

MICHIGAN CENTENNIAL FARMERS:  
SOCIAL CORRELATES OF FARM  
OWNERSHIP FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD  
OF TIME

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## ABSTRACT

Purposes. The study endeavors to examine in detail forty-four Centennial Farm Families in Michigan. These Families are a portion of the total who received formal recognition from the State Historical Society. This recognition was based on ownership of land in Michigan within the same family for a continuous period of one-hundred years or more.

The study is concerned with the process of transmission and succession of property in land from one generation to the next within the same family for a period of one-hundred years or more; and, the results of this process as it has affected the present owner of the land; and, finally, as it has affected the community in which the land is located.

Fundamental to the present study are certain basic concepts, these are: property in land, the element to be transmitted over time; transmission and succession, the means of transmitting the property through time; the family, the agency through which the property is transmitted; and the community, the element which is affected in part by the preceding.

Methods. Lack of empirical data relevant to long time practices of transmission and succession within a family provides the underlying motivation for this thesis. This lack of data also places the study in a formulative or exploratory classification, which results in the statement of hypotheses for future research.

Emphasis is placed on existing patterns, rather than quantities of attributes, as the keynote of analysis. In consideration of this there are developed constructs or patterns to be used as independent analytical variables. Tenure status and relationship of operator are essential characteristics to the development of these empirical constructs. These constructs demonstrate the end results of a hundred years of transmission and succession



practices within the same family. They are, in essence, a continuum of the tenure arrangements of the present owners from owner-operatorship to non-farm ownership.

To obtain data for providing insights the case study method was used in conjunction with a small sample. This sample was drawn in a stratified, purposive manner. Field work involved interviewing Centennial Farmers, selected community informants, and obtaining data from secondary sources within each of the communities.

Findings: Approximately one-fourth of the Centennial Farmers meet the governmental ideal of ownership, the remainder are dispersed relatively equally among the other tenure groups on the continuum. The fact that over two-thirds of the owners are beyond retirement age contributes to this lack of owner-operatorship.

No particular means of transmission of property are outstanding. Rather the owners have engaged in an equalitarian point-of-view for the distribution of their property. As a result only one-third of the farms in all of the transfers have been passed on as going concerns.

The proportion of all children of all owners remaining in the local area decreases as one moves from the owner-operator tenure group to the non-farm owner group. Similarly, the proportion of all children of all owners choosing farming as an occupation decreases as one moves from the owner-operator group to the non-farm owner group.

Community informants have a social image of Centennial Farmers based upon the values of residency and operatorship rather than upon continuity of ownership alone.

MICHIGAN CENTENNIAL FARMERS:  
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FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME

By

Albert E. Levak

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Finally, to my wife, Lois Anne, whose contribution can never be measured the writer offers his sincere thanks.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

#### The Centennial Farm Program

In 1948, the Michigan Historical Commission became cognizant of the fact that some of the land settled in the early days of Michigan still remained in the same family a century or more later. The Commission decided to honor the fortitude and tenacity of these early settlers and their descendants by bringing their achievements to light through public recognition. This recognition is in the form of a Centennial Farm Certificate which designates the land owned as a Centennial Farm and the present owner as a Centennial Farmer. The certificate of recognition carries the signature of the Governor and other leading state officials. In addition to the certificate, the State Historical Commission awards a heavy gauge metal plaque for exterior display.

Operationally defined by the State Historical Commission, Centennial Farmers are those persons who own land in Michigan, either all or part of which was owned by their ancestors. The ancestor may be determined either by blood relationship or by some other form of kinship. The ownership must have been continuous for one-hundred years or more. A Centennial Farm is that land which has been transferred to a

member of the family in all transfers of ownership for a continuous period of one-hundred years or more.

The preceding requirements are derived from the definition of a farm which appears on the application form prepared by the Michigan Historical Commission. The exact wording is as follows:

The farm for purposes of the award is three or more acres, or a less amount if the products raised are valued at \$250.00 or more, on which some agricultural operations are performed by one person either by his own labor alone or with the assistance of members of his household, or hired employees.

From the foregoing, one important element must be emphasized to preclude the reader's misinterpretation. Recognition as a Centennial Farm is based on ownership and not operatorship.

A brief explanation of the program is essential to an understanding of the population to be studied and some of the problems to be encountered. As of November 30, 1950, the date arbitrarily selected for the purposes of this study, there were 234 Centennial Farms located in 30 counties.<sup>1</sup> Because participation in the program was on a voluntary basis and initiation of action for recognition was the responsibility of the land owner, there were eligible land owners who did not apply for the honor. Lack of participation can be

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<sup>1</sup>Appendix A

attributed either to an unwillingness to take part in the program or to a lack of awareness of its existence. Since the date specified above, however, many of these individuals may have become aware of the program and may have developed an interest in it. In addition, other land owners have become eligible simply through the passage of time, and undoubtedly many of them have taken the necessary steps to obtain recognition.

The fact that the land owner must voluntarily petition for a Centennial Farm Certificate possibly introduces a bias into the sample. The possibility of differences between those who apply and those who do not was taken into consideration, and during the field work each Centennial Farmer interviewed was asked if there were any other farmers in the vicinity who were eligible, but had not made application. Only one eligible owner was discovered who chose not to participate in the program. Thus, if the farmers interviewed supplied complete information, it may be assumed that relatively little bias originating in this manner has been introduced into the sample.

#### Purposes of the Study

In order to better understand any society, or even a segment of society, it is necessary to have some comprehension of its past. Each generation inherits a base of customs and traditions from preceding generations. Attempts are occasionally



made, however, to control the flow of the continuity of evolution in an attempt to derive an objective which seems desirable. Some of the policymaking of early American leaders was directed toward the objective of owner-operatorship and the family-sized farm. If the early leaders were to observe rural America today, would they say that Centennial Farms were the result of their long range planning? Furthermore, if they had observed the dynamics of the formation of a Centennial Farm, what factors would they set aside as being relevant to the attainment of their expressed ideal? These questions serve to pose the general purpose of this thesis, namely, to investigate the congruence between the expected end of government policy and the present situation, and to explore the factors in the history of the Centennial Farm Families that have contributed to the present situation.

This study, then, is concerned with the process of transmission and succession of property in land from one generation to the next within the same family for a period of one-hundred years or more. Specifically, how have the results of this process affected the relationship of the present owner to the land, and how have these results affected the community in which the land is located?

The present study may be said to have two objectives. The first objective is methodological in nature, in that analytical independent variables are developed from data

related to the present owner-tenure arrangements of each of the cases under observation. These variables or constructs, which are descriptive of the tenure position of the present owner, demonstrate the end result of a hundred years of transmission and succession practices within the same family. They constitute, in essence, a continuum of arrangements extending from owner-operatorship to non-farm ownership. The second objective is substantive. Once the constructs have been developed it is essential to know what factors in the history of each of the cases has contributed to placing that case in a particular construct. In addition, the cases in each of the constructs are analyzed to determine their contribution to the communities in which they are located.

The importance of an investigation of this nature is emphasized repeatedly in the literature on land tenure and policy. L. C. Gray, writing in 1938 of the importance of inheritance laws, states:

Detailed information regarding the nature and extent of the transfer of agricultural property through inheritance is exceedingly scarce. Studies of the social and economic consequences of our system of inheritance comprehensive enough to indicate dangerous tendencies existing in the institution of inheritance have not been made....The powerful influence of inheritance laws applicable in rural areas on the general social welfare should more clearly be

recognized. As a nation we cannot with safety long neglect serious consideration of the economic and social significance of this subject.<sup>2</sup>

James Tarver, after a comprehensive review of the literature relating to the Wisconsin Century Farm problem, has the following to say of transmission and succession as they are related to farm ownership:

It was discovered that rural sociologists had contributed but scant attention to farm ownership as it is related to farm succession or transmission within the family. Agricultural economists and lawyers have concentrated more attention to farm succession and transmission than all other social scientists.<sup>3</sup>

Those agricultural economists and lawyers who have devoted time and effort to the problem of transmission and succession, however, have written primarily of contemporary problems of transmission of agricultural land. Most state college experiment stations have published bulletins in reference to inheritance, but they are usually restricted to an explanation of the state inheritance laws or to explanations

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<sup>2</sup> Gray, L. C., John B. Bennett, Erich Kraemer and W. N. Sparhawk. "The Causes: Traditional Attitudes and Institutions." Yearbook of Agriculture 1938, United States Department of Agriculture, United States Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 1939, pp. 111-136.

<sup>3</sup> Tarver, James D. Wisconsin Century Farm Families: A Study of Farm Succession Practices. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1950, p. 15.

of how to keep the farm in the family.<sup>4</sup> In any event, research into the social implications of transmission and succession is generally neglected.

Ackerman, writing in 1941 of the need for farm tenancy research, concludes that one of the primary needs in the field is for more investigations centered around the problems of inheritance. He feels that our past policy of inheritance is responsible for many of our present day problems.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See Berry, R. L. and Elton B. Hill. How to Keep Your Farm in the Family. Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station, East Lansing, Special Bulletin 357, April, 1949: Family Farm-Transfer Arrangements. Illinois Extension Circular 680, Urbana, April, 1951: Aiken, Ann and Dorothy Klitzke. Wills and Other Ways to Transfer Property to Heirs. New York Extension Bulletin 794, Ithaca, May 1950: Johnson, O. R. Transferring the Farm to the Next Generation. Missouri Agricultural Extension Service, Columbia, Bulletin 515, July, 1948: Walrath, A. J. and W. L. Gibson Jr. What Will Become of Your Farm? Virginia Extension Service, Blacksburg, Bulletin 169, June, 1947: Beuscher, J. H. and L. A. Young. Your Property -- Plan Its Transfer. Wisconsin Extension Service, Madison, Circular 407, December, 1951: Parsons, K. H. and C. J. Legrid. Planning for the Descent of Property in the Family. Wisconsin Extension Service, Madison, Circular 364, October, 1945.

<sup>5</sup> Ackerman, Joseph. "Status and Appraisal of Research in Farm Tenancy," Journal of Farm Economics, Vol. 23, No. 1, Feb. 1941, p. 286.

Ackerman and Harris writing in the Proceedings of the Conference on Family Farm Policy, pointedly ask for the answers to two specific questions upon which they feel little has been done to ascertain the facts. On one hand, what is the method of transferring physical assets from one generation to the next, and on the other, are the "going-concern" values of the farm generally preserved?<sup>6</sup>

The noticeable lack of empirical data on long time family succession practices provides the underlying motivation of this thesis.

It is possible to establish, arbitrarily, a typology of research studies which classifies research according to primary intent. Classified in this manner, the types are: (1) a formulative or exploratory study in which the primary intent is to formulate a problem for more precise investigation, to develop hypotheses, or to establish priorities for further research; (2) a descriptive or diagnostic study in which the function is that of assessing the characteristics of a given situation; and (3) an experimental study in which the function is that of testing hypotheses.<sup>7</sup> Although these classifications are not necessarily mutually exclusive, the phenomena

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<sup>6</sup>Ackerman, Joseph and Marshall Harris. "Family Farm Policy." Proceeding of a Conference on Family Farm Policy. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947, p. 398.

<sup>7</sup>Jahoda, M., M. Deutsch and S. W. Cook. Research Methods in Social Relations. New York: The Dryden Press, 1951, Volume I, p. 28.



with which this investigation deals and the methodology which is used place it in the "formulative or exploratory" classification.

### Order of Presentation

Chapter II is devoted to an elaboration of the theoretical framework used in the study. In this chapter the historical position of governmental policies concerning farm ownership are discussed with reference to the ideals of owner-operatorship and the family-sized farm. It specifically sets forth the basic concepts of property in land, family, and community, and their inter-relationship through the process of transmission and succession.

Chapter III explains the methods of the study, including the rationale for the selection of the sample and for the approach used, the data to be collected, the field techniques, and the method of analysis of data. It is recognized that although all of the families involved have worked out their succession problems in different ways, they have arrived at the same end, namely, keeping the farm in the family for a hundred years or more. In consideration of this, constructs or patterns collating the predominant attributes of the tenure arrangements of the cases under study have been developed. Tenure status and relationship of the operator to the owner are essential characteristics in the development of these constructs.

Chapter IV attempts to isolate those characteristics which have been historically important in placing the present farm in its particular construct. Data relating to the original owners, methods of transmission and succession, choice of successor, parcellation of land, size of family, and reasons for keeping the farm in the family are all important characteristics analyzed in this chapter. Additional elements analyzed are education, marital status, residence, occupation, and sex of all family members.

A description of the present day owners is given in terms of their personal characteristics: age, sex, marital status, education, occupation, and residence. Other elements for investigation are farm evaluation, beliefs about farming, and plans for disposition of the land. The contribution of the Centennial Farm Family to the community in which the land is located is evaluated on the basis of participation in formal civic and farm organizations and by an assessment of the family contribution, not only by present owners but also by selected members of the community.

Chapter V determines the necessary elements for developing a social image of the concept of Centennial Farmers by the selected community informants and by the present owners themselves. Also, there is an evaluation of the Centennial Farm program by the same interviewees.

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Chapter VI is devoted to an analysis of each of the **tenure** groups separately and to illustrate the patterning of **selected** characteristics within each group.

Chapter VII presents a summary and conclusions. Since **few**, if any, hypotheses have been formulated in this area, **some** space in this chapter is devoted to an attempt to develop **fruitful** hypotheses for further research.

## CHAPTER II

### RESEARCH AND THEORIES PERTAINING TO FARM OWNERSHIP

The desire to own their land has always been strong in the minds of the Midwestern farmers. This attitude has been strengthened very strongly by the objectives of the Federal government and its land policy. Prior to, and following the inception of our Federal system of government there has been a continuous struggle toward the goals of owner-operatorship of land and the family-type farm.

Colonists of this country came primarily from countries where the system of land tenure was feudal in nature, and land-ownership contributed to the stratification of society along social, economic, and political lines. It was natural that the colonists should bring with them the customs, traditions, and laws of their homelands. However, under the conditions of the frontier their folkways and mores underwent considerable change.

Prior to the American Revolution there existed in the colonies a land tenure system which incorporated such feudal practices as quit-rents, primogeniture, and entail. The British Crown insisted upon maintaining this feudal land policy rather than an "allodial" one. Under allodial conditions the land would be held in fee simple absolute, providing the owner with

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the privilege of disposing of his land as he saw fit, within the framework of the laws and customs of the country. The desire for the abolition of feudal practices was a contributory cause to the Revolution.

However much a war may win political freedom, it does not immediately abolish or change the cultural values of the people. To effect the change in these values, such frontier "radicals" as Thomas Jefferson were necessary to give guidance to the "new world" philosophy. Former Secretary of Agriculture, Claude Wickard, and others have called Jefferson the "Father of the idea of the family sized farm."<sup>1</sup> He was the originator of the draft of the Land Ordinance of 1785 which established a system of land survey and provided for the sale of lands surveyed. It was this ordinance which ultimately determined the course of the public land policy, and the settlement patterns in the Northwest Territory. Complementing the action of 1785 was the Ordinance of 1787 which prohibited primogeniture and entail in the Northwest Territory. Under this ordinance property in land became almost the same as any other property in reference to its freedom of transfer and inheritance. No longer would land be settled permanently upon a person and his heirs, nor would the right of the first

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<sup>1</sup>Wickard, Claude R. "Thomas Jefferson--Founder of American Agriculture." Agricultural History, Vol. XIX, 1945, p. 179.

born supersede the rights of all other children. The right of disposal of land became the prerogative of the owner of that property in land.

Two other land laws significant in governmental policy during the period of abundant land, were the Pre-emption Law of 1841 and the Homestead Act of 1862. The former permitted the settlers to buy the lands they were developing before the federal survey, and the latter gave land to settlers who agreed to improve and live on the land for a specified number of years.

The decrease in the abundance of land available for distribution caused the government to turn to other means for the protection and perpetuation of the ideal of owner-operators. To accomplish this, legislative and financial support were given in the form of the Farm Credit Act of 1916, the Bankhead Jones Act of 1937, and finally, the development of the Farm Security Administration.

Historically, the desirability of owner-operated land or at least, the provision of an opportunity for those who till the soil to become land-owners, is clearly evident in American land policy.<sup>2</sup> The expectation of those who till

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<sup>2</sup>Land Reform. Department of State Publication 4445, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., Feb. 1952, p. 11.



the land to become owners in a single lifetime has been dominant in American thinking about land tenure.<sup>3</sup> Because agrarian unrest is always greatest where the attachment to the land is not of an enduring nature, it has been assumed that owner-operatorship is a stabilizing force in society. However, owner-operatorship alone was not sufficient to eliminate the evils which had been associated with the concentration of land. Consequently, the family-sized farm become an additional goal. Inherent in the definition of family-sized farm is the element of size of family which can be a limiting factor in the size of farming operations, thus mitigating land concentration. The distribution of lands in rural areas is probably more intimately associated with the general welfare of the population than any other factor, since the livelihood of the rural population may be dependent upon the land. The ideal seems to be that each family would have sufficient land to meet its own needs, no one having a superabundance, and none should be deprived of it.<sup>4</sup>

The family farm is not to be considered solely as an end in agricultural policy, but also it is to be considered as a means through which farming becomes a rich and satisfying

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<sup>3</sup>Wehrwein, George S. "The Problem of Inheritance in American Land Tenure," Journal of Farm Economics, Vol. IX, No. 2, April 1927, p. 163.

<sup>4</sup>Smith, T. Lynn. The Sociology of Rural Life. Rev. ed., New York: Harper and Bros., 1947, p. 303.

way of life.<sup>5</sup> This idea is crystallized in the following statement:

The United States Department of Agriculture believes that the welfare of agriculture and of the nation will be promoted by an agricultural land tenure pattern characterized by efficient family size owner-operated farms, and one of the continuing major objectives of the Department will be the establishment and maintenance of such farming as the predominating operating farm unit in the United States.<sup>6</sup>

This policy was further affirmed by Secretary Anderson in his 1945 report, when he stated, "The family-sized, owner-operated farm is the backbone of our agriculture and a foundation stone not only of our rural society but of our entire national life."<sup>7</sup> Griswold summarized the attitude toward the family sized farm concept very succinctly by saying, "It is no concession to mythology to recognize the popularity of the family-farm as a symbol of the good life in the United States."<sup>8</sup>

Government legislation has attempted to eliminate both land concentration and undersized farm units, and to reduce tenancy and absentee ownership as much as possible. One of the major inconsistencies in the land policy was the failure

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<sup>5</sup> Ackerman and Harris, Op. Cit., p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Ezekiel, Mordecai. "Schisms in Agricultural Policy." Journal of Farm Economics, Vol. 24, No. 2, May 1942, p. 471.

<sup>7</sup> United States Department of Agriculture Interbureau Committee. Quoted in Griswold, Alfred W. Farming and Democracy. New York: Harcourt-Brace, 1948, p. 110.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 5.

on the part of policymakers to appreciate the fact that wide distribution of ownership could only be effected as long as there was an abundant supply of free land.<sup>9</sup> What has appeared as a notable objective in government policy in the foregoing is viewed as a different matter in reality.

In a publication entitled Farm Land Ownership in the United States, the authors say, "...the owner-operated family-farm objective has been only partially realized in the United States. There is much tenancy and considerable land concentration, and there are many undersized farm units."<sup>10</sup> Ackerman and Harris, in their summary of the Family Farm Conference, state the following as a consensus:

The system of land ownership in the United States permits both the accumulation and maintenance of large landed estates and excessive sub-division into uneconomic-sized units...it was generally agreed there has been an increase in both land concentration and parcellation.<sup>11</sup>

In his study of a prosperous township in the Corn Belt Salter came to the conclusion that the retreat from owner-operatorship is hastened through the "natural" processes of

<sup>9</sup>Hibbard, Benjamin H. A History of the Public Land Policies. New York: Peter Smith, 1939, p. 546.

<sup>10</sup>Inman, Buis T. and William H. Fippin. Farm Land Ownership in the United States. United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Miscellaneous Publication, No. 699, Dec. 1949, p. 2.

<sup>11</sup>Ackerman, J. and M. Harris. Op. Cit., p. 19.

life and death and encumbered ownership in a fee simple tenure system.<sup>12</sup> Writing on the process of inheritance as practiced in this country, Taylor comments as follows: "Since many heirs are no longer farmers the early legislation designed to safeguard the holding of land by owner-operator often results in increased tenancy on absentee-owned farms."<sup>13</sup> In a Report of the President's Committee on Farm Tenancy, the following appears:

For the past 55 years, the entire period for which we have statistics on land tenure, there has been a continuous and marked decrease in the proportion of operating owners and an accompanying increase in the proportion of tenants.<sup>14</sup>

Finally, Griswold writes in a summary manner regarding the family farm:

The romantic appeal of the symbol contrasts strangely with the economic fortunes of reality. The years have not dealt kindly with the family farm. Once the home and livelihood of nine-tenths of the American people, it is now the home of less than a fifth of them and affords employment to barely 15 percent of the working population. It is a home, moreover, that has been slipping from its owners grasp. Nearly 40 percent of the nations farms were mortgaged in 1940 and an equal proportion leased.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Salter, Leonard A., Jr. Land Tenure in Process. Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, Madison, Research Bulletin 145, February 1943, p. 42.

<sup>13</sup>Taylor, Carl, et al. Rural Life in the United States. New York: A. A. Knopf, 1949, p. 276.

<sup>14</sup>"Farm Tenancy." Report of the President's Committee. 1937, Quoted in Griswold, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

However one may observe it, the American dream of the farm, owned by the family which operates it, is becoming more and more remote\*. Whatever the objective of the family farm concept may be, it is the purpose of this study to view it in the perspective of being both an end and a means in agricultural policy.

Inherent in the preceding discussion are certain basic assumptions made by those who have been responsible for the development of the policy of owner-operated, family-sized farms. The first and most important step toward the achievement of this goal was the introduction of the concept of fee simple ownership. This was begun, in part, to permit the owner the greatest degree of freedom in choosing his successor, with the opportunity of the successor to become an owner-operator. It was also assumed that this system would perpetuate itself and there would ultimately exist a nation of owner-operators among the farmers.

It was further assumed that this end would be beneficial to the general welfare of the nation and particularly the communities in which these farms were located. It was believed that those having a vested interest in the land would, in turn, have a positive interest in their surrounding social organization.

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\* This observation was made in 1949. Since that time the proportion of owner-operators has greatly increased.

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### Ownership and Tenure

Within the ideal of owner-operatorship there are two components, ownership and tenure, both of which are discussed in the following pages. Needless to say, there are variations of each, and type of ownership influences to a certain degree the tenure status of the owner.

