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THE EXTENT OF TRADITIONALISM IN  
TWO ENGLISH RURAL AREAS

(A sociological study of attitudes to social status  
and to educational, occupational and geographical  
mobility in North Shropshire and in West Dorset.)

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## ABSTRACT

Much present controversy among rural and urban sociologists centres upon whether The Rural-Urban Continuum Approach is a useful and valid framework for empirical research. Many adherents of this approach postulate two polar types, 'urban' and 'rural', the 'rural' type frequently being described as 'traditional' in character. Among different authors there is considerable consensus as to various components of the unitary type 'traditionalism'.

In this study four aspects of 'traditionalism' were selected for investigation in two rural areas of England. One of these, West Dorset, was much further removed from large conurbations than the other, North Shropshire. According to the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach, in both rural areas there would most probably be widespread 'traditionalism' with regard to all four variables, but in West Dorset 'traditionalism' would be more marked than in North Shropshire. Further, those engaged in agriculture, and those who had lived only in the country, would be more 'traditional' in all respects than those outside these groups in each place.

Empirical research in the two areas was therefore directed at investigating these hypotheses drawn from the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach.

When the data collected in the course of fieldwork was analysed, it was evident that the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach did not afford a satisfactory explanation of the findings. The relatively simple patterns of response indicated by the approach were not forthcoming. While a majority of informants in both areas did hold 'traditional' opinions on some subjects, they held 'non-traditional'

opinions on others. Similarly, within 'rural' and 'agricultural' groups, there was no consistent tendency for respondents to be more 'traditional' than those outside these groups. Finally, the differences between North Shropshire and West Dorset informants were not of the straightforward kind indicated by the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach.

It was further observed that many variables apart from rural/urban residence or agricultural/non-agricultural employment appeared to affect respondents' attitudes in a pronounced way. (Including, for example, the social class and educational background of the respondents.)

The Rural-Urban Continuum Approach did not explain such 'paradoxical' findings as the enthusiasm of ex-urbanites in both areas for many facets of a fixed status system, and for residential stability for their children. This enthusiasm must indeed be explained in terms of the value placed upon life in a rural community by the informants as a whole. Respondents of all classes and ages appeared to place high value on community life, but without necessarily taking a 'traditional' view of educational and occupational mobility.

It is suggested that the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach is insufficiently sensitive to predict or account for patterns of behaviour or attitudes in rural and urban areas. For this approach it would be preferable to substitute one recognising a distinction between locally-oriented behaviour and attitudes, and nationally-oriented behaviour and attitudes.

Further, the concept of 'traditionalism' can be refined, so as to become a useful analytical tool, by distinguishing behaviour and attitudes which are purely customary from those which are dogmatically hostile to change. It should

be helpful, in making explicit this distinction, to adopt the term 'traditional' to refer to the purely customary, while 'traditionalistic' refers to behaviour and attitudes dominated by a self-conscious desire to perpetuate the past. Further, it should be recognised that those people who are 'traditionalistic' will not necessarily have a coherent philosophy. Rather, the individual or group may have a 'traditionalistic' attitude upon relatively isolated questions.

The study therefore rejects one of the conventional theoretical approaches of rural and urban sociology. It seeks to lend support to alternative approaches which appear more interesting in their possibilities.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION.

This study has been prompted largely by the conviction that research which investigates small-scale situations can make both a valuable and an interesting contribution to sociological knowledge. Most rural sociologists and many urban sociologists have been concerned with small-scale situations.<sup>1</sup> Some have attempted 'total' descriptions of whole communities in the manner of anthropologists<sup>2</sup>, others have examined specific problems in the context of a particular locality.<sup>3</sup>

In recent years, however, there has been a demand for fresh orientations among both rural and urban sociologists.<sup>4</sup> This demand seems to have sprung not so much from the feeling that the small-scale situation is unworthy of investigation, as from dissatisfaction with the conventional theoretical approach of rural and urban sociologists.<sup>5</sup> As is indicated by the existence of 'rural' and 'urban' sociology as separate branches of the discipline as a whole, the conventional approach has always tended to emphasize the differences between rural and urban localities. It is very well exemplified by the work of Louis Wirth, especially in his famous paper "Urbanism As A Way Of Life".<sup>6</sup>

This conventional approach will throughout this study be referred to for the sake of convenience as the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach, even though individual writers may simply emphasize the disparity between rural and urban areas without stressing continuity. As will be shown later even writers who adopt what seems to be a fairly simple dichotomous framework, by implication often adhere to the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach. Moreover, the 'dichotomous' approach is subject to many of the same criticisms that

have been levelled at the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach. This latter approach has its immediate origins in the work of Robert Redfield, which has had a major influence on rural sociology as a whole. On the basis of his Mexican studies<sup>7</sup>, Redfield suggested a three-fold classification of societies into 'folk', 'peasant' and 'urban' types. Redfield argued that the peasant society was an intermediate type between folk and urban, and was transitional. When primitive or peasant societies came into contact with urbanised society, he said, they tended to change so as to exhibit more of the features of urban society. Redfield considered that the elements composing each type of society were so inter-related that a change with regard to one element tended to bring a change with regard to others.

Not long after the publication of Redfield's early work, a number of writers, among them several of Redfield's pupils, began to argue that a folk-urban continuum could be constructed.<sup>8</sup> Most of these writers seem to have been mainly concerned to describe new transitional types to be located on the continuum, some of these types being purely hypothetical. Again, most of the writers evidently came to regard the geo-physical factors as having crucial significance in these typologies, in contrast with Redfield who was principally interested in the process of change, and attached more importance to the temporal factor.

At first Redfield's typology and terminology remained the dominant ones. This is indicated by the fact that the early literature refers always to the 'folk-urban' continuum. Gradually, however, as new 'transitional' types were discovered, and the need to describe their elements arose, the dichotomies proposed by the classical sociological theorists were repeatedly drawn upon. There was extensive borrowing from the polar types suggested by Maine (status -

contract), Tonnies (Gemeinschaft - Gesellschaft), Durkheim (mechanical solidarity - organic solidarity) and Weber (traditional - rational), to mention only the most obvious sources. A further important influence, mainly upon the work of urban sociologists, was the work of Robert Park.<sup>9</sup> Park, apart from jointly initiating the ecological theory of the city, also suggested a further distinction between 'sacred' and 'secular' societies. He thus encouraged the emphasis upon the geo-physical factors, and in addition established yet another dichotomy which was used in a similar way to the others. In that his work, with that of Burgess, stimulated an immense volume of empirical research at Chicago and elsewhere, and continues to influence even the most recent studies in urban sociology<sup>10</sup>, Park's role can hardly be over-emphasized.

Rural and urban sociologists have also derived some inspiration from a later theorist, Talcott Parsons.<sup>11</sup> The five pattern variables proposed by Parsons have been used in much the same way as elements derived from the polar types of earlier theorists.

What has happened, then, is that first of all, the geo-physical factors have been assumed to have major significance. The continuum has become a Rural-Urban Continuum. It has been seen, for example, as ranging from the 'truly-rural', through 'small towns', 'commuter villages' and suburbia, eventually to the central areas of cities. The polar types are no longer 'folk' and 'urban', made up of elements carefully enumerated, abstracted from societies conceived of as folk-like or urbanised, and describing social organisation. Rather the polar types are now held to be 'rural' and 'urban', defined principally in terms of common-sense criteria: the physical properties of the area,

the occupational structure, and the density of population, for example. Secondly, more or less all the dichotomies previously mentioned have come to be equated with the rural-urban distinction, however slight the justification for this in the work of the original theorists. Thus 'Gemeinschaft', 'mechanical solidarity', and above all 'traditional' have all been employed as the equivalent of 'rural'. Most confusing of all, many writers have borrowed from several different sources and types simultaneously. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, that a number of recent critics have found it difficult to establish the exact sociological significance of the terms 'urban' and 'rural', and have doubted even that they have such a significance.

Before examining the arguments of those who have attacked the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach, it may be as well to discuss briefly the studies which have been carried out to date in Britain, and the general orientation of their authors. As will be clear from the account that has been given of developments in rural and urban sociology, the early influences on empirical work were American. There was little empirical research in rural or urban sociology in Britain until the 1950's.<sup>12</sup>

In the 1950's, however, a good many studies of both urban and rural areas were produced by British sociologists.<sup>13</sup> Like their American counterparts, these sociologists who carried out field studies were influenced by a variety of theoretical sources. But since they were also influenced by the American work, and were in any case predominately empiricist in outlook, it is usually hard to identify any one major theoretical influence in such studies. Indeed, it is frequently hard to discover a distinctive theoretical



basis at all.

These studies do, however, insist more or less firmly upon the distinction between rural and urban social organisation. They generally omit any comprehensive discussion of the idea of rural-urban continuity, but by implication they do subscribe to this idea. Usually they argue that the extreme polar type 'rural' is no longer to be found in contemporary Britain. The urban way of life, they say, increasingly affects all sectors of society. Yet some communities are more rural than others.

For example, W.M. Williams concludes his study of Gosforth by saying:

"During the last two decades urban culture has been accepted to such a degree that it now appears to threaten the whole social framework. As yet, this influence has not completely over-shadowed the traditional way of life, but the possibility that it will do so is a very real one". 14

A more recent study of a Welsh village, by Isabel Emmett, describes the efforts of the people of this village to preserve their way of life in the face of the urban-industrial environment of Britain as a whole:

"In the battle to retain their culture Llan people are not organised....but their lives are always coloured by their attachment to their Welshness and a reluctance to surrender it." 15

Such quotations could be paralleled by many more from authors of other studies, both very recent and dating from the early 1950's.

It is evident that a great many writers in this country do subscribe to several important tenets of the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach. First they postulate two polar types urban and rural. Second they argue that the impact of the 'urban' type upon the 'rural' has been, and is, such as to change the characteristics of the latter

type in the direction of the former. They tend to emphasize, as the Americans have done, the spatial factor in differentiating community types.

The British community sociologists<sup>16</sup> have also imitated their American fellows in equating such concepts as 'Gemeinschaft', 'traditional', and so on, with the term 'rural'. Most frequently, the concept of 'traditionalism' has been employed, with little attempt to delineate its referents clearly. In work describing the Devon borough of Okehampton we find the observation "Today, tradition still affects contemporary social situations and produces conflict".<sup>17</sup> In Mrs. Stacey's study of Banbury<sup>18</sup> there is perhaps the most complete expression of the argument that the older, rural, 'traditional' society is being replaced by the urban, 'non-traditional' society. Mrs. Stacey explains the existence of conflict between native Banburians, and immigrants who arrived with the opening of a new aluminium factory in the town, in terms of a confrontation between traditionalism and non-traditionalism. With the arrival of the new workers, "Banbury felt the full force of non-traditionalism".<sup>19</sup>

Like the American writers, British sociologists are also guilty on occasion of further obscuring the concepts they are using, together with their total framework, by referring simultaneously to a number of different original types. For example, E.W. Martin in the following quotation is actually using terms generally used to represent a polar type in themselves (for example 'sacred') to define another type (Gemeinschaft) which he in turn identifies with rural communities:

"....Tonnie<sup>s</sup> found that there were two types of basic relationships, to which he gave the names Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft. The first is traditional, rural, sacred and 'devout', tending a little to political apathy and economic backwardness." 20

What a great many writers on rural communities in this country have in common therefore, is a more or less overt adherence to the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach. Frequently, as has been shown, they use the term 'traditional' to describe the rural pole of the continuum.<sup>21</sup> Only rarely (as for example in Mrs. Stacey's book) is there any attempt to clarify the concept of 'traditionalism' itself. Since the concept is employed as a polar type, it is regarded as a unitary construct.<sup>22</sup> That is to say 'traditionalism' (or 'ruralism') is thought of as being made up of a number of variables, so inter-related that they tend to change together in the direction of their 'urban' opposites when brought into contact with urban industrial influences.

This is not to say that individual writers have been uniformly interested in the same components of 'traditionalism'. In different studies the focus has been on different clusters of variables, but in each case these variables have been identified as part of the unitary type 'traditionalism'. However, in both British and American studies various aspects of community life have attracted more attention from sociologists than have others. There is thus, a good deal of consensus as to certain elements of 'traditionalism', although rather more doubt as to the exact boundaries of the concept.

It has already been noted that there have recently been a number of critics of the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach. Many criticisms have been advanced by Pahl in an article which also seeks to suggest a more profitable framework for research into small-scale situations. Pahl observes that the practice of equating 'ruralism' with 'traditionalism' is highly misleading in that a number of studies have demonstrated the existence of 'traditional' characteristics in urban areas.<sup>23</sup> One writer has,

significantly, entitled his study "The Urban Villagers". As Pahl points out, such studies provide evidence in favour of the common-sense proposition that one would not expect factors such as population density and size to exert a common influence on groups as diverse as, for example, rich and poor, students and 'occupied' population, immigrants and native, transients and more stable residents, and hence that many different kinds of social organisation may be found within a city or even one sector of a city. Wirth's argument that the sheer density and size of a city population produces a distinctive urban mentality, appears to be faulty.

Equally Pahl casts doubt on the validity of other types of settlement which have been located on the Rural-Urban Continuum. Various American authors have questioned the proposition that a 'suburban way of life' can be identified.<sup>24</sup> Pahl's own research in commuter villages of Hertfordshire, clearly demonstrates the difficulty of characterising such rural settlements as uniformly 'traditional'.<sup>25</sup> In addition, a study of the <sup>parish</sup> village of Westrigg in Scotland emphasizes the difficulty of distinguishing the rural culture from that of the wider urban environment

"In this study emphasis has been on the similarity between Westrigg and urban centres.... It seemed to me necessary to treat the parish in this way, partly because the farms there are enterprises in the 'agricultural industry' and not family farms, and partly because the most significant social process in the recent history of the parish has been its induction into the wider network." <sup>26</sup>

Pahl, like other writers<sup>27</sup>, has further criticised the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach for its ethnocentricity and for its tendency to lapse into romantic enthusiasm for the rural way of life. This latter tendency seems to have diminished somewhat in recent years.<sup>28</sup> On the former point

Pahl cites a great deal of evidence from under-developed societies which indicates that there are 'fundamental discontinuities' between rural and urban life.<sup>29</sup>

Pahl's attack on the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach can thus be summarised as follows: in the first place, evidence recently provided makes it seem very doubtful that empirical reality corresponds very closely to the unitary types postulated in this approach, even in countries such as Britain and America where the approach was developed: secondly, the concept of 'traditionalism' seems to be misleading when applied to rural areas as though in all respects they would be more 'traditional' than urban areas, and while the logical opposite of 'traditionalism' should, according to the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach, prevail in urban areas, a good deal of data suggests that this is not always the case; lastly, it is objected that the approach is not very useful for analysing social relations in under-developed countries.

Some further criticisms may perhaps be mentioned. As Martindale has pointed out in his comments on the work of Park<sup>30</sup>, sociological analysis is on the wrong track if it is oriented to the geo-physical aspects of settlements, rather than to their social life. Studies with an ecological emphasis (and such an emphasis seems to be intrinsic to the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach) tend to devote too much time to establishing the physical properties of such areas as they consider, and too little to investigating the social life which produced those properties.

A further point to be noted about the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach is that it has a distinct functionalist and mechanistic bias. It has already been observed that many writers conceive of unitary types whose components are so inter-related that a change in one produces a change in

others in a similar direction. This may be re-phrased by saying that the variables are often considered to be functionally inter-dependent. Frequently, and significantly, rural communities have been described by those who have studied them as 'stable' social systems.<sup>31</sup> Often various 'traditional' parts of the system are spoken of as contributing to the stability of the whole. Hence there is an undoubted functionalist tendency in the writings of many rural and urban sociologists, although this is not always made overt. This tendency renders particular works and perhaps the whole approach susceptible to further criticism. First, it is apparent that many of the practices and beliefs described as 'traditional' can only be functional to a rural social system which has, for example, a completely static agricultural economy.<sup>32</sup> Such a state of affairs must now be virtually non-existent in the countries of Western Europe and North America. Second, the functional inter-dependence of various parts of the rural social 'system' should be a question for investigation, rather than for assumption, as often seems to be the case.

Concluding this critique of the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach, some attention must be paid to the concept of 'traditionalism'. As has been shown, it has most often been employed of late as the equivalent of 'ruralism' and as a unitary polar type, whose components have not been clearly enumerated. The concept bears no very close relation to that developed by Weber, and in that it is so vague and controversial, does not commend itself as a tool for precise analysis. It is hoped, however, that on the basis of this study it may be possible to establish 'traditionalism' once more as a well-defined and useful concept, independent of the question of whether a Rural-Urban Continuum exists.

Although it will be evident by now that there is a

considerable body of criticism attacking the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach, the issue if by no means resolved. There are still those who maintain that the approach is useful and valid. It would seem that even Pahl, whose work has just been cited, is not entirely convinced that the approach should be rejected. A certain ambivalence is evident, in that while his theoretical approach suggests that to try and isolate settlement types and locate them on the continuum is mistaken, he himself describes the "metropolitan village" as an "ideal type", which "could be seen as lying in the middle of the rural-urban continuum".<sup>33</sup>

Unqualified support for the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach is to be found in a recent work by Frankenberg which summarises and interprets the evidence of about twenty British community studies.<sup>34</sup> Frankenberg arranges the communities along a typological continuum based on economic organisation and level of technology. He says that, "Generally speaking the pattern of change in roles from rural to urban is one of increasing role differentiation". He argues that differences between rural and urban "can be subsumed under the concept of a changing pattern of social redundancy". (Frankenberg borrows the concept of 'redundancy' from communications research, but seems to mean little more by "the changing pattern of social redundancy" than what Parsons expresses in his distinction between diffuseness and specificity of roles.) This author lists twenty-five dimensions along which differences between rural and urban areas may be measured. In so doing he underlines the tendency already remarked upon, for those favouring the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach to adopt concepts from a plethora of sources often at the expense of clarity and consistency. For example, Frankenberg

draws on Tönnies (rural areas will have 'community' type relations, urban areas will have 'association' type relations), Durkheim (in rural areas relationships will be based on mechanical solidarity, in urban ones upon organic solidarity) and a variety of more recent sources, (Merton, Barnes, Bott, etc). The influence of Parsons has already been noted.

Frankenberg specifically says that his twenty five dimensions do not exhaust the list of possible ways of distinguishing urban and rural areas. Thus his major point is evidently only that 'rural' and 'urban' may be taken as opposite polar types, made up of an indeterminate, (or at any rate unspecified) number of elements. He also argues that a number (indeterminate?) or other types are intermediate between the two poles. It is surprising that Frankenberg did not lose his faith in the construction of unitary polar types, on discovering the difficulty of enumerating their elements precisely. His continuum is 'morphological', that is, it does not imply that one type evolves from another along the continuum.

Frankenberg does not, it is true, seek to establish that a unitary type 'traditionalism' can be held to describe rural life. Yet, no doubt recognising that to suggest so many dimensions of rural-urban difference is unattractively fragmental, he seeks to substitute for the 'traditionalism' concept, the 'new' concept of 'redundancy'. It is difficult to justify his claim that the differences he mentions can be 'subsumed' under this one heading. The concept of social redundancy seems to be far narrower in itself than many of the concepts it is intended to summarise.

It is clear, however, that controversy over the usefulness of the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach still continues. In a recent article Lupri has sought to counter Pahl's



criticisms and has specified rural-urban differences which he considers to be sociologically significant.<sup>35</sup> Swedner, in a methodologically sophisticated study carried out in Sweden, has lent considerable support to the view that certain habits and attitudes do vary with ecological environment.<sup>36</sup>

It is hoped, therefore, that the present study will be able to shed fresh light on a controversy which is still very much alive. The study sets out to examine certain hypotheses suggested by the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach, with the object of investigating the usefulness of the approach as a whole.

The method adopted in this study was to take two areas that as far as geo-physical character was concerned were undoubtedly rural.<sup>37</sup> Various elements of 'traditionalism' upon which most authors agreed were then selected for investigation. For pragmatic reasons the number of aspects of 'traditionalism' to be studied had to be restricted. Four variables were chosen: social status, educational mobility, occupational mobility and geographical mobility. The 'traditional' attitude to each of these factors was known.

It is not difficult to justify the selection of these particular elements of 'traditionalism' for study. In the studies of communities, and in studies on a larger scale, they constantly recur as important topics. Swedner, for example, chose to include these variables among those he studied.<sup>38</sup> Frankenberg mentions all four factors among his dimensions along which urban-rural differences may be measured. Other writers favouring the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach regard these variables as likely to reflect rural-urban differences.<sup>39</sup>

A further reason for choosing these particular variables is that they provide scope for a test of the idea that elements of 'traditionalism' are functionally related. The case has been made by Parsons<sup>40</sup>, and others, that these four variables do tend to be inter-dependent. A priori, it does seem probable that a change in one of these factors will produce, or be accompanied by, an equivalent change in the others in a similar direction. For example, it seems likely that those who favour a 'fixed' status system will also be opposed to educational and occupational mobility. Or on the other hand, one might expect that those who advocate status by achievement will also advocate educational, occupational and geographical mobility. Hence by examining these four aspects of 'traditionalism' it may be possible to discover whether there is a functional interdependence of the type indicated by the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach.

Two separate areas were chosen for study, one of them (North Shropshire) being located much nearer to large urban industrial centres than the other (West Dorset). There was, therefore, scope also for investigating the proposition derived from the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach that areas further from urban centres would tend to be more 'traditional' in all respects than those in greater proximity. Both areas chosen for study were comparatively large, and surveys were made of random samples of their populations, so that it could not be said that findings were based on a relatively small and possibly idiosyncratic local group.

The first hypothesis taken for investigation was thus that both areas, being rural, would display considerable 'traditionalism' with respect to all four factors. The second hypothesis was that West Dorset would be more

'traditional' than North Shropshire.

A further consideration of the existing evidence suggested that two particular categories within rural areas would be especially prone to 'traditionalism'. These were those who had always lived in rural areas, and those who were dependent upon agriculture for their livelihood.<sup>41</sup> Hence the further hypothesis was advanced that in both North Shropshire and West Dorset, people falling in these two categories would be consistently more 'traditional' than those outside them.

In this study, as has been indicated already, it was the attitudes of people in rural areas, rather than their behaviour, which were examined. The decision to investigate attitudes was taken of necessity, since it is impossible to observe the behaviour of persons spread over a wide area in a short space of time and with limited resources. Attitudes to social status were examined in one survey, while attitudes to educational, occupational and geographical mobility, were investigated through the medium of parents' aspirations for their children's future careers, in a separate survey.

There was no attempt, therefore, to measure actual mobility over time, although it may be that a reasonably accurate guide to future mobility has been obtained. Much recent research suggests that parents' aspirations exercise a strong influence upon children's choices of occupations, as indeed one might expect.<sup>42</sup> It would be possible to conduct a follow-up survey to find out how far aspirations of parents in the two areas were eventually realised, but of course it was not the aim of this study to predict patterns of mobility. Rather the aim was to discover the extent of 'traditional' attitudes, and whether particular sections of rural society were more 'traditional' than

others.

What then are the 'traditional' attitudes to social status and the different kinds of mobility? There is a good deal of consensus in the literature. This consensus is recognised, for example, by Frankenberg, in his summary of the data from community studies.<sup>43</sup> Plowman, Minchinton and Stacey, in another study surveying the British literature on different kinds of communities, have also said, with reference to social status, that the individual studies show a high level of agreement.<sup>44</sup>

To discuss the 'traditional' attitude to status first, then. The summary provided by Plowman et al appears to do justice to the then existing studies, and may be outlined here. It may be noted that their account of 'traditional' status is very largely paralleled by Frankenberg's description of the nature of rural status. (Some of his terms exactly coincide with theirs, for example 'total status'.)

Plowman et al argue that the 'traditional' society is characterised by a high rate of personal interaction, and social status appears to be based upon a subjective assessment of an individual by other members of his community. Status is ascribed to individuals or groups on 'non-rational' grounds. The differences between status levels seem to be chiefly cultural, that is, a matter of their 'way of life'. Within a community a 'status system' may exist, "in the sense of an organised whole in which people would have their places and behave accordingly".<sup>45</sup> Plowman et al describe status within a local system as 'total'. Where 'total' status prevails people have a similar status in all their spheres of activity:

"(But) people can have various statuses in different associations and these may bear a more or less close relation to social status. In a status system this relationship is likely to be close, the more honorific institutional statuses, for example, going to those of higher

social status. In this way high or low statuses would coincide, giving what we call 'total' status..."

Status mobility is rare in such a system, say Plowman et al, for the system is 'traditionally legitimised', that is to say, based on a belief in things as they have always been. In a 'traditional' system, too, farmers tend to form an independent group, although there are differences of status among them:

"The farming community is distinct from the village". 46

Plowman et al are unusual in attempting to delineate the opposite polar type, 'non-traditionalism'. They argue that in urban society the population is too dense for more than superficial interaction. Status is therefore what they call 'attributive' in general:

"....in other words, more dependent on the visible signs of class..."

In urban society individuals may have varying statuses in different spheres of activity, since each sphere tends to be kept separate from the rest. Social mobility is easily achieved.

Plowman et al therefore, identify various characteristics of 'traditional status systems' from the studies of different communities, and argue that such systems are most likely to occur in small rural communities. From their description of 'traditional' status it is possible to deduce certain 'traditional' attitudes, and the informants in West Dorset and North Shropshire were questioned to discover whether they held such attitudes. In addition, from the studies concerned with agricultural areas, 'traditional' influences on the status of farmers were gathered. These included: the length of time a farmer had been on the same land: the degree of 'neighbourliness' a farmer displayed: and whether a man came from a farming family or not.<sup>47</sup>

The 'traditional' attitude to status, therefore, was held to embrace the following ideas: status must be assessed subjectively over a long period of time and not solely by reference to class factors; status is 'ascribed', that is primarily inherited at birth; everyone should know and keep to their place in the status hierarchy, associating mainly with their equals; status mobility is difficult and undesirable; certain people have the right to high status, not only in general but in associations organised for specific purposes. In the surveys, questions were also included which would help to reveal the presence or absence of 'non-traditional' attitudes. For example, respondents were asked whether they thought status was derived from occupation or income. These questions were held to be important since it might possibly be the case that in certain groups or individuals 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' attitudes might co-exist. (This contingency is not allowed for in the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach.)

Turning to the 'traditional' attitudes to education and educational mobility, again the literature shows that some consensus exists. Frankenberg summarises the evidence of the studies he examines by saying that in rural areas "educational possibilities tend to be dependent on social status".<sup>48</sup> In urban areas, on the contrary, he says, social status tends to depend on education. In other words the 'traditional' attitude to educational mobility is similar to that manifested to status mobility - it is regarded as virtually impossible and in any case undesirable. It has even been argued that rural people are hostile to education in general. In a study of several Devon villages Duncan-Mitchell remarks:

"In Southam where the rural culture is least disturbed, education is anathema." 49

Rees also illustrates the tendency to under-value education:

"Even among some of the largest farmers it is more usual to send girls to the secondary school than boys, and such boys as do go are usually brought back to work on the farm as soon as they reach the age of fourteen." 50

Another Welsh study speaks of, "the strong incentives for the bright child not to climb the educational ladder". The reason was that, "to climb it means to step out of the rural world which still has a culture worth belonging to."<sup>51</sup>

Despite the fact that Rees mentions girls paradoxically benefiting from their low economic value, and often receiving a better education than boys, in general most writers insist that women 'traditionally' have lower status than men. As a result neither educational nor occupational mobility is sought for them, in rural areas.

A study of a Cumberland village says:

"In particular the education of girls beyond the elementary level was thought to be a waste of time". 52

The 'traditional' attitude to occupational mobility is again, the literature suggests, one of hostility. Fathers tend to expect and hope, say different authors, that their sons will inherit their own occupation irrespective of their qualifications to do so and possibly also of their inclination. Many writers emphasize that farmers are particularly eager for their sons to succeed them in their occupation, often, though not invariably, on the same farm. That some, or all of their children will continue to farm is seemingly regarded by farmers as inevitable. Even the most recent studies stress this desire of farmers to pass their job on to their sons:

"Family farming is perpetuated by the transmission of skills, property and land from one generation to another. Continuity is achieved in Ashworthy within a framework of change in landholding and in the farm

population, by each farmer attempting to set up all his sons as farmers in their own right." 53

The desire for sons to inherit an occupation is not confined to farmers alone, in a 'traditional' rural area. In Gosforth rural craftsmen also passed on their trade to their sons:

"Village craftsmen's families closely resemble those of farmers in the pattern of retiring to another house and handing over the home and place of work to the inheriting son". 54

It is said, however, that farmworkers, and others in a rural area who have few skills and little property to pass on to their children will also be less interested in passing on their own occupation.<sup>55</sup> Saville has shown that farm workers are the group most prone to emigrate from rural areas, in his study of rural depopulation.<sup>56</sup> It may be, therefore, that the lower economic groups will be found to be least prone to 'traditionalism' with respect to both occupational and geographical mobility in the areas studied here.

Further light on the 'traditional' attitude to occupational mobility is shed by the authors who point out that the emphasis will in any case be upon jobs which can be pursued in the rural area itself or in towns within daily reach. (Though in his book 'Village on the Border', Frankenberg has said that even the necessity of commuting may be presented by rural people, whose social organisation it may disrupt.<sup>57</sup>) For girls, it seems, there is one acceptable alternative. This is a living-in job as a domestic, or a job like nursing where accommodation is provided. These posts are acceptable because of the great shortage of jobs for girls in rural areas. Parents prefer them to be under some kind of guardianship if they are to go away from home.<sup>58</sup>



It is often said that when jobs for either sex are scarce they tend 'traditionally' to fall to those who can exercise the greatest personal influence and not necessarily to those who are best qualified for them. Parents try to put pressure on those who can provide employment. Although occupational mobility will not be sought after, the individual's status in a 'traditional' community, is once again thought to demand an 'appropriate' occupation.

Geographical mobility, like other kinds of mobility, will be devalued by those with a 'traditional' rural attitude. It is resisted particularly strongly if it involves movement to an urban environment. Thus Emmett speaks of, "...the pull ...against desertion of the district."<sup>59</sup> Other authors point out that 'traditionally' long residence in a particular community confers high status, and thus individuals have additional incentive to remain where they are:

"The people to whom the 'old standards' are ascribed are generally those whose families have lived in Gosforth for generations.... Being of 'the old standards' implies high rank within a class." 60

The 'traditional' attitudes to educational mobility, occupational mobility and geographical mobility, as described in the literature, are thus to be summarised in terms of dislike and rejection. Indeed, the attitude to status mobility is similar. The thread linking the various elements identified as part of the 'traditional-rural' type is thus the familiar one of stability. 'Traditional' attitudes are evidently attitudes of hostility to change. It is this basic idea of antagonism to change which presumably justifies conceptualising 'traditionalism' as a unitary type made up of inter-dependent elements. 'Traditionalism' is virtually regarded as a coherent philosophy, held by those who live in rural areas.

In this study, this particular interpretation of

empirical findings has been viewed with some sceptism. Moreover, the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach has been treated as only one possible framework for analysis of data collected. It was regarded as essential that alternative approaches should also be explored. In particular, it was considered important to try and distinguish other influences upon the attitudes of informants, apart from ecological ones, and those of agricultural or non-agricultural employment.

It was argued, on the basis of much existing research, that such variables as the age, sex, and marital condition of informants would be likely to influence their attitudes. Further more, it was considered probable that attitudes might also be affected by the social class position of informants, and the educational level they had themselves attained. Parents' aspirations for their children might conceivably be determined more by their knowledge of, or estimate of their child's ability, than by the variables which the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach suggests are most significant.

The importance of taking these other possible influences into account is strongly indicated by Swedner in the study already cited.<sup>61</sup> It becomes even more evident when it is recognised that Gans, for example, in rejecting the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach on the grounds that it does not adequately explain his findings in urban areas, has chosen to substitute an explanation couched largely in terms of social class influences.<sup>62</sup> Gans has argued that ways of life do not correspond with settlement types because they are functions only of social class and life-cycle stage.

Although this view merits further consideration, with the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach itself, a priori it appears also to have major weaknesses. In particular, it seems to give insufficient prominence to the influence of ideas (religious ideas, for example) upon ways of life.<sup>63</sup>

In fact, the role of ideas in determining the nature of social relationships appears to have been neglected by many writers of community studies. Pahl is again an exception, here, in that he has suggested that a 'village' as a type, may exist simply because it is considered to do so. He argues that 'the village' is merely a state of mind, on the basis of the research he undertook in Hertfordshire.<sup>64</sup> The state of mind, according to Pahl, is principally that of middle class commuters, but this elite succeeds in swaying everyone else.

After pointing out that ideas may exercise a strong influence upon ways of life, Pahl makes the valuable suggestion that in attempting to devise a new framework for analysis, the important distinction to recognise may be that between locally-oriented behaviour and attitudes, and nationally-oriented behaviour and attitudes.

In this study, therefore, it has been the objective to examine the possibility that some alternative framework for analysis could be found, more fruitful than the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach. The data collected has been subjected to scrutiny with this objective in mind, and in the concluding chapter the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach is re-evaluated.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. In this country rural sociologists have almost invariably preferred to study one or two 'communities', rather than to undertake larger-scale surveys. Studies based on localities are now proliferating in most countries of the world. The Bibliography appended to this thesis includes only works cited in the text.
2. Examples of American and British studies concerned with 'total' description include:  
Dennis, N., Henriques, F.M. and Slaughter, C. "Coal is Our Life". London 1957.  
Emmett, I. "A North Wales Parish". London 1964.  
Lynd, R.S. and H.M. "Middletown". New York 1929.  
Stacey, M. "Tradition and Change: A Study of Banbury". Oxford 1960.  
Vidich, A.J. and Fensman, J.F. "Small Town in Mass Society". New York 1960.  
Warner, W. Lloyd and Lunt, P.S. "The Social Life of a Modern Community". New Haven 1941.
3. Examples of American and British studies which focus on specific problems in the context of a particular locality, are:  
Birch, A.H. "Small Town Politics". Oxford 1959.  
Rex, J. and Moore, B. "Race, Community and Conflict". Oxford 1967.  
Thrasher, F.M. "The Gang: A Study of 1,313 Gangs in Chicago". Chicago 1936.  
Wirth, L. "The Ghetto". Chicago 1928.  
Young, M. and Wilmott, P. "Family and Kinship in East London". London 1960.
4. Among the critics of the existing approaches are:  
Benet, F. "Sociology Uncertain: The Ideology of the Rural-Urban Continuum". Comparative Studies in Society and History, 6. 1963.  
Dewey, R. "The Rural-Urban Continuum: Real But Relatively Unimportant". American Journal of Sociology, 66, (1). 1960.  
Lewis, O. "Further Observations on the Folk-Urban Continuum and Urbanisation, with Special Reference to Mexico City". In: Hauser, P.M. and Schnore, L. "The Study of Urbanisation". London 1965.  
Pahl, R.E. "The Rural-Urban Continuum". Sociologia Ruralis, VI, 1966.  
Wibberley, G.P. "The Changing Structure and Function of Rural Communities". In: Papers and Discussions of the Second Congress of the European Society for Rural Sociology.
5. For example, a strong case for locality studies has been made recently by Pahl (op.cit. p.317-322), and Rex and Moore (op.cit. Ch.I).
6. Wirth, L. "Urbanism as a Way of Life". American Journal of Sociology, Vol.44. 1938.
7. Redfield, R. "Tepoztlan: A Mexican Village". Chicago 1930.  
Redfield, R. "The Folk Culture of Yucatan". Chicago 1941.

8. Miner, H. "St. Denis: A French-Canadian Parish". Chicago 1939.  
Spicer, E. "Pascua: A Yaqui Village in Arizona". Chicago 1940.
9. Park, R. and Burgess, E.W. "Introduction to the Science of Sociology". Chicago 1921.  
Park, R., Burgess, E.W., McKenzie, R.D. and Wirth, L. "The City". Chicago 1925.
10. See, for example, Rex and Moore, (op.cit. p.272-273)
11. Parsons, T. "The Social System". Glencoe 1951. (p.59 et. seq.)
12. Exceptions are the studies carried out by the American anthropologist C.M. Arensberg:  
Arensberg, C.M. "The Irish Countryman". New York 1939.  
Arensberg, C.M. and Kimball, S.T. "Family and Community in Ireland". London 1940.
13. Many of these studies are listed in the Bibliography.
14. Williams, W.M. "The Sociology of an English Village-Gosforth". London 1956. (p.202)
15. Emmett, I. "A North Wales Parish". London 1964. (p.134)
16. This phrase is intended to embrace all those who have made a study conducted within a small locality, whether concerned with a particular problem or with social organisation in general.
17. Martin, E.W. "The Shearers and the Shorn". London 1965. (p.8)
18. Stacey, M. op.cit.
19. Ib.id. (p.167 et. seq.)
20. Martin, E.W. op.cit. (p.209)
21. The situation is further confused by a tendency in some writers to use the term 'traditional' in a colloquial sense to designate practices or attitudes which are old-fashioned, or ceremonial, or ritualistic, and in any case somewhat residual.
22. In British studies at any rate there is little attempt to formulate the 'non-traditional' or 'urban' type.
23. Pahl, R.E. op.cit. (p.302)
24. Dobriner, W.M. "Class in Suburbia". New Jersey 1963.  
Gans, H.J. "Urbanism and Suburbanism as Ways of Life". In: Rose, A.M. (ed.) "Human Behaviour and Social Processes". London 1962.
25. Pahl, R.E. "Urbs in Rure". London School of Economics and Political Science Geographical Papers No.2, 1965.
26. Littlejohn, J. "Westrigg". London 1963. (p.155)

27. Benet, F. op.cit. p.5.  
Martindale, D. Introduction to M. Weber, "The City".  
New York 1958.
28. It reached its peak in the 1920's under the influence  
of Spengler's book, "The Decline of the West". New  
York 1928.
29. Pahl, R.E. "The Rural-Urban Continuum". Sociologia  
Ruralis, VI. 1966. (p.312-314)
30. Martindale, D. op.cit. (p.29)
31. "Stability" is emphasised in:  
Williams, W.M. op.cit.  
Rees, A.D. "Life in a Welsh Countryside". Cardiff 1960.  
Arensberg, C.M. op.cit.  
- and in a large number of other studies.
32. For example, the 'traditional' practice which is often  
described of farmers handing over their farms to their  
sons whom they train themselves in the skills of  
agriculture.
33. Pahl, R.E. op.cit. (p.305)
34. Frankenberg, R. "Communities in Britain". Harmondsworth  
1966.
35. Lupri, E. "The Rural-Urban Variable Reconsidered".  
Sociologia Ruralis, VII. 1967.
36. Swedner, H. "Ecological Differentiation of Habits and  
Attitudes". Lund 1960.
37. Geographers have frequently disagreed as to the  
definitive characteristics of a 'rural' area. But  
see Chapter II for a justification of this approach.
38. Swedner, H. op.cit., Ch. VII.
39. For example:  
Grigg, C.M. and Middleton, R. "Rural-Urban Differences  
in Aspirations". Rural Sociology, 24. 1959.  
Haller, A.O. and Sewell, W.H. "Farm Residence and  
Level of Educational and Occupational Aspiration."  
American Journal of Sociology, 62. 1957.  
Martin, W.T. "Rural-Urban Fringe: A Study of Adjust-  
ment to Residence Location". American Sociological  
Review, 18. 1953.  
Middleton, R. and Grigg, C.M. "Community of Orient-  
ation and Occupational Aspirations of Ninth Grade  
Students." Social Forces, 38. 1960.  
Payne, R. "Development of Occupational and Migration  
Expectations and Choices Among Urban, Small-Town  
and Rural Adolescent Boys". Rural Sociology, 21. 1957.  
Payne, R. "Rural and Urban Adolescents' Attitudes  
Towards Moving". Rural Sociology, 22. 1957.
40. See, for example, Parsons, T. "An Analytical Approach  
to the Theory of Social Stratification". In: "Essays  
in Sociological Theory". New York 1964.
41. Thus both the hypothesis that the type of employment  
is crucial, and the hypothesis that physical environ-  
ment is crucial were examined. (The former is

supported by e.g. Frankenberg, op.cit., the latter by Swedner, op.cit.)

42. See, for example, Kahl, J. "Common Man Boys". In: Education, Economy and Society". (Ed. Halsey, A.H., Floud, J. and Anderson, A. New York 1961) Also Harrington, M. "Parents' Hopes and Children's Success". New Society 113.
43. Frankenberg, F. op.cit. Ch.11.
44. Plowman, D.E., Minchinton, W.E. and Stacey, M. "Local Social Status in England and Wales". Sociological Review, X, No.2.
45. Plowman, D.E. et al, op.cit. (p.164)
46. Ib.id. (p.164)
47. Again these 'traditional' criteria are mentioned by Williams, Rees, Arensberg, opera cit.
48. Frankenberg, R. op.cit. (p.290)
49. Duncan-Mitchell, G. "Social Disintegration in a Rural Community". Human Relations, 3.1950.(p.298)
50. Rees, A.D. op.cit. (p.143)
51. Emmett, I. op.cit. (p.78)
52. Williams, W.M. op.cit. (p.61)
53. Williams, W.M. "Ashworthy - A West Country Village". London 1963. (p.209)
54. Williams, W.M. "Gosforth". (p.55)
55. Williams, W.M. "Ashworthy". (p.210)
56. Saville, J. "Rural Depopulation in England and Wales, 1851-1951." London 1957. (Ch.I.)
57. Frankenberg, R. "Village on the Border". London 1957.
58. Emmett, I. op.cit. (p.153)
59. Ib.id. (p.79)
60. Williams, W.M. "Gosforth". (p.109-110)
61. Swedner, H. op.cit. (p.10)
62. Gans, H.J. op.cit.
63. Perhaps this is a result of the ethnocentric bias already noted; but a surprising omission, given the apparent influence of the work of Max Weber.
64. Pahl, R.E. op.cit. (p.304)

CHAPTER II

NORTH CHROPSHIRE.

In the Introduction, it was observed that the two areas chosen for investigation in this study must be, according to geo-physical and demographic criteria, 'rural'.

Geographers have disagreed as to the definitive characteristics of a 'rural' area.<sup>1</sup> But for practical purposes, it would appear that an area with a low density of population, a large proportion of the labour force engaged in agriculture, and a number of small settlements permitting face-to-face relationships to exist between the majority of inhabitants, may legitimately be regarded as a rural area. (Most controversy, indeed, appears to centre on the question of which of these features is the most important. Any area which combines all three may surely be taken to be 'rural'.)

In any case, sociologists who have adopted the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach have, for the most part, taken a common-sense definition of the word 'rural'. As it is with their work that this study is concerned, the criteria mentioned above were felt to be sufficiently rigorous.

One of the objects of the present study was to make generalisations about the nature of rural areas in England. It may be suggested that the study of a small parish, or a village does not facilitate such generalisations. It was felt that for this study it would be desirable to choose relatively large areas. Moreover, the choice of two relatively large areas helped to avoid the difficulty caused by variations in social structure between expanding

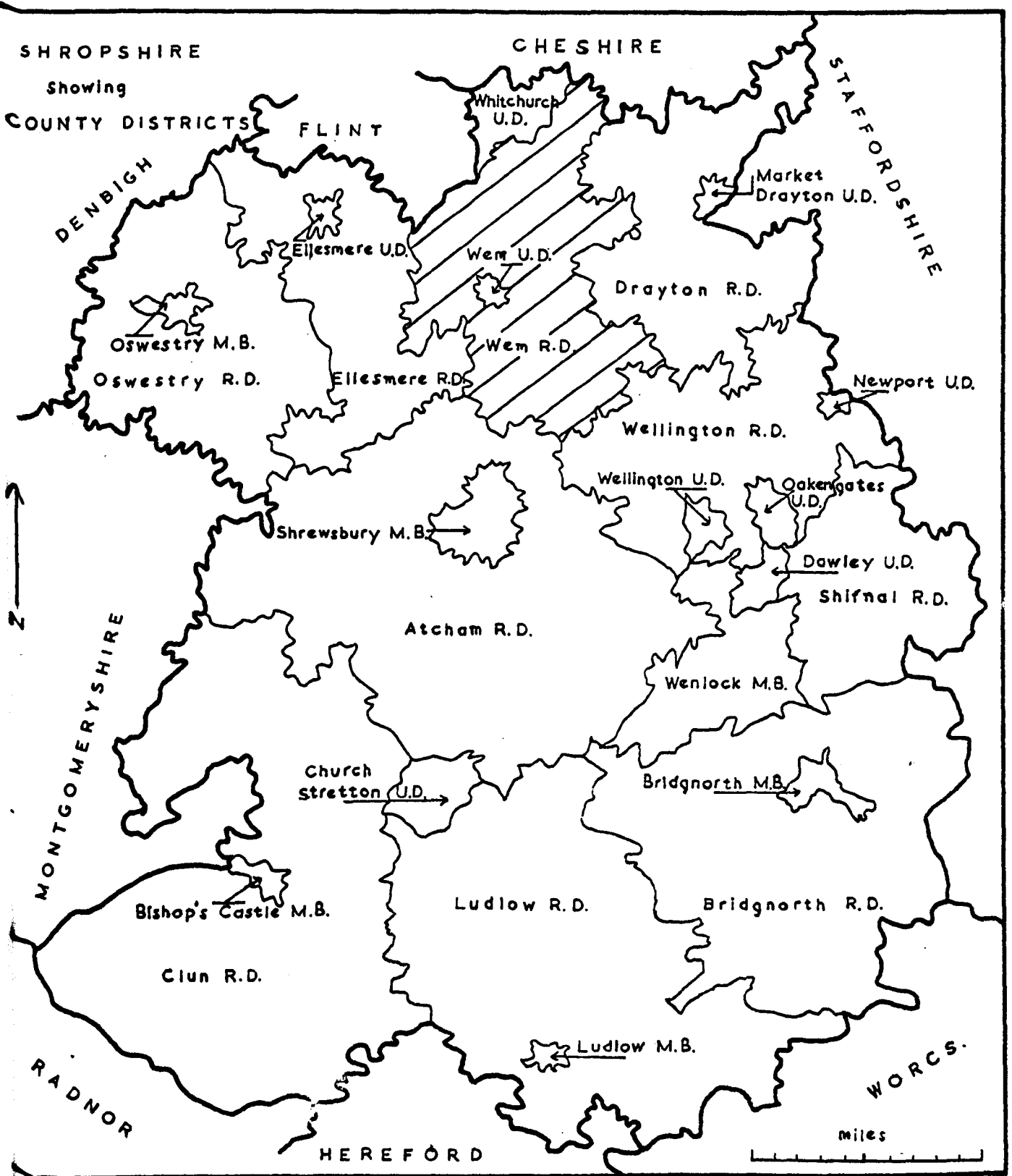


and contracting villages; between villages with plentiful employment and those which are virtually dormitory villages; between villages which are flourishing local centres with many social organisations, and those which have few formal or informal associations; between compact settlements and small hamlets, and so on. At the same time, it was desirable that the areas chosen for investigation should have a certain geographical and administrative cohesiveness.

The two areas selected for investigation were the Rural District of Wem, in North Shropshire, and the Rural Districts of Bridport and Beaminster, which adjoin one another in West Dorset.

In this Chapter, some description will be given of the chosen area in North Shropshire, to demonstrate in what ways it is 'rural' and what its links with urban areas are.

The Rural District of Wem lies at the extreme north of the county of Shropshire and abuts upon Flintshire and Cheshire. Its position vis a vis the other Rural Districts and principal towns of Shropshire is shown on Map I. The area of the Rural District is approximately 94.3 square miles. Its greatest length from north to south is about fifteen miles, and its greatest breadth from east to west about seven miles.



Geographically, the area is fairly uniform in character. The north of Shropshire is the western part of the great Midland Plain of England. Out of this plain rise a few isolated sandstone hills - such as Grinshill and Hawkstone - but with these exceptions the plain is unbroken until it meets the hills of Flintshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire. The area contrasts with the southern part of Shropshire, which is hilly and even mountainous in places. The northern plain is on the whole only two hundred to three hundred feet above sea level, and it is full of streams, meres and marshes.

Within the plain there is one small market town - Wem itself; a few large villages - Hodnet, Prees, Baschurch, Ruyton and Whittington, and many smaller villages and hamlets. There are important market towns at the edges of the plain - Shrewsbury to the south, Oswestry to the west, Ellesmere and Whitchurch to the north, Market Drayton, Newport and Wellington to the east.

That part of the plain which falls within the boundaries of the Rural District of Wem clearly does not include any settlements which are too large to allow face-to-face relationships to develop among most of the inhabitants. Of the villages in the Rural District, Prees with a population of 2,128 in 1961, and Shawbury with a population of 2,366, are easily the largest. Wem itself was excluded from the surveys for, although its population was only 2,600, it is officially an Urban District, and it is certainly one of the service areas for the surrounding villages.

There are fourteen Civil Parishes in the Rural District and, excluding Prees and Shawbury, their average population

is under 600 inhabitants. Some of the Civil Parishes include several villages, so it is apparent that many of the villages in the area are very small.

The population of the entire Rural District of Wem in 1961 was 11,606. This included 5,941 men and 5,665 women. As in many rural districts, therefore, there was an excess of males over females. In the county of Shropshire as a whole, the ratio of females to males is lower than that of England and Wales generally, for almost all age groups. In the Rural District of Wem, as in the remainder of Shropshire, the age distribution is younger than that of England and Wales as a whole. This is largely due to a greater number of births between 1951 and 1961 than between 1936 and 1946.

The 1961 Census revealed that a relatively low standard of household amenities is reached in the Rural District. Of a total of 3,326 households, 25.9% have no cold water tap for their exclusive use, 39.6% have no hot water tap, 35.5% have no fixed bath, and 45.1% have no W.C. In only 50.8% of households is there exclusive use of all four of these amenities. It may be argued that the extensive absence of one or more of these amenities is a reflection of the rural nature of the area, especially where households lack cold water or W.C. It was frequently observed in the course of the fieldwork that many cottages, and even council houses built in the 1930's shared communal taps and pumps outside in a lane.

The actual density of the population in the Rural District in 1961 was 0.2 persons per acre. This is a very low density of population. The average number of persons per acre in the Rural Districts of England and Wales taken together was 0.3. In all districts, Urban and Rural, the number of persons was 1.2 per acre.

The population of the Rural District fell between 1951 and 1961, as Table I shows. Indeed, in this period all the Rural Districts of Shropshire suffered a fall in population, except for Wellington, Atcham and Shifnal, which as Map I shows, are very close to the main urban centres. As there was an excess of births over deaths in the area, the net loss of population in the area was due to migration from the area. It is perhaps significant that all the urban areas of Shropshire, and especially Shrewsbury and Wellington, increased their population substantially between 1951 and 1961. Wem Urban District accordingly experienced a rise in population.

The drop in population between 1951 and 1961 cannot be said to form part of a long-term trend, for between 1931 and 1951 the population of the Rural District rose by 1,770. Net migration out of the area is a new phenomenon.

About one-third of the labour force in the Rural District is engaged in agriculture, and this is the largest group employed in any single industry. In 1963, 1,542 men and 370 women were employed in agriculture and forestry (there is little forestry) in the area covered by the Whitchurch Employment Exchange, which embraces much of Wem Rural District, although not all of it. These men and women, as can be seen in Table III, represented 32.2% of the total insured population in this area.

The number of men and women employed in agriculture in this area actually rose between 1954 and 1964.

32.2% is obviously a very high proportion to be engaged in agriculture. The proportion employed in agriculture in the United Kingdom as a whole was, in 1962, only 2.13%, with 0.09% in forestry. The increase in the proportion in

TABLE I

NORTH SHROPSHIRE - POPULATION

	POPULATION						INTERCENSAL CHANGE % P.A.			
	1931	1951		1961			1951-1961			
	Persons	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Total	By births & deaths	Balance
WEM RURAL DISTRICT	10,273	12,043	6,347	5,669	11,606	5,941	5,665	-0.37	.77	-1.14
WEM URBAN DISTRICT	2,255	2,409	1,163	1,246	2,606	1,254	1,352	.79	.27	.51
WHITCHURCH U.D.	6,174	6,856	3,258	3,598	7,165	3,421	3,744	.44	-0.58	1.02

The population figures given above for the two Urban Districts are included for the purpose of contrasting them with Wem Rural District.

TABLE II

NORTH SHROPSHIRE - HOUSEHOLD AMENITIES, 1961

	Total households	No cold water tap	No hot water tap	No fixed bath	No W.C.	Exclusive use of all 4
	%	%	%	%	%	%
WEM RURAL DISTRICT	3,326	25.9	39.6	35.5	45.1	50.8
WEM URBAN DISTRICT	863	.7	20.63	21.32	3.13	74.39
WHITCHURCH U.D.	2,224	1.48	19.74	23.11	9.17	73.79

Again figures for the two nearby urban districts are given for comparison.

TABLE III

NORTH SHROPSHIRE - EMPLOYMENT (TOTAL)

INDUSTRY	1954	%	1964	%	CHANGE
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,348	27.5	1,912	32.2	+564
Food, drink and tobacco	386	7.9	390	6.4	+4
Engineering and electrical goods	297	6.1	494	8.1	+197
Vehicles	-	-	4	0.1	+4
Textiles	-	-	20	0.3	+20
Metal goods n.e.s.	4	0.1	-	-	-4
Timber, furniture etc. )					
Paper, printing and publishing )	71	1.4	257	4.2	+186
Other manufacturing )					
Construction	478	9.9	458	7.5	-20
Gas, electricity and water	77	1.5	86	1.4	+9
Transport and communication	282	5.8	245	3.7	-37
Distributive trades	610	12.4	865	14.2	+255
Insurance, Banking and finance	42	0.8	59	1.0	+17
Professional and scientific	300	6.1	415	6.8	+115
Miscellaneous services	827	16.8	749	12.2	-78
Public administration	177	3.6	139	2.3	-38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,899</b>		<b>6,109</b>		<b>+1,210</b>



agricultural employment in the Wem area between 1954 and 1964 is in direct contrast to the trend for the United Kingdom as a whole. In the years 1954 to 1962 the proportion in agricultural employment in the United Kingdom fell from 2.88% to 2.13%. This, of course, is part of a very long-term trend.

As a consequence of the fact that many people in the area are employed in agriculture, there is some seasonal unemployment. On average, however, unemployment in the area is below the national level. In Table IV maximum and minimum unemployment figures are given for the years 1954-1962, and may be compared with the national average of unemployed for those years. (These figures again relate to the area covered by the Whitchurch Employment Exchange.)

Agriculture is thus the chief industry in Wem Rural District, and indeed North Shropshire is an important dairying area with some first class grassland. About 40% of the land is, however, under rotation (oats and mixed corn, and green crops, especially kale, are grown) and the remaining 60% under grass. Shorthorns probably still form the type herd but there has been a great increase in Friesans and Ayreshires. The area is mainly concerned with liquid milk production.

Holdings vary considerably in size. There are few large farms of 300 acres or more, but many of 100-299 acres and a very large number of small farms of 5-99 acres.

