27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OWNER</td>
<td>14 18 45 26 23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>51 68 30 37 50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 95% confidence intervals disjoint for proportions of farmer’s and non-farmer’s offspring in this job.

Farmers’ offspring were significantly more likely to have been general farm employees (more so on non-dairy farms), more likely to have been on dairy farms with sharemilking experience, and less likely
to have been doing non-farm work before starting. They were less likely to have managerial experience. The evidence of interaction between these differences and outcome show both career structure and background are important. Over and above the tendency of farmers’ offspring to own and non-farmers’ offspring to leave, there was the increased likelihood of those with neither managerial nor sharemilking experience to leave, and the closing of the gap between farm and non-farm for sharemilkers and managers. Sharemilking is clearly connected with ownership in conjunction with family background as more farmers’ offspring became sharemilkers. But the strongest suggestion of family help came from the high proportion of general farm employees who were farmers’ offspring and became owners. Management has a different role - possibly that of alternative career to ownership for all.

TABLE 7-4
OUTCOME BY JOB HISTORY BY ASPIRATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>FH</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>BEF</th>
<th>TOT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>250</td>
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<tr>
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<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OWNER</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>FH</th>
<th>SM</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>BEF</th>
<th>TOT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNDECIDED/OTHER PLANS</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>FARM</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 95% confidence intervals disjoint for proportions of those wanting to own compared with those with other plans in this job.

Similar patterns emerge if the effect of aspiration towards farm ownership is analysed in the same way. There were some significant differences in the choice of career path between those that wanted to own and other groups, although not as many. Those who wanted to own were more likely to have been sharemilking and less likely to have non-farm experience at the beginning of their careers. They were also on non-dairy farms with managerial experience in larger, but only slightly larger, numbers. Those who had not wanted to own when they started farming were naturally those with non-farm experience at the beginning of their careers. Wanting to own increased the chances of becoming an owner and decreased the chances of leaving across the board, but the proportional increase varied between job histories, with some jobs being related to ownership, and others to management or leaving farming altogether.

It is clear that there are differences in choice of, or access to careers related to both family background and aspiration, and that these are part of the process which determines outcome. However it is still not
clear whether career or background are more important, and whether access to jobs such as sharemilking is available on better terms for farmers' offspring and that this explains their success. In order to assess the interrelationships between these variables and others, I carried out a log-linear analysis of them. I will add job history to the models studied in Chapter Six. With the establishment of a relationship between background and job history the type of job held on the family farm becomes important, so I will look at the effect of having a particular job at a particular stage of a career later in this chapter. This analysis will also include the relationship between the employee and the owner of the farm.

To carry out the log-linear analysis I used the four values for job history presented in Tables 7.2 to 7.4: no experience beyond general farm work (other than non-farm work between farm jobs), sharemilking experience, managerial experience and non-farm work experience before having a farm career. I also used the same dichotomised variables presented in Chapter Six to reduce the amount of detail to be described. Outcome was again coded into three dummy variables, those who had left farming versus those who did not, those who stayed on as farm employees versus those who did not and those who became owners versus those who did not. For each series of models reported on in Table 7-5, the main effect of the dependent variable and a series of explanatory two-way tables are entered in the first row of information, then the same series plus one additional interaction follows. The p values are an indication of the fit of the model to the data and the final column shows whether there was any significant improvement in the fit of the model with the inclusion of the three-way interactions. (This format follows that of Table 6-1 in Chapter Six).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODEL</th>
<th>LIKELIHOOD RATIO X²</th>
<th>DEGREES OF FREEDOM</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>FIT SIGNIF IMPROVED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>2.73</td>
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<td>.987</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ XHE</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.991</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ XHF</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.969</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ XEF</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.978</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>9</td>
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</tr>
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125
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<th>MODEL</th>
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<th>FIT SIGNIF IMPROVED</th>
</tr>
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<td>C, CH, CP, CA</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>.344</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>O, OH, OF, OE</td>
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<tr>
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<td>+ OPA</td>
<td>10.96</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.279</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY**
- X = LEFT FARMING
- C = STILL FARM EMPLOYEE
- O = FARM OWNER
- F = FATHER'S OCCUPATION
- E = EDUCATION
- P = ASPIRATION
- A = AGE
- H = JOB HISTORY

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The best fitting models were those including father's occupation, job history and education, except for farm owners, for whom the models generally had a poorer fit. For owners, the model including aspiration instead of education had a better goodness of fit. For those who left, father's occupation, job history and aspiration also provided a good fit to the data, but current farm employees differ again, with education featuring in all the best fitting models (even the best fits were not good ones). A pattern is much harder to detect for owners, probably because interaction between variables is stronger and the models are all poor fits. Where interactions between father's occupation or aspiration are added to the two-way interactions the fit improves substantially. This is interesting as an indication that job history means different things for people from different family backgrounds. It confirms the results of Table 7-3 which indicated the importance of sharemilking for success, but also indicated that coming from a farm family would in some cases compensate for the lack of such an advantage. This will be followed up in the next section. The interaction between father's occupation and job history also applies to current farm employees in a number of cases although it is less common for those who left farming.

If the results are compared with those without job history, in Chapter Six, differences in the way each outcome reacts to the inclusion of job history show up. For those who left, inclusion of job history improves the fit. Father's occupation and education retain their importance but aspiration loses ground. The fit of the models also improves for those who were current farm employees in 1986, with job history, fathers' occupation and education again contributing to the best fit. Farm owners' models including job history show a consistently worse fit. Given the relationship between job history, father's occupation and ownership, which differentiates farmers' offspring (it will be discussed later in this chapter) this is not surprising. Aspiration and education contribute to the best fit, whether job history is included or not.

An important point to come out of the analysis was the lack of higher order interaction. Only two models showed evidence of significant statistical interaction. These included farm ownership, job history, father's occupation and aspiration, and the previous set of variables with age substituted for aspiration. In these cases father's occupation seemed to be intensifying the effect of some types of job, particularly sharemilking. Father's occupation showed more signs of interacting with other sets of variables than any other factor, but none of these other interactions were significant.

These results confirm that job history does have an effect on outcome which is independent of the background variables tested, and that some background variables have more effect on job history than others. As expected, the results of the previous two chapters, together with Table 7-5, suggest that all the variables, job history, father's occupation, aspiration, education and age, had a significant effect on outcome. However the results were only significant for those who left farming and those who became owners. As usual, the results for those who were still farm employees were more indeterminate.
The analysis also provides a comparison of the first value of each variable with the last one. This can be presented as a relative risk ratio, for example for every one person whose father was not a farmer becoming an owner there were 1.6 people whose father was a farmer who became owners. Wanting to be a farm owner, being under forty years of age, having School Certificate or better, and job history, all showed a similar strength of relationship as father’s occupation. However as I said previously, they were acting independently of each other, with education showing the least interaction. Those who had only general farm experience, were about twice as likely to leave as those with non-farm experience before they began in farming. But those with either managerial or sharemilking experience, were about half as likely to leave as those with non-farm experience first. Those whose fathers were farmers, or who wanted to be a farm owner, or who were younger, or had more education, were all nearly half as likely to leave as the others. The relative risks are considered in Table 7-6a for the best fitting model for those who became owners and in Table 7-6b for the best fitting model for those who left farming.

TABLE 7-6a
RELATIVE RISK OF ACHIEVING FARM OWNERSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RELATIVE RISK</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANT AT 5%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FATHER’S OCC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARMER</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NONF</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDER 40</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVER 40</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOB HISTORY</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHAREMILKER</td>
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<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANAGER</td>
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<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEFORE</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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TABLE 7-6b
RELATIVE RISK OF LEAVING FARMING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RELATIVE RISK</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANT AT 5%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FATHER’S OCC</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARMER</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NONF</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NO QUAL</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC OR MORE</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOB HISTORY</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHAREMILKER</td>
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<td>YES</td>
</tr>
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<td>MANAGER</td>
<td>0.60</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEFORE</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results for farm ownership are not a perfect reverse image of those for leaving farming, because of the effect of those staying on as employees being contrasted with them as well as those of people who left. But in general, anyone who had sharemilked is three times as likely to become an owner and half as likely to leave compared to those who had non-farm work before they started in farming. Having a father who was a farmer, wanting to own, being under forty and having School Certificate or better, was associated with an increase in the chances of ownership of 1.5 or more and nearly half as many left.

Job history does seem to be more crucial to outcome than background factors, but because job history plays a larger part in some outcomes than others, I must qualify this statement. All the previous tables in this chapter have led to the proposition that the same type of job held by those who left farming or were still farm employees in 1986 had a different significance for farm owners. For farm owners the type of job which they held was important, but mainly in the sense of whether they had sharemilked or not, there was less significance in the role of other jobs than for the rest of the sample. Background factors provide the best explanation of the results. Fathers' occupation is not as clearly differentiated from other variables as I had hoped, but the greater strength of its interaction with other variables confirms how important it was to ask whether fathers' occupation leads to other factors, education, aspiration, access to well paid work or cheap credit, which in turn boost chances of ownership. Farm families do not just provide money for a farm deposit, although the proportion of people in general wage work who were farmers' offspring who became owners confirms this is important, since this work is notorious for its low pay. Farm families also provide access to circumstances which will also boost the chances of ownership for other people.
There are many factors involved in the path to either leaving farming or becoming an owner, and I am not looking at many of the individual circumstances which might also influence key decisions. However the importance of both background and job history and the inseparable nature of their relationship is confirmed. The role of parents or relatives in providing jobs is obviously important and the next section will demonstrate this by looking at individual jobs, which can be categorised as being held on farms owned by family or non-family. In order to map the influence of class position, job type and farm type in farming I will compare first, middle and last jobs and the relationship of each with outcome.

7.6 JOB SEQUENCES

Looking at father's occupation and job history suggested that there is a relationship between them, but this approach cannot differentiate between those from farms owned by their families who did and did not work on them. By looking at individual jobs held at particular times rather than an entire job history, which usually involves work on both family and non-family farms, I can incorporate kin relationships between employee and employer into a categorisation of jobs. It will also be possible to look at the timing of changes in jobs made by different groups. This tends to reveal two types of job history, those related to people working largely on family owned farms, or working on them at key times, and those who are not. The differences in the comments made by those starting farm work and those entering management or sharemilking will be discussed in Chapter Eight.

It was useful to look at whether people had organised careers which could be categorised into a series of constellations of jobs, but once it has been established that there does seem to be a relationship between job history and outcome, a new set of questions presents itself. The nature of the relationship between father's occupation and career structure, is still not clear. It is important to know whether successful farm owners have received direct financial help from their parents, but knowing whether they have also had access to other benefits such as a sharemilking contract is also important. The timing of the job or the type of job may also be relevant. For instance, someone who spent a year or two working for their parents for wages as a school leaver may have received much less help in terms of farm ownership than someone who returned to a farm owned by a relative to sharemilk.

These questions about the nature of jobs and the stage of career at which people held them also apply to people who were not working on family farms. As people change jobs they are not just escaping from one situation, but also pursuing their own goals. The reasons my respondents gave for changing jobs included seeking better paid work, more responsibility and more interesting work. People may also be blocked from taking up a preferred job, and here family background may become very important. The results of these influences on decisions are reflected in the changing distribution of
people among different types of jobs over time. The differences confirm the conclusions of the previous sections and show the strategic importance of later jobs.

The most fundamental change is from the type of job people take on when they first join the workforce full time, to the type of activity they were involved in when they received my questionnaire. I will also look at some intermediate stages. In analysing these changes, I will look at trends for the whole sample, then investigate the effect of job sequence on outcome and its relationship with background factors. To do this I will look at people's first job, last farm job and the job midway between the two.

The last job which farm owners held before becoming owners was not necessarily a farm job: 10% had non-farm work immediately before becoming owners. But because the last job of any sort for farmers is not directly comparable with the other two groups, which are by definition farm jobs I will look at last farm and last non-farm jobs separately. The final non-farm jobs of people who left farming will also be analysed separately. Some people had less than three jobs. For those with only one job, I used this job as the middle and last job also. For those with two jobs, I randomly allocated either the first or last job as the middle job, ensuring that half of first and half of the last jobs were used.

For 9% the first job is the only one. Of these people, 80% worked only on family owned farms, and 54% became farm owners. These people were particularly likely to say "family farm" in their answers to open ended questions. Most of the others left farming altogether. Obviously farming was not meeting their needs and they moved on. As the number of jobs people have had rises, they became less and less likely to have started on family owned farms. After four or more jobs, the proportion of people becoming owners dropped and the number remaining in farm work rose. Dairy farms remained the most common choice for the first job, beyond that there was little variation in the proportions going into any particular farm type, however many jobs a person had. It is more likely that the opportunities provided by individual jobs or background factors decided outcome rather than the number of jobs. If one outcome was more likely this will be reflected in career structure early on. Although the number of jobs held may be related to many factors, interest in travel, shopping around among jobs before choosing to settle in one type of work, and availability of work, number of jobs is clearly related to access to ownership as well as these individual choices.

Because this section deals with individual jobs rather than job histories, the categories used are slightly different. The relationship of the employee to the owner is the key to the analysis. Type of job (general, managerial, sharemilking and non-farm) and farm type (dairy or beef and/or sheep farms) are also differentiated. A few people were employed on horticultural farms or orchards, but because the numbers are so low, they have not been included in the analysis. The trend analysis in Table 7-7 could not include more than three jobs because of the high proportion of people with three or less.
Within farm employees' careers there are various points at which they are forced to make decisions which will directly affect their future. One worker commented that he was told that sharemilking was his only chance of farm ownership, and having found that he disliked dairying, gave up this ambition. Off-farm work can be both an advantage and a disadvantage, depending on the pay. In some cases people deliberately went to jobs with high pay and overtime such as forestry or mining to save for a farm. In others people could not get enough farm work in the off season and were forced to take what they could get to fill the gap. Background continues to influence careers over time. Of the 50% of farm owners who were sharemilking before they bought their farm, over half were on a relative's farm. Sharemilking is related to ownership, but is not the only advantage involved in this situation, as 22% of sharemilkers on non-family farms left farming, compared with only 8% of those from family farms. Ideally I would be able to demonstrate that people who began in the same job but made different moves later, ended up in different positions, but this requires a case by case analysis for which I would have to drastically reduce the number of job categories in order to achieve acceptable cell sizes. Because of this I have not presented the full table, but will draw on those sections of it with respectable cell sizes to supplement my analysis of jobs by stage in career.

7.7 CHANGES BETWEEN FIRST JOB AND LAST JOB

Some first jobs were much more common than others. Parents or other family on dairy farms started off more farm work careers than any other situation. Of those whose first job was on a farm, 62% started on dairy farms. Another 29% started on sheep farms, and 9% on beef farms. Only a couple of people worked as managers at this stage. A substantial percentage, 56%, started on farms owned by family, including a few whose fathers were not farmers while they were growing up. Those starting on family farms were more likely to be on dairy farms, reflecting the locality in which the sample was based. The majority began in the Northland or Central Auckland Statistical Areas, although 23% were either living in the rest of New Zealand or overseas. At an aggregate level, there is relatively little change in location from first to last jobs. Those who began on family farms, or had fewer jobs, or were spending most of their time on family farms, were least likely to spend time away from Northland province, despite taking non-farm jobs between farm jobs in similar numbers.
When the nature of the first, middle and last jobs are compared for the whole sample, many of the changes are significant. Between the first job and the last job, there was a decrease in the proportion of people working on dairy farms for wages, particularly on family owned farms. In return, the proportion sharemilking increased even more dramatically, with the proportion on family owned farms and non-family owned farms increasing at a similar rate. Comparing first and last jobs on a case by case basis shows that there is a considerable amount of continuity within dairying. Two-thirds of those who began on dairy farms owned by family members were still on family dairy farms for their last job, although half of them had become sharemilkers. On the other hand, those who did not begin with family, finished up on family farms in 20% of cases. Three-quarters of those starting on dairy farms finished up on them and the figures were almost as high for those on farms which were not owned by relatives as those that were. These figures say nothing about outcome, but they suggest that the idea of a career structure does apply to farm employees and that farm families provide a different structure for their members although they often work on other properties at some stage.
The figures for sheep farms were lower and the pattern is less obvious. The proportion on family owned sheep farms decreased, but there was a significant increase in people on non-family sheep farms during the middle of their careers, with the final proportion declining back to the level of the first job. The number managing sheep farms increased steadily, the bulk on non-family farms, until it became the most common job for those not involved in dairying. Those beginning on sheep farms showed almost as much continuity across family farming and farm type as those from dairy farms. There was little change in the proportions in general beef farm jobs, but managerial jobs increased here as well, although from a much lower level. Again, people who started on beef farms owned by family members were often still on them by their last job, but otherwise there was more chance that they would move to another farm type than those on sheep and dairy farms.

Some career changes took place sooner than others. The proportion of people working on family dairy farms for wages had dropped considerably by the time people had reached their middle job but the proportion on non-family dairy farms dropped later. A slightly different pattern occurred for sheep farm jobs: the numbers on family farms doing both general work and management failed to rise, as it did for general work on non-family farms. The numbers in skilled non-farm work also dropped more rapidly than for less skilled work. Some of those from family owned farms were able to widen their experience elsewhere, some of these then returned to the family farm later, usually when their parents were considering retirement and were happy to have them take more responsibility: for instance as sharemilkers.

Many first jobs were non-farm ones, 34% of the sample had started outside farming. The type of non-farm job that people held varied considerably. Some were in jobs related to agriculture, such as shearing or fencing. Most of those shown in Table 7-7 as being in the first four categories of the Elley-Irving Index, were in clerical, sales, or related jobs, with a couple in technical jobs related to agriculture, for example herd testing (See Chapter Five for an introduction to the index). There were also a number in manufacturing jobs, particularly food processing. Mechanics made up one of the largest single groups. People involved in building, either as tradesmen or construction workers, made up a fifth major group. Finally there were a number of transport workers and general labourers.

Those who began in non-farm work and changed to farm work moved into a slightly different mix of jobs from those who went straight on to farms. They were less likely to have had jobs on dairy farms, and much less likely to have gone on to family farms. All these jobs were less likely to lead to ownership, but it is possible that it is not just the jobs themselves which were the problem but the greater numbers of non-farmers' offspring, who we know in advance will be less successful, going into them.
The proportion in non-farm jobs drops over time. Between the first and middle job there was a significant change from jobs requiring more skills and qualifications to those requiring less, as people moved from non-farm work into farming and then used non-farm work as a break rather than as an ongoing career. These jobs were more likely to be farm related, less likely to be white collar jobs, fewer people were mechanics and more people were in the transport business, probably reflecting jobs available locally.

Once people left farming altogether they generally went to jobs with very similar rankings to those held by people taking a break from their farming careers. For many this is not a new career, in the sense of a job which would have promotion prospects, so much as a job to do until retirement. For others, who were relatively young, the prospects were better. There was little major geographical movement for either. The jobs themselves differed only a little from earlier non-farm jobs, except that by the last or 1986 job 12% had retired and some were unemployed. The number in professional, clerical, sales and service jobs was slightly smaller. There was still a small group in farm related jobs. There was another in manufacturing. The largest proportion were involved with building, construction or labouring, followed by transport workers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELLEY IRVING SCALE</th>
<th>1ST POST-FARM JOB</th>
<th>LAST POST-FARM JOB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-I PRO-SKILLED</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-I SEMISKILLED</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-I UNSKILLED</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RETIRED/UNEMPLOYED</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To sum up overall changes in jobs, there is a tendency for people to move out of general wage work and into sharemilking and managing and we know from earlier sections of this chapter that these jobs are associated with particular outcomes. Even if differentiation by family is removed from Table 7-8 the increase in sharemilking and managerial jobs while others decline is just as marked. Table 7-4 (outcome by job history by father's occupation) showed the importance of both father's occupation and having particular job experience in regard to outcome, Table 7-8 above suggests that people were moving towards the two strategically important types of work over time. However it is also interesting to look at the distribution of jobs by outcome for first, middle and last jobs, to see whether this process of
movement is the same for all groups. Just as farm owners proved to be younger than those who were still employees, I am interested to see whether they were moving into advantageous positions faster than others, whether some can achieve ownership without following this route and whether non-farm people seem blocked in any way.

7.8 OUTCOME AND JOB SEQUENCE

Looking at the changes in numbers in different jobs by outcome, and comparing this with the proportion of people in particular jobs arriving at each outcome, should establish the extent to which access to ownership is dependent on being a member of a farm family. There are significant differences in the proportion of the three subgroups who start and end up in different jobs. Their timing may be different as well. Usually where the numbers in a particular type of work increased over time, so did the proportion who became owners. However it is also possible for people to move into a particular type of work, become disappointed and leave, so this correlation is not universal.

If Table 7-7 showed a tendency for people to move out of some types of jobs and into others over time, Table 7-9 shows that differences in the distribution of job types by outcome were present with the first job. Virtually everyone began their farm careers with general farm work, more responsible positions were only open to members of farm owning families when people first took on full-time employment. The major differences were over access to employment on a family farm, and having non-farm work before going on to farming, but there are also differences in distribution between sheep and dairy farming. While two-thirds of both those who left and farm owners began on dairy farms, only 47% of those who were still farm employees were on dairy farms. Farm type is another cross-cutting factor, although not as strong as belonging to a farm owning family.

The differences over non-farm work, which was dominated by those who left were as expected. Once they entered farming, those who left were more likely to move out of dairying than the others. Those who had become owners were likely to have moved off the family farm by mid-career but were often back to sharemilk. Those who were not working on family farms also moved home to sharemilk in some cases. Those who became owners were much more likely to move out of sheep/beef farms, into dairying, while those who remained farm workers dominated sheep/beef farming and were most likely to move into managing.
Differences among the proportion within each outcome who were working on family owned dairy farms for wages actually reduced over time, as those who became owners moved out of this situation more rapidly than the others. Looking at the trend on a case by case basis, of those who started and finished their farm employment as wage workers on dairy farms owned by their families, 63% became owners. This figure rose to 90% for those who moved into sharemilking on their family's farm. Over time non-family dairy wage work became less popular, and the longer people remained in it the less likely they were to become owners and the more likely they were to leave. Non-family general wage work on dairy farms showed the pattern expected of a dead end job which people hoping to progress in farming leave unless they are in special circumstances.

Sharemilking on family farms increased rapidly after mid-career, but more so among owners. Whether people moved into it earlier or later, the proportion becoming owners remained high. Few of those who left had sharemilked on a family farm. Family sharemilkers who left were a special case, a couple left because of low incomes, the others because of personal reasons such as injury. Those on non-family farms were less successful, (only two-thirds as many became owners) although this job stands out in that it is the only non-family job which is low in the proportion leaving. People were keen to move into a sharemilking job, and only a few found it did not meet their expectations. It is possible to look at jobs on family farms and the others as almost being in separate labour markets, as in the former competition for jobs is suspended and there may be additional forms of support available. This is central to ownership rates as well as the nature of the job itself.
The proportions from each outcome doing general work on sheep/beef farms owned by family dropped rapidly over time, but this had a different significance than changes in non-family jobs. Of those who had begun on family owned sheep or beef farms doing general work and stayed in the same position 59% became owners. Only a quarter of the others changed to dairying. Another quarter moved into management, often on the same farm. There was little success for those who started on the home farm in this position but left it to work elsewhere. Those in managerial jobs on their families’ sheep or beef farms were very rare, but although there were few in this position, the proportion becoming owners was higher than that of sharemilkers on non-family farms, underlining the way the job itself is disassociated from career, background overrides it.