All of the cases under investigation are owners, but there are significant differences in type of ownership. There are those who own the land in fee simple ownership, wherein the use and ultimate disposition of the land is vested in the sole owner. This grouping fits the ideal for which the assumption of owner-operator exists. Those who own the land own it for the purpose of using it in farming to make a living. In Michigan, just prior to the inception of this study, 81 percent of 1,286 farm owners were holding complete or sole ownership rights.<sup>16</sup> In the United States, slightly more than 82 percent of the 38,008 farm owners reporting held complete or sole ownership rights.

A second grouping of owners are those who hold purchase contracts, a type of conditional ownership in which an individual has both possession and use rights; however, the

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<sup>16</sup>Unless otherwise stated, data regarding type of ownership of land in Michigan and in the United States will be obtained from the following two sources respectively: Timmons, John F. and Raleigh Barlowe. Farm Ownership in the Midwest. Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station, Ames: Research Bulletin 361, June, 1949, Table 16, p. 877 and Inman and Fippin, Op. cit., Table 18, p. 29.

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legal title to the land remains with the seller until specified conditions are met. Next to the group of sole owners, the holders of purchase contracts are highly motivated toward owner-operatorship as a goal since, generally, they are buying the land with the intention of farming it. In Michigan, 12 percent hold purchase contracts, while in the country as a whole 5 percent hold such contracts.

The third category of owners are those who have undivided or shared interests in the land. This condition exists when two or more people, other than husband and wife, have ownership rights in the same property. Each has an equal voice in the utilization of that property. In order to satisfy the desires of all the owners, it may be necessary for a tenant to operate the farm. Of the Michigan owners reporting, 5 percent were in the above category, while 4 percent of those in the United States on a whole were in this category.

The final category of owners are those who hold ownership in life estate. These owners merely have use rights in the land only during their lifetime. They have no control over the disposition of the property since disposition has been predetermined. Authorities in the field agree that life estate is probably the least desirable type of ownership in reference to owner-operatorship since it is merely a temporary situation and is not necessarily conducive to good farming. Only 3 percent of Michigan owners are in this grouping. The

figure for the United States is almost identical, being a little less than 3 percent.

Complementing the types of ownership is the tenure status of the various owners. Professor Wehrwein, in a paper on areas of research in agricultural land tenure, had this to say of man's relationship to land:

There are two main types of relationships between man and the land. One is land utilization, in which land directly serves human needs, furnishing raw materials, food, and shelter, and standing room. The other is land tenure, including in that term all relations established among men determining their varying rights in the use of land.<sup>17</sup>

In its spatial location, land remains fixed, but the rights in land and the utilization of these rights vary in relation to the social forces present at any given time. The existing tenure system and its impact upon society is an area of research for the sociologist. Any research in land tenure must concern itself with a study of the distribution of rights in the use of land, and the consequent effects of the distribution of these rights in various forms on the social and economic welfare of individuals and society, now and in the future.<sup>18</sup> The existing form of land tenure has its effect on land utilization, and within the tenure system is found the structure of the concept of property.

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<sup>17</sup>SSRC Advisory Committee on Social and Economic Research  
in Agricultural Land Tenure: Scope and Method. SSRC Bulletin  
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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

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Relating tenure to the ideal of owner-operatorship brings forth a number of distinct categories to be considered. The first is the owner-operator who operates all of the farm land he owns and, in turn, owns all of the farm land that he operates. This is the goal toward which government policy has been oriented and represents the ultimate rung of what was known as the "agricultural ladder." Of 1,169 Michigan farm owners reporting it was found that 64 percent were owner-operators. The comparable figure for the United States was approximately 56 percent.<sup>19</sup>

The second owner-tenure group to be considered is that of owner-operator landlord. The owner in this category owns all of the land operated, but a part of the land he owns is rented. This owner may deviate only slightly from the ideal of owner-operatorship because of reasons peculiar to his particular case. Eight percent of those owners reporting in Michigan are in this tenure group. Approximately 15 percent in the United States are in this group.

A third owner tenure category is that of the non-operating landlord who rents out all of the land he owns.

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<sup>19</sup>Unless otherwise stated, data regarding tenure groups in Michigan and in the United States will be obtained from the following two sources respectively; Timmons and Barlowe, Op. cit., Table 5, p. 861; Inman and Fippin, Op. cit., Table II, p. 21.

*This* group is far removed from any ideal of owner-operator. In the Michigan population 16 percent belong to this category; in the United States about 18 percent.

Since the requirements set forth for recognition as a Centennial Farm contain no explicit statement that the land in question be farmed, there is the possibility of the existence of a fourth and final owner-tenure group. This group would consist of all owners who are neither operating nor renting any of the land they own. This group can be identified as the non-farm owners. The descriptive title "non-farm" refers only to the fact that the land is not being farmed. The land may remain idle for a variety of reasons or it may be utilized for purposes other than farming.

For those who are not owner-operators there are other relationships established within the owner-tenure system extant in the United States. Relationship of the operator to the owner is relatively important. Operators may be related or non-related. The former may include either a blood or legal relationship, while the latter is self-explanatory. Those operators who are related to the owner are likely to have a greater interest in the land they are operating, since the land may someday be theirs. The non-related tenants may merely be using the land as a temporary means to an end, and consequently exploit it.

Another relevant aspect of the tenure pattern is the type of agreement between owner and operator. This may be

either in the form of a verbal or a written contract. The written agreement explicitly states terms and is legally binding. Under this form adequate protection for both parties is provided and the arbitrary nature of the verbal contract is eliminated. In the verbal arrangement the owner and operator simply assent to conditions without putting them in writing. Needless to say, this can be an extremely tenuous arrangement, providing neither owner nor operator any security in their relationship.

In addition there are personal and social characteristics of the owners which affect the tenure status of the owner. These characteristics are sex, age, occupation, and residence.

The relative importance of the sexes as they are related to tenure status is illustrated by referring once again to the study by Timmons and Barlowe. Sixty-six percent of all Michigan males reporting were owner-operators and only 12 percent were non-operating landlords. Of the women reporting, 39 percent were owner-operators and 49 percent were non-operating landlords.<sup>20</sup> In the study by Inman and Fippin, approximately 59 percent of the men were owner-operators and

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<sup>20</sup>Timmons and Barlowe. Op. Cit., Table 5, p. 861.

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about 14 percent were non-operating landlords. For women about 35 percent were owner-operators and 48 percent were non-operating landlords.<sup>21</sup>

When ownership is held jointly by man and wife, there is need to assign a tenure role to one of them. Even though the farms may have decended to the wife, the tenure status, for the purposes of this study, is attributed to the husband since the generally accepted role of the male is that of management and control.

A second important characteristic affecting tenure status is age. It is indicated in the study by Professors Parsons and Waples that the health of male farmers begins to deteriorate at the age of forty, and from this point on the size of the operation decreases with the passing years. Generally a man fifty-five years of age can only do about three-fourths of the work of an able-bodied man, and from that age on, the ability to do farm work declines rapidly.<sup>22</sup> Thus, as age of the owner increases the likelihood of owner-operatorship decreases, and this conclusion may also be true of Centennial Farmers.

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<sup>21</sup>Inman and Fippin. Op. Cit., Table 13, p. 23.

<sup>22</sup>Parsons, Kenneth and Eliot O. Waples. Keeping the Farm in the Family. Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, Madison, Research Bulletin 157, September 1945, p. 17, footnote 12.



Relative to the preceding, Professors Loomis and Beegle make the following point:

In the United States there is a tremendous economic wastage because there is no general uniform, institutionalized practice whereby a child may take over at least part of the farm operation when the father's ability and strength are declining.<sup>23</sup>

The occupation of the owner is also relative to the tenure status of the owner. Five major categories of occupation are considered in the present study: Farmer, Retired, Housewife, Business and Professional Workers, and Clerical-Laborer. The first three groups are self-explanatory. Age is not a requirement for the determination of retirement, rather retirement is determined by the owner's conception of his occupational role. The retired category includes only those who have retired from farming. Merchants and salesmen, professional personnel, and public servants, who have retired are included in the Business and Professional Group. The final category is known as the Clerical-Laborer group. It includes all those engaged in clerical work, in skilled and unskilled labor, those who have retired from these occupations, and those who don't fall into any of the other categories.

Residence is another factor which is pertinent to the tenure status of the owners. It is obvious that those owners

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<sup>23</sup>Loomis, C. P. and J. A. Beegle. Rural Social Systems. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950, pp. 86-87.

living off the farm are not likely to be owner-operators. However, even for those maintaining residence on the farm there are variations of tenure status.

The entire pattern of tenure, not only affects the family but also the community in which the land is located. Fundamental to the present study are certain basic concepts,<sup>24</sup> which have been implicit in the preceding discussion. These concepts are: property in land, the element to be transmitted over time; transmission and succession, the means for transmitting the property through time; the family, the agency through which the property is transmitted; and, finally, the community, the element which is affected by the preceding factors. In the succeeding pages each of the elements are discussed in separate sections. The first part of each section will be devoted to the development of the operational definition of each of the concepts, and the remainder of the section will discuss factors which are related to the study within the realm of the concept.

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<sup>24</sup>The concept of family will be recognized as an association as defined by MacIver, i.e., "A group organized for the pursuit of an interest or group of interest in common." The concepts of property in land and transmission and succession of this property will be considered as institutions, or as "the established forms or conditions of procedure characteristic of group activity." MacIver, R. M. and C. H. Page. Society: An Introductory Analysis. New York: Rinehart and Company, 1949, pp. 11-17.

### Property

Renne<sup>25</sup> considers the definition of property as the right to control an economic good or service subject to the limitations established by laws and regulations. This concept of property consists of three components, the owner, the property object, and the sovereign state.

The owner falls into one of four classes: private, public, group, or qualified. However, property as it is owned by members of the population under investigation, is solely of a private nature. Private property is found when the right to control an economic good or service is vested in a private person, either "natural" or "artificial." This control exercised by the private person is subject to limitations established by laws and regulations. This is to say that all property rights and forms are conditioned by the particular social organization at any given time or place. For this reason the concept of property varies as widely as the societies in which it is found.

The second component of property is the property object, or the thing which is controlled. The object in turn may be subdivided, into realty or personalty. The legal basis for the division is the relative mobility of the object.

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<sup>25</sup>Renne, Roland. Land Economics. New York: Harper and Bros., 1947, pp. 105-110.

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Land and most of the things which are attached to land of a permanent or fixed character, such as buildings, are in the classification of realty. The term realty, as it is used in this study, refers only to property in land. Transmission of realty elements other than land was not considered as a requirement for approval as a Centennial Farm by the Michigan Historical Commission. Although objects of personality had undoubtedly been transferred from generation to generation, they were not considered in the data collected.

The sovereign state, or the final component of property, would embrace any form of government or social organism having as one of its functions the protection of the owner in his rights in the property object, through legal or extra-legal means. The sovereign state in this study is the community in which each of the Centennial Farms is located as well as the State and Federal governments. No individual ever has complete control over his property, as the laws have abstracted some of the elements of ownership as a protection for society.

What is important to this study is realty, or property in land. The utilization of property in land is determined by the individuals owning the rights. Over any period of time the use of rights may affect the quantitative aspect of the property. That is, the property may increase, decrease or remain the same in size. Since 1900 when they averaged 86.4 acres, the average size of farms in Michigan has been increasing.

In 1910 the average was 91.5; in 1920, 96.9; and in 1930, 101.1. During the following decade there was a decrease in average size to 96.2 acres. By 1950 the average climbed to its highest point, 104.9 acres.

Much concern has been shown regarding the breaking up of farms into uneconomic-sized farming units. The policy-makers had hoped this end would be avoided, but possibly this result is not inconsistent with the conditions that may exist in relation to the present Centennial Farms. This result is justified when it is recognized that,

The right to sub-divide agricultural land into smaller than farm units is not always socially undesirable. Many farm families do not need, nor do they want, what is considered to be a full family-sized farm. The number of part-time farms has increased as the country has become industrialized and as adequate transportation and convenient facilities have become available to partially employed city workers who want to live in rural areas. Also many couples find that by living on a small farm they can stretch their retirement income into an acceptable level of living.<sup>26</sup>

This statement, recognizing that conditions change with the passing time, justifies the existence of certain types of farms which are not of the ideal type.

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<sup>26</sup> Ackerman and Harris. Op. cit., p. 58.

### Transmission and Succession

The transfer of a farm is an extremely important process which must necessarily be executed in great detail and with careful planning. If the owners look forward to keeping the farm in the family, they need to be cognizant of the fact that some of the most serious farm ownership problems are a result of the transferring of farms within the family. Owners who wish to keep the farm in the family are faced with a serious problem. On one hand they want to transfer the farm to their successor while that individual is at the beginning of his most productive years, and on the other they have a concern for their own security in their declining years.

What are the means of transmission and succession available to owners? The method chosen is influenced by the goals of the owner and by the conditions peculiar to his family situation. Conditions such as the number of potential heirs, the acreage of land, amounts of other property, and the economic position of the owner will influence his decision.

The term inheritance is generally used in a categorical sense to describe the overall process of transmission and succession. The layman interprets it loosely to mean a share in the family accumulation, whether received from living or deceased parents. A rigid interpretation of the word emphasizes the fact that living persons do not have heirs.<sup>27</sup> In essence, the concepts of inheritance and succession refer to the same

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<sup>27</sup>Parsons and Waples. Op. cit., p. 5, footnote 6.

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thing, namely, "...the entry of living persons into the possession of dead persons' property."<sup>28</sup> According to Hertzler, inheritance:

...is the standardized and regulated form of property transmission at the death of the owner. The distinctive thing about all forms of inheritance is that they appear only when the family is the dominant feature of the social organization; and it deals only with the transmission of private property, from generation to generation, within the family.<sup>29</sup>

Inheritance exists only where the basis of the economic and social system is private property.<sup>30</sup>

Since the rights of ownership in land go beyond the lifetime of the individual owners, the states have made provisions for the disposal of the rights from generation to generation.

Transfer plans may be in one of three forms.<sup>31</sup> The first type is settlement, which involves a complete disposal of the property prior to the owner's death. The second type is testate, or transfer plans made during the owner's lifetime to take effect upon his death. For those owners who

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<sup>28</sup>McMurray, Orrin K. "Laws of Succession." Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, E.R.A. Seligman, ed., New York: The Macmillan Co., 1932, Volume 14, p. 35.

<sup>29</sup>Hertzler, J. O. Social Institutions. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1946, p. 98.

<sup>30</sup>Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences. Op. Cit., Vol. 8, p. 35.

<sup>31</sup>For a discussion of the Michigan laws of inheritance see: Ellis, H., R. Barlowe and E.B.Hill. Inheritance of Farm Property in Michigan. Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station East Lansing, Special Bulletin 388, December 1953.

fail to utilize either of the above forms there is intestate action. In this case, the state laws of descent and distribution go into effect. These laws are an attempt to give adequate protection to those who are eligible as heirs. They are written to include all cases, and make it difficult to interpret each case on its own individual merits which may result in an injustice to a deserving heir.

Settlement would include methods such as purchase contract, sale, or gift, while testate action would be in the form of a will which would dispose of ownership rights directly or allow them to be held in life estate prior to complete disposal.

Purchase contract is possibly the most effective means of transferring the farm within the family. It allows the farm to be transferred as a unit and as a going concern, and it permits the purchaser to begin his farming career at the beginning of his productive years. Thus, the purchaser is given some security regarding the future. In addition, the purchase contract arrangement is flexible enough so that it can fit the peculiar situation of any family and provide equitable treatment for the potential heirs. Even with its many obvious advantages it is a seldom used technique. Primarily because the owner has few outside investments, he tends to regard his land as his investment, and looks upon it as his security in old age.

Outright sales seldom occur within the family, for those who are children seldom have sufficient funds to carry out such a proposition. Instead, children with insufficient money generally resort to the purchase contract. The reasons for not selling the land outright are the same as those stated above for purchase contract.

The practice of making an outright gift of the farm is not a common occurrence, because very few farm owners find themselves in such fortunate economic circumstances that they can give the farm away. Some elements of a gift, however, may exist even when the transfer is in the form of a sale. But, Inman and Fippin, from an analysis of their data and from unpublished data of other studies, conclude that purchase from relatives does not carry a perceptible degree of gratuity.<sup>32</sup>

The use of a will allows the owner to select his beneficiaries as he so desires and to distribute his property as he sees fit, upon his demise. Those who inherit his property need not be related. The state, in the form of the probate court, supervises and enforces the desires of the deceased owner.

The results of the use of the will are important. Too frequently the farm does not pass into the possession of another member of the family until that member has passed

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<sup>32</sup>Inman and Fippin. Op. cit., p. 33.

his peak of productivity as a farmer. This is essential because as Professor Wehrwein points out, "Every transfer in ownership, except through inheritance to one heir, means recapitalization of the farm in whole or in part."<sup>33</sup> Even if the will does not take effect for many years to come, a discussion of the provisions of the will with family members is advisable. It provides the potential heirs with security. And, if the conditions of the will are favorable to him, the one who has a desire to continue farming will work toward making the home farm a productive endeavor. However, what generally happens is that owners neglect to make out wills, and even if they do, there is the tendency for them not to discuss the provisions with the potential heirs. As a result those who are potential heirs are not aware of their status regarding their future stake in the land.

Professors Walrath and Gibson found that only 25 percent of the farmers they interviewed had prepared wills.<sup>34</sup> John Southern, in a work on the Southwest, found only 16 percent with wills.<sup>35</sup> In Michigan, only about 17 percent of the

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<sup>33</sup>Wehrwein, George S. Op. cit., p. 173.

<sup>34</sup>Walrath, Arthur J. and W. L. Gibson, Jr. Farm Inheritance and Settlement of Estates. Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, Blacksburg: Research Bulletin 413, Jan. 1948, p. 30.

<sup>35</sup>Southern, John. Farm Land Ownership in the Southwest. Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station, Fayetteville: Research Bulletin 502, Dec. 1950, p. 44.

owners reporting had made wills.<sup>36</sup> Finally, for the United States as a whole approximately 17 percent of those reporting had made a will.<sup>37</sup>

Life estate is another method of transferring ownership. This may be provided for in the will so that the remaining living spouse has property use rights. Occasionally a joint deed is made out providing for the right of survivorship for the remaining spouse.

A final means of farm transference is the use of verbal promises and understandings. Owners may discuss their plans for disposition with the family members and all may be in agreement with them, but none of the promises are legally binding unless there is transfer of a consideration. As the parties to the agreement advance through life, certain economic, social, and psychological factors may arise to strain the relationship, and as a result neither party has any security in relation to the property disposition. What can be important is the fact that these verbal promises may develop into written agreements, which become effective as a part of the transfer arrangements of the farm.

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<sup>36</sup>Timmons and Barlowe. Op. Cit., p. 931.

<sup>37</sup>Inman and Fippin. Op. Cit., p. 45.

The owner of land has a great many alternatives as to the method of transferring his property, and within his choice the laws of the land give him broad license in what he may want to consider as a rational distribution. What is relevant to the present study is not necessarily the choice of method but the resulting effects of that choice. Thus, such questions as the following are relevant: what distribution was made to the heirs, was there a parcellation of land, and if so, what was the position of the family member who undertook the task of keeping the farm in the family?

#### Family

The third element to be discussed is the agency through which property in land is transmitted from generation to generation. There is need to define what is meant by family, since in a period of a hundred years the family can assume many forms.

Family membership is discussed by Kingsley Davis as being of two types. He states:

Every normal individual acquires membership in two different family groups. This is because he participates in two species of birth; first when he himself is born, second when he procreates another individual. The first of these families we may call the family of orientation, because it is in this family that Ego is socialized and linked through his parents with the rest of the social organization. The second we may call the family of procreation, because it is here that Ego has children of his own. Ego is the sole

link--the sole overlapping member--between these two families.<sup>38</sup>

Moreover, he says that an extended kinship universe is composed of interlocking families. Involved in this interlocking system are three basic relationships, namely, marriage, parenthood, and siblingship.<sup>39</sup> In consideration of this, the original owner of the Centennial Farm begins his tenure and his family with his marriage and parenthood, and through the repetition of this action in succeeding generations the family extends through time to the present. In the process, each owner, with the exception of the original owner, is recognized as having been a member of a family of orientation and in almost all cases a member of a family of procreation.

Obviously the original owner had a family of orientation. However, this term only has reference to the time span under investigation, or, from the time of the original purchase of the land by the original owner to the present time. The second point is that all members of society do not become members of a family of procreation, for they may fail to marry or they may marry but remain without progeny.

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<sup>38</sup>Davis, Kingsley. Human Society. New York: Macmillan and Co., 1949, p. 399.

<sup>39</sup>Loc. cit.





In problems of succession, the family of procreation is generally the group from which the successor is selected. As the term is used here, its size is limited to the parents and their offspring. When a family of procreation does not exist for a particular owner, it is necessary for that owner, or for the state, depending upon the circumstances, to select a successor from the family of orientation. When these conditions exist, the family of the succeeding owner is recognized as a collateral family.

To study the family as an agency for the transmission of property over such an extended period of time is in reality a study of changing characteristics of the family which affect the distribution and use of the land. These inferred changing characteristics can be observed by looking at the American farm family, past and present. The pioneer American farm family, to quote Wilson, was characterized by the following traits:

Land--private property in land--stands out as one of the important features of early American agriculture and family life....(the farmer) built upon his farm a homestead which represented his ideal of domestic and family comfort. He built for permanence. So far as his means permitted, he provided for his children and for generations of descendants."

Self-maintenance with a sense of isolation is another characteristic of the early rural family...(This) is the tradition which has been passed on in such stereotypes as 'independence', 'integrity', and the like...There can be little doubt that the early isolation and the sense of independence did much to magnify the importance of the family and to intensify the importance of its relationships.

Kinship, with a sense of solidarity, was another important bond in the framework of the early family...A sense of kinship, of continuing a line of common descent, must have been a sustaining force in those pioneering experiences...Fidelity to kinsmen, then, is one of the great heritages of the early rural family.<sup>40</sup>

And in comparison, Professor Beers characterizes the modern American farm family by saying:

The portrait of today's farm family...is a modification of old patterns, a partial acceptance of new patterns. It is smaller than the pioneer family, yet it is still among our chief sources of population increase. The social organization of the area is no longer familistic...The roles of parent and child are less fixed in the mores. There is a definite heritage of paternal dominance...Specialization and education have affected the division of labor, but shared work and shared leisure are still formative of the family pattern. Propinquity continues to foster solidarity, resisting the centrifugal effects of urbanization.<sup>41</sup>

In the pioneer days it was not too difficult to maintain the farm and the family as a unit. But in the face of the industrial revolution and the resulting urbanization, family structure and organization changed. Not to have done so would have resulted in a form of "social rigor mortis."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Quoted from Wilson, Warren H. The Evolution of the Country Community. Chicago: Pilgrim Press, 1923, p. 22, by Kolb, J. H. and Edmund deS. Brunner. A Study of Rural Society. New York: Houghton-Mifflin Co., (Revised ed.), 1946, pp. 202-204.