Many people in the area are engaged in industries ancillary to agricultural. A number work in dairies at Whitchurch or Market Drayton. Many work at the factory of Salopian Engineers - a branch of Rubery Owen, which is

TABLE IVNORTH SHROPSHIRE - UNEMPLOYMENT

Year	MAXIMUM				MINIMUM			
	Men	Women	Total	%	Men	Women	Total	%
1954	27	30	57	1.2	8	11	19	0.4
1955	17	37	54	1.1	9	10	19	0.4
1956	34	29	63	1.4	18	12	30	0.7
1957	58	32	90	1.7	21	5	26	0.5
1958	64	19	83	1.6	34	12	46	0.9
1959	85	21	106	2.0	33	11	44	0.8
1960	53	27	80	1.5	30	11	41	0.8
1961	43	22	65	1.2	25	7	32	0.6
1962	76	37	113	2.0	41	16	57	1.0
1963	304	29	333	5.1	56	15	71	1.2

UNITED KINGDOM - AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT

(in thousands)

Year	Males	%	Females	%	Total	%
1954	164	0.68	82	0.34	246	1.01
1955	134	0.55	66	0.27	200	0.82
1956	147	0.6	70	0.28	217	0.88
1957	186	0.75	78	0.32	264	1.07
1958	293	1.19	115	0.47	408	1.66
1959	300	1.21	114	0.46	414	1.68
1960	232	0.93	87	0.35	319	1.28
1961	207	0.82	76	0.3	283	1.12
1962	302	1.18	104	0.41	406	1.59

situated in the Rural District and produces agricultural machinery. There are a number of other firms making agricultural equipment in Whitchurch, but these are smaller concerns.

As can be seen from Table III, a good many people in the area are employed in construction work - mostly for the small building firms which abound in the area. Apart from this, the largest categories of employment are the distributive trades, transport and communication, and professional and scientific occupations. For the most part, those engaged in these occupations will, like those who work in the dairies and for the smaller engineering firms, commute to the nearby market towns.

Although Wem is approximately in the centre of the Rural District to which it gives its name, two other market towns, Whitchurch and Market Drayton (the former with a population of 7,150, the latter with 5,920 inhabitants) form more important service areas and provide more opportunities for employment for those who live in the villages. Whitchurch is perhaps pre-eminent among the market towns of the area. It lies at the northern extreme of the Rural District, on the two main roads which run parallel to each other south to Shrewsbury (the A49 and the A5113). It lies, too, on the railway line which bisects the Rural District as it runs south through Wem to Shrewsbury. The town of Whitchurch is an important link in the communications between Shrewsbury and the industrial North of England. The livestock markets of Whitchurch and Market Drayton add considerably to their importance, though of course they do not approach in size the market at Shrewsbury.

Although the nearby market towns are still of primary importance in the Rural District, an increasing proportion

of the villagers also trade in, or commute to work at, or visit for other purposes (cultural, for example) the county town of Shrewsbury or the expanding industrial town of Wellington. Shrewsbury is only about eleven miles from Wem itself, while Wellington is fifteen miles away. 'Bus services in the area are not always very good, however, especially from the smaller places off the main roads. Furthermore, the railway line which served many of the villages was scheduled for closure at the time of the surveys. Many villagers now have private means of transport, but there are still many who have not and many who cannot afford to make long journeys by public transport even where it exists. The nearer, smaller market towns are therefore likely to retain their importance to the people of the Rural District for a long time.

"Parts of Shropshire still tend in economic and social matters to look northwards to Liverpool and Manchester."<sup>2</sup> From Whitchurch, it is only thirty-eight miles to Liverpool and forty-six miles to Manchester. People in the north of Shropshire tend to think of these big industrial towns as providing the opportunities lacking in the local market towns, and even in Shrewsbury and Wellington. To a lesser extent, too, they now look to the Potteries (Stoke-on-Trent, less than twenty-five miles away is within commuting distance for those with private transport, but few seem to take advantage of the fact) and to the great Birmingham conurbation. These last two areas do not yet provide a real challenge to Shrewsbury and Wellington. Shrewsbury has recently sustained an outburst of industrial activity on the north side, and Wellington too has undergone great industrial expansion. Both these towns are more accessible by rail and road to North Shropshire than either Birmingham or the Potteries.

It is in any case evident that North Shropshire is subject to the influence of several large industrial areas with which good communications exist. The preponderantly agricultural character of the area is nevertheless indisputable.

Part of this study was concerned with the aspirations of parents for their children's educational and occupational careers. The nature of the educational provision in the Rural District was therefore of considerable importance. The Rural District formed a convenient unit for study from the point of view of the educational facilities, since the primary and secondary school children for the most part attended specific schools within the District or in Whitchurch.

The tri-partite system of secondary education obtained in the area. At the time when the survey on attitudes to social change was being conducted, those boys who had passed the county 11+ examination attended the Sir John Talbot Grammar School, in Whitchurch, or Wem Grammar School and the girls went to Whitchurch High School. There were county secondary modern schools in Whitchurch and Wem. In addition, some children from the secondary schools went on, usually at fifteen, to the technical school in Shrewsbury.

It should perhaps be noted that there were rather more grammar school places for boys than for girls in the area, as each of the three grammar schools had roughly two hundred places.

At the time when the fieldwork was being carried out, a plan to amalgamate the girls' High School with the Sir John Talbot Grammar School in Whitchurch was being gradually put into effect. This enabled the study to take into

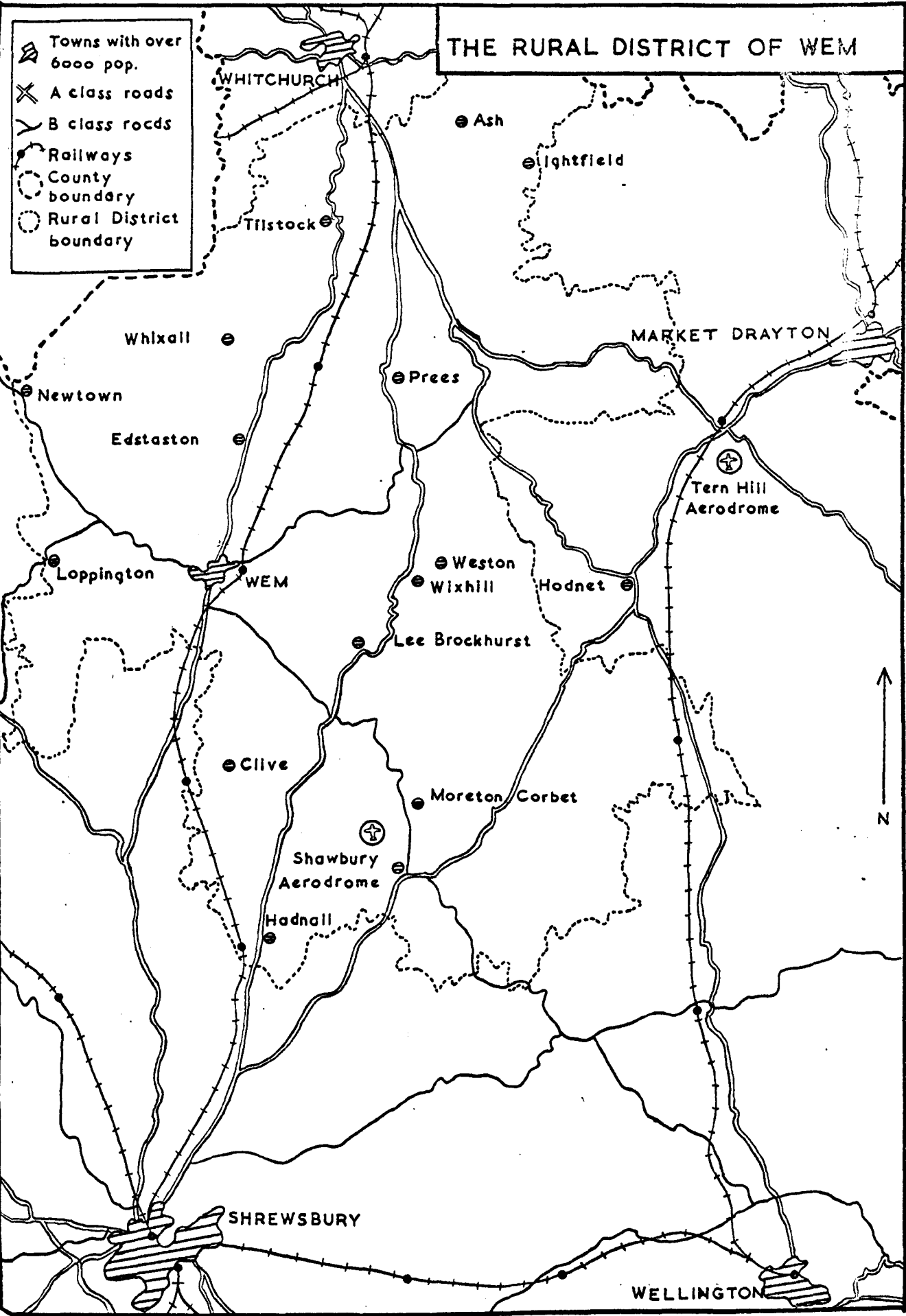
account parents' reactions to a change in the educational system. The Sir John Talbot Grammar School had been founded originally in 1550, and it was expected that the plan might arouse some opposition. The amalgamation was proposed by the Local Education Authority of Shropshire in order to create a co-educational school of four hundred or so pupils which could provide greater variety of curriculum, and better facilities in general, than were available in the two small grammar schools.

The secondary schools that have been mentioned drew their pupils from a large number of village schools in the Rural District, as well as from the schools in Wem and Whitchurch Urban Districts. The survey was concerned with no less than thirteen village schools. (The villages with schools that were involved in the survey are marked with a circle on Map II). Most of these schools had two teachers and an average of about thirty pupils. At least one school had only one teacher - that at Weston and Wixhill-under-Redcastle. Prees had a larger school, as might be expected of the biggest village in the area. One village, somewhat unaccountably, had two schools, a Church of England Primary School and a County Primary School. They seemed to compete vigorously for pupils.

For the most part, the village schools, in contrast with the secondary schools, were of a poor standard with respect to buildings and equipment. Most of the buildings were very old and very small, with little space for classrooms, let alone staffrooms or other refinements. Some were poorly lighted and badly heated. Several had no running water, no proper lavatories and, of course, no washbasins. Less understandably in a rural area, many

# THE RURAL DISTRICT OF WEM

- Towns with over 6000 pop.
- A class roads
- B class roads
- Railways
- County boundary
- Rural District boundary



had no playing field and even no playground. In partial compensation for all this several schools enjoyed beautiful natural surroundings. One parent remarked:

"Their natural facilities are so good for playing space that they don't miss much. They have a marvellous view up there. The trouble is, they tend to think the view compensates for some very poor teaching."

The standard of teaching no doubt does vary in the village schools. Some teachers were heavily criticised, others extravagantly praised. A village school teacher is necessarily closely observed. It is unlikely that many teachers would wish to go to these small and often remote village schools. Some teachers may find the small classes an advantage, others may find that the large age-range in each class offsets this. Usually the schools are divided into two classes; an infants' class for those from five to seven, and a junior class for the eight to eleven-year-olds.

These, then, were the schools which the children of the Rural District generally attended. A few children, it is true, were sent to private schools. Some went to a private school in Whitchurch, others to schools in Shrewsbury. Very few people in the area, it seemed, sent their children completely out of the area to any of the better-known independent schools. Unfortunately, it was not possible to contact any parents who did send their children to independent secondary schools. However, those who sent their children to local private schools initially, usually allowed them to go on to the county secondary schools, and a certain number of these people were interviewed.

Some account has been given of the surroundings of the people of Wem Rural District, of the employment possibilities



that are open to them, and of the schools which their children attend. The area is clearly 'rural' in most generally accepted senses. It remains to be seen if its people are also 'traditional' in their attitudes.

NOTES ON CHAPTER II

1. See, for example, the discussion of this point in Wibberley, G.P., op. cit.
2. Mitchell, J. (Ed.) "Great Britain - Geographical Essays". Cambridge, 1960.

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL STATUS IN NORTH SHROPSHIRE

The study of social status relationships in a particular area will do much to show how traditional its people are in their behaviour and attitudes. But it is impossible to observe closely and impartially over a long period of time, the behaviour of a great many people who are spread over a wide area. This study could not hope to establish by observation and participation whether traditional status systems existed in the villages of North Shropshire and West Dorset. It was possible, however, to establish whether the people in these two areas had the traditional attitudes which must be associated with such systems.

In this Chapter the survey of attitudes to social status which was carried out in Wem Rural District in Shropshire will be described and discussed.

A random sample of the people of Wem Rural District taken from the Electoral Roll, was interviewed with a formal questionnaire which may be found in the Appendix. Since the questionnaire was concerned primarily with the opinions and attitudes of the respondents rather than with factual matters, it was deliberately left to them to comment as extensively as they wished in reply to any particular question. It was thought that monosyllabic or brief answers would not in themselves be likely to distinguish traditionalists from non-traditionalists. Apart from being designed to ascertain the respondents' attitudes to social status, the questionnaire also asked for a certain amount of biographical information.

The original random sample consisted of seventy-nine people. Of these eleven were not contacted because they had left the district, four had died or were unable to answer the questions for reasons of health, and four refused to be interviewed. Sixty people, therefore, were successfully interviewed.

Of the sixty informants in Shropshire thirty were men and thirty women. The age distribution of these men and women is given below in Table I and compared with the age distribution of the population of Wem Rural District as a whole.

TABLE I

Age Distribution of Informants, compared with that of Total Population of Wem Rural District in 1961

<u>Age</u>	<u>No. of Informants</u>	<u>% No. in Total</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>%</u>
20-29	9	15.0	1,627	20.6
30-39	9	15.0	1,571	19.9
40-49	12	20.0	1,395	17.7
50-59	13	21.7	1,417	18.0
60-69	11	18.3	1,002	12.7
70 & over	6	10.0	882	11.2

It will be noted that while there is considerable similarity between these distributions, the informants were somewhat older on the average than the inhabitants of the Rural District in general. There are two probable reasons for this variation. In the first place, the Census includes twenty-year-olds in the youngest age group in the Table, but the informants were chosen only from those who were twenty-one and over.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, and more important, it is highly probable that the majority of the eleven people who were not interviewed because they had left the area, were relatively young.<sup>2</sup>

A further comparison was made between the informants and the general population of the Rural District, this time

with respect to occupation. The proportion of the sample, and the proportion of the general population falling into certain socio-economic groups (as defined by the Registrar-General) is shown in Table II.

TABLE II

Distribution of Informants in various Socio-Economic Groups, compared with Distribution of Total Population of Wem Rural District in those groups

	<u>Groups 1, 2, 3, 4 and 13</u>	<u>Groups 5, 6, 8, 9, 12 and 14</u>	<u>Groups 7, 10, 11, 15, 16 and 17</u>
Male Informants	13.3%	40.0%	46.7%
Adult males in Wem R.D. (1961)	15.8%	32.1%	52.1%

Again the distribution of the informants among the different categories is very similar to the distribution of the general population among these categories. The sample was a very small one, and could not be expected to reflect with complete accuracy all the characteristics of the general population.

Among the men who were interviewed twenty-four were married, two were widowed and four were single. The corresponding figures for the women were twenty-five, two and three.

Half of the men who were interviewed were, or had formerly been, before their retirement, employed in agriculture. Two were farmers, and one had been a farmer until he retired. Eleven men were agricultural workers of various kinds. Only one rural craftsman was interviewed and he was a self-employed agricultural engineer and blacksmith.

Six of the remaining men were employed in manufacturing industry, two being professional engineers, and the remainder skilled workers. Most of these men worked at the nearby Salopian Engineers works. There were four drivers among

the men, and their occupation enabled all of them to work at some distance from their homes. The other five men had a variety of occupations which they pursued mainly in Whitchurch.

Eleven of the thirty women who were interviewed said that they had a paid occupation, but for the majority these jobs were part-time. Four were domestic workers and three were auxiliary nurses. Of the nineteen women who were housewives, seven had never had any paid occupation, being 'at home on the farm' before they married. Domestic service again predominated among the former occupations of housewives, but there were also two professional women, two other non-manual workers and two factory workers.

The occupations of the husbands of the women who were interviewed again demonstrate the rural nature of the district. Eleven of the women were married to men who had agricultural occupations.

Many of the informants came from families which obviously had long associations with agriculture. Seventeen of the men and fourteen of the women said that their fathers had had agricultural occupations. Only two men and one woman had fathers who had been employed in manufacturing industry.

Some indication of the occupational stability of the district is given in Table III. This Table was compiled by comparing the occupations of male respondents with those of their fathers. Each occupation was allotted to the appropriate 'Social Class' in the Registrar-General's scale of Social Classes. If a man had an occupation falling into the same Class as that of his father he was held to be occupationally immobile; if his occupation fell into a higher Class he was held to be upwardly mobile; if it fell into a lower Class he was said to be downwardly mobile.

The Table is merely a device for illustrating how very similar is the occupational distribution of the informants to that of their fathers. It is not suggested that the Registrar-General's categories in any way represent true social classes. They do, however, group together occupations which require somewhat similar skills and kinds of training. And 'mobility' here implies only that a man has an occupation unlike that of his father in these respects. Usually, if a man has been 'upwardly mobile' his occupation requires greater skill or longer training than that of his father.

TABLE III

Occupations of Male Informants,  
Compared with the Occupations of their Fathers.  
Using the Registrar-General's Classification

Occupations of Male Informants	Occupations of Informants' Fathers				
	I	II	III	IV	V
I	1				
II		6			
III		1	7	2	1
IV		1	2	8	1
V					
	Upwardly mobile		Immobile		Downwardly mobile
Male Informants	4		22		4

The Table conceals the fact that so many sons followed their fathers into the same occupation. All the farmers were sons of farmers, and most of the farmworkers were sons of farmworkers. By and large, those in skilled manual occupations were the sons of men who had skilled manual jobs.

Such a comparison is more difficult to achieve for the women, and one would in any case expect them to show more variety in their backgrounds than do the men. The majority of women had married men whose occupations were similar to, or the same as those of the women's fathers. All the women married to farmers were the daughters of farmers, and most

of the women married to farmworkers were also the daughters of farmworkers. Those who were married to skilled workers of other kinds were usually the daughters of skilled workers.

The people of Wem Rural District showed a degree of residential stability which must be unusual in contemporary England.<sup>3</sup> 80% of the people who were interviewed had lived in the parish where they were found at the time of the survey, for over ten years. 30% of the informants had lived in the same parish all their lives. In addition, thirteen of the married women had lived in the same parish continuously since their marriage. Two-thirds of all the women had therefore lived in the same parish either all their lives or since they were married.

As well as being attached to their own neighbourhood, the people of Wem Rural District were confirmed country-dwellers, as Table IV shows. The Table also demonstrates that those who had lived at some time in a town nevertheless had remained in the Midlands for the most part.

TABLE IV

Rural and Urban Residence by Informants

<u>Urban District formerly lived in</u>	<u>Number of men</u>	<u>Number of women</u>	<u>Average time spent there</u>
None at all	21	19	-
Whitchurch U.D.	5	4	12 years
Oswestry M.B.		1	2 years
Shrewsbury M.B.		1	54 years
Wrexham M.B.		1	10 years
Liverpool C.B.		1	19 years
Manchester C.B.	1		10 years
Oldham C.B.	1		30 years
Wigan C.B.		1	20 years
Stoke-on-Trent C.B.	2		24 years
Kidsgrove U.D.		1	20 years
Wallasey C.B.		1	18 years
Birmingham C.B.		1	1 year
London		1	10 years

N.B. Two women had lived in two different towns for more than a year in each case.



The Table includes only periods of residence in urban districts which lasted for a year or more.

Only nine of the men had ever lived in an Urban District for a year or more, and of these five had been no further afield than Whitchurch. None had lived in towns other than those mentioned in Chapter II having a great influence on North Shropshire. More women had experienced urban life, but again all save one had lived in towns in Shropshire or the adjoining counties. The Table does show that those informants who had lived in the more distant and larger towns had usually lived there for some length of time and could be said to have thoroughly experienced urban life.

The attitude of the great majority of the informants was summarised by the farmworker, who, when asked if he had ever lived in a town, replied succinctly, 'No, nor ever will.' Few of the women and none of the men expressed any desire to live in a town, and many expressed complete antipathy to the idea. 'The walls seem to get on top of you.' The women who would have liked to move, envisaged travelling no further than Wem or Whitchurch, generally.

Some description has been given of the people whose attitudes to social status were investigated. The majority were obviously country people by birth, upbringing and inclination. Many of the men had agricultural jobs. On the other hand, a third of the informants had experienced urban life, and many of them had occupations that were not connected with agriculture.

It was, of course, the object of the study to examine certain specific hypotheses suggested by the theory of the dichotomy between rural and urban societies, and by the evidence of studies of British rural communities. It was

hypothesised that the people who had never lived in an urban area would be more likely to preserve traditional attitudes than those with some direct experience of urban life. It was further hypothesised that in an area like North Shropshire, where the population appears to be very static and agriculture is the main industry, traditional attitudes to social status would be widespread.

In order to test the first hypothesis, the informants were divided into two groups. The first consisted of those who had never lived in an urban area, and this was the larger group. The second group of twenty people had all at some time lived in an urban district. The first group, according to the hypothesis, should contain more traditionalists than the second.

The composition of these two groups was fairly similar with regard to age, sex and occupation. In the group that had lived in towns there were eleven women and nine men; in the other group twenty-one men, and nineteen women. The age distribution of each group is shown below in Table V.

TABLE V

Age Distribution of Group who had never lived in a town compared with age distribution of those who had done so

Age	'Urban Group'	%	'Rural Group'	%
21-29	3	15.0	6	15.0
30-39	4	20.0	5	12.5
40-49	2	10.0	10	25.0
50-59	3	15.0	10	25.0
60-69	6	30.0	5	12.5
70 & over	<u>2</u>	10.0	<u>4</u>	10.0
	20		40	
	==		==	

The 'rural' group contained a slightly larger proportion under the age of fifty, just as it contained a slightly larger proportion of men.

The distribution of the male informants' occupations in each group among the Registrar-General's Social Classes is shown below.

TABLE VI

Occupational Distribution of men who had never lived in a town compared with that of the men who had done so.

Social Class	I	II	III	IV	V	Total
"Urban Group"	2	-	4	3		9
"Rural Group"	-	5	7	9		21

The 'rural' group contained more farmers and farm-workers than the 'urban' group, which explains why Classes II and IV contain more of the 'rural' group. The 'urban' group, however, on average, occupied the skilled categories hardly more than did the 'rural' group.

These comparisons between the two groups were necessary because it may be that the age, sex or occupation of an individual influences his tendency towards traditionalism. The differences between the two groups may perhaps be said to offset each other from this point of view since, although the 'urban' group contained more women and more older people, it also contained fewer agricultural workers and farmers, and rather more men in skilled occupations.

To test both hypotheses, it was first necessary to establish whether the people who were interviewed believed that there were differences of social status between individuals or groups.

Three of the informants said that everyone was of equal status. Each lived in a different parish, it should perhaps be noted. These three people did not mean that ranking by prestige did not take place within their community. This was quite clear from their other remarks. They meant that they personally did not recognise distinctions in social

status, and felt that such distinctions should not exist.

Mrs. Higginson, one of the three, said:

"No-one's in a higher class than anyone else though they may think they are. The kind of people who may think they're a bit better have got a better job. But they lead a hand-to-mouth life and haven't got a bank balance."

A farmer's son who worked for his father on a farm near Whitchurch remarked:

"Well, they kind of shut themselves off if they've got a Sir or a Lady in front of them, don't they? They're no higher than us."

In each of these statements, as in those made by a farmworker who was the last of the trio, it is implied that people frequently do rank themselves and others in terms of prestige, and accord deference to those whom they feel have a higher social status than they have themselves, and expect deference from those whom they feel have a lower social status than themselves. These three people are certainly not traditionalists, for they do not accept the ranks allotted to them by other people, nor do they consider that other people have a higher or a lower status than they have themselves. Their attitudes were not only incompatible with voluntary participation in a traditional status system, they are also incompatible with the acceptance of status levels of any kind.

It is significant that both the farmworker and Mrs. Higginson, who held a full-time job, felt that "You have to be polite to your boss". They were reluctant to accord status to anyone, but in the work situation they felt virtually compelled to show deference. The farmer's son was in a rather different position as he worked for his father, and would in future be independent. It was evident that the other two resented the economic power of their employers and

felt that this power did not entitle them to higher status than other people.

Thus, these three people acknowledged that others ranked individuals and groups in terms of prestige, and they argued that non-traditional criteria were employed as a basis for this ranking. The farmworker said, "If you're an employer you're one thing; if you're a worker you're another. Farmworkers are even rated a bit below any others." The farmer's son said that those with professional occupations "Lawyers, solicitors and bankers" - tended to be thought of as having a higher social position than people in other jobs. Mrs. Higginson said more or less the same thing. Each of the three thought status in their community was attributed on economic grounds, therefore, although they declined to classify people in this way themselves.

The three had none of the traditional attitudes. They did not believe that status was ascribed on non-rational grounds, nor did they suggest that members of any community assessed an individual's status subjectively over time. They perceived no striking differences in the mores of the status groups that they knew others recognised. The most obviously non-traditional attitude they displayed was their utter refusal to know their place, or anyone else's place, in a status hierarchy. Status mobility did not interest them, as they rejected the idea of status distinctions altogether. None of them had attitudes of respect for traditional legitimacy.

It is worth noting the negative point that none of the three regarded the farmers as an independent group in the community. The farmer's son, who lived in a village, was very active in local organisations, and claimed that he

always mixed with everyone on equal terms. Any status distinctions among the farmers were again thought by these three people to arise from economic differences - the rich farmer and the successful farmer were the ones who enjoyed the most prestige in other people's eyes, though not in theirs. They did not believe that farmers acquired greater prestige in the traditional ways. Long residence on one farm, for example, did not, in their view, confer status. Said the farmer's son, "People think they're a bit slow to move. It's a good way to get nowhere fast." Nor was the son of a farmer accorded higher status than an 'outsider'. The tenant farmer, if he was successful, would enjoy as much prestige as the owner-farmer. The three, of course, believed that all farmers, like everyone else, enjoyed equal status, although many people distinguished between one farmer and another.

One group of non-traditionalists, albeit a small one, has been identified. The two men were both engaged in agriculture and the woman in an ancillary occupation as an egg-packing supervisor. The farmer had lived all his life in the same village, the farmworker all his life in North Shropshire and never in a town. Mrs. Higginson was the only one of the three to have lived in an urban area, and she had lived in Whitchurch until her marriage. Since then she had lived in the same parish continuously. The three varied in age, although both men were under thirty-five. The hypothesis cannot be rejected on the evidence of three cases, but it may be said that the three people with attitudes least approaching traditionalism all had backgrounds which might have been expected to produce traditional views, except for the woman's stay in Whitchurch.

The main body of the respondents differed from the three whose attitudes have been described, both in believing that there were differences of social status between individuals, and in accepting these differences as inevitable and perhaps even desirable. But although the majority did think that individuals and groups differed in social standing, they were by no means all traditionalists. The mere fact that they recognised status levels does not imply that they participated in a traditional status system, or yet that they were sympathetic to such systems.

In order to test the hypothesis that those who had lived in towns would be more traditional than those who had not done so, certain questions were put to all the informants. The 'urban group' consisted of nineteen people and the 'rural group' of thirty-eight, when the three informants positively identified as thorough non-traditionalists were removed. The first group, according to the hypothesis, should contain more people with non-traditional views than the second.

Traditionally, high status is ascribed to those who are born into a group which has long been accorded high rank. It was thought, therefore, that if the 'rural group' were inclined to traditionalism they would mention 'birth' or 'breeding' as the criteria which determine status situations far more frequently than would the 'urban group'.

All the informants were asked why certain people had a high social status whereas others had a low status. An answer which completely expressed the traditional attitude came, ironically, from a woman in the group of people who had lived in urban areas. She observed, "You're born to it. In the country you don't get to be higher after you're

born." She was not exceptional. Over half this group mentioned birth as a very important determinant of social status. (Two people spoke more vaguely of 'upbringing', but from their replies to other questions it was clear that they meant that an individual's family background played a vital role in the determination of his status.)

Several people mentioned more than one factor which affected social status. Most often mentioned together were 'birth' and 'money'. Hence, although half the group again said that the possession of money was an essential qualification for high status, this was not conclusive evidence that they were all non-traditionalists. Several people seemed to associate wealth with 'land-owners who live on unearned income', and these could be said to incline to traditional attitudes. They thought of wealth as inherited wealth, and those who inherited it were the traditionally high-ranking families. They also tended to think of wealth in terms of land-ownership. On the other hand, most of those who said that money was all-important spoke of it as an attribute which could be acquired by means other than inheritance. These people had non-traditional attitudes.

Six of the nineteen people who had lived in towns thought that 'education' or 'brains' were the most important influences on social status. This was definitely a non-traditional view. It was clear that none of them implied that only a public school education of the traditional type, available to only a limited number of people, gave high social standing to an individual. They thought that any individual, given some brains, could acquire higher status by obtaining a good education. Several echoed the remark of the smallholder who said, "We think education is the most important thing, and we're going to encourage our children to go as far as they can."



Two of those who had formerly lived in towns offered no suggestion as to the determinants of status.

TABLE VII

Suggestions of the 'Urban Group' as to  
the Determinants of Social Status

<u>Determinant suggested</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>
Education	5	26.3
Brains	2	10.5
Money-uneared	2	10.5
Money-earned	6	31.6
Birth	8	42.1
Upbringing	2	10.5
Don't know	2	10.5

N.B. Several respondents gave more than one determinant.

The group of those who had lived in the towns actually contained a majority who mentioned one of the traditional determinants of social status.

The group of thirty-eight people who had never lived in a town included ten who thought that the main determinant of social status was birth. This time it was a farmworker who said, "You're born that way. People are like that because their parents were in that class - were gentry, like." A farmer's wife said, "Some people just are better." Finally, a shop assistant explained, "There's just some you look up to and some you don't. There's certain people in the village you would say are better class, but they don't put themselves out to be."

There was some feeling among these traditionalists that other people did sometimes claim a high status to which they were not entitled. A pig-herdsman said, "There's some masters do send their sons away to schools at the top and they're educated to look down on the workers. They're not anybody but they think they can wipe their feet on you."

It was said that, "A real lady and gentleman will mix with anyone - they're not the same as these jumped-up ones." These sentiments were not isolated. There was a good deal of willingness to concede high status to those who were traditionally high-ranking, but it was plain that many people felt that some individuals did not "know their place".

A large number of people in this group suggested that the possession of money gave social standing. But among these nearly half were speaking of inherited wealth. "It depends how much money they've got. It's not exactly what their income is - it's not earnings - it's more that they're better off and can live without working." Another person said, "The higher class are those with the money handed down to them from generations." There was a reluctance among this group to admit that earned income could give an individual higher status. One contractor's wife said, "Money does count, but there's some as thinks themselves above others if they can live in a grand house, even if they've come from lowly parents to live in a grand house." Many of this group were obviously trying to express the idea that a combination of 'a good family background' and inherited wealth was desirable for the highest social position.

Some of those who said that the money an individual had at his command was a strong influence on his social status were, however, speaking of earned income. They referred explicitly to the difference between wage-earners and salary-earners, and to differences simply in the amount of money each man earned. These members of the 'rural group' inclined to non-traditional attitudes in believing that status was attributional and that higher social positions could be attained by those capable of earning more money. One woman said, "Those that are better off

are snobbish. They think if you're poor they won't have to do with you. Some farmer's wives treat you the same as they do each other but some don't. It's those that can have a car and dress well." Here the difference in social status was said to arise from the possession of money, not of land or an intrinsic status as a farmer's wife.

Two people in the 'rural group' specifically said that an occupation was likely to carry with it a certain social status. They were the only people to do so, apart from the three non-traditionalists whose views were analysed first. They also were inclined to non-traditionalism since they thought that status depended upon an attribute which may be acquired, and which was not associated in their minds with membership of a traditionally high-ranking group.

Only four people among the group who had always lived in the country thought that status was determined by 'brains' or 'education'. They too expressed a non-traditional attitude, therefore.

TABLE VIII

Suggestions of the 'Rural Group'  
as to the Determinants of Social Status

<u>Determinant suggested</u>	<u>No. of informants</u>	<u>% of Group</u>
Education	4	10.5
Money - earned	8	21.1
Money - unearned	9	23.7
Birth	10	26.3
Occupation	2	5.3
Don't know	5	13.2

Again the 'rural group' contained a majority, among those who answered the question, who thought that traditional factors determined social status. In both groups, therefore, a majority of those who offered a suggestion as to the determinants of social status had traditional views.

In the 'urban group' the proportion of those with traditional views was, surprisingly, considerably larger than the proportion in the 'rural group' with such views.

As a further means of testing the hypothesis, all the informants were asked directly whether they thought that birth was an important determinant of social status. Of those who had lived for some time in an urban area, three out of nineteen denied that birth was a major influence on status. Among those who had lived in the country all their lives, seven out of thirty-eight - a slightly larger proportion - denied that birth strongly influenced social status.

TABLE IX

Is Birth an Important Influence on Social Status?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>%</u>
'Urban Group'	16	84.2	3	15.8		
'Rural Group'	30	79.0	7	18.4	1	2.6

In addition, everyone was asked whether they considered that certain other attributes, all of which could be acquired, were very important determinants of social status.

The first of these attributes was education. All but two of those who had lived in towns felt that this was an important influence on social status. Rather more of those who had lived only in the country said that it was not an important factor.

TABLE X

Is Education an Important Influence on Social Status?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>%</u>
'Urban Group'	17	89.5	2	10.5		
'Rural Group'	30	79.0	7	18.4	1	2.6

There was an interesting difference in the nature of the replies given by the members of the two groups to this question. Many of those who had lived in towns suggested that the importance of education was indirect. It was valuable because it enabled an individual to take up a better job, or earn more money. They therefore looked upon education as a means to high status which was available to everyone. The country people tended to agree that education was one of the things which enhances an individual's prestige, but several seemed to feel that generally speaking it was reserved for those who already possessed high status anyway. If one of their number did receive a good education, he would nevertheless not be the equal of those who usually received such an education. They also thought of education as directly conferring prestige. They spoke not of education as a means to a better job, but of education automatically conferring a certain cachet upon individuals. This attitude revealed itself in veiled boasting about members of their families who had had a good education. "Oh well, if that was all that made the difference, my nephew was at college." "My daughter was at Cheltenham college and now she's teaching. It makes all the difference, does education." It also found expression in remarks such as "It's all right if you went to a good school." Attendance at the High School and the Grammar School was obviously thought to give great prestige, and also to make the pupils snobbish:

"The girls as go to the High School, when they're on the bus they won't give you their seat like the ordinary children would. Though my girl was at the High School her used to go on her bike so I don't know if her'd give up her seat."

This was a farmworker indulging simultaneously in disapprobation of snobbishness and approval of his own daughter for having been to the High School.

The idea that education could confer prestige but not a change in social status was not present in the 'urban group' at all. It perhaps accounts for the fact that more of the 'rural group' denied that education influenced social status at all.

When they were asked if income was an important determinant of social status very few people in either group said that it was not. However, many felt constrained to point out that, "A man that's worked his way up from the bottom isn't always thought of as higher when he's done it." Those who made remarks of this kind were found in both groups in similar proportions.

TABLE XI

Is Income an Important Determinant of Social Status?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>%</u>
'Urban Group'	17	89.5	2	10.5		
'Rural Group'	34	89.5	4	10.5		

A marked difference between the two groups was revealed when they were asked if an occupation gave a specific social status to those who undertook it. All of those who had lived in urban areas believed that it did, whereas seven of those who had never lived in a town did not think that occupations had a great influence on social status.

TABLE XII

Is Occupation a Determinant of Social Status?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>%</u>
'Urban Group'	19	100.0	-	-		
'Rural Group'	31	81.6	7	18.4		

A very frequent comment from both groups, and especially from the farmworkers and their wives, was, "The farmworkers

are always the lowest of all." It was also common for the same people to reflect, "The farmers are always best." Less often other occupations were mentioned - lawyers, doctors and bank managers were said to have a high status, roadmen and dustmen a low status.

Finally, the informants were asked whether the possession of wealth in material goods ( a large house and a big car were given as examples) would give an individual high status. The question produced more disagreement than usual. The two groups did not differ greatly in the distribution of their replies, however.

TABLE XIII

Do Material Possessions Give High Status?

	YES	%	NO	%
'Urban Group'	12	63.2	7	36.8
'Rural Group'	25	65.8	13	34.2

A majority of each group did think that an individual's material possessions had a strong influence on his social standing, but members of both groups had reservations about this. A farm worker said, "People who own things like cars think it gives them an important position, but it doesn't really. I was talking to a man who builds all the big houses round here, when along comes this man he's just built a house for, in a huge Jaguar. He says, 'Well, I wonder how much of that car I own?' You can't tell if people really have bought things." Many people pointed out that "with H.P., you just don't know if it's there to stay." Most said that cars were no guide, because, "Even a farmworker can have a car these days." Houses, it seemed, were the possessions that were really felt to make a difference. "In a village like this, the important thing is to have a house with a name, not a number."

The answers to all these questions suggest that in this district there is not a great deal of difference between the views of those who have always lived in the country and those who have lived in a town at some time. When they were asked to suggest the main determinant of social status, those who had lived in towns were more inclined to refer to 'birth' or 'breeding' than were those who had always lived in the country. They were also more prepared to accept it as a determinant when it was suggested to them. To this extent, they appear to be almost more traditional than those who have always lived in the country. However, their replies to later questions demand that this impression should be modified. More of the 'urban group' felt that education and occupation were an important influence on social status than of the 'rural group'.

One explanation of this paradox may be that although most of the members of each group believed that social status within the community in which they lived was largely determined by the 'traditional' factors - birth, land-ownership, and the less tangible quality of 'gentility' - a greater proportion of those who had lived in the towns envisaged status mobility as a possibility. They often said that they felt that their children could achieve higher social positions than they themselves enjoyed, through education and their subsequent occupation. Very few of the other group made similar remarks - and some of them implied that they did not expect their children to be able to improve their social position. The people who had come from the towns had, for the most part, chosen to live in the country and enjoyed doing so. They were



prepared to accept the status allotted to them in the rural community which they had joined. They obviously realised that their children, or indeed they themselves in the future, could equally well choose to go and live elsewhere. The 'urban group' were altogether more convinced that an individual had the power to change his social status, just as he had the power to change his place of residence. Yet while they lived in a village community, they accepted the forms of social organisation they found there, for the most part, because among their reasons for enjoying life in such a community was a liking for participating in a society where each individual had an assured place.

The group of people who had never lived in a town were less able to contemplate the possibility of life anywhere other than their own community. They were therefore also less likely to be able to imagine status changes. It is true that they did not mention 'birth' as a determinant of status as often as did the 'urban group', but they were also more reluctant to discuss status distinctions at all. They exhibited some fear that they would make comments which would reflect poorly upon them or on their community. Some were plainly anxious to forestall criticism and accusations of feudalism. Those who had come from the towns suffered less from such inhibitions - indeed, occasionally affected attitudes of superiority and detachment. A woman remarked, "I'm city-bred, and I don't think it happens in the city. People are always looking down on you in the country, and country people are always looking up to someone. It only happens in the country." An engineer said, "You've got to remember you're talking to a Lancashire man, and up there we don't believe in class."

Traditionally, country people have been inclined to assess an individual's status subjectively over a period of time. Tradition gives the highest status to those who are born into families already enjoying high rank and newcomers may have no clear-cut position in the social hierarchy. The villages of Wem Rural District were certainly small enough to allow this subjective process to take place. An attempt was made to decide whether the people who lived in these villages had attitudes that were favourable to such a subjective process.

It may be argued that some reason has already emerged for thinking that people believed evaluation of an individual's social status to be a long and complex process. It has been shown that the majority of those who were questioned said that they regarded as important determinants of status all the five attributes that were suggested to them. Now an individual's material possessions, and to some extent his occupation, may be immediately apparent. His income, his education, and above all his family background, are far less so. If all these factors are taken into consideration he must be very well-known to his neighbours before his social status is decided. This conclusion is supported by the constant reminders that were given that "It all depends on the people themselves and the way they treat you, whether you look up to them or not." These reminders, it is true, came more frequently from the group that had always lived in the country, than from the other group.

The attitude of the informants to the positions of highest status in their communities is also revealing, as it shows that they were much inclined to think that individuals had to be thoroughly known before they could be allowed to occupy such positions. The names of individuals who occupied these

positions in several communities were often mentioned. It was said that certain families enjoyed high status because they were generous, active leaders in village affairs and "have got manners". All of these qualities can only be revealed in active intercourse over a long period. People would accompany descriptions of local figures with such comments as, "They're helpful and not ashamed to speak to you. The others are snooty. It's breeding that counts." One man with a big farm was almost universally well thought of and his influence extended over a wide area. "There's not many that goes hunting round here, but there's Mr. Matson - he's one of the real people. He keeps hunters and dogs. You have to be pretty big to keep a pack of foxhounds at your own expense." He was also described as paying wages to his men while they were sick, treating them very well in general, and holding parties for his tenants.

It was not only the people who believed that birth was the main influence on status who quoted examples of individuals who enjoyed high status locally. The same people were said to be of high rank variously because they were wealthy, because they had lived in the area for a long time, because they lived in 'the big house up there', ('The Manor', 'The Hall', etc.), because they were well educated, or because they were 'gentry'. It was not clear precisely how any one individual had come to possess such high status. All those who were named most frequently had more than one of the characteristics mentioned, and often several. (Gentility is admittedly hard to assess, but a few had titles and some came from families long associated with the area.) What was clear was that there was general agreement - among both groups of informants - as to which people enjoyed very high prestige in each community.

One reason for this consensus lies in the often-repeated statement, "It depends what kind of person they are." Many people were disposed to accord high status to those born into 'good' families, others were willing to accord it to the wealthy or the well-educated. They united in looking for some object for their deference, and in expecting certain forms of behaviour from those to whom they accorded the highest status. Because their communities were small enough for their inhabitants to know each other well and influence each other's behaviour, the 'gentry' and the wealthy - of whom there were few - could come to be acknowledged by all, provided that they played the role expected of them. Non-traditionalists were able to rationalise their acceptance of those whom others identified as gentry by pointing to their wealth, property, education or satisfactory fulfilment of their role as leaders of the community. Traditionalists in some cases rationalised their acceptance of the wealthy by trying to establish their claims to 'gentility'. That many were willing to effect such compromises is evident from such comments as, "The day of the Lord of the Manor is over, but the man as has his house is looked to."

It is significant that only two of the traditionalists suggested that there were no longer any 'real gentry'. These two - both living in the same village - were wistful about the decline of the gentry. A retired man said, "Of course, years ago when I first came here there were one or two of the old upper class left. They all look up to Captain Corser now, I suppose - he's not really entitled to be called Captain, but most of the old people call him that. He used to have a very big farm in the village, but now he's sold it and lives in a kind of glorified cottage he's modernised. They look up to

him even now. His wife's very helpful to the hospital and the old people, which is why people think a lot of them. They're leaders in the village."

This nostalgic attitude was not paralleled among the other traditionalists. Some of these in fact referred to the Captain as 'real gentry'. It appears that definitions of gentility may differ, for there were many examples given of 'gentry' living in the district.

To be seen to desire high status was said by many informants to be in itself evidence that such status is not merited. "There's some real what I'd call social climbers in the country. The kind of people that when they know someone's moved into the big house they invite them over for a meal. And then they're hurt if they don't get asked back." It was often intimated that "a perfect lady and gentleman never let you know they're above you" and that therefore to try and substantiate pretensions to high status by being 'stand-offish' was useless. It was a bad sign if some people 'couldn't afford to be friendly' and 'wouldn't dream of mixing with shabby people'.

The greatest disapprobation is reserved for those who will not take part in community life at all, and refuse to 'do anything for the village'. This seems to be particularly true where the qualification for high status is not birth. The wealthy farmer who 'keeps himself to himself', 'isn't a good boss' and takes little interest in local affairs, will not be thought of as having high status. Nor will he attain high status with the traditionalists if it is impossible to describe him as a 'real gentleman'. As one man illustrated these points very aptly:

"We started a club in the village for bowls, and the people who were supposed to be able to afford it gave £10 each. I gave £10 and so did other people, but the garage owner up here never did. He's always been a poor mixer. He's one would like to be respected, but he never has been. He did get put on the council but he was never at the meetings. And he's got more money than anyone."

The wealthy man who does not acquire high status because he does not play the expected part, or tries to but is rejected, may be disliked, disapproved of, or merely ignored. Said one farmworker, "There's a gentleman been on his farm here for two years, and I've never seen him. I've seen his car go past the window here. I know his car well, but I don't know him." The word 'gentleman' in this statement was spoken with a fine shade of irony. Yet even the non-traditionalist will speak with affection and respect of 'gentry' who do not in all matters behave as the leaders of the community are expected to behave. Where those with lesser pretensions to high status are almost culpable if they do not play their role properly, the gentry may be thought to be lovably eccentric. Many people had tales of this kind:

"Old Sir Harold Warner used to burn hedge-brushings. Many times I've seen him drive up in his Riley, jump out dressed in rags, and burn a pile of hedge-brushings. He just had a mania for burning hedge-brushings."

Such activities on the part of the merely rich might probably produce scorn and resentment.

A woman who lived in the Manor House of another small village, and whose family had lived there long enough to be considered established gentry, was well-known for her meanness. ("Do you know how much she pays her gardener? £6 a week!") This did not prevent the villagers from acknowledging her as the highest in rank among them.

There is strong reason to think that although a majority of both those who had lived in the towns and those who had not

done so were prepared to accord high status automatically to those born 'gentry' and well-known in the neighbourhood, the status of a newcomer and anyone with less obvious claims to high status would be weighed up very carefully. People in both the 'urban' and 'rural' groups stressed the importance of judging an individual in the round, and by what he accomplished in local affairs.

This unsystematic evidence does not prove that a majority of the informants, or a similar proportion in each group, had subjective attitudes to social status. It was hoped, however, that such systematic evidence could be obtained in another way. All the informants were asked to rank thirty occupations, with all of which it was felt that they would be at least acquainted, in five groups. Within each group the occupations would confer equal status upon those who followed them. The occupations in Group One would confer the highest status, those in Group Five the lowest status, and so on. Except that each group was to contain at least one occupation there were no restrictions on the number of occupations that might be placed in any one group.

It was argued that if the 'rural group' had a more subjective attitude to social status than the 'urban group', this exercise would reveal it. The 'rural group' were expected to show little consensus in their arrangement of the occupations. They might indeed find the exercise completely meaningless or impossible. (It is possible that there might be a consensus within the 'rural group' even if all the members of the group ranked the occupations according to the status enjoyed by those people whom they knew who followed the occupations. There might be a great deal of coincidence between the statuses of different individuals in different communities with the same

occupation. It was thought that this was unlikely, as the sample in this case was drawn from such a wide area.)

The 'urban group', if they were more objective in their approach to social status, might display more consensus in their arrangements, and would find it easier to undertake the exercise. Even if the 'urban group' arranged the occupations objectively according to different criteria (they might arrange them according to income, or according to skill, for example) they should still show more agreement in their average arrangement than the 'rural group'. The ideology revealed by each group in their arrangement might also prove to be different.

No marked difference was found in the amount of consensus displayed by the two groups, in arranging the occupations. (The statistical evidence for this conclusion is shown in the Appendix.) Moreover, the overall arrangements produced by the two groups show a great deal of similarity. There was in fact a general consensus as to how the occupations should be ranked, which superseded any differences between the two groups. This suggests that occupation does have a considerable influence on social status in the eyes of many of the informants. The median arrangement of occupations produced by each group is shown below.

It is true that six of the 'rural group' were unable to complete the arrangement, whereas all the 'urban group' did so, and to this extent there is some support for the hypothesis. Apart from this, the only evidence produced by the exercise to suggest that there is a certain subjective element in ranking lies in the remarks made by informants as they were arranging the occupations. Several said that they were ranking the occupations according to the individuals they knew who followed them, and several said that they were unsure how to rank a



particular occupation because they knew no-one who followed it. In the extreme case of the six individuals who could not complete the arrangement at all, it was clear that the concept of ranking by occupation had little meaning for them. It would certainly be true to say that the 'urban group' found the exercise easier to understand and complete than did the 'rural group', on the whole.

TABLE XIV

Median Arrangement of Occupations by Urban Group

I	II	III
Clergyman	Works Manager	Infant Teacher
Solicitor	Estate Agent	Shopkeeper
Bank Manager	Nurse (S.R.N.)	Farmer Foreman
Company Director	Builder	Publican
Doctor	Farmer	Agricultural Contractor
	Policeman	Clerk
		Electrical Mechanic
IV		V
Garage hand		Hedger and Ditcher
Plumber		Tractor Driver
Carpenter		Domestic Servant
Postman		Cowman
Bus conductor		Farm Labourer
Gardener		
Lorry Driver		

Median Arrangement of Occupations by Rural Group

I	II	III
Clergyman	Works Manager	Shopkeeper
Solicitor	Estate Agent	Farm Foreman
Bank Manager	Nurse (S.R.N.)	Publican
Company Director	Farmer	Agricultural Contractor
Doctor	Infant Teachers	Clerk
		Electrical Mechanic
		Builder
		Policeman
		Carpenter
IV		V
Garage hand		Hedger and Ditcher
Plumber		Tractor Driver
Postman		Domestic Servant
Bus conductor		Cowman
		Farm Labourer
		Gardener
		Lorry Driver

There was some evidence that the 'urban group' were inclined to rank the occupations associated with manufacturing industry somewhat higher than the 'rural group' ranked them. Although the Works Manager and the Electrical Mechanic are placed in the same Groups in each of the arrangements above, the 'urban group' were on average inclined to rank both occupations higher than the 'rural group' did. (See Appendix.) There was no evidence, however, that the 'rural group' were prone to rank agricultural occupations any higher than the 'urban group' ranked them. It was thought that there would be some tendency on the part of the 'rural group' to distinguish the more skilled agricultural occupations, for example, Cowman and Hedger, from the less skilled. There was no such tendency.

The occupation over which the two groups differed in the most pronounced way was the Infant Teacher. This the 'rural group' placed unequivocally in Group II, and the 'urban group' in Group III. It is difficult to account for this variation, although it may possibly be explained by the fact that village school teachers have customarily held positions of great influence, whereas infant teachers in urban areas have less influence and possibly a lower status.

Although the two median arrangements differed in other respects, there were no other major differences in the average arrangements of each group.

Clearly, although there is some evidence that the informants did think in terms of individuals having a certain status, apart from their occupation, there is also strong evidence that they thought of occupations as a means of determining status. No differences between the groups emerged, except that the 'urban group' found the exercise more comprehensible.

Another attempt was made to decide whether the 'rural group' were more inclined to think that an individual's status should be assessed subjectively over time than were the 'urban group'. All the informants were asked whether a person's status depended at all on his character or personality. They were also asked if the length of time an individual had lived in one area affected his social status.

TABLE XV

Does Character Affect Social Status?

	Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
'Urban Group'	13	68.4	5	26.3	1	5.3
'Rural Group'	27	71.1	8	21.1	3	7.9

TABLE XVI

Does Length of Residence Affect Social Status?

	Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
'Urban Group'	13	68.4	6	31.6	-	-
'Rural Group'	28	73.7	9	23.7	1	2.6

While a majority of all the informants thought that character and length of residence both had a strong influence on social status, those who had always lived in the country were slightly more inclined to think so than were those who had lived in towns.

Members of both groups produced many examples of individuals whose good or bad character had affected their social standing. A popular view was, "Well, of course, you must be respectable." A road foreman said, "If you do get down and out then you're looked on that way and you never seem to recover." A bus driver said, "In little villages it's give a dog a bad name and hang him. There's one poor person in our village just made one small mistake and now when anything happens they're round there first to see where they were at

the time." Then a farmer's wife pointed out the wages of virtue, "Well, among the cottage people there's some very respectable people. Then, say the old man dies or something, everybody goes to the funeral. Well, for decent people like that."

Even more people had proof of the fact that villagers refused to accept strangers for years. The estimated number of years varied wildly, but was never less than ten. It was also widely said that the 'old families' were much respected. It was said often, with pride, "Of course, it's all Dodds and Dawsons round here." And again, "The old people that have lived in the village for generations are looked upon as the old originals." Those who had come from towns, not unnaturally, produced more tales of the difficulties of gaining acceptance:

"Well, we've come up from the South again, and have only recently lived in the country." (since 1940)  
"They look on you as a stranger. Well, we can't say we're related to any of these people here. They mostly are related."

"They're very suspicious. It's rather odd really because everybody seems very friendly, but it's in a reserved way. Once the inquisitiveness has worn off it's hard to get beyond 'Good morning'."

The reserve of villagers was frequently commented upon.

An explanation was offered by one woman:

"It doesn't do to be in and out of people's houses all the time, not in a village. You're all on top of one another and it's best to be civil just in passing, and that. I had a friend come here from Bolton and it's made her really ill. She was always going to see this woman in the village who bought some furniture in a sale and asked my friend what she thought about it. She said it was all right but then she went and told someone else she wouldn't give it houseroom. The next time she went to see her the woman wouldn't speak a word to her. My idea is that I wouldn't go into anybody's house nor comment on their furniture."

The inquisitiveness of the villagers was also often referred to:

"They'll stare at you if they haven't seen you before. Like we may go into Tilstock to the village shop and they all stare like anything, though we only live just here." (half a mile off.)

Some people remarked bitterly that 'strangers often seem to get in quicker'. The tenor of their remarks confirmed rather than disproved the majority opinion that more respect was due to older inhabitants.

This seems to point to the conclusion, once more, that a majority of the informants believed that it took a long time to establish a position in a community, and that this was partly because individuals must be known and tried. There was no great difference between those who had lived in towns and those who had not done so, on this point.

It was thought that the informants' views on the farming community would be likely to provide an indication of the extent of their traditionalism. They were all asked if they thought there were distinctions of status among farmers, and if so, what they were based upon. It is noteworthy that many of the informants commented that, "Farmers are in a class of their own. They haven't got much time for working people. They do have some differences among themselves, but we don't really know about them. They help each other, big or small." Or a farmworker's widow said, "We can't really say about that. Farmers are a clannish lot and the likes of us aren't allowed to know what goes on between them. There are differences, but the small ones go straight to the big ones for help." Examples of the 'clannishness' of farmers were often forthcoming:

"The people with the money send their children hunting. They meet the right clique there you see. Then one rich farmer's son marries so-and-so's daughter. It's a real marriage market."

This tendency to regard farmers as a group apart is a traditional one and it is often mentioned in the community studies. It was rather more evident among the people who had always lived in the country, but strongly present in both groups.

Only one of the 'urban group' and two of the 'rural group' thought that there were no distinctions of status among farmers. (These were the same three people who had previously denied that status distinctions existed.) The great majority in both groups therefore felt that such distinctions did exist, and offered several suggestions as to the determinants of these distinctions.

TABLE XVII

Suggestions of the 'Urban Group' -  
Determinants of Status Among Farmers

<u>Determinants Suggested</u>	<u>Number of Informants</u>	<u>%</u>
Type of house	1	5.3
Gentleman or ordinary farmer	7	36.8
'Hunting'	1	5.3
Acreage	7	36.8
Amount of labour employed	1	5.3
Money	2	10.5
Stock	1	5.3
Success	2	10.5
Don't Know	2	10.5
There are no distinctions	1	5.3

Table XVII shows that, of the respondents in this group who suggested possible determinants of status, a majority suggested traditional determinants.

TABLE XVIII

Suggestions of the 'Rural Group' -  
Determinants of Status Among Farmers

<u>Determinants Suggested</u>	<u>Number of Informants</u>	<u>%</u>
Type of house	1	2.6
Gentleman or ordinary farmer	12	31.6
'Hunting'	2	5.3
Acreage	14	36.8
Money	6	15.8
Stock	1	2.6
Success	5	13.2
Neighbourliness	2	5.3
Length of time on land	4	10.5
Respectability	1	2.6
Implements	2	5.3
Don't Know	2	5.3
There are no distinctions	2	5.3

A comparison of Tables XVII and XVIII shows that once again the 'urban group' were as inclined to mention the 'traditional' determinants of status among farmers as were the 'rural group'. An almost equal proportion of each group believed that acreage was the main basic distinction among farmers, and this was the determinant mentioned most frequently. This belief does not in itself distinguish the traditionalist from the non-traditionalist, for the amount of land and stock a man has have been determinants of his status for centuries. The distinction made by many informants between 'gentlemen farmers' and 'ordinary farmers' is obviously traditional in character, however, as is the reference to the length of time a man has been on his farm. The distinction between a good farmer and a poor one may be said to be traditional also, and it refers to something less tangible than financial success, which must be judged over a long period. The idea that neighbourliness gives high status is a traditional one, too, and was also suggested only by members of the 'rural group'. On balance, the 'rural group' were more inclined to suggest the more subtle traditional influences on status than were the 'urban group', but both groups displayed considerable traditionalism.