Jobs on non-family sheep-beef farms doing general work were a popular starting point for many careers, but few of these people became owners. The longer people stayed in this type of work, the more likely they were to leave. Many who were still farm employees had spent substantial proportions of their careers in this type of work, but they were tending to move into managing by 1986. Those who became farmers show the biggest reduction in numbers over time. It appears to act as another “dead end” job. It is worth noting that less than half of those who left did so from general non-family work. In the same way that many of those who left had been interested in farm ownership, they were also interested in “promotion” within farm employment and moved on to management. There was a very rapid increase in managers on non-family farms, among those who finally left and farm employees, and the proportion who became owners from this position was low. This group was much more likely to stay on in farming than any other.

The pattern of last jobs was almost identical with that of Table 7-3, but the subgroups had moved into jobs at different rates and at different times. This pattern shows a similar movement out of wage work on dairy farms for all groups. Those who eventually became owners moved into sharemilking even faster than the other groups and in greater numbers, especially on family farms. The only other job which saw so much change is managing and here those who were still farming predominate. Case by case analysis also confirms that although there was a lot of movement between sheep, beef and dairy farms, there was a tendency to have more jobs in one type and the longer people remained in dairying, the more likely they were to become owners. This is a barrier for some, but not a total one, as the opportunities dairying provided also encourages others to change farm type.

7.9 CONCLUSION

The analysis of career structures has tended to confirm the original propositions about the relationship between some jobs, such as sharemilking, and outcome. It has thrown some light on the extent to which there are cross-cutting factors within the job market. The major one was between those from
farm owning backgrounds and those who were not. Another less major stratification in the job market was between those in dairying, and those who were not. This seems to mainly revolve around sharemilking, as a means of accumulating capital, and also farm price. Lowe (1985) found a much stronger dependence on family help and less access to sharemilking among those from sheep farms.

Working on a family farm is not necessarily an advantage, it may be a disadvantage if it involves low wages. But it may be part of a strategy for intergenerational farm transfer and signify reduced competition for a job and the likelihood of financial help later. Only 20% of owners had always worked on farms owned by relatives, although 76% of owners were farmer's offspring and a few more had other close relatives who owned farms. Although many people from farm families work on non-family farms at some stage in their careers, many also return to the family farm. This is also clearly part of the process of intergenerational transfer, as these people are much more likely to become farm owners than those who left completely. It is clear that even when they were working away from the family farm, farmer's offspring generally were in a different position to that of other farm employees. Chapter Nine will look into the relationship between family background and job history and the amount of help available for farm purchase.

Job history has clearly differentiated farm families by their ability to help their offspring on to their own farms. No other conditions can match the 90% success rate of those who had always worked on their family farm, finally becoming sharemilkers. The log-linear analysis confirms the difference between success in ownership for farmers' offspring and others, in that sharemilking makes a far larger difference than any other variable, and the effect of both aspiration and education are reduced once job history is included in the model. Job history seems to be the result of a cluster of factors, family background, aspiration and ability. It is clear that more resources than those most individuals can provide are necessary to overcome the barriers to ownership. Property can be gifted or inherited, and also be used to secure a loan to enable purchase of another property. A family farm which is large enough to provide long term employment for a member of the family (which is larger than many Northland farms) provides the greatest level of security.

A key factor which is missing from this analysis, is the number of people in each family competing for such help. Several people mentioned taking up or leaving work on the family farm in order to fit in with the plans of brothers and sisters. The number of people the property has to be divided among is important as well as the size of the property. Few women became owners without working as a team with their husband, but many women do receive money which is not reinvested in farming. Collecting such information would have involved moving the focus of the study from farm employees back to farm families and so it was not done. The variety in the amount of help available to the farm families in my study is a result of their marginality as a class rather than problems of definition. There is a fine line between success and failure, and the presence of upward mobility suggests individual circumstances
may alter outcome. Only a couple would qualify as capitalist farmers. By definition petty bourgeois farmers are limited in the amount they can accumulate from the labour of others, and therefore conditions must be ideal before expansion can take place in the next generation. As prices fluctuate, downward mobility is always a possibility.

In some ways, by emphasising differences within farming families, this chapter has undermined the differences between farmers' offspring and others. Although class differences are not based on income and assets, these are essential for the reproduction of farmers. It is the ability to overcome barriers to ownership which provides the rationale for considering farmers' offspring to belong to the same class as the farm owner in Friedmann's definition. Conversely, where there is no difference in the ability of working class and farm owning parents to help their offspring, why should the offspring be considered to have different class interests? Chapter Nine re-examines this question, but the final verdict may depend on the role of the state, which has loaned to applicants from both farm and non-farm backgrounds and so reduced the necessity for family help which existed in Friedmann's example.

Whatever the outcome of this analysis, it must be acknowledged that farm employees as an occupational group contain groups with clearly conflicting material interests. Those from farming families were just as likely to move around "to gain experience" as those who were not, but access to farm ownership was not based on competence or experience, so their chances of utilising the skills gained as farm owners were considerably different. Although not all of those who left farming had wanted to become owners, over half had, and it is clear from the comments made that some people take the possibility of ownership into account before they express a preference for ownership. Working alongside people who may appear to be in the same structural position but who turn out to have considerably different future prospects may also have an influence on perception of the situation. This has not yet been explored and could make a useful contribution to future research. The effect this has on wages and conditions is of key importance.

The analysis presented in Chapter Eight, which will compare the comments made by those taking on various types of jobs by outcome, will demonstrate apparent differences in their approach to farming and farm ownership by those born into farm owning families, compared to those who were not. For the latter the decision involved choosing an occupation of which they had some knowledge and expectations, but they had not experienced it as a complex in which class position is interwoven with family relationships, and both are interwoven into work and other activities. The outline of the job histories has confirmed that people in the same jobs may face different futures because of different backgrounds, although particular jobs such as sharemilking may also minimise differences between people from different backgrounds. Managing seems to play yet another role, by providing a career structure for both farmers' offspring and others for whom ownership is less likely.
Having looked at the more concrete aspects of job history I would now like to look at the way people's attitudes and expectations might interact with the career and other options which they must choose between. Do people from different backgrounds have different attitudes to farming and life in general? Do they make different decisions in similar circumstances? Do their attitudes change as they cope with new situations? The tendency for farm owners, particularly those who were farmers' offspring and who had wanted to be owners for a long time, to have different opinions on unions would be a practical demonstration of the way such differences might operate. The next chapter will look at all these issues.
CHAPTER EIGHT

INTERACTION OF PERCEPTIONS OF FARMING WITH FARM CAREERS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Having ascertained that background factors, which were at work before respondents even began their first farm job, continued to have an influence on the outcome of careers, I was interested in the perception members of the study group had of their situation. Chapter Seven suggested that background had a major influence on job history and access to ownership, influencing the choices people had available to them and no doubt perceptions about jobs. However, a few were able to compensate for less favourable backgrounds by making particular job moves. For those who wanted ownership, sharemilking gave them the best chance, for others managing a farm offered a better income and more interest and responsibility. I expand the bare outline of job changes which I presented in the last chapter by indicating the thoughts people had when they approached these jobs.

People take many aspects of jobs other than access to ownership into account. One of the reasons for this, was that most farm jobs were so poorly paid people did not expect farm jobs themselves to lead to ownership, as this depended on access to credit (except for sharemilking, which not everyone did). Because of this I was interested in whether factors such as pursuit of job satisfaction, concern with family lifestyle, or rejection of the long hours associated with farm work, could influence job choice in ways which might conflict with access to ownership. The indications so far have been that background is so important that it did not seem likely that attitudes to work would prove to be a major factor in shaping career structure and outcome, but I felt that it was possible they might differentiate those who left from those who remained farm employees.

The ideal evidence would have been to look at those who were not farmers' offspring, whose attitudes would not be so inextricably bound up with awareness that material help towards ownership was possible, and see if any differences in attitudes between those who did and did not want to own emerged. Unfortunately the open-ended questions were not always answered fully, and not all respondents worked as managers or sharemilkers, so the results will not support a three-way analysis. Given the link between sharemilking and ownership, the most insightful question might have been "Why didn't you take on sharemilking?" But I did not frame the questions in this way. From the information I did collect, it is clear that sharemilking would not necessarily lead to high incomes and the
best contract, 50:50 sharing of income with the owner does itself require a certain amount of capital, but it would have been interesting to read respondents' comments on the extent to which they felt they had access to this type of position.

We know from the previous chapter that aspiration to own is related to both socio-economic background, particularly father's occupation, and it is possible that attitudes to farm work and to taking particular types of work are also influenced by background. I will look at differences in approach to jobs by both outcome and background, but I will also look for evidence that job experience modifies people's choices as their careers develop. The comments made by people who left farming are illuminating in this respect. Gill (1981) suggested that repeated experiences were very important in shaping people's willingness to stay on in farming. As well as looking at peoples' expectations of particular jobs I asked a series of general questions about farm work. Experience of pay and conditions in a range of jobs do seem to hold the key to perception of farm work and I have looked for differences in attitudes between those who came from different backgrounds and experienced different outcomes.

Other research (Kaplan [1978?]) has suggested that farm employees will be strongly influenced by the needs of their families, for education or for jobs. I will also look for evidence of differences related to demographic factors. Again, these factors may not make a decisive difference between success and failure when it comes to ownership, but they may be important when people decide whether to stay on as farm employees or leave. Other chapters have focused on the way background shapes careers, in this one I will look at a wider range of issues in an attempt to suggest the ways in which structural factors interact with people's experience of farm work. There may be too many minor factors involved in people's overall assessment of farm work to create a model of how they all interact, but discussing them provides a context which is missing from log-linear and other statistical analyses.

I will begin by presenting a series of quotes about various career moves, which will provide a general picture of a range of reasons people gave for various job moves. I will then look at whether there seem to be differences in expectations of different jobs, and whether approach varies among the subgroups. As well as differences in relationship to outcome, I will comment on those related to aspiration, education and job history. Some problems are general to all jobs, particularly those which stem from people's expectations as to appropriate conditions of work and lifestyles. I will discuss these before going on to assess whether attitudes could affect people's careers indirectly through their attitudes to work as well as through choice of particular jobs.

As an example of the way attitude could influence career in a more general way, I am also interested in people's attitudes to unions, and whether these vary between different subgroups. This is important because union activity is one of the few means by which farm employees could act collectively in their
own interests, if they did in fact see problems related to farm work. This is one area where the contrasting backgrounds of farm employees might have an influence on attitudes which in turn might affect their material interests. Very few replies suggest that farm employees themselves see their lives in terms of class mobility or conflict, but structural problems with farm employment and barriers to farm ownership are discussed.

8.2 ATTITUDES TO JOBS

When I asked people about job histories I also asked them about their attitudes to the various types of work that they had undertaken. The responses were often brief, but taken together, they provide a picture of the problems people faced in their working lives and the way they planned their careers to minimise problems. Of course not all the answers, deal with problems and a final question "In what ways is/was farm work helping you achieve what you wanted in life?" asked about the positive aspects of farm life. It was followed by "In what ways is/was farm work not helping you achieve what you want?", asking about the negative aspects. A number of people made no comments in answer to this question, or explicitly stated there were no negative aspects to farm life. I will present quotations on a range of topics now, and compare reactions according to various background factors later.

Not all farm employees had the same initial attitude to their jobs, although some approaches are more common than others. For some, farm employment was the route to farm ownership, for others the ambition to own came later or was never important to them. Some people took up farm work without any specific interest in the work, or belief in any more substantial returns from it either. They simply had little choice at the time and often saw it as temporary. Of course some of those who started with negative feelings to farm work later changed their minds. Farm ownership became an option for one who began like this, another talks about farming as relatively relaxing. He went on to a variety of farm jobs and finally management.

Farm employee, aged 29, no qualifications:
"It started as a fill in job until I decided what I wanted to do"

Farm employee, aged 41, no qualifications:
"Because of isolation and distance from Auckland there was little choice but to work on the land"

Left farming, aged 34, Higher School Certificate:
"When I was told by the judge to work or go to gaol"

The most common single reason was given by farmer's offspring and invoked the family farm as a motive. For some of these people this was a positive aspect of their lives, for others it was something they were manoeuvred into rather than a free choice, for some it is not possible to tell.
Farm employee, aged 30, University Entrance:
"Worked on family farm - started working because of parental pressure"

Farm employee, aged 61, no qualifications:
"It was decided for me. Worked for the family"

Farm owner, aged 30, Higher School Certificate:
"They needed me I worked. Wasn't concerned at the time about money"

Farm owner, aged 31 years, no qualifications:
"Worked on Dad's farm when I left school"

Farm owner, aged 36, no qualifications:
"Always interested in farming and offered the job on home farm at the end of the fifth form year"

As well as being a means to farm ownership, the family farm could also be a resource if work was hard to find elsewhere. This was also described by farm employees who have been made redundant by such a move.

Farm employee, aged 32, School Certificate:
"After the guy I was an apprentice carpenter to went broke. Rather than go to Auckland for work I started working for my parents on wages"

For the majority, starting farm work was a conscious decision. A few planned to get formal farming qualifications from the start and moved around to get the prerequisite experience for their course. Others were planning a farm career, and wanted wider experience without planning on formal training. Simply having farm experience provided the incentive for some to go into farming. Some were positive about farm work but did not mention future plans. Some had already had other jobs and made a decision to try farming after experiencing the negative aspects of other types of work.

Farm employee, aged 41, no qualifications:
"To learn all aspects of each type of farming as cost of going to Massey or Flock House was beyond parents' means"

Farm owner, aged 36, Higher School Certificate:
"Worked for father for 3 mths then applied for job in Waikato to get 18 mths practical experience on an approved farm for my diploma"

Left farming, aged 32, School Certificate:
"Needed experience for Rural Bank finance to go 50/50 [sharemilking]"

Left farming, aged 59, no qualifications:
"Being a family trade. And also farming is all there is where I'm from. And being taught through experience"

Farm owner, aged 36, no qualifications:
"I enjoyed doing farm work"

Farm employee, aged 57 years, no qualifications:
"Because I like country life and animals and working on farms is the best"
Left farming, aged 49, no qualifications:
"I wanted a change from the fast pace in towns"

Left farming, aged 34 years, no qualifications:
"Was scrub cutting (contract work) when farm job with accommodation was offered"

Farm employee, aged 61, Matriculation [equivalent of University Entrance]:
"After three years unable to stand inside work"

The first farm job usually led to others. Many had a variety of farm jobs and non-farm work was also a common option. The most common reason for leaving farm work was to get a better income in a new job. Some were escaping problems related to working on the family farm for wages under a parent's direction. The next most common reasons for a change in jobs were to try different types of farming and to keep up with the prerequisites for courses. Often a change was enjoyed for itself but some changes were also forced on people:

Farm employee, aged 33, School Certificate:
"... back to working for a stock cartage firm and more money ... saving for my own farm"

Farm employee, aged 45, School Certificate:
"To earn extra money during period cows dry"

Farm employee, aged 44, School Certificate:
"Was a shearer for 7 years. Shearing in NZ and Australia. To accumulate more savings while young and healthy"

Left farming, aged 29, no qualifications:
"Dairy farming was suggested by Rural Bank as one of two options for eventual farm ownership. The other was 'inherit a lot of money"

Farm owner, aged 34, School Certificate:
"Left to work in town. Sow wild oats and see how the other half lived"

Farm employee, aged 29, School Certificate:
"I went over to Europe for 2 years working holiday"

Farm employee, aged 29 years, no qualifications:
"A change of scenery and we had a rough deal with a farmer. We decided to throw it away"

Left farming, aged 60 years, Proficiency [taken at age 12]:
"Made redundant due to depression in sheep farming"

There were a wide variety of reasons for changing jobs, some of which also concerned the work or educational opportunities of the employee's family. Access to recreation and other services, health, ability to buy a house, or a poor relationship with an employer, could all promote a move as well as the more common, job-related reasons.
A high proportion of farm employees had been farm managers at some stage of their lives. The range of reasons given for this move differed from those given for changes from one general job to another. There were no more comments on the lines of "enjoyed the change", managing and sharemilking were usually taken on for a particular purpose. The most common single motive was to build on previous experience. Many also commented that the new job was a promotion, or that it offered more challenge and responsibility. The theme of family involvement was not quite so marked for managerial jobs but was still present. Some were pressured into taking on increased responsibility by family circumstances, some appreciated the chance the family farm gave them to extend their skills into management. A few mentioned management was a route to other goals. Very few gave other reasons, such as their liking for farm work and life, the convenience of having a house supplied, or the needs of their own wives and children. Some did mention financial return, usually in the sense that the money was better than for general farm work.

Farm owner, aged 33, School Certificate:
"Mutual agreement with my father who owned the farm - I wanted more responsibility and he was able to let go the reins to see me established"

Farm employee, aged 30, no qualifications:
"I found the challenge and responsibility wasn't enough as shepherd or even Head Shepherd. I even changed to deer farming as it had far more challenge and the responsibility of the monetary value of the stock was good also"

Farm employee, aged 34, no qualifications:
"At the time I was engaged to my wife to be and when offered the job, house etc things just fell into place"

Farm employee, aged 37, Higher School Certificate:
"This was always my ambition failing farm ownership. To achieve this I built up enough of the right type of experience to have the confidence to apply for an advertised manager's position"

Far fewer changed to a different type of work while they were managing farms. Many of them experienced changes in the farm they worked on, as the owner decided to diversify or change stock type. Another group left because they were no longer needed. Several left to improve their breadth of experience. Otherwise the reasons were similar to those changing during general farm work. There was better money available elsewhere, they enjoyed change for its own sake, or there were better educational opportunities elsewhere.

The comments varied again for those moving into sharemilking. The ambition to own a farm became a much more important element in the decision, particularly in comments about the family farm. So were comments about the benefit wives and children would get from the change. For the rest, there were similarities between the reasons given for going into sharemilking and the other jobs. Financial return was important for some. Many commented on aspects of the work they liked, such as the independence it allowed them and their ability to build on past experience. A few saw sharemilking as
an alternative to ownership. Very few sharemilkers left for different work. If they did, either low income, or the economic situation, or the amount of work required was likely to be the problem which had triggered the move.

Left farming, aged 34, Higher School Certificate:  
"I became a proficient milker and gained the respect and trust of my employer"

Farm owner, aged 36, no qualifications:  
"Offered the job when I got married"

Farm employee, aged 48, University Entrance:  
"To house my children and feed and clothe the family while being self employed"

Farm employee, aged 35, no qualifications:  
"After coming back from Australia I had decided to work for my own farm. I worked two years on wages before I landed a 39% job to get the experience and confidence to run a farm of my own"

Farm employee, aged 32, School Certificate:  
"I wasn't getting any further ahead on wages. I started buying a few calves off my father to start my own herd. With the prospects of marriage in the future I thought it time to take the next step to 39% sharemilking"

Overall, there were several aspects of farm work which large numbers of people agreed about. Many just said they liked the work, but others were more specific. They liked the room for individual initiative and responsibility farm work gave them. Some just liked to work hard, although far fewer people commented favourably on the hours or wages farm employment involved. Another large group liked the rural lifestyle. Parents valued it for their children as much as for themselves. Some, mainly current farm owners, liked farm life because it led to ownership. Otherwise there were a variety of things people had benefited from, good health, gaining wider farm experience or formal qualifications, or life experience. A few liked getting a house with the job. Some thought it provided a good standard of living, although this was sometimes separated from cash income. Only eleven said there were no good things about farm life, although some did not answer at all, which may indicate a lack of enthusiasm for farm work.

Left farming, aged 34, Higher School Certificate:  
"Closeness to the land. Open spaces for my children. Being part of a farming community"

Left farming, aged 33, no qualifications:  
"Its a job where you can see better results, you can look back and see them, like 3 miles of fencing or fattening beef or sheep or the green of pasture"

Farm employee, aged 30, School Certificate:  
"Peaceful. Challenging. A sense that you feel you are contributing something toward the country"

Farm employee, aged 33, School Certificate:  
"It is giving me the necessary experience for when I become a farm owner"
Farm employee, aged 34, no qualifications
"An interesting line of work, good variety, outdoors, working with nature and one's own hands. My own boss as the owner lives in town. We have tripled production here and I get most credit I'm told. I'm proud of and treat this farm as if it were my own. This helps alot"

Farm employee, aged 59, University Entrance
"I enjoyed open air life and enjoyed all stock work. More important too - I think our children have had a far better upbringing and outlook on life than if they had been in the city"

Farm owner, aged 36, Higher School Certificate:
"To give wife and family a reasonable standard of living. Being own boss and to make decisions. Being able to see the fruits of my own hard labour. To build a future for both family and myself."

Farm owner, aged 31, no qualifications:
"Farming was the only way I could get my own farm by working up the ladder from farm employee, sharemilker then finally up to farm owner"

Farm owner, aged 38, no qualifications:
"Managed to buy my own block - made a few friends, gave children a reasonably happy life - also got a family life with their grandparents and uncles, aunts cousins which will probably stay with us forever"

The number who did not give any negative aspects of farm work was larger than those who saw no positive aspects. This satisfaction was more for the work itself than for the conditions of employment however. There was overwhelming evidence of dissatisfaction with farm income, including the comment that it was impossible to buy a farm. A number of people commented on the difficult economic situation. Some specifically mentioned that it was difficult for farm workers to buy houses. Dissatisfaction with the hours worked on farms was also very common. Other than these problems, there were a number of issues which only a few people commented on. Some saw other negative aspects to farm work, or rather preferred the possibilities other jobs offered, more holidays, meeting more people, better conditions. There were several comments concerning farm life as opposed to farm work, particularly the way long hours of work and isolation affect family life, social life or sport.

Left farming, aged 33, no qualifications:
"It was simply a job and a house to live in"

Left farming, aged 60, Matriculation:
"No possibility of farm ownership"

Left farming, aged 60, School Certificate:
"When you leave you have no home and there is no way you can save any great amount of cash"

Farm employee, aged 33, School Certificate:
"It is a low paid job and long hours which effect your family life"

Farm employee, aged 32, School Certificate:
"... 5 years since last holiday"

Farm owner, aged 38, no qualifications:
"Could be a bit bitter over relationships with farm owner v sharemilker - worker. Also feel a big difference with our city friends, almost different worlds now"

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Farm owner, aged 31, no qualifications:
"One thing I couldn't get from farming was to get the money and time to travel overseas. Hope to make up for that in years to come"

Farm owner: aged 30, Higher School Certificate:
"Farming has given us worry and stress. Long way to travel to shops and schools"

The quotes given above suggest that there are differences between the attitudes to farm employment held by different groups in my sample. I was interested in the nature of these differences, and also the ways in which people coped with the problems they found. Following on from this I will discuss attitudes to unions in detail and compare such attitudes with the level of dissatisfaction felt about farm work in general. In many jobs trade unions represent a source of support for individual problems and a focus for collective action. Farm employees do not have the assistance of such an organisation, but Gill (1981) suggested this is because they have lost out in a power struggle with powerful farm interest groups and not because there are no problems with farm work. Problems remain for individuals, who cope by leaving the particular workplace where they experience them, and if they meet them again, by leaving farming itself. I will now go on to take a more analytical approach to the comments people made about particular types of jobs, then I will look at attitudes to specific aspects of jobs jobs in general, using both answers to open-ended and closed questions. Then having established that farm employees do perceive problems with their work, I will compare this situation with their attitudes to unions.