<sup>41</sup>Beers, Howard W. "A Portrait of the Farm Family in Central New York State." American Sociological Review, Vol. 2, No. 5, October 1937, p. 600.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 591.

within the bio-social matrix of the family are those inherent elements which could have affected the tenure of the present owner. Some of these elements are subjective and some are objective in nature. Of the former the observation is made by Lowry Nelson that,

While it is admittedly difficult to secure information concerning those more subtle attitudes and responses involved in family ritual, attachment to the homestead, family pride in ancestry, and relations with kinfolk, it goes without saying that these are the very warp and woof of which human life from day to day is really spun.<sup>43</sup>

There is an attempt made in the present study to derive evidence of this statement, but most of the conclusions regarding such subjective items are made by inference.

The objective factors which can be observed and about which some degree of relatedness to the problem can be ascertained are: data on the original owners, number of generations the farm has been in the family, size of each owner's family, sex, occupation, residence, marital status and education of each of the family members, and the choice of the successor.

Knowledge of the occupational and marital status of the original owners of the sample population may prove useful in gaining insights into the economic and social maturity of the

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Nelson, Lowry. Research in Rural Institutions; Scope and Method. John D. Black, ed., The Advisory Committee on Social and Economic Research in Agriculture, SSRC, New York: June 1933, p. 57.

members of this original group. Thus, if these owners had been farmers in their state of origin, especially of a low tenure status, their motivation in migrating may have been for the purpose of attaining the ultimate rung of the "agricultural ladder," i.e., owner-operatorship. Secondly, if the original owners were married prior to their migration, there is the likelihood that they were concerned with establishing a permanent place of residence. If this is true, they would consume a considerable proportion of the hundred years of ownership, and the number of transfers of ownership would be minimized.

The number of generations a farm has been in the family may be a significant contributory element in the present tenure status. It is possible that the greater number of generations a farm stays in a family, the greater the chance of it being broken up into uneconomic sized units. This condition becomes possible because of the number of transfers of ownership that must take place.

The reproductive behavior of all of the owners involved in the succession of the farm is considered. For the past 150 years the average size of the American family had been declining. In 1790 the average family contained approximately 5.7 persons; by 1850 the average was 5.5; in 1880 it had fallen to 5.0 persons; by 1900 to 4.7; in 1930 to 4.1; in 1940 to 3.7;<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>United States Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, 1789-1945, Washington, D. C., 1949. p. 29, Series B 171-181.

and, by 1950 to 3.6.<sup>45</sup> It is possible that an examination of the sample population will reveal a similar consistent decrease. If this is so, then smallness of Centennial Farm Families would keep any extensive parcellation of land and encumbrances to a minimum, thus making it simpler to become an owner-operator and to keep the farm in the family.

Since some of the families of the present owners may as yet be incomplete, it may be difficult to determine their size. For this reason averages are computed for completed families only, and in any family where the female spouse has attained the age of 45 the family is assumed to be complete. It is assumed that the reproduction function ceases at that age. In addition, for this study, averages of size of family are based upon father, mother, and all children who have lived beyond the age of 14 years.

Sex composition of the family is important. Not all farms can be transferred from father to son, as the sex composition of the family limits such a plan. The owner must take his choice of transferee(s) from one of the following hypothetical situations at the time of transfer: (1) all sons and no daughters, (2) both sons and daughters, (3) all daughters and no sons, and (4) neither sons nor daughters. Whatever the choice may be, it has an effect upon the use of the farm, which in turn affects the potential heirs of the owner.

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<sup>45</sup>United States Bureau of the Census. United States Population: 1950. Vol. II, Characteristics of the Population, Part I, U. S. Summary, Chapter B. United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1952. Table 47, p. 1-97.

Related to choice of successor are other questions, such as the determination as to whether the birth order of the heir is important. It was found in one study that the "inheritance of the paternal farm does not follow primogeniture." Generally the inheritor is chosen from about the middle of the sequence of children.<sup>46</sup> Has there been a tendency for the owners to name their youngest child as the successor to the farm, or is the choice random? It is recognized that each family works out its transmission practices within the structure of its own unique situation, but between the families being investigated there may be a consistency of choice.

It is hoped that by taking each family member separately and ascertaining his major occupation, some conclusions may be drawn relating to the occupational mobility of these individuals. Whether or not the occupation is related to farming and the geographical location of the occupation will contribute to some understanding of the family as a unit. It has been observed that farm children more frequently inherit their father's occupation than do the children in any other group. It is possible that a trend indicating the movement out of farming with increasing urbanization can be established. In determining the occupation of the daughters, their chosen

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<sup>46</sup> Miner, Horace. ST. DENIS A French-Canadian Parish. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939, p. 79.

occupation is tabulated if they are single. But, if married, their husbands' occupation is considered because the husband is viewed as having the major occupation.

Relevant to any discussion of occupational preference of farm children, is the idea that farming is a preferred occupation because it represents a way of life for which people are willing to forego substantial money income. Professor Schultz considers this idea to be a gross misconception, as the following quotation reveals:

This notion about occupational preferences reflects mainly the delayed nostalgia of urban people who as youths left rural homes and who, looking back, overglamorize their early years.<sup>47</sup>

Choice of residence of the children of the owners is pertinent to an evaluation of the effect of urbanization upon these farm families. It is recognized that there is a constant movement of population from rural to urban areas, and there is occasionally an equally great return movement, especially in times of national economic crisis. Migration to the urban areas itself may not be disastrous. What is relevant is the continuous flow of wealth from the rural areas to cities. There is little to balance this outgoing flow. A second factor regarding residence is that it is generally

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<sup>47</sup> Schultz, Theodore W. "A Guide to Better Policy for Agriculture," Consumer Reports, Vol. 19, No. 4, April 1954, p. 185.

closely related to occupation and education. Where do the children of Centennial Farm Owners tend to settle permanently, and if it is away from the local area, does the process of transmission and succession contribute to having the migrants return to the farm and to farming?

### Community

Because villagers and residents of outlying lands are complementary components of a social entity, the third basic concept studied is that of community. As the term is used here, it refers to the people of a contiguous area. This area serves as a central point for members interests and activities, and it represents that area in which the daily needs and wants are satisfied.<sup>48</sup>

More specifically the term refers to the following:

A community...is any town and tributary area, where the majority of people find satisfaction for their economic, religious, educational, social, and recreational interests. It is the place where one lives, where his children obtain their secondary education, and where he sells his farm products, buys his necessities of life, attends church and lodge, and participates in other social activities. Thus the term "community" ... invariably means a town-country community-- a population center rendering a sufficient variety of services to

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<sup>48</sup> Thaden, J. F. and Eben Mumford. High School Communities in Michigan. Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station, East Lansing, Special Bulletin 289, Jan. 1938, p. 3.



satisfy the majority of human needs, and the area, primarily farming territory, tributary to it, both mutually dependent upon the other.<sup>49</sup>

These are in reality trade-center communities and the study considers them as such. All of the Centennial Farms have been located within the boundaries of some community and the owners affect and in turn are affected by their presence in that particular trade area.

Although community boundaries do change, they change slowly except in those areas where rapidly expanding urban areas encompass small surrounding communities. Due to the fixity of land, little can be done to remove a farm from within the imaginary lines of a community. What does vary is the relationship of the owners of that farm to the community in which the farm is located. In view of this fact, data should be available regarding farms and farmers of long tenure in a community.

R. C. Headington points out that relatively few families in most communities retain their ownership, and particularly their occupancy of the same land, for a span of more than two or three generations.<sup>50</sup> If this is true then a pertinent question is that related to the plans of the owners for

<sup>49</sup>Thaden, J. F. The Lansing Region and Its Tributary Town-Country Communities. Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station, East Lansing, Special Bulletin 302, March 1940, p. 9.

<sup>50</sup>Headington, R. C. Transferring the Farm From One Generation to the Next. Ohio Mimeo. Bulletin 204, Dept. of Rural Sociology and Agricultural Economics, Ohio State University, Columbus, Nov., 1948, p. 1.

transferring their farms to succeeding generations. There is a possibility that some of the farms have already been in the family for more than three generations. Is there evidence that more of them will remain that long or longer?

Professor Sanderson states that a large percentage of farm owners tend to live near their home farm.<sup>51</sup> Hence, it is assumed that a large percentage of the members of Centennial Farm Families who have become farm owners have settled in the local area. Since one of the criteria of high status in rural areas is a long time family history in the community, the name of the Centennial Farmer should be readily recognized by community informants.

Having been long-time land owners in the community the question arises as to what contributions have been made by Centennial Farm Families to their home communities. Some investigation of community participation is pertinent. Historically, it is difficult to study all of the individual actions of all Centennial Farm Family members. In the early times of rural America, as described by Professors Kolb and Brunner, "country neighborhood settlement and social organization went on quite independently and often prior to town

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<sup>51</sup> Sanderson, Dwight. Rural Sociology and Rural Social Organization. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1942, p. 216.

settlement."<sup>52</sup> Since the folk of the hinterland and the villagers have become more interdependent, there is the likelihood the Centennial Farm Families have also followed the described pattern.

Participation in community activities can be observed in terms of organizational affiliation and in the degree of active or passive participation. Do the members of Centennial Farm Families participate only in those organizations whose objectives are directly related to farming, or do these families also participate in organizations whose objectives are of a civic betterment nature?

Another area of community participation investigated is that of holding public office. There need be no concern as to whether the offices are appointive or elective, or whether they are on a local, state, or national level. The individual has a vested interest and has obligations to his home community and his actions reflect upon that community.

In all community participation, especially in those cases of owner-operators, it is probable that the time required for them to operate their farm precludes, or at least minimizes, any extensive participation.

Two years of presenting awards to eligible farmers throughout the state should have created a consciousness of

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<sup>52</sup>Kolb, J. H. and Edmund deS. Brunner. Op. Cit., p. 227.

the existence of the program in the minds of the community members, and the recipients of the award should have developed a conceptualization of the program. Certainly if the recipients were constant contributors to community growth and development, they would receive the recognition of the community members.

Conceptualization occurs through the reflection of knowledge. This reflection poses the question as to how the Centennial Farmers as well as the community members conceptualize the Centennial Farm idea. In essence, this question can be answered from other questions pertaining to the definition a Centennial Farm, suggested improvements in the program, and whether or not the program should be continued. It may be found from asking these questions that the status of owner-operator is held in high esteem while related tenure groupings receive lesser esteem as they move further from the ideal. Community members may merely parrot the definition they have read in the newspapers or elsewhere. Any suggestions they have for improving the program however, indicate the need for a realignment of the definition. Finally, if they suggest that the program be discontinued, it infers that certain conditions they may feel to be essential to the program are not being met. In essence, are the community members satisfied simply with long-time ownership, or do they also want occupancy and operatorship to be considered as factors in the awards?



Also do they feel that the factor of community contribution on the part of the recipients is just as important as other factors mentioned. From the point of view of the recipients, the definition of the Centennial Farm should be well structured in their minds. But their suggestions regarding improvements may lead to inferences of eliteness of the group. Some conclusions may be drawn regarding factors they consider important for recognition by determining their desire to continue or discontinue the program. Considering both recipients and community members, what values of tenure and ownership are abstracted to compound the social image of the Centennial Farm?

Another area related to this section is concerned with the Centennial Farmers outlook upon farming as a way of life. One of the stumbling blocks to the understanding of life in America has been the idealization of rural living.<sup>53</sup> What is the attitude of the Centennial Farmer as he responds to the question pertaining to his conceptualization of farming as a way of life? Would their responses be synonymous with what has been recognized as the tradition of agrarianism, or would these responses be in terms of recognizing the land they own as a commercial investment?

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<sup>53</sup>Waring, P. Alston, and Clinton Golden. Soil and Steel. New York: Harper and Bros., 1947, p. 25.

Underlying the idealistic aspect of this problem is the statement by Jefferson who believed that "those who labor are the chosen people of God, ..." <sup>54</sup> This statement leads to the agrarian creed, which according to Johnston, has three components: (1) complete economic independence of the farmer, (2) agriculture fundamentalism -- all other economic activities were dependent upon farming, and (3) agriculture is the natural life and is therefore good. <sup>55</sup> Do the present owners of Centennial Farms respond from a more realistic point of view, perhaps by recognizing the factors of land supply, agricultural science, and urbanization? MacIver and Page are inclined to believe farmers do feel this way, as is illustrated by their statement, "...the land has lost some of its old character as an inheritance and has become more nearly an investment of capital, like any other." <sup>56</sup> Are those Centennial Farmers who are owner-operators more realistic in their outlook toward the land than those who fall into other owner-tenure groups?

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<sup>54</sup>United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, "Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Agriculture," (from Jefferson's note on Virginia) 102 pages, 1937 Processed, Quoted by Paul H. Johnstone. "Farmers in a Changing World," 1940 Yearbook of Agriculture, United States Department of Agriculture, 1941, p. 155.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>56</sup>MacIver and Page, Op. cit., p. 352.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS OF THE STUDY

The program of awarding Centennial Farm Certificates to century farm families had been underway for approximately two years when this research project was begun. The project was financed by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation and was carried out under the guidance of a committee composed of members of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. The Michigan Historical Commission served as a cooperating agency.

#### Selection of the Sample

The sample for this investigation was selected in a stratified, purposive manner. A complete explanation of the selection of the cases for study is given in Appendix B. Two variables are important to the selection of the sample: size of community and number of Centennial Farm Families in the community.

The size of the sample is purposively small, even though it is recognized that factors which social scientists are unable to control usually cause small samples to be radically different from one another. For this reason, the use of small samples is relatively limited in social research.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>McCormick, Thomas C. Elementary Social Statistics. New York: McGraw-Hill Co., 1941, p. 234.



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Nevertheless, the study has the purpose of aiding in the development of hypotheses for future study. The small sample not only makes for an economy of research effort, but it is most effective when used in combination with the case study method. It has been found that social scientists working with the case study technique have been able to produce a great number of new insights from a few cases, while an increase in the number of cases may yield few new ideas.<sup>2</sup>

In relation to the purposes of the study, there is little concern for frequency of occurrence, and for this reason a small sample seems adequate. Emphasis is placed on existing patterns rather than quantities of attributes. Regarding such emphasis, Cooley says:

We are accustomed to think of scientific exactness as a matter of measurement in small units of space and time. But behavioristic knowledge is essentially organic, must exist in wholes or not exist at all. Even in its simplest forms it deals with conformations, patterns, systems, not with mechanical units. For this reason the phenomena of life are often better distinguished by pattern than by quantity. Those who are striving to make sociology an exact science might well give more attention to the method of pattern comparison.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Jahoda, M., M. Deutsch and S. W. Cook. Research Methods in Social Relations. New York: The Dryden Press, 1951, Volume 1, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup>Cooley, Charles Horton. Sociological Theory and Social Research. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1930, p. 314.

### Method of Approach

As already indicated, data were collected through the use of the case study. One of the factors contributing to the decision to use this method is the complexity of the data and the development of relevant phenomenon over a period of a hundred years or more. Secondly, it has been stated in the preceding chapter that one of the specific purposes of the study is to develop insights and to suggest hypotheses for future study. Jahoda observes that scientists who have been working in relatively unformulated areas have found the case study method to be most useful for the above purposes.<sup>4</sup> In a similar vein, Cooley remarks that the objective of all research is a more adequate perception of life to better understand what is occurring. He suggests that the social complex must be broken up and examined by units. This can best be done by the case study wherein actual persons or groups are studied very closely, and the perceptions gained from this observation are used as a basis upon which to build an understanding of other persons and groups and ultimately the whole complex.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Jahoda, M. et al. Op. cit., p. 42.

<sup>5</sup>Cooley, C. H. Op. cit., p. 331.

J. O. Hertzler considers the case study method to be the core of sociological procedure. Especially in reference to historical data, he feels that no other method is as effective because the case study alone provides the essential order and consistency to data. It makes possible the examination of a number of similar cases on the basis of spatial distribution and time sequence.<sup>6</sup> Both of these criteria are relevant to the present study.

Since, according to Palmer,<sup>7</sup> one of the functions of science is to reduce individual variations into common categories, it is imperative that the unique characteristics of the cases be brought to the fore. The intensity of the investigation of the case study technique brings forth sufficient information to characterize and explain both the unique features of the case and those which it has in common with others.<sup>8</sup>

Use of the case study technique aids in meeting the needs of the science.

#### Data to be Collected

The first step in the research process was a thorough review of the literature in hope of obtaining data, or at

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<sup>6</sup>Hertzler, J. O. Part II, Chapter 2. The Sources and Methods of Historical Sociology. Bernard, L. L. The Fields and Methods of Sociology. New York: Long and Smith, 1934, p. 270.

<sup>7</sup>Palmer, Vivien. Field Studies in Sociology. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938, pp. 20-21.

<sup>8</sup>Jahoda, M. et al. Op. cit., p. 43.

least insights, for the purpose of delineating areas to be investigated. As has been pointed out in the previous chapter, this search was virtually fruitless and was abandoned for the use of a more direct technique.

The direct technique was to be in the form of a mailed questionnaire which would provide data for the formulation of the problem. After completing the questionnaire, a copy was sent with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and requesting the cooperation of the Centennial Farmer. All of the 234 Centennial Farmers were mailed questionnaires and after the first mailing 142 were returned, or slightly more than 60 percent of the total. Additional letters and questionnaires were sent to the remaining 92 cases and 17 of these were returned, making a total of 159 returned, or approximately 70 percent of the total.

As a result of the data collected on the questionnaires, two temporal areas of investigation are delineated, namely, the historical and the contemporary. Within the former there are areas of focus, such as; data on the original owner, data on all of the children of all of the owners, transmission and succession practices, and general statements regarding the family. The area of the present referred to the present owner, his personal data, his tenure status, his conceptualization of the program and of farming as a way of life, his community contribution and organizational affiliation. In addition,



there is included in the present, a conceptualization of the program as it is viewed by selected members of the community.

Data to be collected on the original owners were place of origin, occupation and marital status in place of origin, age at time of migration and reason for migration, year of purchase of original acreage, number of acres obtained and from whom was the acreage purchased.

For each of the owners in the line of descent of the present Centennial Farm, the following information was tabulated: Birth order, sex, education, marital status, occupation, and final place of residence. It would be difficult to gather more detailed information than the preceding on all of the family members. Hence, general statements regarding the family as a unit were obtained. Information was to be obtained in reference to community participation, and to organizational, religious and political affiliation. Personal data on the present owner include his age, sex, marital status, residence, education, community participation, and organizational membership. Information regarding his tenure status was deemed important. Such items as operatorship, if the farm was not operated by the present owner, then by whom, and the terms of the contract, whether it was verbal or written. How long has it been since a member of the family has operated the farm? Finally, what is the size of the farm and how many acres are being operated?

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Farming as a way of life to the Centennial Farmers is an important attitude to ascertain. Data which provide insights into this attitude are related to what they have done with the Centennial Farm Certificate and what they plan to do with the plaque. In addition, their attitudes toward the program as a whole were ascertained, and specifically, whether they thought the program should be continued, and could they make any suggestions for the improvement of the program. It is also considered especially important to find out what plans have been made for the future disposition of the farm.

In an attempt to determine the point of view of the community, selected community members were interviewed regarding their conceptualization of the Centennial Farm Concept and specifically their conceptualization of the Centennial Farm program, and the Centennial Farms and Farmers located in their communities.

#### Sources of Data

As already stated, the results of the selection of the sample ultimately yielded forty-four Centennial Farms located in twelve communities. Each of the Centennial Farms became a case for study, and in each of the communities selected members contributed to the study by serving as informants.

In the case of the former, the individual to be interviewed is the one whose name appears on the Centennial Farm Certificate, since these individuals have to be owners to



receive the award. However, from the time of the award to the time of the interview there is always the possibility that the owner receiving the award might relinquish ownership; in this case, the new owner is to be interviewed if he is related. In situations where more than one name appears on the Certificate, such as husband and wife, the individual to whom the farm descended is interviewed. However, in cases where the wife was the descendant, data on tenure are collected for the husband.

One of the facets for investigation was the relationship of Centennial Farmers, past and present, to the community in which the land was located. It is assumed that certain people occupying specific positions in their communities would be familiar with the people living in the hinterland of the community. This familiarity would be a consequence of the business or professional interests of the selected community members.

To maintain a measure of consistency among all of the communities, the interviewees are selected from specific occupations or professions. These are: formal political leader, public librarian, newspaper editor, banker, and hardware merchant. In all of the selected communities each of the first three occupational categories listed appear only once. The latter two, however, are likely to be duplicated especially in the larger communities. When duplications occur the



interviewer makes an arbitrary selection based upon his observations in that community.

Additional sources of information are the state and community libraries, compiled local histories, newspaper files, observations of the interviewer, and conversations with local historians.

### Field Techniques

Due to the complexity of the phenomena to be studied, it was difficult to construct a simple schedule. Nevertheless, the cooperation received on the mailed questionnaires indicated that the necessary information might be obtained.

Ultimately a schedule was prepared and a selected group of Centennial Farmers, known to be exclusive of the sample population, was interviewed in a pre-test. These interviews revealed that major revisions were necessary, primarily in the method of conducting the interview. The original schedule had been designed for use in a formally structured situation. Even though it was still essential to obtain the same data, it was necessary to obtain it in another manner. One of the unforeseen difficulties encountered was the extreme age of the interviewees. This, coupled with their sentimental involvement in the case history of their family and homestead, made the use of a formally structured interview virtually impossible. The interviewees were prone to digress continuously, presenting a problem in rapport in attempting to return to the question at hand.

After a revision it was still possible to use certain segments of the original schedule in a structured situation. That is, the questions pertaining to the interviewee or to the farm could be asked without fear of digression. It was noted that only when questions in reference to the history of the farm and the family were asked, the interviewee went off on a tangent.

As a consequence, a decision was made to structure the interview so that those questions which were answered easily were at the beginning of the interview. This in turn provided some of the data in a short time and allowed the interviewer to establish better rapport. Upon completion of the first segment of the interview, the situation became permissive. Through use of a few standard questions it was possible to get the interviewee to describe the history of the farm and the family. These standard questions pertained to the original owner and personal characteristics of members of the Centennial Farm Family. Answers to questions regarding succession practices were asked only when necessary. It was in this area that the interviewer had memorized questions, and as the interview progressed he, abstracted the relevant answers, and made the necessary notes. Due to the flexibility of this method, the interviewer was able to obtain all of the required data.

Members of the community, as designated in the section on the sample, were interviewed with a given set of questions, plus any additional requests for information that the interviewer

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thought necessary within the framework of the particular situation.

The questions asked were designed to determine the community members' conceptualization of the Centennial Farm program. Specifically they were asked to define the term Centennial Farm, and whether or not the program should be continued. In addition, they were asked if they could point out contributions made to the community by any of the local Centennial Farm Families.