Typical expression of the traditional attitude to farmers is found in such comments as:

"It all depends on their families though, however much they got on. There's people on enormous farms whose fathers were ordinary farmworkers and worked their way up and if you should mention them people would say, 'Oh him. Well he's only old so-and-so's son'."

"There's gentleman farmers who wouldn't work for themselves and there's ordinary ignorant ones."

"Well, I can think of the farmer my son works for and he treats him like a son. Now there's others wouldn't do that because they've got something that gives them a position."

There were some non-traditionalists, although relatively few could be positively identified. A farmer's wife said, "The young farmers think more of themselves than the older ones who've been farming quite a bit. The young ones are more modernised."

By and large, the informants thought it was important for a farmer to have a substantial holding, a 'good' family, great experience of farming and a reputation as a generous, friendly and respectable man, to qualify for high status. These are all traditional beliefs.

As a further test of the traditionalism of the respondents' attitudes to farmers, they were asked whether certain specified attributes had an important influence on a farmer's status. It should perhaps be noted here that an overwhelming majority of all the informants said that the North Shropshire farms varied little in type or quality, and the status of a farmer therefore depended not at all on the kind of farming he went in for, nor upon the quality of his land.

TABLE XIX

Do These Determinants Strongly Influence a Farmer's Social Status?

	<u>ACREAGE</u>				<u>NEIGHBOURLINESS</u>			
	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
'Urban Group'	15	88.2	2	11.2	15	88.2	2	11.2
'Rural Group'	26	74.3	9	25.7	27	77.2	8	22.8
	<u>OWNER OR TENANT</u>				<u>FARMING FAMILY</u>			
	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
'Urban Group'	7	41.1	10	58.9	12	70.6	5	29.4
'Rural Group'	16	45.8	19	54.2	26	74.3	9	25.7
	<u>LABOUR EMPLOYED</u>				<u>SUCCESS AS FARMER</u>			
	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
'Urban Group'	13	76.4	4	23.6	15	88.2	2	11.8
'Rural Group'	16	45.8	19	54.2	34	97.1	1	2.9



	<u>AMOUNT OF MACHINERY</u>				<u>LENGTH OF TIME ON FARM</u>			
	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
'Urban Group'	8	47.0	9	53.0	13	76.4	4	23.6
'Rural Group'	18	51.4	17	48.6	18	51.4	17	48.6

Among the selected determinants several were specially chosen to distinguish traditionalists from non-traditionalists. The first of these was 'the length of time a man has been on one farm'. In many areas this has customarily given high status<sup>4</sup>. Strangely enough the two groups differed in their answers to this question. The 'urban group', by a great majority, thought that this was an important influence on a farmer's status. They made comments such as, "In Ash they appreciate a family that goes on and doesn't die out, like the Dodds." On the other hand the 'rural group' repeatedly made remarks of this kind, "People think it's about time they had a change." A farmworker said, "There's a lot of chopping and changing now. Farmers don't stick the place." Evidently, if there was once a widespread tendency to try and keep a farm in the family for generations, in this area, it is waning, and being replaced by an ambition to move to a bigger farm. This is approved by the 'rural group' as a sign that a farmer is more successful. Both groups showed an overwhelming belief that the good farmer deserved respect. That this was not simply a matter of assessing his financial standing is shown by remarks of this kind:

"There's some of the sort we call a Come-day, Go-day, God-send-Sunday farmer. They just don't bother."

"You hear them say at Shrewsbury auction or other sales that so-and-so doesn't come home after the sale for the milking. A man that looks after his place and sees after his men, even if he doesn't exactly work with them, is better thought of."

Another traditional attitude is that a man who comes from a farming family is likely to be accorded higher status than a

man who comes into farming from the outside. Here both groups agreed with the traditional view. Neighbourliness is also a quality which traditionally earns great respect. Once again the 'urban group' inclined more to the traditional view than did the other over this question, although both agreed that the quality was very important. It was a woman who had lived in Manchester and Birmingham who said, "I'm thinking of the kind of neighbour who, when she heard there'd been a fire on a farm, took the station wagon and drove over to fetch the children, where others might have just said how sorry they were."

The two groups differed as to whether the amount of labour a farmer employed greatly affected his social position. The 'urban group' thought that it did - possibly because they stressed the relationship between employer and worker more than did the 'rural group', who thought it did not influence his status.

The two groups also differed as to whether the amount of modern machinery he owned could affect a farmer's status. This suggestion was deliberately inserted to test the strength of non-traditionalism. It is significant that this was one of the two suggestions rejected outright by a majority of all the informants. The 'rural group' here inclined more to the non-traditional view than did the 'urban group'.

The other suggestion rejected by both groups was that a farmer's status might depend on whether he owned his farm or was a tenant. Both groups agreed that ownership of his farm did little to enhance a man's status, and that it might be a financial encumbrance to him.

Both groups agreed conclusively that the acreage of a man's farm was a very important influence on his status.

The evidence provided by the questions about farmers in many ways parallels the evidence provided by earlier questions. It seems fairly clear that a majority of all the informants retained traditional attitudes to the farming community. In some ways again, however, the 'urban group' appear to adhere more closely to traditional values than do the 'rural group'. It is possible that the disparity between the views of the two groups may have occurred because the 'urban group' have noted only the obvious fact that certain wealthy farmers are repeatedly mentioned as having been in the area for a long time. They have not observed, because they are by and large less familiar with farming, and with the area, that a great many farmers leave to go to bigger farms. This is seen by the 'rural group' as a measure of success, and is therefore approved.

In a traditional status system the individual's place is well-defined, and those who 'know their place' in the hierarchy will not think they can mix on equal terms, socially, with those who are above or below them in status. They will expect similar attitudes to prevail in all status groups. Of course, they will come into contact with members of other status groups - at work and in various associations - but not upon equal terms. Because of the 'total' status system applying in rural traditional communities, those with high status will generally be expected to assume the role of leaders, in most contexts.

That 'total' status was expected to be the rule in the communities of North Shropshire was apparent from the answers of many of the informants. Even the three people who denied that any distinctions of status existed betrayed this expectation in themselves. The woman remarked, "There's a farmer round here who's a J.P. with a lot of land and on the parish

council, but he doesn't make any distinction when he passes me on his horse." The farmer's son said, "There's working farmers and there's people that just have farms. The sort of people that have pots of money and get on committees and get their name in the papers - they can get around since they don't work."

The best expression of this expectation came from a man who had lived in Oldham:

"Captain Corser and his wife are leaders in the village. Whenever you try and organise things someone has to take the chair. It's invariably these people that they ask. Most of the younger people in the village haven't the education to take a chair."

In order to find out whether those who had lived in urban areas differed from the rest of their informants in their attitude to association between different status groups, the informants were asked whether they thought that people mixed socially with those who were of a different social standing to themselves. They were also asked if they personally mixed with people of different status, and if so, where they did so.

TABLE XX

Do you think people mix socially with those of different standing to themselves?

	Yes	%	No	%
'Urban Group'	6	15.8	32	84.2
'Rural Group'	3	15.8	16	84.2

The 'urban group' differed not at all from the other in their answers to this question. It was clear that a large majority of all the informants expected people to mix only with their social equals. Many made their attitude quite plain:

"You have more in common with your own sort. To have an interest in art, or antiques, like us, raises one up to be, as it were, intellectual. None of the people in the country are at all interested. There's no social life at all. There's the W.I. of course but that 's so boring. They all meet and discuss their washdays."

"When I was courting it got so I didn't like to tell my friends what my husband did. He was only a farmworker and they all married office workers, and one of them was a surveyor. When I said what he did they all said, 'Oh, what a shame'."

"At the W.I. the so-called better-class hang together and the likes of me cling together. I do all the work and they look on."

"You stick to your own class. I've seen girls go up to the farms as cheesemakers and servants in dozens and they can't keep them. They all say it's terrible, knowing there's the family and then there's you. The men that have their dinner say the same. If company comes, of course they want you out of the road. Last Monday they sent me home early because the daughter had a friend from the hospital there."

Several of those who thought people did try to mix with some who were socially not their equals said firmly that no good came of it. They obviously disapproved of such behaviour:

"There's some that goes and looks for the higher-ups and then can't keep up with the expense."

"They don't stick to their own sort but they'd be better if they did. If you have friends below you they can't keep up and if you have friends above you, you can't keep up."

Those who thought that people did mix with all groups - in any case a small minority - did little to dispel the impression that it was generally thought that everyone had his place and did well to accept it. "The lady doctor here, you can't say she's not a lady, but she'll come in here and sit down and have a cup of tea just like anyone," said one woman. Another said, "Even Lady Miles when she was here would mix with the ordinary people."

TABLE XXI

Do you mix with people from groups whose social standing is different to yours?

	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes - at work</u>	<u>Yes - informally</u>	<u>Yes - both at work &amp; informally</u>
'Urban Group'	6 (31.6%)	1 (5.3%)	9 (47.4%)	3 (15.8%)
'Rural Group'	18 (47.4%)	4 (10.5%)	12 (31.6%)	4 (10.5%)

The 'rural group' differed from the 'urban group' in that fewer of them claimed to mix with people of social standing higher or lower than their own, and of those who claimed to do so in this group, more said that they did so at work. It seems that perhaps the country people had a more rigid view of the status system in this respect.

The main conclusion to be drawn from all the evidence that has been presented is that a substantial majority of all the informants had attitudes to most aspects of social status which were traditional in character. They had attitudes, indeed, which would be favourable to the existence of traditional systems of social status in their local communities.

There were non-traditionalists among those who were interviewed, and also people who had non-traditional views on particular questions, but they did not often form a majority in either the 'urban group' or the 'rural group'.

It has been shown that in some respects, those who had at some time lived in a town actually had more traditional views than did those who had not done so. This may be due partly to the fact that they felt less reluctance to comment adversely upon their own community. It was also to be attributed partly to their refusal to regard the local community as the only possible dwelling-place, and the local status system as the only possible system. They had a certain faith that the individual was free to choose to live elsewhere and might well find different conditions elsewhere.

It must also be stressed that the 'urban group' were a minority and were isolated in many villages from other people who had lived in towns. If they had arrived with different values they might have found them difficult to preserve.

Often, of course, having chosen to live in a small village they might be people who were particularly ready to accept the forms of social organisation they found there.

The expectation that in such a stable rural population traditional attitudes to social status would be strongly present was thus realised. The expectation that those people who had lived in towns might differ in their attitudes from those who had not done so was not fulfilled in quite the predicted way.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. Even if the sample had included 20-year-olds, however, it is unlikely statistically that there would have been more than one or two such people.
2. Saville, in his book on Rural Depopulation, states that it is the people in the younger age groups who migrate from rural areas. (Saville, J. op. cit. Chapter I)
3. See Saville, J. op. cit. p. 229. Here it is stated that 55% of Saville's sample of rural people had lived in the same parish for over ten years. 24% had lived in the same parish for the whole of their lives.
4. For example, in Cumberland (see W.M. Williams' "Gosforth") and in Wales (A.D. Rees, op. cit.).



CHAPTER IV

PARENTS' ASPIRATIONS FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S  
EDUCATIONAL CAREERS IN NORTH SHROPSHIRE

The traditionalist dislikes changes of any kind. He wants to preserve familiar institutions and customary practices. This desire for continuity will prevent the traditionalist from being ambitious for his children. He will not strive to ensure that they receive a better education than that which he himself enjoyed. Nor will he aspire to occupations for them which differ very greatly from his own. Above all, he will not want them to leave the local community. It was argued, therefore, that a survey of parents' aspirations for their children's careers would be of great assistance in distinguishing traditionalists from non-traditionalists.

It was decided that the survey of parental aspirations should be confined to those parents who had children in two specific age groups. The children were to be nine to eleven year-olds, and thirteen to fifteen year-olds. The choice of these particular age groups was determined by several considerations.

In the first place, it was thought that if the children attending primary schools were any younger than nine years old, their parents would have given little thought to their future educational and occupational careers. The parents of children who were nine and over would be thinking about the change to the secondary stage of education, and its implications, and would be better subjects for the survey. Similarly, it was thought that the parents of children who were in the first two years at secondary schools would be unlikely to have considered the next step in their children's careers, whereas the parents of children approaching the minimum school leaving age would have done so.

In the second place, these two age groups were chosen because it was thought that attention could be focused more narrowly on parents' aspirations than if the children were older, or were all secondary school pupils. To a certain extent, when children have passed to the secondary stage of education parents' hopes for their future careers are replaced by expectations. When children have passed the minimum school leaving age aspirations definitely become expectations, and expectations often become certainties. Hence it was felt to be desirable to include primary school parents in the survey, for while the child is still at the primary school parents' aspirations may be relatively undisturbed. It was thought that parents of secondary school pupils over fifteen should be excluded from the survey, as their children's futures would already be determined, at any rate in part.

There was unfortunately no source from which a completely random sample could be drawn, of parents in Wem Rural District who had children of the appropriate ages. The sample was therefore taken from a list of parents in the Rural District who had children at the county secondary and primary schools. No parents of children attending the technical school were interviewed, as their children were all over fifteen years old<sup>1</sup>. The sample therefore consisted of parents of children who attended the county grammar, secondary modern and village schools.

Parents of children who attended independent schools were thus omitted, and this means that there is a bias in the sample. It is not a sample of the parents of Wem Rural District who have children of the appropriate ages, but of parents who have children of the appropriate ages at county schools. However, there is reason to think that very few

parents in Wem Rural District sent their children to independent schools. No information was available from the Local Education Authority on this point, but those parents who were interviewed were asked if they knew of people who sent their children to independent schools. Without exception they said that they knew of no-one, or of very few people who did so, in their neighbourhood. Those people who did send their children to private schools, it was said, sent them to local private schools for the most part, until they were eleven, and then allowed them to go on to one of the county secondary schools. A few parents who had done this were interviewed.

It is not claimed, therefore, that the people whose aspirations for their children were investigated represented a complete cross-section of the parents of Wem Rural District. It is fairly certain, however, that the number of parents in the Rural District with children of the appropriate ages who attended independent schools, was so small that their inclusion would have made little difference to the general pattern of results obtained from the survey.

In Chapter I it was pointed out that an individual's inclination to traditionalism may be affected by his or her age and sex. The great majority of the parents who were interviewed in North Shropshire were between thirty and forty-five years old. It was felt that this age range was so narrow that variations in the traditionalism displayed by particular groups of parents could not be explained in terms of age differences. Furthermore, except in the cases where the child had no mother, or the mother refused to be interviewed, only mothers were involved in the survey. (Mothers were chosen as informants rather than fathers because it was felt that they might be more interested in the education and

future careers of their children, and more willing to discuss them fully.) In only 13.9% of cases was it necessary to interview the father of a child<sup>2</sup>. It was therefore unlikely also that variations in the traditionalism of different groups could be attributed to the sexual composition of those groups.

Altogether, the parents of one hundred and eight children were interviewed. (The original sample had consisted of the parents of one hundred and twenty children, but five families had left the district and the parents of seven children refused to be interviewed.) Fifty-two of the children were girls and fifty-six were boys. Twenty of the children were attending grammar schools, forty were secondary modern school pupils and forty-eight were at village primary schools. Their parents were interviewed with a formal questionnaire which may be found in the Appendix. Again the informants were encouraged to comment freely in reply to the questions.

The occupational distribution of the fathers of the children is shown in Table I. The Registrar-General's Scale of Social Classes has been used to classify the occupations with one important exception. There were thirty-one farmers among the fathers of the children. These farmers owned or rented farms which varied considerably in size; they themselves had received different types of education and training, and their social standing probably varied greatly. (The survey of attitudes to social status established that farmers in this district were thought to vary widely in status.) The Social Classes were to be used to make comparisons between the aspirations of different occupational groups for their children. Yet many of the farmers, who formed a large proportion of the total sample, had nothing in common with the

the other men whose occupations fell into Social Class Two, in the Registrar-General's Scale. The Social Classes were also to be used to assess parents' aspirations for occupational mobility for their children. But the smallholder with an elementary school education who wishes his daughter to become a teacher is hoping that the child will have a very different career from his own, while the man with a large farm, trained at an agricultural college, who has the same ambition for his child, is not aspiring to such a great change.

It was felt, therefore, that it would be misleading to place all the farmers indiscriminately in Class Two. Instead, a formula was devised for allotting the farmers to three different Social Classes. Farmers who had five hundred acres or more, and had received a university education, were placed in Class One. Farmers who had less than one hundred acres and employed no labour other than their own family were placed in Class Three (manual). All other farmers were placed in Class Two.

It was thought that this method of classifying farmers would help to ensure that the men in each Social Class had a similar economic position, had received a similar type of education or training, and enjoyed a similar "general standing within the community."<sup>3</sup> (The survey of attitudes to social status also established that people in Wem Rural District thought that the social status of farmers was largely dependent on the amount of land they held.) The revised classification would provide a fair basis for comparisons between the aspirations of parents belonging to different Social Classes, and would enable a realistic assessment to be made of parents' aspirations for occupational mobility for their children.

TABLE I

Occupational Distribution of Children's Fathers,  
Using Revised Registrar-General's Scale

Social Class	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IV	V
	4	24	6	52	16	6
	(3.7%)	(22.2%)	(5.6%)	(48.1%)	(14.8%)	(5.6%)

Class Two in Table I is a smaller category, and Class Three (manual) a larger category than would be the case if the Registrar-General's Classification had not been amended. There were no farmers in this sample from Wem Rural District who fell into Class One. Relatively few farmworkers' children were included in the survey, and the reason for this is not immediately clear. It is possible that a high proportion of the farmworkers in Wem Rural District were both young and unmarried. It was often mentioned by informants that farmers liked to employ boys, rather than men, for reasons of economy.

Altogether, 39.8% of the children's fathers were directly employed in agriculture, the majority as farmers. Those men who had an agricultural occupation were for the most part the sons of men who had had agricultural occupations. Very few of the sixty-five men with non-agricultural occupations had had fathers with agricultural jobs. This suggests, as did the evidence of the sample described in Chapter III, that agricultural occupations were until recently, at any rate, hereditary in this area. In Table II a comparison is made between the occupations of the children's fathers and the occupations of their paternal grandfathers, illustrating this point.

TABLE II

Comparison of Occupations of Children's Fathers with Occupations of their Paternal Grandfathers

Father	Paternal Grandfather Farmer or Farmworker	Other Occupation	Unknown
Farmer or Farmworker (43)	34 (79.1%)	9 (20.9%)	-
Other Occupation (65)	15 (23.1%)	45 (69.2%)	5 (7.7%)

Another illustration of the occupational stability of the men in this sample is provided by Table III. Although the degree of occupational stability revealed in this Table is not as remarkable as that found in the random sample taken from the Electoral Roll, which was discussed in the previous Chapter, it is still considerable. The largest single group among the children's fathers had remained immobile occupationally. (That is to say, their occupation fell into the same group in the Registrar-General's Scale of Social Classes as their father's did, and was therefore somewhat similar in the level of education, training and skill it required.)

TABLE III

Occupations of Children's Fathers Compared with Occupations of Paternal Grandfathers, Using Registrar-General's Scale<sup>4</sup>

Father	Paternal Grandfather						Unknown
	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IV	V	
I		2	-	2	-	-	
II		13	-	6	3	2	
IIIa		3	1	2	-	-	
IIIb		9	2	23	9	5	4
IV		5	-	1	7	3	
V		1	-	-	-	4	1
	Upwardly mobile	Immibile	Downwardly mobile	Unknown			
Father	34 (31.5%)	48 (44.4%)	21 (19.4%)	5 (4.6%)			

It was found that 58% of those who worked in agriculture had inherited their occupation directly from their fathers. They therefore accounted for a considerable proportion of the stability shown in Table III<sup>5</sup>. There was a much more marked tendency for farmers to have inherited their occupation in this way than for farmworkers to have done so. Two-thirds of the farmers were the sons of farmers, but only one-third of the farmworkers were the sons of farmworkers. It is noteworthy that of the men engaged in agriculture who had not directly inherited their occupation almost equal numbers were farmers who were sons of farmworkers (11.6% of those in agriculture) and farmworkers who were sons of farmers (9.3%).

Only 33.1% of the men with non-agricultural occupations even fall into the same Social Class as their fathers. There was far more tendency to occupational mobility in this group, therefore. This is clear from Table IV.

TABLE IV

Occupational Mobility of Children's Fathers,  
Related to the Nature of their Occupations

	Upwardly mobile	Immobile	Downwardly mobile	Unknown
Agricultural Occupation (43)	11 (25.6%)	25 (58.1%)	7 (16.3%)	-
Non-agricultural Occupation (65)	23 (37.7%)	23 (33.1%)	14 (21.5%)	5 (7.7%)

The mothers of the children were asked if they themselves had any paid employment, and if so, what it was. Thirty-one (28.7%) said that they had an occupation. It was thought that this proportion might be rather small in relation to the proportion of mothers of children of similar ages working in the country as a whole. (Traditionally, women are not expected to play an economic role outside the home, and in



any case there are few jobs available for them in rural areas.) In order to establish whether this prediction was correct, the information about the employment of the children's mothers was compared with information obtained by Viola Klein in a survey concerned with working wives in Britain<sup>6</sup>. Klein's sample consisted of a randomly selected group of married women. Her figures show how many of them who were mothers of children in certain age groups, went out to work, and how many did not. In Table V below, the results of the Shropshire survey are compared with the results of Klein's national survey.

TABLE V

Employment of Mothers of Children 6-15 years old

Shropshire Sample

<u>Ages of children</u>	<u>Working</u>	<u>Not working</u>	<u>% working</u>
6-10 years old:			
1 child	8	29	29.6
2 children	4	19	17.4
3 children	1	9	10.0
11-15 years old:			
1 child	16	39	29.1
2 children	7	20	25.9
3 children	1	2	33.3

Klein's National Sample

<u>Ages of children</u>	<u>Working</u>	<u>Not working</u>	<u>% working</u>
6-10 years old:			
1 child	51	104	32.9
2 children	15	41	26.8
3 children	1	11	8.3
11-15 years old:			
1 child	49	89	35.5
2 children	12	15	44.4
3 children	1	-	100.0

Table V shows that of the mothers in Klein's sample with one or two children in the specified age groups, the proportions going out to work were higher than the proportions in the Shropshire sample who did so. (Only in the case of the mothers who had three or more children between six and ten years old, did a greater proportion of the Shropshire mothers go out to work. The number of mothers in each sample who fell into this group was very small and therefore probably not completely representative.)

The Shropshire sample was not entirely comparable with Klein's, since it was selected from mothers who had children between nine and eleven, and thirteen and fifteen, rather than from all married women. It therefore over-represents mothers with older children. As these mothers are more likely to go out to work than those with young children this does not serve to weaken the general conclusion that the mothers in the Shropshire sample were less likely to go out to work than British mothers in general<sup>7</sup>. The findings of this survey are indeed supported by Klein's own conclusion that married women in Rural Districts are less likely to go out to work than those in other areas<sup>8</sup>.

Apart from the fact that only a relatively small proportion of the children's mothers had jobs at all, it was remarkable how few of those who were working were married to men with agricultural occupations. None of the farmers' wives had a job, and only four women married to farmworkers had one. It was obviously far more common for the wives of those in non-agricultural occupations to go out to work. This accords with descriptions in community-studies of the role of women in agricultural families.<sup>9</sup>

The mothers of the secondary school children were more likely to go out to work than the mothers of primary school children<sup>10</sup>. Only nine of the mothers who were selected as mothers of primary school children had jobs, whereas twenty-two of those who were selected as mothers of secondary school children had jobs. (18.8% against 36.7%)

The majority of women who did go out to work had part-time jobs only, mainly as domestic workers. (This again agrees with Klein's findings about married women working in rural areas<sup>11</sup>.) All the women who had no job at the time of the survey were asked what their most recent paid employment had been. This question revealed that a substantial proportion of the mothers had never had any occupation, having been for the most part 'at home on the farm' before they married. Table VI shows the distribution of the occupations pursued by the mothers of the children either at the time of the survey or when they were last working.

TABLE VI

Distribution of Occupations of Mothers of Children  
(At the time of the survey or when they were last working)  
Using the Registrar-General's Scale of Social Classes.

	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IV	V	At home on farm	None
Mother not working at time of survey (77)	-	14.3%	14.3%	7.8%	19.5%	22.1%	13.0%	9.1%
Mother working at time of survey (31)	-	19.4%	9.7%	9.7%	12.9%	48.4%	-	-

Table VI shows that the largest group among both the women who were working and those who were not held (or had held) unskilled manual jobs. However, a much larger proportion of those who were still working than of those who were not, held jobs of this kind (Class V). This is no

doubt partly explained by the fact that many mothers only wanted part-time jobs, and partly by the fact that such jobs are perhaps the easiest to come by, in a rural area. There were very few factory workers, shop assistants or clerical workers among the mothers who were working, but rather more in the other group. The women in Intermediate occupations (Class II) - for the most part teachers or nurses - represented a larger proportion of the group who were still working than of the group who were not. This suggests that they may possibly have been more inclined to go back to work than were women in other occupational groups, or perhaps that there were more opportunities for them to do so.

Twelve of the children's mothers, apart from the ten who had been at home on a farm before their marriage, were or had been engaged in agricultural work.

This analysis of the occupations pursued by the children's parents has illustrated once again the agricultural character of Wem Rural District. It also demonstrates that in some respects the families in the area, and especially the families of those connected with agriculture, conformed to the traditional pattern of behaviour for rural families. On the other hand, many of the children's fathers had non-agricultural jobs, and these men were more likely to have been occupationally mobile than were the farmers or farmworkers, and their wives were more likely to go out to work. All this tends to support the hypothesis that while the area may be predominately traditional, there may also be differences of outlook between those in agricultural jobs and those in other occupations.

The mothers of the children were asked how many years they had lived in the parish where they were found at the

time of the survey. (In the cases where the mother could not be questioned, the father or guardian of the child was asked how long he had lived in the parish.) 75% of the informants said that they had lived in the same parish for over ten years. They therefore showed only slightly less tendency to residential stability<sup>12</sup> than the random sample discussed in Chapter III (of whom 80% had lived in the same parish for over ten years.) As women tend to be more mobile than men in rural areas, and as the average age of the group of mothers was considerably below that of the random sample, it had been expected that the differences between the two samples would be quite pronounced. However, 31.5% of the respondents in this sample had lived in the same parish all their lives. (Almost the same proportion of the random sample had done so.) A further 31.5% of the mothers had lived in the same parish ever since their marriage. The proportion of the mothers who had lived in the same parish either all their lives or continuously since their marriage was only slightly lower than the proportion of women in the random sample who had done so.

The majority of the sample, too, were attached to life in the country, as well as to life in their own community. 64.8% of the informants had never lived in an urban district. Very few expressed a desire to move into a town, even among those who had originally come from towns. Again, those who had a mild desire to move did not want to travel far:

"I'd like to move when I get older. I don't like all this biking about. I'd like to be in Wem, that is."

Table VII shows which urban areas the respondents had lived in. Again a great majority of those who had lived in towns had lived in the Midland towns or the northern towns

TABLE VII

Rural and Urban Residence by Informants

<u>Urban District formerly lived in</u>	<u>Number of informants</u>	<u>Average length of time lived there</u>
None at all	70	-
Wem U.D.	3	13 years
Whitchurch U.D.	4	26 "
Shrewsbury M.B.	2	14 "
Liverpool C.B.	3	23 "
Birkenhead C.B.	1	1 "
Manchester C.B.	6	17 "
Altrincham M.B.	1	19 "
Salford C.B.	1	20 "
Swinton M.B.	1	8 "
Bolton C.B.	1	10 "
Stockport C.B.	1	17 "
Chester C.B.	1	30 "
Crewe M.B.	1	20 "
Newcastle-under-Lyme M.B.	2	15 "
Wolverhampton C.B.	3	22 "
Birmingham C.B.	1	20 "
Rhyl U.D.	1	18 "
Sheffield C.B.	1	21 "
Leeds C.B.	1	30 "
Bradford C.B.	1	12 "
Darlington C.B.	1	10 "
Newcastle-on-Tyne C.B.	1	10 "
Cardiff C.B.	2	24 "
Swansea C.B.	1	18 "
Southampton C.B.	1	1 "
Plymouth C.B.	3	14 "
Douglas I.O.M.	1	20 "
Southend-on-Sea C.B.	1	20 "
London	3	13 "
Dortmund, Germany	1	19 "

N.B. Several informants had lived in more than one town for periods of over a year in each case. To qualify for inclusion among those who had lived in urban areas an informant had to have lived in a town for over twelve months.

like Manchester which were said in Chapter II to have a strong influence on North Shropshire. Very few indeed of the informants had lived in the south of England, and only three in London.

Most of the informants who had lived in towns had remained there for a considerable number of years. (As Table VII also shows.) Clearly many of the women had been city-dwellers until the time of their marriage. It seems all the more remarkable that so few should have wished to leave the countryside.

In chapter I it was pointed out that the individual's inclination to traditionalism may depend to some extent on the kind of education he has received. Details of the education received by the parents of the children were collected, not only to compare the aspirations of parents who had had different kinds of education, but in order to measure the aspirations of parents for educational mobility for their children.

It was found that 73.1% of the fathers and 70.5% of the mothers of the children had attended schools at which it was unlikely they could have stayed on after the minimum school-leaving age. (That is to say, village elementary, urban elementary and secondary modern schools.) In fact, as Table VIII shows, 82.4% of the fathers, and 73.1% of the mothers had left school by the age of fourteen. More of the men had left school as early as possible, therefore. This is not entirely accounted for by the fact that fewer of them had attended grammar schools or other selective schools. It probably also reflects the tendency (mentioned, for example, by Rees<sup>13</sup>) for agricultural families to remove boys from school as soon as they reached the leaving age and put them to work, but to allow girls to stay on for prestige reasons.

TABLE VIII

Type and Extent of Education  
Received by Parents of Children

<u>School Attended</u>	Mothers %	Fathers %	<u>Leaving age</u>	Mothers %	Fathers %
Wem or Whitchurch Grammar School	8.3	4.6	12	0.9	0.9
Other Grammar School	7.4	9.3	13	6.5	7.4
Central School	3.7	1.9	14	65.7	74.1
Independent School	8.3	7.4	15	11.1	5.6
Wem or Whitchurch Secondary Modern	5.6	7.4	16	5.6	4.6
Other Secondary Modern Schools	15.6	4.6	17	1.9	1.9
Village elementary school in Wem Rural Dis.	25.0	34.3	18	1.9	1.9
Other village elementary schools	21.3	23.1	University	1.9	1.9
Urban elementary	13.0	3.7	Other further education	1.9	-
Other type of school	0.9	1.9	Not known	2.8	1.9
Not known	0.9	1.9			

Table VIII shows that a high proportion of both men and women had attended local schools, though rather more of the men (46.3%) than the women (38.9%) had done so. The great majority of these men and women had attended one of the village elementary schools in Wem Rural District. It is also noticeable in Table VIII that more women than men had attended urban elementary or central schools, which suggests once again that the women in rural areas are more likely to have experienced urban life than are the men.

It was clear that a considerable majority of both men and women had been either to village elementary schools or to grammar and secondary modern schools in small market towns. Comparatively few parents had stayed at school after the



minimum school leaving age, and only two men and four women had had any further education after leaving school. The education of the children's parents had therefore taken place for the most part in the country schools, often in those the children themselves attended as primary or secondary schools, and had not, for most, been very extensive. This provided additional reason to think that many of the parents would prove to be traditionalists.

To summarise the description of this sample of parents which has been given above: the parents were in most cases country people by birth, upbringing, and education, although substantial minorities had lived in an urban area at some time, or been educated at urban schools; a large number of the fathers of the children were engaged in agriculture, but a small majority had non-agricultural jobs.

One of the advantages of this survey was that it facilitated the examination of the hypothesis, advanced in Chapter I, that those who were members of agricultural families would be more traditional in their attitudes and aspirations than those who were members of other families. This hypothesis could not be tested using the sample described in Chapter III.<sup>13</sup>

However, in the case of the sample of parents, it was possible to divide the respondents into an "agricultural group" and a "non-agricultural group". This was done on the basis of the occupation pursued by the child's father.

It was argued that traditionalists would show little interest in education for its own sake. All the parents were asked when they had last visited their children's schools. It was felt that parents who had visited the school under 6 months ago showed unusual interest; that those who had visited the school over 6 months ago showed average interest, and those who had never done so showed very little interest. (It should be

remembered that all the children were either approaching school-leaving age or the eleven-plus examination.) All the schools had given parents opportunity to visit them during the 6 months preceding the survey.

TABLE IX

Last Occasion on which one of the  
Child's Parents Visited the School

	Under 6 months ago	Over 6 months ago	Never
	%	%	%
Agricultural Group (=45)	13.9	65.1	21.0
Non-agricultural Group (=65)	18.4	55.4	26.3

From Table IX it can be seen that while there were rather more parents in the 'non-agricultural group' who took considerable interest in their children's schooling than there were in the 'agricultural' group, there were also more who took very little interest at all. Of course, many parents who lived on remote farms had great difficulty in reaching the schools for formal evening meetings, especially the secondary schools, for there were few buses or trains. The farmworkers in particular rarely had private transport. Farmers were additionally tied by the constant necessity of looking after their livestock, a task in which their wives were usually as involved as they were themselves. It was easy to sympathise with the frequent comments:

"We've not been. It's so hard to get, from here.  
There's no buses at night."

"There's only a bus on a Friday, and we've no car."

"I've got so much outside work to do that I can't get."

"Oh yes, You can get in all right from here. But  
you can't get out again."

The men with non-agricultural jobs tended on the whole to live in the villages, and the more accessible villages in particular. It would be fair to say, therefore, that the parents in this group probably had more chances to visit the schools. It was all the more surprising that the two groups were so similar

in the level of interest they displayed, as measured by this criterion.

It is noteworthy that a fair proportion of secondary school parents were sufficiently concerned about their children's education to complain that they had few opportunities to talk to members of staff about children. (These parents were from both groups.) Grammar school parents especially said that formal functions gave them no chance of speaking to members of staff. A farmer's wife said, "We've never been asked to go and talk to them and he's been there for four years. I did go and see the headmaster by appointment, I have another child at a boarding school and we feel we've got much more contact with the teachers there."

There were those whose answers to this question betrayed their complete lack of interest. One mother said:

"I never go anywhere like that. I'm a stop-at-home body. My husband hasn't been. He's just a farm labourer and he isn't interested. We just like her to go to school as much as she can and be as interested as she can. She isn't as much as we'd like, because when they get to fifteen they like to start work, and that's all she's got her mind on."

Another woman, wife of a salesman, said "I haven't been. I get so busy with my garden." The excuses volunteered by parents who had never visited their child's school were all somewhat weak. However, the important point is that there were relatively few such parents.

As a test of their general interest in education, all the parents were asked whether they approved of the curriculum at their child's school. If they disapproved, they were asked how they felt it could be improved. It was argued that parents who were traditionalists would be unlikely to disapprove of the curriculum, as they would probably have only a vague idea of what it contained. If they did disapprove of anything, it would be of subjects other than the basic academic ones being

introduced into timetables. They would not have 'progressive' ideas on education. They would also tend to resent the incursion of homework into the time children had available for tasks in the home. Traditionalists were expected to be found more frequently, of course, in the 'agricultural group' than in the other group.

TABLE X  
Parents' Views on School Curricula

	Agricultural Group %	Non-agricultural Group %
No adverse criticism	46.5	53.9
Too much P.E.	2.3	10.4
Too much of some academic subject	2.3	4.6
Too much of some practical subject	4.7	3.1
Too much of some cultural subject	7.0	10.4
Too much homework	-	4.6
Not enough of some academic subject	25.6	21.5
Not enough of some practical subject	9.3	7.7
Not enough of some cultural subject	2.3	-
Other complaint	<u>34.9</u>	<u>18.5</u>
TOTAL	43	65

N.B. Percentages do not add up to 100% because many parents had more than one reason for disapproval.

'Practical' subjects include cookery, woodwork, rural science, metalwork, needlework, etc.

'Cultural' subjects include art, music, dancing, etc.

In fact, as Table X shows, the 'agricultural group' were more prepared to criticise school timetables than the other group. Moreover, they were less inclined to attack the curriculum of their child's school on the grounds that it included subjects other than 'the three R's'. The only people who suggested that their children had too much homework were found in the 'non-agricultural group'. There were many people who did reveal traditional attitudes in replying

to this question, but it cannot be said that the answers support the hypothesis that the 'agricultural' group were more traditional than the other group in their attitudes.

The primary school parents were asked whether they were satisfied with the village schools in other respects, apart from their curricula. Those who expressed dissatisfaction with their child's school were asked to explain its causes, and those who expressed approval were asked why they approved. It was argued that traditionalists would be completely satisfied with village schools, having little desire to change familiar institutions. They would have no rational grounds for their approval. Non-traditionalists would be more likely to observe defects. (That there were, by general standards, defects to observe in many of the village schools, if not all, was mentioned in Chapter II.)

TABLE XI

Primary School Parents' Views on Village Schools

	Agricultural Group %	Non-agricultural Group %
No adverse criticism	36.8	44.8
No favourable criticism	42.1	34.4
Points for and against	21.1	20.8

From Table XI it can be seen that the agricultural group were no more traditional than the other group in their attitudes. They were in fact more prone to offer unfavourable criticism of the village schools, and less inclined to approve of them without giving any reason for doing so. (58.6% of those in the non-agricultural group who said that they approved of the schools could give no reason for their approval, while this was true of only 47.4% of the other group.) Far more of the agricultural group had noticed the physical drawbacks of the schools (47.3% of those in the

group offering any criticism that was unfavourable) than of the non-agricultural group, (only 31% of those who criticised.) The agricultural group were also more willing to compare the village schools with town schools, which they considered were better, than were the other group.

It was clear that it was the non-agricultural group which contained many parents who had given no thought to the question of whether the amenities of their child's school could or should be improved. Often these people had a child at a school criticised by others because it had no running water, flush toilets, playing field or other amenities. Nevertheless, some remarked that they themselves had been pupils at the school and that it had improved since then, and therefore must be all right. "They're very lucky compared with what we used to have", was a frequent comment, and a truly traditional one, since it accepts that what was customary in the past must always be the standard of comparison. Other parents were content because they considered the schools similar to most others in the countryside. A smallholder's wife said, "It's not all that bad off for a country school, it's old when all's said and done." Another woman said, "Well, it's all right for a country school. There's not all that many that goes there." This is an equally traditional attitude implying that institutions in the country are almost incapable of change, and necessarily different from those in towns.

Although a small majority of all the parents did disapprove for some reason of the village schools attended by their children, it was obvious that nearly all the parents liked the children to go to these schools. Those who recognized disadvantages hoped that they might be overcome without the necessity of closing the schools altogether. Most

criticism centred on features of the schools which could be improved without sending the children to other schools outside the villages. To this extent, the great majority of parents were certainly against any radical change. "A village community is all very nice, but they want to be with their own age group really", was the sentiment of a very small minority. Many parents pointed out that in the really good village schools the children were very well taught. "In Linda's class there are only ten children, and in the age group there are only four. There are only twenty-four children in the school and two teachers. When they go on to the other school they are well ahead of the other children, she brings them on so well." This was one enthusiastic mother. Others said often, "It's marvellous because they get so much individual attention."

The secondary school parents were asked whether they approved of the plan to amalgamate the Girls' High School with the Boys' Grammar School. (This plan was described in Chapter II). It was argued that traditionalists would be opposed to the plan, since it represented a change in the established order of things. Non-traditionalists would approve of it and think that it could only bring beneficial results educationally, for the children who would attend the new school. All the parents were asked why they approved or disapproved of the plan.

The replies to this question did suggest that there might be more traditionalists among the agricultural group, of whom about 46% were opposed to the plan, than in the other group, of whom only 22% were opposed to it. (A majority of all the parents were in favour of the plan.) A good many of the parents displayed ambivalent attitudes towards the scheme, being inclined to approve of it on some grounds and

disapprove on others. The Local Education Authority had anticipated that the plan might provoke some hostility, and had been at some pains to explain the reasons for the change to the parents and elicit their approval, and this accounts for the fact that many parents were uncertain of their own opinion on the subject. A good many of the parents who did not express any disapproval of the plan were clearly resigned to the idea, rather than actively in favour of it. About half of those who believed it would be beneficial, thought so because they believed co-education in itself to be desirable. (Almost equal proportions of each group advanced this point of view.) The remaining parents who did not disapprove of the scheme seemed to feel that they must accept the change, because it brought the benefits of more teachers, and better buildings and equipment for their children. (This argument, which was put to them by the L.E.A. was often recited rather unenthusiastically by the parents.) Those who were opposed to the amalgamation justified their opposition mainly on the grounds that co-education was undesirable, as it 'unsettled' or 'distracted' the children. An easily distinguishable group of parents, had, however, attended one of the local grammar schools themselves, and resented the departure from the familiar system. These were principally people in the agricultural group, who were for the most part in accord with the woman who said firmly, "I liked the grammar school as it was. It had its own atmosphere." A farmer's wife said, "I think the High School is losing an awful lot. The High School appearance, you might say."

The question did not perhaps provide the illuminating results that it might have produced had it been put to the parents at the time when the plan was first explained to them. When the amalgamation was first proposed it had aroused a great



deal of controversy and attempts to prevent or delay the implementation of the proposal had been made. These had had little effect, however, and the majority of the parents had accepted that the amalgamation was to take place, by the time the survey was being conducted. Undoubtedly, a majority of parents were still far from enthusiastic about the plan, and especially parents in the agricultural group. Again, therefore, it is probably true to say that the idea of change in the educational system was disliked by the majority of the parents.

Traditionalists do not consider that girls require such an extensive education as boys, because their economic role is less important. Although agricultural families might allow girls to stay at school longer than boys who are needed on the farm, they would nevertheless regard the girl's education as being of little practical value to her, if they were traditionalists.

The parents were therefore asked whether they considered that girls needed as much education as boys. (They were asked, too, why they felt that girls did or did not require as much education as boys.) The question produced more uncertainty and more ambivalence than any other. Many parents contradicted themselves in the course of their answer, being obviously confused between what they did think and what they felt they ought to think. The figures showing the proportions of parents who thought that girls needed as much education as boys, and the proportions who did not think so, are to a certain extent misleading, for a favourite reply to the question was that there was a great deal to be said on both sides. Many people who said that they thought girls should receive as much education as boys had clearly said so only because they thought it was expected of them. Many

added that in practice they would always prefer to 'give the boy the education' if they had to choose.

TABLE XII

Parents' Attitudes to the Education of Girls

	Agricultural Group %	Non-agricultural Group %
Need as much as boys	60.6	43.0
Need less than boys	37.2	44.6
It depends on the individual	2.3	7.7
Don't Know	-	3.1
Other reply	-	1.5

Table XII demonstrates that instead of the agricultural group containing more parents who believed that boys should be given educational priority than the other group, the reverse was true. A clear majority of the agricultural group had non-traditional views. A majority of all parents said that girls should have an equal opportunity for education, but probably the most that can be said is that the non-agricultural group were less prone to this belief than others.

Depressingly few parents valued education for either sex for its own sake, or felt that individuals should be treated according to their wants and needs, on the evidence of their replies to this question. The great majority of parents in each group thought exclusively in terms of the economic value of education to their children. Few indeed were those who said, "What use is an uneducated wife to an educated husband?", or even "A girl has a lot more to learn in life than a boy. Or that's my experience. She needs more education." It was far more common for parents to paint gloomy pictures of girls "ending up as housewives" or "getting married young and wasting it," and therefore needing less

education than boys. Alternatively, parents pointed out with equal foreboding, that girls might not get married, might lose their husbands if they did get married or, more rarely, might have to go out to work in any case even if they had husbands, and therefore should have as much education as boys. A subtle argument advanced by many of those who thought that boys should always be given priority was, "There's plenty of jobs for girls where they don't need a good education today," - an argument which would seem to be borne out by the occupational distribution given earlier for the mothers of the children.

It was very apparent that traditional attitudes to the education of girls persisted in a great number of the informants, and were not to be crushed in some whatever their circumstances. A widow with several young children who expressly regretted the fact that she had no job and little to do, said, "I'd not left school long before I was married. You don't need as much education as a boy does, for decent employment. It's wasted if you go on to school."

It was argued that traditionalists, in addition to displaying little active interest in their child's schooling or in education in general, would not aspire to educational mobility for their children, and would indeed have generally lower aspirations than non-traditionalists. The parents were therefore asked a series of questions about their hopes for the educational future of their children.

The primary school parents, none of whose children had yet taken the eleven-plus examination, were asked which secondary school they hoped that their children would go on to. It was thought that the 'agricultural' group would contain a lower proportion of parents aspiring to grammar or technical school places for their children than the other

group, as it was hypothesised that the agricultural group would be more inclined to traditionalism. In fact the agricultural group contained a higher proportion of parents, (63.2%) who hoped their children would go to a grammar school than did the non-agricultural group (51.7%). There was a higher proportion of parents in the non-agricultural group than in the agricultural group who hoped that their children would go to technical school, but the total proportion of parents hoping for grammar or technical school education for their children was higher in the agricultural than the non-agricultural group. This is shown in Table XIII.

TABLE XIII

Secondary School that Parents of Primary School Children Hoped their Child would go on to

	Agricultural Group %	Non-agricultural Group %
Grammar School	63.2	51.7
Technical School	21.1	27.6
Secondary Modern School	15.8	17.2
Don't Know	-	3.4

This question again provided no evidence that the agricultural group were more traditional on the whole than the other group. The answers suggested, however, that many parents had high aspirations for their children. More than half the parents hoped that their children could go to a grammar school, and the secondary modern school was the least popular choice. Of those who selected the grammar school the majority said that they did so because they wanted the kind of education it provided for their children. Few, however, made it clear why they preferred this kind of education, saying for example, "It's the best. I don't

know why". They did not try to describe the kind of education that they felt was 'better' for their children. Another group of parents said that the grammar school was the means to the kind of occupation they wanted for their children. "I'd like to see him get on", and, "They get better jobs", said some. These had a non-traditional outlook, while those who wanted their child to go to the grammar school because some other member of the family had been, or because they felt vaguely it was 'nicest' were not so obviously non-traditionalists. It was hard to escape the conclusion that many of those who chose the grammar school wanted the kind of status it gives for their children, rather than the kind of education it gives. Such people were present in both the 'agricultural' and the 'non-agricultural' groups.

The parents who chose the technical school were unanimous in giving reasons for doing so which showed that they had their children's future employment in mind. The majority adopted a defensive attitude, electing to explain why they had not chosen the grammar school. They believed often that the grammar school was "only for something professional" and was "not so useful". Those whose reasons for choosing the technical school were more positive all said that it trained children for a trade. Many of these parents who chose the technical school seemed to think that it was a more reasonable aspiration for their children than the grammar school. "It's a better outlook for a working-class boy", said one mother. Even if the parents were strongly influenced by their knowledge of their children's abilities and proclivities, some were strongly prejudiced also against grammar schools, which they believed to be seats of snobbery.

Those who chose the secondary modern school were again on the defensive for the most part. (All the parents revealed

in their attitudes that they regarded the grammar school as the summit of aspirations.) Some parents had a high opinion of the school, others simply had a low opinion of their child's ability. ("He's no scholar") There was a small group whose children had all attended the secondary modern school and who therefore expected this one to do so, too, and could not be persuaded that any other possibility could arise.

The replies to this question did suggest that there were parents ambitious for their children who yet had rather traditional views.

Again, in order that the level of their aspirations might be measured, the parents were asked at what age they hoped their children would leave school.

TABLE XIV

Age Parents Hoped Children Would Leave School

Age	Agricultural Group %	Non-agricultural Group %
15	32.6	41.5
16	14.0	10.8
17	11.6	7.7
18	9.3	13.8
"Will stay as long as possible."	2.3	-
"Can stay if ...." <sup>14</sup>	18.6	21.5
Don't know	11.6	4.6

As Table XIV shows, there were no major differences between the two groups on this question, although the agricultural group were less inclined to say that their children would leave at the minimum leaving age (fifteen), than the other group were. More of the agricultural group were uncertain of their aspirations, however, and some of those who were uncertain probably had little ambition for their children, so that the aspirations of the two groups were rather similar,

no doubt, on the whole. Once more there is no reason to suppose that the agricultural group contained a majority of traditionalists, and it is noteworthy that well over half the total number of parents hoped that their children would stay on over the school-leaving age.

The parents were next asked whether they hoped that their children would receive any further education or training after they left school, and if so, what form it would take.

TABLE XV

Parents' Aspirations for Further Education  
or Training For Their Children

Type of Education or Training	Agricultural Group %	Non-agricultural Group %
None at all	16.3	20.0
University, C.A.T.T., etc.	7.0	6.2
Agricultural College	9.3	-
Teacher's Training College, Nursing training, etc.	16.3	6.2
Technical College	7.0	3.1
Further academic education - not yet known	4.7	3.1
Apprenticeship for skilled job - named	2.3	9.2
Apprenticeship - not named	27.9	27.7
Other training, etc.	2.3	3.1
Don't know	<u>7.0</u>	<u>21.5</u>
	43	65

Table XV shows that the agricultural group had higher aspirations, if anything, than the non-agricultural group. Certainly it could not be said that a majority of the agricultural group had the traditional attitude of hostility to education, and specialised education in particular.

More of the agricultural group aspired to further academic education for their children, than of the other group. The non-agricultural group were more prone to say that they did not know whether they wanted further education for their children, and more of them said positively that they did not want it. None of the non-agricultural group hoped their children would go to agricultural college, but perhaps this is not very surprising.

It is significant that a substantial majority of all the parents did aspire to some form of further education or training for their children.

Although none of the tests that have been made so far suggest that the agricultural group were any more traditional in their attitudes to education in general, and to the education of their own child in particular, than were the non-agricultural group, these tests are by no means conclusive.

It has several times been pointed out that an individual's inclination to traditional attitudes may be affected by factors other than involvement in agriculture, or residence in a rural area. The fact that the agricultural group actually showed fewer signs of traditionalism than the other group on the basis of the evidence so far exhibited, might be due to differences in the composition of the two groups which have not so far been mentioned. The agricultural group, might, for example, contain a much higher proportion of well-educated parents, or of wealthy parents, than the other group.

The aspirations of parents in each group for educational mobility for their children, were therefore compared and related to other factors. Traditionalists, of course, would not favour educational mobility.



Aspirations for educational mobility were measured by comparing the age at which the parents hoped the child would leave school with the age at which the child's father left school. The minimum leaving age at the time most of the fathers left school was fourteen, and this was regarded as equivalent to fifteen today. Thus, if the father had left school at fourteen, and it was hoped that the child would leave at fifteen, the parents were said to be aspiring to educational immobility. If, on the other hand, they hoped that the child would leave at a later age, the parents were said to be aspiring to educational mobility in an upward direction. Fathers who had left school after fourteen, but earlier than eighteen were regarded as equivalent to children today who stay on at school after the minimum leaving age, but do not stay long enough to complete a technical school or grammar school sixth form course. Fathers who had left school at eighteen or had had some further education were regarded as equivalent to children who remain at school until eighteen now. Thus aspirations for upward, or downward educational mobility, or for educational immobility, could be estimated for each parent.<sup>15</sup>

TABLE XVI

Parents' Aspirations for Educational Mobility for Their Children

	Agricultural Group %	Non-agricultural Group %
<u>Aspirations</u>		
Upward educational mobility	46.5	40.0
Educational immobility	39.5	50.9
Downward educational mobility	-	3.1
Don't know	11.6	4.6
Father's leaving age unknown	<u>2.3</u>	<u>1.5</u>
	43	65

Table XVI shows that once again it was the non-agricultural group which inclined more to traditionalism. The majority of parents in the non-agricultural group wanted their children to be educationally immobile, but a much smaller proportion of the agricultural group aspired only to educational immobility for their children.

It was recognised that the parents' aspirations might be governed by the ability which they considered that their child possessed. All the parents were therefore asked whether they thought their child's ability was above average, average, or below average. Table XVII shows the aspirations of parents, related to their estimate of their child's ability. It was certainly true that more of the agricultural group thought their children above average (30.2%) than of the non-agricultural group (23.1%). It was thought that this might explain the inclination of the agricultural group to aspire to educational mobility more than the other group.

TABLE XVII

Parents' Aspirations for Educational Mobility  
Related to their Estimate of their Child's Ability

<u>Child's Estimated Ability</u>	Up	<u>Agricultural Group</u>			
		Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Not Known
Above Average	8	2	-	3	-
Average	10	12	-	1	1
Below Average	1	3	-	1	-

<u>Child's Estimated Ability</u>	Up	<u>Non-Agricultural Group</u>			
		Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Not Known
Above Average	10	4	1	-	-
Average	15	23	1	2	1
Below Average	1	6	-	1	-

N.B. One of the agricultural group could make no estimate of the child's ability.

From Table XVII it is clear that the parents' estimates of their children's ability do not completely explain their

aspirations for educational mobility. In the agricultural group parents were more inclined to aspire to mobility for their child whatever its ability (or their estimate of it) than were the other group. It is obvious from the Table that the parents who considered their children above average had higher aspirations than other parents, but the difference between the two groups is not satisfactorily explained.

The possibility was next considered that the difference between the two groups could be explained in terms of the Social Class composition of each group. As an approximate measure of social standing and economic standing the Registrar-General's Scale of Social Classes, revised in the way that was explained earlier, was used. Each informant in the two groups was allotted to a Social Class on the basis of the job held by the father of the child. In Table XVIII the aspirations of the parents are related to their Social Class. (The agricultural group fell into only three Social Classes, so that they are only compared below with the relevant Social Classes in the other group. Although the agricultural group contained no-one who fell into Class V of the Registrar-General's Scale and might be expected to have lower aspirations than those in other Classes, it also contained no-one in Classes I or IIIa who might be expected to have higher aspirations than those in lower Classes. The non-agricultural group contained people who fell into all six Classes. This difference in the composition of the two groups would be unlikely to affect their aspirations, particularly as many farmworkers, although they fall into Class IV, are in effect unskilled manual workers.)

TABLE XVIII

Parents' Aspirations for Educational Mobility  
for their Children Related to their Social Class

<u>Social Class</u>	<u>Agricultural Group</u>				
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Not Known
II	8	7	-	3	1
IIIb	6	4	-	2	-
IV	6	6	-	-	-

<u>Social Class</u>	<u>Non-Agricultural Group</u>				
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Not Known
II	1	3	-	-	-
IIIb	22	15	1	2	-
IV	-	5	-	-	-

Table XVIII demonstrates that in the agricultural group at least half the parents aspired to upward educational mobility in each Social Class, whereas in the non-agricultural group this was true only of Class IIIb. Differences in Social Class composition did not, therefore, explain the differences between the groups.

It was thought that the differences between the groups might be explained in terms of the educational level the parents had reached themselves. That is to say, it was thought that the agricultural group might contain a high proportion of well-educated parents with high aspirations for their children. The parents were therefore allotted to educational groups on the basis of the education received by the father of the child. (Those who had been educated only to the age of fourteen were placed in Educational Group C, those who had left school after fourteen but before eighteen were placed in Educational Group B, and those who had left at eighteen or had further education were placed in Educational Group A.) Table XIX relates parents' aspirations for their children to their own educational level.