8.3 CAREER OUTCOME AND ATTITUDES TO WORK

Although I was interested in the effect of background factors on people's approaches to farming, I had little expectation of finding causal links between attitudes to farm work itself (as opposed to aspiration to own) and ownership. My main concern in this chapter is to provide more detail about the way people experienced the career patterns discussed in Chapter Seven. This section is based on questions as to the reasons people undertook general farm work, managing, or sharemilking and why they may have found these jobs unsatisfactory. The open-ended questions elicited a wide variety of comments, but in order to make some comparisons between subgroups I have selected comments made about key issues and looked at how they relate to outcome and background.

In Chapter Seven I suggested that sharemilking was related to ownership and managing to an alternative career as a farm employee. I was interested in whether the comments seemed to reflect this, for instance whether those taking on sharemilking had a more instrumental view of it, compared with managers, who might emphasise job satisfaction, knowing that high income was not available to them. This analysis cannot relate attitudes to individual jobs and so relationship to employer cannot be taken into account. I was interested in whether background would shape attitudes to the work itself in ways which would affect the outcome of career, but had little hope of detecting even indications of
causal links from material from a mail questionnaire. As it happened, the major feature of this analysis is the way many respondents have referred to the family farm as the reason for action, without qualifying what this means to them. They react as though the reasons for taking farm work were self-evident for people in their position.

Because the results gained from looking at these qualitative aspects of farm work were generally less clear-cut than those gained from comparing other variables, I have not attempted a three-way analysis of the data. Instead I will comment on the relationship of outcome and attitudes, then the effect of the background factors and job history on attitudes without reference to outcome.

In order to make an overall review of the areas of interest to each group, the first thing I did was combine all the answers (to all the questions which were common to each group) in one table. When the comments made in respect of all the questions are combined, differences in emphasis among the groups become more obvious. I have not reproduced this table, which included over one hundred options, but I will comment on the highlights which came out of it, in order to suggest differences in orientation between those who left, those who stayed on as employees and those who became owners. Such differences are only impressionistic. There are some cases where people will make similar comments twice, giving them more weight, and this may not equally common among the subgroups. There is a general tendency for farm owners to make more comments: in general they were younger, had spent more time at school and wrote more fluently. But the material provides an introduction to the more specific issues discussed below.

Current farm employees saw little wrong with farm work itself, satisfaction with farm work gained the most comments. They were more likely to approve of their own working conditions, and less likely to praise those of other jobs. This may have related to narrower experience than those who left, but this is not the full explanation. They had fewer problems with their employers and were less likely to see farm work as insecure. They made few comments about their standard of living and these were evenly divided between positive and negative. Sixty percent of them made negative comments about their income as farm employees, but in fact, even higher proportions of the other groups made negative comments about their income from farming.

On the other hand, those that left farming were more likely to comment on the problems in farm work. Although many did like farm work, not all liked every aspect of it, especially working conditions. Another issue which came up frequently for those who left was security and this seemed to be backed by negative experiences - 19% mentioned these issues as the final reasons for leaving. It may be possible that, as Cant (1967) suggested, bad luck with employers is an element in some people's decision to leave, although I would not place as much importance on it as he did. The differences between current and former farm employees were not large - possibly they related to changing
priorities rather than a radical change in point of view. The other big issues were low income, inability to buy a farm, health or age, conditions of farm work and housing.

Farm owners tended to make more favourable comments about farm work than any other group. However, their feelings were not unmixed. They were more likely to complain about their holidays than other groups - this was a particular problem in 1986 when incomes had just dropped substantially. Farm owners dominated the comments about self-employment, although interestingly enough, they were no more likely to make positive comments about related issues, such as independence and challenge in their work, than any other group. Many seem to have been interested in farm ownership, not just any rural way of life. Farm owners seemed to see security as a problem for themselves first, with those of farm employees flowing on from theirs after the economic down-turn.

Under the new economic measures brought in during 1986 it is not surprising that farm owners had some reservations about farm incomes and therefore rural life. Negative comments about the economy and the future dominated, although farm owners did make most of the positive comments about the income or assets to be had from farming, and were more likely to say their standard of living was acceptable.

The major difference between the comments of farm owners and others was the number that referred to family farms without specifying what it was about them that led them to a course of action. This is not surprising, considering the proportion of them who came from family farms, but it does create some problems for my analysis. Some people, about one quarter, did make comments which implied that they had been expected to conform with the needs of the enterprise, and that their choices were not completely free. In general the comment seemed to imply that if you were a farmer's son (none of the women said this) that no other option was worth serious consideration. It is probably best to interpret the comment in the double sense that there were both pressures to take on farming and rewards to act as an incentive to do so. At the very least it minimised decision-making and the need to enter new situations, although some of those who failed to become owners also made this comment, it can not be taken as total security that ownership is possible. The tendency to mention family farming was greater in those with less education. These people may be less articulate, less likely to make a careful analysis of their motives and movements for a questionnaire. Otherwise education made little difference to comments. Not all farm owners came from farms and not all made these types of comment, but they skew the qualitative data, as it is not clear how "family farm" relates to comments made by others about farm work, income, or lifestyle. These comments are not limited to owners, but are less of a problem in comparing those who left from those who remained farm employees.
8.4 DIFFERENT ATTITUDES TO JOBS AMONG SUBGROUPS

The previous section suggested that people who experienced different outcomes to their careers seemed to be putting different emphases on some issues, such as goals, money or security. Given that there were differences, it seemed worth looking at what particular types of work meant to people in relationship to both background and outcome. Because of the patterns of change in jobs identified in Chapter Seven I have focused first on the comments made by people as they started different jobs. Later I will look at general comments about pay and conditions. Assuming that there is a hierarchy of work, from general wage work to managing and sharemilking, I expected differences in the way each subgroup approached these types of work.

Although there is now plenty of evidence to suggest that coming from a farm owning family is far more important than expectations of farm work itself in shaping careers, attitudes are interesting, both because they are one aspect of the heritage of farm owning families and because they are likely to be related to aspiration towards ownership. At the beginning of their careers those who became farm owners were most interested in ownership, with those who were still farm employees in 1986 and those who left having a similar interest. However more current farm employees decided to become owners later on, and this may be related to experience of farm work itself even although such aspirations do not necessarily lead to ownership and many of these people seemed likely to be disappointed.

It is impossible to do any statistical analysis of such differences using a detailed coding framework, because some comments were made by only a few people. Nor is it easy to compare the tenor of comments made by different groups because some individuals made very full comments and others few or none. Because of this the comments I will make can only be taken as indications or impressions of how people felt. I recoded the answers into broad issues: job satisfaction; positive comments about rural lifestyles; mentions of the family farm as a reason for taking a job; income; and neutral comments which indicated the person acted through force of circumstances rather than choice. I have calculated 95% confidence intervals to check which issues are significantly correlated with outcome. However because these figures may give a semblance of certainty where none exists I have not presented the material in tables. Because the numbers of answers people gave to questions have varied but all have been combined, it is not possible to calculate chi-squared or other statistical tests of significance which relate cell sizes to the numbers in each cell.

Comments about jobs were most likely to fall into two categories, the first referred to the fact of having come from a family farm, the second to satisfaction with the work itself or some aspect of it. The latter included satisfaction at using skills, at gaining a promotion, getting more experience and the job itself, with the ability to see results from this type of work. Comments on rural lifestyle, income, or comments
that indicated the job was taken because of force of circumstances were in the minority. However the balance between these types of comments varied between jobs. Those who were most likely to be working on family farms, people beginning their careers and sharemilkers, were less likely to talk about job satisfaction specifically and more likely to say "family farm" than those going into farm management. In the same vein, those who became owners were more likely to talk about the family farm than the other two groups.

Those who left farming were likely to mention job satisfaction about as often as those still employees, but more likely to mention they liked the lifestyle, for all types of work. Possibly there is an element of nostalgia here as some regretted aspects of farm work they had lost. There were some differences in the comments made about the first farm job: those who left were more likely to make neutral comments, but the differences were not as strong as those related to managerial positions. There were none of the signs of differences between those who left and those still farming at this early stage which existed between those who became farm owners and others.

As it turned out, it was rare for there to be a significant difference between those from different backgrounds on any issue which was not significant between those with different outcomes, demonstrating the close relationship between outcome and background. Those who wanted to own were also more likely to mention family farms. I was interested in whether those who were to end up in different careers had started with different attitudes. However none of the differences related to career were significant. Where differences did show up, they were in line with comments already made, for example those who had started work in non-farm jobs were more likely to talk about liking it and those who either never moved into management or ended up sharemilking (often farmers' offspring) were more likely to mention "family farm".

Once people had experienced farm work and were looking at ways of improving their position, without moving into a different type of work, the reasons for taking work changed. About half wanted a change or to get away from the current situation, the rest were evenly divided between those who wanted to make more money and those whose jobs had disappeared. There was little difference in the range of comments made by those who experienced different outcomes or came from different backgrounds for this type of job change. Those who left farming were slightly less likely to have moved to improve income than either of the other groups, and more likely to have moved because of a change in circumstance on the farm.

Managerial work is dominated by those who stayed on as farm employees and the reasons for moving into managerial jobs showed some interesting differences from those for entering farm work. There was more concern about job satisfaction among all groups, but current farm employees were splitting off from those who left on this issue, showing more concern with the job and income, in line with their
increase in ambition to own. As with their first choice of job, farm owners were substituting "family farm" for more analytical reasons and the gap between owners and others was increasing over time. Their heritage was clearly different.

For those moving into managerial jobs the differences related to aspiration were similar to those for outcome. Those whose fathers were farmers, who wanted to own, or were younger talked of family farm rather than job satisfaction, but there was no difference in the proportion mentioning income. Education made no difference.

Sharemilking had a different relationship to ownership from other jobs and the reasons for becoming a sharemilker also differed from both entering farming and managing. This is confirmed by the increase in similarities between the subgroups. There is much more emphasis on both income and fulfilment of goals such as farm ownership and less on job satisfaction. Family and farm remained an important theme, still dominated by those who became farm owners. Those who left showed a marked increase in concern with income compared with other jobs. Overall, there was little difference between those who left and those who remained farm employees. Nor were there any differences for those moving into sharemilking positions related to education, age or aspirations, other than those relating to comments referring to the family farm.

To sum up, there is some evidence that those who left were farm employees who had a worse deal than others, and were less oriented towards ownership, but the differences were not substantial and there is every chance that the structural pressures which weighed on those who left will also act on those who are still farm employees. Current farm employees have more interest in farm owning, but it is likely many of the younger ones will follow them out of farming if they do not get a farm of their own. The open-ended questions which asked for general attitudes to farm employment did not turn up any new issues. There were some differences between farm owners and others, but these were directly related to the fact that they had achieved ownership. The comments on the negative issues showed no significant difference at all. The negative aspects of farm work will be examined in the next section.

8.5 ATTITUDES TO WAGES AND CONDITIONS, AND RURAL LIFESTYLE

Many of the previous studies of farm employment have looked at work conditions and job satisfaction. They have a common theme that the majority like their work and find good conditions, but that there are some employers who do not provide acceptable wages and conditions (Harris 1980; Cant and Morris 1966). It is difficult to compare wage rates as Harris did, I have only 116 who were still farm employees in my sample, but comparing the median incomes wages with a range of similar occupations (for example forestry, construction and transport) suggests farm employees are likely to
be worse off. Perceptions are important as well as actual wages, since they will lead to action. People who experience blocked class mobility will not necessarily leave farming unless other aspects of it are not acceptable or compare unfavourable with jobs available elsewhere. Job satisfaction may balance out concern about wages. It is possible that those who left were in a similar position to those still farm employees but perceived better opportunities elsewhere or were more dissatisfied with the same conditions.

Opinions about jobs were measured in two different ways. As well as the open-ended questions, respondents were presented with a traditional Likert scale with the options very important, important, unimportant, and very unimportant, over a range of issues relating to work conditions and opinions on unions (See Table 8-4 for a summary of these results). Those who appeared to have left farming were also given a series of options aimed at pin-pointing why they had left. The open-ended questions elicited opinions on a broader range of issues but confirmed that many of the topics raised by the closed questions were important to people. When prompted by a question, more people stated an issue was important than mentioned it in an open-ended question, but the scaled questions confirmed that a higher level of such comments indicated general concern.

The issue that seemed to invoke the most concern was higher wages: 79% felt it was either important or very important. Those who left laid slightly more emphasis on wages but those still in farming and current owners were close behind them. Nor is there any significant difference between farmers' offspring and others on this issue. Some of those who rejected its importance were retired, or had left for personal reasons not related to the nature of the job, such as health. The rest were very keen on the job and appeared to reject concern with wages as materialistic and therefore undesirable. Half the negative comments in answer to the open-ended questions about farm work related to income either directly, or indirectly through concern with standards of living on farms, high land prices and the poor economic situation of farming in general. In contrast, only 6% of the positive comments were favourable remarks about farm income.

Comparing the current wage levels of farm employees and those who have left casts some light on the concern with wages. At a time when the average wage was $347.52 per week or less than $20,000, half of those who left, half the current farm employees, and two thirds of the farm owners were earning less than the average wage (Department of Statistics 1986). There were greater numbers of those who left on low incomes because so many were retired or semi-retired but farm employees were working full-time.

1 The figures combine both farm owner's and employee's incomes and so may be a poor representation of reality. However the figures for full-time males are: farming $10,630, forestry and logging $11,940, construction $12,054, and transport $16,200 (Department of Statistics 1988). The additional non-cash income which used to be a feature of farm employment has been heavily reduced by changes in taxation regulations.
Some farm employees got some income in kind as well as cash (57%). Free meat was the most common, with half of them receiving at least some. One third received a free phone and about one quarter free power, milk or a contribution to travel costs. A few were offered housing, clothing, firewood or upkeep of animals. Most of those who were offered income in kind received several items, but it seems unlikely that many would have received as much in kind as some did in an earlier study. Harris (1980) suggested that the average value of income in kind was about 20% of total income. Although farm owners' incomes were lower than either of the other groups they are not strictly comparable because they do not take the ownership of assets into account, nor is the standard of living on a farm fully represented by cash income. Family income is also important as well as the income of the individual. Women living in rural areas often have less access to the work in which they have been trained or have more costs involved in travel to it. Like lack of work for rural school leavers, this may encourage people to leave farming.

There were far fewer complaints about the nature of the task itself, and fewer of those responding to the scaled question felt that the work needed to be more interesting. Only 51% said this was important, with little variation among the three groups on this issue, nor was there much between farmers' offspring and others. Nearly half of the spontaneous comments on the nature of farm work were favourable, job satisfaction meant that they were achieving what they wanted in life, and only 29% had negative comments about it. Most of the favourable comments, 84%, referred to the actual work rather than conditions for example hours. In contrast most of the negative comments about farm work refer to the conditions under which it is done, in particular hours received 58% of the negative comments.

Many farm employees have a strong work ethic and 10 mentioned hard work as a positive aspect of farm work, but when farm hours interrupted relationships with family and friends it was resented. Farm employees and owners were less likely to be concerned about hours than those who had left, with little difference between farmers' offspring and others except that non-farmers' offspring who became owners were least concerned to cut working hours. If you look at the hours the three groups worked (apart from those retired or working part-time) those who have left farming worked the shortest hours, then came current farm workers, then farm owners. Compared with the average working hours of the whole population, in which only 8% reported working over 70 hours a week, 22% of people involved in my survey reported working over 70 hours (Department of Statistics 1988). Not only were some of those who left in semi-retirement, working very short hours, few were working very long hours. Only 3% worked over seventy hours per week, whereas 21% of farm employees and 32% of farm owners said they worked this long. Given the less regimented nature of farm work these figures may not be strictly comparable with each other and with urban jobs. Very few farm employees were working less than forty hours per week, and some had other jobs as well, as did farm owners.
A superannuation scheme received only slightly more interest than working hours. In keeping with my intuition that farm owners might identify with their current interests rather than those of permanent employees, current farm employees were most in favour of superannuation and farm owners least in favour of it. Non-farmers' offspring were more interested than others.

Job security was considered to be important by just on half of those who replied. Current farm employees were most likely to be in favour of increased security while farm owners were least likely to consider this important. Again, non-farmers' offspring were more concerned about work conditions than those from farm families. There were a few (29) spontaneous comments made about the security of farm work, reflecting the same divided interests. Those taking on sharemilking jobs were among the people who commented on the insecurity of farm work. The question of security tended to be tied up with housing. Given that 66% of current farm employees lived in housing provided by their employer and would move house when they changed jobs, whether they wanted to or not, it is not surprising that this as seen as a problem. Only 28% of current farm employees owned their own home (not all lived in the houses they owned), whereas 70% of those who left owned their own home and few were renting these houses out - 22% rented housing, and another 4% were still in accommodation provided with their job. Some owned other property as an investment and this was more common for those who have left, 20% did compared with 13% of those who were still farm employees. The differences are consistent with the older age range among those who left, but some do leave farming specifically to acquire their own home. Farm owners face problems with interest repayments etc, but do not have the same problems with housing.

More opportunity for promotion was of concern to half of respondents, with no big differences between the groups. Although current farm employees had not been very concerned, more of them did tend to think it was important. People did see their changes in jobs within farming as promotion, particularly if becoming a manager or sharemilker, but few complained about the prospects for promotion within farming, unless about the difficulties of becoming an owner.

Finally there was considerable concern about relationships between employees and employers, 65% of respondents felt this was important and current farm employees and farm owners were both concerned with this aspect of work, more so than those who had left. This is slightly unexpected because the answers to open-ended questions show far more of those who had left farming had problems with their employers, and may reflect the difficulties in addressing a more complex issue in a brief "tick the box" type question. Again, farmers' offspring were less concerned about this issue. It was mentioned a few times in answer to the open-ended questions, almost always as a problem, and the popular response was to move on to another job.
Because housing, access to services and social isolation are considered important factors in people's reasons for leaving farming in the literature (Harris 1980: 55), I investigated whether those who had left farming felt these were important issues when they decided to leave. The results suggested that these areas were not a big problem for the majority, certainly not as important as the work related issues (See Table 8-1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASPECTS OF RURAL LIFE</th>
<th>IMPORTANT</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MORE OPPORTUNITY FOR HOME OWNERSHIP</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BETTER EMPLOYMENT CHANCES FOR CHILDREN</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCESS TO SCHOOLS AND SERVICES</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BETTER EMPLOYMENT CHANCES FOR SPOUSE</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BETTER QUALITY HOUSING</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSPORT PROBLEMS IN GENERAL</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 21% of those who left were concerned about their spouse preferring non-farm work, a quarter of these people's spouses disliked the country, the rest disliked the hours, pay etc of farm jobs. There was little difference in the significance allotted to each statement depending on father's occupation. There were only two areas on which they differed significantly: farmers' offspring were less likely to find visiting friends or employment chances for children problems.

The reasons given for leaving farm work for the final time illuminated areas which concern many farm employees. Although 13% of these people left because of age or ill-health, economic issues dominated the thoughts of most. In 23% of the comments (some made more than one) people stated that they had wanted higher wages, 6% wanted a home of their own and 11% complained that they were unable to buy a farm. There were a few comments, 5% of them, about hours of work, and a large number of negative comments, 18%, about the job security of farm employees and relationships with farmers. Another category of comments covered the needs of wives and children, including education, and availability of social and recreational facilities (9% gave this as a reason for leaving). Contrary to the situation found in some reports, isolation did not seem to be the major issue, but whether that is related to the locality of my respondents or national changes in economic circumstances is not clear. The remaining comments gave neutral reasons for leaving. Some had just chosen other jobs, without having any real problems with farm work itself.

The comments made in answer to the open-ended question "What would have to change before you returned to farm work?" are also heavily dominated by economic issues. Although a quarter of them
stated that it was now too late for the respondents to return because of their age, 33% of comments stated the respondents would not return until either the wages or the general level of incomes in farming improved. Another 16% of comments precluded return unless the respondents could become farm owners, and 18% stated categorically that they would not return whatever changes occurred in farming. Only a handful of comments mentioned other issues, such as education or work conditions. Those who left were also asked whether they felt that they were better off since they left farming. The majority agreed that they were, although another 21% said they were no better or worse off and 8% thought they were worse off. The reasons for being better off included easier access to educational, sporting and recreational facilities, shorter working hours, higher incomes, fewer problems in buying a house than while a farm employee, and the physical toll of farm work. The people who said they were worse off had often left because of circumstances beyond their control. They had retired, or left because of health problems. Others regretted lost quality of life, even although they had decided to leave.

The issues just discussed - housing, access to services, education, working conditions, and concern for family members - were important to many farm employees and owners as well as those who left. Over a quarter commented on this group of issues in answers to the open-ended questions. There are many similarities among the people in this study, although the analysis emphasises differences. Because the majority of the sample were between thirty and fifty years of age, most were married and most had children, the proportions are very close to those of the general population 83% of whom were married in 1986 (Department of Statistics 1988). There some demographic differences among the study population, but these do not lead to differences in outcome. Disadvantages related to the age of the individual appear to reflect results rather than causes.

TABLE 8.2
OUTCOME BY FAMILY SITUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>SINGLE</th>
<th>MARRIED</th>
<th>EX-MARRIED</th>
<th>PERCENT CHILDREN</th>
<th>MEAN NO CHILDREN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>385</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM WORKER</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The age range of the children naturally reflects that of their parents (See Table 8-3). Other studies such as Kaplan [1978?] have suggested that people's decisions about work are influenced by their families. In line with such studies, I divided the children up by their relationship to school and work, and classified all respondents over 40 years old with no children as unlikely to ever have them in line with
Pomeroy (1986). When the information from those who left is correlated with family characteristics the results suggest that schooling and other issues related to family may be important to those who mentioned them, but the age of the children in the family does not affect the overall tenor of the reasons given. There is no increase in the numbers leaving at any particular age. Nor is there any strong correlation between the age of the family and other things which might affect people's life chances, such as the likelihood of women working. The percentage of women who worked off-farm was lower than for urban women in the wage workforce and there were no significant differences in whether they worked or not related to the age of their children.

The comments in response to the open-ended questions suggested that family is just as likely to influence people to stay as to leave. Many people mentioned the benefit that farm life gave to children, access to rural life, open air, animals, freedom from the "evils" of city living, and the possibility for the family to spend more time together because there is less separation between home and workplace for farm people.

The overall impression which comes out of this analysis is that the work itself and related lifestyle issues were not major sources of problems, but other aspects of it such as income were causing frustration. This is significant as income is normally the prime area in which trade unions are active in defending their members' rights. A brief summary of the rating given to key potential problem areas in the scaled questions show significant differences in the weighting given to each by those who experienced different outcomes (See Table 8-4). None of the other issues previously discussed showed significant differences in response according to outcome except for the relationship between employees and employers, which I will not include in this analysis because farm owners may have interpreted this question as employers. Those who were still involved in farm wage work showed most

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>PRE SCHOOL</th>
<th>SCHOOL AGE</th>
<th>LEFT SCHOOL</th>
<th>NO CHILD YET</th>
<th>NEVER CHILD</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEFT FARM</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM WORKER</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM OWNER</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of missing observations: 6
Significance of chi-square: .0000  Gamma: -.30
concern about all these issues, followed by those who had left. Farm owners showed least concern about conditions, although their interest in wages was equal to the others. The significance of each interaction was assessed using the chi-square statistic. Each row in the table represents a different two-way table and the number of cases in each row varies slightly because of missing cases. This applies to all the tables in this and the next section.