#### Method of Analysis

The immediate need of the study is a method with which to analyze the data collected. This is not to say that existing methods are not adequate, it is merely to say that the data of the problem will influence the selection of a method of analysis.

Relevant to the present study there is one significant characteristic which must necessarily be taken into consideration when deciding upon a method of analysis. The pre-test reveals that not all Centennial Farmers are farming the land themselves. This factor means that there are differences in tenure status among the present owners. These differences raise two questions: (1) What is the internal patterning of selected characteristics within each tenure group? and, (2) what differences are there between tenure groups by selected characteristics?



To obtain the answers to these questions there is the need to order the data collected by the case study method.

Furfey writes that if it is possible to express data

...quantitatively the procedure is comparatively straight-forward...In many cases, however, the observations are not adapted to quantification. Facts and occurrences are described individually rather than counted, and the value of the study lies in this qualitative description and not in quantitative measurement. For this situation some type of analysis is necessary that will distill the essential facts from a large unwieldy mass of field notes and present these facts in a way that is scientifically convincing. The problem is how to find a method that will do for descriptive material what statistical analysis does for numerical data.<sup>9</sup>

In the succeeding paragraphs of this section the rationale for the method to be used and a description of this method will be elaborated upon. An examination of the literature reveals that the search for a method for analysis is an on-going process. T. D. Eliot, writing in 1922, was concerned with the limitations of methods of social research. He wrote,

Either all happenings involving "social" are capable of being analyzed, classified, and clarified by existing formulas and methods, or the scope of so-called sociological laws and methods should be so enlarged to make this possible.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Furfey, Paul Hanley. The Scope and Method of Sociology. New York: Harper and Bros., 1953, p. 312.

<sup>10</sup>Eliot, T. D. "Use of History in Theoretical Sociology." American Journal of Sociology, Vol. XXVII, March 1922, p. 629.

Today, Hagood writes that the extent of social research needed, requires that the social scientist transcend any rigid outline of steps which have become traditional in the field. In addition, it is suggested that there is no need to resort to a slavish imitation of procedures which may have proved fruitful in other fields.

In certain projects adherence to such patterns may be useful, but the following of patterns should never be allowed to have a restrictive effect in discouraging experimental ventures in method. The more flexible social research can remain, the more chance it will have to utilize all possible contributions in procedures from other sciences and at the same time invent more effective and appropriate procedures of its own.<sup>11</sup>

The method then must be structured by the desire to demonstrate patterns of selected characteristics of the Centennial Farmers. This emphasis on pattern analysis is stressed by Charles Horton Cooley in one of his major works, when he says,

I have remarked elsewhere that social life in its sensible aspect, presents itself as patterns rather than quantities, and if so, the techniques by which patterns may be recorded are full of scientific promise.<sup>12</sup>

In any concern for pattern analysis the functionally inter-relationship of attributes of a case are important, and

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<sup>11</sup>Hagood, Margaret J. Statistics for Sociologists. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1941, p. 23.

<sup>12</sup>Cooley, C. H. Op. Cit., p. 336.

to describe them merely as isolated attributes does not place them in their proper perspective.

One of the leading exponents of the technique of patterning social attributes was Leonard Salter Jr. It was his observation that in social science research the units of observation should always be treated with extreme care. His concern was with the maintenance of functional systems which consisted of relevant attributes as they are actually patterned in each observed case. To destroy this arrangement would in turn ruin the opportunity of the researcher to observe the very thing he hopes to understand.<sup>13</sup>

To verbalize on a more concrete level, it is possible to consider the problem at hand by pointing out the difficulties one might encounter through a cross-sectional analysis, only. If two of the Centennial Farms under consideration were to have undergone perfectly identical experiences over a period of one-hundred years, a comparison by cross-section would present a distorted picture, due to the fact that these sets of experiences may not have started at the same instant in time. Consider a farm which was first farmed in 1830 and one which was farmed fifteen years later. Each could pass through identical patterns of transmission of ownership and of tenure status, for example. But to compare these two farms at any given time without consideration of the above patterns, might

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<sup>13</sup>Salter, Leonard A., Jr. "Cross-Sectional and Case-Grouping Procedures in Research Analysis." Journal of Farm Economics. Vol. 24, No. 4, Nov. 1942, pp. 792-793.

reveal something that is not similar, and thus distort what is relevant to the ultimate value of the obtained results.

One of the considerations in the sample used in this study was that all of the farms were not in the family for the same number of generations. While one has been held for two generations only, others have been owned for three generations or more. To examine these cases as a total by isolating attributes for cross-sectional analysis would certainly obscure "the underlying uniformity of the pattern of sequential events."<sup>14</sup>

Since not all Centennial Farmers are farming their land, there is the need to develop constructs which can be used as independent analytical variables. The procedure for developing these constructs is that of classifying the data "in terms of the internal pattern of the significant attributes of the functional units under study."<sup>15</sup> These constructs very closely approximate the ideal type, but it needs to be emphasized that they are not identical with the ideal type. To clarify this point and to emphasize the difference the following paragraphs discuss the differences between the ideal type of Max Weber, the ideal type of Becker which emphasized probability, and finally the empirical construct of Winch.

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 794.

<sup>15</sup>Salter, Leonard A., Jr. "The Content of Land Economics and Research Methods Adapted to Its Needs." Journal of Farm Economics, Vol. 24, No. 1, Feb. 1942, p. 244.

Max Weber describes the ideal type as being

. . . .formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffused, discrete more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized view points into a purified analytical construct. In its conceptual purity this mental construct cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality.<sup>16</sup>

Weber was of the opinion that this was an indispensable procedure for heuristic and expository purposes, recognizing that it was not an hypothesis but that it would give guidance to the construction of hypotheses. It is not a description of reality but has as its objective that of giving an unambiguous means of expression to such a description.<sup>17</sup> In presenting itself as a concise unambiguous abstract construct it "recommends itself not as an end but as a means."<sup>18</sup> Thus the ideal type as developed by Weber is that construct which represents the empirical data symbolically, that is to say, these types are purely heuristic devices which never exist in their pure or unmixed forms.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Max Weber on the Methodology of the Social Sciences, trans. by E. A. Shils & H. A. Finch, Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., 1949, p. 90.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 92.

<sup>19</sup> Jensen, Howard. Editorial Note. Becker, Howard. Through Values to Social Interpretation. Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1950, p. XI.

There have been various attempts to make use of the ideal type construct in a more definitive sense. Howard Becker, in his early usage of the construct, looked upon it as a deliberate accentuation or even distortion of empirical reality for the purpose of gaining control over reality.<sup>20</sup> However, more recently, he admits a divergence from the methodological position of Weber. He now feels the need to emphasize "probability," or, the attempt to find close empirical approximations of constructed types.<sup>21</sup>

For the observer to perceive some order in the complexities of social phenomena the function of the ideal type becomes obvious. Robert Winch states that typologies are created by the noting of homogeneous attributes in heterogeneous phenomena; they are created for the purpose of discovering systems.<sup>22</sup> He classifies typologies as heuristic or empirical on the basis of their function and technique of derivation. It is with the empirical typology that this paper is concerned. The construct is defined as follows:

. . .an empirical typology is derived primarily from data rather than from theory, it functions to summarize observations rather than to enhance vision or to illustrate the

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<sup>20</sup>Becker, Howard. Part I, Chapter 2. The Field and Problems of Historical Sociology. Bernard, L. L. The Field and Methods of Sociology. New York: Long and Smith, 1934, p. 35.

<sup>21</sup>Becker, Howard. Op. Cit., p. 108.

<sup>22</sup>Winch, Robert F. "Heuristic and Empirical Typologies: A Job for Factor Analysis." American Sociological Review, Vol. 12, No. 1, Feb. 1947, p. 68.

essence of essences, it describes modal rather than extreme characteristics, and stands logically between observation and the reformulation of theory.<sup>23</sup>

Because empirical typologies arise primarily from the data and can be used to summarize the data, they can be effective especially where the problem area is new, where the existing theory is not complete, and where it appears to be feasible to work with a transdisciplinary approach.<sup>24</sup>

The technique of the constructed typology or the empirical typology is the means of attaining one of the prime requisites of scientific inquiry, that is, giving the proper attention to the internal construction of the observed cases.<sup>25</sup> As Max Weber considered his concept of the abstract ideal type so the same consideration should be given to the patterning of attributes of concrete reality; these constructs are not ends but means.<sup>26</sup>

What seems important at this point is to emphasize the need that the results of this research be based on a method of analysis that preserves the pattern of attributes within the units of observation, for within the framework of social inquiry

<sup>23</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>25</sup>Salter, L. A., Jr. Op. cit., p. 792.

<sup>26</sup>Shils, E. A. and Finch, H. A. Op. cit., p. 92.

conclusions are sought which have relevance to the functional structure of such units. While there is the method of cross-sectional analysis which has an important role to perform, it is necessary to support this method by a procedure which reveals the actual combination of the various attributes as they do exist in the cases studied.<sup>27</sup>

### Analytical Constructs

One of the aims of this study is concerned with the discovery of similar patterns in the history of each of the case families. Stated differently, an aim of this study is the discovery of those elements which have contributed to the evolution of the present pattern of tenure. In addition, there is concern over the nature of the influence these families have had on their communities. The focal point of all of the analysis is the present owners and their land use patterns.

There is a need to go from the abstract to the specific attributes in the development of empirical constructs. However, in doing so there is also the need to make a judgment as to the relative importance of each of the attributes. This judgment is guided not only by reason but also by imagination.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Salter, L. A., Jr. Op. Cit., p. 797.

<sup>28</sup>Pearson, Karl. The Grammar of Science. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1911, Third Ed., p. 34.



It is said that there is the necessity to establish major and minor attributes which clarify the largest doubts in the central problem. It is further stated that the job of the analyst lies in the summarization of subsidiary attribute groupings, in the explanation of exceptional cases, and in reconciling other features of the cases within his groups. He has as his objective the need to explain adequately the reflection of the basic problem in each one of his cases.<sup>29</sup>

Vivien Palmer, recognizing the problem of the complexity of the data gathered by the case-study method, designates the inherent level of qualities in each of the cases. She says:

Any case has three important characteristics: (1) characteristics which are common to every individual in the species to which it belongs, (2) variations of these common attributes which are characteristic of groups within the species, and (3) still other characteristics which belong uniquely to the individual and distinguish it from every other individual within the species. Science is always interested in characteristics of the first two types, and it is attempting to reduce more and more of the individual variations to categories that pertain to the species or to the classes within the species.<sup>30</sup>

These three levels will be utilized in the attempt to develop and describe empirical constructs.

All of the groupings of attributes for the construction of empirical types will be based upon their relative desirability

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<sup>29</sup>Salter, L. A., Jr. Op. cit., p. 803.

<sup>30</sup>Palmer, V. Op. cit., pp. 20-21.

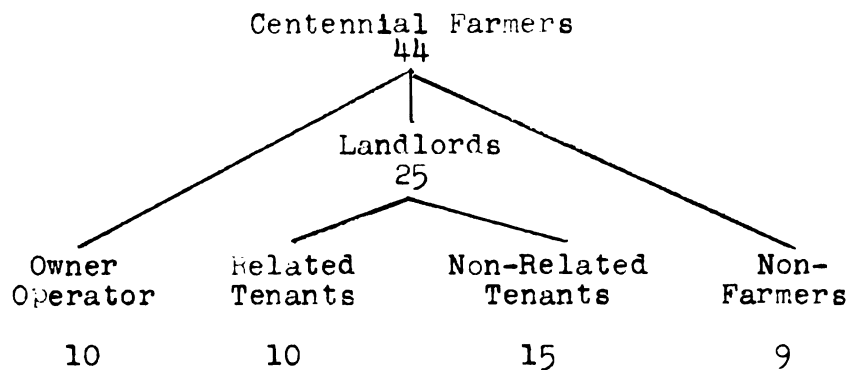


as they are related to the long-time governmental objective of owner-operatorship.

The two major attributes to be considered are ownership and tenure, both of which have variations that deviate from the ideal of owner-operatorship. To develop a continuum of empirical types, it seems pertinent to base them on how the owners are functionally related to the land. However, the relatively few cases under study limit the number of attributes which may be used, and attributes will be gross in nature rather than specific.

For the owners as a group there are two alternatives for land use, either farm or non-farm. For the farmer there is the tenure pattern of the owner which is important -- he may be either an operator or a landlord. If he is the latter, then the relationship of the tenant becomes important; he may either be related or non-related. Those lands which are non-farm need no further breakdown.

Schematically the delineation is as follows:



Thus the independent variable to be used throughout the analysis of data has the following four patterns:

1. Owner-Operators
2. Owners with Related Tenants
3. Owners with Non-Related Tenants
4. Non-Farm Owners

## CHAPTER IV

### CHARACTERISTICS OF PRESENT AND PAST CENTENNIAL FARMS AND CENTENNIAL FARM FAMILIES

#### Original Owners and Family History

The Centennial Farm Families may be considered as old line Americans since all of the original owners came from the colonial states without any apparent identification with any particular ethnic group.

One of the limiting factors in a description of the original owners is the lack of objective information available from the present owners. For example, very few are certain of the occupation of the original owner in the state from which he migrated. Most of the informants thought that the original owner must have been a farmer. Relatively few of the present owners were able to give a reason for the migration of the original owner to Michigan. Another element equally unknown was that of age of the owner of the time of his migration. Only three of the forty-four original owners waited until they arrived in Michigan to be married. In many cases the owners worked their land for a year or two before returning to their home states for their families.

As a group, the families on the Centennial Farms have been predominantly Protestant of a given denomination.

Politically the majority of the families identified themselves as being predominantly Republican.

An examination of newspaper files, library volumes, and discussions with community residents and the present Centennial Farm owners give a basis for a subjective evaluation of the organizational membership and community participation of the families through times. With regard to the role of the Centennial Farm Families in organizational affiliation, almost four-fifths were found to be inactive, even though a limited number of organizations were available to all of them. A similar finding applies to their role in community participation.

#### Present Centennial Farms and Farmers

##### Personal Characteristics

Age and sex composition. The greatest percentage (64%) of all owners are 65 years of age or over, an age which is normally considered to be the retirement age. Approximately 80 percent are beyond 55 years of age or at that period in a farmer's life when productive capacity begins to decrease rapidly. The advanced age of the total group is illustrated by the fact that the mean age is 66.8 years. (Table I, Appendix E)

Male owners as a group are younger than their female counterparts. Only 55 percent of the males are over 65 years of age whereas 80 percent of the female owners are in the same

age category. At the other end of the age scale, there are four males, or 14 percent, who range in age from 35 to 44 years. In this age range there are no female owners.

Comparison between all owners and the selected tenure groupings reveals that the Owner-Operators are the youngest tenure group, with a mean age of 54.0 years. The oldest tenure group is Owners with Related Tenants; these owners have a mean age of 76.0 years. The extensive disparity in the mean ages of these two groups may be explained, in part, by the fact that nine of the ten Owner-Operators are men, while half of the Owners with Related Tenants are women. Non-Farm Owners are the next oldest group with a mean age of 71.5 years, and finally, there is the group of Owners with Non-Related Tenants whose mean age of 66.0 years very closely approximates the mean age for all owners.

In all tenure groups, other than Owner-Operators, the largest percentage of the group members are 65 years of age or over. In the Owners with Related Tenants group all of the members are over 65 years of age, while in the remaining two groups two-thirds of the owners are in a similar age category.

Marital Status. It is indicated that thirty-eight, or 86 percent, of the present owners have been married or are now married. (Table II, Appendix E)

The largest percentage (27%) of any group which has remained single is found in the Owners with Non-Related Tenants group. It is also revealed that none of the members of the Non-Farm Owners group have remained single, a finding which does not hold true for any of the other groups.

Educational characteristics. Educational attainment of the present owners is relatively equally distributed among the categories of grade school, high school, and college. (Table III, Appendix E)

There is little difference between the tenure groups regarding the educational attainment of the members. However, the Owners with Non-Related Tenants have the highest educational attainment since all members have had education beyond the grade school level; this group also has the largest percentage (60%) who have continued on to college. The Owners with Related Tenants group have the highest percentage (50%) of members who have not gone beyond grade school. As the educational level increases for this group, the percentage of members achieving higher levels of education decreases.

Occupational characteristics. Nearly 75 percent of all of the present owners have at one time, or at the present, been involved in farming as an occupation. This figure is determined by placing in one category the occupational groups of<sup>1</sup> Farmer, Housewife and the Retired. However, at present,

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<sup>1</sup>All housewives in the sample are widows of former farmers.





slightly more than three-fourths of all owners are not actively engaged in farming. (Table IV, Appendix E)

The members of the tenure group of Owners with Non-related Tenants have the largest percentage (40%) of those who are not engaged in farming or in some related area. This same group has 27 percent of the total engaged in the Business and Professional category, which is a larger percentage than is found in any of the other groups.

Residential characteristics. It is shown by Table V that 68 percent of all the owners live on farms. While members of the two groups, Owners with Related Tenants and Owners with Non-Related Tenants, are living in the open-country, 89 percent of the Non-Farm owners live in the open-country.

Only 14 percent of the total population reside in villages or cities. One of these cases, a member of the Non-Farm Owners group, is a city resident as a result of the expansion of the corporation limits of the city encompassing what has been designated as her Centennial Farm. The Owners with Non-Related Tenants group has the largest percentage (27%) of members living in cities and villages. With the exception of one case, all other owners who reside on a farm or in the open country are living on the Centennial Farm. These individuals constitute 89 percent of the total.

Organizational membership. An examination of Table VI indicates that one-half of the present owners are not members

of either farm or community organizations. Slightly more of the owners are members of community organizations, with 40 percent of them maintaining membership. For farm organizations, 32 percent of the present owners are members. Organizational membership was relatively equally distributed between tenure groups.

### Ownership and Tenure

Type of ownership. Among all of the present owners, sole ownership is most common, appearing 61 percent of the time. Second in proportion is shared ownership which accounts for 30 percent of the cases. There are relatively few cases of purchase contract or life estate. (Table VII Appendix E)

Among the tenure groups, Owners with Related Tenants exhibit the highest incidence of sole ownership. While the Owners with Non-Related Tenants show the greatest incidence of shared ownership. The one case of purchase contract appears in the Owner-Operators group, but none of the three cases of life estate are in the same category.

Land use. The land of the Centennial Farmers is being put to many uses but farming still utilizes the greatest proportion of the land owned. There is a total of 7,163 acres owned, of which 1,079 acres or 15.0 percent, are not being used in farming. The 724 acres owned by the Non-Farm Owners are part of this acreage, as are 355 acres owned by the Owners with Related Tenants and those with Non-Related Tenants. Of

the latter two groups reasons for not renting parts of their farms are peculiar to the particular situation and are quite diverse.

The nine Non-Farm Owners use their land for various purposes. One of the farms, 27 acres in size, is within the city limits of a large city as a result of corporate expansion. Three other owners with a total of 318 acres are awaiting the residential expansion of the same city. Two of these three have already platted their land for residential use while the third is in the planning stage. Three others are widows who, for reasons of their own, prefer not to rent out the land; these three own 299 acres. Another owner who has 70 acres is waiting for his son to return from the Army. The last owner has only ten acres and utilizes this simply as a suburban residence.

Type of agreement. Of the two types of agreement existing between owners and tenants, 72.0 percent of them have verbal agreements and the remaining 28.0 percent have written contracts. (Table VIII Appendix E)

For those Owners with Non-Related Tenants the five written agreements were made by owners who are in professions which use formalized written agreements as a basis of business relationship. These owners include an advertising agency head, an insurance agent, a banker, and a former state legislator, the fifth being the widow of a lawyer. For the ten

verbal contracts in this tenure group, and the two in the Owners with Related Tenants group, there is a different clustering of occupations. In this group owners are ministers, school teachers, nurses, etc.

Length of time farm operation out of family. It is obvious that the tenure group of Owner-Operators operate their own farm units and members of Owners with Related Tenants by definition have family members operating their farms; the other groups do not. Combining the group of Owners with Non-Related Tenants and Non-Farm Owners, there are twenty-four cases in which time has elapsed since a member of the family has operated the farm. (Table IX Appendix E)

For the twenty-four cases the number of years since the operation of the farm by a family member ranges from one to sixty, with a mean of 17.1 years. The Owners with Non-Related Tenants have a range of from four to sixty years with a mean of 18.0 years. And the Non-Farm Owners have not had family members operating the farm for a range of from one to twenty-eight years, with a mean of 15.7 years.

#### Farm Evaluation

Facilities in the house. Of all the houses located on Centennial Farms, 84 percent have all of the facilities usually considered as essential to comfort. Only one of the houses is without any modern facilities, and all of the other houses have some of the facilities. With the one exception noted all

of the houses have electricity and forty-two of the forty-four have running water. In all cases public utilities are available for installation. The group of Owners with Non-Related Tenants has the greatest percentage (27%) of houses with only some of the facilities. (Table X Appendix E)

General appearance of the farm. An evaluation based on a general observation was made of each farm. Granting that the basis of the observation is subjective, it is nevertheless considered pertinent to obtain some general description of the farms. The evaluation was based on the general condition and appearance of: (1) the grounds surrounding the homestead, (2) the farm house, and (3) the barn and other outbuildings. Final evaluation was in terms of other farms in the surrounding area. The judgment is stated in terms of above average, average, and below average.

Relatively few of the farms were considered to be below average in the judgment of the researcher; only 14 percent fell into this lowest category. The remaining farms are relatively equally distributed between average and above average rating. None of the Non-Farm Owners have farms rated above average, while the majority of the above average farms are owned by the Owner-Operators.

### Beliefs About Farming

Farming as a way of life. Being an owner of a Centennial Farm must in some way affect the outlook toward farming

as a way of life. However, there is a range of involvement in farming among the owners, ranging from the eight who state that with the exception of their childhood they have never been a part of farming, to the six who claim that farming is the only way of life they know. Despite this range, there seemed to be a common core of elements apparent in the responses of the Centennial Farmers. These elements derived from the responses are: (1) farming is hard work; (2) there is independence in farming not found elsewhere; (3) a farm is the best place to raise a family; and (4) farming is God's way of life. There are variations of these four elements to be found in all responses, although each Centennial Farmer does not necessarily verbalize all four of the elements in his response.

Between tenure groups there are slight differences in beliefs about farming, exclusive of the core elements. The Owner-Operators tend to emphasize security, financial return and the challenge farming presents to them. As stated by one of these owners, farming provides "security against the ups and downs of our national economy." There is also a pride in the ownership of land, and the coordinating of factors of production into a successful enterprise.