TABLE XIX

Parents' Aspirations for Educational Mobility for their Children Related to their own Educational level

	<u>Agricultural Group</u>			
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know
Educational Group A	-	-	-	-
Educational Group B	1	4	-	2
Educational Group C	19	13	-	3
	<u>Non-Agricultural Group</u>			
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know
Educational Group A	-	3	1	-
Educational Group B	1	4	1	-
Educational Group C	25	26	-	3

N.B. The educational level of 2 fathers was not known.

Table XIX suggests that one reason why the non-agricultural group were more prone to aspire to educational immobility than the other group was that they were, on average, better educated themselves. There are more of the non-agricultural group in Educational Groups A and B above, which means that fewer of them had the opportunity to aspire to upward educational mobility. This can only have had a marginal effect, as the actual proportionate differences between the groups in educational composition are not large. It is significant that more of the agricultural group who fell into Educational Group C aspired to upward mobility, than of the non-agricultural group with the same educational level.

Of course, all the figures upon which the foregoing Tables are based are very small indeed, and it would be dangerous to draw any conclusion except that there is little or no support for the hypothesis that parents in agricultural

families are more likely than other parents to be traditionalists. It does not seem, on the basis of the evidence above, that parents in agricultural families have less ambition for their children's educational success than other parents.

It was the intention in carrying out this study to examine the hypothesis that people who had always lived in the country would be more likely to be traditionalists than those who had lived for some time in an urban area, as well as the hypothesis that was examined above. The sample was therefore once again divided into two groups. In the 'rural' group were the parents who had never lived in an urban district, in the 'non-rural' group those who had at some time lived in a town. The 'rural' group were more numerous than the other group, being 70 in all, against 38 in the 'non-rural' group. The aspirations of these two groups were then compared, as were some aspects of their general interest in education, to discover whether in fact the 'rural' group did approach the traditional attitude to education more closely than the other group.

TABLE XX

Parents' Visits to their Child's School (B)

	Rural Group %	Non-rural Group %
Under 6 months ago	10.0	28.9
Over 6 months ago	62.9	52.7
Never	27.2	18.3

Table XX shows that the non-rural group might be said to have shown more interest in their child's schooling as measured by this criterion, than the other group. More of the non-rural group had visited the school quite recently, and fewer had never been at all. Moreover, in Table XXI

further evidence is given which suggests that the rural group were more traditional in their attitude to education than were the non-rural group. A higher proportion of the rural group than of the other group thought that girls should receive less education than boys.

TABLE XXI

Parents' Views on the Education of Girls (B)

	Rural Group %	Non-Rural Group %
Need as much education as boys	47.1	55.2
Need less education than boys	47.1	31.6
Don't know	-	5.3
It depends on the individual	4.3	5.3
Other reply	<u>1.4</u>	<u>2.6</u>
	70	38

A very high proportion of the rural group thought the curricula of the schools attended by their children were completely satisfactory. If they did criticise them unfavourably it was on the grounds that 'too little time is given to the grounding subjects' and 'the education part'. They often explained that Maths. and English were the 'basic' subjects. This was the attitude it was contended that traditionalists would hold. The rural group also remarked frequently that too much time was devoted to subjects like P.E., dancing and 'acting games'. The non-rural group were far less inclined to accept school timetables unthinkingly, and were also less hostile to unorthodox subjects and activities, while nevertheless hoping that a high standard would be maintained in the academic subjects.

The rural group were also rather more inclined to accept the village schools completely without criticism than were

the other group, and the rural group contained more people who disliked the idea of the amalgamation of the two grammar schools than did the other group. Furthermore, it was the non-rural group which contained the greater proportion of parents hoping that their children would go on to grammar and technical schools. The evidence for all these statements is given in the Appendix.

The difference between the two groups persisted when their aspirations for their children were contrasted, as Table XXII shows.

TABLE XXII

Age that Parents Hoped Children Would Leave School (B)

AGE	Rural Group %	Non-Rural Group %
15	41.4	31.5
16	8.6	18.5
17	7.1	13.2
18	8.6	18.4
As long as possible	1.4	-
Can stay if .....	22.8	15.8
Don't Know	10.0	2.7

The rural group were more inclined to hope that their children would leave at fifteen than were the other group, and less inclined to name any later age. They were also less positive in their ambitions than the non-rural group, being more prone to say that their child might stay on at school under certain conditions, or to say that they did not know whether they hoped it would stay on.

In all the comparisons between the groups made so far it has appeared that there was some support for the hypothesis that the rural group would be more traditional in their attitude to education than would the non-rural group. However, when the aspirations of the two groups for higher education



or training for their children were compared the differences between the groups were less noticeable, as Table XXIII demonstrates.

TABLE XXIII

Parents' Aspirations for  
Further Education or Training for Children (B)

<u>Details of Further Education or Training Aspired to</u>	Rural %	Non-Rural %
None at all	18.6	18.4
University, Medical School, C.A.T.T.	2.9	13.2
Agricultural College	4.3	2.7
Teacher's training college or Nurse's training	15.6	-
Technical college	4.3	5.3
Apprenticeship for named skilled manual job	7.1	5.3
Apprenticeship for unnamed skilled manual job	24.3	34.2
Other Education or Training	2.9	-
Don't Know	17.2	15.8

The proportion from each group who said that they did not hope for any further education or training for their children was very similar. It could perhaps be said that the non-rural group displayed higher aspirations in that they more frequently hoped that their children would go on to university, but that is perhaps offset by the fact that none of them, against 15% of the rural group, hoped that their children would go to training colleges or for nursing training.

Indeed, when the aspirations of parents for educational mobility for their children were compared, the differences were again seen to be very small, as Table XXIV shows.

TABLE XXIV

Aspirations of Parents for Educational Mobility for their Children (B)

	Rural %	Non-Rural %
Upward mobility	40.0	44.5
Immobility	45.7	50.0
Downward mobility	1.4	2.6
Don't Know	10.0	2.6
Not known	2.8	-

It is apparent from the above Table that although a smaller proportion of the rural group did hope for educational mobility for their children, than of the other group, the difference was insufficient to suggest that there was a much greater inclination to traditionalism in the rural group.

The similarity between the two groups is not produced by a higher proportion of the rural group than of the non-rural group thinking their children were above average in ability. More or less the same proportions of each group thought their children were above average, average and below average. It is affected, however, by the Social Class composition of the two groups, in conjunction with the educational level of the parents in the two groups. For example, the rural group contains a large number of parents who, while they fall in Social Classes I or II, nevertheless have a low educational level. These people are inclined to have high aspirations for their children, as members of those Social Classes, and, since they themselves received little education, can aspire to educational mobility for the children. Table XXV relates the Social Class of the parents to their aspirations for their children and reveals significant differences between the groups.

TABLE XXV

Parents' Aspirations for Educational Mobility  
for their Children Related to their Social Class (B)

	<u>Rural Group</u>				
	Up %	Immobile %	Down %	Don't Know %	Not Known %
Social Classes I & II	66.7	22.2	-	11.1	-
Social Classes IIIa-V	34.6	50.0	1.9	9.6	1.9
	<u>Non-Rural Group</u>				
	Up %	Immobile %	Down %	Don't Know %	Not Known %
Social Classes I & II	30.0	60.0	-	10.0	-
Social Classes IIIa-V	53.6	42.9	3.6	-	-

From the above Table it can be seen that in the rural group a big majority of the parents who fell into Classes I and II aspired to upward educational mobility for their children. In the non-rural group the majority of parents in Classes I and II aspired only to educational immobility. But while only 35% of the rural group in Classes I and II had received a good education themselves, 60% of the non-rural group in these Classes had received a good education. Thus in each group the proportions in these Classes aspiring to upward mobility correspond roughly to the proportions who had not themselves received a good education.<sup>16</sup> It is significant, however, that only a minority of the parents in the rural group who fell into Classes IIIa-V aspired to upward educational mobility, whereas a majority of the parents in the non-rural group in these Classes aspired to upward educational mobility. The educational level attained by the parents in each group, in Classes IIIa-V, was roughly similar. That is, the vast majority in both groups had left school at fourteen.

These differences between the groups suggest that the similarity in their overall desire for educational mobility for their children has two causes. In the first place, the enthusiasm of parents in Classes I and II of the rural group for educational mobility, diminishes the effect of the lack of enthusiasm shown by those in other Classes of the rural group. In the second place, the apparent lack of enthusiasm for educational mobility shown by Classes I and II of the non-rural group ('apparent' in that it arises only from the fact that most of them had had a good education themselves, and therefore their desire for their children to have a good education also does not represent a desire for educational mobility) serves to diminish the effect of the real enthusiasm for educational mobility shown by Classes IIIa-V of the non-rural group.

In other words, although the rural group did not at first appear to contain many more traditionalists than the other group, in fact there were differences in the extent of traditionalism in the two groups, although these were not of a simple nature. The body within the rural group most inclined to traditionalism, on the basis of the evidence presented above, was composed of parents who fell mainly into Classes IIIa-V, as might perhaps be expected. Moreover, the parents in Classes IIIa-V in the rural group did appear to be substantially more traditional than those in the non-rural group in these Classes. The party within the rural group least disposed to traditionalism was composed of parents who fell into Social Classes I and II, and of these a considerable number were, of course, well-to-do farmers. Although many of these parents had received little education themselves, having left school for the most part at fourteen, and sometimes earlier, they often hoped for their children to obtain

a much better education than they themselves had enjoyed, leaving school later and going on to further education or training.<sup>17</sup>

Reverting a moment to Table XVIII, it can be seen that those in the agricultural group in Class II had, on average, higher aspirations for their children than those in the non-agricultural group who were their counterparts in terms of Class. This again suggests that the well-established farmers among those who were originally expected to be traditionalists were, in fact, far from being traditional, at least as far as the education of their children was concerned.

A sign perhaps that many farmers were in favour of specialised education, rather than against it on principle, was that all except one of the parents who hoped that their sons would stay at home and take over the farm eventually, said that they hoped the boys would first go to agricultural college. The mother of one boy explained that though she and her husband had always lived in the country, they had only just got their own farm. She went on:

"He hopes to get his O.L. At one time he did want to be a history master, but since we've come here he's farming mad. We want him to go on to agricultural college if we can get him in. He'll be at school till he's seventeen then do a year's practical experience on a farm, then a two-year course for a Diploma."

This is a long way from the traditional idea that it is the father who is his son's teacher on a farm. Another mother, equally far from traditionalism, indeed condemning the traditional attitude by implication, said:

"We want him to go to Harper Adams.<sup>18</sup> The Farm Institute isn't as good. I could almost teach him as much here at home. But we won't have him here if we can help it at first. For his year's training we want to send him away to complete strangers."

Several farmers stressed the importance of sending their sons away to absorb new ideas.

On the other hand, it would not be true to say that all the farmers shared the unqualified enthusiasm of those quoted above, for specialised education. There were many whose minds were not made up, especially among the smaller farmers, and several who were still half inclined to traditional attitudes to education. One farmer was obviously torn between a hope that his daughter would go to university "and do some kind of service work, to meet people and broaden her outlook" and a conflicting desire for her career to follow the traditional pattern for farmers' daughters:

"If she leaves at sixteen I'd like her to do clerical work. Her mother would like her to do domestic science, but in farming a wife who can do the books is a greater asset than one who can cook."

Another farmer's wife said comfortably, a propos of her two daughters, "Of course, on a farm you can always stop at home." She said that for this reason she wouldn't 'push them too much' at school. Similarly, another farmer's wife said of her son:

"He's not too fond of school so I don't expect he'll be stopping. Of course we've got the farm here. He's not exactly a born farmer but he does say now he'll probably stop and help. His father hopes he'll take to farming. They do seem to be very disappointed in their sons as won't follow them."

Another woman showed clearly the indecision about special agricultural training which characterised several agricultural families:

"She'll do something agricultural. Her daddy thinks he can teach her all she needs to know, but it might be a good idea to go away and specialise in poultry or something."

Sometimes the careers of farmers' children had obviously aroused controversy within the family, as in this case:

"She wants to go on at school. Her dad's not in favour. He had to leave school and go on the farm and he seems to think she should be at home helping, but there's no future for her here. I thought she should have taken domestic science more."

One farmer's wife expressed the traditional attitude completely:

"She's not one as is always striving for the top. She'd rather go to training college than university. In our day we never considered whether to go and do something else - we've not got quite the right attitude to a career perhaps. We're too satisfied with our lot. My father used to say that girls needed more education than boys because he was a farmer and wanted them on the land. Mind you he went to the grammar himself. I don't know why. But not nowadays. I never did agree with that."

This farmer's wife has contrived to convey both the fact that satisfaction with the rural way of life continues in many country people, and militates against ambition for their children, and the fact that, nevertheless, ideas have changed slowly. Indeed, her assessment of the situation would seem to be the right one as far as can be judged from the evidence given already. Of course, all the numbers on which the tentative conclusions above are based are very small, and it cannot be asserted very strongly that the conclusions are the correct ones. Nevertheless, it does appear that in North Shropshire there was no support for the hypothesis that those who were engaged in agriculture would be more traditional than those in other occupations, but there was some support for the hypothesis that those who had always lived in a rural area would be more traditional than those who had at some time lived in a town, as far as the education of their children was concerned. It was the surprising interest in education displayed by the agricultural group as a whole, and by the wealthier farmers in particular, which appeared to sway the agricultural group, and to some extent the rural group, away from traditionalism.

As a postscript to the detailed examination of the two hypotheses which has been described above, it was decided to relate parents' aspirations for educational mobility to the sex of the child concerned. This exercise suggests that there is still some tendency in the area to remove boys from school earlier than girls.

TABLE XXVII

Parents' Aspirations for Educational Mobility related to the Sex of the Child

	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Not Known
<u>Agricultural Group:</u>					
Girls	11	7	-	3	-
Boys	9	10	-	2	1
<u>Non-agricultural Group:</u>					
Girls	15	12	1	2	1
Boys	11	21	1	1	-
<u>Rural Group:</u>					
Girls	18	13	1	4	1
Boys	10	19	-	3	1
<u>Non-rural Group:</u>					
Girls	7	7	-	1	-
Boys	10	12	1	-	-

Table XXVII shows with great clarity that in all groups it was hoped that girls would achieve educational mobility more frequently than it was hoped that boys would. The differences between the rural group and the non-rural group are perhaps the most conspicuous in the Table. In the rural group the girls are given preference educationally over the boys, by quite a large margin. The non-rural group contains



considerably less difference between parents' aspirations for the two sexes. Moreover, what differences of aspiration there are can be attributed to the parents' differential assessments of the ability of the girls and the boys. The boys were thought by the non-rural group to possess, on average, less ability than the girls. (See Table XXVIII). The rural group also felt that the boys were on average of lower ability than the girls, but the difference in their assessment of the relative ability of girls and boys is insufficient to explain the big difference in their aspirations for each sex. There is reason to think, therefore, that the rural group were prepared to keep girls at school for longer than boys; paradoxically, since, on average, they thought that girls needed less education than boys.

The differences between the agricultural group and the non-agricultural group are more difficult to interpret. Both groups here aspired more highly for girls than for boys. Indeed, the differences between the two sexes is more marked in the non-agricultural group. However, the people in the non-agricultural group felt that the girls were of higher ability than the boys, which explains to some extent why they had higher aspirations for the girls. This is not true of the agricultural group who, in fact, thought slightly more of the boys than the girls were above average in ability, as Table XXVIII again shows. It is probably true to say that both groups here showed a similar desire to keep girls on at school longer than boys, but that this desire was not as strong as that observed in the rural group.

TABLE XXVIII

Parents' Estimate of Child's Ability Related to Sex of Child

	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Don't Know
<u>Rural Group:</u>				
Girls	11	21	5	-
Boys	4	9	1	1
<u>Non-rural Group:</u>				
Girls	8	21	4	-
Boys	5	15	3	-
<u>Agricultural Group:</u>				
Girls	6	12	2	-
Boys	7	12	3	-
<u>Non-agricultural Group:</u>				
Girls	9	18	4	-
Boys	6	24	4	-

There is therefore some support for the conclusion that rural people, and especially those who have always been country-dwellers, may be more eager to keep girls on at school than they are to keep boys on. Their motives for this are perhaps more complicated than they once were, though undoubtedly the desire to take boys away from school for economic reasons is still present, just as the desire to keep girls at school for prestige reasons is still present. It is also true, however, that this is no longer a simple question of the boys going into farming as quickly as possible. It is difficult to find girls jobs at all in rural areas, let alone jobs that are well-remunerated, whereas for boys it is easier to obtain jobs, and they are of course better paid. Since girls may have to leave home in order to find jobs, their parents prefer them to stay at school until they are at least a little older than fifteen, and have a specific job to go to. Rather than allow children to leave automatically at fifteen and look for a job then, parents keep

them on at school, particularly girls, until there is a job ready for them. Many therefore leave quite suddenly, but not because they have just attained their fifteenth birthday. There is considerable bitterness if the school refuses to allow a boy or girl to leave as soon as the parents ask.

In conclusion, it would perhaps be true to say that while there is less traditionalism than was expected in the attitudes of parents to education in Wem Rural District, there is still a certain amount, especially among those in the lower economic groups who have always lived in a rural area. The farmers, indeed those in agriculture as a whole, were not as traditional as they were expected to be, and displayed high aspirations for their children, in many cases. Although in the district in general there was great interest in education, and further education, and many parents had great ambition for their children - sharpened by the fact that they themselves had had few educational advantages - it is still evident that far-reaching changes in the educational system were not desired by a majority, even when they could appreciate the benefits they would bring, and that many parents retained traces of traditional attitudes, especially regarding the education of girls.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV.

1. Parents of children who were potential technical school pupils were, of course, interviewed, among the parents of children attending secondary modern schools.
  2. It was felt that for the purposes of this survey it was better to interview the father or guardian when the child's mother was not available, than to fail to interview anyone.
  3. "Classification of Occupations". H.M.S.O., 1960, p. X.
  4. All the farmers were again classified as was described earlier in the Chapter.
  5. One of the reasons why this group of men shows less occupational immobility than the random sample discussed in the previous Chapter, is probably that a smaller percentage here were engaged in agriculture.
  6. Klein, V. "Working Wives". Institute of Personnel Management, 1960.
  7. Perhaps it should be said that since the Shropshire sample included only mothers who were chosen because their child was selected earlier, mothers with more than one child in the given age groups stood a relatively greater chance of being picked for the sample than in the case of Klein's national sample. However, we are concerned here with the relative proportions of workers and non-workers in mothers with one, two, three or more children in the given age ranges. The tentative statements made above cannot be criticised on this score. Therefore, because it is not the overall percentages of working mothers in the two samples which are being contrasted.
- The numbers are fairly small in the case of the Shropshire sample. For this reason, and also because the ages of the children were not identical in the two samples (see text), significance tests would be completely inappropriate. The figures here are compatible with the hypothesis that the Shropshire mothers were less likely to go out to work, but probably this is the most that can be said.
8. Klein, V. op. cit., p. 19, Table 3.
  9. See, for example, Rees, A.D. op. cit.
  10. There were equal proportions of men with agricultural jobs among the fathers of primary and secondary school children. Moreover, the average number of children in the families of men with agricultural jobs (3.4) was the same as the average number of children in the families of men in other kinds of occupations. The tendency of wives of men in agriculture to refrain from going out to work is not to be explained in terms of the age or number of their children.

11. Klein, V. op. cit. pp. 18-19. Table 3.
12. But they still showed more tendency to stability than Saville's sample. (See Saville, J. loc. cit.)
13. Rees, A.D. op. cit. (p. 143).

In this random sample half the respondents were women. Of these women, several were unmarried, and hence could not be classified according to their husband's occupation. Many of the women had no occupation themselves, so that they could not be classified in this way either. There was no acceptable way of dividing this sample into "agricultural" and "non-agricultural" respondents.

14. Conditions on which the child might stay on at school included: "If he does well", "if he passes his exams", "if the Head advises it", "if there's anything he's good at", etc.
15. It will be remembered that some parents did not state an age at which their child was hoped to leave, but said he or she might stay on certain conditions. This was regarded as the equivalent of saying the child would stay after the minimum leaving age, but not until 18. Those who said the child would stay "as long as possible" were regarded as similar to those who said that their child would stay till 18.
16. A 'good education' here means that the child's father fell into Educational Group A or B as defined earlier. More of the rural group fell into Group B, again allowing greater scope to aspire to upward educational mobility for their child.
17. The tendency for those in Class II of the rural group to have higher aspirations than their counterparts in the non-rural group cannot be explained in terms of their estimates of their children's ability. Nor can the tendency of those in Classes IIIa-V to aspire lower than their counterparts be explained in these terms. The rural group Classes I and II contained fewer people (proportionately) who thought their child above average, than did the non-rural group I and II. The rural group Classes IIIa-V contained a high proportion than the same Classes of the other group, who thought their child above average.
18. Agricultural College in Shropshire.

CHAPTER V

The Aspirations of Parents in North Shropshire  
for their Children's Future Occupations and Place of Work

The survey of parents' aspirations in Wem Rural District was concerned not only with the hopes of parents for their children's educational careers, but with their hopes regarding the children's future occupations and the places where they would work.

In Chapter I it was said that the traditionalist would have no desire for his children to climb an occupational 'ladder'. He would not aspire to occupations for his children which required greater training, skill or education than his own required. Nor would he aspire to occupations for them which brought a higher economic reward or social status than his own. (His desire for continuity would mean, similarly, that he would not wish his children to follow occupations demanding less skill, training or education than his own, or offering lower economic reward or social status.) It was also said in Chapter I that the traditionalist would show especially little interest in the idea of careers for girls, expecting their role to lie almost exclusively within the home.

It was hypothesised therefore, that while the district as a whole would probably contain many parents with the traditional attitudes to their children's future occupations that have been described, the parents with traditional views would be found chiefly in two particular groups: in the 'agricultural group', composed of parents dependent for their livelihood on agriculture, and in the 'rural group', composed of parents who had always lived in the country.

All the parents were asked what occupation they hoped their children would take up eventually. Surprisingly

few parents replied that they did not know, or could not answer the question. (Only 12 out of 108.) Nearly all the remaining parents named a specific occupation which they hoped their children would take up, only a few, again, giving an imprecise answer such as 'a trade', 'a profession', or 'office work'. It was therefore possible to classify nearly all the occupations suggested for the children according to the Registrar-General's Scale of Social Classes, and also to categorise them as 'agricultural' or 'non-agricultural'.

It was immediately apparent that a large number of parents did hope that their children's jobs would be very different from their own. It was not by any means true that a majority of the parents aspired only to jobs similar in skill, training and economic and social standing to their own. In Table I the distribution of the occupations that were desired for the children is given, and it will be noted that few parents aspired to unskilled or semi-skilled manual jobs for their children, and many to Intermediate or Professional occupations. In fact, when parents' aspirations for their children's occupations were related to the occupations held by the fathers of the children (by comparing the Social Class the father's occupation fell into, with the Social Class the desired occupation fell into, in the way described earlier) it was found that 46.3% of the informants aspired to upward occupational mobility for their children, 31.5% to occupational immobility and 11.1% to downward occupational mobility. The aspirations of the remaining 11.1% could not be measured. The proportion of parents aspiring to occupational immobility was thus considerably smaller than the proportion of fathers who had themselves

experienced occupational immobility, and the proportion aspiring to upward mobility for their children was much higher than the proportion of fathers who had themselves achieved upward occupational mobility.<sup>1</sup>

TABLE I

Parents' Aspirations for Occupations for their Children,  
(Using the Registrar-General's Scale of Social Classes)<sup>2</sup>

<u>I</u>	<u>II</u>	<u>IIIa</u>	<u>IIIb</u>
6 (5.6%)	36 (33.3%)	15 (13.8%)	27 (25%)
<u>IV</u>	<u>V</u>	<u>Armed Forces<sup>3</sup></u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
9 (8.3%)	-	3 (2.8%)	12 (11.2%)

The parents also showed a marked disinclination to aspire to agricultural occupations for their children. Only fifteen of them, far less than half the number actually dependent upon agriculture themselves, suggested jobs in farming for their children. Incidentally, it was noticeable that the primary school parents were particularly reluctant to encourage their children to enter agriculture. Only 6.3% of them, against 20.0% of the secondary school parents aspired to agricultural occupations for their children. This no doubt reflects to some extent the secondary school parents' greater appreciation of employment opportunities in the area, but it suggests strongly that parents in the area were dissatisfied with agriculture as a career for their children. That both these points have some weight is confirmed by the remarks of the informants. For example, one mother of a secondary modern school boy explained that she was making desperate efforts to get him accepted as an apprentice electrical engineer, but she ended by saying, "He'll probably have to come down to a farmworker". Farmwork was clearly regarded by most parents as a last and undesirable resort.



This description of the general aspects of parents' aspirations for their children conceals the fact that there were great differences between the aspirations of parents for girls and for boys. It was to be expected that relatively few parents would hope that their daughters would take up agricultural occupations, except that it was thought that some farmers might want their daughters to stay at home on the farm. In fact, only four (7.7%) of the girls' parents hoped that they would go into agriculture. It is perhaps more meaningful, therefore, to say that eleven (19.6%) of the boys' parents hoped that their sons would take up agricultural occupations, rather than that fifteen (13.8%) of the parents of both boys and girls hoped their children would go into agriculture. It should be noted that there was only one farming family in which it was hoped that a daughter would stay on the farm, and no other occupation was even tentatively mentioned for her, although in several cases it was said that a girl could always stay on the farm if she failed to get another job.

What was emphatically not expected, was that parents' aspirations for girls should be different from aspirations for boys in that they often aspired to jobs for girls requiring considerably more education and training than those suggested for boys, and possibly (if the Registrar-General's Scale of Social Classes is accepted as a criterion) affording higher economic and social standing. Table II shows that there were considerable differences in the types of occupations that were aspired to for each sex.

TABLE II

Parents' Aspirations for their Children's Occupations Related to the Sex of the Child

	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IV	V	Don't Know
Girls (52)	-	28(53.8%)	11(21.2%)	2(3.8%)	7(13.5%)	-	4(7.7%)
Boys (56)	6(10.7%)	8(14.3%)	4(7.1%)	28(50.0%)	2(3.6%)	-	8(14.3%)

Far from the parents in the area being unambitious for their daughters, the Table suggests that the majority of the girls' parents were unusually eager for them to obtain good occupations. It is difficult to explain why there should be such a great difference between the number of girls' parents who aspired to Intermediate (Class II) occupations for them and the number of boys' parents who did so. The difference is all the more remarkable in that there were a number of well-established farmers who hoped that their sons would enter farming but none who hoped that their daughters would do so. (These boys would therefore fall into Class II)<sup>4</sup>. It will be noted also that the number of boys' parents aspiring to occupations of a skilled manual and non-manual kind (Class III) was much greater than the number of girls' parents doing so. The tendency for the girls' parents to eschew manual occupations for them, and any occupation falling into Class III, and to prefer Intermediate occupations, resulted in the fact that far more parents of girls than boys hoped their children would achieve upward occupational mobility (as defined earlier). Table III shows that there were great differences between the parents of the girls and the parents of the boys in their aspirations for occupational mobility.

TABLE III

Parents' Aspirations for Occupational  
Mobility for Children Related to Sex of Child

	<u>Upward mobility</u>	<u>Immobility</u>	<u>Downward mobility</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Girls (52)	31 (59.7%)	11 (21.2%)	6 (11.6%)	4 (7.7%)
Boys (56)	19 (33.9%)	23 (41.1%)	6 (10.8%)	8 (14.2%)

Table III shows that while a substantial majority of the girls' parents hoped for upward occupational mobility for their children, the proportion of the boys' parents doing so was much smaller. Indeed, the largest single group among the boys' parents hoped for occupational immobility for their sons. It was the parents of the girls, therefore, who made the informants appear to be for the most part non-traditional in their attitudes to their children's future occupations.

The causes of the non-traditionalism among the girls' parents are by no means certain, as has already been suggested. It may be, however, that the scarcity of jobs for girls in the area, and especially jobs of a skilled manual or clerical kind, was at least partially responsible for the high aspirations of many of the girls' parents. The parents' understanding of the local labour market naturally affected their aspirations for their children. Many of them pointed out that this was so. Very few parents aspired to clerical jobs for their children. (The number of girls' parents aspiring to jobs in Class IIIa for them was small, as can be seen in Table II, and the majority of these parents aspired to jobs as shop assistants for their daughters and not jobs as typists or clerks. Only three of the boys' parents and five of the girls' aspired to blackcoated jobs for them.) Few parents suggested jobs such as 'telephonist', 'receptionist' or 'hairdresser' for their daughters, even among those who

had children only at primary schools and might not be familiar with the difficulties facing those trying to place their children in jobs locally. Only two of the girls' parents aspired to skilled manual jobs for them. Altogether the variety of the occupations suggested for the girls was remarkably small, and this must surely be interpreted as a result of the paucity of opportunities in the area for them.

The fact that the occupation suggested most frequently for girls was teaching, seemed to represent as much a recognition of the fact that it is almost impossible to obtain clerical jobs locally, as a genuine ambition on the part of parents for girls to go into this particular occupation. It seemed that if girls showed any promise at all at school then parents were inclined to hope that they might go into one of the two occupations for women which seem to make leaving home easiest: teaching and nursing. (The latter was the job suggested most often after teaching for the girls.) A great many parents seemed to feel that teaching and nursing were good jobs 'which you can always go back to' and were yet not completely unattainable. The parents of the girls could not aspire to jobs which were the equivalent of the skilled manual occupations which so many of the boys' parents wanted for their sons, and they therefore aimed somewhat higher. They did not aim lower, for as they said, 'There's only domestic round here', and they felt that unskilled manual jobs were completely undesirable. 'I'm not having her cleaning other women's floors like I had to', said one mother, expressing the sentiments of several. The girls' parents were not ambitious enough for their daughters to aspire to Professional (Class I) occupations for them, however, whereas six of the boys' parents did so. Thus although there is no evidence that the people of Wem Rural

District were less concerned about the careers of their daughters than of their sons it must be remembered that they were strongly affected in their hopes by the realities of the local employment situation. It was paradoxical that a situation in which acceptable jobs for girls were very scarce in the area, seemed to produce the result that their families hoped they would obtain very good jobs eventually - indeed, in some respects better jobs than those to which the boys' parents aspired.

Certainly the tendency for parents to aspire to the jobs which require a high level of education and training for girls more frequently than for boys cannot be explained solely in terms of the ability they attributed to the girls compared with the boys. It is true that they did consider more of the girls than of the boys were above average in ability (28.8% against 23.2%) but this difference is too small to account for the very wide difference in aspirations. (There was almost no difference between the proportion of boys considered to be below average in ability and the proportion of girls thought to be below average.) Nor was there any difference in the occupations followed by the girls' fathers, or in the educational level of the girls' fathers, compared with the occupations of the boys' fathers and their educational level, which could account for this difference in aspirations, between the parents of girls and the parents of boys.

It must be concluded that the majority of the girls' parents did feel concern over their future occupations. They also felt that there were few occupations, which were acceptable, available in the district and on the other hand, few which involved leaving home which were wholly desirable. They disliked the idea of their daughters leaving home to

work, but thought that at least as student teachers or nurses they would be under some surveillance, and that these jobs would give them some chance to find positions locally after their training. They were reluctant to suggest that their daughters might become typists or clerks, because they knew that there were few openings locally, and they were unwilling to let the girls leave home at a relatively young age to go to places where there would be no-one to act in loco parentis. Not even the possibility of commuting, which seemed, a priori, the obvious solution, appealed to the girls' parents, for, as they were quick to point out, transport costs would absorb any extra wages a girl earned by taking a job in Shrewsbury or Wellington. Manual jobs within the area were felt to be undesirable except when there was no other choice at all.

It was noticeable, however, that despite the high aspirations of the girls' parents, they did not complain quite as bitterly about the lack of opportunity in the district as did the boys' parents. This was surprising, as there was in fact a greater range of jobs open to boys, and vacancies occurred more frequently for them. Furthermore, for the boys there was the not-too-unattractive alternative of a trade apprenticeship in one of the Services. Nevertheless, many of the boys' parents, and especially those who hoped their sons would take up skilled manual work, said that there were far too few openings, while the girls' parents made only token protests. It may be that the girls' parents felt that if they failed to obtain good jobs it was a less serious matter than if boys failed. The tenor of their remarks often suggested that this was so. The parents were more traditional than they at first appeared, in many ways, although it cannot be disputed that their aspirations for

their children, and especially the girls, were far higher than was expected.

Parents' anxiety concerning their children's jobs was revealed in their words. Said one grammar school boy's mother:

"There's not much round here. I'm afraid he'll have to go away. There's a lot of boys never got jobs when they left last September. One farmer's son down here wanted to get an office job, but he's no qualifications. If he was mine I'd have sent him to night school to learn short-hand and typing when he's got his heart set on an office. But he's had to go on the farm helping his dad."

Nearly all the parents echoed the observation, "There's just nothing for them round here." The farmers, shopkeepers and other self-employed people often expressed a certain self-satisfaction in that their children would experience fewer difficulties than others.

"Of course, I can always find something for her to do here."

"Well, his father always says he can go off joiner-ing with him."

"Of course we've got the garage here."

These were just a few of the remarks made by those who could employ their children themselves if need be.

Many of the parents were worried enough about their children's future jobs to try and secure positions for them, often years before they left school. Their statements justify the conclusion that personal influence and contacts often determined the appointments to jobs in a district where they are rather scarce.

The mother of one secondary modern school boy was obviously anxious:

"I have found a firm willing to take him as an appren-tice, though whether there will still be an opening for him when he leaves in a year's time, I don't know."

Jobs for girls were often obtained because parents were lucky enough to know that another was getting married or leaving her job for some other reason:

"Janet is going to work in a shop. I happen to know the people, and someone is getting married so they are letting her have the job. She was just lucky."

Even the farmers wanting workers were in a favourable position in the labour market, as is shown by the comments of a shopkeeper who had one son already working for her, and probably did not feel she could employ another:

"I've not the foggiest idea what Peter will do. The trouble is, they know they've got the kind of daddy who they can come back on. He knows his dad will probably say at the last moment, 'Well I've got you a job at so-and-so,' or 'I've spoken to old so-and-so about you.' He's not the sort that will take anything that comes either. One well-known farmer round here worded him would he like to go on his farm when he leaves and he told him quite openly he wouldn't give it any consideration. He didn't even discuss it with us. I suppose he thinks he's got to do the work so he'll choose it. He's so self-willed and modern in his ideas."

This woman, despite the low esteem in which farmwork was held locally, would have been quite relieved if her son has accepted the farmer's offer. She regarded it as natural that the occupation her son took up eventually should depend partly on the potential employers his father knew, and partly on the potential employers, who noticed the boy himself.

In some respects, therefore, the parents were traditional in their attitudes to their children's future jobs. Particularly, they showed their traditionalism in their tendency to expect that jobs would be obtained through the agency of friends, acquaintances and relatives. Moreover, the parents of the boys included a large number who aspired only to occupational immobility for their sons, and a considerable proportion who aspired to agricultural jobs. Furthermore, although the girls' parents appeared at first to be



startlingly non-traditional in their outlook, and although it must be acknowledged that they were far more interested in their daughters' careers than was anticipated, they did reveal certain traditional attitudes. They were especially prone to remark that they did not mind if their daughters succeeded in entering the occupation suggested for them, and were often very vague as to the qualifications required for the occupations they chose. For example, only 46% of the parents who suggested that their daughters might become teachers or nurses had earlier said that they hoped the girls would go to university, training college or teaching hospital. The boys' parents, on the other hand, often stressed the fact that it would be a great disappointment to them if their hopes were frustrated, and they were generally aware of the qualifications their sons had to have to enter the occupations suggested for them.

The evidence gives only tentative support to the general hypothesis that the rural district would contain many people with traditional attitudes to their children's future occupations. And as with parents' attitudes to education, there was no simple pattern of traditional beliefs to be discerned.

When the aspirations of the parents in the 'agricultural group' were compared with the aspirations of parents in the 'non-agricultural' group, there was only slight evidence that there were more traditionalists in the agricultural group. In Table IV it is shown that a substantial proportion of the parents in the agricultural group hoped that their children would continue to work in agriculture. Only a very small proportion of the parents in the non-agricultural group hoped that their children would take up agricultural jobs. The proportion of parents in the agricultural group

who hoped that their children would inherit agricultural occupations was a great deal smaller than the proportion of the same group who hoped that their children would take up non-agricultural jobs, however. Indeed, virtually the same proportion of parents in each group aspired to non-agricultural jobs for their children.

TABLE IV

Parents' Aspirations for their Children's Occupations - Agricultural or Non-Agricultural

<u>Occupation aspired to for child</u>	<u>Agricultural Group</u>	<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>
Agricultural	10 (23.3%)	5 (7.7%)
Non-agricultural	31 (72.1%)	47 (72.3%)
Armed Forces	-	3 (4.6%)
Don't Know, etc.	2 (4.7%)	10 (15.4%)

Differences revealed between the two groups by Table IV include the fact that the only parents who hoped that their sons would go into the Forces occurred in the non-agricultural group. The non-agricultural group also contained more parents who were uncertain of their aspirations for their children's future occupations.

The remarks of some of the parents in the agricultural group suggest that many of them had devoted a great deal more thought to their children's careers than had been expected. There was a decisiveness in their replies to questions about their children's future jobs which was lacking in many parents in the other group, and which suggested that the questions had been thoroughly discussed within the family, and long resolved. One farmer's wife explained that her son wanted to work on the farm with his father, and that they had therefore sent him to the county grammar school rather than to an independent school like his sister:

"We'd rather spend the money on David later. They need help if they're going to start farming on their own."

Another farmer's wife said that she would send her daughter to London to have a good secretarial training when she was eighteen, because "her brother will have the farm and I don't want her dependent on him. She should have a career."

These and other comments showed a high degree of planning for the future in farming families.

There was also a certain self-consciousness among the farmers and their wives, who had evidently been taught by public opinion to doubt whether it was quite 'right' to want to keep their sons and daughters at home on the farm. Some of them felt compelled to justify themselves at length for their desire to keep their children at home. Said one grammar school boy's mother:

"I think he wants to farm. I would like him to have engineering as well, to be able to mend the implements and know what to buy and what not. He's the only one would take to it. The others aren't keen on farming at all and he is keen really. If he was going to be a scientific farmer he'd need some training but as he's going to farm here he wouldn't need it. He might go to technical college at Chester on the two-year course - if he's clever enough to go to grammar school he ought to be able to take something in. But they don't have much time for reading on a farm. There's always jobs to be done."

The boy was only thirteen and it was clearly a settled fact that he would go on to the farm, which was a relatively big one of 150 acres, on which his father employed no men. His mother felt that she must rationalise the decision about his occupation, and make it appear that he would receive some training and not merely be removed from school as soon as possible to help his father. Her remarks were characteristic of those made by several of the group of informants who hoped that their children would stay on family farms.

Yet, despite the sensitivity to criticism, the farming families showed, by their defensive attitudes, it is significant that the proportion of boys who were hoped to go into agriculture was as high as 41% in the agricultural group. (Of the four girls who were hoped to take up agricultural occupations, only one had parents in the agricultural group. This was the farmer's daughter who has been mentioned already.) In the non-agricultural group parents aspired to agricultural jobs for only 5.9% of the boys.

Among the farmer's sons, 30% were hoped to work on the family farm, and no other occupation was suggested for them. (In addition to the parents with farms who said that they definitely hoped their children would work on their farm, there were a large number who said that their children could 'always fall back on the farm' if they failed to get the jobs that were aspired to for them.) If 30% seems a relatively low proportion, it should be remembered that many of the farmers concerned had children who had already left school, apart from the child in question, and that 58% of these farmers were employing one or more of their other children on their farm. (Only two of the boys who were expected to go on to a family farm had a brother already working at home.) Of the informants who said that they did not want this particular son to go on to the farm, all except two had another, younger son whom they hoped would stay at home, or an older son already at home.

There was no reason at all to think that the farmers in this area hoped to establish all their sons as farmers, but there was strong reason to think that they hoped to set up at least one son as a farmer. This was not, apparently, necessarily likely to be their eldest son, but rather the son

who showed most aptitude and inclination, and left school at a time when his father felt the farm could 'carry' him. It is perhaps worth noting that the farmers who hoped to bring the son concerned in the survey on to the farm were for the most part those with the larger farms, over 100 acres. This suggests that those farmers who were already firmly established knew that they would be in a position to pass on the farm to their children with sufficient capital to run it, and could therefore be more positive in their aspirations than some of the smaller farmers. The large farmers could also contemplate the possibility of employing more than one of their children on the farm more easily than could the small farmers.

While it is true to say that the farmers as a whole did show a marked tendency to traditionalism in their desire to bring their sons into farming, it must be pointed out that the majority of the other self-employed people in the sample were also hoping to employ, or already employed, one of their children at least. For example, there were a number of shopkeepers who said that they hoped their children would work for them: a garage owner, a builder, an accountant and an agricultural engineer and blacksmith. The farmers were only distinguished from other self-employed people in the sample by the unanimity of their desire to see one of their sons continue in the same occupation.

Although a good many of the agricultural group were traditional in the sense that they hoped their children would also take up agricultural occupations, Table V shows that they showed signs of non-traditionalism in their aspirations for occupational mobility for their children.

TABLE V

Aspirations of Parents for Occupational Mobility for their Children

	<u>Agricultural Group</u>	<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>
	%	%
Upward occupational mobility	51.1	43.1
Occupational immobility	39.5	26.2
Downward occupational mobility	4.7	15.4
Don't Know	<u>4.7</u>	<u>15.4</u>
	43	65

It is true that the proportion of parents in the agricultural group aspiring to occupational immobility for their children was greater than the proportion in the other group who did so. However, there was also a higher proportion of the agricultural group than of the other group who aspired to upward occupational mobility for their children. The proportion aspiring to upward occupational mobility in the agricultural group was higher than the proportion aspiring to immobility in the same group. Although the agricultural group were more traditional than the non-agricultural group, therefore, in that the non-agricultural group were less prone to aspire to occupations very similar to their own for their children, the traditionalists did not form a majority of the agricultural group. Many of the agricultural group were ambitious for their children to obtain occupations needing greater skill, training or education than their own, and perhaps giving higher economic and social standing. Only a small proportion of the agricultural group aspired to downward occupational mobility for their children, but a larger proportion of the other group did so.

There was no evidence that either group contained a preponderance of parents who thought that their children were above average in ability or below average. Table VI shows that the parents in the non-agricultural group were inclined to aspire to jobs for their children which demanded less skill and training than their own, even when they believed the children to be above average in ability, or average. The non-agricultural group did not aspire to upward mobility for children they considered to be below average as frequently as the agricultural group did. The agricultural group perhaps gave less consideration to the ability of their children when choosing their future occupations, than did the non-agricultural group. Or it may be that they were led into greater optimism concerning their children's future jobs than the non-agricultural group displayed, by the fact that they could always employ the children themselves in the last resort. (Or in the case of the farmworkers, they could for the most part easily find them jobs on farms locally.) The agricultural group as a whole may have been less aware of the difficulties of obtaining jobs for their children than the non-agricultural group, who may have had greater experience of a competitive labour market in which qualifications were of great importance. In any case, the agricultural group aspired to upward occupational mobility for the children they thought were above average and below average more frequently than did the other group, and the two groups were similar in their aspirations for upward mobility for the children they thought were average.

TABLE VI

Parents' Aspirations for Occupational Mobility for their Children Related to their Estimate of the Child's Ability

	<u>Agricultural Group</u>				<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>			
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know
Above Average	9	4	-	-	6	5	3	1
Average	10	11	1	2	20	8	7	7
Below Average	3	1	1	-	2	4	-	2

N.B. One parent could make no estimate of child's ability.

When the parents' aspirations for occupational mobility for their children were related to their own Social Class, it was found that the parents in the agricultural group, whatever their Social Class, were more ambitious for their children than the parents in the other group were. This is shown by Table VII.

TABLE VII

Parents' Aspirations for Occupational Mobility for their Children Related to their Own Social Class

Social Class	<u>Agricultural Group</u>				<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>			
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know
II	4	12	1	2	-	1	3	-
IIIb	7	4	1	-	16	14	4	6
IV	11	1	-	-	3	1	-	1

When the parents' aspirations for occupational mobility for their children were related to their own educational level, it was found that those in the agricultural group whose own education had been comparatively poor were more ambitious for their children than the parents in the non-agricultural group who had received a similar education.



TABLE VIII

Parents' Aspirations for  
Occupational Mobility for their Children  
Related to their own Educational Level

	<u>Agricultural Group</u>				<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>			
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know
Educa- tional Group A	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
Educa- tional Group B	2	5	-	-	2	2	1	1
Educa- tional Group C	20	12	2	1	24	14	8	8

N.B. Educational level of 2 fathers was not known.

The aspirations of parents in each group for occupational mobility for their children were also related to the sex of the child concerned. It was found that the agricultural group showed a less pronounced inclination to aspire to upward mobility for girls rather than boys than the non-agricultural group did. This suggests that the non-agricultural group were slightly more non-traditional in this respect. Neither group, however, was strongly traditional for in both a majority of the girls' parents aspired to upward mobility for them, while only a minority of the boys' parents did so. This can be seen from Table IX.

TABLE IX

Parents' Aspirations for Occupational Mobility  
for their Children Related to the Sex of the Child (B)

	<u>Agricultural Group</u>				<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>			
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know
Girls (52)	12	8	1	-	19	3	5	4
Boys (56)	10	9	1	2	9	14	5	6

It seems, therefore, that there is very little support for the hypothesis that the agricultural group would be more traditional in their attitudes to their children's future occupations than the non-agricultural group. What support there is, derives from the fact that quite a large proportion of the agricultural group hoped that their sons would continue in agriculture, the farmers especially hoping to keep one of their sons at home on the farm. Partly because they were often inclined to hope their sons would continue in agriculture, the agricultural group aspired to occupational immobility for their children more frequently than the non-agricultural group did. The agricultural group were not as conspicuously non-traditional in their attitudes to their daughters' jobs as were the other group.

It must be reiterated, however, that the farmers' desire to take their sons on to their farm was reflected by a similar desire on the part of many of the other self-employed people to have their children working with them. Moreover, only one farmer's daughter was expected to stay at home on the farm, no alternative occupation being suggested. More important, the proportion of the agricultural group aspiring to upward mobility for their children was greater than the proportion in the other group who did so. In some ways the agricultural group might almost be described as more ambitious for their children than the other group, although the smallness of the sample precludes any categorical statement being made. It seems true to say that the farmers, in particular, were again eager to further their children's careers in any way possible. In many cases it seemed that they regarded the farm as an insurance against the eventuality of their children failing to obtain the jobs chosen for them, rather than as the inevitable source of employment for them. Most of the

farmers did not think in terms of establishing all their sons in farming, nor did the majority think of their children as cheap labour, though a very small number obviously did. They thought rather of the number of people the farm could economically support in the long run, and consequently, only a few of the bigger farmers hoped to keep more than one child at home.

The farm workers were often disenchanted with agriculture as a career, pointing out the disadvantages of a 'seven-day-a-week' job in dairying, with low wages and poor standing in the community. Many elaborated on the evils of tied cottages and the difficulties of living on remote farms or in small villages. It is hardly surprising that very few farmworkers hoped their sons would continue in agriculture, and only one hoped for his son to be a farmworker.

In summary, it may be said that while the agricultural group were perhaps rather more traditional than the other group, on the whole, many of the farmers had a strong desire to see their children established in jobs that they felt were better than their own, often outside agriculture, and most of the farmworkers hoped that their sons would leave agriculture altogether.

No great difference was found between the amount of traditionalism displayed by the rural group (the parents who had always lived in the country) and that shown by the non-rural group (the parents who had at some time lived in an urban area), when their aspirations for their children's future occupations were compared. The non-rural group, indeed, contained a slightly larger proportion of parents who hoped that their children would go into agriculture than did the other group, but on the whole Table X reveals similarities between the groups rather than differences.

TABLE X

Parents' Aspirations for Children's Future Occupations (B)

Occupation Aspired to for Child	Rural Group	Non-rural Group
Agricultural	9 (12.8%)	6 (15.8%)
Non-agricultural	52 (74.3%)	26 (68.3%)
Armed Forces	1 ( 1.4%)	2 ( 5.3%)
Don't Know	8 (11.4%)	4 (10.6%)

When the aspirations of parents in the rural group and the non-rural group for occupational mobility for their children were compared, it was found that it was the non-rural group in which the larger proportion of parents aspired to occupational immobility. Table XI shows that the parents in the rural group were more prone to aspire to upward mobility for their children than were the other parents.

TABLE XI

Parents' Aspirations for  
Occupational Mobility for their Children (B)

	Rural Group	Non-rural Group
Upward Occupational Mobility	48.6%	42.1%
Occupational Immobility	28.6%	36.8%
Downward Occupational Mobility	11.4%	10.6%
Don't Know	<u>11.4%</u>	<u>10.6%</u>
	70	38

Table XII shows, moreover, that the rural group aspired to occupational mobility for their children more frequently than the other group, whatever their estimate of their children's ability.

TABLE XII

Parents' Aspirations for Occupational Mobility for their Children Related to their Estimates of the Child's Ability

	<u>Rural Group</u>				<u>Non-rural Group</u>			
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know
Above Average	13	3	2	1	5	3	1	-
Average	18	14	5	5	9	8	3	4
Below Average	3	3	1	2	1	3	-	-

N.B. 1 parent could make no estimate of child's ability.

In Table XIII the aspirations of each group for occupational mobility for their children are related to their own Social Class. The Table reveals that the most striking difference in aspirations was between the parents in each group who fell into Class IIIb. Those in the rural group in Class IIIb had higher aspirations than those in the non-rural group in this Class. There were few differences in the aspirations of parents in each group who fell into other Classes. This suggests that the principal source of non-traditional attitudes to children's jobs in the rural group was the parents who fell into Class IIIb. A fair proportion of these were of course the smaller farmers, but there were also a good many skilled workers who had always lived in the country, who were more ambitious for their children than had been expected.

TABLE XIII

Parents' Aspirations for Occupational Mobility for their Children Related to their own Social Class (B)

Social Class	<u>Rural Group</u>				<u>Non-rural Group</u>			
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know
I	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	1
II	3	10	2	2	1	3	2	1
IIIa	1	-	2	-	3	-	-	-
IIIb	18	9	4	4	5	9	1	2
IV	7	1	-	1	6	1	-	-
V	5	-	-	-	1	-	-	-

When the parents' aspirations were related to their own educational level it was found that those in the rural group were slightly more inclined to aspire to upward mobility for their children, whatever their own education had been, than were parents in the other group. Table XIV demonstrates this.

TABLE XIV

Parents' Aspirations for Occupational Mobility for their Children Related to their own Educational level

	<u>Rural Group</u>				<u>Non-rural Group</u>			
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know
Educational Group A	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
Educational Group B	3	3	1	1	1	4	-	-
Educational Group C	30	17	7	6	14	9	3	3

N.B. Educational level of 2 parents in the rural group was not known.

The rural group and the non-rural group both aspired to upward occupational mobility more frequently for girls than for boys, although this tendency was more marked in the non-rural group. A majority in each group aspired to upward mobility for girls and only a minority in each group to upward mobility for boys, as Table XV shows. The rural group were not as strongly non-traditional in their attitudes to girls' occupations as the other group, therefore, but they were nevertheless far from being traditional in this respect.

TABLE XV

Parents' Aspirations for Occupational Mobility for their Children related to the Sex of the Child (C)

	<u>Rural Group</u>				<u>Non-rural Group</u>			
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know
Girls	22	7	5	3	9	4	1	1
Boys	13	12	3	5	6	11	3	3

The analysis has therefore shown that there was no firm evidence to support the hypothesis that the people who had always lived in the country would be more traditional in their attitudes to their children's future occupations than were those who had lived in urban areas. Many of the small farmers and skilled workers who had always lived in the country were surprisingly non-traditional. These people had often had little opportunity themselves to embark on careers different from those of their own fathers, but were enterprising people, ambitious on behalf of their children.

The parents in general, therefore, were far less traditional in their aspirations for their children's occupations than had been anticipated. There was perhaps a little evidence that the agricultural group contained more traditionalists than the non-agricultural group, the traditionalists in the agricultural group being mainly the farmers who hoped their sons would follow them on to the farm. There was virtually no evidence, however, to support the hypothesis that the rural group would have more traditional attitudes to their children's future occupations than the non-rural group.

The parents were all asked where they hoped their children would work when they eventually obtained jobs. Only nine of the parents said that they did not know at all, and the majority of the parents said that they hoped their children would work in a particular place, rather than replying vaguely 'In the town' or 'In the country'. Many of the parents (20.4%) hoped that their children would work either at home (in most cases on a farm) or in the parish where they themselves lived. A further 14.8% of the parents hoped that their children would work 'in the country'. (Most of the parents who expressed this hope wanted their children to remain in North Shropshire, although they did not hope for jobs for

them in their own parish. A few only suggested that their children might work elsewhere, in the country.) Altogether, therefore, about 30% of the parents hoped that their children would work in the rural area locally.

It is interesting to note that the proportion of parents who hoped that their children would obtain occupations locally is very much larger than the proportion who said that they wanted their children to go into agricultural occupations. (13.8%). This is partly accounted for by the fact that it was hoped that some of the boys would work at Rubery Owen's factory in the Rural District, or for one of the small building firms in the area. There were, however, a number of parents whose desire for their children to work in the district seemed inconsistent with the aspirations they had expressed for their occupations. For example, two of the girls' parents hoped for jobs for them as teachers, yet hoped they would be able to work 'round here in the country'. It was improbable that both ambitions could be fulfilled, though not, of course, impossible. Some of the boys' parents also said that they hoped that their sons would work locally, but had earlier suggested jobs for them which were unlikely to be available in the parish or nearby in the country. (Three, for example, wanted their sons to be carpenters, one a draughtsman, one a photographer.) There was little doubt but that many parents would have to sacrifice either their aspirations for their children's jobs or their aspirations for their places of work.

There were a good many parents who hoped that their children would work in towns which were less than ten miles away from where they themselves lived. 14.8% said that they hoped their children would work in Whitchurch, Wem or Market Drayton. The great majority of these parents specified Whitchurch as the place where they hoped that their children



would work. Obviously all these parents expected their children to live at home and commute to work in one of the market towns when they first got jobs. Whitchurch was not only the largest of the nearby market towns, but also the most accessible by public transport, as was pointed out in Chapter II.

A somewhat smaller proportion of parents (13.9%) hoped that their children would work in a town between ten and thirty miles from where they themselves lived. Nearly all these parents specified Shrewsbury as the town where they hoped that their child would work, but a few mentioned Wellington and one Wrexham. It was significant that these parents, too, were expecting their children to commute to work from their present homes. Most of them pointed out that the children would be able to travel with their brothers, fathers, or other relatives and acquaintances. The people who said that they hoped their children would work in these comparatively distant towns invariably said that it was conditional upon their being able to find some form of transport, and always said that public transport was inadequate, and too expensive for children starting work in any case.

The great majority of the parents envisaged, therefore, that their children would want to continue to live at home when they obtained their first job, for both financial and emotional reasons. Many expressly said that they would not allow their children to go away from home, because they would be too young. Others said that their children would gain nothing by leaving, because the cost of lodgings would absorb most of their wages. In many households the question of where the children would work had evidently been much discussed, and most parents had concluded that it was best to keep the children at home to try to obtain an acceptable job locally, or a better job within commuting distance which would justify.

expenditure on fares. It was not automatically accepted that they would remain at home, however, because it was recognised that there were very few acceptable jobs available locally, and that they were not well-paid. The children whose relatives worked in Shrewsbury or Wellington already and could both help them to find jobs and help them to get to work each day, were often regarded as very fortunate. On the other hand, however, many parents were opposed to the idea of their children commuting long distances, even among those who could have helped them to do so. One woman said, "He'll work round here. He's not going forty miles to work every day like his dad." It was acknowledged that the position for boys was less difficult than for girls. In the first place, there were more jobs for them in the rural area, and in the second their wages were higher if they commuted to work, and they could better afford the fares. Even so, the problem of where their children would work was a very acute one for the parents of boys as well as girls, and when they were asked what their hopes were, many parents greeted the question with looks of despair and comments such as, "Well, you tell me!"