**TABLE 8-4**

PERCENTAGE STATING ASPECTS OF JOB IMPORTANT BY OUTCOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASPECTS OF JOB</th>
<th>EXIT</th>
<th>FARM</th>
<th>OWN</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGHER WAGES</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MORE JOB SECURITY</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUPERANNUATION</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHORTER HOURS</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because I was interested in the effect of background on attitudes to work, I looked at the differences between farmers' offspring and others to see whether this seemed to be influential (See Table 8-5). It turned out that outcome was much more relevant to separating out different attitudes. The issues which raised most interest showed the least differences in their assessment of importance by each group. Superannuation and shorter hours were most likely to be of relevance to those from non-farm backgrounds but less so than for those who had left.

**TABLE 8-5**

PERCENTAGE STATING ASPECTS OF JOB IMPORTANT BY FATHER'S OCCUPATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASPECTS OF JOB</th>
<th>FARM</th>
<th>NON-FARM</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGHER WAGES</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MORE JOB SECURITY</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUPERANNUATION</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHORTER HOURS</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results, combined with the information on the approach each group made to different jobs, confirm that there may have been a different range of attitudes held within each group, but it is unlikely that attitudes to work had sufficient impact on people's careers to make a difference to their chances of
ownership. All groups agreed that the major problem with farm work was income and expressed themselves passionately on this issue.

None of the other areas where there were differences seem large enough to be affecting career structure, and through it outcome. Those who left may have encountered more negative experiences in farming than those still farm workers, but they were still interested in the job and many left with regret, although they felt that overall they were better off elsewhere. As expected, those still farming showed high job satisfaction and were interested in conditions such as superannuation which would affect their future in the job. They were more likely to indicate interest in ownership as a motivation for career moves than those who left. Some younger ones will go on to ownership. But since it is likely that the majority will not, it is possible that the differences which show up between them and those who left will reduce over time. Those from family farms came to farm work with a set of assumptions which were clearly different to those of others, but it is evident they encountered the same problems with farm employment. Their position depends on the amount of help available from their families and not all can depend on this.

The results confirmed Gill's (1981) hypothesis about the covert nature of industrial conflict within farming. There was some concern about employee/employer relations, and occasional negative comments about the behaviour of individual farmers, but very little criticism about farmers as a group. There is evidence that dissatisfaction with the wages paid by farmers was widespread, but the blame is laid elsewhere, for example with processors or overseas markets. Although 80% saw the need for higher wages - an issue which would normally be pursued by unions - only about half of the study population saw the need for a farm union. There was less concern for other problems, such as hours, which are also the concern of unions, but they were still important to substantial numbers of people, particularly those still farm employees. The differences between the groups suggest that those who became owners had either been aware of this potential for a considerable length of time and this had coloured their thinking, or that their attitudes had changed retrospectively. This suggests that outcome may be related to significant differences in attitudes to unions as well. I will look into this issue in the next section.

8.6 ATTITUDES TO UNIONS

Many farm employees realised the need for an organisation to represent their interests but for various reasons they were not active in the organisations which have been available to them, or in forming new ones. Very few had joined the Farm Workers' Association, which had limited powers to act for them anyway. The Public Service Association was only open to those on crown-owned blocks and the New Zealand Workers' Union seems to have had limited appeal. The majority of its members are urban workers.
There seemed to be a strong feeling that although farm work had problems, unions as farm employees know them, would not provide solutions. There was a lot of negative feeling about compulsory unionism and more people felt that there was a need for unions than thought unions were doing a good job. This confirms the suggestion by Gill (1981) that farm employees have grievances but do not feel able to act collectively on them.

As well as being interested in overall attitudes to unions, I was particularly interested in whether various subgroups had different expectations of them. When the whole sample is divided by outcome and by father's occupation, some significant differences among farm employees do emerge. I will begin with the differences in opinions between those who have left farming, those who were still farm employees and those who were now farm owners (See Table 8-6).

TABLE 8-6
PERCENTAGE AGREEING STATEMENT ABOUT UNIONS IMPORTANT BY OUTCOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASPECTS OF UNIONS</th>
<th>EXIT</th>
<th>FARM</th>
<th>OWN</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>438</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIONS DO A GOOD JOB</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+VE COMPULSORY UNIONS</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM UNION INEFFECTIVE</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>.617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEED FOR FARM UNION</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOULD JOIN FARM UNION</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOINED FARM UNION PAST</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those who had left farming are generally most in favour of unions and, theoretically anyway, most likely to join a farm union. However they had not joined in large numbers in the past. This does not reflect the fact that they had spent less time as farm employees, their average length of time spent predominantly in farm work was 27 years while it was 24.5 years for those still farm employees and 15 years for those who are now owners. It may reflect the availability of organisations to join however, as the Public Service Association was open to few farm employees, the New Zealand Workers' Union has attracted few rural workers other than shearers and the Farm Workers' Association was active for a few years in the 1970s but is now defunct.

One proposition most people agreed on was that unions were not effective for farm workers even although they might be effective for others. Other issues do show statistically significant differences. Those who were still farm employees were slightly less enthusiastic about the need for both farm and
general unions but more likely to have been in a farm organisation of some sort. Those who are now farm owners were less likely to see a need for unions and least likely to have joined in the past.

This gives some confirmation to the idea that those who were aiming to become owners were less likely to be interested in union activity as employees. To check whether these ideas about unions were likely to have been of long standing and influenced people's behaviour in the past I also looked at the differences between those who were farmers' offspring and others (See Table 8-7). Except for the fact that more people who did not come from a farm owning background felt the need for a farm union, the differences between these two groups are much slighter than between those who had experienced different outcomes to their careers. They are in the direction expected though, farmer's offspring are less supportive of unions in general and farm unions in particular.

**TABLE 8-7**

PERCENTAGE AGREEING STATEMENT ABOUT UNIONS IMPORTANT BY FATHER'S OCCUPATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASPECTS OF UNIONS</th>
<th>FARM (263)</th>
<th>NON-FARM (144)</th>
<th>TOTAL (407)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNIONS DO A GOOD JOB</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>.108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+VE COMPULSORY UNIONS</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM UNION INEFFECTIVE</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEED FOR FARM UNION</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOULD JOIN FARM UNION</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOINED FARM UNION PAST</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>.069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.039</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the few spontaneous comments about unions were negative. Obviously, levels of concern about wages, and to a lesser extent conditions, were higher than interest in unions. Gill talks about farm employees as working class and does not mention the position of farmer's offspring at all. Although the differences between farmers' offspring and others were slight, it is possible that the differences which do show up represent ideas which have been absorbed from their parents. Farmers' offspring may fail to reject anti-union feeling as adults when union membership would be of benefit. However the fact that the differences related to outcome were stronger than those related to aspiration to own suggest that some attitudes are confirmed in adult life and relate to current and future needs as well as past influences, while others are dropped.

The evidence presented so far supports Gill's statement that covert dissatisfaction exists but that farm employees are disinclined to act collectively against their employers. Gill's case can be developed further by looking at differences between sub-groups within the farm labour force. The decreased
support for unions among farm owners is mirrored by their decreased concern about work conditions, although wages remain important. It is possible some farm employees may be avoiding unions because strong unions will be a problem to them if they become farm owners, even if they have not consciously decided on this strategy. In many cases all they need to do is fail to reject attitudes commonly held by farm owners. The proportion of people holding these attitudes could be assessed by the level of support for unions in the groups whose opinions differ most. The difference in support for unions between those who intended to become farm owners and did so and those who were undecided on their career and left is over 25% on all issues except their feeling that unions are ineffective for farm workers, and the numbers who have actually joined a farm organisation in the past.

It is difficult to analyse the way attitudes to unions are constructed. From my data I do not know whether the answers people gave to closed questions were based on consciousness of personal economic interests or whether they were a reflection of pervasive ideologies which rejected unions because they were seen as bad for farming as a whole. They may also have reflected a rejection of unions as they knew them, and a lack of appreciation of how to make them more effective. Not all anti-union ideas are linked to ownership. There was a strong feeling among the people I surveyed that farm wages were dependent on the industry's income not the intention of farm owners. Many workers saw the solution to their problems coming from support to the industry, with flow on effects for them, rather than through direct competition with farmers for the industry's income.

8.7 CONCLUSION

In the last chapter I looked at the actual job histories people had, and tried to identify both career paths which were more likely to lead to a particular outcome and barriers to fulfilling goals. In this chapter I have looked at the comments people made about these jobs. The differences which showed up in comments confirmed the impressions given by changes in job type. Farm employees see managerial or sharemilking jobs as being quite different from other farm jobs. Both are progressive moves, but managing has less association with family ownership of farms and ownership in general, and more association with a career in farm employment and job satisfaction. The major difference in comments revolves around background. Those from family farms have different expectations, different careers, and as the next chapter will show, differences in the amount of help they receive from family members. All these factors reinforce each other. Farm ownership is attractive to many farmers' sons, although they may also feel some pressure from their families to take up a farm career then ownership.

All groups experienced problems with the income from farm employment. There was slightly more variety in the concern felt about work conditions. Those who were still farm employees in 1986 were most concerned about issues, such as superannuation, which would affect their future. There is some evidence that more of those who left had unfortunate experiences with their employers, but they had
high levels of job satisfaction in general. Demographic factors seemed to have little bearing on the
decision to leave compared with discontent with farm income. Nor was rural life itself a problem.
Background definitely shaped perceptions of what was an appropriate career, although whether they
in turn shaped the outcome of that career or whether it was shaped by access to more concrete
resources is less clear. The results of sections Three and Four describing attitudes to different types
of work are relatively inconclusive, as most comments fell into two categories, they referred to the
benefits of farm work and life, or demonstrated the way farm ownership seemed an unquestioned
choice for many farmers' sons. Clearly those who did take on managing and sharemilking saw them as
a means to success of one sort or another.

There is much evidence that farm background shapes the attitudes of farmers' offspring at the same
time as it provides concrete help. But there is little evidence of attitudes among others, apart from the
will to own, which make a difference to career outcome without something else to back them up,
whether it was the Department of Lands and Survey settlement scheme, the Rural Banking and
Finance Corporation, a good income from sharemilking, or just plain luck. If there was evidence that
those who left were less tolerant of long hours, their satisfaction with farm work suggests that there
was no intrinsic difference in their approach to the work itself that prevented them from making
successful careers as farm employees. But this is not enough to ensure farm ownership. Attitudes
shape behaviour which can have an effect on people's careers, as the example of attitudes to
unionisation shows, but in terms of direct effect on career, access to material help, whether a loan, farm
stock or access to sharemilking, and whether from family or from some other source, is far more
important. In the next chapter I will look at the actual sources of finance farm owners used to buy their
farms, concentrating on the way background correlated with provision of finance.

Both Goodman and Redclift and Friedmann present their analyses as structural ones rather than as
dependent on the attitudes of farm people. However because these "structural" explanations depend
on assumptions about the nature of families, it is difficult to disentangle values and material interests in
the role of family labour in the success of the enterprise. Friedmann suggests that simple commodity
producers will undersell capitalist farmers and all family members will benefit. Goodman and Redclift
disagree on the latter point. Reproduction of family farms clearly involves both values and concrete
help but it is not clear whether values can be used to examine either proposition empirically. Even if
exploitation were present, there is no guarantee that it would be expressed by dissatisfaction with the
family rather than some external factor. Widespread frustration with working for family would only signal
that other variables should be examined and this chapter has been unable to present data suggesting
either constraint or opportunity are uppermost for the individuals studied. It can only provide pointers
as to the content of a full analysis of the role of background in forming attitudes to ownership and the
importance of judgments made on non-economic grounds.

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What this chapter does show is the extent to which structural conditions and values appear to be interacting. Expectations lead some to job choices which will help them achieve their goals, but not all make these choices. (Unfortunately the comments on job changes give no indication of the amount of competition for such jobs). Attitudes may constrain actions in other areas as well. Farm employees consist of two groups with conflicting interests. It is clear that attitudes to industrial problems, such as the amount of freedom farm owners should have to set wages, are related to background. Differences of opinion will help to disguise the covert conflict which seems to exist within farming. Individual solutions, such as leaving farming, may be the most rational reaction to existing conditions, but I am not sure that this argument can be extended to suggest that farmers' offspring are more aware of the political strength of the farm lobby than other farm employees. It is likely other forces, such as inheritance of values, are operating.

Many people made comments about their structural position and some commented about unions. Because these comments were made spontaneously rather than in answer to a set question I cannot present them quantitatively. They are not conclusive, but do suggest some of the links which exist between individuals and economic structure. In the meantime, is only fair to let farm employees themselves have the last word.

Left farming, aged 32, School Certificate:
"Unionism for workers on a one to one relationship with their bosses is difficult. With good bosses it's a hindrance, with bad bosses it can aggravate problems."

Farm employee, Male, aged 47, Higher School Certificate:
"They [unions] seem necessary but I wish they were not. Some form is needed but compulsory stinks it is doubtful one could exist on a voluntary basis."

Farm employee male, aged 61, no qualifications:
"I don't think that much can be done for the farm workers until the farm owners are getting satisfactory payments for their produce to be able to help the employees more."

Farm employee, male, aged 45, no qualifications:
"Most farm workers are in farming because of the life style they enjoy and are prepared to accept many of the hassles which are sometimes associated with farming."

Farm employee, male, aged 57, School Certificate:
"The whole (Dairy Farms) award is a bit of a laugh really, why are we not in line with other workers ... Too much is left to the employer to decide ..."

Farm employee, female, aged 47 years, University Entrance:
"Farm workers in my view need to see the goal of ownership or herd ownership or else the long hours of difficult and dirty work just can't be worth it."
CHAPTER NINE

SOURCES OF FINANCE AND FARM EXPANSION

9.1 INTRODUCTION

The analysis so far has looked at the effect of background variables, job histories and attitudes to work in an attempt to sort out the complex sets of interacting factors which cast some light on the way farm employees experience farm work. The emphasis has been on the problems of upward and downward class mobility. Although it has been difficult to delineate the exact role of each factor, the relationships between them clearly show the importance of class background. Coming from a farm owning family increases the chances of becoming a farm owner in a variety of ways. It reinforces aspirations towards ownership and expectations of success. In many cases it leads to a different career structure, based on or around work on the family farm. The picture is not completely clear-cut. Not all petty bourgeois farm owners can offer sufficient help to family members for members to be assured of access to a farm. Nor are all non-farmers' offspring excluded from ownership - here government support has played an important role. The process of trying to discern trends among the ambiguities of class relationships is repeated in this chapter on farm finance.

Having looked at both job history and background characteristics and having found it sometimes difficult to give one aspect priority over the others, I looked to the sources of finance of those who did become farmers to confirm the importance of class location. This should have provided evidence of the extent to which people whose father's were farmers provided significant financial help. This would then allow the separation of motivation and ability from financial aspects of the maintenance of class position across generations. As it happens, the results are not as conclusive as I had hoped, partly because of limitations on data but also because there seems to be a variety of financial prerequisites to farm ownership. A major criterion is attempting to buy a farm which will provide a large enough income to repay the mortgage. If you can meet the criteria set by providers of credit, whether from family, government or private financial institutions, you are in a group with this major attribute in common, and the effects of other characteristics such as aspiration, education or job history are minimised.

In suggesting that coming from a farm owning background is a significant factor in mobility, I have assumed that this is because a farm is a large capital asset which enables the owner to give someone else considerable assistance towards ownership. If having a father who is a farmer proves to be related to the amount of family finance received, this will be confirmed. Comparison by vendor, whether, family or non-family is another element which may be related to both incentive and ability to amass capital.
Unlike other variables related in part to background, there seems to be no reason why aspiration to own should be related to the amount of finance available from family, unless those without some backing never even consider it. If those who wanted to own a farm were buying larger farms and getting more finance from their families, the interaction between expectations that ownership is assured and aspiration would be confirmed. The comments about access to financial help from families made by those who had not become owners suggest that although some reject the idea of family help, others regret that they could not borrow enough to make ownership possible. Unfortunately a three-way analysis which looks at finance by aspiration by father's occupation runs into such small cell sizes its results are not reliable.

Education is another factor around which the source and amount of finance used might vary. Those with more education may be better able to amass capital, and may be able to borrow more freely because they fit the lending criteria of financial institutions. Sources of financial help should help decide the question of whether those with higher education had come from more advantaged backgrounds and had greater access to family funds.

Another assumption to be examined relates to career path and accumulation of capital by individuals. Presumably those who are older have had more time to amass their own capital, or have waited in order to make use of family inheritance. The source of finance should confirm this. Another factor interacting with sources of finance is likely to be job history (See Chapter Seven). Those with careers as sharemilkers seem likely to have amassed more of their own capital, while those who had only ever been general farm employees seemed more likely to have been dependent on family help.

Before analysing the amounts people had raised to buy their farms I converted them all to 1980 farm prices, using an index of average changes in price calculated by the Valuation Department (1986). This may not be an accurate conversion scale because of variations in different areas, but allows some comparability where none would be possible because of rapid price rises over the period when members of my sample were buying their farms. The conversion rate varied from multiplying by 1.766 in 1975 to 0.594 in 1986.

TABLE 9-1
PURCHASE PRICES OF FARMS WORTH $100,000 IN 1980 TERMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>$</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>56,818</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>120,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>63,211</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>166,944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>68,027</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>179,856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>72,046</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>170,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>87,719</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>169,491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>168,350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I had hoped that the effects of the main background factors would be confirmed by differences in the access people had to various sources of finance and the overall prices paid for their farms, particularly the effect of father's occupation as opposed to the others. Some trends do seem to show up from these figures, but for a number of reasons it is difficult to draw conclusions from them.

One reason is limitations in the data available. Not all farmers filling in the questionnaire wished to include the amounts of money raised from various sources. Others, unrecognised as owners from the electoral rolls, had not been asked for this information at all. Only 56% provided full information for all sources mentioned, but there was no significant variation between these people and those who did not provide this information.

Another problem is the variability in the data itself. There are some interesting differences in the mean amount of finance from each source according to different circumstances, but the large size of the ranges involved and the small numbers in some of the categories make it difficult to be sure these relationships would be repeated for a larger, more reliable sample. The ranges involved were enormous (See Table 9-2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>MINIMUM</th>
<th>MAXIMUM</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INHERITANCE/GIFT</td>
<td>$7,190</td>
<td>$218,980</td>
<td>$50,988</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAMILY LOAN</td>
<td>$2,940</td>
<td>$183,750</td>
<td>$66,156</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OWN CAPITAL</td>
<td>$5,560</td>
<td>$146,250</td>
<td>$35,598</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL BANK</td>
<td>$3,590</td>
<td>$230,970</td>
<td>$86,838</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER SOURCES</td>
<td>$3,590</td>
<td>$250,200</td>
<td>$61,591</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALL SOURCES</strong></td>
<td>$23,960</td>
<td>$403,650</td>
<td>$150,309</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the sample was subdivided by various background factors the problem intensified. Even if the means appeared to be different, all the 95% confidence intervals around them overlapped to some extent. The problem is greatest for those who had received gifts or inheritances. As this thesis has shown, inheritance and ownership are seldom straightforward matters. Although very few members of my sample inherited farms outright (only 6 of them) some others inherited part of a viable farm but had to raise loans at the same time to pay off others with part shares in the property. Other chose to expand their parent's property when they took it over. The eleven people who were able to put an amount on their inheritance or gifts were also borrowing money from elsewhere. (Except for one who was gifted some shares in a family company.) Given that a family loan is likely to be paid back, even if at
preferential rates, (Lowe 1985) it seemed necessary to keep these amounts separate, but the combined level of family help seems important.

The Rural Bank was the most important source of finance overall. Its policy on loans to first farm purchasers was to assist people who would not be able to purchase using other sources of finance and it had a variety of schemes with this in mind, from subsidised savings to tax exemptions for vendors who were prepared to provide mortgages. However during the period when people from the study population were purchasing farms the Rural Bank was receiving far more applications than it had money to approve. As inflationary prices escalated the approval rate dropped from about three-quarters to about half. The criteria on which proposals were accepted included the ability of the farm to service the debt loading involved, the farming experience and managerial ability of the applicant and the amount of finance applicants themselves were contributing to the purchase. Although money could be lent to those purchasing farms from family members, such transactions were given low priority unless the transaction could not be completed any other way or at any other time. Rural Bank loans gave people considerable advantages: the interest rates were much lower than market rates, until 1985 when the gap began to close, and in certain circumstances they would loan up to 85% of the purchase price (Rural Banking and Finance Corporation 1976-86).

Farm owners' offspring were receiving loans from the Rural Bank, but it was particularly important as a source of finance for non-farmers' offspring and in some cases was a direct substitute for the type of help a farm owning family could provide. Other means to farm ownership which favoured non-farmers' offspring were the settlement schemes run by the Departments of Lands and Survey and Maori Affairs. Anyone could get finance from banks, solicitors, and non-family vendors, but the rates were much higher.

Most people obtained finance from several sources. The average number of sources was 2.4, whilst none had more than five. A few people bought using only one source: their own capital, family loans or Rural Bank capital. The most commonly used source was the Rural Bank: 81% received finance from it. The next most popular source was people's own savings, with 55% having contributed them to the purchase price. This seems relatively low, and may reflect a problem with the questionnaire, as to the nature of various contributions. Many will already have put their own capital into a herd and or plant and machinery while sharemilking or as part-time farmers. This may not have been included in answer to the question about purchase of the farm. Family loans were given in 43% of cases, and gifts or inheritances in 11%.

Because of the variation in the price paid for farms by respondents, even in 1980 prices, I was also interested in whether there was any variety in the dependence each group had on particular sources of finance. I therefore calculated the percentage of the total price which came from each source (See
Table 9-3. These individual percentages were then averaged, showing that some groups did indeed find a larger percentage of their finance from one source. The percentages add up to more than 100%, because there is considerable variation in the individual percentages. Again the range of results and the smallness of some of the groups mean that none of the relationships are statistically significant. The lowest percentage of finance from any source at the individual level is always less than 10%, the highest usually 100%. However I have reported the differences because they suggest interesting possibilities which could be followed up with a larger sample. With all the variables, the differences in the percentages do not always reflect differences in the amounts involved. The numbers of people receiving help from a particular source do not reflect this either (these are shown in the last column of Table 9-3). Having outlined the general characteristics of the sample, I will divide it up according to father’s occupation, aspiration, education age and job history, to see whether there are any significant differences in the mean amount of finance and the mean percentage of finance from each source for each characteristic.

### TABLE 9-3

**PROPORTION OF FINANCE FROM EACH SOURCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>95% confidence interval</th>
<th>% ANY FINANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MIN</td>
<td>MAX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INHERITED-GIFT</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAMILY LOAN</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OWN CAPITAL</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL BANK</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER SOURCES</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALL SOURCES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.2 FATHER’S OCCUPATION AND SOURCES OF FINANCE

The differences in the means of sources of finance between those with and without fathers who were farmers were less than I expected - none were significant (See Table 9-4). Those whose fathers were not farmers were spending only slightly less on their farms. Although I had expected that non-farmer’s offspring would receive less family help, their slightly lower mean for inherited or gifted money is almost compensated for by higher family loans.


TABLE 9-4
MEAN AMOUNT OF FINANCE BY FATHER’S OCCUPATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>FATHER = FARMER</th>
<th></th>
<th>FATHER = NON-FARM</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AMOUNT (000)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>AMOUNT (000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INHERITED-GIFT</td>
<td>$57</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>$34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAMILY LOAN</td>
<td>$62</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>$78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OWN CAPITAL</td>
<td>$34</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>$40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL BANK</td>
<td>$89</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>$92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER SOURCES</td>
<td>$54</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>$42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL SOURCES</td>
<td>$148</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
<td>$137</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I was surprised by this, and looked into these cases individually. The families which were able to help out were those in which the father's occupation indicated higher income, and the farms bought were slightly more expensive than the average. It turned out that the size of the inherited/gifted category was influenced by one case of inheritance through the mothers' family, and that all those parents who had given substantial loans had also had connections with farm ownership even although that was not given as the father's occupation - not all farm owners work full-time or even part-time on their farms. Otherwise the sums involved were significantly smaller, and none of these people had had money from their own parents, although the numbers involved make the result highly unreliable. A more informative strategy is to look at the actual numbers receiving family help of any kind. Far more farmer's than non-farmer's offspring received some help (62% compared with 26%).