A member of the Owners with Related Tenants group said of farming as a way of life: "It is essential, dignified, constructive, fascinating; the best place to rear a family;

and where you experience real neighborliness and community spirit." Another member of the same group said: "When you get rooted to one thing it's the only way of life for you." On the other hand, one admits the fact that farming is a "hard way of living if you have to do it yourself, it's better if you get a tenant."

One of the individuals in the Owners with Non-Related Tenants group states a common feeling among this group which is incorporated in the concept of independence; he advocates "the independence of man with no interference on the part of the government." Another points out that the farmer's independence is being endangered by "too many agricultural laws and bureaucrats."

Members of the Non-Farm Owners had little to contribute except that the majority appreciated what was referred to as the restfulness and the serenity of the country. Most of them had never been involved in farming except as children.

### Transmission and Succession

#### Family

Size of family. Among owners of the Centennial Farms there has been a total of 527 children born to families since settling the land. Of these, 17 had died prior to attaining the age of 14 years. In addition, there are 25 children of present owners who are not counted because they are under 14





years of age. Therefore a total of 485 children is considered in analysis.

The mean number of children to be found in Centennial Farm Families has been decreasing since the time of the original owners. For all generations of all owners there has been a mean number of 4.00 children per family. The mean has attained a peak of 5.16 for the original owners and a low of 2.74 for the present group. (Table XI Appendix E)

In each generation the families of Owners with Related Tenants has consistently had the largest mean number of children per family. This group has the largest mean (4.62) for all generations. In addition, this group has the smallest decrease from the first to the third generations; the decrease being only 1.04 children per family. On the other hand, the Non-Farm Owners who had the greatest mean number of children per family for the first generation (5.64) and the smallest for the third (2.00) had the greatest decrease in mean number of children per family; this decrease was 3.64 children.

Occupational History. Of the 485 children of all owners to be considered, slightly more than one-half, or 58 percent, have chosen farming as their occupation. Children of families in the history of the Non-Farm Owners have had a tendency to choose non-farming occupations; 62 percent of these children have done this. For each of the other three

tenure groups the balance of the choice of occupation is in favor of farming. Children of Owner-Operators and those children in the ancestry of the Owners with Related Tenants are relatively equal in their choice. Sixty-eight percent and 67 percent of the children have selected farming, respectively.

(Table XII Appendix E)

Residential history. Almost three-fourths, or 76.6 percent, of the children of all owners have remained in the local area.<sup>2</sup> Each of the tenure groups had more than two-thirds of their children become residents of the local area. The group of the Owner-Operators had the greatest percentage (84%) who remained in the local area. The group with smallest percentage (33%) of children remaining in the local area was the Non-Farm Owners.

Occupation and residence matrix. In an attempt to determine patterns of behavior for the children, the two attributes choice of occupation and residence are combined. Over one-half, or 54 percent, of all the children had farming as their occupation and they remained in the local area. This was the most common pattern of behavior. The least common pattern was that of engaging in farming outside the local area. Only 3 percent of all children were in this category. The other two patterns of non-farming in the local area and non-

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<sup>2</sup>Local area refers to the area within the boundaries of the present communities.

farming outside the local area were relatively equally chosen: 20 percent were in non-farm occupations locally, and 22 percent were in non-farm occupations outside of the local community boundaries. (Table XIII Appendix E)

Owner-Operators had the greatest percentage (68%) of their children choosing to farm locally, while the Non-Farm Owners had only 36 percent choosing the same pattern. None of the children of Owner-Operators made a choice of the Farm-non-local pattern. For the other two patterns, of non-farming in the local area and non-farming in the non-local area there is very little differentiation among the tenure groups.

When sex and marital status of the children are included with the previous attribute patterns there is a much more extensive description of the occupational and residential roles of the children. (Table XIV Appendix E)

For the first two generations in the history of the families the most common pattern to be found among the children was that of married male engaged in farming locally. The next most common pattern was similar to the first except that these children were married females farming locally. The occupation was that of their husbands. In the third generation there is a slight change in choice, although "married, male, farm, local" is still ranked first, it is now equalled by "married, male, non-farm, non-local" and the next largest group is that of "married, male, non-farm, local."

Choice of successor, Size of family has been discussed previously and it is recognized that this element affects the choice of the successor, though sex composition of the family is also pertinent in making a choice.

In all of the 101 transfers, slightly less than four-fifths (78%) of the heirs <sup>3</sup> have been sons. Only 17 percent of all transfers have gone to daughters, and the remaining transfers have been made to collateral families. (Table XV Appendix E)

There are no apparent differences between the tenure groupings relative to choice of successor. In each of them the largest percentage of heirs have been sons. Within all tenure groups some heirs have been daughters and there has been at least one case of a collateral family taking possession in each tenure group. There were seven cases of families having only one potential heir, either a son or a daughter. Four of these cases were in the Owners with Non-Related Tenants group, one case of sole heir being in each of the other tenure groups.

Birth order was considered to be important. Informants, however, were vague about the birth order of the children of original owners. Not including the seven cases mentioned previously, nearly one-half of the transfers have been made

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<sup>3</sup>Heirs refers to those children who elected to keep the farm in the family.

to the oldest child. The next greatest number of transfers have been made to children who are neither the oldest nor the youngest. Finally, there are those who as heirs were the youngest children in their families; there were five cases such as this. In total there were nine cases where the birth order was unknown. (Table XVI Appendix E)

### Property

Changes in farm size. Although many farm transfers have taken place among the Centennial Farmers, the total acreage owned has decreased only slightly. It has gone from a total of 7,580 acres owned by the original owners to a total of 7,163 acres owned by the present owners, or a decrease in size of 417 acres for the group. On the average each of the farms have been decreased by 9.4 acres. (Table XVII Appendix E) Thirteen of the forty-four farms have increased in size from the time of the original owner to the present, 28 have decreased in size, and 3 farms are the same.

The greatest increase in mean size of farms occurred in the Owners with the Related Tenant group, where the mean increase was 42.0 acres per farm. On the other hand, the Non-Farm Owners had a mean decrease of 64.6 acres per farm. None of the owner tenure groups approximated the mean size of all the present farms.

For both the farms of the original owners and those of the present owners the Owner-Operator group had the largest mean size of any of the tenure groupings. While the Non-Farm Owners had the smallest mean size for the same groups.

The slight decreases in mean farm size from the time of the original owners to the present may be misleading. What needs to be displayed is the mean acreage that was available for transfer, the share of that acreage which was passed on to the heir who kept the farm in the family, and finally, the acreage this heir, in turn, accrued for transfer. Since all tenure groups include some fourth generation owners there are at least three sets of transfers considered. As the number of generations involved increases, the number of transfers decreases.

For all owners the mean acreage available for transfer decreases with each succeeding set of transfers. At the same time, the mean number of acres received by the inheritors increases regularly. While this increase has occurred the average amount of acreage accrued by the inheritor has remained relatively the same in all transfers. (Table XVIII Appendix E)

In the transfers from the first to second generations, the Owner-Operator heirs suffered the greatest gap between mean acres available for transfer and the mean number of acres they received. On the other hand the same heirs recouped the greatest mean number of acres. The heirs of the owners with Non-Related Tenants had the smallest gap between mean acres available and the heirs of the Non-Farm Owners accrued an average of only 26.9 acres beyond the share they received. The heirs of the Owner-Operators were the only ones who accrued





a greater mean number of acres than had been made available by their predecessors. In addition this same accrued acreage was greater than any of that accrued by the other tenure groups.

In the transfers made from the second to third generations the Owner-Operator group had the largest mean number of acres available for transfer. This same group, once again, attained more acreage beyond that which they received than any of the other heirs. The heirs of Owner-Operators and Owners with Related Tenants were the only two groups who accrued more acreage than had been made available to them. The latter group accrued, beyond their mean acreage received, more than twice the mean number of acres accrued by any of the heirs of the other tenure groups. The group recovering the least mean number of acres was that of the Owners with Non-Related Tenants.

In the final set of transfers occurring between the third and fourth generations the Owner-Operator group once again had the largest mean number of acres for transfer. The heirs also accrued the largest mean number of acres of all the groups. But for the first time mean acreage accrued did not exceed mean acreage available for this group. The only group to decrease in mean size of accrued acreage was that of the Non-Farm Owners. This decrease has been consistent for all three sets of transfers. Of all the groups, the Owners with Non-Related Tenants had the greatest decrease between



mean number of acres available and the mean number of acres received. These same heirs had the greatest increase between mean acres received and mean acres accrued.

Combining all 101 transfers for all generations and all owners, it is revealed that the heirs who kept the farm in the family received, on the average, 74.3 acres less than was available. The same heirs in turn added a mean of 67.2 acres, or almost a complete replacement of the acreage which was available. Owners with Related Tenants suffered the greatest decrease in the mean share they received of the mean acreage available. This same group accrued a greater mean number of acres than any of the others. The Non-Farm Owners accrued the least mean number of acres.

#### Methods of Transmission

Pattern of transmission. There are three methods of passing on the farm, namely, settlement, testate and intestate. For all of the owners the farms have been transferred by the method of settlement twenty-two times. Testate action has taken place forty-six times and intestate action has occurred in thirty-three of the cases.

The use of settlement as a method of transfer has increased from the time of the first set of transfers to the present, while the other two methods have had only a slight change. Testate action decreased after the first set of

transfers and remained relatively the same for the next two, while intestate action remained relatively the same for the first two sets of transfers and decreased for the last set. (Table XIX Appendix E)

Owner-Operators used the method of settlement in 37 percent of their transfers, and all other tenure groups had lesser percentages. For all tenure groups, the Non-Farm Owners used testate transmission the greatest percentage (68%) of the time. Intestate action was relatively equally distributed among all groups, but Owners with Related Tenants used it 40 percent of the time, or slightly higher than any of the other groups.

In two of the cases there was only one transfer each; in twenty-seven cases there were only two transfers. In transferring the farms from generation to generation the forty-four families used 19 different orderings of transfer methods. Eight families used testate in all transfers; three families used intestate in all of their transfers; none of the families made use of settlement alone; and, all other families used some combination of the three transfer methods.

Considering all of the forty-two farms which have had two transfers per farm there are nine patterns of transfer. The modal pattern, used in nine cases was that of testate for the first and second transfers. Four other patterns which were used six times each were: Testate -- Intestate; Testate --

Settlement; Intestate -- Testate; and, Intestate -- Intestate. For the fifteen families who have engaged in three transfers, there are ten distinct inheritance patterns that were used.

(Table XX Appendix E)

Regardless of the tenure group examined there is no apparent emphasis on the use of any one pattern of transfer. Even when one considers the forty-two cases of only two transfers per family there is no concentration of patterns.

Parcellation. In the 101 transfers, parcellation of the land has taken place in 56 percent of the cases. That is, the land was divided into shares, either equally or unequally, and distributed to the heirs. In 36 percent of the transfers the land was transferred in total to one heir and the shares of other heirs were given in some other consideration. The final grouping of 8 percent were those transfers where two or more heirs received undivided interest, i.e., where the heirs shared equally in the property rights. (Table XXI Appendix E)

Why farm was kept in family. There are a multiplicity of reasons for keeping the farm in the family. However, reasons the Centennial Farm Families had for doing so may be categorized as follows: families have always been small; good management on the part of the owners; and, there has always been a member of the family interested. These categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive. However, they are

the factors considered to be important by the present owners.  
(Table XXII Appendix E)

The most common response was that someone was always interested in farming. Forty-three percent of the owners responded in this manner. All other responses were relatively equal in occurrence. For those who gave responses other than the three previously mentioned, most felt that sentimental attachment to the homestead played an important role, while others attributed keeping the farm in the family to chance. The two owners who are second generation felt that only one transfer was not a basis for judgment.

Future plans for the farm. Only 19 percent of the present owners have made wills for the disposal of their land. Although the remaining 81 percent have not made wills, most of them express the desire to keep the farm in the family. Eight of those without wills feel that their farm will go to a collateral family, and in two of the cases, the farm will go completely out of the family. One of these farms was in the process of being sold at the time of the interview; the other will go to an only child who will sell the farm because of a lack of interest in farming. The six farms which will go to the collateral family will do so because the present owners are without children and are beyond the reproductive age.  
(Table XXIII Appendix E)

## CHAPTER V

### THE CENTENNIAL FARM PROGRAM AND THE SOCIAL IMAGE

#### Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the conceptualization of the Centennial Farm idea as viewed by selected community members and the Centennial Farmers themselves. Important in determining this social image is the recognition of the concept and changes suggested in the program, if any. If there is no recognition of the program, how would the interviewees define the concept of Centennial Farm and Farmers? To supplement the foregoing questions, the informants were asked if the program should be continued or discontinued, and the reasons for their thinking. Questions pertaining to the recipients of awards whose farms were located in the informants' communities were also asked.

#### Recognition of the Concept

Following introductory remarks and an explanation of his purpose, the interviewer asked the community informant if he recognized the Centennial Farm concept. The respondent was also asked to enumerate the criteria necessary for Centennial Farm recognition.

Of the sixty community informants eighteen, or 30 percent, were able to recognize the concept definitively, i.e., as it was proposed by the Michigan Historical Commission. Twenty (33%) recognized the concept vaguely. That is, they were able to say that they had heard of the program but were able only to enumerate some of the requirements. The final grouping of twenty-two informants (37%) stated that they never heard of the concept, and hence were unable to name any of the elements in the program. In total, forty-four (70%) of the persons interviewed knew little or nothing at all of the program. (Table XXIV Appendix E)

Using the size of community in which informants' lived as a criterion, there are slight differences observed in the recognition of the concept by the selected community informants. For those communities classed as small, half of the informants recognized the concept vaguely while the remainder were divided equally on recognition, either definitively or not at all. The medium sized community interviewees were the least able of all the community groups to recognize the concept, and half of them were in this category. This grouping also shows the least number who were able to recognize the concept definitively. The number of informants of large communities who recognized the concept definitively were equal to the combined number doing so in other community categories. In none of the community groupings, however, did the majority of the informants recognize the concept definitively.





### Continuation of the Program

Both community informants and Centennial Farmers were asked if the program should be continued or discontinued. While 78 percent of the community members thought the program should be continued, less than half, (46%) of the present owners had similar feelings. Combining the two groups of informants, there were 64 percent of the 104 persons interviewed who felt that the program should go on. (Table XXV Appendix E) .

Among the tenure groups, Owners with Non-Related Tenants was the only group with more than 50 percent of its members who thought the program should not be continued. All other tenure groups were relatively equal in the percentage who thought the program should be continued.

### Reasons for Continuing the Program

Centennial Farmers. Some of the present owners felt the program should be continued without any change in requirements. Their responses were quite general in nature, as shown by the following:

"The program should be continued because it is a great morale builder for the farmers."

"Nice to get recognition for being in any area for a hundred years or more."

"Any family that can keep property that long is deserving of some recognition."

There were also those owners who were more specific in their comments. They pointed out some of the relationships

between long time ownership and the community and the land.

Some selected quotations follow:

"It contributes to the stability of farming and to the community rather than simply as a means of recognizing descendants of early pioneers."

"Long tenure on the land by one family was good for the land and would not decrease its productivity."

Others pointed out that the value of the certificate would not be affected. Illustrative of this group are the following remarks:

"The numbers eligible won't increase too greatly because most farms will go out of the family at an increasing rate in the future."

"If the program were continued there would be more recognition for the holders of awards, since the concept would become more widely known."

Community informants. The members of the community who felt the program should be continued were somewhat more expansive in their responses. Those who were favorably disposed placed emphasis on the concepts of community, family and farming. Some of these comments are as follows:

"Permanency and tenacity are essential to a small community. These values are fast disappearing from the American scene and any attempt to instill them once again is worthwhile."

"Ownership of land in one family was good for both the community and the family, both benefiting from the stability. This indicates a positive feeling toward the community."

"It gives recognition to perseverance and stirs up interest in farming and would get the children interested in keeping the farm."

Reasons for Discontinuing the Program

Centennial Farmers. Two major elements were basic to the reasons given for discontinuing the program. The first was based on a recognition of the pioneering spirit of the original owners, and the second was in relation to the conceived value of the award. Those interested in the first element said:

"To continue the program would no longer give recognition to the struggle of the early settlers."

"Early settlers should be given recognition. Especially those who came prior to 1835, since the others haven't contributed as much."

Those who were concerned with the value of the certificate made responses such as:

"Keep the numbers small and uphold the value of the certificate."

"Keep down the number of awards, and make it more valuable to future generations, and it may serve as a reason for keeping the farm in the family."

Still other Centennial Farmers felt that it wouldn't make too much difference if the awards were discontinued, because they were of the opinion that not too many farms would become eligible in the future.

Community informants. Some of these informants gave the same reasons for discontinuance as did the Centennial Farmers. However, the majority had an entirely different emphasis in their reasons. Some of the informants said:

"The program was designed to recognize the early settlers of Michigan, to continue the awards would defeat the purpose of the program."

"There is a distinction between continuity and pioneering."

Most members deemphasized the criterion of continuity and substituted in its place a criterion of community contribution. In view of this feeling they made the following remarks:

"One hundred years of ownership doesn't prove a family's value. There is the need for an award for outstanding contribution rather than one for continuity."

"Continuity is no indication of living in and contributing to the community. The awards should be made to outstanding community members."

#### Suggestions for Change

Centennial Farmers. Some suggestions for changes in the criteria of eligibility have been implied in the preceding remarks. Regarding needed changes suggested by this group most of the emphasis was in reference to operatorship. Some said:

"The program should be restricted to owner-operators, since all other are not following in the footsteps of the early settlers."

"Continue the program with the reservation that only owner-operators receive the award."

"There are too many people who aren't farmers who are getting the award."

Community informants. The responses of suggested change made by the community informants were much more



diversified than were those made by Centennial Farmers. Some of the community members wanted to broaden the program by expanding the definition to include townspeople. One of them remarked:

"The program should be broader to include townspeople. Then really deserving people would get recognition. Many people would be eligible but for the fact that they don't live on farms, and those who do, don't farm."

Other informants emphasized the need to give recognition to those families who had spent a specified number of generations in the area. One informant said:

"Restrict the award to three generations of owners. Long tenure is good for the land. Not necessary for the owners to contribute overtly to the community, the fact that the families stayed so long was a contribution in itself."

Many of the community informants thought that a significant change to incorporate into the program would be the element of operatorship. Some suggested that only top quality operators receive the award. One of the respondents epitomized this feeling by saying:

"The occupation of farming should be raised to a higher level and that any sort of recognition would be of assistance. The historical aspect in itself was unimportant. It is more important to recognize 'good' farmers. The program should be restricted to owner-operators, at least, as any others contributed very little to the community."

"Another excellent setp in creating interest in farming. Would restrict it to owner-operators as absentee ownership is bad for the land and the community."

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Community Recognition of Centennial Farmers

The community informants were asked if they recognized the names of the owners of the Centennial Farms located in their community. Each of the Centennial Farmers had a potential number of five recognitions.

Slightly more than one-fourth of the forty-four owners were recognized by all five of the community informants, while the remainder were identified by less than five informants in each case. Considering this problem of recognition by size of community, there is an inverse relationship between community size and total recognition. In other words as size of community increases, recognition decreases. In the small communities almost three-fifths of the Centennial Farm owners were identified by all community informants. In the medium sized communities half of their Farmers were recognized by all, and, in the large communities approximately one-tenth of the Farmers were recognized by each of the five informants. (Table XXVI Appendix E)

Simple recognition of the Centennial Farmer's name does not indicate subjective evaluation on the part of the community informant. In cases where Centennial Farmers were recognized by less than five, the respondents based their recognition on a vague recollection of having heard or read the name somewhere. Recognition by these informants was not necessarily based on the community contribution of the Centennial Farmers in question.

In cases where the name of the Centennial Farmer was recognized by all of the informants, recognition was supplemented by an evaluation of the farmer's participation and contribution to the community. In almost all of these cases the Farmer was considered a positive contributor to the community and generally was extremely active in community affairs. In a few cases the owners also received recognition for their contribution beyond the local level. One was a state legislator, another is at present serving in that capacity, and another holds a high level position in state education.

#### Tenure and Size of Community

Of the forty-four Centennial Farms, seven are found in small communities, ten are in the medium sized communities, and, twenty-seven are part of the large communities.

(Table XXVII Appendix E)

The small communities have the greatest proportions of the Owner-Operators and owners with related tenants; no Non-Farmers are found here. The medium sized communities have the largest proportion of Non-Farmers and the smallest proportion of Owner-Operators. The large communities have the greatest share of Owners with Non-Related Tenants.

## CHAPTER VI

### PATTERNING OF CHARACTERISTICS WITHIN TENURE GROUPS

#### Introduction

The characteristics of Centennial Farms and Centennial Farmers have been discussed previously. As each element was analyzed, emphasis was placed on one or more tenure groups in which the element was outstanding.

The purpose of this chapter is to treat each of the tenure groups as a separate entity in order to illustrate the patterning of attributes significant in a description of that group. The fact that four distinct tenure groups exist gives greater meaning to the data when treated in this manner.

#### Owner Operators

Personal characteristics. The ten members of this group are farmers, maintaining a permanent residence on the Centennial Farm. Nine of the operators are men, while the other is a woman who may be classed as an owner-manager in that she uses hired help and none of her land is in any other form of tenancy. Her relationship to the land places her in the category of owner-operator.

Six of the owners are married, three are single, and one is widowed. With respect to education, four have had all or part of grade school, two have had partial or completed high school training, while the remaining four have had some or all of a college education.

The age of these operators ranges from thirty-five to seventy-four years, with a mean age of 54.0 years. Half of the owners fall into the group below fifty-five years of age, and eight of them are below the normal retirement age of sixty-five.

Six operators belong to neither community nor farm organizations. Of the four Owner-Operators belonging, two are members of one or more community organizations, while all four belong to one or more farm organizations.

Ownership and tenure. None of the owners hold life estate. One is acquiring his farm under a purchase contract arrangement with his father. Three share ownership with their siblings, while the remaining owners maintain sole ownership. All of the tillable land possessed is being farmed.

Farm evaluation. Nine of the houses located on the Centennial Farms of Owner-Operators have all five facilities thought to be essential for comfort. One house, at the other extreme, has none of these facilities. The general appearance of seven farms was regarded as being above average and the appearance of two was average. One Farm which was considered low average completely lacked facilities in the house.

Beliefs about farming. The Owner-Operators looked upon farming as a difficult way to make a living, but in most cases agreed that it was the only type of work they knew how to do. They spoke of pride in ownership and the test of their abilities as offered by farming. To them, the land provided security from want.

Family. Considering only the first three generations of Owner-Operators, the average number of children per family was 3.72. For these families in each generation respectively, the mean number of children was 5.10, 3.70 and 2.22. A noticeable decrease, or a mean loss of 2.88 children, may be observed comparing first and third generation families.

There are seven fourth generation owners in this group. Of these, three have completed families, with a total of seven children. Two owners, not necessarily having completed families, have a total of eight children, and two owners of this generation are single.