Only three (2.8%) parents named specific towns over thirty miles away where they hoped their children might work. Two of these mentioned Birmingham and it was clear that they did not expect their children to commute to work and live at home. The other hoped her child would work in London. All three had previously said that they hoped their children would take up occupations which they could not easily pursue in the locality. It is perhaps significant that there was only the one parent who named a town outside the Midlands.

A number of parents said that their children would have to work in an urban area in order to pursue the occupations

that were aspired to for them, but they did not name any town in particular. These parents constituted 12% of the sample. In addition, 8.3% said that their children, they hoped, would work anywhere there was a post available of the type aspired to for them. Both these groups of parents seemed to think that in order for their children to obtain the jobs they hoped they would take up, it would be necessary for them to leave the area. Many obviously regretted the necessity for this but said that they would not wish to keep the children at home at the expense of their careers. "We won't stand in his way if he wants to go and if it's for his good" was a common remark. Of the remaining parents, three said they hoped their children would enter the services and two said they hoped their children would go abroad to work. Altogether about 28% of the parents hoped their children would leave home to work, mainly to go to urban areas which they did not specify.

It was perhaps a little surprising in view of the large proportion of parents who hoped that their children would take up Professional or Intermediate occupations, and other jobs which were unlikely to be readily available either in the Rural District or in the market towns, that the number of parents who said that they hoped their children would leave the area to work was so small. There were certainly at least ten parents who hoped that their daughters would become teachers or nurses, and yet wanted them to work in the Rural District or one of the nearby market towns. It was not impossible that their ambitions should be reconciled, but it was most unlikely.<sup>5</sup> These parents would remark in an explanatory way, "Both my children are homebirds. They wouldn't like to go away", or, "She'd not be happy except

in a small market town or a village." It seemed, frequently, that the parents' desire to keep the children in the district might even over-ride their desire to obtain good jobs for them. One mother who said that she hoped her son would become an engineer later said, "I hope he'll work round here. You can always find something for them in the country." It was evident that he would not find an apprenticeship as an engineer in the country, nearby. Even the protests made by many parents that they would not hinder their children from leaving occasionally sounded defensive. The majority of the parents, indeed, were convinced that it would be best for their children to stop at home or to return when they had received training for a job. They were also convinced that the children themselves would wish to do so, attributing this desire partly to love of family and partly to love of the country.

In hoping that their children would live and work within the area the majority of the parents were therefore traditional in their attitudes to this question. Many were inclined to resist the idea of commuting because it was expensive and inconvenient, for the most part, and also because it disturbed their way of life. Said one parent:

"If they go into the towns they see an entirely different life. It causes denudation of the countryside. Then there's no labour in the farms, so they get all this highly-mechanised farming, which I don't condemn, mind you; but then people have to move away from the country into the towns again. You can't get people to work on the farms here."

In general, the parents were strongly traditional in hoping that their children would work in North Shropshire. There were variations, however, between the aspirations of the girls' parents and the aspirations of the boys' parents, as Table XVI indicates.

TABLE XVI

Parents' Aspirations for their Children's Place of Work Related to the Sex of the Child

	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>
At home <sup>6</sup>	1	6
Same parish	2	13
In the country	7	9
Urban area under 10 miles	12	3
Urban area 10-30 miles	7	9
Urban area over 30 miles	1	2
Urban area, unnamed	10	3
Anywhere suitable post	6	3
Services	-	3
Abroad	1	1
Don't Know	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
	<u>52</u>	<u>56</u>

The boys' parents were much more inclined, as the Table shows, to hope that they would work in the country, or in the same parish, or at home, than were the girls' parents. As with the difference in the type of occupations that were aspired to for each sex, this difference probably reflects the fact that more jobs were known to be available for the boys in the rural area. Exactly 50% of the boys' parents hoped that they would obtain jobs in the rural area, in addition to the 21% who hoped their sons would be able to live at home and commute to work in a town less than thirty miles away. The girls' parents were more prone than the Boys' parents to name towns where they were hoped to work, and also to suggest that they would work in towns which they could not specify or any place where a suitable vacancy occurred. The girls' parents naming towns, however, chiefly mentioned the local market towns, and suggested the more distant towns less frequently than the boys' parents. This argues that although the girls' parents realised that their daughters would be unlikely to obtain acceptable jobs except

in the towns, they did not really wish them to have to commute long distances, mainly because there would be little financial gain. Most of those who hoped their daughters would work in an unspecified urban area were hoping that they would become teachers or nurses, though the aspirations of others were for their daughters to become shop assistants or to take up other non-manual jobs.

It was significant that the proportion of boys who were positively hoped to leave home and work elsewhere was so low. It seemed that when there was any hope of placing the child in a reasonably good job locally, as there was for most of the boys, the parents were very well content to keep the child at home. Most parents seemed very desirous of keeping their children in the neighbourhood, but in the case of the girls they were well aware of the difficulties of obtaining jobs locally, and so resigned themselves to many of them having to go elsewhere to work. Many still hoped that their daughters would succeed in working as near home as possible, even after they had been away for training.

When the aspirations of parents in the agricultural group were compared with those of parents in the non-agricultural group, considerable differences were found. Table XVII shows that the agricultural group were more inclined than the other group to hope that their children would remain at home, in the same parish, or in the country, and less inclined to name a town as the place where they were hoped to work.

TABLE XVII

Parents' Aspirations for Children's Place of Work (B)

	<u>Agricultural Group</u>	<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>
At home	6 (14%)	1 (1.5%)
Same parish	8 (18.6%)	7 (10.8%)
In the country	9 (20.9%)	7 (10.8%)
Urban area under 10 miles	3 (7.0%)	12 (18.5%)
Urban area 10-30 miles	5 (11.6%)	11 (16.9%)
Urban area over 30 miles	1 (2.3%)	2 (3.1%)
Urban area, unnamed	6 (14%)	7 (10.8%)
Anywhere is post Services	2 (4.7%) -	7 (10.8%) 3 (4.6%)
Abroad	1 (2.3%)	1 (1.5%)
Don't Know	<u>2</u> (4.7%)	<u>7</u> (10.8%)
	<u>43</u>	<u>65</u>

The tendency for the agricultural group to hope that their children would work locally is partly explained by the fact that a high proportion of these people hoped that their children would continue to work in agriculture.<sup>7</sup> However, the proportion hoping that their children would work locally was very much larger than the proportion who hoped that their children would take up agricultural jobs. Moreover, the proportion in the agricultural group who hoped that their children would go into Professional and Intermediate occupations (other than farming), which often involve considerable geographical mobility, was very much higher than the proportion in this group who hoped that their children would work outside North Shropshire.

When the aspirations of parents in each group were related to their estimate of their child's ability it was found that the agricultural group aspired to geographical immobility for children of above average and average ability

more often than the other group did. For children who were thought to be below average the aspirations of the two groups were similar. The non-agricultural group hoped that the children they believed were above average would leave the area to work, while the agricultural group hoped that the majority of the children they thought were above average would remain. The non-agricultural group also hoped that the majority of the average children would leave, while the agricultural group hoped that a majority would stay. Table XVIII illustrates these points.

TABLE XVIII

Parents' Aspirations for Children's Place of Work Related to their Estimate of the Child's Ability

	<u>Agricultural</u>			<u>Non-agricultural</u>		
	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Above Average	Average	Below Average
At home, same parish, or in the country	7	14	2	-	12	3
Town - named	1	5	3	6	17	2
Town - unnamed or anywhere	3	4	-	5	8	1
Services	-	-	-	-	3	-
Abroad	-	1	-	1	-	-
Don't Know	2	-	-	3	2	2

N.B. 1 parent could make no estimate of child's ability.

It is perhaps a notable sign of the traditionalism of the agricultural group that they hoped to keep so many children of above average and average ability in the area.

Table XIX confirms the hypothesis derived from the community studies that it is the farm labourers (Social Class IV) among the parents in the agricultural group who favour geographical mobility for their children, mainly. The Table demonstrates that the farmers, both large and small, (Social



Classes II and IIIb) are anxious to keep their children in the rural area, and are more anxious to do so than those in the non-agricultural group who fall into this Class.

TABLE XIX

Parents' Aspirations for Children's Place of Work Related to their own Social Class

	<u>Agricultural Group</u>			<u>Non-Agricultural Group</u>		
	II	IIIb	IV	II	IIIb	IV
At home, same parish, in the country	11	9	3	1	-	1
Named town	1	1	7	1	17	3
Town unnamed or anywhere	6	1	1	3	6	-
Services	-	-	-	-	3	-
Abroad	1	-	-	-	-	-
Don't Know	-	1	1	-	4	1

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Table XIX shows that the majority of the farm labourers were eager for their children to work in towns, but that, nevertheless, the proportion hoping for geographical mobility for their children was not as great as the proportion in Class IV of the non-agricultural group who did so. All the Classes in the agricultural group were therefore more traditional in their attitude to geographical mobility for their children than those in the other group.

When the aspirations of parents in each group were related to their own educational level it was found that parents of each educational level in the agricultural group were more anxious for their children to work locally than were those in the same educational levels of the other group. Table XX illustrates this.

TABLE XX

Parents' Aspirations for their Children's Place of Work Related to their own Educational Level

Educational Group	<u>Agricultural Group</u>			<u>Non-Agricultural Group</u>		
	A	B	C	A	B	C
At home, same parish or in the country	-	4	18	2	-	13
Town - named	-	1	8	-	2	23
Town - unnamed or anywhere	-	2	6	1	4	8
Services	-	-	-	-	-	3
Abroad	-	-	1	-	-	1
Don't Know	-	-	2	1	-	6

N.B. The educational level of 2 fathers was not known.

There was, therefore, considerable evidence that in their attitude to geographical mobility for their children, the agricultural group were more traditional than the non-agricultural group.

The difference in the attitudes to geographical mobility of the rural group and the non-rural group was less pronounced than the difference between the agricultural group and the non-agricultural group. However, there was a noticeable tendency for the rural group to hope their children would remain in the locality as Table XXI shows.

TABLE XXI

Parents' Aspirations for Children's Place of Work (C)<sup>9</sup>

	<u>Rural Group</u>	<u>Non-rural Group</u>
At home	4 (5.7%)	3 (7.9%)
Same parish	10 (14.3%)	5 (13.2%)
In the country	14 (20%)	2 (5.3%)
Urban area under 10 miles	10 (14.3%)	5 (13.2%)
Urban area 10-30 miles	7 (10.0%)	9 (23.7%)
Urban area over 30 miles	1 (1.4%)	2 (5.3%)
Anywhere suitable post occurs	5 (7.1%)	4 (10.5%)
Urban area - not specified	9 (12.9%)	4 (10.5%)
Services	1 (1.4%)	2 (5.3%)
Abroad	2 (2.9%)	-
Don't Know	7 (10.0%)	2 (5.3%)

The difference between the rural group and the non-rural group was most marked in relation to the children they considered were of average ability. Table XXII shows that the aspirations of parents in each group for children of above average and below average ability were very similar. The parents in the rural group with children they considered were of average ability were, however, more inclined to hope that they would remain in the rural area, than were parents in the other group with average children.

TABLE XXII

Parents' Aspirations for Children's Place of Work  
Related to their estimate of the Child's Ability

	<u>Rural Group</u>			<u>Non-rural Group</u>		
	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Above Average	Average	Below Average
At home, same parish in the country	5	20	3	2	6	2
Named town	4	11	3	3	11	2
Unnamed town or anywhere	5	8	1	3	4	-
Services	-	1	-	-	2	-
Abroad	1	1	-	-	-	-
Don't Know	4	1	2	1	1	-

N.B. 1 parent could make no estimate of ability.

The difference between the rural group and the non-rural group persisted when the Social Classes within each group were compared. Parents in each Social Class in the rural group were more prone to hope that their children would stay in the neighbourhood than those in the non-rural group in the same Classes, as Table XXIII shows.

TABLE XXIII

Parents' Aspirations for Children's Place of Work Related to their Own Social Class

	<u>Rural Group</u>					<u>Non-rural Group</u>				
	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IV V	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IV V
At home, same parish, in the country	1	9	1	14	2 1	2	3	-	4	1 -
Named town	-	-	1	9	6 2	-	2	-	9	4 1
Unnamed town	-	7	1	5	- 1	-	2	3	2	1 -
Services	-	-	-	1	- -	-	-	-	2	- -
Abroad	-	1	-	1	- -	-	-	-	-	- -
Don't Know	-	-	-	5	1 1	-	-	-	1	1 -

It was found that when the aspirations of the parents in each group were related to their own educational level, the rural group were more inclined to hope that their children would remain in the area than the other group, whatever their own education had been. Table XXIV demonstrates this.

TABLE XXIV

Parents' Aspirations for their Children's Place of Work, Related to their own Educational Level

Educational Group	<u>Rural Group</u>			<u>Non-rural Group</u>		
	A	B	C	A	B	C
At home, same parish or in the country	-	3	24	2	1	7
Named town	-	1	17	-	2	14
Unnamed town or anywhere	-	5	9	1	2	5
Services	-	-	1	-	-	2
Abroad	-	-	2	-	-	-
Don't Know	-	-	7	1	-	1

N.B. Educational level of 2 fathers not known.

The evidence obtained concerning parents' aspirations for their children's place of work therefore supported all

three of the main hypotheses that were being tested. The parents as a whole were found to include a substantial majority who hoped that their children would remain in the area to work. The agricultural group were much more strongly traditional than the non-agricultural group, and the rural group were more traditional than the non-rural group.

It is significant that the agricultural group was found to include many parents with traditional attitudes both to their children's future place of work and to their children's future occupations. It suggests that the farmers' reputation for conservatism is not entirely without foundation. Indeed, their strong desire to ensure that their children received a better education than they themselves had enjoyed, is partly accounted for by the fact that several wanted their sons to go to agricultural college. Many farmers had come to appreciate the advantages of specialised education, but were still traditional in hoping that their sons would take over their farms and that all their children would stay in the neighbourhood.

Although it was not the object of this study to predict the consequences of the parents' aspirations, it was observed (and emerged from the quantitative evidence) that the parents' inclination to traditionalism regarding their children's future place of work was a stronger trend than either their non-traditionalism regarding the children's occupations or their non-traditionalism regarding the children's education. It was possible, therefore, to envisage that when aspirations for the children's occupations, or education and training, conflicted with aspirations for their place of work, the ambition for them to take up a particular job, or have training or further education, might be sacrificed. Nearly half the parents who said specifically that they hoped their

children would have further academic education after leaving school, also said that they hoped the children would return and work in the rural area. (A few of them were people who wanted their sons to go to agricultural college, but most were hoping for entrance to universities, training colleges, and so on, for their children.) As the evidence which was earlier quoted from Birch's study of Glossop suggests, it is highly unlikely that such a high proportion of children receiving further education would want to return or would be able to do so.

There was a lack of whole-heartedness in the ambitions of some parents for their children's future occupations, which is well-illustrated by the fact that many of them had no idea of the training or further education involved if their aspirations were to be fulfilled. It was calculated that two of the six parents hoping that their sons would enter occupations falling into Social Class I did not aspire to the further education that would enable them to attain the jobs; that thirteen of the thirty-six parents aspiring to jobs in Social Class II for their children did not aspire to the appropriate further education for them; and that eight of the thirty parents aspiring to jobs in Social Class IIIb for their children did not aspire to any training for them at all.

Another reason for thinking that parents' desire for further education or training for their children might give way before their desire for the children to stay at home, was afforded by their frequent observations that they did not know if they would be able to afford it, or had no idea how entrance to the appropriate institution could be achieved. Many had obviously gone to no trouble to find out about

qualifications and grants, others were embarrassed when ways and means were suggested to them and preferred not to go deeply into the question. It is possible therefore that many parents' aspirations were not as ambitious as they appeared superficially concerning the education of their children.

The parents, for the most part, however, had a strong and evidently unshakable conviction that their children would stay in the rural area both because the children themselves would wish to do so, and because on the whole everyone thought it was the most sensible thing to do. It was the fact that this feeling on the part of the parents was a conviction rather than merely an aspiration, for the majority, that supported the conclusion that the parents' traditionalism in this respect might partially overcome the non-traditional ambitions many had expressed for their children's education and occupation. The common desire to keep their children in the rural area often extended even to the parents of the children who were thought to be exceptionally clever. This might produce the tendency noticed by Emmett for bright children to remain in the rural area.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

1. See Table III, Chapter IV.
2. Where it was hoped that a boy or girl would go on to a family farm he/she was placed in the same Social Class as his/her father. Where the occupation 'farmer' was aspired to for a boy or girl who was not the son/daughter of a farmer, it was allotted to Class II.
3. For other purposes, in later Tables, these children have been allotted to different Social Classes on the basis of the Registrar-General's former classification of the Armed Forces.
4. The farmer who hoped his daughter would stay at home fell into Class IIIb.
5. Birch, in his study of Glossop, shows that only 7% of the grammar school leavers there who had received further education returned to work in the town. (Birch, A.H. Small Town Politics, Oxford, 1959, p.37)
6. The figure showing how many children were hoped to work 'at home' does not exactly correspond with the number of children who were hoped to work in family businesses, since not all these businesses were situated in the Rural District.
7. The tendency for the agricultural group to prefer geographical immobility for their children cannot be explained in terms of the sex distribution of the children. There was in fact a slightly higher % of girls in this group than in the other.
8. Only Social Classes II, IIIb and V were represented in the agricultural group, and therefore only these Classes are given here for comparison.
9. The difference between the two groups was more remarkable than it seems, because in the rural group there were more parents of girls (who were hoped to leave home more often than boys), while in the non-rural group there were far more parents of boys than of girls.



CHAPTER VI

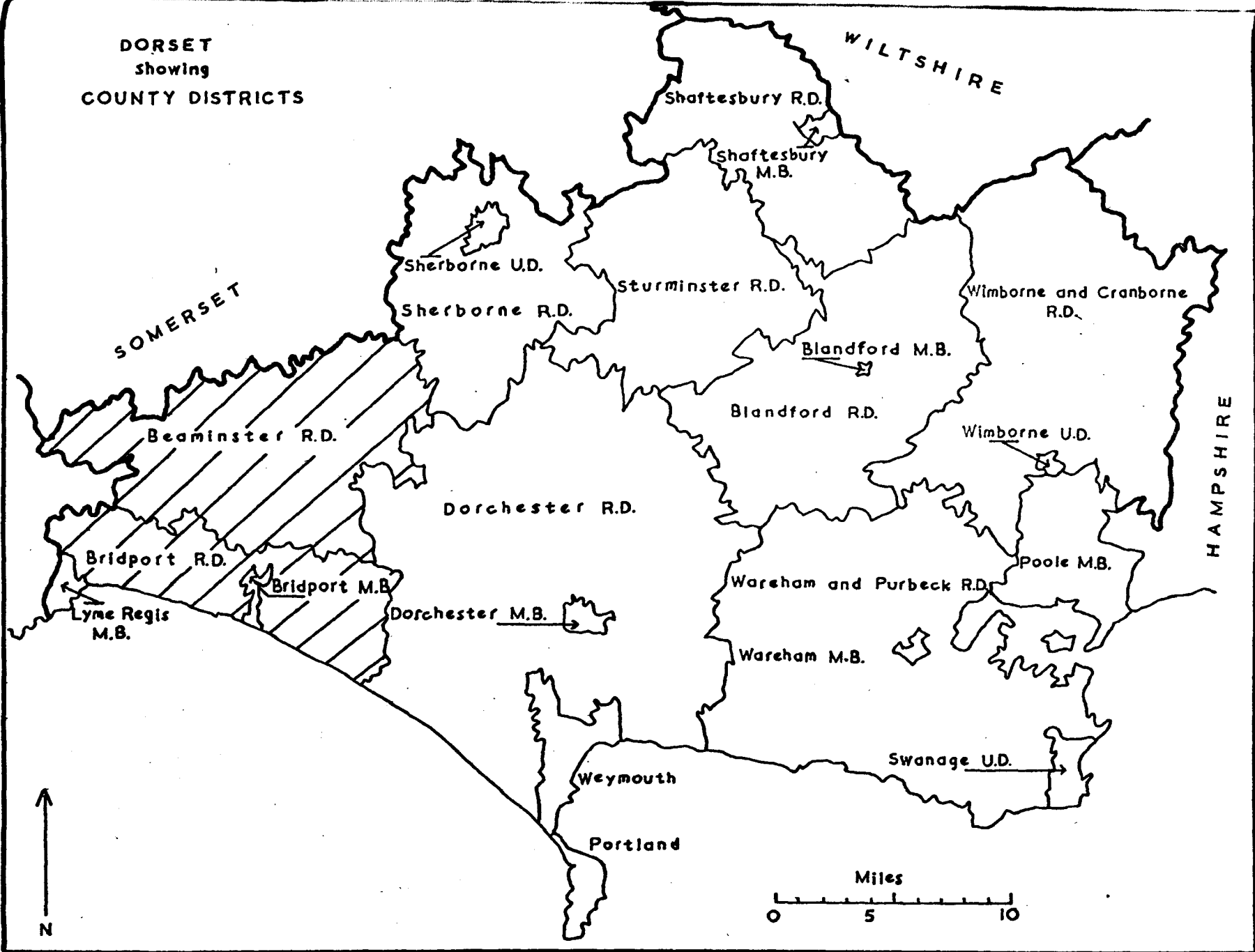
WEST DORSET.

This study was not confined to the rural area investigated in Shropshire. For one thing, it was possible that Wem Rural District had revealed characteristics which were peculiar only to itself. Secondly, the samples taken for the surveys carried out in Shropshire were both relatively small, and the conclusions based on the results of those surveys were necessarily tentative. Finally, and perhaps most important, an area which was further removed from the large conurbations than was North Shropshire had to be selected, so that the hypothesis that remoter rural areas would prove to be more 'traditional' in all respects than those near large urban centres, could be tested.<sup>1</sup>

A second area, in West Dorset, was therefore chosen and surveys of attitudes to social status and parental aspirations, were carried out there using questionnaires which were in most respects identical to those used in Shropshire. Once again, the choice of the area which was to be studied was to a certain extent arbitrary. It was felt, however, that West Dorset did fulfil the essential conditions of being unquestionably 'rural', and sufficiently removed from large urban industrial centres.

The chosen area in West Dorset consisted of the Rural Districts of Bridport and Beaminster, which lie adjacent to one another in the South-west corner of the county. Map 3 illustrates the position of the Rural Districts relative to the other Rural and Urban Districts of the county. The two Rural Districts form a highly distinctive geographical unit, as Darby has pointed out in an article entitled "The Regional Geography of Thomas Hardy's Wessex".<sup>2</sup> He observes that Dorset comprises five main regions; the chalk upland of Central Dorset; the Vale of Blackmoor, in the north; the heathlands and heathland valleys of the east; the Isle of

DORSET  
showing  
COUNTY DISTRICTS



Purbeck in the south; and finally, West Dorset. The boundaries of the Rural Districts of Bridport and Beaminster coincide almost exactly with the region described by Darby as 'Western Dorset'.

The area is virtually enclosed by the chalk uplands of central Dorset, and it includes the whole of the Marshwood Vale, as well as the clay hills which stand in great contrast with the adjoining chalk country. In the west the area is bordered by the Devonshire boundary, and by another line of hills. To the south lies the Atlantic.

The area of the two Rural Districts combined is approximately 142 square miles. The greatest distance from north to south is about fifteen miles, and that from east to west, about fourteen miles.

Within the Rural Districts of Bridport and Beaminster there are, as Map 4 shows, many small settlements. There are forty-four Civil Parishes in the two Rural Districts and these have an average population of 365 inhabitants. (Excluding Beaminster itself, the average population of the Civil Parishes is only 303.) Beaminster lies in the centre of the Rural District which takes its name, and as part of it, was included in the surveys. It is a small town, with a long history as a market town, but the market is no longer held there and in 1961 it had only 2,000 inhabitants. It is nevertheless the largest settlement in the two Rural Districts, so that it is clear that the villages and hamlets of West Dorset are by no means large enough to prevent face-to-face relationships existing among the majority of their inhabitants.

The population of the Rural District of Beaminster in 1961 was 8,210, and that of Bridport Rural District was 7,804. In both of the Rural Districts there was an excess of females

over males. (In the two Rural Districts combined there were 8,435 females and 7,579 males in 1961.) The area does not, therefore, reflect the tendency in many rural areas for the number of males to exceed the number of females. It does, however, resemble the rest of the county, for in Dorset as a whole the ratio of females to males was higher than that of England and Wales as a whole. This can be explained in terms of the age distribution in the county. The population of Dorset is somewhat older than that of England and Wales in general. The proportion of the population under fifteen years old in Dorset is 22.1%, against 22.8% for England and Wales. The proportion in Dorset aged sixty-five and over was 15.3% against 12.0% for England and Wales. The older age groups everywhere in the country have more females than males, hence the ratio of females to males in a total population in which the older age groups are heavily represented, will be high.

Dorset has a population older than that of the country as a whole principally because it is a popular retirement area. In this important respect West Dorset differed from North Shropshire which was not often chosen for retirement, and where the proportion of the population aged sixty-five and over was not unusually high. It is significant that the ratio of females to males was higher in Bridport Rural District which includes a number of small coastal settlements favoured by retired people, than in Beaminster Rural District, all of which lies at some distance from the sea and is less attractive to retired people. As Table I shows, the proportion of the population aged sixty-five and over was appreciably greater in Bridport Rural District than in Beaminster Rural District.

TABLE I

Age and Sex Distribution of Population  
in Bridport and Beaminster Rural Districts, 1961

	Males	Females	Total	%
Beaminster Rural District				
Under 15 years	1,044	938	1,982	24.2
15 - 64 years	2,422	2,537	4,959	60.3
65 and over	534	735	1,269	15.4
Bridport Rural District				
Under 15 years	863	781	1,644	21.1
15 - 64 years	2,098	2,505	4,603	59.0
65 and over	618	939	1,557	19.8

The fact that the population of West Dorset included a much larger proportion of retired people than that of North Shropshire, was not felt to be a disadvantage for this study. The random sample taken for the survey of attitudes to social status would necessarily include a good many people in the older age groups, but it would also include many people with considerable experience of urban life. Their attitudes could be compared with those of people who had lived all their lives in West Dorset.

The standard of household amenities reached in the two Rural Districts, according to the 1961 Census, was higher than that reached in Wem Rural District in Shropshire, and indeed, as Table II shows, in some respects higher than that reached in Bridport Municipal Borough. However, the standard was still relatively low, as a comparison with the Urban Districts of Shropshire will show. (See Table I, Chapter II). The relatively low standard of amenities reflects the rural nature of the area. It will be noted that in the Rural Districts households lacked cold water or W.C. far more frequently than did households in Bridport Municipal Borough.

TABLE II

West Dorset - Household Amenities in 1961

<u>Area</u>	<u>Total House-holds</u>	<u>No cold water tap</u>	<u>No hot water tap</u>	<u>No fixed bath</u>	<u>No W.C.</u>	<u>Exclusive use of all 4</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Beaminster R.D.	2,571	10.1	32.1	28.0	22.8	63.2
Bridport R.D.	2,689	10.7	25.8	24.4	23.6	68.8
Bridport M.B.	2,231	4.7	32.0	27.3	12.4	61.5

N.B. Figures relating to Bridport M.B. included for purposes of comparison.

It will also be observed from Table II that amenities were more often absent from the Rural District of Beaminster than Bridport. This may again be due to the fact that Bridport Rural District attracts both retired people and tourists more frequently than Beaminster Rural District.

The density of the population in Beaminster Rural District in 1961 was 0.1 persons per acre. In Bridport Rural District it was 0.2 persons per acre. It may perhaps be recapitulated that the average density of population in all the Rural Districts of England and Wales was 0.3 persons per acre, so that it is clear that the two Rural Districts of West Dorset have relatively low population densities. Even in the Rural District of Bridport where the coastal settlements are fairly thickly populated, the density of population was not in excess of that in Wem Rural District.

Table III shows that the population of West Dorset has slowly increased since 1931. In this the area resembles the rest of the county, in which, between 1951 and 1961, the population increased at about 0.73% per year. About one-third of this increase may be attributed to the excess of births over deaths in the county, and the other two-thirds to net migration

TABLE IIIWest Dorset - Population Changes, 1931-1961

	<u>Population</u>						<u>Intercensal change % per annum</u>			
	<u>1931</u>	<u>1951</u>		<u>1961</u>			<u>1951-1961</u>			
	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>By births and deaths</u>	<u>By net migration</u>
Beaminster R.D.	8,018	8,186	3,983	4,203	8,210	4,000	4,210	0.03	0.29	-0.26
Bridport R.D.	6.709	7.584	3,428	4,156	7,804	3,579	4,225	0.29	-0.15	0.43
Bridport M.B.	6.145	6.616	3,002	3,614	6,530	2,945	3,576	-0.13	-0.34	0.21

N.B. Figures relating to Bridport M.B. included for comparison.

into Dorset. There is some reason to think that the increase in West Dorset may also be attributed in part to net migration into the area. Bridport Rural District and Bridport Municipal Borough, between 1951 and 1961, experienced an excess of deaths over births. However, both the Rural District and Bridport Municipal Borough sustained net immigration in the period, so that the total population of the Rural District increased slightly, while that of the Borough fell much less than it would otherwise have done. Beaminster Rural District does not follow the same pattern, no doubt because it contains a much smaller proportion of retired people than the other two areas. In Beaminster Rural District there was an increase in population in the period 1951-1961 which was due to an excess of births over deaths. There was a small net loss by migration. This second pattern corresponds to that in many other agricultural-rural areas.

Beaminster Rural District therefore reveals several traits completely dissimilar to those of Bridport Rural District. This is principally because its agricultural character is less diluted by the presence of retired people. It resembles Wem Rural District in Shropshire more closely than it resembles Bridport Rural District, in population structure. However, Beaminster Rural District is not completely unaffected by either the influx of retired people, or of summer visitors, as the age structure of the population and the occupational structure reveal.

Agriculture employs almost one-fifth of the male labour force in the area covered by the Bridport Labour Exchange. (This area includes the Borough of Bridport and most of the Rural Districts of Bridport and Beaminster, though not all.) In 1964, the group of men engaged in agriculture was the largest employed in any single industry in the area, as



Table IV shows. The number of men employed in agriculture declined slightly between 1954 and 1964, following the national trend, but clearly farming is still the principal source of livelihood for a large proportion of the population of West Dorset.

The proportion of women engaged in agriculture was very much less than the proportion of men, and by far the largest group of women in employment were in manufacturing industry. (The biggest employer in this category was the net manufacturing industry of Bridport.) Substantial groups of women were also employed in the service and distributive trades.

As there was a high proportion of women in the insured population, and few of these had agricultural jobs, the proportion of the total insured population in agriculture was only 12.2%. (This was also due to the fact that the employment area included the Borough of Bridport within which there were few agricultural workers, of course.)

It is interesting to note that apart from the fact that the proportion of women in the insured population was considerably higher in West Dorset than in North Shropshire, the proportion of women in agriculture was much lower in Dorset. These differences may perhaps be partly explained by the fact that greater opportunities exist for women to take up domestic work in West Dorset - partly because of the tourist industry, partly because many of the retired people can afford domestic help. More important, the net and rope industry of Bridport offers an opportunity for women to obtain jobs in manufacturing industry which are not available to women in Shropshire. No doubt more women avail themselves of the opportunity of permanent jobs in industry partly because there are far more single women in the population of West Dorset than North

TABLE IV

Occupational Structure of West Dorset

Industry	1954			1964		
	Men %	Women %	Total %	Men %	Women %	Total %
Agriculture	19.8	5.1	14.7	18.0	3.3	12.2
Forestry	1.3	-	0.9	0.7	-	0.5
Fishing, Mining & Quarrying	0.8	-	0.6	0.8	-	0.5
<b>TOTAL PRIMARY</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>13.2</b>
Food, drink & tobacco	3.7	1.7	3.0	2.7	0.8	2.0
Chemicals						
Metal m/f						
Textiles						
Bricks etc.						
Other m/f	14.3	23.6	17.7	12.8	17.3	14.6
Engineering	1.2	0.1	0.8	1.3	0.3	0.9
Shipbuilding	0.8	0.2	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.3
Vehicles	-	-	-	0.2	-	0.1
Clothing & Footwear	-	0.4	0.1	-	0.2	0.1
Timber, etc.	1.5	0.7	1.2	3.3	1.6	2.6
Paper, etc.	1.0	0.4	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.3
<b>TOTAL SECONDARY</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>20.9</b>
Construction	14.3	0.7	9.8	17.4	0.9	11.0
Gas, elec- tricity & Water	1.9	0.3	1.3	2.2	0.3	1.5
Transport, etc.	5.4	2.3	4.4	4.6	1.4	3.3
Distributive	9.0	17.1	11.8	9.4	17.9	12.7
Insurance, etc.	1.6	1.2	1.5	1.6	2.2	1.8
Professional	3.5	13.5	7.0	4.2	16.7	9.1
Misc. Services	11.8	31.0	18.4	11.7	33.7	20.3
Public Admin.	7.3	1.6	5.4	8.2	2.9	6.2
<b>TOTAL TERTIARY</b>	<b>55.0</b>	<b>67.8</b>	<b>59.5</b>	<b>59.3</b>	<b>76.2</b>	<b>65.8</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>4,101</b>	<b>2,140</b>	<b>6,241</b>	<b>4,090</b>	<b>2,621</b>	<b>6,711</b>

Shropshire. As Table IV shows, 20.6% of the female insured population in West Dorset were employed in manufacturing industry, and 3.3% in agriculture. The comparable figures for North Shropshire were 10.2% and 20.3%.

Significantly, there has been a decline between 1954 and 1964 not only in the proportion of the insured population engaged in agriculture, but in the proportion in manufacturing industry. An increase in the proportion employed in service industries can be seen in Table IV. This suggests the tourist industry is attaining even greater importance in the area.

There are considerable seasonal fluctuations in the demand for labour in the area, since building, agriculture, and tourism are all major industries. As Table V reveals, unemployment sometimes reaches a relatively high level. A comparison with the maximum and minimum levels of unemployment in North Shropshire (Table IV, Chapter II) shows that West Dorset experiences a higher level of unemployment on the whole. Moreover, the average level of unemployment in West Dorset seems to be well above the national average. (See also Table IV, Chapter II.) This suggests that despite the presence of a certain amount of manufacturing industry, there may be fewer opportunities for steady employment in West Dorset than in North Shropshire.

TABLE V  
Unemployment in West Dorset

Year	Maximum				Minimum			
	Men	Women	Total	%	Men	Women	Total	%
1954	92	45	137	2.2	41	5	46	0.7
1955	97	27	124	1.9	47	5	52	0.8
1956	119	25	144	2.2	52	6	58	0.9
1957	118	35	223	3.5	82	6	88	1.4
1958	177	41	218	2.8	97	17	114	2.2
1959	172	36	208	2.9	73	6	79	1.3
1960	113	33	146	2.3	73	11	84	1.3
1961	130	23	153	2.3	73	7	80	1.2
1962	149	37	186	2.7	103	7	110	1.6
1963	325	41	366	5.4	116	17	133	1.9
1964	154	54	208	3.1	110	18	128	1.9

Although the numbers employed in agriculture have gradually declined for many years, it is still the only major industry in the Rural Districts of Bridport and Beaminster. William Marshall, in 1796, described West Dorset as 'from time immemorial a Dairy District'. It remains to this day a dairying area, but there are too some other livestock enterprises. A few sheet, poultry and pig farms can be found, and there is a little mixed farming. Small farms abound in the area, the average size of farm being even smaller than in North Shropshire. There are, however, a few large farms of three hundred acres, or more. In West Dorset rather more of the farmers were the tenants of landlords owning large estates than was the case in North Shropshire. The large Ilchester estate lies in the area, as well as smaller estates attached to properties such as Forde Abbey, Melplash Court, Mapperton Manor, and so on.

There are in West Dorset a large number of people employed in industries ancillary to agriculture. A high proportion of these actually work in the Rural Districts. At Beaminster and Maiden Newton there are large dairies. (A good many people living in the area also work at the dairy in Yeovil.) In addition, there are several small firms of agricultural engineers in the district, especially in Beaminster itself.

A large number of small building firms have been established in the Rural Districts, as well as in Bridport Municipal Borough, and these, as Table IV shows, employ quite a large proportion of the labour force. As has been suggested already, a great many people are employed for at least part of the year in catering for the tourists who visit the area in the summer. Those who live in Bridport Rural District are

especially likely to be involved in at least part-time work in one of the service industries. Small hotels and guest-houses, cafes, and camping-sites exist in great profusion, and many farms and private houses take in paying guests.

Within Bridport Rural District there is an expanding timber and furniture factory which provides some employment.

Those who are employed in the distributive trades for the most part work in the nearby market towns, or in Beaminster, as do the 'professional and scientific' workers, and those in public administration. Within the Rural District of Beaminster, however, there is a large B.B.C. station at Rampisham, which employs a good many technicians and professional workers.

Because it is so small, the town of Beaminster provides relatively few opportunities for employment. Moreover, the variety of jobs available is not great. Only the dairy and a small plastics factory have many vacancies, and these are mainly for unskilled workers. There are a few shops with openings, and still fewer banks or offices. Rather more jobs are to be found in Bridport, which as Map II shows lies in the centre of its own Rural District and to the south of Beaminster.

Bridport is a market town of 6,530 inhabitants, which forms a very important service area not only for its own Rural District, but for much of Beaminster Rural District as well. The town of Bridport, as an urban area, was not included in the present surveys. From Beaminster to Bridport there is a regular bus service, and from many villages in Beaminster Rural District it is easier to reach Bridport than any other town. The town is situated on the main road which runs from Wimborne to Exeter, and which also links Poole and Bournemouth with the West. Another main road runs from

Bridport through Beaminster to Yeovil, and so ultimately to Bristol. The roads and railways of the area are shown on Map II. The town can at present be reached by rail, on the branch of the railway which runs from Maiden Newton, through much of Beaminster and Bridport Rural Districts. This branch line is likely to close in the immediate future, however, which is a source of concern to those who live in the Rural Districts and travel to work in Bridport, as well as to those catering for tourists.

Bridport, then, provides employment for a considerable number of those who live in the two Rural Districts.

The net, rope and twine industry of the town of Bridport has been mentioned already as a major source of employment to those who live in the area. This industry, the staple of the town since mediaeval times, continues to flourish, although there has been some drop in the numbers employed recently. Some part-time outwork is provided by this industry, and women can still be found in their homes helping to make nets by hand.

There are far more shops in Bridport than there are in Beaminster, as well as local government offices, several banks, a hospital, a brewery, and various small building and engineering firms.

The two Rural Districts do not look only to Bridport as a service area and source of employment, however. As Map II shows, there are a number of other small market towns on the fringes of the area studied. To the north are Chard and Crewkerne (the latter has a small livestock market), to the east is the county town of Dorchester, and to the west is Axminster, which has a livestock market that gives it considerable importance for the farming community. (Axminster

is not marked on the Map, but is just inside the Devon boundary.)

The public administration offices and the shops of Dorchester offer considerable non-manual employment to those who live in the Rural Districts, although the town itself is not very large. Crewkerne has a number of industries which have expanded in recent years. More important, though, than either of these towns as far as openings for employment are concerned, are the towns of Yeovil and Weymouth. In 1961, the population of Yeovil was 24,500, and that of Weymouth was 41,390. Both towns now have large industrial sectors. Yet although these towns lie only twenty miles or so from the most distant parts of the Rural Districts, communications are not always very good. Weymouth can at the moment be reached by railway from some parts of the Rural Districts, but, as has been mentioned already, the line is scheduled for closure. Weymouth can also be reached by bus from Bridport, but services from outlying villages into the town are infrequent. Yeovil is accessible by bus from some villages in Beaminster Rural District, but the services are hardly frequent, and do not by any means cover the entire area. Some firms solve the problem of transport by providing their own employees with buses. Despite the difficulties involved, many people who live in the Rural Districts do work in Yeovil or Weymouth, and the aircraft factory at Yeovil is a particularly big employer.

When the people of West Dorset require economic opportunities or social and cultural amenities which are not afforded by the towns that have been referred to already, they turn principally to Exeter. Exeter is forty miles or so to the west of Bridport and is accessible at the moment by rail and

a fast coach service. People may also go to Bournemouth and Poole which are about forty miles to the east, but less easily reached by public transport. Few people appear to commute to work in either of these large urban centres. For most purposes, then, the local market towns, and especially Bridport itself, suffice West Dorset as service areas and even as employment centres. Yeovil and Weymouth are assuming increasing importance in the latter respect, however.

West Dorset is, therefore, less subject to the influence of large industrial conurbations than is North Shropshire. There are only relatively small towns, with new, though expanding industrial sectors, nearby. These towns, and even some of the small market towns do provide opportunities for employment in manufacturing industry, but of course such opportunities are necessarily more limited than they are in the Midlands. West Dorset remains overwhelmingly agricultural in essence, and its character is probably being affected more by the tourist industry at present, than by any growth of industry.

A little must be said of the schools of West Dorset, for the nature of the educational provision in the Rural Districts was of some importance to the study of parental aspirations. Fortunately, most of the primary and secondary school children in the area attended schools within the Rural Districts or in Bridport itself.

In West Dorset, the county's first comprehensive schools have been established. All the secondary school children involved in the survey, therefore, attended either the comprehensive school at Bridport or the one at Beaminster. (Some children on the outskirts of the Rural Districts attended schools at Lyme Regis which were in the process of becoming



comprehensive. To avoid methodological difficulties these children were omitted from the survey of parental aspirations.) The children attending the two comprehensive schools had all taken the Dorset 11+ examination, but the results of the examination were not made known to the parents, and little significance was subsequently attached to them. The two comprehensive schools were both organised so that the children were taught in streams and also in sets for different subjects, but the divisions were based upon the results of internal examinations held by the schools themselves.

The comprehensive school at Bridport was at the time of the survey considerably larger than that at Beaminster (having over 900 pupils as against 400 at the other school). The Bridport school had been established longer. Both schools were housed in new buildings, and both represented a fairly recent change from a bi-partite system of education which involved a grammar school and an all-age school.

It seems true to say that the change to a comprehensive system in West Dorset was due exclusively to a recognition that educational aims would be better fulfilled in this way than under the old system. It is doubtful, in other words, whether any social policy of a wider nature lay behind the change. Certainly many of those responsible for carrying out the change denied that social aims were involved. In the rural areas affected there are insufficient children to warrant the maintenance of separate grammar and secondary modern schools, let alone a technical school. Nor could such schools, if established, have had the modern facilities and large staffs that the big comprehensive schools justify. The new schools can offer a much wider range of subjects, taught by specialists, than the old grammar schools could. The old schools of

course lacked amenities such as gymnasia, playing fields on the site, and so on.

There is little room to doubt that the recent advent of comprehensive schools in West Dorset has meant a substantial improvement in educational opportunities for children of all levels of ability.

The two comprehensive schools drew upon a wide catchment area, extending to the limits of the two Rural Districts. As a result many of the secondary school children had to be taken to school each day in buses specially provided. Many had long journeys to school, and in the winter experienced some difficulty in getting there at all. Those who lived in the outlying villages also had some difficulty in participating in extra-curricular activities. One of the comprehensive schools overcame this last difficulty by continuing school for an extra hour one day a week, the staff staying on for the purpose, to enable sports and club meetings to be held. At the same school, the headmaster recognised the difficulty many parents had in coming to see him, and therefore went to the local village halls to meet them. There were plans for plays and other entertainments produced by the school to be performed in outlying villages. Clearly it is possible by such methods for the comprehensive schools in rural areas to meet the problems inevitably posed for pupils and parents. At both schools Evening Institutes were run very successfully for adults, and at Beaminster there was, in addition, a thriving Arts and Social Club. In this way the two new schools were becoming educational and social centres for their surrounding rural areas and filling a need previously less well catered for.

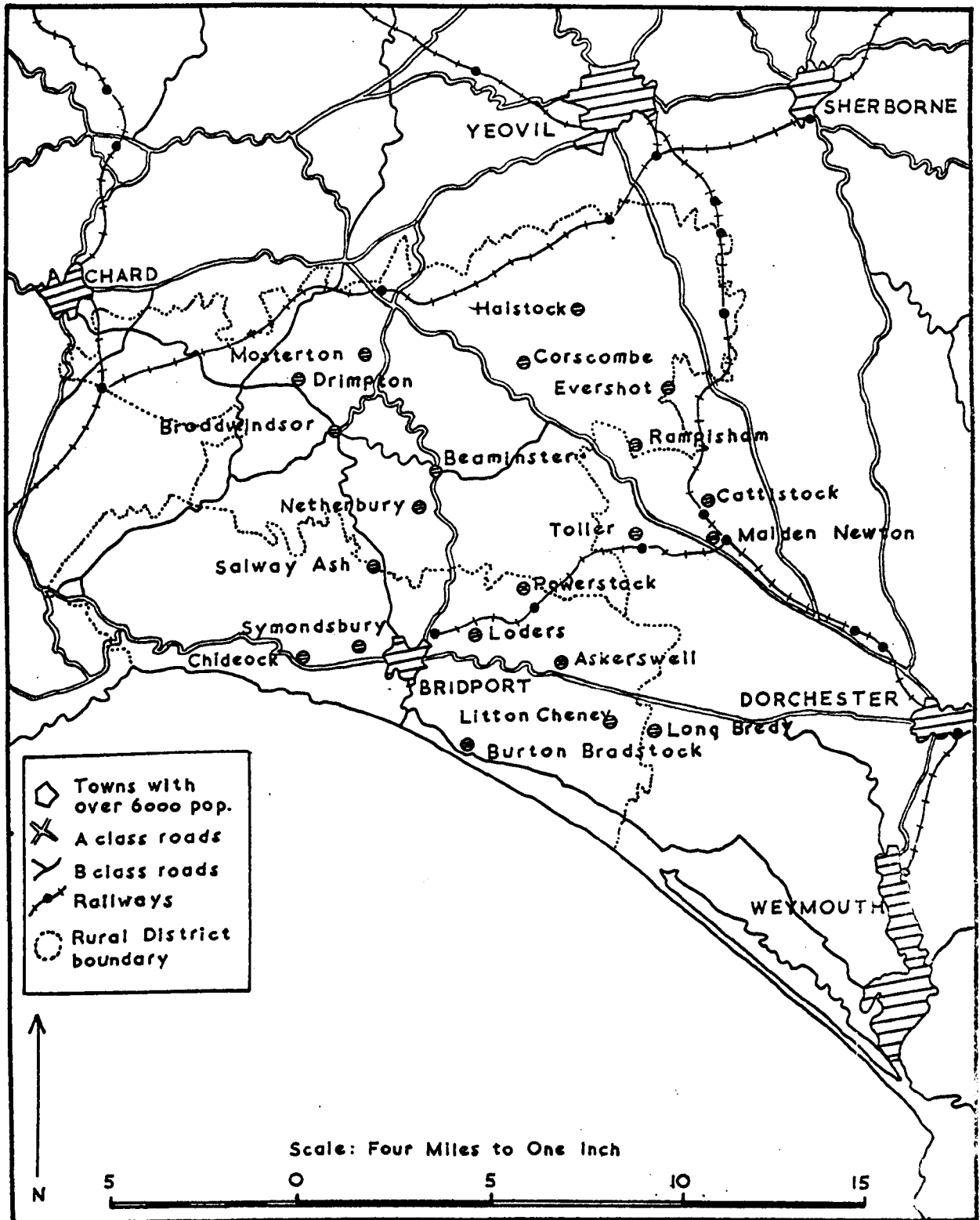
It must be concluded that despite the disadvantages attending upon the fact that both schools had pupils coming

from far off villages, they brought benefits to the area in general as well as to children specifically. At the time of the survey perhaps the advantages had not been either fully realised or fully exploited by many of the people affected, but ultimately it may be that the role of the schools could be extended to bring new benefits to the area.

The two comprehensive schools drew their pupils from a large number of village schools. (The Bridport school, of course, also drew upon primary schools in the towns of Bridport, whose pupils were not involved in the survey.) The survey was concerned with the pupils of twenty-two village schools in the Rural Districts. The villages with schools involved in the survey are marked on Map II, with a small circle. Most of these schools, like the ones in Shropshire, had about thirty pupils, and two teachers. Again, one school had only one teacher, but this was due to close shortly after the survey took place. Beaminster, of course, had two fairly large primary schools - one for each sex.

As in Shropshire, the village schools were not remarkable for the high standard of their buildings or equipment. The majority were very old and overcrowded, one at least being indistinguishable externally from a farmhouse. Some were without playgrounds or playing fields and many lacked running water and good sanitation. If the observations of parents can be given any credence the standard of teaching was sometimes rather poor. In several villages it was reported that difficulties in obtaining staff had meant that many changes had taken place within short periods. On the other hand several teachers were very highly thought of, and their schools staunchly defended.

# THE RURAL DISTRICTS OF BRIDPORT AND BEAMINSTER



The primary schools of West Dorset villages, therefore, in many ways resembled those of North Shropshire, although the system of secondary education was very different. As in Shropshire, there were a few parents who sent their children to private primary schools, though within the area there was only one such school. A convent in Bridport did take some private pupils, however. For the majority of parents there was virtually no alternative to the village school unless they travelled great distances with their children, and few chose to do so. Even fewer sent their children to independent secondary schools, for most of the children who had gone to private schools until eleven then went on to one of the state comprehensive schools.

From the description that has been given of Bridport and Beaminster Rural Districts it is evident that they constitute a 'rural area' in most accepted senses of the term. The density of population is low, and concentrated only in small settlements. A relatively high proportion of the population are dependent on agriculture. In the succeeding Chapters, it will be the object to show how far the area can be said to be traditional in character.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

1. See Chapters I and II.
2. Darby, H.C. "The Regional Geography of Thomas Hardy's Wessex". Geographical Review, No. 38, 1948.

CHAPTER VII

Social Status in West Dorset

It was hoped that it would be possible to establish whether the people of West Dorset had traditional attitudes to social status by conducting a survey similar to that carried out in Shropshire. It was felt, however, that it was desirable to take a larger sample for interview in Dorset than had been possible in Shropshire, in order to increase the accuracy of the results.

A random sample was again taken from the Electoral Roll, to be interviewed with the same questionnaire that was used in Shropshire. (See Appendix.) The original random sample included 120 people, but of these seven had left the area, two had died and six refused to be interviewed. 105 people, therefore, were successfully interviewed.<sup>1</sup>

Of the 105 respondents, 58 were women and 47 men. (It will be remembered that there were more women than men in the population of the two Rural Districts<sup>2</sup>.) The age distribution of the men and women in the sample is given in Table I, and compared with the age distribution of the population of the Rural Districts in general. It can be seen that the age distribution of the sample corresponded quite closely with that of the population of the Rural Districts.<sup>3</sup>

TABLE I

Age Distribution of Sample Compared with that of the Total Adult Population of Bridport and Beaminster R.D.'s in 1961

<u>Age</u>	<u>No. of Informants</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No. in Total Population</u>	<u>%</u>
20-29	11	10.4	1,409	12.5
30-39	17	16.2	1,860	16.5
40-49	20	19.0	1,969	17.4
50-59	21	20.0	2,239	19.7
60-69	18	17.2	2,087	17.6
70 & over	18	17.2	1,832	16.2

A comparison made between the occupations of the people in the sample and those of the general population of the Rural Districts, again showed that the sample was on the whole a representative one.<sup>4</sup> The proportion of people in the sample and the proportion in the general population falling into certain socio-economic groups, as defined by the Registrar-General, is shown in Table II.

TABLE II

Distribution of Male Informants between Socio-economic Groups Compared with Distribution of Total Male Population of R.D.'s

<u>Groups</u>	<u>1, 2, 3, 4, 13</u>	<u>5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 14</u>	<u>7, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17</u>
Male informants (47)	23.4%	46.8%	29.8%
Adult Males in Rural Districts (7,579)	24.9%	41.1%	34.0%

The tests that were carried out suggested that the sample drawn from the Electoral Roll of Bridport and Beaminster Rural Districts reflected with a fairly high degree of accuracy many of the characteristics of the general population of the area. It was felt, therefore, that the attitudes to social status revealed by the survey and described in the succeeding pages, might be taken as representative of those held by the people of West Dorset. (Excluding, of course, the Borough of Bridport.)

Thirty-seven of the men who were interviewed were married, five were widowed, one divorced and four single. Of the women, forty were married, eight widowed and ten single.

Twenty-two (46.8%) of the men who were interviewed were, or had been before their retirement, employed in agriculture. Eleven of these men were farmers, two were farm managers, and nine were farmworkers. (Three of the last group were the



sons of farmers who worked for their fathers.) In addition, two agricultural engineers were interviewed and a veterinary surgeon.

Of the remaining men in the sample only three were employed in manufacturing industry, two as unskilled workers and one as a press operator. There were a number of other manual workers, mainly employed in the building industry, as plumbers, joiners or bricklayers, although there were also a roadman and a railway worker.

The sample included a number of self-employed and professional workers, of whom several were retired. Among the self-employed were a wine-shipper, an artist, a shopkeeper and a camp-site proprietor. In the group of professional men there were two clergymen, a civil engineer, an underwriter and a naval captain.

The sample was completed by a few non-manual workers who were not self-employed - a civil servant, a port officer and an average adjustor.

The variety of occupations pursued by the men in the sample is perhaps a little misleading, as regards the occupational structure of the area, for most of the men who had retired had followed their occupations elsewhere than in Dorset. Twelve of the men said that they were fully retired, and for the most part they had had professional or non-manual occupations.

Seventeen of the 58 women in the sample said that they had never had any paid employment in their lives. Most of these remained at home on a farm until their marriage, three were single women, however, of whom one was living at home on a farm, and the other two were rentiers.

The remainder of the single women who were interviewed held, or were retired from, full-time jobs. Nearly all their occupations were non-manual. Three of the widows also held full-time jobs.

Among the married women, only nine were working at the time of the survey, and all of them held part-time jobs. None of them were self-employed, in contrast to the single women and widows, of whom five were self-employed. The majority of the married women worked as domestic helps.

Among the jobs formerly held by the remaining married women were a good many non-manual occupations, although two of the women had been factory workers and seven domestic servants. Only one woman had held a skilled manual job, although two had been typists, and two shop assistants. Three of the married women had professional qualifications which they were not using at the time of the survey.

The agricultural nature of the two Rural Districts is emphasized by the fact that of the 40 married women in the sample, eighteen were married to men with agricultural occupations. (Eight of their husbands were farmers, one was an Agricultural Adviser and the rest were farmworkers of various kinds.)

There were obviously many informants who came from families with long-standing associations with agriculture. 53% of the men and 32.7% of the women said that their fathers had had agricultural occupations. Only one man and three women had fathers who had been employed in manufacturing industry. That agricultural occupations have tended to be hereditary in the area is strongly suggested by Table III, in which the occupations of the male informants are compared with those of their fathers.

TABLE III

Occupations of Male Informants Related to those of their Fathers

<u>Informant's Occupation</u>	<u>Father's Occupation</u>		
	<u>Agricultural</u>	<u>Non-Agricultural</u>	<u>Not Known</u>
Agricultural (22)	86.3%	13.6%	-
Non-Agricultural (25)	20.0%	68.0%	12.0%

The occupational stability of the area is also illustrated by Table IV, in which the Social Class of the male respondents (according to the Registrar-General's Classification) is compared with the Social Class of their fathers. Occupational mobility has been measured by the method previously described, and it can be seen that the great majority of the men in the sample have experienced stability of occupation, rather than upward or downward occupational mobility.