The differences were relatively slight for other sources. The greater dependence on their own capital by non-farmers' offspring was expected. The greater use of free market sources: banks, solicitors or non-family vendor finance by farmer's offspring may have related to lack of access to the Rural Bank sources because family is involved. The Rural Bank result is the most significant. The range of the 95% confidence interval is 53% to 66% for farmers' offspring, and 62% to 80% for non-farmers' offspring, the smallest overlap between farmers' and non-farmers' offspring. Although analysis of variance did not find any significant relationships, clearly family finance and the Rural Bank played a large role in shaping the social relations of production in New Zealand.

Non-farmer's sons who became owners (no women were included in this analysis) fell into four main groups. There were those who did have family help. Another group had spent over five years sharemilking, giving them a chance to amass capital that way. There was a higher proportion of sharemilkers in this group than in the full population of farm owners. A third group tended to be older, and to have had School Certificate or higher educational qualifications, or farm qualifications. Any
others had found an alternative way of amassing capital, for example off-farm work, or had bought a cheaper farm. Five non-farmers sons had purchased through the Department of Lands and Survey's ballotted farm settlement scheme, which was specifically targeting young, competent farmers without family assistance. In general, the occupations of parents in this group differed slightly from those in the full sample, with 36% in professional, managerial, clerical or sales positions compared with 23% of the whole sample.

My conclusion is that father's occupation does reveal differences in the extent to which farmers are able to assist their children financially, but that the difference is not only in the amount that is provided, but also in whether there is access to other forms of assistance such as sharemilking. Chapter Seven has already shown the importance of career structure, particularly access to high incomes through sharemilking on a family farm. Many of those who had had this advantage also received financial help, although a higher percentage of people on sheep or beef farms benefitted from family finance alone. Non-family sharemilkers were most likely to have missed out on family help. In New Zealand access to farm ownership is not completely closed and the ability of non-farmers offspring to become owners reflects this position. The strongest differentiation is revealed in the proportion of non-farmer's and farmers' offspring who wanted to own but failed to do so, rather than in the help given to those who did succeed.

I was interested in whether there were differences between those inheriting or buying family farms and those buying from non-family. However the total purchase prices showed virtually no difference, with a mean of $150,842 for farms purchased or inherited from family, and $153,370 for those purchased from non-family. It is not possible to tell whether farms purchased off family members are given a current market value anyway. In general, although there were differences in the amounts acquired from different sources between family and non-family purchases, these were not significant. The Rural Bank was the only exception, analysis of variance put the significance at .008, with non-family purchasers receiving a mean of $102,454 compared with $76,594 for family ones. Only one non-family purchaser inherited, for family loans there was little difference. Family purchasers were getting only slightly more money from the less common sources of finance. When I compared the total purchase price of farms for those who did and those who did not get some form of family loan, those with family help were able to purchase more expensive farms, the mean was $163,848 compared to $136,771. I would conclude that the amount of help which is available, is an important difference in ability to buy a farm, and that this is important rather than membership of a farm owning family alone.

9.3 ASPIRATION AND SOURCES OF FINANCE

When the mean total price of those who wanted to own a farm when they started farming is compared with those who did not want to, the influence of situation on career is more striking, although the
relationship is not statistically significant. Those who did not want to own paid an average of nearly $40,000 more for their farms (See Table 9-5). The means show that a large proportion of the difference in purchase price is made up of Rural Bank loans. Family assistance is higher, as is personal capital. It seems likely that these people ended up in a position where ownership became particularly attractive and superceded their alternative plans. Analysis of variance puts the significance for the difference in Rural Bank loans at .04, none of the others are significantly different.

TABLE 9-5
MEAN AMOUNT OF FINANCE BY ASPIRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>OWN FARM AMOUNT (000)</th>
<th>OWN FARM %</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>UNDECIDED AMOUNT (000)</th>
<th>UNDECIDED %</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>NOT OWN AMOUNT (000)</th>
<th>NOT OWN %</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INHERIT-GIFT</td>
<td>$78</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$59</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAMILY LOAN</td>
<td>$64</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>$51</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>$98</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OWN CAPITAL</td>
<td>$35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>$32</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>$48</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL BANK</td>
<td>$84</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>$82</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>$123</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER SOURCE</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>$75</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>$44</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL SOURCES</td>
<td>$146</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
<td>$140</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>$183</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As expected, those who had originally wanted to own were getting a substantial amount of finance from their families. The means are slightly higher than those for farmer's offspring in general. However those who had not been undecided were not missing out on family help - this may have been a deciding factor for some.

Clearly, there may be a relationship between aspiration and knowledge of available resources, but evidence for this among the successful is mixed. Few of those who had not become owners had access to family help, and there were no significant differences between those who did and did not related to aspiration. Some non-owners commented that being independent of family was preferable. If those who wanted to own were separated from others the differences would be minimal. The fact that differences related to aspiration seem less important than father's occupation confirms the importance of background but at the same time we must remember differences within both farm families and non-farm families as to the amount of support that they can give.

9.4 EDUCATION AND SOURCES OF FINANCE

Analysis of education confirms the ambivalent position of those with better educational qualifications in farming. Those with the highest qualifications paid no more (on average) for their farms than those with
no formal qualifications (See Table 9-6). However they were more likely to inherit large sums or receive them as gifts from family. Because they received less from institutional sources and put no more of their personal capital into the transaction the total price they paid remains lower than that of those with School Certificate. Analysis of variance gives the significance of the differences in the totals as .08.

**TABLE 9-6**
MEAN AMOUNT OF FINANCE BY EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>&lt; SCHOOL CERT</th>
<th>SCHOOL CERT</th>
<th>&gt; SCHOOL CERT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AMOUNT (000)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>AMOUNT (000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INHERIT-GIFT</td>
<td>$23 15</td>
<td>$39 30</td>
<td>$90 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAMILY LOAN</td>
<td>$67 39</td>
<td>$83 47</td>
<td>$45 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OWN CAPITAL</td>
<td>$32 26</td>
<td>$39 21</td>
<td>$40 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL BANK</td>
<td>$85 67</td>
<td>$95 57</td>
<td>$72 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER SOURCES</td>
<td>$50 32</td>
<td>$72 41</td>
<td>$24 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALL SOURCES</strong></td>
<td><strong>$138 49</strong></td>
<td><strong>$172 35</strong></td>
<td><strong>$138 18</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of the percentages tends to back up the idea that education is related to social class. Those with some formal school qualifications are getting a greater proportion of their purchase price through family help, particularly through inheritance or gifts, (generally the latter as their parents are still alive). On the other hand, the number of people with School Certificate or higher education receiving loans from their family was no higher than for those without it. Those with no formal education are also putting a lower proportion of their own capital into the enterprise and doing so in fewer numbers. They are more dependent on the Rural Bank. Again, small numbers make it difficult to tell how reliable these results are, none are significant. There is some indication that those with some formal education are doing better than those without, but evidence supports the view that this is because of family support, in the area of education as well as farm purchase, just as much as the idea that the type of ability indicated by school qualifications is important in itself.

### 9.5 AGE AND SOURCES OF FINANCE

Age is related to a number of variations between the means of various sources of finance and these are also consistent with the problems in access to farm ownership previously identified - those who have not been in appropriate circumstances when young are not likely to experience any improvement in their chances as they get older. Those who were oldest had had considerably less family help, and the strongest difference was between them and those who were between 36 and 45 years years old (See Table 9-7). A large number of the older owners received family loans, but the amounts were
usually small. They received less help from the Rural Bank, and more received more money from commercial institutions, possibly they were less likely to meet Rural Bank criteria. Those who are older are generally buying farms of less value than those of younger people, unless a property is seen as a stepping stone for a farm employee towards full-time ownership, they will not fund non-economic blocks.

TABLE 9-7
MEAN AMOUNT OF FINANCE BY AGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>29-35 YEARS</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>36-45 YEARS</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>46+ YEARS</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AMOUNT</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>AMOUNT</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>AMOUNT</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INHERIT-GIFT</td>
<td>$62</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>$17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>$32</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAMILY LOAN</td>
<td>$64</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>$73</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>$24</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OWN CAPITAL</td>
<td>$42</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td>$32</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>$38</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL BANK</td>
<td>$81</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td>$91</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
<td>$78</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER SOURCES</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>$48</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>$82</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL SOURCES</td>
<td>$156</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$147</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$124</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of percentage of purchase price for people's own capital is also different. Those in the older age group were putting in a slightly higher percentage than the middle range, but the amount was lower than that of the youngest age group and the numbers supplying it no higher. The funds received from the Rural Bank were most important for the middle group, possibly reflecting the Bank's preference for experience but not too much access to family money. In summary, there do seem to be differences in funding related to age, with the major differences, except for a dearth of inheritance for those in the 36 to 45 year age group, coming between those under 45 years and those over 45 years in age. Those who get into ownership earlier are clearly advantaged in a number of ways, and extra time to amass capital and experience with age does not fully make up for missing out on such advantages. Among those who had not become farmers, almost nobody over 45 years old had family help available to them.

9.6 JOB HISTORY AND SOURCES OF FINANCE

When sources of finance were compared across career types, there was an interesting mix of expected and unexpected results. The unexpected was the similarity in the personal savings brought in by people from all career types, although all the literature has suggested some jobs such as sharemilking would bring in more money than others. Possibly they are just making it more quickly. On the expected side, those who had spent their careers as general farm employees, possibly varying this by taking non-farm work, showed much more family support than those in any other career. Given the
universal complaints about income from general farm employment these people were most in need of support to succeed. They were in direct contrast to those who had started non-farm work, who showed least family support but most credit from the Rural Bank. The only significant difference was between those who had inherited or been gifted money. Former managers were paying the highest price, and compensating for limits to the amounts each source was able to put up by using more commercial finance.

TABLE 9-9
MEAN AMOUNT OF FINANCE BY JOB HISTORY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>GEN FARM AMT (000)</th>
<th>GEN FARM %</th>
<th>GEN FARM N</th>
<th>SHAREMILKER AMT (000)</th>
<th>SHAREMILKER %</th>
<th>SHAREMILKER N</th>
<th>MANAGER AMT (000)</th>
<th>MANAGER %</th>
<th>MANAGER N</th>
<th>NON-FARM 1ST AMT (000)</th>
<th>NON-FARM 1ST %</th>
<th>NON-FARM 1ST N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INH-GIFT</td>
<td>$219</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$46</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAM LOAN</td>
<td>$32</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>$64</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>$66</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$44</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OWN CAP</td>
<td>$35</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>$37</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>$37</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL BNK</td>
<td>$74</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>$87</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>$85</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>$99</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>$37</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>$55</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>$77</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$58</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL SOURCES</td>
<td>$158</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>$145</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
<td>$163</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$152</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These differences are related to the problems people face in financing different farm types after having spent time in particular types of job. Those who had spent the majority of their careers on sheep farms had received far more family support ($71,727 was inherited compared with $39,137, with a lesser difference over loan money), necessarily so because the total purchase price of their farms was significantly higher ($143,665 compared with $185,588). Slightly more use was also made of commercial sources of finance. Otherwise the amounts received and the proportion each made of the purchase price were almost indistinguishable.

9.7 CONCLUSION

To sum up, the differences between various subgroups which related to source of finance tended to confirm previously identified trends, even although they did not provide a clearcut dependence on any one source. Once the cases where families were involved in farm ownership in spite of fathers' occupation being non-farm were removed, the differences in amount and frequency of family help offered by non-farm families became obvious.

Just being from a farm owning family is not enough, the hierarchy among farm owners suggested in Chapter Seven has been confirmed. Nor do those who did not get a loan always get sharemilking contracts. Those who purchased from a family member did get greater family support. The only
disadvantage to farm family membership came from the Rural bank. Sales which do not involve family members get priority and the mix of Rural Bank and other finance clearly reflects this. As expected, because of the relationship between background and ownership, those who were younger and those who had wanted to farm received more family finance.

Aspiration seems less important in this context - there was no indication that those who wanted to own had help towards ownership which was denied to others. It is most likely that some form of family backing helped those who were undecided and became owners to choose ownership in the end. Education was not important either. Job history confirms the importance of farm background compared with ability and personal choice. Many of those with sharemilking also got financial help from their families. This tends to support Goodman and Redcliff's argument, as a number of farmers' offspring do not appear to have had family help. In Chapter Seven it seemed likely that there were avenues by which a few non-farm people and those from the more marginal farms could achieve ownership without family help. The activity of the Rural Bank clearly fulfils this role by making up the difference between purchase price and personal sources of finance. External factors such as this do not contradict either Friedmann or Goodman and Redcliff's concept of class structure within families, but it must be taken into account when inferences about the theories are being drawn.

By focusing on the information derived from individuals, including the interaction of factors also related to class such as education, it is easy to forget the key players may be beyond the family circle. Family farming has been supported in New Zealand by a series of political decisions which have provided the climate for upward mobility and given help for those within petty bourgeois farming itself who were marginal. In the ten years before this study was begun, market forces caused land prices to increase faster than the inflation rate - as both farm owners and other business people competed for land. The state played a role in this competition through provision of subsidies and incentives aimed at encouraging production. During the decade that those in my study group bought farms, the Rural Bank was cushioning the effect of price rises for new entrants in approved categories by increasing the amounts loaned. Friedmann makes a case for the resistance of petty commodity producers to restructuring, but this can only be tested if both capitalist and petty bourgeois farms are operating in the same free market, and one condition of this is that state spending favours all farms regardless of size. It is not part of this thesis to make an in-depth analysis of government policy, but to point out evidence of such effects and indicate where further research could solve some of the problems of analysing class structure using evidence collected from individuals.
10.1 RECAPITULATION OF THEORETICAL ISSUES

In the introduction I outlined a model of farm employment which suggested that farm employees were a diverse group which potentially contained conflicting class interests. The ability of farm owners to shape government policy in their favour and to the disadvantage of their employees has been discussed in Chapter Three, and provides an explanation of why wages and conditions in farm employment remain unsatisfactory (Gill 1981). However this political conflict between owners and employees is not the subject of this thesis. Instead I am interested in the ways this general underlying relationship may become interwoven with the detail of people's careers in specific circumstances; such as the presence of both farmers' offspring and others in farm employment, some of whom have hopes of becoming owners.

Where there is a degree of mobility from farm employment to ownership by people without farm owning backgrounds, this may encourage people to try and improve their circumstances by becoming farm owners, rather than acting collectively to improve their conditions as farm employees. Ideological statements by farmers have praised an individualistic response to problems (Harris 1975) although in the background, Federated Farmers of New Zealand and its predecessors have worked in favour of farm owners' collective interests. Upward mobility may also encourage an individualistic approach to achieving goals in general. It is possible the success of a few farm employees who do not come from farm owning families would discourage farm employees from acting collectively against employers, by holding out the promise of farm ownership for all. The presence of members of farm owning families in wage work on other farms would reduce the likelihood of action even further, on top of the problems of organising a small, scattered workforce.

Not all farm employees are interested in farm ownership and the interests of those who are not are likely to suffer under this regime. Knowing that farm employees generally find satisfaction in their work, more than people in jobs of comparable income and status (Clark 1979), it is unfortunate that farm employment is noted for its high turnover. This is the result of a variety of problems, from low wages to living in isolated areas. I suspect the decision to leave might be complicated for some farm employees because they had hoped to become farm owners. Some might stay on in farming longer than they otherwise would have, in light of actual conditions, in the hope of becoming an owner. When it
became clear to them that this was not possible I suspected some would reassess the job and leave, but others would decide to stay, feeling they lacked other experience or reluctant to give up their lifestyle.

In the past, governments have sponsored settlement on small farms and fostered upward mobility, hoping to benefit from high productivity from the self-employed (Fairweather 1982). Whether intentionally or otherwise, this policy may have reinforced more direct measures taken to control the farm wage labour force, such as excluding farm employees from the national system for fixing industrial awards. The amount of government assistance available for potential farmers, through the Rural Banking and Finance Corporation, the Department of Lands and Survey, and the Department of Maori Affairs, to name the main sources, has contributed to a degree of mobility into farm ownership which may be missing in some rural societies. Because of this, and because Northland is an area which has been dominated by small family farms (Moran and Anderson 1983:9), I have not concentrated solely on fathers' occupation while looking at class mobility in farming. I have also looked at some of the other co-requisites of mobility - aspiration and entry qualifications (work experience or education).

It is clear that more is involved in farm ownership than just intergenerational transfer of property. Under New Zealand conditions it is important to trace the origins of other factors which are associated with class, but may not be completely reducible to it. Expectations of success, achievement in areas such as formal qualifications, and access to government help also influence achievement. Class mobility is an aspect of the nature of classes and the relationship between them. The amount of class mobility which exists reflects back on the process by which a class reproduces itself. For example intergenerational transfer can break down, as in the case of the artisanal bakeries in France, where offspring refuse to take over the business and owners must sell to wage workers in order to realise their investment in the business (Bertaux, Bertaux-Wiame 1981). This points to the range of relationships which can occur between business owners, their families and wage workers. The nature of class conflict between employee and employer is modified. High upward or downward mobility could also call the specific class status of small family owned farms into question. They have already been presented as being "propertied labourers" in other arguments (Davis 1980).

Differing theoretical analyses of the nature of the current class structure begin with differing accounts of the prospects of people who are members of each class. In much of the international literature on rural class structure, farm employees who were not members of a farm owning family were seen as having few chances of class mobility. Although my thesis draws on a specific local situation, it also refers back to key propositions about rural class structure in general, and the position of farm employees in particular. In New Zealand, the way farmers manage economic change, class mobility, and intergenerational transfer of property has only recently been studied in any depth and some of this work is still not completed. Nevertheless, what is known is important in assessing the ability of
theories developed in relationship to particular situations, to address the full range of class relationships which occur. Although my research was not designed specifically to "test" other theories, so much as to demonstrate the variety of ways in which class relationships express themselves, I am interested in the implications of my findings for their usefulness in explaining specific contexts.

If all farmers' sons are considered to be of the same class as their fathers, as in Friedmann's explanation of the nature of family owned and run farms, farmers' sons remain petty commodity producers even when working off the family farm (Friedmann 1978a). A high degree of downward mobility among farmers' sons would become a very real problem for the class as a whole, as an awareness that their efforts would not be rewarded by eventual farm ownership might discourage farmers' sons and daughters from contributing to the fathers' farm. However Friedmann downplays the extent to which the "flexibility" of the family farm to produce for a lower return than other units relies on the motivation of family members. There is no advantage for petty bourgeois farms compared with capitalist ones, if the family is no more prepared to work for a low or even no return than other wage workers, but she spends little time on this possibility.

Although Friedmann has recently discussed the possibility of stratification within families, she does not admit that this should be interpreted as internal exploitation, comparable in nature to the exploitation suffered by wage workers, who lose surplus-value to capitalist employers. In her interpretation of farm families, all contribute and all are better off. Friedmann makes no claim that simple commodity producers will always outcompete capitalist farms, but she sees change as determined by external forces such as increasing mechanisation, rather than determined by internal pressures from family members. Therefore downward mobility of individual farm owners, or of their offspring, does not invalidate her concept that family farms are operating on a different basis to capitalist ones. Although prices have dropped and costs risen, exacerbating overproduction as each unit attempts to maintain its income, the basic unit, with all family members working for the same goal, has not been lost. Nor does she consider a time when machinery has replaced family labour.

Friedmann's conceptualisation can be challenged if family relationships can be proved to be inherently exploitative, or even to have changed. An example would be family members rejecting farm work or refusing to take over farm ownership even although it was possible, in large numbers. This has occurred in the past, for instance with the families of leasehold farmers in Scotland (Carter 1979). In a situation of high mobility, differences between farmers' sons and other farm employees may appear to disappear, but this is not enough to prove Friedmann's concept has problems without other evidence that the family could no longer be seen as an economic unit. In New Zealand, this is clearly not the case. However evidence of the disintegration of families elsewhere, combined with analysis of the
logic of Friedmann’s argument, suggest evidence of mobility must be taken into account more than Friedmann has done.

The contribution of research into individual mobility rather than reproduction of families does not prove or disprove the theory that non-owning members of the farm family are members of different classes to other wage workers. Instead it demonstrates the variety of relationships between home farm and offspring and the extent to which this relationship seems to give farm owners’ offspring advantages others lack. Failure to provide advantage is also important. Of course some theorists, such as Goodman and Redclift (1985), accept that family relationships are based on exploitation. In this case downward mobility emphasises the similarities between farmers’ sons and other employees. But again individual mobility can not prove that family relationships are exploitative. It can provide evidence which may be consistent with the theorising of the relationships between the different family members, or which may challenge it, but can not cause it to be rejected without further study.

Just as a very high level of downward mobility would raise serious questions about the extent to which Friedmann had taken a temporary situation and given it undue theoretical significance, so the absence of downward mobility would suggest that the apparent exploitation of family labour on farms is counteracted by later reward in terms of family help. Evidence of labour contributed to the family farm without reward and differences in financial help available to members of farm and non-farm families remain a crucial issue. A high proportion of financial help from family may also provide some indication of the extent to which structural change can be resisted, no matter what class definitions are. Low or no interest rates on loans and writing off of debts may put the farm owners’ offspring in a favourable position compared with others. They can use this as a base to expand production, but they can also use it to maintain acceptable incomes, at a lower level of production than those who had commercial finance need to survive. Upward mobility for farm employees is not considered by Goodman and Redcliff, given that they consider small family farms themselves to be unstable and prone to being replaced by capitalist enterprises.

None of these analyses consider women as owners or potential owners of the family farm and because of the limitations of my methodology I used I have not been able to address women’s issues specifically either. Obviously female farm owners exist and daughters are interested in farming, just as sons are. But the limited information I did collect and previous studies suggest that the barriers between them and ownership are both higher and constructed in different ways.

10.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH RESULTS

The link between my general desire to find out more about farm employment and theoretical issues is upward and downward mobility. The evidence I have collected focuses on individual mobility (for
males) because to focus on intergenerational transfer tends to leave many farm employees out of the picture yet again. My project was to look at the variety of farm employees' life experiences and the practical implications class background has for achievement of their goals. I have used my evidence to look at alternative models of mobility, and the way the structure of farm employment affects the situation of individuals. I have not looked at farmers' offspring who were never farm employees, or movement into farming by those who have never been farm employees, and this also limits my ability to look for or assess evidence of problems in the reproduction of petty bourgeois farmers. However the problems of all farm employees in achieving goals reflect on the necessity for help, either from family, government, or outside earnings, to buy a farm.

There are various ways in which farm employees can be categorised. One involves the ambitions they hold. Past research into farm employment suggested some farm employees are interested in the job because it is convenient in the short term. Others may prefer it as a long term career, without wishing to change their position in farming from employee to owner in their own right. But there is a third group, who are only interested in farm employment because it can offer the skills needed for farm ownership. Of this third group, some will succeed in ownership but it will remain out of reach for others. Another way of differentiating farm employees is related to class position rather than aspiration: as non-farmers' offspring, as farmers' offspring on a farm owned by someone else, and as farmers' offspring on the family owned farm. These two hierarchies of involvement with farm ownership may have some members who fit into the first, second or third category of each, but this is far from universal. A third hierarchy would involve competence at farming tasks. Again, there is no necessary relationship between competence and involvement with farm ownership.