Slightly more than two-thirds of the 108 children representing all generations have chosen farming as their primary occupation. Thirty-five of the children decided upon non-farming employment. Those who remained in the local community number ninety-one, while a total of seventeen migrated permanently.

Combining the attributes of occupation and residence, it is found that of the total number of children of all the



owners none elected to farm outside the local area. The decision of non-farm local and non-farm, non-local was relatively equally divided among thirty-five children.

By the addition of the attributes of sex and marital status to the foregoing properties, the pattern of bio-social characteristics found most frequently for the entire group is that of "male, married, farm, local." Forty-two cases fitted this pattern. The next most frequent pattern is that of "female, married, farm, local" which includes twenty-five cases. For each of the three generations considered the same two bio-social characteristic patterns remain predominant.

Of the twenty-seven transfers, slightly more than three-fourths of the owners named sons as heirs.<sup>1</sup> Daughters were chosen as heirs in five of the transfers. In one case a collateral family was the successor. Slightly more than one-half the total transfers were made to oldest children, of which one case was an only child, while approximately one-tenth of the transfers were made to the youngest child.

Property. A total of 1900 acres, or farms which had a mean acreage of 190.0 comprised the holdings of the original owners. During the passage of years and the increasing number of transfers, the farms have augmented in size to a total of

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<sup>1</sup>Reference to the heir indicates the one who elected to keep the farm in the family.

220 acres. Having an average of 222.0 acres at present, there is an increment of 32.0 acres per farm.

From the time of the original owner, the difference between mean acres available and mean acres received has been decreasing in each transfer. In the first two transfers between generations the mean acreage accrued by the heirs was always greater than that available to them. For the final set of transfers, however, the mean acreage accrued was slightly less than the mean average to them.

Methods of transmission. For the owner-operators as a group, the majority of the transfers were by will or other type of settlement prior to the owner's demise. Slightly less than one-third of the owners have resorted to the use of intestate action. With each succeeding set of transfers, among all generations, the use of intestate action has diminished; at the same time, the use of settlement of some form has increased.

All cases had a minimum of two transfers. The most prominent type of transfer from the first to second and from the second to third generation was that of intestate action. Among those cases having three sets of transfers the most utilized pattern was that of "intestate, settlement, settlement." A little more than one-half of the transfers resulted in some degree of land parcellation. In one case the transfer gave the heirs undivided interest, the remaining transfers were made without parcellation of land.



According to the majority of owners, the farm was kept in the family because one of the family members in each generation was interested in farming. Even though all of the owners desire to keep the farm in the family, only two have prepared wills for the disposition of the property. Three of these owner-operators are single and, as such, not members of a family of precreation. They expressed the opinion that their farms in all likelihood would go to a member of the family of orientation.

#### Owners with Related Tenants

Personal characteristics. Ownership of the ten farms found in this group is equally divided between men and women. All of the owners are over sixty-five years of age, ranging from sixty-five to ninety-five years. The mean age is 76.0 years. All but one of the owners has been married at one time but five of them are now widowed.

Half of the owners have been limited to partial or complete grade school education. Only one of the others has gone as far as attending either all or part of college.

All of the male owners in this group are retired from farming. Three of the females are housewives but their deceased spouses were active as farmers. Of the other two women who are owners, one is a business and professional person, while the other is a clerical worker. All but one of the owners reside on farms. The remaining one lives in the trade center of her community.

All but two of these owners are members of some organization, either farm or community in nature. Five of the owners are members of one or more farm organizations. Six of them belong to one or more community organizations.

Ownership and tenure. The majority of these owners maintain sole ownership rights in their land. One of them has life estate; another has a shared interest.

Four-fifths of these owners have only verbal contracts with their related tenants. The two written agreements are between an owner and his son and an owner and his son-in-law. The verbal agreements are with five sons, two sons-in-law, and one grand-nephew. Three of the owners receive cash only for the use of their land, the remainder receive a share of the crops only. All of the tillable acreage owned by this group is being farmed by the related tenants.

Farm evaluation. Eight of the Centennial Farm houses of this group had all facilities which were considered to be necessary for comfort. The other two houses have only some of the facilities. Electricity is present in all of them. At least half of the farms were rated as average in appearance, four above average, and one below average.

Beliefs about farming. As a group, these owners concurred with what is known as the Agrarian Creed. They express a feeling of a nearness to God, and verbalize in a spiritual vein the joys of farming. The necessity of working with their

hands as well as the emphasis placed on accomplishing an honest day's work further substantiate their belief in farming as the chosen way of life.

Family. The history of these families for three generations is characterized by a large number of children as well as a slight decrease in their average size. There is a mean decrease of 1.04 children per family when comparing the mean number of children for first and third generations. The averages for these units are 5.20 and 4.16, respectively. The only fourth generation owner in this category has two grown children. This family is considered to be complete.

Of the total of 111 children in this group, two-thirds have chosen farming as their major occupation, the remainder choosing non-farm means of support. Almost three-fourths of the children have remained in their home community.

Three-fifths of the children found in this group have chosen farming in the local area. The next most common pattern, non-farming occupation in a non-local area, accounts for a little more than one-fifth of the children.

Adding sex and marital status to the aforementioned attributes, the most common bio-social pattern for the children of all generations was that of "male, married, farm, local." Second in rank was that pattern of "female, married, farm, local." With each succeeding generation, however, the element of non-local residence became more prevalent for both males and females.



In more than three-fourths of all the transfers, a son was elected to keep the farm in the family. In slightly greater than one-fifth of the cases a daughter was placed in the same position. There were two cases of a collateral family taking possession. Almost all of the total transfers were made to oldest children, one of whom was an only child; no cases of the youngest child as heir occurred.

Property. The original owners of this group had a total of 1,720 acres, or an average of 172.0 acres per farm. These original holdings have been increased to 2,140 acres, or to a mean size farm of 214.0 acres, indicating a mean increase of 42.0 acres per farm.

For the first set of transfers the heirs who chose to keep the farm in the family received less than one-half of the mean acreage available, in turn accruing slightly less mean acres than were bestowed. The second set of transfers, occurring between the second and third generations, resulted in Centennial Farm Family heirs receiving a mean acreage exactly half of which was available for transfer. In turn, they had an average increment of 48.2 acres than were available. Transfers between the third and fourth generations were limited to one, the heir receiving all the available acreage, and neither increasing or decreasing his holdings.

Method of transmission. Of the twenty transfers which occurred, two-fifths were intestate. In the transfers between

generations there were no consistent choices of method of transfer; testate was the most common method used for the first set of transfers, the element of intestate action was predominant in the second set of transfers and, settlement was utilized in the single case in the third set.

Testate action was employed by one case having only one transfers taking place. Another single case having three transfers within the family utilized all forms of transfer in the following sequence: intestate, testate and settlement. Each of the other cases involved two sets of transfers having no definite patterning of transfer action.

Three-fourths of the farms underwent parcellation of land of varying degrees while one-fifth of the farms were passed on as units. The remaining proportion involved a number of heirs having the land in undivided interest.

Most of these owners felt that the family retained their farms as the result of some family member's interest. One owner attributed good management on the part of the previous owners as his reason, while another said it was due to a sentimental attachment for the land.

Even though the present owners express a desire to keep the farm in the family, eight of them have not made wills or used other forms of settlement. With the exception of one owner, all have children who can succeed them to ownership of the farm.

### Owners with Non-Related Tenants

Personal characteristics. The fifteen owners having non-related tenants, range in age from forty-five to eighty-four years, with a mean age of 66.0 years. Two-thirds of these owners are over sixty-five years of age. The ratio of male to female owners in this group is eleven to seven.

Slightly less than an eighth of the owners have never married, three-fifths are at present married, and the remainder are widowed. All owners have had at least some part of high school education. The greatest proportion of the owners have completed high school and have gone on to college.

The members in this group have a diversity of occupations. The largest proportion, however, is in the retired category. The second most predominant occupational group is business and professional, and a little more than a fourth of the owners operate at this level. Four of the owners are equally divided between housewife and clerical-laborer.

Almost three-fourths of the owners with Non-Related Tenants group live on their Centennial Farms. Three of the group reside in cities and one lives in a village. Slightly more than one-half of these owners do not belong to any organization. One-fourth are members of one or more farm organizations and, three-fifths belong to one or more community organizations.

Ownership and tenure. A little less than-one-half of the owners have sole ownership in their property. The largest percentage however, share their ownership rights with others.





The group as a whole have a total of 2,079 acres, not all of which are farmed. Approximately one-eighth, or 269 acres are idle.

One-third of the tenants operate the land under a written agreement with the owners. All of these owners are or have been members of occupations which are legalistic in nature. Included in the foregoing are an insurance agency owner, a former state legislator, a banker, a widow whose husband was a lawyer, and the owner of an advertising agency. The owners who have verbal contracts have major endeavors of a less legalistic nature, as for example, nurse, school teachers, and retired farmers.

The length of time since a member of the family has operated the farms ranges from four to sixty years. The average is 16.6 years.

Farm evaluation. All facilities considered essential are found in approximately three-fourths of the houses located on Centennial Farms. Of the remainder, all of the houses have electricity with some combination of the other facilities. The number of farms rated as above average equals that of those rated average. Only one farm was below average in appearance.

Belief about farming. Most of the owners have not been farmers, but had spent some of their childhood on farms. Their expressions about farming ranged from the individual who was



happy because his children had chosen occupations other than farming, to the one who verbalized all of the elements of the Agrarian Creed. Two of the owners looked upon their farms as an interesting hobby, one of them stating that it was a nice restful place where he could raise a few chickens for a pastime. The most common statement made by these owners referred to the independence and serenity to be found in the country.

Family. The difference in mean number of children between the first and second generations is 1.95. The average number of children per family was 4.86 and 2.91, respectively. Two of the five fourth generation owners are without children and the other three have a total of nine children. All of these owners have completed families.

In the history of these owners, a little more than one-half of the children have selected farming as their major occupation. For these same children, approximately three-fourths have remained in the local area.

Combining occupation and residence, only slightly more than one-half of all the children have chosen to farm in the local area. Almost one-fifth of the children remained in the local area, but in occupations other than farming. A similar number of children migrated from the local area to enter non-farming occupations.

Adding sex and marital status to the two previously mentioned attributes, the most commonly observed pattern among

all the children was that of "male, married, farming, local." For the children of the first and second generation owners there was a similar finding. The children of the third generation, however, fall into the pattern of "male, married, non-farm, non-local."

In more than four-fifths of the thirty-five transfers occurring in this group, the sons have elected to keep the farm in the family. Of the remaining transfers one went to a collateral family, while the remainder went to daughters. Three-fifths of the total transfers were made to the oldest child, four cases being only children, and in one case of the twenty-one, the youngest child was made heir.

Property. The farms of these owners have decreased in size from a total of 2,565 acres to a present acreage of 2,079, or, from an average sized farm of 171.0 acres to one of 138.6 acres.

Only in the set of transfers from the third to fourth generations have the heirs accrued a greater mean acreage than they received. For all generations, the heirs who kept the farm in the family accrued a mean of 53.6 acres. On the other hand, they received an average of 69.7 acres less than were available.

Methods of transmission. For the transfers occurring between all generations, approximately one-half were by testate action, one-fifth were by a form of settlement, and the remaining were intestate cases.

The use of testate action has been most predominant for each set of transfers between all generations. At the same time the occurrence of intestate action has decreased with each succeeding set of transfers, while the use of settlement has remained relatively the same.

In the sole case having one transfer occurring, testate action was utilized. Wherever two transfers took place in any family, the methods were equally divided between the patterns of testate-testate and testate-intestate.

In almost half of the transfers, the farm was passed on as a unit, while in a little more than two fifths of the transfers some parcellation took place. Ownership interest was undivided in less than one-tenth of the transfers.

A third of the owners believed that their farm was kept in the family because the past families had few children. Another third of the group attributed the fact of continuity of ownership to good management practices on the part of the previous owners. The others thought continuity might have occurred either because some family member was always interested, or because of sentimental attachment to the homestead.

Approximately three-fourths of this group of owners have not prepared wills or entered into any form of settlement for keeping the farm in the family. Three owners, two unmarried and one married but without children, feel that their farm will revert to the family of orientation.

### Non-Farm Owners

Personal characteristics. All five females of the nine non-farm owners are over sixty-five years of age. The four male members are relatively evenly distributed in the age range of thirty-five to seventy-four years. As a group the mean age is 71.5 years, with two-thirds of the group members beyond sixty-five. All of these owners have been married at one time. At present, however, four of the female owners are widowed.

Educationally, two owners have had some college training. Three have had partial or complete high school work, while the remaining four have had all or part of grade school. All five females are considered to be housewives. One male owner has retired from farming. One is classed in the professional category and two are clerical-laborers.

All of the members of this group live on their Centennial Farm. However, only eight of the owners live in the open-country. The ninth owner lives in a city, a result of the recent expansion of the city limits.

Two-thirds of these owners are not affiliated with any organization. Of the owners who do belong to organizations, all are members of one or more community organizations. One owner is a member of one or more farm organizations.

Ownership and tenure. The majority of owners maintain sole ownership rights in their land. Two have life estates and one has shared ownership.



None of the 724 acres owned by this group is being put to any farm use. But, this is not to say that there is no utility of the land, as the owners have diverse reasons for not farming.

The number of years since a member of the family had operated any of these farms ranged from one to twenty-eight years, with an average of 14.6 years of non-farm activity. Four of these farms have been out of family operation for twenty years or more.

Farm evaluation. All facilities deemed necessary were found in the farm houses located on the Centennial Farms for this group. Even so, no farm ranked above average in general appearance. Two-thirds were considered average while the remainder were below average.

Beliefs about farming. Since a few of these people had spent most of their lives in cities, they had only childhood memories on which to base a personal judgement regarding farming as a way of life. The others in this non-farm group stated that farming was a difficult but fruitful way of life and mentioned the belief that there was a nearness to God.

Family. The first generation owners had large families, or an average of 5.64 children per family. In the third generation, however, these families had been decreased by a mean of 3.64 children per family, or to an average of 2.00 children.



One of the two fourth generation families in this group is considered complete, the owner having one grown child. The other owner has three pre-school children and this family may yet increase in size.

For all owners, almost two-thirds of the total number of children have chosen non-farming occupations. At the same time, two-thirds have remained in the local area. Combining residence and occupation, the distribution of the children is relatively equally dispersed among "farm, local", "non-farm, local"; and, "non-farm, non-local."

Adding to the two previously mentioned characteristics, those of sex and marital status, the most frequent pattern for all children of all generations was "male, married, farm, local." Closely following this, the next most common patterns are, by rank: "male, married, non-farm, non-local;" "female, married, farm, local;" "female, married, non-farm, local" and, "female, married, non-farm, non-local."

According to individual generations, the most common patterning of bio-social characteristics found in the first was "male, married, farm, local;" in the second, "female, married, non-farm, local;" and, in the third, "male, married, non-farm, local."

A son, in more than two-thirds of the cases, inherited and kept the farm in the family. In slightly more than one-fourth of the cases, a daughter was placed in the same position.

The introduction of a collateral family into the line of descent occurred only once. Thirteen of the nineteen transfers were made to oldest children, one case being an only child, while no transfers were made to the youngest child.

Property. Beginning with a total of 1,395 acres, these farms have been decreased approximately by one-half, since the present owners now have a total of 724 acres. There has been a decline from an average of 155.0 acres owned by the first generation to the present average of 80.4 acres.

In each generation the number of acres available for transfer has decreased: A corollary of this, the mean number of acres accrued by the heirs also has decreased. While from the first to second generations the mean acreage received by heirs has diminished by more than one-half, there has been a slight gain in that mean acreage received between the second and third generations.

Method of transmission. Testate action has occurred in more than two-thirds of the transfers for this group. The use of a will was most common for the first generation, decreasing in use slightly by the second and third generations. As the use of the form of testate action diminished, the use of intestate action increased. Disposition by settlement occurred only once.

The most frequent pattern of transmission that has taken place has been that of testate action by first generation

owners, followed by intestate action by second generation owners. Considering those of the group having two transfers, the previous pattern has occurred in six of the transfers.

A little less than two-thirds of the transfers resulted in parcellation of the land, while in slightly more than one-fifth of the transfers there was non-parcellation. In about one-sixth of the cases there was undivided interest as an end in the inheritance practice.

While a third of present owners are of the opinion that the farm was kept in the family because there was always someone interested, more than one-half of them gave other reasons which included sentimental attachment to the homestead, chance alone, and small families.

None of the nine non-farm owners have prepared wills for the future disposition of their land. Those owners who have platted or intend to plat the land for residential purposes, express the desire to keep the homestead in the family. Another owner feels that once her only child acquires the farm he will sell it because of a lack of interest in farming. Still another who hasn't any children was in the process of putting all of her land up for sale. The remaining owners simply hope the land will stay in the family.

## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

American agricultural land policy-makers have, from the inception of our nation to the present time, been directing their efforts toward the realization of the goal of a nation of farmers who are owner-operators. In the sample population of forty-four Centennial Farmers, all of the original owners were owner-operators. However, the passage of time with its many intervening variables, has resulted in the tenure of many of the present owners being far removed from the expected ideal.

This observed deviation from the assumption that Centennial Farmers were owner-operators made it necessary to develop a means of analysis which would demonstrate some of the characteristics which have contributed to the tenure status of the present owners. For this reason, four independent analytical constructs based upon management of the land were derived from the data available on the present owners. The four constructs were arranged along a continuum from owner-operator to non-farm owners. These constructs were: (1) Owner-Operators, those owners who were operating all of the land they owned; (2) Owners with Related Tenants, those owners not engaged in farming but renting out their land to related

tenants; (3) Owners with Non-Related Tenants, those owners not engaged in farming but renting out their land to non-related tenants; and, (4) Non-Farm Owners, those owners whose land is not being used in any farming endeavor.

Slightly more than one-fifth of the present owners meet the expectations of the policy-makers; a similarly sized group, the Owners with Related Tenants, closely approximates the ideal in agricultural land policy. The Owners with Non-Related Tenants group comprises a little more than one-third of the population. The Non-Farm Owners group, which is farthest removed from the ideal, consists of about one-fifth of the present owners.

The development of these independent variables presents two problems of analysis, the first problem is to demonstrate the internal patterning of selected characteristics of the Centennial Farm Families for each of the independent variables. The second is to observe the differences among the independent variables for selected characteristics of the Centennial Farm Families. Within this chapter there is a summary of the findings for each of the objectives, and also, the presentation of hypotheses for future research.

Figure 1. presents, succinctly, the patterning of the characteristics as they were observed in each of the independent variables. This is a summary of the patterns as they were presented in Chapter VI.

FIG. 1 - Summary of Selected Characteristics of Centennial Farmers, Farms and Families by Tenure Groups, 1950

Characteristic	Owner Operators	Related Tenants	Non-Related Tenants	Non-Farm
Number	10	10	15	9
PRESENT OWNERS				
Age range in years	35 to 74	65 to 94	45 to 84	35 to 74
Mean age in years	54.0	76.0	66.0	71.5
Occupation				
Farmer	10	0	0	0
Retired	0	5	6	1
Housewife	0	3	2	5
Bus. & Prof.	0	1	5	1
Clerical-Laborer	0	1	2	2
Residence on Centennial Farm	10	9	11	8
Marital Status				
Married	6	5	9	5
Widowed	1	5	4	4
Single	3	0	2	0
Education				
Grade School	4	5	0	4
High School	2	4	6	3
College and other	4	1	9	2
Number belonging to community organizations	2	6	9	3
Number belonging to farm organizations	4	5	4	1
Type of Ownership				
Sole	6	8	7	6
Shared	3	1	8	2
Purchase Contract	1	0	0	0
Life Estate	0	1	0	1

Characteristic	Owner Operators	Related Tenants	Non-Related Tenants	Non-Farm
<b>FARM EVALUATION</b>				
Facilities in House				
All	5	8	11	9
Some	4	2	4	0
None	1	0	0	0
Appearance of Farm				
Above average	7	4	7	0
Average	2	5	7	6
Below average	1	1	1	3
<b>CENTENNIAL FAMILY</b>				
Decrease in mean number of persons from original family to present family	2.28	1.04	1.95	3.64
Occupation				
Approximate proportion of all children who chose farming	2/3	2/3	1/2	1/3
Residence				
Approximate proportion of all children remaining in the local area	4/5	3/4	3/4	2/3
Predominant relationship of successor	Son	Son	Son	Son
Predominant birth order position of successor	Oldest	Oldest	Oldest	Oldest

Characteristic	Owner Operators	Related Tenants	Non-Related Tenants	Non-Farm
<b>FARM</b>				
Change in mean size of holdings from original owner to present	Increase 32.0 acres	Increase 42.0 acres	Decrease 32.4 acres	Decrease 74.6 acres
Method of transfer used most frequently	Settlement	In-testate	Testate	Testate
Proportion of transfers resulting in land parcellation	1/2	3/4	1/2	2/3
Proportion of owners who have prepared wills	1/5	1/5	1/4	none
<b>BELIEFS ABOUT FARMING</b>	Farming is a hard way of life which provides a challenge to the ability of the owner. Land provides security from want and a pride in ownership.	They concur with the elements of the Agrarian Creed	The open country with its peacefulness and serenity is a good place to retire to.	Little basis for judgement mostly childhood memories. Farming is hard but fruitful.



Relative to the second objective, that of comparing the independent variables by selected characteristics, the following is presented.

The age of the present owners plays a significant role in the relationship of the owner to his land. Because of age the Centennial Farmers are not as active as would be necessary to realize the ideal of owner-operator. Assuming a normal retirement age of sixty-five years, the research demonstrates that almost two-thirds of the present owners are beyond this age level. By excluding the owner-operators, the proportion is raised to three-fourths beyond sixty-five years. Obviously, age affects the productive efficiency of the farm operator. At fifty-five years his production is cut to three-fourths and decreases rapidly with increasing age. One-half of the Owner-Operators are more than fifty-five years of age. Considering the widows whose husbands farmed, all of the retired farmers and the present owner-operators, only a small proportion of the present owners are or have been engaged in non-farm occupations.

Sex of the owners is a limiting factor when there is a delineation of tenure relationships. A third of the present owners are women, only one of whom is an owner-operator. This proportion meeting the ideal is below that of the nation as a whole but, as four-fifths of the women in this study are over sixty-five years of age the fact that they are not operators is to be expected.

It appears from this study that the Centennial Farmers differ in their choice of residence from the expected pattern. As they become older and retire, farmers tend to migrate to villages and towns for their remaining years. Only one-tenth of the present owners, however, are residents of villages and towns, and not all of the cases involved are retired. This socio-psychological desire to remain on the farm may be a direct result of an attachment to the land and, specifically, to the homestead which has been, for so long, an integral part of the individual's development.