TABLE IV

Occupations of Male Informants, Compared with their Fathers, Using the Registrar-General's Classification

<u>Male Informant's Occupation</u>	<u>Father's Occupation</u>						
	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IV	V	Not Known
I	1	4					1
II		13		2			1
IIIa	2	1					
IIIb		1	1	4	1		1
IV		4*	1	-	4	1	
V				1	2	1	
Upward mobile	Immobile		Downward mobile			Not Known	
8	23		13*			3	

N.B. The figures marked \* include the three farmers' sons at present working for their fathers, so that the table probably understates the amount of stability.

In Dorset, as in Shropshire, it was noticeable that many sons had followed their fathers into the same occupation. Nearly all the farmers were the sons of farmers, and the majority of farmworkers were the sons of farmworkers. Frequently the skilled workers, and self-employed men had inherited their occupations.

The degree of residential stability shown by the Dorset informants, while not as remarkable as that found in Shropshire, was still considerable. 58%<sup>5</sup> of the respondents had lived in the parish where they were found at the time of the survey

for over ten years. 20%<sup>6</sup> of the respondents had lived in the same parish all their lives. 26% of the married women in the Dorset sample had lived in the same parish since their marriage. (Hence 38% of the women had lived in the same parish either all their lives or since marriage. 30% of the men had lived in the same parish all their lives.)

Rather more of the Dorset sample than of the Shropshire sample had at some time lived in an urban area. The majority (57%), however, had always lived in the country. Those who had lived in urban areas had frequently lived in towns which were a great distance from Dorset. As Table V shows, the ex-urbanites in Dorset had often had prolonged experience of city-life. It was noticeable, however, that few people had come from the Midlands or the north of England to live in Dorset. Those who had lived in towns had lived primarily in southern England. A comparatively large number had lived in London.

Table V lends support to the idea that there was a significant difference in the nature of the experience of ex-urbanites in the Dorset and Shropshire sample. There were many people in the Dorset sample who had lived in the urban areas for their whole working life and had then retired to the country. There were both men and women with many years' experience of city life, many of whom had lived in London, or even abroad. In Shropshire, on the other hand, there was virtually no-one who had lived all his working life in a town. Most of those who had lived in towns for many years were women who had lived in a town until their marriage. The town in which the Shropshire ex-urbanites had lived was most likely to be a small market town in Shropshire itself, or one of the nearby Midland towns. It was expected, therefore, that there might be some more substantial differences in outlook between

the ex-urbanites and the country-dwellers in Dorset, than was found between the two groups in Shropshire.

TABLE V

Rural and Urban Residence by Informants

<u>Urban District formerly lived in</u>	<u>Number of Men</u>	<u>Number of Women</u>	<u>Average time spent there</u>
None at all	28	32	-
Chard	1	-	23 years
Axminster	-	1	2 years
Bridport	-	1	25 years
Lyme Regis	-	1	2 years
Ilminster	-	1	4 years
Taunton	-	1	1 year
Exeter	1	-	8 years
Plymouth	-	2	3 years
Bristol	-	3	6 years
Cheltenham	-	1	17 years
Salisbury	-	1	3 years
Reading	-	1	10 years
Reigate	1	-	19 years
Brighton	-	1	7 years
Shoreham	1	-	15 years
Wrexham	1	-	30 years
Pembroke	-	1	13 years
Ryde	1	-	40 years
Wakefield	1	-	30 years
Leeds	1	-	16 years
Birmingham	1	-	2 years
Birkenhead	1	-	1 year
Chester	1	-	35 years
Glasgow	1	-	8 years
Colchester	-	1	40 years
Luton	-	1	27 years
London	8	13	21 years
'Abroad'	3	2	9 years

N.B. Several people had lived in more than one urban area, for over a year in each case.

Table V shows that in West Dorset, as in Shropshire, fewer men than women had lived in urban areas. (Only 40% of the men had ever lived in a town, while 45% of the women had done so.) The men in the Dorset sample, therefore, tended to have lived longer in the parish where they were found at the time of the survey, and were also more likely than the women to have lived always in the country.

From the preceding description of the sample it can be seen that the majority of the Dorset informants, like their Shropshire counterparts, were country people by birth and upbringing. They were usually country people by disposition also, frequently making adverse comments on urban life. Even the retired people wished to be regarded as country people. One elderly woman said emphatically, "The retired people round here want to be part of the countryside!" However, there were a large number of people, of course, who had lived in towns for most of their lives and were better acquainted with the social structure and economic organisation of urban life, than they were with rural conditions. Similarly, although many informants depended on agriculture for a livelihood (including several ex-urbanites), there were also many engaged in other occupations.

For purposes of analysis, the Dorset sample, like the Shropshire sample, was divided into two groups. The first group consisted of those who had lived for at least a year in an urban area, the second of those who had never done so. It was hypothesised that the second group would be more inclined to traditional attitudes than the first. The group of informants who had lived in towns (the 'urban' group) included forty-five people, and the other group (the 'rural' group) included sixty people.

The urban group contained 42% men and 58% women, while the rural group had 47% men and 53% women. The age distribution of each group is given below in Table VI.

TABLE VI

Age Distribution of 'Urban' Group Compared with 'Rural' Group

<u>Age</u>	<u>Urban Group</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Rural Group</u>	<u>%</u>
21-29	3	6.7	8	13.4
30-39	7	15.6	10	16.6
40-49	8	17.8	12	20.0
50-59	8	17.8	13	21.7
60-69	10	22.2	8	13.4
70 & over	<u>9</u>	<u>20.0</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>15.0</u>
	45	100.1	60	100.1

The distribution of the male informants' occupations among the Registrar-General's Social Classes is shown below in Table VII, for each group.

TABLE VII

Occupational Distribution of Male Informants in Urban and Rural Groups

<u>Social Class</u>	<u>Urban Group</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Rural Group</u>	<u>%</u>
I	4	21.0	1	3.6
II	6	31.7	12	42.9
IIIa	2	10.6	1	3.6
IIIb	4	21.0	3	10.7
IV	3	15.8	7	25.0
V	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>14.3</u>
	19	100.1	28	100.1

The comparisons between the urban and rural groups reveal that the rural group contained a smaller proportion of women than the urban group, and also contained fewer people in the upper age groups and more in the lower age groups. These are important differences in the composition of the two groups, since women and older people may be more inclined to

traditional attitudes than are men and young people. However, the urban group contained few people engaged in agriculture, and fewer people in the manual classes of the Registrar-General's Scale than the rural group. As agricultural workers and manual workers may also be more inclined to traditional attitudes than other groups, the differences between urban and rural group may perhaps be regarded as offsetting each other.

There proved to be only a very small minority of the informants who did not believe that there were any differences in status between individuals or groups. Four people interviewed in Dorset said that everyone enjoyed equal status. It was apparent from the remarks of these four informants that although they recognised no status distinctions themselves, they believed that others did recognise such distinctions. The four regretted the attitudes and behaviour of those who acknowledged status distinctions. One woman commented:

"Some people are more intelligent than others, but that doesn't mean they come under classes. That's a decadent idea."

One of the quartet, a wealthy retired man, gave his views more ambiguously:

"I'm not a snob. We don't believe in class distinction. I would speak to a labourer and his wife in the same way as a millionaire and his wife. I think there is more class distinction within the poor class."

Each member of the dissenting quartet, therefore, while saying that he or she did not accept status differences, stated implicitly or explicitly that others did so. They were not traditionalists, for they disclaimed traditional views, but nevertheless they thought they lived in a society where status levels existed.



The four differed in their assessment of the criteria upon which others based social status distinctions. Two argued that non-traditional criteria were employed, and that money and education were important determinants of status in the eyes of other people. The others argued that traditional criteria were the important ones. (One even confused the general attitude with his own, saying, "I believe in pride in one's family. Anyone who has lived in the country for generations is looked up to.")

All the four agreed that traditional criteria were used to distinguish between farmers. Said one, "There's gentlemen and working farmers."

There was some evidence that the four thought that various status groups were differentiated from one another by their style of life. There was also evidence that they saw people as inter-acting chiefly with those who were of similar status.

Although these four people were not in themselves traditionalists, it is evident that they all believed status distinctions were made by other people and that in part, at least, such distinctions were based on traditional attitudes. There was some reason to suspect two of these informants of some sympathy with traditional beliefs and opinions.

This group of self-identified non-traditionalists was very small, of course, and few conclusions can be drawn from it. Of its four members, two belonged to the 'urban' group, two to the 'rural' group. All were over forty - one was connected with agriculture. They were, therefore, a tiny, heterogeneous minority, of whom it cannot even be said that they were confirmed, or consistent, in their non-traditional views. This group of informants did not seriously threaten the hypothesis that West Dorset would contain many people with traditional attitudes.

Apart from these four respondents those who were interviewed said that there were status distinctions among individuals and groups, which they recognised themselves. Most people regarded such differentiation as quite unavoidable, saying simply, "There must be distinctions". A substantial number of informants said that status distinctions were right and just. For example, a farmer's wife observed, "It always was. It's a good thing if the people are right in the top class." Among the ex-urbanites a number believed that status distinctions were especially prevalent in rural areas, saying for example, "It's handed down to them that they should respect the Squire and so on. We've got a Squire here." But on the other hand some ex-urbanites found it difficult to distinguish status levels in the country. Said a vicar's wife, "Nearly all the farmers here are more or less the same. But we do have a lot of retired Colonels."

Those who had lived in urban areas were on the whole much more willing to discuss their views on social status fully, than were the rural group. As with the Shropshire informants who had always lived in the country, a certain defensiveness manifested itself among members of the rural group. There was some reluctance to appear backward and ridiculous. (Clearly the interview situation, in which the country people were questioned by a city-dweller, was at least partly responsible for this attitude.) The defensiveness of the rural group was unsurprising, when even the ex-urbanites who had come to live in West Dorset sometimes made contemptuous remarks about them. A builder's wife said, for example:

"The farmworker likes to feel some people are better. In bygone ages they were serfs. They do live better now. But .... a lot of people don't know how to handle money or plan. If there's an outing in the village they'll go and spend money they could have spent on their homes."

The rural group therefore tended to be rather brusque in their replies to the questionnaire at first, in contrast with the ex-urbanites who often pretended to a high degree of objectivity and made extensive comparisons between rural and urban life.

The same questions that were put to the Shropshire informants to test the hypothesis that those who had lived in towns would be less traditional in their views than those who had not, were also put to the Dorset sample. The 'urban' group consisted of 43 people, and the 'rural' group of 58, when the four people who did not recognise status distinctions were left out.

When the informants were asked why some people enjoyed high status, while others had only a low social status, many had difficulty in expressing their ideas. Especially within the rural group there was a feeling that those with high status possessed a certain *je ne sais quoi* which marked them out from their fellows. Said a gardener, "A lot of people think they are - I can't find a word for it - I'm not educated enough - but they aren't anyway." Traditional attitudes were more completely expressed by other people, and, as Tables VIII and IX show, by people from both groups. A retired clergyman expressed the traditional view as follows:

"It's birth, very largely. The upper class are born with an intuitive outlook and feeling for their social class."

Another, younger gardener, stressed environment as much as heredity:

"It's breeding in their family before them. They've been gentlefolk all their life. I'm, well, not common exactly, but a broad Devonshire sort of chap, and I've not got the finer points and way of expressing myself like those chaps."

As Table VIII shows, a large proportion of the urban group suggested that traditional criteria determined an

individual's status. 34.9% of the informants who had lived in towns said that birth, breeding or family background were the important determinants of status. In addition, there were, among the ex-urbanites, a few people who felt that other traditional criteria - for example, inherited money, public school education, or employing a great many local people on the land - were the important ones. In one village it was said:-

"There's a feudal system in this village based on employment. If the Lord of the Manor, as he calls himself, is your employer, you're careful to fall in with his views. On the Parochial Church Council three-quarters of the people look and see what he and his wife think, then vote accordingly."

Table VIII probably understates the amount of traditionalism in the urban group, as it was not always possible to distinguish between those who spoke of inherited money and those who spoke of earned income; or between those who spoke of state education and those who spoke of education which is available only to the privileged. Where there was doubt of this kind, the informant was placed in the non-traditional category.

While there were apparently many traditionalists among the ex-urbanites, there were also many who believed that money was the principal determinant of social status and that money could be acquired by more or less anyone. These people had a non-traditional view. Many argued explicitly that the individual could improve his status by earning more money. Self-improvement was the theme of several people. For example, a woman who had moved from London to a small hamlet, said:

"Some people are better because they make themselves better. There's one poor woman here - she's just inferior because she won't try to do a thing for herself. They do get in a rut here."

Another woman from London observed in passing:

"Being in a low class is something that can be avoided. We aren't wealthy, but I don't drink or smoke or take holidays and so I have a lovely home. I don't go out squandering money. We don't live at the rate of the ordinary farmworker."

Apart from those who felt that money itself was all-important, there were a few of the urban group, also non-traditionalists, who felt that the possession of material goods or the acquisition of a good education, determined an individual's status. These people thought that status-mobility was possible, and that status was allotted on the basis of attributes which could be acquired.

Table VIII demonstrates that although a majority of the ex-urbanites suggested non-traditional determinants of social status, there was a very substantial minority who believed that traditional criteria were important.

TABLE VIII

Suggestions of the Urban Group  
as to the Determinants of Social Status

<u>Determinant suggested</u>	<u>Number of times</u>	<u>% of Group</u>
Education	9	20.9
"Ability"	1	2.3
Money - earned	15	34.9
Material possessions	2	4.7
Occupation	1	2.3
Self-improvement	3	6.9
"Character"	1	2.3
Money - unearned	1	2.3
"Interests"	1	2.3
Public School education	1	2.3
Employment of people on land	1	2.3
Birth	15	34.9
Don't Know	1	2.3

N.B. Many informants suggested more than one determinant. Therefore, figures do not add up to 100%. (There were 43 people in the urban group.)

When the opinions of the rural group were examined it was apparent that fewer of this group had suggested traditional determinants of status. For example, if Table VIII and Table IX are compared, it will be seen that a smaller proportion of the rural group suggested that "birth" was a determinant of status. Moreover, larger proportions of the rural group than of the urban said that an individual's earned income, education and occupation were important.

Those in the rural group who thought that traditional criteria were the ones that mattered most, expressed themselves very succinctly in general, saying, for example, "You feel a bit inferior to the big estate families." Those who felt non-traditional criteria determined status were often more voluble, perhaps because they did not fear accusations of feudalism.

There were members of the rural group who gave ambiguous answers to the question. They hinted that although people did place value on attributes such as wealth, it was doubtful whether these attributes qualified their owners for high status. One farmworker's wife said:

"Some of my relations are just the same as us, but they think that because they've more money they're everybody. So of course I don't see much of them. Those that have got the money don't think so much of it."

This ambivalence was reflected in the comments of other informants in the rural group. A great many people believed that "getting on", earning high wages, acquiring a good education and having a good job put people in a high social position. Yet they felt, frequently, that for some reason this position had not the authenticity given by attributes that were not easily acquired. Said one woman:

"Some have got more money to spend on things. I have noticed that some people who've got nothing to be big about, try to - whereas others who really have it just aren't."

There was resentment in the rural group both of those who "got on" and then assumed airs of superiority over their former friends, and of those who came into the area and expected to be automatically accorded high rank. "Millionaires taking over farms", "these people who come in from outside and pay extraordinary prices for farms", and "the retired people who expect you to look up to them" - all aroused suspicion, annoyance and jealousy.

It is probable that Table IX, like Table VIII, understates the amount of traditionalism among the informants. This is because of the ambivalence in the attitudes of the rural group as well as because of the occasional difficulty of distinguishing the traditional reply from the non-traditional. However, there can be little doubt but that the rural group showed rather less traditionalism in their suggestions as to the determinants of social status than did the urban group, while still containing a large minority with traditional views.

TABLE IX

Suggestions of the Rural Group  
as to the Determinants of Social Status

<u>Determinant Suggested</u>	<u>Number of times</u>	<u>% of Group</u>
Education	13	22.4
Money - earned	23	39.6
Occupation	3	5.2
Character	4	6.9
Behaviour	1	1.7
"Retired people"	3	5.2
Employers	2	3.5
"Way of life"	1	1.7
Amount of leisure	1	1.7
Landowners	2	3.5
Money - unearned	4	6.9
Birth	15	25.9
Don't Know	3	5.2

N.B. Many people suggested more than one determinant. Therefore figures do not add to 100%. (58 informants in the rural group.)

When the informants were asked directly whether they considered that birth was an important determinant of social status, once again the urban group proved to be more traditional in outlook than the rural group. Table X shows that a high proportion of the urban group believed birth to be an important influence on an individual's status. A cook explained:

"They do really have an advantage, though we're told they don't or you read it and hear it on the telly. I know some of the Government were quite ordinary men and some millionaires started as office boys, like Henry Ford, but that's just one in a million, isn't it?"

Although a majority of the rural group also felt that birth was important, it was a smaller majority than in the other group, as Table X reveals. There were people in the rural group (though not in the other) who argued that other criteria were becoming more important than family background. Some regretted this development, others welcomed it. One of those who regretted the trend was a farmer's wife, who felt that more respect was due to the distressed gentry:

"You can often find an elderly person who is wonderfully well-educated and comes from high social standing, and however poor she is now, you can't fail to know she comes from the upper class."

TABLE X

Is Birth An Important Influence on Social Status?

	Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group (43)	36	83.6	7	16.4	-	-
Rural Group (58)	41	70.8	16	27.6	1	1.7

When they were asked whether various attributes which could all be acquired were important determinants of social status, the urban and rural groups again differed in their replies.

The informants were first of all asked whether they thought that the education an individual received had an



effect on his social status. Far more of the urban group than the rural group believed that it had. It is interesting to note that in both groups a great many people assumed that it was public school education which was under discussion. Hence they tended to regard education not as an attribute to be acquired by anyone, but rather as a means by which the existing upper class could perpetuate its position. For example, a woman in the rural group said:

"Supposing someone of good family and breeding came here and sent their child to grammar school because they had little money. I don't think it would make a lot of difference to their status. But generally our sort of people beggar themselves to give their children a public school education. It's invaluable - a way of life."

There was again a considerable amount of concealed traditionalism in both groups, although in both a majority believed education to be an important determinant of status. Only a few people, apparently, believed that education of the kind which all children have the opportunity to acquire enhances social status. One man did say, "It is the thing which gets you the chance to earn more money and get in a high position", but his overtly non-traditional view was shared by few others. There is therefore little reason to think that in evaluating education more highly as a determinant of status than the rural group, the urban group were expressing non-traditional views.

TABLE XI

Is Education an Important Determinant of Social Status?

	Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group (43)	36	83.6	7	16.4	-	-
Rural Group (58)	37	63.8	19	32.8	2	3.4

When the informants were asked whether they considered that income was an important determinant of status, only a small

majority of the urban group said that they did think it important. A greater proportion of the rural group said it was an important criterion.

In both groups there were a number of people who were uneasy about according high status to those whose only qualification for it was a large income. Frequently informants pointed out that such people often lacked other essential qualities. A camp site proprietor expressed this idea:

"Income is something, but it isn't everything. Some people, dockers for instance, have a very high income but not a high social position. Plenty of people in a very high class have little money."

Similarly, a woman pointed out that in the last analysis an individual's background was more important than his current income:

"A great many people think it's important to be rich, but in the long run it counts no weight. People always know where you come from."

Many informants made it clear that they resented the claiming of high status by those who merely had 'a good income'. This resentment explained much of the ambivalence in the replies of respondents. The weight of opinion seemed to be with the man who said:

"Those with the highest income are often the professional and Service people here, then they have high standing. But thinking of others with a good income - farmers, for instance - it doesn't follow that they have high status."

Income was therefore regarded by many informants as an insufficient claim to status in itself, but a powerful support to other qualifications. There were those, however, with a straightforward belief that income was the basic determinant of status. A man in the rural group said:

"They have the money to travel and they have the things that count - T.V. and washing machines and all that sort of stuff. The main social points."

Again, latent traditionalism can be perceived in informants' answers. This simple belief in the power of a large

income to give high status was relatively rare. On the whole, however, there was more non-traditionalism in the replies of the rural group to this question.

TABLE XII

Is Income an Important Determinant of Social Status?

	Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group (43)	23	53.6	20	46.5	-	-
Rural Group (58)	40	69.0	17	29.3	1	1.7

The two groups differed very little when they were asked whether an occupation gave an individual a specific social status. It was noticeable, however, that quite a large number of the informants had a somewhat traditional view of occupational prestige. They treated the question as though they had been asked whether a traditional rural occupational hierarchy still existed in their district. One young man replied:

"It's always been like this. People get the idea that because I'm the gardener at the Abbey, they think I'm higher socially than they are. They think it's better gardening for a private gentleman than labouring or farmworking."

A retired woman had less faith in the durability of the traditional hierarchy, but felt that it still persisted to some extent:

"Ten years ago your occupation was important, but now it's going out. In the village, the farmer's employee meets with a good many people on equal terms. I don't say with his employer."

Another woman explained why traditional occupational distinctions were dying out:

"It doesn't carry as much weight as it used to. You have the chap who works at Westlands and he's a new element. Sort of mechanical as opposed to the ordinary farmworker. They don't know where they fit in."

There was quite a strong body of opinion which felt that 'the professional people' commanded more respect than those in

other occupations, but for the most part the informants did not appear to have a clear idea of an occupational-prestige ladder.

Thus although the majority of all informants believed that occupation did exert an important influence upon social status, it was by no means clear that they regarded the occupations which conferred high status as open to all. Few people seemed to think of occupation as a means of self-advancement. Rather, many informants believed that those who enjoyed high status were likely to enter prestige-giving occupations, thereby reinforcing their position. Moreover, many people looked upon the occupational hierarchy itself as a traditional structure. It was difficult to interpret the answers to this question as evidence of extensive non-traditionalism among the informants.

TABLE XIII

Is an Individual's Occupation  
an Important Determinant of Status?

	Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group (43)	34	79.0	5	11.6	4	9.3
Rural Group (58)	45	77.7	11	18.9	2	3.4

A small majority of the rural group said that material possessions were not an important determinant of social status. Rather more of the urban group denied that material possessions were a criterion of status. Again, therefore, while both groups exhibited traditional attitudes, they were more pronounced within the urban group.

Many people suggested that material possessions, even more than income, represented only a doubtful claim to social standing. It was often said that a claim based on these grounds was only put forward by those with no other qualifications for high standing, and was only accepted by the ignorant or gullible:

"The man cutting the hedge there, may think the man in the big house down the road is someone, but ..."

"Obviously the farmworkers are impressed by big houses, but ..."

"It would weigh with the people in the middle. In villages you get a lot of the upper class living in very small cottages. There's one here inhabited by nobility. Anyone in the village will say he's the most important person living here, but there's no visible sign."

As in the case of income, only a few people had an uncomplicated belief in the power of material possessions to raise their owner's status. One man did say:

"One person may own a pushbike and another a Rolls. Obviously the latter is better off. You can see he is."

Another made the point that possessions tend to shut people off from those without them:

"The people with a car think, 'I won't bother with that man in his dirty old working clothes, in case he may dirty my car'."

But the majority of all the informants rejected the idea that a man's possessions could influence his status.

TABLE XIV

Do Material Possessions Strongly Influence Social Status?

	Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group (43)	15	34.9	27	62.9	1	2.3
Rural Group (58)	26	44.8	30	51.8	2	3.4

The answers to all the questions so far examined confirm the hypothesis that there would be strong tendencies towards traditionalism in Dorset. Unexpectedly, however, the analysis also suggests that traditional views were more common in the urban group than in the rural. The urban group not only suggested traditional determinants of social status more frequently, they also acknowledged them to be important more often when they were suggested to them. Moreover, when they said that attributes such as education, which could be acquired,

were important. They tended to place value on these attributes as sources of additional prestige to those already in high positions. Fewer people saw these attributes as means of social mobility. Lastly, the urban group rejected material possessions as a source of status more firmly than did the rural group.

The hypothesis that the rural group would be more traditional than the urban, in attitudes to social status, is therefore strongly challenged. An explanation of this is perhaps afforded by the composition and character of the urban group. Like many of those in the Shropshire urban group, the people in Dorset who were ex-urbanites had for the most part deliberately elected to live in the country. In many cases this decision had been made late in life. It may be suggested that they were attracted to life in a small village community for various reasons, one of which might be that their concept of the structure of such a community appealed to them.

It is possible that the many retired people in the sample, most of whom had held professional occupations, and many of whom were relatively wealthy and had been educated at independent schools, expected that people with their qualifications would enjoy high status in a small village. That to a certain extent they were justified in this expectation, is clear. Such people might almost be said to have a vested interest in preserving the traditional status system - and hence they would maintain that this structure was a stable, immutable one. This reasoning was not always conscious, of course, although there were many who did not hesitate to say that they felt entitled to high esteem. There was, for example, the woman who said simply, "I'm in Burke's Landed Gentry. You'll find it over there." A retired Naval Officer described himself as

"gentry", and said that the gentry were at the top of the social hierarchy.

The country may attract so many retired officers from the Services, and so many retired professional workers, precisely because they expect to continue to command in a village community the deference they have been accustomed to in their working life. It is no doubt significant that almost without exception, the retired officers are painstakingly referred to as 'Wing Commander', 'Rear-Admiral', 'Colonel' and so on, by everyone in their community.

Both the retired people themselves, and the rest of the community, were fond of explaining that they tended 'to keep together'. A clergyman's widow said:

"We have a lot of retired people here all on a level - from the Civil Service and the Services. We are all friends. If you take the officer class in the Services and they come into a perfectly new neighbourhood - well, if you hear that a man is a Lieutenant-Colonel you think immediately that he's a man with a certain background who has always moved in certain circles."

A farmworker's wife was less congratulatory:

"All the retired people here, they like to call themselves 'The Elite'. Having sherry parties and that. Well they can call themselves that."

It is true that in a rural area the generally limited and fixed income of the retired people will go further than it would in a town. But this is probably less important to them than the fact that they can establish themselves in an identifiable niche in a village community, and one which has a relatively high status attached to it. The retired people will willingly concede, in many cases, that 'the aristocracy' or 'the county families' rank above them in the social hierarchy, for after all, to do so is to consolidate their own position at the top of the local scale.

It is therefore not surprising that traditional attitudes to social status were so widespread in the urban group. It may even be conjectured that this traditionalism among the ex-urbanites in itself diminished that of the rural group. It must be pointed out again that members of the rural group were often ambivalent about the claims of the retired people to high status. It was evident that many of the retired people aroused resentment and hostility, partly because they did demand deference from 'the villagers' and at the same time were seen to treat them with amused contempt on occasions. The resentment of the local people was increased by the fact that the influx of 'outsiders' was quite large, and these people were able to buy cottages and farms at what appeared to be inflated prices.

The vicar of one small village remarked on the hostility:

"There's resentment here at all the retired people buying up cottages that the people's children might have had and turning them into dwelling-houses."

Farmers often had strong feelings. Said one, "They just don't like outsiders, Majors and so on, taking the land from farmers' sons."

There was little cause to wonder that the rural group were not prepared to accord high status automatically to those whose qualifications might appear to be the traditional ones - an upper middle class background, a public school education, a professional or Service career and the ownership of land. There were too many newcomers in all the villages, with these qualifications. The qualifications were themselves coming to be questioned. It is significant that for the most part the rural group did not challenge the status of those who owned the large estates, had long-established claims to be 'county families' or 'aristocracy' and were often distinguished



by titles of a non-military kind. Indeed, the position of these people was so indisputable that they were often mentioned only as an afterthought, for example:

"Of course, if we should talk of the like of Mr. Roper, well, he's obviously different."

It was suggested sometimes that the supremacy of these people was so indubitable that they could afford to treat everyone with civility, while others with more uncertain claims could not do so:

"Well obviously the Lady of the Manor is better, but she doesn't make no difference. She'll always speak to anyone."

When the rural group were asked if various qualifications gave individuals high status, they thought in terms of those whose status was doubtful in their eyes, not in terms of those whose status was so confirmed as to be almost forgotten by them.

It must be said that the rejection of the claims of the retired people was made overt by only a few local people. For the most part, in the course of interaction the claims seemed to be conceded, resentment was kept beneath the surface and emerged only in private.

The rural group were thus far from being non-traditionalists in general. In fact, many of them were given to a more rigidly traditional view of the status hierarchy than the ex-urbanites. The claims they acknowledged were hallowed by time.

In West Dorset, as in Shropshire, an attempt was made to discern whether status was assessed subjectively by individuals over time. A priori, there was some reason to think that a subjective evaluation was made by many people, for a number insisted that it was primarily the behaviour of a person which determined his status. In the rural group especially,

informants were prone to point out that the individual's observed actions over a long period were the important criteria for assessing his proper position. Said a retired woman:

"People think more of such families in respect of how they behave and not because of who they are. As they behave, not among their own class, but to other people."

Appropriate behaviour included "doing a lot for the village", having "a good word for everyone" and being "very generous". Inappropriate behaviour included "climbing" - many people condemned those who "try too hard". Also unpopular were those who "won't speak to you when they meet you in the village. They don't want to know you".

It was expected that those to whom high status was accorded would be neither haughty nor un-friendly. They would play their proper role in village activities without being domineering.

A newcomer was subject to close scrutiny to see how far his behaviour met the appropriate standards, said several informants.

It was not felt that this incidental evidence was sufficient proof that the informants tended to estimate status subjectively. As with the Shropshire sample, there was an attempt to gather systematic evidence on this point. The informants were asked to rank the same thirty occupations that had been presented to Shropshire informants. It was again argued that the rural group would show less consensus in the arrangement than the urban group, if their approach to social status was more subjective.

The informants were again asked to rank the occupations in five groups, within which the occupations would give equal status, while Group I had the highest status, Group V the

lowest, and so on. It was stipulated only that each group should contain at least one occupation.

When the rankings produced by each group were examined it was found that the rural group did in fact show less consensus than the urban group. (The Statistical evidence for this conclusion is given in the Appendix. The residual variation about the mean was considerably larger for the rural group than for the urban.) Moreover, while 70% of those who had lived in urban areas were able to complete the arrangement, only 50%<sup>7</sup> of those in the rural group could do so. Both these facts suggest that there was less inclination in the rural group to use objective measures of rank and more inclination to make subjective assessments. Members of the rural group often found the exercise meaningless and said so. Frequently they invoked their knowledge of specific individuals in certain occupations, in order to rank the occupations, and found it hard to rank others because they knew no-one with such an occupation.

The median arrangement of occupations produced by each group is shown below in Table XV.

TABLE XV

Median Arrangement of Occupations by Urban Group

I	II	III
Company Director	Works Manager	Farmer
Clergyman	Agricultural	Builder
Bank Manager	Contractor	Clerk
Solicitor	Estate Agent	Landlord
Doctor	Nurse	Policeman
	Teacher	Shopkeeper
		Electrical
		Mechanic
	IV	V
	Plumber	Hedger
	Carpenter	Domestic Servant
	Farm Foreman	Farm Labourer
	Postman	Gardener
	Lorry Driver	Bus Conductor
		Tractor Driver
		Cowman
		Garage hand

Median Arrangement of Occupations by Rural Group

I	II	III
Company Director	Works Manager	Teacher
Clergyman	Agricultural	Builder
Bank Manager	Contractor	Clerk
Solicitor	Estate Agent	Landlord
Doctor	Nurse	Policeman
	Farmer	Shopkeeper
		Farm Foreman
IV	V	
Electrical Mechanic	Hedger	
Plumber	Domestic Servant	
Postman	Farm Labourer	
Carpenter	Bus Conductor	
Lorry Driver	Tractor Driver	
Gardener	Cowman	
	Garage hand	

It will be noted that the median arrangements produced by the two groups varied in several significant ways. It had been hypothesised that the rural group would evaluate agricultural occupations more highly than the urban group would. This proved to be the case. Farmer, farm labourer and gardener were all placed in higher groups by the rural informants. It had also been hypothesised that occupations with a specifically urban connotation - for example, electrical mechanic, a works manager, would be ranked higher by the urban group. In the case of the electrical mechanic the Table shows that this was done. Moreover, when the average rankings for each occupation were examined (see Appendix) it was found that the tendency for the ex-urbanites to elevate industrial occupations, and for the rural group to elevate agricultural jobs, was still more evident. The urban group, for example, ranked works manager and company director higher on average than the rural group did. The rural group ranked cowman, tractor driver, hedger and farm labourer higher than ex-urbanites did.

It is hard to explain why the urban group ranked the infant school teacher higher than the rural group did. This

phenomenon represented a reversal of the Shropshire trend. Perhaps it reflects the fact that many of the infant teachers in the area with whom the rural group were well-acquainted were unqualified women, often young students temporarily filling a vacancy. There was, therefore, some reason to think that the rural group were less inclined to rank individuals objectively by their occupations than the urban group. Insofar as the rural group had a ranking system for occupations it differed markedly from that of the urban group, and was consistent with traditional ideas of occupational prestige in rural areas.

It should be noted, finally, that although the degree of consensus in the arrangement of occupations varied significantly between urban and rural group, the informants who completed the arrangement did display overall a high level of consensus. Clearly there was some general agreement as to the rank which should be accorded to most of the occupations in relation to the rest.

Confirmation of the hypothesis that status is assessed to a great extent subjectively in West Dorset was also obtained by asking informants two further questions. They were asked, first, if they regarded an individual's character or personality as an important influence on his status. Then they were asked if they thought that the length of time an individual had lived in a particular area was a determinant of his status.

A majority of both groups believed that character was an important influence, as Table XVI shows. A slightly larger majority of the rural group believed it to be so. The influence of character was held to be important because in a small village people made a point of investigating others.

"In a small place you find out their character from A to Z."

"In a village like this after you've been here five minutes you've not got a character at all. I've got one I didn't know I had."

Some people denied the influence of 'character' in a more stereotyped sense:

"If somebody's got bad morals it's a nine-days' wonder, then they take no notice. There's some people I know - people have just come to expect it, now."

Several people said that people who had been 'in trouble' were forgiven, and "not hounded or anything", but did little to mitigate the impression that a close interest was taken in 'character' in the sense of moral behaviour, and that individuals might well find their position in the community affected by this scrutiny.

TABLE XVI

Is Character an Important Influence on Social Status?

	Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group (43)	29	67.4	13	30.2	1	2.3
Rural Group (58)	45	77.7	11	18.9	2	3.4

In each group a majority believed that the length of time an individual had lived in an area influenced his status. Indeed, there was little difference between the groups on this point. However, the answers of the rural group again revealed resentment of 'the outsiders' who seemed to come and appropriate the most desirable positions in the community. One elderly woman said astringently:

"It seems sometimes when outsiders come they seem to get in everything. Whether it's because of their upbringing or what not, I don't know. They get to the head of things in the village."

Another woman echoed this:

"They think more of newcomers. They seem to run everything here. The villagers stand back. Outsiders run everything in this parish."

Other people suggested a reason for this apparent success and popularity of newcomers:

"They look up to newcomers in a village - today that is. I don't know if people do get to know them to know their business or what it is. They get took up quicker than anybody been living here all their life. You're all right for a bit, but when they get used to 'ee they do drop 'ee till somebody else comes in."

"Some of those who come think they're above those who've always been here, but they come down in the end."

"When I first came here they treated me like gold-dust. Then in the second week, they, like, turned."

A strong body of opinion believed quite simply that the length of time an individual or family had lived in the area did influence their status, their belief being unclouded by resentment of 'newcomers'. Said one farmer:

"You get used to the people and know their background. You know if they're genuine."

TABLE XVII

Is Length of Residence An Important Influence on Status?

	Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group (43)	29	67.4	14	32.6	-	-
Rural Group (58)	38	65.5	18	31.0	2	3.4

To obtain further insight into the amount of traditionalism present among West Dorset informants, they were asked the same questions about the status of farmers that had been put to Shropshire informants. Like the Shropshire informants, those in Dorset were prone to regard farmers as an integrated group apart from the rest of the community. Several people said that the farmers were so tightly-knit they could perceive no status distinctions among them.

The rural group, especially, commented on the fact that the farmers were set apart. They often said that farmers looked down upon "the farmworkers and other villagers."

Examples of their unity were cited:

"The farmers round here have special seats in the church. They all sit together."

"They nearly always marry into farming families, the men, that is. You can't blame them, the women know the work."

When they were asked to suggest the determinants of status among farmers, the two groups did not differ very greatly. Table XVIII shows that the urban group believed that the traditional distinction between 'gentleman' and 'working' (or 'yeoman') farmer still persisted. To a lesser extent they thought the acreage a man farmed important. A minority group held the non-traditional view that to have attended agricultural college was important (but several associated agricultural college education with 'gentlemen farmers' only).

"There's the gentleman farmer who has been educated higher - has been to agricultural college. But does he know much more? Lots of these farmers who left school at fourteen seem to know so much intuitively."

The majority of the urban group were at least partly traditional in their view of what gave a farmer high status. Many tried to explain the difference between 'gentlemen' and 'working' farmers:

"The gentlemen farmers have got that Lord-of-the-Manor attitude. Mr. Roper's a gentleman farmer, at Forde Abbey, isn't he? When the Hunt meets you can pick out the rough and ready ones from the real gentlemen. The gentlemen farmers are in every activity. They've got the money to do it of course."

"If the son of a General decides to take up farming, well he's a gentleman farmer, but if the son of a farmer takes up farming, he's just a farmer."

The woman who said, "They all seem to work now there's no gentlemen farmers" was in a very small minority. Possibly her standards were too exacting, compared with those of other people. Most people quickly pointed out that there was a difference between this farmer and that which was self-evident



if they could not quite explain why one was 'ordinary' and the other 'a gentleman'.

Hunting figured largely in accounts of gentlemen farmers - this is hardly surprising as the area is divided between two large Hunts - the Seavington and the Cattistock.

A strong current of traditionalism was therefore evident in the replies of the urban group to this question.

TABLE XVIII

Suggestions of the Urban Group  
as to Determinants of Status among Farmers

<u>Determinant</u>	<u>Number of times suggested</u>	<u>% of Group</u>
'Gentlemen' or 'working'	16	37.2
Type of house	1	2.3
Hunting	3	6.9
Labour employed	1	2.3
'Social standing'	2	4.7
Success as farmer	5	11.6
Agricultural college	5	11.6
'Modernisation'	4	9.6
Tenant or owner	1	2.3
Size of farm	7	16.3
Capital invested	2	4.7
Don't Know	5	11.6
There are no distinctions	3	6.9

N.B. Several people suggested more than one determinant. Therefore figures do not add to 100%. 43 in urban group.

The rural group attached even more importance to the distinction between 'gentlemen' and 'working' farmers. They also suggested various non-traditional criteria more often than the urban group, however. They mentioned the size of farm, the amount of money a farmer had and the number of cars he owned. Yet this was offset by the fact that the rural group spoke of several traditional determinants of a farmer's

status which the urban group had not suggested at all. These included the length of time a farmer had been on his land, and whether or not he came from a farming family. In general, therefore, while both groups showed a good deal of evidence of traditionalism in replying to this question, it was more marked in the rural group.

It was from a member of the rural group - a young veterinary surgeon - that a summary of the traditional status structure within the farming community in Dorset came:

"I think farmers are divided into three categories, socially. There's gentleman farmers. They have a better education and often don't come from farming backgrounds. They have perhaps come into farming since the war and since it became a profitable occupation. They regard it as a profitable investment. Then there is the yeoman farmer who is pretty sound, financially. Most of them own their own farms. He doesn't show how well off he is. There aren't many of those round here. Then there's the peasant farmer. He has perhaps come up from a farm labourer and has perhaps married some money or had some left him, or won the Pools or something. Often he's a tenant farmer."

This statement seemed to synthesise a good deal that was said by other people. The rural group in particular looked upon 'gentlemen' farmers as making a big profit out of farming. As in the urban group, several people mentioned too the importance of hunting. A number tried to explain the distinction between those from farming families and those from outside farming:

"A man that is born in farming is different from a man that's come in from outside. The man who is come in from outside may be a good farmer but he doesn't understand the welfare of an animal. It's a fact they often get tired of it after a few years."

The traditional distinction between good and bad farmers was mentioned several times as helping to determine status:

"A lot is the way they run their farms. Some have a lot of go and push. The others muddle along."

Traditional criteria, therefore, held considerable importance for the rural group.

TABLE XX

Suggestions of the Rural Group  
as to Determinants of Social Status among Farmers

<u>Determinant</u>	<u>Number of times suggested</u>	<u>% of Group</u>
'Gentleman' or 'working'	24	41.4
Hunting	3	5.2
Time on the land	4	6.9
Success as a farmer	3	5.2
'Book' farmers or hereditary	3	5.2
Agricultural College	1	1.7
Education at public school	4	6.9
Size of farm	13	22.8
Stock	2	3.5
Money	10	17.2
Don't Know	3	5.2
There are no distinctions	4	6.9

N.B. Several people mentioned more than one determinant. Therefore figures do not add to 100%. 58 people in rural group.

The informants were asked, as a further test of the traditionalism of their attitudes to status, whether certain attributes had an important influence on a farmer's status. As in North Shropshire, the great majority of all informants said that in West Dorset farms were similar in type and quality, and that therefore a farmer's status did not depend at all on the kind of farming he was engaged in, or upon the quality of his land.

TABLE XXI

Do these Determinants Influence a Farmer's Status Strongly?

		<u>Acreage</u>					
		Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group	(43)	25	58.0	9	21.0	9	21.0
Rural Group	(58)	34	58.7	21	36.2	3	5.2
		<u>'Neighbourliness'</u>					
		Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group	(43)	30	69.8	8	18.6	5	11.6
Rural Group	(58)	37	63.8	16	27.6	5	8.6
		<u>Owner or Tenant</u>					
		Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group	(43)	29	67.4	9	21.0	5	11.6
Rural Group	(58)	14	24.2	41	70.7	3	5.2
		<u>Farming Family</u>					
		Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group	(43)	29	67.4	8	18.6	6	13.9
Rural Group	(58)	42	72.3	12	20.7	4	6.9
		<u>Labour Employed</u>					
		Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group	(43)	25	58.0	14	32.5	4	9.6
Rural Group	(58)	21	36.2	32	55.1	5	8.6
		<u>Machinery Owned</u>					
		Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group	(43)	24	55.8	12	27.8	7	16.4
Rural Group	(58)	41	70.7	15	25.8	2	3.4
		<u>Success as a Farmer</u>					
		Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group	(43)	34	79.0	8	18.6	1	2.3
Rural Group	(58)	42	72.3	13	22.4	3	5.2
		<u>Length of time on Farm</u>					
		Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group	(43)	31	72.1	6	13.9	6	13.9
Rural Group	(58)	44	75.9	12	20.7	2	3.4

Of the suggested determinants, several had been selected especially to distinguish traditionalists from non-traditionalists. "The length of time a man has been on his farm" was the first of these. Both groups believed it to be an important influence on a farmer's status, the rural group, however, containing slightly more people who thought so. In Dorset, in contrast to Shropshire, there was widespread enthusiasm for the farmer who kept the family farm on, and the family which remained on the same land for generations. One woman explained:

"Farming is a long-term business. They'd be foolish to lay the foundations and not wait to see the superstructure."

This was a rationalisation offered by several people. Others said that the desire to stay on the same farm was purely sentimental:

"If they've sons, they naturally want to pass it on. We do have a better opinion of them than of them that do come and go."

"They're all for sticking, round here", said a farmworker concisely.

A source of regret to many people was that a large number of farmers were being prevented from 'sticking' nowadays, because of the tendency of the big estates to put up farm rents:

"They'd like to pass on the farm to their sons, but they can't. These are all estate ones, and when the old man dies they don't want the son to have it, because they want to push the rent up."

Much incidental evidence was gathered confirming that families who had been on the same land for generations did enjoy high prestige. Their names were frequently mentioned by many different people with approval.

Both groups agreed conclusively that it was important for a farmer to be successful at his job. "The way he farms"

was regarded as almost all-important by some informants. This too is a traditional criterion for assessment a farmer's status. It is not to be calculated simply in financial terms. One retired man said:

"They do notice how a man keeps his farm you know. One of the local farmers was described to me as 'Dixon of Dock Green' the other day. His fields are full of docks."

The state of hedges, ditches, gates, yards and stock were all suggested as signs of a farmer's ability and care.

The traditional view that a man from a farming family has higher status than the 'outsider' found support from a majority of both groups, and especially from the rural one. A popular view was, "If the family's been in farming for a hundred years they know more by nature than anyone ever learns at agricultural college."

Neighbourliness is a quality which traditionally earns respect, and both groups agreed that it influenced status. The urban group attached more importance to it than the rural, to some extent. It was often said that this quality was valued most highly among the small farmers.

The groups differed as to whether the amount of labour a farmer employed affected his status greatly. The urban group thought that it did, on the whole; the rural group did not. As in Shropshire, it may be that the ex-urbanites attached more significance to the employer-employee relationship than did the rural group, and were to this extent less traditional. The rural group often expressed an admiration for those who did not employ anyone at all. The family farm was their ideal - a truly traditional concept. Said a farm-worker, "I think the fellow who can manage on his own is a better fellow." Another said, "A man that carries a decent

farm on a shoestring should be better thought of than the one with a pocketful of money who has everything done for him."

The urban group also thought that a man who owned his farm would be more likely to have high status than a tenant farmer. The rural group disagreed bitterly with this idea. Many of the rural group explained why they rejected this view:

"Some that are wealthy may be tenants and some that are owners quite poor."

"If they rent a big farm, they'll be higher class than owning a small one."

Probably the rural group knew more about farmers and farming than the urban group. The ex-urbanites were for the most part unaware that farmers on large farms were often tenants of the big estates, while many smallholders owned their land. One farmer who had at one time rented 500 acres in Devon, but recently had bought his own farm of 100 acres in Dorset, did believe that he had lost prestige by doing so.

Indeed, both groups considered that the acreage a man farmed was very important to his status. Yet the majority in this case was by no means as large as that which believed that length of time on the land and success as a farmer, or coming from a farming family was important. It seems, therefore, that the traditional qualities were the ones which were held to be most important.

It was interesting to note that the Dorset informants, unlike those in Shropshire, did believe that the amount of modern machinery a farmer owned contributed to his standing. The rural group especially believed this. A farmer's wife explained, "It pays to be up to date. Old ways are expensive ways." For the most part, farmers of all ages hastened to

condemn old-fashioned methods. It was not entirely non-traditional values which prompted this. Rather, it was the view that a farmer should be good at his job.

There were some non-traditional opinions among the informants' answers, but in general their views on the social status of farmers were overwhelmingly traditional. This was especially true of the rural group, though often the ex-urbanites differed from them only because their knowledge of the area and of farming was more superficial.

In a traditional local status system individuals will "know their place" and will neither expect, nor wish, to mix on equal terms with those above and below them in the hierarchy. They will expect others, too, to know their places and behave accordingly. Those people with a traditional outlook, therefore, will sympathise with these characteristics of a status system.

The comments of many Dorset informants showed evidence that they expected some individuals to have high status in all circumstances. The concept of 'total status' had meaning for them. One woman observed:

"I think the upper class probably look after the welfare of the whole community. They do all the Queen-Beeing. It's very difficult to get other people to undertake responsibility. They will only do things if people will lead them."

The expectation that the same individuals would be at the head of many activities aroused no hostility (except when they were 'newcomers').

All the informants were asked whether they mixed socially with people of a different social standing from their own. Table XXII shows that the rural group, far more frequently than the urban, said that they did not do so. It was often said that while everyone in the village appeared to mix



amicably on formal occasions, this was a purely superficial interaction:

"On occasions like Harvest Festival all the village dignitaries will talk to you like they've never talked before. The Vicar and the doctor and so on."

"Well, at times like the Harvest Supper everyone comes and we all get on very well. But I suppose that sort of thing doesn't happen very often. I must admit we do usually mix just with our own small group of friends."

The kind of 'mixing' the urban group described did not often go very deep or far:

"Well, I do mix if I meet them. You've got to muck in with them all. A bit, that is."

"Inevitably one mixes. Not socially. In the village."

"Do you mean mix socially? We talk to everyone in the village and ask after their families."

However, the urban group were less committed to the opinion that different levels should keep to themselves, and ought not to mix. Hence they were slightly less traditional than the rural group.

TABLE XXII

Do you mix socially with people whose status is different from your own?

	Don't Know %	No %	Yes - at work %	Yes- informally %	Yes - at work and informally %
Urban Group (43)	4 (9.6)	8 (18.6)	10 (23.2)	19 (44.1)	2 (4.6)
Rural Group (58)	6 (10.3)	21 (36.2)	9 (15.5)	17 (29.3)	5 (8.6)

The informants were also asked if people in general mixed with others of different status. Both groups said that they did not, but the rural group were more confirmed in this opinion. As in Shropshire, both groups spoke with disapproval of 'social climbers':

"They try to mix in with someone a bit higher than they are. They think they're achieving something."

"Some that aren't quite in a class try to, like, blend in."

Many people sought to explain the tendency for people to mix only with their social equals:

"You are inevitably thrown together, especially in the country."

"If Colonel Woolley had a cocktail party and invited one of the small farmers, say, or someone from the Council houses, they'd be more embarrassed than he or one of his normal guests would."

"Your own people are more congenial. It's not snobbery."

It seemed, therefore, that the majority, and especially of the rural informants, believed it was best to know and keep one's place - an essentially traditional view.

TABLE XXIII

Do People Mix Socially with Others of Different Status?

	Yes	%	No	%	Don't Know	%
Urban Group (43)	30	69.8	11	25.6	2	4.6
Rural Group (58)	35	60.2	7	12.2	16	27.6

All the evidence obtained from the survey of attitudes to social status in West Dorset points to the conclusion that traditional views are widespread. It seems reasonable to infer that traditional social status systems may exist in many of the villages, but this cannot be stated with certainty.

It was paradoxical that in many respects the urban group showed themselves to be more given to traditional views than the rural group. As has been said, it is believed that this was partly because they were not unwilling to subscribe to a view of local society which might appear ridiculous to an urban outsider. More important, however, was the fact that they themselves benefited from, and approved of, the traditional order.

The rural group were not always overtly traditional in their opinions, but many of them were in fact profoundly traditional in their attitudes to status.

The West Dorset respondents shared many attitudes in common with those of North Shropshire, and some that were different. In the concluding chapter a comparison of the surveys held in each place will be made.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII

1. The proportion of the original sample which was successfully interviewed was higher in Dorset than in Shropshire principally because the Electoral Roll was not so out of date.

2. Distribution of population between sexes in the Rural Districts = 52.8 women and 47.1 men.

Expected distribution of sexes in sample = 55.5 women and 49.4 men.

Therefore, by  $X^2$  test there is no evidence it was not a random sample.

3. Expected distribution of sample was:-

20 - 29	13.1
30 - 39	17.3
40 - 49	18.1
50 - 59	21.0
60 - 69	18.6
70 and over	17.6

By  $X^2$  test no evidence sample not random.

4. Expected distribution of sample was:-

1, 2, 3, 4, 13	5, 6, 9, 8, 14, 12	7, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17
11.7	19.3	16.0

Actual distribution:-

11.0	22.0	14.0
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By  $X^2$  test no evidence sample not random.

5. This proportion is still a little higher than the comparable one found by J. Saville (op. cit. p. 229).

6. This proportion is a little smaller than the comparable one found by J. Saville (loc. cit.).

7. Both proportions of informants completing the exercise are very much lower than in Shropshire. One factor which contributed to this was the generally lower standard of participation in the interview in Dorset. Dorset informants were on the whole much less talkative, hospitable and at ease in the interview situation.

CHAPTER VIII

Parents' Aspirations for their  
Children's Educational Careers, in West Dorset

The survey of parental aspirations which was carried out in the Rural Districts of Bridport and Beaminster involved a much larger group of parents than the comparable North Shropshire survey. The object of enlarging the sample was to increase the accuracy of the conclusions to be drawn from the survey.

As in the case of the Shropshire survey the questionnaire (almost identical with the one used in Shropshire, and shown in the Appendix) was put only to parents who had children in the age groups nine to eleven and thirteen to fifteen. It was unfortunately the case in Dorset, as in Shropshire, that there was no source from which a completely random sample of parents with children in the two relevant age groups could be drawn. The sample once again had to be taken from a list of parents in the Rural Districts who had children of the appropriate ages at county secondary and primary schools. The sample therefore consisted of children attending Bridport or Beaminster comprehensive schools, and the village schools contributing to these secondary schools.

The parents of children attending independent schools were again omitted from the survey. It is difficult to estimate the importance of this omission. The Local Education Authority were not able to say how many people did send their children to public or private schools since those schools were not necessarily in Dorset. It seems probable, however, that the proportion of parents sending their children to independent schools was very low. All the people who were interviewed were asked if they knew of anyone in their parish who sent their child to an independent school. In no case were

more than a few people said to do so. Several parents did send their children to local private schools which took children up to the age of eleven, but hardly anyone was mentioned as having a child at an independent secondary school. A number of people who had sent their child to a private school initially, and later to the County Secondary School, were interviewed. It was hoped, therefore, that the group of parents who were omitted as a result of the sampling technique was not of great significance. There was good reason to think that the group was so small that it could have made little difference to the overall results obtained from the survey.

The age-range of the parents who were interviewed in Dorset was relatively limited. The great majority were aged between thirty and forty-five. Moreover, as in North Shropshire, whenever it was possible it was the mother of the child who was interviewed. In only 9.6% of cases (where the mother refused to be interviewed, or the child had no mother) was the father or guardian of the child interviewed. It was unlikely, therefore, that variations in the traditionalism displayed by different groups of parents could be explained in terms of either age or sex.

The parents of four hundred and thirty-one children living in Bridport and Beaminster Rural Districts were interviewed. (The original sample consisted of four hundred and fifty parents, but of these fifteen refused to be interviewed and four had left the area<sup>1</sup>). 48.7% of the children were girls and 51.5% boys. 63.1% of the children attended one of the two secondary schools, while the remainder attended village primary schools.

The occupational distribution of the fathers of the children is shown in Table I. The Registrar-General's Scale

of Social Classes has been amended in the way that has been previously explained. (That is to say, farmers have been allotted to three different Classes, as described in Chapter III. There were one hundred and eight farmers among the children's fathers.)

TABLE I

Occupational Distribution of Children's Fathers  
Using Revised Registrar-General's Scale

Social Class	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IV	V	Don't <sup>2</sup> Know
	5	113	14	152	88	35	24
	(1.1%)	(26.2%)	(3.2%)	(35.3%)	(20.6%)	(8.1%)	(5.5%)

N.B. There were some fathers in the sample who were in the Armed Forces, and these have been included in the Table on the basis of the Registrar-General's former classification of service occupations.

There were altogether one hundred and seventy-two fathers employed in agricultural work, the majority of these being farmers in their own right. The men with agricultural occupations were, in general, sons of men who had had agricultural occupations. Table II suggests strongly that such jobs have been hereditary in the area at any rate until very recently.

TABLE II

Comparison of Occupations of Children's Fathers  
with Occupations of their Paternal Grandfathers

<u>Father</u>	<u>Paternal Grandfather</u>		
	<u>Farmer or farmworker</u>	<u>Other occupation</u>	<u>Not known</u>
Farmer or farm- worker (172)	123 (71.5%)	42 (24.4%)	7 (4.1%)
Other occupation (235)	69 (29.4%)	147 (62.5%)	19 (8.1%)
Not Known (24)	2 ( 8.3%)	2 ( 8.3%)	20 (83.4%)

In Table III further proof of the occupational stability of the men in the sample is provided. The largest single

group of the fathers had remained occupationally immobile. (The proportion who had been occupationally immobile is similar to the comparable proportion in Shropshire. See Table III, Chapter III.)