The main focus of the data analysis of chapters Five and Six has been to assess the initial differences between those who became owners and those who did not, looking closely at those who left farming altogether. Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine were concerned with the type of help which was available to farm employees as working adults, and looked at evidence for differentiation among farm owners themselves. I have tried to look at the interrelationships between variables as well as their individual effects. Because I have focused on individuals, I have looked at many factors other than class. Often I have referred to socio-economic status, to emphasise that I was talking about gradations in position between people some of whom are in the same class position. Respondents could be categorised by the likelihood of receiving help from their parents. There were differences among farmers themselves, and between the ability of urban and rural members of the petty bourgeoisie, but the primary split over ability to help their offspring on to farms is still between members of the petty bourgeoisie and the working class. The gradation among families is an artifact of my individual level of focus, but more importantly of the position of the petty bourgeoisie itself, poised insecurely between the capitalist and working classes (Bechhofer and Elliot 1981).
Throughout this analysis I have tried to look at each aspect of background or working life in terms of differences between those from farm owning families and others. Although some of those from non-farm families have come from a petty bourgeois background, farm owners' assets outstrip those of other members of this class such as small business owners, or self-employed tradesmen. Partly because of this, but mainly because of the need to keep the size of subsamples large enough to allow differences to be assessed for statistical significance, I have not separated them from other non-farm people in most analyses. I am also interested in the proposition, implied by Friedmann's and other analyses, that farm families contribute something unique to the reproduction of family members as petty bourgeoise, other than money. Chapter Eight, with its evidence on the relationship between working for family and ownership confirms the importance of this approach. Whether the nature of the contribution is unique to families in the sense that it could not be provided by any other institution, such as the Department of Lands and Survey, is not examined.

The first task in this analysis was to look carefully at the sources of difference between people who had responded to my survey and the general population of farm employees. A number of biases were detected which suggest that those who responded did indeed differ from farm employees as a whole, even those in Northland. Those who were older in 1975 were less likely to become owners, their contemporaries who had become owners had already finished with farm employment and were not included in the study. The material presented relates more to male employees, more to those in farm employment for several years, more to those on dairy farms, and because of all these factors, particularly to those destined for farm ownership. The proportion who did not return questionnaires may also be a source of bias, related to differences between those who had stable addresses and were interested in the survey and so returned questionnaires, and farm employees as a whole. None of the conclusions that I have drawn can be generalised to the wider population of farm employees in terms of the proportions in particular subgroups.

However that does not mean that the relationships between various background factors and life history which I have presented are not present among farm employees as a whole, or have no validity outside the response group. Comparison with samples from other surveys confirmed the differences between them but also a degree of similarity in orientation to work and farm ownership. Within the whole population of farm employees there may be subgroups which I have not focused on at all. However the group who have responded to my survey include a number of those who are necessary to my argument: those who have been in farm work for a long time then left before retirement age, and those who did not come from farm owning families but succeeded in owning. Some respondents were farmers' offspring who did not become owners - for various reasons. Until greater resources are available to improve on my sampling method it will be impossible to present a precise picture of class mobility within farming.
I cannot say what proportion of all farm employees wish to become farm owners, only that a substantial proportion are likely to want to. Nor can I say that a particular proportion of farm employees will consist of farmers' offspring, only that this proportion is also likely to be substantial. The following summary will concentrate on relationships rather than numbers since it is this aspect of my results which provides the most adequate picture of farm employees' experiences.

The results confirmed the linchpins of my model. Farmers' offspring were working on non-family farms in large enough numbers to make it likely they would influence the self-image and activities of the group as a whole. Many farm employees were interested in farm ownership earlier in their careers, but had not been successful. Many who had been interested in ownership had since left farming. Both those who had left and current farm employees were generally older than those who had become owners, suggesting that the ambition to own had been held for sufficient time to make a sound assessment of whether it was possible, and not given up lightly. It was clear that few of those who had not yet achieved ownership, but were still in farm work, would succeed.

From then on I was interested in the way various background factors interacted with each other. Although farmers' offspring became owners more often than the offspring of men in any other occupational group, those whose father's had been in any of the occupations in the higher income levels, such as professionals, managers, or tradesmen, were more likely to become owners than those in other non-farm occupations. The petty bourgeoisie consists of people who are widely different in terms of occupation and the type of property they own, from the skill and tools of tradesmen, to the intellectual tools of professionals, to the land and machinery of the farmer, and the amount of help they made available differs. But they remain different from the working class - there is no gradation below this level, the offspring of those with medium skill levels were just as likely to leave as those of unskilled workers. This confirmed that the economic status of the family was likely to have influenced the result as well as aspirations or experience. These factors are closely intertwined, but none of them account for all the effect of any others, there are farmers' offspring who do not want to own and non-farmers' offspring who do.

Aspiration and experience could be related to knowledge of farming and not just relationship to a farm owner. Previous experience was obviously an important factor in the decision to take up farm work, only 13% of the sample had none. But the evidence suggests that experience, either before the first full-time job or after, has little to do with achieving ownership unless linked with a means of making more money, such as sharemilking. The group of non-farmers' offspring which was most likely to achieve ownership was made up of those who came from wealthier urban backgrounds, not farm employees' offspring. Occupational continuity across generations is related to class not just familiarity with the tasks involved.
The relationship between reported aspiration to own and achieving ownership is clear. It boosts farm ownership levels, and those who were undecided or with other preferences were more likely to follow through and leave. Aspiration to own a farm is more common among those from a farm background, but is not limited to them, nearly half of those from other backgrounds wanted to own. The latter were more successful than their counterparts who did not want to own, but their success rate was never as high as that of farmers’ offspring. It seems likely that aspiration is associated with the knowledge that ownership will be possible, ambitions are formed long before people start work (Balock 1971a). This means it is likely that interest in ownership but failure to achieve it is probably being under-reported for this sample.

Not everybody wanted to own, and some may have gauged their chances of achieving a desired lifestyle as being better elsewhere. A small group from the urban petty bourgeoisie, like those with higher education, were more likely to leave although they also had good chances of ownership. Those who were undecided sometimes achieved ownership later, but unless they were farmers’ offspring this was unlikely.

Family background continues to have a practical input into peoples’ careers long after career choices have been made and qualifications acquired. Given that aspiration was an important factor in ownership, although not enough on its own to ensure it, I wondered whether there were other attitudes acquired by farmers’ offspring as part of a “cultural” inheritance which might be related to success as well as financial help. Acceptance of hard work, persistence, independence, or risk taking might have contributed to success. As it happened there were differences in attitudes between owners and others, but they did not revolve around these issues. The major difference is directly related to coming from a farm owning family. The fact that this is often given as a reason for doing things, without further explanation seeming necessary to the person commenting, confirms the importance of being brought up on a family owned farm, even for those who missed out as owners.

There is little difference in the reasons those who left and farm employees give for starting farm work, or for taking up managerial or sharemilking positions. Job satisfaction was clearly important, and so was ability to provide for wives and children, particularly by the time people were taking on sharemilking or management. Some saved up by sharemilking, but with farm prices rising rapidly a poor season as a sharemilker could put a farm deposit out of reach permanently. Others made lucky investments, or had worked off-farm to save up a deposit. Although positive in the beginning, those who left were more likely to mention the insecurity of farming, while owners emphasised the independence it gave them. Not all of those who left farming had done so because of negative aspects of the work or the lifestyle associated with it: some had retired or left through ill-health, or just happened to have taken another job available in the area. For the rest, higher wages or inability to buy a farm were important issues although not always the only ones. Naturally many left while their children were of school age, but
there seemed no particular age which triggered a move. Although just over half had mentioned wanting to own at some stage of their careers, lack of success in this area does not directly push all of these people out of farming. Rather it seems that if ownership is not possible, there is not enough within farm employment to hold them anyway.

Where New Zealand studies have tested the proposition that the education system reproduces the hierarchy of privilege related to social class, it has been confirmed (Nash 1982). Education is just as difficult to assess as a causal mechanism as aspiration, although its correlation with ownership was initially clear. Those with more education had higher chances of owning, those with less were more likely to leave farming. Nor is there any difference between those in my sample with and without farm backgrounds in terms of education - gaining a qualification is related to class background rather than a farm-nonfarm split.

It is not possible to compare older farm employees without School Certificate and younger ones with it on the basis of education. Few significant differences in career related to education still show up in similar age ranges. Rising educational standards mean that those who were over 35 years of age in 1975 were less likely to have School Certificate. They were also less likely to become owners, but this was probably not because of lack of education but because they lacked access to finance earlier in life. Education may also appeal to lending agencies, and reflect personal attributes, which although not essential to practical farm tasks, may assist in management.

Other points confirm that there is a relationship between socio-economic status and formal qualifications. Those who stayed on at school longer were more likely to become owners regardless of whether they achieved formal qualifications. For both farmers' offspring and others, more education was related to increased chances of owning. However even the highest level of ownership, for those with School Certificate, does not match that achieved by farmers' offspring with no qualifications.

It is difficult to say which of these key background variables, fathers' occupation, aspiration and education is most important. They usually acted independently, but had a similar effect. The group which would be expected to provide the highest proportion of owners and the lowest proportion leaving, those who were farmers' offspring who wanted to own, in fact did not. Those who wanted to own and had either School Certificate or mothers in white collar jobs were slightly ahead, although the difference was not significant. In fact, the group which had the highest proportion of owners had worked on their fathers' farms as sharemilkers. Those most likely to leave had no family backing, low education and no expectation of ownership.

Job history was as good or better an indicator of ownership than aspiration or education, in that the better chances of ownership were held by those who had spent time on farms owned by family
members. Although almost all started in general wage work, only a third were still in this type of work in their last farm job and even those who left often showed some kind of "progression" in the types of work they are doing. The rates of ownership varied with different types of work. Those who had been doing general wage work did less well than sharemilkers unless backed by farm owning families. Work in non-farm jobs or on a variety of farms in the middle of a career was not necessarily a hindrance to ownership. However coming from a non-farm background and having non-farm work experience before starting in farm work was. Although sharemilking helped these people, it did not raise rates as high as for other groups - those whose fathers were farmers have more chance of financial help as well. Those who were still farm employees were concentrated in managerial jobs, which may, as previous researchers have suggested, end up as an alternative to ownership.

The importance of background factors in predicting the chances an individual has to become a farm owner is clear. If there was greater mobility into farm ownership from those whose parents were not owners than some writers have suggested, there were definite limitations to upward mobility. If class position is not the only determinant of life chances, aspiration is certainly not the decisive force either as many who wanted to own failed to do so. Given the numbers of people who had wanted to own at some stage who missed out, the high proportion who do want to own is no doubt related to the presence of some who did "make it", encouraging those who might have less chance of success for various reasons to try their luck. In the face of difficulties in organising for higher pay, farm employees may have chosen strategies which maximised individual chances by attempting ownership. They had no alternative but to leave if conditions were unsatisfactory.

The most striking agreement between the three groups was over farm income. 80% complained about it and no other issue claimed such complete agreement. Some of these comments referred to the economic situation in general rather than specifically to incomes and the farm owners in my sample appeared to have been more badly affected by the events of 1986 than the employees so far. However the sample is divided in other ways which would affect cohesiveness. In general, those who were farm employees in 1986 were most concerned about career related issues such as promotion, job security and superannuation, had fewer complaints about the work itself, but were most likely to have joined a farm employees' organisation. Farm owners might have been dissatisfied with some aspects of farm work but tended to be least concerned about career security and union activity. There was an even more significant difference in the attitudes of those who wanted to own and succeeded and those that had had other plans and left. It is likely that the presence of potential farm owners among the occupational group can influence collective activity. Certainly concern about wages was not matched by interest in unions.

Downward mobility was higher than I had expected. Few in my sample had inherited farms, most were relying on a combination of parental help, their own savings and relatively cheap loans from the Rural
Bank. For some farmers’ offspring direct financial help was supplemented by assistance in the job market. For instance, if employees could get into sharemilking a few good seasons would let them build up their own capital quickly. Despite government help for New Zealand farmers, membership of the petty bourgeoisie is more tenuous than that of other classes and may depend on the combination of several factors.

It is unfortunate that such a small proportion of respondents answered the question on sources of finance for their farms. It is difficult to know whether the differences in the sources and amounts of finance available to different subgroups would have been confirmed by more reliable data. The results emphasised the major role played by the Rural Bank for both farmers’ offspring and others. A higher proportion of non-farmers’ offspring received Rural Bank finance, making up for differences in the amount of help available from family. Lands and Survey ballot farms also gave 22% a head start.

Differences between the ability of farm families to help their offspring were demonstrated again, by the higher prices paid by those with School Certificate and by the fact that those who were older when they became owners were getting less finance from their families than those getting on farms earlier. Another aspect of differences in the ability of farm families to ensure their offspring become farm owners may have been family income rather than just farm income. Those whose fathers were farmers and mothers were working in professional jobs, such as teachers or nurses, had the highest levels of ownership. On the other hand, those whose mothers were working on the farm but not said to be owners (for example characterised as “slave to farm owner”) had lower rates of ownership than for farmers’ offspring in general.

Downward mobility for a significant group of farmers’ offspring who had wanted to own also underlines the difficulties some farm families have in reproducing all members as petty bourgeoisie. Although the number of smaller horticultural blocks is growing, in the larger farm sizes numbers are still dropping and mean acreages growing. It is inevitable that some will miss out. Some farmers’ offspring have commented on their years working for parents as a form of enforced saving which was repaid by help towards ownership later in life. If this process is short-circuited for an increasing number of people, and some of those farmers’ offspring who left had worked on their parents’ farm, it is likely that farmers’ offspring will reassess their contribution to the family farm.

10.3 CONCLUSION

An empirical study such as this can illustrate the wealth of differences in people’s life histories. I have presented an abstracted and truncated version of the situation of farm employees, but in order to analyse the processes I am concerned with I must simplify this material again. Theory building involves giving key elements priority over others as explanatory factors.
My analysis has provided a picture of relatively open access to farm ownership, with half of the better qualified non-farmers' offspring becoming owners. This is partly because government intervention in the New Zealand economy has favoured some class fractions over others. In the past it has created a situation which favours petty bourgeois farmers rather than capitalist ones, lessening the gap between the working class and farm ownership. It has helped those employees who make it to ownership more directly, with low interest rates on credit. To see class interests clearly it is necessary to move out from the individual, to look at the political manoeuvring of various class interests and changes in markets at a national and global level. Both individual and economy level approaches are appropriate and should never be separated from each other. Although I have tried to follow Westergaard's direction to return to the experience of individuals while working within a framework of class analysis, I have also tried to present the context in which mobility has been taking place.

There are a number of ways in which the data I have collected can be related to the competing analyses of Friedmann and Goodman and Redclift. Upward mobility suggests that the conditions under which farm employees work are different to those in Friedmann's case study. Her assumption that farm employees from farm families (no matter where they were working) were simple commodity producers was based on the impossibility of working class employees becoming owners by any means other than family help. However the possibility of upward mobility is not ideal for testing Goodman and Redclift's assumption that the families of farm owners will be exploited as well as employees either. The role of the government in New Zealand suggests that focusing on downward mobility may be more instructive.

If there is no downward mobility, Friedmann is supported, as farm owners are capable of maintaining family members in the same class. Previous efforts on behalf of the farm owner are rewarded. Even downward mobility will not impact on Friedmann's position unless it is involuntary and affects a high proportion of farmers' offspring. In my study, intergenerational mobility was not necessarily a smooth process. Changing cost structures have affected the viability of farms over time and there may have been more than one child interested in farming, with insufficient capital to help them all. The result is that some farmers' offspring who wished to own did not succeed and downward mobility remained at 40%. The barrier created by the price of farms meant that the amount of upward mobility was low, only about 25% of all non-farmer's offspring became owners. Given that only 6% of current farm employees expected to become owners in the next ten years, 40% of farmers' offspring in my sample would experience downward mobility. (In 1996 the youngest of this group would be 39 years old, past the usual age of first gaining ownership). Wanting to own a farm only boosted ownership figures by about 10%, so obviously much downward mobility was involuntary.
The next question is whether downward mobility implies exploitation. If Goodman and Redclift's contention that farm owners' families are exploited is to be supported, further analysis into changes in the size and labour input into the smallest viable farm is needed. This would prove whether the family labour input is still required, even if maintenance of class status is not possible. In this case, secondary data and the results of my own survey suggest that family help is still important for family farms although it is much less important than it was at the turn of the century.

Some farmers' offspring commented that their work on the family farm did not provide them with an adequate income, and that they were forced to work part-time elsewhere or leave when they married and needed a higher income. For some this period of sacrifice for the farm was counterbalanced by assistance later when they came to buy their own property. For others this process of reproduction was short-circuited by changing economic conditions. Such dislocation confirms the problems with the distribution of work and rewards within families which Friedmann herself raised in her more recent work. The degree of continuity found by Friedmann, which allowed her to state farm employees could not become owners without family help is not there, but it was impossible to save for a farm on farm wages.

Although downward mobility occurred, the distinction between farm owners and the working class remains. New Zealand has not suffered the exodus from farming which has occurred in the United States of America. Farm incomes fluctuated during the twenty years leading up to 1986, but until the early 1980s the possibility of capital accumulation in farming balanced the relatively low incomes. The movement from farm employee to petty bourgeois farmer is much shorter than that to capitalist farmer, but the sums at stake, with the average farm purchased by the owners in my sample retailing at $150,000 in 1980 terms, are still much higher than the value of the estates of working class people. They are also higher than those of most self-employed tradesmen. The size of the productive base limits upward mobility but inhibits wholesale downward mobility, in that once farm owners have become established, with high equity, they are able to help others gain ownership. It seems most productive to focus on farm/non-farm differences, taking the presence of different class fractions which cut across this split into account.

It is possible that there would have been more continuity in the past, although Martin (1983b) suggested downward mobility has always been a problem. Class mobility in farming has not been studied on a national basis but other studies which measured occupational continuity for farm owners in New Zealand also seemed to show limited upward mobility and some downward mobility. The period in which my respondents bought farms was not "typical", in that farm prices were high and rising because land was seen as a secure investment outside as well as inside farming. But government policy aimed at helping new entrants on to farms maintained a flow of entrants from traditional sources.
The amount of mobility in either direction may be insufficient to put either Friedmann's or Goodman and Redclift's analysis of class relationships on the line, but it does raise questions. External factors may be more important than internal ones such as the availability of family labour. The difference in viability between petty bourgeois and capitalist farms may depend more on the best size for minimising all costs, with labour being an insignificant part of these.

The degree of downward mobility present among my study group and the number of farmers' offspring who received little or no help from their families towards ownership emphasises the marginality of the petty bourgeoisie. Government help has contributed to its stability in the past but recent political events have demonstrated that in the face of deteriorating economic conditions the government has neither the will nor the means to maintain a particular class structure. It would be interesting to return to Northland in a few years time, and look at whether downward mobility has increased under the increased economic pressures of the last few years, including the privatisation of the Rural Banking and Finance Corporation.

Some predict an increase in non-farm capital moving into large scale business ventures, others a retrenchment into family farming, at a less profitable level. What is clear is that families without large capital assets will be unable to finance offspring on to farms. Family capital will continue to provide a cushion against market pressures, and the problems of maximising investment which Murray (1978) suggests exist while the owners labour and family labour are important will remain until farming becomes fully capitalist.

My case study can say little about structural change other than that mobility, which is likely to facilitate structural change, exists. Farming may continue to move to a greater reliance on capitalist sources of finance now low interest finance is no longer provided by the state, particularly if capital requirements continue to grow. But not all sections of farming may move at the same rate. As well as structural analysis there is a need for further empirical investigation of family relationships and further theorisation of them, although for farming, this issue may be overtaken by others. If small farms do disappear and the capital intensity of farming increases, research effort will concentrate on the role of capital in farming rather than labour. Goodman Sorj and Wilkinson (1987) are already suggesting new topics, such as the way biotechnology can be appropriated by capital, should replace debates over the future of the family farm.

Where will such changes leave farm employees? Although farm employees were once the largest working class occupational group in New Zealand, their role in the economy is now much more limited. Even when their numbers were higher they were unable to exert collective control over their employers. Farm employees have been pitted against the largest and perhaps best organised group of employers, who have mobilised government help in the process of class warfare as effectively as
any industrial employers' group. Differences among farmers have been used to political advantage. Farmers often are poor, exploited by processors and providers of inputs alike. They may emphasise upward mobility and their own poverty as a justification of lack of action on employment conditions. But not all suffer to the same extent, even though all benefit from low wages. Farm employees respond as individuals, often aiming for ownership rather than unionisation, although Oliver Duff's (1941) comment that "The shepherds who came to New Zealand put up fences and climbed over the top wire into a new world." is an idealised view of class mobility. This provides a rational way of coping with the difficulties of farm employment. In the same way, leaving farming completely is another rational response to the difficulties they face.

For farm employees, the future will continue to change. It will be interesting to see whether a reduction in upward mobility will lead to greater interest in collective action, and whether farm owners' interests in the matter of labour relations are served by government as assiduously in the future as in the past. There is a topic for future research here. Given that failing to intervene on behalf of farm employees effectively subsidises farm owners incomes without involving taxpayers' money, it seems likely that governments will continue to leave owners and employees to fight it out on an individual basis.
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APPENDIX ONE

. COMPARISON OF DATA WITH OTHER SURVEY RESULTS

Having outlined the basic characteristics of the study population in the previous chapters I will now compare some of my findings with those of previous research. 1986 was a year of tension and upheaval in the farming community. However more farm owners seemed to be commenting on problems than employees. Many employee's problems are on-going ones which have been discussed in a number of previous studies. Cant's (1967) research into the reasons Canterbury farm workers were leaving farming produced a number of findings that are similar to those of Harris's (1980) survey and appear again in my research.

I would also like to integrate some of the disparate elements in previous research where possible. The social relations of production have been said to vary with different farm types. A study which includes both sheep and dairy farm employees can examine these differences in the openness of the class structure while still controlling for a number of common variables. My research findings show that farm employees in particular, and no doubt some owners, were circulating between a number of farm types as they explored the possibilities available to them within farming. The disparity in time of execution, geographic area, and sample selection which exists between studies like those of Kaplan [1978?] of a sheep farming area, Maunier et al (1985) of a dairy farming area in transition, Lowe (1985) of dairying in the Waikato region, and Pomeroy (1986) sheep and beef farming, which make it difficult to generalise between them, could be reduced by careful comparison. These studies have all been discussed in Chapter Three, so in this section I will concentrate on comparison of the data collected with my own, with only a brief discussion of their context.

Cant's study of reasons why farm employees leave farming

Although Cant's study looked at movement out of farm employment between 1963 and 1966, in a very different farming system to that in Northland, many of the problems in farm work which he identified reappear in my study. The rate at which people had been leaving farming was higher in my sample than in Cant's, reflecting higher rates of people who became farm owners. It is possible that the proportion of farmer's offspring was higher in my sample because the ratio of farm employees to farms is lower. The range of occupations ex-farm workers moved into was very similar, apart from differences attributable to the different range of jobs available in Auckland, demonstrating the limits on the types of
jobs open to farm workers. Cant makes the point that only a quarter were able to make permanent use of the skills they had acquired and few left the working class (Cant 1967: 45).