The Centennial Farm homesteads were equipped with most of the facilities considered to be necessary for comfort. Only one house lacked all facilities. The farms as a group rated at least average or better in appearance. Only a little more than a tenth of them were below average.

Differences in educational attainment does not seem to be a relevant contributory characteristic to the present tenure status of the Centennial Farmers. Attainment is relatively equally distributed among grade school, high school, and college for all owners. However, the Owners with Non-Related Tenants group tends to have the highest educational level.

The present owners had very little objective information available on the original settlers of their farms prior to the arrival of these settlers in Michigan. Such questions as age of original owner at time of migration, occupation in

place of origin, and reasons for migration were largely unanswered. However, comments on the original owners indicate that they were from old-line American families without a clear-cut ethnic identification.

The original owners came to Michigan with the intention of settling permanently. Slightly more than nine-tenths of the original owners were married prior to their migration. The remainder married after settling in Michigan.

Centennial Farmers differ slightly from the ideal in type of ownership, the greatest differentiation comes with the Owners with Non-Related Tenants group. The early makers of land policy considered sole ownership as the means of exerting the greatest control over the use and disposition of the land. More than three-fifths of the present owners maintain sole ownership; less than a third have shared ownership. The Owners with Non-Related Tenants group reverses these positions. A little more than half the owners in this group share ownership and the remainder have sole ownership.

Those owners who have tenants operating their farms neglect good business practice by their limited use of a written agreement. Only a little more than one-fourth of these owners make use of a written contract, the remainder using verbal agreements. The Owners with Non-Related Tenants group tends to use the written form more frequently than the Owners with Related Tenants group.

For this generation more than half the Centennial Farms have not been operated in an agricultural pursuit by family members. The time span of this occurrence ranges from one to sixty years, with a mean of 17.1 years.

The size, in acres, of the original farm may have been contributory to the tenure status of the present owner. Although all of the original owners were owner-operators they are distributed according to the position of the present owners in the analytical constructs. Moving along the tenure continuum, from owner-operator to non-farm, one finds that the mean size of the farms decreases. This decrease in mean size is observed for both the farms of the original and present owners. The farms of the original owners had a decrease in average size from 190.0 acres for Owner-Operators to one of 155.0 acres for the Non-Farm Owners. The present owners' diminution of mean acres is 222.0 to 80.4, respectively.

Both Owner-Operators and Owners with Related Tenants have augmented the mean size of their farms, while the group of Owners with Non-Related Tenants and Non-Farm Owners have allowed their farms to decrease in size. The former groups appear to have greater motivation to increase their acreage, while the latter groups seem little concerned with size of farm. It would seem natural that non-farmers would not be concerned with increasing acreage. In fact they may be more interested in decreasing the size of their holdings.

For all owners of all generations there has been a major problem to be faced at some time in their tenure of ownership--how to dispose of one farm to a number of children. The data indicate that the majority of owners assumed an equalitarian point-of-view, that is, to give each of their children an equal share of the estate. To further complicate matters there was the additional problem of providing for the spouse when necessary. This equalitarian end is certainly consistent with the democratic way of life of this nation, but the means chosen by these owners were not always consistent with a policy of providing the potential heir some security in the land.

Similar to families in the general population the Centennial Farm Families have been decreasing in size since the time of the original owners. The decrease is smallest in the families of Owners with Related Tenants while the greatest decrease appears in the families of Non-Farmers. The mean differences between original and present owners for these two groups are 1.04 and 3.64 persons, respectively.

Although none of the means of transfer are outstanding, the use of settlement as a means has been increasing since the time of the first set of transfers. This is particularly true of Owner-Operators. For all the owners almost a fifth used some form of settlement, and slightly less than half the owners used a will. A third of the owners delayed their plans for

disposition too long, either voluntarily or involuntarily, and upon their demise the transfer took the form of intestate action.

Even though the use of settlement as a means of transfer has been increasing, it is likely that it will soon decrease in incidence. This is substantiated when one considers the age of the present owners as well as the fact that a little more than half of the farms are no longer operated by family members. This is particularly true when one recognizes that four-fifths of the present owners have not made any concrete plans for the disposal of their property.

No tenure group, in the time span under consideration, utilized a common transference pattern. Rather each owner made his decision in relation to the particular situation of his family.

Centennial Farms have not necessarily been passed on from generation to generation as going concerns. Over one-half of the transfers have resulted in parcellation of the land. Less than a tenth have been transferred to two or more heirs in undivided interest. In only a third of the cases has one heir received the land in its entirety.

Generally, the son has elected to keep the farm in the family. This relationship of the successor to the owner prevails in all tenure groups. Almost four-fifths of all the successors were sons. It is interesting to note that among

the daughters who took over the farm almost all of them had male siblings. Relatively few of the farms went to collateral families.

Birth order position of the heir does not seem to play a significant role in determining who will carry on the farm. Over half the heirs were the oldest child, but this includes seven cases of an only child. The youngest child rarely took over the farm, while the child in the middle took over the farm in a third of the cases. Succession is more likely to be dependent upon which child has an interest in the farm and wants to continue farming on the home farm. This is confirmed by the claim of a little less than half the owners, who thought the farm was kept in the family because someone was always interested in doing so. Only a fifth of the owners attributed this process of long time tenure to good management. An even smaller proportion gave credit to the existence of small families in their history.

The majority of the children in the Centennial Farm Families remained in residence in the local area. By tenure groups the proportion of children remaining in the local area decreases as one moves from the owner-operator group to the non-farm group. The children of all the owners however have been included to chose farming as their major occupation. Almost three-fifths of the children have done so. An examination of occupation by tenure group results in a finding similar

to the one described for choice of residence: as one moves away from the ideal of owner-operator the proportion of children remaining in farming decreases.

Combining the two attributes of occupation and residence results in the conclusion that those children who remain in the local area select farming as their occupation, while those who migrate chose non-farming pursuits. The highest proportion among those who remain in the local area but do not farm is found among the children of Non-Farm Owners.

There is no evident concentration of any Centennial Farm tenure group in relation to size of community. However, within the small towns in the study there are no Non-Farm Owners. In the medium sized communities the number of cases found in each tenure group increases along the continuum from Owner-Operators to Non-Farm Owners. Within the large communities the most prevalent group is that of Owner with Non-Related Tenants.

The present Centennial Farmers and the families from which they came have not been very active in community affairs. One-half of the present owners belong to farm organizations and two-fifths are members of community organizations. Little evidence was available on any positive contribution of the past owners.

Approximately a fourth of the names of Centennial Farm Owners were recognized by all informants in the owners'



community. One of the factors involved in recognition was the contribution of the owners to the community rather than ownership of the farms.

The Centennial Farm concept was not well recognized by community informants. Less than a third of the informants were able to define the concept as defined by the Michigan Historical Commission. The remainder included those informants who were uncertain of the criteria for recognition, and some informants were completely unaware of the existence of the program.

The present concept of Centennial Farmer would be changed by the community informants to better fit their scheme of what was important to recognition. Residence on the farm was the most important change mentioned. Extended continuity of ownership was a positive value, but was not meaningful to a community. To give a greater emphasis to residence, particularly in the small towns, the informants would extend the program to include townspeople. Feeling that an owner-operator would have more of a vested interest in his community, the community informants second criterion was that of farm management. Some felt that only 'good' operators should receive recognition regardless of how long the farm had been in the family. According to their values, namely, farm residence and management, they fear that a recognition of continuity of ownership may tend to give recognition to absentee-owners.

The present owners view the program differently. There is little concern over questions of residence and management as criteria for recognition. Those who would discontinue the program would do so because of a feeling that "early" settlers of Michigan would not be properly recognized.

As a group the present owners verbalize their belief in the Agrarian Creed. Farming as a way of life to them means hard work, independence and a nearness to God.

#### Hypotheses for Future Research

This summary statement is brought to a close with the presentation of hypotheses for future research. These hypotheses are a result of insights obtained in this study on Centennial Farms. Each of the hypotheses presented is to be considered in terms of the qualifications for recognition as a Centennial farm; continuous ownership of land within a family for one-hundred years or more. The hypotheses are related to the major concepts of the study namely, ownership and tenure, property, transmission and succession, family, and community.

Property in land in fee simple ownership is the desire of the Midwestern farmer, however achievement of this desire may have many consequences. Type of ownership in land effects the tenure of the owner.

1. In many cases the desire to own land has been so strong that the general welfare of the family and of the land has been sacrificed.

2. Long time family ownership of land results in an increasing proportion of the land being held by owners in occupations other than farming.

3. Long time family ownership of land results in a situation where the owner maintains ownership of the land beyond his peak of physical ability to do farm work.

4. In cases of long time family ownership of the land there will be distinct differences in the history of cases of present owner-operators and those cases of present owners who are not operators.

5. In long time family ownership of farm land the size of the original farm, in acres, has an affect on the tenure status position of the present owner.

6. Farms in the history of present owner-operators will demonstrate an increase in size from the time of the original owner. The farms in the hands of present owners who are not operating their farms will demonstrate a decrease in size.

The transmission and succession of property in land plays an important role in satisfying the desire of the farmer for ownership of his land. However, there are factors in the policies of transmission and succession which hamper the attainment of the ideal of owner-operatorship.

1. The inheritance process results in many persons inheriting land who are not farmers and who in turn tend to increase the rate of tenancy.

2. Although many owners may have given considerable thought to the disposal of their land they tend to delay action of transmission until the effectiveness of their intentions are minimized.

3. Intestate action on the part of the owner is in many cases an inadequate means of transfer since it divides the property among too many heirs, without consideration of individual family circumstances.

4. In families without any clear-cut ethnic identification the transmission of the farm is on an equalitarian basis, that is, the owner tends to distribute his property equally among all heirs.

5. In families without any clear-cut ethnic identification keeping the farm in the family cannot be attributed to any one item, and it is more likely to be a result of chance.

The family which is the agency of transmission for property and the provider of a line of succession is considered for further review with the following suggested hypotheses:

1. In the history of present owner-operators there will be a greater proportion of the children of successors who will remain in the local area than for any other present tenure group.

2. In the history of the present owner-operators there will be a greater proportion of children of successors who will choose farming as an occupation than for any other present tenure group.



3. In long time family ownership of land the size of farm, in acres, rather than the size of the family is the significant factor in the achievement of farm ownership.

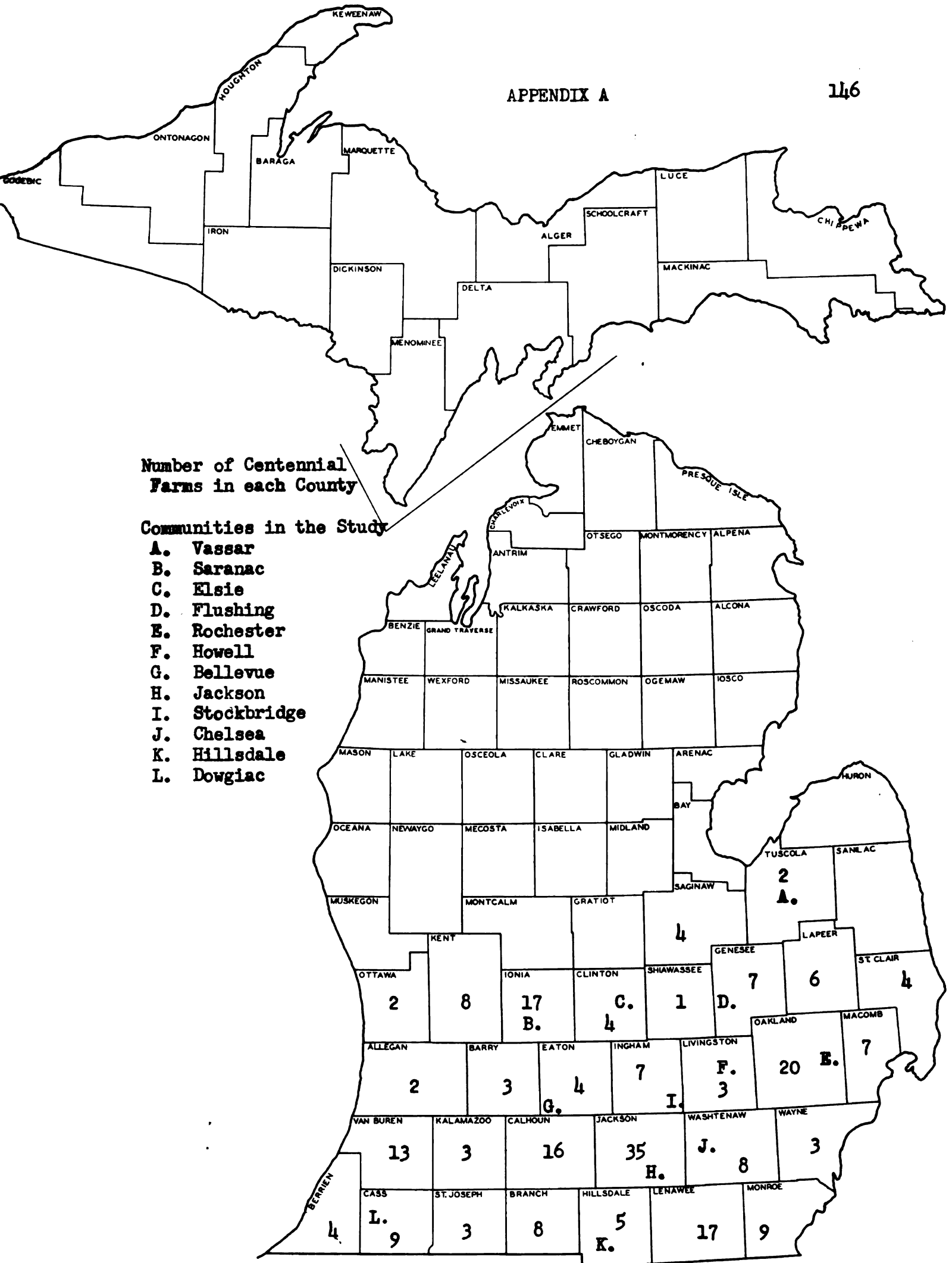
The community which is affected by long time tenure of families has certain concerns in regard to their consideration of this phenomenon.

1. Community members consider the elements of local residence and farm management over a long period of time as being more important than the element of continuity of ownership alone.

2. Recognition of families owning land within the confines of a particular community for an extended period of time is dependent upon the contribution of these families to the community rather than continuity of ownership.

3. For small rural communities one of the greatest values to the inhabitants is that of stability and permanence of population.

## APPENDICES





## APPENDIX B

## THE SELECTION OF THE SAMPLE

There were, as of November 30, 1950, two hundred thirty-four Centennial Farm Families (referred to in the following as CFF). These CFF were distributed over the southern section of the state, in a total of ninety communities.<sup>1</sup> The number of CFF in each of these communities ranged from one to twenty-four.

There are then two factors to be considered; (1) the size of the community by population, and; (2) the number of CFF in each community. These are important because there is a concern with the effect of CFF upon the growth and development of the community in which the Centennial Farm is located.

Two categories of communities are established for comparative purposes. Arbitrarily, the communities having one or two CFF were selected as one category (category A), and those having three or more CFF were considered to be in the second category, (category B).

The next step was the selection of communities by population. Three groups were established: small, medium,

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<sup>1</sup> As delineated by Dr. J. F. Thaden in 1940.

and large. There were sixty-six communities having one or two CFF. The range of population was from 1,500 to 217,000. This range was divided into three equal groups and the median was found in each. The communities in category A nearest this median, plus or minus 100 population, were the ones selected. The same process was carried through for category B, having twenty-four communities and having a population range of 2,200 to 250,000. The median was slightly higher in each of the groups in this category.

One further step was necessary regarding the representation of communities. Since category A represented three fourths of the total number of CFF it was necessary to have three communities in this category in each of the three population categories of small, medium, and large while category B would have one community in each of the three population categories. Thus, there will be twelve communities.

Population No. of CFF	Small			Medium			Large		
	Community	Pop.	No. of CFF	Community	Pop.	No. of CFF	Community	Pop.	No. of CFF
Category A	Elsie	2,500	1	Vassar	6,500	2	Howell	13,700	1
	Bellevue	2,500	1	Flushing	6,800	2	Rochester	14,000	1
	Saranac	2,500	2	Chelsea	6,900	1	Hillsdale	14,000	1
Category B	Stockbridge	4,000	3	Dowgiac	11,200	5	Jackson	90,600	24

## APPENDIX C

## Section I

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Schedule Number \_\_\_\_\_ Category \_\_\_\_\_  
Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Community \_\_\_\_\_

## Section II

1. Name of the present owner \_\_\_\_\_
2. Does the present owner reside on the Centennial Farm?
  - a. ☐ Yes
  - b. ☐ No
3. Where is the location of the permanent residence?
  - a. ☐ On a farm
  - b. ☐ in open country, but not on a farm
  - c. ☐ village of less than 2,500
  - d. ☐ town of 2,500 to 4,999
  - e. ☐ town of 5,000 to 9,999
  - f. ☐ city of 10,000 to 24,999
  - g. ☐ city of 25,000 to 99,999
  - h. ☐ city of over 100,000
4. What is the manner in which the farm is owned?
  - a. ☐ Sole ownership
  - b. ☐ purchase contract
  - c. ☐ life estate
  - d. ☐ shared ownership
5. What is the educational level of the present owner?
  - a. ☐ some grade school
  - b. ☐ completed grade school
  - c. ☐ some high school
  - d. ☐ completed high school
  - e. ☐ some college
  - f. ☐ completed college
  - g. ☐ business college
  - h. ☐ other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is the age of the present owner?
  - a. ☐ under 25 years
  - b. ☐ 25 to 34 years
  - c. ☐ 35 to 44 years
  - d. ☐ 45 to 54 years

- e. ☐ 55 to 64 years
- f. ☐ 65 to 74 years
- g. ☐ 75 to 84 years
- h. ☐ 85 to 94 years
- i. ☐ 95 years and over

7. What is the marital status of the present owner?
- a. ☐ Married
  - b. ☐ Widowed
  - c. ☐ Single
  - d. ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
8. What is the political affiliation of the present owner?
- a. ☐ Republican
  - b. ☐ Democrat
  - c. ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
9. What is the religious affiliation of the present owner?
- a. ☐ Methodist
  - b. ☐ Baptist
  - c. ☐ Lutheran
  - d. ☐ Presbyterian
  - e. ☐ Episcopal
  - f. ☐ Inter-denominational
  - g. ☐ Catholic
  - h. ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
10. Of what community organizations is the owner a member?
- a. ☐ None
  - b. ☐ Parent Teachers Association
  - c. ☐ Odd Fellows
  - d. ☐ Masons
  - e. ☐ American Legion (or Auxiliary)
  - f. ☐ Veterans of Foreign Wars (or Auxiliary)
  - g. ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
11. Of what farm organizations is the owner a member?
- a. ☐ Farm Bureau
  - b. ☐ Grange
  - c. ☐ Gleaners
  - d. ☐ None
  - e. ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
12. What facilities are in the house on the Centennial Farm?
- a. ☐ Central Heating
  - b. ☐ Running Water
  - c. ☐ Electricity
  - d. ☐ Indoor Toilet
  - e. ☐ Bath
  - f. ☐ All of the above
  - g. ☐ None of the above

13. What is the occupation of the present owner?  
a. ☐ Farmer  
b. ☐ Housewife  
c. ☐ Retired Farmer  
d. ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
14. What is the relationship of the present owner to the original owner?  
a. ☐ Son  
b. ☐ Grandson  
c. ☐ Great-grandson  
d. ☐ Daughter  
e. ☐ Grand-daughter  
f. ☐ Great grand-daughter  
g. ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### Section III

1. From what state or country did the original owner migrate?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. In what year did the original owner arrive at the present location? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What was the age of the original owner at the time of his arrival? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Was the original owner married prior to his migration?  
Yes ☐ No ☐  
If yes, how many children were born in the state of origin? \_\_\_\_\_ How many in Michigan? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Did the original owner ever marry in Michigan?  
Yes ☐ No ☐  
If yes, how many children were born? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What was the occupation of the original owner in his place of origin? \_\_\_\_\_ If farmer, what was his tenure status? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What occupation did the original owner engage in when he arrived in Michigan? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What was the original owners' reason for migrating?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Section IV

1. What was the size of the original farm in acres? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the size of the farm today in acres? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many of the acres owned today are part of the original acreage? \_\_\_\_\_
4. From whom was the original acreage obtained? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Does the present owner operate all, part, or none of the farm? \_\_\_\_\_  
If part, how many acres? \_\_\_\_\_  
Are the remaining acres idle? \_\_\_\_\_  
If part or none  
Does someone else operate the farm? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
If yes, how many acres? \_\_\_\_\_  
Is the operator related to you? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
If yes, what is the relationship? \_\_\_\_\_  
How long has it been since a member of your family has operated the farm? \_\_\_\_\_ years
6. Do you have a verbal or written contract with the operator? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Does the operator pay you rent in the form of
  - a. \_\_\_ Cash only
  - b. \_\_\_ Share of crops only
  - c. \_\_\_ Part cash and part share of crops
  - d. \_\_\_ Share of livestock and crops
  - e. \_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
8. Do you or the person who operates the farm rent
  - a. \_\_\_ additional land? How many acres? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_ land to others? How many acres? \_\_\_\_\_

## Section V

1. What has been the predominant religious affiliation in the history of the family? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What has been the predominant political affiliation in the history of the family? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What has been the history of the family community organizational affiliation? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What has been the history of the family community participation? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Who were the outstanding members of the family and name some of their activities? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is the general observation of the Centennial Farm? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Section VI

1. What have you done with the Centennial Farm Certificate you received? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What will you do with the Centennial Farm Plaque when you receive it? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Why do you think your farm was kept in the family for such an extended period of time? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you think the program should be continued or discontinued? \_\_\_\_\_ Why do you feel this way? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. If the program were to continue, what changes would you suggest? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. At the time of the award, did your award receive any recognition by the members of the community? \_\_\_\_\_ In what manner? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What do you think of farming as a way of life? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What plans have you made for the future disposition of the farm? \_\_\_\_\_

## Section VII

1. How many children were in the family of the original owner? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What was their birth order position? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What was the sex of each child? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What was the educational level of each child? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What was the marital status of each child? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What was the major occupation of each child? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What was the final place of residence of each child? \_\_\_\_\_

The above data are to be gathered for each owner's family and placed in the appropriate place on the attached sheet.

## Section VIII

The following questions are to be asked and the answers recorded for each transfer that occurred in the Centennial Farm Family line of descent.

1. What was the means of transfer utilized by the owner to pass on his property to the succeeding generation?
2. How many acres did the owner have available for transfer?
3. How many acres were received by the heir who kept the farm in the family?
4. Among whom was the property divided?