TABLE III

Occupations of Fathers Compared with Paternal Grandfathers, using Revised<sup>3</sup> Registrar-General's Scale

Father	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IV	V	Not Known
I	1	2	1	1	-	-	-
II	6	66	2	20	10	3	6
IIIa	2	1	4	3	1	2	1
IIIb	1	21	6	72	32	11	9
IV	1	16	2	12	46	3	8
V	-	2	-	8	14	9	2
Not Known	-	1	-	1	1	1	20

<u>Upwardly mobile</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Downwardly mobile</u>	<u>Not Known</u>
91 (21.2%)	198 (46.0%)	92 (21.2%)	50 (11.6%)

55% of those fathers whose jobs were agricultural were found to have inherited them directly from their own fathers. They accounted for a considerable proportion of the occupational stability shown in Table III. The farmers were much more likely to have inherited their occupation in this way than were the farmworkers. (65% of the farmers were the sons of farmers, while only 38% of the farmworkers were sons of farmworkers.)

Only 44% of those in non-agricultural occupations fell into the same Social Class as their fathers. There was therefore far more tendency to occupational mobility in this group. This emerges from Table IV.



TABLE IV

Occupational Mobility of Fathers  
Related to Nature of Occupation

	<u>Upward Mobile</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Downward Mobile</u>	<u>Not Known</u>
Agricultural Occupation (172)	29 (16.8%)	95 (55.2%)	41 (23.8%)	7 (4.1%)
Other Occupations (235)	62 (26.4%)	103 (43.9%)	51 (21.7%)	19 (8.1%)

Of the mothers<sup>4</sup> of the children, one hundred and forty-one (32.6%) said that they had some paid employment at the time of the survey. This proportion was slightly higher than the comparable one for Shropshire. It was felt, however, that the proportion of mothers in West Dorset who were working was still likely to be lower than the proportion of mothers with children of similar ages working in Great Britain as a whole. The information obtained in Dorset about working mothers was therefore compared with the information obtained by Klein in her national survey.<sup>5</sup> In Table V Klein's data are compared with the West Dorset results.

TABLE V

Employment of Mothers with Children 6 - 15 years old

<u>Ages of Children</u>	<u>Dorset Sample</u>			<u>Klein's National Sample</u>		
	<u>Working</u>	<u>Not Working</u>	<u>% Working</u>	<u>Working</u>	<u>Not Working</u>	<u>% Working</u>
<u>6-10 years</u>						
1 child	47	123	27.6	51	104	32.9
2 children	20	56	26.3	15	41	26.8
3 children	1	18	5.3	1	11	8.3
<u>11-15 years</u>						
1 child	58	149	27.9	49	89	35.5
2 children	39	67	36.8	12	15	44.4
3 children	5	13	27.8	1	-	100.0

Table V demonstrates that the proportions of mothers in Klein's sample who went out to work were higher in all cases than the proportions in the Dorset sample who did so.

It must be noted again that the Dorset sample was not entirely comparable with Klein's, being selected from the mothers of children in two specific age groups. Like the Shropshire sample, it over-represents mothers of older children. However, as was previously noted, such mothers are in fact more likely to go out to work than mothers of young children. It seems justifiable, therefore, to suggest that mothers in West Dorset were less likely to go out to work than mothers in Britain as a whole.<sup>6</sup>

In West Dorset, as in Rural Districts in general, therefore, it seems that mothers are less likely to go out to work than are those who live in urban areas. In West Dorset it was also noticeable that women married to men with agricultural occupations were relatively unlikely to go out to work. (Only 20.8% of such women worked while 36.6% of women married to men with non-agricultural jobs did so.) Several of the children had no father. Of the mothers who were widowed, divorced and so on, 75.8% worked. The traditional rural antipathy towards women leaving home to work seems to persist in West Dorset to some extent, especially in agricultural families.

It may be noted that as one would expect, mothers of secondary school children were more likely to go out to work than were those of primary children. 35.6% of the former group worked, and only 28.3% of the latter.<sup>7</sup>

As in Shropshire, most of the Dorset mothers who went out to work had only part-time jobs. For the most part this meant domestic or canteen work.

The women who were not working at the time of the survey were asked what their most recent paid employment had been. A good many mothers had never held any job at all, and many of these had lived at home on a farm until their marriage. Table VI shows the distribution of occupations of mothers either at the time of the survey or formerly.

TABLE VI

Distribution of Mother's Occupations  
Using Registrar-General's Scale

	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IV	V	Home on Farm	None
Mother Not Working at Time of Survey (288)	1 0.3%	33 11.4%	59 20.5%	43 14.9%	31 10.8%	50 17.4%	36 12.5%	35 12.2%
Mother Working (141)	-	21 14.9%	14 9.9%	6 4.3%	19 13.5%	81 57.4%	-	-

N.B. 2 children had no mother.

Table VI shows that the largest group among the mothers who were working at the time of the survey held unskilled manual jobs, (Class V). As has been mentioned already, these mothers were principally in domestic or canteen work. There were a few skilled manual workers (IIIb) among the working mothers and comparatively few non-manual workers of any kind (Classes I - IIIa). Few women were employed as clerks, shop assistants and so on, but rather more were self-employed or professional workers. (The majority of these were full or part-time nurses and teachers.)

It will be observed that among the women not working at the time of the survey, there were relatively few who had at one time been self-employed or professional workers (Class I and II). There were many who had formerly been employed in clerical work or as shop assistants (IIIa) and quite a large number who had had skilled manual jobs (IIIb).

It was perhaps the case that Dorset offered little opportunity to those who had once held skilled manual or non-manual jobs.

It is evident from the analysis of the mothers' occupations that while only a minority held jobs at the time of the survey, quite a large number had had experience of urban and industrial occupations. On the other hand, a preponderance of the mothers were, or had formerly been, engaged in domestic work or agriculture, and these women could be said to have experience only of the traditional labour market.

The mothers of the children were asked how long they had lived in the parish where they were found at the time of the survey. (The father or guardian was asked where the mother was not available.) 62%<sup>8</sup> of the informants had lived in the same parish for over ten years. These informants therefore showed slightly more tendency to residential stability than those in the random sample discussed in the previous chapter.<sup>9</sup> 15% of the informants had lived in the same parish all their lives,<sup>10</sup> and a further 26% ever since their marriage.

A majority (53%) of the informants had always lived in the country. However, there were a substantial number of people who had lived in urban areas, often at a great distance from West Dorset. Many of these people had lived in big industrial centres for long periods and would clearly be very familiar with urban conditions.

Table VII indicates the location of the urban areas in which various informants had lived. It also gives the average length of time they spent there.

TABLE VII

Rural and Urban Residence by Informants

<u>Urban Area Formerly Lived In</u> <sup>11</sup>	<u>Number of Informants</u>	<u>Average length of time spent there</u>
None	228	-
Urban area within 15 miles of Rural Districts	51	12.8 years
Urban area within 50 miles of Rural Districts	29	9.2 years
Other urban area in Central and Southern England	37	9.7 years
London conurbation	63	12.2 years
Birmingham conurbation	14	18.5 years
Urban District in N.W. England	17	14.8 years
Urban District in N.E. England	12	11.3 years
Urban District in Wales	2	10.5 years
Urban District in Scotland	8	18.2 years
Abroad	12	9.9 years

N.B. Several informants had lived in more than one urban area. Only periods of residence of one year or more were counted in the Table.

Table VII shows that while a great many of the informants had previously lived in one of the urban areas within West Dorset (within fifteen miles of the Rural Districts), or exerting a considerable influence on the area (within fifty miles), a large number, too, had lived in large industrial centres a long way off. Particularly noticeable is the fact that a large group of people had at one time lived in the London area. The majority of ex-urbanites had lived in towns in Southern England, but there was a substantial minority from more distant industrial centres. The Table makes it quite evident that the group of parents did incorporate many with extensive experience of urban life.

In Table VIII the extent and type of education received by the children's parents is shown.

TABLE VIII

Type and Extent of Education Received by Parents

<u>School Attended</u>	<u>Mothers</u> <u>%</u>	<u>Fathers</u> <u>%</u>
<sup>12</sup> Bridport or Beaminster Grammar School	7.4	9.1
Other Grammar School	8.6	9.1
Central School	3.0	2.3
Secondary Modern School	6.3	5.1
Technical School	1.6	1.6
Independent School	8.8	6.0
Village elementary school, within the Rural Districts	30.7	30.7
Other village elementary school	22.1	20.2
Urban elementary school	9.5	6.7
Other	1.4	0.9
Not Known	0.7	8.4
<u>Leaving Age</u>		
12	0.2	0.5
13	0.9	0.5
14	68.7	60.1
15	6.8	7.2
16	13.5	10.9
17	5.3	3.9
18	2.2	0.9
University	0.7	1.4
Other Further Education	1.1	1.6
Not Known	0.7	9.3

As Table VIII shows, a great many of the parents had been to local schools. (These were local village, all-age schools, and the two local grammar schools.) For the most part, these parents had attended only a village school. Few parents had attended urban schools, but it may be noted that more mothers than fathers had done so.

Few parents had stayed at school after the minimum school leaving age, and of those who had done so, most had left at sixteen or earlier. Hardly any had received further education after leaving school. More women than men, however, had remained at school after the age of fifteen.

The description of the sample of parents which has been given shows that a majority of them were born, and educated, in the country and had continued to live there all their lives. A large number had remained always in West Dorset, many in the same parish all the time. Many of the families investigated in the survey were dependent upon agriculture and a substantial proportion had a hereditary interest in the land. Yet the sample did contain a majority of non-agricultural families. There were many informants who had lived for the greater part of their lives in urban areas. A fairly large group of parents had attended urban schools. Hence it seemed quite possible that in this sample of parents a clash between traditional and non-traditional views might be found.

The data collected was analysed in the same way as that gathered in North Shropshire. The sample was in the first instance divided into two groups. The "agricultural group" consisted of the informants who were married to farmers or farmworkers (or were themselves farmers or farmworkers in the cases where a child's father or guardian was the respondent.) The "non-agricultural group" consisted of the remaining informants (apart from those who had no husband, or whose husband had no occupation. There were 24 women in this category who could not be placed in either group.)

The informants, like the Shropshire sample, were asked when they had last visited the school their child attended.

The comprehensive schools had both held more than one function in the preceding six months which the parents could have attended. Most of the village schools had also held formal Open Days, and in any case they all welcomed informal visits from parents. It was again argued that parents who had visited the school within the preceding six months had shown considerable interest in their child's education. Those who had visited the school, but not as recently, showed average interest, and those who had never visited the school were held to show little interest. (Again it should be remembered that the children were all approaching primary or secondary school leaving age.)

TABLE IX

Last Occasion on which One of  
the Child's Parents Visited the School

	<u>Under</u> <u>6 months ago</u>	<u>Over</u> <u>6 months ago</u>	<u>Never</u>
	%	%	%
Agricultural Group = 172	43.0	37.8	19.2
Non-Agricultural Group = 235	46.0	34.1	19.9

Table IX reveals very little difference between the two groups. This is somewhat surprising for in Dorset, as in Shropshire, the agricultural families were often rather cut off from the villages and therefore the schools. Visiting represented a considerable effort for them sometimes. The comprehensive schools were particularly remote, as has been mentioned already (Chapter VI), but for the most part the parents tried to attend meetings arranged for them. Many expressed great appreciation of the fact that one headmaster came to the villages to meet them.

The Dorset parents were all asked if they approved of their child's curriculum. It was argued that traditionalism



would tend to accept the status quo, but might possibly resent excessive homework or seemingly esoteric subjects.

TABLE X

Parents' Views on Curricula

	Agricultural Group %	Non-agricultural Group %
No adverse criticism	55.8	48.9
Too much P.E.	10.4	8.9
Too much academic work	1.2	3.4
Too much practical work	-	1.7
Too much cultural work	1.2	4.3
Too much homework	3.5	4.7
Not enough academic work	12.8	13.6
Not enough practical work	5.2	5.5
Not enough cultural work	1.2	0.4
Other complaint	<u>22.1</u>	<u>17.8</u>
	172	235

N.B. 'Practical' includes cookery, woodwork, etc.  
'Cultural' includes music, art, etc.

There were no pronounced differences in the attitudes of the two groups to school curricula, though the agricultural group were slightly less critical than the other group. Neither group was enthusiastic about 'progressive' methods of education. Most of the critics in each group thought more academic work was needed. Parents in both groups also complained that the schools were not authoritarian enough, and lacked discipline.

The primary school parents were invited to give their opinion on village schools in general. Again it was argued that traditionalists would be contented with existing institutions and would not wish to change them.

TABLE XI

Primary School Parents' Views on Village Schools

	Agricultural Group %	Non-agricultural Group %
No adverse criticism	65.7	48.7
No favourable criticism	19.4	30.5
Points for and against	<u>14.9</u>	<u>20.7</u>
	67	82

In Table XI a considerable difference between the attitudes of the two groups does appear. The agricultural parents were indeed less critical of the village schools than were the other parents. They frequently had a good deal to say in favour of retaining such schools, basing their arguments chiefly on their small, intimate character and their accessibility. One parent said, speaking for many:

"It's nice to have a village school. They get more individual attention and there's more personal contact between child, teacher and parents. When they get to the Colfox you're miles away from the teacher who's teaching the kid."

Among those who made unfavourable comments upon village schools, many pointed out that their small size limited opportunities in some ways:

"Possibly they would get on better in a bigger school. Here you get all age groups in one class and they can't concentrate."

Many parents had observed the physical shortcomings of the schools. Said one tersely, "It's an old dilapidated building and it should be knocked down and another built." Yet for the most part those who made criticisms did not want radical reforms. They usually wanted their children to remain in the village and often had a sentimental attachment to the school. The number of parents who actively wished their children could go to a primary school in the town was very small.

There was some support, in the answers to this question, for the hypothesis that the agricultural group would show more traditionalism.

All the respondents were asked whether they considered that girls needed as much education as boys. As in Shropshire this question produced many ambivalent reactions. As Table XII shows, however, there was little difference in the replies of the two groups to the question.

TABLE XII

Parents' Attitudes to the Education of Girls

	Agricultural Group %	Non-agricultural Group %
Need as much as boys	51.2	53.7
Need less than boys	39.0	35.3
Depends on the individual	3.5	5.9
Don't Know	3.5	3.4
Other reply	<u>2.9</u>	<u>1.7</u>
	172	235

As in Shropshire, there was a substantial body of opinion among the parents which held that girls need less education than boys. This traditional view was slightly more prevalent in the agricultural group.

So that a measure of parents level of aspiration might be obtained, they were asked at what age they hoped their children would leave school.

TABLE XIII

Age at which Parents Hoped Children would Leave School

	Agricultural Group %	Non-Agricultural Group %
15	32.0	26.4
16	22.2	23.8
17	10.4	11.9
18	6.9	11.9
"Will stay as long as possible"	6.9	4.7
"Can stay if .....	18.0	14.9
Don't Know	<u>3.5</u>	<u>6.4</u>
	172	235

Table XIII shows that once again there was almost no difference between the two groups. There was slight evidence of lower aspirations in the agricultural group, but insufficient to lend support to the hypothesis that they would show more traditionalism. A majority of all the parents wished their children to leave school at fifteen or sixteen, and relatively few stated positively that they wished them to go on longer. As a whole, therefore, the parents were not particularly ambitious for their children, although a minority emphatically were.

TABLE XIV

Parents' Aspirations for  
Further Education or Training for their Children

Type of Training, etc.	Agricultural Group %	Non-agricultural Group %
None at all	22.7	18.7
University, C.A.T.T., etc.	7.5	10.6
Agricultural College	12.2	2.1
College of Education, Nurse's Training, etc.	3.5	5.9
Technical College	2.9	5.5
Further Academic Education, unspecified	4.7	2.9
Apprenticeship for named job	12.2	12.4
Apprenticeship - unspecified	23.3	27.7
Other training, etc.	3.5	4.3
Don't know	<u>7.5</u>	<u>9.8</u>
	172	235

Table XIV shows only minor differences between the two groups, although again aspirations were slightly higher in the non-agricultural group. More parents in the agricultural group had no wish for further training or education for their

children. Yet it is significant that many of the agricultural group hoped for education at agricultural college for their children. This demonstrates that farmers are not unwilling in many cases to accept innovation, and indeed to seek it out, through their sons.

It is noteworthy that a majority of all parents did have aspirations to some further education or training for their children. But although many had clearly-defined plans, there were also a great number with only a vague idea of giving their child "some kind of trade".

Little support for the hypothesis that the agricultural group would prove very traditional was found here.

Aspirations for education mobility were measured in the way described in Chapter IV.

TABLE XV

Parents' Aspirations for Educational Mobility for their Children

Aspirations	Agricultural Group %	Non-agricultural Group %
Upward mobility	45.3	45.5
Immobility	43.0	37.9
Downward Mobility	5.2	5.5
Don't Know	3.5	6.4
Father's leaving age unknown	<u>2.9</u>	<u>4.7</u>
	172	235

N.B. Where father's leaving age is unknown aspirations cannot be calculated.

Table XV does not suggest that the agricultural group were much more traditional than the other group.

It was argued that parents' aspirations might be governed by the ability they believed their child possessed. The parents were therefore asked whether they considered their

child to be above average, average or below average in ability. Their estimate of the child's ability was then related to their aspirations for educational mobility.

TABLE XVI

Parents' Aspirations for Educational Mobility  
Related to their Estimate of their Child's Ability

	<u>Agricultural Group</u>			
	<u>Up</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Down</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Above Average (=59)	30 (53.5%)	22 (39.4%)	2 (3.6%)	2 (3.6%)
Average (=97)	42 (43.7%)	45 (46.8%)	5 (5.2%)	4 (4.2%)
Below Average (=12)	2 (20%)	7 (70%)	1 (10%)	-
	<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>			
	<u>Up</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Down</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Above Average (=73)	40 (58.9%)	24 (35.3%)	1 (1.5%)	3 (4.4%)
Average (=129)	60 (48.4%)	50 (40.4%)	9 (7.3%)	5 (4.0%)
Below Average (=26)	7 (30.4%)	11 (48.0%)	3 (13.0%)	2 (8.7%)

N.B. 11 parents could make no estimate of their child's ability.

16 were excluded because their father's leaving age was not known.

24 were excluded because they had no father, etc.

The proportion of parents in the agricultural group who believed their children to be above average (34.3%) was slightly higher than the proportion in the other group who considered their children above average (31.0%). Table XVI does suggest that the parents in the non-agricultural group were more ambitious for children of all levels of ability than were agricultural parents. This Table does, therefore, suggest that the hypothesis may be partly true.

The parents' aspirations for their children were next related to their own Social Class (using the Registrar-General's Scale). As the agricultural group fell into only four classes they were compared with the relevant classes in the other group.

TABLE XVII

Parents' Aspirations for Educational Mobility Related to Own Social Class

<u>Social Class</u>	<u>Agricultural Group</u>			
	<u>Up</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Down</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
I	-	-	2 (100%)	-
II	32 (49.2%)	28 (43.0%)	2 (3.1%)	3 (4.6%)
IIIb	17 (45.9%)	17 (45.9%)	-	3 (8.1%)
IV	29 (46.0%)	29 (46.0%)	5 (7.9%)	-
	<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>			
	<u>Up</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Down</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
I	-	3 (100%)	-	-
II	21 (45.6%)	19 (41.3%)	4 (8.7%)	2 (4.3%)
IIIb	63 (56.1%)	37 (33.4%)	6 (5.3%)	5 (4.5%)
IV	14 (56.0%)	10 (40.0%)	1 (4.0%)	-

N.B. 40 parents omitted because leaving age unknown, or occupation unknown, etc.

39 omitted because included in Classes IIIa or V of non-agricultural group.

From Table XVII we may note that Classes IIIb and IV of the non-agricultural group were rather more ambitious for their children than their counterparts in the agricultural group. However, those in Class II of the non-agricultural

group were less ambitious, to a certain extent, than those in Class II of the agricultural group. The Table thus gives only qualified support to the hypothesis that members of the agricultural group will be more given to traditional views.

TABLE XVIII

Parents' Aspirations for Educational Mobility Related to their Own Educational Level

<u>Parents' Educational Group</u>	<u>Agricultural Group</u>			
	<u>Up</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Down</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
A	-	4 (57.0%)	3 (42.9%)	-
B	7 (20.6%)	20 (58.8%)	6 (17.6%)	1 (2.9%)
C	71 (56.2%)	50 (39.7%)	-	5 (4.0%)
	<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>			
	<u>Up</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Down</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
A	-	7 (87.5%)	1 (12.5%)	-
B	11 (18.0%)	32 (52.4%)	12 (19.7%)	6 (9.8%)
C	96 (62.0%)	50 (32.3%)	-	9 (5.8%)

N.B. 40 parents omitted because father's leaving-age unknown, child had no father, etc.

As Table XVIII indicates, parents in both groups who had reached Educational Level B, had somewhat similar aspirations for their children. However, those in the agricultural group who had reached levels C or A had lower aspirations than similar members of the non-agricultural group. Again the support found for the hypothesis is limited, therefore.

On the basis of the foregoing Tables it may perhaps be concluded that the agricultural group did contain slightly more traditionalists than did the other group. However, it should



be noted that the farmers with comparatively large holdings (those who fell into Social Class II) were less traditional than the rest of the agricultural group. These farmers had generally themselves left school at an earlier age than people who fell into Class II of the non-agricultural group. It was therefore possible for them to aspire to upward educational mobility for their children. It was clear that many of these farmers were not opposed to innovation, or committed to traditional views. They generally wanted a good formal education for their children, and had planned for further education for them. Even if they hoped their children would enter agriculture, they had aspirations for them to go to agricultural college or farm institutes. These farmers mainly accounted for the membership of Educational Group B. Hence Table XVIII shows that the highest aspirations in the agricultural group occurred at this Educational level.

It was among the lower Social Classes of the agricultural group that traditionalism was most evident. There was a particularly marked contrast between the aspirations of the smaller farmers (IIIb) and the members of the equivalent Class of the non-agricultural group. The small farmers of West Dorset (many of whom had themselves left school at fourteen) did not, on the whole, evince much desire for their children to have a prolonged education. Their aspirations for their children were little higher than those of the agricultural workers (IV).

When all these points have been made, however, it must be said that the differences in attitudes manifested by each group are relatively small. Traditionalism was very far from universal in the agricultural group, and far from absent in the other group. Among the informants with definite aspirations

it is noteworthy that a majority desired upward educational mobility for their children. As far as attitudes to education go, therefore, West Dorset is hardly a stronghold of traditionalism.

The sample was next divided into two different groups. The rural group contained all the informants who had never lived in an urban area, and the non-rural group contained the rest. The attitudes and aspirations of these two groups were then compared to test the hypothesis that the rural group would incorporate more people with traditional attitudes than the non-rural group.

TABLE XIX

Parents' Visits to Schools (B)

	Rural Group	Non-rural Group
	%	%
Under 6 months ago	42.0	46.8
Over 6 months ago	37.7	33.0
Never	<u>20.2</u>	<u>20.2</u>
	228	203

Table XIX reveals little difference in the degree of interest in education shown by each group as measured by the criterion of visiting. However, Table XX does provide some support for the hypothesis.

TABLE XX

Parents' Views on the Education of Girls

	Rural Group	Non-rural Group
	%	%
Need as much education as boys	42.0	64.0
Need less education than boys	43.0	25.6
Don't Know	6.6	1.0
Depends on individual	6.6	6.9
Other	<u>1.8</u>	<u>2.5</u>
	228	203

In their attitude to the education of girls, considerably more of the rural group than of the non-rural could be described as traditional. Those who believed that girls invariably require less education than boys formed the largest party in the rural group.

When the aspirations of each group of parents were compared, those of the rural group were found in general to be lower than those of the other group.

TABLE XXI

Age that Parents hoped Children would leave School (B)

AGE	Rural Group	Non-rural Group
	%	%
15	34.2	24.6
16	23.3	20.7
17	8.3	14.8
18	5.7	14.8
'As long as possible'	4.4	7.4
'Can stay if .....	18.8	13.3
Don't know	<u>5.3</u>	<u>4.4</u>
	228	203

More of the rural group, as Table XXI shows, hoped that their children would leave school at fifteen or sixteen, and fewer hoped positively that they would go on to seventeen or eighteen, or 'as long as possible'. In Table XXII there is evidence again of a lower level of aspiration among rural group parents. More of these people did not want any further education for their children, or spoke only indecisively, in terms of 'some kind of trade' or 'learning a skill'. Few of the rural group hoped for education to university level, while many of the other group did so. On the whole, the aspirations of the rural group were modest, conventional and frequently only vague conceptions.

TABLE XXII

Parents' Aspirations for Further Education for their Children (B)

<u>Type of Further Education or Training</u>	<u>Rural Group</u>	<u>Non-Rural Group</u>
	%	%
None	22.8	18.6
University, C.A.T.T. etc.	2.6	16.9
Agricultural College	7.9	3.9
College of Education or Nursing Training	4.8	4.9
Technical College	5.3	3.9
Apprenticeship for named Job	9.7	8.9
Apprenticeship - unspecified	28.1	20.2
Other education	6.6	10.3
Don't Know	<u>12.2</u>	<u>12.4</u>
	228	203

Unexpectedly, the rural group proved to contain more people aspiring to upward educational mobility for their children than did the other group. However, it was felt that this might well be due to variations in the composition of each group.

TABLE XXIII

Aspirations of Parents for Educational Mobility (B)

	<u>Rural Group</u>	<u>Non-rural Group</u>
	%	%
Upward mobility	45.5	39.8
Immobility	35.6	40.4
Downward mobility	5.3	4.9
Don't Know	5.3	4.4
Not Known	<u>8.3</u>	<u>10.4</u>
	228	203

To discover whether variations in the composition of the two groups had influenced the results shown above in Table XXIII, the parents' aspirations were first related to their Social Class.

TABLE XXIV

Parents' Aspirations Related to their own Social Class (B)

	<u>Rural Group %</u>				
	<u>Up</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Down</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Not Known</u>
Social Classes I and II	47.9	35.5	6.2	6.2	4.3
Social Classes IIIa - V	47.6	37.6	5.3	5.3	4.1
	<u>Non-rural Group %</u>				
	<u>Up</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Down</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Not Known</u>
Social Classes I and II	42.8	47.1	7.2	2.9	-
Social Classes IIIa - V	42.8	41.2	4.2	5.9	5.9

As Table XXIV shows, the aspirations of the rural group were higher than those of the other group for both sets of Social Classes. Aspirations were next related to the parents' own educational levels.

TABLE XXI

Parents' Aspirations for Educational Mobility Related to own Educational Level (B)

<u>Educational Level</u>	<u>Rural Group</u>			
	<u>Up</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Down</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
A	-	2 (100%)	-	-
B	8 (18.6%)	23 (53.5%)	12 (27.9%)	-
C	96 (58.6%)	56 (34.2%)	-	12 (7.3%)

TABLE XXI (Cont.)

Parents' Aspirations for Educational Mobility Related to own Educational Level (B)

<u>Educational Level</u>	<u>Non-Rural Group</u>			
	<u>Up</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Down</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
A	-	9 (69.2%)	4 (30.7%)	-
B	10 (19.2%)	29 (55.9%)	6 (11.6%)	7 (13.4%)
C	71 (60.8%)	44 (37.6%)	-	2 (1.7%)

N.B. 40 informants' leaving age not known, etc.

Table XXV suggests that a partial explanation of the higher aspirations of the rural group may lie in the fact that fewer of this group than the other had received a good education themselves. (76% of the rural group fell into Educational Group C, while only 57% of the other group did.) Thus there was more scope for them to aspire to upward mobility. As the Table shows, the people with similar educational backgrounds in each group in fact had rather similar aspirations for their children.

On balance, therefore, the data do not suggest any marked tendency for the rural group to be more traditional than the other, despite the fact that in their answers to several questions more of the rural group did seem to be inclined to traditional views.

In Table XXVI parents' aspirations for educational mobility are related to the sex of the children concerned, to discover whether there was any evidence that in West Dorset girls were allowed to continue at school longer than boys.

TABLE XXVIParents' Aspirations for Educational  
Mobility Related to Sex of Child

	<u>Up</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Down</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Not Known</u>
<u>Agricultural Group:</u>					
Girls	40 (57.0%)	27 (38.6%)	2 (2.9%)	1 (1.4%)	-
Boys	38 (37.3%)	47 (46.0%)	7 (6.9%)	5 (4.9%)	5 (4.9%)
<u>Non-Agricultural Group:</u>					
Girls	58 (44.6%)	54 (41.5%)	6 (4.6%)	12 (9.2%)	-
Boys	49 (46.6%)	35 (33.3%)	7 (6.7%)	3 (2.9%)	11 (10.4%)
<u>Rural Group:</u>					
Girls	53 (50.6%)	36 (34.2%)	5 (4.8%)	7 (6.7%)	4 (3.8%)
Boys	51 (41.4%)	45 (36.5%)	7 (5.7%)	5 (4.1%)	15 (12.2%)
<u>Non-Rural Group:</u>					
Girls	45 (43.3%)	45 (43.3%)	3 (2.9%)	6 (5.8%)	5 (4.8%)
Boys	36 (36.4%)	37 (37.3%)	7 (7.1%)	3 (3.1%)	16 (16.2%)

It will be noted that Table XXVI does indicate that in the agricultural group and the rural group particularly aspirations were considerably higher for girls than for boys. Hence there was some support for the hypothesis. It was ironic that parents frequently combined relatively high aspirations for girls with the opinion that they always needed less education than boys.

TABLE XXVIIParents' Estimate of Child's Ability Related to Sex of Child

	<u>Above Average</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Below Average</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Agricultural Group:				
Girls	30 (42.9%)	38 (54.2%)	1 (1.4%)	1 (1.4%)
Boys	29 (28.4%)	59 (57.9%)	11 (10.8%)	3 (2.9%)
Non-Agricultural Group:				
Girls	43 (33.0%)	69 (53.0%)	13 (10.0%)	5 (3.9%)
Boys	30 (28.6%)	60 (57.0%)	13 (12.4%)	2 (1.9%)
Rural Group:				
Girls	36 (34.2%)	60 (57.0%)	7 (6.7%)	2 (1.9%)
Boys	27 (21.9%)	85 (69.1%)	8 (6.5%)	3 (2.4%)
Non-Rural Group:				
Girls	37 (35.6%)	56 (53.9%)	7 (6.8%)	4 (3.8%)
Boys	36 (36.4%)	43 (43.4%)	17 (17.2%)	3 (3.1%)

Table XXVII demonstrates that parents in the agricultural and rural groups did believe that more girls than boys were of above average ability. By itself, however, this difference in the estimated ability of each sex could not account for the difference in aspirations between agricultural and non-agricultural groups. Moreover, although the high aspirations of parents in the rural group may be explained in terms of their belief in their children's ability, it is difficult to account for the differences in aspirations between rural and non-rural groups. In any case, the fact that the agricultural and rural groups attribute above average ability to girls much more frequently than the other groups, itself requires some explanation. It may be that boys still do undertake many paid and unpaid tasks before and after school, and consequently are less successful academically than girls. It may be that parents rationalise their desire for boys to leave school and



become economically productive. There are certainly signs here of traditional attitudes and especially in the agricultural group.

Of West Dorset, however, one must conclude that as far as attitudes to education go, traditionalism is not a very powerful force. Nor is there much reason to think that it has a strong hold on agricultural families, or on those who have always lived in the country.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VIII

1. The very low refusal rate in West Dorset is explained by the fact that the head teachers of all the schools provided the interviewer with letters of introduction for parents.
2. The occupation of some fathers was not known, or the child had no father.
3. Farmers classified as described in Chapter III.
4. 2 children had no mother. This is, therefore, a percentage of 429.
5. V. Klein, op. cit.
6. See Note to Table V, Chapter IV.
7. Note that here it is mothers who were interviewed because they had at least one child at secondary or primary school who was selected for the survey, who are under consideration. 'Primary' or 'secondary' mothers might also have had children at other schools. It should also be noted that there were rather more men with agricultural jobs among the fathers of primary school children (45%) than among fathers of secondary children (46%). Hence wives of agricultural workers had additional reasons for remaining at home. Agricultural workers in Dorset also had, on average, slightly larger families than other workers. (3.3 as against 3.2 children).
8. This is again higher than the comparable percentage found by J. Saville. (Saville, loc. cit.)
9. The random sample of course contained several retired people recently moved into the area.
10. This is lower than the proportion found by J. Saville, but of course his sample consisted of both men and women, while the present sample contained only women, who are more likely to be mobile in a rural area. (J. Saville, loc. cit.)
11. Details of the towns subsumed under each heading can be found in the Appendix. To have listed each separately in the Table would have entailed an unjustifiable waste of space.
12. The local comprehensive schools had not been established long enough for any of the informants and their husbands (wives) to have attended them.

CHAPTER IX

The Aspirations of Parents in West Dorset  
for their Children's Future Occupations and Place of Work

The parents in the West Dorset sample were not only asked about their aspirations for their child's educational future, but also about their aspirations concerning the occupations the children would take up. They were asked, too, where they hoped that their children would eventually work. It was expected that the 'agricultural' and 'rural' groups of parents would contain many who aspired neither to occupational nor geographical mobility for their children.

As in North Shropshire, the parents of even the primary school children were generally able to state precisely what occupations they hoped their children would take up. Comparatively few parents aspired to unskilled or semi-skilled manual jobs for their children. A very large majority of the parents, as Table I shows, hoped that their children would take up occupations for which some training was required. There were not many parents who aspired to professional occupations for their children, however, so that the overall level of ambition was relatively modest.

TABLE I

Parents' Aspirations for Children's Occupations

Registrar- General's Social Class	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IV	V	Don't Know
	22	89	63	91	49	5	80
	5.1%	20.7%	14.6%	20.9%	11.4%	1.2%	18.6%

N.B. 32 parents (7.4%) hoped their child would go into the Armed Forces.

As the Table shows, a fairly large group of parents had no clear aspirations for their children. Many of these described in general terms the kind of occupation they wanted for their child, but did not specify a particular job.

TABLE II

Parents' Aspirations for Children's Occupations Related to Sex of the Child

	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IV	V	Services	Don't Know
Girls (209)	6 2.9%	55 25.3%	51 24.4%	27 12.9%	21 10.1%	3 1.4%	2 0.9%	44 21.0%
Boys (222)	16 7.2%	34 15.3%	12 5.4%	64 29.9%	28 12.6%	2 0.9%	30 13.5%	36 15.2%

Table II reveals considerable differences in the types of occupation aspired to for each sex. Parents of boys aspired to Professional (I) occupations more frequently than girls' parents, but the latter aspired more often to Class II occupations. Not surprisingly, secretarial and shop work was often aspired to for girls, so that a far larger proportion of girls' than boys' parents aspired to non-manual jobs as a whole (I, II and IIIa). Skilled manual jobs (IIIb) were more frequently sought for boys than girls. It will be noted that quite a high proportion (13.5%) of the boys' parents hoped that their sons would go into the Services. This tendency to favour the Armed Forces as a career for boys is undoubtedly to be attributed in part to the dearth of skilled jobs in West Dorset. By entering the Forces the boys can obtain a training in a trade easily and economically.

In contrast with North Shropshire, there was little difference between the proportion of primary school parents who hoped their children would enter an agricultural occupation (22.7%) and the number of secondary school parents who did so (18.1%). The latter proportion was, however, slightly lower. Many of the respondents did wish their children to go into agriculture (19.7% of all the informants aspired to agricultural jobs for their children.) This proportion represented just under half the number of parents engaged in

agriculture. This seems highly significant, since of course it was principally the boys who were hoped to go into agriculture.

When the parents' aspirations for occupational mobility were examined, it was found that the proportions aspiring to upward mobility (33.6%) and immobility (32.8%) were very similar. 11.4% of the parents aspired only to downward mobility. It may be noted that the West Dorset parents were considerably less ambitious with regard to their children's occupations than those of North Shropshire.

A preliminary examination of the results of this part of the survey thus tended to support the hypothesis that West Dorset would contain many people with a traditional attitude to occupational mobility. Many parents hoped for agricultural occupations for their children and only a minority of those with positive ambitions hoped for upward occupational mobility.

TABLE III

Parents' Aspirations for Occupational  
Mobility Related to Sex of Child

	Upward Mobility	Immobility	Downward Mobility	Don't Know	Not Known
Girls (209)	89 42.5%	41 19.6%	28 13.4%	43 20.6%	8 3.8%
Boys (222)	56 25.2%	98 44.3%	21 9.4%	31 14.0%	16 7.2%

Table III reveals that the majority of the girls' parents who had positive aspirations hoped for upward occupational mobility for them. A majority of the boys' parents, on the other hand, were content with immobility. It will be recalled that in the previous chapter it was found that girls' parents were frequently more desirous of upward educational mobility. As was the case in Shropshire, this disparity in

aspirations for the two sexes may reflect the employment situation in West Dorset, to some extent. A number of comparatively well-paid jobs were available for boys as skilled workers, but there were few for girls. Indeed, in the rural area there were few jobs at all for girls. Moreover, a certain amount of the desired upward mobility for girls would be comparatively short-range (many girls whose fathers were manual workers were hoped to go into jobs falling into Class IIIa). However, there were a considerable number of parents who wanted long-range upward mobility for their daughters. As in Shropshire, many parents hoped their daughters would go into teaching or nursing. These two occupations have a unique place as almost the only ones thought of as 'really good' for girls. Boys' parents showed much more variation in their choice of occupations and conceptions of 'good positions'.

In West Dorset even more than in North Shropshire, personal contacts were extremely important in obtaining jobs. Parents made considerable efforts to persuade possible employers to take their children on. Many mothers confided that they had 'had a word with' their hairdresser, or the manager of a local business or shop. Others said their husband was going to speak to his foreman. In many cases it was virtually taken for granted that a son would be employed where his father worked. One farmworker, when he was asked where he hoped his son would work, jerked his head towards the farm and said, "It won't be far from here."

The competition for most skilled jobs was very fierce. Many parents were encountered who had been offered what they believed to be a good opening for a son or daughter, only to

be frustrated because their children could not be released from school until they completed the year in which they became fifteen.

TABLE IV

Parents' Aspirations for Children, Agricultural or Not

Occupation Desired	Agricultural Group		Non-agricultural Group	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Agricultural	63	(36.6%)	21	(8.9%)
Non-agricultural	61	(35.5%)	158	(67.2%)
Services	11	(6.4%)	20	(8.5%)
Don't Know	<u>37</u>	(21.5%)	<u>36</u>	(15.3%)
	172		235	

When the aspirations of the agricultural group were compared with those of the non-agricultural group, some evidence of traditionalism in the agricultural group was found. As Table IV shows, a high proportion of the agricultural group hoped that their children would continue in agriculture. Relatively few of the other group hoped that their children would enter agriculture. (In the agricultural group 56% of the boys were hoped to go into agriculture, as against only 10% of boys in the other group.)

TABLE V

Aspirations of Parents for Children's Occupations Related to Sex of the Child

Type of Occupation	Agricultural Group		Non-agricultural Group	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Agricultural	13	50	10	11
Non-agricultural	40	21	94	64
Services	1	10	1	19
Don't Know	16	21	25	11

As Table V demonstrates, the agricultural group hoped that quite a high proportion of girls (19%) would go into agriculture. (This compares with 7% of the non-agricultural group's daughters.) The fact that well over one-third of the

agricultural group hoped that the child involved in the survey would go into agriculture is particularly surprising, when it is considered that many - indeed the majority - of the farmers who were interviewed already had a son or daughter working at home on the farm. Just over 50% of the farmers' sons were hoped to remain at home on the family farm. However, a number of other farmers' children were hoped to become farm managers, farm secretaries and all types of farmworkers, so that farmers in general did show more inclination to keep their children in agriculture than did farmworkers. While the West Dorset farmers were not, for the most part, making any attempt to keep all their children in farming, there were few who did not want to pass on their farm to at least one child. And among the wealthier farmers there was some tendency to try and establish more than one child in farming. It has already been said that West Dorset farmers set more store by remaining on the same farm than did the Shropshire farmers. There were several who had no sons, who were encouraging their daughters to become farmers. One of the very few farmers whose only son was not going to take over his farm, embarked on a very lengthy explanation of his son's behaviour, which he clearly saw as thoroughly deviant. He himself claimed great credit for his tolerance.

The other self-employed people in the sample were mainly small shopkeepers, and did not display such a marked tendency to wish to pass their occupations on to their children as did the farmers.

TABLE VI

Aspirations for Occupational Mobility (B)

	Agricultural Group	Non-agricultural Group
Upward mobility	46 (26.7%)	98 (41.6%)
Immobility	67 (39.0%)	71 (30.2%)
Downward mobility	21 (12.2%)	30 (12.8%)
Don't Know	<u>38</u> (22.1%)	<u>36</u> (15.3%)
	172	235



In Table VI there is further substantiation of the hypothesis that in the agricultural group there would be more traditionalists. More of the agricultural group than of the other aspired only to downward mobility or immobility. More of the non-agricultural group aspired to upward occupational mobility for their children.

TABLE VII

Aspirations for Occupational  
Mobility Related to Ability of Child

	<u>Agricultural Group</u>			
	<u>Upward</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Down</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Above Average	19 (32.2%)	15 (25.4%)	6 (10.2%)	19 (32.2%)
Average	26 (26.8%)	42 (43.2%)	14 (14.4%)	15 (15.4%)
Below Average	1 (8.3%)	8 (66.6%)	1 (8.3%)	2 (16.7%)
Don't Know	-	2 (50.0%)	-	2 (50.0%)
	<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>			
	<u>Upward</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Down</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Above Average	42 (57.5%)	17 (23.4%)	6 (8.2%)	8 (11.0%)
Average	47 (36.5%)	45 (35.0%)	14 (10.8%)	23 (17.8%)
Below Average	4 (15.4%)	9 (34.5%)	9 (34.6%)	4 (15.4%)
Don't Know	5 (71.5%)	-	1 (14.3%)	1 (14.3%)

It will be noted from Table VII that the lower aspirations of the agricultural group cannot be accounted for by their estimate of their children's ability. The agricultural group displayed more tendency to aspire to immobility for each type of ability.

TABLE VIII

Parents' Aspirations Related to their Own Social Class

<u>Social Class</u>	<u>Agricultural Group</u>			
	<u>Upward</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Downward</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
I	-	-	-	2 (10.0%)
II	6 (8.9%)	30 (44.7%)	18 (26.8%)	13 (19.5%)
IIIb	11 (27.5%)	18 (45.0%)	2 (5.0%)	9 (22.5%)
IV	29 (47.5%)	19 (31.1%)	1 (1.6%)	12 (19.7%)
	<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>			
	<u>Upward</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Downward</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
I	-	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)
II	6 (13.1%)	20 (43.5%)	14 (30.4%)	6 (13.1%)
IIIb	41 (36.6%)	43 (38.4%)	12 (10.7%)	16 (14.3%)
IV	20 (80.0%)	2 (8.0%)	-	3 (12.0%)

Table VIII indicates that the lower aspirations of the agricultural group could not be explained in terms of the Social Class composition of the group. There were in each Social Class of the agricultural group, fewer parents aspiring to upward mobility and more aspiring to immobility than in the equivalent Class of the other group. It should be noted perhaps that there is a particularly marked contrast between the aspirations of parents in Class IV of the agricultural group and their counterparts in the other group. Farmworkers appeared to be particularly traditional in outlook.

TABLE IX

Parents' Aspirations for Occupational Mobility  
Related to their own Educational Level

	<u>Agricultural Group</u>			
	<u>Upward</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Downward</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Educational Group A	2 (28.5%)	1 (14.3%)	-	4 (57.1%)
Educational Group B	13 (38.2%)	7 (20.6%)	14 (41.2%)	-
Educational Group C	31 (24.8%)	57 (45.5%)	7 (5.6%)	30 (24.0%)
	<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>			
	<u>Upward</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Downward</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Educational Group A	2 (25.0%)	3 (37.5%)	2 (25.0%)	1 (12.5%)
Educational Group B	22 (36.0%)	21 (34.5%)	9 (14.8%)	9 (14.8%)
Educational Group C	69 (44.5%)	43 (27.8%)	17 (10.9%)	26 (16.8%)

Although the aspirations of parents in Educational Groups A and B were in many ways similar, it should be pointed out that in the agricultural group many parents of 'B' level aspired to downward mobility for their children. There was a great difference, as Table IX shows, between parents in the agricultural group of educational level 'C' and those in the other group, of this level. It seems that there are most traditionalists, as was originally hypothesised, among those in the agricultural group who are least well-educated.

TABLE X

Aspirations for Occupational Mobility  
Related to Sex of Child (B)

	<u>Agricultural Group</u>			
	<u>Upward</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Downward</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Girls	21 (30.0%)	16 (22.8%)	11 (15.7%)	22 (31.4%)
Boys	25 (24.5%)	51 (50.0%)	10 (9.8%)	16 (15.7%)

TABLE X (Cont.)

Aspirations for Occupational Mobility  
Related to Sex of Child (B)

	<u>Non-Agricultural Group</u>			
	<u>Upward</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Downward</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Girls	68 (52.2%)	25 (19.2%)	17 (13.1%)	20 (15.4%)
Boys	30 (28.5%)	46 (43.8%)	13 (12.4%)	16 (15.2%)

The parents in the agricultural group, although they hoped for upward occupational mobility more often for girls than for boys, were less prone to this tendency than were parents in the other group. It is also noteworthy that Table X shows that it was parents in the agricultural group with daughters, who were most uncertain what future career they would choose for their children.

The preceding Tables, taken as a whole, do give considerable support to the hypothesis that members of the agricultural group would be more likely to have traditional attitudes to their children's occupations than other parents. Moreover, it is evident that it was the farmworkers, and least well-educated parents in the agricultural group, who were most likely to have traditional attitudes.

When the rural group was compared with the non-rural group, there was found to be less disparity in their attitudes than that found between agricultural and non-agricultural groups. The rural group were not particularly inclined to traditionalism. As Table XI shows, they were slightly more prone to hope for upward occupational mobility for their children than were members of the other group.

TABLE XI

Parents' Aspirations for Occupational Mobility for Children (C)

	<u>Rural Group</u>	<u>Non-Rural Group</u>
Upward Mobility	82 (35.9%)	63 (31.0%)
Immobility	70 (30.6%)	69 (33.9%)
Downward Mobility	27 (11.8%)	22 (10.8%)
Don't Know	39 (17.2%)	35 (17.4%)
Not Known	<u>10</u> (4.4%)	<u>14</u> (6.9%)
	228	203

When the type of occupation which parents chose for their children was examined, it was found that the rural group were rather more inclined to choose agricultural occupations than were other parents. On the whole, however, as Table XII shows there was little difference between the two groups with regard to the type of occupation they chose.

TABLE XII

Aspirations for Occupations - Agricultural or Not (B)

	<u>Rural Group</u>	<u>Non-Rural Group</u>
Agricultural Occupation	57 (25.0%)	43 (21.2%)
Non-agricultural Occupation	119 (52.1%)	100 (49.3%)
Armed Forces	12 (5.3%)	20 (9.8%)
Don't Know	<u>40</u> (17.6%)	<u>40</u> (19.7%)
	228	203

The rural group were more likely to aspire to upward occupational mobility for children of above average and average ability than were the other group. Thus their estimate of their children's ability could not be said to account for their high aspirations.

TABLE XIII

Aspirations for Occupational Mobility  
Related to Ability of Child (B)

	<u>Rural Group</u>			
	<u>Upward</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Downward</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Above Average	34 (55.7%)	9 (14.7%)	5 (8.2%)	13 (21.4%)
Average	47 (33.5%)	49 (35.0%)	20 (14.3%)	24 (17.2%)
Below Average	1 (8.3%)	7 (58.4%)	2 (16.6%)	2 (16.6%)
	<u>Non-rural Group</u>			
	<u>Upward</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Downward</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Above Average	26 (38.8%)	18 (26.9%)	8 (11.9%)	15 (22.4%)
Average	32 (32.6%)	40 (40.8%)	11 (11.2%)	15 (15.3%)
Below Average	5 (20.8%)	11 (45.8%)	3 (12.5%)	5 (20.8%)

Table XIX reveals no consistent pattern of aspirations within the rural group when it is divided into Social Classes. The Table does suggest, however, that one possible reason why the rural group contains more parents aspiring to upward mobility, is that it contains more Class V parents. These people, of course, have the least desirable jobs in many respects. They cannot aspire to downward mobility. It will be noted that the parents in Class IV of the rural group were less ambitious for their children than their counterparts in the other group. Many of these people would of course be the farmworkers who have already been found to be rather traditional in this respect.

TABLE XIV

Aspirations for Occupational Mobility  
Related to Social Class (B)

<u>Social Class</u>	<u>Rural Group</u>			
	<u>Upward</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Downward</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
I	-	-	-	-
II	3 (6.3%)	20 (41.5%)	16 (33.3%)	9 (18.8%)
IIIa	2 (40.0%)	1 (20.0%)	-	2 (40.0%)
IIIb	33 (35.5%)	34 (36.5%)	10 (10.8%)	16 (17.2%)
IV	24 (49.0%)	14 (28.5%)	1 (2.1%)	10 (20.5%)
V	20 (87.0%)	1 (4.3%)	-	2 (8.7%)
	<u>Non-rural Group</u>			
	<u>Upward</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Downward</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
I	-	1 (20.0%)	1 (20.0%)	3 (60.0%)
II	9 (13.8%)	30 (46.2%)	14 (21.5%)	12 (18.4%)
IIIa	3 (33.3%)	2 (22.2%)	3 (33.3%)	1 (11.1%)
IIIb	19 (32.2%)	27 (45.7%)	4 (6.8%)	9 (15.2%)
IV	25 (64.0%)	7 (18.0%)	-	7 (18.0%)
V	7 (58.3%)	2 (16.6%)	-	3 (25.0%)

When the parents' aspirations for occupational mobility were related to their own Educational Level, it was found that parents in the rural group, of Educational Level 'C' had higher aspirations than those of similar education in the other group. Those in the other two educational divisions of the rural group had lower aspirations than their counterparts in the other group. But the differences between rural and non-rural groups were on the whole inconsiderable. No

support could be found for the hypothesis that the rural group would contain many more traditionalists than the other group.

TABLE XV

Parents' Aspirations for Occupational Mobility Related to Own Education (B)

	<u>Rural Group</u>			
	<u>Upward</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Downward</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Educational Group A	-	1 (50.0%)	-	1 (50.0%)
Educational Group B	13 (30.3%)	12 (27.9%)	7 (16.3%)	11 (25.6%)
Educational Group C	64 (38.8%)	56 (33.9%)	20 (12.1%)	25 (15.2%)
	<u>Non-rural Group</u>			
	<u>Upward</u>	<u>Immobile</u>	<u>Downward</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Educational Group A	4 (30.7%)	3 (23.1%)	2 (15.4%)	4 (30.7%)
Educational Group B	17 (32.7%)	19 (36.6%)	8 (15.4%)	8 (15.4%)
Educational Group C	38 (32.5%)	46 (39.4%)	11 (9.4%)	22 (18.8%)

Thus Table XV confirms the conclusions drawn from the other Tables.

As a final note to this part of the analysis, it may be observed that both rural and non-rural groups were more ambitious for girls than for boys. There was virtually no difference between the two groups with respect to their aspirations for each sex.

Very few of the parents (6.3%) did not know where they wanted their child to work when he or she obtained a job. The majority were able to name a specific place where they hoped their child would take up an occupation. As many as 18.0% of the parents hoped that their child could work either at home (that is, generally, on the family farm) or in the



parish where the family were living at the time of the survey. A further 3.7% hoped their children would work somewhere 'in the country', though not necessarily very near home. The proportion who wanted their children to work at or near home, or in the country, is approximately the same as the proportion who wanted agricultural jobs for their children. This is a less surprising finding than was made in Shropshire, where far more of the parents wanted their child to work in the country than wanted agricultural jobs.

The largest group of parents in West Dorset (25.4%) wanted their children to work in one of the small market towns near the Rural Districts. The towns of Bridport and Beaminster themselves (especially the former) were the parents' most frequent choices, of course. Only a very small proportion (1.2%) of the parents suggested that their child would work in the large towns like Poole and Exeter which are the nearest big industrial centres. Nor did a large proportion suggest specifically any large town outside the West Country (3.5% in fact did so). Unexpectedly, there were few parents who hoped their child would work in Yeovil and Weymouth, the two expanding towns near the area studied (under 1%). There were, however, quite a large number of parents who said that their child would, they hoped, work "in a town somewhere" (11.4%). On the whole, it was clear that these parents were speaking of a town of some size, outside the Rural Districts. There were two other categories of parents whose ideas were somewhat vague. There were those who said their children would go "anywhere there is work" (and who for the most part envisaged that this would mean an urban area some way off). Then there were the parents who

definitely wanted their children "near home" but specified little else. The former group accounted for about 12.3% of the parents, the latter for 9.5%.

The remainder of the parents wanted their children to go abroad (2.8%) or into the Armed Forces (6.7%).

The proportion of parents who wanted their children to remain in West Dorset (including the small towns) was therefore about 53%. Only 16.1% said definitely that they wanted their children to work in a large urban centre (discounting the group who said their children would work "anywhere"). There were comparatively few parents in West Dorset who positively wished their children to leave the area and seek work elsewhere. Many of those who hoped that their children would take up professional or skilled jobs nevertheless wanted them to remain in the area. It was plain that much of this desire for their children to remain in the area could be attributed not just to affection for the children (though of course this played its part), but to enthusiasm for local communities, and affection for West Dorset itself, which they knew their children shared.

Many of the parents made observations of the following kind:

"Well, he likes it here, and all his friends are here. Why should he go to the town?"

"She wouldn't like the rat-race of city life. She'd rather do nothing here than have a 'good job' in the town."

"It's like one big family here. No-one who's lived here long wants to go away. You can always get a job here where you're known."

It was not simply the parents of the dull children who made such remarks. Moreover, a considerable proportion of the parents who hoped their children would go and work in a

large industrial centre still betrayed nostalgia at the thought of their leaving the country. Many made it clear that their children would be reluctant to leave but would have to do so to obtain the jobs they wanted. Among the informants there was a high degree of attachment to life in West Dorset, which could be attributed partly to the attractions that life in small communities held for some people, and partly to the natural beauties of the place itself. Both kinds of advantage were mentioned by many people.

In general, therefore, there was an appreciable amount of traditionalism among the parents, as far as geographical mobility was concerned.

TABLE XVI

	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>
At home	9 (4.3%)	25 (11.2%)
Same parish	16 (7.7%)	27 (12.2%)
"In the country", "Near home"	27 (12.9%)	30 (13.6%)
Urban under 10 miles	68 (32.5%)	41 (18.4%)
Urban 10 - 40 miles	3 (1.4%)	2 (0.9%)
Urban over 40 miles	10 (4.8%)	5 (2.3%)
Urban area - not specified	29 (13.9%)	20 (9.0%)
"Anywhere there is work"	24 (11.4%)	29 (13.1%)
Services	2 (1.0%)	30 (13.5%)
Abroad	9 (4.3%)	2 (0.9%)
Don't Know	<u>12</u> (5.7%)	<u>11</u> (4.9%)
	209	222

The differences between the aspirations of parents for each sex (Table XVI) reflect the fact that many more boys than girls were hoped to obtain agricultural jobs, and in particular to stay at home on the family farm. Hence, many more boys than girls were hoped to work "at home", or in the

same parish, or "in the country". Considerably more girls' parents hoped that they would work in urban areas. No doubt this was partly because of the shortage of skilled jobs for girls locally. It is also consistent with the overall tendency for parents to aspire to all kinds of mobility for girls more frequently than for boys. However, a large proportion of girls were hoped to work in the small towns near home, so that similar proportions of each sex were hoped to work in the West Dorset area. (55.4% of the boys, 57.4% of the girls.) It is interesting to note that it was the girls' parents for the most part who hoped they would go abroad to work. On the other hand, nearly all those who were hoped to enter the Services were boys.