Because more time had elapsed since they left farm work my respondents were older than Cant's and more had left because of age and ill health. Despite this the typical length of time spent in farming was remarkably similar; the only real difference being that more of my respondents had left after less than five years in farming. Similar percentages said they were better off financially since they had made the move, 75% in Cant's group and 71% in mine. Similar percentages gave wages as the reason, but my respondents were more likely to give failure to achieve farm ownership as a problem. The result from Cant's research was that farm work appeared to be taken up by two separate sets of people: those who wanted to become farm owners and did so, and those that did not become owners, but never did want to anyway. Because of this his policy recommendations did not take up the issue of farm ownership, and the solutions focused on problems created by individual farmers, or on those such as access to education and jobs for the whole family, which also affect farm owners, rather than structural issues.

**Harris's study of the conditions of farm employment**

Harris's research confirmed that obtaining farm ownership was important to farm workers (Harris 1980: 30-31) but failed to ascertain whether the decrease in interest felt by the older group of workers reflected a change in ambition or the loss of those individuals who had this ambition from the work force. Both factors were operating in my study, but my results suggested that leaving farm work was a more common means of coping with problems in this area than taking farm management positions. Of course many of those who left had been farm managers previously.

To make my comparisons more valid, I created a subsample of people who had been in farming in 1979, when Harris's field work had been carried out. The farm workers in my sub-sample tended to be similar to an older group of married farm workers Harris identified in his sample. These older groups had spent more time in the work force and had less formal education and farm training than others in the survey populations. Overall, my study population was better educated than both Harris's and Kaplan's respondents, probably because they were younger.

The proportion of people in Harris's group who intended leaving farming was in line with the proportion in my group who did so. Fewer managers intended a move, and my results found a higher proportion leaving farming than had indicated this among Harris's managers. Harris also asked people what their main goal in life was and found that for 43% it was farm ownership. This varied with age, of those under 19 years old 83% wanted to own a farm, but only 5% of over 40 year olds did. My results suggest that of the younger age group, many will be disappointed.
Although aware that aspiration was changing with age and some of his respondents were likely to have been disappointed in ownership, Harris did not discuss this directly in his policy conclusions either, but focused on incomes, housing and rural services. He suggested that farm workers were not leaving because of the level of the wages, but that higher wages would compensate for the negative aspects of farm work.

**Kaplan's study of Mangamahu Valley farm employees**

The last survey dealing with farm employees I discuss is Kaplan's section on farm workers. Kaplan produced a comprehensive study of all the adult inhabitants of a farming community, and his section on farm owners is discussed later in this appendix. Like the other surveys, discussion was kept within the framework of means of improving or maintaining productivity.

Although Kaplan specifically broke down his sample down into owner's sons and others, looked at differential mobility, and compared past aspirations with realistic expectations, he did not make any suggestions concerning farm ownership for farm employees in his summary. Like Kaplan I have divided up my sample into farmer's sons, farm managers and ordinary farm workers.

There was a strong hierarchy among the three groups which showed up in both our groups of respondents. Farmer's sons still living on the home farm were far younger than other farm workers, particularly managers. In both studies two thirds of farm workers also had a farm background, as did an even higher proportion of farm managers. Education also varied with position in the hierarchy, reflecting differences in age and socio-economic status. Kaplan suggested job turnover was high among younger people and increasing, but I found that although some people stayed a short time in jobs, the average time spent was high. Neither of us had a suitable study population from which to speculate about changes in turnover.

Kaplan was pessimistic about the likelihood of farm employees acquiring farms unless they had some advantage, for example access to a special loan scheme. Harris's sample appear to have been more ambitious, but unless many were farm owner's sons, it is likely that Kaplan's respondents were more realistic. Kaplan's sample felt that farm ownership must be achieved by 30 years of age and had tended to settle for a career as farm managers by their mid to late twenties. Their other course of action was to leave farming, prompted by the needs of their wives and families for access to education and work in town. This resulted in an increase in the proportion leaving in their mid-twenties (on marriage) and their thirties (when their children went to secondary school). My own results found people were achieving ownership much later than 30 years of age, and the twin peak in leaving age did not show up either: after the first high point in the mid and late twenties there was a steady decline in numbers. In
both surveys, farm employees expressed a general concern about the future, although they were not necessarily worried about their own jobs.

The studies looked at so far have not uncovered any major differences between my study population and others apart from those associated with different sampling frames, particularly age. It is possible that my sampling methods had led to contact with more farmer's offspring than would occur in the general population. When compared with each other all the studies contribute to a fuller picture of farm employment and although each looks at a specific population, they support the proposition that farm employees experience similar situations and face common problems. I will now look at studies of farm owners to see whether the same applies to them.

Maunier, Moran and Anderson's study of Northland dairy farmers and Lowe's study of Waipa farmers

The Northland study was particularly concerned with the effect of social factors on productivity and much of its analysis is outside the scope of my own work, but I followed the issues raised by Lowe very closely. To make comparisons with both I used a subgroup of 113 dairy farmers. Our respective sampling methods seem to be the greatest source of variation: the primary differences between my sample and the others seem to be age and the absence of people from non-farm occupations who bought farms, with other differences following from these ones. For instance members of my study population were more likely than those from the other Northland one to be in a partnership (a recent phenomenon), and better educated. The mean age at survey was 37 years for my sub-sample and 44 and 47 years for the other Northland and Waipa studies respectively. The mean age at acquisition of farm at 30 is the same in all our surveys.

There seemed to be similar mixes of dairy and other income in the two Northland groups, although more of my respondents had non-dairy farming income, similar proportions had non-farm income. Farm owners in my study group reported heavier work weeks, but this may have been a result of both their age and the economic down turn of 1986. Many said they had been working harder than ever at the time of the survey.

Lowe's work was specifically concerned with class mobility in farming, although his use of 80 existing farmer's to test the conditions of entry into ownership limits it to upward mobility. Lowe examined the effect of key background characteristics on career structure and sources of finance for farm purchase. Career structure was operationalised by the percentage of time spent in each type of job before ownership is achieved by the respondents and the length of time spent working before ownership was achieved.
In Lowe's study, there was little investment in ownership by people from outside farming. Most workers in both studies moved steadily to jobs with more income and control with non-farm work as a break or part of a strategy to increase income. Overall people in my sub-sample were spending longer as farm hands in a wider range of farm jobs but were slightly less likely to have been sharemilkers. The path lengths and age at acquisition of first farm was the same for both studies.

Type of vendor made the largest difference to path length for both studies. Those inheriting farms waited longest but did least sharemilking, while those who purchased farms from their families, even with little assistance, sharemilked more and achieved ownership five years earlier. Father's occupation confirms this trend, with those with non-farm owning backgrounds (who had least assistance) spending least time as farm hands, and almost as much time sharemilking as dairy farmers' offspring. The figures for my sub-sample were very close to his, despite the fact that Northland is a less prosperous dairying area than Waipa and my study population was younger.

Our figures for education were not so close. Those in Lowe's study group with School Certificate were younger when they acquired their first farm, and spent more time as sharemilkers (42% compared with 28%) and less as farm hands. In comparison the differences between those in my sub-sample with and without School Certificate were slightly less, mostly because those with qualifications did not have the high rate of sharemilking which showed up in Lowe's group.

Maunier et al emphasised a particular view of farming as done by families for families. In comparing variables across both of our surveys I found many similarities, particularly in the importance of family background in farm ownership and the orientation of people to their families when they assessed their lifestyle as farmers. In fact family background has been even more important for my sample.

Lowe's evidence tends to support these themes. He suggested that in New Zealand sharemilking provides a means of accumulating capital which allows people to achieve ownership despite minimal family assistance, but that assistance did allow easier access to farming. The importance of sharemilking was confirmed by my study. Taking the different age ranges, narrower base for my sample and the lapse in time between the two surveys into account I feel that I have contacted a group of farmers who represent a far larger group of Northland farmers who also have many similarities to dairy farmers outside Northland.

Kaplan and Pomeroy: studies of sheep and sheep-beef farms

In order to make comparisons with the 42 farmers studied by Kaplan and the 119 studied by Pomeroy, all of whom were running sheep or sheep and beef farms, I created a sub-sample of 47 sheep-beef farmers for comparison. Again, the general samples of farmers were older than mine, but had similar
job histories except for a few buying farms after non-farm careers. They seemed to have been acquiring their farms at similar ages, and to have a similar proportion of fathers who were farmers. Thirty-five percent of both samples had never worked away from their relatives' farms.

However there were signs of the differences I had expected within dairy-farming but did not find. Compared to my group of sheep farmers the others employed more people on larger farms. Off-farm work by farmers was twice as common among my sub-sample, 40% had casual, part-time or even full-time work as well as farming. Another pointer to differentiation was that the farmers in Pomeroy's study were better educated than those in Kaplan's, in spite of a similar age range, and much more likely to use family companies to manage ownership.

Farmers in both Kaplan's and Pomeroy's studies noted declining use of full-time employees. They were employing contractors for some types of work and worked together (for wages) on occasion. The lower proportion of employees in my sub-sample may show a continuation in this trend, but also may indicate a more marginal financial position.

As with the studies of farm employees, a number of similarities exist between farmers from different study areas, confirming that it may be possible to generalise my results to a wider population of farmers, if they are suitably qualified. Where key information relating to class mobility in other studies is missing, the similarities which do exist between mine and other studies suggest it would have been a significant factor. Some factors change over time, for instance education, the number of employees on an average farm, or the structure of ownership, but all the differences between the studies on these counts were in the directions expected. Other differences which showed up are even more interesting, as they confirm that farm type is not the only variable by which farming systems may need to be differentiated. Trends in relation to farm employment confirm that many problems will continue, although they will be of less public concern in a new political climate. Young people continue to take up farm employment, but leave early. Farmers in Kaplan's study still wanted more help, because in the face of the conditions available "good, experienced, married shepherds are becoming harder and harder to get." (Kaplan [1978?]: 13).
GOODBYE TO THE FARM: A SURVEY OF REASONS FOR LEAVING FARM WORK

At present there is considerable change going on in the farm workforce and many farm employees appear to be leaving farming. However, little is known about the way in which people come to make this sort of decision, and how it affects their lives.

To find out more about this I am asking people who used to be farm employees about the experiences they had when they left to take either a different type of farm job, such as agricultural contracting, or a non-farm job.

I have chosen your name from the electoral rolls because you have given your occupation as a farm employee in the past, but have given another occupation in the latest roll.

I am interested in the position of ALL types of farm employees, from people who were doing casual work to those with sharemilking contracts, and all reasons for leaving, including retirement. I am also interested in people who were working on every type of farm from poultry farms or horticultural units to pastoral farms.

Because it is so difficult to trace people who have LEFT an occupation it is essential to my research that everyone returns a questionnaire. I would really appreciate it if you set aside about half-an-hour, on your own, to fill in your copy and post it in the enclosed pre-paid envelope as soon as possible.

All the information you give me will remain confidential. Your questionnaire has a number so that it may be ticked off on the mailing list when it comes in, but your name will not be placed on the questionnaire.

If you would like a summary of the results, please write your name, address and COPY OF THE RESULTS REQUESTED on the back of your return envelope.

If you have any comments or questions about the questionnaire please write or ring me collect, I will be happy to answer your enquiries. My phone number is: 892 783 AUCKLAND - evenings only.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Alison Loveridge
RESEARCH SOCIOLOGIST
GOODBYE TO THE FARM
A SURVEY OF REASONS FOR LEAVING FARM WORK

Murray Ball, Flootrot Flats 4

PLEASE ANSWER ALL OF THE QUESTIONS. IF YOU WISH TO COMMENT ON ANY OF THE QUESTIONS, OR FIND THERE IS NOT ENOUGH ROOM LEFT FOR YOUR REPLY, PLEASE USE THE BACK PAGE OR A SEPARATE PIECE OF PAPER.

RETURN ADDRESS:
Alison Loveridge
Department of Sociology
University of Auckland
Private Bag
AUCKLAND

TO BEGIN WITH, I NEED SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT YOURSELF BECAUSE I NEED TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE SORTS OF PEOPLE WHO BECOME FARM WORKERS.

1 Did you ever live on a farm before you left school?
   Please tick the appropriate box
   YES ☐ NO ☐

2 Did you work on a farm while you were still at school?
   Please tick the appropriate box
   YES ☐ NO ☐

3 What was your father's main occupation while you were at school?

4 What was your mother's main occupation?

   Did your mother come from a farming family?
   YES ☐ NO ☐

5 Which district did you mainly live in while you were at school?

6 How many years were you at secondary school?

   What was your highest qualification from school?
7. After finishing school did you do any further training?  
Please give details

AGRICULTURAL TRAINING

OTHER TRADE RELATED TRAINING

OTHER EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

NOW I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR JOB HISTORY.

8. Did you have any non-farm jobs before you started your first farm job?

YES → PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 9

NO

PLEASE LIST JOBS BELOW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR STARTED</th>
<th>HOW LONG DID YOU STAY IN JOB</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
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9. When you first started work after leaving school what did you hope to do in the future?  
Please tick the box closest to your choice

1. REMAIN IN SAME TYPE OF WORK AS FIRST JOB
2. HAD NOT DECIDED WHAT I INTENDED TO DO
3. BECOME A FARM MANAGER OR SHAREMILKER
4. LEAVE FARM WORK AND FIND A JOB ELSEWHERE
5. OWN A FARM
6. OTHER - Please say what

10. When did you decide that you wanted to work on a farm?

11. Have you ever farmed a block of land of your own?

YES → PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 12

NO

PLEASE GIVE DETAILS BELOW
THE NEXT SECTION IS ABOUT YOUR WORK AS A FARM EMPLOYEE.

QUESTIONS 12, 13 AND 14 ARE EACH ABOUT A DIFFERENT TYPE OF FARM WORK AND NOT ALL MAY APPLY TO YOU. PLEASE READ EACH ONE THEN GO TO THE NEXT QUESTION IF YOU HAVE NOT DONE THAT TYPE OF WORK.

12 Have you had any jobs as a farm employee, working for wages? (do not include jobs as a farm manager)

[ ] NO  [ ] YES  [ ] PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 13

How did you come to do this type of work?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Please list your jobs of this type below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE STARTED</th>
<th>TYPE OF FARM EG DAIRY, ORCHARD</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>WAS OWNER A RELATIVE?</th>
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If you changed from one farm type to another, or left farming for several years then returned, please give reasons for this change:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Why did you finally leave farm wage work for some other type of work?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Have you ever worked on a farm as a farm manager?

[NO] — PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 14

[YES]

PLEASE GIVE DETAILS BELOW

How did you come to be a farm manager?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Please list your jobs as a farm manager below:

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<th>DATE STARTED</th>
<th>TYPE OF FARM</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>WAS OWNER A RELATIVE?</th>
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</table>

If you had any important job changes while a manager, eg changed farm type, please give reasons for this change:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Why did you finally leave this type of work for some other type of work?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Were you ever working on a farm as a contract milker or sharemilker?

[NO] — PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 15

[YES]

PLEASE GIVE DETAILS BELOW

How did you come to do this type of work?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Please list your jobs of this type below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE STARTED</th>
<th>CONTRACT TYPE</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>WAS OWNER A RELATIVE?</th>
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</table>

Why did you leave sharemilking? If you decided to leave sharemilking at any stage but changed your mind, please give reasons for this decision as well as your final one:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

15 Did you have any non-farm jobs between farm jobs?  
Please tick the appropriate box

If yes - please list jobs below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE STARTED</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
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<tbody>
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16 Please give a brief list of the jobs you have had since you left farm work:

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<th>DATE STARTED</th>
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</table>

17 What would have to change before you returned to farm work?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

- 5 -
Here is a list of reasons people have given for leaving farm work. Please tick a box for each one to show how important it was to you when you left farm work:

1. VERY IMPORTANT 2. IMPORTANT 3. UNIMPORTANT 4. VERY UNIMPORTANT

1. HIGHER WAGES
2. GREATER OPPORTUNITY FOR FARM OWNERSHIP
3. MORE INTERESTING WORK
4. MORE REGULAR WORKING HOURS
5. SHORTER WORKING HOURS
6. SUPERANNUATION SCHEME
7. MORE JOB SECURITY
8. MORE OPPORTUNITY FOR PROMOTION
9. A BETTER RELATIONSHIP WITH MY EMPLOYER

Some people leave farming to live in town. Please tick a box for each of these statements to show how important it was to you when you left farm work:

1. VERY IMPORTANT 2. IMPORTANT 3. UNIMPORTANT 4. VERY UNIMPORTANT

1. MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOME OWNERSHIP
2. BETTER QUALITY HOUSING
3. BETTER ACCESS TO SCHOOLS
4. BETTER ACCESS TO OTHER SERVICES, EG DOCTOR, SHOPS
5. FEWER TRANSPORT PROBLEMS
6. EASIER TO VISIT FRIENDS
7. EASIER TO MAKE FRIENDS
8. BETTER ACCESS TO SOCIAL FACILITIES AND ENTERTAINMENT
9. MORE ACCEPTANCE BY FARMERS AND THEIR FAMILIES
10. BETTER EMPLOYMENT CHANCES FOR WIFE
11. BETTER EMPLOYMENT CHANCES FOR CHILDREN
12. MY WIFE/HUSBAND PREFERENCES NON-FARM WORK. WHY?

In what ways was farm work helping you achieve what you wanted in life?

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

In what ways was farm work not helping you achieve what you wanted?

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

Some people can obtain finance from their families to help them achieve goals such as farm or home ownership. Was such finance available to you when you left your last farm job?

Please tick the appropriate box

YES  NO

If no, would such finance have made a difference to your decision to seek non-farm work or farm work in another form such as agricultural contracting?

Please tick the appropriate box

YES  NO
22 Now I would like to ask your opinions on unions. Please tick a box for each of these statements to show how much you agree with it:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 AGREE STRONGLY</th>
<th>2 AGREE SOMewhat</th>
<th>3 DISAGREE SOMEWHAT</th>
<th>4 DISAGREE STRONGLY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 I THINK THERE SHOULD BE TRADE UNIONS</td>
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<td>2 I THINK UNION MEMBERSHIP SHOULD BE COMPULSORY</td>
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<td>3 UNIONS DO A GOOD JOB REPRESENTING WORKERS</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 UNIONS ARE EFFECTIVE FOR SOME WORKERS BUT NOT FOR FARMWORKERS</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 FARM WORKERS NEED TO FORM A UNION TO PROTECT THEIR INTERESTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN A FARM WORKERS UNION IF I WORKED ON A FARM</td>
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</table>

23 Were you ever a member of the Farm Workers Association or any other trade union while working on a farm?

*Please tick the appropriate box*

- YES
- NO

FINALLY, I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR PRESENT SITUATION TO HELP WITH THE INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS.

24 What year were you born in?

25 Which of these applies to you at present?

*Please tick the appropriate box*

1 MARRIED/LIVING WITH A PARTNER
2 DIVORCED/SEPARATED/WIDOWED
3 SINGLE - NEVER MARRIED

26 How many children do you have?

27 How old is your youngest child?

28 Which of these fits your own situation?

*Please tick as many boxes as apply*

1 HOME YOU LIVE IN IS PROVIDED FREE WITH YOUR JOB
2 HOME YOU LIVE IN IS RENTED FROM SOMEONE ELSE
3 OWN THE HOME YOU LIVE IN
4 OWN A HOUSE OR FLAT
5 OWN A HOUSE SECTION
6 OWN LAND
7 OTHER

29 What is your present before tax income from all sources for the last year?

*Please tick the box*

1 0 - $4,999
2 $5,000 - $9,999
3 $10,000 - $14,999
4 $15,000 - $19,999
5 $20,000 - $24,999
6 $25,000 - $29,999
7 $30,000 - $49,999
8 $50,000 or more
30 How many hours of paid work do you usually do a week?

31 In what ways are you better off since you left farm work?

32 Since you left farm work, do you think you are overall:

   Please tick the appropriate box

   1 BETTER OFF
   2 THE SAME
   3 WORSE OFF

FINALLY, ARE THERE ANY OTHER COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE ABOUT THE ISSUES COVERED IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE? OR ANY OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES FOR FARM WORKERS THAT YOU THINK NEED TO BE CONSIDERED?
About two weeks ago I wrote to you asking for your help in a survey of people's reasons for leaving farm work.

I would like to give my thanks to all those of you who have completed the questionnaire. Your replies have been very useful and interesting. After reading them I feel that leaving farm work or finding a different way of fulfilling an ambition to farm has been an important decision for many people. The results of the survey will highlight some important issues for farm employees in general.

Those of you who requested a summary of the results will receive one in a few months, when I have finished a more detailed analysis of the results.

If you have not yet returned your questionnaire, please do so today. The difficulties of tracing people who have left farm work mean that only a limited number of people can be contacted. Each person is important to the study, and has a unique contribution to make to it.

If you have not received a copy of the questionnaire, or have misplaced yours, please ring me collect tonight, and I will send one out. My phone number is Auckland 892-783 evenings only.

Thank you for your contribution.

Yours faithfully

Alison Loveridge
RESEARCH SOCIOLOGIST
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
GOODBYE TO THE FARM: A SURVEY OF PEOPLE'S REASONS FOR LEAVING FARM WORK

I am writing to you about our study of people's reasons for leaving farm work. We have not yet received your completed questionnaire.

We have undertaken this study because we believe that the large number of people who leave farm work is an important issue. It is important both for those who feel their chosen job is not providing the satisfaction they hoped for, and so leave, and for the farming community as a whole which is losing their valuable contribution.

Results so far have confirmed the seriousness of this issue for the people involved and many have found it rewarding to review these events in their lives and express their opinion about the lot of farm employees.

All the people in your area who were involved in farm work in 1975 but have since left it have been contacted where possible. We need to hear from everyone in this group. The accuracy of the survey depends on you, and the others who have not yet responded. Past experience suggests that your reply may be quite different from those of people who have already sent in their questionnaires.

In case your questionnaire has been misplaced, I enclose a replacement questionnaire and a stamped reply envelope.

If you have any queries, please write or phone me collect. My number is 892-783 - evenings only.

Your contribution to the success of this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Alison Loveridge
RESEARCH SOCIOLOGIST
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
A FUTURE IN FARMING: A SURVEY OF THE WORK EXPERIENCES OF FARM EMPLOYEES

At present there is considerable change going on in the farm workforce and many farm employees are concerned about the future. It is important to understand more about the position of people who have been involved in farm work for several years, and about their aspirations and whether these are being met.

I have chosen your name from the electoral rolls because you appear to have been involved in farming for at least 10 years.

I am interested in the position of all types of farm employees, from people who are doing casual work to those with sharemilking contracts. I am also interested in people who are working on every type of farm, from poultry farms or horticultural units to pastoral farms. If you have now left farm work your comments are still important to the study - please just note your reasons for leaving and your present occupation in the space left for comments at the back of the questionnaire.

I would really appreciate it if you set aside about half an hour, on your own, to fill in your copy and post it in the enclosed pre-paid envelope as soon as possible.

All the information you give me will remain confidential. Your questionnaire has a number so that it may be ticked off on the mailing list when it comes in, but your name will not be placed on the questionnaire.

If you would like a summary of the results, please write your name, address and "copy of the results requested" on the back of your return envelope.

If you have any comments or questions about the questionnaire, please write or ring me collect as I will be happy to answer your enquiries. My number is: 892 783 AUCKLAND - evenings only.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Alison Loveridge
RESEARCH SOCIOLOGIST
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
A FUTURE IN FARMING
A SURVEY OF THE WORK EXPERIENCES OF FARM EMPLOYEES

CURSE HIS FLAMIN', "GET IN BEHIND!"