Children of original owner

Birth order position

Sex

Education

Marital Status

Occupation

Residence

Children of second generation owner

Birth order position

Sex

Education

Marital Status

Occupation

Residence

Children of third generation owner

Birth order position

Sex

Education

Marital Status

Occupation

Residence

Children of fourth generation owner

Birth order position

Sex

Education

Marital Status

Occupation

Residence



## APPENDIX D

Schedule for Community Informants

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Community \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Informant \_\_\_\_\_

Hello, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ from Michigan State College. We're conducting research on Centennial Farmers in Michigan, and I would appreciate your help in answering some questions about these people.

1. Have you heard of the Centennial Farm Program?  
 Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ If yes, as you recall the program what would you say was necessary to receive recognition as a Centennial Farmer? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Before continuing the questionning provide the informant with the exact requirements for recognition as stated by the Michigan Historical Commission.

2. Do you think the Program should be continued or discontinued? \_\_\_\_\_ Why do you feel this way? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
3. If the program were to continue, what changes would you suggest? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Handing the informant the name(s) of the local Centennial Farmers, ask the following questions.

4. Which of these names do you recognize?
5. Can you tell me anything about the community participation of these people you've recognized? Have their families, in the past, made any particular contribution to the community?

**APPENDIX E**

TABLE I  
AGE AND SEX DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRESENT OWNERS  
FOR THE TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Age and Sex	All Owners		Owner Operators		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Percent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent
Both Sexes										
All Ages	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0
35-44	4	9.0	3	30.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	11.1
45-54	5	11.3	2	20.0	0	0.0	2	13.2	1	11.1
55-64	7	15.9	3	30.0	0	0.0	3	20.0	1	11.1
65 & over	28	63.6	2	20.0	10	100.0	10	66.6	6	66.6
Mean	66.8		54.0		76.0		66.0		71.5	
Male										
All Ages	29	100.0	9	100.0	5	100.0	11	100.0	4	100.0
35-44	4	13.7	3	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0
45-54	4	13.7	2	22.2	0	0.0	1	9.0	1	25.0
55-64	5	17.2	2	22.2	0	0.0	2	18.1	1	25.0
65 & over	16	55.4	2	22.2	5	100.0	8	72.7	1	25.0
Female										
All Ages	15	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	4	100.0	5	100.0
35-44	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
45-54	1	6.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0
55-64	2	13.3	1	100.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0
65 & over	12	80.0	0	0.0	5	100.0	2	50.0	5	100.0

**TABLE II**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF PRESENT OWNERS BY MARITAL STATUS,**  
**FOR ALL TENURE GROUPS, 1950**

Marital Status	All Owners		Owner Operators		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent
Total	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0
Married	24	54.5	6	60.0	4	40.0	9	60.0	5	55.5
Widowed	14	31.8	1	10.0	5	50.0	4	26.6	4	44.4
Single	6	13.7	3	30.0	1	10.0	2	13.2	0	0.0

TABLE III  
DISTRIBUTION OF PRESENT OWNERS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT,  
FOR ALL TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Education <sup>1</sup>	All Owners		Owner Operators		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent
Total	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0
Grade School	12	27.2	4	40.0	5	50.0	0	0.0	3	33.3
High School	16	36.3	2	20.0	4	40.0	6	40.0	4	44.4
College	16	36.3	4	40.0	1	10.0	9	60.0	2	22.2

<sup>1</sup>The terms grade school, high school, and college refer to all or part of that training.

TABLE IV

## OCCUPATION OF PRESENT OWNERS BY TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Occupation	All Owners		Owner Operator		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent
Total	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0
Farmer	10	22.7	10	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Housewife	10	22.7	0	0.0	3	30.0	2	13.3	5	55.5
Retired	13	29.5	0	0.0	5	50.0	7	46.6	1	11.1
Business & Professional <sup>1</sup>	6	13.6	0	0.0	1	10.0	4	26.6	1	11.1
Clerical - Laborer <sup>2</sup>	5	11.3	0	0.0	1	10.0	2	13.2	2	22.2

<sup>1</sup>Business and Professional includes merchants, professional personnel, salesmen, public servants, and all who have retired from these occupations.

<sup>2</sup>Clerical-Laborer includes all those engaged in clerical work, in skilled and unskilled labor, and those who have retired from these occupations, and those who do not fit in to any of the other categories.



TABLE V  
LOCATION OF RESIDENCE OF PRESENT OWNERS BY TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Residence	All Owners		Owner Operators		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent
Total	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0
Farm	30	68.1	10	100.0	9	90.0	11	73.3	0	0.0
Open Country	8	18.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	88.8
Village <sup>1</sup>	2	4.5	0	0.0	1	10.0	1	6.6	0	0.0
City	4	9.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	20.0	1	11.1

<sup>1</sup>Village refers to population centers of less than 2,500 people.

TABLE VI  
ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIP OF THE PRESENT OWNERS BY TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Organizational Membership	All Owners		Owner Operator		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent
Total Organizations One or more None	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0
	22	50.0	4	40.0	8	80.0	7	46.6	3	33.3
	22	50.0	6	60.0	2	20.0	8	53.4	6	66.6
Farm Organizations Total One or more None	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0
	14	31.8	4	40.0	5	50.0	4	26.6	1	11.1
	30	68.2	6	60.0	5	50.0	11	73.4	8	88.9
Community Organizations Total One or more None	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0
	17	39.6	2	20.0	6	60.0	6	40.0	3	33.3
	27	60.4	8	80.0	4	40.0	9	60.0	6	66.6

TABLE VII

TYPES OF OWNERSHIP HELD BY PRESENT OWNERS FOR TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Type of Ownership	All Owners		Owner Operators		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent
Total	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0
Sole Purchase Con-tract Life Estate Shared	27	61.3	6	60.0	8	80.0	7	46.7	6	66.7
	1	2.2	1	10.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	3	6.7	0	0.0	1	10.0	0	0.0	2	22.2
	13	29.8	3	30.0	1	10.0	8	53.3	1	11.1

TABLE VIII

TYPE OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN PRESENT OWNERS AND TENANTS, 1950

Type of Agreement	All Owners		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Total	25	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0
Written	7	28.0	2	20.0	5	33.3
Verbal	18	72.0	8	80.0	10	66.6

TABLE IX

DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER OF YEARS SINCE A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY  
HAS OPERATED THE FARM FOR OWNERS WITH NON-RELATED  
TENANTS AND NON-FARM OWNERS, 1950

Years	Total	Non-Related Tenants	Non-Farm
Total	24	15	9
1 to 5	3	2	1
6 to 10	7	5	2
11 to 15	3	2	1
16 to 20	3	2	1
21 to 25	4	1	3
26 and over	4	3	1

TABLE X

APPEARANCE OF FARM AND FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN CENTENNIAL FARM HOUSE,  
BY TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Farm Evaluation	All Farms		Owner Operator		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent
Total	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0
Facilities in Farm House <sup>1</sup>										
All of them	37	84.0	9	90.0	8	80.0	11	73.3	9	100.0
None of them <sup>2</sup>	1	2.2	1	10.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Some of them <sup>2</sup>	6	13.6	0	0.0	2	20.0	4	26.6	0	0.0
Total	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0
Appearance of Farm										
Above average	18	40.9	7	70.0	4	40.0	7	46.6	0	0.0
Average	20	45.4	2	20.0	5	50.0	7	46.6	6	66.6
Below average	6	13.6	1	10.0	1	10.0	1	6.6	2	33.3

<sup>1</sup>Facilities include; central heating, running water, electricity, indoor toilet, bath.

<sup>2</sup>All of these cases have electricity and four of them have running water.

TABLE XI  
MEAN NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER FAMILY FOR EACH GENERATION BY TENURE GROUPS, 1950<sup>1</sup>

Mean Number of Children	Total	Owner Operators	Related Tenants	Non-Related Tenants	Non-Farm
All Generations Mean	4.00	3.72	4.62	3.71	3.84
First Generation Mean	5.16	5.10	5.20	4.86	5.64
Second Generation Mean	3.85	3.70	4.25	3.86	3.66
Third Generation Mean	2.74	2.22	4.16	2.91	2.00

<sup>1</sup>Fourth generation is not included because of the few children and the fact that some of the families are as yet incomplete.

TABLE XII

OCCUPATION AND RESIDENCE OF ALL PAST MEMBERS OF CENTENNIAL FARM FAMILIES,  
BY TENURE GROUPS, 1950<sup>1</sup>

Occupation & Residence	Total		Owner Operators		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Percent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent
Occupation										
Total	485	100.0	108	100.0	111	100.0	166	100.0	100	100.0
Farm	279	57.5	73	67.5	74	66.7	92	55.4	38	38.0
Non-Farm	206	42.4	35	32.5	37	33.3	72	44.6	62	62.0
Residence										
Total	485	100.0	108	100.0	111	100.0	166	100.0	100	100.0
Local	362	74.6	91	84.2	82	73.8	122	73.4	67	67.0
Non-Local	123	25.3	17	15.8	29	26.1	44	26.6	33	33.0

<sup>1</sup> Not included: Children who died prior to 14 years of age, and 25 children who at the time of the survey were under 14 years of age.

TABLE XIII

RESIDENCE AND OCCUPATION PATTERN FOR PAST MEMBERS  
OF ALL CENTENNIAL FARM FAMILIES,  
BY TENTURE GROUPS, 1950<sup>1</sup>

Occupation and Residence	All Owners		Owner Operators		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent
Total	485	100.0	108	100.0	11	100.0	166	100.0	100	100.0
Farm-Local	263	54.2	73	67.5	68	61.2	86	51.8	36	36.0
Farm-Non- Local	16	3.2	0	0.0	6	5.4	8	4.8	2	2.0
Non-Farm Local	99	20.4	18	16.6	14	12.6	36	21.6	31	31.0
Non-Farm Non-Local	107	22.1	17	15.9	23	20.7	36	21.6	31	31.0

<sup>1</sup>Not included: Children who died prior to 14 years of age, and 25 children who at the time of the survey were under 14 years of age.



TABLE XIV

DISTRIBUTION OF ALL CHILDREN BY PATTERN  
OF SEX, MARITAL STATUS, OCCUPATION,  
AND RESIDENCE FOR ALL TENURE  
GROUPS, 1950

Bio-social Characteristics <sup>1</sup>	All Owners	Owner Operator	Related Tenants	Non-Related Tenants	Non-Farm
Total all Generations <sup>2</sup>	485	108	111	166	100
M-M-F-L	156	42	41	43	20
M-M-F-NL	7	0	3	3	1
M-M-NF-L	32	2	5	13	12
M-M-NF-NL	54	7	8	23	16
M-S-F-L	11	5	3	2	1
M-S-F-NL	0	0	0	0	0
M-S-NF-L	8	3	1	2	2
M-S-NF-NL	2	1	0	1	0
F-M-F-L	100	25	24	36	15
F-M-F-NL	9	0	3	5	1
F-M-NF-L	43	8	5	16	14
F-M-NF-NL	44	7	12	11	14
F-S-F-L	6	1	0	5	0
F-S-F-NL	0	0	0	0	0
F-S-NF-L	16	5	3	5	3
F-S-NF-NL	7	2	3	1	1
First Generation Total	221	51	50	70	50
M-M-F-L	79	18	21	27	13
M-M-NF-L	9	2	2	4	1
M-M-NF-NL	18	4	2	1	11
M-S-F-L	5	2	2	1	0
F-M-F-L	57	13	12	20	12
F-M-F-NL	6	0	2	4	0
F-M-NF-L	18	5	1	8	4
F-M-NF-NL	20	6	6	1	7
F-S-NF-L	9	1	2	4	2

TABLE XIV -- Continued

Bio-social Characteristics <sup>1</sup>	All Owners	Owner Operator	Related Tenants	Non-Related Tenants	Non-Farm
Second Generation Total	158	34	30	55	29
M-M-F-L	57	16	13	13	5
M-M-NF-L	7	0	1	3	3
M-M-NF-NL	16	2	2	8	4
M-S-F-L	5	2	1	1	1
F-M-F-L	36	11	10	13	2
F-M-NF-L	17	2	1	6	8
F-M-NF-NL	15	1	2	6	6
F-S-F-L	5	0	0	5	0
Third Generation Total	85	14	23	33	15
M-M-F-L	20	8	7	3	2
M-M-NF-L	16	0	2	6	8
M-M-NF-NL	20	1	4	14	1
F-M-F-L	7	1	2	3	1
F-M-NF-L	8	1	3	2	2
F-M-NF-NL	9	0	4	4	1
F-S-NF-L	5	3	1	1	0

<sup>1</sup> Symbols used to describe bio-social characteristics are: First column is sex, M is male, F is female. Second column is marital status, M is married, S is single. Third column is occupation, F is farm, NF is non-farm. The fourth column is residence, L is local, NL is non-local.

<sup>2</sup> All cases are included, however for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd generations patterns with less than five in total are excluded.

TABLE XV

## RELATIONSHIP OF SUCCEEDING HEIR BY TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Heir	All Farms		Owner Operators		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent
Total	101	100.0	27	100.0	20	100.0	35	100.0	19	100.0
Son	79	78.2	21	77.7	16	80.0	29	82.8	13	68.4
Daughter <sup>1</sup>	17	16.8	5	18.5	2	10.0	5	14.2	5	26.3
Other	5	4.9	1	3.7	2	10.0	1	2.8	1	5.2

<sup>1</sup>Of the 17 daughters there were only four cases where the other siblings were also females.

TABLE XVI

BIRTH ORDER POSITION OF SUCCEEDING HEIR  
BY TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Birth Order Position	Total		Owner Operators		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent
Total	101	100.0	27	100.0	20	100.0	35	100.0	19	100.0
Oldest <sup>1</sup>	56	55.4	15	55.5	7	35.0	21	60.0	13	68.4
Middle	32	31.6	9	33.3	6	30.0	11	31.4	6	31.5
Youngest	4	3.9	3	11.2	0	0.0	1	2.9	0	0.0
Unknown	9	8.9	0	0.0	7	35.0	2	5.7	0	0.0

<sup>1</sup>Includes seven only children: one Owner Operator, one Related Tenant, four Non-Related tenants, and one Non-Farm owner.

TABLE XVII

TOTAL ACRES OWNED, MEAN SIZE OF ACRES OWNED FOR  
ORIGINAL AND PRESENT OWNERS BY TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Total Size and Mean Size	Total	Owner Operators	Related Tenants	Non-Related Tenants	Non-Farm
Total	44	10	10	15	9
Original Farms					
Total Size in acres	7580	1900	1720	2565	1395
Mean Size	172.2	190.0	172.0	171.0	155.0
Present Farms					
Total Size in acres	7163	2220	2140	2079	724
Mean Size	162.8	222.0	214.0	138.6	80.0

TABLE XVIII

NUMBER OF TRANSFERS, AND MEAN ACREAGE  
AVAILABLE FOR TRANSFER, RECEIVED  
BY INHERITOR,<sup>1</sup> AND ACCRUED BY  
INHERITOR, BY TENURE GROUPS,  
1950

Transfers	Total Acreage	Owner Operator	Related Tenants	Non- Related Tenants	Non- Farm
Total all Generations Number	101	27	20	35	19
Mean Acreage Available	169.6	195.5	175.1	162.0	141.1
Received	95.3	124.8	88.6	92.2	66.2
Accrued <sup>2</sup>	162.5	206.1	188.5	145.8	104.2
First to Second Generation Number	44	10	10	15	9
Mean Acreage Available	181.2	193.2	187.3	173.6	169.2
Received	89.1	65.9	88.2	105.2	89.2
Accrued <sup>3</sup>	163.6	211.3	170.6	155.7	116.1
Second to Third Generation Number	42	10	9	15	8
Mean Acreage Available	163.6	211.3	164.4	155.7	118.1
Received <sup>4</sup>	91.6	156.9	82.2	77.7	44.1
Accrued <sup>4</sup>	163.6	223.0	212.6	129.6	98.2

TABLE XVIII -- Continued

Transfers	Total Acreage	Owner Operator	Related Tenants	Non-Related Tenants	Non- Farm
Third to Fourth Generation Number	15	7	1	5	2
Mean Acreage Available	152.3	176.2	150.0	138.0	105.5
Received	125.4	163.4	150.0	97.0	51.5
Accrued <sup>5</sup>	156.5	174.8	150.0	165.0	74.5

<sup>1</sup>Inheritor refers to individual who was in line that kept the farm in the family.

<sup>2</sup>Includes 44 present owners.

<sup>3</sup>Includes 2 present owners.

<sup>4</sup>Includes 27 present owners.

<sup>5</sup>Includes 15 present owners.

TABLE XIX

METHOD OF TRANSFER AS UTILIZED BY ALL OWNERS AND BY EACH GENERATION,  
FOR TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Method of Transfer	Total		Owner Operators		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent
Total All Generations	101	100.0	27	100.0	20	100.0	35	100.0	19	100.0
Settlement	22	21.7	10	37.0	4	20.0	7	20.0	1	5.2
Testate	46	45.5	7	26.0	8	40.0	18	51.1	13	68.4
Intestate	33	32.8	10	37.0	8	40.0	10	28.9	5	26.4
First to Second Generation Total	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0
Settlement	6	13.6	1	10.0	2	20.0	3	20.0	0	0.0
Testate	23	52.2	3	30.0	5	50.0	7	46.6	8	88.8
Intestate	15	34.2	6	60.0	3	30.0	5	33.3	1	11.1
Second to Third Generation Total	42	100.0	10	100.0	9	100.0	15	100.0	8	100.0

TABLE XIX -- Continued

Method of Transfer	Total		Owner Operators		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent
Settlement Testate Intestate	10	23.8	5	50.0	1	11.1	3	20.0	1	12.5
	17	40.5	2	20.0	2	22.2	8	53.3	4	50.0
	15	35.7	3	30.0	6	66.6	4	26.6	3	37.5
Third to Fourth Generation Total										
	15	100.0	7	100.0	1	100.0	5	100.0	2	100.0
Settlement Testate Intestate	6	40.0	4	57.1	1	100.0	1	20.0	0	0.0
	6	40.0	2	28.6	0	0.0	3	60.0	1	50.0
	3	20.0	1	14.2	0	0.0	1	20.0	1	50.0



TABLE XX

DISTRIBUTION OF PATTERNS OF INHERITANCE AS UTILIZED  
BY ALL OWNERS, BY TENURE GROUPINGS, 1950

Pattern of Inheritance <sup>1</sup>	Total	Owner Operator	Related Tenants	Non-Related Tenants	Non-Farm
Total	44	10	10	15	9
T	2	0	1	0	1
T-T	4	0	1	2	1
T-I	6	0	2	1	3
T-S	5	1	1	2	1
S-T	1	0	1	0	0
S-I	2	0	1	1	0
I-T	5	1	0	3	1
I-S	1	0	0	1	0
I-I	3	1	2	0	0
T-T-T	2	0	0	1	1
T-T-I	3	1	0	1	1
T-S-S	1	1	0	0	0
S-I-T	1	0	0	1	0
S-S-T	1	1	0	0	0
S-T-S	1	0	0	1	0
I-I-T	2	1	0	1	0
I-I-S	1	1	0	0	0
I-S-S	2	2	0	0	0
I-T-S	1	0	1	0	0

<sup>1</sup>T-stands for Testate; S for Settlement; I for Intestate.



TABLE XXI

PARCELLATION OF LAND FOR ALL TRANSFERS FOR TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Parcellation	Total		Owner Operator		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent
Total	101	100.0	27	100.0	20	100.0	35	100.0	19	100.0
Parcellation	57	56.4	15	55.5	15	75.0	15	42.8	12	63.1
Non-Parcellation	36	35.6	11	40.7	4	20.0	17	48.5	4	21.0
Undivided	8	8.0	1	3.8	1	5.0	3	8.7	3	15.8

TABLE XXII

DISTRIBUTION OF REASONS FOR KEEPING THE FARM IN THE FAMILY  
BY TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Reason	Total		Owner Operator		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent
Total	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0
Small Family	7	15.9	1	10.0	0	0.0	5	33.3	1	11.1
Good Management	8	18.1	2	20.0	1	10.0	5	33.3	0	0.0
Always some-one interested	19	43.1	6	60.0	8	80.0	2	13.3	3	33.3
Other	10	22.7	1	10.0	1	10.0	3	20.0	5	55.6

TABLE XXIII

DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER OF PRESENT OWNERS  
AND THEIR PLANS FOR DISPOSAL OF THE FARMS  
BY TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Plans	All Owners		Owner Operators		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent
Total	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0
Will	8	19.1	2	20.0	2	20.0	4	26.7	0	0.0
No Will	36	80.9	8	80.0	8	80.0	11	73.3	9	100.0

TABLE XXIV

RECOGNITION OF THE CENTENNIAL FARM CONCEPT BY  
COMMUNITY INFORMANTS AND SIZE OF COMMUNITY, 1950

Recognition of Concept	Total	Size of Community		
		Small	Medium	Large
Total	60	20	20	20
Definitively	18	5	4	9
Vaguely	20	10	6	4
Not at all	22	5	10	7

TABLE XXV

ATTITUDE TOWARD PROGRAM BY COMMUNITY MEMBERS  
AND PRESENT OWNERS BY TENURE GROUPS, 1950

Attitude Toward Program	All Owners		Owner Operator		Related Tenants		Non-Related Tenants		Non-Farm		Community Members	
	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent
Total	44	100.0	10	100.0	10	100.0	15	100.0	9	100.0	60	100.0
Should Pro- gram Be Continued?												
Yes	20	45.5	6	60.0	5	50.0	4	26.6	5	55.5	47	78.3
No	24	54.5	4	40.0	5	50.0	11	73.4	4	44.5	13	21.7

TABLE XXVI

RECOGNITION OF CENTENNIAL FARMERS BY COMMUNITY INFORMANTS  
BY SIZE OF COMMUNITY, 1950

Number of Recognitions	Total		Size of Community					
			Small		Medium		Large	
	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent
Total	44	100.0	7	100.0	10	100.0	27	100.0
Less than Five	32	72.7	3	42.8	5	50.0	24	88.9
Five Recognitions	12	27.3	4	57.2	5	50.0	3	11.1

TABLE XXVII

DISTRIBUTION OF TENURE GROUPS BY SIZE OF COMMUNITY, 1950

Tenure Group	Total		Size of Community					
			Small		Medium		Large	
	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent	No.	Per- cent
Total	44	100.0	7	100.0	10	100.0	27	100.0
Owner-Operator	10	22.7	2	28.5	1	10.0	7	25.9
Related Tenants	10	22.7	4	57.1	2	20.0	4	14.8
Non-Related Tenants	15	34.0	1	14.2	3	30.0	11	40.7
Non-Farm	9	20.4	0	0.0	4	40.0	5	18.5

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