TABLE XVII

Parents' Aspirations for Children's Place of Work (B)

	<u>Agricultural Group</u>	<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>
At home	25 (14.6%)	9 (3.8%)
Same parish	15 (8.7%)	25 (10.6%)
"In the country" or "Near home"	31 (18.0%)	26 (11.1%)
Urban under 10 miles	38 (22.1%)	64 (27.2%)
Urban 10 - 40 miles	3 (1.7%)	1 (0.4%)
Urban over 40 miles	6 (3.5%)	8 (3.4%)
Urban not specified	13 (7.6%)	30 (12.8%)
"Anywhere there is work"	17 (9.9%)	36 (15.3%)
Services	8 (4.6%)	18 (7.7%)
Abroad	4 (2.3%)	7 (2.9%)
Don't Know	<u>12</u> (6.9%)	<u>11</u> (4.7%)
	172	235

There was not a great difference between the agricultural and non-agricultural groups regarding their children's future places of work. However, the agricultural group, as Table XVII shows, did contain rather more traditionalists, who

wanted their children to work at home, or in the country. Altogether 63.4% of the agricultural group hoped that their children would work in West Dorset, while 52.7% of the other group hoped so. Furthermore, while only 34.9% of the agricultural group said that they wanted their children to work in an urban area, 43.8% of the other group did. More of the non-agricultural parents said that their children would go "anywhere there is work", or into the Armed Forces, or abroad.

TABLE XVIII

Aspirations for Place of Work Related to Ability of Child

	<u>Agricultural Group</u>		
	<u>Above Average</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Below Average</u>
At home Same parish In the country, etc. )	19 (32.3%)	43 (44.3%)	7 (58.3%)
Named town	14 (23.7%)	29 (29.9%)	2 (16.6%)
Unnamed town or anywhere )	16 (27.1%)	14 (14.4%)	-
Armed Forces	2 (3.4%)	3 (3.1%)	3 (25.0%)
Abroad	2 (3.4%)	2 (2.1%)	-
Don't Know	<u>6</u> (10.2%)	<u>6</u> (6.2%)	<u>-</u>
	59	97	12
	<u>Non-agricultural Group</u>		
	<u>Above Average</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Below Average</u>
At home Same parish In the country, etc. )	19 (26.0%)	35 (27.1%)	6 (23.1%)
Named town	12 (16.4%)	48 (37.2%)	11 (42.3%)
Unnamed town or anywhere )	28 (38.5%)	31 (24.0%)	6 (23.1%)
Armed Forces	6 (8.2%)	8 (6.2%)	3 (11.6%)
Abroad	4 (5.5%)	2 (1.5%)	-
Don't Know	<u>4</u> (5.5%)	<u>5</u> (3.9%)	<u>-</u>
	73	129	26

The agricultural group, as Table XVIII shows, were more inclined to hope that their children would work in the country,

whatever their ability, than were the other group. Moreover, although they were more prone to name a town where they thought above-average children might work, in general they did not suggest that children of any level of ability should go to an urban area as often as did the non-agricultural group. The traditionalism of the agricultural group could not be attributed to the fact that they believed their children to be less able than others, therefore.

TABLE XIX

Aspirations for Place of Work  
Related to Parents' Own Social Class

	Agricultural Group			
	I	II	IIIb	IV
At home, etc.	1 (50.0%)	28 (40.8%)	15 (37.5%)	27 (42.8%)
Named town	-	15 (22.4%)	10 (25.0%)	22 (35.0%)
Unnamed town, etc.	1 (50.0%)	12 (17.9%)	9 (22.5%)	8 (12.7%)
Armed Forces	-	4 (5.9%)	2 (5.0%)	2 (3.2%)
Abroad	-	2 (3.0%)	2 (5.0%)	-
Don't Know	-	6 (9.0%)	2 (5.0%)	4 (6.4%)
	Non-agricultural Group			
	I	II	IIIb	IV
At home, etc.	1 (33.3%)	14 (30.4%)	32 (28.6%)	5 (20.0%)
Named town	1 (33.3%)	5 (10.8%)	38 (33.9%)	8 (32.0%)
Unnamed town, etc.	1 (33.3%)	19 (41.3%)	27 (24.1%)	8 (32.0%)
Armed Forces	-	2 (4.4%)	7 (6.2%)	3 (12.0%)
Abroad	-	3 (6.5%)	2 (1.8%)	-
Don't Know	-	3 (6.5%)	6 (5.4%)	1 (4.0%)

As Table XIX shows, the traditional attitude of the agricultural group cannot be accounted for in terms of the Social Class composition of the group. All Social Classes of this group were more inclined than their counterparts in the other group to want their children to work in the country and less inclined to mention an urban area.

Apart from the fact that those in Educational Group A in the agricultural group did not aspire as often for their children to remain in the country as their counterparts in the other group, Table XX shows that all educational levels of the agricultural group were more traditional than those of the other group.

TABLE XX

Parents' Aspirations for Place of Work Related to own Educational Level

	Agricultural Group			Non-agricultural Group		
	A	B	C	A	B	C
At home etc.	2 28.6%	10 29.4%	59 46.8%	3 37.5%	9 14.7%	47 30.3%
Named town	1 14.3%	8 23.5%	36 28.6%	-	16 26.2%	50 32.3%
Unnamed town etc.	3 42.9%	8 23.5%	16 12.7%	3 37.5%	23 37.7%	37 23.8%
Armed Forces	-	3 8.8%	5 4.0%	-	6 9.8%	12 7.7%
Abroad	1 14.3%	3 8.8%	-	1 12.5%	3 4.9%	3 1.9%
Don't Know	-	2 5.9%	10 8.0%	1 12.5%	4 6.6%	6 3.9%

When similar comparisons of aspirations for their children's future place of work were made between the rural and non-rural groups, the former were found to be rather more traditional in outlook. The members of the rural group were more prone to want their children to work in the country and in the local area than were members of the non-rural group. 66.2% of the rural group and only 45.5% of the other wanted their children to work in West Dorset, or "in the country".

TABLE XXI

Aspirations for Children's Place of Work (C)

	<u>Rural Group</u>	<u>Non-rural Group</u>
At home	. 24 (10.5%)	10 (4.9%)
Same parish	26 (11.4%)	17 (8.4%)
"In the country" or "Near home"	27 (11.8%)	30 (14.8%)
Urban under 10 miles	74 (32.5%)	35 (17.4%)
Urban 10 - 40 miles	3 (1.3%)	2 (1.0%)
Urban over 40 miles	9 (3.9%)	6 (2.9%)
Urban, not specified	27 (11.8%)	22 (10.8%)
"Anywhere there is work"	15 (6.6%)	38 (18.7%)
Armed Forces	10 (4.4%)	22 (10.8%)
Abroad	2 (0.9%)	9 (4.4%)
Don't Know	<u>11</u> (4.8%)	<u>12</u> (5.9%)
	228	203

Parents in the non-rural group did not name specific towns as frequently as the other parents, but were far more likely to say that their children would go anywhere there was a job. They were also more likely to hope that their children would go into the Services or abroad to work.

TABLE XXII

Parents' Aspirations for Place of Work  
Related to Child's Ability (B)

	<u>Rural Group</u>		
	<u>Above Average</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Below Average</u>
At home, etc.	21 (33.3%)	50 (34.5%)	4 (26.7%)
Named town	20 (31.8%)	58 (40.0%)	7 (46.7%)
Unnamed town, etc.	13 (20.6%)	26 (17.9%)	1 (6.7%)
Armed Forces	2 (3.2%)	6 (4.1%)	2 (13.3%)
Abroad	1 (1.6%)	1 (0.6%)	-
Don't Know	6 (9.5%)	4 (2.8%)	1 (6.7%)



TABLE XXII (Cont.)

Parents' Aspirations for Place of Work  
Related to Child's Ability (B)

	<u>Non-rural Group</u>		
	<u>Above Average</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Below Average</u>
At home, etc.	16 (21.8%)	31 (31.3%)	9 (37.5%)
Named town	9 (26.3%)	26 (26.3%)	6 (25.0%)
Unnamed town	31 (24.2%)	24 (24.2%)	4 (16.6%)
Armed Forces	8 (7.1%)	7 (7.1%)	4 (16.6%)
Abroad	5 (4.0%)	4 (4.0%)	-
Don't know	4 (3.6%)	7 (7.1%)	1 (4.2%)

Table XXII demonstrates that the rural group's attitude to their children's future place of work was not governed entirely by their estimate of the children's ability. Except for the children who were below average, the rural group were more inclined to keep the children in the local area than were the other group. (They were also more inclined to name a town where they hoped their children would work. But this, to refer back to Table XXI, was generally a small local town.) The non-rural group proposed unnamed towns, the Armed Forces and "abroad" more frequently for children of all types of ability than did 'rural' parents.

It does seem, therefore, that the rural group were rather more traditional than the other parents in their attitude to their children's future place of work. They did not aspire to geographical mobility to nearly the same extent that the non-rural group did. (In the Appendix, Tables XXIII and XXIV relate parents' aspirations for geographical mobility to their own educational level and Social Class, and show that traditionalism in the rural group is not affected by either of these variables.)

To conclude the appraisal of the West Dorset findings, therefore, it does appear that there was some support for the hypothesis that there would be a large body of parents with traditional attitudes to occupational and geographical mobility. In the case of geographical mobility the traditionalists were indeed in the majority. Moreover, the agricultural group did prove to contain more traditionalists than the non-agricultural group, with regard to both questions. The evidence regarding the rural group was, however, more ambiguous. More of them than of the non-rural group were traditionalists with reference to geographical mobility, but this was not true in the case of occupational mobility.

In the following Chapter, which completes the study, the evidence obtained in the West Dorset survey will be compared briefly with that obtained in North Shropshire. The approach of the community-study authors will be re-examined, and some tentative conclusions suggested.

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION

One of the major aims of this comparative study of two English rural areas was to discover how far such areas could be described as 'traditional'. Throughout this study the word 'traditional' has been used to signify the polar type held to embody the characteristics of rural areas by those who suggest that a rural-urban dichotomy can be distinguished, or those who argue for the existence of a rural-urban continuum.

In the Introduction some account was given of the history of the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach. The conceptual framework adopted by the writers who have used this approach was outlined and discussed. It was noted that a number of writers, especially in recent years, have on various grounds questioned the usefulness and validity of the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach. And yet, the approach still has many vigorous supporters. In fact, it may be said that here is an area of considerable controversy in rural and urban sociology. The controversy has aroused all the more interest because the attack on the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach has been seen by several authors as threatening the existence of rural and urban sociology as independent branches of sociology as a whole.

It was hoped, therefore, that by investigating the incidence of 'traditionalism' in rural areas, this study would provide direct evidence as to the usefulness or otherwise of the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach.

In this particular study, only a rather restricted test of the applicability of the approach was possible.

The first step was to establish the nature of the polar types postulated by authors favouring this approach. As is more fully explained in the Introduction, while many different authors conceptualise polar types incorporating those features which they believe to be characteristic of rural and urban areas, the types are rarely fully and exactly defined. However, there is considerable consensus among different authors as to a number of general and specific characteristics of the 'urban', and more especially the 'rural' type. This consensus may be partly explained by the fact that several authors refer to the same original theoretical sources; for example, Tönnies and Weber. Others refer to sources in turn influenced strongly by earlier theorists; for example, Redfield, Park and Wirth. It was possible, therefore, to identify some of the conventional components of the relevant polar type 'traditionalism'.

Only a limited number of aspects of 'traditionalism' were selected for study in North Shropshire and West Dorset for pragmatic reasons. Four aspects of 'traditionalism' were chosen, and the object of the empirical investigations was to determine how far they were present or absent from the two areas as a whole, and from certain groups within the areas. (That is to say, it was possible to specify the 'traditional' attitudes to social status, educational mobility, occupational mobility and geographical mobility, and to discover how far individuals or groups held these attitudes.) The grounds on which these particular aspects of 'traditionalism' were chosen for study have been set forth in the first Chapter.

It will be recalled that apart from the significance attached by many previous writers to these components of

'traditionalism', there was an additional reason for studying these variables. This was the apparent interdependence of the four variables. A priori it seemed reasonable to argue that those who favoured a fixed status system would be unlikely to favour educational mobility or occupational mobility. Or that those who favoured status by achievement would also favour educational and occupational mobility together with geographical mobility. It would appear that there might be a functional interdependence between these four variables. (Of course, many writers have suggested that this is so.) Possibly this seeming functional interdependence encourages those who view 'traditionalism' as a unitary polar type. It must also encourage the argument implied in the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach that movement along the continuum involves a more-or-less equal change in all variables in the same direction. The four variables chosen for study here do appear to be closely related, and a change in one does appear to be likely to produce a similar change in the others. Hence, it was argued that the selection of these four aspects of 'traditionalism' for investigation would provide a good, if limited, test of the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach.

The Rural-Urban Continuum Approach initially suggested the hypothesis that in both the areas with which this study is concerned there was likely to be a high degree of 'traditionalism' with respect to all four factors. West Dorset, however, is considerably further removed from large conurbations than is North Shropshire. The second hypothesis that was drawn from the approach was therefore that in West Dorset there would be more 'traditionalism' with respect to all four variables than would be found in North Shropshire.

Authors have disagreed as to whether it is the nature of agricultural employment, or the nature of the rural environment itself which is to be regarded as crucial in accounting for the incidence of 'traditionalism'. But taken as a whole, the writings of rural sociologists suggested the further hypotheses that among those who were engaged in agricultural occupations and among those who had always lived in rural areas 'traditionalism' would be more pronounced than in other groups. Again with respect to all four factors.

There were thus four main hypotheses taken for investigation by empirical research. If the data collected cast doubt on the validity of the hypotheses it would be necessary to consider whether an alternative approach to the study of rural or urban areas could be formulated, which might prove to be more useful.

In Chapters II and VI evidence was presented to show that as far as physical characteristics, demography and occupational pattern are concerned, North Shropshire and West Dorset are indeed rural areas. In addition, the samples chosen for study in each area revealed a number of other tendencies which many authors have held to be characteristic of rural areas. (For example, high levels of occupational and residential stability.) It was considered therefore, that these areas represented appropriate locales in which to test the hypotheses that have been specified.

The data which were collected in the course of fieldwork have already been presented and analysed. It remains to summarise the findings and to provide an interpretation of them. The schema shown below has been drawn up to

facilitate this process, although at the expense of somewhat over-simplifying the evidence initially. (For example, in the schema, the findings on attitudes to the three types of mobility have been summarised without taking into account the influence of variables such as social class, the educational level of respondents, and so on, which were found in the course of analysis to have considerable significance.) This over-simplification will be rectified shortly when particular findings are discussed in more detail.

What is immediately apparent from the schema is that there was no consistent and predictable inclination to 'traditionalism' either in North Shropshire or West Dorset as a whole, or in individual groups within the areas. In all groups there was rejection of at least one aspect of 'traditionalism'. To take just one example, the agricultural group in Shropshire placed high value on both educational and occupational mobility, but accepted the 'traditional' view of status and geographical mobility.

A further point to be noted about the schema is that the differences between North Shropshire and West Dorset are not easily explained in terms of the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach. This approach simply suggests, as was observed in the Introduction, that West Dorset might probably be more 'traditional' than North Shropshire because it lies further away from urban industrial centres. It is not easy to determine whether in fact 'traditional' attitudes are present to a greater extent in West Dorset on the basis of the limited study undertaken here, but it is clear that in the two places people held traditional attitudes with respect to different questions. In Shropshire, a small

NORTH SHROPSHIRE.

<u>Criteria of</u> <u>'Traditionalism'.</u>	<u>'Rural' Group.</u>					<u>'Non-Rural' Group.</u>				
	++	+	NR	-	--	++	+	NR	-	--
I. Accepts fixed status system		*					*			
II. Devalues educational mobility		*					*			
III. Devalues occupational mobility				*			*			
IV. Devalues geographical mobility		*							*	

<u>Criteria of</u> <u>'Traditionalism'.</u>	<u>'Agricultural' Group.</u>					<u>'Non-Agricultural' Group.</u>				
	++	+	NR	-	--	++	+	NR	-	--
I. Accepts fixed status system						No evidence				
II. Devalues educational mobility				*					*	
III. Devalues occupational mobility				*					*	
IV. Devalues geographical mobility		*							*	

<u>Criteria of</u> <u>'Traditionalism'.</u>	<u>Overall pattern - North Shropshire.</u>				
	++	+	NR	-	--
I. Accepts fixed status system		*			
II. Devalues educational mobility				*	
III. Devalues occupational mobility				*	
IV. Devalues geographical mobility				*	

NR = No Result.



WEST DORSET.

<u>Criteria of</u> <u>'Traditionalism'.</u>	<u>'Rural' Group.</u>					<u>'Non-Rural' Group.</u>				
	++	+	NR	-	--	++	+	NR	-	--
I. Accepts fixed status system		*					*			
II. Devalues educational mobility				*				*		
III. Devalues occupational mobility		*					*			
IV. Devalues geographical mobility *								*		

<u>Criteria of</u> <u>'Traditionalism'.</u>	<u>'Agricultural' Group.</u>					<u>'Non-Agricultural' Group.</u>				
	++	+	NR	-	--	++	+	NR	-	--
I. Accepts fixed status system	No evidence					No evidence				
II. Devalues educational mobility				*					*	
III. Devalues occupational mobility		*						*		
IV. Devalues geographical mobility *							*			

<u>Criteria of</u> <u>'Traditionalism'.</u>	<u>Overall pattern - West Dorset.</u>				
	++	+	NR	-	--
I. Accepts fixed status system		*			
II. Devalues educational mobility				*	
III. Devalues occupational mobility				*	
IV. Devalues geographical mobility			*		

NR = No Result.

majority of respondents accepted the 'traditional' hostility to educational mobility; in Dorset, on the other hand, educational mobility was positively valued. In Dorset occupational mobility was rejected as a goal, while in Shropshire it was accepted. In predicting these variations in attitudes between the two places, the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach would not appear to be very useful.

On the basis of the schema alone it seems justifiable to say that this latter approach tends to obscure the variety of attitudes which may be held in rural areas as a whole, and in particular groups within them. Even a very simplified analysis shows that these attitudes do not consistently approximate to the type that has been labelled 'traditionalism' in this study.

When the research findings are examined in more detail this becomes even more apparent. The schema makes it appear that the Shropshire parents were somewhat more 'traditional' than those of Dorset in their attitudes to educational mobility. But as was more fully explained earlier, this bare statement does not do justice to the empirical situation. In general the Shropshire parents were far less 'traditional' in their attitudes to education than had been anticipated. The desire for educational mobility was really weak only in those parents in the lower socio-economic groups who had always lived in the country and had generally received only a limited education themselves.

There was no strong tendency towards 'traditionalism' in the agricultural group in Shropshire. The farmers were conspicuously ambitious for their children. Frequently these farmers had only had a little formal education themselves, but were anxious for their children to have much more. The group of Shropshire parents as a whole did display a tendency

to hold higher aspirations for girls than for boys. But it appears that this tendency was produced by a realistic appraisal of the opportunities open to the two sexes, rather than by 'traditional' attitudes. In the fuller discussion of the fieldwork in Chapter III the attempt was made to show how other factors besides settlement type, and the nature of local employment had affected parents' aspirations for their children. These other factors included the social class of the parents, and their own educational background. Both of these variables were found to influence aspirations for educational and occupational mobility within all groups.

As regards their aspirations for their children's future occupations the Shropshire parents showed little 'traditionalism'. Occupational mobility was positively valued by a majority of parents. The agricultural and rural groups were no more 'traditional' in this respect than were the other groups of parents. Farmers in North Shropshire did not evince the strong desire for their children to follow them into farming that had been expected of them. Many did have such a desire, but they were not a majority. Farmworkers were definitely unwilling for their children to go into agriculture.

Of course, the Shropshire parents were influenced in their choices of occupations for their children by the proximity of large urban centres. The possibility of commuting was always present in their minds, and although its disadvantages were often pointed out, the parents did not discount the possibility.

Where there did seem to be strong evidence of 'traditionalism' in North Shropshire was in the parents' attitudes to geographical mobility. A large majority hoped that their children would continue to live and work in the local area.

This desire for residential stability for their children seemed in many of the parents to be even stronger than their ambitions for educational or occupational mobility. It was present in parents of all social classes and different types of educational background. However, since the parents did appreciate that the possibility of commuting existed, their occupational ambitions for their children would not necessarily have to be sacrificed to this desire for geographical stability.

Further evidence of 'traditionalism' in Shropshire was produced by the survey of attitudes to social status. But here there was an unexpected and paradoxical finding. This was that the ex-urbanites proved to be more 'traditional' in outlook, on the whole, than the rural group, with respect to certain aspects of status. (This finding was in complete opposition to the initial hypothesis that the people who had always lived in the country would be more consistently 'traditional' than the rest of the informants.) Once again the difficulty of explaining the research findings in terms of the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach was apparent.

A further unexpected finding in North Shropshire, though a less striking one, was that the rural informants did not consider that the length of time a man had been on his farm tended to increase his status. Earlier studies had repeatedly mentioned this as a factor enhancing a farmer's social standing.

In comparing the Dorset findings with those of North Shropshire some interesting similarities became apparent. In Dorset, as in Shropshire, traditional attitudes to social status were widespread, though often held by substantial minorities rather than by a majority of informants. But what appears to be very significant is that in Dorset again

it was the ex-urbanites who were most committed to 'traditional' attitudes to social status. The paradoxical finding of the Shropshire survey was thus repeated, and since it could not be disregarded as 'accidental' or random, demanded explanation.

In their attitudes to geographical mobility too, the Dorset informants resembled their Shropshire counterparts. A majority of all the parents aspired to geographical immobility for their children. They wanted the children to live and work in West Dorset.

There were therefore two major points of similarity between the research findings for the two areas. In other ways the results obtained in West Dorset differed somewhat from those obtained in Shropshire, however. As regards education, the parents of West Dorset were far from being 'traditional'. They manifested considerable ambition for their children, and a majority aspired to educational mobility, among those with positive ambitions. Dorset parents were indeed more enthusiastic about the educational advancement of their children than were those of North Shropshire. There was no evidence that those who were engaged in agriculture in this area were more 'traditional' than the other parents. Farmers, as in Shropshire, were indeed especially eager to further their children's careers. Little difference in attitudes and aspirations could be discerned, either between the ex-urbanites and the rest of the parents on this question. Where the pattern of Shropshire was again reflected was in the fact that aspirations for girls were consistently higher than those for boys. Again the most adequate explanation seemed to lie in the paucity of 'good' jobs for girls in the area, and of jobs, in particular, for which little formal education is required.

Although more ambitious for their children's education than the Shropshire parents, the Dorset sample were less prone to aspire to occupational mobility. At first sight this seems illogical, in the light of the possible functional interdependence of the variables that was mentioned earlier. In particular it was found that farmers and farmworkers often hoped that their children would be occupationally immobile. Farmers in West Dorset did want to remain on the same farm for as long as possible and hoped that their sons, and even daughters, would inherit it.

It is relevant to re-iterate here that commuting to an industrial town, although possible in West Dorset, was not such an established practice as it was in Shropshire. It was not a possibility which parents automatically took into account when considering their children's future occupations, and places of work. Hence if the West Dorset parents were more 'traditional' in their choices of occupations for their children than were those of Shropshire, this was probably because they valued residential stability so highly, and were unwilling for their children to go away and work. It was the availability of non-traditional occupations in Shropshire, and their relative accessibility, that caused them to be more frequently chosen, rather than any fundamental difference in attitudes to occupational mobility itself between the two groups of parents.

Finally, two interesting minor findings from West Dorset should be re-emphasised. These represent departures from the Shropshire pattern. In the first place, it was found that a majority of all informants did consider that the length of time a farmer had been on the same farm enhanced his status. (In Shropshire, on the contrary, it was often said that to remain for ever on the same farm was simply unprofitable

stagnation, tending to diminish a man's standing.) In Dorset, too, it was found that to have modernised his farm would probably improve a farmer's social position. (Whereas in Shropshire, no particular value seemed to be placed on modernisation.)

From this brief re-statement of the principal findings it is evident that the hypotheses which were advanced, based on the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach, were certainly not confirmed in any straightforward way. In both Shropshire and Dorset, it is true, some of the informants did hold some of the opinions and show some of the attitudes that have been called 'traditional'. But in both places, equally, a majority of informants held some attitudes and had some aspirations which were non-traditional. It could not, on the basis of the empirical findings, be said that those who were dependent on agriculture, or those who had always lived in the country were in either area consistently inclined to 'traditionalism'. So neither a majority of all the inhabitants, nor a majority of the two groups considered most likely to be 'traditional' in outlook, were found to be 'traditional' on all the points investigated.

The variations in attitudes which were found were regarded as sufficiently interesting and significant to warrant the attempt being made to find an explanation. 'Partial' explanations of individual findings have already been suggested in earlier Chapters, and elsewhere in this Conclusion. It has been argued, for example, that attitudes to occupational mobility differed in North Shropshire and West Dorset because parents fully understood the local employment opportunities, and possibilities for commuting. As far as differences between the two areas in attitudes to educational mobility are concerned, it is likely that here

an important factor is that the child's major chance of self-advancement in Dorset is through formal education, since employment opportunities are so restricted. Hence while both sets of parents were ambitious for their children to have a good education, the Dorset parents were more markedly so. The Shropshire parents had an additional outlet for ambition in the wider opportunities for employment offered by large neighbouring towns. That this explanation is a valid one is suggested by the variations in both places between aspirations for girls and for boys. (It has been suggested that these variations were due to the limited choice of employment open to girls in the rural areas, and smaller possibility of commuting, for them.)

It has already been pointed out that it would not have been possible to predict these variations in attitudes using the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach. That is not to say that the findings under discussion are in all cases totally irreconcilable with this approach. It may be said, for example, that on the basis of the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach it could be predicted that the people of West Dorset would be less enthusiastic for occupational mobility than those of Shropshire. However, it could not simultaneously be predicted that they would be more enthusiastic about educational mobility and more or less equally devoted to a fixed status system. The criticism made here is therefore that the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach is both insufficiently sensitive to predict and explain attitudes and behaviour in different types of settlement, and actually misleading, in that it suggests that those who live in settlements farthest removed from big urban centres will be in all respects more traditional than those who are nearer such centres. It is argued that using only the Rural-Urban



Continuum Approach it would not be possible to predict the extent to which a particular area or group of people would hold 'traditional' views, nor yet the kind of questions on which 'traditional' attitudes would be held.

It must also be stressed that as far as the findings on educational and occupational mobility go, the analysis presented in earlier Chapter indicated the complexity of the influences on attitudes and aspirations. It was found that apart from their perceptions of opportunities, other variables affecting parents aspirations strongly were their own social class background and their own educational level. Many of the writers who emphasize the importance of settlement type and local occupational structure (whether agricultural or non-agricultural) in determining attitudes, have failed to give these variables and perhaps others which also remain unconsidered here, sufficient prominence. However, taken as a whole, the findings of this study do not suggest that an explanation could be framed solely in terms of the influence of class factors.

It is principally the attitudes to social status and geographical mobility in the two areas which are not amenable to explanation in terms of class factors. It has been stated that in both areas considerable 'traditionalism' was found with reference to both variables. In addition, and quite unexpectedly, the ex-urbanites were found to be more 'traditional' with regard to geographical mobility, than rural people. Not even a 'partial' explanation of these findings has so far been offered in this Chapter. They appear less anomalous, however, in the light of Pahl's recent research on a number of Hertfordshire villages.<sup>1</sup> Pahl found that in these villages the middle class commuters were also very much in sympathy with certain aspects of 'traditional' status.

His commuters favoured a style of life in which the place where they lived was of crucial importance. They valued life in a village community, as they conceived of it. Their image of such a community, Pahl suggests, included interaction among members of different status groups, with the proviso that behaviour should always recognise the status distinctions. Thus Pahl found among his ex-urbanites both high value placed on living in a particular (rural) area, and high commitment to a traditional status system.

There is therefore considerable similarity between some of the findings reported by Pahl from his 'metropolitan villages' and those described in this study. The present findings are interesting then in at least partly substantiating those of Pahl. At the same time it must be recognised that the ex-urbanites of this study differed widely from those encountered in Hertfordshire. Those of Hertfordshire were mainly middle class commuters, often described by Pahl as 'spiralists'. In Dorset many of the ex-urbanites were again middle class, but here they were not transient and often they were retired from active employment. In Shropshire the ex-urbanites were far more heterogeneous, resisting attempts to generalise about them.

What these ex-urbanites have in common with those studied by Pahl is that they had for the most part deliberately chosen their environment. From their replies to several of the questions asked in the surveys it was evident that they did value life in a village community as an end in itself, just as the Hertfordshire commuters did. As he says, it was generally part of the image of the village, as far as middle class ex-urbanites were concerned, that there would be appropriate interaction. But there were also ex-urbanites who were not middle class, and others whose idea of community

life was not quite framed in this way. The idea possessing these people was probably simply that of a small, well-defined group, in which it would be an easy matter to establish an identity, to know and be known, and to understand the working of the whole unit. If this second group favoured a fixed status system it was largely because this was at any rate an aid to establishing identity.

The explanation offered for the research findings that were initially regarded as paradoxical, is therefore that the group of ex-urbanites in each case were people who placed high value on life in a small community. This immediately accounts for the lack of interest in geographical mobility. The enthusiasm for 'traditional' status, or rather, for certain aspects of it, is to be explained by the qualities the ex-urbanites expected to find in rural life. They expected, often, to encounter a range of status groups, and to enjoy a recognised position. Hence they accepted those aspects of 'traditional' status which met these expectations. Significantly, they also accepted, very frequently, other aspects of status which could not be defined as 'traditional' but were not incompatible with their main aims. Even those ex-urbanites who had no very clear image of the kind of status system they expected to encounter in a village community, did expect to have a recognised niche. This in turn led them, unconsciously, to prefer a fixed status system, in many aspects.

So far there has been no great departure from the kind of explanation offered by Pahl for his similar findings. However, what is emphasised here, on the basis of the data collected in Dorset and Shropshire, is that class factors do not seem to play the important role Pahl attributes to them, in determining attitudes to geographical mobility and social

status. Pahl has said that the idea of the village community is held principally by those members of the middle class who have a wide choice as to how and where they live. The working class in a rural area, he says, have no such choice. We should therefore expect in them a less whole-hearted enthusiasm for 'traditional' status and for residential stability. Yet in West Dorset and North Shropshire there was no evidence that the working class felt that they must remain as they were for want of choice. As we have seen, the working class no less than the middle class preferred residential stability for their children. They were also as likely to favour a fixed status system. What Pahl seems to have failed to observe is that even those with a relatively lowly position in the status hierarchy of a village do gain many of the advantages already mentioned; a sense of identity, and of knowing and influencing a local community. It is not true to say even of the working class inhabitants of Shropshire and Dorset that they have no choice of place of residence. Nearly all those who indicated their preference for life in the country said that they believed themselves to be unusual in contemporary Britain, but that they would infinitely dislike life in a town. They generally added that 'of course' they would be better off in a town, often said that they had thought of moving, but always concluded that they could only live happily in the country.

The tendency to place a high value on life in a rural community is not, therefore, a middle class phenomenon. (Not even as far as the ex-urbanites were concerned. Quite a high proportion of these were working class.)

The explanation offered here for the findings on status and geographical mobility is not in accord with the Rural-

Urban Continuum Approach. The latter implies that types of settlement determine people's attitudes, rather than that they are likely to choose a certain kind of settlement because they hold specific attitudes.

Taking the findings as a whole, it does appear that the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach is of little use in interpreting them. If the approach is discarded, and furthermore, the idea that 'rural' may be taken as equivalent to 'traditional' is also discarded, it is possible to explain the empirical findings of this study in a logically consistent manner. In both places a fixed status system and residential stability were valued, because in both places the majority of people valued life in a rural community as a major goal. However, they saw no reason in general to restrict their educational and occupational ambitions for their children. In particular the former were easily reconciled with the value placed on rural life. Where the possibility of commuting existed, occupational mobility could also be achieved without sacrificing the goal of life in a small community. The minor findings which were felt to be unexpected can also be fitted into this explanation. In Dorset mechanisation was highly valued by the farmers because it increased their efficiency and prosperity without interfering with other goals. It seemed probable that the Shropshire farms had been modernised earlier than those in Dorset and that this question was no longer an important one there. It may now be tentatively suggested that the farmers in Shropshire had reached the stage where they could only increase their prosperity by moving to a larger farm. Hence they did not value 'sticking the place' very highly. Farmers in West Dorset still had considerable scope for improving their own productivity by mechanisation and so were far less interested in moving to

larger farms.

The apparent functional interdependence of the variables taken for study here, is therefore shown to be largely illusory. The unitary concept of 'traditionalism' which has often been used is shown to be misleading. There are two problems to which some solution must be offered here. First of all:- If the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach is rejected, is there an alternative framework for further research, which might prove to be more useful? Second:- If the concept of 'traditionalism' is not to be used as if it were a unitary type and, moreover, the equivalent of 'rural', how should it be used?

With regard to the latter problem, there is clearly a need for rigorous definition of the term 'traditional'. The work of Hoselitz suggests what is undoubtedly a helpful distinction.<sup>2</sup> Hoselitz suggests that we should distinguish carefully between action which is 'traditional' only in the sense of being the customary way of behaving, and action which he calls 'traditionalistic'. 'Traditionalistic' action is that which is based on a conscious belief in the glories of the past and this type of action is intrinsically resistant to any kind of change. This is clearly an important theoretical distinction, and not a needless refinement of terminology. The distinction is, however, seldom made in empirical work, despite the fact that it probably originates in the theoretical writings of Max Weber, whose influence upon urban and rural sociologists has been so considerable. This neglect is all the more to be regretted since the 'traditionalistic' type of action holds great interest for the sociologists interested in the process of change.

It is argued here that on any particular issue there may be a 'traditionalistic' perspective. That is to say on

any one question an individual may be hostile to change because he firmly believes in the arrangements which have been hallowed by time. But an individual may be 'traditionalistic' with respect to certain issues (for example, the employment of married women) and yet not at all 'traditionalistic' with regard to various other issues. Groups with a fairly consistent set of 'traditionalistic' attitudes can no doubt be located without difficulty even in contemporary Britain, however. Certain religious groups and groups like Welsh Nationalists may have something approaching a traditionalistic philosophy. By this is meant that on a very wide range of issues they take up a traditionalistic position, and they have a body of underlying general principles which support the pattern of attitudes as a whole.

It is suggested at present that it is probably more common in industrial societies to find individuals and groups who are 'traditionalistic' with respect to particular questions or clusters of questions. Some of the attitudes found in this study can be described as 'traditionalistic'. (For example, attitudes of hostility to the education of girls; the determination of some farmers that their sons should succeed them on the farm, and so on.) However, many of the attitudes which would have fallen within the original (polar type) definition as 'traditional' are now seen to be of a different nature. Many parents with little ambition for their children were not so much hostile to change per se, as indifferent. Or they may simply find change inexpedient, or be ignorant of opportunities available. In other words, future studies should make use of Hoselitz' distinction because it enables us to distinguish attitudes which probably have a high level of sociological significance (the 'traditionalistic') from those which are not so

important, at any rate from the point of view of social change (the 'traditional').

It is evident that if there can be a 'traditionalistic' perspective on all issues, and 'traditionalism' is not necessarily a coherent philosophy, all groups whether in urban or rural environments can be studied to discover their propensity to 'traditionalism'.

As far as the first problem which was established is concerned, it may perhaps be argued that rural-urban differences are not of primary sociological significance. As much has been said by a number of writers quoted already in the Introduction. As Pahl has said, there is relatively little that is unique, sociologically, about a rural area. Such areas are likely to have a small, easily identified population with a high awareness of each other. There may also be a high awareness of the boundaries of the settlement and the distinctive characteristics of the locality. Because of the sparse population there will probably be more interaction between status groups than is the case in relatively homogeneous urban areas. No doubt however, one could envisage parts of a city which would conform more or less to this description. One can also imagine city dwellers valuing the idea of the community. Indeed Gans has written on the subject of 'urban villages',<sup>3</sup> and other writers have discussed urban 'neighbourhoods' and 'communities', the population of which has the same enthusiasm for local life that was noted in the rural areas studied here. It is not necessary for a wide range of status groups to exist in an area in order for a strong local-orientation to thrive, as Pahl seems to argue. Rather, the desire for a sense of identity in a recognisable community seems to be the crucial factor.

In the two areas studied, in Pahl's Hertfordshire



villages, and in various areas both urban and rural studied by other writers, a marked local-orientation seems to exist. At the same time, of course, influences working at the national level were important. For example, educational changes, changes in employment opportunities, changes in class factors were all 'national' influences exerting a powerful influence on the localities studied here.

Pahl has suggested that the importance of 'milieux studies' (he includes both urban and rural studies in this category) is that the impact of national influences upon groups and individuals can be studied in detail from close range. So also can the impact of parts of local systems on the national level. Part of the latter impact might be because some local groups were strongly 'traditionalistic' (the Welsh Nationalists have not failed to have an effect on the educational system) but one can also envisage a situation in which some local group was strongly predisposed to change of a particular kind.

The confrontation between the small-scale and the large-scale is well worth studying for the way in which it can illuminate the process of change. The approach to milieu studies suggested here, which is primarily derived from Pahl's work, is similar to that adopted by Rex and Moore in their recent study of an area of Birmingham.<sup>4</sup> (In this case it is the relationship between economic factors operating at the national level, and racial and other conflicts at the local level which was studied.) This approach has the merit that it is equally applicable to urban and rural settings, and to industrial and under-developed societies. As far as concepts and methods go, the approach is likely, as Pahl suggests to benefit from the work of anthropologists, who are increasingly interesting themselves in this field of

study.

It is hoped therefore that this study has not only accomplished the negative task of further discrediting the Rural-Urban Continuum Approach. It has attempted to provide support for a more useful framework for empirical research, both in investigating the existence of 'traditionalism', and in the field of milieux studies in general.

NOTES TO CHAPTER X.

1. Pahl, R.E. "Urbs in Rure". London School of Economics and Political Science Geographical Papers, 2. 1965.  
Pahl, R.E. "Class and Commuting in English Commuter Villages". Sociologia Ruralis, 5. 1965.
2. Hoselitz, B.F. "Tradition and Economic Growth". In: Braibanti, R. and Spengler, J. (eds.) "Tradition, Values and Socio-Economic Development". Durham, N.C. 1961.
3. Gans, H.J. "The Urban Villagers". New York. 1962.
4. Rex, J. and Moore, B. "Race, Community and Conflict". Oxford. 1967.

APPENDIX I

(to Chapter III)

Number of respondents who had lived in an urban area placing occupations in a particular group

OCCUPATION	GROUP					Total	Average
	I	II	III	IV	V		
Clergyman	10	6	2	1	-	19	1.68
Solicitor	17	2	-	-	-	19	1.10
Bank Manager	15	2	1	1	-	19	1.37
Works Manager Company	8	7	3	1	-	19	1.84
Director	16	2	1	-	-	19	1.21
Doctor	15	3	-	-	1	19	1.37
Estate Agent	9	8	1	-	1	19	1.74
Nurse	4	9	4	1	1	19	2.26
Teacher	1	7	6	4	1	19	2.84
Garage hand	-	1	3	6	9	19	4.21
Shopkeeper	-	7	6	4	2	19	3.05
Builder	3	7	3	6	-	19	2.63
Farm Foreman	1	5	7	5	1	19	3.00
Farmer	2	10	6	1	-	19	2.31
Publican	2	5	4	4	4	19	3.16
Agricultural Contractor	1	8	7	3	-	19	2.63
Policeman	2	10	6	1	-	19	2.31
Clerk	2	4	6	5	2	19	3.05
Electrical Mechanic	2	4	9	3	1	19	2.84
Plumber	-	2	6	7	4	19	3.68
Carpenter	-	1	9	5	4	19	3.63
Hedger	-	1	1	5	12	19	4.47
Postman	-	4	3	7	5	19	3.68
Tractor Driver	-	-	2	5	12	19	4.52
Domestic Servant	-	-	1	6	12	19	4.58
Bus Conductor	-	-	2	10	7	19	4.26
Cowman	-	-	3	3	13	19	4.52
Gardener	-	-	3	7	9	19	4.31
Lorry Driver	-	-	3	8	8	19	4.26
Farm Labourer	1	-	2	3	13	19	4.42

The residual variation about the mean was calculated for this group and found to be 0.82.

APPENDIX I (Cont.)

Number of respondents who had never lived in an urban area placing occupations in a particular group

OCCUPATION	<u>GROUP</u>					Total	Average
	I	II	III	IV	V		
Clergyman	16	8	6	1	1	32	1.84
Solicitor	22	7	2	1	-	32	1.44
Bank Manager	24	5	2	1	-	32	1.38
Works Manager	5	15	8	3	1	32	2.38
Company Director	21	8	3	-	-	32	1.44
Doctor	29	1	2	-	-	32	1.16
Estate Agent	11	15	2	2	2	32	2.03
Nurse	10	12	5	4	1	32	2.19
Teacher	4	22	3	1	2	32	2.22
Garage hand	-	2	4	11	15	32	4.22
Shopkeeper	-	7	17	7	1	32	3.06
Builder	2	8	12	9	1	32	2.97
Farm Foreman	1	3	14	10	4	32	3.41
Farmer	8	17	3	4	-	32	2.09
Publican	-	4	12	11	5	32	3.53
Agricultural Contractor	3	11	12	5	1	32	2.69
Policeman	5	6	15	6	-	32	2.69
Clerk	-	8	12	8	4	32	3.25
Electrical Mechanic	3	5	8	12	4	32	3.28
Plumber	1	1	12	8	10	32	3.78
Carpenter	1	2	14	12	3	32	3.44
Hedger	1	1	2	8	20	32	4.41
Postman	-	7	4	12	9	32	3.72
Tractor Driver	-	1	2	1	28	32	4.75
Domestic Servant	-	-	3	3	26	32	4.72
Bus Conductor	-	1	4	15	12	32	4.19
Cowman	-	1	3	3	25	32	4.63
Gardener	-	4	2	4	22	32	4.38
Lorry Driver	-	2	4	9	17	32	4.28
Farm Labourer	2	1	2	8	19	32	4.25

The residual variation about the mean was calculated for this group and found to be .86, only .04 greater than the variation about the mean in the other group.

APPENDIX 2  
(to Chapter IV)

TABLE I  
Parents' Views on School Curricula (B)

	Rural Group %	Non-rural Group %
No adverse criticism	57.1	34.2
Too much P.E.	5.7	10.5
Too much of an academic subject	-	10.5
Too much of a practical subject	4.3	2.6
Too much of a cultural subject	12.9	2.6
Too much homework	1.4	5.3
Not enough of an academic subject	18.6	31.6
Not enough of a practical subject	7.1	10.5
Not enough of a cultural subject	-	5.3
Other complaint	—	—
TOTAL	70	38

TABLE II  
Primary School Children's  
Parents' Attitudes to Village Schools

	<u>Rural Group</u> %	<u>Non-rural Group</u> %
No adverse criticism	61.6	59.1
Don't know	3.8	-
Complaint made	34.6	40.9

APPENDIX 2 (Cont.)

TABLE III

Secondary School Primary Children's  
Parents Hoped Children Would Go To

	Rural Group	Non-rural Group
	%	%
Grammar School	53.8	59.1
Technical School	23.1	27.3
Secondary Modern School	19.2	13.6
Don't Know	3.8	-

TABLE IV

Secondary School Children's Parents' Attitudes  
to Amalgamation of the Two Grammar Schools

	Rural Group	Non-rural Group
	%	%
Adverse criticism	30.0	-
No adverse criticism	60.0	55.0
Don't Know	10.0	45.0

TABLE V

Parents' Aspirations for their Children for Educational  
Mobility Related to their Estimate of the Child's Ability

	<u>RURAL GROUP</u>				
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Not Known
Above Average	13	4	-	2	-
Average	15	22	1	2	2
Below Average	1	6	-	2	-

	<u>NON-RURAL GROUP</u>				
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know	Not Known
Above Average	5	3	1	-	-
Average	10	13	-	1	-
Below Average	1	3	-	-	-

APPENDIX 3

(to Chapter VII)

Average ranking of occupations by each group

	Urban Group	Rural Group
Company Director	1.32	1.58
Clergyman	1.39	1.49
Bank Manager	1.39	1.52
Solicitor	1.35	1.40
Doctor	1.06	1.05
Works Manager	2.05	2.17
Agricultural Contractor	2.48	2.54
Estate Agent	1.98	1.89
Farmer	2.74	2.11
Builder	2.87	2.85
Electrical Mechanic	3.07	3.32
Plumber	3.50	3.81
Nurse	2.34	2.26
Carpenter	3.66	3.63
Farm Foreman	3.50	2.91
Clerk	3.20	2.98
Landlord	3.17	3.29
Policeman	3.10	2.82
Teacher	2.57	2.88
Shopkeeper	3.14	2.79
Hedger	4.65	4.37
Domestic Servant	4.55	4.40
Farm Labourer	4.62	4.28
Gardener	4.39	4.03
Bus Conductor	4.62	4.37
Postman	3.93	3.66
Tractor Driver	4.46	4.09
Lorry Driver	4.22	4.12
Cowman	4.49	3.91
Garage hand	4.46	4.40

For the urban group the residual variation about the mean was .73.

For the rural group the residual variation about the mean was 1.01.



APPENDIX 4

(to Chapter VIII)

TABLE I

Parents' Views on School Curricula (B)

	Rural Group %	Non-rural Group %
No adverse criticism	54.5	48.7
Too much P.E.	15.2	12.6
Too much academic work	4.3	1.6
Too much practical work	1.4	2.4
Too much cultural work	0.6	3.2
Too much homework	6.9	5.5
Not enough academic work	6.9	14.2
Not enough practical work	8.9	7.1
Not enough cultural work	-	1.6
Other complaints	<u>21.4</u>	<u>24.4</u>
	228	203

N.B. Figures do not add to 100% because many parents made more than one complaint.

The rural group were only slightly less critical than the other group.

TABLE II

Aspirations for Educational Mobility  
Related to Ability of the Child (B)

	Rural Group			
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know
Above Average	35 (60.2%)	18 (31.0%)	2 (3.5%)	3 (5.2%)
Average	60 (45.8%)	55 (42.0%)	7 (5.3%)	9 (6.9%)
Below Average	7 (46.7%)	7 (46.7%)	1 (6.7%)	-
Don't Know	2 (40.0%)	1 (20.0%)	2 (40.0%)	-
	Non-rural Group			
	Up	Immobile	Down	Don't Know
Above Average	33 (54.0%)	24 (39.4%)	3 (4.9%)	1 (1.6%)
Average	41 (43.6%)	43 (45.7%)	5 (5.3%)	5 (5.3%)
Below Average	5 (25.0%)	12 (60.0%)	2 (10.0%)	1 (5.0%)
Don't Know	2 (28.6%)	3 (42.9%)	-	2 (28.6%)

The rural group are more ambitious for the children at each level of ability.

APPENDIX 4 (Cont.)

Principal towns lived in by informants  
within each category given in Table VII:-

1. Urban areas within 15 miles of Bridport and Beaminster Rural Districts. Includes Bridport itself, Yeovil, Weymouth and Dorchester, principally.
2. Urban areas within 50 miles of Bridport and Beaminster Rural Districts. Includes Bournemouth, Bristol, Taunton, etc.
3. Urban Districts in Central or Southern England. A catch-all category. Towns frequently mentioned include Salisbury, Southampton, Brighton, etc.
4. London conurbation. Greater London Area.
5. Birmingham conurbation. Birmingham, Walsall and Wolverhampton mentioned most often.
6. Urban Districts in N.W. England. Liverpool, Manchester, Burnley were mentioned most often.
7. Urban Districts in N.E. England. Leeds and Newcastle.
8. Urban Districts in Wales. Cardiff and Swansea.
9. Urban Districts in Scotland. Glasgow principally.
10. Urban Districts Abroad.

APPENDIX 5  
(to Chapter IX)

TABLE XXIII

Aspirations for Place of Work Related to own Social Class

Social Class	<u>Rural Group</u>					
	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IV	V
At home etc.	-	23 (48.0%)	-	31 (33.4%)	16 (32.6%)	5 (21.7%)
Named town	-	12 (25.0%)	2 (40.0%)	35 (37.6%)	20 (40.8%)	13 (56.4%)
Town not specified	-	7 (14.6%)	2 (40.0%)	20 (21.5%)	6 (12.4%)	4 (17.4%)
Services	-	3 (6.3%)	1 (20.0%)	2 (2.2%)	3 (6.1%)	-
Abroad	-	1 (2.1%)	-	1 (1.1%)	-	-
Don't Know	-	2 (4.1%)	-	4 (4.3%)	4 (8.2%)	1 (4.4%)
	-	48	5	93	49	23
Social Class	<u>Non-rural Group</u>					
	I	II	IIIa	IIIb	IV	V
At home etc.	2 (40.0%)	20 (30.8%)	1 (11.1%)	16 (27.1%)	16 (41.0%)	1 (8.3%)
Named town	2 (40.0%)	7 (10.8%)	2 (22.2%)	13 (22.0%)	10 (25.6%)	4 (33.3%)
Town not specified	1 (20.0%)	25 (38.5%)	3 (33.3%)	16 (27.1%)	9 (23.1%)	2 (16.7%)
Services	-	3 (4.6%)	1 (11.1%)	8 (13.6%)	2 (5.1%)	4 (33.3%)
Abroad	-	4 (6.2%)	2 (22.2%)	3 (5.1%)	-	-
Don't Know	-	6 (9.2%)	-	3 (5.1%)	2 (5.1%)	1 (8.3%)
	5	65	9	59	39	12

APPENDIX 5 (Cont.)

TABLE XXIV

Aspirations for Place of Work  
Related to own Educational Level

	Rural Group			Non-rural Group		
	A	B	C	A	B	C
At home etc.	2 100.0%	10 23.3%	61 37.2%	3 23.1%	9 17.3%	45 38.5%
Named town	-	16 37.2%	62 37.8%	1 7.7%	8 15.4%	26 22.2%
Town not specified	-	11 25.5%	25 15.2%	6 46.1%	21 40.4%	27 23.0%
Services	-	3 6.9%	7 4.3%	-	6 11.6%	9 7.8%
Abroad	-	2 4.7%	-	2 15.4%	4 7.7%	3 2.6%
Don't Know	-	1 2.3%	9 5.5%	1 7.7%	4 7.7%	7 6.0%
	<hr/> 2	<hr/> 43	<hr/> 164	<hr/> 13	<hr/> 52	<hr/> 117

APPENDIX 6

Questionnaire on Social Status  
(Used in Shropshire and Dorset)

1. Do you think people are divided into different social classes?
2. What sort of things put some people in a higher social class or a lower social class than other people?
3. Do you think any of these things are very important in helping to put people in different social classes?
  - (a) Education?
  - (b) Income?
  - (c) Family background?
  - (d) Occupation?
  - (e) Possessions?
4. Do you think a person's social class depends at all on his or her character?
5. Do you think people tend to mix most, socially, with those in their own class?
6. Do you think people who have lived in a place for a long time have a higher social position than those who have just come?
7. Do you think that farmers are divided into different social classes?
8. What sort of things put some farmers in a higher or a lower social class than other farmers?
9. Do any of these things have an important effect on a farmer's social position?
  - (a) The amount of land he farms?
  - (b) Neighbourliness?
  - (c) Whether he owns his farm or is a tenant?
  - (d) Whether he comes from a farming family?
  - (e) Whether he has a lot of modern machinery?
  - (f) Whether he employs other men?
  - (g) Whether he is a good farmer?
  - (h) The sort of farming he goes in for?
  - (i) Whether his land is good?
  - (j) The length of time he has been on his farm?
10. Do you mix socially with people who belong to other social classes? Where?
11. What is your occupation? (What is your husband's occupation? What was your occupation before you married, if any?)

APPENDIX 6 (Cont.)

12. How old are you?
13. What was your father's occupation?
14. How long have you lived in this parish? (Is that all the time since your marriage?)
15. Have you ever lived in a town? Where? How long?
16. Will you arrange the cards so that the occupations are ranked in five classes? The occupations which give people the highest social position go in Column One, those which give people the lowest social position in Column Five, and so on. You can put as many, or as few, occupations as you like in each class, as long as there is at least one occupation in each Column.

APPENDIX 7

Questionnaire on Parental Aspirations  
(Used in Shropshire and with slight amendment in Dorset)

1. When did you last visit X's school? What was that for?
2. Do you think too much time is spent on some subjects in X's school? (Which subjects?)
3. Do you think too little time is spent on some subjects in the school? (Which subjects?)
4. Are there any subjects which are not taught at all, and which you think ought to be taught? (Which subjects?)
- \*5. What kind of secondary school would you like X to go to? Why is that?
6. At what age do you hope X will leave school?
7. Do you think girls need as much education as boys? Why do you think that?
8. Do you hope X will have any further education or training after he/she leaves school? What kind?
9. Where do you hope X will work when he/she eventually gets a job?
10. What occupation do you hope X will take up eventually?
- \*11. What is your opinion of the plan to amalgamate the Grammar School and the High School? Why?
12. Would you say X was above average, average, or below average in ability?
13. How many children have you? How old are they?
14. Have any of your children left secondary school? What are they doing now? Where do they live? Which secondary school did they go to?
15. What is your husband's occupation? Is he self-employed? Does he employ anyone else? (How many people?)  
  
(If farmer': How big is the farm?  
Does he own the farm?  
Does he employ any men?)
16. Have you any paid occupation? (Had you any paid occupation before marriage?)
17. How long have you lived in this parish? (Is that all the time since you were married?)

APPENDIX 7 (Cont.)

18. Have you ever lived in a town? Where? How long?
19. How old are you?
20. What sort of school did you go to? Where?
21. How old were you when you left school?
22. What sort of school did your husband go to? Where?
23. How old was your husband when he left school?
24. What was your father's occupation?
25. What was your father-in-law's occupation?
26. How many people in this parish would you say send their children to private or independent public schools?

Questions marked \* asked only in Shropshire.



APPENDIX 8.

Notes on Scalogram Analysis.

Using the 'Cornell' technique, a scalogram analysis was carried out to discover whether a 'scale of traditionalism' could be constructed on the basis of questions asked in the survey of parents' aspirations.

Seven statements derived from the questions asked in the survey were chosen for testing. (See Appendix 7 for actual questions asked.) The response categories were reduced to two in each case. The statements were:

- |   |      |       |
|---|------|-------|
| 1. Parent had visited child's school.   | No=1 | Yes=0 |
| 2. Parent had some criticism to make of child's school.                                 | No=1 | Yes=0 |
| 3. Parent wanted child to stay at school after age 15.                                  | No=1 | Yes=0 |
| 4. Parent wanted child to obtain some formal qualifications before leaving school.      | No=1 | Yes=0 |
| 5. Parent wanted child to have some further education or training after leaving school. | No=1 | Yes=0 |
| 6. Parent thought girls needed as much education as boys.                               | No=1 | Yes=0 |
| 7. Parent wanted child to leave the area to work.                                       | No=1 | Yes=0 |

In the case of each statement the negative response represented the 'traditional' attitude, the positive response the 'non-traditional' attitude.

A sub-sample of 100 of the respondents was selected for testing. After scoring the responses of this sub-sample, and recording them on a table, cutting points were established for the different statements. The proportion of errors was then found to be 0.17. The 'co-efficient of reproducibility' was thus 0.83.

According to Edwards (Edwards, A.L. "Techniques of Attitude Scale Construction". New York 1957. p.191.) a co-efficient of reproducibility of 0.90 or higher "constitutes evidence for the scalability of a set of statements". The co-efficient obtained here, being much lower than 0.90, seems to indicate that these statements are not scaleable. Even when statements (6) and/or (7) were omitted no co-efficient of reproducibility higher than 0.85 was obtained.

While the scalogram analysis failed to indicate a 'scale of traditionalism', it did provide further evidence against the unitary concept of 'traditionalism'. It showed once more that many people have an attitude hostile to change in one respect, but favourable to change in other respects.

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