Murray Ball, Floatrot Flats 4

PLEASE ANSWER ALL OF THE QUESTIONS. IF YOU WISH TO COMMENT ON ANY OF THE QUESTIONS, OR FIND THERE IS NOT ENOUGH ROOM LEFT FOR YOUR REPLY, PLEASE USE THE BACK PAGE OR A SEPARATE PIECE OF PAPER.

RETURN ADDRESS:
Alison Loveridge
Department of Sociology
University of Auckland
Private Bag
AUCKLAND

TO BEGIN WITH, I NEED SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT YOURSELF BECAUSE I NEED TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE SortS OF PEOPLE WHO BECOME FARM WORKERS.

1. Did you ever live on a farm before you left school? 
   Please tick the appropriate box
   YES ☐ NO ☐

2. Did you work on a farm while you were still at school? 
   Please tick the appropriate box
   YES ☐ NO ☐

3. What was your father's main occupation while you were at school?

4. What was your mother's main occupation?

   Did your mother come from a farming family?
   YES ☐ NO ☐

5. Which district did you mainly live in while you were at school?

6. How many years were you at secondary school?

   What was your highest qualification from school?
7 After finishing school did you do any further training? Please tick the appropriate box and if YES give details

AGRICULTURAL TRAINING

OTHER TRADE RELATED TRAINING

OTHER EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

NOW I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR JOB HISTORY.

8 Did you have any non-farm jobs before you started your first farm job?

YES NO

PLEASE LIST JOBS BELOW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>HOW LONG DID YOU STARTED</th>
<th>YOU STAY IN JOB</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

9 When you first started work after leaving school what did you hope to do in the future? Please tick the box closest to your choice

1 REMAIN IN SAME TYPE OF WORK AS FIRST JOB
2 HAD NOT DECIDED WHAT I INTENDED TO DO
3 BECOME A FARM MANAGER OR SHAREMILKER
4 LEAVE FARM WORK AND FIND A JOB ELSEWHERE
5 OWN A FARM
6 OTHER - Please say what

10 When did you decide that you wanted to work on a farm?

11 Have you ever farmed a block of land of your own?

YES NO

PLEASE GIVE DETAILS BELOW
THE NEXT SECTION IS ABOUT YOUR WORK AS A FARM EMPLOYEE.

QUESTIONS 12, 13 AND 14 ARE EACH ABOUT A DIFFERENT TYPE OF FARM WORK AND NOT ALL MAY APPLY TO YOU. PLEASE READ EACH ONE THEN GO TO THE NEXT QUESTION IF YOU HAVE NOT DONE THAT TYPE OF WORK.

12 Have you had any jobs as a farm employee, working for wages or living expenses? (do not include jobs as a farm manager)

[ ] NO  [ ] PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 13

[ ] YES

How did you come to do this type of work?

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

Please list your jobs of this type below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE STARTED</th>
<th>TYPE OF FARM EG DAIRY, ORCHARD</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>WAS OWNER A RELATIVE?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

If you changed from one farm type to another, or left farming for several years then returned, please give reasons for this change:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

If you have finally left general farm work to become a manager or sharemilker, please give reasons:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________
13 Have you ever worked on a farm as a farm manager?

- NO — PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 14
- YES

How did you come to be a farm manager?

Please list your jobs as a farm manager below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE STARTED</th>
<th>TYPE OF FARM (EG DAIRY, ORCHARD)</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>WAS OWNER A RELATIVE?</th>
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</table>

If you had any important job changes while a manager, eg. changed farm type, please give reasons for this change:

If you have left farm managing for another type of work please give reasons:

14 Were you ever working on a farm as a contract milker or sharemilker?

- NO — PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 15
- YES

How did you come to do this type of work?
Please list your jobs of this type below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE STARTED</th>
<th>CONTRACT TYPE</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>WAS OWNER A RELATIVE?</th>
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</thead>
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</table>

If you have ever decided to leave sharemilking, even if you changed your mind later, please give reasons:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

15 Have you had any non-farm jobs between farm jobs, or at the same time as a farm job?

PLEASE LIST JOBS BELOW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE STARTED</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
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</table>

Why did you do non-farm work in between or as well as your farm jobs?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

16 Here is a list of changes some people would like to see in farm work. Please tick a box for EACH ONE to show how important it is to you:

1 VERY IMPORTANT 2 IMPORTANT 3 UNIMPORTANT 4 VERY UNIMPORTANT

1 HIGHER WAGES
2 GREATER OPPORTUNITY FOR FARM OWNERSHIP
3 MORE INTERESTING WORK
4 MORE REGULAR WORKING HOURS
5 SHORTER WORKING HOURS
6 SUPERANNUATION SCHEME
7 MORE JOB SECURITY
8 MORE OPPORTUNITY FOR PROMOTION
9 A BETTER RELATIONSHIP WITH MY EMPLOYER
17 Some people can obtain finance from their families to help achieve goals such as farm or home ownership. Is such finance available to you now or in the future?

Please tick the appropriate box

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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Does this make any difference to the plans you have for the future?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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</table>

Why do you say this?

18 How likely is it that you will still be working on a farm for wages or as a sharemilk in:

- ONE YEARS TIME
- FIVE YEARS TIME
- TEN YEARS TIME

Please tick a box for each time period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 YR</th>
<th>5 YRS</th>
<th>10 YRS</th>
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</table>

19 What do you hope to be doing:

1 IN ONE YEARS TIME?
2 IN FIVE YEARS TIME?
3 IN TEN YEARS TIME?

20 Have you ever been a member of the Farm Workers Association or any other trade union while working on a farm?

Please tick the appropriate box

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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</table>

21 Please score this list of statements about unions by ticking a box for EACH ONE to show how you feel about it:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 AGREE STRONGLY</th>
<th>2 AGREE SOMEWHAT</th>
<th>3 DISAGREE SOMEWHAT</th>
<th>4 DISAGREE STRONGLY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 I THINK THERE SHOULD BE TRADE UNIONS
2 I THINK MEMBERSHIP OF UNIONS SHOULD BE COMPULSORY
3 UNIONS USUALLY DO A GOOD JOB REPRESENTING WORKERS
4 UNIONS ARE EFFECTIVE FOR SOME WORKERS BUT NOT FOR FARMWORKERS
5 FARM WORKERS NEED TO FORM A UNION TO PROTECT THEIR INTERESTS
6 I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN A FARM WORKERS UNION IF ONE WERE ACTIVE IN MY DISTRICT |

FINALLY, I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR PRESENT SITUATION TO HELP WITH THE INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS.

22 What year were you born in?
23 Which of these applies to you at present?
   Please tick the appropriate box
   1 MARRIED/LIVING WITH A PARTNER
   2 DIVORCED/SEPARATED/WIDOWED
   3 SINGLE - NEVER MARRIED

24 How many children do you have? ____________________________

25 How old are they?  ____________________________

26 Which of these fits your own situation?
   Please tick as many as apply
   1 HOME YOU LIVE IN IS PROVIDED FREE WITH YOUR JOB
   2 HOME YOU LIVE IN IS RENTED FROM SOMEONE ELSE
   3 OWN THE HOME YOU LIVE IN
   4 OWN A HOUSE OR FLAT
   5 OWN A SEPARATE HOUSE SECTION
   6 OWN LAND
   7 OTHER - Please say what ____________________________

27 What is your household's before tax income from all sources for the last year?
   Please tick a box in each column
   1 none
   2 $0 - $4999
   3 $5000 - $9999
   4 $10000 - $14999
   5 $15000 - $19999
   6 $20000 - $24999
   7 $25000 - $29999
   8 $30000 - $49999
   9 $50000 or more

28 How many hours a week do you usually work?
   1 ON THE FARM
   2 OFF THE FARM

29 Do you receive any allowances in kind? eg free phone, meat
   NO  PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 31
   YES

30 Below is a list of things some people think important in life. Please tick a box for EACH ONE to show how important it is to you:
   1 VERY IMPORTANT  2 IMPORTANT  3 UNIMPORTANT  4 VERY UNIMPORTANT
   1 OWN A HOUSE
   2 OWN A FARM
   3 HAVE A JOB YOU LIKE
   4 HAVE A JOB THAT PAYS WELL
   5 MAINTAIN THE LIFESTYLE OF YOUR CHOICE
   6 EDUCATE YOUR CHILDREN TO A SATISFACTORY LEVEL
   7 OTHER - Please say what ____________________________
31 In what ways do you feel that farm work is helping you get what you want out of life?

32 In what ways is farm work not helping you get what you want out of life?

33 Do you think the position of farm workers will change in the future?

FINALLY, ARE THERE ANY OTHER COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE ABOUT THE ISSUES COVERED IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE? OR ANY OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES FOR FARM WORKERS THAT YOU THINK NEED TO BE CONSIDERED?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP, I APPRECIATE IT VERY MUCH.
About two weeks ago I wrote to you asking for your help in a survey of people's experiences as farm employees.

I would like to give my thanks to all of you who have completed the questionnaire. Your replies have been both enlightening and interesting.

It seems that many farm workers feel the same about farm work. While liking many aspects of their jobs they feel wages and conditions could often be improved, and are concerned about the future of farm work under the present economic climate. The final results of the survey will probably confirm that there has been little change in many of the traditional problem areas of farm work.

If you requested a summary of the results, you will receive one in a few months, when I have finished a more detailed analysis of the questionnaires.

If you have not yet returned your questionnaire, please do so today. The difficulties of tracing people employed in farm work mean that only a limited number of people can be contacted. Each person is important to the study, as although farm employees have broad interests in common, there is so much variety in farm work itself and the people who choose it as a job.

If you have not received a copy of the questionnaire, or have misplaced yours, please ring me collect tonight, and I will send one out. My phone number is Auckland 892-783 evenings only.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Alison Loveridge
RESEARCH SOCIOLOGIST
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
A FUTURE IN FARMING: A SURVEY OF THE WORK EXPERIENCES OF FARM EMPLOYEES

I am writing to you about our study of the work experiences and aspirations of people working on farms. We have not yet received your completed questionnaire.

We have undertaken this study because we believe that the situation of farm employees is an important aspect of the farming industry and one which needs more attention.

Results so far have confirmed that employees are concerned about their situation and many have found it rewarding to review their working lives and express their opinions about the lot of farm employees.

Some choose farm work as a life long job, others see it as a stepping stone to farm ownership. But whatever their reason for choosing farm work, people must feel they can achieve their goals in life if they are to stay in farming. In the past a high proportion of farm employees have "voted with their feet" and left farming. However the only way to really understand the situation is to ask people working on farms today.

All the people in your area who were involved in farm work in 1975 and appear to still be working on farms have been contacted where possible. We need to hear from everyone in this group. The accuracy of the survey depends on you, and the others who have not yet responded. Past experience suggests that your reply may be quite different from those of people who have already sent in their questionnaires.

In case your questionnaire has been misplaced, I enclose a replacement questionnaire and a stamped reply envelope.

If you have any queries, please write, or phone me collect. My number is 892-783 - evenings only.

Your contribution to the success of this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Alison Loveridge
RESEARCH SOCIOLOGIST
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
A FARM OF MY OWN : A SURVEY OF WAYS PEOPLE ACHIEVE FARM OWNERSHIP

Many people who own their own farms today, began their careers working on farms owned by someone else. We need to understand more about the ways in which people work their way up from being farm employees to farm owners, and the problems they encounter on the way.

I have chosen your name from the electoral rolls because you have given your occupation as farm employee in the past, but now give it as "farmer".

I am interested in the position of people on all types of farms - from orchards, poultry farms, or horticultural units to pastoral farms. If you have now left farming or are still in the process of getting on to your first farm, your comments are still important to the study - please just note this on the back page of the questionnaire.

I would really appreciate it if you set aside about half-an-hour, on your own, to fill in your copy and post it in the enclosed pre-paid envelope as soon as possible.

All the information you give me will remain confidential. Your questionnaire has a number so that it may be ticked off on the mailing list when it comes in, but your name will not be placed on the questionnaire.

If you would like a summary of the results, please write your name, address and "copy of the results requested" on the back of your return envelope.

If you have any comments or questions about the questionnaire, please write or ring me collect, as I will be happy to answer your enquiries. My number is 892 783 AUCKLAND - evenings only.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Alison Loveridge
RESEARCH SOCIOLOGIST
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
TO BEGIN WITH, I NEED SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT YOURSELF BECAUSE I NEED TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE SORTS OF PEOPLE WHO PROGRESS FROM BEING FARM WORKERS TO FARM OWNERS.

1. Did you ever live on a farm before you left school? Please tick the appropriate box
   - YES [ ]
   - NO [ ]

2. Did you work on a farm while you were still at school? Please tick the appropriate box
   - YES [ ]
   - NO [ ]

3. What was your father's main occupation while you were at school?

4. What was your mother's main occupation?

5. Did your mother come from a farming family? Please tick the appropriate box
   - YES [ ]
   - NO [ ]

6. Which district did you mainly live in while you were at school?

7. How many years were you at secondary school?

8. What was your highest qualification from school?
7. After finishing school did you do any further training?  
   If YES - please give details below  
   
   YES ☐ NO ☐  

   AGRICULTURAL TRAINING  
   ____________________________________________  

   OTHER TRADE RELATED TRAINING  
   ____________________________________________  

   OTHER EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS  
   ____________________________________________  

   NOW I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR JOB HISTORY.  

8. Did you have any non-farm jobs before you started your first farm job?  
   
   NO ☐ YES ☐  
   
   PLEASE LIST JOBS BELOW  
   ____________________________________________  

   YEAR  
   ____________________________________________  

   HOW LONG DID YOU STAY IN JOB  
   ____________________________________________  

   OCCUPATION  
   ____________________________________________  

   DISTRICT  
   ____________________________________________  

9. When you first started work after leaving school what did you hope to do in the future?  
   Please tick the box closest to your choice  
   
   1. REMAIN IN SAME TYPE OF WORK AS FIRST JOB  
   2. HAD NOT DECIDED WHAT I INTENDED TO DO  
   3. BECOME A FARM MANAGER OR SHAREMILKER  
   4. LEAVE FARM WORK AND FIND A JOB ELSEWHERE  
   5. OWN A FARM  
   6. OTHER - Please say what  

10. When did you decide that you wanted to work on a farm?  
   ____________________________________________  

11. Have you ever farmed a small block of land of your own part-time while working for someone else as well?  
   NO ☐ YES ☐  
   
   PLEASE GIVE DETAILS BELOW  
   ____________________________________________  

   PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THIS COLUMN
THE NEXT SECTION IS ABOUT YOUR WORK AS A FARM EMPLOYEE.

QUESTIONS 12, 13 AND 14 ARE EACH ABOUT A DIFFERENT TYPE OF FARM WORK AND NOT ALL MAY APPLY TO YOU. PLEASE READ EACH ONE THEN GO TO THE NEXT QUESTION IF YOU HAVE NOT DONE THAT TYPE OF WORK.

12 Have you had any jobs as a farm employee, working for wages or for living expenses? (do not include jobs as a farm manager)

- [ ] NO  
- [ ] YES  

PLEASE GIVE DETAILS BELOW

How did you come to do this type of work?

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________


Please list your jobs of this type below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE STARTED</th>
<th>TYPE OF FARM (EG DAIRY, ORCHARD)</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>WAS OWNER A RELATIVE?</th>
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</table>

If you changed from one farm type to another, or left farming for several years then returned, please give reasons for this change:

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

Why did you finally leave farm wage work for some other type of work?

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

13 Have you ever worked on a farm as a farm manager?

- [ ] NO  
- [ ] YES  

PLEASE GIVE DETAILS BELOW

How did you come to be a farm manager?

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________

- 3 -
Please list your jobs as a farm manager below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE STARTED</th>
<th>TYPE OF FARM</th>
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<th>WAS OWNER A RELATIVE?</th>
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</table>

If you had any important job changes while a manager, eg changed farm type, please give reasons for this change:

Why did you finally leave this type of work for some other type of work?

Were you ever working on a farm as a contract milker or sharemilker?

How did you come to do this type of work?

Please list your jobs of this type below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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Why did you leave sharemilking? If you decided to leave sharemilking at any stage but changed your mind, please give reasons for this decision as well as your final one:
15 Did you have any non-farm jobs between farm jobs, or at the same time?

PLEASE LIST JOBS BELOW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>HOW LONG WERE YOU IN JOB?</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
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PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 16

16 Do you do paid work off your own farm now?

Yes □ No □

If YES - please give details below

OCCUPATION

DATE STARTED

AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED EACH WEEK

17 Here is a list of changes some farm employees would like to see in farm work. Please tick a box for EACH ONE to show how important it was to you while you were a farm employee.

1 VERY IMPORTANT □ 2 IMPORTANT □ 3 UNIMPORTANT □ 4 VERY UNIMPORTANT □

1 HIGHER WAGES
2 GREATER OPPORTUNITY FOR FARM OWNERSHIP
3 MORE INTERESTING WORK
4 MORE REGULAR WORKING HOURS
5 SHORTER WORKING HOURS
6 SUPERANNUATION SCHEME
7 MORE JOB SECURITY
8 MORE OPPORTUNITY FOR PROMOTION
9 A BETTER RELATIONSHIP WITH MY EMPLOYER

18 Now I would like to ask your opinions on unions. Please tick a box for EACH of these statements to show how much you agree with it:

1 AGREE STRONGLY □ 2 AGREE SOMEWHAT □ 3 DISAGREE SOMEWHAT □ 4 DISAGREE STRONGLY □

1 I THINK THERE SHOULD BE TRADE UNIONS
2 I THINK UNION MEMBERSHIP SHOULD BE COMPULSORY
3 UNIONS DO A GOOD JOB REPRESENTING WORKERS
4 UNIONS ARE EFFECTIVE FOR SOME WORKERS BUT NOT FOR FARM WORKERS
5 FARM WORKERS NEED TO FORM A UNION TO PROTECT THEIR INTERESTS
6 I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN A FARM WORKERS UNION IF I STILL WORKED ON SOMEONE ELSE'S FARM

19 Have you ever been a member of the Farm Workers Association or any other Trade Union while working on a farm?

Yes □ No □

Please tick the appropriate box

NOW I HAVE A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT THE WAY YOU ACHIEVED OWNERSHIP OF YOUR FIRST FARM. BY FARM I MEAN A SELF-SUPPORTING UNIT NOT A SMALL BLOCK farMED PART-TIME.

20 What was the date you assumed ownership?
21 How did you get on to your first farm?
   Please tick the appropriate box
   
   1 FARM WAS INHERITED - from whom? 
   2 FARM WAS BOUGHT FROM PARENTS OR SPOUSE'S PARENTS
   3 FARM WAS BOUGHT FROM ANOTHER RELATION
   4 VENDOR WAS NOT A MEMBER OF YOUR OWN FAMILY

22 How did you finance your first farm?
   Please tick each source and give the amount of finance
   
   1 INHERITED/GIFT FROM FAMILY
   2 OWN CAPITAL
   3 FAMILY LOAN
   4 VENDOR FINANCE
   5 FURAL BANK
   6 TRADING/SAVINGS BANK
   7 SOLICITOR
   8 OTHER - please specify other sources:

23 What size was your first farm when you first bought it? 

24 How was your first farm held?
   Please tick the appropriate box
   
   1 FREEHOLD
   2 LEASEHOLD
   3 OTHER - please specify

25 How many people owned this first farm? 

26 What form did ownership take?
   Please tick the appropriate box
   
   1 INDIVIDUAL OWNERSHIP
   2 PARTNERSHIP
   3 FAMILY TRUST
   4 FAMILY COMPANY
   5 NON-FAMILY COMPANY
   6 OTHER - please specify:

27 How many farms have you owned including your present one?

NOW I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR FARM TODAY.

28 What size is your present farm? 

29 Is your present farm freehold, leasehold or other? 

30 What form does ownership of your present farm take? 

31 What proportion of your income was from each of the following in the 1985/86 season?
   
   1 DAIRY
   2 BEEF
   3 SHEEP
   4 ORCHARDS
   5 MARKET GARDENING
   6 OTHER STOCK OR CROPS
   Please say what:

Please do not write in this column
32 How many hours a week do you usually work on the farm? 

33 Does anyone else help with the farm work and administration?

   Please tick the appropriate box
   UNPAID YES  NO  PAID YES  NO

If YES - please give details:

FINALLY I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR PRESENT SITUATION TO HELP WITH THE INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS.

34 What year were you born in? 

35 Which of these applies to you at present?

   Please tick the appropriate box

   1 MARRIED/LIVING WITH A PARTNER
   2 DIVORCED/SEPARATED/WIDOWED
   3 SINGLE - NEVER MARRIED

36 How many children do you have? 

37 How old are your children? 

38 What is your household income from the farm, and from non-farm sources for the 1985/86 financial year?

   Please tick a box in EACH column

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OWN</th>
<th>SPouse's</th>
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<tr>
<td>FARM</td>
<td>NON-FARM</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>$5000 - $9999</td>
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<td>$10000 - $14999</td>
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<td>$15000 - $19999</td>
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<td>$20000 - $24999</td>
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<td>$25000 - $29999</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>$30000 - $49999</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>$50000 or more</td>
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I WOULD LIKE YOU TO THINK ABOUT YOUR PAST AND PRESENT GOALS IN LIFE.

39 In what ways has farming helped you get what you wanted out of life?

In what ways has farming NOT helped you get what you wanted out of life?
40 Since you became a farm owner, in what ways are you better or worse off?


41 How long do you intend to stay in farming?

Why do you say this?


FINALLY, ARE THERE ANY OTHER COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE ABOUT THE ISSUES COVERED IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE? OR ANY OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES THAT YOU THINK NEED TO BE CONSIDERED?


THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP, IT IS MOST APPRECIATED.
About two weeks ago I wrote to you asking for your help in a survey of the ways people achieve farm ownership.

I would like to thank all of you who have completed the questionnaire. Your replies have shown a keen interest in the survey and given us a wealth of information about working on farms and farm ownership.

After reading the replies I have received so far I have been struck by the variety of experiences and opinions that exist in the farming community. One thing farmers do seem to have in common is an enthusiasm for farming which has carried them through years of effort to get on to their own farm, but which is now being severely challenged by the present economic situation.

Those of you who requested a summary of the results will receive one in a few months, when I have finished a more detailed analysis of the results.

If you have not yet returned your questionnaire, please do so today. If this survey is to accurately represent the experiences farmers go through as they progress to farm ownership, we need a completed questionnaire from each person we have been able to contact.

If you have not received a copy of the questionnaire, or have misplaced yours, please ring me collect tonight, and I will send one out. My phone number is Auckland 892-783 - evenings only.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully

Alison Loveridge
RESEARCH SOCIOLOGIST
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
I am writing to you about our study of people's experiences in farming and the ways they have been able to achieve farm ownership. We have not yet received your completed questionnaire.

I understand that this is an extremely busy time of year for farmers. However we have undertaken this study because we believe that the sort of experiences people have in farming, especially in getting on to their own farms, is an important part of farming, and one that needs more understanding.

Many farmers who have already replied found it rewarding to express their feelings about their own situation, and about the problems and successes of farming in general.

I would really appreciate it if you set aside about half an hour, on your own, to fill in your copy of the questionnaire.

The accuracy of the survey depends on you, and the others who have not yet replied. Past experience shows that your reply may be quite different from those of people who have already sent in their questionnaires.

In case your questionnaire has been misplaced, I enclose a replacement questionnaire and a stamped reply envelope.

If you have any queries, please write, or phone me collect. My number is 892-783 - evenings only.

Your contribution to the success of this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Alison Loveridge
RESEARCH SOCIOLOGIST,
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY.